

Pastor Rob's Reading List

2026: Topic - Christology

As a pastor, one of my priorities is to see the believers I shepherd be not just listeners on Sunday, but learners who study throughout the week. I esteem it a great privilege to impart direction towards good reading and learning. The following books are books I possess in my own library and have personally read over the last year. I offer praise or critique with confidence about each book in its presentation of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, or Christology.

Warm Regards and Happy Reading!

Pastor Rob Phillips

Joel R Beeke author. *Reformed Systematic Theology*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway, 2019.

These volumes (1-4) offer what I believe to be the best presentation of the deity, life and ministry of Jesus Christ from a reformed perspective, specifically volumes 1 and 2 in reference to Christology. Beeke and Smalley not only give very sound doctrinal teaching, each chapter is also practical with applicational truth and Psalms for reflection.

Volume 2 is particularly poignant to the study and understanding of Christology, but all four volumes will serve the reader well for a full understanding of Christ in every area of Theology.

White, Robert. "*Substantial Marrow: Calvin's 1541 Institutes in English*." Banner of Truth, August 1, 2014.

I believe it is important for every believer to have a basic knowledge of Calvin's Institutes, and I have found this to be the easiest version to read and glean from devotionally. Chapters 4-6 will be of particular importance in understanding Jesus' role in salvation.

Keller, Timothy. *King's Cross: The Story of the World in the Life of Jesus*. New York, N.Y.: Dutton Redeemer, 2011.

As a Christian Ethicist and Philosopher, Timothy Keller's work to clearly articulate Jesus' role as both a king, but also the atoning sacrifice is essential for it's clarity and simplicity to understand. This book can also be found under the revised title of *Jesus the King*.

Ortland, Dane C. *Gentle and Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers*. Wheaton, Ill. Crossway, 2020

This is a book that I give every new believer who makes a profession of faith at the churches I pastor. This book is the best book I have ever read on understanding the true heart of Christ.

Piper, John. *The Pleasures of God: Meditations on God's Delight in Being God*. Rev. and Expanded.. Sisters, Or.: Multnomah Publishers, 2000.

This book has had one of the most profound impacts upon my own life. Along with another book by Piper, *Desiring God: meditations of a Christian hedonist*, this book should be required reading for any believer, especially believers coming out of Arminian teachings or Dispensational fundamentalism.

Particular attention should be given to chapter 6 entitled The Pleasure Of God In Bruising The Son for an excellent presentation of Jesus' work for the Father in the study of Soteriology.

Packer, J. I. *Knowing God*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1973.

In the study of Christology, I recommend this book for one chapter alone: Chapter 18 which is entitled The Heart of the Gospel. This chapter is a complete work for understanding Christ's role in our salvation as Packer covers the ideas of incarnation, justification, propitiation and expiation.

Kistemaker, J. Simon. *The Parables: Understanding the Stories Jesus Told*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Books, 1980

This is a good book for understanding why Jesus utilized story and wisdom saying in his teaching curriculum. This book will help you understand how to read parables.

Carson, D.A. *Jesus's Sermon On The Mount And His Confrontation With The World*. Grand Rapids, Mi.: Baker Books, 1987

This book will help you understand the full context of Christ's Sermon On The Mount. Carson does an excellent work of not only helping us understand how to read the sermon, but also how to interpret some difficult concepts within the sermon.

You will want to pay close attention to the thematic elements such as "you have heard" and "the kingdom of heaven", as Carson helps us see the whole of the Gospel writings in these phrases and others.

Free Book Offer at the Book Table:

Smethurst, Matt. Tim Keller on the Christian Life, The Transforming Power of the Gospel. Wheaton, Ill.:Crossway, 2025

This book is on offer for free by Four Points Church for hungry readers and features some of the best Keller had to offer on Gospel indicatives and imperatives.