

# Christian Biographies-Missionaries, Preachers, Theologians

This page on Christian Biographies begins with an article written by a pastor I have come to love and respect as a "2 Timothy 4:2-man," one who preaches the Word in season and out of season, producing expositions that are always faithful to the inspired Word of God. It is with that confidence that I have included Pastor Cole's excellent article which answers the question you may be asking "Why read Christian biographies instead of the Bible?" Good question, but I think you will find an answer to your question as you read his short article. After the article I have listed many of Pastor Cole's recommendations that you can actually borrow and read at no charge. Following this are other sources of sound Christian biographies. I personally have been stirred and challenged by the Christian biographies I have read and my prayer is that they will have the same effect on your Christian walk.

## Mining for Gold WHAT I'VE LEARNED FROM READING CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHIES - Pastor Steven Cole

During a class in my final year in seminary, Dr. Howard Hendricks said something that jumped out and grabbed me for life: "Two factors will have the greatest impact on where you find yourself ten years from now: the books you read and the friends you make. Guard them both very carefully!"

That was many years ago. I got to thinking about what, apart from the Bible, has most influenced my Christian life. I concluded that it is reading Christian biographies—the lives of the saints, as some call it. The people I have read about have become my friends, even though I won't meet them personally until I get to heaven. Hendricks was right: the friends I have made through the books I have read have had a profound impact on my life.

**It's a gold mine available to all but mined by few.** The pressures of our fast-lane lives crowd out the time for settling down with the greats of the past. What can they teach me about the problems I face? Plenty! I've found that the mine is rich and worth the effort many times over. Here are four ways that reading Christian biographies has helped me:

### **HERITAGE: CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHIES GIVE ME A SENSE OF MY PLACE IN THE CHRISTIAN DRAMA.**

Reading Christian biographies has helped me appreciate my spiritual roots. It helps me put our times and my particular circumstances in perspective. It makes me realize that I am carrying the torch handed to me by those who went before, and that I must hand it off intact to those who come after me.

For example, we live in a culture that values tolerance and open-mindedness. Many Christians tiptoe around difficult issues like sexual ethics, divorce, or hell. Reading the lives of Luther and Calvin and how they stood fearlessly for the truth in their day gives me courage to take a stand on the issues that really matter.

I'm not deluded into thinking that my convictions and choices will influence history as the Reformers did. But I do believe that taking a stand on the common issues of everyday life in my small corner of the vineyard matters in shaping God's kingdom in our day.

One small example: Some years ago, four or five disgruntled marriage partners came to me, independently of one another, and informed me that they were going to divorce their mates. When I inquired why, I discovered that in each case the unhappy mate had read a popular book by a Christian psychologist that encouraged them to issue an ultimatum in an attempt to bring their partners to repentance. But in my judgment, none of the situations, although difficult, were beyond hope if the partners were willing to forgive and live in a godly manner with their sinning mates.

In spite of intense pressure from some friends of the wounded parties to go along with this popular book, I gently, but firmly, held to the biblical high view of the sanctity of marriage. In each case the unhappy spouse followed my counsel. As far as I know, even the marriages where there was sexual infidelity are still intact today. My commitment to hold to the Word in the face of strong cultural currents to the contrary preserved several families from destruction.

I realize it's not on a par with Luther at the Diet of Worms, but it helps me to stand firm when I feel pressured to compromise to know

that I am linked in an unbroken chain of faithful witnesses who have held to God's unchanging truth before me.

## **MODELING: CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHIES GIVE ME GREAT EXAMPLES TO FOLLOW.**

Dr. Albert Schweitzer was asked what is the best way to raise children. The learned doctor replied, "There are three ways: 1) By example, 2) By example, and 3) By example." He was right. God has made us so that from our earliest days, we learn from models.

The same is true spiritually. We learn by watching models who "flesh out" Christian principles in their daily lives. When I was younger in the faith, I wanted someone to disciple me. I tried several different men, but it never seemed to work out the way I had hoped. But in a very real sense, I have been discipled by some of the greatest Christians who have ever lived, by reading their biographies.

Three who have influenced me greatly are Martyn Lloyd-Jones, Charles Spurgeon, and Jonathan Edwards. Lloyd-Jones is from the 20th century, Spurgeon from the 19th, and Edwards from the 18th. All three were pastors and strong preachers. Their ministries affirm the power of biblical preaching backed by godly lives. As a pastor, they especially speak to me.

But those not in pastoral ministry can gain much from these giants. They all combined solid theology with deep devotion for Christ. Their theology gave them the mooring they needed to stand firm in the controversies of their day. Reading their lives motivates me to deepen my roots by chewing on some of the great books from the past rather than just nibbling on the latest best-selling fluff.

Besides Lloyd-Jones, Spurgeon, and Edwards, I have many more models. Francis Schaeffer has reinforced the need to blend compassion with truth, scholarship with evangelism, and orthodoxy with spiritual reality. George Muller impresses me with the practicality of a life of prayer and faith. Hudson Taylor, Jim Elliot, and Bruce Olson all bucked the Christian establishment and endured hardships to further God's work in difficult areas. Adoniram Judson's faithful endurance through horrible trials and discouragements inspires me.

## **SPIRITUALITY AND DOCTRINE: CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHIES GIVE ME THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE AND BALANCE.**

We are all limited by the fact that we are creatures of our time and culture. We tend to view issues from the grid we almost unconsciously absorb from the theological and social climate in which we come to Christ and begin to grow. It's as if we're born in the forest and start walking, not quite sure where all the various trails come from or lead to. Reading Christian biographies is like climbing a high mountain so that you can get a feel for the lay of the land.

Reading biographies of men and women who grew up in different times under different cultural influences, broadens me. To read of Christians from various traditions who loved and served the same Lord widens my understanding of what God is doing. It makes me less sectarian, less consumed with petty issues and narrow viewpoints.

It also gives me perspective on how the Christianity of our day has drifted. For example, take the matter of the Lord's Day. In our day, especially in laid-back California, most Christians view Sunday the same as any other day, except that you go to church if you're not doing something else. But after church, it's a day to do whatever you please: Wash your car, work in your yard, go shopping, play soccer, watch TV sports, or whatever. We've lost any concept of Sunday as the Lord's Day.

Reading the life of Hudson Taylor, I was shocked to learn that his wife, Maria, who was desperately trying to get home to be with a sick child, would not travel on "the sabbath" (Sunday). I don't necessarily agree with her. My point is that by reading about people from the past I've learned that "we've come a long way, baby!" Maybe we are out of balance. That drives me back to the Scriptures to seek God's mind on the matter.

You gain the same kind of perspective on other social issues. For example, what did Jonathan Edwards, Charles Spurgeon, Robertson Nicoll, G. Campbell Morgan, C. S. Lewis, and Martyn Lloyd-Jones all have in common? They smoked, some of them as pastors! In most American Christian circles, that's enough to brand you as unspiritual, if not to question your salvation. And yet Spurgeon would be aghast that Christians watch TV and go to the movies. He disapproved of attending stage plays and reading secular novels. Such "worldliness" was unthinkable in his day!

Besides social issues, reading the lives of the saints gives perspective on theological issues. Many of the current "hot topics" are not new. Calvin has some great insights on self-love. Lloyd-Jones shows how the "lordship salvation" debate was hashed out over 200 years ago.

So reading Christian biographies has taken me up the mountain for a clearer view of my own and others' theological perspective. This has helped me sort through which issues are crucial and worth fighting for and which issues are more cultural, where I need to be more tolerant.

## **HUMANITY: CHRISTIAN BIOGRAPHIES GIVE ME**

## AN UNDERSTANDING OF PEOPLE AND OF MYSELF.

There are two types of Christian biographies. Many of the older works fall into what I would call the "eulogy" genre, approaching the subject as we deal with the deceased at funerals: They emphasize his good points and overlook his faults. More recent biographers tend to take a more honest look at their subjects, exposing warts and all.

If you read more honest biographies (and read between the lines of the eulogy-type), you discover that God has used some very rough instruments. You find that the great strengths of some of the giants were also the flip side of great weaknesses and blind spots. Men and women who were unswerving in their commitment to Christ were sometimes stubborn and ran roughshod over people. And yet God used them greatly!

This is not to excuse their sins, nor to excuse my own. But I am a perfectionist. I tend to be very hard on myself and on others. When I read of those who did great things for God, it helps me to realize that they weren't perfect. Far from it!

Some of the greats, such as John Wesley and William Carey, had difficult marriages. Carey's wife didn't want to go to the mission field. When she finally got there (due to her husband's pressure), she went insane. David Livingstone was a loner who had numerous conflicts with fellow workers. He essentially abandoned his wife and children, who suffered greatly without him. Yet God used Livingstone to open Africa to the gospel!

Bob Pierce loved the world but couldn't relate to his own family. He preached the gospel to huge crowds in the Far East and saw thousands respond. He founded World Vision to help the many hurting children he encountered. Yet his oldest daughter committed suicide. He and his wife were separated at several points in their marriage, apart from the numerous separations due to his incredible travel schedule—he was gone an average of ten months each year! He never tamed his explosive temper, and eventually World Vision fired him. Yet he loved and served the Lord to the end of his life.

C. T. Studd, famous for the quote, "If Christ be God and died for me, no sacrifice is too great for me to make for Him," left his wife in poor health and went to Africa, returning to see her only once in the final 16 years of her life. He worked 18-hour days and expected everyone else to do likewise. His intense dedication to the cause of Christ made him intolerant of anyone who wasn't equally committed. He alienated everyone around him, including his daughter and son-in-law, and was finally dismissed by the mission he had founded.

My point is not to take pot shots at these servants of the Lord nor, by justifying their sin, to excuse my own. But seeing their shortcomings and failures helps me accept imperfect people, including myself.

God did some significant things with these imperfect men and women. Thousands of lives have been changed. In some cases, the history of nations and of western civilization has been altered through these godly, yet very human, instruments. Maybe there's hope that God can use even me!

## CONCLUSION

W. Robertson Nicoll, the learned British writer, had 25,000 volumes in his personal library, including 5,000 biographies. He wrote, "I have for years read every biography I could lay my hands on, and not one has failed to teach me something" (cited by Warren Wiersbe, [50 people every Christian should know : learning from spiritual giants of the faiths](#) [borrow this book]).

I agree (although I'm a bit short of 5,000)! Many of the greats from the past have become my mentors and friends as I've read their biographies. They have given me a sense of the heritage I have in Christ. They have provided me with models to live by. They have given me theological and spiritual perspective to navigate the tricky waters of our times. They have helped me understand others and myself, as imperfect human beings called to serve the perfect Savior. The gold is there for the mining. Happy prospecting! (Source: [Used by permission of Steven Cole](#) - bolding added)

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**John Piper** would agree with Cole and exhorts us in his article [Brothers, Read Christian Biography](#) in which he says "Hebrews 11 is a divine mandate to read Christian biography. The unmistakable implication of the chapter is that, if we hear about the faith of our forefathers (and mothers), we will "lay aside every weight and sin" and "run with perseverance the race that is set before us" (Heb 12:1+). If we asked the author, "How shall we stir one another up to love and good works?" (Heb 10:24+), his answer would be: "Through encouragement from the living (Heb 10:25+) and the dead" (Heb 11+). Christian biography is the means by which "body life" cuts across the generations.".....Biographies have served as much as any other human force in my life to overcome the inertia of mediocrity. Without them I tend to forget what joy there is in relentless labor and aspiration. I have devoted more time to the life of Jonathan Edwards (good biography of O. Winslow) than to any other non-biblical person. Before he was 20 years old Edwards wrote 70 resolutions which for years have fired my work. Number 6 was: "To live with all my might, while I do live." Number 11: "When I think of any theorem in divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if circumstances do not hinder." Number

28: "To study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive, myself to grow in the knowledge of the same."....Recently I have been greatly encouraged in my own pastoral work by [Warren Wiersbe's \*Walking with the Giants a minister's guide to good reading and great preaching \(borrow this book\)\*](#) and [Listening to the Giants \(Warren Wiersbe - borrow book\)](#). The main reason these mini-biographies have been helpful is seeing the sheer diversity of pastoral styles God has chosen to bless. There have been great and fruitful pastors whose preaching patterns, visitation habits, and personalities were so different that all of us may take courage. One humorous example: Over against the austere Edwards, who measured his food intake so as to maximize his alertness for study, you can put Spurgeon, who weighed more than 300 pounds and smoked cigars. Both men won more converts to Christ than any ten of us will. Spurgeon said to a Methodist critic, "If I ever find myself smoking to excess, I promise I shall quit entirely." "What would you call smoking to excess?" the man asked. "Why, smoking two cigars at the same time!" was the answer.....Living theology. Flawed and encouraging saints. Stories of grace. Deep inspiration. The best entertainment. Brothers, it is worth your precious hours. Remember Hebrews 11. And read Christian biography. (From [Brothers. Read Christian Biography](#))

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**R Albert Mohler, Jr** - We read biographies because worthy portraits of our fellow human beings help us to make sense of the world. We are especially fascinated by the lives of those who have made a difference in the world -- whose mark remains visible even now. The lives of the famous and the infamous make for compelling reading. As Benjamin Disraeli, a famous author as well as Queen Victoria's favorite Prime Minister, once remarked, biography is "life without theory." In other words, at their best biographies take us into the real lives of real persons as they were really lived. No life can be reduced to a written biography, of course, and no biography can consider all aspects of even a single life. Every biographer picks and chooses from the available data of a life. Nevertheless, we are drawn into these lives as we read compelling biographies. Reading the biographies of persons whose lives represent a significant influence on the Christian church is especially enriching.

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#### Related Resource:

- [The Importance of Christian Biography - Tabletalk Magazine](#) Whereas secular biography will set its gaze on the historical figure, Christian biography will marvel and gaze at Christ, who is Himself "the author and perfecter" of the faithful.
- [Watch the incredible youtube video The Indestructible Book - How We Got our English Bible - 3 hours, 37 minutes - It will make you weep!](#)

## STEVEN COLE'S LIST OF RECOMMENDED BIOGRAPHIES

[Pastor Steven Cole's list of Christian Biographies and short comments](#) (NOTE: ALL of the books below can be borrowed from [archive.org](#).)

[The new international dictionary of the Christian church](#) by Douglas, J. D. - Short biographical articles on thousands of people and movements in church history.

[Dictionary of Christianity in America](#) Daniel Reid, et al - Short articles on key people and movements in American church history.

[Great leaders of the Christian church](#) by John Woodbridge. Short biographies of the leaders of Christianity from Peter to Francis Schaeffer.

[Walking with the giants : a minister's guide to good reading and great preaching](#) by Warren Wiersbe - Outstanding! Numerous short biographies of great preachers you should know. Part 2 deals with "Classic books on the ministry." Every pastor and church leader should read this and the next one.

[Listening to the giants : a guide to good reading and great preaching](#) by Warren Wiersbe - Similar to the book above, plus a sample sermon from each preacher. The chapter, "[A Basic Library](#) (check it out)," is worth the price of the book.

[The company of the preachers : a history of biblical preaching from the Old Testament to the modern era](#) by David Larsen. A lengthy history of preaching, consisting of short biographies of preachers from the Old Testament to the modern era. Flawed by the author's aversion to Reformed truth and at times sounding like a doctoral thesis, but a useful survey with many interesting details of some of the characters God has used to preach His Word.

[The Man Who Shook the World](#) (new title, The Apostle), by John Pollock. A readable biography of Paul. (new title - [Paul : the apostle](#)) by John Pollock. A readable biography of Paul.

[Paul, apostle of the heart set free](#) by F. F. Bruce. A more scholarly treatment of Paul.

[The Legacy of Sovereign Joy](#) by John Piper. Subtitled "God's Triumphant Grace in the Lives of Augustine, Luther, & Calvin." Excellent reading!

[Here I stand : a life of Martin Luther](#) by Roland Bainton. Hard to follow the details at points, but a classic biography of the great reformer.

[Martin-- God's court jester : Luther in retrospect](#) Many interesting facts as he tells Luther's story and theology.

[Martin Luther : a guided tour of his life and thought](#) by Stephen Nichols. A recent, helpful introduction to Luther.

[John Calvin](#) [Lion Publishing], by T. H. L. Parker. The best treatment of Calvin by a leading 20<sup>th</sup> century Calvin scholar. His [Calvin's Preaching](#) [Westminster/John Knox Press] is an excellent study of Calvin's emphasis on the Word. Highly recommended!

[God's outlaw](#) by Brian Edwards. The story of William Tyndale, who was persecuted for putting the Bible into English.

[The Hidden Smile of God](#) by John Piper. Subtitled, "The Fruit of Affliction in the Lives of John Bunyan, William Cowper, and David Brainerd." **Really good!**

[The autobiography of Richard Baxter](#)

[Out of the depths : the autobiography of a man who was converted from slave trader to noted minister, writer and author of the beloved hymn Amazing grace](#) by John Newton. The fascinating autobiography of the slave trader turned pastor, author of the beloved hymn, "Amazing Grace."

[The Roots of Endurance](#) by John Piper. Subtitled, "Invincible Perseverance in the Lives of John Newton, Charles Simeon, and William Wilberforce." **Really good!**

[John Wesley](#) By: Pollock, John Charles

[George Whitefield and the great awakening](#) by John Pollock. Whitefield was an interesting man, zealous for souls, and greatly used by God.

[Jonathan Edwards : a guided tour of his life and thought](#) by Stephen Nichols. A recent, helpful introduction to Edwards and his theology.

[Marriage to a difficult man : the "uncommon union" of Jonathan and Sarah Edwards](#) by Elisabeth Dodds. Their story from his wife's perspective. He was difficult because he was a genius, not because he was hard to get along with. They had a wonderful marriage.

[Cotton Mather](#) by Barrett Wendell. An American Colonial Puritan preacher. You will be amazed at his education and intellectual output.

[Memoir and remains of the Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne](#) A. A. Bonar. Devotional Scottish preacher who died at 29, but has had lasting impact on many.

[The autobiography of Charles H. Spurgeon](#) Volume: v.1

[C. H. Spurgeon autobiography](#) Volume: 2

[The autobiography of Charles H. Spurgeon](#) Volume: v.3

[The autobiography of Charles H. Spurgeon](#) Volume: v.4

Long, but well worth reading. A remarkable man!

[Spurgeon: heir of the Puritans](#) by Ernest Bacon. Short, but good treatment.

[A passion for souls : the life of D.L. Moody](#) Lyle Dorsett. The author (as well as Moody) is critical of the doctrines of grace, but it is still an interesting read on a man God used to reach thousands.

[Moody](#) by John Pollock. I like Pollock as a biographer.

[George Muller Of Bristol](#) A. T. Pierson. Written in early 20<sup>th</sup> century, biography of the godly man of prayer who founded orphanages in England. This book changed my life when I first read it in 1970.

[George Muller delighted in God](#) by Roger Steer. Best recent biography of Muller. **Great!**

[Answers to Prayer](#) (audio) by George Muller. Excerpts from his diary, showing dramatic answers to prayer.

[A man of the word : life of G. Campbell Morgan](#) by Jill Morgan. The life of her father, G. Campbell Morgan, well known preacher and author.

[H.A. Ironside, ordained of the Lord](#) by E. Schuyler English. The life of H. A. Ironside, another great Bible expositor.

[J. Gresham Machen : a biographical memoir](#) Ned Stonehouse. Machen stood firm against liberalism in the Presbyterian Church. He founded Westminster Seminary when Princeton went liberal.

[The sacred anointing : the preaching of Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#) by Tony Sargent. A good treatment of Lloyd-Jones' preaching.

[Daws : the story of Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators](#) by Betty Lee Skinner. The story of Dawson Trotman, founder of the Navigators.

[That man Barnhouse](#) by Margaret Barnhouse. The life of Donald Grey Barnhouse, an influential Presbyterian pastor, radio speaker, and author. He was quite a character!

[The tapestry : the life and times of Francis and Edith Schaeffer](#) by Edith Schaeffer. The interesting life of Francis and Edith Schaeffer, founders of L'Abri in Switzerland. He was a Christian philosopher and writer. She wrote this before his death from cancer in 1984.

[Letters of Francis A. Schaeffer : spiritual reality in the personal Christian life](#) ed. by Lane Dennis. Reading these letters gives you insight into the pastoral heart of this Christian thinker.

[A Severe Mercy](#) by Sheldon Vanauken. Moving love story of a couple who met Christ through C. S. Lewis. You will need Kleenex nearby!

[The Billy Graham story : the authorized biography](#) (2003) Graham is an influential and interesting man, who has done much good and some bad.

[J.I. Packer](#) by Alister McGrath. The life of the popular theologian, author of [Knowing God](#).

[Joni Eareckson Tada : her story](#) by Joni Eareckson Tada. A powerful story of God's grace triumphing over tragedy.

**Steven Cole's recommendations on Missions Biographies/Histories: (ALL of the books below can be borrowed from [archive.org](http://archive.org).)**

[From Jerusalem to Irian Jaya : a biographical history of Christian missions](#) by Ruth Tucker. A history of missions, giving short biographies of many missionary heroes. **This is a powerful, life-changing book. Read it!**

[Guardians of the great commission : the story of women in modern missions](#) by Ruth Tucker. A biographical history of women in missions. It is similar to the above, except that the author is grinding an axe for feminism, which I strongly disagree with. But the stories are still inspiring and informative.

[William Carey : shoemaker and missionary](#) by Mary Drewery. The "Father of Modern Missions." Quite a story. His reluctant missionary wife went insane. He translated the Bible into over 35 languages!

[To the Golden Shore](#) by Courtney Anderson. The moving story of Adoniram Judson, pioneer missionary to Burma, who endured incredible trials and setbacks. **Read it!** (ED: I SECOND PASTOR COLE'S EXHORTATION. THE LIFE OF THIS MAN HAS THE POTENTIAL TO CHANGE YOUR LIFE, SO READ IT! SEE MY SHORT BUT FACT PACKED BIO ON [Adoniram Judson](#))

[The life and letters of Henry Martyn](#) by John Sargent. Martyn went to Iran in the early 1800's, and died of tuberculosis in his early 30's.

[David Livingstone : the truth behind the legend](#) by Rob Mackenzie. Livingstone had amazing perseverance in spite of overwhelming difficulties.

[David Livingstone: his life and letters](#) by George Seaver. A thorough treatment, but the author is a theological liberal who did not understand the need for conversion.

[J. Hudson Taylor : a man in Christ](#) by Roger Steer. The most recent and readable treatment of the great pioneer missionary to China. Read it and be changed! (ED: SEE STEER'S [Hudson Taylor : lessons in](#)



[discipleship](#))

[Hudson Taylor and Maria : pioneers in China](#) by John Pollock. Honest treatment of Taylor's life up to Maria's death. Moving!

[John G. Paton, missionary to the New Hebrides : an autobiography](#) An amazing story of commitment and courage. He left Scotland to go to the New Hebrides Islands, where cannibals had killed and eaten missionaries.

[Borden of Yale '09 : "the life that counts"](#) by Mrs. Howard Taylor. Borden gave up his fortune to go to Cairo, where he got sick and died at 25.

[A chance to die : the life and legacy of Amy Carmichael](#) by Elisabeth Elliot. A strong woman missionary and devotional writer who suffered greatly, but took in needy children and built a caring community in India. (ED: I PERSONALLY WAS SO CONVICTED BY THIS SERVANT OF JESUS THAT I WAS NOT EVEN ABLE TO FINISH THE ENTIRE BOOK!)

[The small woman](#) by Alan Burgess. The story of Gladys Aylward, featured in the film '[Inn of the Sixth Happiness \(WATCH THE FULL MOVIE\)](#),' starring Ingrid Bergman. She went to China, lived by faith, and led a group of orphans on a long survival journey during the Japanese invasion. **Quite a story!**

[Fire on the mountains: the story of a miracle - the Church in Ethiopia](#) by R. J. Davis. Story of an amazing revival in Ethiopia during WWII.

Bakht Singh of India [International Students], by Daniel Smith. Hard to find, and my copy is missing! Story of a powerful evangelist and man of God. I heard him speak once at Biola. (ED: THE BOOK BY DANIEL SMITH IS NOT AVAILABLE TO BORROW BUT THE FOLLOWING IS AVAILABLE TO BORROW ALTHOUGH I HAVE NOT READ IT - [Bakht Singh of India : the incredible account of a modern-day apostle](#) By: Koshy, T. E.)

[The flying Scotsman](#) by Sally Magnuson. The story of Eric Liddell, of "Chariots of Fire" fame (ED: [IF YOU HAVE NEVER HEARD THE SOUND TRACK TAKE A LISTEN! POWERFUL!](#)).

[A foreign devil in China : the story of Dr. L. Nelson Bell](#) by John Pollock. The story of Dr. Nelson Bell, father-in-law of Billy Graham, missionary doctor to China.

[Mission to the Headhunters : how God's forgiveness transformed tribal enemies](#) by Frank & Marie Drown. Missionaries to the tribes in Ecuador.

[Through Gates of Splendor](#) by Elisabeth Elliot. The story of the five missionaries to the Aucas who were martyred, including Jim Elliot, the author's husband.

[Shadow of the Almighty](#) by Elisabeth Elliot. The story of her husband Jim, martyred at 28. **This story will challenge you spiritually.**

[The Savage my Kinsman](#) by Elisabeth Elliot. The story of how she and her young daughter lived among the tribe that murdered her husband.

[Uncle Cam : the story of William Cameron Townsend, founder of the Wycliffe Bible](#) by James & Marti Hefley. The story of Cameron Townsend, founder of Wycliffe Bible Translators.

[Days of Glory, Seasons of Night](#) by Marilee Dunker. The story of Bob Pierce, founder of World Vision, told by his daughter. An agonizing story of a man who badly wounded his family, but accomplished much for the cause of missions.

[Bruchko](#) by Bruce Olson. Story of a 19-year-old boy who went to South America and reached a murderous tribe. He is still living there, in his early 60's now (ED: THIS COMMENT WAS WRITTEN 4-26-2016). **Gripping!** Bruchko, which has sold more than 300,000 copies worldwide, has been called "more fantastic and harrowing than anything Hollywood could concoct." Living with the Motilone Indians since 1961, Olson has won the friendship of four presidents of Colombia and has made appearances before the United Nations because of his efforts. Bruchko includes the story of his 1988 kidnapping by communist guerrillas and the nine months of captivity that followed. This revised version of Olson's story will amaze you and remind you that simple faith in Christ can make anything possible. Loren Cunningham Co-founder, Youth With A Mission "[Bruchko is] an all-time missionary classic. Bruce Olson is a modern missionary hero who has modeled for us in our time the reaching of the unreached tribes."

[Peace Child](#) by Don Richardson. Story of how he and his young family reached a headhunting, cannibalistic

tribe in Irian Jaya. (Also in video.) Amazing story!

[Lords of the Earth](#) by Don Richardson. **Another amazing story of missionary courage in reaching a savage tribe in Irian Jaya.** This should be a movie! The turn of events at the end is one of the most amazing stories in missions history!

[And the word came with power : how God met & changed a people forever](#) by Joanne Shetler with Patricia Purvis. How God used one woman to transform the Balangao people of the Philippines.

## Spiritual Journeys of Some Great Christians

See the list of articles from Christian History Magazine, many of which have biographies of well-known Christians over the centuries.

- [Alford, Henry](#) (Henry Alford) ([Henry Alford - In "Biographical Sketches" by A J Hare, 1895](#)) ([Bio](#))
- Gladys Aylward - Borrow [Gladys Aylward The Little Women](#)
- [Athanasius](#) ([Athanasius--Exile](#)) ([Athanasius--Creed](#))
- [Augustine: The Swan is Not Silent](#)  
[Augustine of Hippo : a biography](#) By: [Brown, Peter Robert Lamont](#)
- [Baxter, Richard](#) ([Writings](#)) ("[I preached... as a dying man to dying men](#)")
- [The life of Rev. Richard Baxter](#)  
[Writings](#)  
[Richard Baxter - Christian History Magazine](#)
- [Ruth, a portrait : the story of Ruth Bell Graham](#) By: Cornwell, Patricia Daniels - A well written book that was hard to put down describing the private and somewhat mysterious life and struggles of this fascinating woman, Mrs. Billy Graham.
- [Bliss, Phillip](#) (songwriter companion of D Moody)
- [Bonar, Andrew](#)
- [Bonar, Horatius](#)
- [Bonhoeffer, Dietrich](#) Borrow [Bonhoeffer](#) By: [Eric Metaxas](#) - **It is powerful and extremely well written.** You will not be disappointed! After you have read it you may want to watch the [video documentary of his life](#) or [Bonhoeffer: Agent Of Grace](#) or read his classic [The cost of discipleship](#)
- Jerry Bridges - BORROW [God took me by the hand : a story of God's unusual providence](#) By: [Bridges, Jerry](#)
- [Corrie Ten Boom](#) BORROW [The hiding place](#)  
Watch [the full movie](#) The hiding place  
Borrow [Tramp for the Lord](#) by Corrie Ten Boom, Corrie and Jamie Buckingham
- Reinhard Bonnke - Borrow [Living a life of fire : an autobiography](#)
- [Booth, William](#) -  
Borrow [William Booth](#) By: Bennett, David Malcolm
- [Borden, William](#) -  
Borrow [Borden of Yale '09 : "the life that counts"](#)
- [Brainerd, David: Oh, That I May Never Loiter On My Heavenly Journey!](#)  
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- [Chalmers, James: Missionary to Cannibals \(Chalmers, James\)](#)
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- [Cowper, William \(Bio\)](#)
- [Cowper, William: Insanity and Spiritual Songs in the Soul of a Saint \(by John Piper\) \(Website including links to his online books\)](#)
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- [Elliot, Jim \(alternate site\) \(Youtube\)](#)
- [Edersheim, Alfred \(Writings\)](#)
- [Evans, Christmas](#)
- Flint, Annie Johnson (some of her poetry)
- [Fox's Book of Martyrs](#)
- [Fox, George: Autobiography \(Fox, George - Founder of Quakers\)](#)
- [Andrew Fuller Holy Faith, Worthy Gospel, World Mission](#) - John Piper
- [Goforth, Jonathan \(Goforth, Jonathan\)](#)
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- Keith Green - Borrow [No compromise : the life story of Keith Green](#) By: Green, Melody
- Isobel Kuhn - Borrow [By searching](#) By: Kuhn, Isobel
- [Guthrie, James](#)
- [Handel, George Frederic \(Handel\)](#)
- [Havergal, Frances Ridley](#)
- [Havner, Vance \(Youtube\) \("Jesus Only" - online book\) \(Online audio sermons\) \(Quotes\) \(Biography\)](#)
- [Hodge, Charles](#)
- [Hus, John \(English Bible History\) \(Bio\) \(Hour long video\)](#)
- [Hyde, John \(Praying Hyde by Francis A. McGaw\)](#)
- Judson, Adoniram  
[Judson, Adoniram: How Few There Are Who Die So Hard \(by John Piper\)](#)
- [Judson, Ann \(Judsons in Rangoon\)](#)
- [Knox, John \(Preaching of John Knox in the Power of the Holy Spirit\)](#)
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- C S Lewis - Borrow [Surprised by joy : the shape of my early life](#) Lewis, C. S.
- [Liddell, Eric](#) ([Liddell, Eric](#)) ([video documentary](#))
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- [Livingstone, David](#) ([Bio](#)) ([Bio](#)) ("Dr. Livingstone I presume" - Stanley)
- [Lloyd-Jones, Dr. Martyn](#) ([Spiritual Depression-video](#)) ([False Believer-video](#)) ([Heal Brokenhearted](#))
- [Lloyd-Jones, Martyn](#) - [Need for Revival and Baptism with the Holy Spirit](#) ([Work of the Holy Spirit](#))
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- [Marshall, Peter](#) ([Sermon on youtube - Contrast of Faith](#))
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- [Moody, Dwight L: His Life & Work](#) (550 page book) ([videos](#))
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Borrow [The autobiography of George Müller](#) This autobiography is a real life example of how we can see answers to prayer when we pray with pure motives for the blessing of others.
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- [Owen, John](#)
- [Packer, J I](#)
- [Parker, Joseph](#)
- [Pascal, Blaise](#) ([Pascal, Blaise--Conversion](#) )
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- [Pierson, Arthur T.](#)
- [Pink, Arthur](#) ([critique](#))  
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Borrow [The complete works of Francis A. Schaeffer : a Christian worldview](#)

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- [Simpson, A B](#)
- [Slessor, Mary](#) ([Slessor, Mary](#))
- [Smith, Gypsy](#) (book)
- [Spafford, Horatio](#)
- [Spurgeon, Charles Preaching Through Adversity](#) ([Bio](#)) (Spurgeon's Personal Testimony: must read)
- [Spurgeon, Charles and Susannah](#)
- [Stam, John](#)  
Borrow [John and Betty Stam : missionary martyrs](#) by Vance Christie - Tim Challies writes "Christian martyrs who sparked a great resurgence of missionary fervor."  
Borrow [The triumph of John and Betty Stam](#) by Mrs Howard Taylor
- Lee Strobel - Borrow [The case for Christ : The case for faith Strobel, Lee](#)
- [Studd, C. T.](#) ([Studd, C. T.](#))
- Silvia Tărniceriu Borrow [God knows my size! : Silvia Tărniceriu](#)
- [Taylor, Hudson](#) ([Taylor, Hudson](#)) ([Taylor, Hudson](#))
- Sammy Tippitt - Borrow [No matter what the cost : an autobiography](#) - This one is guaranteed to challenge a tepid walk with Christ! If you dare, follow up by borrowing [Fire in your heart](#)
- [Toplady, Augustus](#) ([Complete Works of Toplady](#)) ([Toplady, Augustus](#))
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Borrow [A passion for God : the spiritual journey of A.W. Tozer](#) By: [Dorsett, Lyle W](#)
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- Harry Truman - Borrow [Truman](#) by David G McCullough - Tim Challies says "This is easily one of the best biographies ever written."
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- [Watts, Isaac](#) ([Watts, Isaac](#)) ([Watts, Isaac](#))
- [Webster, Noah](#) ([Short bio](#)) ([bio](#))
- [Wesley, Charles](#) ([Wesley, Charles](#))
- [Wesley, John](#)
- [Wesley, John--Impact on America](#)
- [Wesley, John--Revival](#)
- [Wesley, Susanna](#) ([Wesley, Susanna](#))
- [Whitefield, George](#) ([Whitefield, George](#)) ([Whitefield, George](#))
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- Richard Wurmbrand - Borrow [Tortured for Christ](#) by Wurmbrand, Richard
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[Hudson Taylor's spiritual secret](#) ([Plus several other books on his life](#)) ([Audio version](#))

[It is not death to die : a new biography of Hudson Taylor](#)

[Hudson Taylor - Into the Heart of the Dragon](#) - 58 minute video

[William Tyndale - God's outlaw \(book\)](#) (Full movie [God's Outlaw](#))

[Just what the doctor ordered : soul winning stories](#)

[John Wycliffe : morning star of the Reformation \(book\)](#) (Full movie of John Wycliffe: [The Morningstar](#))

[Mover of men and mountains : the autobiography of R. G. LeTourneau](#)

[Isaac Newton : inventor, scientist, and teacher](#)

[Christian men of science](#) by George Mulfinger

[George Whitefield](#) By: Arnold Arthur Dallimore

## SERMON SERIES FROM HARBOR REFORMED BAPTIST CHURCH

All of the following are audio only.

- [Mr. Valiant for Truth: The Life of C. H. Spurgeon](#) Mark Raines
- [Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer #1](#) Mark Chanski |
- [Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer #2](#) Mark Chanski
- [Life of Dietrich Bonhoeffer #3](#) Mark Chanski
- [Life of Ulrich Zwingli](#) Seth Getz
- [Life of Susannah Spurgeon](#) Mark Raines
- [The Life of William Tyndale](#) Mark Raines
- [Life of Adoniram Judson](#) Mark Raines
- [The Life of Richard Cameron](#) Mark Chanski
- [The Life of William Carey #1](#) Mark Raines
- [The Life of William Carey #2](#) Mark Raines
- [Perspectives on the Life of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#) Rev. Geoff Thomas
- [The Life of Hudson Taylor](#) Mark Raines
- [Mitsuo Fuchida and Jacob DeShazer](#) Mark Chanski
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- [Biography of J. Gresham Machen](#) Thomas Sullivan
- [Biography of Henry Martyn, Part 1](#) Mark Chanski
- [Biography of Henry Martyn, Part 2](#) Mark Chanski
- [Overview of the Puritans](#) Thomas Sullivan
- [The Life of Robert L. Dabney](#) Thomas Sullivan
- [The Second Great Awakening and Asahel Nettleton](#) Thomas Sullivan
- [The Philosophy and Thought of C. S. Lewis](#) Mark Chanski
- [The Life of A. W. Pink](#) Thomas Sullivan

- [The Life of Adoniram Judson](#) Thomas Sullivan

## MISCELLANEOUS BIOGRAPHIES AND RELATED WORKS

- Borrow [50 people every Christian should know : learning from spiritual giants of the faith](#) by Warren Wiersbe
- Borrow [50 women every Christian should know : learning from heroines of the faith](#) by DeRusha, Michelle
- Borrow [They found the secret : twenty transformed lives that reveal a touch of eternity](#) by : Edman, V. Raymond
- Borrow [Eternity in their hearts](#) By: Don Richardson - This book is a fascinating account of how God placed eternity in the hearts of people groups that otherwise were lost spiritually.
- Borrow [The greatest century of missions](#) by Peter Hammond
- [27 Servants of Sovereign Joy Faithful, Flawed, and Fruitful](#) - John Piper - 1025 pages - D A Carson writes "These studies are gems, often looking at well-known figures in a fresh light. Now we have all twenty-seven of these studies brought together in one fat volume. If you want to be stirred and challenged by the Christ who stirred and challenged these twenty-seven servants of sovereign joy, look no further.
- [Biographies from Dr John Piper at Desiring God](#) These synopses of the lives of some of the greatest saints of old emphasize what made them the men of God that history has proven them to be. My comments - **The link has both audio and transcript but I highly recommend listening to the audio. These are outstanding looks into what made these great saints tick. You will be challenged and stimulate by the lives of these saints!**  
[Hudson Taylor](#),  
[George Herbert](#),  
[J C Ryle](#),  
[Robert Murray McCheyne](#),  
[C S Lewis](#),  
[George Whitefield](#),  
[Bill Piper \(John's father\)](#),  
[Andrew Fuller](#),  
[William Tyndale](#),  
[Athanasius](#),  
[George Muller](#),  
[Adoniram Judson](#),  
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[John G Paton](#),  
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[Martin Luther](#),  
[C H Spurgeon](#),  
[John Owen](#),  
[J Gresham Machen](#),  
[William Cowper](#),  
[Martyn Lloyd-Jones](#),  
[David Brainerd](#),  
[Charles Simeon](#) (one of my favorites),  
[Jonathan Edwards](#).
- [Preacher's and Evangelists - Christian History](#)
- Borrow [Perspectives on the world Christian movement : a reader](#) - Took this course in mid 1980's - changed my view of missions for the next 30+ years!
- Borrow [I dared to call him Father](#) By: Sheikh, Bilquis, Schneider, Dick
- Borrow [Hearts of fire](#) This compilation features eight contemporary Christian women in the underground church who have experienced persecution for the sake of Christ.
- Borrow [More than conquerors](#) Woodbridge, John D - Borrow - Short summaries of >60 Christians from all walks of life. Includes color pictures - check it out.
- [Theologians - Christian History](#)

- [Missionaries - Christian History](#)
- [Christians in Britain - Christian History](#)
- [Fox's Book of Martyrs](#)- "After the Bible itself, no book so profoundly influenced early Protestant sentiment as the Book of Martyrs. Even in our time it is still a living force. It is more than a record of persecution. It is an arsenal of controversy, a storehouse of romance, as well as a source of edification." - James Miller Dodds, English Prose.
- Google Search for Christian Biographies (Hint: put the name in quotes e.g., "Jonathan Edwards").
- [Wikipedia](#) has generally accurate biographies, but they are more historical and less Biblical.

## Christian History Magazine

Gives portions of each article but not the full article.

- [The African Apostles - Christian History](#)
- [Anabaptists - Christian History](#)
- [Thomas Aquinas - Christian History](#)
- [The Gospel According to J.S. Bach - Christian History](#)
- [Richard Baxter and the English Puritans- Christian History](#)
- [Dietrich Bonhoeffer- Theologian in Nazi Germany - Christian History](#)
- [William and Catherine Booth - Christian History](#)
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- [John Newton- Christian History](#)
- [The Apostle Paul and His Times - Christian History](#)
- [Casper Schwenckfeld: Forgotten Reformer - Christian History](#)
- [Charles H. Spurgeon - Christian History](#)
- [Hudson Taylor & Missions to China - Christian History](#)
- [The Waldensians- Christian History](#)
- [The Wesleys-- Christian History](#)
- [The Wesleys: Founders of Methodism](#)
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- [William Wilberforce and the Abolition of the Slave Trade- Christian History](#)
- [Zinzendorf and the Moravians - Christian History \(A Prayer Meeting that Lasted 100 Years\)](#)
- [Zwingli - Father of Swiss Reformation - Christian History](#)

## Brief Biographical Sketches of



## Bible Translators & Reformers

- [John Wycliffe](#)
- [William Tyndale](#)
- [Miles Coverdale](#)
- [Thomas Cranmer](#)
- [Venerable Bede](#)
- [John Huss](#)
- [Hugh Latimer](#)
- [Nicholas Ridley](#)
- [John Rogers](#)
- [Laurence Saunders](#)
- [A Brief Summary of the History of the Reformation](#)
- [Martin Luther](#)
- [The Burning of the Bibles](#)
- [Cardinal Wolsey](#)