

Take up and Read: Ten (or more) Recommended Authors for Women

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by Lori Bridges

In a world where we fill our spare minutes with tidbits of info instantly accessed on our phones, it's far too easy to neglect reading longer books. In fact, because some have convinced themselves they don't have time to take on an entire book, they settle for short summaries, quotes, or whatever internet candy clickbait that's trending today.

Still, there are others who love to read and try to make reading a priority. Either way, most of us read something sometimes, and because God calls us to love him with all our mind, we should consider what we are reading when we have and make time to read.

Indeed, because disciples of Jesus are called to think about those things that are good, true, noble and beautiful, we might ask: How do I discern and decide what to read with the time I have?

This is a hard question for me to answer because I can list a million books that I want everyone to read so I can sit and discuss them over coffee. But for this article I am going to focus on the books that speak directly to a woman's walk with God. Even more specifically, as we have recently considered in the Sermon on the Mount, I want to highlight trusted authors who faithfully point us to Christ from the Bible.

I will not say this list is exhaustive, but I hope that the ten women authors listed below is a good start.

Bible Studies

Nancy Guthrie

[Nancy Guthrie's books](#) on the Bible are generally a trusted approach to Scripture (although our church would differ with her view of infant baptism). Otherwise, her study guides and diligence to Scripture will guide you well as you read the Bible. Also, I would commend Nancy Guthrie's books on grief; let them comfort you and help you comfort those around you.

Jen Wilkin

Like Nancy Guthrie, [Jen Wilkin](#) is another faithful interpreter of Scripture. Let her lead you to a deeper worship of who God is.

Your Sisters at OBC

My final suggestion for Bible study would be the faithful ones in your church. At our church, God has raised faithful women who study God's word and share what they have learned. There are Bible studies on Monday nights, Wednesday mornings, and on Tuesday nights, those who are not teaching children or youth are invited to attend an adult Bible study filled with men and women hungry to learn more of the Bible.

In general, the brothers and sisters at your church are a gift to you. Sit under them and learn more of the Bible.

Christian Living

Perhaps the most popular category for women is what might be called the "Christian Living category." For good or bad, this is where most female Christian authors can be found. In this genre there are treasures and dangers. This calls for great discernment.

We need to read these books with open eyes, know the author's theology and character as far as we are able, and follow only what is true. As Colossians 2:8 puts it, "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ."

It is easy to fall in love with observations made by others, but we must seek to measure their words with scripture. This is not easy and any one of us can be easily deceived. Just listen to the testimony of this [pastor](#)—you might know him!

Indeed, all truth is God's truth, and we find some truths mixed among pages of falsehood, so being extra careful about whose words we emulate is immensely important.

I am not claiming to have read every good author, and I cannot include all those I love in this short list, but here are a few I would suggest:

Elisabeth Elliot

Elisabeth Elliot's books have stood the test of time. Her life and wisdom gleaned from her experiences have led me and many others to embrace her practical theology in life's ups and downs. Get to know her first with [Through Gates of Splendor](#).

Gloria Furman (and Kathleen Nielson)

Gloria Furman's advice to women as pastor's wives all the way to motherhood is rare and beautifully edifying. Gloria also partners with Kathleen Nielson in [Joyfully Spreading the Word](#) which I hope to read very soon. Gloria's blog is also a refreshing place when you don't have time to embrace a full book. My favorite book of Gloria's is *Missional Motherhood*.

Nancy Leigh Wolgemuth (formerly DeMoss)

Nancy Leigh DeMoss's powerful way of speaking God's truth in a way that pierces the soul has been extremely valuable to women in the church. Women have been convicted and pressed on toward love and good deeds from her writing for many years. Read [Lies Women Believe](#), as you seek to grow in discernment.

Christine Hoover

Christine Hoover's [*A Beautiful Messy Friendship*](#), is a book I could hand out any time a friendship is in trouble. I wish I had read it years ago, so much heartache I could have possibly been spared. Christine seeks to point us to beauty in truth in every book. If you are like me and really hate laundry, her By Faith podcast is a way to get through those clothing mountains, and it is full of encouragement and wonderful testimonies.

Hannah Anderson

If you love how creation points us to God's truths you will love Hannah Anderson's books. She is great at observing the world around her, gleaning from it's rich beauty, and then using beautiful words to build up the reader and point to walking more closely with the Lord. Her new book, [*All That's Good: Recovering the Lost Art of Discernment*](#), is on the top of my read next stack, and I expect it to be an enlightening guide as to what and who to read and follow.

Christian Thinkers

Just as we have a Christian Living genre, I wish we could invent a "Christian Thinking" category. If that day ever comes, I would highlight these three ladies and their many thoughtful books:

Rosaria Butterfield

Rosaria Butterfield is a must read for our day and age. If you want to engage in our modern culture (which as Christian women I seriously hope you do), Rosaria's books are a must. Start with her story of how she came to know the Lord in [*The Secret Thoughts of an Unlikely Convert*](#). Then read all her books and articles, and listen to her speak. Your mind will grow by leaps and bounds.

Read [*Nancy Pearcey*](#) as you are engaged with thinking through your faith and our culture. Be prepared to focus like you did as a student studying for an exam, and then reap the benefits of what you have read as you love the Lord with all your mind even more. I can't pick one of her books out as a favorite, read them all. Start with *Total Truth*, then *Saving Leonardo* (even if you think you don't like art), and then make sure you read *Love Thy Body* as soon as possible. Few books are more important for our current world than this last one!

Karen Swallow Prior

Finally, for your mind, read [*Karen Swallow Prior's On Reading Well*](#). Karen's knowledge of fine literature and the Christian mind is a gift to those of us non-English majors. Anyone that tells me I should read more classics in order to live well now makes me want to read all their books.

Keep the Conversation Going

There are so many more unbelievably talented and wise women that we can read and learn from, and this list is short, but I hope it gives you a good start. Read these women and learn from them but also let them be guides to other wise authors. Look at who endorses their books, see who they quote and write about then seek them out. Ask women in the church their favorite books and authors, trust me it leads to fascinating conversation and connection.

Connect with friends over the best form of social media out there, Goodreads, and see what your friends are reading. Join a book club, preferably at church, and yes, that is a shameless plug!

All in all, nothing replaces reading the Bible, but few practices in your Christian life will grow you in grace like reading good books and learning to talk to other Christians (or non-Christians) about them. As you read God's word and these other books, ask Him to lead you into wisdom so that your delight in Him would multiply and your passion to study His word would grow.

Because God has made us to be talking, thinking, reading creatures—God did write His Law for us to read—we cannot follow Him without reading and reading well. To this end, I hope this list serves you. And of course, I am happy to talk books any other time too. Just pull me aside in the hall, or join us at our next women's book club.