

## Recommended Reading:

The following are a few books we would recommend reading on topics that interest us. Some are our favorites; others are the ones we love to hate and others just something good that we read recently. We did not sweat over the descriptions but wanted to give you a little idea what the book is about—so feel free to send us your two-sentence summary of the book. Also we would love your ideas for other books we should read/include. Have fun reading.

### **Christian Perspective on Stuff (related to poverty and development):**

- 1) **Transforming Mission: David Bosch** (Reformed South-African)--tracks the concept of mission through the OT, Christ, Paul, early church, medieval church, Reformation and to the Present. Shows how the concept has changed and in the end calls for understanding of mission which is integral/broad/holistic. VERY good book, lots of exciting insights but very long and a little tough to get through. Many consider it to be the classic modern text on missions.
- 2) **The Intrusive Gospel: C. Norman Kraus** (NA Mennonite)--also calls for a sense of renewal of what we consider missions and development work--that both need to be working toward the same thing--the renewal of individual's and society's heart and mind (he does better arguing for the first than second). The book sprang from a series of lectures he gave to MCC so he is mostly talking to Christian development workers. Lots of good insights.
- 3) **Until Justice and Peace Embrace: Nicholas Wolterstorff** (NA Reformed, former Calvin Philosophy professor)--He tries to answer what is a Christian's role in society. Shows how the answer to those questions has changed over time. He then focuses on the concept of Shalom and applies it to several troublesome social problems--global poverty and inequity, nationalism and racism, urbanization and urban planning and finally Christian scholarship. I really liked it.
- 4) **Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger** (1997 edition): **Ron Sider** (NA Evangelical)--if you are going to read one book on the topic of poverty and inequality this is it. Explores 1) the need in our world 2) what the Bible says is our responsibility and 3) how we as Christians can and should make a difference.
- 5) **Godly Materialism: John Schneider** (NA Reformed--Calvin professor)--if you want a counterbalance to Sider. Argues, sometimes successfully, that Christians need not feel guilty for enjoying earthly bounty. I feel he makes some good points, brings some balance to the argument but in the end pushes the arguments too far, fails to deal sufficiently with the world's need and our responsibility.
- 6) **Neither Poverty nor Riches: Craig L Blomberg** (NA--?)--takes a book-by-book approach to looking at what the Bible has to say about poverty and wealth. Probably the most balanced of these three books but still challenging. I think reading the three as a trio would be quite enlightening.
- 7) **Freedom of Simplicity: Richard Foster**—if you haven't read it, read it. Foster ably plots out the tensions in simplicity and the Christian life in general, and shows how simplicity while not the only Christian virtue, is central to the Christian life.
- 8) **Anything by Anne Lamott** (especially *Traveling Mercies*)

9) **Poems and essays by Wendell Berry.**

**Other interesting books on Poverty/development/Globalization**

- 1) **When Corporations Rule the World: David Korten**--probably the best-known critique of globalization. Classic and easy to read. I like it because at least he tries to go beyond critiquing and proposes solutions, even if they are a little utopian. My second choice would be: *The Case Against the Global Economy* (Editors: Mander and Goldsmith), which is a selection of readings by top globalization critics.
- 2) **The Lexus and the Olive Tree: Thomas Friedman** (NY Times editorialist)--probably the best-known cheerleader of globalization (though he would not approve of that title). Full of lots of interesting analogies (maybe a few too many), very readable analysis of what is going on in the world.
- 3) **Globalization and its Discontents: Joseph Stiglitz** (2001 Nobel Prize winner in Economics, Clinton Advisor and World Bank VP)--he critiques no so much globalization as the IMF's management of the process. Interesting, readable and fun to see critiques from someone who is VERY knowledgeable and close to the action, though at times it seems more personal than professional.
- 4) **The Mystery of Capital: Hernando de Soto** (Peruvian, economist) De Soto argues that individuals and countries are poor because they have not created the systems to free up capital to use to start businesses, etc... The US and Europe developed mortgages, stocks, bonds, etc.... which allowed Kism to take off. Very interesting argument. I am reading this right now.
- 5) **Economic Development: Michael Todaro** (most popular development textbook). It is an economic textbook but non-economists can ignore the formulas and learn a ton. He starts with theories and then looks at every major national and international development issue—inequality, environment, population, educations, trade, debt.... And 1) outlines the problem 2) pulls apart the issues involved and 3) suggests policy solutions.

**How to change the world**

- 1) **The Better World Handbook: Ellis Jones et al.**--choked full of ideas on how to reduce, reuse, recycle, simplify, etc... and hopefully create a happier and healthier global society. Lots of really good ideas.
- 2) **Rethinking Globalization: Bigelow and Peterson**--written by two high school teachers, this books gives hundreds of ideas/exercises/games... on how to teach and explore the topic of globalization. REALLY good.

**Community Development**

- 1) **Two Ears of Corn: Roland Bunch**—a classic text on how to do community development. Practical, easy to read and a good introduction to anyone interested in doing community development.
- 2) **Training for Transformation: Anne Hope and Sally Timmel**—a series of 4 volumes which were written based on years of training experience in Africa. All about empowerment, written to train trainers, engaging and challenging.

- 3) **Getting to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: David Korten**—another classic text in which Korten tries to tie community development into making a better world. Connecting the local and the global. Lots of ideas on what NGOs and we as individuals need to do differently and better.