



Pastor's Page

A Turn up for the Books

It's not very often that you're asked a question that you've never been asked before but it happened to me yesterday. This was it; "Are the people at your church readers?" Well I stumbled over some answer admitting that I wasn't quite sure. The same person (who works in a bookshop) then told me that only 10% of Christians in this country have ever read a Christian book. (I think that's what she said!) All of this got me thinking about the important role that Christian literature has played in my own life and then I began reminiscing on some of the books I've read.....(allow me to indulge myself)

It all began at about age 18 with JB Philips 'Ring of Truth'. This was my first and I learnt so much from it. As you probably know I never used to be a reader, in fact I've still only read one novel ("The Pearl" -I was 16 years old and had to read it for my CSE English exam – sorry, I think I read 'The Pancake Man' too!) To me reading always felt like a chore, it seemed to take me ages to read a page let alone a whole book. In fact it once took me 10 years to read a book (really) "*The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich*" The war only lasted 5 years! So 'The Ring of Truth' (which preceded this) was a big breakthrough. With short chapters I found that I wasn't overwhelmed by it and God used it to speak His truth into my life.

Then one summer when I was about 20 years old I picked up a book late one night in the lounge of our holiday chalet. I read these words; "*Isolated by itself, what is a minute? Merely a measurement of time. There are 60 in a hour, 1,440 in a day. At seventeen I had already ticked off more than 9,000,000 of them in my life. Yet in some cosmic plan, this single minute was isolated. Into these particular sixty seconds was compressed more significance than all the millions of minutes marking my life prior to this instant. So many actions, sensations, thoughts and feelings were crowded into that fragment of time. I recall so clearly the details of those few dozen seconds – seconds destined to change my life forever, and there was no warning or premonition. What happened on July 30 1967 was the beginning of an incredible adventure.....*" I was hooked. This was just a part of the preface to a book simply called 'Joni'. I'd never heard of this girl or her story and if I had been judging the book by its cover I wouldn't have picked it up! But as I began to read about this 17 year olds' diving accident in Chesapeake Bay which left her permanently paralysed, I found that I couldn't put the book down. Probably more than any other this publication had a profound impact on me and my Christian life. I thank the Lord for this woman and her story and all the incredible things that I learned from it. (If you've never read this book I highly recommend it to you - I will even lend it to you - But beware it might change your life!)

But what of C.S. Lewis, P.T. Forsyth, John Stott, Philip Yancey, J.I. Packer, Rick Warren, Martin Lloyd Jones, John Ortberg, Josh McDowell, David Watson, Michael Green, Adrian Plass, R.T. Kendall...??Well these are just a few of the authors who have blessed and challenged me over the years. What about you? When did you last read a good Christian book? Why not put one on your Christmas list this year? (It'll be an investment!)

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