

EFCA WEST'S "ALL PEOPLE" RECOMMENDED READING LIST

[Updated 07-22-20]

INTRODUCTION

Inclusion of a book on this list does not mean that EFCA West or EFCA agrees with the work's statements, conclusions, recommendations or content. It just means that the staff reader believes the work was useful for the purposes of learning about various perspectives on the topic, broadening understanding, viewing issues from others' perspectives, etc., and was worth reading. We humbly offer this reading list to broaden understanding and strengthen Christian conviction regarding what it means to make disciples among "all nations" to "love your neighbor as yourself" and to carry out EFCA's mission to "multiply transformational churches among all people."

The reading list is divided into sections addressing the following topics:

- Understanding other cultures and multi-cultural ministries
- Racial Issues
- Gender-related issues
- Victims of abuse
- Disabled persons

UNDERSTANDING OTHER CULTURES AND MULTI-CULTURAL MINISTRIES

Christians in the Age of Outrage: How to Bring Our Best When the World Is at Its Worst and *Christians at Our Best: A 6-week Guide to Living in the Age of Outrage*, by Ed Stetzer (2018).

In Ed Stetzer's unique style, this book helps the reader understand how we came to this point of binary thinking and outrage toward the other and the uniquely Christian concepts to help Christ-followers avoid falling into these traps themselves. The guide is a workbook suitable for Bible study groups. (Osborne)

Eastern Voices: Insight, Perspective, and Vision from Kingdom Leaders in Asia in Their Own Words, compiled by Asian Access (2017).

This is a book to help one understand the mind of the western world from an Asian cultural worldview. (Rivero)

Ethnic Blends: Mixing Diversity into Your Local Church, by Mark DeYmaz (2010).

This is an excellent introductory book about understanding the people that are attending your church. (Rivero)

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Multiasian Church: A Future for Asian Americans in a Multiethnic World, by D.J. Chuang (2016).

Are multi-Asian churches different than multi-ethnic churches? DJ Chuang brings a fresh perspective of the future of the multi-Asian church. Chuang takes the reader on a journey into the multi-Asian church with his 20 years of research, observations and professional experience. This is a foundational guide and a must-read for leaders serving in an Asian American context. (Mayeda)

Multicultural Ministry Handbook, by David Anderson (2010).

This is a good introductory book about planning to be a more of a multicultural church. (Rivero)

Preaching with Cultural Intelligence, by Matthew D. Kim (2017).

This is an excellent resource for pastors/preachers seeking to teach multicultural issues to their congregations. (Rivero)

Unclean: Meditations on Purity, Hospitality and Mortality, by Richard Beck (2011).

If you are not at peace with your own inner being and do not want to be challenged on your own faith and mortality, do not read this book! The author focuses on the psychology of disgust – why certain things bring in us certain responses. (Rivero)

RACIAL AND POVERTY ISSUES

Bridging the Diversity Gap: Leading toward God's Multi-ethnic Kingdom, by Alvin Sanders (2013).

Alvin Sanders served as the executive director of reconciliation for the EFCA. The book calls us to transcendence rather than tolerance and gives guidance on living out the vision of God's kingdom gathering together every tribe and nation. (Osborne)

Disunity in Christ: Uncovering the Hidden Forces that Keep Us Apart, by Christena Cleveland (2013).

The author approaches the often-unseen forces and social dynamics that lead to the conflicts, divisions and us-them dynamics so often seen in our churches as well as in general society. She skillfully blends her social psychology training and research with her Christian faith to help us see what we are not seeing in our personal and social interactions that lead to disunity. (Osborne)

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Do All Lives Matter? The Issues We Can No Longer Ignore and the Solutions We All Long For, by Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins (2017).

John Perkins is cofounder of the Christian Development Association and president emeritus of the John and Vera Mae Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation, Justice, and Christian Community Development. He was a trailblazer in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and beyond. He was a featured and inspirational presenter at EFCA's 2018 Theology Conference on The Gospel, Compassion and Justice and the EFCA. This short book (90 pages) addresses the question, "do all lives matter" (yes, they do) and challenges with the thoughts that unless black lives matter, all lives don't matter. (Osborne)

Dream with Me: Race, Love and the Struggle We Must Win, by John M. Perkins (2017).

John Perkins is cofounder of the Christian Development Association and president emeritus of the John and Vera Mae Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation, Justice, and Christian Community Development. He was a trailblazer in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and beyond. He was a featured and inspirational presenter at EFCA's 2018 Theology Conference on The Gospel, Compassion and Justice and the EFCA. (Osborne)

EFCA 2018 Theology Conference Podcasts – The Gospel, Compassion and Justice and the EFCA

These presentations from EFCA's 2018 Theology Conference are available on the EFCA Website at the following link. These are well worth your time to hear – whether as a review or for the first time. They are available at the following link:

<https://www.efca.org/podcasts/efca-theology-podcast?page=6>

Just Mercy: A Story of Justice and Redemption, by Bryan Stevenson (2015).

This book was recently turned into a popular and moving motion picture. It chronicles the wrongful conviction of an African American man, Walter McMillian, sentenced to death for a notorious murder he did not commit, the challenges of overturning that conviction, and the story of mercy and justice in his life. Although I cannot personally vouch for the 100% accuracy of everything in the book, it is a true story. It illustrates and personalizes the systemic issues of injustice in the criminal justice system in the United States that are uncomfortable for me (formerly a deputy sheriff in Los Angeles County) but real nonetheless. (Osborne)

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Making Neighborhoods Whole: A Handbook for Christian Community Development, by Wayne Gordon and John M. Perkins (2013).

John Perkins is cofounder of the Christian Development Association and president emeritus of the John and Vera Mae Perkins Foundation for Reconciliation, Justice, and Christian Community Development. He was a trailblazer in the civil rights movement of the 1960s and beyond. He was a featured and inspirational presenter at EFCA's 2018 Theology Conference on The Gospel, Compassion and Justice and the EFCA. This book is more of a "how to" book related to Christian Community Development. Not every idea will work in every ministry context, but it's a good overview of useful strategies. (Osborne)

Mandarinfish: The Splendor of the Diverse Church, by Ron King (2017).

Do a web search on "mandarinfish" and you'll see the picture and understand the unusual name of this book. Written by an EFCA pastor in Fremont, California, the book is part ecclesiology, part personal journal and story, and part "how to" for reconciliation and ministry in an "among all people" local church. (Osborne)

Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible, by E. Randolph Richards and Brandon J. O'Brien (2012).

The book helps the "western" reader understand nuances of scripture that may otherwise be lost on one that doesn't read them through the "eastern" eyes of those that wrote them. Dealing with cultural paradigms such as individualism/collectivism, honor/shame, and right/wrong, the book is an eye-opener to those that have not been instructed in these cultural differences and how they impact our understanding and application of scripture. It's also a good primer on basic cultural differences. (Osborne)

Oneness Embraced: Reconciliation, the Kingdom, and How We Are Stronger Together, by Tony Evans (2011).

In this book, well-known pastor and author Tony Evans writes on three main themes: 1) A Biblical Look at Oneness; 2) A Historical View of the Black Church; and 3) A Kingdom Vision for Societal Impact. This is a compact blending of theology, history and vision. A favorite compelling line captures the heart of the matter: "We are not our brother's keeper, but we are our brother's brother." (Osborne)

Rediscipling the White Church: From Cheap Diversity to True Solidarity, by David W. Swanson (2020).

Unfortunately, the author and forward writer did not refrain from periodically bashing politically conservative people and politicians. This is a shame because, if one can wade through those intentional offenses, there are some very thoughtful suggestions for furthering the "oneness" in Christ that Christians should be pursuing with their brothers and sisters from "among all people." Wade through the muck of the political stuff to get some nuggets that can make the muck of the journey worthwhile. (Osborne)

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Removing the Stain of Racism from the Southern Baptist Convention, edited by Jarvis J. Williams and Kevin M. Jones (2017).

The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) was on the wrong side of the slavery issue from its inception. Don't smirk – so were many other Christian churches. Even our own EFCA has not overcome its own roots as Swedish, Dutch and Norwegian ethnic congregations. This book has 12 essays related to “removing the stain” of racism in the SBC. At times insightful, at times moving, at times tragic, the book is a helpful contribution to the conversation about race in our churches in a way that the thoughtful reader will find himself or herself asking from time to time, “Lord, is it I?” (Osborne)

A Story of Rhythm and Grace: What the Church Can Learn from Rock and Roll about Healing the Racial Divide, by Jimi Calhoun (2018).

Missionary, church planter, and pastor Jimi Calhoun weaves together stories about racial reconciliation from his life in the music world and in the church. Before experiencing the life-transforming work of Jesus, Calhoun performed alongside famous musicians like Jimi Hendrix, Etta James, John Lennon, Elton John and The Four Tops. This heart-warming and eye-opening book is filled with insight from the unusual perspective of a world-class musician and ministry leader. (Mayeda)

The Third Option: Hope for a Racially Divided Nation, Miles McPherson (2018).

San Diego-area pastor Miles McPherson lays out a third option – honoring one another – to replace the binary options of “I win, you lose” and “You win, I lose” in the fight against racism in the USA and in our churches. Insightful and filled with personal anecdotes, this is an easy-to-read yet powerful book. It's not so easy to read if one is genuinely open to changing themselves in a difference-making way. (Osborne)

White Working Class: Overcoming Class Cluelessness in America, by Joan C. Williams (2017).

This is not a “church book,” but it is an interesting read about the disconnect and divisions between the “elites,” “working class” and “poor” in the United States – why it's there, and what to do about it. (Osborne)

Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community, by Martin Luther King, Jr. (1968, revised 2010).

This was Martin Luther King, Jr.'s final manuscript in which he laid out his thoughts and dreams for the continuation of the struggle for civil rights for African Americans. What could have happened cannot be known because his life was cut short by an assassin in 1968. Thoughts, rebukes, challenges, and vision abound. (Osborne)

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Why We Can't Wait, by Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963, 1986, 2010 edition).

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., needs no introduction. This book recounts the Birmingham civil rights campaign of 1963. It provides keen insight into the how and why of this march, the history of the civil rights movement, and the text of King's famous "*Letter from Birmingham Jail*" and is a must read in light of the continuing struggle to end racial injustice. The book will rekindle memories among Baby Boomers who watched this struggle on television and in the newspapers and will give insight to younger leaders on how we got to where we are today – regarding both progress to date and the long road ahead. (Osborne)

GENDER-RELATED ISSUES

Developing Female Leaders: Navigate the Minefields and Release the Potential of Women in Your Church, by Kadi Cole (2019).

This book is a favorite among EFCA West staff for its helpful chapter on clearly defining what one believes scripture teaches about gender-based roles in the church as well as its insights and recommendations on how to empower women to use their leadership gifts and talents wherever a church lands on the gender-based-roles continuum, and does so without arguing for the adoption of a particular biblical interpretation. (Osborne)

Gender Roles and the People of God: Rethinking What We Were Taught about Men and Women in the Church, by Alice Matthews (2017).

The author aims for an "egalitarian complementarity in which men and women use all their gifts in the church together, in partnership, for the glory of God." Whether she accomplishes this or not depends upon one's interpretation and application of scripture to the organizational and leadership structures and systems in churches today. This book develops these issues from an egalitarian theological and historical perspective and can either strengthen your convictions or add nuance to them depending upon your convictions regarding gender-based roles in the church. (Osborne)

How I Changed My Mind about Women in Leadership: Compelling. Stories from Prominent Evangelicals, by Alan F. Johnson, General Editor (2010)

This book presents 21 essays from evangelical church leaders that changed their position about women in leadership from various degrees of what is commonly called "complementarian" to that commonly called "egalitarian." The book is clearly biased toward one position – moving "from a more or less restrictive view to an open, inclusive view." Those holding that view will be confirmed in their beliefs. Those holding to the "more or less restrictive view" will learn much about what is driving the beliefs of those going in the other direction. (Osborne)

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Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism, edited by John Piper and Wayne Grudem. (1991, 2006).

The title says it all: This work presents rebuttals, focused upon scholarly expositions of scripture, to refute published arguments that advocate what they refer to as “evangelical feminism.” The authors argue for a complementarian view of gender-based roles in the home and church. Whether you agree or disagree, it’s important to understand the arguments. (Osborne)

Understanding Gender Dysphoria: Navigating Transgender Issues in a Changing Culture, by Mark A. Yarhouse (2015).

The author was featured in the post-conference sessions of the 2016 EFCA Theology Conference. This book is helpful in understanding specific terms of the conversations about gender issues as well as in both individual pastoral and organizational responses to the issue. The author’s audio presentations from the theology conference can be found at <https://www.efca.org/2016-theology-conference-doctrine-church>. (Osborne)

VICTIMS OF ABUSE

Becoming a Church that Cares Well for the Abused, by Brad Hambrick (2019).

This excellent book shows how to help survivors of devastating live experiences. (Rivero)

The Cry of Tamar: Violence Against Women and the Church’s Response (second edition), by Pamela Cooper-White (2012).

EFCA’s 2020 Theology Conference included a section on abuse in the church. This book was one of the recommended readings. Have you ever read the account of Tamar in 2 Samuel 13 and wondered why it seems so focused on the men in the story and not on the woman who was the victim of a heinous rape? That’s the starting point for this thought-provoking exposition on the topic of violence against women and what the church’s response has been and what the author believes it should be. (Osborne)

DISABLED PERSONS

Beyond Suffering (Study guide with CD), by Joni Eareckson Tada and Steve Bundy (2012).

This is one of the best contemporary study guides for churches developing a distinctly Christian view about ministry to the disabled. I highly recommend that churches take the on-line class (available through the Christian Institute on Disability) and/or buy this book and read through it together. (Rivero)

[End of List]