

**General Topics :: Puritan Book Reports****Puritan Book Reports - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2009/1/13 10:14**

Dear saints,

This thread focuses exclusively on specific Puritan literature and the practical application we can gain from certain books. Feel free to include anthologies and sermons by Wesley...if they are published in book form. We are not limiting ourselves to treatises on Calvinistic theology. You may also include various Confessions of Faith and their appendixes if you choose (and if they are published in book format).

Here's some guidelines to make this thread unique:

- 1. Only do a report on a Puritan book you've actually read and gained something from. Please do not arbitrarily list all the Puritan Paperbacks.*
- 2. Do a report if the book you read was too verbose (which is common among Puritans) and hard to understand. Warn others of purchasing something that might be too laborious to read. Sometimes a tiny bit of crabmeat isn't worth all the effort of going through the shell.*
- 3. Please state how your life in Christ was impacted by this book; and in particular, how the contents were applied practically to your life and what material afforded the Holy Spirit the capability of widening your understanding of God and His ways.*

The intention here is to make more people aware of the best of the best Puritan books, without having to trudge through many of the turgid, harder-to-understand works.

I'll start adding my own choicest picks (I have a library of Puritan books) as soon as I get back. My wife has a check-up today...and an ultrasound for the baby. We are excited!

:~)

Re: Puritan Book Reports - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2009/1/13 10:23

Stephen Charnock: The Existence and Attributes of God. My friends this is a massive book in which Mr Charnock seeks to leave no stone unturned. For example he speaks of the immutability of God but contrast it to passages that seem as if God changes. Charnock I must warn is a hard read. It will take you a while to get around his writing style which is steeped in 17th century English but once you get into it you start to become familiar with his speech. This is a great read that requires commitment. But if you commit you will come out a different man or woman by the end. Be blessed my dear friends.

Its life impact is as expressed in Daniel 11:32 the people that know their God shall be strong and do exploits. This book has tamed fears and worries for me. Thinking about God aright has allowed me to see that he does not change he is sovereign, omnipotent and none can stay his hand. This has caused me great peace in these hard times.

Re: Puritan Book Reports - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/1/13 10:42

I would like to ask bro Paul West to do a review of William Gurnall's, A Christian in Complete Armour. I have not the ability to adequately express the impact this book has had on me. Next to the Bible, nothing has come close.

Re: - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2009/1/13 10:50

Wow TJ. I have never read the book now I am going to have to pick it up.

Re: - posted by Ruach34 (), on: 2009/1/13 15:15

This is a good post and often have a hard time finding these threads unless it is in the most active box. So, I am bumping this to keep it active.

Will be finished with a book called Puritan Preaching in England: A Study of Past and Present. Written by John Brown, B.A., D.D., published 1900.

A short report is forthcoming...

Re: TCICA - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2009/1/13 20:52

Quote:
-----I would like to ask bro Paul West to do a review of William Gurnall's, A Christian in Complete Armour. I have not the ability to adequately express the impact this book has had on me. Next to the Bible, nothing has come close.

With pleasure. I think you would find a kindred reaction in John Newton, who also expressed that if he had a choice of only one other book he could have besides the Bible, he would elect TCICA (The Christian in Complete Armour), and after reading much of it, I can understand why.

[Image: http://ecx.images-amazon.com/images/I/51Uw4b79bWL._SL500_AA240_.jpg]

The Christian in Complete Armour by William Gurnall (1616-1679)

I think this is the greatest treatise on spiritual warfare ever penned, hands down. It was unreservedly praised by Charles Spurgeon and was the book Leonard Ravenhill introduced to young David Wilkerson when the former thought the latter was ready to digest the meat within. This is one of those rare books where virtually *every single sentence* is worthy of quotation. If you are reading this report and have never heard of this book (or at least have never read it) I hope this post would provoke you to acquire this masterpiece and be blessed.

You have two options. Banner of Truth puts out an unabridged version in one massive tome, the 1864 edition with the introduction by J.C. Ryle. This is the copy I have. You can find it on Amazon or Ebay. Mind you, this is the *unabridged* version - meaning tiny print, copious puritanic verbosity and the King's English. Over 1,200 pages of it...but, oh, what gold. For those not intrepid enough - or patient enough - to wade through much of Gurnall's sentence structuring in this imposing volume, Banner of Truth Trust also puts out a three-volume set, modernized and abridged. If you are not used to reading Puritan works, this is the edition I recommend.

The Christian in Complete Armour will teach you about Satan; about his strategy, his tactics, his weaponry, and it will exhort you like no other work to gird about your loins with truth and don the whole panoply of God. It's a book bursting with divine wisdom and epigrammatical sayings and staggering maxims and analogies on every page. It's hard to even read through one paragraph in this book without getting lost in stupendous rumination.

It would be awesome if more Christians knew about this gem. My prayer is that this post will help make that a reality.

Brother Paul

Re: - posted by Compton (), on: 2009/1/13 21:51

I think Paul West should publish a monthly digest of extracted Puritan chapters with book reviews, commentary, and biographies. Call it the Puritan Repository. I'll order the first subscription. :)

MC

Re: - posted by White_Stone (), on: 2009/1/13 22:00

(<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/gurnall/armour/files/armour.html>) Found it here in CCEL

It is available for download in HTML or PDF.

I have downloaded all the parts but haven't had a chance to begin study. From what I have read here, I may be busy for a while, glued to the computer screen.

Of course, a hard copy would be infinitely better, but I will use what I have at hand. If it lives up to the compliments, I will try to buy a copy.

eBay has some right now. :-)

Kind regards,
white stone

Re: - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2009/1/14 9:06

Thomas Watson's: A Body Of Divinity

The subject of the book is doctrinal and filled with biblical truth's such as the nature of conversion, sin, and sanctification. It is a good foundational book that will give one a firm understanding of what being a christian is all about.

It also gives us practical instruction on main christain themes and doctrine. One of the great things about thomas watson is that he is the most easy puritan to read and if you are going to start reading the puritans I would suggest starting with Watson. Has anyone read watson's the great gain of Godliness ?

The Body of divinity has had a great impact upon my life for the fact that it has revealed to me that a christain is not a chirstain in name only. but that the life of a christain is a supernatural one that has a chief end and that is to glorify God

Re: - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2009/1/14 11:08

Quote:

-----Has anyone read watson's the great gain of Godliness ?

I have, and I intend on writing a report on it. It's very good. Was Watson capable of writing anything less than excellent? One of his aims in writing The Great Gain of Godliness was to confound the atheist...so you can imagine the wealth of goodness in this book.

Order it if you don't have it. You can get it for 8 dollars on Amazon.

Re: The Great Gain of Godliness - posted by PaulWest (), on: 2009/1/16 19:36

[Image: <http://www.preachtheword.com/bookstore/godliness.jpg>]

The Great Gain of Godliness by Thomas Watson (1620-1686)

This was the book Charles Spurgeon ardently sought after all his life, but was unable to find. He lamented over not being able to acquire it. Indeed, this is a very strong work (despite being extremely easy to read), and full of classic "Watsonisms" such as:

"Remember, O hard-hearted sinner, how many ways God can be revenged on you. He can raise an army of diseases against you in your body. He can arm every creature against you: the dog, the bear, the elephant. He can arm conscience against you. O, dread this Lord of hosts!"

"If men's hearts stood where their faces did, they would blush to look upon one another"

"The soul is the jewel, and the sinner is fearless of it, he will throw it away upon the world; as if one should throw pearls and diamonds at pear trees"

I would be dishonest if I didn't say Watson is almost as fun as he is edifying to read! I pray this post would strike up an interest for those yet unacquainted with this remarkable Puritan divine. This book is a great place to get introduced to him. It is considerably lighter than his more formidable works, such as "Body of Divinity", "Ten Commandments" and "A Divine Cordial". TGGOG (The Great Gain of Godliness) is an exposition on Malachi 3:16-18, designed "to encourage solid piety and confute the atheists of the world, who imagine there is no gain in godliness" (Watson's own words). The entire book is basically Watson's practical notes and ruminations on the scripture, and along the way he infuses rich illustrations and practical wisdom with solid doctrine and a level "purity" that can make your heart burn in Christ exaltation. Watson, in general, is very easy to read, and this work is probably the easiest I've encountered by him. A major part of this book focuses on and expounds upon the fear of God.

Trivia: Watson died while in prayer in 1686. They found him in his prayer closet "sleeping". How blest are the deaths of God's dear saints.

Re: - posted by Fuegodedios (), on: 2009/1/16 19:56

Thanks for the review of a classic work by Watson brother Paul. I did not know that Spurgeon sought this book. He provided a foreword in Watson's Body of Divinity. Thanks once again for your insight. However, I know you have more Puritan writings in that arsenal of yours. :-)

Re: - posted by HeartSong, on: 2009/1/16 21:42

Quote:
-----Trivia: Watson died while in prayer in 1686. They found him in his prayer closet "sleeping". How blest are the deaths of God's dear saints.

Oh, this is a beautiful picture. Such peace is to be found in our Lord - I think I shall go pray right now.