



Annual Book Review 2003

by **Jim Osman**
Pastor/Teacher

Kootenai Community Church
kootenaichurch.org

Ecclesiastes 12:12 - But beyond this, my son, be warned: the writing of many books is endless, and excessive devotion to books is wearying to the body.

Occasionally in messages I make reference to books I have read or am reading. Because of this some have asked if I could provide a “recommended reading” list.

So, if you are looking for some good reading material, I would offer the following suggestions:

Endurance by Alfred Lansing. This is the story of Ernest Shackleton and his crew’s fight for survival following their failed attempt to land on Antarctica. This could easily be called the “greatest successful failure” ever. After reading this book, you will truly think that what these men endured was unbelievable. An excellent companion book for those in leadership or management is **Shackleton’s Way: Leadership Lessons From The Great Antarctic Explorer** by Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell.

The American Leadership Tradition: Moral Vision from Washington to Clinton by Marvin Olasky (272 pages). During the eight years of the Clinton Administration we were fed a steady diet of the “character doesn’t matter” mantra. The idea was that it did not matter what a man does in his private life; it does not affect his ability to lead or serve as President.

“What people do in private is no one’s business but theirs,” is the popular refrain of our day. The fact that then President Clinton received high approval ratings even in the heat of charges of sexual misconduct in office showed that the American people share that

view.

Olasky challenges that view by analyzing the private lives of twelve different leaders from American History and shows the indissoluble link between private morality and public policy.

Presidents George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Franklin Roosevelt and John F. Kennedy are among the men that Olasky uses to show that private life impacts a person’s ability to govern. Chapters are devoted to Booker T. Washington, John D. Rockefeller and Henry Clay as well.

You will be amazed to learn of the impact that morality played in the War of Independence, Civil War and the role it plays in the war for our future as a nation.

Terrorism, Jihad, and the Bible by John MacArthur (120 pages). A quick and easy read, MacArthur’s book puts into perspective the historical roots of the Middle East cauldron and why terrorism is the weapon of choice for those who seek to destroy Israel and America. You will find this book both informative and encouraging with chapters like, “Where Was God on September 11?” and, “A Biblical Perspective on War.”

A Faith to Grow On by John MacArthur (191pages). Diedre and I have used this book for our family devotion time over the last year. The book is designed to be used in that format. Each lesson answers a particular question and includes scripture readings (in a translation easily understood by young children), prayer starters, and discussion starters. The book covers subjects including Creation, the nature of God, the Trinity, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, forgiveness,

salvation, church, worship, and prayer.

Jonathan Edwards: A New Biography by Iain Murray (487 pages). This book will give you a thorough and full understanding of one of the greatest philosophical and theological minds that America has ever produced. Edwards lived in the early 1700s, pastored a church in Connecticut and later became a missionary to the Indians. If you are looking for “light and fluffy,” stay away. If you want a real appreciation for a pastor/theologian whose ministry and writings continue to influence the church over 200 years after his death, then this book’s for you.

I hope you enjoy these books as much as I did. So many books, so little time. Remember, you are a product of the books you read, and in all your reading, don’t neglect The Book.

Without Wax -

