

Postmodernism (and Modernism) in Christian Perspective: Books Worth Reading

Boyd, Gregory A., *Benefit of the Doubt: Breaking the Idol of Certainty*. Makes the case that the quality of our faith should not be measured by the certainty with which we believe doctrine, but rather by the quality of our relationship with Jesus and the way our lives reflect that relationship.

Clapp, Rodney, *A Peculiar People: the Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society*. Looks at problems in “modern” ways of doing church and suggests better approaches.

Enns, Peter, *The Sin of Certainty: Why God Desires our Trust more than our “Correct” Beliefs*. About walking with God in our uncertain lives without obsessing over the certainty that we tend to think is required for a strong faith.

Francke, John R., *Manifold Witness: The Plurality of Truth*. Professor of Missional Theology on the idea that multiple perspectives (like 4 Gospels) are needed for finite humans to best appreciate God’s truth.

Grenz, Stanley J., and John R. Franke, *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context*. Thoughts on building Christian theology without modern foundationalist assumptions. More academic than most books on this list.

Hipps, Shane, *The Hidden Power of Electronic Culture: How Media Shapes Faith, the Gospel, and Church*. Good insights about how media shapes the modern and postmodern worlds and our churches.

McKnight, Scot, *The Blue Parakeet: Rethinking How You Read the Bible*. About reading the Bible as story, seeing not isolated pieces but how the parts fit into the whole.

*McLaren, Brian D., *A New Kind of Christian*. Leader in emergent church movement on ways postmodern and other insights can shake up old assumptions and transform us into more faithful followers of Jesus.

McLaren, Brian D., *The Story We Find Ourselves In*. Sequel to *A New Kind of Christian* focuses on seeing the narrative nature of the gospel and finding ourselves in that story.

*Middleton, J. Richard, & Brian J. Walsh, *Truth is Stranger than it used to be: Biblical Faith in a Postmodern Age*. Good introduction to modernism, postmodernism, and implications for following Jesus.

*Newbiggin, Lesslie, *Proper Confidence: Faith, Doubt, and Certainty in Christian Discipleship*. Theologian and longtime missionary on recognizing the failure of modernist approaches to knowledge and finding better ways to know and trust. Critical realist approach, although he doesn’t use the term.

Newbiggin, Lesslie, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. About communicating the Gospel in a context where modernist and Christendom assumptions are no longer dominant.

Olson, Roger E., *Reformed and Always Reforming: The Postconservative Approach to Evangelical Theology*. Prof. at Baylor argues for theology that rejects modernism and fundamentalism, always open to being reformed by the Word of God rather than attempting to fossilize orthodoxy.

Roxburgh, Alan J., and M. Scott Boren, *Introducing the Missional Church: What it is, why it matters, how to become one*. Includes a very good introduction to “missional church” concepts.

A good web-based introduction to the missional church is at <http://www.friendofmissional.org>.

*Smith, James K.A., *Who’s Afraid of Postmodernism?: Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*. Prof. at Calvin College explores how some postmodern insights can be helpful to the church.

Taylor, Daniel, *The Myth of Certainty: The Reflective Christian & the Risk of Commitment*. Great if you naturally incline toward reflection and doubt and feel inferior to Christians who always seem 100% certain.

Wright, N.T., Much of Wright’s writing is good “Third Way” material. His *The New Testament and the People of God* has a good section on critical realism, and *Scripture and the Authority of God* articulates a good Third Way approach on that topic. See also material on the Web at www.ntwrightpage.com.