

The Books Missionaries Should Read

I hope you are a reader. One of our PO Values is Growth. We are committed to lifelong growth. A key way we grow is by the books we read. Everyone has their own pace of reading. You may have read ten books in the first two weeks of this year or you may be just beginning your first one. Volume is good but what we read is really important. Here are my two cents on what missionaries should read.

- **The Bible** - missionaries should be ferocious readers of the Bible. While I don't think we should be legalistic about our Bible reading I do think we should plan it.
 - Reading four chapters a day will get you through the Bible from front to back in the course of a year. Maybe you prefer to read it chronologically or with an emphasis on the N.T. There are dozens of reading plans available in multiple free apps. Pick one.
 - At least once in your life, and it is best if it is early in your missionary career speed read your way through the Bible multiple times in one year. One book and three Psalms a day will get you through the Bible in just over two months. You will be amazed how reading quickly through the entirety of the Bible really helps the big picture come into focus.
 - Read it in your adoptive language. I understand if you need to have devotional times in English, but also schedule reading in the Bible in your adoptive language. It can be a real eye opener into culture and phrasing.
- **Missionary Biographies** - You are not the first missionary on your field! You can learn a lot from those who preceded you. The Spirit in Paradise is great reading for those in the South Pacific. Schedule to read at least one missionary biography from your field this year.
- **Books about your field** - Start with the Lonely Planet books for your countries and go from there. There are dozens of books about your country. Dig into them. The more you learn the better you will be able to minister. I would encourage you to schedule in at least one book about your field this year. If you want a broad based view of the Pacific consider: The South Pacific by Ron Crocombe.
- **Local History Books** - The more you learn about your country's history the more you will understand why things are the way they are. Visit the local book store. They will have histories of your country available for purchase. The best ones are the ones in your adopted language.
- **Books about Missions** - When you went through Missionary Training you were given a huge list of recommended books about missions. Have you read them? Put one or two on the calendar for this year.
- **Books specific to your genre of ministry** - Are you in youth ministry? Read a book about youth ministry this year. You can extrapolate to your ministry focus. Avoid the tendency to get in a rut. Books about ministry can fill your head with new ideas and stir up the creative juices.
- **Books about an area where you personally need to grow.** - Is there an area of your life you see as weak? Time management, healthy eating, strategic planning, systems development, preaching, teaching etc. Find a book that addresses that weakness and read it.
- **Wholesome Fiction** - I recommend that you mix some wholesome fiction into your reading schedule. It gives your mind a break but also tends to help you avoid becoming rusty in your speaking and writing.

The MAD Joy Reading List is

1. The Spiritually Healthy Leader
2. Third Culture Kids
3. The Psychology of Missionary Adjustment
4. The Spirit Empowered Church
5. Pentecostalism in Context
6. On Being a Missionary
7. Transformational Conflict
8. Caring Enough to Confront
9. How to Lead When You are Not in Charge
10. The 3D Gospel
11. Filling Up the Afflictions of Christ
12. Apostolic Spark
13. The Story of Reality
14. Apostolic Function in Missio Dei
15. A Biblical Theology of Missions
16. Ministering Cross Culturally
17. Cross Cultural Servanthood
18. Figuring Out Foreigners
19. Leading Across Cultures