

A collection of classic books concerning practical theology gathered in a collection by a [Bulgarian Christian Publisher "Nov Chovek" \(New Man\)](#)

. Bulgarian versions can be purchased on the [publisher's website](#)

. It is a great collection of works that are now in the public domain and the English sources are available online. We have kept a chronological order of appearance instead of the order of publishing the Bulgarian editions.

20th-Century

[Buchanan, James.](#) *[The Doctrine of Justification: An Outline of Its History in the Church and of Its Exposition from Scripture](#)* . 1955. First delivered as the Cunningham Lectures in 1866, this monumental work by a towering 19th-century Free Church of Scotland theologian stands as a classic defense of the Reformed doctrine of justification by faith alone. Buchanan splits his treatise into a meticulous historical survey—tracing the doctrine from the Patristic era through the Reformation to the rise of its modern critics—followed by an exhaustive biblical exposition. Writing with crystalline logical precision, he vindicates the forensic nature of justification and the imputation of Christ's active and passive obedience against both Roman Catholic and liberal Protestant challenges.

[Murray, Andrew.](#) *[Humility: The Beauty of Holiness](#)* . 1910. Murray, a beloved South African Dutch Reformed pastor and devotional writer, delivers a profound spiritual treatise on humility as the foundational grace of the Christian life. He argues that pride is the root of all sin and loss of fellowship with God, whereas humility is simply the displacement of self by the enthronement of God. Written in an accessible, deeply urgent devotional style, Murray traces the humility of Christ as the ultimate pattern for believers, demonstrating that true holiness is impossible without absolute self-abnegation and dependence on divine grace.

19th-Century

[Scougal, Henry.](#) *[The Life of God in the Soul of Man](#)* . 1868. Originally written in 1677 by a young Scottish Episcopal divine, this classic work defines true religion not as mere orthodox belief or external morality, but as a vital, supernatural union between the soul and God. Scougal describes this spiritual reality as "divine life," characterized by the core graces of love to God, charity to man, purity, and humility. This historic volume is highly significant for evangelical history, famously serving as the primary catalyst for the conversions of George Whitefield and John Wesley.

[Buchanan, James. *The Office and Work of the Holy Spirit* . 1847.](#) Buchanan offers a deeply scriptural, systematically structured exploration of the Third Person of the Trinity, focusing intently on the experiential application of redemption. The work is divided into three parts: the Spirit's work in the illumination and conversion of the sinner, illustrative scriptural case studies (such as the Philippian jailer), and the Spirit's ongoing work of sanctification and revival in the believer and the church. It remains a superb example of robust Scottish theology applied to pastoral care and experimental piety.

[Newton, John. *One Hundred and Twenty-Nine Letters from the Rev. John Newton* . 1847.](#) This collection of epistolary correspondence highlights the legendary pastoral wisdom of John Newton, the slave-trader-turned-Anglican-evangelical pastor and author of "Amazing Grace." Written to various friends, ministers, and parishioners, these letters function as a masterclass in spiritual direction. Newton applies the deep truths of sovereign grace to the practical, messy realities of the Christian walk—tackling doubt, spiritual depression, pride, affliction, and the subtle snares of the heart with an unmatched blend of theological firmness and gentle, empathetic pastoral warmth.

[Ryle, John Charles. *Holiness: Its Nature, Hindrances, Difficulties, and Roots* 1879.](#) Ryle, the first Anglican Bishop of Liverpool, delivers an absolute masterpiece of evangelical practical theology. Writing to counter the flawed "sinless perfection" and Keswick higher-life movements of his day, Ryle presents a robust, historically grounded defense of progressive sanctification. With his characteristic plainspoken, punchy style, he unpacks the lingering reality of indwelling sin, the absolute necessity of the believer's active struggle in the spiritual warfare, and the deep, Christ-centered roots of true biblical holiness.

[Bonar, Horatius. *Words to the Winners of Souls* . 1860. Published by the American Tract Society.](#) Bonar, a prominent 19th-century Scottish Presbyterian divine and hymnwriter, pens an intensely urgent, heart-searching manual for ministers and evangelists. Drawn largely from historic Puritan insights and the lessons of the Great Awakening, Bonar confronts the professionalization, cold intellectualism, and lack of spiritual passion that often cripple gospel ministry. He calls for radical personal holiness, unceasing prayer, deep compassion for the lost, and a fearless proclamation of Christ crucified, making this a classic text for fueling revival and evangelistic zeal.

[Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor* . 1835.](#) First published in 1656, this definitive Puritan classic serves as a searing, passionate appeal for ministerial oversight, fidelity, and systematic personal catechizing. Baxter challenges pastors to take heed first to their own spiritual lives before tending the flock purchased by Christ's blood. The work provides an intensely practical

blueprint for pastoral ministry, emphasizing individual home visitation and rigorous biblical instruction over mere public preaching, making it an enduring benchmark for pastoral theology and ministerial accountability.

18th-Century

[Edwards, Jonathan. *Religious Affections* . 1746.](#) Written in the wake of the First Great Awakening, Edwards's psychological and theological masterpiece serves as the definitive tool for spiritual discernment. Edwards argues that true, saving religion is deeply rooted in the "affections" (the holy inclinations of the heart), but warns that intense emotional experiences, visions, or outward zeal are not proof of regeneration. He systematically lays down twelve "signs" of truly gracious and holy affections—chief among them being a love for God for His own glorious sake and a life of practical, habitual Christian obedience.

17th-Century

[Owen, John. *Grace and Duty of Being Spiritually Minded* . 1681.](#) Owen, the "Prince of the Puritans," delivers a profound, psychologically astute analysis of Romans 8:6 ("to be spiritually minded is life and peace"). Written during a time of failing health and political distress for Nonconformists, Owen instructs believers on how to actively anchor their thoughts, meditations, and affections on heavenly realities rather than the fleeting things of this world. Though written in Owen's characteristically dense, scholastic style, the work offers an invaluable diagnostic guide for identifying spiritual decay and cultivating a vibrant, peace-filled communion with God.

[Flavel, John. *Divine Conduct; or, The Mystery of Providence* . 1677.](#) Flavel, a prominent English Puritan known for his warm, experiential style, provides a masterful exposition of Psalm 57:2, exploring the doctrine of divine providence. He systematically demonstrates how God's sovereign hand orchestrates the everyday details of the believer's life—including birth, conversion, trials, and provisions—for their ultimate good and His glory. Written with deep pastoral sensitivity during a period of intense nonconformist persecution, Flavel offers practical directives on how to track, interpret, and praise the unfolding work of providence, making this a classic work for cultivating holy contentment and trust in divine sovereignty.

[Venning, Ralph. *The Sinfulness of Sin; or, The Plague of Plagues* . 1669.](#) Originally published under the title *Sin, the Plague of Plagues*, Venning's treatise stands as one of the most searching and vivid exposures of the anatomical nature of sin in Christian literature. Writing in the wake of the Great Plague of London, he uses the pandemic as a powerful metaphor to illustrate how sin acts as a spiritual disease that is completely contrary to God's holy character, destructive to human nature, and deceitful in its operations. Venning breaks down the

deceitfulness of indwelling sin with analytical precision, serving to drive the reader to a deeper hatred of transgression and a greater appreciation for the cleansing blood of Christ.

[Watson, Thomas. *The Doctrine of Repentance* 1668.](#) Watson, a master of Puritan devotional prose, provides an exceptionally lucid, vivid, and searching exposition of the nature of true evangelical repentance. Fearing that many professing Christians held a superficial view of salvation, Watson systematically outlines the six essential ingredients of genuine repentance: sight of sin, sorrow for sin, confession of sin, shame for sin, hatred of sin, and turning from sin. Filled with memorable aphorisms and piercing scriptural insights, this work remains an essential guide for understanding the gospel call to conversion and holy living

[Brooks, Thomas. *Precious Remedies Against Satan's Devices: Being a Companion for Christians of All Denominations* 1652.](#) Brooks delivers a highly structured, psychologically brilliant manual on spiritual warfare that focuses on the defensive strategies of the believer. He systematically classifies dozens of specific "devices" or strategies that Satan uses to lure Christians into sin, keep them in a state of spiritual depression, or undermine their assurance of salvation. For every single demonic device identified, Brooks provides multiple "precious remedies" drawn directly from Scripture, equipping the believer with practical, logical, and biblically sound tactics to resist temptation and maintain vibrant communion with God.

[Rutherford, Samuel. *The Trial and Triumph of Faith* 1645.](#) Delivered as a series of sermons on Christ's interaction with the Syrophenician woman (Matthew 15), Rutherford—a towering Scottish Covenanter and Westminster Divine—unpacks the nature, operations, and ultimate victory of saving faith. He analyzes the various "trials" faith must endure, particularly the experience of divine silence, delayed answers to prayer, and the heavy weight of spiritual desertion. Written with a unique blend of high scholastic precision and rich, almost mystical pastoral warmth, Rutherford illustrates how genuine faith stubbornly clings to the promises and character of Christ even when outward circumstances appear entirely hostile.

[Sibbes, Richard. *Beams of Divine Light; or, The Bruised Reed* 1630.](#) Sibbes, affectionately known as the "Heavenly Doctor" for his tender pastoral style, provides a masterful, Christ-centered exposition of Isaiah 42:3. Writing to comfort Christians suffering from spiritual brokenness, doubt, and weak faith, Sibbes demonstrates the profound gentleness of Jesus toward the "bruised reed" and the flickering, "smoking flax" of believer piety. Rather than crushing the weak, Christ carefully restores, heals, and fans their faith into a flame. This work stands as a premier Puritan classic of experimental divinity, highly prized for its psychological depth and its comforting defense of the preservation of the saints.

16th-Century

[Luther, Martin. *On the Bondage of the Will* . 1525.](#) Written as a direct, scathing response to Desiderius Erasmus's *Diatribes on Free Will*, Luther considered this volume to be his most important theological treatise. He systematically demolishes the Pelagian and semi-Pelagian assertions of human autonomy, arguing with razor-sharp logical and biblical precision that fallen humanity's will is utterly enslaved to sin and Satan. Apart from the sovereign, regenerating grace of God, humanity is incapable of choosing or moving toward salvation. This foundational Reformation text provides a uncompromising, robust defense of the absolute sovereignty of God in salvation, the radical depravity of man, and the doctrine of justification by grace alone (*sola gratia*).