

## **Reading List Of Contemporary Orthodox Classics**

**THE ORTHODOX CHURCH**, by Timothy Ware. Still one of the best single volume introductions to the Orthodox Church available today.

**THE ORTHODOX WAY**, by Archbishop Kallistos Ware (the same person as Timothy Ware). A superb complement/supplement to **THE ORTHODOX CHURCH**, in which the implications of the Church's doctrinal teaching is applied to the spiritual life, culminating in a prayerful union with God based upon the patristic notion of theosis.

**FOR THE LIFE OF THE WORLD**, by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann. A brilliant "essay" on the Church as "Sacrament of the Kingdom," and the sacramental life within the Church. A passionate rejection of a "scholastic" understanding of the Sacraments.

**GREAT LENT**, by Fr. Alexander Schmemmann. Considered by many as the best single volume discussion of the liturgical expression of the season of Great Lent.

**CHRIST IN EASTERN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT**, by Fr. John Meyendorff. An "advanced" study of how the great Eastern Fathers further developed the doctrine of Christ as God and Man from the time of the Fourth Ecumenical Council in 451 through the entire Byzantine Period. A classic of Orthodox Christology.

**BYZANTINE THEOLOGY – Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes**, by Fr. John Meyendorff. A brilliant synthesis of the Byzantine Era of the Church (5<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup> centuries). Implicitly reveals the "Eastern" alternative to Western historical and theological developments that are today proving to be "dead ends."

**THE MYSTICAL THEOLOGY OF THE EASTERN CHURCH**, by Vladimir Lossky. This is widely considered to be *the* "classic" of 20<sup>th</sup> c. Orthodox theology, written by a brilliant lay theologian. Lossky is both profound and eloquent (the book was originally written in French) in explaining the unbreakable bond between the Church's dogmatic tradition and the mystical life: theology and mysticism are organically united and cannot exist in isolation. Not an easy book to read, but one that needs to be read many times so as to absorb its many insights.

**BIBLE, CHURCH, TRADITION: An Orthodox Perspective**, by Fr. George Florovsky. A superb collection of essays – probably the best – on the themes found in the title, by one of the most erudite and brilliant representatives of pre-revolutionary Russia's Orthodox culture. Illuminates the early Church's organic understanding of Bible, Church, and Tradition; and the unbroken and continuous existence of the Church through time. Insights that will forever shape your understanding of these essential themes.

**CREATION AND REDEMPTION**, by Fr. George Florovsky. Another collection of essays by Florovsky that reveal his attempt to create a “neo-patristic synthesis.” This means a creative – and not simply imitative – synthesis of the Church Fathers’ approach to theology and exposition of the “Mystery of Christ,” that reveals how contemporary and existential the writings of the Fathers remain. The “perennial” wisdom of the Church applied to the concerns of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. Christian.

**ORTHODOX SPIRITUALITY**, by Fr. Dumitru Staniloae. A massive, thorough and wide-ranging study of the Orthodox understanding and practice of the spiritual life as “life in the Spirit.” The book takes the reader through the stages of Purification, Illumination and Perfection, accompanied by a wealth of patristic sayings and insights, all organically presented by Fr. Staniloae.