

5 books for ministry

selected by [Shawnthea Monroe](#) in the [May 4, 2010](#) issue

***Miss Manners' Guide to Excruciatingly Correct Behavior*, by Judith Martin** (Norton). Part etiquette manual, part psychology text, *Miss Manners' Guide* has been a dependable source of insight and information over the years. Martin addresses everything from writing condolence letters to the order of a traditional wedding procession to how to handle sexist remarks with grace. Even in ministry, good manners never go out of style.

***Readings in Christian Theology*, edited by Peter C. Hodgson and Robert H. King** (Fortress). This book is a well-edited introduction to the foundational texts that shaped the development of Christian theology. I still use this invaluable primer for busy pastors to refresh my theological memory.

***Peace Like a River*, by Leif Enger** (*Atlantic Monthly Press*). Enger's story is a modern parable, a gripping tale about Jeremiah Land, a man of extraordinary faith who will go to any length to save his children. It's elegantly written and theologically rich—plus it features the most vivid and compelling description of heaven in contemporary fiction. This book has given me a way to speak about miracles and the afterlife that liberal post-Enlightenment Christians can hear.

***Feminist Theory and Christian Theology*, by Serene Jones** (Fortress). By turning the doctrine of justification on its head, Jones puts a feminist twist on Calvinism that breathes new life into the Reformed tradition. It's easy to read and offers wonderful insights for preaching as well as teaching.

***Word Study Greek-English New Testament*, edited by Paul R. McReynolds** (Tyndale House). What I love about this reference Bible is that it makes quick work of finding the multiple meanings of Greek words. Featuring a complete concordance keyed to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*, this book is an essential tool for my preaching ministry.