

A Little Book for New Bible Scholars

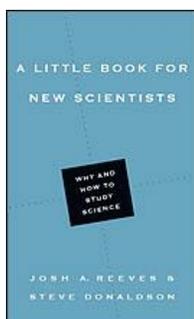
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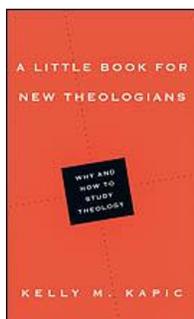
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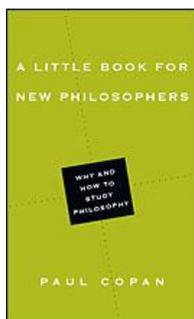
In *A Little Book for New Bible Scholars*, Randolph Richards and Joseph Dodson encourage young students of the Bible to add substance to their zeal—the kind of substance that comes from the sweat and toil of hard study. “Just as we should avoid knowledge without love,” they write, “we should also avoid love without knowledge.” Aimed at beginners, this concise overview offers a wealth of good advice, warns of potential pitfalls, and includes wisdom from a variety of other biblical scholars as well as stories from the authors' own long experience in the guild. This book invites a new generation of young scholars to roll up their sleeves and dig into the complex, captivating world of the Bible.



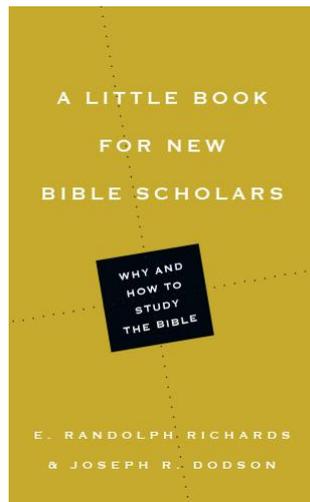
In *A Little Book for New Scientists*, Josh Reeves and Steve Donaldson present a concise introduction to the study of science that explains why scientists in every age have found science congenial to their faith and how Christians in the sciences can bridge the gap between science and Christian belief and practice. If Christians are to have a beneficial dialogue with science, it will be guided by those who understand science from the inside. Consequently, this book provides both advice and encouragement for Christians entering or engaged in scientific careers because their presence in science is a vital component of the church's witness in the world.



In the tradition of Helmut Thielicke's *A Little Exercise for Young Theologians*, Kelly Kopic offers a concise introduction to the study of theology for newcomers to the field in *A Little Book for New Theologians*. He highlights the value and importance of theological study and explains its unique nature as a serious discipline. Not only concerned with content and method, Kopic explores the skills, attitudes, and spiritual practices needed by those who take up the discipline.



In *A Little Book for New Philosophers*, Paul Copan offers a concise introduction to the study of philosophy. Aimed at newcomers, this brief overview is both a survey of philosophy's basic aims and categories and an apology for its proper function in the life of the Christian. “By God's grace,” Copan writes, “philosophy can enhance our understanding and worship of God . . . and assist us in defending the coherence of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.”



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“Plotting a course of study or even a career in biblical studies can be fraught with many trials and temptations. In this charming little book, Joey Dodson and Randy Richards offer some sage advice to budding students of the Bible on how to keep their egos intact, how to keep their faith authentic, how to use their vat of new biblical knowledge to serve others, and how to grow as Christians through biblical studies. Everyone should read this book before seminary!”

— **Michael F. Bird**, lecturer in theology, Ridley College, Melbourne, Australia

Beyond the Beaten Path to Biblical Studies

When the Richards boys were teenagers, I took them to Blanchard Springs Caverns in the Ozark Mountains and signed us up for the “wild cave tour.” Before we departed for the caves, the guides made sure we would be able to crawl on our bellies, tolerate tight spaces, and be willing to get dirty from head to toe. They had us sign waivers assuring them that we realized we were taking our lives into our own hands. Then they issued special equipment and introduced us to our personal guide. For the rest of the day, we crawled through tiny holes. We inched along a ledge with our backs against one wall, our legs braced against the other, and a gorge underneath us. We skirted other dangerous areas. If our headlamps gave out, we would be in deepest darkness. There were no paths and no ropes to mark the walkways. We ate our sack lunches in some deep cavern and then began our ascent. After crawling through a narrow — really narrow — tube, we squeezed through a crevice and emerged on the path of the standard tour, just behind the ropes. Imagine the surprise of the regular tourists when these four bedraggled folks, who seemed to materialize out of a crack, stood up and stepped across the rope and onto the guided path. We were covered with dirt, sweat, and smiles. To be sure, our journey wasn’t for everyone. Most people couldn’t take the claustrophobic spaces. We certainly got our hands (and every other inch of us) dirty. But to see certain treasures required the hard work.

The same is true of advanced biblical studies. Those willing to don the equipment, turn on their headlamps, and head underground into dark caves of vocabulary and ancient philosophy, those willing to inch through tubes of church tradition and theology, and those willing to brave narrow places recently discovered and to skirt dangerous areas still waiting to be explored will find untold treasures.

This little book is written for those who desire to go beyond the beaten path to pursue biblical studies, whether it is in college, seminary, or an advanced church program. We hope to show you that biblical studies is a noble calling — that it can enable you all the more to act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly before the Lord. Moreover, we want to show you that biblical studies can help us understand the gospel of Jesus Christ more fully so that we can teach it in our churches more effectively. We should warn you, however, that while graduating college with a major in chemistry makes you a chemist and finishing a major in engineering makes you an engineer, completing a major in biblical studies makes you not so much a Bible *expert* as much as a lifelong Bible *student*. We chafe at part of our book’s title — *Bible Scholars* — but we didn’t know how else to term it. Even though both of your authors have completed PhDs in biblical studies, we remain always and forever *students* of the Bible. There is so much yet to learn and we have an ever-increasing hunger to learn it, not to mention a matching desire to see it faithfully applied to our lives and churches.

— *Taken from the introduction*

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