



THE GOOD PORTION: CHRIST

BY JENNY MANLEY

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Jenny Manley is a former Chief of Staff in the U.S. Senate who now lives on the Arabian Peninsula with her husband and five children. Amid home-schooling her children, she has written an impressive theological primer, expressly written to encourage women on the person and work of Christ. *The Good Portion: Christ* is all about who Jesus is (Part 1), what he has done for sinners (Part 2), and the difference this makes in our lives.

The book has appropriately received high praise from leading Bible scholars. Thomas Schreiner describes the book as “biblically faithful and theologically astute” and at the same time “wonderfully clear and accessible.” Stephen Wel-lum expresses his hope that it will be used in many churches to equip Christians better to treasure and proclaim Christ, and says, “If you want to grow in your knowledge, love, and trust of Jesus, then this book is a must-read.”

Every Christian a Theologian

Manley’s book is profoundly doctrinal, which contributes significantly to its value. Theologically rich books are not likely to be bestsellers, but they are the books most likely to serve the church. In *Systematic Theology*, Wayne Grudem says, “I am convinced that there is an urgent need in the church today for much greater understanding of Christian doctrine, or systematic theology. Not only pastors and teachers need to understand theology in greater depth—the whole church does as well.”¹

Manley understands this urgent need and writes with a desire to see women grow in sound doctrine, knowing Christ, and loving the whole of God’s word.

1. WAYNE GRUDEM, *SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY: AN INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL DOCTRINE* (GRAND RAPIDS, MI: ZONDERVAN ACADEMIC, 1994), 18.

Every Christian is a theologian, and women with theological depth and discernment—especially in their doctrine of Christ—are well-positioned to be women of great maturity and influence. Not every woman is called to publish a 250-page Christology. But all Christians—men and women—should continually learn and apply Christian doctrine. We are all commanded by God to “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom” (Col. 3:16).

This book goes a long way in meeting an urgent need for a greater understanding of Christian doctrine among women. It will help believers grow in their knowledge of Christ and his saving work throughout all of Scripture.

Knowing is for Living

The Good Portion: Christ is not written for scholars but women in every season of life. The doctrine of Christ is deeply practical, and Manley writes with a desire to see the truth about Jesus connected and applied to daily life.

Each chapter begins with a brief case study of a woman in need: Dana is a stay-at-home mom who has struggled off and on for years with depression and finds no joy in her children; Noura is angry with God because she just found out her new baby boy has a genetic disorder; Jada is losing hope because her adult son has been wayward for years; a Christian colleague at work carries guilt and shame from an abortion she had as a college student; Shannon recently received a shocking health diagnosis of stage 3 breast cancer and is questioning the goodness of God; Tamela’s marriage is in shambles; Stephanie’s closest friends have all gotten married, and she feels insecure and lonely being single.

These examples help us connect the truth about Christ to our own lives and to practical conversations and counseling. Each chapter also ends with questions for personal reflection or group study. Consider reading this book together with a friend or in a small group.

The Good Portion: Christ has helped me personally treasure Christ more. Chapters 8 and 9 on the cross of Christ were my favorite and led me to

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marvel once again at the one who was punished in my place.

If you want to grow as a Christian, make Christ the great theme of your study. Is anything more relevant for Christian living than our knowledge of Christ? Manley explains, “Our joys, our parenting, our marriages, our trials—are all directly influenced by what we believe about the Son of God” (230). And she testifies, “My study of the person and work of Christ has shaped my parenting, the way I love my husband, the manner with which I seek contentment, and the vigor with which I serve my church. . . .In fact, it seems every aspect of life has been touched by my deeper understanding of Christ” (231).

Use this book to deepen your knowledge of Christ and anticipate the life-changing power of Christ to leave no aspect of your life untouched.

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Jared Mellinger is senior pastor of [Covenant Fellowship Church](#) (Glen Mills, PA) and serves on the Sovereign Grace Leadership Team.