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Review: The Minister's Library, V 2 (1972-1980)

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IN REVIEW

FOR PASTORS

The Minister's Library

by Cyril J. Barber

Baker Book House

Vol. 1, 1974 (fourth printing, 1981)

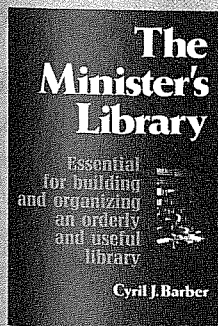
425pp., \$17.95

Vol. 2, 1972-1980, 1983

224pp., \$14.95

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As the title indicates, this is especially for pastors and Christian workers. The description on the dust cover says it all: "Essential for building and organizing an orderly and useful library." What the cover promises, the books deliver.



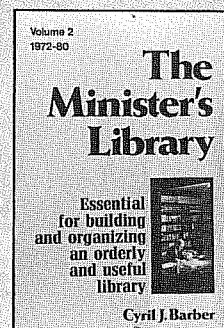
Volume 1 is set up in two parts:
1. How to Set Up Your Library, and
2. A Guide to Books for Your Library.
Those who have been around for some time are aware of the need for pastors and Christian workers to organize the books and materials they collect. In the days since World War II

there have been a number of suggestions for remedying this problem, from the simple single alphabet system to the more complicated systems such as Memory-O-Matic. In frustration, many pastors either arranged their books by color, order of purchase, size, or at random, trying to remember what was in them—or they simply gave up trying to organize the mess. The result was that most of the information in the minister's library was not used and remained inaccessible.

Barber has come to the minister's rescue by relying upon the time-tested Dewey Decimal System for the classification of the minister's books. Step by step Barber instructs the minister first in classifying his books and then in cataloging them. He recommends the purchase of library cards from the Library of Congress but also shows the minister what materials are needed, what information is necessary, and how information is to be placed on file cards should he elect to type his own, out of necessity or personal choice. The first part of the book concludes with a helpful Subject Guide to the Dewey Decimal Classification System.

In Part Two the books of general interest to ministers are classified into types (e.g., Bible Commentaries and General Reference Works, Old Testament, New Testament, Doctrinal Theology, etc.). The minister is then able to turn to the section in which he is interested and find each area further broken down into appropriate categories, with books listed alphabetically by author. The appropriate bibliographical data is given, together with a brief description of the contents and evaluation of the books. This information could be included on the contents section of the individual catalog card, if desired. Those works which the author regards as especially worthy of purchase are indicated with an as-

terisk (*). Books that espouse a viewpoint different from the Conservative, Evangelical viewpoint are marked with a dagger (†). Each category includes a number of other books helpful for a broader knowledge of the subject or worthy of purchase if the minister has additional funds available. Part Two of the book serves as a guide to what is available in a particular field, and as an evaluation of how the pastor might best spend his money.



Volume 2 is a follow-up to Barber's original 1974 publication. It follows the same format used in the earlier volume so the reader does not need to acquaint himself with either a new system of nomenclature or evaluation. One helpful improvement in the present volume is the attractively laid out table of contents which readily lends itself to rapidly locating books that have been written on a particular subject of interest. Volume 2 which collects the information that has appeared in supplements is helpful in its own right, but someone just beginning the process of organizing his library will find it necessary to acquire Volume 1 as well.

These books are a *must* for the minister who is serious about his library. Barber has provided tools that will help the pastor organize his library in a useful, efficient way and will guide him in his reading and future acquisitions.