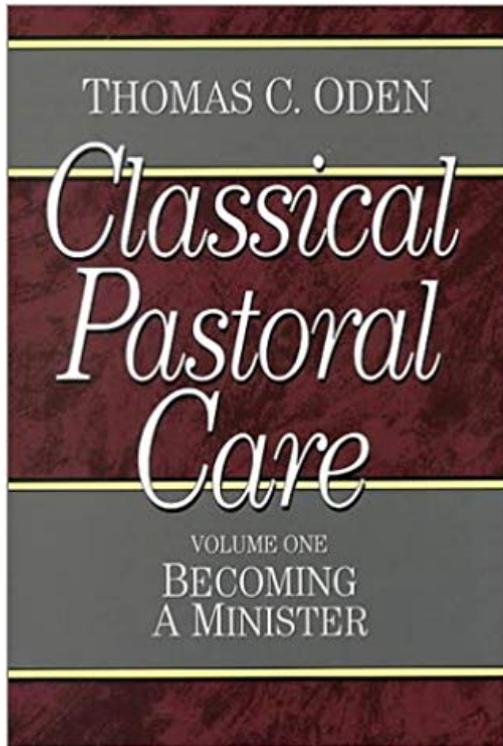


Classical Pastoral Care (4 Volume Set) by Thomas C. Oden



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This four-volume set provides a topical arrangement of passages from classic Christian writings offering guidance on all major topics of pastoral theology. Writings from more than two hundred notable Christian authors--from Abelard and Ambrose to Isaac Watts and Zwingli--are arranged in thirty topical sections. Volumes are available individually in addition to the four-volume set. Volume one, *Becoming a Minister*, is concerned with the person and self-understanding of the pastoral caregiver. Volume two, *Ministry through Word and Sacrament*, guides pastors in caring for other's health, their own health, and the life of the soul. Volume three, *Pastoral Counsel*, brings new perspective to the counseling ministry as pastors seek to help those who are hurting. Volume four, *Crisis Ministries*, addresses crucial situations in which pastors are often called to respond to urgent and specific challenges as they comfort those who suffer.



Reviews of the Classical Pastoral Care (4 Volume Set) by Thomas C. Oden

- Malien

Long out of print, this volume is one of four by the premier pastoral theologian of the past 50 years.

- **Adrielmeena**

Thomas Oden's Classical Pastoral Care series is a pastoral resource of the first order. I highly recommend it for all pastors as an essential foundation for the nature and scope of pastoral ministry, rooted in the wisdom of the Church of all ages and places. I'm using the first two volumes in a seminary course I'm teaching on The Cure of Souls (and would use the others if we had time). One of the values of the series is that it can be read sequentially or in small chunks depending on the particular need of the busy pastor. Perhaps most importantly, Oden has made the classical texts on pastoral ministry easily accessible to the modern pastor.

In each of the 4 volumes of the series, Oden discusses major areas of pastoral care in terms of what Christian pastors, priests, bishops, and theologians have said about pastoral care from the 1st century to around 1700. Because Oden is drawing from what has been the ecumenical consensus from all traditions - early church, Roman Catholic Church, Eastern Churches, Protestants, etc. - the wisdom found in each volume is, indeed, classical. Interspersed with the classical texts Oden provides his own commentary and introduction to the material.

Oden is right in his Introduction when he says that "pastoral care has often been practiced in our time with narrow unhistorical, or even anti-historical assumptions and prejudices." He's also correct when he reminds us that "the whole apparatus of commentary and scholarship has shown a bias in the direction of philosophical, exegetical, and doctrinal questions to the neglect of the practical care of souls." In order to correct these deficiencies, Oden presents an exemplary group of classic texts and writers to help shape the nature of pastoral ministry today.

The 4 volumes are presented in this order:

1. Becoming a Minister
2. Ministry Through Word and Sacrament
3. Pastoral Counsel
4. Crisis Ministries

Every pastor would benefit from reading these volumes and the deep and ancient wisdom embodied in them. They will help the pastor understand more clearly the noble nature of his calling as well as how to better prepare for this calling.

Because this series is so valuable, I find it unfortunate and inexplicable that it is, apparently, out of print.

- **Benn**

It's almost unfathomable to imagine the amount of tedious research that went into the development of Classical Pastoral Care. All four volumes are worth purchasing. But volume three, "Pastoral Counsel" is worth the price of the entire series. Here Oden collates amazingly relevant quotes from the halls of Church history, all demonstrating how God's people, pastoral and lay, men and women, have always ministered pastoral care one to another.

More than a history text, Oden's work is a counseling theory and training manual. As you read, you gain insight into how to apply Christ's truth to crushing suffering and horrific sin.

Reviewer: Robert W. Kellemen, Ph.D., is the author of Beyond the Suffering: Embracing the Legacy

of African American Soul Care and Spiritual Direction , Soul Physicians: A Theology of Soul Care And Spiritual Direction, Spiritual Friends: A Methodology of Soul Care And Spiritual Direction, "Biblical Psychology," and "Martin Luther's Pastoral Counseling."

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