

# Our Favorite Books: Most Recent Reads to Add to Your List

## Episode 226

Rachel Winchester [00:00:00]:

Making our children lovers of books is one of our passions here at Homeschool Made Simple. One way to encourage your child to love books is by enjoying them yourself. If you're looking for something to read, we've got you covered. You're listening to the Homeschool Made Simple podcast. This is a podcast to help you homeschool simply, inexpensively and enjoyably. Carole Joy Seid has been helping families homeschool for several decades now. And I'm Rachel Winchester, fellow homeschool mom and director of operations here at Homeschool Made Simple. Today, Carole and I share books we've been reading lately, and ones you'll want to read too. Listen in.

Rachel Winchester [00:00:36]:

Well, if you've been around for long, you know that we have a thing about books here. That's one of our obsessions. So Carole and I are going to talk about the books we've been reading lately and do a little back and forth sharing some of our favorites that we want you to know about as well.

Carole Joy Seid [00:00:57]:

Yes, ma'am. This is our favorite subject. Don't even get us started.

Rachel Winchester [00:01:03]:

Yeah. As we were about to start the episode, then Carole just walks around her house gathering. Well, I liked this one. I liked this one. No, people need to know about that one. So we may have opened a can of worms here, but we'll do the best we can.

Carole Joy Seid [00:01:20]:

Alright, miss Rachel. Let's get us started. So tell us what you're reading, Rach.

Rachel Winchester [00:01:25]:

Okay. So I have been on a little Edith Schaeffer kick lately.

Carole Joy Seid [00:01:29]:  
Me too. Me too.

Rachel Winchester [00:01:30]:  
Yep. Ever since March. And I guess March, I started or a couple months ago, I started *L'Abri*. I read before, but I wanted to reread it again. And it was so good. It's the story of the Schaeffer's ministry called L'Abri in Switzerland that they go to start, and it really just tells the story of L'Abri, their ministry in, like, the first 7 years, I think it is.

Carole Joy Seid [00:02:01]:  
Okay.

Rachel Winchester [00:02:01]:  
And, I just love it because going back through it the second time, I realized how much it had left an impression on me of just God's presence in our lives and really depending on him and seeing the way the things that they prayed about and the way that they really wanted God to be a present reality to them. And so they set their lives up so that they really were depending on God and not just kind of paying lip service to God in their life. And so I really love the story of that.

Carole Joy Seid [00:02:37]:  
Yes. So Edith wrote *L'Abri*. And then years later, she wrote *The Tapestry*, which is a story starting with the great grandparents of both she and Frances. And, that book is so thick.

Rachel Winchester [00:02:52]:  
I've been reading that one. You have? Yeah. It's over 600 pages long.

Carole Joy Seid [00:02:58]:  
I read it years ago. Isn't it wonderful? I love it. Edith was a wonderful writer. Very, very, idealistic, very creative, very personal.

Rachel Winchester [00:03:11]:  
She kind of meanders a little bit. And so sometimes, at first, her writing style kind of was a little bit difficult to me, but then I got into it. And I really enjoy it because I like how she brings in little threads

Carole Joy Seid [00:03:26]:  
Oh, yeah. So for those who are not familiar with the Schaeffers, Edith and Frances Schaeffer, started a ministry in Switzerland, right after World War 2 called L'abri, which

means the shelter in French. And, Edith wrote 20 some books, and Francis wrote, I think, close to 30 books. And so very prolific. They had a hospitality ministry in Weymouth, Switzerland. They have one also in England and several other places in the world, Minnesota, Rochester, Minnesota. So you want to read doctor Schaeffer's books, the God who is there, he is there and he is not silent. There's a trilogy, and they're on my handouts if you've been to my seminars.

And then Edith's books are also *What is a Family*, *The Hidden Art of Homemaking*, *Afflictions*. She wrote many books, and, she had a huge influence on my life as a young Christian. She was a huge role model for me and I had the pleasure of spending time with her twice before she died. That was a joy for me. So, yeah. Yeah. Anything by Edith, we can highly recommend.

Rachel Winchester [00:04:43]:  
Yes. Totally.

Carole Joy Seid [00:04:44]:  
Another woman that I think is a little there are some similarities. Her name is Lila Marie Lawler, and she wrote 3 books, called *Summa Domestica*, which is a take on, I think, who's the theologian who wrote *Summa Theologica*, which means everything theological. It wasn't Saint Augustine or was it? I can't remember remember who the who it was. But it's it's a famous theologian, and so she did it as kind of a tongue in cheek title, everything domestic. And she and her husband have, I think, what, Rachel, 7 or 8 kids? Yes. Something like that. And I just adore this woman.

And, one of my pastor's daughters, Madeline, who is, at St. Andrew's in Scotland marriage. She called me up, and she said, auntie Carol, you've got to read these books. And I, you've got to read these books. And I, ordered them, and she said, when I read them, I feel like I can hear your voice. And she said, you know, Lila is a Catholic, and so there are a couple things maybe that Madeline said she didn't agree with. I'm I'm not very far in. But so much of it, I am just clicking my heels with joy as I read about mothering and family life and, you know, and you're reading them as well.

First one is order and wonder in family life. I mean, how can you not love a book called order and wonder in family life? And the other 2 books are in the other room, so I don't have them in my hand. But tell me what's kinda grabbed you as you've been going through them.

Rachel Winchester [00:06:36]:

Yeah. She can be really kind of big in the idea, but then she also gets down into the practicals because especially when you're in the early years of home management and raising a family, it's like, what am I doing? Or how do I organize my home life? Or how do I feed all these people or keep the laundry clean and all those things. And she's very practical. She has some really practical, helpful things, and it's been tested. You know? It's not just this thing she did one time. It's she's been doing it for a long time, and it's been working for her family. They also had stuff about being frugal and, like, having a budget and Hospitality. It just covers the whole gamut.

Carole Joy Seid [00:07:28]:

I know. The whole life. Breastfeeding. Yeah. Feeding a toddler and bedtimes. And I mean, it's just like sitting with your grandmother and being mentored. And I just could eat her books up. I love them, and she's whimsical.

She's down to earth. She's one of these people who's like, oh, it's good enough. You know, she doesn't put these horrible expectations where you're just like, oh, how could I possibly fulfill this? So I love her. Yeah. Okay. Give me another book you're reading.

Rachel Winchester [00:08:02]:

So one I just finished up is by a guy named Greg McEwen. Okay. And, he wrote a book called *Essentialism*.

Carole Joy Seid [00:08:13]:

I've heard him Yes. I've heard him speak at a leadership conference. Yes. Talk about that.

Rachel Winchester [00:08:20]:

So he wrote *Essentialism*, which I got that from the library as well, but I also got his second book, *Effortless*, which is what I just read. And so he kind of defines effortless as the cross section between essential things that are done enjoyably.

And that that makes things effortless because he was running into, you know, just defining what's essential wasn't necessarily solving all the problems in his life. And really, he could still get caught up in the rat race of, you know, doing the most things and not keeping things simple, I guess.

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:03]:

Yes.

Rachel Winchester [00:09:03]:

And so I was really drawn to it because I can overcomplicate things very easily. And so I was interested in what he had to say about keeping things simple and making things effortless and asking questions like, what's the easiest way this could be done? Or, you know, how could this be enjoyable? Right. It doesn't have to be a slog. You know?

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:27]:

That's right. That's right. Mhmm. Oh, yeah. I really like that guy. He he's he's a keeper. He's British.

Rachel Winchester [00:09:33]:

Yes. Yes. He's British. And actually, the Matthew 11:28 verse is the inscription in the beginning of that effortless book. Oh. Yeah.

Carole Joy Seid [00:09:44]:

Well, no wonder we like him.

*\*ad\**

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Carole Joy Seid [00:10:20]:

Well, so as long as we're in Britain, let's stay in Britain for a minute. So J. J. and Kristen gave me this amazing book for Mother's Day called *Remaking the World: How 1776 Created the Post Christian West* by Andrew Wilson. And this is his newest book and it is brilliant. And he just talks about the age of reason and, of course, the age of reason was not biblically founded, and so how that has affected everything.

And, oh, this book, it's it's so readable. I'm also reading another book on of his on liturgy that I'm in love with. He's a professor at King's College in England, but what a great writer and, highly recommend *Remaking the World*.

And then I want to talk about, a book on nature that a young mom has written, a homeschool mom, called *Rooted in Wonder: Nurturing Your Family's Faith* through God's creation. Doesn't that just sound like a book I'd love? And this book is just right up my street as Cary Grant used to say. And I think anyone who loves nature and loves children will love her book.

Rachel Winchester [00:12:00]:

And she has a podcast called the Nat Theo podcast.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:05]:

And Say that again.

Rachel Winchester [00:12:07]:

Nat Theo.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:08]:

So nature and theology?

Rachel Winchester [00:12:10]:

Mhmm. And so nature lessons rooted in the bible. And so she answers questions like, can bees dance? Or how did God use math to create nature? Or why do sloths hang upside down? Or what is the difference between a turtle and tortoise? And so the whole thing is just about these different parts of creation and understanding them as God's creation.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:39]:

Oh, that sounds marvelous. Alright. Tell me what else you're reading.

Rachel Winchester [00:12:43]:

Well, then I have books that my family has been reading. So I just finished reading *Little Britches* by Ralph Moody with my kids.

Carole Joy Seid [00:12:52]:

You took the wind out of my sails. So I was just about to talk about it. So I Really? I can't believe that we're like minded. It it scares me. You truly are my spiritual daughter. Okay. Tell me.

Rachel Winchester [00:13:07]:

So I heard about this book for a long time, and then I finally got it for my son at his last birthday a month ago. And so then I would read it with my older 2 after they got up from rest, and we got into a little routine with it. And it was so good. They always wanted to read more even, like, both girl and boy. They both were so into it. And it started out with one of my scriptures for my life from Psalm 37, "Dwell in the land and befriend faithfulness." And the mom who is this, like, the spiritual anchor for their family, she quotes that when they're moving out west. And, yeah, it was just awesome.

We loved it, and we can't wait to read the next one.

Carole Joy Seid [00:13:59]:

Wow. We're on, book 3. Okay. And, so I took my 2 twin grandsons to Florida. This was their kind of, double digit birthday. They just turned 10, and I took their sister on a big trip when she was a little bit younger than they are. And so they were due for their trip, and the first thing I packed was one of the Ralph Moody books. Mhmm.

And we read it every day in Florida, and they were so into it. At one point, we were sitting at a little restaurant on the beach, and we ordered our food and they were sitting outside. It's just a little, like, surf shack kind of restaurant. And, the boys are like, did you bring the book? And I said, no. It's back in the car. And they're like, what? What? Like, even waiting for the food to come. We had to have the book. So I said, okay.

Well, you can take the keys and run back to on the beach and, oh, get, you know, get the book out of the car. So they ran up the beach, got the book, lot figured out how to lock it with a keyless lock, ran all the way back to the surf shack, and we read. They just couldn't get enough of these books. So they're written by Ralph Moody about his own childhood. And, I think I've purchased maybe 4 in the series, but they will change your children's lives. They're some of my favorite books I've ever read in my life. There is some harsh language in the books, and I have to give a disclaimer about that. But, if you can just ignore that and the nice thing about reading out loud is you can edit.

And you can, you know, kinda soften the language. But the language is rough because he is a cowboy and and it's true, but it's, you know, do we have to read that exact word?

Rachel Winchester [00:15:44]:

Right.

Carole Joy Seid [00:15:45]:  
No. We don't.

Rachel Winchester [00:15:46]:  
Yeah. Or like taking the Lord's name in vain.

Carole Joy Seid [00:15:52]:  
Oh, never. Over my dead body would I ever do that. Is there the Lord's name in vain in the book?

Rachel Winchester [00:15:59]:  
I think a couple times, maybe one of the cowboy figures. Yes. Not in the family. Like, the dad doesn't. Would never. Yeah. They're so dignified in their own family.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:12]:  
And godly.

Rachel Winchester [00:16:12]:  
But these people that he works for, they're rough people.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:15]:  
Yeah. That's right. So just to be prepared for that, but do not even think about reading these books. Yeah. You just have to edit.

Rachel Winchester [00:16:24]:  
Yes.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:25]:  
Well, I like to reread things that I've read before. So I'm rereading *The Hawk and the Dove* for the 90th time. I'm being a little hyperbolic.

Rachel Winchester [00:16:35]:  
Not you. I mean, no. Never.

Carole Joy Seid [00:16:37]:  
I would never be hyperbolic. *The Hawk and the Dove* by Penelope Wilcox, one of my top five of all books ever written. So it's worth reading over and over again.

And then I wanna talk about a book that will rock your lives. It's called *Theology of the Body for Beginners*, and it's written by Christopher West. And, people from all stripes



of, Christendom are reading this book and having their lives rocked. Have you read this, Rach?

Rachel Winchester [00:17:12]:

No, but you've told me about it and I'm feeling pressured to get it.

Carole Joy Seid [00:17:17]:

Yeah. You run, not walk to read this book. It's based on John Paul the second's theology of the body, which is extremely scholarly and intimidating. And so Christopher West wrote this book for people like you and I, Lehman, and it's on pope John Paul's the second sexual revolution. He and and when you read this book and the deep spiritual significance of being a celibate man writing about human sexuality in the most edifying, glorious way and, and equating it to Christ's love for the church and why human sexuality is so important and should be embraced, celebrated. It will just change your life. And I met a woman on the beach with 8. She had 7 children.

1 has gone to be with the Lord, but 8 boys, 8 boys, she was the most peaceful, calm, joyful mother of children I've ever met. And her husband was a bowl of fun. And, my kids got to know her kids, and they were all homeschool kids together at the beach off season when nobody else was there. But, you know, as soon as I sat down, she starts nursing her baby. We start talking and immediately she's we start talking about theology of the body and she we are both like, yes. Don't you love it? And just immediate kindred spirits with this book. It will change your outlook and perspective for the rest of your life. That's how good it is.

Rachel Winchester [00:19:03]:

Wow.

Carole Joy Seid [00:19:04]:

And then I went to one of my board members' houses and was staying there doing a seminar, and her just graduated from high school daughter had this book on her nightstand because her pastor, who's the brother of my pastor, had recommended it and she was reading it. And I'm just like, oh, I give up. I love it. I love it. What a perfect book to give to a teenager as they're making up their mind about their own personal sexuality and what that's gonna look like in their lives. Right.

Rachel Winchester [00:19:36]:

Yeah. I was thinking, is it accessible to younger people or is it more just appearing? To a teenager?

Carole Joy Seid [00:19:41]:

Yes. Yes. Great. Especially our teenagers that we mentor Right. Through our ministry because they are above and beyond. So tell me what else you're reading. You have some children's books?

Rachel Winchester [00:19:57]:

So my last book as far as chapter books that we've been reading was the family read aloud that we just finished is called *Mountain Born* by Elizabeth Yates.

Carole Joy Seid [00:20:09]:

Oh, I love Elizabeth Yates. Tell me more.

Rachel Winchester [00:20:11]:

It's about this. It's the first in a sequel in, like, a 2 part story. And it's about this boy, Peter, and his family, his parents and him and this older man, and they're shepherds, basically. And so it's just about their life on and this especially this one lamb that's born and how he takes care of it and how it grows up and the process of it, you know, growing into old age, basically.

Carole Joy Seid [00:20:46]:

And what's the title again?

Rachel Winchester [00:20:47]:

*Mountain Born*. So it's just really sweet. It's very like, it feels pastoral. You know, it's just like a very calming book. So it's very, very sweet, but we really enjoyed that. My husband really loved it.

Carole Joy Seid [00:21:03]:

Alright. I'm gonna give you 2 more. Okay. And, the first one is a book that I, Ruth Bell Graham, you know, is right next to Jesus in my heart. And, so I've discovered 2 little books that the Billy Graham Association created out of some of her writings and articles. *Letters from Ruth's Attic* and then *More Letters From Ruth's Attic*. And I have tracked them down and read, you know, some of these I'm very familiar with from excerpts from her other books. But a few things are kinda new and, you know, I read her over and over again.

And of course, I read *Legacy of a Pack Rat*. That book I have like intravenous needle into my arm from. She's such an influence in my in my soul. I can't even tell you.

And then the last book I wanna share is, not a Christian book by any stretch, but it's written by Amor Towles who wrote *A Gentleman in Moscow*, which is a book that I've read 3 times already. Again, not a Christian book, but a delightfully written book. And this is, his latest book *And I*, you know, it's it's more short story ish. There's a novella and then several short stories.

So it's not, there will never be another *Gentleman in Moscow*. So don't get your hopes set too high. But he's still, he's a very good writer and, anything he writes I'm interested in reading. And I've been told that *A Gentleman in Moscow* has been made into a mini series. I know it's on Paramount. I think it's also maybe on Hulu or whatever it's called.

So there are a couple of different ways that you could watch it, but I haven't seen it yet. But my friend highly recommended it. So she has very good taste, so I'm assuming it's well done.

Rachel Winchester [00:23:05]:  
Yeah. Great.

Carole Joy Seid [00:23:07]:  
So yeah. So I didn't really have any children's books to give you today, except for *Little Britches*, which you ruined my day by having pre-read. I can't believe and I was also reading *L'Abri*, and then you said you're reading *L'Abri*. Like, how random is that? I know. Yep. We're kindred spirits.

Rachel Winchester [00:23:26]:  
Same wavelength going on here.

Carole Joy Seid [00:23:28]:  
I know. I know. And I've been listening to *Anne of Green Gables* on audio. So kindred spiritness is always forefront in my mind.

Rachel Winchester [00:23:37]:  
Well, it's always fun to go through a stack of books. And I know that's what I do when I come to your house is I just go around and look and see what's new and if there's anything worth reading or anything.

Carole Joy Seid [00:23:50]:  
You can always steal you can always steal books. I know. The book situation is out of control. It's out of control. So one day I thought I'm gonna I've gotta shelve all these

books because now there's just stacks everywhere. So I took like hours shelving and crunching. And then I put books up in my grandchildren's bedrooms because there's shelves up there. I'm like, I gotta utilize more shelves.

And those I had, you know, toys and other stuff up there. Yeah. I moved everything aside. I'm cramming books up in their room. Like, it's out of control.

Rachel Winchester [00:24:21]:

Yep. Desperate times. Actually, on this topic, I will ask you, is there a certain way that you organize your books? Because sometimes people want to know about this.

Carole Joy Seid [00:24:30]:

Yes. I do. So I have all my art books together, you know, famous artists, things like that, design books, anything like that. I have books on nature all on a shelf. I have tons of biographies. So I have an entire bookshelf just of biographies. And then that is overflowing where I have 2 layers of books on each shelf. So now I've had to go to some more shelves for more biographies.

Then I have a section on history. Then I have children's classics. That's a whole separate bookcase of its own. Then picture books, another whole area of books. Then I have, like, books for information, like books on homeschooling and on liter you know, books on literature and things like that. Those are some shelves. I'm trying to picture my bookshelves and where yes. So definitely oh, classics.

So I have, you know, adult classics, multiple shelves on those, really nice additions of of classic books. What am I leaving out? And then a whole shelf of nothing but just bibles. And then I have shelves of theology books, you know, bible study aids, things like that, and then other Christian books, So books for information. Oh, and the the book that I wanted to talk about, I forgot to mention. Well, it's in the other room and I won't waste our time. But next time, I will talk about these 2 books by this man that I'm in love with his books, talking about a rule of life. So stay tuned for the next time and we'll talk about his 2 books, which I've listened to on audio and they are life changing books. So we'll talk about this.

Twist my arm. I'll talk about books anytime you want.

Rachel Winchester [00:26:29]:

Until next time.