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Cepero's "Christ-Shaped Character: Choosing Love, Faith and Hope" (Book Review)

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U.S. and then gives a summary of biblical teaching about the goodness of wealth, sins concerning wealth, giving of wealth, and the importance of stewardship of wealth. The chapters in this second section are helpful but are tedious to read. In the last part of the book (the most practical part), Blomberg discusses the stewardship of wealth to individuals, governments, and churches and makes use of case studies and a question-and-answer format. "Government and Business as Stewards?" is the most controversial chapter, because the author evaluates capitalism and socialism in the light of the Bible and takes a medium position. All but the first chapter conclude with questions for reflection and discussion, such as, "Are there any areas of your life in which God might want you to enjoy his good, material gifts where you have been reluctant to accept them?" and "How do you react to the case study presented at the beginning and end of this chapter? Did Generic Suburban Church do anything wrong?" The author offers footnotes on most pages of this thought-provoking book, quotes on many pages, and scripture, subject, and author indexes at the back. Although too long for group Bible study, this book could be very helpful for pastors and Bible teachers who teach about stewardship.

Christ-Shaped Character: Choosing Love, Faith and Hope,

by Helen Cepero. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2014. 181 pp. \$14.50.

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This readable and well-organized book provides instruction and inspiration to those who wish to more closely pattern their lives after the model provided by Christ, as illuminated in scripture. Cepero, a previously-published author, adjunct instructor, and retreat leader describes nine spiritual disciplines using illustrations from her life experiences, as well as relevant scriptural passages, and provides useful interpretation and suggestions for application. The book is organized into three sections, each containing three chapters: Part One: Choosing Love (Choosing Life, Compassionate Hospitality, and Forgiving as We Are Forgiven); Part Two: Choosing Faith (Following Jesus, Embracing Vulnerability, and Living with Integrity); and Part Three: Choosing Hope (Paying Attention, Seeing Blessing, and Trusting Christ). The illustrations are memorable and poignant, and the suggestions for practical application, including various forms of prayer, are scripturally sound and valuable. Each chapter ends with a summary; thus, while this book will be profitable to the individual reader, it has been formatted in a manner that enhances its value to book clubs and small groups. Suggestions for further reading at the end of each chapter lead the reader to additional resources. This book is written in a non-technical fashion, and thus is highly recommended for public and academic library collections.