



***A free downloadable and printable guide  
to well-recommended commentaries on the Bible***

*Edited and compiled by Mark Roberts*

# The Commended Commentary List

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2015 edition

*Edited and compiled by Mark Roberts*

# Introduction

One of the most common question preachers are asked is “I need a commentary on [insert book of the Bible]. Which one should I buy?” Its close companion is “Which commentary set should I buy?” Both of these queries, of course, are very good questions. They come from a desire to learn and better understand God’s Word. Often times someone is trying to prepare to teach a Bible class, which makes a good answer all the more important because the students in that class need a well prepared teacher.

However, few are the individuals who have a command of all the vast amount of material being written on the Bible. New commentaries are constantly appearing. Self-publishing and e-publishing mean that any writer can also be his own publisher. Thus, we live in a time where there are more commentaries readily available than ever before. All of this means that the task of choosing well has never been more difficult.

The Commended Commentary list seeks to address and help that problem. It represents the results of a simple survey of many good brethren who are careful students of God’s Word. A university degree was not a requirement to contribute to the survey. However, a reputation for healthy and vigorous Bible study combined with an appreciation for the value of Scripture as practically applied to life today is what brought the men who’s names are listed below to the project. Each one of them has helped us all, and for this we should be grateful.

A few further notes on what this survey is about and we will get to the list itself. First, a word about this business of “I don’t use commentaries.” This attitude, usually presented in a “I’m so much more spiritual than you” sort of way is not only annoying it is precisely the opposite of the attitude that those who seek Truth should have. Warren Berkley has written further on this - see Appendix A. Suffice it to say here that it is a wonder that anyone who preaches and teaches (thus offering a verbal commentary to his listeners on the meaning and application of Scripture) should turn his nose up at the very same thing simply because it is in print! If someone knows something about the original languages of Scripture, the customs of the times, the history of the cultures or the meaning of the text shouldn’t those who want the Truth be eager and interested to see what that person knows? Let’s be blunt: ignorance isn’t a virtue, shouldn’t be celebrated, and certainly should not be bragged on!

Secondly, it is important to understand what is not here. There is no blanket recommendation of a set of commentaries. Such is impossible. Commentary sets vary in quality. Invariably some of the volumes are good and others are simply not as good. Even when an entire set is done by one author it is typical to find good work on one book of the Bible and work that is not as good in other books. If you are looking to buy one commentary set and be done with it you are either very naive about the nature of commentaries (read on, my friend!) or about to be sadly disappointed in this list. We cannot recommend any one set of commentaries.

Further, it is vital that all understand that we cannot recommend any commentary as being absolutely right on every point and issue. Brethren often seek to read something from the pen of a brother because they do not want to be bothered sorting through Calvinism, Pentecostalism or other false doctrines. That is, in many ways, commendable. Why read chaff? *Let's get to the wheat!* However, even in material written by faithful brethren there will be matters of disagreement. In short, there is no book but God's Book which we can open without any fear of error. Indeed, it is a genuine concern that someone might find that a commentary is written by a brother and thus decide to swallow everything therein without a second thought. God forbid! The spirit of the Bereans applied to the preaching of an inspired apostle (Acts 17:11) and should surely be ruthlessly applied to anything written by uninspired men. Again, while appreciating the desire to read from brethren who believe and practice the truth we cannot ever treat any commentary as if it is on par with Scripture. *Never!*

Just to make sure the point is clearly made: no commentary on this list, no matter how highly commended, is recommended as free from error. Every book authored by any one today comes from a fallible writer who can and does make mistakes. Thus, you will find in the survey books that accept a variety of errors, on the inspiration of Scripture, eschatology, the Holy Spirit and more. "How can such be on the list?" someone gasps. However, as one survey noted "I would recommend \_\_\_\_\_, even if one disagrees with him. That's part of the point of the activity, isn't it?" Indeed! Good Bible study means being challenged to think and re-think our conclusions and ideas. So there will be books on this list that force you to do that. Further, they make this list because those who were surveyed believed there was more wheat than some (very objectionable) chaff, and that the reader could be expected to separate the good from the bad. To paraphrase bad Latin, *caveat reader!*

So what is here? How do I make the best use of this survey? What you will read below is a compilation of the top recommended commentaries for each book of the Bible, as divided into three categories. **These categories are important.** Asking "What commentary should I buy?" is like asking "Which gun should I buy?" Immediately one would respond with "What will you use the gun for?" What would be recommended to hunt elephants would be quite different than what would be recommended for personal defense! In the same way, the purpose for which one is studying is crucial in deciding which commentary to buy. It would be easy to recommend the most advanced, high-end commentary and be done with it. After all, if you burrow all the way through the hundreds of pages covering original language, translation issues, form and structure matters, interpretation and commentary on every phrase of every verse as found in a typical advanced commentary then somewhere in there what one needs to know ought to be covered! But who has time for that? If all one wants is a concise summary of the material in a chapter to consult for a moment in conjunction with daily Bible reading then a highly technical commentary is not the best recommendation, is it?

With this in mind, we have divided the recommendations into three categories:

### ***Devotional Commentaries***

These are the simplest commentaries. Their purpose is to familiarize the student with the text in a very basic and rudimentary fashion. Usually these commentaries are shorter. Their comments are brief and do not treat every aspect or question that might arise from the text.

Please note: it is not a criticism of commentary to list it as “devotional.” There is a need for these commentaries and they most certainly have their place. However, it is fair to note that reading a devotional commentary will not adequately prepare the teacher for a typical adult Bible class.

A good example of a devotional commentary would be Warren Wiersbe’s *Be Series*. The Restoration Library’s *Gospel Light* series would probably fit in this category as well. *The Preacher’s Commentary* series (Lloyd J. Oglivie, editor) features books that are not short by any means, but it is still very much a basic, devotional commentary. William Barclay’s famous *Daily Study Bible* series fits here as well.

### ***Standard Commentaries***

These commentaries have more depth than devotional commentaries. They will be lengthier to read. This brings the opportunity to present more information to the student. Occasionally more advanced material will be introduced, such as form and structure matters or linguistics. Some textual matters will be addressed in higher end versions of these commentaries (with the better ones covering more than just obvious matters, like the end of Mark 16 or the questions about the text of John 8 and the woman taken in adultery). These commentaries typically contain an introduction to the book of the Bible they are covering, assembling essential information necessary to begin a study of that book (date of writing, purposes, themes, etc.) in one place.

A good example of this kind of commentary would be *The College Press NIV Commentary* series. Among older series *Barnes’ Notes* fits here. Note that these books are usually longer, but there are exceptions. The *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary* series is a good example of a set that is a quick read but that treats the text surprisingly thoroughly.

A teacher who is seeking to prepare for an adult Bible class would certainly want to read something in this category as a beginning point for class preparation. Preaching an expository sermon from the text would demand at least a beginning here as well.

### ***Advanced Commentaries***

These works seek to acquaint the student with the more advanced issues in the text. Translation questions, original language matters, form and structure (like chiasm) are all “standard equipment” in these commentaries. Commentaries in this category are definitely for those who want to become intimately familiar with the text. However, with advanced scholarship also comes advanced vocabulary (example: *setz im*

*leben*) and often a willingness to entertain questions about a book of the Bible being compiled or redacted by many authors, are miracles authentic, etc. Advanced commentaries seek to interact with the text at every level, from translation to overall structure to purpose for writing and even advanced textual criticism matters. These commentaries can be exhausting, both in their treatment of the text and for the reader to complete.

A good example of this kind of commentary would be the *Word Biblical* series and the *New International Commentary on the Old Testament (NICOT)* and the *New International Commentary on the New Testament (NICNT)*.

Ideally, a Bible class teacher wanting to be thoroughly prepared to teach or preach from a text of Scripture would want to consult at least one of these kind of works. Some advanced commentaries are more accessible than others. The survey will make note of these.

Those are the categories. Below are the commentaries that a number of men believed they could recommend to fit the reader's needs in each category.

Please note that not every book of the Bible has recommendations in all three categories. That is the nature of this survey. Such doesn't necessarily mean there isn't a good commentary for that book. It simply means there was not enough consensus to name a commentary as "the one." The commentaries listed below made it to the list by being recommended by several surveys, not just one.

As a final note, certainly some will check this list and not find their favorite commentary on it. What to do? Simply email the title, where to buy it, how much it costs and why you are certain it must be included in the survey. The plan is to update the survey every five years and so your submissions and suggestions are sought and will be most helpful to us all.

Thank you for your interest in knowing God's Word better. It is my hope that you will be thankful to the good men who have helped us all by pointing the way to study materials that enlighten us in the Scriptures so that we can do God's will. May these recommended books help us do exactly that.

Mark Roberts, Editor

# Survey Participants

Listed alphabetically. My thanks and gratitude go out to each of them. Without men willing to take the time to fill out the survey the project would never have come to fruition. These men are dedicated Bible students and want you to be one as well.

David Banning  
Warren Berkley  
Russ Bowman  
Ryan Boyer  
Luke Chandler  
Tack Chumbley  
Josh Creel  
Gary Fisher  
Bubba Garner  
Randy Harshbarger  
Kevin Kay  
Brent Kercheville  
Tony Mauck  
Leon Mauldin

Seth Mauldin  
Brent Moody  
Tommy Peeler  
Kyle Pope  
David Pratte  
Mark Roberts  
Bill Robinson  
Shane Scott  
Roger Shouse  
Terry Slack  
Ralph Walker  
Nathan Ward  
Mike Wilson  
Steve Wolfgang

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*Commended Commentaries:*

# **Old Testament**



*Commended Commentaries:*

# Old Testament

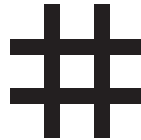
Please note that not every book of the Bible has a listing in all three categories. This does not necessarily mean there isn't a good commentary for that book. It simply means there was not enough consensus to list a commentary. There were many other commentaries submitted by the panel that are not mentioned here because commended works had to appear on several surveys, not just one.

Within types commentaries are listed in no particular order. Comments are from the surveys.

Key:



Associated with  
non-institutional  
churches of  
Christ



Associated with  
mainstream  
churches of  
Christ



Consensus Pick:  
A must-have  
book

## GENESIS

### *Standard*



Ward, Nathan. *The Growth of the Seed: Notes on the Book of Genesis*. Chillicothe, OH: DeWard Publishing, 2007.

*While certainly not rudimentary, one reviewer noted it is the kind of book anyone can pick up and benefit from.*

Ross, Allen P. *Creation and Blessing: A Guide to the Study and Exposition of the Book of Genesis*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1998.

*One survey said "Because of the way it is laid out it is an excellent help for both sermon preparation and Bible class."*

Kidner, Derek. *Genesis: An Introduction and Commentary*. London: Tyndale, 1971.

*This was almost a consensus pick. Kidner is excellent and his works are commended everywhere on this list.*

## *Advanced*

Wenham, Gordon. *Genesis - Volumes 1 and 2*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

Waltke, Bruce K., and Cathi J. Fredricks. *Genesis: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

## *Additional Recommended Resources*

Clines, David J.A. *Theme of the Pentateuch*. London: Continuum, 2001.

Longman, Tremper. *How to Read Genesis*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2005.

*The comment one writer made was "Not everyone will agree with every position Dr. Longman takes, but it is a very readable, helpful introduction to the book as a whole."*

Alter, Robert. *Genesis*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1996.

*Alter is a Hebrew literary scholar, not a Bible scholar, who provides notes about how he translates the O.T. One survey noted this can be a valuable resource "since much word play gets overlooked in typical English translations."*

Steinmann, Andrew. *From Abraham to Paul: A Biblical Chronology*. St. Louis, MO: Concordia Pub. House, 2011.

*Steinmann's work is very expensive but came very highly recommended as the resource on working out biblical dating matters. One survey said "But his is now the go-to book on Biblical chronology, and it's also an extremely valuable book in defending the integrity of the historical record from a chronological perspective. It is very well researched, up-to-date, and user-friendly – a must-have for anyone truly interested in the subject (even if it's expensive)."*

## **EXODUS**

### *Standard*

Davis, John James. *Moses and the Gods of Egypt: Studies in Exodus*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1986.

*One noted "An excellent study with thoughts I've found no where else."*

## **LEVITICUS**

### *Standard*

Ross, Allen P. *Holiness to the Lord: A Guide to the Exposition of the Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

Wenham, Gordon J. *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Leviticus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1979.

Advanced

Hartley, John E. *Word Biblical Commentary: Leviticus*. Dallas, TX: Word, 1992.

## NUMBERS

*Devotional*

Brown, Raymond. *The Message of Numbers: Journey to the Promised Land*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002.

*One survey said "Brown's outlining of each section of the text lends itself to expository preaching."*

*Advanced*

Ashley, Timothy R. *New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Numbers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993.

Sarna, Nahum M., and Jacob Milgrom. *The JPS Torah Commentary: The Traditional Hebrew Text with the New JPS Translation*. Philadelphia: Jewish Publ. Soc., 1990.

*A comment on Milgrom was "A lack of expertise in Hebrew does not prevent students from gaining much. Interesting from cover to cover."*

## DEUTERONOMY

*Standard*

Block, Daniel Issac. *NIV Application Commentary: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life: Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

*Advanced*

Craigie, Peter C. *The Book of Deuteronomy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976.

## JOSHUA

*Standard*

Davis, Dale Ralph. *Focus on the Bible Commentary Series - Joshua: No Falling Words*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2000.

*One said "These commentaries are written in a clear, easily understood style."*

*Scholarly in comment, practical in nature ... these commentaries are 'exciting' to read. You will be eager in Bible class to share you knowledge."*

Hess, Richard S. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary Series: Joshua: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.

## **JUDGES**

### *Standard*

Block, Daniel Isaac. *The New American Commentary: Judges, Ruth*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1999.

*A survey said "I found Block's commentary because every other commentary I was using kept referring to it. It was far and away the best overall commentary I encountered."*

## **RUTH**

### *Devotional*

James, Carolyn Custis. *Gospel of Ruth: Loving God Enough to Break the Rules*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Duguid, Iain M. *Esther and Ruth (Reformed Expository Commentary)*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005.

### *Standard*

Block, Daniel Isaac. *The New American Commentary: Judges, Ruth*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1999.

*A survey said "I found Block's commentary because every other commentary I was using kept referring to it. It was far and away the best overall commentary I encountered."*

Hubbard, Robert L. *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Ruth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.

## **1 and 2 SAMUEL**

### *Standard*

Davis, Dale Ralph. *Focus on the Bible Commentary Series - 1 Samuel: Looking on the Heart*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2007.

Davis, Dale Ralph. *Focus on the Bible Commentary Series - 2 Samuel: Out of Every Adversity*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2010.

Waldron, Bob. *Truth Commentary Series - The Books of 1 and 2 Samuel*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation, 2011.

## **1 and 2 KINGS**

### *Standard*

Davis, Dale Ralph. *Focus on the Bible Commentary Series - 1 Kings: The Wisdom and the Folly*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2009.

Davis, Dale Ralph. *Focus on the Bible Commentary Series - 2 Kings: The Power and the Fury*. Fearn: Christian Focus, 2011.

Provan, Iaian W. *New International Biblical Commentary -1 and 2 Kings*. Peabody, MA.: Hendrickson, 1995.

### *Additional resource:*

Thiele, Edwin. *The Mysterious Numbers of the Hebrew Kings*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic & Professional, 1994, reprint.

*In recommending this resource this thought was offered: "Though this is not really commentary, it is very helpful in working out the chronological difficulties of the Divided Kingdom." See also the recommendation under Genesis for an additional book on biblical chronology.*

## **1 and 2 CHRONICLES**

### *Standard*

Hicks, John Mark. *College Press NIV Commentary Series: 1 & 2 Chronicles*. Joplin, MO: College Pub., 2001.

## **EZRA**

### *Standard*

Kidner, Derek. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2009.

## NEHEMIAH

### *Devotional*

Swindoll, Charles R. *Hand Me Another Brick*. Nashville: T. Nelson, 1978.

### *Standard*

Kidner, Derek. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - Ezra and Nehemiah: An Introduction and Commentary*. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2009.

## ESTHER

### *Devotional*

Duguid, Iain M. *Esther and Ruth (Reformed Expository Commentary)*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2005

### *Standard*

Firth, David G. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of Esther: God Present but Unseen*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 2010.

Baldwin, Joyce G., and Donald J. Wiseman. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries: Esther: An Introduction and Commentary*. London, Downer's Grove, ILL: Intervarsity, 1984.

## JOB

### *Standard*

Hailey, Homer. *A Commentary on Job*. Louisville, KY: Religious Supply, Inc, 1994.  
*This was by far and away a consensus choice on Job.*

*(Not nearly the support Hailey received but some still notable):*

Hooks, Stephen M. *College Press NIV Commentary - Job*. Joplin, MS: College Pub., 2006.

Alden, Robert L. *The New American Commentary: Job*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1993.



*Additional resources:*

Bullock, C. Hassell. *An Introduction to the Old Testament Poetic Books*. Chicago: Moody, 1988

## **PSALMS**

### *Devotional*

Lewis, C. S. *Reflections on the Psalms*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1958.  
*Simply a classic. Not to be missed.*

### *Standard*

Craigie, Peter C., and Marvin E. Tate. *WBC: Volume 19, Psalms 1-50*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

*The three volumes in the Word Biblical Commentary series are well recommended. Craigie passed away before the series was completed.*

Tate, Marvin. *WBC: Vol. 20, Psalms 51-100*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

Allen, Leslie C. *WBC: Vol. 21, Psalms 101-150*. Allen, Leslie C. *Psalms 101-150 (Revised)*. Vol. 21. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2002.

Derek Kidner, *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - Psalms*. Two volumes. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2009.

### *Additional Resources:*

Longman, Tremper. *How to Read the Psalms*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1988.  
*This is just an indispensable help for preaching and teaching from the psalms.*

## **PROVERBS**

### *Devotional*

Wilson, Mike. *Biblical Secrets of Success: Wisdom from Proverbs*. The Posey-Wilson Publishing Group, 2014.

### *Standard*

Kidner, Derek. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentaries - Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary*. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2008.



Kitchen, John A. *Proverbs: A Mentor Commentary*. Fearn, Ross-shire: Mentor, 2006.  
*One survey noted "Kitchen's is one of the best commentaries on any book, very applicable, insightful, and readable."*

### *Advanced*

Murphy, Rowland E. *Word Biblical Commentary - Proverbs. Vol. 22*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

### *Additional Resources*

Zuck, Roy B. *Learning from the Sages: Selected Studies on the Book of Proverbs*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1995.

*One noted "A comprehensive volume that contains scholarly articles about all chapters in Proverbs. Introductory articles provide good background material."*

## **ECCLESIASTES**

### *Devotional*

Swindoll, Charles R. *Living on the Ragged Edge: Coming to Terms with Reality*. Waco, TX: Word, 1985.

### *Standard*

Kidner, Derek. *The Bible Speaks Today - The Message of Ecclesiastes: A Time to Mourn, and a Time to Dance*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1989.

*A consensus pick by far. One survey remarked "I've never read anyone who can say more in fewer words than Derek Kidner and that is on full display in his Ecclesiastes volume. It may be the best volume on the book and is only 100 pages."*

Provan, Iain W. *The NIV Application Commentary Series - Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

## **SONG OF SOLOMON**

### *Devotional*

Glickman, S. Craig. *A Song for Lovers: Including a New Paraphrase and a New Translation of the Song of Solomon*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1976.

### *Standard*





Garrett, Duane A. *New American Commentary: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs*. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993.

Provan, Iain W. *The NIV Application Commentary Series - Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs: From Biblical Text ... to Contemporary Life*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

*Advanced*

Hess, Richard S. *Baker Commentary on the Old Testament Wisdom and Psalms - Song of Songs*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

## ISAIAH

*Standard*



Hailey, Homer. *A Commentary on Isaiah: With Emphasis on the Messianic Hope*. Louisville, KY: Religious Supply, Inc, 1992.

*This was an absolute consensus pick. Not to be missed.*



McGuiggan, Jim. *The Book of Isaiah*. Lubbock, TX: Montex Pub., 1985.

*Advanced*



Motyer, J. Alec. *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction & Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.

*This was another consensus pick for Isaiah.*

## JEREMIAH

*Devotional*



Mott, L.A. *Thinking Through Jeremiah*. Chillicothe, OH: DeWard Publishing, 2009.

*Standard*

Longman, Tremper. *Understanding the Bible Commentary Series: Jeremiah, Lamentations*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2012.

Humphries, John. *Truth Commentaries: Jeremiah and Lamentations*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth. 2003.

Kidner, Derek. *The Bible Speaks Today Series: The Message of Jeremiah: Against Wind and Tide*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1987.

*Advanced*

Thompson, J. A. *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Book of Jeremiah*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1980.

## LAMENTATIONS

*See other recommended works that contain Lamentations as well.*

## EZEKIEL

*Standard*

McGuiggan, Jim. *The Book of Ezekiel*. Lubbock, TX: International Biblical Resource, 1979.

Allen, Leslie C. *Word Biblical Commentary*. Ezekiel. Vols. 28-29. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

*Advanced*

Block, Daniel Isaac. *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament. The Book of Ezekiel: 2 volumes*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997.

## DANIEL

*Standard*

Baldwin, Joyce G. *Tyndale Old Testament Commentary Series - Daniel: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity, 1978.

*One said "Baldwin's work, in my opinion, is probably the best concise treatment of Daniel available. She is a very good scholar."*

McGuiggan, Jim. *Looking into the Bible series: Daniel*. Montex Publishing Company, 1978.

*Though not a consensus pick, this work was heavily recommended.*

*Advanced*

Young, Edward J. *The Prophecy of Daniel: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1977.

## **MINOR PROPHETS**

*Unfortunately, it is very tough to get consensus on the Minor Prophets because often an individual book is dealt with in a collection. If the rest of the collection is poor then one stand out may not be noticed. Here are some that are recommended.*

Hailey, Homer. *A Commentary on the Minor Prophets*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1972.

*This is the starting point for Minor Prophet studies. This book was very heavily recommended.*

Kidner, Derek. *The Bible Speaks Today - Love to the Loveless: The Message of Hosea*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1981.

Waltke, Bruce K. *A Commentary on Micah*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007.

Baldwin, Joyce G. *The Tyndale Old Testament series - Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: Inter-varsity, 1972.

Motyer, J. A. *The Bible Speaks Today - The Message of Amos: The Day of the Lion*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1988.

Robertson, O. Palmer. *The New International Commentary on the Old Testament: The Books of Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990.

*Commended Commentaries:*

# **New Testament**

*Commended Commentaries:*

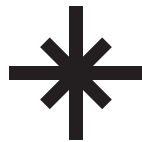
# New Testament

The reader will note more recommendations here than in the Old Testament. There simply is more writing about the New Testament, especially among brethren. The attempt here is to give you the choices that the respondents thought merited your confidence without editing or trimming them down too much.

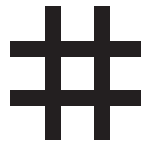
Please note that not every book of the Bible has a listing in all three categories. This does not necessarily mean there isn't a good commentary for that book. It simply means there was not enough consensus to list a commentary. There were many other commentaries submitted by the panel that are not mentioned here because commended works had to appear on several surveys, not just one.

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Key:



Associated with  
non-institutional  
churches of  
Christ



Associated with  
mainstream  
churches of  
Christ



Consensus Pick:  
A must-have  
book

## MATTHEW

### *Devotional*



Lewis, Jack. *The Living Word Commentary: Matthew*. Austin: Sweet Publishing, 1976.  
*It was noted that Lewis gives excellent documentation if a student wished to pursue things further, and that he was easy to read and summarizes well.*

Barclay, William. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1975.

Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Loyal*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1980.

## Standard



Chumbley, Kenneth. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Nashville: Self-published, 1999.  
*A no question, consensus pick. One said "Every preacher should have a copy of Chumbley's work; absolutely my favorite."*

Carson, D. A. *The Expositor's Bible Commentary Series: Matthew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1995.

Blomberg, Craig L. *The New American Commentary*. Nashville: Broadman, 1992.

## Advanced



Pope, Kyle. *The Gospel According to Matthew*. Athens, AL: CEI Books, 2013.

France, R.T. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Matthew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publication Co., 2007.

## MARK

### Devotional

Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Diligent*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1987.

Garland, David E. *The NIV Application Commentary - Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Pub. House, 1996.

### Standard



Stauffer, L. A. *Truth Commentaries - Mark*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation, 1999.

Black, Allen. *The College Press NIV Commentary - Mark*. Joplin, MO: College Press, 1995.

Morgan, G. Campbell. *The Gospel According to Mark*. New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1927.

### Advanced

Lane, William. *New International Commentary on the New Testament - The Gospel according to Mark*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974.

## LUKE

### *Devotional*

Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Compassionate*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1988.

### *Standard*

Morris, Leon. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Luke*. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2008.



Caldwell, Colly. *Truth Commentaries - Luke*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation, 2012.

### *Advanced*



Darrell Bock. *Baker Exegetical Commentaries - Luke*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994.

*Bock was a landslide choice here. His work is considered a must have. One survey noted that as a bonus he answers the Jesus Seminar nonsense particularly well. He is also the author of the NIV Application Commentary on Luke, a series that is not as advanced as the Baker Advanced Exegetical Series so it might provide an opportunity to read after Bock without quite so much detail. That said, if at all possible get the BEC version. He is one of the pre-eminent Lukan scholars in the world and well worth reading after.*

## JOHN

### *Devotional*



Hailey, Homer. *That You May Believe; Studies in the Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1973.

### *Standard*

Tenney, Merrell. *The Gospel of Belief*. Eerdmans. 1948.

*One survey noted "This old standard has stood the test of time. There is not another book that outlines the intent of John's gospel better than Tenney's work."*

Bruce, F. F. *The Gospel of John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Pub., 1983

## Advanced



Carson, D.A. *Pillar New Testament Commentary: The Gospel according to John*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1991.

Morris, Leon. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel according to John*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

## ACTS

### Devotional

Stott, John. *The Bible Speaks Today Series - The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church & the World*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

### Standard



McGarvey, J. W. *New Commentary on Acts of Apostles*. Cincinnati: Standard Pub., 1892.  
*One noted "Still holding its own pretty well, after all these years. Definitely not the final word on Acts, given its age, but a good starting point." Note: electronic version for Kindle available from Amazon for \$0.99. That would make this commentary the best buy in the entire survey!*



Jackson, Wayne. *Acts of the Apostles: From Jerusalem to Rome*. Stockton, CA: Christian Courier Publishers, 2005.

Bruce, F.F. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - The Book of the Acts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1988.

### Advanced

Ben Witherington, *Acts: A Social-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. 1998.

### Additional Resources

Conybeare, W.J. and Howson, J.S. *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*. New York: Longmans, Green, and Co. 1898.

*This is an astonishing and fabulous work, especially considering its age. Conybeare and Howson cover nearly everything surrounding the life and work of the apostle Paul. This includes extensive information about the New Testament world and its politics, geography and more. They formulate a harmony of Paul's life, inserting the epistles where they are needed in the account of Acts. Can be found at used book stores for little and is just a joy to read and an invaluable resource.*



## ROMANS

### *Standard*

Jack Cottrell. *College Press NIV Commentary series - Romans. Vols. 1-2.* Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 1996.

*One writer said "This work is simply outstanding. Cottrell is an excellent writer who reasons and writes well. Makes Romans easier."*



Robert F. Turner. *Reading Romans.* Temple Terrace, FL: Florida College, 1995.

*One survey noted "Turner's book is concise and brief (like all his writing) and directly to the point. Extremely helpful."*



Jim McGuiggan. *Looking into the Bible series - The Book of Romans.* Lubbock, TX: Montex, 1982.

*A comment on McGuiggan was he is "essential on chs. 9-11."*



Whiteside, R. L. *A New Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Saints at Rome.* Clifton, TX: Mrs. C.R. Nichol, 1945.

### *Advanced*

Moo, Douglas J. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - The Epistle to the Romans.* Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub., 1996

Dunn, James D. G. *Word Biblical Commentary: Romans 1-8. Vol. 38A - 38B.* Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

*Notes: The New Perspective on Paul has radically affected the landscape of work on Romans. Better works will interact with these new ideas that should be considered in our study. The real trouble here is that most anything not written by brethren will reflect Calvinism. Cottrell is an outstanding scholar associated with Christian churches so his work is relatively free on Calvin's doctrines.*

## 1-2 CORINTHIANS

### *Devotional*

Morgan, G. Campbell. *The Corinthian Letters of Paul: An Exposition of I and II Corinthians.* New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1946.

### *Standard*



Willis, Mike. *Guardian of Truth series - First Corinthians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 1994.

Morris, Leon. *Tyndale New Testament Commentary series - 1 Corinthians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2008.

Oster, Richard. *The College Press NIV Commentary - 1 Corinthians*. Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 1995.



Curry, Melvin. *Guardian of Truth commentary series - 2 Corinthians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 2008.

### *Advanced*

Fee, Gordon D. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1987.

Garland, David E. *1 Corinthians. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.

## **GALATIANS**

### *Standard*



Willis, Mike. *Guardian of Truth commentary series - Galatians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 1994.

Stott, John R. W. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of Galatians: Only One Way*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1986.

*A comment received on Stott was he "has an outstanding ability to outline each section of the text in a sensible format and is a very readable author."*

Tenney, Merrill C. *Galatians: The Charter of Christian Liberty*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993.

### *Advanced*

Longenecker, Richard N. *Word Biblical Commentary - Galatians. Vol. 41*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

Dunn, James D. G. *Black's NT commentary series - The Epistles to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 1993.

*Note: Dunn takes the "New Perspective" view of Paul's writings.*

## EPHESIANS

### *Devotional*

Morris, Leon. *Expository Reflections on the Letter to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1994.

### *Standard*

Stott, John R. W. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of Ephesians: God's New Society*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1986.



Caldwell, C.G. *The Guardian of Truth Commentary series - Ephesians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 1994.

### *Advanced*

O'Brien, Peter Thomas. *Pillar NT Commentary series - The Letter to the Ephesians*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999.

Witherington, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007.

## PHILIPPIANS

### *Devotional*

Carson, D. A. *Basics for Believers: An Exposition of Philippians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996.

### *Standard*

Hendriksen, William. *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of Philippians Exposition of Colossians and Philemon*. Grand Rapids; Edinburgh: Baker Book House, 1988.



Weaver, Walton. *Guardian of Truth Commentary - Philippians and Colossians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 1996.

*Advanced*

Fee, Gordon D. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - Paul's Letter to the Philippians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm.B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.

## **COLOSSIANS**

*Devotional*

Lucas, R. C. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of Colossians and Philemon: Fullness and Freedom*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1980..

*Standard*

Wright, N. T. *Tyndale New Testament Commentary series - The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary*. Leicester, England: InterVarsity, 1986.



Weaver, Walton. *Guardian of Truth Commentary - Philippians and Colossians*. Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth, 1996.

*Advanced*

Moo, Douglas J. *Pillar NT Commentary - The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2008.

Witherington, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007.

## **1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS**

*Devotional*

Wiersbe, Warren W. *Be Ready*. Wheaton, IL: Victor, 1979.

*Standard*

Morris, Leon. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries - 1 and 2 Thessalonians: An Introduction and Commentary*. Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2009

Stott, John R. W. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of Thessalonians: The Gospel & the End of Time*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1994.

Weatherly, Jon A. *College Press NIV Commentary - 1 & 2 Thessalonians*. Joplin, MO: College Press Pub. Co., 1996.

*Advanced*

Malherbe, Abraham J. *The Anchor Yale Bible Commentary series - The Letters to the Thessalonians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

*Malherbe is very well recommended. One remarked "Without a doubt, one of the best, readable, enjoyable commentaries you will ever read. Exhaustive in scope. Challenging."*

## **PASTORAL EPISTLES - 1 and 2 TIMOTHY, TITUS**

*Devotional*

Wiersbe, Warren W. *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: It's Always Too Soon to Quit!* Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010.

*Standard - there was not a strong consensus here.*

Stott, John R. W. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: God's Good News for the World*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1996.

#

Jackson, W. S. B. *Before I Die: Paul's Letters to Timothy and Titus*. Stockton, Cal.: Christian Courier Pub., 2007.

#

Moss, C. Michael. *College Press NIV Commentary series - 1, 2 Timothy & Titus*. Joplin, MO: College, 1994.

*Advanced*

Mounce, William D. *Word Biblical Commentary - Pastoral Epistles. Vol. 46*. Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 2000.

*This is an extremely detailed commentary that looks at the text phrase by phrase. Quite lengthy and not a quick read by any means but an extraordinary work that is well worth the investment in funds and time.*

## **PHILEMON**

*Philemon is often "thrown in" with other prison epistles or the pastoral epistles. Check other works to see if Philemon is included.*

### *Devotional*

Wiersbe, Warren W. *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon: It's Always Too Soon to Quit!* Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 2010.

### *Standard*

Wright, N. T. *Tyndale New Testament Commentary series - The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary.* Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1986.

Witherington, Ben. *The Letters to Philemon, the Colossians, and the Ephesians: A Socio-rhetorical Commentary on the Captivity Epistles.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2007.

### *Advanced*

Moo, Douglas J. *Pillar NT Commentary - The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2008.

## **HEBREWS**

### *Standard*

McClister, David. *A Commentary on Hebrews.* Temple Terrace, FL: Temple College, 2010.  
*This is an absolute must have commentary. It was the run away selection by far. One participant noted "McClister's commentary is actually between standard and advanced. It is a nice blend for Bible students who want deep content, but might not know Greek."*

Lightfoot, Neil R. *Jesus Christ Today: A Commentary on the Book of Hebrews.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1976

### *Advanced*

Bruce, F. F. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - The Epistle to the Hebrews. Rev. ed.* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1990.

Lane, William L. *Word Biblical Commentary: Hebrews. Vols. 47A-47B.* Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.



## JAMES

### *Devotional*

Wilson, Mike. *Faith in Action, Studies in James*. Summitville, IN: Spiritbuilding, 2008.

### *Standard*

Motyer, J. A. *The Bible Speaks Today - The Message of James: The Tests of Faith*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1985.

Woods, Guy N. *Gospel Advocate Commentary series - A Commentary on the Epistle of James*. Nashville: Gospel Advocate, 1964.

### *Advanced*

McKnight, Scot. *The New International Commentary on the Old and New Testament - The Letter of James*. Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Anchor Yale Bible Commentaries - The Letter of James: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. New Haven: Yale UP, 2005.

## 1, 2 PETER and JUDE

*Commentaries on these "minor" epistles are notoriously difficult to evaluate because they often get lumped together. Thus, one of the books may be well covered and others neglected. Invariably something very well written just on one of these epistles will slip through unnoticed.*

### *Standard*

Hamilton, Clinton. *Guardian of Truth Commentary - 1 Peter*. Bowling Green, KY: 1995.

Clowney, Edmund P. *The Bible Speaks Today series - The Message of 1 Peter: The Way of the Cross*. Leicester, England: Inter-Varsity, 1988.

### *Advanced*

Jobes, Karen H. *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament - 1 Peter*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005.

Bauckham, Richard J. *Word Biblical Commentary - 2 Peter, Jude. Vol. 50.* Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998.

*One survey remarked "Bauckham is thorough on 2nd Peter and Jude, if you can handle his pseudonymous conclusions; but the background material is outstanding. It reminds me of what Edgar Srygley used to say about the Interpreter's Bible: 'All the right information; all the wrong answers.'"*

Davids, Peter H. *Pillar New Testament Commentary - The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude.* Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub., 2006.

## 1, 2, 3 JOHN

### *Devotional*



Lanier, Roy H. *Epistles of John: Notes on 1, 2, 3 John.* Abilene, TX: Quality Publications, 1992.

### *Standard*

Stott, John R. W. *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries - The Letters of John: An Introduction and Commentary.* Nottingham, England: Inter-Varsity, 2009.

### *Advanced*

Marshall, I. Howard. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - Epistles of John.* Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978.

## REVELATION

### *Standard*



Hailey, Homer. *Revelation, an Introduction and Commentary.* Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979.

*Hailey's book was a huge winner here. This is the "must have" book on Revelation.*



McGuiggan, Jim. *The Book of Revelation.* Lubbock, Tex. (5101 2nd St., Lubbock TX 79416): International Biblical Resources, 1976.



Harkrider, Robert. *Guardian of Truth commentaries - Revelation.* Bowling Green, KY: Guardian of Truth Foundation, 1997.



Summers, Ray. *Worthy Is the Lamb; an Interpretation of Revelation*. Nashville: Broadman, 1951.

*One wrote "If I could have only one book on Revelation this is it. Still, though, it is not lengthy and therefore you might need other volumes to address technical matters like dating, etc."*

### *Advanced*



Oster, Richard E. *Seven Congregations in a Roman Crucible: A Commentary on Revelation 1-3*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2013.

*One survey noted "He provides some extremely good scholarly content. In some ways takes approaches that have long been needed when it comes to Revelation. Brethren who get this book will not be disappointed. He focuses heavily on the NT world and how it comes it play in the images we find in Revelation. He also discusses the importance of how we understand prophetic language."*

Mounce, Robert H. *The New International Commentary on the New Testament - The Book of Revelation*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1997.

Beale, G. K. *New International Greek NT Commentary - Revelation: A Commentary on the Greek Text*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans, 1999.

*This was noted as being expensive but was highly recommended.*

### *Other resources for Revelation:*



Roberts, Mark. *Understanding Apocalyptic Literature: A Guide to the Book of Revelation*. Temple Terrace, FL: Florida College, 2012.

*Comment: A number of respondents mentioned this book as being extremely helpful in their overall approach to the book.*

*Full disclosure: this book was written by the editor of the Commended Commentaries survey.*

Commended Commentaries:

# Appendix A

## The Use and Need for Commentaries

By Warren E. Berkley

A Bible commentary is a book (whether traditional paper and binding, digital or audio), where one student proposes to help other students better understand the Bible. It is people helping people, authors helping readers, teachers helping students, scholars helping non-scholars. Unlike biblical writers, historic and modern commentary authors and editors are not directly inspired by God (we do not recommend those authors who would make that claim). It is people helping people study the Word of God.

While most commentaries are published in print editions, there are now digital commentaries for Kindles and iPads; there are pdfs you can load in your computer and online commentaries. Likewise, there are audio commentaries of the Bible, where you listen to someone who seeks to help you understand and apply Scripture (something we do when we listen to preaching).

## Do We Need Commentaries? Three Common Sense Illustrations

(1) Why do you attend Bible classes? You take your Bible with you. You open it and read it as the text is read by the teacher. Then, to help you understand the passage, you listen to the Bible class teacher. He discusses the historical setting of the passage, brings in relevant context, defines key words and puts it all together to stress the meaning of the verses. Then, there follows a discussion of appropriate applications for us today. Now, what has happened? All other things being equal (faithful teaching from the text), you have been helped by another Bible students' efforts *and commentary*. Right? If the words of the Bible class teacher were transcribed onto paper, could you read that and have the same benefit?

(2) Suppose you are sitting in your living room, reading Romans chapter nine. You've read this chapter many times but it has never really been clear. Parts of it you seem to understand, but digesting the whole context and getting the main idea has been elusive. The doorbell sounds. You respond to discover a preacher is in town who wanted to drop in and see you for a few minutes. Can you tell him what you've been doing, reading Romans nine? Sure. Can you describe to this man your challenge is understanding the text? Of course. Can you listen to him as he helps you? Yes, you can. You are benefiting from his study. You are listening *to his live commentary*.

(3) A preacher claims that he doesn't use commentaries, only the Word of God. He is critical of human commentaries and tells people not to buy them or use them. Just read the Word of God. But what does this preacher do in his work? He reads the Word of God, then writes down on paper or commits to memory what he thinks

about the passage. In his classes and sermons, he will certainly relate to you what he understands the Word of God to be saying, and he will even say he wants to help you understand the Bible. What if you transcribed what he said, and you read that manuscript as you studied your Bible. Well, *you would be using a commentary*. And the anti-commentary preacher would be seen as inconsistent in his objection to commentaries.

### **Commentaries: Their Value**

Think of commentaries as help from others who are reading and wanting to understand the same book you are reading and wanting to understand. Their value lies in whatever measure of help the writer provides when you allow him into your study. **You are not allowing the commentator to be a substitute for your own study. You are not letting the commentary replace the source, God's Word.** You are admitting that others may have studied a passage with results that will help you. The Word of God is the infallible source.

### **Four Ways Commentaries Can Help The Bible Student:**

1] A good commentary can help you see connections in passages that you haven't considered. Have you ever listened to a sermon or a Bible class presentation, and the preacher/teacher brought something up you hadn't thought about, connecting the text to some principle or application? That can happen in your use of commentaries. Still, you must go through the discernment process to make certain what is said/written is true. But it may be good for you to consider and weigh what hasn't occurred to you. It is certainly true with me, that I don't always think of everything.

2] A good commentary can help you find the right words. Sometimes I have a good mental grasp of what a passage says, but I need the right words to speak to the audience or class about that. It may often happen, the commentator is better at the verbiage, and can suggest ways of saying things that will be valuable to you and those who listen to you.

3] A good commentary may help you identify and better understand error. That's right. There may be false teachings or shades of various errors you discover in reading commentaries. They enable you to better know the opposition to truth, better explain what needs to be answered and refuted. When you speak or write against false teaching, it is always good to quote accurately the teaching you are refuting. Commentaries may contain error, therefore help you see it, quote it from the source and answer it.

4] A good commentary will often help you get a good grasp of historical context. There are matters of chronology, geography, culture and history that enlightens you in your study of a text of Scripture. For instance, most commentaries will provide an introduction to a book. Within that section you may learn valuable matters that shed light on the content of that book.

## Commentaries: Care In Use

Most public libraries have some Bible commentaries on their shelves, in the religious section. In your reading and study of almost any passage in the Bible, you can pull one of those commentaries off the shelf and read something about that passage. The fact that the commentary has been written, published and distributed affords you no assurance that the content is correct or helpful. The same applies in the brick and mortar bookstore and the digital marketplace. Especially in the print-on-demand and digital publishing age, almost anyone can write, publish and distribute to the public. Anyone can write a commentary these days. I like to become acquainted with the background and viewpoint of the author.

Guard against...

1] Parroting your favorite commentator. Whether due to laziness or mis-guided loyalty, there is sometimes this spectacle of regurgitating what some celebrated commentator published, as if he had apostolic or spiritually gifted status. Keep your mind fixed on the difference between the apostle Paul and Albert Barnes. Receive legitimate help, without becoming a commentator's disciple. A preacher must not become a collator and organizer of the thoughts of others.

2] Never quote a commentary as your proof. If Scripture teaches that baptism is for the remission of sins, adding eight quotations from commentaries is unnecessary. In fact, when you do that, it sounds like *you* need more proof than Scripture. Don't do that. You can quote commentaries if they word something well, but not as an offer of proof.

3] Don't be deceived. Never fall into the trap of considering yourself incapable of being deceived. Many of the classic published commentators are experts at persuasion. And all of them have a point of view that is pushed from their evangelistic passion. Be careful. "Test everything. Hold on to the good," (1 Thess. 5:21).

4] Resist temptations to plagiarize. This is an integrity issue! It not only happens in the publishing world, it happens in church bulletins, blogs and pulpits. Commentaries make it easy. The author states something brilliantly. The flash of temptation hits you, "I wish I had said that," and then you just take that step and use his words. Let commentaries help you, not replace your own work.

5] It may help to guard against using commentaries too early. Read the passage first with your own objectivity. "Second only to the fault of not doing adequate study is that of introducing into one's preparation too soon the secondary resources. When used at the proper time they are indispensable, but if too early opened, they take over. They suppress and intimidate the preacher. After all, who is going to venture a thought or an interpretation when at the very same desk are six internationally known bible scholars?" (Fred B. Craddock. Preaching. p. 106).

## Conclusion

Every single day, I hear or read something that helps me in my understanding of and appreciation of the Bible. I listen to audio/video sermons online, read books and talk to people and discover value in not thinking of myself as the only good student of the Bible.

You've often heard, "the Bible is its own best commentary." That is true. But when you heard that, you were listening to someone's verbal commentary that was designed to help you. Don't hesitate to make good use of other's commentaries - written and otherwise - so as to understand God's Word.

*Commended Commentaries:*

# Appendix B

## Dr. Phil Roberts' Recommendations

Many brethren remember Phil Roberts. Phil taught Bible at Florida College for 27 years. He was a true scholar, outstanding preacher and devoted student of the Scriptures. His deep faith in God's Word and mastery of the big themes of Scripture made a lasting impression on his students. He passed to his reward after a battle with cancer in 2005. He is simply irreplaceable and greatly missed.

One of the survey respondents was given this list one summer and was kind enough to pass it along. We present it here without further comment, but know that it will be a help to many.

### Genesis

*Creation and Blessing - Allen P Ross*

*Leupold (though partially out of date)*

*Kidner (though doesn't defend Creation)-Tyndale*

*JJ Davis-Paradise to Prison*

*Steigers*

*Aalders*

*Thomas (Devotional)*

*Encountering the Book of Genesis (Encountering Biblical Studies) by Bill T. Arnold*

*Willis*

*Walton*

*Victor Hamilton*

### Exodus

*JJ Davis-Moses and the Gods of Egypt*

*Cole-Tyndale*

*Youngblood-Everyman's Bible Commentary*

*Meyer (Devotional)*

### Leviticus

*Wenham-New International Commentary*

*Harrison-Tyndale*

*Jukes (on chapter's 1-7/sacrificial law)*

### Numbers

*Jensen-Journey to God's Rest Land*

*Wenham-Tyndale*

**Deuteronomy**

*Craigie-New International Commentary*  
*Thompson-Tyndale*  
*Schultz-Everyman's Bible Commentary*  
*Schneider-A Favored Book of Jesus*  
*Klein-A treaty of the Great King*

**Joshua**

*New International Commentary*  
*Schaeffer-Joshua and the Flow of Biblical History*

**Judges**

*L. Wood-Distressing Days of the Judges*  
*Coondall and Morris-Tyndale*

**Ruth**

*C. Barber*  
*Every Man's Bible Commentary*  
*JT Willis-Sweet*

**I and II Kings**

*Englishman's Bible Commentary*  
*Ellul-Politics of God and Politics of Man*

**Ezra and Nehemiah**

*Kidner-Tyndale*  
*Fensham-Englishman's Bible Commentary*  
*Cambridge-Ryel*  
*Barber-Nehemiah and the Dynamics of Leadership*

**Esther**

*Whitcomb-Everyman's Bible Commentary*

**Job**

*Anderson-Tyndale*  
*GC Morgan Answers to Jesus to Job*  
*Inch*  
*Zuck*  
*Archer*  
*Bennett*  
*Johnson*  
*Blackwood*

**Psalms**

*Kidner-Tyndale*  
*JJS Perowe*  
*Leupold*  
*Spurgeon*  
*Alexander*  
*J. T Willis*  
*New International Commentary*

**Proverbs**

*Kidner-Tyndale*

**Ecclesiastes**

*Kaiser-Everyman's Bible Commentary, Ecclesiastes Total Life*

*Kidner-A Time to Mourn and A Time to Dance*

*Eaton-Tyndale*

*Leupold (not the best)*

**Song of Solomon**

*Glickman*

*New International Commentary*

**Isaiah**

*EJ Young (3 volumes)*

*GL Robinson (little book)*

*JA Alexander*

*HC Leupold*

*JT Willis*

*Homer Hailey*

**Jeremiah**

*Harrison-Tyndale*

*Thompson-New International Commentary*

*Laetsh*

*LA Mott*

**Lamentations**

*Kaiser- A Biblical Approach to Suffering*

**Ezekial**

*Taylor (very good)-Tyndale*

*Fairbairn*

**Daniel**

*Young*

*Baldwin-Tyndale*

*Leupold*

**Minor Prophets**

*Robinson*

*Homer Hailey*

*Von O'Relly*

*Jack Lewis*

*Pusey*

**Hosea**

*Kidner-Love to the Loveless*

*GC Morgan - Heart to the Holiness of God*



**Joel**

*LC Allen-New International Commentary*

**Amos**

*CR Cripps*

*JA Motyer-The Day of the Lion*

**Obadiah**

*LC Allen*

*JDW Watts*

**Jonah**

*JW McGarvey-Jesus and Jonah*

**Micah**

*LC Allen*

**Nahum**

*WA Maier*

**Habakkuk**

*DM Lloyd Jones-From Fear to Faith (good for modern application)*

**Haggai**

*Baldwin-Tyndale*

*World*

**Zechariah**

*Baldwin-Tyndale*

*Leupold*

*CHA Dright*

**Malachi**

*GC Morgan-Malachi's Message of Today*

*Kaiser*

# The Commended Commentary List

## 2015 Edition

*Edited and Compiled by Mark Roberts*

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To God be the glory!

The document will go through minor tweaks and revisions until the next round of surveys is sent in 2015. To be part of that or to submit a book to be included in the next CCL email the editor, Mark Roberts.

His email address and the latest version of the CCL can always be found at:

[www.BibleClassMaterial.com/commentary](http://www.BibleClassMaterial.com/commentary)

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