

A Reader's Greek New Testament. Compiled by Richard J. Goodrich and Albert L. Lukaszewski. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003, pp. 585., \$29.99.

Richard Goodrich and Albert Lukaszewski have put together for readers the Greek text that formed the basis for the NIV translation of the New Testament. The main purpose of the book is to enable students to read the Greek New Testament with greater facility. Hence, definitions are provided at the bottom of the page for any word that occurs thirty times or less in the NT. The definitions are taken from Trenchard's *Complete Guide to the Greek New Testament*, though the compilers checked the context and revised the definition if they were convinced that Trenchard's definitions did not adequately convey the meaning in a particular verse.

The aim of the book, then, is not to provide a critical text of the New Testament with an apparatus. It functions as a practical tool to assist students who are constantly turning to a lexicon when attempting to read larger sections of the New Testament. By listing all the words that occur thirty times or less students are spared having to search through a lexicon with the result that they lose the train of thought in a passage. In my judgment the book serves as a helpful tool for learning how to read the Greek New Testament more quickly. If students become proficient at reading larger sections of the New Testament, they will have a better feel for interpreting smaller texts in which they do intense exegesis.

On the other hand, there is the danger that students would rely on this tool and fail to use lexicons like BDAG (*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed.). A wealth of information is contained in BDAG, and

I learned much about Greek searching through BDAG trying to find out the meaning of words! If students restrict themselves to *A Reader's Greek New Testament*, their knowledge of Greek will be rather superficial. Nevertheless, I am essentially positive about the book because one of the keys to learning how to read the New Testament is reading, reading, and reading.

Another benefit of the book is that it contains a Greek text that differs from UBS⁴ and NA²⁷. As I mentioned earlier, a sophisticated critical apparatus is not contained in the book, though the compilers do provide a footnote at every place where they differ from UBS⁴ and NA²⁷. The Greek text standing behind the NIV differs from these standard Greek editions in 231 places. It is not my purpose to defend or criticize the Greek text used for the NIV. It is salutary for readers, however, to own a Greek text that differs from UBS⁴ and NA²⁷, for readers may gain the mistaken impression from UBS⁴ and NA²⁷ that we have a “received text”! The Greek text underlying the NIV reminds us that the task of textual criticism must continue.

The book is beautifully bound and the size is convenient for traveling. I found the italic font pleasing to read, though some students have complained to me that they found it difficult. OT citations are put in a bold font and the OT reference is noted at the bottom of the page. In my opinion, this is a very helpful tool, and I suspect that it will sell very well because it will meet a felt need among students.

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