

Gospels (35–67), Pauline literature (68–89), other New Testament literature (90–101), the criteria of Canonicity (102–111), the transmission of New Testament documents (112–136), and Textual variants and Textual Criticism (137–149).

The problem with this particular work (as with all attempts to 'introduce' a topic) is that the reader is confronted with a wealth of material which they hardly have time to assimilate before the writer invites the reader to join him in an altogether different realm of discussion. On the plus side, Patzia is quick to point the reader to other sources which can be explored at the reader's leisure. This in itself makes Patzia's work a welcome tool for those beginning New Testament study, not to mention those charged with the task of teaching New Testament.

As with all 'broad-brush' introductions, there are questions which are raised which cannot be answered within the scope of the work. Such questions for this reviewer include: why do we have to describe the Apostle Paul as 'Hellenistic' (p.69) and what place do the earliest Christians who were illiterate have in the Making of the New Testament? Further, in places, recent scholarship appears to have been overlooked. An example of this would be L. T. Johnson's, *The Writings of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), which although mentioned in the bibliography, is missing from the scholarly interaction within the book; of which there is much. We might be forgiven for thinking that Johnson would have been a key dialogue partner for Patzia.

It may well be that time and space prevented interaction with Johnson, and the speed of discussion necessitated unanswered questions. The Making of the New Testament will be a useful book to have on one's shelves; but one cannot help feeling that its omissions will prevent it from moving from the 'useful category on our shelves to the 'important'.

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***The Message of 2 Peter & Jude: The Promise of His Coming***

**Dick Lucas and Christopher Green**

Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press (The Bible Speaks Today), 1995, 270pp.  
£9.99. ISBN: 0–85111–149–1

***The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus: The Life of the Local Church***

**John R. W. Stott**

Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press (The Bible Speaks Today), 1996. 232pp.  
£9.99. ISBN: 0–85111–172–6

**RÉSUMÉ**

*Les commentaires de cette série se veulent à la fois précis dans l'exposition du texte biblique et pertinents pour la vie contemporaine. Outre l'exégèse non technique, ils fournissent un guide d'étude destiné à aider les chrétiens à mieux comprendre le texte et à le mettre en pratique. Les auteurs du volume intitulé Le Message de 2 Pierre et Jude montrent les similitudes et les différences entre ces deux lettres, pour ce qui est des idées et du contenu, du contexte situationnel et des visées, et ils trouvent des applications stimulantes du message de ces deux lettres du Nouveau Testament pour l'Église du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle. Dans Le Message de 1 Timothée et Tite, Stott montre que le souci prédominant de Paul pour la vérité dans les trois lettres pastorales est particulièrement pertinent pour notre culture contemporaine submergée par l'esprit du post-modernisme.*

**ZUSAMMENFASSUNG**

*Die Kommentare in dieser Serie haben das Ziel, sowohl akkurat in der Auslegung des biblischen Textes zu sein, als auch relevant für zeitgemäßes Leben. Zusätzlich zu der nicht-technischen Exegese, bieten sie einen Studien- teil, der Christen helfen soll, den Text besser zu verstehen und auszuleben. In dem Band The Message of 2 Peter & Jude zeigen die Autoren sowohl die Ähnlichkeiten, als auch die Unterschiede dieser beiden Briefe auf bezüglich des Gedankengutes und Inhalts, des jeweiligen Sitz im Leben und der Absichten, und sie finden anregende Anwendungen dieser beiden neutestamentlichen Briefe für die Gemeinde im zwanzigsten Jahrhundert. In dem Band The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus zeigt Stott auf, wie relevant das überragende Anliegen des Paulus mit der Wahrheit in allen drei Pastoralbriefen für unsere Kultur ist, die eingetaucht im Geist der Postmoderne ist.*

It is the threefold ideal of the series The Bible Speaks Today to be accurate in the exposition of the biblical text, relevant for contemporary life, and readable. The goal is to find a sound balance between serious exegesis on the one hand and practical application for today's church on the other hand. Generally, the



structure consists of an introduction to the individual books, a verse-by-verse exposition of the biblical text and a study guide. The study guide recapitulates the major themes of the individual passages and offers questions that are designed to help readers to reflect on the biblical message, to stimulate thought and/or group discussions concerning contemporary Christian life, and to challenge people to apply what they have learnt in their lives. The volumes of this series, then, are not technical commentaries that elucidate the text for scholarly purposes and explore critical issues. Rather, this series is aimed at all those Christians who desire to understand the Bible better and to live it out.

The first volume to be discussed here is *The Message of 2 Peter & Jude* by Dick Lucas and Christopher Green. The introductions to each letter which contain the core of the authors' understanding of the letters have been written by Dick Lucas, and the verse-by-verse exposition by Christopher Green. The reason for grouping these two New Testament letters together in one book, although they are written neither by the same author nor for the same audience, lies in their similarity of ideas and content. The precise nature of the relationship between these two letters is discussed by Christopher Green together with other topics of scholarly interest in an appendix. Green largely follows R. Bauckham who had shown that the author of Jude comes from Palestinian Jewish circles and that the book was also intended for such a readership. Having recognised Jude's message as important for the wider church, the writer of 2 Peter adapted Jude for a wider Gentile readership, adding material to give it a different coherence. According to Lucas, the purpose of 2 Peter is twofold: to expose the lawless teachers, that is teachers unrestrained by apostolic authority, for what they were and, more importantly, to set before the churches the conditions of survival when doctrinal and moral perversions infiltrate their fellowships. Jude's purpose is identified as the ambition to defend and preserve the gospel by pulling down the strongholds of error, and to urge the loyal believers to build up one another in Christ. Lucas points out that a further distinction between the two letters is possibly that 'Peter's special concern is with individual believers, in terms of personal growth and responsibilities ... [while] Jude, it seems, is alarmed at the prospect of whole Christian communities being destroyed from within' (p. 163; *italics his*).

This volume not only offers considerable information (for example the reference to the original public reading situation of the text and how this affected Peter's style of writing on pp. 60, 251), but also makes for challenging and edifying devotional reading. For example, 2 Peter 1.5–11 is explained under the heading 'The Productive Christian.' Here Green demonstrates exegetically what character traits Peter wants Christians to gain, and how the virtues listed were specifically relevant to the original situation of communication. But he goes further in spelling out how to go about this task and suggests that for Christians today the kind of knowledge Peter is talking about 'comes from reading, thinking and discussing as a Christian' (p. 59). In dealing with difficult verses, such as Jude 9–10, Green weighs the options carefully before reaching his conclusions. Not only does he explain satisfactorily the verses concerned, but he also expounds on the general flow of the argument. Greek words are referred to where this is relevant to clarify the exposition, but readers do not have to know Greek in order to understand the argument.

The *Message of 2 Peter & Jude* thus forms part of the important task of recovering these forgotten letters which all too often lie unnoticed and unvalued at the back of our Bibles. It is a very useful tool for a wide readership: for individual Christians who want to come to grips with these two unfamiliar letters in private study, for students who are looking for a solid, but lucid introduction into the thought world of 2 Peter and Jude, for Bible study group leaders who seek to stimulate group members to discussion about the biblical text and to challenge them about the way they live, and for preachers who want to proclaim the powerful message of 2 Peter and/or Jude and apply it in today's church.

The second volume to be discussed here is *The Message of 1 Timothy and Titus* by John Stott. In his preface, Stott explains that the biblical writer's overriding preoccupation throughout all three Pastoral Letters is with the truth, that it may be faithfully guarded and handed on. He argues that this theme is especially relevant to our contemporary culture which is overtaken and submerged in the spirit of postmodernism. According to Stott, the apostle's unambiguous commitment to truth forms the crass and 'wonderfully refreshing' (p. 10) contrast to one of the chief tenets of postmodernism, that there is no such thing as objective truth, let alone universal and eternal truth.



In an introductory chapter, Stott addresses the question of the authenticity of the Pastoral Letters which is an ongoing issue ever since F.C. Baur of Tübingen rejected Pauline authorship of these letters in 1835. Stott provides an overview over the major scholarly positions and evaluates the plausibility of the arguments offered. He rehearses briefly the case for and against Pauline authorship, and for and against pseudonymity, before he considers the possible contribution to the writing of Paul's letters made by an amanuensis, i.e. by someone who not only undertook the actual mechanics of writing but may have been given some liberty in clothing the apostle's thought with words. Stott concludes that 'The most likely scenario is that Paul the apostle wrote the three Pastorals, toward the end of his life, addressing contemporary issues, and communicating through a trusted amanuensis' (p. 34).

The exposition of the text itself is clear, thorough and well informed. For example, as the author attempts to throw light on the preoccupation of the false teachers with myths and genealogies (1 Tim. 1.4) he points out possible links to extra-biblical literature, such as The Book of Jubilees and Philo's Antiquities, and refers to interpretations of early church fathers, such as Tertullian's Prescriptions against Heretics. However, he is careful enough not to jump to quick and easy conclusions, as his cautious wording signals: 'It may be, then, ...' (p. 44) and 'All we can say in conclusion is ...' (p. 45).

I was particularly impressed with Stott's handling of what are probably the most controversial verses in the Pastoral Letters, 1 Tim. 2.11–15. Recognising that the conclusion people draw from this text depends largely on the hermeneutical principles they bring to it, Stott spends several pages discussing two hermeneutical principles, the principle of harmony and the principle of history, and explains how these different principles lead to different understandings of the text. His own hermeneutical principle is that of cultural transposition which he applies not only to women's submission (vv. 11–15), but also to the previous topics, namely men's prayers (v. 8) and women's adornment (vv. 9–10). The conclusions he draws are well argued for, balanced and convincing. Although the author does not provide all the answers to our questions about gender roles (he does not claim to do so, and outlines areas where more theological reflection is needed), Stott's application of the principle of cultural transposition to 1.

Tim. 2.8–15 is most helpful in handling this text.

Throughout, the author applies the biblical text for today's church. This is done not only explicitly, but often also implicitly. For example, as Stott refers to 1 Tim 1.17 as a spontaneous doxology of Paul, which contains some phrases from an early liturgical form, he remarks incidentally that 'liberty and liturgy are not necessarily incompatible' (p. 55). From 1 Tim. 5.1, young readers learn that Stott prefers the use of 'aunt' and 'uncle' in addressing older people rather than the use of the Christian name for people who could be someone's great-grandfather or great-grandmother (I personally doubt that 'uncle Stott' would express more respect). While here Stott maybe goes a little to far in his practical application, he is not radical enough in other areas. For example, in his exposition of 1 Tim. 4.3f, he rightly distinguishes between the proper use and the abuse of God's creation gifts with regard to sexuality, but he fails to do so with regard to food, specifically animal products. He maintains that 'to forbid ... meat-eating is to be guilty of serious error' (p. 113), without addressing the question whether today's industrial meat production, which inevitably leads to exploitation of people and animals, is a misuse of God's creation and goes against God's will for creation.

On the whole, this volume is well worth its money. The author has continually made an effort not only to expound single verses, but also to elucidate the general flow of Paul's argument and to apply the text for today. This book makes an enlightening and challenging reading, and I recommend it warmly. Especially ministers and theological students as those whom God has called to be leaders of his church will profit from Stott's insights into the Pastoral Letters, but laypersons also will grasp more deeply the nature and tasks of the church and the importance of the truth for its surviving.

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***Sharing Good News With the Poor:  
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**Bruce J. Nichols and  
Beulah R. Wood (eds.)**

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