NLT STUDY BIBLE

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Category: Reviews

I've been rather slow at getting down to write a review of the NLT study Bible and quite a few people have already beaten me to it. You can see a summary of other reviews here.

Let's start at the most basic level, this is a considerable book. You are not going to want to hold it for very long or to carry it around. It's one to use on your desk, not to read in bed (unless you have wrists like an Olympic shot putter).

I've already said enough (for example, here and here) to indicate that I like the New Living Translation as a Bible translation and that I recommend it to others, so I won't comment any further on the translation.

One comment on format is that this is a red letter Bible, that is the words of Jesus are highlighted in red. This is probably a personal thing, but this is something I'm not very keen on. I tend to view all Scripture as equally important and I'm also not entirely sure that we can always distinguish the words of Jesus from those of the Gospel writers with any great certainty. On the other hand, the page layout is always clear and even though the pages are crowded, you can clearly distinguish Scriptural text from commentary, notes and other stuff.

I don't recognise all of the people who have contributed notes and commentary, but the ones I do recognise are people I respect. It should be no surprise that all of the contributers are from an evangelical, protestant background: those looking for a wider based approach to Scripture should probably look elsewhere.

There are lots and lots of maps, and they are nice and clear.

The introductions to different books and sections are concise and give a good basic background to the text; discussing different things like literary genre, authorship and dating. There is a simple running commentary with notes on just about every verse and some fascinating pen-portraits of some Bible characters.

It's a big book and it packs a lot in. But, that being said, no study Bible can ever give more than a brief introduction to any of the subjects it covers. This is not the place to turn if you want serious commentary or exegesis; there is simply too much to be said on the Biblical text for one volume ever to contain it all. I do like the short 'further reading' sections which occur throughout the text and there are some excellent quotes from other writers scattered throughout the comment sections.

The bottom line is that this study Bible will be on my book shelves and it will be one of the first places I turn to when I have a question on the text. I won't always find the answers I'm looking for, but sometimes I will, and I'll often get good ideas and inspiration.

Should you buy it? If you have a shelf full of commentaries, lexicons and study Bibles, you probably don't need it (but you will probably want to have it to complete your collection). If you don't have a good set of commentaries and Bible dictionaries, then this is a good way of getting a good overview

at a fairly low price. I've found Study Bible-NLT (Bible Nlt) for as little as Â£13.99 on Amazon - at that price, it's hard to resist.