EVERY MAN'S BIBLE

Posted on August 31, 2010 by Eddie

Category: Reviews

> *Men face different challenges than women do, and it is important for men to have a deep understanding of the Holy Scriptures. So the features and notes of this edition were written specifically for men. God created men and women with different strengths and different roles. Our desire in presenting the Every Man's Bible is that it will help you better understand God's general plan for masculinity as well as the special and unique role God has for you.*

So runs the introduction to Every Man's Bible by Tyndale publishers; a presentation of the New Living Translation which is aimed specifically at men (if you hadn't worked that out yet).

First the good bits: I still think the NLT is the best translation available in English for the regular reader. Like all translations, it has its problems, but in my view it provides the best combination of good clear English and fidelity to the text that is currently available.Â There are some good, if rather basic notes on the text at the foot of each page which will be a help to new readers.

Now, some of the bad bits: I know that I am older than the target generation for this bible, but I find the layout dreadful. I don't know who thought that dirty brown was a good colour for the notes and subtitles, but they were wrong.

More importantly, the quality of some of the notes and much of the introductory material is quite simply not up to scratch. Perhaps the worst feature of this edition of the Bible is the one line introductory comments on each book of the Bible.

- What's the point of Exodus? God loves his people enough to demand holiness.
- What's the point of Luke? Jesus cares about the individual.

These sound bites are true, but they are hardly adequate or even accurate summations of the books they are describing. What is worse, comments like these shape the way that readers approach literature and will constrain people who are new to the Bible from getting the full message from the book. These little comments are reason enough not to buy this edition.

That brings us to the central concept of a Bible targeted at men (or women, or .....). I fully appreciate that there is a place for books, teaching, seminars or what have you that are aimed at particular groups of people. I am much less convinced that there is a place for Bibles which are so aimed. The only way that these demographic Bibles can really match up to their billing is if the study material starts to dominate over the text of Scripture and that is something that you really do not want to see. In this case, the Bible text does predominate, which is a good thing, but then I am left wondering how this is a Bible for men. There are a couple of little studies, for example on fatherhood, which are gender specific, but mostly the notes are as relevant to women as to men.

There are good quotes from luminaries such as Jim Elliot scattered through the text. It took me a while to work out what they were there for. Eventually, I realised that they all contained the word

'man or 'men' and so presumably are relevant to the male gender, though all of the quotes I came across would equally apply to women.

The nice people at Tyndale provided me with a copy of Every Man's Bible to review and I feel rather awkward giving it a strong thumbs down, but I do feel this is one to avoid. If you are looking for a Bible with study notes, just jump in and get yourself an NLT Study Bible (Bible Nlt).