BOOKS I HAVE READ: READING THE BIBLE MISSIONALLY

Posted on February 9, 2017 by Eddie

Reading the Bible Missionally has some excellent articles and students of the Bible and Mission will find much that is helpful here. However, I'm not convinced that the book hangs together as a whole and it is of little interest to the more general reader.
Category: Reviews

The important thing to note about this book is that it is an edited collection written by various authors. What this means, in practice, is that it covers a wide range of subjects in a variety of different styles and that different parts of the book will appeal to different people.

Overall, it's a medium format paperback of around 350 pages with an extensive bibliography and a less extensive index. It will set you back around Â£20 if you want to get your own copy.

The book has its origin in a conference on a missional reading of Scripture which was held at Calvin College in late 2013, you can read my short reflections on the conference here. The book subdivides into five sections:

- A Missional Hermeneutic
- A Missional Reading of the Old Testament
- A Missional Reading of the New Testament
- A Missional Reading of Scripture and Preaching
- A Missional Reading of Scripture and Theological Education

As far as I can tell, the first section did not emerge from the original conference; that being said, I found it the section as a whole very helpful.Â The following four sections reflect the four themes of the conference and the introductory chapters in each section are developed from the plenary presentations. As I did at the time, I found the presentations on the Old Testament (C.Wright) and the New Testament (N.T. Wright) and Preaching (Goheen) to be the highlights of the book.

The excellent bibliography has been made available online so that it can be updated as new books on the subject appear.

I'll leave it to others to delve into detail about the strengths and weaknesses of the various chapters. I'll just finish with the question that most people want answered: should you buy it? To be honest, the answer is almost certainly, no, you shouldn't.

This is not to say that it isn't a good book; bits of it are very good indeed. The issue is that it is rather a specialised book. If you have a deep interest in missional hermeneutics,Â you've probably bought the book already or have it on your wish list. If this isn't an area of special interest to you, then there are other books that would be a better introduction to the subject.Â I've linked to some of them below.

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On another note; there has been some discussion about the fact that the authors of the various articles in this book are overwhelmingly (exclusively?) male and western. It is unfortunate that the editor and publisher did not seek to illustrate some of the issues that the book raises by having a

more diverse authorship.