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Bauer's "Essential Bible study tools for ministry" (Book Review)

Anne Mead

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those he meets along the way. Within every chapter the author poses very practical and real questions that most people have asked at one time or another. Drawing on his experiences as a hospital chaplain, he addresses the various kinds of suffering from small, everyday occurrences to life changing events and then offers wisdom and insight to help the reader find comfort for and through their pain and suffering. He does this with an unusual writing style that is, in some ways, almost poetical. As a Christian and hospital chaplain in the Philadelphia area the author has presented us with a very readable book that can speak to a vast spectrum of people regardless of their background or belief system. He is currently attending Palmer Theological Seminary where he has already earned his Master of Theological Studies Degree and is now currently working towards his Master of Divinity.

Reviewer

T-Ann Currie, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary

Bauer, D. R. (2014). *Essential Bible study tools for ministry*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press. 410 pp. \$45.99. ISBN 9781426755170

Essential Bible Study Tools for Ministry presents an excellent bibliography of high quality sources recommended for pastors, scholars and students who are studying scripture. As a scholar who is also committed to the church, David Bauer, Professor of Biblical Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary, goes through the myriad of resources available for studying the Bible selecting those that present both outstanding scholarship and sound theological interpretation. He represents a spectrum of theological views selecting works from reputable publishers written by respected scholars, many whose names are familiar in the field of biblical studies. His list includes some older works as well as more recent scholarship.

This reference work is arranged in sections starting with the entire Bible then various subsections related to each testament and followed by individual books of each testament. The author looks at the key components within the study of Scripture including history, interpretation, criticism, theology, geography, and archaeology. It is helpful that he also includes a section on the intertestamental period, Judaism and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Bauer recommends general works along with reference sources such as introductions to the Bible, concordances, commentaries, atlases, and theological dictionaries. The hundreds of annotations he has written of the

“highly recommended” tools are extremely helpful. They contain his remarks on the structure of the work with emphasis on the theological view of the author. He has chosen to focus on print resources and those in English.

Bible Study Tools is easy to use and will be beneficial for collecting important resources that cover all aspects of biblical studies.

Reviewer

Anne Mead, Northwestern College

Schreiner, T. (2015). *Faith alone: The doctrine of justification*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 284 pp. \$19.99. ISBN 9780310515784

The doctrine of justification was one of the foundational principles from which Luther launched the Reformation. And it is that concept that is at the heart of *Faith Alone: The Doctrine of Justification* by Thomas Schreiner. This work is the first published title from “The 5 Solas Series” produced by Zondervan and edited by Matthew Barrett. In his trademark careful style, Schreiner walks the reader through main areas and gives a historical tour of the *sola fide* concept through the ages, covers the biblical and theological basis for the doctrine, and raises contemporary challenges that the doctrine still faces today. The first section of the work sets about to defend the doctrine of *sola fide*, but he honestly notes that in the early church fathers “we see that justification by faith alone was embraced, even though the implications of the doctrine were not worked out completely” (p. 31). The second section addressed the main import of the issue since some “scholars have questioned whether it deserves the prominence it has been given” (p. 133). This middle section is weighty but clearly and concisely written for such an important topic. He continues the thread of conversation from the distant past, the more recent past, and up to the modern conversation affecting the world today. The final section primarily focuses on the discussion between Catholicism which “sees justification and sanctification as two different ways of describing the same reality, whereas for Protestants they are inseparable, yet still distinguishable from one another” (p. 214). Solid introduction to the topic of justification and highly recommended for any library interested in having a concise, but thorough, work on hand.

Reviewer

Mark J. Hanson, Maranatha Baptist University