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Cambron's "NIV verse mapping Bible" (book review)

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Book Review



Cambron, K. (Ed.). (2021). *NIV verse mapping Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 1550 pp. \$44.99. 9780310454595

It is said the Bible is the most printed book in history. So what more can be said about one more bible edition being printed? This review will seek to answer two basic questions, who is the audience for this edition and is it successful in reaching it?

A general description is helpful in answering these questions. First, the Bible uses the NIV translation and is not heavily annotated with study notes or background to the text. There are, however, footnotes for various translation issues provided by Zondervan and an introduction to each book provided by Kristy Cambron, the editor of the Bible. Cambron is best known as a writer of historical fiction, including books such as *The Butterfly and the Violin* and the *Lost Castle* series.

What Cambron brings to this edition of the Bible is not historical or theological insight but rather a new way of engaging with the text through personal devotions and Bible study. Throughout the text, “verse maps” are provided for the reader to take notes. There are 5 aspects of the verse map: the verse, design, develop, actions, and outcome. The verse is provided, such as Genesis 3:6 in the first verse mapping guide. Design is used to compare different translations of the verse to see if there are repeated words or different vocabulary used that the reader may want to explore more in depth. Develop is the stage where you do just that. The reader is encouraged to use Bible dictionaries, concordances, and free online resources to explore interesting words and concepts. The action step takes a broader view and asks what action is happening in and around the verse. It can also be a time to explore the character, places, and topics that the verse mentions. Again, outside resources are needed for this step. The last step is the outcome and here there is a space to write a summary about what the reader has learned or how the Holy Spirit has challenged them in their own lives.

We can now turn to the issue of who the audience for this Bible is. Given the lack of study notes and background information and the chosen translation combined with the emphasis on personal devotion, the audience is truly any Christian who wants to work through reading the Bible while taking notes and stopping frequently for reflection and devotion. However, the verse mapping

method does not add much new to devotional literature and methods. Given how many Bibles are in print and the plethora of devotional and Bible study literature, this version does not add much to the discussion. For a new Christian, new to reading the Bible, this Bible may be appropriate. For others, keep reading the Bible you own, and find devotional and Bible study resources elsewhere.

Reviewer

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