

1 Peter: A Commentary for Biblical Preaching and Teaching, by Timothy E. Miller and Bryan Murawski. Kerux Commentaries. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2022. 296 pp. \$32.99.

Kregel's Kerux series carves a niche in the world of commentaries by offering a selection designed specifically with the preacher in mind, not the scholar or graduate student. Miller (Vice President of Academics and Dean of Faculty at Shepherds Theological Seminary in Cary, NC) and Murawski (Associate Professor of Divinity at Cairn University), have together fulfilled the vision of this series admirably in their volume on 1 Peter (Miller handles the exegesis and Murawski handles the homiletics for each passage).

After an "Overview of All Preaching Passages" (11–24) designed to function as a refresher and summary of the book, the authors offer a fairly standard, conservative evangelical introduction to the book. The reader should expect no surprises here (e.g., Petrine authorship is defended; a primarily Gentile audience is suggested). In addition, the authors offer the following for what they see as the main theological themes: "Election," "Suffering," "Holiness" and "Elect-Exiles: The Readers as the People of God." The introduction concludes with a brief discussion of Peter's use of the OT and Peter's dependence on the words of Jesus (drawing from Miller's own specialty in Petrine studies).

Each homiletical segment of the book breaks down as follows: a brief section on "Literary Structure and Themes," a verse-by-verse "Exposition" (usually handling one or two verses at a time), a section on "Theological Focus," and, finally, "Preaching and Teaching Strategies." This final section by Murawski brings Miller's exegesis "down-to-earth," so to speak. It discusses the relevance of the passage for the modern era, offers a "Preaching Idea" for the pastor to consider, and deals with various issues at the intersection of sermon and audience. Murawski also offers practical tips on illustrations and visual aids to make the sermon come alive (though sometimes these seem more geared towards a contemporary-style church service). Each section ends with a series of study questions which, to their credit, do not ignore the difficult issues of each passage.

As a bonus, throughout the book one can find gray sections that offer further discussion on key issues. These include such topics as "Slavery in the Ancient World" (154), "Suffering Endured for Wrongdoing" (208), and the very helpful "Using Apocryphal Texts in a Sermon" (226–27).

The book's focus on the needs of the pastor (almost unique among commentaries) makes this an invaluable contribution to the library of anybody preaching or teaching through 1 Peter. In addition, Miller's exegesis and Murawski's practical insights are both worth their weight in gold. Miller has researched well and thought through issues at a high level of competency (though at least two years' worth of Greek is recommended, however, to follow all of Miller's discussion). Murawski's homiletical insights mesh well with Miller's exegesis while brilliantly

taking theological truths and making them relevant to the average “Joe” or “Josephine” in the pew. The two authors work well together, and the result is a fantastic tool.

It is difficult to offer points of critique when both authors fulfill the vision of the series so admirably, and when one of the authors is a friend of this reviewer. However, in the spirit of the fact that no commentary on an inerrant text can itself be inerrant, I offer the following minor quibbles.

First, I cannot help but wonder if perhaps this commentary performs a bit *too* much of the pastor’s work. This can be illustrated by the fact that, when it comes to the many controversial passages in 1 Peter, Miller does not seem to leave too much room for the preacher to figure out his own position. Granted, Miller does present each position fairly and, to be honest, this reviewer happens to agree with Miller almost all the time. Were this a regular commentary, of course, this would hardly be a criticism. Yet in this sort of commentary, a few preachers may very well chafe at the fact that there does not seem to be any exegetical issues left for them to figure out on their own and perhaps present differently (though some preachers may, of course, welcome Miller’s thoroughness).

Second, the commentary is strangely dogmatic on textual variants when pastors should be free to study them out for themselves (though in this reviewer’s opinion textual variants rarely need to be discussed from the pulpit). In addition, judgments on variants are often based on a list of “the earliest and most significant MSS” (e.g., 96, n. 2 and 97, n. 3) or “the best manuscripts” (107, n. 3). Yet statements such as “most significant MSS” and “best manuscripts” are themselves value judgments that can beg the question, and P⁷²’s inclusion in those lists may be reasonably questioned even by critical text adherents (P⁷²’s copyist is quite sloppy at times; see the discussion in Tommy Wasserman, *The Epistle of Jude: Its Text and Transmission* [Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 2006], 45). Fortunately, notwithstanding this reviewer’s objections, none of this matters too much for the commentary as a whole.

One finally note. The Kerux Commentary’s nearest competitor is probably Baker’s Teach the Text Commentary Series. Based on a brief comparison with one volume in that series, I would suggest that Kerux seems to be more exegetically rigorous while Teach the Text has many more full-colored photographs for illustration.

Notwithstanding a few quibbles, Miller and Murawski have put together an excellent, practical commentary on 1 Peter that belongs on every preacher’s shelf. I highly recommend it.

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