



**PREACHING
TOOLS**

PREACHING TOOLS

AN ANNOTATED SURVEY OF COMMENTARIES AND
PREACHING RESOURCES FOR EVERY BOOK OF THE BIBLE

DAVID L. ALLEN



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*Preaching Tools: An Annotated Survey of Commentaries and Preaching Resources
for Every Book of the Bible*

By Allen, David L.

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HEBREWS

EXEGETICAL COMMENTARIES

Delitzsch, Franz. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. 2 vols. Minneapolis: Klock & Klock, 1978 [1871].

From the pen of the renowned Lutheran scholar and Jewish Christian, this is a classic treatment of Hebrews still valuable today. Delitzsch was conservative; a brilliant scholar with a warm heart. He argued Luke was the author of Hebrews ... so he has to be on the ball!

Ellingworth, Paul. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993.

Ellingworth's volume is still considered the top-of-the-line Greek exegetical treatment of Hebrews. It is detailed but contains less theological analysis than Lane, who should be consulted in conjunction with Ellingworth. Slim treatment of the thorny passage Hebrews 6:4–6.

Lane, William. *Hebrews*. WBC. 2 vols. Dallas: Word, 1991.

One of the top five commentaries on Hebrews from the pen of this Baptist scholar who loved working on this book. Lengthy introduction covers the waterfront well and reflects knowledge of and interest in discourse analysis in analyzing structure. Weds exegesis and theology together that is helpful for preachers. Don't miss Lane's more popular commentary on Hebrews, *Call to Commitment: Responding to the Message of Hebrews*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1985; Regent College, 2004 reprint.

Miller, Neva. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: An Analytical and Exegetical Handbook*. Dallas: SIL International, 1988.

Analyzes the communication roles in Hebrews via discourse analysis. The exegetical notes are informed by solid linguistic theory. This work strives to get at the meaning of the Greek text. Excellent resource!

Westcott, B. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews: The Greek Text with Notes and Essays*. London: Macmillan, 1892.

This classic work has stood the test of time and is still rewarding to read. Minute attention to detailed exegesis. Westcott's knowledge of patristic and medieval interpreters in original Greek and Latin is impressive. He employs numerous excurses addressing significant theological issues. I still turn to this work and am never disappointed.

EXPOSITORY COMMENTARIES

Allen, David L. *Hebrews*. NAC. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2010.

I have attempted to bring discourse analysis to bear on the overall structure of the letter in an effort to exhibit the sentential, paragraph, section, and discourse structure of Hebrews. A verse-by-verse, paragraph-by-paragraph treatment focusing on exegesis, exposition, and theological implications. I have given extensive space to treating the prologue [1:1–4] and the famous warning passage in 6:1–8, the latter extending to 50 pages and to my knowledge is the longest analysis of the various views in a commentary in print. I wrote with pastors in mind. 672 pages. See also the companion volume *Lukan Authorship of Hebrews*. Studies in Bible and Theology. Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2010, an expansion of my Ph.D. dissertation.

Barclay, William. *The Letter to the Hebrews*. Revised edition. DSB. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1976.

I would consider this the best of Barclay's volumes in the DSB series. Barclay was a world-renowned Scottish New Testament scholar. His knowledge of Greek is vast, and it shows in this volume. Excellent word studies and illustrations to boot. For example, consider this gem from his treatment of Hebrews in 10:1–2: "Without Christ you cannot get beyond the shadows of God." Buy it!

Bruce, F. F. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Bruce's volume is still one of my favorites on the epistle. I consider it his best work. It is a slight revision of his 1964 edition, with emphasis on the word "slight." Nevertheless, it has stood the test of time and is very valuable to the expositor.

Cockerill, Gareth Lee. *The Epistle to the Hebrews*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

Replaces the Bruce volume above. Cockerill writes from the Wesleyan tradition, and this is now probably one of the top five more recent commentaries on Hebrews. Cockerill wrote his Ph.D. dissertation on Melchizedek in Hebrews 7. His work is a good balance to the Reformed commentaries on Hebrews.

Greenlee, J. Harold. *Exegetical Summary of Hebrews*. 2nd ed. Dallas: SIL International, 2008.

Greenlee, a scholar in textual criticism, was the secretary of the committee for the UBS 3rd edition Greek New Testament. I had the privilege of having him serve as an outside reader for my Ph.D. dissertation on Lukan authorship of Hebrews back in 1987. See Abernathy under Romans for information on books in this series. In my judgment, every pastor should own all volumes in this series. It can be a huge time saver, and it often addresses semantic issues not discussed in other exegetical commentaries.

Guthrie, George H. *Hebrews*. NIVAC. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

One of the best volumes in this series. Guthrie wrote his Ph.D. dissertation at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary on the structure of Hebrews. Guthrie's treatment will be of immense help to preachers.

Hughes, Philip Edgcumbe. *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.

I read Hughes for his survey of the history of interpretation of the book. This is a good exposition from a Reformed orientation.

O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letter to the Hebrews*. PNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

This is one of the top five commentaries on Hebrews, especially for pastors. It is readable, exegetical, and expositionally sound. Superb scholarship here from a Reformed perspective. Gives a bit more attention to the thorny passage in Hebrews 6:4–6 than most, but still a slim treatment.

Schreiner, Tom. *Hebrews. Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation Series*. Nashville: B&H, 2015.

Schreiner is the James Harrison Professor of New Testament at Southern Seminary and one of Southern Baptists' top NT scholars. The purpose of this series is to relate biblical theology to daily life. It is tailor made for preachers. Expositors will find lots of help from Schreiner.

DEVOTIONAL COMMENTARIES

Griffith Thomas, W. H. *Hebrews: A Devotional Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1962.

Here are 41 devotional messages by one of the premier devotional writers on Scripture.

Meyer, F. B. *The Way into the Holiest: Expositions of Hebrews*. New York: Revell, 1893.

Meyer, Baptist pastor and contemporary of Spurgeon, met D. L. Moody in 1873, and the two become fast friends. Author of more than 40 books, he is best known for his devotional works and books on Bible characters. This is a warm-hearted devotional work of 35 short meditations on selected passages in Hebrews that should be in every pastor's library.

Murray, Andrew. *The Holiest of All: An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1960.

This 550-page work is a classic! It is the best devotional work on Hebrews. I remember reading Murray late one Saturday night when I was getting ready to preach on Hebrews the next morning. He warms the soul. Consider this gem from 8:12–13: “Pardon is the door, holiness the pathway, and the presence of God the blessing. ... The three blessings: pardon of sin, purity of heart, and the presence of God.” Don't forget to read all Murray's books on prayer as well, especially *With Christ in the School of Prayer*. Westwood, NJ: Revell, 1953.

Newell, William. *Hebrews: Verse by Verse*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2005.

Commissioned by D. L. Moody to a teaching ministry shortly before his death, Newell carried on an international teaching ministry until his death in 1956. This is one of the top devotional commentaries on Hebrews. He is also the author of the great hymn “At Calvary.”

SPECIAL STUDIES

Lincoln, Andrew. *Hebrews: A Guide*. London: T&T Clark, 2006.

Excellent pastoral resource surveying canonical position, genre and rhetoric, structure, background, use of the Old Testament, Christology, soteriology, and eschatology. Very helpful resource.

Trotter, Andrew. *Interpreting the Epistle to the Hebrews*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.

Out of print but a very helpful volume for the preacher. Covers matters of introduction, structure, textual issues, exegetical issues, and theology in an easy-to-follow manner.

SERMONS

Draper, James. *Hebrews: The Life that Pleases God.* Wheaton: Tyndale, 1976.

See above on Titus. These are excellent, practical, down-to-earth sermons that explain the text well. Draper gets the warning passages right to boot!

Manton, Thomas. *By Faith: Sermons on Hebrews 11.* Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2000 reprint [1873 edition].

Here are 65 sermons on 31 verses! In typical Puritan fashion, Manton is interested in proclaiming Puritan theology as much as he is the text of Scripture, but these sermons are worth a read if you have time. He is also the author of almost 1,700 pages of sermons on Psalm 119 in three volumes. In fact, 22 volumes of his extant works consist mostly of sermons.

M'Cheyne, Robert Murray. *Sermons on Hebrews.* Michael McMullen, ed. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2004.

At the beginning of the 20th century, James Macdonald of Edinburgh purchased a box of old papers that belonged to a preacher of around 60 years earlier. The contents turned out to be the notebooks and sermon notes of Robert Murray M'Cheyne. Here are 24 sermons on selected paragraphs in Hebrews by the famed pastor in Brighton.

Perkins, William. *A Commentary on Hebrews 11.* New York: Pilgrim Press, 1991 reprint.

This work, originally by one of the greatest of the Puritans, appeared in 1609 and is a series of expositions on Hebrews 11:1–12:1 preached at Cambridge in the 1590s. Worthy of your time if you have time.

Seiss, Joseph A. *Lectures on Hebrews.* Grand Rapids: Baker, 1954.

Here are 36 sermons that will warm your heart. You will find sermon help for your own preaching here. See Seiss on Revelation as well.

Vines, Jerry. *Hebrews.* Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux, 1993.

Excellent expository sermons from this experienced Baptist pastor and expositor. Vines was pastor of First Baptist Church in Jacksonville, Fla., for 25 years.

Every effective preacher needs tools to craft faithful, text-driven sermons. However, since pastors have limited time each week and there are thousands of potential preaching resources, knowing the best commentaries and books to help in sermon preparation can be a daunting task.

In *Preaching Tools*, David Allen draws from the well of more than 40 years of experience in the pulpit, both as a pastor and preaching professor, to provide the top commentaries and resources for every book of the Bible. Resources are categorized for quick reference, and Allen's annotations provide insight into the books' strengths, weaknesses, and backgrounds.

“What I’ve tried to do in this book is provide an annotated bibliography for preachers of helpful resources, mostly commentaries, for every book of the Bible, in English. Most of the books listed in this bibliography I own in my personal library. These are the works that I have found to be the most helpful in sermon preparation.” – David Allen



David Allen serves as dean of the School of Preaching, distinguished professor of preaching, George W. Truett Chair of Ministry, and director of the Center for Expository Preaching at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He has led or been a part of more than 400 revivals, Bible conferences, and lecture series, including study tours in the Philippines, Israel, Oxford, and Germany. He is the author of *1–3 John: Fellowship in God’s Family* in Crossway’s Preaching the Word series and *Hebrews* in the New American Commentary series. He is also co-editor of *Text-Driven Preaching: God’s Word at the Heart of Every Sermon*.

