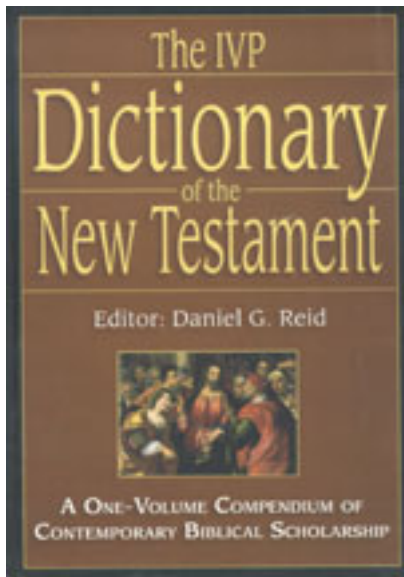


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Reid, Daniel G., ed.

The IVP Dictionary of the New Testament: A One-Volume Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship

Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2004. Pp. xxvi + 1173. Hardcover. \$50.00. ISBN 0830817875.

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The IVP Dictionary of the New Testament is a one-volume compilation of essential articles from a four-volume dictionary series devoted to the New Testament, published by InterVarsity Press between 1992 and 2000. The original four-volume series consists of (1) Joel B. Green, Scott McKnight, and I. Howard Marshall, eds., *Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels* (1992; abbreviated *DJG*); (2) Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin, eds., *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (1993; abbreviated *DPL*); (3) Ralph P. Martin and Peter H. Davids, eds., *Dictionary of the Later New Testament and Its Developments* (1997; abbreviated *DLNT*); and (4) Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter, eds., *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (2000; abbreviated *DNTB*). The first three volumes offered introductions to the New Testament documents, surveys of contemporary critical discussion on various topics, overviews of theological themes, and the like. The fourth volume, by contrast, focused on background information useful for interpretation and hence attempted to place the New Testament and early Christianity in its literary, historical, social, and religious context. The length of each successive volume increased in size from that of its immediate predecessor: the text proper of *DJG* was 896 pages long, *DPL* 993 pages, *DLNT* 1,241 pages, and *DNTB* 1,303 pages. The objective of the series was to offer quality evangelical scholarship on the designated segments specified in the titles of the respective volumes, coupled with representative

bibliographies appended to the entries. Each of the volumes also contained Scripture, subject, and articles indices.

Daniel G. Reid, the editor of the present one-volume compendium, notes that the selection of articles from the original four-volume set was made with students and the classroom in mind. The articles appear by and large in the same form as in the original dictionary of origin. The articles themselves, however, are not condensations of the original entries. Minor editorial changes include the deletion of foreign-language works from the bibliographies where they are not integral to the text of an article. Moreover, important works, particularly commentaries that have been appeared since the respective publications of the dictionaries of origin, have been added to the bibliographies. Reid further notes that the compilation of articles began with the envisioning of a course in New Testament introduction, with the initial “wish list” of articles being steadily whittled down substantially to meet the constraints of space limitations. In contrast to the three indices included in each of the four original volumes, the compendium offers two indices: Scripture and article. The latter index further provides in parentheses the dictionary (or dictionaries) of origin for each of the entries.

The *IVP Dictionary of the New Testament* reproduces the introductions to each of the books of the New Testament, albeit with the bibliographical modifications previously mentioned. Also surveyed in varying degrees of detail are biblical figures (e.g., “Abraham”; “John the Baptist”; “Women”), relevant background literature (e.g., “Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha”; “Dead Sea Scrolls”; “Rabbinic Traditions and Writings”), socioreligious movements (“Apocalypticism”; “Gnosticism”; “Judaism”), institutions (e.g., “Synagogue”), media (“Parables”; “Rhetoric”), places (e.g., “Rome”), theological themes (e.g., “Ethics”; “God”; Holy Spirit”; “Law”; “Righteousness”), christological titles (e.g., “Christ”; “Lord”; Son of God”), selective critical issues (e.g., “Gospels, Historical Reliability of”; “Jesus and Paul”; “Paul in Acts and Letters”; “Synoptic Problem”), significant incidents (e.g., “Temple Cleansing”; “Trial of Jesus”), and religious practice (“Baptism”; “Worship”).

The treatment of some of the more prominent theological themes, christological titles, and important incidents are more commonly subcategorized under three corpora: “Gospels,” “Paul,” and “Acts, Hebrews, General Epistles, Revelation.” These portions combine the original articles of the first three dictionaries (*DJG*, *DPL*, and *DLNT*). “Holy Spirit,” for instance, is treated under “Holy Spirit I: Gospels” (M. M. B. Turner), “Holy Spirit II: Paul” (T. Paige), and “Holy Spirit III: Acts, Hebrews, General Epistles, Revelation” (G. F. Hawthorne). Depending on the scope of the attention given in the New Testament, some themes are treated more narrowly. “Israel,” for example, is presented as “Israel I: Gospels” (M. A. Elliott) and “Israel II: Paul” (W. S. Campbell). Similarly,

“Covenant, New Covenant” is treated under two categories: “Paul” (W. S. Campbell) and “Acts and Hebrews” (C. C. Newman). Some themes, such as “In Christ” (M. A. Seifrid) or “Table Fellowship” (S. S. Bartchy), are restricted to one corpus (“Paul” and “Gospels” respectively).

The serviceability of this one-volume compendium must be judged in accordance with its objective in selecting articles with students of New Testament introduction and the classroom in mind. In this regard there is much of benefit for students from the original four volumes that has been retained in the present compendium, particularly the detailed introductions to New Testament documents themselves. Additionally, a helpful six-page “Glossary of Terms” has been included between the text and the indices (1147–52). At the same time, however, a one-volume compendium is obviously faced with the thankless task of deciding which articles to retain and which to exclude from the original volumes, and the resultant choices will surely not please everyone. As a consequence, there are no entries on canon, chronology, or textual criticism, articles that presumably might have been more important to students of New Testament introduction than a fifteen-page entry on Abraham (though the article is of high quality). Owing to the physical size and weight of the volume (10.25 x 7.25 x 2.75 inches and approximately 5 pounds), moreover, it would serve more practically as a desk reference than as a portable text capable of being carried to and from the classroom. Given these drawbacks, this compendium will likely not be a first choice as a course text in New Testament introduction. Its steep price may also give one pause in adopting it as a supplementary text. It is, however, a useful volume for personal and reference libraries, but only for those not already possessing the original four-volume set.