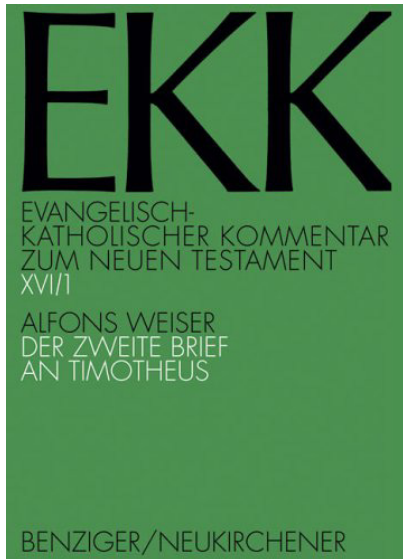


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Weiser, Alfons

Der zweite Brief an Timotheus

Evangelisch-Katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 16/1

Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 2003. Pp. xii + 347.
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Weiser's commentary on the Second Letter to Timothy is a welcome addition to the EKK series, complementing as it does Roloff's commentary on 1 Timothy, which appeared in the same series five years earlier.

A singular strength of Weiser's commentary is his use of patristic material. The attention that he will pay to the church fathers is foreshadowed in the initial bibliography. Divided into three sections, the first section cites a fairly large number of patristic and medieval commentaries. A second section lists Reformation and post-Reformation commentaries, while the third section is devoted to commentaries published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. None of the commentaries published in the early years of this century make an appearance on his list.

Weiser's fashion of dealing with the literary form of 2 Timothy is rather unusual in contemporary scholarship. Weiser begins his study with considerations on the friendly letter. Equally unusual is the way he deals with the "apostolic parousia" as a possible key to understanding the text. His observations on the testamentary genre are particularly broad and cogent, as are his considerations on the epideictic nature of the genre. Weiser concludes that 2 Timothy is a testamentary exhortation in the form of a friendly letter.

I find myself in sympathy with Weiser's option for the pseudepigraphic character of both the literary sender and the recipient of the text. He explains his position with conviction, noting, nonetheless, various similarities with material in the Pauline homologoumena. Weiser, on the other hand, denies any direct literary dependence of 2 Timothy on the Acts of the Apostles, thereby taking at least implicit issue with those who would see Luke's hand at some point in the composition of this text.

The commentary itself is thorough and well-done. Marginal notations of content are particularly useful, for example, on salvation (114–16), on epiphany/manifestation (116–18), sound teaching (130–31), the agonistic motif (160–61), catalogue of virtues (228–29), servant of the Lord (232–33), catalogue of vices (241–43), and so forth. Unfortunately, the absence of a topical index and the lack of any mention of these mini-excursus in the table of contents make these systematic treatments less accessible to the reader than this reviewer would like.

The larger excursus are, however, well-identified in the table of contents. In keeping with the nature of the series, each of the topics treated in excursus-fashion pertains to a topic with regard to which confessional Roman Catholics and Lutherans entertain differing opinions. The six topics are the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of 2 Tim 1:13, intercessory prayer for the dead (142–46); the understanding of apostolic succession (181–85); the theological error of “the opponents,” namely, that the resurrection from the dead has already occurred (210–25); women and ministry in the church (261–66, erroneously identified in the table of contents as beginning on 266); the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of 2 Tim 3:16 within the context of the ecclesial doctrine of inspiration (286–97); and the personnel data of 2 Timothy (328–39). Each of these excursus deserves serious consideration not only by biblical scholars but also by systematic theologians and ecumenical observers.

The volume's lack of scriptural, authorial, and topical indices is a major lacuna that makes the volume somewhat less than user-friendly. I found myself paging through the volume as I attempted to reread and ponder some of the patristic and Greco-Roman material that the author had so deftly incorporated into his commentary.

The volume's footnotes occasionally make reference to secondary sources; at other times they discuss the meaning of words and phrases, often with reference to appropriate primary and secondary references. This reader, however, has the impression that the Anglo-Saxon literature cited in the author's bibliography is underrepresented in his footnoted discussions. I find that to be another serious lacuna in an otherwise excellent commentary.