

A World-Wide Methodist Project for Today - Picking up where John Wesley awkwardly left off?

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A World-Wide Methodist Project?

The World is in crisis today. So too is the Church: it is possible that it has never before been so divided over what it is to proclaim in the world. The crux of the matter is to do with its texts and how they are to be read and interpreted. John Wesley himself began a work on this in the 1750s. In my paper, I review what he was doing and address new information that has come to light since his death and, particularly, over the last forty years on the features and characteristics of the writings of the New Testament. It leads me to propose a 'Methodist Project' in which Methodists around the world might get involved. My belief is that the Methodist Church has one more gift to offer the whole Christian Church. It will show how the writers of the New Testament's texts intended their disciplined writings, firstly, to be read and understood and, secondly, to be viewed as contributions to the Church's growing understanding of itself and the New World Faith it was called to promote.

Wesley's Work on the New Testament

In the year of 1754, Wesley published his ***Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament***. We read in his Preface that he intended it for people who did not have 'the advantage of learning'ⁱ, who were 'plain, unlettered men' who understood 'only their own mother-tongue and yet' revered and loved the Word of God and had a 'desire to save their souls'ⁱⁱ. Wesley's constant thought was of them.

Because he did not wish to 'leave the ordinary reader behind'ⁱⁱⁱ, Wesley chose not to introduce terms that the ordinary reader would not readily understand, difficulties that the ordinary reader needn't be introduced to, the actual names of contributors to his own thinking, and such technical and critical matters that might distract the ordinary reader from his reading of God's Word. In his Preface, Wesley clearly states his intentions.

Wesley himself was enlivened by the exegetical research of JA Bengel. In his Preface, he called him, 'the great light of the Christian world'^{iv}. Employing the results of Bengel's research, Wesley introduced his tables for each book of the New Testament. He explained,

‘The *chain of arguments* in each book is briefly exhibited in the table prefixed to it, which includes also the sum thereof, and may be of more use than prefixing *the argument to each chapter*; the division of the New Testament into chapters having been made in the dark ages, and very incorrectly, often separating things that are closely joined, and joining those that are entirely distinct from each other’^v (my italics).

Wesley found what he wanted in JA Bengel’s publication of 1742 which covered all the books of the New Testament^{vi}. Through Wesley’s ***Explanatory Notes***..., the influence of Bengel’s work, therefore, spread far and wide in the nineteenth century. But because Wesley wished to ‘leave no reader behind’, he chose to share none of the technical aspects of Bengel’s research on ‘grammatico-historical’ reading. These, as a result, surfaced only in the early years of the twentieth century.

Did Wesley choose right? Many of us will say that he didn’t and that he could have done much more than he did to encourage a reading of the texts in the ways that *the writers intended*.

John Albert Bengel

In Methodism, many of us have grown up with John and Charles Wesley and learnt much about them over the years. I suspect, however, that few of us will have known anything or learnt anything at all about John Albert Bengel. He was a Swiss Lutheran clergyman who researched at the University of Tübingen in the eighteenth century. There is much that is available to read about him in books and on line. If you turn to this material you will learn about:

- his investigative work on the available manuscripts;
- his pioneering work on compiling a critical apparatus for his own Greek New Testament, published in 1734;
- his work on exegesis and exegetical method; along with
- his determination to help people to read the texts for themselves and glean meaning for themselves.

Bengel was writing about chiasm^{vii} and presenting the New Testament’s texts as those that were shaped to Greek compositional principles. It is understandable that Wesley was attracted to his work. Reading the ***Gnomon Novi Testamenti*** of 1742^{viii}, a Latin document, he knew he could do Bengel and the church in Britain a service by translating it into English in full. Instead, however, he chose to use Bengel’s material in the book he wanted to leave his preachers when his life and work were complete. With Bengel in Tübingen in the 1740s, I think we see the beginnings of the era of modern Biblical Critical Studies.

The Methodist Church Act 1976

The importance still of Wesley's *Explanatory Notes...* is seen principally in that his book is referenced under the Methodist Church Act 1976 (in Part 1 of the Deed of Union, Clause 4)^{ix} as a 'must read' for Methodist preachers in Great Britain. I quote two of its paragraphs:

'The doctrines of the evangelical faith which Methodism has held from the beginning and still holds are based upon the divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice. These evangelical doctrines to which the preachers of the Methodist Church are pledged are contained in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and the first four volumes of his sermons.

'The Notes on the New Testament and the 44 Sermons are not intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist preachers, but to set up standards of preaching and belief which should secure loyalty to the fundamental truths of the gospel of redemption and ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of salvation.'

Wesley's *Explanatory Notes...* could have been set aside in 1976, but it wasn't. Why? Was it because it was judged that preachers of a very different generation to that of John Wesley still needed his assistance? No. It was, in fact, the church, the continuing Methodist denomination itself, that needed it. Its preachers, in this way, could be held to account and the church could secure their loyalty to Methodism's principal tasks 'to Save Souls' and 'to spread Scriptural Holiness around the world'. Above, we saw that Wesley intended his book for 'plain, unlettered men'. In 1976, the Church and the Law gave the book a more elevated status and presented it as important, not only for preachers who did not have 'the advantage of learning', but also for those who did! It may be observed, however, that in Britain, at least, this book has not had the continuing influence the church might have wanted for it.

As a Minister and Preacher myself, I have been concerned for some time about the parameters John Wesley set for his book. He knew what he did and did not want to include and why. He alone decided, therefore, what his lay^x preachers could and should be asked to consider. We have to ask, is this appropriate for his ordained and lay preachers today who have the opportunities for Continuing Studies, University and College training? I don't think it is! It seems to me that when we look for the Word of God in the texts of both the Old and the New Testaments, all preachers should be aware of difficulties, of different scholars' views and scholars' different views, and also, very importantly, of the technical and 'critical' (analytical) issues that attend the writings that shape the faith we hold and the faith we would share, or, indeed, present to others through our preaching. The Bible did not drop down out of Heaven. Its texts were the works of writing men who wrote to the writing rules of men. Further, the texts themselves tell us, in places like 1 Cor. 7, that their writers were exploring

truth hesitantly, in their own time-setting, wrestling with earlier texts, tradition, reason and experience (which is what many today call 'the Wesleyan quadrilateral', yes?).

Wesley's Work on the Old Testament

For his ***Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament*** of 1765, Wesley followed the work of Mark Henry ('a person of strong understanding, of various learning, of solid piety, and much experience in the ways of God...')^{xi}. Wesley's Preface for this work can be compared with his Preface for his ***Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament***. It appears more formal and, at the last, exhibits what might be considered a backward step, when he advocates (loosely, maybe) for his readers a reading 'by chapters'.

Had Wesley forgotten the lessons he had learned from Bengel? Wesley had surely adopted his exegetical approach and included his tables which represented his identification of the writers' chains of arguments, all in preference to following chapters. That Bengel had died before the first Preface was written in 1754 can be noted. Eleven years later Bengel's influence may have been waning, even in Wesley's case.

My own work

What Bengel began to do and Wesley promoted among his preachers has been a stimulus to me. In the forty years of my ministry and research, I have been attempting to complete what Bengel began. Bengel and Wesley, I believe, would be delighted to see all the texts of the New Testament today, free of chapter and verse, laid out to the dating of their compositions and, most importantly, with each text laid out to the divisions and sub-divisions of their writers, which reveal important features and characteristics of the texts that tell us: what kind of literature it is; how the texts are to be read; their purpose and their meaning.

With every new literary discovery, I have found myself challenging the currents and consensuses of New Testament scholarship. The Greek texts have never been translated as they could and should have been, either eighteen-hundred years ago when they began to be translated into Latin and Old Syriac, or, indeed, at any time since. Translators have been oblivious to the skills of the writers and first readers. But, happily for the church today, the features and characteristics of the texts that have been long-hidden are still to be seen in the Greek. They are identifiable to anyone who would consider the texts' structures and style.

Today, therefore, the texts need to be presented in new ways. The new information cannot be ignored. Chapter and verse has lasted eight-hundred years since it was first imposed on the texts. Its continuing presence in the texts today speaks volumes of scholarship's failure.

People think the Bibles they have are the best representations they could possibly have of the sacred texts, but they are much mistaken.

It is necessary that chapter and verse is jettisoned and that the writers' own divisions and sub-divisions replace them. The texts need to be allowed to be what they are. And the writers of these texts deserve in every way to have them read as they intended them to be read and to have them understood as they intended them to be understood.

There is a massive job to be done to make good past and present damage. It is as daunting as it is exciting. The present hurdles will be hard enough, of course, for many. People will ask, 'Are you saying I have not been reading the texts in the ways that I ought?!' Will they, then, want to know anything about Style and Structure? They will be highly reluctant, I would suggest, until they are given the chance of seeing where such could take them, from a subjective, ill-informed and undisciplined reading to one that is disciplined and an exercise in objectivity, taking them from a reading that makes possible many kinds of colliding interpretations to a reading that makes possible common understanding.

As a Methodist, a Minister and an Architect, I feel myself to have been well qualified and suited to a sustained engagement in New Testament literary research. What sealed my interest in the first place was an Undergraduate Dissertation I undertook on the Central Section of Luke's Gospel in preference to a fifth course of lectures, terms papers and end of year exams. My life-time's task revealed itself the day I completed my Finals. That night, I worked till 4.30 in the morning on issues raised by my own dissertation. Indeed, that summer, before my first post-ordination stationing, I worked most days on the Gospels and Acts. Over the years, it is these books that I have returned to again and again. I only began looking at the Letters in 2003 when I was serving in Jaffna, in northern Sri Lanka. Living under twelve-hour curfews, I needed something to do in those hours of darkness. What I never expected to find was that the 'Letters' demonstrated the same discipline as the 'Books'. My latest book, *THE TEXTS...*^{xii}, is my sixteenth publication under my own imprint, *Ceridwen Press*. I have published again and again because I have kept on finding things that I have thought readers of the New Testament needed to know.

The work of Christendom's first 'methodists'

Provocatively, I call the New Testament's writers Christendom's first 'methodists'! I recall how the members of the Holy Club in Oxford were labelled 'Methodists' for their method, their discipline and the order they maintained in bible study, prayer, prison visiting and almsgiving. In my books and papers, I have been pleased to share my insights into the comparable writing discipline of the New Testament's writers, their method and their work of

ordering their texts. My continuing concern is that the Church lacks any realisation of this, or that their texts demand a matching discipline of presentation for disciplined reading.

My primary thesis is that the New Testament writers wrote to the rules and practices of writers who were schooled in the Greek compositional methods of the same era. The Rules included: Idea, Structure, Style, Memory and Performance. The evidence of the texts shows that the writers kept to the rules, to their own advantage and to everybody else's.

The common view of scholars in the past century was that the writers were *not constrained* by such rules, but were *free to develop new ways* of writing. For an example, we have the following by JN Sanders from his paper, 'The Literature... of the New Testament' in Peake's Bible Commentary, the recommended Commentary for Methodist Local Preachers in the nineteen-seventies ^{xiii}.

'The New Testament can hardly be considered as literature at all, except in the most general sense of the term....

'The aesthetic motive and the desire to produce fine writing as something worthwhile in itself are foreign to its authors whose aims were urgent and practical....

'Lk 1.1-4 echoes the cadences and repeats the conventional claims of Hellenistic historians, but there the resemblance ends....

'Their comparative indifference to pagan literature was on the whole an advantage to the writers of the New Testament. They gained thereby in freshness and freedom from stale conventions and artificial rhetoric. They were not conscious literary artists, obeying a convention and imitating the correct models, like Hellenistic authors, but rather practical men falling into familiar forms when these happened to provide them with effective means of expression....

'The Literature of the New Testament is in the main something new.'

On speeches and sermons, Sanders admits that Thucydides puts speeches into the mouths of his principal personages at appropriate moments and states, 'he set an unfortunate precedent', but that 'Luke didn't follow the precedent'.

My research demonstrates how such scholars could not have been more wrong. If any text was to succeed in a time of oral/aural communication, it had to conform to a writing methodology with which readers were familiar.

It has often been said that the spread of Christianity owed much to Pax Romana. We now have to consider what it owed to the 'Accepted Writing (and Publishing) Method' that had at least seven-hundred years of development behind it, since Homer. Indeed, Homer's style and structure for the *Iliad* are much in evidence in the New Testament's texts. His writing style of dactylic hexameter is reflected in the three-part writing style of all the texts. And his choice of structure is replicated firstly in three of Paul's Letters and then in three of the four

gospels^{xiv}. Clearly, because the texts were so disciplined in their composition, they could be read everywhere by readers in exactly the same way as each other.

All was well for possibly two centuries, until, that is, the texts started to be translated from their original Greek into Latin and Old Syriac. Augustine (a Professor of Latin Rhetoric) was not impressed with the priests' abilities^{xv}: he wrote,

'In the early days of the faith, no sooner did anyone gain possession of a Greek manuscript, and imagine himself to have any facility in both languages (however slight that may be), than he made bold to translate it'

My own thought is that these translators were translating the 'words' but not the 'works'. This, I want to suggest, is what translators have been doing in every age since. The evidence of improper breaks in the texts shows this. Evidence exists too to show that translators have even dared to think they could improve the texts by changing the 'words' before they could ever have understood what the writers were attempting. I have examples from the NIV, Lk. 15.1-32, and the KJV, Rev. 13.1-15.4. In both of these, the translators actually undermine the writers' purposes! In the first of these, the editor compounds the difficulties.

New Resources

The meanings of texts and the purposes of whole texts are available today because they come with the readings that the writers themselves intended. Bengel and Wesley would have been pleased to see this day! They would have been pleased too, I believe, to read my book, ***The Texts...***, not only for the ordering of the texts themselves, but also to see them set out in the approximate date order of their composition, to see how one text begat another text, how a text raised questions and issues that prompted responses.

For everyone, it is good too to know today that the texts are in good condition in the main and exhibit completeness, that they are constituted almost exactly in the ways that they can be considered to have been composed. Our liberation as expositors today lies in our exposure to the writing discipline of the writers and in the knowledge that the reading of these texts requires the same discipline. There is help available like never before for anyone who wishes to read the New Testament Books for themselves - to the writers' own divisions and sub-divisions, free of chapter and verse, free of lectionary trimming and free of inconsistent (and sometimes poor) translation and editing. For eighteen centuries, these things have not been available. Now, they are!

I have posted the texts (with notes) for download free from my website, www.new-testament-new-testimony.com. My books chart my progress with my research and can be purchased

from any bookshop, or from my personal website, www.davidgpalmer.co.uk. Also, I am making myself available to lead training sessions. Preachers need to know their texts, but, to date, not many do! Yet, surprises galore await every enquirer of every New Testament text.

Methodists today, therefore, need to connect in new ways with the works of Christendom's first 'methodists', accept that there is technical work for preachers to commit to exploring (contrary to Wesley's thinking) and be moved afresh (as Wesley himself was) to devote time to the study of the texts that the Early Church had collected and preserved. In these texts is hidden treasure still - for everyone to discover.

A Methodist Work

In every sense, this is a 'Methodist work'. It began for Wesley in the 1750s. And it began for me in the early 1980s, at Wesley House in Cambridge where I completed my training for ordination as a Methodist Minister. I left, also, knowing the literary-structures of the Gospels and Acts.

In 1986, on a summer exchange with a United Methodist minister, I was asked by his New Jersey congregation how the Revelation was arranged, because I had been speaking about the arrangements of the gospels. Within a few days, the folk got to hear my answer.

In 1987, my former Principal, Revd Brian E Beck, invited me to attend the Eighth Meeting of the Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies. At an informal evening meeting of British representatives there, I presented the literary-structures of the Gospels, Acts and the Revelation. The following year, these were the focus of my first book^{xvi}.

Methodist academic friendships developed particularly in the 1990s, during and after my doctoral studies on Mark's Gospel at Glasgow University. In 1998, Revd Professor Paul Ellingworth^{xvii} was one who reviewed my PhD thesis, *The Markan Matrix: A Literary-Structural Analysis of the Gospel of Mark*^{xviii}. In 2016, on receiving my book (from the Methodist Recorder, for review), *New Testament: New Testimony to the Skills of the Writers and First Readers*^{xix}, he wrote to congratulate me on 'completing my work' (on doing for all the books of the New Testament what I had done for Mark's Gospel).

The annual Conferences of the British New Testament Society, since 2003, have given me opportunities to present papers and enjoy contact with other Methodist scholars. With Professor Morna Hooker^{xx}, the conversation focused on 'numbers' and their use in Mark's Gospel. With Revd Professor I Howard Marshall, it was 1 John^{xxi}, as to how the writer intended it to be read. Revd Professor Emeritus CK Barrett^{xxii} was another, though we did not meet at the conferences because he had already retired. I visited him at his home in

Durham. We recalled 'the charge' he had preached at my ordination service (in 1983). But, most of all, I was there to discuss with him the literary form of John's Gospel.

As an Honorary Research Fellow of the Queen's Foundation, Birmingham, 2015-2019, I benefitted through other opportunities for scholarly dialogue with both Methodists and Anglicans. Methodist Research Conferences facilitated additional sharing. And more recently, I have received encouragement from Professor Vernon K Robbins, a 'United Methodist', whom I contacted after the death of his writing colleague, Burton L Mack^{xxiii}.

A Methodist Project?

At the last, we have to ask how this Methodist Project might continue and involve more participants than just those already mentioned. An open invitation could be given to everyone to engage in an exegetical approach to the texts, which will jettison 'reading to chapters' once and for all and commend a reading to the writer's own 'chain of arguments'. Readers are needed to read the New Testament's texts in the ways that will be considered 'new', to compare the old and new ways and to report. What British Methodists are invited to do, all Methodists around the world could be invited to do, and, indeed, because we are Methodists, also all Christians the world over. Further, it could be, as Wesley would never have imagined it, a work for scholars and non-scholars together, of University and College staff on the one hand and those who have never engaged in any formal training on the other.

Either as individuals, in groups, or as churches, involvement in the project could include the following suggested steps and stages:

- 1) Choose the book of the New Testament to be read - in the way that the writer always intended; to start with, maybe, a small text, one the size of a letter like that of 1 John;
- 2) Download the document free from the website, www.new-testament-new-testimony.com and make copy available in some way;
- 3) Read the text (on your own, or together with others) exploring and examining the Style and Structure of the book to establish the divisions and sub-divisions of the writer: it is these which will expose the purposes of the text and its meanings;
- 4) See where the book lies in the Rhetorical Chart which is produced in ***The Texts...*** and ask what the book you are reading contributes to the Church's understanding of its Faith, as well as how it builds on earlier documents;
- 5) Sum up what new features and characteristics you have seen in this book that you have not seen before when reading it to its chapter divisions;
- 6) Summarise for yourself (and your group, or your church) your findings and send copy to the coordinators of the project (for now, only myself in South Derbyshire, but in the future others, elsewhere);
- 7) Then, all contributions will be collected, collated and published on a new website so that all might gain from each other, as we develop our New Testament reading capabilities.

Preachers should be the first to benefit from such an exercise: the writers themselves do not ask us to fill in what we think are gaps in their presentations; they ask us to draw out from their texts what they are telling us and want us to know. The task is not *eisegesis*, to add or read other things into their texts, but *exegesis*. That is the preacher's first duty to both the text as well as the writer. Also, the better the congregation is informed, the more challenged the preacher will be, to be properly prepared to engage fully with both the text and his/her congregation. Or, just maybe, we will all end up sitting in circular formation, not for a sermon as such, but for an exercise in exposition in which one individual introduces the theme before he/she draws from others their knowledge and insights.

The World and the Church in Crisis...

There are some who will say that this paper will add to the current Crisis in the Church, that it will destabilise the Church all the more. But if these discoveries that are shared here are of God, and we can believe that they are, I think we can only look optimistically into the future, even in a World in Crisis.

John Wesley was right: care needs to be taken with the New Testament's texts to see that they are read as they were meant to be read, for the sake not only of our preaching and teaching, but also of our witness in the way we live. Today, we have the evidence of a writing discipline. When we employ the matching reading discipline, the features and characteristics of the texts reveal to us how we are to read the writings as the writers always intended and understand them as the writers also wanted us to understand them. Reading these texts up until now has been a subjective matter: now it is beginning to be an exercise in objectivity. In the same way as each other, therefore, just as we have been able to describe, say, Psalm 119, we will:

- identify the writers' writing styles for each text
- locate with pinpoint precision all the original divisions of each text
- describe the structure of each text
- use only the text's own divisions and self-referencing methods, jettisoning 'chapter and verse'
- establish each text's leading idea and purpose
- reconstitute/critically restore the original texts
- read, teach and preach the texts in the ways that the writers always intended
- delight in reading each text to its own literary presentation, and
- assess each text's contribution to our understanding of the Christian Faith.

It means also that we will be able to review the texts as a collection of similar but sometimes disparate writings and identify the difficult task that the Early Church faced, to succinctly describe what the New World Faith of Christianity was all about.

A few years of world-wide disciplined reading, of the New Testament's twenty-seven Books, is envisaged. During this time, the Methodist Church will be revealing its gift to Christendom - of a disclosure that will refresh its Faith, its Mission and its Unity. Given that both the Church and the World are in Crisis, this Project is well timed: the texts themselves were written in just such a context and, because of this, hold special relevance for these times.

ⁱ Para. 1 of the Preface, John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament*, London 1754, 1976 Edition published by Epworth Press, London

ⁱⁱ Para. 3 of the preface, John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes...*

ⁱⁱⁱ See Paras. 6 and 7 in particular, John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes...*

^{iv} Para. 7, John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes...*

^v Para.11, John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes...*

^{vi} JA Bengel, *Gnomon Novi Testamenti*, or *Exegetical Annotations on the New Testament*, 1742. Bengel's edition of the Greek New Testament was published at Tübingen in 1734.

^{vii} Chiasm in its basic form of use in Greek composition can be represented by ABB'A' where the outer two parts, A and A', parallel each other for themes and/or contents around two inner parts, B and B', which also parallel each other. Chiasms come in many forms, like ABA', 12C2'1', 123C3'2'1', and so on.

^{viii} See note vi

^{ix} Part 1 of the Deed of Union, Clause 4, Doctrine, Methodist Church Act 1976, *The Constitutional Practice and Discipline of the Methodist Church*, Methodist Publishing

^x I say 'lay' because ordained clergy in Wesley's Church of England will have had every educational advantage.

^{xi} John Wesley, *Explanatory Notes Upon the Old Testament*, London, 1765: see the Preface in particular.

^{xii} David G Palmer, *Challenging New Testament Scholarship, The Texts in Full and in Detail*, Ceridwen Press, Church Gresley April 2023

^{xiii} JN Sanders (Dean of Peterhouse College, Cambridge), 'The Literature and Canon of the New Testament', *Peake's Bible Commentary*, Editors: Matthew Black & HH Rowley, Thomas Nelson & Sons Ltd. 1962.

^{xiv} The scheme in question is described as ABB'XABB' where two sub-series ABB' balance each other either side of a central turning point X, where A is introductory, B is the first development and B' is the second, corresponding and completing development.

^{xv} See: *De doctrina Christiana* Book 2 Chapter 11

^{xvi} David G Palmer, *Sliced Bread: The Four Gospels, Acts and Revelation: Their Literary Structures*, Ceridwen Press, Cardiff 1988

^{xvii} See Paul Ellingworth, *The Epistle to the Hebrews: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC, Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. He is also remembered as a translator and for producing a variety of handbooks for translators.

^{xviii} David G Palmer, *The Markan Matrix: A Literary-Structural Analysis of the Gospel of Mark*, Ceridwen Press, Paisley 1999

^{xix} David G Palmer, *New Testament: New Testimony to the Skills of the Writers and First Readers*, (Fifth Illustrated Exhibition Edition), Ceridwen Press, Church Gresley 2016

^{xx} See chiefly: Morna D Hooker, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, Black's New Testament Commentaries, A & C Black, London 1991. Lady Margaret's Professor of Divinity at the University of Cambridge from 1976-1998, she has served Methodism, the wider Church and academia all through her life.

^{xxi} I Howard Marshall, *The Epistles of John*, The New International Commentary on the New Testament, William B Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Michigan 1978; see also his NIGTC, *The Gospel of Luke: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, also William B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1978.

^{xxii} CK Barrett, *The Gospel According to John: an Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, Second Edition, The Westminster Press, Philadelphia 1978 and particularly *Harper's New Testament Commentaries on Romans* (1957), *1 and 2 Corinthians* (1968 and 1973 in turn), Harper & Row, Publishers, New York, Hagerstown, San Francisco, London.

^{xxiii} Vernon K Robbins and Burton L Mack are well known for their works in the 1990s on Rhetoric and the New Testament and on Reading the Texts.