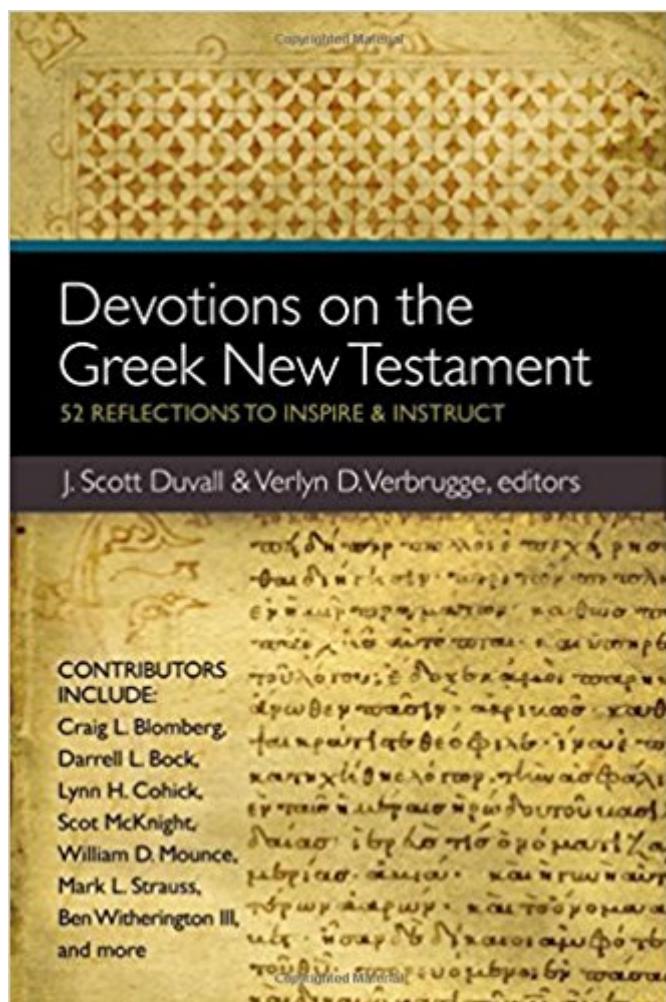


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# Devotions On The Greek New Testament: 52 Reflections To Inspire And Instruct



## **Synopsis**

Zondervan is known for its excellent resources in biblical languages, and many of our resources encourage professors, students, and pastors to continue to use their Hebrew and Greek Bibles beyond their seminary years. *Devotions on the Greek New Testament* continues on this path of excellence by introducing these devotions "based on a careful reading and study of the Greek New Testament" "written by some of the top Greek scholars of today. Contributors include Scot McKnight, Daniel B. Wallace, Craig L. Blomberg, Mark Strauss, and William D. Mounce, among others. *Devotions on the Greek New Testament* can be used as weekly devotional or as a supplemental resource throughout a semester or sequence of courses. The main point each devotion offers comes from a careful reading of the passage in the Greek New Testament, not from the English Bible. These authors use a variety of exegetical approaches in their devotions: grammatical, lexical, rhetorical, sociohistorical, linguistic, etc. Each devotion closes with a practical application.

## **Book Information**

Paperback: 160 pages

Publisher: Zondervan (October 28, 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0310492548

ISBN-13: 978-0310492542

Product Dimensions: 5.4 x 0.5 x 8.1 inches

Shipping Weight: 4.8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.6 out of 5 stars 23 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #129,920 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #32 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Meditations > New Testament #110 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Language Studies #800 in Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > New Testament

## **Customer Reviews**

J. Scott Duvall (PhD, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary) is professor of New Testament at Ouachita Baptist University. He is the coauthor with George H. Guthrie of *Biblical Greek Exegesis: A Graded Approach to Learning Intermediate and Advanced Greek* and with Terry G. Carter and J. Daniel Hays of the textbook *Preaching God's Word: A Hands on Approach to Preparing, Developing and Delivering the Sermon*. Verlyn D. Verbrugge (PhD, University of Notre Dame) is Senior Editor at

Large for Biblical and Theological Resources at Zondervan. He has published a number of articles as well as the acclaimed New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology: Abridged Edition (Zondervan, 2000), Paulâ™s Style of Church Leadership as Illustrated by His Instructions to the Corinthians on the Collection (Mellen, 1992), and A Not-So-Silent Night: The Unheard Story of Christmas and Why It Matters (Kregel, 2009). Â

If the purpose or goal of the book is to demonstrate how to use Greek in understanding a verse or a section of verses, then this book is five stars. It has shown through bite size forms how Greek helps in understanding a passage. Having the verse or verses printed in the beginning of each reflection helps in encouraging reading and even translating that verse or verses before reading the explanations. This book has 52 reflections written by various NT scholars. The back cover states that it can be used as a weekly devotional or as a supplemental resource throughout a semester or several courses. Each reflection has 2-3 pages (last page is usually less than half a page). The quality of helpfulness of these reflections (Greek insights) varies. Some are very helpful and some are harder to grasp the Greek significance but overall, Greek insights were great. But for the purpose (or purposes) indicated, it needs improvement through additional information. The stated purpose is to strengthen oneâ¢â™s walk with the Lord in the need to know the reason for studying Greek (p.11). The editors also hope to motivate students to endure Greek studies and will make them interested and motivated in this social media age (p.11-12). It is stated at the back cover that these devotions will inspire the reading and meditation of the Greek NT. Connecting the insights in Greek in how it can be significant or apply to the reader needs improvement (about half or so has some form of connecting application/significance to readers but only few did it sufficiently clear). It is good to know that a participle could be causal or concessive. But what application could be derive from either interpretation and specifically from the proposed meaning? As for helping students endure and be interested and motivated in Greek studies, more help could have been provided. With many scholars in this project, several things could have been included. Scholars could have shared their suggestions how to keep up with Greek and use it for daily living. Maybe different reading plans, from few passages a day to reading through the NT a year. Maybe a suggestion of verses to memorize and an explanation of how to meditate on Greek insights (Do you try to interpret the meaning in English and dwell on that or do you reflect on the Greek itself?). With a collection of these many scholars, we can learn much besides the reflections, their habits and practices, wisdom and advice that are varied that it will help different students and pastors. It would be also good to have a glossary of terms and select vocabulary (occurrence of 10 or less, maybe?). Intermediate

students will understand the terms and may be able to translate but beginning students will grapple with the meaning of terms and translating some words (or even parsing). Having several resources open or at hand as suggested like first class grammars may make the process like an academic study than a reading that motivates students to keep on learning and use their Greek. It will also make this book less handy if it is too dependent on having other resources at hand. I think Daily Dose of Greek videos and the weekly Monday with Mounce will help students and graduates keep up with Greek studies for free but these are not intended as devotionals (nor necessarily exegetical). So to make this volume distinct and profitable and worth its retail price of \$16.99 (less listed here) as intended, the devotional aspect must be improved including selecting the appropriate verses (maybe shorter) or focus (maybe grammar or word meaning; finding the main verb or wordplays maybe good for study but not study with devotional flavor). Other helpful guidance to motivate and to assist students to endure in studying and keeping Greek must be added.

This is a fine book for a beginning to intermediate Greek student, and is excellent for pastors or missionaries who have had Greek training in seminary. Duvall brings together some fine evangelical scholars to produce a short book of 52 devotions on the Greek New Testament. The devotions all begin with a Greek text and run in the common order of our New Testaments from Matthew to Revelation. Each devotion is 2-3 pages long. One of the aspects of the book I most enjoyed was the variety of approaches the authors took in the devotions. Sometimes the devotional point was made through a discussion of lexical data, sometimes literary analysis, sometimes verb tense. The grammatical and lexical perspectives presented through the devotions showed how richly rewarding the study of the Greek text can be for the committed student. This book will encourage many to take up their Greek again or to persevere in their studies. Of course, a book like this can not replace the necessary work of grammatical study and daily reading of the Greek text, but it can be a great encouragement in the journey.

I think it is generally true that finding a new tool in whatever area you have a real passion is about as exciting as it gets! A gardener who discovers a new way to dig or a house painter who finds a faster, smoother way to apply paint are both almost thrilled to get to work! Several have commented specifically on the content of "Devotions on the Greek New Testament." Let me add my voice by saying this tool is a must for every pastor who is in the pulpit from Sunday to Sunday. Here we find fifty-two great "sermon starters" (for want of a better word) that help one begin where the beginning of each message should take place -- in the depths of the text. Of course, all tools carry warnings

("Do not use iron on clothes while wearing them") and other sensible instructions. This tool is for use in the study process. Few in your audience will want you to read to them from this book. Warning: Do not say "As it says in the Greek" when preaching this material. However, have you ever considered the "If" clauses in Gamaliel's statement to the Sanhedrin? Or the significance of the "you and the you" in John 1? This book will make you stop and ponder what is really going on in some very well-known texts. From that personal pondering a truly marvelous message can be developed. Sure, we can all download a "sermon-lite" from a huge variety of websites. Or we can get back into the business of growing true disciples for the kingdom by feeding on the Word ourselves before feeding it to others. My only disappointment will be if the editors fail to produce an annual version of these devotions.

You got meat! Pull-out-your-Greek-resources-type meat. Many rich insights are in here to be discovered; soul satisfying truths to be mined. Be sure to read with pen in hand to underline the gold. I found exegetical Greek gold on practically every page (and I've been at this for decades). Here are just a few highlights among many to search out once you get yours: Luke 2:4-5 (p.33) Luke 23:34 (p.38) Ephesians 5:18-22 (p.85) Colossians 3:4 (p.102) Hebrews 10:24-25 (p.125) Revelation 5:7 (p.145). Blessings.

For the trained Greek exegete, this is a fun reading of the New Testament in select devotional passages. The average layman would need to ignore the Greek text, and simply accept the devotional as it is presented. The volume does, however, present "unique" readings not found in most good translations. "Unique" interpretations are always suspect because all scholars stand on the shoulders of those who have gone before us; a truly unique reading would mean that everyone else had missed the intent of the author until now. For the reader of Greek, or those with the tools to dig out meanings, this is a worthwhile reading. I wish it were in Kindle format as well.

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