

THE NAKED NEW TESTAMENT SCHOLAR on 'CHAPTER AND VERSE'

(in promotion of Rev Dr David G Palmer's Edinburgh **Exhibition in Art on the New Testament**)

The TV Naked Chef, Jamie Oliver, stripped down recipes and presented the bare essentials of cooking. Now, biblical scholar David Palmer does what no one has done before. He strips down all the New Testament Books to their **bare essentials** and shows how they were intended to be read to their own built-in sub-divisions. The books display structures, a common writing style and aids for memorising and presenting the text. Their ingredients are vividly revealed in **artworks** and **charts**. The purposes of the works, their genre and their meanings are all laid bare to our gaze. The New Testament it may be, but it is not as you have ever known it. You have never seen it like this before, for its disciplined simplicity *and* its literary beauty.

Dr Palmer's **exhibition** reveals characteristics of all twenty-seven books of the New Testament that have not been seen since the first two centuries. At some point early in the third century, churches wanted texts in Latin. It is then that the Greek texts were badly translated. Only the words were translated. The texts, as whole texts, were not. At that time, biblical scholars began losing any knowledge they might have had about the constructions of Greek literature. For the past seventeen-hundred years, therefore, the church has not known its own books as they were meant to be known! Over the same period, the failure of scholarship has been immense! No one has been asking how the first readers read the first texts. For the church and academe, these failures have been costly. They have missed out on the unity, peace and common purpose that they would have known. Many have engaged in exegesis, hermeneutics and biblical exposition, but it has been to no avail: the all important discipline for reading the Greek manuscripts has never been known. The church's preaching and teaching work has suffered as a consequence. And because of this, its people have been under-served in the study of the scriptures. All are biblically **naïve**, theologically **naked** and **prone** to choosing what they want to believe about the literature!

New Testament: New Testimony to the Skills of the Writers and First Readers (Fourth Edition, 2013) presents Dr Palmer's most recently published evidence so far, in the Greek texts, which demonstrates clearly that all twenty-seven New Testament Books were created by rhetors of the first centuries, who wrote to the discipline of classical Greek that was common in their era (we now call it Ancient Rhetoric). The documents were prepared for a readership that was educated in the same discipline, that they might present them in a society and culture that relied on oral-aural communication. The basic supposition of New Testament Studies has been that the writers were not 'slaves to a system' of writing. This is now overturned and, because of this, most of the currents and consensuses of modern New Testament scholarship are due to be jettisoned!

As a result of the discoveries, we have now the opportunity for a clarity of reading, a clarity of understanding and a clarity of appreciation of the purpose of each book. Through an informed, disciplined approach to reading, which is first-century in its

method, we will be able, even, to jettison 'chapter and verse', which has been a misleading referencing system now for eight hundred years! It is a referencing system of artificial sub-divisions that were imposed on texts that already had their own in-built (hence, self-referencing) sub-divisions! The continuing use of 'chapter and verse' symbolises and signals scholarship's ignorance and incompetency.

The building blocks of first century Hellenistic literature were structural and sub-structural. It was one of the rules of writing that the rhetor had to provide a simple structure that his reader could discern. Another of the rules was that he had to employ a writing style from the beginning of his document, through to its very end. This writing style worked at many levels simultaneously, but at its highest level it defined a structural piece of the whole. It functioned, therefore, sub-structurally. Hence, every document is self-referencing.

Compare the delineations of the sections and sub-sections of the New Testament texts in **NT:NT(5)**, which is Dr Palmer's future publication of his best evidence to date (but which is available for viewing now in this **exhibition**), with the references of the currently used lectionaries and you will see that very few passages begin and end where the writers (the rhetors) would have wanted. The church promotes haphazard Sunday and Daily readings. Is this respectful of the 'Word of God'?

The writing style that all the writers employed can be described as ABB', where A is the introductory piece, B is the first development and B' is the second, paralleling, development and closing piece of the construction. In the case of Mark's Gospel, for example, the Prologue is defined by such a reading as 1.2-20. The Narrative's 'Four Series of Seven Days' comprise days' tellings that are all completed in the form of ABB'. Or with The Revelation, the parts of the arrangement, of Prologue, Epilogue and the Seven Sections of Introductions and 'Sevens of Pieces', are all ABB' completed wholes. It is true also of the Epistles. For example, I John, James and I Peter all consist of four sections, ABB'A' where Section A consists of parts in an ABB' arrangement, also Sections B, B' and A'. Referencing systems for everyone's simultaneous use are easily established. Consider these: A/ABB'; B/ABB'; B'/ABB'; A'/ABB'. They are also fully expressive of the place a part, or a piece, occupies within a text. That is simply not so, with the current use of chapter and verse.

When the shape of first century manuscripts is taken into account, it can be seen why this writing approach was needed.

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For more, visit the **Exhibition** and visit the website, www.davidgpalmer.co.uk

An Exhibition in Art:

Seeing the New Testament

for what it is:



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This Exhibition is on a two-year, nationwide tour. It launched in Leicester in February 2015 and it will conclude in Hull, City of Culture 2017, the exhibitor's 'home' town. It visited Oxford in March, Cambridge in April, Cliff College Festival in May and Swadlincote in June. For July and August it is 'at home' in Church Gresley.

You would think, wouldn't you, that we would know all that there is to know about the New Testament Books. For nearly two thousand years they have been the focus of the keenest analytical minds. But the truth is there is more, much more. This Exhibition and Talks will enable you to see the New Testament texts for what they are. You will see how very carefully, and purposely, these books were crafted.

'This exhibition introduces the fruits of much scholarly research which will inform and intrigue both those who know a lot about these books and those who know very little,' says Rev Dr David G. Palmer, the Exhibitor, Methodist Minister, New Testament Scholar, Architect and Author.

The Exhibition now visits Scotland for the first time

At the **City of Edinburgh Methodist Church**

Nicolson Square, Edinburgh, EH8 9BX

Thursday to Saturday, 3rd – 5th September 2015

Thursday 2.00pm - 9.00pm

Friday 10.00am - 6.00pm

Saturday 10.00am - 2.00pm

Thursday at 7.30pm and Friday at 2.30pm:

Talks (disclosing new discoveries)

'The New Testament, but not as you know it!'

For sale at the exhibition for educational and evangelistic purposes: books, reading schemes, artworks, posters, jigsaws, mugs, greetings cards, placemats and mouse-mats.

To learn more about this New Testament research, visit the website: www.davidgpalmer.co.uk

For more information, contact:

Rev Dr David G Palmer, 46 Regent Street, Church Gresley, Swadlincote, DE11 9PL; Tel: 01283 211671; 0773 179 1846

