

Book review on africa bible commentary - book report

[Religion](#), [Bible](#)



That Africa Bible Commentary by editor Tokunboh Adeyamo provides study and discussion of the Bible in the context of African studies and trials. A variety of articles are collected within the text that provides unique perspectives to African issues in a Biblical way. Essentially, the difficult challenges facing many Africans today have specific and understandable solutions and commentary in the Holy Bible, and the Africa Bible Commentary brings those issues to light. The book goes through the Bible, offering interpretations of the book section by section, and demonstrating how the issues being discussed are relevant to modern Africa. Seventy African scholars have come together to explore the books of the Bible, and their implications for modern African Christians, together.

African churches and ministries can benefit greatly from the commentary itself, but there are articles on specific issues pertaining to Africans that can be found within as well. Issues like HIV and AIDS are covered thoroughly, as well as how funeral and burial rites are performed in Africa. The problems of persecution and orphan/widow experiences are also discussed in the commentary, offering interesting context and engaging commentary on those issues. An African can look at these issues through the commentary and have a rigorous, thorough and well-researched explanation for how to address them through the Bible.

The most important aspect of the book is in the section " Scripture as the Interpreter of Culture and Tradition" - the editor denotes that " The Africa Bible Commentary attempts to relate the Scriptures and African cultures and in so doing to see ways in which the gospel may be seen to be relevant to

African cultures" 1. In this section, it is acknowledged that Scripture is a vital and important part of African culture, and that Christianity is one of the most prevalent things about it. As a result, Africans must pay attention to Scripture as the means by which people learn their history and identity, as the Scripture is God's attempt to engage with the cultures of His people.

In applying Scripture to culture, Scripture must be considered to be completely intertwined with culture - not principles extracted from Scripture and slapped on to culture in a clumsy attempt to fit it. The book of James in particular receives a fair treatment as it pertains to Africa. Of unique focus is the subject of favouritism, which is compared to the nepotism encountered rampantly in political and economic positions in Africa. These actions are denounced, just like they are in James, and Christians are told to fight against it².

One interesting aspect of the commentary is that it is written from a conservative evangelical viewpoint, instead of Charismatic or Liberal, the two primary voices found in the majority of African Christian scholarship. One of the assumptions made throughout the commentary is that the Spirit is still providing the special gifts that it offers to Christians - what's more, it asks the readers to not take for granted or abuse the gift of life and health. This particular viewpoint allows for Africans to combat their current (often impoverished and abusive) situations. This type of hope is given the proper Biblical context, and can be a great boon to Christians living in Africa.

On the subject of " the role of women in the church," the author makes a particularly strong point regarding women's rights and strength in the congregation. While most would bring up the issue of female submission, it is not touched on here - this is a good thing, as even acknowledging it would be a grave betrayal to women's rights. The way in which mixed congregations are celebrated in this book is another testament to how progressive the book is at times, and how it teaches the Bible to Africans in a unique and enlightening way.

The fact that this commentary is in one volume is one of the selling points of the book - in few instances has there been a more comprehensive guide that is short enough for the layman to read. In essence, the book presumes that the reader has at least a cursory knowledge of the books of the Bible, but may have questions as to how to relate it to their own world. Furthermore, its authorship consisting of African scholars and relating to an African world is important, as it offers the most direct correlation to African life. It cannot be said that the commentary provided is divorced from the African experience, due to the direct links the authors have with that same experience. In conclusion, the Africa Bible Commentary is absolutely essential to those people who want a more comprehensive, direct corollary between African life and the Christian Scripture.

References

Adeyamo, T. ed. (2006). Africa Bible Commentary. ABC Editorial Board, Association of Evangelicals of Africa.

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