



# Reading the Word of God in the Presence of God: A Handbook for Biblical Interpretation

By Vern S. Poythress

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Every time we read the Bible, we're reading in the presence of God. How should this incredible truth shape how we read?

Moving quickly from principle to practice, Vern Poythress helps us rethink how we interpret the Bible by showing us the implications of entering into God's presence as we study. This handbook outlines distinct steps for practicing faithful biblical interpretation by focusing on our fellowship with the God who speaks to us through his Word.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

“While many sincere Christians read the Scriptures as personal communiques from God, biblical scholars often treat them as little more than human documents written for people living long ago. Vern Poythress insists neither of these paths reflects how Christ calls his followers to approach the Bible. Everyone familiar with Poythress's theological reflections knows that he is one of the brightest minds of our day. Everyone familiar with his life knows the depth of his piety. In this book, Poythress offers a glimpse into how he employs both of these gifts from the Holy Spirit as he handles the Bible. His reflections will challenge and inspire everyone who seeks to read the Scriptures in the presence of God.”

—**Richard L. Pratt Jr.**, President, Third Millennium Ministries

“Vern Poythress has given the church a truly comprehensive guide to reading and appropriating Scripture. This unique resource explains both the first steps for beginners and the theological, philosophical, and linguistic foundations for sophisticated interpretation.”

—**Dan Doriani**, Vice President of Strategic Academic Projects and Professor of Theology, Covenant Seminary

“Providing both theological foundations and practical strategies for interpretation, Dr. Poythress explains the simple yet astounding truth that God is present in his Word and speaks to us as we read. With pastoral sensitivity, he combines linguistic theory, hermeneutics, systematic theology, and expert biblical knowledge into a compelling work both instructive for advanced students of the Bible and accessible for beginners. I highly commend this book and look forward to sharing it with my congregation.”

—**Camden Bucey**, Pastor, Hope Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Grayslake, Illinois; President, Reformed Forum

“*Reading the Word of God in the Presence of God* does two very hard things very well. First, it guides a spectrum of readers from an introductory listening to God speaking in Scripture into deeper explorations of the Word's multifaceted witness to Christ. Second, this book exemplifies a radical, refreshing alternative to mainstream methods of biblical interpretation—an approach controlled at every point by the Bible's claim to be the very Word of the ever-living, ever-present God.”

—**Dennis E. Johnson**, Professor of Practical Theology, Westminster Seminary California

“Vern Poythress has done readers a great service by providing an easy to understand guide to the complexities of biblical interpretation. Readers will benefit from his knowledge of the way language works, his emphasis on the divine inspiration of Scripture, and the ways in which every passage relates to God's unfolding plan of redemption. Here is a trustworthy and practical guide for anyone interested in reading the Bible faithfully.”

—**Brandon D. Crowe**, Associate Professor of New Testament, Westminster Theological Seminary

#### About the Author

**Vern S. Poythress** (PhD, Harvard University; ThD, University of Stellenbosch) is professor of New Testament interpretation at Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he has taught for nearly four decades. In addition to earning six academic degrees, he is the author of numerous

books and articles on biblical interpretation, language, and science.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jeremy Brown:**

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