

Series Foreword

A preacher who seeks to be creative, exegetically up to date, hermeneutically alert, theologically responsible, and in-touch with the moment is always on the hunt for fresh resources. Traditional books on preaching a book of the Bible often look at broad themes of the text with little explicit advice about preaching individual passages. Lectionary resources often offer exegetical and homiletical insights about a pericope with little attention given to broader themes and structures of the book from which the lection is taken. *Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries* provide the preacher with resources that draw together the strengths of these two approaches into a single text aid, useful for the moment of preparation halfway between full scale exegesis and a finished sermon.

The authors of this series are biblical scholars who offer expositions of the text rooted in detailed study and expressed in straightforward, readable ways. The commentators take a practical approach by identifying (1) what the text invited people in the ancient world to believe about God and the world and (2) what the text encouraged people to do in response. Along the way, the interpreters make use of such things as historical and cultural reconstruction, literary and rhetorical analysis, word studies, and other methods that help us recover how a text was intended to function in antiquity. At the same time, the commentaries offer help in moving from then to now, from what a text meant (in the past) to what a text means (in the present), by helping a minister identify issues, raise questions, and pose possibilities for preaching while stopping short of placing a complete sermon in the preacher's hands. The preacher, then, should be in a position to set in motion a conversation with the text (and other voices from the past and present) to help the congregation figure out what we today can believe and do.

The commentators in this series seek to help preachers and students make connections between the various lections from a given book throughout the lectionary cycle and liturgical year in their sermons and studies. Readers, preachers, and their parishioners will have a deeper appreciation of the book's unique interpretation of the Christ event and how that influences their approach to living the Christian faith in today's world. The most life-giving preaching is nearly always local in character with a minister rooted in a particular congregation, culture, and context encouraging listeners to think

specifically about how the text might relate to the life of the congregation and to the surrounding community and world. *Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries* are set forth in the hope that each volume will be a provocative voice in such conversations.