



# Abingdon New Testament Commentaries: Philippians & Philemon

*Carolyn Osiek*

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The commentary demonstrates how to work through the texts of Philippians and Philemon in the light of relevant scholarship but also with the use of one's own critical judgment. While traditional exegetical questions are dealt with, contemporary theological concerns are highlighted, and there is a special effort to probe the social issues that arose in the Pauline churches. Gender roles and slavery are given particular attention as they arise in the texts.

Scholarship, now enlightened by greater knowledge of the social structures and relationships of Mediterranean antiquity, is just beginning to explore questions of how women functioned in house-church communities, how early Christians dealt with the institution of slavery, and how slaves were integrated into their communities. To the extent allowed by the commentary format, these questions are given special attention in contributing to an ongoing discussion.

"Osiek deftly weaves new rhetorical, social-historical, and social-scientific insights into classical historical and philological research on Philippians and Philemon. She has the special gift of discussing difficult issues in simple language and with great clarity. The result is a remarkable synthesis in which readers of all kinds will come to a deeper understanding not only of these two letters and recent scholarship on them, but of Paul and the ancient world he inhabited." ?Dennis C. Duling, Canisius College

"Professor Osiek's combination of meticulous scholarship, a profound grasp of the rhetorical and social dimensions of Philippians and Philemon, and her succinct yet limpid style make this commentary a remarkably accomplished and mercifully compact addition to Pauline Studies." ?Philip F. Esler, Vice-Principal (Research) and Professor of Biblical Criticism in the University of St. Andrews, Scotland

"Osiek's brief commentary is a model of excellent scholarship shared with clarity and with sensitivity to contemporary interpretive issues. The historical and sociological approaches in the hands of Osiek lead to insightful and important comments, for example, on issues related to women (in Philippians) and to slavery (in Philemon). Osiek presents alternative interpretations clearly and fairly and always makes her own case with grace. this is authentic biblical scholarship in the service of all God's people." ?David M. Scholer, Professor of New Testament and Associate Dean for the Center for Advanced Theological Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary

"Osiek succeeds in combining up-to-date scholarship on the puzzles of Philippians and Philemon along with a clear exposition of the real meaning of Paul's thought. The commentary will be of great value to both the professional and the lay reader." ?Vincent Branick, Professor of Religious Studies, University of Dayton

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#### **Thomas Schwan:**

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