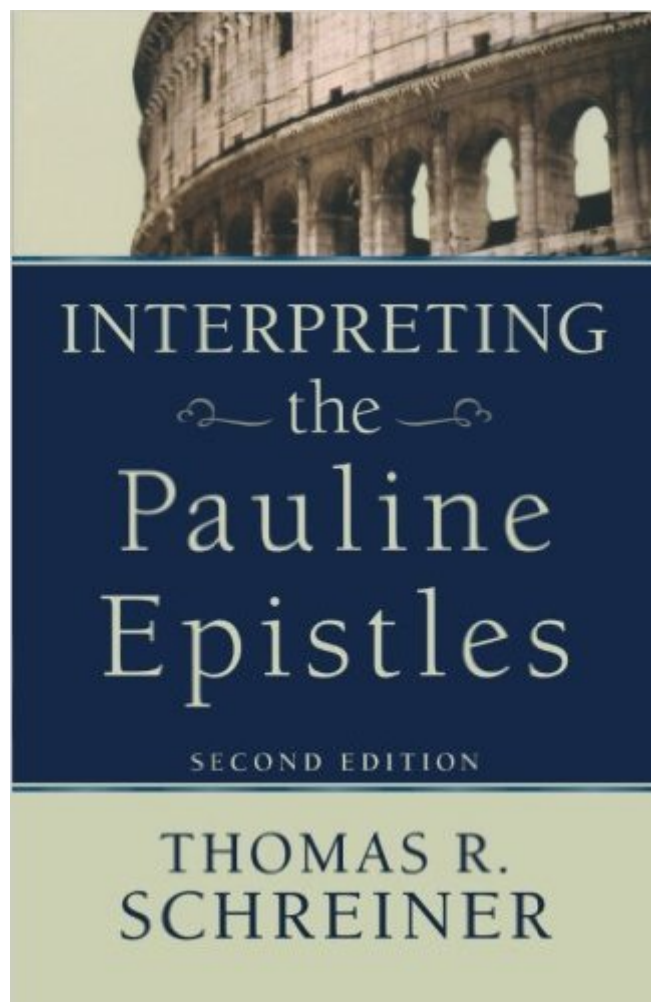


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# Interpreting The Pauline Epistles



## Synopsis

Leading Pauline studies expert Thomas Schreiner provides an updated guide to the exegesis of the New Testament epistles traditionally assigned to Paul. The first edition helped thousands of students dig deeper into studying the New Testament epistles. This new edition is revised throughout to account for changes in the field and to incorporate the author's maturing judgments. The book helps readers understand the nature of first century letters, do textual criticism, investigate historical and introductory issues, probe theological context, and much more.

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## Customer Reviews

Thomas Schreiner's 167 page introduction to the Pauline Epistles is a book that the reviewer has turned to time and time again for its depth of wisdom and clarity of presentation. In a relatively brief book the author manages to summarize each of the necessary components for doing exegesis on the Pauline Epistles. Schreiner begins by explaining the nature of the Pauline Epistles. In doing so, Schreiner argues against Deissmann's view that Paul's letters were merely reactions against specific problems in specific situations. Instead, the author argues that although the Pauline epistles were, in fact, occasional, they were far more than "merely private individual letters" (25); these epistles were rather highly structured documents including an opening, a body, and a closing. As each of these sections are dealt with individually the writer presents for the reader comparisons and contrasts between numerous Pauline epistles and the method in which these sections are utilized.

Schriener then moves to analyze specific literary forms (including diatribe, parenesis, and hymns) that may or may not be used to some degree throughout the books in question. The first chapter ends with an extensive discussion of the occasional nature of these epistles. The second chapter briefly highlights the challenges and blessings of textual criticism throughout the Pauline epistles. The author conducts three case studies and offers the student a paradigm for making text critical decisions. Chapter three reinforces the need for a "program of regular reading" (58) in order for the student to gain greater familiarity with the text of the Greek New Testament. The fourth chapter discusses historical and introductory issues that challenge students of the Pauline epistles.

Two summers in a row I spent about two weeks overseas, primarily in London. London has become one of my favorite cities and I jump at any chance to spend more time there. The second time I was there as a missionary helping to lay a foundation for future church planting. The first time, however, I was a visitor. I came as a student on a church history study tour. Though I had always known and read about London, this was the first time I had ever experienced it. The thing that made that first trip to London was my tour guide. He was able to explain to us how to navigate the city; places to avoid and certain must-see sites. He told us which place to go if we were going to get tickets to the theater so we would get the best deal. In short, this was a city he knew and loved. His knowledge and love helped make him a reliable guide. Tom Schreiner's *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* is in its second edition. It received a new cover and some light revision, but the meat is still the same. This book is a reliable and helpful guide to navigating the letters of Paul. If even the apostle Peter says that Paul says some hard things that are difficult to understand (2 Pet 3:16) then you know that you and I need some help. I can't think of a single better volume to help equip men and women to study the New Testament than this one. He covers every area pertinent to the subject and does it with ease and simplicity. Sometimes introductory books are written with so much jargon and technical detail that it makes it an arduous read with little profit. This is not one of those kinds of books. He explains every area of Pauline studies and every component their interpretation. Even with a BA in Theology and a MDiv in the works, I learned a lot from this book.

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