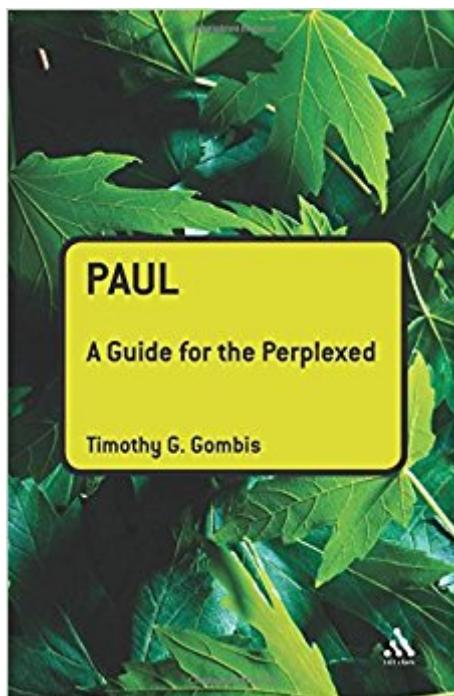


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# **Paul: A Guide For The Perplexed (Guides For The Perplexed)**



## Synopsis

This is an up-to-date and engaging introduction to the study of Paul offering fresh interpretations of this crucial figure in biblical studies. The Apostle Paul is the most influential theologian in the Christian tradition while also being the most controversial and probably the least understood. He has been regarded simultaneously as an anti-Semite, a figure who would surely support the state of Israel, a misogynist, a feminist, a conservative, and a radical. Just as at various times over the last two millennia, Paul is again at the center of a range of controversies, beginning especially with E. P. Sanders's groundbreaking work in the late 1970's on Paul's relationship to Judaism. Since then, the field of Pauline studies has been a hot-bed of vigorous and creative debate. This book will serve as an upper-undergraduate level engagement with these various controversies and debates, introducing students to the historical and hermeneutical dynamics that have given rise to the variety of discussions before then rigorously working through them. The book will begin by placing Paul historically in his first-century context and throughout church history. Gombis will then introduce the most significant debates in the study of Paul, drawing out the lines of argument of the major players in Pauline studies before then commending a way of processing the issues involved. The format of discussions, then, will be somewhat of a broad survey of advanced discussions, but will include Gombis' own advocacy of a preferred view in each case. Continuum's Guides for the Perplexed are clear, concise and accessible introductions to thinkers, writers and subjects that students and readers can find especially challenging - or indeed downright bewildering. Concentrating specifically on what it is that makes the subject difficult to grasp, these books explain and explore key themes and ideas, guiding the reader towards a thorough understanding of demanding material.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Tim Gombis has painted a picture of the apostle Paul by applying the fresh paint of recent scholarship to a traditional canvas of authorship and history. The results are a careful exposition of important issues that winsomely engages a variety of viewpoints and a book that will orient a new generation of students to the latest scholarly conversations about Paul. " J.R. Daniel Kirk, Fuller Theological Seminary, USA. Just when scholarly discussion on the Apostle Paul has produced an intricate tangle of debate, Timothy Gombis rescues the non-specialist by providing a delightfully accessible book on Paul. Sifting carefully through the best scholarship, Gombis presents a clear, fresh, and compelling portrait of Paul's theological framework. For those needing a helpful roadmap for locating Paul's life and theology, this is the place to begin. And for those who assume the road is all too familiar, Gombis offers plenty of welcome surprises. " Justin K. Hardin, Wycliffe Hall, Oxford University, UK. Seminal reading for teachers and students in post-sixteen education... I also commend the volume to Christian and inter-faith groups. " Theological Book Review This short work succeeds in giving a succinct overview of aspects of Pauline thought, unencumbered by complex scholarly apparatus. " Sanford Lakoff

Timothy G. Gombis (Ph.D., University of St. Andrews) is Associate Professor of New Testament at Grand Rapids Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI.

As a reviewer wrote on the back cover: "...by applying the fresh paint of recent scholarship to a traditional canvas of authorship and history..." This book is an excellent introductory overview and evaluation of Pauline scholarship from a perspective that affirms traditional authorship. Well written and easy to understand, the author does a great job of communicating his perception of the big picture(s) of Pauline thought and how recent scholarship has informed that.

This is a necessary book for any pastor, seminary student desiring to understand Paul better. Gombis gives a great overview of a vast range of Pauline topics, making this book both practical and helpful.

I have finally found an excellent introductory text for my New Testament classes. "Paul: A Guide for the Perplexed," by Timothy G. Gombis, achieves a number of hard to find objectives. Teaching religious studies at a state university provides the challenge of finding sources that cover a number of scholarly approaches to Pauline studies without being too advanced for undergraduate students. Having required this book for the fall 2010 semester, Gombis' text has met and exceeded my expectations. First, the scholarly material is presented in an even-handed fashion. This is important to me with such an eclectic group of university students. Second, the book's length is perfect--145 pages of material. This is a length that most students will actually read! Third, the text is well written and self-explanatory with respect to technical aspects of Pauline studies. Fourth, Gombis goes to great lengths to situate differing Pauline addresses in local contexts. This is immensely helpful in teaching students the primary interpretive task of "context." Not only do I give this book my highest recommendation, I would suggest giving it a try in introductory courses on New Testament and Pauline studies.

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