

“Philemon” by Eric D. Barreto

Review by Greg Carey, Lancaster Theological Seminary

This commentary offers formidable strengths. Barreto finds a straightforward way to guide readers through the thorny problems related to the circumstances of Philemon’s composition. He also takes a straightforward position of his own: that Onesimus is indeed a slave, and that Paul is challenging the nature of the master-slave relationship. He reads the entire letter with acute theological sensitivity. Barreto’s report of how American slavery advocates used Philemon is especially helpful. Finally, the great strength of this commentary is that Barreto identifies the letter’s key theological issue: how does the gospel shape believers’ relationships with one another? The theological work Barreto does is outstanding.