

genuinely theological engagement with doctrine and text that, even for those who argue for a Christology that would isolate the sociopolitical message of Jesus of Nazareth, cannot be discounted.

Bates' suggestion that this approach yields a mosaic from which the triune God emerges is indeed, as he puts it, a welcome respite from the "monochrome hues of procession and subordination" (175). Yet, to his implicit charge that other readings of Scripture are not only partial, but somehow flawed, one replies, of course, that modernity matters too. Thus, to present this hermeneutical strategy as the retrieval of a conversation among the persons of the Trinity, rather than conveying this as a catholic extension of the consciousness of Jesus Christ, seems problematic, although a series of interpretive "critical controls" assuages this somewhat. On balance, however, the point that this is not merely an early, implicit form of Trinitarian speculation is warranted, as such a frame might now seem wanting, missing, as it would, the genuinely prosopological force of this reading, the retrieval of which marks this work as one of the most important additions to the Trinitarian literature of the last twenty years. While of interest to Trinitarian theology, this study is perhaps even more relevant to graduate students and scholars in the area of Christology. As a thoughtful and scholarly point of engagement for questions about the self-consciousness of Christ, its insights will also be useful for the seemingly naïve questions that typically arise in an undergraduate classroom.

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*Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation, and Mission.* By Michael J. Gorman. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2015. x + 341 pages. \$28.00 (paper).  
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This book appears as the author's third volume in a "partly deliberate, partly accidental" (2) trilogy on Paul, following *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (2009) and *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (2013). Building on his previous work, Michael J. Gorman identifies his central claim as follows: Paul desired the communities he addressed "not merely to believe the gospel but to become the gospel, and in so doing to participate in the very life and mission of God" (2). A missional, justice-making God "creates a missional, justified, justice-making people" (9). The book involves the intersection of Pauline studies, hermeneutics, and missiology and is intended for, and accessible to, scholars, pastors, and lay church leaders (10).

Gorman employs a “missional hermeneutic” to explore aspects of what it means to “become” or “embody” the gospel according to Paul’s letters.

Chapter 1 provides a framework for the book and explores two ways of reading Paul missionally: historically—for Paul’s vision of God’s mission and his and the churches’ role in that mission—and scripturally—for modern Christian readers to discover their role in God’s mission today. For Gorman the historical and exegetical work of Paul rightly provides a foundation for understanding Paul’s voice to contemporary Christian mission. In chapter 2 he proposes “missional hermeneutics”—reading the biblical text “as witness to God’s purposes in the world and as invitation—even as summons—to participate in that divine activity” (52).

In chapters 3 through 8, Gorman addresses key aspects of participation in Paul’s letters. For each letter addressed, he presents his analysis in light of historical context and Paul’s audience, missionary journey, and purpose for writing. He then concludes each chapter with summary comments and modern examples of how such themes and concepts are being modeled in contemporary Christian communities. Thus, Gorman effectively integrates a historical and scriptural missional analysis to comment on what “becoming the gospel” meant for Paul and what it means for the church today.

Chapter 3 explores missional virtues of faith (or faithfulness), love, and hope in 1 Thessalonians—a letter sent to strengthen them to endure in living out the gospel as a missional community. In chapter 4, Gorman analyzes Paul’s “master story” in Philippians 2:6–11; Paul encourages his audience to continue to “proclaim the gospel with their lives and their lips ... despite persecution” (113). The community is to be a “living exegesis” of the gospel. Chapter 5 provides an overview of the “peace of God” and “God of peace” in Paul, and chapter 6 provides a closer analysis of peace in Ephesians. Gorman identifies peace and peacemaking as a “constituent element” of Paul’s gospel that may engender opposition, but are to extend from the church to home, community, nation, and world. Chapter 7 explores justice in Paul’s letters to the Corinthians and the crucial role it plays in Paul’s missional theology and practice. In opposition to the idea that for Paul “justification” is about personal status before God, Gorman argues for a “more robust” Pauline understanding of justification that is “participatory and transformative” and inherently missional. Justification results in an ordering of relationships, reconciliation, and participation in the justice of God in the world. Chapter 8 explores “missional theosis” in Romans, which, for Paul, is Christological, political, and missional.

In his final reflections, Gorman summarizes key aspects of Paul’s missional theology and praxis. He concludes that Paul’s letters assume that the churches have been living the gospel in the public square, address consequences of

doing so (or not), and call on churches to continue to do so. *Becoming the Gospel* presents a clearly articulated, comprehensive, and challenging missional exegesis of Paul that both effectively integrates historical analysis and draws out implications for how churches may live as missional communities today. It would be well at home in the hands of scholar, pastor, church leader, and seminary or graduate student and conveys a needed missional message for many contemporary Christian communities and readers of Paul.

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*A Modest Apostle: Thecla and the History of Women in the Early Church.* By Susan E. Hylan. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. 182 pages. \$74.00. doi: 10.1017/hor.2016.68

Susan Hylan's book argues that feminist scholarship has drawn too sharp a contrast between First Timothy and the Acts of Thecla, and has not sufficiently taken into consideration the complexity of social norms of modesty regarding the behavior of women. The strengths of this book are considerable: it advances scholarship through reappraisal of conclusions that often go unchallenged, and it culls data about women from numerous sources, including papyri. In addition to textual analysis, Hylan rereads in between the lines of key texts of First Timothy and Thecla, emphasizing what is *not* stated explicitly but is presupposed in the light of Greco-Roman cultural norms and values. Historians and social scientists have long engaged in this practice, of course, but the value of this book lies in its rereading of these texts in ways that challenge predominant readings that have at times caricatured marriage as a restriction on women. Hylan argues convincingly that marriage was an advance for social influence, increased social status, and access to resources for most women. Marriage was associated with freedom (84), since slaves could not form a licit marriage. The evidence shows, she argues, that celibacy did not grant women greater freedom, nor did it provide a more egalitarian situation.

Hylan advances her arguments while evenhandedly acknowledging that gender hegemony was part of Roman culture, and that women were constrained by social expectations of deference to men of greater or equal rank. She concludes (121): "The interpreter should both acknowledge the limitations and structural barriers that women experienced alongside the specific kinds of actions and circumstances in which women's agency was not only allowed but also expected."

In all, this is a substantial contribution to the discussion on early Christian women. There are some problems, however. First, there are unsubstantiated