

Saint-Michel conflated patristic texts almost seamlessly into a commentary on Romans 14. By the thirteenth century, theologians of the mendicant orders dominated exegesis in the schools. Peter of John Olivi saw the controversy about evangelical poverty reflected everywhere in his Bible. His later Franciscan confrere Nicholas of Lyra was able to keep the affairs of the order separate from exegesis, but in his theory of a “double literal sense” (one for the prophet’s own time and one for the future as foreseen by the prophet), he protected the historical person of the text while he propounded a future sense that “firmly grounds Christ and the New Testament itself in the unfolding events of salvation history” (51).

Far different from these is the work of systematic theologians like Peter Abelard, Peter Lombard, and Thomas Aquinas. According to the editors themselves, their commentary “often offered fanciful etymologies and was anachronistic in its conflation of past and present” (viii). For example, in his discussion on chapter 8 of Romans, Aquinas first lays out the logic he imagines Saint Paul used to construct each argument in good scholastic form. He goes on to discuss questions that Saint Paul never brought up, such as whether “the movement of covetousness flowing from original sin...is worthy of condemnation” (175). Aquinas’ arguments use nonrelated and even much later theological formulations of the church in his exposition of the Pauline text—what would be called “eis-egesis” by today’s exegetes. Another drawback, of course, is the medieval reliance on the Vulgate translation. This can cause quite a bit of speculation on a problem in a Latin text that is in no way present in the original Greek, as, for example, the Vulgate translation of *phronēma*, “mind-set; mentality,” in Romans 8:6 by *prudētia*, and its rendering of the same word as *sapientia* in Romans 8:7 (183).

The unavoidable truth is that much of medieval exegesis has not been translated into English because there has been no great demand for it. Although the texts in this study are extremely valuable for understanding medieval religious culture and especially the burning theological questions of the day, they often as not fail to advance our understanding of the original biblical texts.

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Thinking through Paul: A Survey of His Life, Letters, and Theology. By Bruce W. Longenecker and Todd D. Still. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014. 408 pages. \$44.99.

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The title of this textbook, *Thinking through Paul*, provides a key to the book’s major strength. Longenecker and Still provide readers with a thorough

study of Paul that does not merely summarize current scholarship in Pauline studies but also invites readers to engage this scholarship for themselves. The result is an informative and accessible book that moves readers from thinking about Paul to thinking through Paul, from thinking about Paul's life, letters, and theology to developing their own thinking on the important matters Paul engages through his letters.

The volume is divided into three parts: Paul's life, Paul's letters, and Paul's theology. Following the survey of Paul's life and ministry in part 1, the second part of the book examines the letters of Paul, providing readers with the socio-historical context of each letter, identification of the central vision of the letter, and an analysis of the letter's contents. The book concludes in part 3 with an exploration of Paul's theology, focusing on the primary components within Paul's theological worldview, and the relationship between Paul's theological narrative and the narratives of Israel and the Roman imperial order, and connecting Paul's narrative with everyday life within the communities of Jesus-followers. All chapters in the book begin with an overview of the chapter's contents and key verses from Paul's letters. Chapters conclude with questions for discussion, questions for contemporary theological reflection, and a list of sources for students who want to engage in further reading. In addition, each chapter is enhanced by the inclusion of colorful artistic images, maps, and informative sidebars on a wide variety of topics. These artistic images, maps, and sidebars as well as the effective introductions and conclusions to chapters contribute to the book's value as a tool for both instructors and students.

Longenecker and Still present a balanced view of contemporary Pauline scholarship. They differ from the majority of contemporary Pauline scholars in their reliance on Acts as a source for historical details in Paul's life and in advocating Pauline authorship of 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, and 2 Timothy. Despite occasionally siding with the minority position among interpreters of Paul, Longenecker and Still present all major scholarly positions clearly and objectively. Their balanced treatment of disputed areas in Pauline studies fulfills a stated goal for the book: to help readers think through Paul by seeking to be good and honest guides rather than telling readers what to think about Paul (81).

The expertise of the authors is apparent throughout the book but is most evident in part 3, which explores Paul's theology. Longenecker and Still analyze major movements in Pauline scholarship with ease and instead of drawing conclusions encourage further thinking on the topic. In addition, reading the third part of the book leads readers to make insightful connections between the narratives that emerged from Paul's historical context and Paul's life, thinking, writing, and theology. One example of this is in

the section treating the apocalyptic narrative that undergirds Paul's theological thinking. In only a few pages the authors are able to introduce readers to some major interpreters of Paul, such as J. C. Beker, Richard Hays, Tom Wright, Ben Witherington III, and Michael Gorman, give an account of the apocalyptic narrative that Paul presupposed, and draw a connection to Galatians, in which Paul presents his own life as a microcosm of the larger apocalyptic narrative of God's reclamation of the cosmos (301–4).

Longenecker and Still have written a thorough, accessible, and insightful introduction to Paul and his letters. The first sentence of the book states: "To study Paul well can be exciting. To study Paul well can be challenging. To study Paul well can be life-changing" (10). This textbook captures the spirit of that statement and encourages readers to engage in an exciting, challenging, and perhaps life-changing encounter with the apostle Paul and his letters.

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No Irrelevant Jesus: On Jesus and the Church Today. By Gerhard Lohfink. Translated by Linda M. Maloney. A Michael Glazier Book. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2014. xii + 330 pages. \$34.95.
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This book assembles twenty-five popular lectures for learned Catholic audiences. The essays are rooted in reflection on Scripture, but are quite varied in content, from Jesus as "revolutionizing time," the meaning of the love commandment, the significance of the redactive process of the New Testament canon for understanding the authorial intent of the text as a whole (for it is not just an assemblage of unrelated, occasional writings), the meaning of a conservative (*not* "regressive" and thus not opposed to being "progressive") pope, the place of sacraments and how they work, the real loss of abandoning practices like confession and fasting, the nature of faith and of prayer, the futility of fanaticism, the rejection of violence, the distinctiveness of Christianity, and numerous other topics. Linda Maloney has provided a lucid and elegant English rendering of the German original.

Lohfink recalls a 1969 saying that he copied "from somewhere" in his diary: "Traditions are like lampposts. They light the way we are supposed to follow, but only drunkards hold on to them." His own approach is deeply traditional—no suspicion of heterodoxy here—and remarkably insightful. His foes are the purveyors of the individualistic, narcissistic, therapeutic babble that substitutes in many ways for spirituality and the rigors of discipleship, and the intellectuals (Käsemann, for example) who would