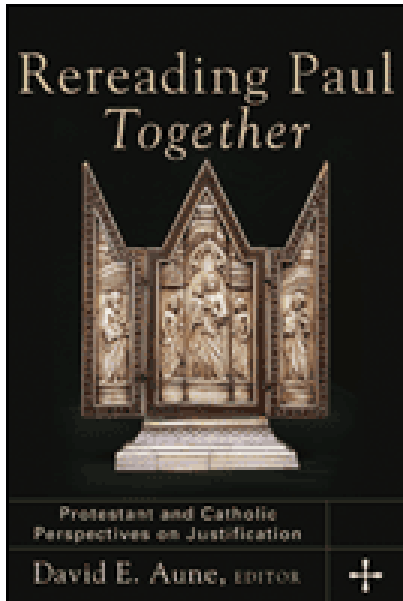


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Rereading Paul Together: Protestant and Catholic Perspectives on Justification

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This collection of essays is, for the most part, based on a colloquium held in February 2002 at the University of Notre Dame, entitled “Re-reading Paul Together: A Colloquium on the Modern Critical Study and Teaching of Pauline Theology in Educational and Ecumenical Context.” The special focus of the colloquium was the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification, a document ratified by the Lutheran World Federation and representatives of the Roman Catholic Church on 31 October 1999, in Augsburg, Germany. This was a truly epochal event: as one of the contributors to the Aune volume observes: “This text is the first joint declaration that the Roman Catholic Church has made with any church of the Reformation” (43). So the colloquium and its subject were highly appropriate, and the value of the present volume is enhanced by broadening the discussion beyond the limitations of the Lutheran–Roman Catholic dialogue to broader issues and issues arising beyond the traditional Catholic-Reformation disagreements on justification by faith.

David Truemper begins with an “Introduction to the Joint Declaration” describing the process and reactions to the Joint Declaration from both sides. Susan Wood, writing on “Catholic Reception of the Joint Declaration,” attempts to clarify the remaining differences between Catholics and Lutherans, particularly on the teaching of merit (and indulgences)

and the theology of *simul iustus et peccator*. Her observation is well worth pondering in relation to all such ecumenical or interfaith dialogue: “In order to ascertain whether the different assertions are compatible one must view them within their own conceptual framework and not superimpose a different framework on one’s dialogue partner” (54). Michael Root then gives a Lutheran take on the subject. He raises the question whether there should be such a thing as “Lutheran Systematic Theology,” and on justification as a criterion he makes a trenchant critique of Jüngel’s claim that the doctrine of justification is the one and only criterion of all theological statements (70).

In chapter 4 Joe Fitzmyer provides a review of the biblical teaching on the subject from a Roman Catholic perspective. He notes that Paul uses a range of different images (82) and argues for an effective sense of *dikaioō* in Rom 5:19 (although a reference also to 2 Cor 9:9–10 would have been welcome) and an attributive sense of *dikaiosynē theou* in Rom 1:16–17. In his response Richard DeMaris raises the question whether the Joint Declaration is already outdated in that the appreciation and appropriation of Paul has moved on, particularly in the decentering of justification implied by the recognition, not least outside the boundaries of Lutheranism, I might add, that justification is only one image among others used by Paul (Fitzmyer’s own point [82]) and by the newer challenge of the New Perspective on Paul.

John Reumann, a veteran of the Lutheran-Catholic dialogue, defends the Joint Declaration against several criticisms but devotes the majority of his essay to an exposition of Phil 3, including a strong defense of the objective genitive for 3:9–10 (124–25) and a welcome recognition of the “eschatological reservation” in 3:12–16 (127–28). Margaret Mitchell, responding as a Catholic layperson, raises some methodological issues, including a strong questioning as to whether Gal 2:16 was a consensus statement to which Paul could appeal (and so not a Pauline creation), drawing on John Chrysostom to provide a perspective not shaped by the grace/law antithesis of the Reformation. The response on Gal 2:16, however, neglects the possibility (I would say likelihood) that Paul was *sharpening* an agreed understanding of “justification by faith” into an antithesis between faith and works of the law.

Chapter 8, by David Rylaarsdam, is a reminder of how differently Paul would have been read prior to the Reformation controversies. For example, for Origen “the primary image of salvation is divinization or deification, not justification” (151), while “the most prominent image of Chrysostom’s soteriology is union with God, a union made possible in the incarnation” (158). Augustine’s emphasis on predestination reminds us more of Calvin, but his insistence on faith as a divine gift and his interpretation of Rom 7 is more broadly Reformational in character, although Rylaarsdam ignores the opportunity to relate his discussion to the Reformation debates themselves. In contrast, Randall

Zachman provides a particularly valuable chapter in the way it sets out the medieval church's Augustinian reading of Paul and contrasts it with Luther's, showing how revolutionary Luther was: "The shift from the grace of God as the work of God within us by the Holy Spirit to the grace of God as the work of God for us in Jesus Christ created a new narrative for the reading of Paul.... The gift of the Holy Spirit, which was central to the Augustinian definition of grace, is no longer understood to give us the ability to love God, but is rather understood as sealing the love of God for us in Christ Jesus on our minds and hearts" (181–83).

The final chapter is an excellent fifty-eight-page review by the editor of "Recent Readings of Paul Relating to Justification by Faith." It starts unpromisingly by an attempt to rescue the term *legalism* from the negative connotations that remain attached to it; an alternative, such as *nomism*, at least removes the discussion from the still-dominant Reformation overtones, with their too-negative assessment of Second Temple Judaism's soteriology. But then follows a most valuable survey and critique of recent (in some cases earlier) contributions to a sequence of issues: "The Hellenistic Paul or the Jewish Paul?"; "Paul's Damascus Experience and Justification by Faith"; "Particularism and Universalism in Pauline Thought"; a fourteen-plus-four-page discussion of "The New Perspective on Paul," which is one of the fairest and most helpful available; "The 'New View' of Paul" linked to the names particularly of Lloyd Gaston and John Gager; and other aspects of "Justification by Faith" not covered by the Joint Declaration, including the evangelical debate on imputation, the issue of the centrality of justification in Paul's thought, and the *pistis Christou* debate. For its range of secondary literature reviewed, and not at all in a wooden, formalistic way, and for the sharpness of the critique provided, this essay in itself is worth the cost of the whole volume. It would provide a most valuable introduction to any lecture course or for anyone with an essay to write on the subject of justification in Paul.

All told, the volume succeeds in bringing out the continuing issues and open questions that still, inevitably, cluster round the Joint Declaration, while encouraging the ongoing debate to move beyond the limiting terms and categories of the old Lutheran-Catholic dispute. Much to be welcomed.