

“A FRESH AND FASCINATING CONTRIBUTION TO PAULINE STUDIES”

Joshua Jipp places Paul’s writings within the timeless pursuit of human flourishing, happiness, and the good life, reframing the task of Pauline theology as an encouragement to pursue a particular way of life.

“Entrepreneurs, bloggers, and talking heads of all sorts are all too happy to promote their visions of what makes for the ‘good life,’ but few people would connect that topic with the apostle Paul. Joshua Jipp begs to differ. In this informed and wide-ranging study, Jipp puts Paul’s Letters in conversation with both ancient philosophy and contemporary positive psychology. The result is an energetic invitation to read Paul’s theology as nothing less than ‘a way of life.’”

—**BEVERLY ROBERTS GAVENTA**,
Princeton Theological Seminary (emerita)

“Jipp’s three-way conversation on the topic of human flourishing, involving ancient moral philosophers, contemporary exponents of positive psychology, and the apostle Paul, is brilliantly conceived and masterfully executed. Far from simply locating superficial similarities, Jipp vigorously interrogates the interlocutors, and in the process provides a rich and nuanced appreciation for Paul, not as a systematic theologian but as a pastor seeking to shape his readers into a distinctive way of life. A fresh and fascinating contribution to Pauline studies that can profitably be read by all students of the human condition.”

—**LUKE TIMOTHY JOHNSON**,
Emory University (emeritus)

“Joshua Jipp’s book is not so much an addition to the enormous mountain of books on Pauline theology as it is a consideration of what Pauline theology might be for to begin with. What is Paul up to, as it were, with all this theology? Jipp’s answer is at once both ancient and contemporary: Paul’s theology is aimed at the good life. It works to shape those for whom it matters into people whose Christlike transformation brings them deeper and deeper into what a good life actually is. Jipp is that rare combination of a prolific and thoughtful scholar, and this newest addition to his body of work shows learning and conceptual refinement. It is also a reframing of Paul in ways that are important to consider and also, as it turns out, existentially rich, pastorally relevant, and quietly inspiring.”

—**C. KAVIN ROWE**,
Duke Divinity School

“Does the apostle Paul have something relevant to say regarding how to live in the twenty-first century? Joshua Jipp argues not only that Paul has something to say about how to live in our world today but also that the apostle offers a powerful vision for human flourishing in our contemporary world. In this interesting analysis, which places Paul in conversation with philosophy and the field of positive psychology, the apostle emerges as a potent resource for humanity’s pursuit of the supreme good.”

—**LISA M. BOWENS**,
Princeton Theological Seminary

“Jipp’s book makes a compelling case that Paul is centrally focused on the pursuit of human flourishing and happiness. Throughout his discussion, Jipp draws extensively on both ancient philosophy and contemporary positive psychology in ways that haven’t been explored before. The result is a masterful interdisciplinary exploration of Paul’s theology as a way of life. Highly recommended!”

—**CHRISTIAN B. MILLER**,
Wake Forest University

“With remarkable skill, Jipp shows that even as Paul’s thinking about what constitutes the good life is uniquely and inextricably related to Christ, it can also be illuminated through careful comparison to both ancient philosophical and modern psychological efforts to attain true happiness.”

—**MATTHEW THIESSEN**,
McMaster University

Paul is known as a theologian, and indeed his writings yield rich theological insights. But Paul was foremost a missionary and a pastor who wrote to real people and churches.

In this fresh approach to Pauline theology, Joshua Jipp brings Paul’s pastoral concerns to the fore, specifically his concern for human flourishing in his congregations. Jipp argues that Paul’s writings are

best understood as invitations to a particular way of life, one that is oriented toward the supreme good of experiencing life in God through participation in Christ. For Paul, Christ epitomizes the good life and enables others to live it. While analyzing Paul's thought through this lens of well-being and flourishing, Jipp introduces conversation partners as points of comparison and contrast. He interacts with ancient philosophy and modern positive psychology, both of which also address "the good life."

This substantial contribution to Pauline studies covers issues such as transcendence, suffering and death, relationships, pursuit of Christian virtue, and moral agency. It will be a valuable resource for all students of Paul.

JOSHUA W. JIPP (PhD, Emory University) is professor of New Testament and director of the Carl F. H. Henry Center for Theological Understanding at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. His books include *Christ Is King: Paul's Royal Ideology, Saved by Faith and Hospitality*, and *The Messianic Theology of the New Testament*. Jipp is also a series coeditor for the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.