

Bradley Arnold

Christ as the *Telos* of Life

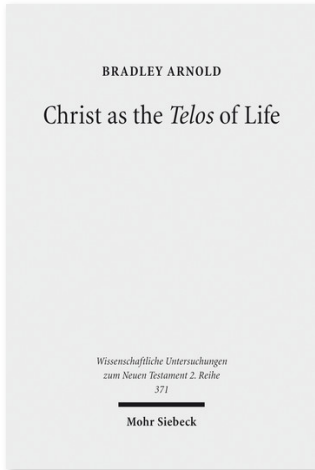
Moral Philosophy, Athletic Imagery, and the Aim of Philippians

[Christus als *Telos* des Lebens. Moralphilosophie, athletische Symbolik und das Ziel des Philipperbriefs.]

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Bradley Arnold examines the argumentative logic and central aim in Paul's letter to the Philippians. A historical context is mapped out that is useful for these purposes, examining the broad structure of thought in ancient moral philosophy (namely, Aristotle, Epicureanism, and Stoicism), ancient athletics, and vivid description. The author then uses these areas to elucidate the nature of Paul's argument in Philippians. In an exegetical analysis of the entire letter he demonstrates that Paul's argument is structured similarly to the pattern of thinking in ancient moral philosophy and that within this framework Paul utilizes athletics at key places to conceptualize the nature of Christian existence. He argues that Paul sums up his perspective on life with the image of the runner in Phil 3:13–14, which functions as a vivid description. This imagery plays a central role in Paul's rhetorical aim in this letter, presenting *in nuce* his persuasive appeal for the Philippians to pursue Christ as the τέλος of life.

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