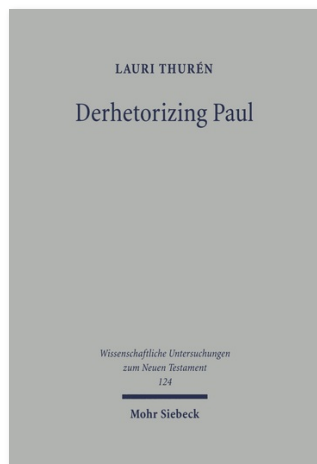


Lauri Thurén

Derhetorizing Paul

A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law

[Die Entrhetorisierung des Paulus. Eine dynamische Sichtweise auf paulinische Theologie und das Gesetz. Von Lauri Thurén.]



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In 1 Thess 1:8 Paul claims: »In every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that we have no need to speak a word.« We can smile at a call to stop missionary activity based on that verse. Lauri Thurén argues that Paul and his original addressees would smile at us for the very same reason, were they aware of many of the problems of modern Pauline scholarship. Expressions, which were never meant to be taken at their face value, may have promoted sophisticated but erroneous theological and historical reflections. This is due not only to the scholars' ignorance of ancient rhetorical and epistolary conventions, but also to their static attitude to the text itself.

Lauri Thurén offers a different study which is based on a natural, dynamic view of Paul's letters. In order to describe any theology beyond the texts, they need to be derhetorized. This means an identification of the persuasive devices in Pauline texts in order to filter out their effect on the theological ideas expressed. This principle is applied to a controversial issue in Pauline theology, the question of law. Lauri Thurén claims that Paul's exaggerated statements correspond to his hyperbolic way of thinking. His search for consistency in the Old Testament was a major reason for his revolt against the law.

Lauri Thurén Born 1961; 1984 Master of Theology; 1987–88 Fulbright grantee at Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, CA; 1988 Licentiate of Theology; 1990 Doctor of Theology; 1983–93 Pastor at the Lutheran Evangelical Association of Finland; 1985 and 1991 Assistant of Exegetics at Åbo Academy University, Finland; since 1987 teacher at the University of Turku; since 1994 Lecturer of Exegetics at Joensuu University; since 1995 Lecturer of New Testament Exegetics, Åbo Academy University; 1993–96 Junior Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland; since 1996 Senior Research Fellow at the Academy of Finland.

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