Gorman, Michael J. *Paul and John in Harmony: A Theological and Historical Exploration.* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2026. 182pp. + 28pp. (back matter).

Paul and John have influenced Christian theology more than any other writers. In recent years, scholars have begun to delve into the relationship between the writings of these two men. Michael J. Gorman enters the discussion with this volume. His concern is not primarily to identify common sources of their writings; rather, he seeks to discuss key theological similarities between Paul and John. In chapter 1, Gorman surveys the state of the scholarly discussion on the Johannine-Pauline relationship. He comments on the significant absence of scholarly discussion on the relationship between John and Paul's theology until the last five years. In contrast to the majority of scholars who believe that John derived his teaching from Paul, Gorman seeks to argue for the alternative view that Paul derived his teaching from John: "I contend that *John is not a Pauline Gospel; rather, Paul is a Johannine theologian*" (16).

Gorman points out several challenges in comparing the theology of two bodies of literature: (1) choosing what to compare—upholding similarities and differences; (2) being necessarily selective (not comprehensive) for the purpose of comparison; (3) categorizing the items being compared; (4) being careful not to determine the results in advance; and (5) measuring the degree of similarity (or difference). These considerations are helpful for a study like Gorman's. Gorman acknowledges that Paul and John generally use different genres; John, however, uses a letter to explain the gospel, and Paul provides Christological narratives in various places as the groundwork for his teaching in his letters. Finally, Gorman notes three possible explanations for similarities between John and Paul: (1) they independently develop their teaching based on the same early Christian teaching and traditions; (2) one of them influences the other in their theology; or (3) Pauline and Johannine teaching and writings influence each other. Gorman use chapters 2 through 5 to discuss literary and theological similarities. Chapter 6 considers the issue of influence.

Chapter 2 compares two key passages to show their similarity in Christology and in their implications for discipleship: Philippians 2:6–11 and John 13:1–20. Gorman argues that these stories "have significant linguistic, structural, and theological features in common" (17). Gorman suggests that Philippians 2:6–11 may be considered Paul's "master story" because the key terms, grammar, and themes permeate the rest of Paul's letters. It is the overarching story of Christ's work that has direct implications for the lives of believers. Gorman then argues that John 13:1–20, the foot-washing passage, is a "good candidate for the role of the Johannine master story" (19). The account captures the key themes of John's Gospel, and it carries implications for the Christian life. Gorman finds numerous key words and themes common to both passages that help demonstrate the similarities. They both emphasize Jesus as both "high" and "low," highlighting his relationship with the Father. Both focus on his acts of self-sacrificial love. This self-sacrificial love becomes paradigmatic for Jesus' followers.

Gorman presents five theses to defend the idea that these passages share the same theological features. First, each text presents a story of Christology/soteriology as well as discipleship/spirituality. Second, each text is a story about God, incarnation, and divine self-revelation. Both Paul and John

emphasize Jesus' identity as God, which serves as the presupposition for what follows. Gorman highlights that Paul explicitly states Jesus' identity as God and that he humbled himself *because of* (not in spite of) his deity. Gorman looks to John's Gospel as a whole to provide the background for Jesus' identity as God (John 1:1–18; 5:17; 8:28). He, however, seems to overlook John 13:3 as a strong support for this within the immediate context of the foot-washing account. Third, each text presents a slave narrative—Christ's humility and self-enslavement, followed by exaltation. They both present a clear descent and ascent. Paul joins Isaiah's servant of the Lord with the Lord himself; the suffering servant becomes exalted Lord. Fourth, both texts present a story of sacrificial missional love that becomes a paradigm for the disciples. Finally, each text presents a paradoxical story of Christ's free choice and his obedience. Paul highlights Jesus' emptying and humbling *himself;* Paul also points out that this self-humbling culminates in his obedience to the point of his death on the cross. John presents Jesus' decision to humble himself to serve the disciples. To account for Jesus' obedience, Gorman refers to other passages in John that emphasize Christ's obedience to the Father (4:34; 5:30; 6:38; 10:17–18; 15:12–14). Based on the evidence in chapter 2, the passages in Philippians 2 and John 13 do reveal significant similarities. Gorman closes with an assertion that "these profound similarities almost certainly cannot be coincidental" (59).

In chapter 3, Gorman asks whether Paul and John reveal other profound similarities. Whereas chapter 2 focuses on Christology, chapter 3 shifts to spirituality, focusing on the language of union with Christ and oneness in Paul and John. Gorman compares the teaching in John 15 and 1 John with Paul's teaching on unity in Christ. The topic of oneness with Christ, or participation with Christ, is generally recognized as a key concept in Pauline and Johannine theology; however, the similarities between John and Paul on this topic have been under-explored. John and Paul use "locative language" and "residential rhetoric" to describe this oneness/participation with Christ. This is a "mutual indwelling" or a "reciprocal residence," which is often referred to as *perichoresis*. This chapter focuses on metaphorical terms for location, residence, and mutual indwelling found in both John and Paul.

Gorman first examines the locative language in John's Gospel, beginning with John 15:1–11. This passage uses "abide" ten times (in Greek) and "in" fifteen times. First John also overflows with terminology for "abiding." The fact that "abiding" is scattered throughout this letter "demonstrates how central to Johannine spirituality it is" (74). Gorman then discusses locative language in Paul's letters. Paul uses "in" prominently, but he does not speak of "abiding" using John's terminology. Paul does use terms related to "dwelling" (*oikeō* and *enoikeō*) some fourteen times. Paul's comments about the Spirit dwelling in believers (1 Cor 3:16) bear a striking similarity to John's comments about the Spirit abiding with and in believers (John 14:17). Paul uses this language primarily in reference to location, participation, and transformation. Any discussion of being "in Christ" must entail submission to the "dominion" of Christ. For Paul, not only are believers in Christ, but Christ is in believers. In Romans 8 in particular, Paul seems to see some overlap between the indwelling of Christ and that of the Spirit. It is clear, then, that Paul and John share certain key concepts related to participation with Christ. Gorman builds on these observations in the following chapter.

Chapter 4 continues the discussion of locative language from chapter 3. Gorman presents four aspects of the spiritual relationship conveyed by this locative terminology: (1) mutual, (2) identity-

framing, (3) Trinitarian, and (4) active and transformational. First, in both John and Paul the indwelling is mutual. In John 15 and in several passages in 1 John, Jesus and believers abide in each other, though the emphasis is on believers abiding in Jesus. Paul also presents a similar mutuality with the emphasis on believers being in Christ. Some scholars, though, such as Richard Bauckham, do not see a connection between John's mutual indwelling and Paul's "being in Christ." Gorman devotes several pages to refuting Bauckham's view (92–94). Gorman argues that for Paul, mutual indwelling includes both intimacy and power. It is difficult to see, though, how "power" would be an element of *mutual* indwelling. This seems to imply that believers in Christ communicate power to Christ.

Gorman presents "identity" as the second aspect of locative language. Abiding in Jesus is central to the identity of the disciples. This identity is prominent in John 15 with Jesus' image of himself as the vine and his disciples as the branches. Additionally, Jesus' prayer in John 17 emphasizes Jesus' being "in them" (17:26). Therefore, "Jesus in us is our core identity" (98). For Paul, being "in Christ" is "the most basic identity of believers" (99), and the indwelling is mutual. The third aspect of locative language is Trinitarian. Those who are in Christ are also in the Father and in the Spirit (John 17:20–23; 14:17; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 6:11). For both John and Paul, participation and fellowship in Christ constitute participation in the Spirit. In order to uphold the unity of the Trinity, Gorman comments, "Theologically speaking we may appropriate the work of inhabitation to the Spirit, rather than the Father, but there is only one God who inhabits and who is inhabited. Paul's perichoretic spirituality is Trinitarian" (112). It would be inappropriate to think of one being in Christ and in the Spirit but not also in the Father.

The final aspect of locative language is its impact on active, transformational character. John and Paul both present a moral and missional spirituality. Spirituality is no mere private, internal mystical experience; it entails a mission to the world. Gorman refers to this as "missional theosis." Abiding in the vine results in bearing fruit. This fruit-bearing is itself transformative as "it is actually in bearing fruit that the disciples become disciples; in doing so, they will become what they already are" (116). Similarly, for Paul, the concept of Christ in the believer (Gal 2:20) "must lead to the Christian moral life" (119). For both Paul and John, bearing fruit is a key outcome of mutual indwelling. Gorman concludes that though there are minor differences between Paul and John, "the depth and breadth of the significant likenesses is impressive" (126).

Chapter 5, titled "Prequels and Sequels," discusses three primary topics: (1) the Father's double sending of the Son and Spirit, (2) the act of believing "into" Christ, and (3) the life-giving activity of God. First, Gorman examines the "backstory of the incarnation" (i.e., the prequel), which is the sending of the Son. Both Paul and John speak of the Father's saving purpose in sending the Son in coordination with the Son's incarnation and death. Both authors include a corresponding sending of the Spirit. In a sense, the sending of the Spirit is the sequel to the incarnation. Gorman comments that many assume that John and Paul are merely drawing on early Christian tradition in these formulaic texts. For Gorman, though, the problem is that no such formulaic tradition exists outside of Paul and John (137). Though other NT writers speak of the sending of the Son, no others use the specific formulas both Paul and John use; they are "distinctively Johannine and Pauline" (138).

Gorman then discusses believing "into" Christ as the prequel to the locative/residential concept of being "in Christ." For Paul, faith is the means by which a person moves into Christ (e.g., Phil 1:29; Gal 2:16). The majority of such Pauline passages use the preposition *eis*, though it is often translated as "in" rather than "into." Galatians 2:16 is prominent here as believing *into* Christ results in a status of being *in Christ*. John's emphasis on believing "into" (*eis*) Christ is well known. This indicates that believing is more than merely trusting; rather, it is "a dedication of one's life" to Jesus (147). This is similar to the Pauline emphasis found in passages such as Galatians 2:16. Both John and Paul use similar prepositional patterns for key concepts. Humans are enslaved *in* sin and walking *in* darkness. When they come to Christ, they believe *into* Christ. In the new life, they abide *in* Jesus, and they walk *in* the light/the truth/newness of life. Among NT authors, Paul and John alone present this full pattern culminating in being *in* Christ as a result of believing *into* Christ.

Gorman closes the chapter with one final sequel. Both Paul and John use the term *zōopoieō* for God's giving of life to people. For both authors, this divine activity involves each person of the Trinity; also, both authors present this giving of life as both a present and future reality.

Chapter 6, Gorman's final chapter, initially reviews his previous findings, concluding that Paul and John are in harmony in "some quite striking ways" (158). The chapter is mostly dedicated to a discussion of which writer influenced the other. Gorman's overall argument in the previous five chapters is not dependent on the outcome of the question in chapter 6. Most scholars hold to one of two theories. The first theory is that Paul and John drew on the same early Christian traditions, but they did not originally influence each other. These traditions were either rooted in OT teaching or they were "in the air" in early Christianity. One key problem with this view is that scholars have not been able to find a shared tradition. The alternative theory is that either Paul or John influenced the other. The more popular view among scholars is that Paul influenced John; John's Gospel therefore would be a "Pauline Gospel." A third theory is that John and Paul mutually influenced each other, but Gorman cites no scholarly argumentation for this view.

Gorman's argument in this chapter, though, is that Paul is a Johannine theologian. For Gorman, fundamentally, it is "easier to imagine" Paul using concepts from John's Gospel and applying them in different contexts than it is to imagine John taking Pauline concepts and building them into his narrative of Jesus in his Gospel. For example, would John really have taken Paul's language about "mutual abiding" and then added it to the lips of Jesus in one discourse? Gorman argues that Johannine tradition or even an early version of John's Gospel may have influenced Paul's letters.

Gorman's unique contribution in this chapter, though, is a "brief" and "preliminary" argument that John's Gospel was written at an earlier date than is generally assumed among scholars. Gorman presents eight arguments to support this view. First, he believes that Paul must have been familiar with John 13–17, since he shares many of the same words and themes that John does in this section. So what else could Paul have read from this Gospel? John 13–17 would not have been written as an independent unit without speaking of Jesus' ministry and subsequent death and resurrection. "It is therefore likely that Paul knew the Gospel as a whole" (170). Therefore, John's Gospel must have been completed before AD 50. Second, Gorman addresses the typical arguments for a late dating of John's Gospel, concluding that there is no evidence to support the view. Third, Gorman sees no "historical,

literary, or theological reason to say that John's Christology *must* follow Paul's" (173). The typical argument is that John's "high Christology" implies that John's Gospel must have been written later than the other NT writings. But why is this a necessary conclusion? Fourth, there is no compelling reason to date John in the 60s; it could well have been written in the 40s. Fifth, Gorman supports the idea of an early date (before 50) for all four Gospels, which would explain Paul's awareness of all four Gospels.

Paul and John in Harmony provides some helpful contributions to the discussion of the relationship between Johannine and Pauline theology. Many of the positive contributions are highlighted above. Gorman makes excellent use of Scripture to support his arguments, particularly when summarizing the themes common to Paul and John. The content in chapters 2 through 5 provides the most meat on which to chew. The striking similarities between John 13 and Philippians 2:5-11 are noteworthy and are overlooked elsewhere. The presentation on union with Christ and believing "into" Christ in chapters 3 and 4 was also well done. The discussion in chapter 5 on prequels and sequels was creative and convincing. Though Gorman's argument in chapter 6 lacks meaningful evidence, he acknowledges this and is careful to distinguish between arguments supported by evidence and those that are not. As a prolific Pauline scholar, Gorman does cater a bit to less conservative scholarship. Throughout the book, he regularly differentiates between the disputed and undisputed letters of Paul. He also identifies the author of 1 John as "whoever it may be" (178).

Gorman argues that John influenced Paul. Though Gorman presents a number of similarities shared by Paul and John, he fails to provide any actual evidence that one influenced the other. Gorman appears to be at risk of parallelomania, arguing that because there are shared characteristics one must have originated from the other. The only "evidence" is that in certain portions of their writings, Paul and John refer to the same themes and occasionally use the same words. It would, however, seem odd if their content did not overlap at certain points. Gorman's argument is also strongly dependent on identifying John 13 as John's "master story," a proposition that seems questionable. Gorman later refers to Paul's obvious awareness of John 13–17, based on Paul's supposed usage of John 13 in composing Philippians 2 as well as Paul's "in Christ" language reflecting John's "abiding" language in John 15. This reasoning is circular.

Gorman (along with other scholars) gives insufficient consideration to the possibility that Paul and John did not influence each other. Yet Gorman has provided no evidence for one depending on or influencing the other. John certainly learned much from the Lord Jesus during his earthly ministry, and then the Holy Spirit taught John much more (John 16:12–15). At the same time, Paul was an expert OT scholar prior to his conversion, and he subsequently received revelation directly from Jesus Christ (Gal 1:12–18). Given these facts, why would one author need to borrow from or learn from the other? Certainly, Paul and John knew each other (Gal 2:9–10), and they would almost certainly have discussed many of the ideas about which they wrote. Without having any evidence to the contrary, though, it seems best to say that both Paul and John were influenced by Jesus Christ and were separately carried along by the Spirit to produce their God-breathed writings. The million-dollar question is, "Why does it matter who influenced whom?" Gorman does not quite answer this question.

In the end, Gorman's work is a helpful introduction to some similarities between Pauline and Johannine theology; any evidence that one primarily influenced the other, though, is lacking.

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