


Article

Pneumasis/pneumafication Based on Romans 8:1–17: Highlighting the Spirit’s Role in Deification

Jacob Chengwei Feng 

School of Mission and Theology, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA 91182, USA;
chengweifeng@fuller.edu

Abstract: In view of the two key themes found in Romans: pneumatology and deification, some pressing questions can be asked. One of these is, what is the role of the Holy Spirit in deification? This essay identifies one area of the work of the Holy Spirit presented in Romans that is often neglected in New Testament (NT) pneumatology, soteriology, and anthropology. This paper argues that, in Romans 8:1–17, the crucial role of the Spirit, as an active person in the triune Godhead, in possessing and being possessed by believers and facilitating the mutual indwelling of Christ and his co-sufferers, is best captured by a new term, namely, *pneumasis* or *pneumafication*. In other words, *theosis*/deification and *Christosis*/Christification are made possible by *pneumasis*/*pneumafication*.

Keywords: *pneumasis*; *pneumafication*; *theosis*; deification; *Christosis*; Christification; Romans 8; Holy Spirit

1. Introduction

The role of the Holy Spirit in Romans has been widely recognized in biblical studies. As Gordon Fee observes, “It is fair to say that Paul’s entire theology without the supporting pinion of the Spirit would crumble into ruins” (Fee 1996, p. 7). A parallel development in recent Pauline studies is the increased attention given to the Pauline theology of deification (or *theosis*) as revealed in Romans.¹ For example, Michael Gorman detects a renewal of interest in participation,² with a family of words including *theosis*, deification, divinization, *Christosis*, and Christification, within various theological subdisciplines, including biblical studies, theological ethics, spirituality, and others. Furthermore, he observes that “participation has been proposed as an essential aspect . . . of Pauline theology and spirituality in particular” (Gorman 2019, p. xv). Among the many key themes that scholars such as Gorman and M. David Litwa find in Romans are these two: pneumatology and *theosis*/deification.³ Consequently, some stimulating questions can be asked: What is the relationship between the Spirit and deification? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in deification?

In his magisterial *God’s Empowering Presence*, Fee laments: “By and large the crucial role of the Spirit in Paul’s life and thought—as the dynamic, experienced reality of Christian life—is often either overlooked or given mere lip service” (Fee 1994, p. xxi). For Susan Eastman, the Holy Spirit as God’s presence is elusive—at least for Pauline scholars, with only a few exceptions. She observes “the relative paucity of scholarly work on the Spirit” regarding the importance of the Spirit at certain key junctions in Paul’s letters (Eastman 2018, p. 103). She suspects that the experiential aspect of Paul’s language regarding the Spirit may be partly to blame. Moreover, modern tendencies in the Global North have exacerbated the difficulty of talking about experience due to their inclination to think of “spiritual experience” as individual, private, and esoteric (ibid., pp. 103–4).

This essay identifies one area of the work of the Holy Spirit presented in Romans that is often neglected in NT pneumatology, soteriology, and anthropology.⁴ Constantine Campbell summarizes the sixteen scholars⁵ who have made “significant academic contributions



Citation: Feng, Jacob Chengwei. 2023. *Pneumasis/pneumafication* Based on Romans 8:1–17: Highlighting the Spirit’s Role in Deification. *Religions* 14: 1210. <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel14091210>

Academic Editor: Greg Peters

Received: 29 July 2023

Revised: 7 September 2023

Accepted: 8 September 2023

Published: 20 September 2023



Copyright: © 2023 by the author. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

concerning union with Christ through the twentieth century to the present day” (Campbell 2012, p. 59). However, the Holy Spirit is hardly even mentioned in his synthesis of these scholarly works.⁶ In Pauline scholarship, Grant Macaskill recognizes “the broad awareness of the role of Christ as the focus of union” (Macaskill 2013, p. 41). After reviewing the twelve scholars⁷ whose “key contributions . . . rightly or wrongly, have shaped the discussions during the last century or so, including the recent resurgence of interest in participatory accounts of atonement” (Campbell 2012, p. 17), Macaskill concludes that “most scholars have recognized the distinctive Christocentrism of Pauline mysticism”⁸. Bernie A. Van De Walle asserts that “the doctrine of *theosis* is essentially Christocentric. While *theosis* occurs through the agency of the Spirit, it is complementary to the work of the Incarnation and results from union with Christ” (Van De Walle 2008, p. 140). Clearly, in the contemporary scholarly work on *theosis*, the role of the Holy Spirit as a person in the triune Godhead has, by and large, been marginalized.⁹

To reverse that trend to some degree, I propose to work with Rom 8.1–17, which is notable for its high incidence of Spirit language.¹⁰ I argue that, in 8.1–17, the crucial role that the Spirit plays through possessing believers and being possessed by them, and facilitating the mutual indwelling of Christ and his co-sufferers, is best captured by a new term, namely, *pneumasis* or *pneumafication*. In other words, *Christosis*/Christification, a synonym of *theosis*/deification, is made possible by *pneumasis*/*pneumafication*. If, by *theosis*, we mean *participation in God’s divine nature*¹¹ and, by *Christosis*, *conformation to the image of Christ in his death and resurrection*,¹² then by *pneumasis*/*pneumafication*, we mean *being in the Spirit and indwelt by the Spirit*, which entails walking according to the Spirit, setting our minds on the Spirit, and being led by the Spirit as children of God. Thus, *pneumasis* highlights Paul’s recognition of the spiritual reality that the Spirit is not merely the means or the power through which we participate in Christ, but is an active person in whose work “the stress [is] upon the immediacy of the divine, and the direct encounter of man with the Holy Spirit” (McGrath 1986, pp. 1:3–4). *Theosis*, *Christosis*, *pneumasis*—or deification, Christification, *pneumafication*—form a trinitarian doctrine that does justice to Paul’s proto-trinitarian thought, which penetrates Rom 8. Through the use of this neologism—*pneumasis*/*pneumafication*, this paper hopes to underscore the preeminent role of the Holy Spirit, to match Paul’s high and elevated view of the Holy Spirit without undermining the salvific power of Christ. For Paul, the Spirit serves as God’s solidarity with Christ’s co-sufferers. Due to some problematic readings of Rom 8, much of Western Christianity has been plagued by a type of individualized and arrogant morality that divides the world into the spiritual and the fleshly. Such a dualistic, black-and-white divide results in spiritual pride, which not only is detrimental to Christian spirituality and humanity, but also loses sight of God’s solidarity with those suffering with Christ. The significance of this paper lies in its contribution to the NT studies on deification; it brings to light the crucial role of the Holy Spirit not only in soteriology, but also in anthropology, highlighting human participation in the Spirit as Christ’s co-sufferers for the sake of the eschatological and cosmological freedom from corruption that creation eagerly awaits. Romans 8.1–17 invites believers into such a *pneumatic*/*pneumaficational* reading and transforms them into Christ’s co-sufferers, who no longer remain captive to spiritual pride, but genuinely care about the suffering of humanity and creation.

2. Brief Survey of Recent Exegetical Works on Paul’s Pneumatology and Deification in Romans 8:1–17

The sheer volume of Pauline scholarship on Romans makes any attempt at even a brief survey of the history of exegesis a gargantuan task. Even if we narrow it down to the Pauline theme of union with Christ, we have in our hands the scholarly works of more than a century to cover.¹³ However, the research carried out by Campbell and Macaskill provides excellent limitations for our work. Among the works surveyed, only those of Käsemann, Sanders, Gaffin, Dunn, Wright, Gorman, Campbell, and Macaskill have provided in-depth exegetical work on Rom 8.1–17.¹⁴ First, Käsemann initiated a line of

scholarship that concentrates on “apocalyptic” readings of Paul (Macaskill 2013, p. 34). Käsemann divides his exegesis of Rom 8.1–17 into two subsections, entitled “the Christian life as being in the Spirit” (vv. 1–11) and “the state of sonship” (vv. 12–17). He is correct to refute the view that one cannot start with the parallels “in the Spirit” and “in the flesh,” because the former usually designates inspiration. However, his opinion that “in the Spirit” is interchangeable with “in Christ” betrays his reductionistic view (Käsemann 1980, pp. 212–29). Moreover, his insistence that “in Christ” interprets “in the Spirit”, but not vice versa (ibid., pp. 222–23), suggests his subordination of the role of the Spirit.

Second, Sanders refocused attention on “participation” as the more important dimension of Paul’s soteriology (Dunn 1998, p. 393). In the context of Rom 8, he observes that “having the Spirit as *guarantee* and salvation by *participation* in the Spirit or in Christ (or participation with the Spirit or Christ by having them in one) are not separate themes... Having the Spirit results in (or is) real participation in the Spirit and the resurrected Lord, which participation provides the best guarantee of all: Christians *are* sons of God” (Sanders 1977, p. 460). Sanders also notices that “the reference in [Phil 3.10] to suffering with Christ is to be connected with other passages in which Paul says that Christians share Christ’s sufferings so as to share his life: Rom. 8.17” (ibid., p. 467). On one hand, Campbell rightly applauds Sanders, who “revitalized the concept of participation with Christ, describing Paul’s pattern of religion as ‘participationist eschatology’” (Campbell 2012, p. 53). Sanders also sees the intrinsic link between suffering with Christ and sharing his life. On the other hand, he does not notice the connection between participation and the mutual indwelling of believers and the Spirit/Christ.

Third, in his work *The Centrality of the Resurrection*, Gaffin notes that:

The assumption expressed in Rom 8.9a (“if the Spirit of God dwells in you”) is basic to the reasoning in the sentences immediately following. Essential also is the intimate bond between Christ and the Spirit. The Spirit is “the Spirit of Christ” (v. 9b). In the experience of believers, “in the Spirit” (v. 9a), “the Spirit in you” (vv. 9a, 11a, c) and “Christ in you” (v. 10a) are all used correlatively, and the remaining possibility on this combination, the more usual “in Christ” is certainly present by implication (cf. the apodosis of v. 9b; v. 1). The idea of solidarity, then, has an important place in these verses. (Gaffin 1978, p. 66)

Another of Gaffin’s contributions is his argument (against Käsemann and Bultmann) that “Paul considers the Spirit a (divine) person in the same sense as the Father and Christ” (ibid., p. 71). However, in considering Paul’s use of “in Christ” and “in the Spirit” as equivalent, Gaffin fails to discern their inherent distinctions.

Fourth, Dunn carefully analyzes Paul’s theme of participation in Christ (Dunn 1998, pp. 390–412). Commenting on Rom 8.9–10, Dunn argues that “where ‘in Spirit,’ ‘have Spirit,’ and ‘Christ in you’ all serve as complementary identifying descriptions, the dividing line between experience of Spirit and experience of Christ has become impossible to define in clear-cut terms. At best we may speak of Christ as the context and the Spirit as the power” (ibid., p. 408). Realizing the mutual indwelling between the Spirit and believers, Dunn concludes that “the Spirit is the medium of Christ’s union with his own” (ibid., p. 264). However, by merely viewing the Spirit as the “power” and “medium,” Dunn fails to meet his own classification of Rom 8.1–27 as “the high point of Paul’s theology of the Spirit” (ibid., p. 423).

Fifth, in his classic work on Paul, *The Climax of the Covenant*, Wright captures the covenantal dimension of Paul’s thought with a narrative substructure shaped by the story of Israel, which leads to the new reality of Christ. Wright studies prepositional phrases that include Χριστός (Wright 1991, pp. 44–49). He lists as a red herring, though entirely correctly, that we would be mistaken to suggest that Paul’s language about “Christ in me/you” has more or less the same meaning as “in Christ”. He further notices that “Christ in you” is much closer to Paul’s language about the Spirit, as is clear from Rom 8.9–11 (ibid., p. 45). Unfortunately, due to his emphasis on the covenant and the vindication of the

law, he does not tackle the crucial issues related to the terms “in Christ” and “in the Spirit” in his exegesis of Rom 8.1–11 (Ibid., pp. 200–16).

Sixth, in his work *Romans: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary*, Gorman notices that Rom 8 focuses on the life in the Spirit within the framework of a trinitarian understanding of salvation. He identifies at least five key elements of Christian life from Rom 8, three of which originate from vv. 1–17: first, the mutual indwelling of Christ and the Spirit with believers; second, believers’ adoption as God’s children; and third, the Christ-shaped pattern of suffering followed by glory (Gorman 2022, p. 192). Gorman affirms the individual and corporate aspects of participation in and with Christ (Ibid., p. 41). His unique contribution is the identification of the Holy Spirit as “the Spirit of cruciformity—cross-shaped participation in Christ” in Rom 8 (Ibid., p. 41), with the role of putting to death the deeds of the body (8.13) and empowering believers to suffer with Christ as the prelude to glory (8.17) (Ibid., p. 193). Particularly germane to this paper is Gorman’s affirmation that the mutual indwelling of Christ and the faithful “takes place by the means of the Spirit,” and that “Paul can use the language of mutual indwelling with respect to Christ and the Spirit in the same breath” (Ibid., p. 40). In interpreting Christians’ suffering with Christ (8.13), Gorman clarifies that, for Paul, “This is not a statement about suffering as meriting glory but a claim about the nature of full participation in the messianic story. Christ’s story is a narrative of suffering before full and final glory, of death before resurrection, of being humbled before being exalted” (Ibid., p. 202). Gorman’s insight comes close to the argument presented by this paper, but still falls short in understanding the preeminent role of the Spirit in the mutual indwelling of Christ and his co-sufferers.

Seventh, Campbell studies Paul’s concept of union with Christ primarily in his exegesis of a few prepositional phrases associated with Christ, for example, ἐν Χριστῷ, εἰς Χριστόν, σὺν Χριστῷ, διὰ Χριστοῦ, σὺν-compounds, and their variations. He concludes that union with Christ is the “essential ingredient that binds all other elements together; it is the webbing that connects the ideas of Paul’s web-shaped theological framework” (Campbell 2012, p. 442). Campbell opines that “in the life of the believer, the Spirit becomes the means through whom union with Christ is lived out”. He suggests that “suffering is to be viewed as a *participatio Christi* and not *imitatio Christi* only. Believers share in the ongoing force of Christ’s death and the power of his resurrection, and one consequence of this is that believers will undergo suffering” (Ibid., p. 448, italics original). Despite his comprehensive exegetical work on union with Christ, Campbell’s recognition of the Spirit’s role as merely the means of the work of Christ downplays the personal nature of the Spirit and, therefore, marginalizes her role.¹⁵ His understanding would have been much thicker had he applied the same exegetical rigor to the study of the Spirit.

Finally, Macaskill performs a descriptive task on participation in the New Testament, informed by historical theology and, to a lesser extent, systematic theology. In synthesizing his conclusions, he argues that the covenantal framework must serve as the starting point for reflection on participation or union with Christ (Macaskill 2013, pp. 297–98). For Macaskill, the new covenant is the covenant of the Spirit. The Spirit “is the gift given within the new covenant, who conforms our being to its terms by writing those terms on our hearts and realizing our conformity to Christ” (Ibid., p. 300). Commenting on Rom 8.14–17, Macaskill observes the distinctive partnership of the Holy Spirit and the human (Ibid., p. 240). However, in this treatment of Romans (Ibid., pp. 237–44), he fails to execute his own prescribed task, namely, paying attention to “the distinctive place of Jesus and the Spirit” (Ibid., 145). In particular, he misses the different roles of “in Christ” and “in the Spirit” in the Pauline theme of participation.

In addition, I propose reviewing Eastman’s work for its relevance to this research. In her recent study of Rom 8, Eastman notices the Spirit’s role in mediating the experience of union with Christ. Eastman argues that the Spirit generates and sustains a mutually participatory bond of love between believers and God, as well as between people “in Christ.” For Eastman, “The central motif therefore is the indwelling of Christ through the Spirit” (Eastman 2018, p. 111). In her consideration of the entire chapter, she is insightful

in realizing the Spirit's role in generating a community bonded with love. However, the motif of love is only visible in the second half (vv. 28, 35, 39), suggesting that her exegetical "center of gravity" leans more toward vv. 18–39. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a recalibrated analysis of the first half of the chapter, without losing sight of Eastman's contribution.

So far, I have reviewed scholars surveyed by Campbell and Macaskill and the works of Fee and Eastman. These studies show a trend toward an increased appreciation for Paul's motif of *theosis*. However, comparatively speaking, what is lacking is the due recognition of an elevated role of the Spirit in *theosis*. Moreover, there has been a lack of appreciation of the Spirit's work in (trans)forming believers into Christ's co-sufferers so that eschatological freedom can be enjoyed by the suffering creation. With that in mind, I proceed to my analysis of Rom 8.1–17.

3. Exegesis of Romans 8:1–17

Romans 8.1–17 is situated in a chapter that "contains one of the thickest clusters of Spirit language in Paul's letters" (Ibid., p. 103). Commenting on this chapter, Dunn vividly portrays the highly elevated role of the Spirit: "when the reader reaches Rom. 8, not least after the agonizing testimony of 7.7–25, it is almost as though a pent-up flood has been released, and out pour Paul's convictions about the decisive role of the Spirit in determining and shaping the believer's life. Rom. 8.1–27 is unquestionably the high point of Paul's theology of the Spirit" (Dunn 1998, p. 423). Moreover, 8.1–17 is populated with the densest references to the Spirit. The seventeen instances of *πνεῦμα* mentioned in 8.1–17 occupy half of all the references in the epistle, dwarfing the remaining chapter and all other parts of the epistle. In comparison, *θεός* appears nine times, and *Χριστός* six times. Ironically, the passage has been chiefly read christologically, in terms of justification.¹⁶

3.1. Mutual Indwelling of the Spirit and Believers

Of all these references to *πνεῦμα*, of particular interest is the phrase *ἐν πνεύματι* in v. 9, through which Paul speaks of the believers' new sphere. Namely, they are no longer in the flesh but in the Spirit. Functionally similar to *ἐν πνεύματι* is *πνεύματι*, used without the preceding preposition. Paul exhorts the Roman believers to put to death the deeds of the body in/by the Spirit (v. 13) and to be led by/in the Spirit (v. 14). At the other end of the spectrum of the relationship between the Spirit and believers is the fact that "the Spirit of God dwells in you" (9, 11 [2x]). Therefore, the concept of mutual indwelling between the Spirit and the believers is one of the hidden "jewels" in 8.1–17, recognized by Gorman as "the center of Paul's spirituality of participation and transformation" (Gorman 2019, p. 16).

The phrase *ἐν πνεύματι* appears eleven times in the undisputed Pauline epistles (Rom 2.29; 8.9; 9.1; 14.17; 15.16; 1 Cor 12.3; 14.16; 2 Cor 6.6; Gal 6.1; 1 Thess 1.5), of which at least four (Rom 8.9;¹⁷ 1 Cor 12.3; 14.16; Gal 6.1) refer to the believers' new relationship with the Holy Spirit.¹⁸ The semantic analysis of prepositions is a complex enterprise (Campbell 2012, p. 74). Without question, the preposition *ἐν* is by far the most commonly used preposition in the NT (Wallace 1996, pp. 357, 372); it is also the most significant and the most perplexing of the relevant prepositions (Campbell 2012, p. 75). According to Albrecht Oepke, "The spatial sense is always the starting-point, but we have to ask how far there is an intermingling of other sense, esp. the instrumental" (Oepke 1964, p. 2:538). He regards the use of *ἐν* and *πνεῦμα* as local: "The thought of the Spirit in [humanity] is local... The converse that [humanity] is in the Spirit... is also based on a spatial sense" (Ibid., p. 2:540). Oepke's definition is complemented by Louw and Nida, who interpret *ἐν* as "a marker of close personal association—'in, one with, in union with, joined closely to'" (Louw and Nida 1989, p. 1:793). Therefore, "in the Spirit" denotes believers' intimate relationship with the Spirit, in which "all believers individually are constantly enveloped and possessed by Christ's Spirit, like the air around and within them" (Gorman 2022, p. 199). Such a close, personal association between the Spirit and believers is also similarly expressed by the

standalone word $\piνε \acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\iota$, without the preceding $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$, such as in “I serve God in/with my spirit” (1.9; cf. 9.1; 12.11; 15.16). The same is true in other undisputed Pauline epistles: “I come with love in the Spirit of gentleness” (1 Cor 4.21; cf. 5.3; 7.34; 14.2, 15 [2x]; 2 Cor 2.13; 12.18; Gal 3.3; 5.5, 16, 18, 25 [2x]; Phil 3.3).

Paul’s use of $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \piνε \acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ in Rom 8.9 differs from that in other non-disputed Pauline epistles. For example, in 1 Cor 12.3, 14.16, and Gal 6.1, Paul focuses on the believers’ new lifestyle in speaking and behaving, whereas in Rom 8.9, Paul’s attention is on the believers’ new identity, demonstrated through his sharp antithesis between “in the flesh” and “in the Spirit” (8.8, 9).

Now, let us turn to the other side of the coin by looking at how Paul describes the Spirit’s dwelling in believers. In 8.9, Paul speaks of the Spirit of God dwelling in his believers. The word $\circ\iota\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ appears four times in Romans (7.18, 20; 8.9, 11), portraying a stark contrast between the believers’ old identity and their new one. Their old identity is characterized by statements such as “nothing good dwells in me” (7.18) and “sin dwells within me” (7.20), whereas with their new status, the indwelling sin is replaced by the indwelling Spirit (8.9, 11). In 1 Cor 3.16 and 6.19, Paul uses the vivid metaphor of believers as the temple of God indwelt by the Spirit. In Rom 8.11, Paul employs another verb, $\acute{\epsilon}\nu\omicron\iota\kappa\acute{\epsilon}\omega$, to express the similar notion of the Spirit’s dwelling in the believers. This verb also appears in 2 Cor 6.16, in which God is said to indwell his people who are the temple of the living God.¹⁹

There are various allusions to the indwelling Spirit in Israel’s Scriptures. Paul could have in mind something akin to God’s promise in Exod 29.45–46 to dwell among the people of Israel (Jewett 2007, p. 490). Both Ezek 36.26–27 and Jer 31.33 contain prophetic promises of the indwelling divine Spirit, which can now be experienced by those in the Spirit. In Ezek 43.5, the prophet was lifted by the Spirit and then brought into the inner court, where he saw the glory of the Lord fill the temple. If it is true that Paul borrows this imagery from Ezekiel, then he reappropriates both the temple as God’s justified people, and the glory of the Lord as the Holy Spirit. For Paul, however, the glory is eschatological and cosmological (Rom 8.18, 21), whereas the Spirit is presently “set out as the Spirit of cruciformity—cross-shaped participation in Christ” (Gorman 2022, p. 192).

In summary, Paul speaks of the mutual indwelling of the Holy Spirit and believers as their new identity, contrary to their old identity, which is marked by their being in the flesh and indwelt by sin.

3.2. Mutual Indwelling of Christ and the Believers

Paul begins Rom 8 by announcing the good news to a particular group of people, namely those who receive no more condemnation as they are now “in Christ Jesus” (v. 1). The reciprocal relationship between Christ and believers is expressed in v. 10: “Christ is in you.” Hence, similar to the mutual indwelling of the Spirit and the believers, Paul speaks of an intimate relationship between Christ and the faithful.

There are thirteen occurrences of the precise phrase $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ in Romans (Rom 3.24; 6.11, 23; 8.1, 2, 39; 9.1; 12.5; 15.17; 16.3, 7, 9, 10), of which nine (6.11, 8.1; 9.1; 12.5; 15.17; 16.3, 7, 9, 10) refer to the believers’ new relationship with Christ. Their new identity is understood as being alive to God in Christ Jesus (6.11), many members being “as one body in Christ” (12.5), and so on (cf. 16.7, 9, 10). This new lifestyle is demonstrated through their “speaking the truth in Christ” (9.1; cf. 15.17; 16.3). Thirty-nine occurrences of the phrase $\acute{\epsilon}\nu \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\acute{\omega}$ are recorded in the other undisputed Pauline epistles, among which nineteen refer to the believers’ new identity in Christ (1 Cor 1.2, 4, 30; 3.1; 4.10, 15a; 2 Cor 5.17; 12.2; Gal 1.22; 2.4, 17; 3.26, 28; Phil 1.1, 4.21; 1 Thess 2.14; 4.16; Phlm 8, 23), and twelve to the new lifestyle in Christ, personally and corporately (1 Cor 4.15b, 17; 15.18, 19, 31; 2 Cor 2.17; 12.19; Phil 1.13, 26; 3.3, 14; Phlm 20).

Gorman helpfully identifies in Rom 8 two groups of phrases and words: the “in” group dominating the first half of the chapter, and the “with” group in the second half,

such as “bearing witness with” (v. 16), “joint heirs,” “suffer with,” “be glorified with” (v. 17), “groans and suffers together” (v. 22), and so on (vv. 26, 28, 29). In addition, there is the phrase “with him [Christ]” (σὺν αὐτῷ) (8.32). All these “exhibit Paul’s profound spirituality of participation, . . . echo and further develop the ‘in/into’ and ‘with’ language associated with baptism and new life in Christ in 6.1–7.6” (Gorman 2022, pp. 193–94).

To flip the coin once again, the phrase “Christ in you” (Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν) occurs three times in undisputed Pauline epistles (Rom 8.10; 2 Cor 13.5; Gal 4.19).²⁰ For Paul, the believers are not only the temple for the Holy Spirit, but are also a habitation for Christ. The Christians’ taking up residence in Christ is realized through faith and baptism, when “people are moved into Christ, into the sphere of his Spirit; simultaneously, those who move into Christ find that Christ has moved into them” (Gorman 2022, p. 199).

Having identified the mutual indwelling of Christ/Spirit and the believers in Paul, I will now investigate the role of the Spirit in Rom 8.1–17, and the significance of *pneumasis* to *Christosis*.

3.3. *Pneumasis: A New Terminology Highlighting the Primacy of the Spirit in Deification*

According to Gorman, terms such as *theosis*/deification and *Christosis*/Christification have summarized a Christian understanding of salvation since at least the second century: Christ became what we are so that we could become what he is (Ibid., p. 197). These terms, however, do not fully capture the role of the Holy Spirit in the Pauline understanding of participation. To do justice to Paul’s prevailing references to the Spirit (compared to God and Christ) and his proto-trinitarian motif, this paper proposes the use of the word *pneumasis* or *pneumafication*. To coin a new theological term is, understandably, a risky business. However, I am persuaded, if not compelled, by the text to propose this new term as a protest against the downplaying or marginalizing of the role of the Holy Spirit in recent biblical and theological works on deification. As shown above, Rom 8.1–17 is so deeply saturated by Spirit language that it calls for the naming of the preeminent role of the Spirit. The occurrences of πνεῦμα exceed the total number of references to God and Christ combined (πνεῦμα: 17; θεός: 9; Χριστός: 6). Therefore, *pneumasis* deserves a seat at the table of participation as an equal partner with *theosis* and *Christosis*. If, using Pauline terminology and following Eastern Orthodox tradition, *Christosis* may be defined in terms of “in Christ” and “Christ in you”²¹, namely, the mutual indwelling of Christ and the believers, then *pneumasis* refers to believers’ experience of being in the Spirit and being indwelt by the Spirit, or the mutual indwelling of the Holy Spirit and believers as a temple of the Spirit.

Based on his study of Rom 8, Blackwell suggests that *Christosis* is a better term than *theosis*/deification to describe Paul’s specific soteriological emphasis, for two reasons. The first substantive reason is the particularly Christo-form nature of the experience. The more pragmatic reason relates to the “meaning” of the term *theosis*, which “can be ambiguous with regard to its referent because of its varied use in ancient and modern contexts” (Blackwell 2016, pp. 264–66). However, Blackwell acknowledges that the term *Christosis* may not do justice to the fact that “the distinctive role of the Spirit permeates our passages, especially in Rom 8, Gal 3–4, and 2 Cor 3”. While I am appreciative of Blackwell’s genuine struggle with how to balance the roles of God, Christ, and the Spirit in Pauline deification, I propose that the newly coined term *pneumasis*, or *pneumafication*, can better avoid the “possible overemphasis on Christ and underemphasis on the necessary and unique roles of . . . the Holy Spirit” (Ibid., p. 265). First, in Rom 8, when speaking of believers’ experiences, Paul’s attention is always on the Spirit. The Spirit’s work sustains a type of “dual agency” inaugurated through God’s action in Christ (Eastman 2018, p. 123). Blackwell himself concurs that “the Spirit is central to Paul’s portrayal of the believer’s experience of the divine”. He quickly adds that “such experience is christo-telic in nature, such that believers embody the Christ-narrative in death and life through the Spirit” (Blackwell 2016, p. 265). To overcome his circular reasoning, it makes more sense to use *pneumasis* to capture Paul’s

higher incidence of references to the Spirit in Rom 8. Second, Blackwell proposes the term *Christosis* because of the diversity of meanings associated with theosis/deification, a fact that “makes it difficult in some discussions to distinguish theosis as a modern term from theosis as a historical term” (Ibid., p. 266). Of course, by introducing the term *Christosis*, Blackwell does not want to do away with theosis. Instead, he suggests that “no single term will be sufficient for fully encompassing Pauline soteriology because he uses diverse terminology and metaphors to describe his theology. Accordingly, *Christosis* cannot be the only term we use to describe Pauline soteriology any more than justification can, but at the same time deification, theosis, and *Christosis* would not be inadequate terminology for describing Pauline soteriology” (Ibid., p. 267). The concept of *pneumasis* proposed in this paper fits well into his insightful observation. Paul’s specific contribution in Rom 8 is a Spirit-filled soteriology; thus, *pneumasis* helps sharpen the analysis of this dimension of Paul’s theology.

Having demonstrated the necessity and significance of *pneumasis*, the paper proceeds to define the role of the Spirit as illustrated in 8.1–17.

3.4. *Pneumasis* Effectuates *Christosis*

In 8.1–17, the role of the Holy Spirit is to effectuate, facilitate, and enable *Christosis*, namely the mutual indwelling of Christ and his co-sufferers. The reasoning is as follows. First, the role of the Spirit is highlighted through the following inverted parallelism.

- A 8.1 *Christosis*: “in Christ”
- B 8.2–8 The Spirit liberates the believers and invokes their obligations
- C 8.9 *Pneumasis*: the mutual indwelling of the Spirit and the believers
- B’ 8.10–15 The effect of *pneumasis* and the believers’ further obligations
- A’ 8.16–17 *Christosis*: “co-heirs, co-sufferers, being co-glorified” with/in Christ

What is crucial to our purpose is that *pneumasis* lies at the center of the Pauline idea of *Christosis*. In particular, the γάρ (v. 2) explains that the believers’ new status “in Christ” is made possible by the law of the Spirit, which sets them free from the bondage of the law of sin and death. Subsequently, the Spirit invokes the believers’ participation to “walk according to the Spirit” (v. 4), so that they can “set their minds on the things of the Spirit” to harvest life and peace (vv. 5–6). For Lancaster, walking according to the Spirit entails “responding appropriately to God, living in that relationship and thus fulfilling the requirement of the law (8.4)”²². As a result of *pneumasis* (v. 9), God will give life to their mortal bodies through the Spirit (v. 11) who is life (v. 10). In v. 12, “thinking about debt Paul mentions as social obligation can open up the text to a reading about the community”, in which the communal relationship determines our responsibilities to one another (Ibid., p. 139). Believers are “obligated” to put to death the deeds of the body by/in the Spirit, so that they will live (v. 13).²³ They manifest their status as children of God if they are led by the Spirit (v. 14). Paul concludes this pericope with the idea of *Christosis*, namely, of believers as Christ’s co-heirs, co-sufferers, and co-sharers of his glorification (v. 17), which is the result of the Spirit bearing witness with our spirit (v. 16).

Third, the mutual indwelling of Christ and his believers can be shown to be effectuated by the mutual indwelling of the Spirit and the believers. First, for the believers to be “in Christ” (8.1), they need to be released from the bondage of the law of sin and death (v. 2). Paul makes it crystal clear that such is the work of the Spirit, and that the law of the Spirit sets them free from the tyranny of sin and death (v. 2). Second, the only possible way for Christ to indwell believers is through Spirit-enabled resurrection (v. 11). Therefore, it is only reasonable to appreciate Paul’s high pneumatology (at least in this pericope) and to recognize that the Spirit facilitates, empowers, enables, and effectuates the mutual indwelling of Christ and believers. Gorman identifies two dimensions of the Spirit-filled life as the effects of the Spirit’s presence: (1) putting to death the deeds of the body, or dying to the flesh in order to truly live (8.13); and (2) suffering with Christ as the prelude to

glory (8.17) (Gorman 2022, p. 193). Therefore, a conclusion can be drawn that it is the Spirit who facilitates believers' participation in Christ's life and suffering.

Fourth, the leading role of the Spirit in *Christosis* can be seen in 8.14–15. Here, Lancaster is insightful in pointing out Paul's wordplay in Greek: "The word translated as 'adoption' conveys the idea of 'son-making' in Greek (*huiiothesias*), so Paul refers to the community members as 'sons' (*huiioi*) in 8.14. The Greek wordplay between 'sons' and 'son-making' also calls to mind that in 8.3 Paul says God sent the Son into the world to deal with sin. Through Jesus Christ, God's own Son, we become adopted sons and therefore join heirs with Christ" (Lancaster 2015, p. 141). Paul's wordplay around Christ as God's Son and believers as "adopted sons" captures the essence of *Christosis*. The primacy of the Spirit can be shown by the fact that, first, "God's sons" are those who are led by the Spirit (8.14) and, second, we can call "Abba! Father!" because we have received the Spirit of "son-making" (8.15). God sends the Spirit into the community of believers so that they are made "sons" of God, who can cry "Abba! Father!" just like Jesus, the Son of God, did (Mark 14.36; cf. Gal 4.6). Without possessing and being possessed by the Spirit, such a "son-making" process cannot be achieved.

3.5. *Pneumaficational Anthropology*

The neglected role of the Holy Spirit is also reflected in the one-sided emphasis on terms such as "the indwelling Christ," and much less on "the indwelling Spirit," and the neglect of the Spirit-enabled and experiential "indwelling humanity": "in Christ" and "in the Spirit." Combatting an individualistic, hidden, and inward mindset concerning spiritual experiences, Eastman is insightful in stating that "the basis of the Spirit's claim on every aspect of life is not simply our given reliance on God, but Paul's participatory Christology and pneumatology; because Christ entered fully into human existence, there is no unclaimed or 'secular' territory of the self or society; because the Spirit continues that divine participation, there is no 'unspiritual' experience beyond the reach of transformation" (Eastman 2018, p. 123). Part and parcel of Paul's participatory anthropology is the interpersonal experience that exists as the relational bonds between members of Christ's body (Ibid., pp. 122–23). Building on Eastman's insight, this paper proposes another aspect of such a participatory or, better, *pneumaficational* anthropology: humanity dwells in the Spirit and, consequently, in Christ, which is qualified by the fact that, in contrast to Christ's pervasive entrance into human existence, and the Spirit's ubiquitous penetration into the self and society, human participation in the divine is always limited by human weakness (8.26). In Rom 8, Paul portrays ongoing warfare, a constant struggle between the Spirit and the flesh (vv. 4, 5, 6, 9, 13). Human failures due to weakness (v. 26) in this warfare cause creation to be subjected to futility (v. 20), to suffer the bondage to decay (v. 21), and to groan in labor pains, until now (v. 22). However, *pneumasis* entails first, the Spirit helping us in our weakness by interceding for us (v. 26), and second, that the new life in Christ "is not a spiritual free-for-all" (Gorman 2022, p. 194). Life in the Spirit is not automatic, but requires active participation by believers (Ibid., p. 200). To live in the Spirit "is to live according to, or in sync with . . . the Spirit rather than the flesh (8.4, 5, 12, 13) . . . In other words, the Spirit enables the children of God to resemble their Father by resembling his Son, who is their elder brother" (Ibid., p. 194). As a result, Paul's *pneumaficational* anthropology brings hope through the eschatological tension between the "already" ("in hope we were saved" [v. 24]) and the "not yet" (by active participation in the Spirit "we hope for what we do not see" [v. 25]).

The result of such a participatory anthropology is, first, "the freedom of the glory of the children of God," contingent on which is the cosmological freedom shared between creation and humanity (v. 21). Gorman summarizes Rom 8 with the heading, "Life in the Spirit: Resurrectional Cruciformity" (Ibid., p. 191). Life in the Spirit "is a life of joyful, resurrection-infused cruciformity" (Ibid., p. 192, italics original). I would further add that, between such a present joyful life in the Spirit (vv. 1–17a) and future glory and freedom (vv. 18b–30) lies a life of co-suffering with Christ (vv. 17b–18a). Such Spirit-enabled co-

suffering is, paradoxically, integral to the joyful life affirmed in Rom 8. For Paul, the key to realizing eschatological and cosmological hope is in Christ's co-sufferers staying actively "in the Spirit" by allowing the Spirit to indwell them and direct them; hence, *pneumasis*.

3.6. Summary of the Spirit's Role in Deification

In this section, I have presented an exegetical analysis of Rom 8.1–17 from two angles: the mutual indwelling of the Spirit and believers, and the mutual indwelling of Christ and the faithful. I have offered a theological rationale for coining the new theological term *pneumasis*/*pneumafication*. I have further demonstrated that the Holy Spirit is God's facilitator of the mutual indwelling of Christ and believers. Finally, based on these observations, I have proposed a *pneumafictional* anthropology: although limited by human weakness, believers are enabled by the Spirit to participate in the divine as Christ's co-sufferers.

4. Conclusions

In this paper, I have followed the general contours established by Campbell and Macaskill and surveyed the works on Romans by a number of scholars, ranging from the early twentieth century to the present. What I have noticed is the increasing scholarly attention on Pauline pneumatology and deification. However, a lacuna has been identified concerning the neglect of the preeminent role of the Holy Spirit in deification and as God's solidarity with Christ's co-sufferers. In order to fill such a lacuna, I have argued for the crucial role of the Holy Spirit as one who facilitates, enables, and empowers the mutual indwelling of Christ and his co-sufferers in Rom 8.1–17. To avert the misconception of a subordinated role of the Spirit in deification, I have coined the term *pneumasis*, or *pneumafication*, which goes hand in hand with *theosis* and *Christosis*. Such a term is necessary to nuance and supplement the language of *theosis* and *Christosis* and constitute a genuinely trinitarian doctrine of participation. *Theosis*, *Christosis*, and *pneumasis*—or deification, Christification, and *pneumafication*—work together to reflect, and do full justice to, Paul's proto-trinitarian thoughts on participation. The newly coined term also makes it possible to capture the distinct but inseparable functions of God, Christ, and the Spirit in participation. One cannot separate *pneumasis* from *Christosis* (or the Spirit from Christ); neither can one separate it from *theosis* (or the Spirit from God), because participation is, indeed, a triune divine encounter. Another benefit of this new term is an increased awareness of a participatory or, better, *pneumafictional* anthropology, in which human participation into the divine, though often hindered by human weakness in the struggle between the Spirit and flesh, calls for the Spirit-enabled Christian obligation to walk in the Spirit, while being led by the Spirit in every daily mundane affair.

Pauline *pneumasis* is pivotal to constructing contemporary Christian ethics through questioning the "private", "inner", and "subjective" Cartesian understandings of Christian spiritual experiences. Moreover, the *pneumafictional* experiences highlighted in Rom 8.1–17 focus on the Spirit as God's solidarity with Christ's co-sufferers in the present suffering creation. This may serve as a healthy critique of some parts of Western Christianity, which have led to a black-and-white worldview that divides humanity into the spiritual and the fleshly, resulting in an arrogant mindset reflected in civil and international politics. On the contrary, based on a close reading of Paul's passage, *pneumafictional* ethics invite readerly formation to be identified with the Holy Spirit. In this way, we can be rescued from an introspective and judgmental spirituality, participate in Christ's suffering, and stand in solidarity with Christ's co-sufferers and the suffering creation. By doing this, the voice of the Holy Spirit's groaning, joined by Paul in his *pneumafictional* experiences, will not be left unheard.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: Data sharing is not applicable.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Notes

- ¹ For some most recent monographs and volumes on Paul and deification/*theosis*, see Gorman (2022), Thate et al. (2018), Blackwell (2016), Finlan (2008, pp. 68–80), and Gorman (2009). On the critiques of using deification as a category in New Testament scholarship, see Macaskill (2013, pp. 26–34).
- ² Gorman defines the Pauline concept of participation in this way: “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, and to do so God in Christ became what we are so that in Christ we might become what God is”. See Gorman (2015, p. 6).
- ³ Gorman identifies Christoformity or Christification, or even deification/*theosis*, as a key theme in Romans, which are synonyms for “salvation as Gods restoration of humanity’s lost glory and righteousness . . . by identification with and conformity to Christ”. For Gorman, there is some overlap between these terms and sanctification, or growth in holiness. This article adopts his working definition of deification/*theosis*, namely, “transformative participation in the character, life, glory, and mission of God through Spirit-enabled conformity to the incarnate, crucified, and resurrected/glorified Messiah Jesus. It includes as one process what has often been seen in the West as separate realities: justification, sanctification, and glorification”. See Gorman (2022, p. 29). David Litwa argues that “even though Paul avoids the specific vocabulary of deification—the language of his soteriology has long suggested a form of deification at work in his thought”. For Litwa, the Pauline concept of union with Christ, or assimilation to Christ, a divine being, ruling over “all things” (including superhuman beings), and the expectation of existing in a superhuman, immortal, and incorruptible corporeality, are the three primary factors “that suggest a form of deification in Paul”. See Litwa (2012, pp. 10–13).
- ⁴ The marginalized view of the Spirit in Paul is reflected by Lancaster, who argues that, “Paul was not concerned to distinguish Spirit and Christ in the way that the doctrine of the Trinity would later do . . . Paul’s point, instead, is that where Christ, the Spirit is also.” See Lancaster (2015, pp. 136–37). This contrasts with Fee’s conviction that “the Spirit stands near the center of things for Paul, as part of the fundamental core of his understanding of the gospel.” See Fee (1996, p. 7).
- ⁵ The scholars surveyed by Constantine Campbell include Adolf Deissmann, Wilhelm Bousset, Albert Schweitzer, Rudolf Bultmann, John Murray, Alfred Wikenhauser, Fritz Neugebauer, Michel Bouttier, Karl Barth, Robert C. Tannehill, W. D. Davies, E. P. Sanders, Richard B. Gaffin, James D. G. Dunn, Michael S. Horton, and Michael Gorman. See Campbell (2012, pp. 32–59).
- ⁶ The only exception is when Campbell speaks of John Murray, for whom the union with Christ refers to an intensely spiritual relationship consonant with the nature and work of the Holy Spirit. See Campbell (2012, p. 62).
- ⁷ The scholars reviewed by Macaskill are Deissmann, Bousset, Schweitzer, Sanders, Richard Hays, Dunn, N. T. Wright, Ernst Käsemann, J. Louis Martyn, Gorman, Douglas Campbell, and Constantine Campbell. See (Macaskill 2013, pp. 18–40).
- ⁸ Macaskill follows pioneering German scholars (such as Deissman, Bousset, and Schweitzer) who equate Paul’s mysticism with union with Christ. See (Macaskill 2013, pp. 19, 40).
- ⁹ One exception is Gorman, who argues that, “it is this life-giving, life-changing Spirit that makes the imitation . . . of Christ, possible. It is *in* Christ that we become *like* Christ, thanks to the Spirit.” See (Gorman 2019, p. 16).
- ¹⁰ See (Fee 1994, p. 472). Speaking of Rom 8.1–27, Dunn opines that, “the 21 *pneuma* references . . . (19 to the Holy Spirit) form the most intense focus on the Spirit in the Pauline letters.” See (Dunn 1998, p. 423).
- ¹¹ There have been various definitions of deification. Here, I refer to 2 Pet 1.4 as its definition. Similarly, Finlan and Kharlamov note that the term *theosis* is “the notion of being transformed by God, or taking on the divine nature.” See (Finlan and Kharlamov 2006, p. 4). Some scholars view the elusiveness of *theosis* as a liability and go so far as to suggest the discontinuation of the term. However, such a suggestion does a disservice to the rich Christian tradition.
- ¹² Blackwell coined the term *Christosis* to nuance and supplement the language of *theosis*. Such a term speaks to his reading of Paul’s Christocentric doctrine and spirituality. For Blackwell, “the term ‘christosis’ (or christopoiesis) serves to capture the embodiment of Christ’s death and life that is so fundamental for Paul’s spirituality.” See (Blackwell 2016, p. xix).
- ¹³ Constantine Campbell argues that, “while union with Christ has been discussed and explored at various times in the history of the Christian church, the volume and intensity of such discussions and explorations became significantly heightened through the twentieth century.” See (Campbell 2012, p. 32).
- ¹⁴ This does not mean that the works that do not contain exegetical works are unimportant. Many of these twenty-three authors contributed significantly to the topic of union with Christ and participation. However, without detailed exegesis, many nuanced observations could be missed.
- ¹⁵ I follow Johannes Van Oort, who argues that, “in the image of the Holy Spirit as woman and mother, one may attain a better appreciation of the fulness of the Divine.” See (Van Oort 2016, p. 1).
- ¹⁶ Fee’s analysis of the inadequacy of the traditional view of Paul’s theology applies here. The traditional view, fostered by the Reformers and perpetuated by generations of Protestants, is that “justification by faith” is the key to that theology. The inadequacy of the view is that “it focuses on one metaphor of salvation, justification, to the exclusion of others.” See (Fee 1996, p. 5).

- 17 For Gorman, the believers' being "in the Spirit" means that the Spirit lives in them (8.9a). In my view, most likely, he confuses these two theologically pregnant phrases. See (Gorman 2022, p. 199).
- 18 Should the disputed Pauline epistles be included, then out of the seventeen occurrences, at least seven (Rom 8.9; 1 Cor 12.3; 14.16; Gal 6.1; Eph 5.18; 6.18; Col 1.8) refer to the believers' new relationship with the Holy Spirit.
- 19 Three instances appear in disputed Pauline epistles: Col 3.16; 2 Tim 1.5, 14.
- 20 The phrase also appears in Col 1.27.
- 21 Eastern Orthodox theology notes that *theosis* is the result of union with God in Christ. See (Van De Walle 2008, p. 141); cf. (Ware 1997, p. 231).
- 22 However, by defining the Spirit as "being oriented to God," in contrast to the flesh meaning "being oriented in the world without reference to God," Lancaster most likely de-personalizes the Spirit and, thus, marginalizes the Spirit's role in her exegesis. See (Lancaster 2015, pp. 132–33).
- 23 Fee identifies a surprising element in v. 13, namely, the concept of "obligation," which occurs rarely in Pauline paraenesis. Paul is not preoccupied with the concept of obligation, as many of his interpreters have been. For him, as in this series of sentences, obligation stems from grace—not just the pronouncement of grace, but the experience of it. See (Fee 1994, p. 557).

References

- Blackwell, Ben C. 2016. *Christosis: Engaging Paul's Soteriology with His Patristic Interpreters*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Campbell, Constantine R. 2012. *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Dunn, James D. G. 1998. *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Eastman, Susan G. 2018. Oneself in Another: Participation and the Spirit in Romans 8. In *"In Christ" in Paul: Explorations in Paul's Theology of Union and Participation*. Edited by Michael J. Thate, Kevin J. Vanhoozer and Constantine R. Campbell. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, pp. 103–25.
- Fee, Gordon D. 1994. *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul*. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- Fee, Gordon D. 1996. *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God*. Peabody: Hendrickson.
- Finlan, Stephen. 2008. Can We Speak of Theosis in Paul? In *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*. Edited by Michael J. Christensen and Jefferey A. Wittung. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, pp. 68–80.
- Finlan, Stephen, and Vladimir Kharlamov. 2006. Introduction. In *Theōsis: Deification in Christian Theology*. Edited by Stephen Finlan and Vladimir Kharlamov. Eugene: Pickwick.
- Gaffin, Richard B. 1978. *The Centrality of the Resurrection: A Study in Paul's Soteriology*. Grand Rapids: Baker.
- Gorman, Michael J. 2009. *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Gorman, Michael J. 2015. *Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation, and Mission*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Gorman, Michael J. 2019. *Participating in Christ: Explorations in Paul's Theology and Spirituality*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic.
- Gorman, Michael J. 2022. *Romans: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Jewett, Robert. 2007. *Romans: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress.
- Käsemann, Ernst. 1980. *Commentary on Romans*. Translated by G. W. Bromiley. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Lancaster, Sarah H. 2015. *Romans*. Belief. Louisville: Westminster John Knox.
- Litwa, M. David. 2012. *We Are Being Transformed: Deification in Paul's Soteriology*. Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft 187. Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida. 1989. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains*, 3rd ed. New York: United Bible Societies.
- Macaskill, Grant. 2013. *Union with Christ in the New Testament*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- McGrath, Alister E. 1986. *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification*, 2 vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Oepke, Albrecht. 1964. ἐν. In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Edited by Gerhard Kittel. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Sanders, E. P. 1977. *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion*, 1st American ed. Philadelphia: Fortress.
- Thate, Michael J., Kevin J. Vanhoozer, and Constantine R. Campbell, eds. 2018. *"In Christ" in Paul: Explorations in Paul's Theology of Union and Participation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Van De Walle, Bernie A. 2008. How High of a Christian Life?: AB Simpson and the Classic Doctrine of Theos. *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 43: 136–53.
- Van Oort, Johannes. 2016. The Holy Spirit as Feminine: Early Christian Testimonies and Their Interpretation. *HTS* 72: 1–6. [CrossRef]
- Wallace, Daniel B. 1996. *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Ware, Timothy. 1997. *The Orthodox Church*. London: Penguin Books.
- Wright, N. T. 1991. *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.