1 Corinthians 1-4: A Rhetorical and Social Analysis and its Evaluation from a Korean-Confucian Christian Context

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November, 2008
Statement of Authorship

I affirm that this thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other institution.

To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

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Abstract

This thesis investigates 1 Corinthians 1-4 from a rhetorical and social perspective and argues that a divisive culture of rhetorical and patronal elitism lies behind the schisms and problems identified in the letter. I argue that this culture was shaped to some extent by the legacy of Cicero, amongst others, and that Paul’s references to ‘boasting’ and ‘imitation’ indicate both his subversive use, and his critique, of Greco-Roman wisdom.

In the final chapter, this analysis of wisdom traditions and their social consequences amongst first-century Corinthians leads to a critical reflection on similar dynamics amongst Korean Christians in 21st century Korean-Confucian culture. In particular, Korean Protestants are encouraged to take a more positive stance towards Confucian wisdom traditions (as exemplified by T’oegye’s legacy), and some insights are suggested into the ethics of imperial worship, ancestral veneration, and ethnic exclusivity.
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Abbreviations

AB  The Anchor Bible
ABR  Australian Biblical Review
ANTC  Abingdon New Testament Commentary
BA  The Biblical Archaeologist, a publication of the American Schools of Oriental Research.
BAR  Biblical Archaeological Review
BASOR  Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BCE  Before Common Era
BECNT  Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BI  Biblical Interpretation
BNTC  Black’s New Testament Commentaries
CBQ  The Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CE  Common Era
CIL  Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum
EC  Epworth Commentary
ExpT  Expository Times
FeH  Fides et Historia
GNA  Good News Australia
GNS  Good News Studies
GOTR  Greek Orthodox Theological Review
HTR  Harvard Theological Review
IBC  Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC  The International Critical Commentary
Int  Interpretation
JBL  Journal of Biblical Literature
JETS  Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JNT  Jewish New Testament
JSNT  Journal for the Study of the New Testament
JSNTS  Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JTS  Journal of Theological Studies
KJV  King James Version
MNTC  The Moffatt New Testament Commentary
Mig  De Migracione Abrahami
NCBC  The New Century Bible Commentary
NCBC  The New Cambridge Bible Commentary
NEB  New English Bible
NIBC  The New International Biblical Commentary
NICNT  The New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC  The New International Greek Testament Commentary
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<td><strong>NIV</strong></td>
<td>New International Version</td>
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<td><strong>NKJV</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NovT</strong></td>
<td>Novum Testamentum</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>NTS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>RBL</strong></td>
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