

7. Historical Development of Pauline Theology

I. Reception of Pauline Theology in the Early Church

- 1) Paul's epistles were received as authoritative documents within the early Christian communities and became foundational for doctrine and ethical instruction.
 - 2) 2 Peter 3:15–16 treats Paul's letters as Scripture, indicating their early recognition and significance.
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II. Interpretation in the Patristic Period

- 1) Church Fathers such as Origen and Augustine commented on and systematized Pauline theology.
 - 2) Augustine, through Paul's doctrine of grace, developed foundational ideas such as original sin and predestination.
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III. Medieval Scholasticism and Pauline Interpretation

- 1) Medieval theologians redefined the relationship between law, grace, and faith in Pauline thought.
 - 2) However, their interpretations were often shaped more by ecclesiastical tradition and philosophical reasoning than by direct engagement with the biblical text.
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IV. The Reformation and the Recovery of Pauline Theology

- 1) Martin Luther emphasized the Pauline doctrine of "justification by faith" to critique the merit-based system of Roman Catholicism.
 - 2) Paul's gospel was reilluminated through intense study of Galatians and Romans.
 - 3) John Calvin restructured systematic theology centered on Paul's teachings.
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V. Modern Theology and Diverse Interpretations of Paul

1) Neo-Orthodoxy:

Karl Barth emphasized God's sovereignty in Paul's theology.

2) New Perspective on Paul:

E.P. Sanders, James D.G. Dunn, and N.T. Wright reinterpreted Paul within his first-century Jewish context, challenging traditional views of Judaism and law.

3) Social-Ethical Readings:

Liberation theology, feminist theology, and other approaches have explored Paul's teachings on community and justice from diverse ideological perspectives.

VI. Conclusion: Continual Development Across the Ages

- 1) Pauline theology has been continually reinterpreted across the centuries, responding to the needs and questions of each era.
- 2) Core themes such as the gospel, grace, faith, the Holy Spirit, community, and eschatology remain central and consistent throughout its development.