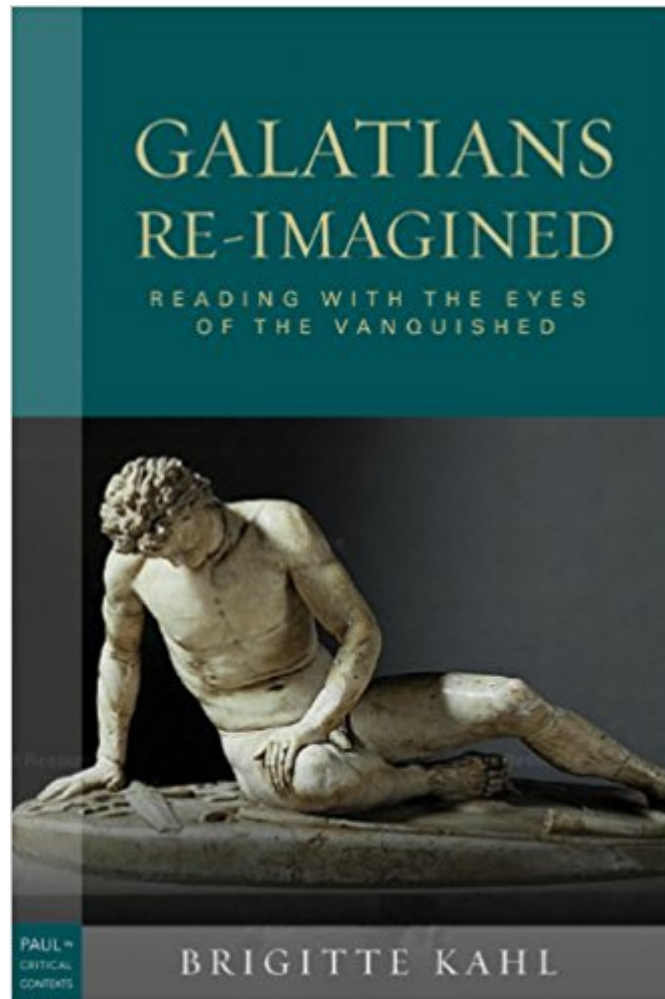


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Galatians Re-Imagined (Paul In Critical Contexts)



Synopsis

Brigitte Kahl brings to this insightful reading of Galatians a deep knowledge of the classical world and especially of Roman imperial ideology. The first wave of scholarship on the Roman imperial context of Paul's letters raised important questions that only thorough treatments of individual letters can answer.

Book Information

Series: Paul in Critical Contexts

Paperback: 450 pages

Publisher: Augsburg Fortress Publishers; Reprint edition (April 1, 2014)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1451488076

ISBN-13: 978-1451488074

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.9 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (8 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #526,665 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #154 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Meditations > New Testament](#) #1198 in [Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Social Sciences > Gender Studies > General](#) #2027 in [Books > Christian Books & Bibles > Bible Study & Reference > Bible Study > New Testament](#)

Customer Reviews

Brigitte Kahl brings to this insightful reading of the Galatians a deep knowledge of the classical world and a keen eye, and ear, for the themes of Roman imperial ideology. Ranging over the history of Roman interactions with the Gallic/Galatian peoples, perceptions of Galatian savagery, and representations of defeated Gauls/Galatians, Kahl gives particular attention to the symbol of the Great Altar of Pergamon and its codes of cultural conflict. She shows that themes of imperial propaganda--order v. lawlessness, civilization vs. barbarity, harmony vs. anarchy--echo in Paul's letter and highlight the deep issues at stake in the Galatian crisis. Paul's struggle is motivated not by Jewish antagonists but by Galatian anxiety about their identity status on a landscape where withdrawal from the civic celebrations of Rome's glory was held in the gravest suspicion. "Galatians re-imagined" interprets the letter as an exhortation to stand with the powerless, yet not vanquished, rather than with the imperial worldview of the imperial conqueror, who is not lord supreme. The core of the Galatian controversy is that circumcision was less a body-marker of Jew or gentile, and more

a signifier of political compliance or non-compliance with Roman civic obligations as proselytes sought Jewish identity to escape the demands of the imperial cult. The circumcision solution, according to Paul, who claims to be the voice of "proper" Judaism and law observance, is less an expression of faithful, theologically motivated Jewish Torah-obedience than of political realism. Hence, Paul presents foolish Galatians with another option, inclusion without circumcision, which fits into his fundamentally Jewish apocalyptic framework expecting an end-time pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem (Isa 2:2-3; Zeph 3:9).

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