Mohrlang's "Paul and His Life-Transforming Theology" (Book Review)

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Paul and His Life-Transforming Theology,
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Dr. Roger Mohrlang is professor of biblical studies at Whitworth University in Spokane, Washington. He has devoted decades of his life to Bible translation and to the study of the Apostle Paul’s life and writings. His writing in clear, everyday English reflects his teaching of many cohorts of college and university students. He provides his own translation of extensive quotations from Paul’s letters. This concise summary of Paul’s theology is very readable, accessible to ordinary Christian readers, new students of Pauline theology and anyone seeking an introductory overview. The inviting writing clearly conveys Mohrlang’s evangelical heart as he shares the words and thoughts of the Apostle Paul.

Mohrlang presents a moderate Reformed Protestant position and does not engage in distracting, unnecessary debates of theological scholarship. His primary focus is to expound the life-transforming nature of Paul’s theology, which he does carefully and ably. He does not shy away from thorny questions such as the relationship between divine election and human responsibility, but rather points out Paul’s paradoxical perspective which offers equal respect to both Calvinist and Wesleyan positions. The heart of Paul’s theology is just as transforming for readers today as it was for Paul himself. Mohrlang presents Paul as a Jewish scholar, transformed and able to comprehend Jesus’ suffering, death and resurrection as redemptive in light of Isaiah 53, against a Jewish religious background that provides context and continuity for Christian understanding. As Paul left behind his traditional Pharisaic legalistic interpretation, he read the law in a messianic way in light of its fulfillment in Christ Jesus. No longer is holy living followed for fear of judgment for breaking the law. Having been promised in the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is experienced by Paul as life-transforming to equip him, and other followers of Christ, for holy living to love the Lord and one another.