

TRAVIS B. WILLIAMS

Good Works  
in 1 Peter

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament*

337

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**Mohr Siebeck**

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Travis B. Williams

# Good Works in 1 Peter

Negotiating Social Conflict and Christian Identity  
in the Greco-Roman World

Mohr Siebeck

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*In Memory of*

George ("Frank") and Bobbie Campbell  
Bob and Joanne Williams

אגר עובדיך טביא מתקנין לך קדמיי לעלמא דאתי  
(*Tg. Neof. Gen 15:1*)



## Preface

The present work grew out of my doctoral thesis (published as *Persecution in 1 Peter: Differentiating and Contextualizing Early Christian Suffering* [NovTSup 145; Leiden: Brill, 2012]), in which I attempted to challenge the modern consensus on the nature of persecution addressed by 1 Peter. In doing so, I discussed the various causes of conflict represented in the epistle. One of the causes, as I understand it, was the fact that the readers had been performing “good works” within their Anatolian communities. In this discussion, I mentioned that most modern interpreters have come to an agreement concerning the referent behind these good deeds (*viz.*, that “doing good” involved acts which were favorably recognized by Greco-Roman society and thus which should have received a positive response from outsiders), and then I briefly proposed a “new perspective” for understanding this important motif. Given the spatial limitations, however, this idea was left undeveloped, being suggested more than demonstrated. The present work is meant to serve as a full demonstration and extension of this earlier proposal.

The reason why I feel that a full-length monograph on this subject is so important is because of how wide-ranging this consensus is among Petrine interpreters. In the introduction, I purposefully cite and quote a large number of interpreters as a way of showing just how deeply-ingrained this view has become within Petrine studies. Given how strongly the consensus opinion is held, it would take much more to refute it than the brief comments which were previously set forth. Yet, I feel that a challenge is necessary. The importance lies in its effect on the overall reading of 1 Peter: whereas my previous efforts were meant alter how interpreters approach the problem behind the epistle, this work attempts to reshape how we understand the author’s social strategy in addressing this problem.

I would like to express my gratitude to the editors of *Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament*, Prof. Dr. Jörg Frey (Editor) and Prof. James A. Kelhoffer (Associate Editor), for their willingness to accept my work into this prestigious series, and to Dr. Henning Ziebritzki (Editorial Director, Theology and Jewish Studies) and his excellent editorial staff for their able assistance. It has been a pleasure to work with everyone at Mohr Siebeck.

Portions of this study have appeared elsewhere. Part of Chapter Four and Appendix One earlier appeared as “Benefiting the Community through Good Works? The Economic Feasibility of Civic Benefaction in 1 Peter,” *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism* 9 (2013) 147–195. I am grateful to Sheffield Phoenix Press



for permission to reproduce the material here. Likewise, a brief section in Chapter Seven appeared as “Reading Social Conflict through Greek Grammar: Reconciling the Difficulties of the Fourth-Class Condition in 1 Pet 3,14,” *Filología Neotestamentaria* 26 (2013) 119–160. I am grateful to Ediciones El Alemendro de Córdoba, S.L. for permission to reproduce the material here.

Many people have contributed to my thinking about the theme of this book. Most of all, David G. Horrell has been a close friend and mentor as well as a constant source of encouragement. Having read an early draft of the work, he offered many valuable suggestions for its improvement, and he continues to be a wise sounding board off which I can bounce all of my ideas about 1 Peter. I would also like to thank David M. Shaw for proof-reading the entire Manuscript.

I also wish to acknowledge and offer my sincere thanks to everyone at Tusculum College. Both the administration and the faculty have been extremely supportive of the project from the beginning. I am especially appreciative of the faculty and staff of the Thomas J. Garland Library for all of their assistance. Charles Tunstall (Reference/Instructional Service Librarian), in particular, has been an invaluable resource during the process of my research, chasing down obscure titles and processing a seemingly innumerable amount of inter-library loan requests.

Finally, I want to thank my wife, Amy, and my sons, Bryce and Trent, for all of their support. While work on this project has occasionally taken away from our time together, their patience has been an encouragement throughout the whole process. I am truly grateful for their sacrifice. This work is dedicated in memory of my grandparents (George “Frank” and Bobbie Campbell; Bob and Joanne Williams), whose lives were marked by a devotion to God and a commitment to good works.

Travis B. Williams

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## Abbreviations

All references that fall within the sphere of biblical studies are abbreviated according to Patrick H. Alexander, et al., eds., *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1999). Materials that are not found in the *SBL Handbook* are listed below.

AEG	Abingdon Essential Guides
BCSNT	Biblicher Kommentar über sämtliche Schriften des Neuen Testaments
BDAG	Bauer, Walter. <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . 3 <sup>rd</sup> ed. Edited by Frederick W. Danker, based on Walter Bauer, <i>Griechisch-deutsches Wörterbuch zu den Schriften des Neuen Testaments und der übrigen urchristlichen Literatur</i> . 6 <sup>th</sup> ed. Edited by Kurt and Barbara Aland, with Viktor Reichmann and on previous English editions by W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDF	Blass, Friedrich and Albert Debrunner. <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> . Translated and revised from the 9 <sup>th</sup> –10 <sup>th</sup> German edition, incorporating supplementary notes of A. Debrunner by Robert W. Funk. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961.
BE	<i>Bulletin épigraphique</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BGU	<i>Ägyptische Urkunden aus den Königlichen (Staatlichen) Museen zu Berlin, Griechische Urkunden</i> . 19 vols. Berlin: Weidmann, 1895–2005.
BHGNT	Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament
BM	Bibelwissenschaftliche Monographien
Bosch, Ankara	Bosch, Emin. <i>Quellen zur Geschichte der Stadt Ankara im Altertum</i> . Türk Tarih kurumu yayinlarindan, Series 7, no. 46. Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi, 1967.
CBNT	Commentaire biblique, Nouveau Testament
CEB	Commentaire évangélique de la Bible
CEG I	Hansen, Peter A., ed. <i>Carmina Epigraphica Graeca: Saeculorum VIII–V a. Chr.n.</i> Text und Kommentare 12. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1983.
CID IV	Lefèvre, François, Didier Laroche, and Olivier Masson, eds. <i>Corpus des inscriptions de Delphes, Tome IV: Documents Amphictioniques</i> . Paris: Ecole française d'Athènes/Diff. de Boccard, 2002.

- CIG* Boeckh, Augustine, ed. *Corpus inscriptionum graecarum*. 4 vols. Berlin: Reimer, 1828–1877.
- CIJ* Frey, Jean-Baptiste, ed. *Corpus inscriptionum iudaicarum: recueil des inscriptions juives qui vont du IIIe siècle avant Jésus-Christ au VIIe siècle de notre ère*. 2 vols. Rome: Pontificio Istituto di archeologia Cristiana, 1936–1952. Revision of vol. 1: Baruch Lifshitz, ed. *Corpus of Jewish Inscriptions: Jewish Inscriptions from the Third Century B.C. to the Seventh Century A.D.* New York: KTAV, 1975.
- CIL* Mommsen, Theodor, et al., eds. *Corpus inscriptionum latinarum*. 17 vols. Berlin: Reimer, 1853–.
- CPJ* Tcherikover, Victor, et al., eds. *Corpus papyrorum Judaicarum*. 3 vols. Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957–1964.
- CPL* Cavenaile, Robert, ed. *Corpus papyrorum Latinarum*. Wiesbaden: O. Harrassowitz, 1956–58.
- DCLS Deuterocanonical and Cognate Literature Studies
- EC Epworth Commentaries
- ECC Eerdmans Critical Commentary
- ECM* Aland, Barbara, et al., eds. *Novum Testamentum Graecum. Editio Critica Maior IV Catholic Letters, Part 1: Text*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2013.
- EDNT* Balz, Horst R., and Gerhard Schneider, eds. *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–93.
- EUS European University Studies
- F.Amyzon* Robert, Jeanne and Louis Robert, eds. *Fouilles d’Amyzon en Carie, I. Exploration, histoire, monnaies et inscriptions*. Paris: de Boccard, 1983.
- FCNT Feminist Companion to the New Testament and Early Christian Writings
- F.Delphes III,1* Bourguet, Émile, ed. *Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie, Fasc. 1, Inscriptions de l’entrée du sanctuaire au trésor des Athéniens*. Paris: de Boccard, 1929.
- F.Delphes III,2* Colin, Gaston, ed. *Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie, Fasc. 2, Inscriptions du trésor des Athéniens*. Paris: Fontemoing et Cie, 1909–1913.
- F.Delphes III,3* Daux, Georges and Antoine Salac, eds. *Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie, Fasc. 3, Inscriptions depuis le trésor des Athéniens jusqu’aux bases de Gélon*. 2 vols. Paris: de Boccard, 1932–1943.
- F.Delphes III,4* Colin, Gaston, et al, eds. *Fouilles de Delphes, III. Épigraphie, Fasc. 4, Inscriptions de la terrasse du temple et la région nord du sanctuaire*. 4 vols. Paris: de Boccard, 1930–1976.
- FiloNT* *Filologia Neotestamentaria*
- FSBP Fontes et subsidia ad Bibliam pertinentes
- GIBM* Newton, C. T., ed. *The Collection of Ancient Greek Inscriptions in the British Museum*. 4 vols. Oxford: Clarendon, 1874–1916.
- GTJ* *Grace Theological Journal*
- HALOT Koehler, Ludwig, Walter Baumgartner, and Johann Stamm, eds. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Translated and ed-

- ited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden: Brill, 1994–2000.
- HCNT Hand-Commentar zum Neuen Testament
- HCSB Holman Christian Standard Bible
- HSNT Die heilige Schrift neuen Testaments
- I.Ankara* Mitchell, Stephen, and David French, eds. *The Greek and Latin Inscriptions of Ankara (Ancyra)*, vol. 1: *From Augustus to the End of the Third Century AD*. Vestigia 62. Munich: Beck, 2012.
- I.Aph2007* Reynolds, Joyce, Charlotte Roueché, and Gabriel Bodard, eds. *Inscriptions of Aphrodisias (2007)*, available <<http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007>>.
- I.Apollonia* Cabanes, Pierre and Neritan Ceka. *Corpus des inscriptions grecques d'Illyrie méridionale et d'Épire 1. Inscriptions d'Épidamne-Dyrrhachion et d'Apollonia*, vol. 2: *Inscriptions d'Apollonia d'Illyrie. Études épigraphiques 2*. Athens: Fondation D. et E. Botsaris/Ecole française d'Athènes 1997.
- I.Asklepieion* Peek, Werner, ed. *Inchriften aus dem Asklepieion von Epidauros*. Abhandlungen der Sächsischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Leipzig, Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Band 60, Heft 2. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1969.
- I.Assos* Merkelbach, Reinhold, ed. *Die Inschriften von Assos*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 4. Bonn: Habelt, 1976.
- I.Byzantion* Łajtar, Adam, ed. *Die Inschriften von Byzantion*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 58. Bonn: Habelt, 2000.
- I.Cos* Paton, William R. and Edward L. Hicks, eds. *The Inscriptions of Cos*. Oxford: Clarendon, 1891. Repr. Hildesheim/New York: G. Olms, 1990.
- I.Délos* Durrbach, Félix, et al, eds. *Inscriptions de Délos*. 7 vols. Paris: Champion, 1926–1972.
- I.Ephesos* Wankel, Hermann, et al., eds. *Die Inschriften von Ephesos*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 11.1–17.4. 8 vols. Bonn: Habelt, 1979–84.
- I.Erythrai* Engelmann, Helmut and Reinhold Merkelbach, eds. *Die Inschriften von Erythrai und Klazomenai*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 1. Bonn: Habelt, 1972.
- IG II<sup>2</sup>* Kirchner, Johannes, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae II et III: Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno posteriores*. Parts I–III, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: Reimer, 1913–1940.
- IG IV<sup>2</sup>,1* von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae, IV. Inscriptiones Argolidis*. Fasc. 1, *Inscriptiones Epidauri*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1929.
- IG V,1* Kolbe, Walter, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae, V,1. Inscriptiones Laconiae et Messeniae*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1913.
- IG V,2* von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae, V,2. Inscriptiones Arcadiae*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1913.
- IG IX,1* Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae IX,1. Inscriptiones Phocidis, Locridis, Aetoliae, Acarnaniae, insularum maris Ionii*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1897.



- IG IX,1<sup>2</sup>.2 Klaffenbach, Günther, and Klaus Hallof, eds. *Inscriptiones Graecae IX, Inscriptiones Graeciae septentrionalis voluminibus VII et VIII non comprehensae*. Pars I, *Inscriptiones Phocidis Locridis Aetoliae Acarnaniae insularum maris Ionii*. Fasc. II: *Inscriptiones Acarnaniae*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957.
- IG IX,1<sup>2</sup>.4 Klaffenbach, Günther, and Klaus Hallof, eds. *Inscriptiones Graecae IX, Inscriptiones Graeciae septentrionalis voluminibus VII et VIII non comprehensae*. Pars I, *Inscriptiones Phocidis Locridis Aetoliae Acarnaniae insularum maris Ionii*. Fasc. IV: *Inscriptiones insularum maris Ionii*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2001.
- IG IX,2 Kern, Otto, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae*, IX,2. *Inscriptiones Thessaliae*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1908.
- IG X,2.1 Edson, Charles F., ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae*, X. *Inscriptiones Epiri, Macedoniae, Thraciae, Scythiae*. Pars II, fasc. 1: *Inscriptiones Thessalonicae et Vicinae*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1972.
- IG XI Dürrbach, Felix, and Pierre Roussel, eds. *Inscriptiones Graecae XI. Inscriptiones Deli*. 4 vols. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1912–27.
- IG XII,3 von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae*, XII. *Inscriptiones insularum maris Aegaei praeter Delum*, 3. *Inscriptiones Symes, Teutlussae, Teli, Nisyri, Astypalaeae, Anaphes, Therae et Therasiae, Pholegandri, Meli, Cimoli*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1898.
- IG XII,5 von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae XII,5. Inscriptiones Cycladum*. 2 vols. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1903–1909.
- IG XII,7 Delamarre, Jules, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae XII,7. Inscriptiones Amorgi et insularum vicinarum*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1908.
- IG XII,9 Ziebarth, Erich, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae XII,9. Inscriptiones Euboeae insulae*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1915.
- IG XII,Sup. von Gaertringen, Friedrich Hiller, ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae XII. Supplementum*. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1939.
- IGBulg I<sup>2</sup> Michajlov, Georgi I., ed. *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae*, vol. 1: *Inscriptiones orae Ponti Euxini*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Serdicae: Academiae Litterarum Bulgaricae, 1970.
- IGLPalermo Manni Piraino, Maria T., ed. *Iscrizioni greche lapidarie del Museo di Palermo*. Sikelika, Serie Storica 6. Palermo: Flaccovio, 1973.
- IGR Cagnat, René, et al., eds. *Inscriptiones graecae ad res romanas pertinentes*. 4 vols. Paris: Leroux, 1906–1927.
- IGUR Moretti, Luigi, ed. *Inscriptiones graecae urbis Romae*. 4 vols. in 5 parts. Rome: Istituto Italiano per la storia antica, 1968–1990.
- I.Halicarnassus Cousin, Georges and Charles Diehl. “Inscriptions d’Halicarnasse,” *Bulletin de correspondance hellénique* 14 (1890) 90–121.
- I.Heraclea Jonnes, Lloyd, ed. *The Inscriptions of Heraclea Pontica*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 47. Bonn: Habelt, 1994.
- I.Hierapolis Judeich, Walther, ed. “Inschriften.” Pages 67–202 in *Altertümer von Hierapolis*. Edited by Carl Humann, et al. Jahrbuch des Kaiserlich Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Ergänzungsheft 4. Berlin: G. Reimer, 1898.
- I.Iasos Blümel, Wolfgang, ed. *Die Inschriften von Iasos*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 28.1–2. 2 vols. Bonn: Habelt, 1985.

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- I.KPolis* Becker-Bertau, Friedrich, ed. *Die Inschriften von Klaudiu Polis*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 31. Bonn: Habelt, 1986.
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- I.Labraunda* Crampa, Jonas, ed. *Labraunda. Swedish Excavations and Researches, III: Greek Inscriptions*. Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institutet i Athen 4–5. 2 vols. Lund/Stockholm: Svenska Institut i Athen, 1969–1972.
- ILAlg I* Gsell, Stéphane, and Hans-Georg Pflaum, and Louis Leschi, eds. *Inscriptions latines de l'Algérie, 1: Inscriptions de la proconsulaire*. Paris: Champion, 1922.
- I.Lampsakos* Frisch, Peter, ed. *Die Inschriften von Lampsakos*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 6. Bonn: Habelt, 1978.
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- I.MagSip* Ihnken, Thomas, ed. *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Sipylos, mit einem Kommentar zum Sympolitievertrag mit Smyrna*. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 8. Bonn: Habelt, 1978.
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- I.Olympia* Dittenberger, Willhelm, and Karl Purgold, eds. *Die Inschriften von Olympia*. Olympia 5. Berlin: Asher, 1896.
- IosPE I<sup>2</sup>* Latyshev, Basilius [Vasilii], ed. *Inscriptiones antiquae orae septentrionalis Ponti Euxini graecae et latinae*, vol. 1: *Inscriptiones Tyriae, Ol-*

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- I.Perge* Şahin, Sencer, ed. *Die Inschriften von Perge*. *Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien* 54. Bonn: Habelt, 1999.
- I.Perge (EA)* Merkelbach, Reinhold and Sencer Şahin. “Die publizierten Inschriften von Perge.” *Epigraphica Anatolica* 11 (1988) 97–170.
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- I.ScM I* Pippidi, Dionisie M., ed. *Inscriptiones Daciae et Scythiae Minoris antiquae. Series altera: Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris graecae et latinae*. vol. 1. *Inscriptiones Histriae et vicinia*. Bucharest: Editura Academiei Republicii Socialiste România, 1983.
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- JGRChJ* *Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism*
- JIGRE* Horbury, William, and David Noy, eds. *Jewish Inscriptions of Graeco-Roman Egypt, with an Index of the Jewish Inscriptions of Egypt and Cyrenaica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.
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- JRASup Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement Series
- JSHJ* *Journal for the Study of the Historical Jesus*
- KEHNT Kurzgefasstes exegetisches Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
- LPS Library of Pauline Studies
- LW Le Bas, Philippe, and William Henry Waddington, eds. *Voyage archéologique en Grèce et en Asie Mineure. fait par ordre du gouvernement français pendant les années 1843 et 1844, Tome III, 5ème partie: Inscriptions grecques et latines recueillies en Grèce et en Asie Mineure*. Paris: Firmin Didot, 1870.
- MAMA* Keil, Josef, et al., eds. *Monumenta Asiae minoris antiqua*. Journal of Roman Studies Monographs. 10 vols. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1928–.
- Michel Michel, Charles, ed. *Recueil d'inscriptions grecques*. Paris: Brussels: Lamertin, 1900.
- MNTS McMaster New Testament Studies
- MTS Marburger theologische Studien
- NABPRSSS National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion, Special Studies Series
- NET New English Translation
- NIDNTT* Brown, Colin, ed. *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975–78.
- NRSV New Revised Standard Version
- NTM New Testament Message
- O.Berenike II Bagnall, Roger S., et al, eds. *Documents from Berenike, vol. 2: Texts from the 1999–2001 Seasons*. Papyrologica Bruxellensia 33. Bruxelles: Association Égyptologique Reine Élisabeth 2005.
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- OTM Oxford Theological Monographs
- O.WadiHamm. Kayer, F., ed. "Nouveaux textes grecs du Ouadi Hammamat." *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik* 98 (1993) 111–156.
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- PGM Preisendanz, Karl, et al., eds. *Papyri Graecae Magicae: Die griechischen Zauberpapyri*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Sammlung wissenschaftlicher Commentare. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1973–1974.
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- PNTC Pillar New Testament Commentary
- P.Oxy. Grenfell, Bernard P., et al., eds. *The Oxyrhynchus Papyri*. 72 vols. London: Egypt Exploration Society, 1898–.
- P.Princ. III Johnson, Allan C. and Sidney P. Goodrich, eds. *Papyri in the Princeton University Collections*. Princeton University Studies in Papyrology 4. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1942.
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- RMR Fink, Robert O., ed., *Roman Military Records on Papyrus*. *Philological Monographs* 26. Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University, 1971.
- RSV Revised Standard Version
- SB Preisigke, Friedrich, et al, eds. *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1915–.
- SBG Studies in Biblical Greek
- SEG Roussel, Pierre, et al., eds. *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*. Lugduni Batanorum: Sijthoff, 1923–.
- SGDI Collitz, Hermann, et al, eds. *Sammlung der griechischen Dialekt-Inschriften*. 4 vols. in 7. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1884–1915.
- SIG<sup>3</sup> Dittenberger, Wilhelm, ed. *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 4 vols. Leipzig: Apud S. Hirzelium, 1915–1924. Reprinted by Hildesheim/New York: G. Olms, 1982.

SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
<i>Studia Pontica</i> III	Anderson, J. G. C., Franz Cumont and Henri Grégoire, eds. <i>Studia Pontica</i> , III. <i>Recueil des inscriptions grecques et latines du Pont et de l'Arménie</i> . Brussels: Lamertin 1910.
TAM II	Kalinka, Ernst, ed. <i>Tituli Lyciae linguis Graeca et Latina conscripti</i> . 3 vols. Vienna: Alfredi Hoelder, 1920–1944.
TANZ	Texte und Arbeiten zum neutestamentlichen Zeitalter
TDNT	Kittel, Gerhard, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds. <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Translated by Geoffrey Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964–76.
<i>Tit. Cal.</i>	Segre, Mario. “Tituli Calymnii.” <i>Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente</i> 22–23 (1944–45 [1952]) 1–248.
<i>Tit. Cam.</i>	Segre, Mario and Giovanni Pugliese Carratelli. “Tituli Camirenses.” <i>Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente</i> 27–29 (1949–51) 141–318.
TLNT	Spicq, Ceslas. <i>Theological Lexicon of the New Testament</i> . Translated and edited by James D. Ernest. 3 vols. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994.
TSR	Texts and Studies in Religion
<i>T. Vindon.</i>	Speidel, M. Alexander, ed. <i>Die römischen Schreibräfen von Vindonissa: Lateinische Texte des militärischen Alltags und ihre geschichtliche Bedeutung</i> . Veröffentlichungen der Gesellschaft Pro Vindonissa 12. Brugg: Gesellschaft Pro Vindonissa, 1996.
WAS	Wiener alttestamentliche Studien
WGRWSup	Writings from the Greco-Roman World Supplement Series
WS	Wuppertaler Studienbibel

PART ONE

A New Perspective on Good Works





## CHAPTER ONE

### Introduction

One of the central themes in the epistle of 1 Peter is the notion of “good works”/“doing good.” The letter includes a number of passages which describe the conduct of the readers using the adjectives *ἀγαθός* or *καλός* or some derivative (nominal or verbal) form. On two separate occasions, the audience is told to maintain “good conduct” among the Gentiles (2.12 [τὴν ἀναστροφὴν . . . καλήν]; 3.16 [τὴν ἀγαθὴν . . . ἀναστροφὴν]). They are similarly enjoined to practice “good works” (*καλῶν ἔργων* [2.12]) and to “do good” (*ποιησάτω ἀγαθόν* [3.11]). Throughout 1 Peter, the author repeatedly draws from the *ἀγαθο*-word group (*ἀγαθοποιός* [2.14]; *ἀγαθοποιέω* [2.15, 20; 3.6, 17]; *ἀγαθοποιῆα* [4.19]).<sup>1</sup> The letter makes reference to this idea no less than eleven times in just five brief chapters, and it would appear that the author intends the strategy to be one of the primary responses to the conflict in which his readers are engaged.<sup>2</sup> Because of its prominence in the overall message of 1 Peter, the good works motif plays an important role in modern reconstructions of the epistle’s social strategy. This means that a proper diagnosis of the author’s goals and objectives is largely determined by the accuracy with which this important theme is understood.

#### A. Modern Consensus of Good Works in 1 Peter

What is striking – especially considering how divisive other interpretive questions have been – is the broad agreement which Petrine scholars have reached concerning the meaning and function of the good works motif. Within modern scholarship, the interpretation of this theme has remained nearly uniform for the past century. The modern consensus on good works in 1 Peter is grounded on the premise that “doing good” involved acts which were approved by Greco-Roman society. According to proponents of this popular opinion, the author of 1 Peter subscribes to the idea that the “Christian lifestyle should, to whatever extent possible, be characterized by a

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<sup>1</sup> Although there is variation in the specific terminology and forms employed, all of these references focus on a particular kind or quality of behavior, which the author labels as “good.” This concentration represents what we will describe as the letter’s good works motif/theme.

<sup>2</sup> The nature of the conflict situation represented in 1 Peter is discussed in Travis B. Williams, *Persecution in 1 Peter: Differentiating and Contextualizing Early Christian Suffering* (NovTSup 145; Leiden: Brill, 2012).

way of life that even pagans could recognize as good.”<sup>3</sup> As a result, he admonishes his readers to begin to undertake good works. Rather than simple pietistic deeds undertaken according to a Christian standard,<sup>4</sup> these good works are thought to be acts that were favorably acknowledged by “pagan” society.<sup>5</sup>

The interpretive basis for this conclusion is twofold. First, the positive acknowledgement of these good deeds is grounded in the use of popular Hellenistic terminology. It is on this basis, for instance, that Earl J. Richard argues,

[b]oth the terminology and style of [1 Pet 2.12] indicate that the conduct about which the author speaks is not only holy, reverent behavior but also deeds that are meant to be seen as honorable or beautiful. . . . [The author of 1 Peter] here twice employs the synonym *kalos* to insist that Christian behavior be both good and publicly acknowledged as such, specifically that it be deemed “beautiful or honorable” in the eyes of Gentile neighbors.<sup>6</sup>

The reason why such heavy stress is placed on the public recognition of these deeds is because, according to many commentators, “[t]he term *kalos* has an aesthetic as well as a moral connotation. It denotes conduct that is both morally just and aesthetically attractive, thus behavior that is in all senses worthy of honor.”<sup>7</sup> As such, many

<sup>3</sup> Karen H. Jobes, *1 Peter* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2005) 170. Cf. Peter H. Davids, *The First Epistle of Peter* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990) 96: “While good certainly does not stand over against holy in that Peter would never ask Christians to do that which was less than holy, [1 Pet] 2:14 shows that its focus is on virtues that the culture itself should approve.”

<sup>4</sup> I recognize that calling the Petrine readers “Christians,” given their historical location, might be technically anachronistic (see John H. Elliott, “Jesus the Israelite was Neither a ‘Jew’ nor a ‘Christian’: On Correcting Misleading Nomenclature,” *JSHJ* 5 [2007] 119–54). This designation is nonetheless employed throughout the work due to the fact that I am unconvinced that there is a better alternative. We might note that the author himself was moving in this direction when he attempted to transform the stigmatized title Χριστιανός (1 Pet 4.16) into a badge of honor that would be embraced by early Jesus-followers (see pp. 235–37).

<sup>5</sup> See John H. Elliott, *1 Peter: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 37B; New York: Doubleday, 2000) 469: “The adjective *kalos* in both instances [i.e., 2.12a and 2.12c] describes behavior that is good, just, and *honorable* in the sight of both God (cf. 1:17) and society” (original emphasis). Cf. David L. Balch, “Hellenization/Acculturation in 1 Peter,” in *Perspectives on First Peter* (ed. C. H. Talbert; NABPRSSS 9; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986) 79–101: “Contrary to a simple dualistic view, both Christians and pagans recognize good behavior (1 Pet. 2:12–15; 3:13–16)” (87; original emphasis).

<sup>6</sup> Earl J. Richard, *Reading 1 Peter, Jude, and 2 Peter: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys, 2000) 105–106. Cf. Pierre Prigent, *Suivre le Christ: Commentaire de la première épître de Pierre* (Lyon: Olivétan, 2006) 63: “on peut se demander si le choix de l’adjectif [καλός] n’est pas ici délibéré: les actions visées ne sont pas seulement bonnes, mais elles sont aussi reconnues comme telles.”

<sup>7</sup> Elliott, *1 Peter*, 466. Cf. Edward G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes, and Essays* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; London: Macmillan, 1947; repr. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1952) 170: “καλός and not ἀγαθός is the adjective used here [in 1 Pet 2.12], because it implies that the conduct in question not only is good, but also appears so. This point was of particular importance in a society which applied to the highest kind of human character the term καλός ἀγαθός, i.e. one whose intrinsic goodness is also beautiful in other’s eyes.” This classical distinction between καλός and ἀγαθός was pointed out by many older commentators, who noted that the former would have been recognized and respected (so, e.g., F. J. A. Hort, *The First Epistle of St. Peter 1.1–II.17: The Greek Text with Introductory Lecture, Commentary, and Additional Notes* [London: Macmill-

conclude that, “the choice of *καλός* (“good”) here links Christian ethics to the best of pagan culture to show that Christians are not a threat by reason of their standard of conduct.”<sup>8</sup>

The second piece of interpretive evidence used to support the notion that good works were favorably regarded by Greco-Roman society is the positive response which is expected from members of the general public. This interpretive deduction is most clearly seen in the treatment of Miroslav Volf. He begins by pointing out that “one of the central passages in 1 Peter entertains a lively hope that precisely the Christian difference – outwardly visible in their good deeds – will cause non-Christians to see the truth and eventually convert (2:12, 15; 3:1; 3:16).” On the basis of this favorable reaction, he concludes, “This expectation presupposes overlap between Christian and non-Christian constellations of values. The good works of Christians can be appreciated by non-Christians and look attractive to them.”<sup>9</sup> Thus, a positive response from outsiders reveals an acceptable pattern of behavior.

Given that these good deeds would have been favorably recognized by the wider civic community, most assume that the letter’s call to “do good” is therefore an admonition to behave in a manner which was consistent with popular, Hellenistic standards of conduct.<sup>10</sup> For it only seems natural that, “pour être appréciée des païens, la

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lan, 1898] 134–35; Jean Monnier, *La Première Épître de L’Apôtre Pierre* [Macon: Protat Frères, 1900] 111; George W. Blenkin, *The First Epistle General of Peter* [Cambridge Greek Testament for Schools and Colleges; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1914] 55; J. W. C. Wand, *The General Epistles of St. Peter and St. Jude* [WC; London: Methuen & Co., 1934] 74).

<sup>8</sup> Paul J. Achtemeier, *1 Peter: A Commentary on First Peter* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996) 177. Cf. J. de Waal Dryden, *Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter: Paraenetic Strategies for Christian Character Formation* (WUNT 2/209; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006) 132 n. 50: “The adjective *καλός* . . . points to recognizable goods in Greco-Roman culture.”

<sup>9</sup> Miroslav Volf, “Soft Difference: Reflections on the Relation Between Church and Culture in 1 Peter,” *ExAud* 10 (1994) 15–30 (25). Cf. Steven R. Bechtler, *Following in His Steps: Suffering, Community, and Christology in 1 Peter* (SBLDS 162; Atlanta: Scholars, 1998) 100, who argues that “doing good” means, “to behave in a manner that issues in commendation [from society] rather than censure, in honor rather than dishonor.”

<sup>10</sup> Some of the interpreters who have held to this view (since 1970) include: Max-Alain Chevalier, “Condition et vocation des chrétiens en diaspora. Remarques exégétiques sure la 1er épître de Pierre,” *RSR* 48 (1974) 387–98 (397); Fritz Neugebauer, “Zur Deutung und Bedeutung des 1. Petrusbriefes,” *NTS* 26 (1979) 61–86 (82–84); David L. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive: The Domestic Code in 1 Peter* (SBLMS 26; Atlanta: Scholars, 1981) 81–116; S. Légasse, “La Soumission aux Autorités d’après 1 Pierre 2.13–17: Version Spécifique d’une Parénèse Traditionnelle,” *NTS* 34 (1988) 378–96 (387–88); J. Ramsey Michaels, *1 Peter* (WBC 49; Waco, TX: Word, 1988) 117–18, 126, 132; Karl H. Schelkle, *Die Petrusbriefe, der Judasbrief* (6<sup>th</sup> ed.; HTKNT 13/2; Freiburg: Herder, 1988) 71–72; Davids, *First Epistle of Peter*, 96–98, 101; Ferdinand-Rupert Prostmeier, *Handlungsmodelle im ersten Petrusbrief* (FB 63; Würzburg: Echter, 1990) 389–92; Otto Knoch, *Der erste und zweite Petrusbrief. Der Judasbrief* (RNT; Regensburg: Friedrich Pustet, 1990) 73; Samuel Bénétreau, *La Première Épître de Pierre* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; CEB; Vaux-sur-Seine: Edifac, 1992) 188–90; Leonhard Goppelt, *A Commentary on 1 Peter* (trans. J. E. Alsup; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) 158–62, 177–79; Norbert Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.; EKKNT 21; Zürich/Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger/Neukirchener, 1993) 113–15, 120–21; Lauri Thurén, *Argument and Theology in 1 Peter: The Origins of Christian Paraenesis* (JSNTSup 114; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic,

conduite des chrétiens doit correspondre à une échelle des valeurs admise par les premiers.”<sup>11</sup> So, one might say that “this ‘good conduct’ is in substance no different from pagan, political and social morality,”<sup>12</sup> or one could describe the situation as “[t]he addressees . . . behav[ing] according to the Gentiles’ requirements.”<sup>13</sup> Either way, many believe that “the ethic developed in 1 P[eter], despite its use of Jewish sources, is just as close to the ‘bürgerliche Ethik’ of the Greeks as it is to that of the Jews. That is to say, 1 P[eter] does not portray a special ‘Christian’ ethic but encourages a truly human code of conduct.”<sup>14</sup>

Explaining *why* the good works in 1 Peter are, in many ways, similar to the ethical standards of Hellenistic society is the point at which modern commentators diverge. Within the pertinent literature, two explanations of this phenomenon appear with some regularity. One attempt to explain these similarities is through an overlap in ethical standards. As interpreters regularly note, “[a] some points Christian and secular valuations of behavior converge.”<sup>15</sup> Or, to put it another way, “Peter recog-

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1995) 135, 192–95; Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 176–78, 184–85; M. Eugene Boring, *1 Peter* (ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon, 1999) 113–14; Elliott, *1 Peter*, 466, 469; Richard, *Reading 1 Peter*, 105–108, 112–14; Thomas R. Schreiner, *1, 2, Peter, Jude* (NAC; Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2003) 121–23, 129; Donald P. Senior, “1 Peter,” in *1 Peter, Jude and 2 Peter* (SP 15; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 2003) 65–67, 72; Karl O. Sandnes, “Revised Conventions in Early Paraenesis – ‘Working Good’ in 1 Peter as an Example,” in *Early Christian Paraenesis in Context* (eds. J. Starr and T. Engberg-Pedersen; BZNW 125; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004) 373–403; Jobes, *1 Peter*, 174–76, 228; Dryden, *Theology and Ethics in 1 Peter*, 131–32; Prigent, *La première épître de Pierre*, 63; Reinhard Feldmeier, *The First Epistle of Peter: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (trans. P. H. Davids; Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2008) 188 n. 124; Paul A. Holloway, *Coping with Prejudice: 1 Peter in Social-Psychological Perspective* (WUNT 244; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009) 174–91; Lewis R. Donelson, *I & II Peter and Jude: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2010) 69–70; Jacques Schlosser, *La première épître de Pierre* (CBNT 21; Paris: Cerf, 2011) 147; Duane F. Watson, “First Peter,” in *First and Second Peter* (Paideia; Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012) 65; *et al.*

<sup>11</sup> Légasse, “La Soumission aux Autorités,” 388.

<sup>12</sup> Gordon M. Zerbe, *Non-Retaliatio in Early Jewish and New Testament Texts: Ethical Themes in Social Contexts* (JSPSup 13; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993) 275. Cf. Brox, *Der erste Petrusbrief*, 113 n. 376: “Das in V 12 zweimal verwendete *καλός* (gut) ist in der Umwelt ein geläufiger Terminus für das sittlich Gute und kann hier im 1Petr geradezu als Signal für die vorausgesetzte Übereinstimmung mit den Heiden in der ethischen Idealvorstellung gewertet werden.”

<sup>13</sup> Thurén, *Argument and Theology*, 135. Cf. Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, 92: “the ‘apology’ anticipated in 1 Pet 3:15 would assure outsiders that Christians would conform to the kind of behavior in the household demanded by society, i.e., demanded by masters, husbands, and governors.”

<sup>14</sup> John H. Elliott, *The Elect and the Holy: An Exegetical Examination of 1 Peter 2:4–10 and the Phrase Basileion Hierateuma* (NovTSup 12; Leiden: Brill, 1966) 182. Cf. Kathleen E. Corley, “1 Peter,” in *Searching the Scriptures*, vol. 2: *A Feminist Commentary* (ed. E. Schüssler Fiorenza; New York: Crossroad, 1994) 349–60: “The author of 1 Peter strives to bring the image of Christianity into accord with a Greco-Roman ideal” (352).

<sup>15</sup> John H. Elliott, “1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy: A Discussion with David Balch,” in *Perspectives on First Peter* (ed. C. H. Talbert; NABPRSS 9; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1986) 61–78 (66). Cf. Wilhelm Brandt, “Wandel als Zeugnis nach dem 1. Petrusbrief,” in *Verbum dei manet in aeternum: Eine Festschrift für Prof. D. Otto Schmitz zu seinem 70. Geburtstag am 16. Juni 1953* (ed. W. Foerster; Witten: Luther, 1953) 10–25: “Der Maßstab für das, was ‘gut’ ist, liegt

nizes that non-Christian values of his culture overlap in some ways with those of the Christian faith.<sup>16</sup> “The implication of this overlap,” according to Karen H. Jobes, “is that Peter does not seem to be thinking in binary categories that characterize society as evil and the Christian community as good. The apostle does not condemn all of the values and customs of first-century culture and society or advise complete withdrawal from it.”<sup>17</sup>

Despite the effort to bridge the gap between Christians and pagan society by focusing on the values which both shared in common, there were still certain limits which the author of 1 Peter was unwilling to cross. “The point the author impresses on his readers is that such authority and social orderings of relationships [i.e., the “good works” described in the household code] can be respected *insofar as* subordination to the will of God, the creator and ruler of all, is not compromised.”<sup>18</sup> So one might say, “[w]here civic and Christian good intersect, the Christian is to perform it; where they diverge, the Christian is to follow God’s will, not the emperor’s decrees.”<sup>19</sup>

A second way of explaining the similarities in ethical standards between believers and “pagan” society is through the social conformity of the Anatolian congregations. That is, “Christians had to conform to the expectations of Hellenistic-Roman society so that society would cease criticizing the new cult.”<sup>20</sup> Such a strategy, if it

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nicht im Menschen, nicht in der Beschaffenheit seiner Seele, nicht im Nutzen der *πόλις* oder der Menschheit, er liegt im Willen Gottes, dargelegt in seinem Wort. Andererseits muß dieser ‘gute’ Wandel auch nach den Maßstäben der Heiden sich als solcher aufweisen” (12)

<sup>16</sup> Jobes, *1 Peter*, 170–71. Cf. Feldmeier, *First Epistle of Peter*, 188 n. 124, who notes that at 1 Pet 2.14–15, “it is indeed assumed that concerning that which is ‘good,’ a consensus is possible between Christians and pagans,” and Schlosser, *La première épître de Pierre*, 147: “Est donc requise des chrétiens, dans ce contexte, non pas une éthique de la radicalité évangélique, mais une éthique de l’honnête homme . . . , des vertus que les chrétiens ont en commun avec la culture environnante.”

<sup>17</sup> Jobes, *1 Peter*, 170.

<sup>18</sup> Elliott, *1 Peter*, 502 (original emphasis). Cf. Davids, *First Epistle of Peter*, 97: “the following list of virtues [1 Pet 2.13–3.6] can be largely paralleled in pagan lists and in general exhorts Christians to be good citizens *as far as possible*” (emphasis added).

<sup>19</sup> Achtemeier, *1 Peter*, 185. Cf. Elliott, “1 Peter, Its Situation and Strategy,” 73: “But where Christians adherence to pagan values, customs, and moral standards would violate the will of God, and obscure the distinction between the respect due the emperor and the fear reserved for God alone (2:17); where retaliation sanctioned in society would betray the solidarity Christians have with their nonretaliating Lord (2:18–25; 3:9, 15–16); where exploitation of role and rank would deny humility, love, and mutual service owed by all believers to one another (1:22, 2:17, 4:8–11, 5:2–5) as ‘good household stewards of god’s varied grace’ (4:10–11); where continued association with nonbelievers and their sinful desires and futile ways (1:18; 2:11; 4:2–4) would contradict the reality of their conversion, their holy union with God and Jesus Christ and their incorporation into a new family united by a distinctive faith and hope (1:3–2:10); then in such instances when the distinctive identity, cohesion, and commitments of the brotherhood are at stake, the household of God is to manifest its distinctiveness through behavior consonant with the will of God and through social disengagement, nonconformity, and resistance.”

<sup>20</sup> Balch, *Let Wives Be Submissive*, 88. Cf. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* (New York: Crossroad, 1983) 261: “for