

## Article

# What Justification? Pauline Reception and the Interpretation of *Phld.* 8.2

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**Abstract:** While studies of how Paul and the Pauline letters were received in early Christianity continue to appear at an ever-quickenning rate, there are still corners of early Christian literature that remain underexplored with regard to Pauline reception. The letters of Ignatius of Antioch would not usually be included in the underexplored category, but this article argues that one statement within Ignatius's letters is deserving of more careful attention vis-à-vis its relationship to Pauline themes and terminology. After showing that interpretations of Ignatius's *Philadelphians* (*Phld.*) 8.2 have typically run along two opposing tracks, the article argues that both ways of interpreting Ignatius's letter fail to do justice to his rhetoric in the letter. The article proposes an alternative way of reading Ignatius's justification language in *Phld.* 8.2. Whereas Paul wrote about justification before God, Ignatius desires to be proven right in the eyes of his Philadelphian readers, with whom he has had a dispute. The article concludes by offering ways to account for the different meanings evidenced in the letters of Ignatius and Paul while also endeavouring to explain the purpose for which Ignatius employs terminology that is similar to that of Paul. In the final clause of *Phld.* 8.2, Pauline terminology provides Ignatius not with his doctrinal substance but rather with authoritative rhetoric that evokes the Apostle.

**Keywords:** Ignatius of Antioch; justification; *letter to the Philadelphians*; Paul; Pauline reception; reception history



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## 1. Introduction

The study of Pauline reception in early Christianity has exploded since the 1970s and has only continued to expand in the last decade. The trajectories along which these reception–historical studies have traced Paul's influence have been well documented in recent years and need not be rehearsed in full. From the ground-breaking works of Ernst Dassmann (1979), Andreas Lindemann (1979), Donald Penny (1979), and David Rensberger (1981), to the increasingly nuanced distinctions between the receptions of Paul's person, letters, and teaching (Marguerat 2008), and into recent explorations of how the Apostle was transformed or remembered (White 2014; Yarbrow Collins 2022), the field of reception history has developed quickly and with growing complexity when it comes to Paul.<sup>1</sup> In his programmatic chapter on the reception of Paul in the second century, Lindemann (2018) rightly highlights that various receptions of Paul are evident across a wide geographical swath of the second-century Christian world.<sup>2</sup> As a result, “das Thema findet also erfreulicherweise kein Ende” (Lindemann 2018, p. 30). The letters of Ignatius play an important role in studies of how Paul was received in the second century. Annette Merz (2004) and Michael Theobald (2016) argue in different ways that the Pastoral Epistles influenced the composition of Ignatius's letters, while Alexander Kirk (2015, pp. 74–87) has observed Ignatius's view of Paul as someone who ascended to God through his death. Enrico Norelli's (2018) essay in the same volume as Lindemann's chapter focuses on the question of how Ignatius used Paul rather than on questions concerning which passages or how many times Ignatius may have referred to Paul. Norelli and others have pushed

reception–historical studies of Paul in Ignatius’s epistles to glimpse the phenomenon from exciting, albeit ever more nuanced, vistas. Despite these advances in Pauline scholarship generally and Ignatius’s reception of Paul in particular, there are still dark corners of Ignatius’s reception of Paul that remain in need of new light. The question of how Ignatius employs Paul’s language is a particular desideratum in such passages.

This article argues that *Phld.* 8.2 provides an example of such a passage in Ignatius’s letters that necessitates a fresh look at how Paul is utilised.<sup>3</sup> Ignatius’s language in this passage has created no shortage of controversy concerning both the nature of the Judaism that he so strongly disavows as well as the quality of his attempt to follow in Paul’s footsteps in both suffering and letter writing. With regard to the former, Ignatius recounts a controversy that broke out during his time with the Philadelphians and that he characterises as having something to do with Judaism (*Phld.* 6.1).<sup>4</sup> Much of the dispute appears to centre around the relationship between the archives and the gospel. While his opponents look for the gospel within the archives, Ignatius insists that the archives have been redefined in Jesus’s cross, death, and resurrection, as well as in the faith that comes through him (*Phld.* 8.2). This portion of the letter not only aids readers in understanding what Ignatius found so problematic about Ἰουδαϊσμός but also in reconstructing his understanding of Jewish scripture in the aftermath of his controversial encounter with some of those in Philadelphia.<sup>5</sup> *Phld.* 8.2 has also played a role in determining how Ignatius might be theologically related to Paul. The christocentric quality of Ignatius’s argument and his focus on Jesus’s death and resurrection, as well as the references to faith and justification, have led Ignatius’s interpreters to compare *Phld.* 8.2 to Paul’s language and argumentative style.<sup>6</sup>

The aim of this article is to take up one clause in *Phld.* 8.2 that suffers from a scholarly tendency to interpret it with Paul in view. More precisely, the clause ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι tends to be interpreted with Paul too closely in focus. While Ignatius’s words are reminiscent of Paul, this study attempts to reposition Ignatius’s words in two ways. First, it places *Phld.* 8.2 within the argument of *Philadelphians* by arguing that Ignatius’s justification language is best understood with reference to a different audience than Ignatian scholarship has traditionally recognised. Rather than hoping for justification before God, Ignatius writes in *Phld.* 8.2 with the hope of being justified before believers in Philadelphia. Second, the article repositions Ignatius’s language in light of recent interests in the field of New Testament Studies regarding *how* Paul was used rather than *that* Paul was used. Instead of focusing solely on whether Ignatius used Paul in *Phld.* 8.2 or evaluating Ignatius’s usage as a good or bad interpretation of Paul, this article explores the way in which Pauline language functions within Ign *Phld.* 8.2. Pauline terminology provides Ignatius with authoritative language at a key point in his polemic against “Judaism”.

In order to accomplish these dual aims, the article begins by engaging in a ground-clearing mission that observes how Paul has been seen in the background not only of the language of *Phld.* 8.2 but also of the interpretation of how Ignatius’s language is understood within the letter. It then questions the foundations upon which the interpretation of Ignatius’s language in Pauline terms have been constructed. By clearing away faulty foundations, the article is able to provide an alternative interpretation of *Phld.* 8.2 that aims to make better sense of both the entire argument in *Philadelphians* and the grammar of *Phld.* 8.2. The final section then reflects on the significance of this interpretation in understanding how Ignatius employs Pauline terminology.

## 2. Interpretations of *Phld.* 8.2 with Reference to Paul

Before entering discussions about how *Phld.* 8.2 has been understood with reference to Paul, it is useful to bear two things in mind when considering Ignatius’s letters more broadly. First, the date and authenticity of Ignatius’s letters are in the process of being freshly re-evaluated, a process that has been ongoing in its current instantiation since the late 1990s. These disputes provide a healthy chance to consider the place of the Ignatian corpus within the second century. However, since the Pauline material that Ignatius would have utilised stems from Pauline letters that were composed in the middle of the first

century, questions about precisely when and how the Ignatian letters were written can be left to one side for this article. Knowledge of at least some Pauline letters could have been available to Ignatius whether his letters were genuinely written during the time of Trajan, composed by a forger at the end of the second century, or were written some time in between.<sup>7</sup> A second matter to note is that Ignatius clearly admires Paul in his letters. He contrasts his lowly state as a man condemned to die with the apostolic freedom of both Peter and Paul (*Rom.* 4.3). He lauds the Ephesians as “fellow-initiates” (συμμύσται) of Paul and upholds the Apostle as someone who has been sanctified and proven and in whose steps Ignatius desires to follow (*Eph.* 12.2). Ignatius thus has great admiration for Paul in general, whatever one may say about his employment of Pauline language in a particular passage.<sup>8</sup>

Turning to *Phld.* 8.2 and the discussion of justification therein, an important strand of scholarship on early Christianity understands Ignatius to be speaking ineptly about Pauline justification. For example, Rudolf Bultmann and Thomas Torrance concur that Ignatius’s language at the end of *Phld.* 8.2 is a reworking of Paul’s terminology, but they both evaluate Ignatius’s understanding of Paul negatively. Bultmann argues that the Pauline understanding of sin is absent from Ignatius’s letters; thus, the latter’s understanding of justification is consequently compromised (Bultmann 1953, pp. 40–43). Torrance maintains that Ignatius’s use of justification is hindered by his misunderstanding of the Pauline doctrine of grace (Torrance 1948, pp. 67–70). Johannes Kleivinghaus likewise argues for a meaning of justification that stands over and against Paul. When Kleivinghaus reads ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι (*Phld.* 8.2), he understands justification with reference to Ignatius’s martyrdom (Kleivinghaus 1948, p. 102, n. 2). An earlier example can be found in Eduard von der Goltz, who attributes Ignatius’s failure to understand sin, repentance, forgiveness, and justification to “die einfache Folge jener völligen Trennung von Paulus” (Goltz 1894, p. 166). He views Ignatius’s departure from Paul as part of a broader slide toward Hellenism. These scholars share a belief that Ignatius’s language about justification is directly patterned after Paul. However, they argue that Ignatius has altered, misunderstood, or otherwise departed from Paul’s understanding of justification by faith. While not everyone believes that Ignatius’s failure is part of a deterioration into Hellenism, they share theological convictions that *Phld.* 8.2 moves away from Paul’s belief in justification and is to be critiqued on account of it.

Conversely, several recent studies of Ignatius’s letters have highlighted similarities between *Phld.* 8.2 and Paul’s arguments regarding justification. Brian Arnold’s (2017) study of justification in the second century, for example, acknowledges that justification is not central to Ignatius’s arguments. However, “he does speak of justification by faith” with the result that Ignatius thought himself to be in alignment with Paul’s teaching about the gospel (Arnold 2017, p. 76). Matthew Thomas finds that Ignatius’s use of δικαιωθῆναι has “interesting parallels” with Paul in Gal 2 and Rom 3 (Thomas 2018, pp. 98–99), while Gregory Vall critiques Torrance’s reading of Ignatius and Paul by noting that Ignatius’s letters indicate “that he had given serious thought, not only to the relationship between faith and love, but to the place of ‘works’ within the whole structure of redemption” (Vall 2013, p. 196).<sup>9</sup> Such views are not without precedent in the history of Ignatian scholarship.<sup>10</sup> Virginia Corwin, for example, argued that Ignatius shares a belief with Paul that salvation comes through Christ and is thus a result of Jesus’s work (Corwin 1960, p. 239). However, she noted that Ignatius speaks about salvation in ways that are broader than Paul. Ignatius prefers terms like grace and life to justification (Corwin 1960, pp. 160–69).<sup>11</sup> Corwin may acknowledge a greater distance between Ignatius and Paul concerning justification language, but she shares with recent studies a belief that Paul and Ignatius largely agree about the nature of Jesus’s death and resurrection. This tendency in scholarship concerning *Phld.* 8.2 is part of a larger trend that rightly connects Ignatius to Paul insofar as both depict salvation as a divinely initiated and divinely oriented work of God on behalf of human beings.

Good reasons underlie the belief that there are similarities between the ways in which Paul and Ignatius think about divine action on behalf of human beings. Although it will become clear as the article continues that I think the justification terminology of *Phld.* 8.2 differs somewhat from Paul's justification language, these reasons make it possible for Ignatian scholarship to evaluate Ignatius's justification language alongside Paul's earlier terminology. For example, a key reason for understanding *Phld.* 8.2 alongside Pauline justification may be found when one observes the presence of prominent Pauline motifs in the context of Ignatius's Philadelphian polemic (Thomas 2018, pp. 98–99).<sup>12</sup> As Paul's arguments regarding justification in Rom 3 and Gal 2 occur within a debate about the role of the Torah in the lives of first-century Jesus followers,<sup>13</sup> so Ignatius's reference to justification is placed within an extended argument about the boundaries between Christianity and Judaism (Lieu 2004, pp. 134–35; Murray 2004, pp. 87–91). While it is unclear how significant a role circumcision played in the Philadelphian dispute,<sup>14</sup> Ignatius's reference to circumcision may also be due to Pauline influence (*Phld.* 6.1; see further Niebuhr 1994, pp. 229–30). Ignatius emphasises the events accomplished by Jesus over and against the archives (*Phld.* 8.2).<sup>15</sup> At the centre of Ignatius's portrayal of Jesus is the cross, death, and resurrection (Lindemann 1979, p. 221; 1990, p. 39; 2005, p. 23). Such a way of speaking about Jesus is also found in the Pauline letters.<sup>16</sup> Finally, Ignatius refers to "the faith that comes through him" (ἡ πίστις ἣ δι' αὐτοῦ), in which the antecedent of the personal pronoun is Jesus Christ. Paul likewise speaks about faith in connection with justification.<sup>17</sup> These terminological similarities provide important foundations upon which comparisons of Ignatius's conception of justification with that of Paul may be constructed.

Yet, not everyone holds that Ignatius is talking about justification in ways that show either understanding of Paul's teaching or a lack thereof. A third option exists but has been left underexplored. In his Habilitationsschrift, Lindemann states his position clearly: "Ignatius hat die paulinische Rechtfertigungslehre offenbar überhaupt nicht angenommen" (Lindemann 1979, p. 217). When Ignatius writes ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι (*Phld.* 8.2), he does not allow the doctrine of justification to come into focus, but his terms operate in the vicinity of Pauline terminology (Lindemann 1979, p. 213). For Lindemann, it is possible for Ignatius to be indebted to Pauline language and to use that language in a way that neither demonstrates agreement nor shows misunderstanding but simply stands apart as different from that of the Apostle whom he admires. Although Lindemann finds similarities in the vocabulary between *Phld.* 8.2 and the Pauline letters, he does not press further. Instead, he notes that "eine genaue theologische Analyse dieser Aussage ist letztlich unmöglich" (Lindemann 1979, p. 217). Section 4 of this article may not engage in a precise theological analysis, but it endeavours to read Ignatius's prepositional phrase at the end of *Phld.* 8.2 in a way that coheres with both the dispute that Ignatius describes and the broader rhetorical aims of the letter. Lindemann's belief that Ignatius both employs Pauline terminology and refers to justification in a way that is only loosely related to Paul, rather than being pro-Pauline or anti-Pauline, serves as a key point of departure for this interpretation.

### 3. Questioning Pauline Reception in *Phld.* 8.2

Before offering a reading of *Phld.* 8.2, however, it will be helpful to probe the foundations upon which so many readers of Ignatius have built their arguments that Ignatius is directly echoing Pauline justification by faith, whether for good or ill. Despite the terminological similarities between Pauline and Ignatian language in *Phld.* 8.2, four observations result in questions regarding how one understands Ignatius's use of δικαιώω when writing to the Philadelphians.

First, scholarship on *Phld.* 8.2 has tended to assume that Ignatius's use of δικαιώω should be read as being analogous to Paul's use of the term in Romans, Galatians, and Philippians. Although there are similar terms and circumstances found in Paul's letters and in *Phld.* 8.2 that may suggest Ignatius is employing a Pauline argumentative style in a new context, the assumption that Ignatius means the same thing as Paul should be freshly tested.

Ignatius employs the verb *δικαιῶ* only in *Rom.* 5.1 and *Phld.* 8.2, but it would be wrong to assume that his *δίκαιος* terminology must always be utilised in a Pauline manner.<sup>18</sup> For example, Ignatius speaks of Jesus's baptism by John in terms that are reminiscent of Matthew when he insists to the Smyrnaeans that the purpose of Jesus's baptism was so that "all righteousness" (*πᾶσα δικαιοσύνη*) could be fulfilled (*Smyrn.* 1.1; see Matt 3:15).<sup>19</sup> Whatever Ignatius may mean when writing to the Smyrnaeans, his understanding of righteousness appears to go beyond what Paul describes with the term in passages like Rom 1:17; 3:21–26; 5:21; Gal 2:21; 3:6; and Phil 3:9. In light of the flexibility with which Hellenistic authors could employ the verb *δικαιῶ*, readings of Ignatius's letters that do not map neatly onto a Pauline idiolect remain worthy of consideration even when there is an overlap between Pauline and Ignatian terminology.

Second, the belief that faith and justification language must be interpreted in a Pauline tenor when they appear in close proximity is a point that has been largely assumed by Ignatian scholarship but that needs to be further examined. At this point, it would be good for readers of Ignatius who compare Ignatius to Paul to state more openly how they read Paul. From my reading, it appears that much of Ignatian scholarship has operated with an understanding of Paul that is indebted to what might now be called a traditional or an Old Perspective view of Paul in which faith is understood to be the response of believers to the justifying work of Jesus Christ.<sup>20</sup> Since this article is focused on Ignatius, it is not necessary to rehearse or adjudicate these debates about Pauline interpretation. Rather, it is important to show how they have played a role in understanding *Phld.* 8.2. Perceiving faith as the believer's response to Jesus and finding such an understanding of faith to be lacking in Ignatius, Bultmann faults Ignatius's use of justification terminology because it fails to recognise Paul's "heilsgeschichtliche Betrachtung" (Bultmann 1953, p. 41). Bultmann's reading of Ignatius as lacking something in comparison to Paul comes from his understanding of faith as a response to the salvation–historical work of God in Christ and his concomitant failure to find anything comparable in *Phld.* 8.2. Arnold, on the other hand, views Ignatius as a better reader of Paul regarding justification. Yet, he likewise perceives faith as something undertaken by believers. "Faith, then, is an aspect of the 'unalterable archives' that comes through Jesus Christ. In this verse faith is the response to the Gospel, and it is faith in the person and work of Christ that results in his justification" (Arnold 2017, pp. 61–62).

The tacit assumption that faith and justification language must be interpreted in a Pauline tenor when they appear in close proximity to each other enables readers of Ignatius's letters to miss the nuance with which he employs *πίστις* language in *Phld.* 8.2. Ferdinando Bergamelli has rightly pointed out that Ignatius's description of "the faith that comes through him (Jesus)" (*ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ*) is a faith that is mediated from God through Jesus's active mediation. Jesus's role in mediating faith is in keeping with his role as the active agent in the events of his life summarised by Ignatius's references in *Phld.* 8.2 to his cross, death, and resurrection (Bergamelli 2004, pp. 652–57). Such an interpretation may parallel readings of Pauline passages in which the genitive phrase *πίστις Χριστοῦ* is labelled as a subjective genitive. On such readings of Paul's letters, the genitive phrase would refer to Christ's demonstration of faithfulness.<sup>21</sup> Admittedly, as Teresa Morgan (2015), Morna Hooker (2016), and Peter Oakes (2018) have argued in recent years, it may not be necessary to make a strict selection between subjective and objective interpretations of this phrase in Paul. The same may also be true of Ignatius. Nevertheless, the hermeneutical significance of Ignatius's potentially multivalent nominal phrase is rarely observed as carefully as it should be in studies of *Phld.* 8.2.<sup>22</sup> Belief can be said to come "through" Christ, as the result of his acts; yet, Ignatius's account of Christ-initiated achievements, including faith, may immediately give way to the essential nature of a believing Christian response in Christ within Ignatius's thought (Corwin 1960, p. 239).

To thus interpret *ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ* as believers' faith in the person and work of Jesus transfers Ignatius's focus away from Jesus and to believers. Thus, although Jesus is the agent in the acts alluded to by means of the cross, death, and resurrection, interpreters

of *Phld.* 8.2 do not always account for the active mediation of Jesus in Ignatius's πίστις language. Moreover, they blur the lines between the agents of faith in *Phld.* 8.2 without reflection. While Ignatius's manifold references to faith may allow multifaceted depictions of agency within his letters, the relationship of Jesus and believers through πίστις should not be glossed over uncritically.<sup>23</sup> This failure when reading *Phld.* 8.2 enables Ignatian interpreters to more easily understand the relationship between faith, justification, and Jesus in ways that may resonate with Paul, particularly if Paul is understood in terms of the so-called Old Perspective. However, such understandings of *Phld.* 8.2 may not best account for Ignatius's response to the Philadelphian conflict.

Third, when reading *Phld.* 8.2 in terms of Pauline justification, it has proven difficult for interpreters to understand precisely how Ignatius's desire for the Philadelphians' intercession fits into his desire to be justified before God. Attempts to account for the purpose of the Philadelphians' prayer often rely on other letters where Ignatius asks for intercessions (e.g., *Eph.* 11.2; *Magn.* 14; *Rom.* 8.3; *Smyrn.* 11.1). In such accounts, Ignatius may ask for prayer so that believers can be unified; he can continue to be faithful, or he can be perfected in conjunction with the death that he anticipates.<sup>24</sup> These requests indicate that, even on a cursory reading of Ignatius's epistolary corpus, "the 'prayers' of his correspondents occupy a very prominent place in the letters of Ignatius".<sup>25</sup> Yet, one should not assume that Ignatius always asks for the same thing when he appeals to his audience for prayer. Elsewhere in *Philadelphians*, Ignatius asks for his audience to pray for his perfection before explicitly turning his attention to the Philadelphian conflict. Ignatius anticipates that the Philadelphians' prayer will be efficacious in allowing him to attain God, for prayer (ἡ προσευχή) is the subject of the active verb 'perfect' (ἀπαρτίσει; *Phld.* 5.1). Ignatius hopes that the Philadelphians' prayer will perfect him as he expects to die for God, thereby attaining God. Yet, it is not clear that Ignatius's allusion to prayer in *Phld.* 8.2 refers to the same entreaty as in *Phld.* 5.1. Moreover, the repetition of ἐν in *Phld.* 8.2 suggests that something different from Paul is afoot in this verse. Ignatius hopes to be justified ἐν οἷς, that is, by the inviolable archives or by the list of things that Jesus has done. He also hopes to be justified ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν, that is, by your prayer. Despite the importance of prayer within Ignatius's letters generally and within *Philadelphians* particularly, the relationship in *Phld.* 8.2 between the prepositional phrase ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ and δικαιοθῆναι remains difficult to articulate in Pauline terms when δικαιοθῆναι is assumed to refer to justification before God.

Finally, when readers immediately assume that the language which is similar to something found in Paul's letters must be interpreted primarily in dialogue with Pauline theology, they risk being blinded to other meanings that might fit Ignatius's rhetorical context more profitably. The readings of *Phld.* 8.2 examined so far understand justification to take place *coram Deo*. Yet, God is not mentioned in the context of Ignatius's comments on justification in this verse. Although God is hardly an unreasonable subject before whom Ignatius may want to be justified, the interpretations explored so far nevertheless rely upon an assumption—not an argument—that God is the figure before whom Ignatius desires to be justified. But if one recalls both that Ignatius's discussion of justification occurs in an account of a dispute at Philadelphia and that a readily available nuance of δικαίωω has to do with vindication, then Ignatius's desire may simply be for his side of the argument to be understood correctly.<sup>26</sup> Such a recognition opens the possibility that Ignatius's desire is to be proven right before an audience that is not limited to God alone. While understanding the verb in *Phld.* 8.2 in terms of vindication following Ignatius's troublesome time in Philadelphia may not be obvious and must therefore be argued for, the assumption that Ignatius's use of δικαίωω follows more or less Pauline lines so that justification occurs solely before God blinds interpreters to other possible meanings.

Taken individually, none of the observations above necessitate the need to consider an alternative way of understanding *Phld.* 8.2. Collectively, however, these four enquiring observations raise questions about whether interpreting justification language in Pauline terms makes the best sense of Ignatius's claims at this point in *Philadelphians*. There are at least questions that are serious enough to open a space for an alternative reading to

enter the interpretive conversation. Thus, it remains to enquire as to whether another interpretation of Ignatius's relative clause might fit the context more seamlessly.

#### 4. An Alternative Reading of *Phld.* 8.2

At the heart of the justification language in *Phld.* 8.2 is Ignatius's wish for something to be put right for him. He desires to be justified (θέλω . . . δικαιοθῆναι). The audience before whom Ignatius desires his justification is, however, unexpressed. Although much of the scholarship highlighted in this article locates Ignatius's longing for justification with respect to God, it is worth repeating that no mention is made of the audience before whom Ignatius wants to be put right. Accordingly, one might ask before whom Ignatius wants to be justified. If not before God, then before whom? A viable alternative answer to this question is before the Philadelphians. To begin substantiating this interpretive proposal, it is helpful to recall the context in which Ignatius's wish to be justified occurs within *Philadelphians*.

Ignatius is preoccupied with unity throughout the letter. When he initially addresses the Philadelphians, he refers to their association as one that has received mercy and been established "in the harmony of God" (ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ θεοῦ; *Phld.* inscr.). This emphasis on harmonious living may be most clearly expressed in the instruction that Ignatius gives to participate in a single Eucharist because of the singularity of Jesus's flesh, the cup of his blood, the altar, and the bishop (*Phld.* 4; see further [Maier 2005](#), p. 318). A desire for unity among believers can also be found in other letters written by Ignatius.<sup>27</sup> The reason for this emphasis becomes increasingly apparent in *Phld.* 5.1–9.2. Following the comparatively general statements in the beginning of the letter, Ignatius turns his attention to an incident that occurred while he was staying with the Philadelphians during his transport across Roman Asia. The dispute revolved around something that Ignatius now defines as Ἰουδαϊσμός (*Phld.* 6.1). Ignatius dismisses his opponents as graves, associates them with the ruler of this age, and urges the people to unite in response (*Phld.* 6.1–2).

Although Ignatius acknowledges that he is not perfect with regard to this controversy and presumes that he will not be perfected until after the death that he anticipates (*Phld.* 5.1), he does not thereby find reason for concern about his own relation to God. Instead, he has a clear conscience (εὐσυνείδητος) when he thinks about the Philadelphians because he did not burden them (*Phld.* 6.3). He prays that his words will not serve as a witness against those to whom he spoke. Ignatius's confidence about his behaviour is a result of the approval that he has already found before God. He understands himself to have been God's mouthpiece. Despite the attempts of some in Philadelphia to deceive him, God's Spirit exposed their secrets and enabled Ignatius to cry out with "the voice of God" (θεοῦ φωνῆ; *Phld.* 7.1).<sup>28</sup> Some in Philadelphia suspected that Ignatius knew about the controversy because he was told about the nature of the conflict by other partisans (*Phld.* 7.2). Ignatius again responds confidently when he calls God to be his witness that it was the Spirit's words that were declared through him in order to urge the Philadelphians to unite around the bishop as God's temple in their imitation of Jesus. Ignatius thus presents himself as a prophet through whom the Spirit speaks ([Trevett 1983](#), p. 9; [Maier 1991](#), p. 160; [Rothschild 2009](#), p. 193; [Svigel 2016](#), pp. 136–38). His prophetic work is focused on unity in Philadelphia and stands with God against division (*Phld.* 8.1; see also *Phld.* 2–4; [Lössl 2018](#), p. 87).

Within the argument in *Phld.* 6.3–8.2, Ignatius evinces no doubt about either the truth of what he believes God has set before him or about his devotion to setting out that truth before the Philadelphians. God has already approved Ignatius's message by speaking in the Spirit through Ignatius while he was in Philadelphia, and Ignatius remains convinced of his approval before God as he writes the letter. Thus, when it comes to his summary of the conflict and his desire for vindication at the end of *Phld.* 8.2, the Philadelphians are a more likely audience before whom to be justified than God since Ignatius already views himself as right before God when it comes to the polemical argument in the letter. Although he elsewhere acknowledges that he remains incomplete (*Phld.* 5.1), he nevertheless understands himself to have spoken to the Philadelphians as God's approved

prophet (Phld. 7.1–2; see further [Trevett 1983](#), p. 9; [1992](#), pp. 135–36). The audience before whom Ignatius hopes to be vindicated regarding the archives is thus best understood to be the Philadelphians to whom he writes. The resulting vindication would lead the Philadelphians to accept Ignatius’s understanding of the relationship between the archives and Jesus.

After clarifying the audience before whom Ignatius desires to receive vindication, the next step in interpreting Ignatius’s language is to enquire more precisely about what it is that Ignatius hopes to be vindicated for. A straightforward answer presents itself if one recognises that the prepositional phrase ἐν οἷς contains a plural relative pronoun that is either masculine or neuter. The antecedent of the pronoun is thus unlikely to be πίστις alone. If the antecedent was faith, then Ignatius’s debt to a Pauline idiolect would be more obvious. For the antecedent of the relative pronoun to be πίστις, however, one would expect him to write the singular ἐν ἧ rather than the plural ἐν οἷς. Both the gender and the number of Ignatius’s relative pronoun fail to match πίστις. The most likely single antecedent of the relative pronoun would be the plural noun ἀρχεῖα, either when Ignatius defines the archives in terms of Jesus Christ or when he enhances his statement by referring to “the inviolable archives” (τὰ ἄθικτα ἀρχεῖα). The latter option may be slightly more likely to be the antecedent since the noun lies in closer proximity to the relative pronoun. An alternative antecedent could be the combined nouns that Ignatius employs to delineate the inviolable archives: σταυρός, θάνατος, ἀνάστασις, and πίστις. Whatever noun or nouns one might choose as the antecedent of the plural relative pronoun, the meaning remains stable because Ignatius employs each of these terms in the service of demarcating the archives in terms of Jesus Christ ([Bergamelli 1993](#), pp. 38–39). Whether the relative pronoun refers to the archives, the inviolable archives, or the constituent parts with which Ignatius further defines the archives, it points back to the definition that Ignatius offers for the term at the centre of his controversy with the Philadelphians.

The nuance of the preposition in front of the relative pronoun (ἐν οἷς) is also of interest. If Ignatius hopes to be vindicated in the eyes of his audience regarding the matters at the heart of the dispute that occurred in Philadelphia, then he need not wish at this point in the letter to be vindicated by the archives. When justification is understood in Pauline terms, the archives or its constituent parts are often understood as the means by which Ignatius hopes to be justified before God. Such interpretations of Ignatius’s prepositional phrase may be found in translations like that of Camelot (en cela que), Paulsen (in diesen), and Schoedel (in which).<sup>29</sup> Yet, it is also possible to understand the archives as that “regarding which” (ἐν οἷς) Ignatius desires to be vindicated. On such a reading, the prepositional phrase would not be the means of Ignatius’s justification but rather a marker of specification regarding what Ignatius desires. The relationship between the preposition and verb would be similar to the construction found in Jas 1:8, in which the author notes that a double-minded person is “unstable regarding all his ways” (ἀκατάστατος ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ὁδοῖς αὐτοῦ).<sup>30</sup> Such a meaning may also be evident in Heb 13:20–21 as the author offers a benediction, praying that God will make the audience complete “with regard to every good work” (ἐν παντί ἀγαθῶ; Heb 13:21) so that they can do God’s will.

However, Ignatius’s language may be best understood not as a desire to be justified by the archives but rather with regard to the archives. The audience before which Ignatius desires his vindication is not divine but human. His vindication will result in a resolution of the dispute that he has described throughout *Phld.* 6.3–8.2. Finally, the means by which Ignatius hopes finally to be vindicated concerning the conflict in Philadelphia is the prayer of the Philadelphians themselves (ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν; *Phld.* 8.2). When Ignatius’s words are read in their own context and without limiting their meaning to a Pauline sense, no great difficulty arises with understanding how prayer and justification cooperate. Prayer provides the means by which the Philadelphians will discover that Ignatius was correct in his understanding of the archives and in the rest of the dispute that so deeply marked his time with believers there. When the singular noun is read alongside the second-person plural pronoun, the collective nature of the Philadelphians’ prayer is

emphasised. The harmonious undertones that support Ignatius's vision of prayer coincide with his sense of unity elsewhere in the letter. The Philadelphians are a particular source of delight "if they are at one" (ἐὰν ἐν ἐνὶ ὄσιν) with the bishop, elders, and deacons (*Phld.* inscr.). Ignatius reminds his readers that the prophets participated proleptically in the unity through their proclamation of Jesus (*Phld.* 5.2). Immediately preceding his hope to be vindicated, he adjures the Philadelphians not to act in dissension (*Phld.* 8.2), while the context that follows insists that the entirety of God's actions is unified in Jesus (*Phld.* 9.1–2). Throughout the letter, Ignatius emphasises that belonging to Jesus entails unity with the bishop (*Phld.* 3.2–3), but he also leaves open the possibility that members on the borders of the Philadelphian community might return to this unity (*Phld.* 8.1). When Ignatius speaks about the Philadelphians' prayer as the means by which he will be vindicated, he similarly has in mind the unifying effects of prayer within the community. He believes that their collective prayer will demonstrate that he was correct in their dispute.

Ignatius thus anticipates the efficacy of the Philadelphians' communal prayer as a means by which to demonstrate that he was on the right side of their earlier dispute.<sup>31</sup> In *Phld.* 6.3–8.1, he sets out both his account of their dispute and emphasises anew the position that he took. The Philadelphians are to be united with the proper authorities in their community (*Phld.* 7.1–2) and to understand the relationship between Jesus and the archives properly (*Phld.* 8.2). Jesus is the defining lens through which the archives must be viewed. Jesus's cross, death, resurrection, and the faith that comes through him enable a proper understanding of the archives. When Ignatius comes to the end of this account, he does not hope to be justified before God because he already understands himself to have spoken in God's voice as a prophet (*Phld.* 7.1–2). Instead, Ignatius desires to be vindicated regarding these things (ἐν οἷς θέλω . . . δικαιοθῆναι; *Phld.* 8.2), that is, regarding Jesus and the archives. The Philadelphians are thereby placed in the position of Ignatius's jury, even if their position is of secondary importance to Ignatius since he has already been proven right when God spoke through him by the Spirit. Finally, the means by which the Philadelphians are to discover the truth of what Ignatius has said is to be found in their common act of prayer (ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν).

The argument of this section would result in a translation of *Phld.* 8.2 that runs along the following lines:

Now, I urge you to do nothing in accordance with factiousness but in accordance with the learning of Christ. For I heard some people saying, "Unless I find it in the archives, I do not believe in the gospel". When I said, "It is written," they answered me, "That is the question". But for me, the archives are Jesus Christ, the inviolable archives are "his cross, death, his resurrection, and the faith that comes through him. Regarding these things, I desire to be vindicated by your prayer (ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιοθῆναι).

## 5. Conclusions

Ignatius's use of justification language looks different from Paul's employment of the same terminology, at least insofar as Ignatian scholarship has understood Pauline teaching about justification. This article thus finds itself in broad agreement with Lindemann's assessment of this passage that was published more than four decades ago. Ignatius is neither a good nor a bad interpreter of the Pauline doctrine of justification. Instead, Ignatius's use of the term is found in a situation in which Ignatius's rhetorical aims are quite other than Paul's earlier articulations of what it means to be justified before God. Ignatius desires to be vindicated before the Philadelphians regarding their earlier conflict. Yet, his terminology in *Phld.* 8.2 is not far removed from that of Paul, nor is Ignatius unfamiliar with Paul. He declares his approval of Paul in other letters (Eph. 12.2; Rom. 4.3; see further [Still 2017](#)), and, while the extent of Ignatius's knowledge of the Pauline corpus remains uncertain, he likely knew at least some of Paul's letters, including, above all, 1 Corinthians (see further [Lindemann 1979](#), pp. 199–221; [Merz 2004](#), pp. 141–91; [Foster 2005](#), pp. 164–72; [Vall 2013](#), pp. 43–47; [Theobald 2016](#), pp. 302–3). On the one hand, then,

Ignatius utilises  $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\acute{o}\omega$  in a way that differs from Paul's understanding of justification, but he simultaneously employs a web of similar terminology related to the gospel, Jesus's death and resurrection, faith, and even the preposition  $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ . How should one account for this apparent discrepancy?

One option might be to argue that there is no Pauline influence on Ignatius's justification terminology in *Phld.* 8.2. Instead, one might say that Ignatius has utilised terminology that is scattered broadly, if unevenly, across early Christian literature. The strength of reading *Phld.* 8.2 in this way is that it enables Ignatius's words to be read on their own within the context of *Philadelphians*. To be sure, making sense of Ignatius's language within the context of his epistolary aims is of fundamental importance to scholarship on the Ignatian corpus. This way of reading should be the foundational strategy to be adapted by readers of Ignatius who seek to understand his words within the letters as they have been received in the so-called middle recension. However, the refusal to admit any Pauline influence on Ignatius's justification terminology struggles to account for Ignatius's admiration of Paul elsewhere in his letters. Even in *Philadelphians*, the reference to circumcision is likely due to the influence of Pauline letters or traditions (*Phld.* 6.1; see Niebuhr 1994, pp. 229–30), while this article has shown that the christological argument of *Phld.* 8.2 resonates strongly with the themes and terminology found in the Pauline letters. To dismiss out of hand Paul's influence on the justification terminology of *Phld.* 8.2 is thus uncalled for.

A better alternative might be to think that Ignatius employs Pauline language in a way that is both applied to a new context and is also imprecise enough that twenty-first-century scholars can no longer trace its exact origins. To account for such a reading, one might think that Ignatius refers to what he understands as a Pauline teaching that has perhaps been gleaned from a Pauline letter such as Romans or Galatians but then extends this teaching to address a different situation. Someone wanting to argue for this position might add that ancient quotation strategies did not require authors to quote authoritative sources precisely.<sup>32</sup> Indeed, imprecision could sometimes be a sign of respect as an author was able to reuse an authority in a new context (Hill 2012). Admittedly, the way in which this option has been framed requires an attempt to understand Ignatius's intention in choosing the words found in *Phld.* 8.2. However, given Ignatius's acknowledgement of Paul's authority in other letters, his likely knowledge of 1 Corinthians and other Pauline epistles, and his reference to circumcision in *Phld.* 6.1, it is not unreasonable to think that Ignatius might be consciously referring to Pauline terminology when he recounts the controversy and urges the Philadelphians to unity.

If thinking of *Phld.* 8.2 as an imprecise reference to Paul's letters is unpalatable, one might still think that Ignatius applies Pauline language to his different rhetorical context in *Philadelphians* by arguing that the reference is made more broadly to Pauline terminology. Rather than suggesting that Ignatius has made use of a Pauline letter that discusses justification, one could then appeal more broadly to the transmission of Pauline teachings, even if the process by which Ignatius received and passed on such traditions must remain opaque to twenty-first-century readers.<sup>33</sup> Whether one regards *Phld.* 8.2 as an imprecise reference or a more general appeal to Pauline tradition, these inexact methods of influence and reuse allow the justification language in *Phld.* 8.2 to be understood as a Pauline reference while simultaneously allowing Ignatius's language to stand independently of that of Paul. Such a solution acknowledges both Ignatius's debt to Paul elsewhere in his letters and the different audience before which Ignatius desires to be justified in *Phld.* 8.2. Reading justification terms in this way allows Ignatius to be understood within the rhetorical flow of *Philadelphians*, while accounting for the Pauline resonances of Ignatius's terminology. In other words, Ignatius need not be evaluated as a good or bad Pauline interpreter regarding his use of justification terminology. Both the different meaning of his words in the context of *Philadelphians* and his debt to Paul can be acknowledged without such positive or negative evaluations by allowing Ignatius to employ Pauline terminology in a way that is simply different from that of the Apostle.

Admitting both the different audience before whom Ignatius desires to be justified and his utilisation of Pauline terminology leads to at least one further question, namely, how does Ignatius use Paul? Paul does not appear to be a doctrinal authority in the final clause of *Phld.* 8.2, at least not if one follows the general thrust of Ignatian scholarship in assuming a view of Paul that might broadly be termed “traditional” or be said to fit in the “Old Perspective”.<sup>34</sup> As far as readers can tell based on the evidence of *Phld.* 8.2, Ignatius is not precisely informed by Paul’s usage of justification language because Ignatius desires to be justified or vindicated before a different audience. The audience before whom Ignatius desires vindication is not God but the Philadelphians. Yet, Ignatius’s choice to utilise Pauline terminology is not haphazard. It is placed in a fraught and highly polemical situation and suggests that Pauline terminology was used to give weight to Ignatius’s argument. Paul remains an authority in *Phld.* 8.2 but not as the teacher of justification by faith. Rather, Paul’s authority lies in the power that his words carry by virtue of being associated with the Apostle.<sup>35</sup> Ignatius’s language resonates with Paul’s terms, then, not because he is referring to justification by faith along the same lines as Paul but instead because the authority undergirding such terminology enhances Ignatius’s argument for how to interpret the archives. Ignatius’s desire to be viewed as right in the Philadelphians’ eyes regarding the dispute between them is stated in Pauline terms that lend Pauline credibility to Ignatius’s desire for what he views as a proper understanding of the gospel and archives.

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## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> There is thus also a call among some involved in the study of New Testament reception history for further terminological and methodological clarification. See especially the exchange in [Burnet \(2023a, 2023b\)](#); [Hoegen-Rohls \(2023a, 2023b\)](#), as well as future prospects for reception historical studies in [Batovici \(2017\)](#).
- <sup>2</sup> For a recent concise statement about how Paul and other apostolic figures are utilised in the Apostolic Fathers, see [Edsall \(2021\)](#).
- <sup>3</sup> While the abbreviations in this article generally follow [Collins et al. \(2014\)](#), I will omit the authorial prefix “Ign” when referring to Ignatius’s letters due to the high number of references to Ignatius’s letters that appear in this article.
- <sup>4</sup> The literature on Ignatius and Judaism is voluminous. See, among others, [Richardson \(1935\)](#); [Corwin \(1960, pp. 52–87\)](#); [Barrett \(1976\)](#); [Donahue \(1978\)](#); [Trevett \(1992, pp. 75–113\)](#); [Niebuhr \(1994\)](#); [Lieu \(1996, pp. 23–56\)](#); [Uebele \(2001, pp. 74–82\)](#); [Cohen \(2002\)](#); [Trebilco \(2004, pp. 690–700\)](#); [Marshall \(2005\)](#); [Myllykoski \(2005\)](#); [Skarsaune \(2007, pp. 505–10\)](#); [Robinson \(2009\)](#); [Vall \(2013, pp. 68–79\)](#); [Nicklas \(2014, pp. 124–29\)](#); [Boyarín \(2018\)](#); [Thomas \(2018, pp. 95–97\)](#); [Buda \(2019\)](#); [MacDiarmid \(2022, pp. 13–19\)](#).
- <sup>5</sup> See further [Goltz \(1894, p. 80\)](#); [Bauer \(1920, p. 61\)](#); [Funk \(1901–13, p. 1.270\)](#); [Grant \(1967, p. 106\)](#); [Camelot \(1969\)](#); ([Paulsen 1978, p. 57](#)); [Schoedel \(1978, pp. 97–101\)](#); [Speigl \(1987, p. 364\)](#); [Zetterholm \(2003, p. 209\)](#); [Nicklas \(2014, p. 128\)](#); [Carleton Paget \(2015, p. 466\)](#); [Markschies \(2015, pp. 277–78\)](#); [Dus \(2016\)](#); [Hartog \(2017\)](#); [Kreps \(2022, p. 20\)](#); [Sargent \(2023\)](#). The archives are thus widely understood in terms of Jewish scripture. This interpretation remains broadly intact even if one follows [Hengel \(1985, pp. 77–78\)](#) and [Gamble \(1995, pp. 152–53\)](#) in arguing that the archives refer to a congregational library or to the place where scriptural writings were kept. If so, then Ignatius employs the word metonymically to describe Jewish scripture or similar, likely authoritative, texts.
- <sup>6</sup> E.g. [Bergamelli \(2004, pp. 652–57\)](#); [Arnold \(2017, pp. 60–64\)](#); [Thomas \(2018, pp. 98–99\)](#). On Ignatius’s relationship to Paul elsewhere in the letters, see also [Inge \(1905, pp. 64–76\)](#); [Rathke \(1967\)](#); [Dassmann \(1979, pp. 126–49\)](#); [Merz \(2004, pp. 147–55\)](#); [Foster \(2005, pp. 164–72\)](#); [Lindemann \(2005, pp. 16–24\)](#); [Pervo \(2010, pp. 134–42\)](#); [Smith \(2011\)](#); [Bergamelli \(2013\)](#); [Vall \(2013, pp. 44–49\)](#); [Theobald \(2016, pp. 289–309\)](#); [Cobb \(2017\)](#); [Downs \(2017\)](#); [Maier \(2017\)](#); [Still \(2017\)](#); [Bauer \(2018\)](#); [Hartog \(2018\)](#); [Norelli \(2018\)](#); [Thomas \(2018, pp. 84–100\)](#).
- <sup>7</sup> For recent discussions on the date and authenticity, see [Brent \(2007\)](#); [Theobald \(2016, pp. 252–314\)](#); [McKechnie \(2019, pp. 69–72\)](#); [Vinzent \(2019, pp. 266–404\)](#); [Bremmer \(2021\)](#); [Foster \(2021\)](#); [Glaser \(2021\)](#); [Castelli \(2022\)](#); [Eurell \(2022\)](#).

- 8 Regarding Ignatius's knowledge of the letters, Ernst Dassmann's analysis of the *communis opinio* still holds true: "Daß Ignatius Paulusbrieve gekannt hat, ist nie ernsthaft bestritten worden; äußerst kontrovers dagegen ist bis in die neueste Zeit das angenommene Ausmaß dieser Kenntnis" (Dassmann 1979, p. 129).
- 9 For the larger context of Vall's discussion, see Vall (2013, pp. 192–97).
- 10 See also Lightfoot (1889–91, p. 2.2.273); Grant (1967, p. 106); Schoedel (1985, p. 209, n. 18); Brown (2000, pp. 16–18).
- 11 On Ignatius's terminology for life, see Zañartu (1979).
- 12 See similarly Donahue (1978, p. 89).
- 13 For an up-to-date discussion that engages the many disputes surrounding justification in Paul's letters, see Gathercole (2022).
- 14 See the discussions in Lookadoo (2018, pp. 38–43); Skarsaune (2007, pp. 505–10).
- 15 See further Smith (2011, p. 46); Hartog (2017, p. 113).
- 16 E.g. Rom 6:3–4, 10; 8:34; 14:9; 1 Cor 15:3–4.20–22; 2 Cor 5:14–15; Gal 2:19–20; Phil 2:8–9; 1 Thess 4:14.
- 17 E.g. Rom 1:16–17; 4:1–25; Gal 2:15–21; 3:6–14.
- 18 Ignatius's belief that, although he is learning from the mistreatment that he is experiencing at the hands of his Roman guards, "I am not justified because of this" (οὐ παρὰ τοῦτου δεδικαίωμαι; Rom. 5.1) is reminiscent of Paul's statement to the Corinthians that, although he does not know of anything against him, "I am not justified by this" (οὐ ἐν τούτῳ δεδικαίωμαι; 1 Cor 4:4). Arnold, however, argues that this reference "offers little help in uncovering Ignatius's understanding of justification" (Arnold 2017, p. 60). On the interplay between 1 Cor 4:4 and Rom. 5.1, see Rathke (1967, pp. 28–30); Schoedel (1985, p. 179); Foster (2005, p. 166).
- 19 On Matt 3:15 and *Smyrn.* 1.1, see Inge (1905, pp. 76–77); Massaux (1950, pp. 98–99); Koester (1955, pp. 57–59); Paulsen (1978, pp. 37–39); Trevett (1984); Foster (2005, pp. 174–76).
- 20 For orientations to the Old Perspective and its place within contemporary Pauline studies, see Bird (2016, pp. 1–30); Pitre et al. (2019, pp. 11–63).
- 21 See Rom 3:22.26; Gal 2:16.20; 3:22; Phil 3:9. Paul can elsewhere employ prepositions to clarify the relationship between πίστις and Jesus (e.g., Gal 3:26).
- 22 For other studies of faith in Ignatius, see Harrisville (1994, p. 240, n. 37); Wallis (1995, pp. 188–93); Morgan (2015, pp. 512–14).
- 23 See the many-sided portrayal of faith in Ignatius's letters in Tarvainen (1967, pp. 24–71).
- 24 On intercession and church unity, see Swartley (1973, pp. 102–3). On intercession and faithfulness, see Arnold (2017, pp. 64–67). See similarly Vall (2013, pp. 192–93). On intercession and martyrdom, see Bower (1974, p. 3); Schoedel (1985, p. 72).
- 25 For further discussion, see Lightfoot (1889–91, p. 2.2.85).
- 26 On δικαίω in the sense of *vindicate*, see Gen 44:16; Sir 13.22; 23.11; Luke 10:29; 16:15; Barn. 6.1; Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* 8.2.2. See also BDAG, s.v. 2; Diggle (2021, s.v. 3); PGL, s.v. F.
- 27 For fuller analyses of the role of unity within Ignatius's letters, see Camelot (1969, pp. 20–55); Vall (2013, pp. 88–96).
- 28 On *Phld.* 7.1, see Martín (1971, pp. 400–2), Paulsen (1978, pp. 125–26).
- 29 Camelot (1969, p. 151); Paulsen (1985, p. 85); Schoedel (1985, p. 207). This way of translating Ignatius's letters continues to be found in more recent translations. For example, "in these things" (Brannan 2017, p. 107) and "through these" (Varner 2023, p. 158) are found in recent English translations. The Italian translation of Prinzivalli and Simonetti (2010–15, p. 1.403), "grazie a questo," lies closer to the meaning of the prepositional phrase espoused in this article. However, their note in the commentary places justification in *Phld.* 8.2 alongside salvation in the Christian faith and thereby makes God the audience before whom Ignatius desires justification (Prinzivalli and Simonetti 2010–15, p. 1.604, n. 404).
- 30 I have maintained the masculine pronoun in translation solely for the purpose of mimicking the syntactical features of the Greek phrase as closely as possible. On double-mindedness, see List (2021) and the literature cited therein.
- 31 Leavenworth (2022, p. 40, n. 115) concludes similarly regarding both the translation of the infinitive and the role of prayer: "By reiterating the essential elements of his gospel message, Ignatius asked his readers to pray that he 'be exonerated' (δικαιωθῆναι) of the charge of disseminating an unscriptural gospel message".
- 32 Additional methodological insight might be gained from studies of how Paul used sources, such as those found in Hays (1989); Stanley (1992); Ciampa (2008); Porter (2008).
- 33 For those who think that the Ignatian letters were authentically written by a Syrian church leader as he was transported to Rome in anticipation of his death, this way of accounting for Ignatius's debt to Paul would fit the situation in which the letters were written, namely without reference to a well-stocked library.
- 34 Future research on justification in Ignatius might explore the possibility of whether other understandings of Pauline justification, such as those embodied by the so-called "New Perspective," apocalyptic, or Paul within Judaism approaches, might fit *Phld.* 8.2 better. In my view, however, the audience before whom Paul and Ignatius want to be justified remains quite different, making it difficult to bring Pauline justification and Ignatian justification into precise alignment. The terms are similar, but Ignatius's meaning is simply different.

- <sup>35</sup> This conclusion is in broad agreement with Norelli's characterisation of Ignatius's use of Paul in *Ephesians*. Norelli (2018, p. 551) concludes his chapter by saying, "[I]l apparaît qu'Ignace a régulièrement plié les passages de Paul aux exigences de sa propre polémique plus qu'il ne les a utilisés pour construire sa propre théologie, mais de manière moins arbitraire qu'il ne pourrait paraître. Il s'est efforcé, en effet, de fonder les transformations qu'il opère sur des caractères internes au texte de Paul (voire du pseudo-Paul), souvent par glissement sémantique".

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