

Breathless:

Paul's Long Sentence in 1Th 1:2-10

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SCJ Conference
 April 5, 2019
 Inaugural Session for the group: Life, Letters, and Legacy of Paul¹

Introduction

1Th 1:2-10 is sometimes called the third longest sentence in the NT.² However, biblical scholars are by no means of one mind about this,³ and English translations (for reader reasons) have never kept it as one sentence. The NIV, for example, has rendered it as 9 sentences:

	Total	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ASV	4				.		.	.		.
NRS	4		.		.		.			.
KJV	5			.	.		.	.		.
RSV	6		.		..		.	.		.
NET	6		.		.	.	.	.		.
NJB	8	.	.		..	.	.	.		..
NIV	9	.	.		..	.	.	.	.	.
		<i>Vv. 2-10 that are given periods.</i>								

¹ My appreciation to Prof. Jerry Sumney for reading this paper and offering feedback.

² Col 1:9-20 = 218; Eph 1:3-14 = 202 1Th 1:2-10 = 195; [bracketed words included].

³ E.g., **One sentence** (Frame 1912, 85; Best 1977, 65; Malherbe 2001, 105 and others place colons after each of vv. 5, 7, and 8); **Two sentences** (Westcott-Hort and SBL Greek editions, Fee 2009, 19, and others put a colon after vv. 5 and 8, and a period after v. 7); **Four sentences** (NA28 and UBS4 puts a period after each: 5, 7, and 8.) Another way of saying this is that whereas some have put a period after v. 5, or 7, or 8, or all three, the following put a colon after: v. 5: (Tregelles, WH, SBL; Frame 1912, 85; Best 1977, 65; Malherbe 2001, 105; Fee 2009, 19); v. 7 (Stephanus; Frame 1912, 85; Best 1977, 65; Malherbe 2001, 105); v. 8 (Stephanus, Tis, WH, SBL, NA25, UBS1&2. Frame 1912, 85; Best 1977, 65; Malherbe 2001, 105; Fee 2009, 19). Of course, this is only a representative list. The uncertainty over this question can be easily seen in the NA25 and UBS1,2,&3 changing their minds in NA26 and UBS4, moving from a colon after v. 8 to a period.

The question about the number of sentences derives from the problematic or perhaps elusive grammatical structure of this text—at least in places. Commentators routinely comment about the awkwardness or complexity of 1:2-10 or parts of it. Best⁴ says it is “one long untidily constructed sentence.” Malherbe⁵ agrees. Fee⁶ sees two long and complex sentences, breaking after v. 7. Weima⁷ focuses on this text less in terms as *sentences* and more as a self-contained thanksgiving divided into “four main clauses” (2-5, 6-7, 8, 9-10).⁸ He agrees with Best in calling the transition from vv. 4 to 5 and also the structure of v. 8 as “awkward” and “clumsy”.

Here I will ask two questions: whether 1:2-10 is indeed appropriately described as either *awkward* or *clumsy*; and whether the battle of “How many sentences?” is very helpful. First, I will briefly address the form of the letter, since this may impact how 1:2-10 is treated; then I will look at some possible structural features of this text. In the process, I will answer “no” to both questions above and offer a solution⁹ that has the potential of breathing new life into current readings of this text. I will argue that while there are many fine studies on this, no one has provided *the one true key*, and that likely such a key does not (and likely can never) exist. In that context, I hope to offer a suggestion that might help.

Form of the Letter

The well-known *form-of-the-letter* debate (whether 1Thessalonians is best read as a form of the ancient Greco-Roman *letter* or as following the pattern of ancient Greco-Roman *rhetorical forms*) is certainly relevant for 1:2-10, since how one regards the form may influence where one breaks sentences, paragraphs, sections, and the like.

Epistolary vs. Rhetorical Approaches

In a nutshell: Koester, who (now famously) focused on the *epistolary form*¹⁰ of 1Thessalonians, called it

⁴ Best 1977, 65.

⁵ Malherbe 2000, 105.

⁶ Fee 2009, 19.

⁷ Weima 2014, 79, 93.

⁸ Weima argues for the close association and flow of thought in verses 2-5, and he notes that some scholars place a “full stop at the end of 1:5, thereby beginning a new sentence with 1:6-7.” Still, Weima argues for a close tie between vv. 2-5 and 6-7 and does not clearly commit about a full stop.

⁹ Here-to-fore unpublished as far as I know.

¹⁰ Numerous valuable studies have been produced on epistolary theory. To start see especially Malherbe 1970, 1983, 1986, 1987, 2000; White 1971, 1972, 1981, 1986; Doty 1973; Stowers 1986; Aune 1987, Richards 2004. See Mitchell 2004 for some pointed criticisms of Malherbe.

an experiment in the composition of literature which signals the momentous entry of Christianity into the literary world of antiquity. . . it is “the Christian letter in the making.”¹¹

Suggesting that “Paul’s first letter” was a *protreptic letter* (an *instructive* piece¹²), this stirred up Malherbe who agreed on nearly all points, demurring only that it was a *paraenetic letter* (an *exhortational* piece¹³).

This (and many other studies), in turn, stirred Witherington¹⁴ who objected to both, especially to their focus on *epistolary form*:

What Koester did not realize is that we need to examine 1Thessalonians primarily as a *discourse* rather than as a *literary artifact*. It is certainly not ‘*sui generis*’ when it comes to rhetorical form.¹⁵

Hence, the letter is following a particular *rhetorical* form. And so, having dispensed with Koester, Witherington presents Malherbe’s commentary as “a muddle when it comes to the form of the material.”¹⁶ And so, by viewing the letter rightly—mostly in rhetorical categories¹⁷—we can see the Thanksgiving report/*Exordium* to end with v. 3 and the *narratio* to begin at v. 4.¹⁸ Hence,

it is perfectly appropriate to put a full stop at the end of v. 3, which is to be preferred in this case, and make a fresh start where the *narratio* actually begins, at v. 4 (so NIV, NJB, NLT, NRSV).¹⁹

¹¹ Koester 1979, 34.

¹² Koester 1979, 35; Malherbe 1986, 122.

¹³ Malherbe 1986, 124f.

¹⁴ Ben Witherington has written several commentaries on the rhetorical analysis of Paul’s letters, including 1Thessalonians, 2006. As will become clear, I am not a particular fan of this approach.

¹⁵ Witherington 2006, xii, my italics, gdc.

¹⁶ Witherington 2006, 17-19. He was summarizing M. Mitchell’s review, here. This does not mean that W. is unappreciative of significant contributions in Malherbe’s commentary.

¹⁷ Witherington 2006, xii, accepts Wannamaker’s conclusion that “while both epistolary and rhetorical analyses are important for studying Paul’s letters, when they are wed ‘it is a marriage of unequal partners.’” Rhetorical analysis is the more important.

¹⁸ Witherington 2006, 28, says the *Narratio* extends from 1:4 to 3:10.

¹⁹ Witherington 2006, 52. Actually, the NIV not only makes a new sentence at v. 4, it also makes a new *paragraph*, as does the NJB. In contrast, the NET Bible, NEB, and REB make a new paragraph only at v. 5. The KJV, ASV, RSV, NRSV, ESV, NA 25 and 28 keep 1:2-10 altogether in one paragraph (of course with various multiple sentences). The Message makes this text into three paragraphs: 2-5, 6-7, 8-10. The NA 26 and 27 add a large space (but not a paragraph) after v. 5 (reversed by NA 28). All of this helps to emphasize that every mark of every kind (a space, a comma, semi-colon, colon, period, paragraph mark, whatever) put into a Greek text or English translation, is a mark of interpretation. It is not necessarily

This is at least one clear example of how a text might be fitted into a presumed rhetorical strategy.²⁰

Of course, not every fisherman boards the same boat. So the extent to which rhetorical categories can be legitimately applied to NT texts has been widely and pointedly discussed, especially when it comes to postulating (or assuming) whether Paul had received a rhetorical education.²¹ So much so that Green asks bluntly whether it is even “legitimate to analyze the letters of the NT using the categories of oral rhetorical discourse.”²² Others continue to be critical of the approach, including Weima’s most recent major commentary on 1Thessalonians.²³

Baugh on “Long Sentences”

It was in this supercharged climate that Baugh wrote his 2011 Ephesians commentary.²⁴ Avoiding the specific approaches of Witherington and others (of whom he is only mildly critical), he nevertheless approaches the so-called *long sentence* in Ephesians 1:3-14²⁵ with rhetorical concerns, only now, in terms of *cola*²⁶ and *periodic*

wrong (or right), and for the sake of current readers this is a necessary effort. However, these readings can be different from each other and can change the meanings of the texts represented.

²⁰ The point is not that it is *necessarily* wrong, but that in such an approach the decision about where a full stop is placed may not be entirely dependent upon grammatical indications or requirements.

²¹ Especially Porter 1993, 2012a; and the spat between Porter 2016a and Witherington 2016; Reed 1993, 1997; Stamps 1995; Weima 1997a, 2014; Kern 1998; Meggitt 1998, 84, 86, 96; Anderson 1999; Bird 2008, 378; Schellenberg 2013, among others.

²² Green 2002, 71, offers several packed pages (69-74) summarizing the debate and the problems involved. He is not mentioned by Witherington 2006, perhaps (?) because W. felt he’d already addressed the main issues from the main proponents of this view.

²³ Weima 2014, 55. Way back in 1990, Lambrecht sounded a warning about approach and method for the study of 1Thessalonians:

The danger, however, lies in exaggeration, in increasingly inventive speciousness, in too much, often far-fetched and strained, genre hunting. One might wonder whether Paul consciously starts the body of his letter in 2:1, deliberately composes an apostolic parousia in 2:17-3:13, or really intends a twofold epistolary recommendation in 2:1-12 and 2:17-3:8. Even to attribute to Paul a more or less spontaneous, subconscious following of preexisting patterns may constitute here an unwarranted postulate.

This quote is from Lambrecht “Thanksgivings in 1 Thessalonians 3” 1990 which was republished in Donfried 2000, along with Lambrecht’s new follow-up, “Structural Analysis in 1Th 4-5.” In Donfried 2000, Wanamaker “Epistolary vs. Rhetorical Analysis: Is a Synthesis Possible?” slaps the hands of Lambrecht for the above quote, chiding that Lambrecht himself is interested in such things. However, Lambrecht’s response was to quote it again in his follow-up article in that same volume: Donfried 2000, 164, (which means the quote shows up twice in that volume!).

²⁴ S. M. Baugh. *Ephesians* in the Evangelical Exegetical Commentary. Lexham Press, 2016.

²⁵ As far as I can tell, Baugh never references or comments on 1Th 1:2-10 in this commentary.

²⁶ Baugh 16, defines a colon as “approximately twelve to seventeen syllables in length.”

*sentences*²⁷ as described in ancient Greek rhetorical literature. He takes specific issue with calling this a *long sentence*:

To say, for example, that Eph 1:3–14 is one sentence makes it seem like there would have been no break for the hearer or reader in their experience of the text. Yet when ancient authorities spoke about division of a Greek text, they did not usually speak of grammatical “sentences” (Latin *sententia*, “thought”), but rather of the colon* and the period as the essential building blocks of discourse.²⁸ In light of this ancient analysis, Eph 1:3–14 would not appear to be one long sentence but an interconnected “paragraph” of nine easily manageable periods—*as I suggest the text be arranged*—with an unfolding unity of thought.²⁹

Baugh then lays out his 9 periods according to his view of how an early reader would have seen or marked the text for public reading. As an example:³⁰

³ Εὐλογητὸς ὁ θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν
 Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
 ὁ εὐλογήσας ἡμᾶς
 ἐν πάσῃ εὐλογίᾳ πνευματικῇ
 ἐν τοῖς ἐπουρανίοις ἐν Χριστῷ ⁴

καθὼς ἐξελέξατο ἡμᾶς ἐν αὐτῷ
 πρὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου
 εἶναι ἡμᾶς ἁγίους καὶ ἀμώμους
 κατενώπιον αὐτοῦ

ἐν ἀγάπῃ ⁵
 προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν
 διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτόν
 κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ ⁶
 εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ

and so on in similar fashion through v. 10. Each line would be a colon; each block would be a period, and the whole would be a “periodic sentence.”

²⁷ Bough 17, defines: “Technically, a period was a grouping of cola* that a trained speaker could present in one breath and had a certain ‘rounded’ character.” A *periodic sentence*, then, is a collection of such units.

²⁸ Note that the Greek *colon* and *period* here are not punctuation marks, but *speaking units* of a text. gdc

²⁹ Baugh 2011, 15-16. (I, gdc, have put the verse numbers at the end of the line (except for v. 3), so that the cola can be seen more easily without interference by numbers. So then, vv. 4, 5, and 6 each start on the next line.

³⁰ The 9 periods are listed on Baugh 2011, 63f. Baugh makes it clear that he does not always speak of “periodic sentences” technically. But he apparently disagrees with BDF 239 and 242, who describes The Period (or periodic style), and yet does not apply it to Ephesians. BDF reserves the “running style” for the NT, described in rather unflattering terms.

Certainly, Baugh did not invent the interest in *cola* and *periods*, but he has developed this for Ephesians in a way that no current grammar³¹ or commentary³² does to my knowledge. Scholarly resources routinely speak about Greek periods, but they don't then mark and arrange the text as Baugh has. For that reason alone, Baugh deserves much closer attention than I can give him. There is at least one caution: the approach is a bit more subjective than it is eventually presented as being. As just one example: When Baugh states that: "The text *divides itself naturally* into a succession of normal Greek periods, . . ." ³³ (which is a bit stronger than he presented earlier in the book), then one wishes to see how that text is "dividing itself." However, his explanations and markup do not usually provide sufficient reasons to know why this is a "text dividing itself"³⁴ rather than Baugh making "a suggestion."³⁵ Apparently, there is nothing about *cola* or *periods* that *require* the suggested arrangement offered by Baugh.

Summary

All of the views above are intriguing, offer valuable insights, and deserve serious attention. Especially helpful is the increased focus on "oral presentation," that such texts, although written, would be *written with oral presentation in mind*. Also useful is Baugh's *de-emphasizing* a need to determine an exact sentence in the so-called *long sentence* of Eph

³¹ Rob 432f.; BDF 239, 242.

³² E.g., Richard 1995, 11, 14, 45 calls 1Th 1:2-10 A fully developed "thanksgiving period." But it is a summary comment, not a prelude to "mark the text." Witherington 2006 points to the existence of periods, but minimizes their importance: xi-xii, xiv, 56, 63.

³³ Baugh 2011, 70 my italics.

³⁴ For example, I wonder why vv. 4-6 are not "asking to be divided" this way:

ἐν ἀγάπῃ ⁵
 προορίσας ἡμᾶς εἰς υἰοθεσίαν
 διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς αὐτόν
 κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ ⁶
 εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ
 ἧς ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς
 ἐν τῷ ἡγαπημένῳ ⁷

where "the good pleasure of his will" centers the group; where "love" heads and finishes the group, and where each of the other legs are also balanced. These are not entirely compatible. I don't offer this as definitive, only as a question why this is not just as much a "text dividing itself" as Baugh's approach. For if there is any legitimacy to my suggestion, it changes the meaning, force, and translation of v. 5.

³⁵ Baugh 2011, 18, clearly says as much: "Let me repeat that the division into *cola** and periods I provide for Ephesians is a suggestion." He then notes how difficult this is among scholars who have given themselves in classical literature to such issues. I also note that Baugh could be called into question for his Greek and Roman source material. E.g., this stands in tension with Tom Olbricht 1990, "An Aristotelian Rhetorical Analysis of 1 Thessalonians." Olbricht takes issue with using Latin sources like Cicero (and others) for evaluating Paul's rhetorical approaches. He is also less concerned with genres or forms than with rhetorical styles.

1:3-14, as well as Weima's inclination for 1Th 1:2-10 to speak of clauses more than of sentence determinations. At the same time, none of the approaches above emerges as *king on the mountain*, providing *the one-and-only key* to 1Th 1:2-10: such approaches do not cancel each other out. Indeed, if the myriad of studies in relation to Paul's letter proves anything, it is this: *To whatever degree Paul echoed any external Greco-Roman form of rhetorical argument or letter-writing, that was not his focus or what he was trying to get at.*³⁶

"Structure" in 1Th 1:2-10 (General)

So all the while championing the validity and usefulness of the above approaches, I am going to turn now to something rather basic: an approach now featured especially in the new resource EGGNT³⁷ and described in the new intermediate Greek grammar, *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek*,³⁸ as "Phrase Diagrams," or perhaps "Sentence-Flow," or "Thought-Flow," or "Argument" diagrams.

In this process, one question I might bring to the front is this: *Without assuming a particular epistolary or rhetorical preconception or agenda, is it possible to see grammatical relationships between words and phrases as they exist in our text?* It needs to be stated clearly

³⁶ Too often in such discussions, one gets the feeling that readers are required to figure out *the key, the one right reading* of the text. Even a brief look at these debates should be enough to convince anyone that it is not possible to say with any finality, "Here is the right form or style, and all the rest are wrong," as if there even is one right or dominant answer to this. They can certainly be listed, from the pages of early Alford 1856, Frame 1912, and Plummer 1918 to the volumes by Witherington 2006, Fee 2009, and Weima 2014, and many others. These are valuable contributions to Pauline studies. Among the good results are that scholars explore the kinds of influences or concerns *that were possible*. Even so, no one has been able to demonstrate that Paul needed special training in either Greco-Roman rhetoric or letter writing for his letters to have been written as they were. **With respect to Rhetoric:** Whitney Shiner has noted:

The techniques of rhetoric found in the handbooks could be learned even if one never attended a rhetorical school. Indeed, Augustine says [*De Doctrina Christiana* 4.3.4–5] it is easier to learn eloquence by reading and hearing eloquent men than by studying rules.

(Shiner 2003, 6, as quoted in Bird 2008, 378.) See also the brief discussions in Green 2002, 72-23, and Weima 2014, 55. It is also worth noting that the existence of rhetorical *strategies* and *styles* do not imply the necessity or use of *forms*. See Valentine, "First Corinthians 10:1-13 in Light of the Rhetoric of Self Control" *SCJ* 17 no. 1: 2014; Gary S. Selby, *Not with Wisdom of Words: Nonrational Persuasion in the New Testament*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2016 George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* in *Writings from the Greco-Roman World*. Book 10. SBL, 2003. **With respect to Letter Writing:** It seems clear that while Paul's letters show similarities and even a good deal of conformity with generally recognized literary styles and patterns, they were not overly constricted or driven by them. **And finally**, whether Paul personally gave great attention to such concerns, or whether he relied on his secretaries for such things, it is simply impossible to know.

³⁷ A series edited now by Köstenberger and Yarbrough *The Exegetical Guide to the Greek NT*. B&H Academic.

³⁸ Köstenberger, Merkle, and Plummer, 2016, 456ff.

that I do **not** claim this to be “the key to this text.” I claim merely that the concerns below deserve a seat at the table when discussing 1Th 1:2-10.³⁹

1Th 1:2-7—Comments

Space prohibits a complete commentary.⁴⁰ Looking **first at 1:2-7**, the following grammatical and structural comments seem warranted:

1. Vv. 2-10 apparently have only **one main verb**: “We give thanks” (v. 2). Everything else appears to be tied to that verb in what is possibly one, long, “run-on” sentence⁴¹ carried on by participles and conjunctions, both subordinating and coordinating; exactly how these elements are all related have often been debated.
2. The **main verb** (“we give thanks”) is followed by **three explanatory present tense adverbial participles** (“making mention [2], remembering [3], knowing⁴² [4]”). The present tense in participles expresses an *author’s viewpoint* that an action is unfinished, ongoing or customary.⁴³ The function of participles is not always easy to pin down. Here, each participle somehow explains the main verb. Just how is less clear, since adverbial participles can have a variety of applications, here possibly temporal, manner, instrumental, or causal; some translators call upon attendant circumstance, treating them like verbs.⁴⁴ This chart show some of the variety among a few major English translations.

		A	B	C	
1	KJV, ASV, NASV, NJB	mentioning	remembering	knowing	open, open, open
2	RSV, NIV, ESV	mentioning	remembering	for we know	open, open, causal
3	NRSV	we mention	because we recall	we know	temporal, causal, temporal
4	NET	as we mention	because we recall	we know	manner, causal, temporal

These are different. When “-ing” is used by itself, the application is left **open** to the reader. “As” may imply **manner**. “For or because” is **causal**. Temporal implies “when”. Which one is *right*? Actually, the grammar *requires* only some relationship of the participles with the verb, but *it does not specify what kind of relationship*. For example, Malherbe marks the group as *temporal, causal, causal*;⁴⁵ but Weima says

³⁹ Merkle’s 2016 volume in the EGGNT on Ephesians is an especially good example in this respect. And I note that the volume for 1-2Thessalonians in this series, assigned to David W. Chapman, has no publication date as yet.

⁴⁰ For such a commentary, see Collier 2018 chapter 13 and 14.

⁴¹ “Run-on” does not mean sloppy or aimless. It simply means “continuing on.”

⁴² εἰδότες (v. 4) technically perfect, but functionally present. BDAG οἶδα. But see Sedlacek 2016.

⁴³ Greek aspect: Campbell 2015, 106-108; Köstenberger 2016, 229ff; Wallace 1996, 499-512; Sedlacek 2017ab

⁴⁴ See the grammars for explanations, e.g., Wallace 612ff.

⁴⁵ Malherbe 2000, 107ff.

1Th 1:2-7—Greek Text

²Εὐχαριστοῦμεν τῷ θεῷ
πάντοτε

μνησίαν ποιούμενοι

ἀδιαλείπτως

³μνημονεύοντες ὑμῶν

τοῦ ἔργου τῆς πίστεως

καὶ τοῦ κόπου τῆς ἀγάπης

καὶ τῆς ὑπομονῆς τῆς ἐλπίδος

τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ

ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν,

⁴εἰδότες,

ἀδελφοὶ ἠγαπημένοι ὑπὸ [τοῦ] θεοῦ,

τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν,

⁵ὅτι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν

οὐκ ἐγενήθη

εἰς ὑμᾶς

ἐν λόγῳ μόνον

ἀλλὰ καὶ

ἐν δυνάμει

καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ

καὶ [ἐν] πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ·

καθὼς οἴδατε οἷοι

ἐγενήθημεν

[ἐν] ὑμῖν ἡ

δι' ὑμᾶς·

⁶καὶ ὑμεῖς

μιμηταὶ ἡμῶν

ἐγενήθητε

καὶ τοῦ κυρίου,

δεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον

ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ

μετὰ χαρᾶς πνεύματος ἁγίου,

⁷ὥστε γενέσθαι

ὑμᾶς τύπον

πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν

ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ

καὶ ἐν τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ·

²We give thanks to God,

always

concerning all of you

making mention

upon our prayers

continually

remembering of you

the work of faith

the labor of love

and the patience of hope

of our Lord Jesus Christ

before our God and father

knowing

brothers being loved by God

the election of you (all)

that/because our gospel

did not **become**

to you (all)

in word only

but also

in power

and in the holy spirit

and in full assurance much

just as you know what kind of [men]

we **became**

among you [all]

because of you [all]

and you [all]

imitators of us

[you] **became**

and of the Lord

having received the word

in much tribulation

with the joy of the holy spirit

so that to **become**

you [all] an example

to all those who believe

in Macedonia

and in Achaia

*instrumental, causal, causal.*⁴⁶ In fact, Weima says that the *grammatical structure* is parallel, but that the *meaning or function* is not,⁴⁷ and he builds a case around cause: immediate cause 1:3; ultimate cause 1:4-5; additional causes 1:6-10. Hence, for him: “We give thanks *as we make mention, because we remember, because we know.*” Does the grammar require this? Weima admits: no, this is “a theological judgment by modern interpreters and not one explicitly in the text.”⁴⁸

In such cases, it is easy to read all kinds of things into the text (such as *cause*, making it more specific than the author may have intended), and it is best to stay as simple and as general as possible. So then, although it is clearly possible to regard these in a variety of ways, *there is no compelling reason to consider any of these as anything more than general, present tense temporal*⁴⁹ *participles, with an emphasis on how we always are praying for you.* Like so:

²... how thankful we are:
 continually *making mention* . . .
 ever ³*remembering* . . . ⁴
 all the while *basking in the knowledge* . . .

Hence, *cause* is not clearly the point, and may not be the point at all; Paul is more likely forcefully expressing how thankful he is for them.

3. The third participle is followed by **three subordinating conjunctions**: ὅτι|*hoti*, καθὼς|*kathōs* (v. 5) and ὥστε|*hōste* (v. 7) (“that or because,” “just as,” and “so that”). Is each one merely subordinated to the idea just before it; or do they stand out structurally since they are all used just before a form of γίνομαι|*ginomai* “to become”? Again, this can be debated.

⁴⁶ Weima 2014, 80.

⁴⁷ Weima 2014, 82f.

⁴⁸ Weima 2014, 84.

⁴⁹ Another possibility that no one talks about is a *participle of result*. Although Wallace 638 does not include 1Th 1:2-4 in this category, his emphatic description may fit, that the action of such participles in relation to their verb “**is thus actually simultaneous, giving the logical outcome of the verb**” [his bold and italics, gdc]. It would read like this:

²... how thankful we are [resulting in that we are]:
 continually *making mention* . . .
 ever ³*remembering* . . . ⁴
 all the while *basking in the knowledge* . . .

Like others, *Going Deeper* 331fn supports the causal function “knowing” [v. 4]: “because we know.” But it is interesting to carefully note their treatment of Eph 5:18-21, the verb [“be filled with the spirit”] and five participles, which they identify as *participles of result*. 1Th 1:2-4 may be comparable to this.

4. In vv. 5-7, **four forms of the same verb** (γίνομαι|*ginomai*) appear like so: “it became, we became, you became, that you *might become*.” Does this represent some sort of progression of *what might be(come) for you*. Taken together with #3 above, these appear to work together structurally.
5. Important questions include whether to understand v.5 ὅτι|*hoti* as causal (“because”) or epexegetical/explanatory (“namely, for”). Does it refer only to “knowing”, and thus telling how election happened, like this: “we give thanks . . . knowing your election, **namely** [ὅτι] how our Gospel was brought”); or a general reference back to the main verb, like this: “We give thanks . . . that our gospel was brought.”

Also significant are:

6. the importance and function of all of the **prepositional phrases**;
7. the odd appearance (in v. 6) of δεξάμενοι|*dexamenoi* “**having received**” (what is it related to?);
8. some apparent redundancy (vv. 5 and 6) respecting the **Holy Spirit**, as well as
9. the duplication of πολλῆ|*pollē*, “**much**”.

1Th 1:5-7—Comments

Now, at last, let’s take this a step further. Just how tediously long or awkward is this text after all? A closer look at 1:5-7 may take us beyond some of the chaos. I will now argue that there is an incredibly elegant balance to the entire section, not for mere literary art, but for discourse purposes.⁵⁰ So then, unconcerned (at the moment) about any formal theory that tells me how this text must be divided, what I see is that the three coordinating conjunctions in vv. 5-7 (ὅτι, καθὼς, and ὥστε) are in league with the four forms of γίνομαι|*ginomai* “become” and should be taken as markers. When taken together with the two parallel phrases about the Holy Spirit, this text *divides itself up naturally* into three

⁵⁰ I suggest 1:5b-6 as a formal and intended micro-*chiasmus* by the author or his amanuensis for discourse purposes, fully aware that some current scholars have either rejected out-of-hand, or at least have sharply criticized, the notion that *chiasmus* exists in the NT. E.g., see Porter 1998, which fifteen years later he himself (2012c, 50) overrates as “a refutation of the finding of chiasms in the New Testament.” The initial article (by Porter and Reed) was a needed warning against careless approaches, especially for so-called macro-chiasms of whole books. But it hardly renders *chiasmus* in the NT moot. More valuable are the appropriate critical cautions and guidelines in especially Blomberg 1989; Slusser 2002; deSilva 2008, and Heath 2012. Since to my knowledge, no one has suggested 1Th1:5b-6 as chiasmic, my description above will stand as a demonstration on its own merits. See additionally Lund 1942; Welch 1981b; Thomson 1995; Welch 1995; Hall 1998; Welch 1999; Heil 2007; Breck 2008; York 2013; Nässelqvist 2015; (Interestingly, see also Porter 1990 who appeals to chiasm to solve a problem in Ephesians.)

5 ὅτι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ ἐγενήθη
εἰς ὑμᾶς
ἐν λόγῳ μόνον
ἀλλὰ καὶ
ἐν δυνάμει

For our Gospel not merely "came to be"
to you
in word only
but also
in power

καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ
καὶ [ἐν] πληροφῶρῃ πολλῇ,
καθὼς οἴδατε οἳοι
ἐγενήθημεν
[ἐν] ὑμῖν
δι' ὑμᾶς·
6 καὶ ὑμεῖς
μιμηταὶ ἡμῶν
ἐγενήθητε
καὶ τοῦ κυρίου,
δεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον
ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ
μετὰ χαρᾶς πνεύματος ἁγίου,

and in the Holy Spirit
and in much confidence
just as you know how
we "came to be"
among you
for you;
and you
imitators of us
you "came to be"
and of KURIOS
having received the word
in much tribulation
with the joy of the Holy Spirit

7 ὥστε γενέσθαι
ὑμᾶς τύπον
πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν
ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ
καὶ
ἐν τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ·

So that might "come to be"
you, an example
to all who believe
in Macedonia
and
in Achaia;

blocks. Such intricate textual symmetry can hardly be dismissed merely to reader creativity or to authorial accident. I stress again, that this is not for the sake of clever literary art, but for the purpose of public presentation, because when read aloud, following these markers can support a certain *excitement* or *breathlessness*. It also completely solves the problem of the so-called awkwardness of these clauses.

1. The very top and bottom blocks (vv. 5a and 7) are not only parallel, they form an *inclusio* with sub-items, all balanced with their counterpart: they are like a header (v. 5) and a footer (v. 7), capping the "Holy Spirit" chiasm of 5b-6. "The gospel came . . . that you might become"; and each of these is followed by "you" with datives: (v. 5) "in word and in power" . . . , and (v. 7) to the believers "in Macedonia and in Achaia";

2. The whole central block, then (vv. 5b-6), is enclosed with (encircled by) “the Holy Spirit” from top to bottom (see item 7 below); marking a *heavy* emphasis that *entirely and only* in the Holy Spirit the gospel came to *you*, and *you* responded in the realm of the Holy Spirit;
3. at the very center, the phrases, “we came . . . you became,” emphasize you, which is repeated;
4. the fact that the phrase (v. 6) “and of KURIOS” is out of place actually emphasizes its importance: “you became imitators of us—and *most certainly of the LORD!*” (which also includes Paul and his party as imitators of the LORD); here, again, Paul is stating just how important his personal relationship to them is, and how he himself is confirmed among them using an elegant and sophisticated style that English readers only rarely get to see;
5. the phrase (v. 5b) “just as you know” is balanced with “having received the word,” i.e., what is known by experience is balanced by the reception of the preached word;
6. the phrase “with *much* (πολλῆ) conviction” (this is a bit of an overkill: “*much full* assurance or certainty”)⁵¹ is verbally balanced with “in the midst of *much* (πολλῆ) tribulation”;
7. this leads back again to the Holy Spirit (see item 2 above);

1Th 1:8-10—Comments

Moving then to 1:8-10: **V. 8** appears not only to be broken (called anacoluthon), having two subjects and two verbs in a prepositional phrase, but also to have the verbs, strangely, at opposite ends. Is this awkward? Yes, at least from some points of view.

To make this worse, both vv. 8 and 9 have γὰρ *gar*, “for,” lending to a feeling of running a marathon more than any interest in constructing a “proper sentence.” However, this gives a sense of continuing to move, that what is about to be said is related to what has gone before—an unfinished feeling of not yet crossing the finish line. In this sense, v. 8 marks a running *transition*, not a set-in-concrete *break*.

As mentioned earlier, this is the place where Best⁵² says “this is a difficult sentence” and “an awkward break and is clumsy” and “Paul has attempted to combine two ideas

⁵¹ πληροφορία occurs only 4x in biblical texts (Col. 2:2; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 6:11; 10:22), only here with πολλῆ

⁵² Best 1977, 80.

1Th 1:8-10—Greek Text

Ἐξ ὑμῶν γὰρ		for from you
ἐξήχηται		has sounded forth
ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου		the word of the Lord
οὐ μόνον ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ [ἐν τῇ] Ἀχαΐᾳ,		not only in Macedonia and in Achaia
ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ τόπῳ		but in every place
ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν		the faith of you toward God
ἐξελήλυθεν,		has gone forth
ὥστε μὴ χρεΐαν ἔχειν ἡμᾶς λαλεῖν τι·		so that no need for us to speak anything
Ἐαυτοῖς γὰρ		for they themselves
	περὶ ἡμῶν	concerning us
ἀπαγγέλλουσιν		announce
ὁποῖαν εἴσοδον ἔσχομεν		what sort of entrance we had
	πρὸς ὑμᾶς,	with you
καὶ πῶς ἐπεστρέψατε		and how you turned
	πρὸς τὸν θεὸν	to God
	ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων	from idols
δολεῦσιν		to serve
θεῶ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ		God, the living and true
¹⁰ καὶ ἀναμένειν		and to await
τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ		the son of him
	ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν,	from the heavens
ὃν ἤγειρεν		whom he raised
	ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν,	from the dead
Ἰησοῦν		Jesus
τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς		the one rescuing us
	ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς	from the wrath
	τῆς ἐρχομένης.	[that is] coming

into one"; and where Frame⁵³ equally speaks of the problems of a broken sentence. And where Weima agrees with such assessments.⁵⁴

However, Weima also does a very puzzling thing here. He notes and then essentially ignores and dismisses the relevance of the statement by Richard⁵⁵ that the awkwardness of v. 8 can be resolved by seeing it as a chiasm. Weima footnotes it and suggests that the content is not balanced, only some grammatical features. Apparently, he sees the proposed "structure" as merely academic, not solving any real problem. So, he responds in the body of his text:

⁵³ Frame 1912, 85f.

⁵⁴ Weima 2014, 104.

⁵⁵ Richard 1995, 70-71.

A more likely reason for the grammatical difficulty of this verse, however, is that Paul has combined into one sentence two related yet distinct evangelistic activities carried out by the Thessalonians. . . ⁵⁶

In response, first, it comes across as extremely curious that we should hold on to a supposed grammatical difficulty and to offer a hypothetical (and dubious) rationale for that difficulty, than to accede to a possible unpopular solution inherent in the text itself— a chiasm. Second, Weima does not seem to consider that the text may be written the way it is *for discourse reasons*.

The so-called *awkwardness* that has dominated the discussion of v. 8 simply melts away by seeing that the verbs are the outer edges of a discourse-motivated *chiasmus*,⁵⁷ “ringing out . . . going out,” where “the word of the Lord” is balanced by “your faith toward God”;⁵⁸ and where the next phrase, “Achaia and Macedonia” is balanced by “in every place.”⁵⁹ From a standpoint of public reading, even in English, this is not awkward at all, but a beautiful focus on how they are said to be representing faith:

it is sounding forth
this word of the Lord
not only in Macedonia and in Achaia
but in every place
this faith which you have toward God
it is going out!

It may be that scholars don’t talk this way, but preachers do!

V. 9, then, has the same feel of being *non-stop*. It is governed by a single “they announce to us” followed by what they announce, namely: *our* entrance and *your* response. And what is that response? *To serve* and *to await* (v. 10). The final lines all focus on Jesus: “his son, whom he raised, Jesus, who rescues us.” All of the prepositional phrases here have an interesting pull as well: “toward God, from idols; from the heavens, from the dead ones, and from the wrath which is coming.”

All of this is easily read Paul making one prolonged *breathless* exhale of thankfulness, unobstructed, all the way back from v. 2, and including the running transition at v. 8.

⁵⁶ Weima 2014, 104.

⁵⁷ I did not get this from Richard 1995, but saw it on my own. I was delighted to find it later as a corroborating voice.

⁵⁸ These two concepts are clearly related. Not only does Lord and God appear in them, more importantly, the word of the Lord is the preached message, the faith which you have towards God is the response to the preaching, or rather, the motivation for preaching it.

⁵⁹ See Richard 1995, 70-71. The fact that one line is longer than another is immaterial. The question is balanced thought-patterns pointing to locations; one specific, the other universal.

Conclusion:

Stepping back for a second to comment on the whole letter, I think probably most scholars recognize that this letter is not a philosophical or moral treatise, not merely a rhetorical discourse, not purely an ancient piece for stage or public performance, not in essence a literary piece designed for its beauty or anonymity, and not a clear-cut example of any particular Greco-Roman letter or rhetorical-form. It might have elements or traces of any or all of these, but it is both less than and more than these. For of all the “nuts-and-bolts-components” that might make up this letter, more significant than all of them are the shades of intimate conversation which cover, envelope, and bind the whole. Whatever else this letter might have in it and however it might be constructed or related to other formal or traditional material, all of that is merely support material or buttressing strategies for the final intended product: *This letter is above all intended as a letter of intimate apostolic conversation;*⁶⁰ the flowing style, here, helps Paul *accomplish it*.

It is in this pursuit of *ongoing conversation* that 1Th 1:2-10 reveals an exuberant “thankfulness” in a sustained breathless moment. Being something of Paul’s *prayer language*, this text is less concerned with its technical conformity than with its fluidity and effulgence—its impact and appeal in an oral setting. And in this cause, the grammatical flow of this text is an agent: the verb with its participles, the subordinating conjunctions, the chiasmic structures in vv. 5a-7 and v. 8,⁶¹ and the final two occurrences of γὰρ all promote an oral reading posture of expectancy.

It has not been my attempt to prove that there is only one sentence in 1Th 1:2-10; nor am I “excited” about a new chiasmic toy I think I have found in this text. Instead I’m directly addressing the longstanding question of “awkwardness” in this text, and I am suggesting that paying attention to *grammatical flow as it may have been written for the sake of public (oral) presentation* may help to address that. I do think that there are two fairly clear chiasms here, which by themselves as mere “literary devices” do not mean much; but if they are considered in the contextual flow of this text *from a speaking perspective*, all of the contextual considerations together literally solve the problem of “awkwardness.”

I suggest that the grammatical flow of this text is dynamic and progressive, and I think that the *very form* of that text helps to promote a feeling of anticipation and elation.⁶² For that reason, I prefer to read this text aloud as one long *breathless* sentence.

⁶⁰ This is not a proposed “ancient form.” It is a suggestion about what Paul was *trying* to do.

⁶¹ The point is not that the mere existence of a couple of chiasmic structures implies an “excitement” in the author; it is rather the progressive grammatical build-up of the various parts coming together.

⁶² When English translations, break the text into individual sentences or paragraphs, they might not be technically *wrong* for translation purposes for eighth-grade English readers, but they just might end up interfering with and slowing down the flow of the text—they might even change the *focus* of that text. The point here is not how fast the text is read, but how, with intent, the text is relentless to the end.

1Thessalonians 1:2-10

Translated by Gary D. Collier

²When we talk to God, we always tell him **how thankful we are** for all of you, **continually speaking** your names in our prayers; **ever** ³**upholding** before our God and Father how dynamic is your faith, how diligent is your love, and how determined is your hope in our LORD Jesus Christ; ⁴**all the while basking** in the knowledge that you are God's elect (O dear friends, how loved by God you are!);⁵

for truly, our Christ–Message *“came to be”* for you,
not merely in talk, but also in power;

both in the Holy Spirit
and with overwhelming proof;
which you know was how
“we came to be”
in the midst of you,
for the sake of you; ⁶so that you,
as imitators of us
“you came to be,”
yes, and of the LORD Jesus,
having received the delivered word
in the middle of overwhelming distress
with a joy produced by the Holy Spirit;⁷

so that you yourselves *“came to be”* an example for all the believers
in Macedonia and in Achaia;⁸

for from you has echoed out like rolling thunder
the word of the Lord,
not only into Macedonia and Achaia, but everywhere we go,
your faithfulness to God
has already gone forth;

so much so that we don't need to say a thing; ⁹

for on their own, they tell us about **what sort of entrance we made** into your lives, and **how you turned to God** from idols, to become a slave to God, who is real and alive,¹⁰ all the while expecting his Son to come from the heavens—Jesus: the one he has raised from the realm of the dead; the one who rescues us from the coming wrath!

² **Εὐχαριστούμεν** τῷ θεῷ
πάντοτε

περὶ πάντων ὑμῶν
μνεῖαν **ποιούμενοι**
ἐπὶ τῶν προσευχῶν ἡμῶν,

ἀδιαλείπτως
³ **μνημονεύοντες** ὑμῶν
τοῦ ἔργου τῆς πίστεως
καὶ τοῦ κόπου τῆς ἀγάπης
καὶ τῆς ὑπομονῆς τῆς ἐλπίδος
τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν,

⁴ **εἰδότες,**
ἀδελφοὶ ἠγαπημένοι ὑπὸ [τοῦ] θεοῦ,
τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν,

⁵ **ὅτι** τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν οὐκ **ἐγενήθη**
εἰς ὑμᾶς
ἐν λόγῳ μόνον
ἀλλὰ καὶ
ἐν δυνάμει

καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ
καὶ [ἐν] πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ,
καθὼς οἴδατε οἷοι
ἐγενήθημεν
[ἐν] ὑμῖν
δι' ὑμᾶς·
⁶ καὶ ὑμεῖς
μιμηταὶ ἡμῶν
ἐγενήθητε
καὶ τοῦ κυρίου,
δεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον
ἐν θλίψει πολλῇ
μετὰ χαρᾶς πνεύματος ἁγίου,

⁷ **ὥστε γενέσθαι**
ὑμᾶς τύπον
πᾶσιν τοῖς πιστεύουσιν
ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ
καὶ
ἐν τῇ Ἀχαΐᾳ·

⁸ ἀφ' ὑμῶν γὰρ
ἐξήχηται
ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου
οὐ μόνον ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ καὶ [ἐν τῇ] Ἀχαΐᾳ,
ἀλλ' ἐν παντί τόπῳ
ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεὸν
ἐξελέλυθεν,

ὥστε μὴ χρεῖαν ἔχειν ἡμᾶς λαλεῖν τι·

⁹ αὐτοὶ γὰρ περὶ ἡμῶν
ἀπαγγέλλουσιν
ὅποιαν εἴσοδον ἔσχομεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς,
καὶ πῶς ἐπεστρέψατε πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων
δουλεύειν
θεῷ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ
¹⁰ καὶ ἀναμένειν
τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν,
ὃν ἠγείρειν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν,
Ἰησοῦν
τὸν ὀνούμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης.

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D. Abbreviations for Greek Reference Works

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- BDAG W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, F. W. Gingrich, and F. W. Danker, Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd edition. Chicago, 2000.
- BDF F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. W. Funk, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. Chicago, 1961.
- Campbell 2015 Campbell, Constantine. *Advances in the Study of Greek: New Insights for Reading the New Testament*. Zondervan 2015.
- GDG Köstenberger, Andreas J., Benjamin Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament*. B&H Academic, 2016.

LN	Louw-Nida <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains</i> , 2nd Edition, Edited by J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida. United Bible Societies, New York, NY, 1988.
LSJ	Liddell-Scott-Jones: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> , 9th Revised Edition, by Henry George Liddell, Robert Scott, Henry Stuart Jones, and Robert McKenzie. Oxford, 1996.
LXX	Septuagint (the Greek OT)
Moule	Moule, C. F. D. <i>An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek</i> . Cambridge, 1953.
MM	J. H. Moulton and G. Milligan, <i>The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament</i>
Moule 1953	Moule, C. F. D. <i>An Idiom-Book of New Testament Greek</i> . Cambridge, 1953.
NA28	Nestle-Aland. <i>Novum Testamentum Graece</i> . 28 th edition, Stuttgart, 2013.
Porter 1994	Porter, Stanley E. <i>Idioms of the Greek New Testament</i> . Biblical Languages: Greek 2. Sheffield, 1992. 2 nd Ed. 1994.
Porter 2015	Porter, Stanley E. <i>Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament: Studies in Tools, Methods, and Practice</i> . Baker Academic, 2015.
Rob	Robertson, A. T. <i>A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research</i> . Broadman, 1934.
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Sedlacek 2017a	Sedlacek, James. "Connecting the Morphology of the Greek Perfect to its Aspectual Properties." Unpublished Paper for SCJC 2017.
Sedlacek 2017b	Sedlacek, James. "Specialised Uses for the Perfect Tense-form in the Pauline Epistles: A Pragmatic Analysis of Perfect Usage in Epistolary Literature." Unpublished paper presented at the annual British New Testament Conference, at St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, Ireland. 2017.
Smyth	Smyth, Herbert. <i>Greek Grammar</i> . Harvard, 1920.
TCGNT	Metzger, Bruce. <i>A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament</i> . United Bible Societies, 1971; 2 nd ed. 1994.
TDNT	<i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , 10 volumes 1964-1976. Ed. by G. Kittel, G. W. Bromiley & G. Friedrich
TR	Textus Receptus, or "Received Text"
UBS4	United Bible Society Greek NT, 4 th ed.
Wallace	Wallace, Daniel B. <i>Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics</i> . An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament. Zondervan, 1996.

E. Abbreviations for Other Resources

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary Series
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i> , D. N. Freedman, ed.,
ANF	The Ante-Nicene Fathers
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentary
AYBRL	Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament.
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin: A Journal of Bible and Theology</i>
CBQ	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CPNIVC	College Press NIV Commentary
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad novum testamentum
CS	<i>Christian Studies</i>
DNTB	<i>Dictionary of New Testament Background</i> . IVP, 2000.
DPL	<i>Dictionary of Paul and His Letters</i> . IVP, 1993.
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
HTS	<i>Harvard Theological Studies</i>
IB	<i>Interpreter's Bible</i>
IBC	<i>Interpretation: A Biblical Commentary for Preaching and Teaching</i>
IBR	Institute for Biblical Research
ICC	International Critical Commentary
IDB	G. A. Buttrick, ed., <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i>
IDB(S)	<i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i>
Interp	<i>Interpretation</i>
ISBERev	G. W. Bromiley, ed., <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, rev.</i>
IVP	Inter-Varsity
IVPNTCS	Inter-Varsity New Testament Commentary Series

JBC	<i>Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>
JBL	<i>The Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
JETS	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
JSNT	<i>The Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LWC	Living Word Commentary Series
NCBC	New Century Bible Commentary
NETS	<i>A New English Translation of the Septuagint</i> , by the International Organization of Septuagint and Cognate Studies, Inc., 2007
NIBC	New International Bible Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDB	<i>The New Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible</i> . 5 volumes. Abingdon, 2009.
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
NJBC	R. E. Brown et al., eds., <i>The New Jerome Biblical Commentary</i>
NovT	<i>Novum Testamentum</i>
NTS	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
ResQ	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
SacPag	Sacra Pagina
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBLSem	<i>SBL Seminar Papers</i>
SCJ	<i>Stone-Campbell Journal</i>
SCJC	Stone-Campbell Journal Conference
SNTSMS	Society for the Study of the New Testament Monograph Series
SP	Scholars' Press
TynBul	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
WBC	<i>Word Biblical Commentary</i>