

JEROME MURPHY-O'CONNOR ON BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD: REVIEW AND RESPONSE

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Introduction – “Baptized for the Dead’ (1 Cor 15:29): A Corinthian Slogan?,” *RB* 88.4 (1981): 532–43; “Baptized for the Dead’ (1 Cor 15:29): A Corinthian Slogan?,” in *Keys to First Corinthians: Revisiting the Major Issues* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 242–56.

Summary

Οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν is a Corinthian slogan

Βαπτίζεσθαι has the broader Hellenistic sense of “to be destroyed”

Νεκρός has an existential sense

Response

Criteria for establishing οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν as a pejorative Corinthian slogan – Jay E. Smith, “Slogans in 1 Corinthians,” *BibSac* 167 (2010): 68–88 [(1) an explicit introductory formula, (2) a brief statement or generalization in the present tense, (3) features that enhance memorability (e.g., parallelism), (4) repetition (e.g., occurrence elsewhere in the Corinthian correspondence), (5) diatribe or “imaginary” dialogue, (6) language or ideas unusual for Paul, (7) contextual or syntactic dislocation, (8) sharp rebuttal, (9) language or ideas that other contexts suggest is distinctively Corinthian, (10) congruency with the immediate context, (11) observation by multiple interpreters, and (12) convergence of multiple kinds of evidence]

Linkage between baptism and resurrection

Interpretation of influence from Philonic Judaism

Νεκρός as a reference to existential death

Treatment of ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν in v. 29b – “If those who are really [i.e., physically] dead are not raised why indeed are they [i.e., Paul and his associates] being destroyed on their account [i.e., on account of ‘those who have died or will die’].” (p. 250)

Paul's selective (non-)use of οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν

Conclusion