

A Pneumatology of Race in the Gospel of John: An Ethnocritical Study. By Rodolfo Estrada Galvan, III. Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2019. 362 pp.

Rodolfo Galvan Estrada, III, is a New Testament scholar who currently serves at Vanguard University. His academic credentials include a PhD from Duke Divinity School. His expertise in New Testament and his experience as a Mexican-American provide the background for this ethnographic exploration in which he connects the work of the Spirit in the Gospel of John with a narrative of subversion in which the ethnic ideologies that could have affected the Johannine community are redefined in light of the Spirit's renewal.

The first part of the book establishes the different nuances of Johannine pneumatology and the ethnic issues surrounding the original audience. The author describes how the pneumatology of John's gospel differs from the Synoptics, unveiling perspectives that include an eschatological, polemical, and socio-scientific understanding. The main theme for Estrada is that the Spirit can be properly understood in the Fourth Gospel as the social context of the Johannine community (13). His thesis explores the implications of a pneumatic discourse that responds to "the ethnic ideologies of the Greco-Roman world" (23). To reach his objective, he employs the ethnocritical method to insert the ministry of the Spirit in a multiethnic reality that was present in the Greco-Roman world. Estrada's pneumatology of race starts with the history of the socio-cultural ideologies of the Greeks and Romans, and their implications to the relationship with the Jewish community.

Part two explores the central argument of the author in light of the Spirit's appearances in the discourses of Jesus. Estrada applies his thesis to instances in which Jesus interacts with people from different ethnic backgrounds and social statuses. For the author, the Spirit's role in Jesus' discourse has cultural implications for the Johannine communities. The author places the ethnocritical lens to conclude that the Spirit anoints Jesus to reach to all ethnicities, facilitates spiritual birth to non-Jews without the natural genealogies that created racial prejudice and superiority in Israel, calls for a unified corporate worship without mutual rejections, and warrants infilling for Jews and Greeks alike. In all of the chapters of this section, Estrada summarizes the pneumatological truths that would have deeply transformed the inter-ethnic relationships of the Johannine community. Within the overall argument of part two, there is a recurrent theme that emerges: the work of the Spirit throughout the narrative is both the ideal picture and the prophetic reality to heal the prejudices that could have affected members of the Johannine community.

Finally, in part three, the author explores the Spirit as paraclete in light of impending persecution for the disciples. The author grounds the Spirit-paraclete ministry in the

Farewell Discourses to walk with the disciples' in their impending persecution. Estrada posits that the world is understood as an ethnic group that will persecute the disciples and the ethnic Johannine community. His argument closes by interpreting the Johannine Pentecost as an event that moves the Johannine community into a hostile world to proclaim their faith as true children of God. For the author, the ethnic ideologies that were imported from the Greco-Roman world provided the context to see the Spirit as the source of a pneumatoethnic identity for the Johannine community. Such ministry was prescriptive because the Johannine community had a solution against racial inequality and reconciliation. The implications of this "pneumatic solution" (298) carries out perpetually as believers today must learn to live in unity in a world that could be as ethnically oppressive as the Greco-Roman society in the New Testament.

The strongest arguments of the author relate to the understanding of the cultural background of the Greco-Roman world to which the audience belonged. His thorough research of historical documents and commentaries demonstrates how the ethnic complexities of the original audience galvanized a distinct pneumatology. His ethnographic approach nuanced widely accepted theological truths in Johannine literature. Likewise, the author's approach presented theories that could solve problematic passage such as the flesh and Spirit discourse of John 6 (170) and the open-ended nature of the Johannine Pentecost (287).

The author also successfully handles a presumptive bias due to his ethnic identity. Despite proposing new, and occasionally ground-breaking, insights to Johannine scholarship, he is never off-tempo with other commentaries, nor does he impose an anachronistic lens to his study of the Fourth Gospel. He accomplishes this by exploring the layers of the multiethnic cultural context to cement his conclusion that it played a part in the pneumatology of the Johannine community. As the discussion moves to the Farewell Discourses, the author's assumption that multiple ethnic ideologies necessitated a pneumatology of unity slightly fades to accommodate more traditional pneumatological theories, albeit with a focus on ethnic identity language.

Rodolfo Estrada has provided a vital addition to New Testament studies—one that is apropos with the current times of ethnic and racial differences affecting society. The contributions of this volume could further the discipline of contextual hermeneutics and popularize similar ethnographic studies in other portions of biblical literature. It could also serve as a scholarly demonstration of contextual theology on the biblical text emerging from a member of the Latino Diaspora in the United States.

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