

Charles Lee Irons

The Righteousness of God

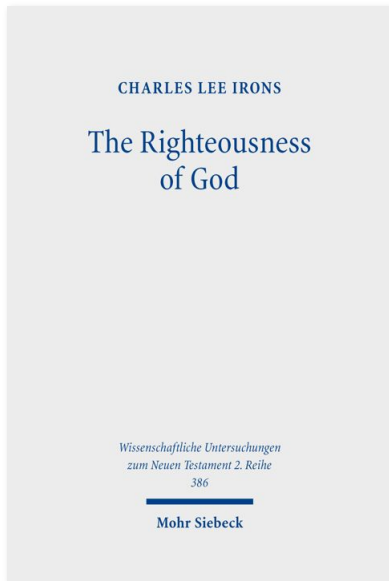
A Lexical Examination of the Covenant-Faithfulness Interpretation

[The Righteousness of God]

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Advocates of the New Perspective on Paul appeal to the view that »righteousness« in biblical theology is a Verhältnisbegriff (relational concept). This is the view that »righteousness« does not mean conformity to a norm, nor is it an essentially legal concept; rather, »righteousness« denotes the fulfillment of the demands of a relationship, since the relationship itself is the norm. This relational interpretation of »righteousness« was first put forward by Hermann Cremer in 1899 and exercised a profound influence in biblical scholarship throughout the 20th century. It lies at the root of the New Perspective claim that »the righteousness of God« in Paul is a cipher for God's saving faithfulness to his covenant, a view defended by N. T. Wright, among others. Charles Lee Irons provides a critical examination of Cremer's chief arguments for the relational, covenant-faithfulness interpretation. The author argues instead for the view that »the righteousness of God« in Rom 1:17; 3:21-22; 10:3; 2 Cor 5:21; and Phil 3:9 is the status of righteousness that comes from God as a gift.

Charles Lee Irons Born 1968; 1992 BA in Greek at UCLA; 1996 MDiv in Biblical Studies at Westminster Seminary California; 2011 PhD in New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena; currently Senior Research Administrator at Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science in Los Angeles.



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