This volume examines 1 Corinthians 1–4 within first-century politics, demonstrating the significance of Corinth’s constitution to the interpretation of Paul’s letter. Bradley J. Bitner shows that Paul carefully considered the Roman colonial context of Corinth, which underlay numerous ecclesial conflicts. Roman politics, however, cannot account for the entire shape of Paul’s response. Bridging the Hellenism-Judaism divide that has characterized much of Pauline scholarship, Bitner argues that Paul also appropriated Jewish biblical notions of covenant. Epigraphical and papyrological evidence indicates that his chosen content and manner are best understood with reference to an ecclesial politeia informed by a distinctively Christ-centered political theology. This emerges as a “politics of thanksgiving” in 1 Corinthians 1:4–9 and as a “politics of construction” in 3:5–4:5, where Paul redirects gratitude and glory to God in Christ. This innovative account of Paul’s political theology offers fresh insight into his pastoral strategy among nascent Gentile-Jewish assemblies.

Bradley J. Bitner is Tutor in New Testament and Greek at Oak Hill Theological College in London. He is the coeditor, with James R. Harrison, of New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity, Vol. 11 (forthcoming).
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Paul’s Political Strategy in 1 Corinthians 1–4

Constitution and Covenant

Volume 163

BRADLEY J. BITNER
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ABBREVIATIONS


**ABSA** The Annual of the British School at Athens  
**AE** L’Année Épigraphique  
**AJA** American Journal of Archaeology  
**BICSSup** Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London Supplement
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List of abbreviations


LHR Law and History Review


Muraoka Muraoka, T., A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint. Louvain, 2009

NovT Novum Testamentum


NTS New Testament Studies


OGIS Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae


PDubl Greek Papyri from Dublin


PLond Greek Papyri in the British Museum

POxy Oxyrhynchus Papyri

PSchoyen Papyri graecae Schøyen

PYadin The Documents from the Bar Kochba Period in the Cave of Letters

List of abbreviations

REA  Revue des études anciennes
REB  Revue des études byzantines
REG  Revue des études grecques
SB  Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten
SEG  Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum
SIG  Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum
TynBul  Tyndale Bulletin
West  West, A. B., Corinth, Volume VIII, Part II: Latin Inscriptions 1896–1926. Cambridge, 1931
ZNW  Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche
ZPE  Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik