



# **Galatians and the Imperial Cult: A Critical Analysis of the First-Century Social Context of Paul's Letter (Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament)**

*Justin K Hardin*

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Justin K. Hardin assesses the imperial cult as the background for understanding the social setting of Paul's letter to the Galatian churches. After estimating the influence of emperor worship and imperial ideology during the Julio-Claudian period, specifically in the province of Galatia, he then offers a fresh hypothesis for the situation of the Galatian churches. As such, this study is an important contribution to the ongoing debate on the importance of the imperial cult for the social and religious setting of the New Testament era. The argument is advanced in two parts. In Part One, the author undertakes a thematic sketch and assessment of emperor worship and imperial ideology during the Julio-Claudian period. In Part Two, he then turns to Paul's letter in order to evaluate the imperial cult as a backdrop from which to understand the crisis in Galatia.

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