

PhD Application Essay on Junia

Junia of Romans 16:7 is a subject for which, up until recently, I would have thought, “there is nothing new under the sun.” Surely scholars have said everything that there is to say about Junia’s gender and whether or not Paul truly meant to designate her among the apostles. Surely Eldon Jay Epp’s 2005 book, *Junia: The First Woman Apostle*, still serves as the definitive scholarly word on the subject.

Recently I began researching Junia myself, painstakingly prying into the primary sources that so many authors footnote without actually quoting, only to find a number of mistakes in the work of others. While many have made excellent (if sometimes polemical) contributions to the conversation on Junia, honest errors in their work have been absorbed by the church and are preached today as gospel truth on Romans 16:7. The definitive volume on Junia has yet to be written.

I envision a truly intersectional dissertation on Junia, a volume that begins with exegesis of Romans 16:7 and analysis of other female leaders in the New Testament and early Christianity, then segues into an examination of patristic and medieval commentary on Junia. I would then cover the relevant Reformation and Enlightenment commentators on Junia, the evolution of the masculine Junias, and a history of the modern-day controversy on the matter. My work would feature numerous original contributions to the conversation on Junia, including: (1) original translations of all Latin, Greek, and German commentary on Junia/s, (2) an essay on the 8th-century *Index Discipulorum* of Ps.-Epiphanius and its use among modern-day scholars, (3) a full response to Michael H. Burer’s 2015 article on Junia, engaging his arguments for the Greek grammar and syntax of *episemois en tois apostolois*, his use of late (4th and 5th century) sources in his exegetical analysis, as well as his neglect of the ECF commentary on Junia, (4) an analysis of Al Woford’s 2008 article on Yehuni as Junia, (5) a full summary and analysis of the last twenty years of Junia scholarship and Bible translation, wherein much has taken place. Throughout I would have opportunity to utilize my background in Hebrew, classical Latin, classical and koine Greek, early church history, patristics, medieval church history, reformation church history, Enlightenment church history, and modern-day history. As someone with a bachelor’s degree from one of the best classics programs in the country, an undergraduate minor in Hebrew, and a master’s degree in church history, I am ideally suited to undertake this cross-disciplinary task.