This book proposes a new and comprehensive chiastic structure as well as a new unifying theme for the letter of James. In accord with this structure that organizes its oral performance, the words “worship to live by” express what the letter as a whole is exhorting its audience to adopt. “Worship” includes not only liturgical worship but also the ethical behavior that complements it, so that the result is a holistic way of worshiping God. And the words “to live by” embrace the worshipful conduct by which to live out presently one’s birth to a new life as a believer before the final coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, with a view to the future eternal life to be granted at the last judgment as the outcome of such worship. In short, the letter of James urges its audience to practice the worship to live by now in order to live eternally.

“Although others have observed chiastic patterns in the Letter of James, John Paul Heil focuses upon macro- and micro-chiastic units determined primarily by linguistic parallels rather than thematic ones. At the heart of James, as revealed by its structure, Heil proposes a new unifying theme; that of ‘worship to live by.’ Provocative and clearly written, this book deserves consideration by all those interested in contemporary analyses of the ‘right strawy epistle.’”

—Alicia J. BATTEN
Professor, Religious Studies Department, University of Sydney
Author, What Are They Saying about the Letter of James? (2009)

“In his latest monograph, John P. Heil takes the reader on an innovative journey through the text. Postulating the letter to be composed of a series of microchiasms . . . within an overall macro-chiastic arrangement of its content, Heil brilliantly makes the case that James has written an epistolary homily . . . designed for oral performance with the goal of persuading the audience to adopt ‘worship to live by.’ This book is treasure trove of insight that will leave the reader surprised how easy it is to follow and accept Heil’s conclusions.”

—Peter SPITALER
Associate Professor, New Testament
Interim Chair and Director, Graduate Program, Villanova University

“In his most recent work, John P. Heil offers a decided contribution to studies on the Letter of James. Based on previous research into chiastic structures within a number of New Testament letters . . . Heil demonstrates similar chiastic structures within the Letter of James. Heil takes seriously James’s oral performance as a sermon delivered within the context of a worshipping community. This study offers unique insight into the Letter of James through its call to practice a holistic way of worship.”

—Patrick J. HARTIN
Professor of Religious Studies, Gonzaga University
Author, James (Sacra pagina 14; 2003)

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