

Paul and His Theology

PAULINE STUDIES (PAST) [3]



Edited by Stanley E. Porter

BRILL

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Pauline Studies

Edited by

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VOLUME 3

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PREFACE

This third volume in this series, *Pauline Studies*, is on Paul and his theology. It follows on from the series' two previous volumes, *The Pauline Canon*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (PAST 1; Leiden: Brill, 2004), and *Paul and his Opponents*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (PAST 2; Leiden: Brill, 2005). The reception to the first two volumes of this projected five (or more) volume series has continued to be very encouraging, especially as more and more contributors are agreeing to contribute to future volumes. I again wish to thank those who have made use of the previous volumes, those who have given such favorable reviews to these volumes and especially those who have profitably used the volumes in their own research. Like its predecessors, this volume brings together a number of different papers by leading scholars in recent discussion of the topic of Paul and his theology. The balance of this volume is generally reflective of the tenor of current discussion of the topic of Paul and his theology—although readers will note that there is no contribution on the center of Paul's theology (apart from my introduction), only one on the issue of Paul and the law, and two that address issues of trinitarian theology, among others. This volume also includes treatments of two significant interpreters of Paul—Melancthon and Deissmann—and their contribution to understanding his theology. Subsequent volumes currently scheduled to appear are as follows:

Volume 4: Paul's World

Volume 5: Paul: Jew, Greek and Roman

As I mentioned in previous volumes, I would like to invite any scholars interested in making contributions to one or more of these volumes to be in contact with me regarding submission. Contact information is provided below. The topics of the volumes are being defined and interpreted broadly, so that papers that deal, for example, with clearly related subjects, such as the Paul of the Letters and of Acts, Paul's rhetoric, and various social issues, we hope will be able to find a home in these collections of papers. Papers for the fourth and fifth volumes are already being gathered for publication,

and they promise to continue the pattern already established in previous volumes of providing a range of interesting papers on a variety of topics important to Pauline studies. I look forward to producing these volumes in a timely manner to keep the series moving forward with one volume appearing each year. We are also assessing topics for future volumes, with two further sets of five volumes each under consideration. These volumes are designed to extend and focus discussion of various issues in Pauline studies. I am optimistic that scholarly and readerly interest in this series will encourage us to move forward. Suggestions for future volumes are welcome.

I would again like to thank all of the individual authors for their worthy contribution to this third volume of essays in the PAST series. There is again little overlap in the contributors from the first two volumes (besides the present editor, only Craig Evans has contributed before), but this is not intentional. Multiple submissions by scholars with wide-ranging interests are welcome and encouraged. As I have stated previously—and it is no less true for the repetition—many, if not most, scholars would not be able to do their work if it were not for their institutions that support them. I again wish, on the authors' behalf, to thank their institutions for such tangible efforts, as well as the intangible encouragement and environments that enable such scholarship to take place. I would also like to thank the several people at Brill with whom I have worked over the years, including especially Louise Schouten on this project, who have continued to be an encouragement as this project not only took shape but has continued to develop and come to timely fruition. My sincere hope is that this volume will make a significant contribution to the topic of Paul's theology.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary
ABD	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
ABR	<i>Australian Biblical Review</i>
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
AJA	<i>American Journal of Archaeology</i>
AJBI	<i>Annual of the Japanese Biblical Institute</i>
AnBib	Analecta biblica
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
ATANT	Abhandlungen zur Theologie des Alten und Neuen Testaments
BBR	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
BDAG	W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , 3d ed., 1999
BDF	F. Blass and A. Debrunner, <i>A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> , ed. R. Funk
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
BETL	Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium
BEvT	Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie
BHT	Beiträge zur historischen Theologie
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>BibLeb</i>	<i>Bibel und Leben</i>
<i>BibSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BNTC	Black's New Testament Commentaries
BR	<i>Bible Review</i>
BT	<i>The Bible Translator</i>
BTB	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>BZ</i>	<i>Biblische Zeitschrift</i>
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology

<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
CC	Continental Commentaries
CNT	Commentaire du Nouveau Testament
ConBNT	Coniectanea neotestamentica
<i>CQ</i>	<i>Classical Quarterly</i>
CRINT	Compendia rerum iudaicarum ad Novum Testamentum
<i>CSR</i>	<i>Christian Scholar's Review</i>
<i>CTR</i>	<i>Criswell Theological Review</i>
DEL	Describing English Language
EBib	Études bibliques
EFN	Estudios de Filología Neotestamentaria
EKKNT	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>EncJud</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> , 16 vols.
<i>EstBib</i>	<i>Estudios bíblicos</i>
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemeridum theologiarum lovaniensium</i>
ETS Studies	Evangelical Theological Society Studies
<i>EvQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>EvT</i>	<i>Evangelische Theologie</i>
<i>EWNT</i>	H. Balz and G. Schneider (eds.), <i>Exegetische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> , 3 vols., 1980–1983
<i>ExpTim</i>	<i>The Expository Times</i>
FB	Forschung zur Bibel
<i>FN</i>	<i>Filología Neotestamentaria</i>
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
GTA	Göttinger theologischer Arbeiten
<i>HBT</i>	<i>Horizons in Biblical Theology</i>
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HNTC	Harper's New Testament Commentaries
HSS	Harvard Semitic Studies
<i>HTR</i>	<i>Harvard Theological Review</i>
HTS	Harvard Theological Studies
IBC	Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching
ICC	International Critical Commentary
<i>Int</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
IVPNTC	IVP New Testament Commentaries
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JR</i>	<i>Journal of Religion</i>

<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
KEK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (MeyerK)
KNT	Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
LCL	Loeb Classical Library
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
<i>LS</i>	<i>Louvain Studies</i>
MeyerK	Kritisch-exegetischer Kommentar über das Neue Testament (KEK)
MNTC	Moffatt New Testament Commentary
NCB	New Century Bible
NCIB	New Clarendon Bible
NEG	Neue Echter Bibel
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovTSup	Novum Testamentum Supplements
NTAbh	Neutestamentliche Abhandlungen
NTG	New Testament Guides
NTL	New Testament Library
NTM	New Testament Monographs
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
OBS	Oxford Bible Series
OTL	Old Testament Library
OTM	Oxford Theological Monographs
<i>OTP</i>	J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), <i>Old Testament Pseudepigrapha</i> , 2 vols.
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
<i>PWSup</i>	A. F. Pauly, <i>Paulys Realencyclopädia der classischen Altertumswissenschaft</i> , rev. G. Wissowa, Supplement
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review & Expositor</i>
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RSPT	Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
SANT	Studien zum Alten und Neuen Testaments
SBG	Studies in Biblical Greek
SBLDS	SBL Dissertation Series

SBLRBS	SBL Resources for Biblical Study
SBLSBS	SBL Sources for Biblical Study
SBLSCS	SBL Septuagint and Cognate Studies
SBLSP	SBL Seminar Papers
SBS	Stuttgarter Bibelstudien
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SD	Studies and Documents
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
<i>SEÅ</i>	<i>Svensk exegetisk årsbok</i>
<i>SJT</i>	<i>Scottish Journal of Theology</i>
SNT	Studien zum Neuen Testament
SNTG	Studies in New Testament Greek
SNTSMS	SNTS Monograph Series
SNTSU	Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt
SÖAW	Sitzungen der österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien
SP	Sacra Pagina
Str-B	H. L. Strack and P. Billerbeck, <i>Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch</i> , 6 vols., 1922–1961
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
TB	Theologische Bücherei: Neudrucke und Berichte aus dem 20. Jahrhundert
<i>TBei</i>	<i>Theologische Beiträge</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theological Dictionary of the New Testament</i> , trans. G. W. Bromiley, 10 vols., 1964–1976
TF	Theologische Forschung
THKNT	Theologischer Handkommentar zum Neuen Testament
<i>ThPK</i>	<i>Theologisch-praktische Quartalschrift</i>
<i>ThTo</i>	<i>Theology Today</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
<i>TLZ</i>	<i>Theologische Literaturzeitung</i>
TNTC	Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
<i>TTZ</i>	<i>Trierer theologische Zeitschrift</i>
<i>TWNT</i>	G. Kittel and G. Friedrich (eds.), <i>Theologische Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament</i> , 1932–1979
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>TZ</i>	<i>Theologische Zeitschrift</i>
UNT	Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
VE	<i>Vox evangelica</i>

<i>VR</i>	<i>Vox reformata</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WEC	Wycliffe Exegetical Commentary
WMANT	Wissenschaftliche Monographien zum Alten und Neuen Testament
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZBNT	Zürcher Bibelkommentare NT
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>
<i>ZTK</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche</i>

IS THERE A CENTER TO PAUL'S THEOLOGY?
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY OF PAUL
AND HIS THEOLOGY

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1. *Issues in the Study of Paul's Theology*

A question that has long occupied students of Paul is whether there is a definable center to his thought. A previous generation of interpreters did not find it insuperably difficult to posit that there was a central notion or even complex set of notions that motivated and centered his thinking—even though discussion of the issues surrounding “doing” New Testament theology has been with us for centuries.¹ For many this central Pauline notion was the concept of justification by faith, but others have suggested a variety of other ideas. Finding a center for Paul's theology has passed out of fashion in recent theological discussion, however, so that the result is often a more apparently fragmented picture of Paul's thought. More to the point, one of the major preoccupations of much recent theologizing is the issue of whether and how biblical theology, and in particular in this case New Testament theology, and even more particularly the theology of a particular author (here, Paul), should be done.² In this introductory essay, I wish to introduce some of the

¹ For historical overviews, see R. Morgan, *The Nature of New Testament Theology* (SBT Second Series 25; Naperville, Ill.: Allenson, 1973) esp. 1–67; G. Hasel, *New Testament Theology: Basic Issues in the Current Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978); H. Boers, *What Is New Testament Theology?* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); H. Räisänen, *Beyond New Testament Theology: A Story and a Programme* (London: SCM Press, 1990); R. Morgan, “New Testament Theology,” in S. J. Kraftchick, C. D. Myers Jr., and B. C. Ollenburger (eds.), *Biblical Theology: Problems and Perspectives* (FS J. C. Beker; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995) 104–30; D. O. Via, *What Is New Testament Theology?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002). For an overview of the study of theology that goes back to Jesus and his time, see C. E. Briggs, *History of the Study of Theology* (2 vols.; London: Duckworth, 1916).

² Useful introductions to some of the issues (besides those in n. 1) include: C. K. Barrett, “What is New Testament Theology?” in his *Jesus and the Word and Other Essays* (Allison Park, Penn.: Pickwick, 1995) 241–54; J. Reumann, *Variety and Unity in New Testament Thought* (OBS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); P. Balla,

issues that surround discussion of the notion of defining Paul's theology, always keeping an eye on the question of whether it is possible to find a center to his thought, and what that center might look like.³

a. *Types of Pauline Theology*

One of the first issues regarding coming to terms with study of Paul's theology is that his theology is treated in a variety of different contexts. I will select six for brief mention here.⁴

Challenges to New Testament Theology: An Attempt to Justify the Enterprise (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997); B. Witherington III, *The Paul Quest: The Renewed Search for the Jew of Tarsus* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998) 286–96; and the introductions to many of the New Testament theologies. One of the most recent areas of discussion—one that goes beyond what I wish to discuss in this introduction—is the influence of postmodernism (actually, one must begin earlier, by attempting to define it and determine if it actually exists in a meaningful way). Some of the issues are raised in: A. K. M. Adam, *Making Sense of New Testament Theology: "Modern" Problems and Prospects* (Studies in American Biblical Hermeneutics 11; Macon: Mercer University Press, 1995); *idem* (ed.), *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Criticism* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2000); B. D. Ingrassia, *Postmodern Theory and Biblical Theology: Vanquishing God's Shadow* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995). See Via's helpful critique (*What Is New Testament Theology?* 109–25), where he quotes Richard Rorty's opinion that "postmodernism" is the Most Overrated Idea (p. 124). On wider issues of theological method, see H. Vorgrimler (ed.), *Dogmatic vs. Biblical Theology* (Montreal: Palm, 1964); J. J. Mueller, *What are They Saying about Theological Method?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1984).

³ I will not address issues concerning the Biblical Theology movement, which, to my mind, was plagued with a number of major conceptual difficulties, made obvious by the work of James Barr (*The Semantics of Biblical Language* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1961], *Biblical Words for Time* [SBT First Series 33; 2d ed.; London: SCM Press, 1969], *The Bible in the Modern World* [London: SCM Press, 1973], *The Scope and Authority of the Bible* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980], *The Concept of Biblical Theology* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999], among others), and summarized in B. S. Childs, *Biblical Theology in Crisis* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1970). There have been numerous attempts to defend, revive or rehabilitate the movement: e.g. J. D. Smart, *The Past, Present, and Future of Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1979), J. Reumann (ed.), *The Promise and Practice of Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); F. Watson, *Text, Church, and World: Biblical Interpretation in Theological Perspective* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994); *idem*, *Text and Truth: Redefining Biblical Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1997); S. J. Kraftchick, "Facing Janus: Reviewing the Biblical Theology Movement," in Kraftchick *et al.* (eds.), *Biblical Theology*, 54–77; S. J. Hafemann (ed.), *Biblical Theology: Retrospect & Prospect* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002); and (in some ways) J. B. Green and M. Turner (eds.), *Between Two Horizons: Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

⁴ The following examples of secondary literature are meant to be not exhaustive, but merely suggestive.

There are first, for example, individual essays on particular dimensions of Paul's thought. The Pauline Theology Consultation/Group at the Society of Biblical Literature from 1986 to 1995 culminated in four volumes on Paul's theology. These volumes began with the smaller letters and then proceeded to the larger ones of the seven generally considered authentic, providing for the most part treatments of individual books.⁵ Other volumes, including journals, might also have essays on particular topics in Paul's thought.⁶ This particular volume is to a large extent an exercise in this type of Pauline research. There are fourteen different authors who are addressing various issues in Paul's thought. Some of these essays are concerned with a number of Paul's letters, while others with just one. Some of them are concerned with a broad topic, while others are more narrowly focused.

The second type of source is a general study of Paul that might well include a section or portion on his theology and thought. A number of these volumes have recently appeared,⁷ in a continuing stream of such studies through the years. Sometimes the theological sections are clearly marked, but as often as not the theological portion is integrated into a historical or epistolary or more general framework.

The third source is a specialized treatment of a single theological issue within Paul's letters.⁸ Some of these issues are broad and far-ranging, and the author incorporates a number of Paul's letters into

⁵ J. M. Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology Volume I: Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians, Philemon* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); D. M. Hay (ed.), *Pauline Theology Volume II: 1 & 2 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993); D. M. Hay and E. E. Johnson (eds.), *Pauline Theology Volume III: Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); and E. E. Johnson and D. M. Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology Volume IV: Looking Back, Pressing On* (Atlanta: SBL, 1997). For a useful summary of the issues confronted by the consultation/group, including definition of terms, see J. D. G. Dunn, "In Quest of Paul's Theology: Retrospect and Prospect," in Johnson and Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology*, IV, 95–115.

⁶ E.g. the series, *New Studies in Biblical Theology* by InterVarsity Press, with a volume such as M. A. Seifrid, *Christ, our Righteousness: Paul's Theology of Justification* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000); and the journal, among others, *Horizons in Biblical Theology*. There are numerous other volumes on particular Pauline theological topics, such as Paul's view of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, humanity, etc.

⁷ E.g. J. Becker, *Paul Apostle to the Gentiles* (trans. O. C. Dean Jr.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1993); J. McRay, *Paul: His Life and Teaching* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003).

⁸ E.g. C. Breytenbach, *Versöhnung: Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie* (WMANT 60; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1989). The issue of Paul, the law and related topics (e.g. covenant) dominates recent discussion.

the discussion, while others are more narrowly focused and only treat a very specific topic that may only be found in a limited portion of Paul's corpus. These studies are often intertwined with discussion of a number of historical and related issues as well.

The fourth context is the Pauline theology *per se*.⁹ Several of these volumes have been recently published, two of them from very different perspectives. One approaches Paul's thought from the book of Romans, claiming that this volume is the fullest and least contingent of his writings,¹⁰ while the other deals with a number of topics over the course of all of the letters.¹¹ Some of the older theologies assume the categories of systematic theology.

The fifth source is a New Testament theology. There has been a spate of New Testament theologies produced lately, especially by German scholars.¹² Each of these devotes some discussion to Paul. They are organized differently. Some of them approach Paul's writings by topic, while others treat the letters either individually or in various groupings (such as the main letters, the prison letters and the pastorals).

The sixth and final source that I will mention here is the biblical theology volume as a whole. Not many of these volumes are written any more, but those that have been well illustrate some of the issues raised by study of Paul's theology.¹³

In studying Paul's theology, one is often compelled to draw on theological works that are found in a number of the categories above. However, one must realize that the very nature of their classification and organizing principles indicates fundamental notions about their orientation to theology. For example, works on individual books or very specific or limited topics do not necessarily place their work within the larger scope of Paul's thought (which is problematic in

⁹ E.g. H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (trans. H. Knight; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959).

¹⁰ J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) esp. 25–26.

¹¹ T. R. Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001).

¹² See the notes below, especially n. 47.

¹³ E.g. G. Vos, *Biblical Theology: Old and New Testaments* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948); B. S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992).

itself to define; see below). Those that treat Paul's thought within the context of his life and letters are often saying something about how they believe his thought is related to the historical circumstances in which he lived and wrote. Those theological writings that commit themselves to finding a central notion to Paul's thought must justify such a selection, while those that are general Pauline theologies are compelled to treat in some way at least most of the major notions that he addresses. Works that treat more than Paul are compelled to synthesize the diverse literature in the New Testament so that it can speak with a common voice, even though the types of literature are quite diverse in type and situation.

b. *Questions Regarding formulating Paul's Theology*

There are a number of questions regarding formulating a Pauline theology. Some are problems that are shared by any endeavor to engage in creating a biblical theology. Others are particular to the study of Paul the theologian. I will address some of these here.

1. *What is Pauline theology?* This question was brought to the fore in the discussion at the Society of Biblical Literature. Dunn quotes a number of the participants, who had various ideas of what constituted Pauline theology. Some of the elements suggested by the participants include Paul's thought world, what Paul communicated to his various churches, Paul's thought as found in a single letter, Paul's thought as found across the span of his letters (whether that be four, seven or more), the thoughts of the Paul who stood behind the letters, or the concepts that are expressed in the letters attributed to Paul.¹⁴ Other elements that have occupied scholars recently include Paul's relationship to the Scriptures of Israel, his appropriation of the fundamental stories of Israel, Paul's interaction with the fundamental theological notions of Judaism or the early Church, the means by which one determines a theologically significant concept, the principles of organization by which such discussion is arranged, and what

¹⁴ Dunn, "In Quest of Paul's Theology," 95–97. Cf. H. Hübner, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments. II. Die Theologie des Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1993) 26–27.

its relationship is to the traditional categories of theological investigation.

In other words, even if one wishes to be more circumscribed than simply dealing with a biblical theology or New Testament theology, Pauline theology itself raises numerous questions of definition. Is the concern with the man himself or with his various manifestations as found within the letters? Which letters are to be of concern—those traditionally attributed to him or a more restricted corpus, or possibly only a single letter at a time? How narrow a topic can provide the basis for a Pauline theology, or an element of a Pauline theology? When one investigates such topics, does one take a thematic, existentialist, historical, salvation-historical approach, or something else?¹⁵ These questions, though often raised at various times and in various ways in the discussion at the Society of Biblical Literature, were not adequately addressed then, and often are not thoroughly discussed in the treatments that are offered. In a sense, each Pauline theologian appears to have an individualized concept in which he or she goes about the task of analyzing Paul and his thought. It is often only when various scholars articulate their notions and these are brought together, such as Dunn does, that one sees the potential problem for confusion.

2. *What Constitutes a Center of Paul's Thought?*¹⁶ The question of formulating a center for Paul's theology is part of the larger question regarding the unity or diversity of the biblical witness¹⁷—a question

¹⁵ These are the categories that Hasel discusses (*New Testament Theology*, 72–132). There are other approaches as well that could be offered.

¹⁶ See C. J. A. Hickling, "Centre and Periphery in the Thought of Paul," in E. A. Livingstone (ed.), *Studia Biblica 1978. III. Papers on Paul and Other New Testament Authors* (JSNTSup 3; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1980) 199–214; J. Plevnik, "The Center of Pauline Theology," *CBQ* 51.3 (1989) 461–78; V. P. Furnish, "Pauline Studies," in E. J. Epp and G. W. MacRae (eds.), *The New Testament and its Modern Interpreters* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1989) 321–50, esp. 333–36.

¹⁷ Items of unity that have been suggested in New Testament theology include: historical connection, scriptural dependence, vocabulary, themes, typology, promise-fulfillment, salvation history and unity of perspective (so Hasel, *New Testament Theology*, 184–203), or Jesus Christ, the gospel, the kingdom of God, love, kerygma, proclamation of the word, God's plan of salvation, the new age (eschatology), or faith (so Reumann, *Variety and Unity*, 27–33).

that has been central in theological discussion for some time.¹⁸ Discussion of Paul's thought over the last two centuries has come increasingly to emphasize diversity in his thought. This diversity is predicated upon a number of different factors. Some might include a natural or at least understandable development in Paul's thought. For example, some would point to Paul's changing thought regarding the immediacy and imminence of the parousia of Jesus Christ. They would argue that Paul began his missionary career expecting the return during his own lifetime (e.g. 1 Thess 4:15; cf. 1 Cor 7:26, 29) but, as the prospect of death became an increasing reality, he modified his view to include the possibility that the parousia might not occur during his lifetime and that he would die before that time (e.g. Phil 2:20–21).¹⁹ Another factor important to arriving at the center of Paul's theology is that of the contingent nature of his letters.²⁰

¹⁸ See A. J. Köstenberger, "Diversity and Unity in the New Testament," in Hafemann (ed.), *Biblical Theology*, 144–58, esp. 144. As Köstenberger notes, there has been a trend toward diversity, found especially in such writers as: W. Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (ed. R. Kraft and G. Krodel; London: SCM Press, 1971); R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; trans. G. Krodel; London: SCM Press, 1951–1955); J. W. Drane, *Paul: Libertine or Legalist?* (London: SPCK, 1971) 109–36; and J. D. G. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977). Other works on the issue of unity and diversity include: F. C. Grant, *An Introduction to New Testament Thought* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970) 29–42; Hasel, *New Testament Theology*, 140–203; D. Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1981) 49–59; the first volume of the *Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie*, entitled *Einheit und Vielfalt Biblischer Theologie* 1 (1986); D. Wenham, "Appendix: Unity and Diversity in the New Testament," in G. E. Ladd, *A Theology of the New Testament* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993 [1974]) 687–92; L. T. Johnson, "Fragments of an Untidy Conversation: Theology and the Literary Diversity of the New Testament," in Kraftchick et al. (eds.), *Biblical Theology*, 276–89; D. A. Campbell, *The Quest for Paul's Gospel: A Suggested Strategy* (JSNTSup 274; London: T. & T. Clark International, 2005) 17–28.

¹⁹ See, e.g., J. Plevnik, *Paul and the Parousia: An Exegetical and Theological Investigation* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1997) 81, 178; but rejected by C. K. Barrett, *Paul: An Introduction to his Thought* (London: Chapman, 1994) 55. For an overview of the issues, see R. N. Longenecker, "Is There Development in Paul's Resurrection Thought?" in his *Studies in Paul, Exegetical and Theological* (NTM 2; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2004) 216–49.

²⁰ The contingent nature of Paul's letters was emphasized in J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) 23–36; *idem*, "Recasting Pauline Theology: The Coherence-Contingency Scheme as Interpretive Model," in Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology*, I, 15–24. He was clearly anticipated by the view of Paul's letters propounded by A. Deissmann, *Bible Studies* (trans. A. Grieve; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1901) 1–59, *idem*, *Light from the Ancient East*

The contingent nature of an occasional letter means that Paul's letters address different issues in different ways (or not at all) and in different proportions—depending upon the circumstances that he confronts. For example, some might draw attention to the fact that there is no single coherent picture of Pauline eschatology that emerges, but that one must create a composite picture on the basis of a number of different passages (e.g. 1 Cor 15:50–58; 2 Cor 5:1–10; 1 Thess 4:13–5:11; 2 Thess 2:1–12; among others), some of which may fit more readily with the others.²¹ One of the purported criticisms of using the letter to the Romans as a template for Pauline theology is that there are a number of ostensibly important theological concepts that are not treated in that letter, or are treated elsewhere, such as the Lord's Supper.²² Furthermore, the Lord's Supper is only treated in 1 Cor 11:17–34 in the Pauline writings.

If there is so much variety within Paul's thought, in large part based upon individual epistolary circumstances, what would constitute a center to his thought, a center sufficient to unite together the various strands of his thinking into a coherent whole? There have been a number of suggestions.²³ These include God,²⁴ Christ or Christology,²⁵

(trans. L. R. M. Strachan; 4th ed.; London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1927) 227–45; and Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.190.

²¹ Cf. E. Lohse, "Changes of Thought in Pauline Theology? Some Reflections on Paul's Ethical Teaching in the Context of His Theology," in E. E. Lovering, Jr. and J. L. Sumney (eds.), *Theology and Ethics in Paul and his Interpreters: Essays in Honor of Victor Paul Furnish* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996) 146–60.

²² A. J. M. Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988) 6.

²³ Some of the proposed centers for New Testament theology include: anthropology, salvation history, covenant, love and kingdom, and Christology (so Hasel, *New Testament Theology*, 14–64).

²⁴ H. R. Mackintosh, *The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ* (New York: Scribners, 1912) 52; R. N. Longenecker, *The Ministry and Message of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) 89; H. Schlier, *Grundzüge einer paulinischen Theologie* (Freiburg: Herder, 1978) 25; L. Morris, *New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986) 25–38; Schreiner, *Paul Apostle of God's Glory in Christ*, 18.

²⁵ F. Prat, *The Theology of Saint Paul* (2 vols.; trans. J. L. Stoddard; London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1927) 2.13–15; P. Feine, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1953) 148; E. Stauffer, *New Testament Theology* (trans. J. Marsh; London: SCM Press, 1955) 39; H. Schlier, *New Testament Theology Today* (trans. D. Askew; Montreal: Palm, 1963) 74; Guthrie, *New Testament Theology*, 54 (who believes this is the key element for the entire New Testament); L. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; ed. J. Roloff; trans. J. E. Alsup; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981–1982) 2.63; D. G. Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul* (London: Continuum, 2000) 56–63. This category sometimes is treated as related to the mystical participation-in-Christ. Cf. L. E. Keck, "Toward the Renewal of New Testament Christology," *NTS* 32 (1986): 362–77.

justification by faith,²⁶ salvation history,²⁷ reconciliation,²⁸ apocalyptic,²⁹ (mystical) participation in Christ,³⁰ the cross,³¹ anthropology and

²⁶ E.g. H. Weinel, *St. Paul: The Man and his Work* (trans. G. A. Bienemann and W. D. Morrison; London: Williams & Norgate, 1906) 290–91; Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.279–87, although within the larger context of Pauline anthropology (see p. 191); E. Käsemann, *Perspectives on Paul* (trans. M. Kohl; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) 1–31, 60–78; G. Bornkamm, *Paul* (trans. D. M. G. Stalker; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971) 116; P. Stuhlmacher, *Reconciliation, Law & Righteousness: Essays in Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1986) 68; A. J. Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel and Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); M. A. Seifrid, *Justification by Faith: The Origin & Development of a Central Pauline Theme* (NovTSup 68; Leiden: Brill, 1992) 76.

²⁷ W. Wrede, *Paul* (trans. E. Lummis; London: Green, 1907) 114–15; W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980 [1948]) xxxv; O. Cullmann, *Christ and Time: The Primitive Christian Conception of Time and History* (trans. F. V. Filson; London: SCM Press, 1951); *idem*, *The Christology of the New Testament* (trans. S. S. Guthrie and C. A. M. Hall; London: SCM Press, 1959) 322–27; *idem*, *Salvation in History* (trans. S. G. Sowers; London: SCM Press, 1967) 248–68; J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (trans. F. Clarke; London: SCM Press, 1959); K. Stendahl, “Biblical Theology: A Program,” repr. in *Meanings: The Bible as Document and as Guide* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984 [1962]) 11–44; D. E. H. Whiteley, *The Theology of St. Paul* (2d ed.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1974); W. Kümmel, *The Theology of the New Testament According to Its Major Witnesses, Jesus-Paul-John* (trans. J. E. Steely; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1973) 141–50; Ladd, *Theology of the New Testament*, 27–28; H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of his Theology* (trans. J. R. De Witt; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 44–57; *idem*, *When the Time Had Fully Come: Studies in New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957) 44–60; Goppelt, *Theology*, 1.276–80; N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991); *idem*, *The New Testament and the People of God* (London: SPCK, 1992) 403–409; *idem*, “Putting Paul Together Again: Toward a Synthesis of Pauline Theology (1 and 2 Thessalonians, Philippians, and Philemon),” in Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology*, I, 183–211; *idem*, “Romans and the Theology of Paul,” in Hay and Johnson (eds.), *Pauline Theology*, III, 30–67, esp. 34; *idem*, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 151–53; R. Scroggs, “Salvation History: The Theological Structure of Paul's Thought (1 Thessalonians, Philippians, and Galatians),” in Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology*, I, 212–26; D. J. Lull, “Salvation History: Theology in 1 Thessalonians, Philemon, Philippians, and Galatians,” in Bassler (ed.), *Pauline Theology*, I, 247–65; Barrett, *Paul*, 56–57; B. Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1994); C. M. Pate, *The End of the Age has Come: The Theology of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995) 34. Covenant and narrative language are often associated with this position. This position also can have numerous similarities to the biblical theology perspective. On the history of this movement, and defense of Cullmann in particular, see R. W. Yarbrough, *The Salvation Historical Fallacy? Reassessing the History of New Testament Theology* (Leiden: Deo, 2004).

²⁸ T. W. Manson, *On Paul and John: Some Selected Theological Themes* (ed. M. Black; SBT 38; London: SCM Press, 1963) 50–54; R. P. Martin, *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul's Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981); *idem*, “Center of Paul's Theology,” in G. F. Hawthorne and R. P. Martin (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993) 92–95.

²⁹ Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 135 181, 362; *idem*, *Paul's Apocalyptic Gospel: The Coming Triumph of God* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982).

salvation,³² resurrection and/or exaltation,³³ ethics,³⁴ and gospel,³⁵ among others. The positing of a center to Paul's thought seems to require that one assume that the unity in his thinking exceeds the diversity. Even if one accepts this assumption, there is still the difficulty of determining what that center is. There have been a variety of means that have been used to establish a center. Some of these means attempt to quantify the significance of a particular concept, while others utilize other criteria, such as purported theological significance. Those who would argue that the notion of God is the center of Paul's thought would almost assuredly point to the fact that Paul refers to God nearly 550 times in his writings, and that such references are spread consistently throughout his letters. A more restrictive notion, such as reconciliation (which language occurs in only a limited number of places in Paul's letters, such as Rom 5:9–11; 2 Cor 5:18–20; Col 1:20, 22 and Eph 2:16, as the major passages),

³⁰ There is often an eschatological bent to this position. Those who take a mystical view include: A. Deissmann, *Die neutestamentliche Formel "in Christo Jesu"* (Marburg: Elwert, 1892); *idem*; *The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul* (trans. W. E. Wilson; 2d ed.; London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1926) 193–200; *idem*, *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* (trans. W. E. Wilson; 2d ed.; London: Doran, 1926) 147–57; A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (trans. W. Montgomery; London: A. & C. Black, 1931) 3; H. A. A. Kennedy, *The Theology of the Epistles* (London: Duckworth, 1919) 121–22; A. Wikenhauser, *Pauline Mysticism: Christ in the Mystical Teaching of St. Paul* (Freiburg: Herder, 1960) 106–107. Those who take a non-mystical participatory sense often focusing on the Church are: R. N. Flew, *Jesus and his Church: A Study of the Idea of the Ecclesia in the New Testament* (London: Epworth Press, 1938) 209–19; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 434–42; Campbell, *Quest for Paul's Gospel*, 38–42 (his model is called pneumatologically participatory martyrological eschatology).

³¹ W. Morgan, *The Religion and Theology of Paul* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1917) 3; M. J. Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); *idem*, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord: A Theological Introduction to Paul & his Letters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 98–102.

³² G. Stevens, *The Theology of the New Testament* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1911) 337; C. A. A. Scott, *Christianity According to St. Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939) 23; J. A. T. Robinson, *The Body: A Study in Pauline Theology* (SBT 5; London: SCM Press, 1952) 8–9; L. Cerfaux, *Le Christ dans la théologie de saint Paul* (2d ed.; Paris: Cerf, 1954) 15–16; F. Amiot, *The Key Concepts of St. Paul* (Freiburg: Herder and Herder, 1962) 49; Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.190; E. W. Hunt, *Portrait of Paul* (London: Mowbray, 1968) 67–68.

³³ R. H. Strachan, *The Historic Jesus in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1931) 32–33; P. J. Achtemeier, "The Continuing Quest for Coherence in St. Paul: An Experiment in Thought," in Lovering, Jr. and Sumney (eds.), *Theology and Ethics*, 132–45, esp. 138.

³⁴ M. S. Enslin, *The Ethics of Paul* (New York: Abingdon, 1945) 63–78.

³⁵ I. H. Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004) 422–23.

requires that a theological framework be in place that pushes this notion to the fore. There are also historical reasons for such determinations. There is no doubt that justification by faith is a notion that occurs in a number of significant passages in Paul's letters (e.g. Rom 3:20, 24, 28; 5:1), but there is also probably little doubt that the agenda of the Reformation has helped to establish this, at least in some interpreter's eyes, as the center of Paul's theology.

Most would agree that simple counting of lexical items is not the way to determine the center of Paul's theology. Nevertheless, there is more likelihood of convincing others of one's analysis if there is a means of establishing the significance of the concept—whether that is through some form of lexical usage or distribution, a theological construct, contextual indicators, or historical factors. One method of establishing priorities in Paul's thought is to differentiate between Paul's theological assumptions and his developed theological ideas.³⁶ The assumptions constitute the building blocks for Paul's theology. Paul does not argue for such concepts, but assumes them, for any number of reasons—his theological background, his experience of the risen Christ on the Damascus Road, his experience of the Christian community, or the like. Paul's developed beliefs, on the other hand, are those that he verbally mulls over and expatiates upon in his letters. His assumptions constitute the backdrop for his development of a number of complex theological notions. For example, one might be able to argue that Paul's theological assumptions would include such things as: God, Jesus as the Christ, the Holy Spirit, grace, faith, and any number of other theological concepts. Paul's developed theological ideas would include: justification by faith, the law and works, reconciliation, sanctification or holiness, salvation, the apocalyptic triumph of God, the gospel, the Church, the sacrificial nature of Jesus' death and resurrection, eschatology, among potentially many others.³⁷ It is not that he defines all of his terms in his developed beliefs, but that he simply does not assume them and is concerned to explore the implications of these theological propositions.

Can it be said that any one of these constitutes the center of Paul's thought? Many of the above have been posited. I would

³⁶ L. M. McDonald and S. E. Porter, *Early Christianity and its Sacred Literature* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000) 352–65.

³⁷ Dunn (“Prolegomena to a Theology of Paul,” 418) questions whether notions such as “righteousness” and “works of the law” are developed by Paul, or whether Paul assumes his audience understood what they meant.

contend that it is unlikely that any of the theological assumptions should constitute *the* center of his theology. These are ideas that Paul assumes and therefore has inherited from others or encountered in his circumstances, and most likely would have been assumed and shared by most of the leaders of the early Church. More likely would be one of the *developed* beliefs. These have the stamp of Paul's own unique thinking and perspective on them, as he develops them for his different churches in the light of their varied circumstances.

3. *Contingency and Timelessness.* One of the major issues in thinking through theological notions is the traditional philosophical conundrum of how it is that timeless truths can be extracted from the interpretation of contingent historical events, such as Paul's writings.³⁸ This is a dilemma not only for Pauline studies, but for any discipline—and especially theology—where one looks to particularistic and unique events and occurrences as the basis for formulating principles, even timeless truths, to guide one's thought, belief and action. Paul's theology is no different. One of the major emphases in recent Pauline interpretation is the realization that Paul's letters are all contingent. This notion of contingency, however, can mean a variety of things. Some wish to emphasize that Paul's letters are all simply the responses of the Apostle to the particular situation of a given early Christian community. Even the book of Romans, often seen as coming as close as there is among Paul's writings to a compendium of his most important beliefs, is usually not seen as a comprehensive and inclusive view of his theology.

There is no doubt that Paul is writing specific letters to different first-century communities. However, there are a number of important observations that need to be made.³⁹ One is that it has ever been thus. In a very real sense, all human action is unique, particular and contingent (or located in a context). If this is so, one can either decry any effort to extrapolate meaning beyond the contingent, or recognize that this is one of the inherent limitations in such a process. All human action is contingent, but that does not necessarily mean that it is not meaningful or cannot point to something beyond itself. These transcending truths are what human beings are often searching after in their theology, and they cannot accept that

³⁸ This is the so-called dilemma of Lessing's ditch.

³⁹ See, e.g., Bultmann, *Theology*, 1.190; Hultgren, *Paul's Gospel*, 3.

life is confined to meaningless random and unique events with no further purpose. A further response is that, even within Paul's writings, there is his apparent recognition that he is addressing issues in a variety of particularized ways and with differing types of language. One of the benefits of study of the Pauline letter form has been the recognition that the various "places" in the letter indicate different things about what the author is trying to convey. Paul has adapted the Hellenistic letter form for his own purposes. Several of the results of this are the developed thanksgiving, the potentially theologically significant body, and the development of the paranetic section. The paranesis functions as a set of instructions or exhortations to the readers in the light of what they have been told previously, including in the letter, regarding how they should lead their Christian lives. Paul is, therefore, within a given letter, assuming or positing theological truths that he expects to see worked out within the Christian community he is addressing. He goes further, however. There is a clear sense in his letters that Paul believes that many of these truths are important, not only for the particular audience he is addressing but for other Christians as well—including especially those facing similar theological or practical difficulties, but others also.

This issue can be extended in terms of the hermeneutical issue of bridging or fusing the distance between the two horizons of the original text and the modern context.⁴⁰ This particular issue poses a number of challenges. Some of these challenges focus upon the horizon of the original text, including the difference, foreignness and otherness of a text that originated in a different culture, with different values, a pre-scientific worldview, and competing socio-cultural systems. Others of these are related to the horizon of the modern context. These include the modern (or now post-modern?) worldview, an increasingly secular (non-supernatural) perspective, and a mix of cultural values. Nevertheless, this initial confrontation and then fusion of competing horizons is one that is faced in various ways as the experience of human communication. Modern interpreters are increasingly called upon to fuse horizons between competing cultures in

⁴⁰ The language of horizons is from H. G. Gadamer (*Truth and Method* [New York: Crossroad, 1975] 272–74), but has been widely appropriated in contemporary interpretation. See A. C. Thiselton, *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) esp. 307–10.

today's world. Engaging in Pauline theology requires that the perspective be turned from synchronic to diachronic considerations. The tasks are admittedly difficult, but our contemporary position is predicated upon standing at the current endpoint of a long process of horizontal fusion, as each succeeding generation interprets and interacts with its past.

The debate over contingency and timelessness is an important one, because it has helped us as interpreters to recognize some of the limits of interpretation. Nevertheless, the dichotomy can be overstated so that it unduly paralyzes further theological reflection. While recognizing the limitations of contingent letter-writing, one can also recognize that Paul himself, in the way that he formulates his argument, is addressing situations beyond those simply of his immediate letter-writing situation.

4. *The Pauline Corpus*. Discussion of Pauline theology usually assumes that there is at least a common body of material to be interpreted. In the light of the last two hundred years of critical interpretation of Paul's letters, however, it is difficult to know what that body of material is, and the implications of it for Paul's theology. The traditional canon of Paul's letters is thirteen, with Hebrews now rarely considered one of Paul's letters (it does not claim to be, as the other letters do).⁴¹ Since F. C. Baur, however, the recognizably authentic letters have often been seen to be fewer. Common divisions include the main letters (the so-called "Hauptbriefe"), the prison letters, and the pastoral epistles (some differentiate the missionary letters, 1 and 2 Thessalonians).⁴² Those who do not accept the authenticity of all of the Pauline letters are faced with a decision in formulating a Pauline theology. One must ask whether a Pauline theology is a theology of all of the purported letters of Paul, whether it is a theology of all of the authentic letters of Paul, or whether it is a theology of Paul's letters and those of his earliest interpreters, or at least the ones that were included in the canon.⁴³ There is also the book of

⁴¹ But it is included in Prat, *Theology of Saint Paul*, 1.355–96.

⁴² For a discussion of the issues regarding the sources to use, see Stevens, *Pauline Theology*, 75–95.

⁴³ Dunn (*Theology of Paul the Apostle*, 13 n. 39) pretty much dismisses Ephesians, on the basis that the "majority" regard it as post-Pauline, an opinion with which he concurs. The only problem is that the "majority" clearly have not dismissed Ephesians, as H. W. Hoehner (*Ephesians* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002] 6–20) has

Acts to consider, especially the Pauline speeches. Acts is usually not included, but if one is offering a theology of Paul and his earliest interpreters, the speeches in Acts should perhaps be revisited.⁴⁴

Some theologians face this particular set of questions, while others seem to have minimized their critical reluctance when it comes time to formulate their theology. The distinction occasionally made between a theology of Paul and of the Pauline letters does not actually solve the difficulty,⁴⁵ because what we know of the theology of Paul must be grounded in his letters, no matter how much other material might be drawn into the discussion (e.g. the book of Acts). Those who include all of Paul's letters run the risk that they are including within Paul's theology thought that is not genuinely his. Those who include a smaller corpus of letters are faced with the difficulty of formulating generalizations on the basis of a decreasing body of evidence (and risking excluding what is genuine material if their critical judgments are wrong).⁴⁶ Those who include the supposedly non-Pauline letters as Paul's first interpreters are perhaps the most problematic, as they admittedly are creating a non-Pauline theology by virtue of including the writings of others—even if they were some of Paul's earliest interpreters. Their status both as documents and in terms of authority are unclear, and not helped in an exercise such as this.

Many of the problems of the relationships of various portions of the Pauline corpus also relate to issues of how one might compare Pauline theology with the theology or theologies of the rest of the New Testament, and beyond. There is some difference, as already noted above, regarding the fact that the whole of the New Testament represents a variety of literary types and different authors (some known only through their writings). However, many of the same issues are involved, when one attempts to find common theological themes throughout the larger corpus. These issues include the differing

shown. If one is simply going to follow the critical consensus, one best be sure one has ascertained it correctly.

⁴⁴ See Prat, *Theology of Saint Paul*, 1.10–11, who includes the speeches in Acts—but who also argues for the authenticity of all thirteen letters.

⁴⁵ See Dunn, "Prolegomena to a Theology of Paul," 415–16.

⁴⁶ John Ziesler (*Pauline Christianity* [OBS; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983] 6) uses the standard seven letters, but not the others, for a very odd reason: "even if they are written by Paul, it is an older Paul whose thought and style have changed." He apparently wants the thought of the young and pre-changed Paul!

apparent purposes of the literature, the different topics addressed in the different literary types, and the simple fact that one is attempting to coordinate the thought of different authors. Nevertheless, despite these barriers, there are those who attempt to incorporate Paul's theology within larger spheres of theological thought.⁴⁷

2. *The Contributions of this Study of Paul as Theologian*

The essays in this volume directly and indirectly address and take into consideration a number of the issue raised above.

Arland Hultgren begins by establishing and analyzing the scriptural foundations for Paul's mission to the Gentiles. He first looks at Paul's call in terms of Jer 1:5 and its implications for Paul's mission. Then he turns to the guiding principle of Paul's apostleship, before considering Paul's eschatological expectations concerning the nations. These he sees grounded in a series of passages, especially from Isaiah (2; 2-4; 2:4; 25:6-8; 51:4-5; 60:3; 66:18). This framework formed the basis of Paul's commission.

The next five essays are focused on particular theological themes that are found in Paul's writings and that have been at or near the center of much recent Pauline theological discussion. David Hay takes on the notion of Paul's understanding of faith and interprets it in terms of participationist language. That is, Christians are those

⁴⁷ Marshall (*New Testament Theology*, 18) notes that despite the issues being debated regarding formulating a New Testament theology, they continue to be written. Besides those noted above, see the following: W. Beyschlag, *New Testament Theology* (2 vols.; trans. N. Buchanan; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1895); B. Weiss, *The Religion of the New Testament* (trans. G. H. Schodde; New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1905); A. Schlatter, *The Theology of the Apostles: The Development of New Testament Theology* (trans. A. Köstenberger; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998 [1922]); O. Kuss, *Die Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1937); J. Bonsirven, *Théologie du Nouveau Testament* (Paris: Aubier, 1951); A. Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1958); S. Neill, *Jesus through Many Eyes: Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976); P. Stuhlmacher, *Biblische Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (2 vols.; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992-1999); K. Berger, *Theologiegeschichte des Urchristentums* (Tübingen: Francke, 1994); J. Gnifka, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Freiburg: Herder, 1994); W. Schmithals, *The Theology of the First Christians* (trans. O. C. Dean Jr.; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997); G. Strecker, *Theology of the New Testament* (completed F. W. Horn; trans. M. E. Boring; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2000); F. Hahn, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002); U. Wilckens, *Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (3 vols. to date; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 2002-); P. F. Esler, *New Testament Theology: Communion and Community* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005).

who participate in Christ, even though they are still subject to human frailty. This essay provides a valuable survey of Paul's faith language as it is used throughout the major Pauline epistles. By contrast, James Harrison explores the notion of Paul as the theologian of God's electing grace, especially as that is seen in Romans 9–11 and more particularly Rom 9:6–13. Within the larger context of systematic and biblical theology, Harrison focuses upon the Jewish Second Temple context out of which Paul's concept of grace emerged. Following on from the previous essay, Colin Kruse tackles the issue Paul's teaching on the relationship between the Mosaic law and the Spirit of God, in the light of the coming of Christ. Kruse is returning to an issue that he has written on before, and that continues to be of widespread interest among New Testament and in particular Pauline theologians. On the basis of a number of passages, in particular in Romans and Galatians, Kruse sees Paul arguing that the Mosaic law is no longer regulatory for believers. Stanley Porter examines two recent treatments of Pauline reconciliation passages—2 Cor 5:18–20 and Rom 5:10–11—to see how these articles have incorporated recent thought on this important Pauline notion. Randall Tan offers the final essay of this section with another study that focuses upon Romans. Tan brings into the discussion a number of recent innovations in linguistic study of the Greek text to provide an analysis of the major participants in the opening of Paul's letter to the Romans as a key to deciphering the theological foundation of the letter.

The next three essays tackle issues that, though perhaps less central to recent Pauline scholarship, are still central to Paul's thought. In particular John Levison examines Paul's treatment of the Spirit and the Temple in the Corinthian correspondence. For Levison, the interplay of Spirit and Temple, especially in terms of Jewish thought of the time, indicates what Paul wishes to say about how the dividing wall between humans has been torn down through the work of Christ, and how the Church stands as the body that unites Jews and Gentiles together. In a lengthy essay that focuses upon Philippians, Heinz Giesen discusses Paul's eschatological views. He focuses upon what Paul says in Phil 1:23 regarding his expectations of the completion of his salvation immediately after death within the larger context of Paul's eschatological thought in Philippians. This delayed expectation of the return of Christ, Giesen believes, is consistent with the rest of the New Testament. The third and final essay in this grouping is by Craig Blomberg on the issue of how Paul handles

gender roles. Despite much discussion that attempts to categorize Paul as either a hierarchicalist or egalitarian, Blomberg rejects such a simple division. Examining the range of evidence from Paul's letters (e.g. 1 Cor 11:2–16; 14:33b–38; Col 3:18–19; Eph 5:21–33), including the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim 2:8–15), Blomberg concludes that Paul appears to affirm both sides of the divide.

The next group of two essays addresses the larger theological issue of whether and in what way Paul was a trinitarian in his thought. Ron Fay takes a detailed look at Romans 8 in terms of what Paul says about Father, Son and Holy Spirit. He concludes that, though Paul was not technically a trinitarian, he had a trinitarian understanding of the relationship among the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, including one in which the Spirit is subordinate to the Father and Son and the Son to the Father. Andrew Gabriel focuses more specifically upon the relationship of the Spirit and Christ within a trinitarian framework. As a result, he examines a wider range of possible trinitarian passages, including 2 Cor 13:14, 1 Cor 12:4–6 and Eph 4:4–6, and then a number of specific Christ/Spirit passages such as Rom 8:9, Gal 4:6, Phil 1:19, 2 Cor 3:17 and 1 Cor 15:45. He concludes that though Paul did not articulate a doctrine of the Trinity, he had what might be called trinitarian presuppositions.

The volume closes with three further essays. Craig Evans raises the question of Paul as exorcist and healer. He notes that in several places in his letters Paul appears to make claims regarding performing works of power (2 Cor 12:12; Rom 15:18–19; Gal 3:5). These passages are consonant with a number of passages in the book of Acts that help to confirm Paul as an apostle. The final two essays focus upon two important interpreters of Paul. René Kieffer examines the interpretation of Paul's letter to the Romans in Philip Melanchthon's *Loci Communes*. He sees Melanchthon in this work as a young and enthusiastic interpreter of Paul's letter. Jan de Villiers offers an appraisal of Adolf Deissmann and his view of Paul's mysticism. He places his comments regarding Deissmann in the context of contemporary and subsequent interpreters who have appreciated and analyzed Deissmann's foundational ideas.

3. *Conclusion*

Any collection of theological essays such as this is bound to have a variety of essays that focus in different ways and with varying degrees of depth and even success on topics that are identified by their authors as important in Pauline theology. This collection is no different. Some of the essays are broad ranging, while others are narrowly focused. Some are on broad themes, while others tackle particular and specific issues. Some try to survey the entire field, while others focus on a single individual. As noted from the discussion in the first half of this essay, each approach has its place in the study of Paul's theology. The study of Pauline theology is not best described as a univocal thing, so much as a community effort over time to come to terms with the major thoughts, influences, ideas, contexts, and practices of Paul the Apostle. The essays in this volume are a part of and a continuation of that work.

THE SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATIONS FOR PAUL'S MISSION TO THE GENTILES

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The apostle Paul refers to himself in his letter to the Romans explicitly as ἔθνων ἀπόστολος (“apostle to the Gentiles,” 11:13), and in Galatians he speaks of his commission to proclaim Christ among the Gentiles (1:16) and of his being entrusted with the gospel for them (2:7–9).

Just when that sense of apostleship to persons other than the Jewish people came to Paul's mind is debated. It has been held that Paul was commissioned to that apostleship from the very beginning, the Christophany of which he speaks in his letters (1 Cor 15:8; Gal 1:16).¹ Others have maintained that Paul came to that sense of vocation over a period of time and as a consequence of his reflecting upon the implications of the gospel.² But it should be stressed that, unless Paul had received a vocational commission in some way at the time of his call, it is not self-evident why he would have concluded that he should be an apostle to the Gentiles. Was it because he perceived that the risen Christ was Lord of all the world, and that therefore everyone in the world should come under his reign?³

¹ Martin Dibelius, *Paul* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1953) 53; Ferdinand Hahn, *Mission in the New Testament* (SBT 47; Naperville, Ill.: Alec R. Allenson, 1965) 97; Heinrich Kasting, *Die Anfänge der wchristlichen Mission: Eine historische Untersuchung* (BEvT 55; Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1969) 56–60; Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (WUNT 2.4; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1981) 56–66; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 80; J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997) 159; and Rainer Riesner, *Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 235–37.

² Arthur D. Nock, *St. Paul* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1938) 72–81; Anton Fridrichsen, *The Apostle and His Message* (Uppsala: Lundequistska Bokhandeln, 1947) 13, 23 (n. 26); Edward P. Blair, “Paul's Call to the Gentile Mission,” *BR* 10 (1965): 19–33; W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Paul's Theology* (4th ed.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965) 67–68; Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* (New York: Harper & Row, 1971; repr., Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 22.

³ Günther Bornkamm, “Christ and the World in the Early Christian Message,” in his *Early Christian Experience* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969) 15; Hahn, *Mission*,

Was it because he concluded that Jesus, rejected by the highest authorities of law-observant Israel, was vindicated by God; and that therefore another way into the people of God had been opened to humanity, viz., the way of faith in the rejected and vindicated Christ—apart from Torah observance?⁴ Was it because he understood that the end of the ages had come, when Gentiles would have a place in the final, renewed humanity?⁵ Or was it simply due to the overwhelming experience of God’s love in Christ that compelled him to preach the gospel?⁶ It is quite possible that any or all of these and more were factors in Paul’s Gentile missionary theology.⁷ In any case, it is not the purpose of this essay to take up those questions specifically. The question pursued here is more limited and can be put in this way: What was it in the Scriptures known to Paul that would have given him the basis for a mission to the Gentiles? It is presupposed here that there was such, and that for Paul the Scriptures of Israel were “oracles of God” (Rom 3:2) that spoke directly to his own day.

1. *Paul’s Call*

It has become widely accepted that the turning point in Paul’s career—from that of persecutor to apostle—was not a “conversion” but a “call.”⁸ The appearance of the risen Christ to witnesses does

100; Donald Senior and Carroll Stuhlmueller, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1983) 171–72.

⁴ C. K. Barrett, “Paul: Missionary and Theologian,” in his *Jesus and the Word and Other Essays* (Allison Park: Pickwick Publications, 1995) 154–55.

⁵ E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983) 171; Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul*, 80.

⁶ Johannes Nissen, *New Testament and Mission: Historical and Hermeneutical Perspectives* (2d ed.; New York: Peter Lang, 2002) 105.

⁷ Not to be entertained is the thought that the Gentile mission was simply a means to another end, viz., the making of Israel jealous (Rom 11:13–14), leading ultimately to its turning and being saved. According to his own statements, Paul understood himself as an apostle to persons outside Israel proper.

⁸ Martin Dibelius, “Paulus und die Mystik,” in his *Botschaft und Geschichte: Gesammelte Aufsätze* (2 vols.; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1953–56) 2.158; Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1959) 24–35; Walter Schmithals, *The Office of Apostle in the Early Church* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1969) 24–31; Krister Stendahl, *Paul among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976) 7–11; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) 3–11; and Karl O. Sandness,

not by itself lead to apostleship or mission, for there is no indication that all (or even any) of the five hundred to whom Christ appeared (1 Cor 15:6) became apostles. An added ingredient, a commissioning, is necessary for the making of an apostle. And so, when Paul speaks of the appearance of Christ to him, he does more than recount a Christophany. He claims that he was at the same time commissioned as an apostle (Gal 1:15–16).

The language by which Paul describes his call is in accord with that of prophetic calls in the Old Testament (e.g., Isa 49:1–6; Jer 1:5), and in particular much like that used in connection with the call of Jeremiah. The similarity can be seen by comparing what Paul himself says with the text from Jeremiah in the Septuagint:

Jeremiah 1:5 (LXX):

πρὸ τοῦ με πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ ἐπίσταμαί σε
καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξῶλθῆναι ἐκ μητρὸς ἡγίακά σε
προφήτην εἰς ἔθνη τέθεικά σε.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you came from your mother I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

Galatians 1:15–16:

ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς μου
καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί,
ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν. . . .

But when [God], who had set me apart from my mother's womb,
and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his son to me,
in order that I might proclaim him among the nations (or Gentiles). . . .

Two items stand out in particular. Paul, as in the text from Jeremiah, (1) speaks of his vocation as having been determined before he was born, and (2) speaks of that vocation as a divinely given appointment to go to the “nations/Gentiles” as an apostle.

The phrase ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν in Gal 1:16 is usually translated “among the Gentiles” (RSV, NEB, NAB, NIV, and NRSV). While that is appropriate, it may be too restrictive. The term “Gentiles” refers simply and indiscriminately to non-Jewish persons, usually—or at

Paul—One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding (WUNT 2.43; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1991) 59–62. For a study that speaks in terms of conversion, see John G. Gager, “Some Notes on Paul's Conversion,” *NTS* 27 (1981): 697–704.

least often—to individuals (not groups). The Greek term (nominative plural ἔθνη) can, however, and often does, have a broader meaning than that. It can refer to “nations” or “peoples,” and when it does, it has a corporate meaning. Both meanings are to be found in the LXX, Philo, Josephus, and other Jewish literature of antiquity,⁹ and both are found in the letters of Paul.¹⁰ When Paul speaks of himself as commissioned to evangelize ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, therefore, one must ask whether that means that he was to evangelize among non-Jews (individuals), or whether the phrase means primarily that he was to evangelize among “the nations” known to him.

Within his letters Paul uses the term ἔθνη frequently to signify “Gentiles” in contrast to Jews in many places (Rom 2:14; 3:29; 1 Cor 1:23; 2 Cor 11:26; Gal 2:12, 14–15). But the term can also signify the “nations” of the world—corporate entities—outside the people of Israel. That is particularly true in quotations from the Old Testament (LXX) at Rom 4:17 (from Gen 17:5); 10:19 (from Deut 32:21); Gal 3:8b (from Gen 12:3); and possibly at Rom 2:24 (from Isa 52:5) and 15:9b–12 (from Ps 18:49; Deut 32:43; Ps 117:1; Isa 11:10).

That Paul was an apostle to “the Gentiles” is clear, but the terminology needs to be more fluid than that word allows by itself in modern speech. It is striking that immediately after writing about his call as an apostle in Gal 1:16, Paul writes about his travels to particular places populated by certain “nations” of the world. He says that his mission was first to Arabia (1:17) and then to Syria and Cilicia (1:21). Moreover, at the outset of his Letter to the Romans, Paul writes that he had received apostleship “to bring about the obedience of faith . . . among all the nations” (ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, Rom 1:5). Here the term ἔθνεσιν is more appropriately translated as “nations” (KJV, RSV, NEB) instead of “Gentiles” (NIV, NRSV) for a couple of reasons. First, the adjective “all” should not be missed. Paul is writing to Rome, and it is there that “all the nations” are

⁹ For references to all of these, cf. Georg Bertram, “ἔθνος,” *TDNT* 2.364–69; Karl L. Schmidt, “ἔθνος,” *TDNT* 2.369–72. For a comprehensive survey, cf. James M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background to Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (WUNT 84; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1995) 58–121. According to Scott, there are actually three meanings to the term: the nations of the world, including Israel; the nations of the world in distinction from Israel; and Gentiles (in distinction from Jews).

¹⁰ Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 121–23.

gathered, and among whom the house-churches of that city are located.¹¹ And secondly, it would not be fitting for Paul to speak of the Christians at Rome as Gentiles alone, which the wording would imply (“including yourselves,” Rom 1:6), for the community there was not made up of Gentiles only; it had a (presumably minority) Jewish membership as well (cf. Rom 4:1, 12; 7:1; 16:3–4, 7),¹² and the various house churches existed within a huge metropolis of various ethnic groups, including a large Jewish populace. Other statements of Paul confirm that he thought primarily in terms of an apostleship aimed toward the nations known to him, not simply toward individuals. Near the conclusion of the same letter Paul indicates that he had completed his work in the eastern regions, consisting of discrete nations, and was now planning to travel to Spain via Rome (15:23–28). And in 2 Corinthians he registers his intention “to preach the gospel in the regions beyond [Corinth]” (εἰς τὰ ὑπερέκεινα ὑμῶν εὐαγγελίσασθαι) rather than work in fields already evangelized by others (2 Cor 10:16).

To put matters candidly: If Paul considered himself an apostle to “the Gentiles” as individual persons, he would not have had to travel beyond Antioch of Syria.¹³ There would have been enough Gentiles in Palestine and Syria alone to consume his energies. The fact of the matter is that Paul traveled as an apostle to the (Gentile) “nations” north and west. He intended to go as far as Spain (Rom 15:28), and it is unlikely that Spain would be the end of his mission work, if he had ever gotten there.

¹¹ Adolf Schlatter, *Romans: The Righteousness of God* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995 [1935]) 11; Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (13th ed.; MeyerK 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 42. Cf. also Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 122, who favors “nations” on the basis of his reading of Rom 1:13–15.

¹² On the mixed (Jewish-Gentile) character of the church(es) of Rome, cf. Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 69–79; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975–79) 1.16–21; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 76–80; Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament* (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 559–64.

¹³ Concerning estimates of the size of the Gentile population in Antioch of Syria in proportion to the much smaller Jewish population, see Wayne A. Meeks and Robert L. Wilken, *Jews and Christians in Antioch in the First Four Centuries of the Common Era* (SBLSPS 13; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1978) 8.

2. Paul's Apostolic Principle

In Rom 15:14–29 Paul speaks not only of his travel plans but also of his apostleship. Writing from Corinth (c. A.D. 55/56), he indicates that he plans to travel “to Jerusalem with aid for the saints” (15:25). Paul has completed his collection (Gal 2:10; 1 Cor 16:1–3; 2 Cor 1:16; 8:1–9:15) from the Gentile churches for the church in Jerusalem. The collection itself was more than a matter of relief, but was also a symbol of the unity of his Gentile churches with the church in Jerusalem.¹⁴ Twice Paul speaks of his collection as a sign of “fellowship” (κοινωνία, 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13). His plans were to deliver the collection at Jerusalem and then travel by way of Rome to Spain (Rom 15:23–24, 28).

Paul speaks of a guiding principle regarding his apostleship. He says that it is his “ambition to preach the gospel, not where Christ has already been named” (Rom 15:20; cf. 2 Cor 10:15–16). Here he indicates that he will not seek to establish a new “Pauline” congregation in Rome (or anywhere else where a congregation exists) but will go to places where there is no other congregation. He had indicated earlier in the letter his intention to “impart . . . some spiritual gift” to strengthen the Christian community at Rome (1:11), and even to preach the gospel at Rome (1:15), but that would be for mutual edification (1:12), not to establish a new congregation as a rival to any existing there already.¹⁵ He is “satisfied” with the faith and knowledge of the Roman community (15:14; cf. 1:8).

It is in this context that Paul writes that “from Jerusalem and as far around (καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι) as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ” (Rom 15:19) and that he has no longer “any room for work in these regions” of the east (15:23), that is, the regions between Jerusalem and Illyricum. Paul has preached the

¹⁴ Cf. Dieter Georgi, *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992) 33–42; Bornkamm, *Paul*, 41; Bengt Holmberg, *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (ConBNT 11; Lund: C. W. K. Gleerup, 1978) 35–43; Keith F. Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* (SBT 48; London: SCM Press, 1966) 111–29; Munck, *Paul*, 287–97; and Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (EKKNT 6; 3 vols.; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978–82) 3.124–25.

¹⁵ Nor does Paul regard the Roman community as lacking an “apostolic foundation” or the “fundamental kerygma,” as suggested by Günther Klein, “Paul's Purpose in Writing the Epistle to the Romans,” in Karl P. Donfried (ed.), *The Romans Debate* (rev. ed.; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991) 29–43 (see especially pp. 39, 42).

gospel in the geographical arc or portion of a circle—which κύκλω implies¹⁶—extending from Jerusalem northwest into Macedonia (which borders on Illyricum). The astounding aspect of Paul’s statements here is that, according to him, he has no longer any room for proclaiming the gospel (and founding congregations) in the eastern sphere. Certainly he has not preached the gospel to every single person. Certainly there is plenty of room for evangelism among individual Gentiles (and Jews) throughout those areas. But Paul says that there is no more room for work in those regions.

The key to understanding what Paul has written is that he does not think here in terms of individual persons but instead of “nations.”¹⁷ Günther Bornkamm has stated the matter well concerning Paul:

His thought always extends beyond the individual community to countries and districts. Each of the churches founded, but no more than founded, by Paul stands for a whole district: Philippi for Macedonia (Phil 4:15), Thessalonica for Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thess 1:7f.), Corinth for Achaia (1 Cor 16:15; 2 Cor 1:1), and Ephesus for Asia (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Cor 1:8).¹⁸

Paul has therefore, in his own estimation, completed the work that he can do in the eastern regions. That does not mean that he has been in every nation or province. But given his work and the work of others, he now looks westward toward Spain. Moreover, it is not likely that Spain would have been the terminus of his apostolic work, but that is where he intended to go when he wrote to the Roman community. John Knox has suggested that the word κύκλω (Rom 15:19) may indicate that Paul intended to go beyond Spain. The term implies a complete circle, and perhaps Paul had thus already projected his apostolic work as extending to all the nations around the Mediterranean Sea:

The gospel preaching in that segment of this circle whose limits are roughly indicated by “from Jerusalem to Illyricum” has been completed; the rest of the circle has to be filled in. It is at least possible that this rather casual κύκλω reflects Paul’s hope and expectation of

¹⁶ BDAG 574: “in an arc” or “in a curve” is suggested.

¹⁷ Munck, *Paul*, 51–53; cf. also Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 395.

¹⁸ Bornkamm, *Paul*, 53–54; cf. Wolf-Henning Ollrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter: Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission* (WMANT 50; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979) 125–29; Senior and Stuhlmüller, *Biblical Foundations*, 184; and Nissen, *New Testament and Mission*, 112.

making a complete circuit of the nations, both north and south of the Sea, planting the gospel where it had not been planted by another. If this should be true, his over-all conception of his apostolic mission would not have been of a series of missionary journeys between Jerusalem and various points in Asia Minor and Greece, but rather of one great journey beginning and ending at Jerusalem, but encompassing the whole Mediterranean world in its scope.¹⁹

The suggestion of Knox deserves attention. Whether Paul thought that he could encircle the Mediterranean world within his own lifetime cannot be determined with certainty. But the insight of Knox that Paul did not think of his journeys as sporadic, random skirmishes into Gentile lands (a point that can be confirmed; cf. 2 Cor 1:17; 2:12), but as forming a geographic pattern of an arc extending from Jerusalem to Illyricum and then on to Spain, is sound. Paul expected to carry out a mission as far-reaching as that, even though his expectation was finally not fulfilled. It has been suggested that his attention would have turned to Gaul and Britain²⁰—areas of which he may well have been aware. Yet it is more likely that Paul would have planned to go from Spain to northern Africa—and then back to Jerusalem, completing the circle.²¹ In the LXX the word κύκλω is used by various writers in reference to peoples and nations surrounding Jerusalem,²² the “navel” of the world (Ezek 38:12). Moreover, according to Ezekiel, the Lord has set Jerusalem “in the midst of the nations (ἐν μέσῳ τῶν ἐθνῶν) and [has set] the countries in a circle (κύκλω) around her” (Ezek 5:5).²³

¹⁹ John Knox, “Romans 15:14–33 and Paul’s Conception of His Apostolic Mission,” *JBL* 83 (1964): 11.

²⁰ Munck, *Paul*, 52.

²¹ *Contra* the view that Spain would have been the terminus, based on LXX Isa 66:19 (where Tarshish is taken to refer to Spain), as in Roger D. Aus, “Paul’s Travel Plans to Spain and the ‘Full Number of the Gentiles’ of Rom. XI.25,” *NovT* 21 (1979): 234, 260. Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period*, 250–53, maintains that the Tarshish of Isa 66:19 would have been understood by Paul as Tarsus of Cilicia. Riesner identifies the places referred to in the passage as Tarsus, Cilicia, Lydia, Mysia, Bithynia, Macedonia, and Spain (“the distant islands”). He suggests that Paul was influenced at various points of his itinerary by the passage, intending to go as far as Spain, followed by a return to Jerusalem (pp. 253–306). That a single verse from Isaiah could function as an itinerary seems to go beyond the evidence in Paul’s letters and the Acts of the Apostles. According to Paul, he also traveled as an apostle to Arabia (Gal 1:17) and Syria (1:21), and major sites in Achaia (Corinth and Athens) and Asia Minor (Ephesus) do not fit into the pattern.

²² Ps 78:3–4; Isa 49:18; 60:4; Jer 39:44; 40:13; Ezek 5:5; cf. Bar 2:4; 2 Macc 4:32.

²³ Cf. Scott, *Paul and the Nations*, 138–39, 179, 217.

There is another reason why Paul could have planned to go from Spain to northern Africa. It is there that we have both literary and archaeological evidence of Jewish communities, and Paul would have considered their synagogues as bases of evangelization among the so-called Gentile “God-fearers” (see the section below on “Paul’s Strategy”).²⁴ Literary evidence indicates the presence of Jewish communities in Libya (Acts 2:10) and Egypt (Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 36; the Jewish texts known as the *Elephantine Papyri* from upper Egypt), and particularly at Alexandria, where Philo estimated that a million Jews lived in the first century (*Flacc.* 6.8). Gustav Adolf Deissmann has mapped out the existence of 143 Jewish communities outside Palestine encircling the Mediterranean basin, based on archaeological as well as literary evidence, and many of these dot his map across northern Africa.²⁵

3. *Eschatological Expectations concerning the Nations*

The decisive impetus behind Paul’s mission to the Gentiles—apart from any that would have been given him at the time of his call—must surely have been the eschatological expectations expressed in the Scriptures of Israel concerning the “nations” (Hebrew: גוֹיִם; LXX: ἔθνη). Already in Gen 12:3 the promise is given to Abraham, “in you shall all the families of the earth (LXX, πάντα αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς) be blessed.”²⁶ Paul quotes that passage in Gal 3:8 but alters it to

²⁴ Concerning Spain itself, opinions differ as to whether there were any Jewish communities located there in Paul’s day. Their existence is affirmed in the studies of Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in Christian Spain* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1966) 1.15–16; and Menachem Stern, “The Jewish Diaspora,” in Shemuel Safrai and Menachem Stern (eds.), *The Jewish People in the First Century: Historical Geography, Political History, Social, Cultural and Religious Life and Institutions* (CRINT 1; 2 vols.; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974–76) 1.169–70. On the other hand, the evidence for such an existence is lacking, according to W. Paul Bowers, “Jewish Communities in Spain in the Time of Paul the Apostle,” *JTS* 26 (1975): 395–402. It is generally conceded that “Sepharad” (the name for Spain in Hebrew) at Obadiah 20 is not likely to be a reference to Spain (as claimed in some post-biblical traditions) but applicable to an ancient city called Saparda in western Media or to Sardis in Asia Minor. For a review of the literature and discussion, cf. Paul R. Raabe, *Obadiah* (AB 24D; New York: Doubleday, 1996) 266–68.

²⁵ Gustav Adolf Deissmann, *St. Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1912) 41, 88, and the map in the jacket of his book, “The World as Known to Paul.”

²⁶ Cf. also Gen 22:18 where the promise is given to Abraham: “by your offspring shall all the nations of the earth (LXX, πάντα τὰ ἔθνη τῆς γῆς) gain blessing for themselves.”

read “in you shall all the nations/Gentiles (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) be blessed.” Then too at Gen 17:5 Abraham is designated “father of many nations” (LXX, πατέρα πολλῶν ἐθνῶν). Paul quotes that passage at Rom 4:17 (exactly as in the LXX). When Paul quotes those two passages from Genesis, he does so in contexts where he is making the case for the inclusion of Gentiles within the new humanity apart from circumcision. Yet even in these instances the sense of “nations” is close at hand. In the former, the divine blessing given to Abraham is for the sake of all humanity; and in the latter, the term ἔθνη can only be translated as “nations” in both Genesis and Romans.

But it is above all in the prophetic writings that the eschatological vision of Israel’s witnesses is projected. The prophets envision the conversion of the “nations” to serving the God of Israel. Many passages can be cited, especially from Isaiah.²⁷ Among them are the following (LXX texts in each case):

- Isaiah 2:2–4: “all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη)” will come to Zion “in the latter days” to learn the ways of the Lord.
- Isaiah 12:4: the Lord’s saving deeds are to be made known “among the nations (ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν).”
- Isaiah 25:6–8: the Lord will make a feast in Zion “for all the nations” (πᾶσι τοῖς ἔθνεσιν), and on that mountain his will for “all the nations” (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) will be established.
- Isaiah 51:4–5: God’s law will go forth, his justice as a “light to the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν)” and in his “arm” will “the nations (ἔθνη)” hope.
- Isaiah 60:3: “nations (ἔθνη) shall come to your light.”
- Isaiah 66:18: the Lord says that he will come “to gather all the nations (πάντα τὰ ἔθνη) and tongues, and they shall come and see [his] glory.”

Additional eschatological passages concerning “the nations” appear in other prophetic writings (LXX):

- Jeremiah 16:19: the prophet prays, “to thee shall the nations (ἔθνη) come from the end of the earth.”
- Micah 4:1–3: in the latter days “many nations (ἔθνη πολλά)” will come to Zion to learn the ways of the Lord (cf. Isa 2:2–4).
- Zechariah 8:20–23: “many peoples (λαοὶ πολλοί)” and “many nations (ἔθνη πολλά)” will come to seek the Lord.

²⁷ There is a tendency to place greater stress on “the nations” in the LXX of Deutero-Isaiah than in the MT, according to John W. Olley, “Righteousness” in the *Septuagint of Isaiah: A Contextual Study* (SBLSCS 8; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1979) 147–51.

Such eschatological expectations of the “nations” as turning to the Lord in the last days are found also in the Psalms (e.g., 22:27; 86:9) and in passages within the deuterocanonical (or apocryphal) books of the Old Testament. Among them are Tob 13:11 (LXX, 13:13, “Many nations [ἔθνη πολλά] will come from afar to the name of the Lord God”); 14:6 (“all the nations [πάντα τὰ ἔθνη] will turn to fear the Lord God in truth and will bury their idols”); Wis 8:14 (“nations [ἔθνη]” will be subject to wisdom); and Sir 39:10 (“nations [ἔθνη]” will declare God’s “wisdom”). Still other passages can be found in the pseudopigraphal literature (*Pss. Sol.* 17.30–35; *T. Zeb.* 9.8; *T. Benj.* 9.2; *T. Judah* 24) and in rabbinic literatures.²⁸

In addition to these more general expectations, there are passages, particularly in Isaiah, that speak not of the nations as coming to Zion, but of the Servant of the Lord as going to the nations to bring them justice and being a light unto them:

Isaiah 42:1, 6: the Lord’s Servant will bring “justice to the nations (κρίσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν)” and be a “light to the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν).”

Isaiah 49:6: the Lord will send forth his Servant to be a “light to the nations (φῶς ἐθνῶν)” in order that his salvation may reach to the ends of the earth.

Given the eschatological expectations of his own Jewish heritage, it should not be surprising that Paul would think in terms of the “nations” (not simply “Gentiles” as individuals here and there) as the field of his apostolic mission. Furthermore, in keeping with those eschatological expectations that the Lord himself (through his Servant)²⁹ would reach out to the nations, Paul—as the Lord’s apostle—would envision a mission that reaches out to the ends of the earth. Insofar as Acts can be used as a source on Paul, the apostle’s call is interpreted as a call to the “nations” at Acts 9:15 where he is commissioned to be a “chosen instrument” to carry the Lord’s name “before the nations

²⁸ Many texts of the rabbinic literature are cited by Wilckens, *Römer*, 2.255 (n. 1145).

²⁹ There seems to be no explicit connection between the Servant motif of Isaiah and the Christology of Paul. The implicit connections, however, may well be many and thoroughgoing. *Contra* Paul Dinter, “Paul and the Prophet Isaiah,” *BTB* 13 (1983): 48–52, it is highly unlikely that Paul would have thought of himself as the Servant. Instead, he would have thought of himself as a “herald” announcing good news, as maintained by J. Ross Wagner, “The Heralds of Isaiah and the Mission of Paul: An Investigation of Paul’s Use of Isaiah 51–55 in Romans,” in William H. Bellinger, Jr., and William R. Farmer (eds.), *Jesus and the Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 and Christian Origins* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1998) 193–222.

(ἐνώπιον ἔθνῶν) and kings and the sons of Israel.” The same is affirmed in two other passages: 22:21 (“I will send you far away to the nations [εἰς ἔθνη]”); and 26:20 (Paul preached at Damascus, Jerusalem, throughout Judea, and “to the nations [τοῖς ἔθνεσιν]”). This picture of Paul as one appointed to carry on a mission among the “nations” is confirmed by what he says of his work also in Romans 15.

4. *The Offering of the Nations*

At Rom 15:16, Paul speaks of himself as a “minister (λειτουργός) of Christ Jesus to the nations (εἰς τὰ ἔθνη), serving as a priest (ιερουργούντα) of the gospel of God, in order that the offering of the nations (ἡ προσφορά τῶν ἔθνῶν) may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” Using cultic language, Paul speaks of himself as making an offering to God.³⁰ The offering that he presents is the “offering of the nations,” which is to be understood not as an offering “from” (subjective genitive) the nations, but an offering of the nations themselves (an objective genitive; more precisely a genitive of apposition)—“the offering that consists of the nations.”³¹

The imagery recalls that of Sir 50:12–14 (LXX), in which the writer describes the cultic activity of Simon as high priest (c. 219–196 B.C.). In that scene priests from all around (κυκλόθεν) surround (κυκλόω) the high priest. Together they present an offering (προσφορά) before the congregation (Israel) as an act of priestly service (λειτουργέω) for the Most High, the Almighty (ὁ παντοκράτωρ).

This cultic imagery lies behind the passage of Rom 15:16. That Paul was familiar with Sirach is beyond dispute, since his letters contain allusions to it elsewhere.³² Paul speaks of himself as carrying out the

³⁰ According to Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.756, the term *ιερουργέω* “occurs frequently in Philo and Josephus but always in the sense of offering (a sacrifice).” Cf. BDAG 471.

³¹ The objective genitive has very wide support; cf. BDAG 887; Str-B 3.153; Michel, *Römer*, 365; Käsemann, *Romans*, 393; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.756–57; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 712; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994) 237–38; Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period*, 247. The subjective genitive is favored by Albert-Marie Denis, “La fonction apostolique et la liturgie nouvelle en esprit: Étude thématique des métaphores pauliniennes du culte nouveau,” *RSPT* 42 (1958): 405–407.

³² The appendix to the Nestle-Aland text (27th ed.) lists some 22 allusions to Sirach in the seven undisputed letters of Paul. For illustrations, see E. Earle Ellis, *Paul’s Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1957) 59, 76, 153.

priestly work of presenting the Gentile nations themselves from the regions of his missionary work extending in the arc (κύκλω, 15:19) from Jerusalem to Illyricum. The offering is not simply an offering of “the Gentiles” (RSV, NIV, NRSV) but of the Gentile “nations.” The phrase “offering of the nations” recalls the closing words of Isaiah 66, which speak of the end times: God will come and “gather all the nations and tongues; and they shall come and shall see my glory” (66:18). God will send his witnesses to declare his glory “among the nations” (66:19). “They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an offering to the Lord” (LXX, ἐκ πάντων τῶν ἐθνῶν δῶρον κυρίῳ, 66:20).³³ In spite of the terminological difference of δῶρον (“gift,” Isa 66:20) and προσφορά (“offering,” Rom 15:16), the concept of the “offering of the nations” to the Lord in Isaiah must be considered the background for the apostle’s own expression in Romans, as various interpreters have held.³⁴ A similar expression appears at Phil 2:17 where Paul speaks of the faith of the Philippian as an “offering and service,” using still other terms (θυσία καὶ λειτουργία).

The “offering” of which Paul speaks (Rom 15:16) is presumably not “the Gentile world itself,”³⁵ for the offering is one that has been “sanctified by the Holy Spirit.” That would include Christians alone (cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 6:11 where the term “sanctified” applies to Christians).³⁶ But an offering in Jewish tradition is always representative of the whole. Elsewhere Paul uses the cultic language of “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) offered to God to speak of his first converts of Asia (Rom 16:5) and Achaia (1 Cor 16:15), and he speaks of Christians generally as those

³³ In Isa 66:20 the reference is to Jews of the Diaspora who will come from the nations, but in Rom 15:16 it is the nations themselves that are in view—perhaps in light of Isa 66:18, which speaks of gathering “all nations and tongues.”

³⁴ Cf. John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959–65) 2.210; Michel, *Römer*, 365; Matthew Black, *Romans* (NCB; Greenwood: Attic, 1973) 175; Konrad Weiss, “Paulus—Priester der christlichen Kultgemeinde,” *TLZ* 79 (1954): 355–63; Gordon P. Wiles, *Paul’s Intercessory Prayers* (SNTSMS 24; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974) 85 (n. 5); Riesner, *Paul’s Early Period*, 245 (n. 57). On the significance of Deutero-Isaiah for Paul’s understanding of his apostleship, see Traugott Holtz, “Zum Selbstverständnis des Apostels Paulus,” *TLZ* 91 (1966): 321–30.

³⁵ Käsemann, *Romans*, 393.

³⁶ Cf. Schlatter, *Romans*, 265; Michel, *Römer*, 365; Ulrich Luz, *Das Geschichtsverständnis des Paulus* (BEvT 49; Munich: Kaiser, 1968) 392; Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.757; Wilckens, *Römer*, 3.118; and Martin Hengel, “The Origins of the Christian Mission,” in his *Between Jesus and Paul: Studies in the Earliest History of Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983) 51.

who have the “first fruits (ἀπαρχή) of the Spirit” (Rom 8:23).³⁷ On one occasion he speaks of Jewish Christians as “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) offered to God (Rom 11:16).

The Church is the “first fruits” of the Spirit offered to God (cf. also 2 Thess 2:13; Jas 1:18; Rev 14:4; *1 Clem.* 42.4).³⁸ For Paul, the “offering of the nations . . . sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:16)—an offering prepared through his priestly service of the gospel—is the “first fruits” of redeemed humanity. The imagery of “first fruits” is based on the Old Testament cultic festival, by which the first fruits were given to the Lord (Exod 23:16; 34:26; Num 28:26; Deut 26:1–11). Through this act God is acknowledged to be the actual owner of all things; the remaining crop is sanctified, and it therefore shares in the divine blessing;³⁹ the first fruits “represent the whole.”⁴⁰ In his apostolic work the apostle Paul intended to gather from the nations an offering acceptable to God—sanctified by the Spirit—by which the divine blessing extends to the nations themselves. For God is the owner of all the nations—the God who is God of both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 3:29). Through his proclamation of the gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum, which was to be extended to Spain and perhaps beyond, Paul made a circuit (Rom 15:19) among the nations to render to the Lord the “offering of the nations” in terms of the eschatological expectation expressed in Isaiah 66.

³⁷ Cf. Gerhard Delling, “ἀπαρχή,” *TDNT* 1.484–86. Cf. also 2 Cor 5:5 where Paul uses the synonym ἀρραβών (first installment) of the Spirit.”

³⁸ In spite of differences in terminology between “offering” (προσφορά) in Rom 15:16 and “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) elsewhere in Paul’s writings, the two terms are associated in early Christian literature, as witnessed by the fact that the writer of the *Apostolic Constitutions* speaks of Christians as “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) and “offerings” (προσφορά) offered (προσφερόμεναι) to God (2.26.2). Already in the Old Testament the term ἀπαρχή is used beyond the meaning of “first fruits” to include regular offerings brought to the temple or to the priests; cf. Delling, “ἀπαρχή,” *TDNT* 1.485. The verb “to offer” (προσφέρω) takes “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) as its direct object (Lev 2:12; Num 5:9); and within a single chapter of Sirach various terms concerning offerings are used in parallel: 35:5, προσφορά; 35:6, θυσία; and 35:7, ἀπαρχή. Furthermore, there is a linkage in terminology even in Paul’s own writings in that the “offering” (προσφορά) is “sanctified by the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:16), and Christians as “first fruits” (ἀπαρχή) are such because of the work of the Spirit in them (Rom 8:23).

³⁹ Walther Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (2 vols.; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1961–67) 1.152; Gerhard von Rad, *Old Testament Theology* (2 vols.; New York: Harper & Row, 1962–65) 1.254.

⁴⁰ Johs. Pedersen, *Israel: Its Life and Culture* (2 vols.; London: Oxford University Press, 1926–40) 2.301.

Other passages cohere with this conception. At Rom 11:25, Paul writes that a “partial hardening”⁴¹ has come upon Israel “until τὸ πλήρωμα τῶν ἐθνῶν comes in.” The phrase is difficult, and it has been translated “the full number of the Gentiles” (RSV, NIV, NRSV). So it has been said that here Paul speaks of “the full number of the elect from among the Gentiles.”⁴² But such an interpretation tends to individualize. It is not likely that Paul has in mind here a set “number” of elect persons.⁴³ Rather, behind the conception is the tradition that comes to expression in Mark 13:10: “The gospel must first be preached to all the nations” before the parousia.⁴⁴ Israel’s no to the gospel has provided opportunity for the gospel to be preached to all the nations. Already in Rom 11:11–12 Paul wrote that through the trespass of Israel—Israel’s refusal to accept the gospel—salvation comes to the nations (τοῖς ἔθνεσιν), resulting in “riches for the world” and “riches for the nations” (ἐθνῶν). Again it is customary to translate “Gentiles” in these verses (RSV, NIV, NRSV), but Paul thinks in terms of collectives: Israel, the world, and the (Gentile) nations. Paul envisions the no of Israel to persist until the parousia—and then “all Israel will be saved” (11:26–32)—but that means that in the present time before the parousia the gospel is to be proclaimed until the “fullness of the (Gentile) nations” enter into the new humanity. Paul does not thereby think that all Gentiles individually throughout the nations will be converted, but rather that the “fullness of the nations” will be ushered into the new humanity representatively by those who believe throughout the various nations of the world.⁴⁵ The gospel must therefore be preached among them at the dawn of the new age, which has begun with the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. The eschatological expectation of the Scriptures of Israel that in the latter days the nations will come to worship the God of Israel is thus being realized—with the apostle himself having a pivotal role in the history of salvation.

⁴¹ For this translation, rather than “a hardening has come upon part of Israel” (RSV, NRSV), see Black, *Romans*, 147; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 621; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (WBC 38A–B; 2 vols.; Dallas: Word, 1988) 2.679; cf. NEB, NIV.

⁴² Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.575; cf. Murray, *Romans*, 2.93.

⁴³ Munck, *Paul*, 48; *idem*, *Christ and Israel: An Interpretation of Romans 9–11* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1967) 134–35.

⁴⁴ Peter Stuhlmacher, “Zur Interpretation von Römer 11,25–32,” in Hans W. Wolff (ed.), *Probleme biblischer Theologie: Gerhard von Rad zum 70. Geburtstag* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1971) 565–66; and Käsemann, *Romans*, 312.

⁴⁵ Cf. Munck, *Paul*, 48; *idem*, *Christ and Israel*, 134–35.

Paul carried on his apostolic work among the nations then in order to gather from them an “offering” sanctified by the Holy Spirit and acceptable to God (Rom 15:16), which is representative of the nations themselves. This offering is the “first fruits” (Rom 16:5; 1 Cor 16:15; cf. Rom 8:23) of the redeemed humanity. The Church is the eschatological people of God in history, consisting of persons from all the nations, who are already the “new creation” (2 Cor 5:17). That which is in store for all the nations, through God’s reconciling the world to himself in Christ (2 Cor 5:19), is realized prophetically in the old age (historical time), where the first fruits appear. Paul’s proclamation of the gospel among the nations is his priestly work to prepare an acceptable offering, sanctified by the Spirit, as the first fruits of the new creation.

5. *Paul’s Strategy*

There are essentially two competing views concerning Paul’s mission strategy. One view is that Paul’s work as an apostle was conducted in large part, but not exclusively, among the so-called Gentile God-fearers who attended the synagogues of the Diaspora,⁴⁶ that is, Gentiles who did not undergo circumcision to become members of the people of Israel, but who were attracted to and devoted to Jewish monotheism and ethics.⁴⁷ The technical terms usually translated “God-

⁴⁶ The term “God-fearers” is discussed by Kirsopp Lake, “Proselytes and God-fearers,” in F. J. Foakes-Jackson and K. Lake (eds.), *The Beginnings of Christianity* (5 vols.; London: Macmillan, 1920–33) 5.74–96; the revised essay on “Gentiles and Judaism: ‘God-fearers’ and Proselytes” by Emil Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.–A.D. 135)* (3 vols.; rev. Geza Vermes et al.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973–87) 3/1.150–76; Karl G. Kuhn, “προσήλυτος,” *TDNT* 6.742–44; and Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969) 320.

⁴⁷ Persons holding this view include Nock, *Paul*, 91–92; Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 68; *idem*, “Paul and the People of Israel,” in his *Jewish and Pauline Studies* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984) 135; Kuhn, “προσήλυτος,” 6.744; Munck, *Paul*, 120; Philipp Vielhauer, “On the ‘Paulinism’ of Acts,” in Leander E. Keck and J. Louis Martyn (eds.), *Studies in Luke-Acts: Essays Presented in Honor of Paul Schubert* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966; repr., Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) 38–39; Peter Richardson, *Israel in the Apostolic Church* (SNTSMS 10; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1969) 136; Richard Longenecker, *The Ministry and Message of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1971) 37–48; John G. Gager, *Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1975) 128; Abraham J. Malherbe, *Social Aspects of Early Christianity* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1977) 64; Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 61–62; Beker, *Paul*, 76;

fearers” (σεβόμενοι τὸν θεόν and φοβούμενοι τὸν θεόν) appear in the writings of Josephus (*Ant.* 14.110), frequently in Acts (10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 26, 50; 16:14; 17:4, 17),⁴⁸ and in inscriptions.⁴⁹ Apart from the technical terms themselves, there is additional evidence that Jewish communities attracted Gentiles who did not become full proselytes. Josephus writes concerning the Jewish community at Antioch of Syria: “They were constantly attracting to their religious ceremonies multitudes of Greeks, and these they had in some measure incorporated with themselves” (*War* 7.45).

The basis for the view that Paul worked among the God-fearers of the synagogues rests essentially on accounts in Acts. Even though it is recognized that Acts is a secondary source on Paul’s mission activities, many scholars have concluded that on this point Acts is essentially correct. In Acts, Paul frequently visits synagogues (9:20; 13:5, 14; 14:1; 17:1–2, 10, 17; 18:4, 19; 19:8), and at 17:1–4 and 18:4 it is said explicitly that Paul found a following from among both Jews and Greeks (the God-fearers) associated with synagogues at Thessalonica and Corinth.

The second view looks at the evidence from the letters of Paul apart from Acts. When Paul refers to his converts, nowhere does he speak of them as former God-fearers. Instead they are spoken of as having come from pagan backgrounds. The Galatians, he says, had been “enslaved to beings that by nature are not gods” (Gal 4:8). The Corinthians had been “pagans” (NIV and NRSV for ἔθνη) and “led astray to idols that could not speak” (1 Cor 12:2; cf. 6:9–11). The Thessalonians had “turned to God from idols” (1 Thess 1:9). Moreover, when Paul speaks of his first contact with the Galatians he says that it was “because of a physical infirmity” (Gal 4:13). Therefore it has been claimed that when Paul entered a given community, he did not apparently go to the synagogue but sought out and went directly to Gentiles.⁵⁰ More specifically, it has been suggested that Paul capitalized on his trade as an artisan (tent maker),

and Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982) 102–104. In regard to the early (non-Pauline) mission among the “God-fearers” at Rome, cf. Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus*, 69–72.

⁴⁸ A similar term (θεοσεβής) appears at John 9:31.

⁴⁹ For references in inscriptions, see Karl G. Kuhn and Hartmut Stegemann, “Proselyten,” *PWSup* 9.248–83; and Machteld J. Mellink, “Archaeology in Asia Minor,” *AJA* 81 (1977) 305–306. For critique, see A. Thomas Kraabel, “The Disappearance of the ‘God-Fearers,’” *Numen* 28 (1981): 113–26.

⁵⁰ Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 182–86.

so that his first contacts in a community were often with fellow artisans and their customers; “that the workshop itself may have been a locus of much of Paul’s missionary preaching and teaching is not implausible.”⁵¹

This view sets the material in Acts aside and approaches the matter solely on the basis of the evidence in Paul’s own letters. It could be given additional support from Acts. According to Acts 18:1–3, when Paul arrived at Corinth, he sought out Aquila and Priscilla “because he was of the same trade” (a tent maker). One could conclude from this that the house of this couple and/or their place of trade, rather than the synagogue, was the locus of Paul’s missionary work at Corinth. It corroborates the evidence and inferences from the letters.

But an exclusive either/or choice between these two views is not necessary. Immediately after the passage just cited, Luke adds that “every sabbath” Paul “would argue in the synagogue [at Corinth] and would try to convince Jews and Greeks” (Acts 18:4). Whether Acts can be considered reliable is of course disputed, but to remain for a moment with its account, it has to be said that, according to Luke, Paul did not seek out Aquila and Priscilla simply because they were of the same trade, but primarily because they were Christians, a fact that must have been known to him through the network of associations within the trade or even through information carried about by other Christians who had been in Corinth. Aquila and Priscilla were Jewish Christians who had been expelled from Rome (c. A.D. 49) when Claudius “commanded all the Jews to leave Rome” (Acts 18:2). Because they were of the same trade, Paul “stayed with them” and “worked” at the same trade (18:3). Their home was most likely the first meeting place for the church at Corinth, just as later their home was the place for the gathering of a church at Ephesus (1 Cor 16:19; cf. 8:9) and then at Rome after their return there (Rom 16:3–5).⁵² But even though the home of this couple may have

⁵¹ Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (2d ed.; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) 29. Meeks cites the work of Ronald F. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980). It should be noted, however, that Meeks does not entirely discount the view that some members of the Pauline congregations were from the God-fearers (cf. pp. 26–28, 73).

⁵² Some scholars have suggested that Romans 16 was appended to a second edition of Romans that Paul sent to Ephesus (not Rome). The major scholar to pro-

served as a place for gathering, according to Luke, Paul carried on evangelistic efforts at the synagogue at Corinth (Acts 18:4).

The question to be considered is whether any of the material from Acts can be considered reliable on this matter. A case can be made for an affirmative conclusion in reference to Corinth in particular. The Christian community there was a mixed Jewish/Gentile body. Although it was undoubtedly composed chiefly of Gentiles, it had some members of Jewish heritage as well.⁵³ In addition to Aquila and Priscilla—present for a time at Corinth due to their expulsion from Rome—there are other Jewish Christians that Paul mentions in his letters. These include Crispus (1 Cor 1:14, a convert of Jewish background; cf. Acts 18:8) and three men who join Paul in sending greetings from Corinth to Rome named Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, whom Paul identifies as Jewish Christians (οἱ συγγενεῖς μου, “my kinsmen,” Rom 16:21). Moreover, Paul says that, in his work as an apostle, he “became as a Jew, in order to win Jews” and “became as one outside the law” in order to “win those outside the law” (1 Cor 9:20–21). It is in his Corinthian correspondence also that he speaks of both “Jews and Greeks” as those who have been called (1 Cor 1:24) and baptized (1 Cor 12:13). Further, he says that those who are circumcised should not “seek to remove the marks of circumcision” (1 Cor 7:18), and he says that the Corinthians should give no offense to Jews, Greeks, or the Church of God (1 Cor 10:32). The data cited give credence to the tradition in Acts that at Corinth Paul reached both Jews and Gentile God-fearers at the synagogue.⁵⁴

pose this was T. W. Manson, “St. Paul’s Letter to the Romans—and Others,” in *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (ed. Matthew Black; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962) 225–41; reprinted in K. Donfried (ed.), *The Romans Debate*, 3–15. The suggestion has not held up well in recent scholarship, however. Cf. the work of Harry Y. Gamble, Jr., *Textual History of the Letter to the Romans: A Study in Textual and Literary Criticism* (SD 42; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977) 56–95; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.8–11; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 59–64; Dunn, *Romans*, 2.884–85; Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus*, 153–54; Brown, *Introduction*, 575–76.

⁵³ Cf. Werner G. Kümmel, *Introduction to the New Testament* (rev. ed.; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1975) 271, who refers to 1 Cor 7:18; Acts 18:4; cf. Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul*, 271–73; Brown, *Introduction*, 514.

⁵⁴ The presence of a Jewish community at Corinth is attested by Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 36.281, as well as Acts 18:5–17. An inscription at Corinth (ΑΓΩΓΗ ΕΒΡ) is probably to be read as συν]αγωγή Ἑβραίων (“synagogue of the Hebrews”). It may or may not come from the time of Paul, but most any time between 100 B.C. and A.D. 200, according to Gustav A. Deissmann, *Light from the Ancient East* (rev. ed.; New York: George H. Doran, 1927) 16 (with illustration). A plaque possibly referring to a synagogue official at ancient Corinth is illustrated and discussed in G. H. R.

Going beyond the Corinthian situation, and even beyond what is recorded in Acts, there are indications in his letters that Paul came into conflict with synagogue authorities and perhaps other adherents. He reports that he had received the thirty-nine lashes from the Jews no less than five times (2 Cor 11:24), and on other occasions he refers to persecutions (2 Cor 4:9; 12:10) and “danger from my own people” (2 Cor 11:26). It is through the preaching of Christ, he says, that the “veil” over the minds of those who hear Moses read (in the synagogue) is removed (2 Cor 3:14–16). The conclusion to be drawn is that he had offended synagogue leaders and was punished by them,⁵⁵ and the reason for such offenses and consequent punishments must have been his preaching in synagogues.

It is less clear whether the churches in Galatia, Philippi, and Thessalonica had any former God-fearers as members. In regard to the churches of Galatia, it can be said that throughout his letter to them, Paul speaks to his readers as Gentiles who had worshiped pagan gods previous to their accepting the gospel (Gal 4:8–9).⁵⁶ In the case of Philippi, Paul addresses his readers as uncircumcised Gentiles (Phil 3:2–3). And it is striking that, in reference to Thessalonica, Paul never quotes from, or even alludes to, the Old Testament or Jewish traditions.⁵⁷ That the Thessalonians “turned to God from idols” (1 Thess 1:9) speaks of a pagan past.

Horsley *et al.*, *New Documents Illustrating Early Christianity* (9 vols.; North Ryde, NSW, Australia: Ancient History Documentary Research Centre, 1981–2002) 4.213–20. Once again, the date is uncertain.

⁵⁵ Flogging was a means of discipline for various offenses, including rebelliousness against synagogue authority. See *m. Sanh.* 1.2; Hugo Mantel, *Studies in the History of the Sanhedrin* (HSS 17; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1965) 295; Haim H. Cohn, “Bet Din and Judges,” *EncJud*, 4.720–21; and Arland J. Hultgren, “Paul’s Pre-Christian Persecutions of the Church: Their Purpose, Locale, and Nature,” *JBL* 95 (1976): 104.

⁵⁶ Martyn, *Galatians*, 16.

⁵⁷ What is said in 1 Thess 2:13–16 does not supply any information that coincides with that of Acts, for its reference to Jewish Christians applies to Judea, and in any case it is often considered a deutero-Pauline interpolation. Cf. Birger A. Pearson, “1 Thessalonians 2:13–16: A Deutero-Pauline Interpolation,” *HTR* 64 (1971): 79–94; Daryl Schmidt, “1 Thess 2:13–16: Linguistic Evidence for an Interpolation,” *JBL* 102 (1983): 269–79. Those claiming its authenticity include Davies, “Paul and the People of Israel,” 124–27; I. Howard Marshall, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (NCB; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 11–12; Karl P. Donfried, “1 Thessalonians 2:13–16 as a Test Case,” *Int* 38 (1984): 242–53; Frank D. Gilliard, “The Problem of the Antisemitic Comma between 1 Thessalonians 2:14 and 15,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 481–502; and Brown, *Introduction*, 463.

Whether one can exclude the existence of any God-fearers at the time of the founding of the churches in those three places, however, needs to be balanced with other things in the letters and in Acts. In regard to Galatia, Paul can assume that at least some of his readers understand his scriptural allusions (Gal 3:6–29; 4:21–31) and consider the Scriptures authoritative. Does that imply that at least a nucleus of readers of Galatians came from a God-fearer background? The question cannot be answered with certainty. It is possible that Paul had instructed them in the Old Testament during his time with them or that the zealous Jewish-Christian missionaries present there after his departure instructed them.⁵⁸ But with Philippi and Thessalonica there is more evidence for the existence of Jewish communities and God-fearers. Philo refers to Jewish colonies existing in Macedonia in the first century.⁵⁹ In regard to Philippi in particular, it seems too drastic to exclude the essential historicity of Acts where it is said that Paul gained a following outside the city gate that included Lydia, a God-fearer (σεβομένη τὸν θεόν), whom he met at a “place of prayer” (προσευχή, Acts 16:13–14). And in regard to Thessalonica, it is striking that when Paul writes his letter to the Romans, he sends greetings from a man named Jason who is with him in Corinth at the time (Rom 16:21). That person could well have been the member of the synagogue at Thessalonica to whom Luke refers and who protected Paul from other members of the synagogue there (Acts 17:1–9). If that is so, he could have become a convert and left Thessalonica with Paul because of the persecution that he experienced in that city.⁶⁰

Paul’s apostolic work must have carried him well beyond those cities that have become familiar to us from his extant letters and the book of Acts. His reference, for example, to receiving the thirty-nine lashes (2 Cor 11:24)—from synagogue officials—cannot be explained or illumined by finding correlations in Acts or the letters that have been preserved, but provides evidence that a good amount

⁵⁸ For a construction of the scope of the teaching of the Jewish-Christian missionaries in Galatia, cf. J. Louis Martyn, “A Law-Observant Mission to Gentiles,” in his *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) 7–24.

⁵⁹ Philo, *Legat.* 36.281.

⁶⁰ The possibility is held by Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.805–806; Dunn, *Romans*, 909; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 749; and Florence M. Gillman, “Jason of Thessalonica (Acts 17,5–9),” in Raymond F. Collins (ed.), *The Thessalonian Correspondence* (BETL 87; Louvain: Leuven University Press, 1990) 39–49 (especially on p. 40).

of Paul's missionary activities was carried on in and around synagogues where he would become acquainted with God-fearers.⁶¹ The fact that Paul speaks of his converts as persons who had turned from idolatry to the worship of God does not negate or undermine the view that some of them, who made up the initial nucleus, had been former Gentile God-fearers. To be sure, many—perhaps most—could have come directly from a pagan past into his churches without prior synagogue associations.⁶² But some converts in various places known and unknown to us from the letters and Acts could have been God-fearers whose ultimate origins were in paganism. The God-fearers were customarily first-generation with a pagan past. It was common for such persons to incorporate the next generation into Judaism through circumcision; or the second generation would seek full inclusion on its own initiative. God-fearers remained legally Gentiles, had a loose relationship to the synagogue, and did not cut off associations with the larger pagan environment. They never went through a “conversion,” properly speaking, for that could come about only by circumcision and adopting the law as a way of life.⁶³ Therefore when Paul speaks about the pagan past of persons in his congregations (1 Cor 12:2; Gal 4:8; 1 Thess 1:9), we need not conclude that none of them had ever had any associations with synagogues. Their roots may indeed have been in paganism and their idolatry recent. When Paul has to contend with Gentile Christians at Corinth for their syncretistic practices (1 Cor 10:7, 14–22), we witness the difficulty these persons had in breaking with former associations even as baptized Christians.

Taking the evidence as a whole, it can be concluded that Paul carried on his work as an apostle to the Gentiles in various settings, as these gave him opportunity. His work as an artisan provided contacts. His bodily ailment, needing attention, opened up contacts in Galatia (Gal 4:13). And the synagogues of the Diaspora were also

⁶¹ The passage is discussed extensively by Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 801–803. Cf. also Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (ICC; 2 vols.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994–2000) 2.736–38; and Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003) 267.

⁶² Cf. 1 Cor 6:11, “and such were some of you,” referring to many categories of persons in the church at Corinth, including idolators.

⁶³ Cf. the discussion on “Gentiles and Judaism: ‘God-fearers’ and Proselytes” in Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People*, 3/1.150–76.

fertile ground. It was at and around the synagogues that he would have found Gentile God-fearers who had some acquaintance with the scriptural traditions of Israel. With such persons as a nucleus for further work among Gentiles, he and they could gather in homes for preaching, teaching, and discussion that a larger, public setting would not accommodate.⁶⁴ Strange as it may sound, it can be said that, since Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles, he would sometimes go to synagogues to find them. To such persons Paul could proclaim the crucified and risen Jesus as the Messiah and declare that they need not undergo circumcision and observe the law to be full members of the people of God—for whom the scriptural promises have been confirmed in Jesus as the Messiah—but could be full members by faith alone apart from the law. By going to synagogues where opportunities existed Paul would not have thought of himself as reneging on the agreement at Jerusalem, by which he would go to the Gentiles (Gal 2:7–10). He would still have thought of his apostolic mission as directed toward the Gentiles among the various nations. But in terms of strategy, he would find Gentile God-fearers most likely to be prepared and receptive of the gospel. Both within the international network of artisans and in the circle of Gentiles already favorably disposed to Judaism (but not yet full members of Israel), the apostle would most naturally find access to possible converts.

6. Conclusion

Paul carried on a mission as an apostle to the Gentile nations not simply because he had good news to share, but because he had been commissioned to do so. Since the redemptive work of God in Christ is cosmic in scope, and since peoples of all the nations are to enter into the new humanity, Paul conceived of his mission as world-embracing. The Church on earth must mirror what is to come. A gospel and mission for the Jews alone, or that requires circumcision and keeping the law on the part of Gentiles (in effect, conversion first to Judaism) as a precondition, is incomplete and, in effect,

⁶⁴ Stephen C. Barton, “Paul as Missionary and Pastor,” in James D. G. Dunn (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Paul* (Cambridge Companions to Religion; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) 44–45; he cites Stanley K. Stowers, “Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching: The Circumstances of Paul’s Preaching Activity,” *NovT* 26 (1984): 68.

a denial of the gospel itself. The new age, which has already dawned with the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, is the messianic kingdom, and that kingdom includes in principle all the nations in its scope, as the eschatological promises of the prophets declared it would. Those promises had been set forth in the Scriptures of Israel, and they were foundational for Paul's mission to the Gentiles. It is unlikely, in light of his expectation of the parousia imminently, that Paul thought that all persons everywhere—Jew and Gentile alike—would hear and believe the gospel. But he set out to proclaim the gospel among the Gentile nations and thereby to establish congregations among them as the “first fruits” of the new creation. Or to use other cultic language, Paul could speak of his work as rendering a priestly service, preparing an offering, acceptable to God, consisting of believers from among the nations, representative of all the inhabitants of the world. The unity of all humankind in Christ, which will come into its own at the parousia, was thus being initiated at the dawn of the new age.

PAUL'S UNDERSTANDING OF FAITH AS PARTICIPATION

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Paul has often been described as the person who gave faith a central place in Christian thought. A reexamination of some aspects of the Pauline concept of faith seems warranted both by its general prominence in his letters and by some recent reassessments of his ideas, not least in regard to “the faith of Christ.”¹

¹ While this essay does not offer a history of modern studies of Paul's ideas on faith, an adequate review of that history would have to take account of the following: W. H. P. Hatch, *The Pauline Idea of Faith in Its Relation to Jewish and Hellenistic Religion* (HTS 2; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1917); Adolf Schlatter, *Der Glaube im Neuen Testament* (4th ed.; Stuttgart: Calwer, 1927) 323–418; E. Wissmann, *Das Verhältnis von PISTIS und Christusfrömmigkeit bei Paulus* (FRLANT NS 23; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1926); W. Mundle, *Der Glaubensbegriff des Paulus* (Leipzig: Heinsius, 1932); Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1951); Rudolf Bultmann, “πιστεύω κ.τ.λ.,” in *TDNT* 6.174–82, 197–228; Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; New York: Scribner's, 1951) 1.314–30; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1961) 200–212; F. Neugebauer, *In Christus—ἐν Χριστῷ: Eine Untersuchung zum Paulinischen Glaubensverständnis* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1961); James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961) 161–205; H. Ljungman, *Pistis: A Study of Its Presuppositions and Its Meaning in Pauline Use* (Lund: Gleerup, 1964); H. Binder, *Der Glaube bei Paulus* (Berlin: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1968); Ernst Käsemann, “The Faith of Abraham in Romans 4,” in his *Perspectives on Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971) 79–101; Wolfgang Schenk, “Die Gerechtigkeit Gottes und der Glaube Christi,” *TLZ* 97 (1972): 162–74; Dieter Lührmann, “Pistis im Judentum,” *ZNW* 64 (1973): 19–38; Arland J. Hultgren, “The *Pistis Christou* Formulation in Paul,” *NovT* 22.3 (1980): 248–63; Gerhard Barth, “Pistis in Hellenistischer Religiosität,” *ZNW* 73 (1982): 110–26; Sam K. Williams, “Again *Pistis Christou*,” *CBQ* 49 (1987): 431–47; James L. Kinneavy, *Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith: An Inquiry* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987); Axel von Dobbeler, *Glaube als Teilhabe* (WUNT 2.22; Tübingen: Mohr & Siebeck, 1987); Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002); Morna D. Hooker, “Pistis Christou,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 321–42; Richard B. Hays, “ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?” in E. E. Johnson and D. M. Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology, IV: Looking Back, Pressing On* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 35–60; James D. G. Dunn, “Once More, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ,” in Johnson and Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology, IV*, 61–81; Paul J. Achtemeier, “Apropos the Faith of/in

What does “faith” mean in Paul? How exclusively does he connect it with Jesus? Is it for Paul mainly or essentially belief, trust, or loyalty (faithfulness)? Or something else? Is faith for him primarily individualistic or communal? Paul never presents a single comprehensive definition, and he uses a variety of terms to express his ideas about faith. Yet “pist. terms” clearly have primacy, and we will focus our discussion on their use in the undisputed letters.²

The general position for which I will argue in this essay is that Paul’s concept of faith is best understood as the mode by which Christians participate in Christ, a mode with both individual and corporate dimensions, and one that combines elements of cognitive assertion, trust, and faithfulness.

1. *Some Observations on Pauline Usage*

Pist. terms appear in all seven undisputed letters. These letters use the noun πίστις 91 times, the verb πιστεύω 42 times, and the adjective πιστός nine times. The distribution of these terms exhibits some interesting features, notably what might be called “a cluster phenomenon”: a large number of the uses are clustered in a few major passages: Rom 1:5–17 (seven), 3:2–5:2 (twenty-nine); 9:30–10:17 (thirteen); Gal 2:16–3:26 (twenty-one); 1 Thess 1:3–3:10 (eleven). On the other hand, there are stretches in the letters where such terms are few and far between. It is well known that Romans 5–8 hardly refers to “faith,” but emphasizes participationist terms and images. Pist. terms are likewise absent in Gal 3:27–5:4. The verb is used nine times in 1 Corinthians, but only twice in 2 Corinthians; the noun occurs seven times in each of the two letters. There are thirteen uses of the noun and the verb in 1 Thessalonians, but only six in Philippians. The adjective πιστός does not appear in Romans, Philippians, or Philemon, but does so five times in 1 Corinthians, twice in 2 Corinthians, and once each in Galatians and 1 Thessalonians.

Christ: A Response to Hays and Dunn,” in Johnson and Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology*, IV, 82–92; and Douglas A. Campbell, *The Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3.21–26* (JSNTSup; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992).

² Romans, 1–2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon. “Pist. terms” refers to words based on the pist- stem. In addition to πίστις, πιστεύω, and πιστός, Paul uses ἀπιστέω (once), ἀπιστία (four times), and ἄπιστος (14 times).

Paul uses *pist.* terms only in relation to the Jewish Scriptures or the Christian movement. Very often he speaks of Christians simply as οἱ πιστεύοντες (“those who have faith”).³ Contrariwise, non-Christians can be mentioned simply as “unbelievers” (ἄπιστοι): 1 Cor 6:6; 7:12–15; 10:27; 14:22–24; 2 Cor 4:4; 6:14. Words for faith are never clearly applied to contemporary Judaism or non-Christian Jews, let alone to pagans.⁴

Paul often refers to faith in passing, without pausing to explain or comment on the idea. This indicates that he can assume that his readers will understand the word; probably Paul often uses the term on the basis of a common early Christian understanding of faith. This may be the case particularly in Romans, since Paul there addresses a community he did not himself establish.

The noun πίστις and the verb πιστεύω can readily be used in expressions indicating the content of faith, and Paul sometimes uses such expressions. Sometimes the content or object of faith is God. Paul describes Abraham's faith in God (quoting Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:3 and Gal 3:6) or God's promise (Rom 4:18, 20). God as object of faith can be identified as the one who justifies the ungodly (Rom 4:5) or the one who gives life to the dead and creates out of nothing (Rom 4:17). Twice Paul speaks of faith in God who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 4:24; 10:9). In 1 Thess 1:8–10 Paul refers to how the Thessalonians (former pagans) came to have faith in God, but couples this with references to “the word of the Lord” and the expectation of Jesus' Parousia.

Paul refers to Christ as the object or content of faith in a variety of ways, using both the noun and the verb. In Gal 2:16 and Phil 1:29, he uses a πιστεύω εἰς construction to speak directly of faith in Christ. In Rom 9:33 and 10:11 he quotes Isa 28:16, interpreting that text as referring to belief in Christ.⁵ Addressing Philemon, he

³ Rom 3:22; 4:11, 24; 1 Cor 14:22; Gal 3:22; 1 Thess 1:7; 2:10, 13. There are similar expressions in Rom 10:4; 13:11; 15:11; 1 Cor 3:5; 15:2, 11; Gal 2:16; 1 Thess 4:14; Phil 1:29. In general Paul implies that all (genuine) Church members possess faith. In Gal 6:10, Christians are called “those of the family of faith.”

⁴ See further Gal 3:23–25 and Rom 11:22–23. Paul clearly regards Abraham and other Old Testament figures as persons of faith; but he seems to conceive of their faith as looking forward to Jesus and the Church (e.g., Gal 3:8, 16).

⁵ With, e.g., Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980) 278–79 and Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1992) 579–80, 592. Paul W. Meyer, however, argues for identifying the rock with God, understood as the Father of Jesus Christ (Meyer, “Romans,” in *Harper's Bible*

speaks of “your faith toward the Lord Jesus” (Phlm 5). He speaks of faith in the gospel concerning Christ in Rom 10:8, 14, 16–17; 1 Cor 15:2, 11, 14, 17 and Phil 1:27 (cf. Gal 1:23). The passages in 1 Corinthians 15 clearly focus on the death and resurrection of Christ, as does 1 Thess 4:14 (cf. Rom 10:9). In Rom 6:8, Paul speaks of Christian faith in a future life with Christ.

Most of the Pauline passages which employ pist. terms, however, lack any direct statement about the object or content of faith.⁶ This suggests that, in the minds of the apostle and his readers, pist. terms are so regularly associated with Christian identity that the object or content need not be made explicit. On the other hand, the point of mentioning faith in some polemical passages is to emphasize it as *a mode of receiving salvation*, in contrast to what for Paul is the false path of relying on the law of Moses or works connected with it (Rom 3:27–28, 31; 4:5, 13–14; 9:32; 10:4; Gal 2:16; 3:2, 5, 11–12, 23–24; Phil 3:9). The distinctiveness or originality of Paul’s thought regarding faith is largely connected with his viewing faith as excluding reliance on works of the law.

2. *Some Background Issues*

Recent discussion of pist. terms indicate that, though they may not have been central in pagan religious discourse, they were quite commonly used to express religious belief in Paul’s pagan environment.⁷

Commentary [San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988] 1157). E. Elizabeth Johnson identifies the rock with the Christian gospel, “the proclamation of God’s righteousness which includes but is not limited to the person of Christ” (E. Elizabeth Johnson, “Romans 9–11: The Faithfulness and Impartiality of God,” in D. M. Hay and E. E. Johnson (eds.), *Pauline Theology, III: Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 230).

⁶ E.g., πίστις is so used in Rom 1:8, 12, 17; 3:27, 28, 30–31; 5:1, 2; 9:30, 32; 10:6, 8, 17; 1 Cor 13:2, 13; 2 Cor 1:24; 5:7; 13:5; Gal 1:23; 3:2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 12, 14, 23, 24, 25; 5:5, 6; 6:10; Phil 1:25; 2:17; 1 Thess 1:3; 3:2, 5, 6, 10; 5:8. The following passages use πιστεύω without explicitly indicating the content or object of faith: Rom 1:16; 3:22; 4:11; 10:4; 13:11; 15:13; 1 Cor 3:5; 13:7; 14:22; 2 Cor 4:13; 1 Thess 1:7; 2:10, 13. Conspicuously absent from the above analysis are the seven Pauline passages in which the noun πίστις is followed by a reference to Jesus in the genitive case. Section 5 of this essay, dealing with “Faithfulness and the Faith of Christ,” will discuss these passages.

⁷ Among recent contributions, see especially Barth, “Pistis” and Dobbeler, *Glaube*, esp. 283–98. Dobbeler persuasively argues that this pagan background does not explain the origin of Paul’s understanding of faith, but it illuminates how his pagan converts would have interpreted what he says about it.

Plutarch is a particularly important witness to this usage.⁸ A recent investigation argues that the Greek rhetorical tradition commonly gave πίστις the meaning “persuasion.” This tradition regularly emphasized that πίστις was not certainty and contained within it always the possibility of doubt; it involved a decision. A survey of all the occurrences of πίστις and πιστεύω in the New Testament leads to the conclusion that in the New Testament the word πίστις (and its derivatives) “meant, at least partially, what the word meant in the primary contemporary meaning of the term: persuasion in a rhetorical sense.”⁹ This, Williams thinks, is associated in the majority of uses with the idea of conversion, “persuasion to a new view of life.”¹⁰

It is, however, reasonable to suppose that Paul’s understanding of these terms was primarily shaped by his Jewish heritage, and especially by the LXX.¹¹ Among the Pauline “cluster” passages listed above, it is noteworthy that the Jewish Scriptures figure prominently in the three longest (Rom 3:3–5:2; 9:30–10:17; Gal 2:16–3:26). This suggests that Paul’s thinking about the nature of faith, or at least his argumentation on the subject in Galatians and Romans, was decisively influenced by reflection on those Scriptures.

Within the LXX pist. terms sometimes refer to belief that something is true (Gen 45:26; Exod 4:1, 5, 8, 9; Ps 105:12; Sir 19:15; Isa 43:10; 53:1). The verb πιστεύω sometimes refers to the establishment of a comprehensive and exclusive allegiance to the God of Israel (Isa 43:10; Jon 3:5; Wis 12:2; Jdt 14:10).¹² Quite often such terms refer to the faithfulness of God (e.g., Deut 7:9;¹³ 32:4; 1 Kgdms 21:2; Isa 49:7; *Pss. Sol.* 14.1; 17.10). Still more often, they express

⁸ Plutarch also illustrates use of πίστις with genitive constructions indicating the object of faith—e.g., τοῦ θεοῦ in *Superst.* 2 = *Mor.* 165B (Barth, “Pistis,” 122).

⁹ Kinneavy, *Greek Rhetorical Origins*, esp. 101–37.

¹⁰ Sam K. Williams (*Galatians* [ANTC; Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997] 66) accepts Kinneavy’s position that the general emphasis on rhetoric in the Greco-Roman world makes it likely that Paul would use πίστις to mean the personal state of being persuaded or the objective sense of a conviction, the consequence of being persuaded.

¹¹ On faith terms and ideas in the Old Testament (including the LXX), see esp. Artur Weiser, “πιστεύω κ.τ.λ.,” in *TDNT* 6.182–96; Barr, *Semantics*, 161–205; and Brevard S. Childs, *Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992) 595–600 and Walter Brueggemann, *Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997) 466–70.

¹² T. Haraguchi, “ΠΙΣΤΙΣ Ο ΘΕΟΣ, ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΤΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ in Paul,” *AJBI* 20 (1994): 63.

¹³ Θεὸς πιστός, ὁ φυλάσσειν διαθήκην καὶ ἔλεος τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτὸν καὶ τοῖς φυλάσσοσσι τὰς ἐντολάς αὐτοῦ.

human trust in God—often the trust of individuals (e.g., Gen 15:6; Exod 14:31; Tob 14:4 [S]; Pss 26:13; 105:12; 115:1; 118:66; Prov 30:1; Sir 2:6, 8; *4 Macc* 7.21; 15.24; 16.22).

Of particular interest are those LXX passages containing πίστις or related terms which Paul cites more than once: Gen 15:6 (Rom 4:3, 9, 22; Gal 3:6), Hab 2:4 (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11), and Isa 28:16 (Rom 9:33; 10:11). In each passage the possession of faith is correlated with salvation (more or less equated with righteousness, which is more or less equivalent to not being put to shame before God at the Last Judgment). If Paul kept in mind the literary contexts of the Isaiah and Habakkuk passages, he knew that both contrasted the way of faith with that of arrogance and death. The apostle interprets the Genesis and Habakkuk passages as indicating that faith alone is the way of salvation, as opposed to works of the law.¹⁴ The Isaiah passage for him provided a prophecy both of Christ's rejection by religious leaders and God's making faith in him the key to salvation.¹⁵ In Genesis 15 the one in whom Abraham had faith is God; in Isaiah 28 the object of faith is "the stone of stumbling." The latter passage Paul clearly reads eschatologically, connecting the stone with Christ. In Genesis 15 faith is directed toward God, but the apostle's involved arguments assume that Abraham's faith points toward Christ as well (especially in Gal 3:16 and Rom 4:23–25). Presumably it is no accident that Paul never cites the one LXX text that presents Moses as an object of Israel's faith alongside God (Exod 14:31: ἐπίστευσαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ Μωϋσῆ).¹⁶

Paul vehemently attacks the idea that the Mosaic law ever provided a means of salvation, and he assumes that the age of faith began with the coming of Christ. Yet his careful citations of passages about faith in the Jewish Scriptures indicate that he discerned a fundamental continuity between those Scriptures and the early Church. Church members have the same "spirit of faith" as the

¹⁴ Cf. 1QpHab 8.1–3, where Hab 2:4 is interpreted as referring to those who keep the law and have faith in (or are faithful to) the Teacher of Righteousness.

¹⁵ The MT of Isa 28:16 does not identify an object of faith (though it implies trust in God), while the LXX (A, S) reads ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ. Paul conflates Isa 28:16 and 8:14.

¹⁶ On the meaning of this text within the Jewish tradition in relation to Paul, see Schoeps, *Paul*, 206–207. Cf. Exod 19:9.

psalmist who wrote "I believed, and so I spoke" (2 Cor 4:13, quoting Ps 115:1 LXX).¹⁷

The writings of Philo of Alexandria offer several features of interest to interpreters of Paul's statements about faith, though no direct connection can be assumed between the two writers. Philo often uses πίστις and πιστεύω to refer to religious faith, emphasizing both intellectual belief and trust.¹⁸ He writes extensively about Abraham's faith in God and God's promises, concluding that such faith is the supreme human virtue (*Abr.* 268–272). For Philo, faith means turning from the visible world and all mortal things, including oneself, to trust in God alone (*Migr.* 134; *Her.* 68–70, 90–93; *Somn.* 1.60, 212)—an idea resonating with Paul's denunciation of boasting in the flesh (though, of course, Philo does not contrast faith with "works of the law").¹⁹ Finally, like Josephus, Philo very often uses πίστις to mean proof or evidence on which faith can be based. The way in which a persecutor of the Jews died was a demonstration, Philo says, of God's providential care of the Jewish people (*Flacc.* 170, 191). Yet more striking is another passage which quotes Deut 5:5 concerning Moses standing between God and the people of Israel, identifies him with the divine Word (Logos), and goes on to say that the Logos is

... a guarantee to both sides: to the parent, providing a pledge (πρὸς πίστιν) that the creature will never completely rebel against the rein and choose chaos over order; to the child, giving him assurance (πρὸς εὐελπιστίαν) that the compassionate God will never turn away from His own creation (*Her.* 205–206).²⁰

A recent dissertation by Dennis Lindsay examines Josephus's uses of πίστις and πιστεύω in relation to their uses in pagan Greek sources (classical and Hellenistic periods), the Septuagint, and the New

¹⁷ Probably, too, the phrase ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν in Rom 1:17 carries an allusion to the continuity between faith as articulated in the Jewish Scriptures (e.g., in Hab 2:4) and faith as known in the Christian community.

¹⁸ See Harry A. Wolfson, *Philo* (LCL; Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1947) 2.215–18. Philo does not, however, express this idea in genitive constructions with πίστις (Barth, "Pistis," 122).

¹⁹ Cf. Schoeps, *Paul*, 286–87; David Winston, *Philo of Alexandria: The Contemplative Life, the Giants, and Selections* (Classics of Western Spirituality; New York: Paulist Press, 1981) 33.

²⁰ See David M. Hay, "Pistis as 'Ground for Faith' in Hellenized Judaism and Paul," *JBL* 108.3 (1989): 461–76. It is noteworthy that Philo's most extended treatise dealing with Moses emphasizes his "partnership" with God but does not speak of faith in Moses or quote Exod 14:31 (see Philo, *Mos.* 1.155–159).

Testament.²¹ He contends that Josephus uses both πίστις and πιστεύω mainly in non-religious ways, but sometimes employs them to speak of trust in God (or trust in Old Testament prophets or miracles). Lindsay contends that Josephus twice refers to “the faithfulness of God,”²² but never to πίστις in God (p. 107). Josephus never mentions the πίστις of Abraham or quotes Hab 2:4. For him, Moses, as giver of the law, is also “the father of faith” and can be represented as an object of faith—though only in a secondary sense.²³

While faith as trust in God was a strong part particularly of the Jewish tradition, it is noteworthy that faith as belief in the truth of a religion or religious proposition is also well attested in both pagan and biblical texts.

3. Faith as Participation in Christ

The main thesis of the present essay is this: faith, for Paul, is the mode by which Christians participate or live spiritually in Christ.²⁴ Their religious existence is a personal relationship with Christ in the sense that Christ is understood as a living person through whom they are directly related to God the Father and the Spirit. It is personal also in that believers are connected with Christ, in Paul’s understanding, not simply as members of a corporate body but also as individuals, with individual differences in faith. A classic statement is that of Gal 2:19–20:

For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God (ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῆ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ) who loved me and gave himself for me (NRSV).²⁵

²¹ Dennis R. Lindsay, *Josephus and Faith: πίστις and πιστεύειν as Faith Terminology in the Writings of Flavius Josephus and in the New Testament* (AGJU 19; Leiden: Brill, 1993).

²² *Ant.* 17.179, 284 (see Lindsay, *Josephus*, 87–88). Both passages use a genitive construction, πίστις θεοῦ. R. Marcus (LCL) translates the expression in both passages as “faith in God.”

²³ Lindsay, *Josephus*, 108, 126–27, 140, 143.

²⁴ Hays also aims, from a somewhat different angle, to explicate the relation between Paul’s concepts of faith and participation (see his *Faith of Jesus Christ*, xxix–xxiii, 213–15).

²⁵ Unless otherwise noted, all biblical quotations are from the NRSV.

The passage has often been interpreted as an expression of Paul's "mystical experience." But in its context, the passage clearly implies (1) that it applies to all of life, not just to moments of special consciousness (in contrast to 2 Cor 12:1–5),²⁶ and (2) the "I" here refers not just to Paul but to all Christians (all of whom have, according to Paul, died to the law). Christians live entirely "by faith." Furthermore, existence in faith means that the believer has died and been displaced by Christ, although an individual "I" somehow persists.²⁷

Another key passage is Phil 3:3–16, in which Paul speaks of his own experience in such a way as to imply that it applies to all believers. Here Paul says he has given up all the bases he had for boasting in the flesh and seeking a righteousness of his own—and that he has done this in order to gain the righteousness of faith and "be found" in Christ. Now, instead of Christ living in Paul, the apostle speaks of his being in Christ. Again the whole of Christian existence is construed as life in faith.

What are the major implications of this union through faith?²⁸ First, it implies that the Christian is committed to living not by her or his own will or desires but in obedience to Christ as Lord. Paul's references to Christ as the object of faith and of believers united with Christ imply that Christ and God are very closely related, though passages like 1 Cor 15:27–28 suggest his Christology had subordinationist features. Believers belong not to themselves or other persons or powers in this world, but to Christ and, through Christ, to God (Rom 14:7–9; 1 Cor 3:21–23; 6:19). Each believer is *ipso facto* a servant of God, devoted to God's righteousness and will (Rom 6:15–23).

²⁶ Cf. the interpretation of that passage in Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990) 36–37. Segal goes on to argue that Paul's theology is based on his conversion and subsequent visionary experiences (p. 69).

²⁷ Paul certainly refers to himself in distinction from Christ many times in his letters! In Gal 2:20, rather than speaking of dying with Christ through baptism (Romans 6), Paul speaks of Christians having died with Christ "to the law through the law." The sense is probably that for Paul faith in Christ implies both (1) a negating of any hope of being justified through works of the law (2:15–18) and (2) a sense that Christ died under the law's curse (3:13) and those who participate in his death also die "through the law" (see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* [AB 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997] 257).

²⁸ On the general issue of participation in Christ and the Spirit, see the survey of issues in James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 390–441.

Secondly, believers enjoy access to divine power. All share the power of God's Spirit (e.g., Rom 15:13; 1 Cor 2:4; Gal 3:2, 5, 14; 1 Thess 1:5). It is the Spirit that enables the people to make the basic confession of faith, "Jesus is Lord" (1 Cor 12:3).²⁹ Paul alludes to this idea of power when he speaks in passing about faith that can move mountains (1 Cor 13:2).³⁰ He argues that no hostile power can separate believers from the saving love of God shown in Christ's death (Rom 8:37–39). In a similar tone he says that "all things are yours" (1 Cor 3:21). When he claims "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Phil 4:13), he implies that God's power can meet every need of believers (cf. Phil 4:6–7; 1 Cor 13:7).

Such divine empowerment means liberation, and Paul seems in his letters to imply that he regularly proclaimed that believers are free from all worldly lords, powers, and norms—including sin, the law, and death—because they are both subjected to and united with both God and Christ. Their oneness in Christ has also fundamentally emancipated them from the distinctions dividing Jews and Gentiles, slaves and masters, males and females (Gal 3:28). Believers are already being transformed into the image of Christ (2 Cor 3:18; Rom 8:29), and in the future they will share in a resurrection like his (Phil 3:21).

Not only do they participate in divine power and glory. They also possess "the mind of Christ" (1 Cor 2:16). Paul does not claim that he or other believers literally know everything, but he does insist that they know what they must know to be saved and that they can access knowledge of God's will for their daily lives. When they fail to recognize their responsibilities, Paul criticizes, prods, and reproves—as if they really ought to know better (e.g., 1 Cor 3:1–5). Colossians and Ephesians probably were written by Paulinists rather than Paul himself, but their assertions about believers having divine knowledge probably echo Paul's historical teaching (Col 1:10; 2:2–3; Eph 1:9–10; 3:18–19).

When Paul says "we walk by faith, not by sight" and "now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face," it is clear that

²⁹ E. Schweizer says that Paul conceived of the Spirit as that divine power "which makes men believers and lets them live as such" ("πνεῦμα κ.τ.λ.," in *TDNT* 6.427).

³⁰ It seems probable that Paul consciously alludes here to traditions about Jesus' teaching (Matt 17:20, par.). 1 Cor 13:2 has often been taken to refer to a special gift of miracle-working faith that only some church members would claim (as in 1 Cor 12:9). But the probable allusion to Jesus' teaching suggests that this statement in 1 Corinthians 13 pertains to the faith that all Christians should have.

faith qualifies the claims to divine knowing. Faith has genuine divine knowledge and wisdom. Yet it is somehow restricted and will one day, along with hope, become an outmoded mode of relating to God.³¹ That church members participate in Christ by faith implies that their present union with him is preliminary and imperfect (cf. Phil 1:23).

Faith also qualifies the claim to partake of divine power since it implies power exercised under divine authority (1 Cor 3:21–23). Faith performs works of love which fulfill the law (Gal 5:6), but without placing believers “under” the law or encouraging them to try to save themselves (Gal 5:6, 14, 18). God’s power is manifest in and through the apostle’s power to preach effectively (1 Cor 15:10–11), overcome obstacles and ideas opposed to Christ (2 Cor 10:3–6), exercise discipline in his churches (1 Cor 4:19–21; 2 Cor 13:1–5), and perform miracles attesting his apostleship (1 Cor 2:4–5; 2 Cor 12:12).

Divine power is also at work in Paul’s experiences of weakness (2 Cor 12:9–10). Empowerment through God’s Spirit and liability to suffering go hand in hand. Indeed, it is especially in experiences of Christ-like suffering that Paul claims to have experienced the power of Christ’s resurrection (2 Cor 4:7–15). Yet he also points out that his repeated prayers about the “thorn in the flesh” were not answered as he had hoped (2 Cor 12:5–10). The sufferings of Paul are present fact. The sharing of Christ’s power is at least largely a hope for the future (Phil 3:10–11). Thus the “power” Paul speaks of is not merely a symbol of present sufferings, and it is more than the ability to endure those sufferings.

The apostle’s use of faith language in connection with affirmations about participation in Christ may sometimes be intended to warn believers that their identification with Christ does not make them indistinguishable from Christ. He remains their lord and future judge, and their present form of life remains entirely human, “in the flesh” (Gal 2:20).³² Their reception of divine power and faith in an eschatological victory is qualified by ongoing experiences of “the antagonisms of life.”³³

³¹ On 1 Cor 13:13, see esp. Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 650–51.

³² Cf. Martin Dibelius, *Botschaft und Geschichte* (Tübingen: Mohr & Siebeck, 1956) 114–15, 156–59.

³³ See Hans Dieter Betz, “The Human Being in the Antagonisms of Life according to the Apostle Paul,” *JR* 80 (2000): 557–75.

One of the familiar puzzles of Romans is why justification and faith language are prominent in the first four chapters, but almost entirely absent in chs. 5–8, which emphasize ideas of Christians as presently united with Christ and the Spirit of God. Perhaps in large measure faith/justification language and participation categories were for the apostle alternative ways of describing salvation. Yet the alternatives are not always separated; in passages like Gal 2:20 and Phil 3:7–11 they are combined.³⁴ However he varies his descriptions of Christian existence, for him faith means existing in Christ and life in Christ for him is always—at least this side of the eschaton—a life of faith.³⁵

Participation “in Christ” clearly has sociological and sacramental ramifications.³⁶ One enters the relationship with Christ through baptism, and life “in” the Body of Christ is life in fellowship with other believers. In Gal 3:25–27 Paul moves from a discussion of faith and justification to one of true sonship to Abraham with these words:

But now that faith has come, we are no longer subject to a disciplinarian, for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith (πάντες υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).³⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

For Paul all Christians are by definition persons of faith and persons who live in Christ. Yet in writing about faith Paul implies that maintaining this relationship with Christ, God, and salvation is not as simple as putting on physical clothes. He speaks of growth in belief and trust, of struggles against temptation and false doctrine,

³⁴ Hence one need not, with some scholars, conclude that justification by faith is of secondary importance and that Paul’s primary pattern of thinking is participatory. See, e.g., E. P. Sanders, *Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991) 80. Cf. his *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977) 497–511.

³⁵ Paul can readily speak of the present life as an existence by faith as opposed to sight (2 Cor 5:7; cf. 2 Cor 4:18; Rom 8:24–25). For Paul, a crucial (perhaps the crucial) feature of the end-time will be seeing God and/or Christ “face to face” (1 Cor 13:12).

³⁶ Cf. R. Tannehill, *Dying and Rising with Christ* (BZNW 32; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1967) 20: “. . . the inclusive unity which Christians enter is Christ himself.” Dobbeler (*Glaube*, 99–275) provides a good exploration of the ecclesiological side of Paul’s ideas about faith, though he one-sidedly denies that faith pertains to individuals (in opposition principally to Bultmann).

³⁷ The clause could also be rendered, “For you are all children of God through faith in Christ,” but this entails taking the prepositional phrase ἐν Χριστῷ as modifying or defining the sense of πιστις—something that does not fit well with Pauline usage elsewhere.

renunciation of boasting, and continual rededication to the cause of God as known in Christ.

4. *Believing and Trusting*

Although modern readers can distinguish abstractly between belief as intellectual assent and trust as reliance, in the Pauline letters these components are hard to disentangle. πίστις and its congeners in those letters rarely or never seem to signify a merely cognitive or intellectual judgment.³⁸ On the other hand, Pauline ideas of trust seem always connected with a specific understanding of the Christian gospel or the “truth” it presents.

Rudolf Bultmann argued that Paul builds on a pre-Pauline Christianity which made “the primary sense of πιστεύειν . . . acceptance of the kerygma about Christ.” Faith is bound to the Church’s missionary message. He adds that in this sense “faith is always a ‘venture’” (p. 212). Yet Bultmann stresses that Pauline faith is never simply an assertion about historical facts; it always entails the conviction that Christ is the Lord of believers. Hence to believe in Christ entails a personal relationship with Christ (p. 211). But this, Bultmann urges, means for each believer a new self-understanding which is not simply cognitive but also volitional, an “absolute committal to God” which simultaneously negates all human efforts to rely on themselves in their standing before God.³⁹ Thus, by Bultmann’s account, Paul’s concept of faith held belief and trust inextricably together.⁴⁰

The “believe to be true” dimension of faith is prominent in a number of Pauline texts using πιστεύω. In 1 Cor 11:18 he reports that he is inclined to believe reports that the Corinthian church’s celebration of the Eucharist is marred by divisions. More fundamentally, in 1 Cor 15:1–19 Paul begins a discussion of the resurrection

³⁸ See Hatch, *Pauline Idea*, 35. Referring especially to uses of πίστις in Gal 2:16, 3:6, 22, Martyn speaks of a “fluidity of reference, involving trust, faith, and belief” (*Galatians*, 275).

³⁹ Bultmann, “πιστεύω, πίστις, κ.τ.λ.,” 212–20; cf. Williams, *Galatians*, 66.

⁴⁰ Martin Buber, however, who read Paul and Bultmann sympathetically, nevertheless saw in Pauline thought a decisive replacement of Jewish trust (*emunah*) by intellectual belief (*pistis*): Buber, *Two Types*, esp. 46–55, 96–101. B. A. Gerrish insightfully notes that Buber’s view, though itself one-sided, is a good antidote to recent interpretations of the New Testament that emphasize the trust element of faith without stressing the element of belief (Gerrish, *Saving and Secular Faith* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999] 4–5).

hope with words about the missionary message and believing. He speaks of the gospel they received from his preaching, “by which you are saved, if you hold it fast—unless you believed in vain” (v. 2). Salvation is thus linked with the message Paul preached and the faith with which the Corinthians responded to it (cf. 1:21; 2:5). He offers a creed-like summary concerning Jesus’ death and resurrection (15:3–5) and a few lines later says “so we proclaim and so you have come to believe” (v. 11). In v. 14 he says, “if Christ has not been raised, then our proclamation (κήρυγμα) has been in vain and your faith has been in vain.” In v. 17 he rephrases the latter conclusion: “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.” In the face of the doubts or denials of some Corinthians, which apparently centered on the question of their own future resurrection, Paul argues strenuously, with various warrants, that genuine faith involves affirmation of the future resurrection of believers. At the same time, the “existential” or trusting side of faith also appears: Jesus’ resurrection means that we may rely on him and God to raise those who are in Christ in preparation for God’s final triumph over all adversaries (vv. 20–28). In this faith the Corinthians are to remain “steadfast, immovable, always excelling in the work of the Lord, because you know that in the Lord your labor is not in vain” (v. 58). This is something more than cognitive acceptance. The actions and lives of believers are not meaningless because their confidence in a God of resurrection is not misplaced.

Another famous passage that emphasizes faith in relation to kerygmatic assertions is Rom 10:9–11:

... if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord (κύριος) and believe (πιστεύσης) in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11 The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.”

Here also salvation and faith are closely correlated, as are belief in the heart and confession with the mouth. The content of faith combines the assertions about the Lordship of Jesus and God’s raising of him.⁴¹

We also note the strong sense of continuity with the Jewish Scriptures

⁴¹ Bultmann observes: “The two statements constitute an inner unity. The resurrection is not just a remarkable event. It is the soteriological fact in virtue of which Jesus became the κύριος” (“πιστεύω,” 209).

in v. 11: the prophecy of Isa 28:16 is understood without argument to refer to persons who have faith in Jesus (πάς ὁ πιστεύων ἐπ' αὐτῷ) and who consequently will not lose God's salvation ("be put to shame"). Faith now is both belief in Jesus and his resurrection and trust that the God of Moses revealed in Jesus his true path to salvation for all persons. The other scriptural quotations in 10:12–18 are also interpreted in relation to the Church's preaching about Jesus. But the same is emphatically true of the statements about Moses and the quotations from Deuteronomy and other texts in Rom 10:5–8: Paul insists that Moses was prophesying Christ's incarnation and resurrection, indicating that God's righteousness (or salvation) were intended to come through Christian faith, not through observance of the Mosaic law. The passage expresses not only continuity between Jewish Scriptures and Christian preaching but also the stark contrast between a righteousness based on the Law and one based on faith in Christ.

An emphasis on trust is central to Romans 4, Paul's most extensive discussion of the nature of faith. The passage is clearly intended, however, not to exhibit the general nature of faith but to address the specific issue of how the gospel summarized in 3:24–26 is in continuity with the (right understanding of) the Jewish Scriptures (3:31). Moreover, the chapter climaxes in a kind of cognitive assertion about faith: God's reckoning of Abraham as righteous by virtue of his faith (Gen 15:6) applies not only to Abraham but also to Christians: "It will be reckoned to us who believe (οἱ πιστεύοντες) in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification" (4:24–25).

Jesus' death and resurrection "for us" are central to faith, but Paul also emphasizes that faith is oriented to the God of Abraham who raised Jesus. Christians and Jews honor the same God, Paul contends, but Christians understand God in relation to Jesus' death and resurrection and some Jews fail to understand that God's work of vindication or rectification hinges on faith, not on circumcision or other works of the law (4:2, 11–16). Paul does not say that the content of Abraham's faith was identical with that of Christians (though faith in God's promise of the birth of Isaac is at least analogous to faith in Christ's resurrection).⁴² Yet he indicates that Jews and Gentiles

⁴² There is an underlying unity since God's promise that Abraham would be the father of all nations of believers is fulfilled as Jews and Gentiles alike become

can somehow share Abraham's faith (v. 16) and thus gain salvation.

The mixture of belief and trust components in Abraham's faith is brought out clearly. He believed in the truth of God's promise that he would become the father of many nations (Rom 4:13, 17–18—Gen 17:5; cf. 12:2–3; 15:5; 18:18). His faith did not weaken when he considered or thought about his own body (“as good as dead”) or that of Sarah (who was childless and was also very old). “Hoping against hope, he believed” (or hoped with faith against all human reckoning of what is possible) because he trusted in the God who raises the dead and creates things out of nothing (v. 17) and was fully convinced (πληροφορηθείς) that God had the power to fulfill what he had promised (v. 21).⁴³

The emphasis on justification or rectification by faith in Romans 4 is clarified by Paul's insistence that the Jewish Scriptures themselves prove that human beings are not justified by “works” (4:2, 6), in line with the previous statements in 3:20, 27–28. Paul's argument is oriented to works of the Mosaic Law, with particular emphasis on circumcision and perhaps other requirements that distinguished Jews from Gentiles. Hence Christian faith is based on gift or grace (4:16), and faith itself is a gift (cf. Phil 1:29).⁴⁴ Sin has made it impossible for anyone, Jew or Gentile, to be justified by works of the law (3:20, 23).

Although pist. terms are infrequent in 1 Cor 1:18–2:16 and 2 Corinthians 1–5, both passages deal with religious epistemology. Worldly knowing fails to recognize the crucified Jesus as God's appointed means of salvation. The message Paul preaches is “folly” to non-Christians, but through it God is pleased to bring salvation to believers (1 Cor 1:21). Just as Romans 4 contrasts the gracious gift of God with human efforts to secure righteousness, 1 Corinthians 1–2 contrasts divine wisdom with human claims to know the criteria for discerning God's way of salvation. The message of the cross is

believers in Christ. The community of believers as Paul thinks of them (apart from Old Testament figures, notably Abraham) seems always to be coterminous with Christians.

⁴³ Halvor Moxnes (*Theology in Conflict: Studies in Paul's Understanding of God in Romans* [NovTSup 53; Leiden: Brill, 1980] 146–55) compares this text with Philo's interpretation of Abraham in relation to the conviction that “all things are possible with God.”

⁴⁴ The idea of faith itself as gift is well presented in dialogue with the views of Schlatter and Bultmann in Peter Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (FRLANT 87; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965) 81–83.

the lens through which believers understand God as loving them unconditionally, a perceptual change that gives them “the mind of Christ” and empowers them to live in solidarity with divine love.⁴⁵

Likewise in 2 Corinthians we find fundamental assertions of contrast. In 5:7: “we walk by faith, not by sight.” The suffering and obloquy that Paul and other Christians experience are visible and transient, whereas faith looks to things that are unseen and eternal (4:16–18). Paul expresses his hope that the Corinthians, who have been willing to listen to attacks on Paul’s integrity, will at length recognize that Paul and his associates are sincere representatives of Christ’s love and God’s message of reconciliation (5:14–21). In 5:16 Paul offers a fundamental statement about the knowledge of faith (without using pist. terms): “From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view (οὐδένᾳ οἴδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα); even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.” Paul implies that the Corinthians must choose one way rather than another of thinking about Christ and their own salvation, just as he commends to the Philippians a particular way of thinking about boasting and maturity (Phil 3:7–16). The new way of knowing which replaces the old is one determined by an understanding of Jesus’ death as the eschatological salvation event, revealing God’s love and human sinfulness and the pathway that believers must walk (2 Cor 5:14–15, 21).⁴⁶

Is Christian faith an individual or group phenomenon in Paul’s view?⁴⁷ And, related to that, is it a matter of individual choice or the result of God seizing control of a person’s will and life?

The language of Paul often seems to encourage the latter view, that the faith of an individual is a matter of God invading a person’s life, replacing the human mind with the mind of the Spirit, and that the ongoing life of believers is an apocalyptic struggle

⁴⁵ Cf. Alexandra R. Brown, *The Cross and Human Transformation: Paul’s Apocalyptic Word in 1 Corinthians* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), esp. 152–69.

⁴⁶ J. Louis Martyn, “Epistemology at the Turn of the Ages,” in his *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997) 108: “The essential failure of the Corinthians consists in their inflexible determination to live somewhere other than in the cross. So also the essential flaw in their epistemology lies in their failure to view the cross as the absolute epistemological watershed” (p. 108). See also Martyn, *Galatians*, 132.

⁴⁷ Among recent writers who stress, especially against Bultmann, a non-individualist interpretation of Paul’s faith concept are Binder (*Glaube*), Neugebauer (*In Christus*), and Dobbeler (*Glaube*).

between the powers of Spirit and the flesh in which the human person is not a decider but simply a battlefield (Gal 5:17).⁴⁸ Further, Paul sometimes seems to explain rejection of the apostolic message not by reference to the free decisions made by individuals but in terms of demonic blinding (2 Cor 4:4). Yet Bultmann maintains that faith is fundamentally a decision of the human individual, and one that has to be made over and over again. If the Pauline letters lack the language and focus of the free will controversies of Augustine and Pelagius or Luther and Erasmus, they also do not suggest that believers are or understand themselves to be marionettes.⁴⁹ Käsemann, who so greatly emphasized the corporate and cosmic dimensions of Paul's concept of the righteousness of God, also wrote:

... as the acceptance of the divine address, faith in Paul remains primarily a decision of the individual person, and its importance must not therefore be shifted away from anthropology to ecclesiology. It is true that a man never believes in isolation; but he is none the less irreplaceable in himself, and the Christian community is the company of those who have personally turned away from superstition and cannot be dispensed from this by anything or anybody. In so far as the renunciation of the superstition which is a constant threat and temptation even to Christians is a characteristic of faith, it can be described as a movement between 'no longer' and 'not yet.' . . . The real point is the constantly new hearing of, and holding fast to, the divine Word . . . we do not set ourselves in motion, but . . . we are called out of ourselves through God's Word and miracle. We cannot therefore interpret our faith as our own work, but only as grace, which is conferred on us, in the face of the world, without our deserts and in the middle of unavoidable temptation.⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Thus Martyn, *Issues*, 279, writes, "For most of us who have been seized by Jesus Christ . . . abandoning the confession of him is not a genuine option." Cf. his questions about A. R. Brown and the question of "avoiding a simplistic use of the term 'decision'" (*ibid.*, 109 n. 56). Brown writes "for Paul the action that follows perceptual transformation is not a human decision to do what the Word says . . . but rather a living out of what the Word has done *in* the saying" (*Cross*, 167). But Brown here speaks of action *after* the perceptual transformation involved in coming to Christian faith.

⁴⁹ Cf. Brown, *Cross*, 11–12. Brown herself, while speaking of the "performative power" of Paul's message to the Corinthian church, might have stated more clearly her ideas about how this power is related to the spiritual freedom of individual Christians. When 2 Cor 5:16 speaks of a revolution in perception, does this mean that the readers are incapable of seeing things from a "human point of view" or that Paul wants to persuade them that they must not yield to that temptation. Do Paul's words compel readers to see things his way?

⁵⁰ Käsemann, "Faith of Abraham," 83–84.

Thus faith is a matter of individual decision-making and continual struggles against temptations that call it into question. Yet it is itself grace, something brought about by God through the revelatory word concerning Jesus. When Paul speaks of “the obedience of faith” and of disbelief in the gospel as disobedience to God (Rom 1:5; 11:30–31; 15:18; 2 Cor 9:13), he implies that God calls in the kerygma and that individuals are responsible for their answers. Paul’s use of “I” language to explain the nature of faith for all believers in passages like Gal 2:20 and Phil 3:7–16, like his use of Abraham as a model of faith in the presence of temptation (Rom 4:19–21), implies a strong sense that faith concerns individuals as well as communities. Yet Paul does not dwell introspectively on the details of his own experiences of temptation or doubt, or on such experiences of other individual Christians. His emphasis remains on faith’s orientation to God’s action in Christ, not on any oscillation of doubt and conviction within individual church members.⁵¹

Paul usually writes as though all Christians have the same faith. Yet sometimes he stresses faith as an individual matter and remarks on differences in faith positions. In Rom 12:3, he urges all the Roman Christians “to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith which God has assigned.” He proceeds to identify various gifts and how they should be used for the common good of the body of Christ (12:4–8). Differences in “measures” of faith seem connected with different gifts and the uses made of them; one’s perception of God and Christ is individual just as one goes about one’s daily life seeking to use one’s talents for the benefit of the whole Church.

In Rom 14:1–15:1, the apostle distinguishes persons who are “weak in faith” from “strong” persons like himself. The former group are convinced that some days are especially holy and that some foods are unclean, while the “strong” consider all foods and days alike.⁵² Paul says “Let all be fully convinced in their own minds (ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοί πληροφореῖσθω).”⁵³ However, the strong should not condemn the weak but realize that all must give account of themselves to God

⁵¹ Cf. Dieter Lührmann, *Glaube im frühen Christentum* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1976) 53–54.

⁵² The formulation in Rom 14:2 probably means that some persons believe that all foods are clean, while others believe that only vegetables are pure.

⁵³ Paul’s only other use of the verb applies it to Abraham’s unswerving faith (Rom 4:21). Cf. Col 4:12.

and that love and the kingdom of God take precedence over disagreements about food and holy days. He ends the chapter,

The faith (πίστις) that you have, have as your own conviction before God. Blessed are those who have no reason to condemn themselves because of what they approve. But those who have doubts are condemned if they eat, because they do not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin (14:22–23).

Here “faith” means not simply “conscience” (as a human faculty for distinguishing good and evil) but an individual’s perception of God’s will in relation to her or his sense of responsibility to Christ as Lord. As one who is himself “strong in faith,” Paul is sure (οἶδα καὶ πέπεισμαι ἐν κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ) that no food is unclean. But, he continues, “it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean” (14:14). Thus sin consists in doing whatever the doer thinks or believes to be sinful.⁵⁴

Finally, Paul sometimes stresses growth in faith. He writes to the Thessalonians about having sent Timothy “to strengthen and encourage you for the sake of your faith, so that no one would be shaken by these persecutions” (3:2–3; cf. v. 5). Now he writes that Timothy has returned “and has brought us the good news of your faith and love” (v. 6). He adds that he himself prays night and day “that we may see you face to face and restore whatever is lacking in your faith” (vv. 8, 10). So the Thessalonian Christians have true faith, yet there are unspecified things still lacking.

In 2 Cor 10:15, the apostle writes to the Corinthians of his hope that “as your faith increases, our sphere of action among you may be greatly enlarged.” He begins his letter to the Roman believers by praising their genuine faith which is known worldwide (1:8), but adds that he intends a visit “so that I may share with you some spiritual gift to strengthen you—or rather that we may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith, both yours and mine” (vv. 11–12). Some of these passages suggest a sense that faith needs sometimes to become surer of itself, but most of them also suggest that Paul hopes that the receivers of his letters will grow in their understanding of what the gospel means. In 2 Cor 1:8–11, he refers to experiences of suffering which taught him to rely (more completely or

⁵⁴ See also J. Paul Sampley, “Faith and Its Moral Life: Individuation in the Thought World of the Apostle Paul,” in John T. Carroll *et al.* (eds.), *Faith and History* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990) 223–38.

consistently than before?) on God's power to save. In Phil 3:13–15, he speaks of not having attained full maturity in Christ, but of striving forward to do so. Thus Paul's references to growth in faith imply that Christian individuals and whole communities vary in maturity even though they all possess authentic faith.

On the other hand, there are churches like those in Galatia whose members evidently confess Christ as Lord and yet are on the brink of abandoning him (Gal 5:1–6). In 2 Cor 13:5–10, Paul mentions the possibility that the Corinthian Christians are in real danger of failing to meet the test of Christ's presence. Here, too, one senses that persons who think they have genuine faith may be laboring under a lethal misapprehension. In such situations we might say that "growth in faith" means grasping the true implications of the Christian message, in contrast to false ones.

Paul does not claim that his faith in Christ has given him answers to all possible questions. He sometimes expresses uncertainty about the faith of those he addresses (e.g., Gal 4:19–20), and people in his churches certainly articulated doubts and suspicions about Paul. Occasionally Paul suggests that it is good not to be too sure how one will be judged by God (1 Cor 4:4; 9:27; Phil 3:11). For the most part the doubts dealt with in his letters seem to be questions raised by others about Paul's interpretation of the Christian message. He normally responds by arguing, with a variety of warrants, that his readers ought to exchange their doubts for his convictions.⁵⁵

Paul never suggests that he entertains any doubts about the basic kerygma. Passages like Rom 8:37–39 and Phil 1:21 are rhetorically powerful assertions of unwavering confidence in the love of God revealed in Christ.

5. *Faithfulness and the Faith of Christ*

Hatch remarks that πίστις has the sense of "faithfulness" only twice in the Pauline letters, in Rom 3:3 (speaking of the faithfulness of God) and in Gal 5:22 (where faithfulness is a Christian virtue).⁵⁶

⁵⁵ See further David M. Hay, "The Shaping of Theology in 2 Corinthians: Convictions, Doubts, and Warrants," in Hay (ed.), *Pauline Theology*, II (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 135–55.

⁵⁶ Hatch, *Pauline Idea*, 32.

The adjective πιστός, however, is quite often used to mean “faithful.” In three passages, all in 1 Corinthians, Paul uses it to refer to the faithfulness of human beings. In the midst of giving instructions about marriage and divorce he remarks that “I give my opinion as one who by the Lord’s mercy is trustworthy” (1 Cor 7:25). This seems equivalent to his remark at the end of this discussion, “And I think that I too have the Spirit of God” (7:40). The implication is that the Corinthians can rely on Paul’s counsel because he himself is guided by God and faithfully communicates God’s will to them.

Elsewhere he speaks of sending Timothy, “my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ Jesus, as I teach them everywhere in every church” (1 Cor 4:17). The Corinthians can trust Timothy to represent Paul’s message and his “ways in Christ” faithfully.

Speaking more generally, Paul says “it is required of stewards that they be found trustworthy” (1 Cor 4:2). Apparently all ministers (including Timothy) will be judged by God in relation to their faithfulness to God’s commission⁵⁷—and Paul adds that the Corinthians should not presume to pass judgment on him or on “things now hidden in darkness” and “the purposes of the heart” (4:5).

In four passages Paul employs πιστός to describe God. In 1 Cor 1:8–9, he encourages the Corinthians in his opening thanksgiving for their rich spiritual gifts and the confirmation of the message of Christ in their midst: Christ will sustain (confirm) them up to the day of the final judgment, adding “God is faithful; by him you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord” (1:9). The same God who called them into a faith relationship with Christ will preserve them spiritually in the present and the future. There is a similar comforting general reference to God as πιστός in 1 Thess 5:23–24. A special application of the idea appears in a passage warning church members that they face temptations just as ancient Israelites did (1 Cor 10:13):

No testing has overtaken you that is not common to everyone. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tested beyond your strength, but

⁵⁷ In three passages (1 Cor 9:17; Gal 2:7; 1 Thess 2:4) Paul uses passive forms of the verb πιστεύω to express his sense of having been *entrusted* by God with a commission to preach the gospel. Cf. Rom 3:2.

with the testing he will also provide the way out so that you may be able to endure it.

In all these passages, Paul does not argue for God's faithful love for believers but rather affirms and interprets the implications of that love for his readers' situations.

Writing in a more controversial mode, Paul argues as follows in Rom 3:1–4:

Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much, in every way. For in the first place the Jews were entrusted (ἐπιστεύθησαν) with the oracles of God. What if some were unfaithful (ἠπίστησαν)? Will their faithlessness (ἀπιστία) nullify the faithfulness (πίστις) of God? By no means! Although everyone is a liar, let God be proved true (ἀληθής), as it is written, "So that you may be justified in your words, and prevail in your judging."

In this passage Paul seems to assume something to which the readers should readily consent, namely that human faithlessness cannot nullify God's faithfulness, which is equated (v. 4) with God's being "truthful" (ἀληθής).⁵⁸ The immediate point for which Paul is arguing is that human sin does not destroy the truthfulness of God or God's "oracles." But, in the light of Romans 9–11, it is clear that Paul must be alluding as well to the general problem raised for him by the fact that most Jews of his time have shown "unfaithfulness" in the specific sense of rejecting the gospel about Jesus. The gospel about Jesus promises absolute security to believers (8:37–39), but God previously in the Jewish Scriptures gave irrevocable promises and calling to the Jewish people (9:4–5; 11:29). The apostle affirms that the God who invites can be trusted to honor his invitations. Hence Rom 3:3, with its unique use of πίστις to refer to the divine trustworthiness, nonetheless defines a fundamental, perhaps *the* fundamental, issue of Paul's letter to the Romans.⁵⁹

⁵⁸ On this point and its background in the LXX's use of both πίστις and ἀλήθεια to render the Hebrew noun אֱמוּנָה see esp. Haraguchi, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ Ο ΘΕΟΣ," 67–68.

⁵⁹ Paul Meyer makes a strong case that the faithfulness or "integrity" of God is the central issue in the entire letter (e.g., "Romans," 1140). See, further, Wayne A. Meeks, "On Trusting an Unpredictable God: A Hermeneutical Meditation on Romans 9–11," in Carroll *et al.* (eds.), *Faith and History*, 105–24. As for the fact that Rom 3:3 is the only Pauline passage in which πίστις refers to God's faithfulness, one is reminded of a Käsemannian dictum, "Statistics cause just as much confusion and have just as many unfortunate results in theology as they do elsewhere" (Käsemann, "Faith of Abraham," 84).

Scholars have often noted that Romans has a decidedly theocentric orientation. Paul frequently seems to go out of his way to stress that the gospel about Jesus is a message about God's action in Jesus. Jesus' death is represented as demonstrating God's righteousness (3:24–26) and love (5:6–8; 8:31–39). In the final soteriological summation in 15:7–9, Jesus is portrayed as welcoming “you” for the sake of God's glory, having become a servant to Jews “on behalf of the truth of God,” and also confirming the promises given to the patriarchs about gentiles glorifying God. Repeatedly, then, Jesus is presented as demonstrating God's saving faithfulness.

In 2 Cor 1:16–23, Paul writes about a change in his travel plans, which caused some in Corinth to accuse him of vacillating. The apostle responds that he (and two associates) have consistently preached Christ and

As surely as God is faithful (πιστός), our word to you has not been “Yes and No.” 19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, whom we proclaimed among you, Silvanus and Timothy and I, was not “Yes and No”; but in him it is always “Yes.” 20 For in him every one of God's promises is a “Yes.” For this reason it is through him that we say the “Amen,” to the glory of God. But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ. . . . (2 Cor 1:18–20)

Thus Paul claims that the Christ he preaches is the confirmation (or “Yes”) to all God's promises of salvation and reconciliation (cf. 4:4–6; 5:19–21). The implication is that the issue of Paul's dependability is inseparable from that of God's faithfulness demonstrated in Christ, which in turn is at the center of the Corinthians' own faith.⁶⁰

We turn now to the issue of “the faith (or faithfulness) of Christ.” The recent discussion has focused on seven Pauline passages involving πίστις and a genitive construction referring to Christ: Rom 3:22, 26; Gal 2:16 (two), 20; 3:22; Phil 3:9.⁶¹ All of these passages set Christian righteousness over against a righteousness based on the

⁶⁰ Cf. Victor F. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984), esp. 145–47.

⁶¹ On the debate over the meaning of πίστις Χριστοῦ in Phil 3:9, see esp. the forceful advocacy of an objective genitive interpretation in Veronica Koperski, “The Meaning of *Pistis Christou* in Philippians 3:9,” *LS* 18 (1993): 198–216. The case for considering the subjective genitive meaning “likely” is well laid out by Morna D. Hooker, “The Letter to the Philippians,” in *The New Interpreter's Bible* (vol. XI; Nashville: Abingdon, 2000) 528.

Jewish law.⁶² Traditionally these constructions have been interpreted as objective genitives so that they refer to human faith or belief in Christ, and that interpretation is still widely maintained, especially among European scholars. A large number of American and British specialists, however, have recently argued that the true sense is “the faith (or faithfulness) of Christ.”⁶³ Hays, for example, argues that Jesus’ death

is simultaneously a loving act of faithfulness (πίστις) to God and the decisive manifestation of God’s faithfulness to his covenant promise to Abraham.⁶⁴ Paul’s uses of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and similar phrases should be understood as summary allusions to this story, referring to Jesus’ fidelity in carrying out this mission. Consequently, the emphasis in Paul’s theology lies less on the question of how we should dispose ourselves toward God than on the question of how God has acted in Christ to effect our deliverance.⁶⁵

This line of interpretation can be combined with a sense of the centrality of participation. Hays, writing elsewhere (in regard to Gal 2:20), says, “We are taken up into his [Christ’s] life, including his faithfulness, and that faithfulness therefore imparts to us the shape of our own existence.”⁶⁶ Nevertheless, Hays maintains that Paul sometimes uses pist. terms to refer to human faith.⁶⁷

⁶² As pointed out by Hooker, “Pistis Christou,” 336–37. She also maintains that all these passages refer to the death of Christ, but that is not obvious in the case of Gal 3:22.

⁶³ A convenient listing of scholars on both sides is provided by Richard B. Hays, himself one of the leading proponents of the subjective genitive interpretation; see his “ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Theology,” 36 nn. 3–4. See also Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, xxi–lii.

⁶⁴ Hays can also speak of Christ as embodying faithfulness in two directions: as the one faithful human being and as demonstrating God’s faithfulness (Richard B. Hays, “The Letter to the Galatians,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible* (vol. XI), 240). This somewhat recalls Philo’s idea of the Logos as a basis for faith to both God and humanity (*Her.* 205–206). Shuji Ota suggests that Paul’s phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ refers to “Christ’s faithfulness to humanity” (Ota, “Absolute Uses of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ in Paul,” *AJBI* 23 [1997]: 80).

⁶⁵ Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 274–75.

⁶⁶ Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, xxxii.

⁶⁷ J. D. G. Dunn has argued that Hays’s position “virtually forces him to draw in all the πίστις references to his thesis as denoting Christ’s faith” (“Once More,” 81). Hays’s answer is that in some passages of Galatians Paul uses the verb πιστεύω and the noun πίστις to refer to human believing or trusting (“ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology,” 58–59). Cf. Campbell, *Rhetoric*, 58 n. 1.

In his recent commentary on Galatians, Martyn argues for a genitive of author or origin: πίστις Χριστοῦ is used by Paul to speak of Christ's

atonement faithfulness as, on the cross, he died faithfully for human beings while looking faithfully to God . . . God has set things right without laying down a prior condition of any sort. God's rectifying act, that is to say, is no more God's response to human faith in Christ than it is God's response to human observance of the Law.⁶⁸

Martyn adds that "everyone must agree that Paul sometimes speaks of the faith had by human beings," but human faith is "awakened, kindled by God's trustworthy deed in Christ."⁶⁹ Martyn thus sees human trust in Christ as a *secondary* sense of πίστις. Thus he interprets Gal 2:16 as meaning ". . . we have placed our trust in Christ Jesus, in order that the source of our rectification might be the faith of Christ and not observance of the Law."⁷⁰

From a general grammatical standpoint, both lines of interpretation seem possible. Furthermore, the commentaries by Betz and Dunn on Galatians show that an objective genitive view can be convincingly defended exegetically,⁷¹ while those of Matera, Williams, Martyn and Hays show that a subjective (or authorial) interpretation can also make exegetical sense.⁷²

⁶⁸ Martyn, *Galatians*, 271.

⁶⁹ Martyn *Galatians*, 272 n. 173. Martyn urges that the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ with the meaning of "the faithfulness of Christ shown in his death" was already formulated and used by Paul's Jewish Christian opponents in Galatia. If so, they must have used it in line with their ideas that salvation came through faith plus works of the Jewish law.

⁷⁰ Martyn, *Galatians*, 271. Those who argue against an objective genitive interpretation move in varied directions. Williams (*Galatians*, 65–71) argues that πίστις Χριστοῦ "is a double-sided expression, referring first to the faith of Christ himself but including as well the answering faith of those who are in him." Christ's faith is "source and pattern" for Christians. As an analogy he suggests that Mother Teresa "actualized and exemplified" a way of love which makes that love possible for others. Even when Paul writes ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν in Gal 2:16, Williams thinks the apostle intends to speak of faith not in Christ but in God or "what God is doing through Christ's death and resurrection" (p. 70). Note Hays's reservations about Williams's suggestion that Christ is merely "an exemplar of faith" (*Faith of Jesus Christ*, 289–90).

⁷¹ Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1993). Hultgren argues for a "genitive of quality" interpretation with the sense that Paul is speaking of "the faith of believers, which is in and of Christ" ("The *Pistis Christou* Formulation," 254).

⁷² See Frank J. Matera, *Galatians* (SP 9; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992) 100–102.

Given Paul's emphasis on faithfulness of human beings and on the faithfulness of God the Father, it seems very possible that he means in some passages to speak of the "faithfulness of Christ." This would cohere with his general ideas about faithfulness or integrity in the human and divine realms. Paul speaks emphatically of Jesus' obedience to God, especially in Rom 5:12–21 and Phil 2:6–11. Yet the apostle never explicitly equates faith/faithfulness with obedience, however, nor does he ever plainly speak of Jesus as a model of faith (in contrast to Heb 12:1–2; cf. 5:7–10). He nowhere applies the adjective πιστός to Jesus.⁷³ It is not unreasonable, however, to infer that in speaking of Jesus' obedience, above all in his death, Paul meant to refer to Jesus' faithful submission to the divine will. In line with our broader thesis that faith for Paul means participation in Christ, the participation of believers in Jesus' own faithfulness makes good sense.⁷⁴ Yet it seems odd, if this was a vital issue for Paul, that he never unpacks the phrase to make that sense clear.⁷⁵ It will remain important for modern interpreters to distinguish between (1) what seems to them a reasonable inference from Paul's general theological position and (2) what meaning or meanings πίστις more or less distinctly bears in specific passages of his epistles.⁷⁶

What are some of the major theological or exegetical advantages of the "faithfulness of Christ" interpretation? One is the idea that this could show how faith and ethics (or Christian faith and responsibility) are joined in the face of such questions as those raised in Rom 6:1 and 15. The faithfulness of Christ includes his entire life of obedience to God. As Christians are incorporated into Christ,

⁷³ Whereas it is directly connected with Christ in 2 Thess 3:3; 2 Tim 2:11, 13 and Heb 2:17; 3:2, 6; Rev 1:5; 3:14; 19:11.

⁷⁴ Cf. the proposal of Williams that "we believed in Christ" in Gal 2:16 means "to move into that new socio-spiritual domain where Jesus Messiah is Lord and where his faith is source and pattern for those who are 'in' him" (*Galatians*, 70). Citing Phil 2:12–13 alongside Gal 2:20, Charles H. Talbert proposes that the Christian life is "a manifestation of the faithfulness of the Son of God who lives in and through believers" ("Paul, Judaism, and the Revisionists," *CBQ* 63 [2001]: 21).

⁷⁵ See Dunn, *Theology*, 381–82.

⁷⁶ E.g., Luke Timothy Johnson remarks that, if Jesus could not have faith, then he "has become a cipher" ("Rom 3:21–26 and the Faith of Jesus," *CBQ* 44 [1982]: 90). In response, one might say that, while Paul nowhere denies that Jesus could have faith, it is not obvious that he ever discusses that topic. A powerful interpretation of Jesus as a model of trust in God, based on general theological considerations rather than exegesis of Pauline texts, is offered in H. Richard Niebuhr, *Faith on Earth: An Inquiry into the Structure of Human Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) 85–97.

they share and extend his obedience in their everyday lives.⁷⁷ Another often-cited advantage of this line of interpretation is that it precludes a human-centered interpretation of Paul's soteriology and stresses that justification by faith does not mean that God justifies people because of their faith or as a reward for their previously existing faith.⁷⁸

Against this line of recommendation it might be said that Luther and his better interpreters did not think of human faith as a "good work" that earned God's justification. Käsemann stressed that the gospel of the justification of the ungodly was linked with an understanding that even as a believer Abraham remained ungodly.⁷⁹ Faith is a means of recognizing and accepting God's salvation as pure gift, and faith itself is a gift.

Other problems with the subjective genitive interpretation of πίστις Χριστοῦ include (1) the diversity of views about the meaning of this interpretation,⁸⁰ and (2) the tendency of some interpreters to suggest that Christ becomes ultimately non-essential since salvation hinges on the obedience of Christians who obey and trust in God just as Jesus did.⁸¹

The issues linked with the "faith of Jesus Christ" debate are perhaps most clearly displayed in two passages, Gal 3:22–26 and Rom 3:21–26.

⁷⁷ See, e.g., Charles B. Cousar, *The Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996) 131.

⁷⁸ So Martyn, *Issues*, 151: "The result of this interpretation of *pistis Christou* is crucial to an understanding not only of Galatians, but also of the whole of Paul's theology. God has set things right without laying down a prior condition of any sort. God's rectifying act, that is to say, is no more God's response to human faith in Christ than it is God's response to human observance of the Law. God's rectification is not God's response at all. It is the *first* move; it is God's initiative, carried out by him in Christ's faithful death." Cf. Cousar, *Letters*, 131 and Johnson, "Rom 3:21–26," 83.

⁷⁹ "Faith of Abraham," 93: Cf. Paul W. Meyer, *The Word in this World: Essays in New Testament Exegesis and Theology* (ed. John T. Carroll; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2004) 115–16 and n. 82.

⁸⁰ See, e.g., George Howard, "Faith of Christ," *ABD* 2.758–60.

⁸¹ See Achtemeier, "Apropos the Faith of/in Christ," 90–91. Cf. Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster Press, 2000) 335 n. 36: "Even where *pistis Christou* does not refer to Christ's own faithfulness, but to the *pistis* of Christ-believers, it is not faith *in* Christ, but faith or trust in the God who was active in the Christ event." On the other hand, Richard Hays writes that his emphasis on the faithful obedience of Christ "does not deny that Paul saw Jesus as the object of faith" (as in Gal 2:16) but is intended to imply that Christians should focus not on introspective assessment of their own believing but on what Christ has done for them (Hays, "The Letter to the Galatians," 247).

In the former passage Paul in a remarkable way sets in parallel the coming of faith (πίστις) in vv. 23 and 25 and the coming of Christ (v. 24). The period of the law was one in which humanity was confined under sin in order that the promise based on “faith of/in Jesus Christ” might be given to those who have faith (ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ δοθῇ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν)” (v. 22). The period of faith begins with the historical appearance of Jesus and continues with the community of those having a faith oriented to him. Proponents of an objective genitive reading of v. 22 conclude that human faith *in* Christ became a possibility with the coming of Jesus. Advocates of the “faithfulness of Jesus Christ” read the passage as saying that the coming of Christ revealed both his own obedient faithfulness and that his disciples would subsequently share in that faithfulness.

Another way of construing the passage would be based on the fact that Greco-Roman writers, including Jewish writers like Philo and Josephus, often use πίστις to mean, “ground for faith on which belief or trust is based.” The appearance of Jesus is then the manifestation of the one who is the ground for the faith of Christians. Such an interpretation of ἡ πίστις in vv. 23 and 25 (and perhaps of πίστις in v. 24) could be combined with an objective genitive interpretation of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in v. 22. But this line of interpretation could also mesh with a “faithfulness of Jesus Christ” line of interpretation for v. 22: Jesus in his obedient faithfulness to God is the basis of Christian belief and trust.⁸²

Romans 3:22 speaks of “the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe” (δικαιοσύνη δὲ θεοῦ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας). Then in 3:25–26 we find this compressed statement about Jesus’ atoning death:

25 whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith (διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι). He did this to show (εἰς ἔνδειξιν) his righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over the sins previously committed; 26 it was to prove (πρὸς τὴν ἔνδειξιν) at the present time that he himself is righteous and that he justifies the one who has faith in Jesus (τὸν ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ).

⁸² I have previously argued for this exegetical possibility, especially from evidence in Philo and Josephus, in Hay, “Pistis as ‘Ground for Faith.’” My intent was to suggest that Jesus is not simply one proof or evidence among others but the essential demonstration without which faith in a Christian sense would not be possible (cf. Ota, “Absolute Uses,” 67).

The πίστις phrases in vv. 22 and 26 can readily be interpreted to mean “faith in Christ.” Advocates of the “faithfulness of Jesus” interpretation urge that the “faith of Jesus (Christ)” phrases in vv. 22 and 26 mean that the Christian lives spiritually on the basis of Jesus’ own faithfulness.⁸³ It seems less easy to interpret the πίστις in v. 25 as denoting Christ’s faithfulness. One could also interpret the uses of πίστις in vv. 22, 25, and 26 in the sense of the “proof” or “ground for faith” consisting in Jesus (or Jesus’ death). Thus we might paraphrase v. 25, “the one whom God presented as a sacrifice through the ground for faith in his blood as a demonstration of his righteousness. . . .” The two uses of ἔνδειξις in vv. 25–26 suggest that in the passage as a whole Paul construes Jesus’ death as a demonstration that God is righteous and makes righteous those persons who live on the basis of πίστις rather than the law, which Scripture itself shows cannot provide rectification (3:19–20). The interpretation of πίστις as “ground for faith” in the passage is readily supportive of an emphasis on the faith of believers. Yet interpretation of the three instances of πίστις in Rom 3:22, 25, 26 as referring or alluding to Christ’s faithfulness can be fortified by the understanding that his faithfulness is the decisive evidence or ground for human faith revealed by God.⁸⁴ Christ’s death is not simply a revelation or an invasion by God’s cosmic apocalyptic power. It is also a demonstration that God has always been righteous and that God actually makes people righteous on a basis other than the Mosaic law.⁸⁵

Such interpretations of these passages assign complex and overlapping meanings to pist. terms, but this is not inherently implausible.⁸⁶

⁸³ For a subtle and comprehensive reading along these lines, see Campbell, *Rhetoric*, esp. 177–203. The traditional objective genitive reading is defended against the subjective genitive interpretation by some other recent interpreters: Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 225; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 181–86; Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (THKNT 6; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999) 86–87.

⁸⁴ Cf. Campbell, *Rhetoric*, 197: Christ and his death on the cross “function as the definitive sign and manifestation of God’s righteousness. . . .”

⁸⁵ Cf. Ljungman, *Pistis*, 38: πίστις Χριστοῦ in Rom 3:22 refers to Christ as the “manifestation” of God’s righteousness and faithfulness. Richard Hays concedes that my interpretation of πίστις as “ground for belief” might make argumentative sense in Rom 3:22, 25 (*Faith of Jesus Christ*, xlv).

⁸⁶ E.g., Campbell thinks that Paul gave four distinct meanings in Romans, arguing that this wordplay is stylistically elegant (*Rhetoric*, 68 n. 4). See also Williams,

Moreover, whatever the apostle intended, some of his first hearers or readers may have interpreted passages like Gal 3:22–26 and Rom 3:21–26 as alluding to Christ's own faithfulness or to Christ as the basis of Christian faith.

Conclusions

Whatever conclusions one draws about the πίστις Χριστοῦ controversy, it should be kept in mind that most of Paul's 161 uses of pist. terms pertain to the faith or faithfulness of church members, to whom he quite often refers simply as οἱ πιστεύοντες.

Faith for Paul pertains to the whole of the Christian life and more particularly to that life as a participation in Christ. Faith as belief is the appropriate human response to the gospel message. As trust, it means total reliance on God and Christ as Lord for salvation; in this domain of meaning Paul often uses pist. terms to attack opponents who demanded circumcision or other "works of the law" as essential for salvation. Sometimes he uses πιστός to refer to the faithfulness Christians should manifest in relation to God and other believers. In a few notable passages Paul uses pist. terms to speak of the faithfulness of God. Very possibly, but not certainly, he employs phrases like πίστις Χριστοῦ to refer to the faithfulness of Christ. Perhaps, too, some of his uses of πίστις bear the sense of "proof" or "basis for faith."

Concepts of belief, trust, and faithfulness sometimes seem to flow together in a particular Pauline passage using pist. terminology, and this probably reflects the fact that all three are constitutive of participation in Christ. The apostle's references to faith often appear to have more than one layer of meaning, which adds to the richness of his statements and to the challenges facing exegetes.

Paul uses faith language primarily to describe the situation of believers, who, though they participate in Christ, continue to be subject to human limitations. Belief may turn toward doubt or error. Trust may falter or swerve toward idols. Human faithfulness

Galatians, 68–70. Cf. Matera's comment on the meaning of faith in Gal 2:16 (*Galatians*, 102): "This faith embraces both the faith *of* Christ and faith *in* Christ and might well be called Christ-faith."

is inconstant. The fundamental message of the apostle is that the love of God as known in Christ may be relied upon under all circumstances. God justifies the ungodly and remains faithful in spite of all human doubt and instability.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ I am indebted to Dr. David R. Adams for insightful comments on an earlier draft of this essay.

PAUL, THEOLOGIAN OF ELECTING GRACE

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1. *The Historical Method and the Study of Grace*

In the last twenty-five years there has been a resurgence of monographs on the role of grace in Paul's thought. These have ranged from a study on Paul's language of 'overflowing' grace,¹ a comparison of grace in the thought of Philo and Paul,² two general studies on grace and thanksgiving in Paul's letters,³ to, finally, an exploration of Paul's language of grace against its Graeco-Roman background.⁴ Two other recent studies have discussed the patronal backdrop to Paul's understanding of grace, even though each work's theme is more wide-ranging.⁵ Also the controversy engendered by the 'New Perspective' debate over the covenantal basis of Mosaic law in Second Temple Judaism and its relation to Pauline justification by faith has acutely raised the issue of the place of grace in Paul's thought.⁶

¹ M. Theobald, *Die überströmende Gnade: Studien zu einem paulinischen Motivfeld* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1982).

² D. Zeller, *Charis bei Philon und Paulus* (Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1990).

³ B. Eastman, *The Significance of Grace in the Letters of Paul* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999); D. W. Pao, *Thanksgiving: An Investigation of a Pauline Theme* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2002).

⁴ J. R. Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace in Its Graeco-Roman Context* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003). Moreover, the excellent PhD thesis of G. W. Griffith (*Abounding in Generosity: A Study of Charis in 2 Corinthians 8–9* [unpublished PhD thesis, Durham University, 2005]) demonstrates that the recent impetus in grace studies continues unabated.

⁵ D. A. DeSilva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship and Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2000) 95–119; Z. A. Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004) 132–48.

⁶ For coverage, see Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 97–106. Additionally, D. A. Carson *et al.* (eds.), *Justification and Variegated Nomism: Volume 2—The Paradoxes of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004) Subject Index s.v. "grace"; S. Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The 'Lutheran' Paul and His Critics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 341–51.

What unites most of these studies (with the exception of Eastman and Theobald) is their use of historical evidence to inform a theological discussion of grace. Harrison provides the most extensive discussion of χάρις and its cognates against the backdrop of the Graeco-Roman reciprocity system, surveying evidence from the inscriptions, papyri, Jewish literature and the popular philosophers. The other studies explore aspects of divine grace in its eastern Mediterranean benefaction context, discussing either Seneca (Griffith, Pao) or Philo (Zeller), or employing a selection of literary and documentary evidence (Crook, DeSilva). Systematic and biblical theologies, to be sure, continue to touch on the role of grace in Paul's thought, but they make virtually no reference to the first-century context (*infra* §§2 and 3). This is hardly surprising, given the different methodologies employed by the theological disciplines and more exegetically based studies.

The continuing debate about the nature and task of New Testament theology poses a fundamental methodological question for us: how should historical exegesis of Pauline χάρις—as interpreted within the conventions of the eastern Mediterranean reciprocity system—inform the study of grace in systematic and biblical theologies?⁷ Certainly there remains considerable good will regarding the possibility of an integration of disciplines in this regard. In recent years, several biblical scholars have reaffirmed the contribution that the application of historical methodology to the biblical documents makes for our understanding of New Testament and Pauline theology, as well as for our pastoral engagement with contemporary society.⁸ In the most recent New Testament theology, for example, Philip Esler has proposed that a meticulous historical examination of Romans—within his proposed hermeneutical framework of interpersonal communication and communion—might throw light on how we can address ethnic violence and genocide within our own era.⁹

But, sadly, the study of electing grace in systematic and biblical theologies remains caught in a 'time warp' of Reformation dogmat-

⁷ On the nature and task of New Testament theology, see D. O. Via, *What is New Testament Theology?* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); H. Räisänen, *Beyond New Testament Theology* (London: SCM Press, 2000). For the most recent survey, see P. F. Esler, *New Testament Theology: Communion and Community* (London: SPCK, 2005) 11–37.

⁸ J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000); G. Strecker, *Theology of the New Testament* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2000).

⁹ Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 273–82.

ics, only to be occasionally troubled by the 'New Perspective.' Consequently, we refuse to enter sympathetically and imaginatively into the struggles of mid first-century Roman believers as they heard Paul's papyrus letter being read out aloud for the first time in their house churches. What difference, for example, did Paul's doctrine of divine election by grace in the epistle to the Romans make to Jewish Christians struggling with the rising anti-Semitism among the Roman intelligentsia in the late 40's and 50's?¹⁰ What difference did it make to Gentile Christians living in the capital where the propaganda of Augustus depicted the ruler as the elect Saviour of Providence and the iconic benefactor of the world? And what difference does Paul's answer to these first-century Roman issues make to us today, theologically, socially, and politically?

After surveying and critiquing scholarly discussion of grace with systematic and biblical theologies, this article seeks to locate Paul's doctrine of electing grace in Romans within its first-century imperial context and within the debate about election within Second Temple Judaism. From here we will be better placed to explore the contribution that Paul's theology of election by grace might make to the theological, social and political context of the twenty-first century church.

2. *The Understanding of Grace in Systematic Theology*

In exploring the understanding of grace in systematic theology, we acknowledge that the task of theological dogmatics differs markedly from the brief of biblical exegesis. Systematic theologians range across the Old Testament and New Testament. They discuss the theological themes unifying both testaments within their canonical development, utilize the tools and methods of current biblical research, and draw upon the doctrinal traditions of historical theology for further illumination. Additionally, systematic theologians seek to bring their theological investigation into dialogue with contemporary concerns,

¹⁰ R. Penna, "The Jews in Rome at the Time of the Apostle Paul," in his *Paul the Apostle. Volume 1: Jew and Greek Alike* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996) 19–47; W. Wiefel, "The Jewish Community in Rome and the Origins of Roman Christianity," in K. P. Donfried (ed.), *The Romans Debate: Revised and Expanded Edition* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1991) 85–101.

relating their findings to traditional and emerging academic disciplines and to the pressing social, philosophical and cultural questions of their day.

It is unlikely that a detailed analysis of Paul's theology of grace would emerge from the wide-ranging quest of systematic theology, notwithstanding the wealth of exegetical observation found in Calvin or Barth, for instance. But the 'timeless' approach of systematic theology to Paul's language of grace has imposed enduring paradigms upon the study of Paul that have, until recently, obscured the apostle's versatility as a social and ecclesiastical thinker. A survey of systematic interpretations of Paul's theology of grace is therefore important for our purposes.

In late antiquity, Augustine of Hippo articulated his seminal understanding of divine grace in commentaries and treatises that were written in response to the doctrinal threat posed by the Manichees and Pelagius.¹¹ Whereas Manichaeism repudiated the existence of free will, Pelagius "exaggerated its role in justification."¹² By contrast, Augustine understood the event of justification, as enunciated by Paul, to be inaugurated by *operative grace* (a unilateral act of God), whereas the process of justification was accomplished by *cooperative grace* (a divine renewal that engaged the human will).¹³ Theologians of the early and later medieval period—including Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and Gabriel Biel—pursued and expanded upon Augustine's conviction that human beings still had a positive role to play in justification, arguing that this occurred through the infusion of grace or by means of the sacraments or via a pact between God and humankind.¹⁴

To some extent, Augustine's polemical approach bore similarities to the tactics of the historical Paul who, centuries earlier, had worked on several ideological fronts in framing his theology. The apostle responds pointedly to cultural and theological perversions of his gospel of grace, Graeco-Roman and Jewish, emanating from inside and from outside his house churches. He also critiques, sometimes with intentional precision, other times more obliquely, the competing social and religious ideologies of the eastern Mediterranean basin by means

¹¹ See P. Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (London: Faber & Faber, 1967).

¹² A. E. McGrath, *Iustitia Dei: A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification* (2d ed.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) 26.

¹³ For Augustine's critique of Pelagius, see *On the Proceedings of Pelagius*.

¹⁴ See the magisterial discussion of McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 37–179.

of his careful theological construction of counter-symbolic universes. Paul's presentation of electing grace in Romans is aimed as much at the Julio-Claudian rulers mediating divine favours as at contemporary Jewish understandings of election, the theological crisis precipitated by Israel's stumbling (Rom 3:3–4; 9:3a, 6a, 30–31; 10:1–2, 16; 11:1, 11), and the arrogance of Gentile Christians towards their Jewish brothers (Rom 11:17–21).

This is not to suggest that Paul's language of grace was merely an apologetic strategy. The apostle's gospel of justification by electing grace originated from his own Damascus experience of the risen Jesus and from his call to be the apostle to the Gentiles (e.g. Gal 1:14–16 [Jer 1:4–5; Isa 42:1, 6–7; 44:1–2, 24; 49:1, 6; Pss 22:9–19; 71:6]; 2 Cor 4:6; cf. Rom 8:29–30; Eph 1:4–6).¹⁵ Undoubtedly, it was also informed by the tradition of Jesus' openness towards the 'godless and lost' in his ministry,¹⁶ and by the apostle's own Spirit-renewed understanding (2 Cor 3:8, 17–18), in light of his Damascus experience, of the Old Testament covenantal and prophetic heritage.¹⁷

In the Reformation, Martin Luther and John Calvin attacked the merit theology of medieval Catholicism, ensuring the triumph of Paul's theology of grace through their relentless emphasis on justification by faith alone.¹⁸ Two significant developments for Pauline

¹⁵ See S. Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 101–27 for a discussion of the convergence of Paul's Damascus experience with the elect Servant of Isaiah.

¹⁶ Note the comment of E. Stauffer (*New Testament Theology* [London: SCM Press, 1955] 144–45): "The message of God's grace and of the forgiveness of sins derives from Jesus himself and was the common ground of the primitive Church. But its most powerful representative was the apostle Paul, and its most forceful expression is found in his doctrine of atonement." G. Bornkamm (*Paul* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1971] 237–39) also points to the continuity between Jesus and Paul on the issue of justification, but asserts that Paul knew less about the Jesus of history than we do. However, Paul's tantalizing reference to the "meekness and gentleness" of Christ (2 Cor 10:1) perhaps indicates that he knows considerably more about the historical Jesus' ministry to "sinners" (e.g. Matt 5:5; 11:28–30) than he initially lets on.

¹⁷ Note the comment of A. Richardson (*An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament* [London: SCM Press, 1958] 272): "Against this religion of pride and merit, the teaching of Jesus and his disciples, notably St Paul, represents a vigorous 'protestant' reformation, a reformation based upon a return to the *sola gratia* of Israel's prophets and to their parallel doctrine of election for service."

¹⁸ While the great Reformer, Philip Melancthon, did not surrender the *sola gratia* of justification, his later theology reflected elements of synergistic thinking. For discussion, see G. C. Berkouwer, *Divine Election* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960) 32–33.

scholarship emerged from this striking theological breakthrough. First, the Reformers dismissed medieval Catholicism as a ‘works-based’ piety with strong parallels, it was alleged, to the meritorious Torah-based religion of Judaism.¹⁹ The caricature of first-century Judaism as a ‘graceless’ religion remained deeply entrenched in New Testament scholarship until G. F. Moore, R. T. Herford, and E. P. Sanders challenged the stereotype over the course of the twentieth century.²⁰ Secondly, eternal election—which Calvin saw mirrored in Christ (*Inst.* 3.24.5; cf. Eph 1:4, 9; 2 Tim 1:9)—was singled out as the *raison d’être* of the operation of divine grace in salvation history, with reprobation being its dark-sided corollary.²¹ The theological legacy of each development still continues to shape modern scholarly discussion of Paul’s understanding of grace.²²

Closer to our era, Karl Barth struggled with the legacy of the post-war crisis of 1918 and challenged the optimistic, anthropocentric theologies of Adolf Harnack and Friedrich Schleiermacher.²³ Barth’s theology of grace stands out for its richness throughout his *Church Dogmatics*.²⁴ According to Barth, the Bible is a miracle of grace

¹⁹ For a comparison between works-based Judaism and the papists, see P. Melancthon, *Commentary on Romans* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992) 60.

²⁰ G. F. Moore, *Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era* (repr. 2 vols.; New York: Schocken Books, 1971 [1927]); R. T. Herford, *The Pharisees* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1924); E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1977).

²¹ While Calvin emphasises the freedom and sovereignty of divine grace in election (*Inst.* 3.21–24), he also strongly underscores the merit of Christ imputed to believers as the grounds of all grace (*Inst.* 2.17): “Christ, by his obedience, truly purchased and merited grace for us with the Father” (*Inst.* 2.17.3). The entirety of Book 3 of Calvin’s *Institutes* is devoted to the mode of obtaining the grace of Christ, temporal and pretemporal. In sum, Calvin gives to his presentation of divine grace a sharp christocentric focus.

²² For discussion, see Berkouwer, *Divine Election*; H. Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: God and Creation* (vol. 2; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004) Subject Index s.v. “election, divine,” “grace”; G. J. Spykman, *Reformational Theology: A New Paradigm for Doing Dogmatics* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans) 507–12. For criticism of Berkouwer’s position, see A. L. Baker, *Berkouwer’s Doctrine of Election: Balance or Imbalance?* (Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1981).

²³ F. Schleiermacher (*The Christian Faith* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1928] 366–67) argued that the power of Christ’s God-consciousness brought about an increasing perfection in humanity as it assimilated the human consciousness of sin to itself. This communication of the God-consciousness on the part of Christ the Redeemer to humanity is what Schleiermacher perceives divine grace to be (pp. 262–64).

²⁴ For discussion of grace in Barth’s theology, see G. C. Berkouwer, *The Triumph of Grace in the Theology of Karl Barth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1956). Grace is given considerably less attention in Barth’s earlier lectures at Göttingen (*The Göttingen Dogmatics: Instruction in the Christian Religion Vol. 1* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991])

to its readers (*CD I*.² 528–30); grace represents the supreme expression of God’s love (*CD II*.¹ 353–68);²⁵ the election of divine grace is fully revealed in Christ, the electing and elected one (*CD II*.² 3–194); and, finally, the triumphant grace of God is demonstrated in the atonement as the fulfilment of the covenant and is the underlying dynamic animating justification by faith (*CD IV*.¹ 69, 514–642). In Barth’s presentation of the objective character of God’s work in Christ the ‘objectivism of grace’ is continuously underscored.²⁶ As Barth states,

When Christ appeared and died and rose again, the grace of God became an event for all men, and all men are made liable for their being and activity, for their being and activity as it is revealed in the light of this event. For as the ultimate and profoundest reality, this event is the self-revelation of the truth, and therefore the truth about man.²⁷

Although Barth is not writing a theology of Paul, the meticulous attention that he gives to the role of grace in the apostle’s thought stands in marked contrast, inexplicably, to many contemporary theologies of Paul.

Another important theological work highlighting the centrality of grace, published in 1937 prior to the outbreak of the Second World War, was Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s *The Cost of Discipleship*. This study highlighted how the Lutheran understanding of justification by grace had been progressively cheapened as the Christian West played down the call to costly discipleship:

Judged by the standard of Luther’s doctrine, that of his followers was unassailable, and yet their orthodoxy spelt the end and destruction of the Reformation as the revelation on earth of the costly grace of God. The justification of the sinner in the world degenerated into the justification of sin and the world. Costly grace was turned into cheap grace without discipleship.²⁸

Subject Index s.v. “Grace”), though divine election is covered more expansively (Subject Index s.v. “Election”).

²⁵ Emil Brunner—Barth’s famous neo-orthodox contemporary—omits grace from his discussion of God’s attributes (*The Christian Doctrine of God. Dogmatics Vol. I* [London: Lutterworth Press, 1949]), reserving his discussion of divine grace for his third volume (*The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation. Dogmatics Vol. III* [London: Lutterworth Press, 1962] Subject Index s.v. “God: grace”).

²⁶ See the discussion of K. Runia, *Karl Barth’s Doctrine of Holy Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1968) 213–16.

²⁷ *CD I*.² 305.

²⁸ D. Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (London: SCM Press, 1959 [1937]) 41.

Although Bonhoeffer concentrated on the call to discipleship as expressed in the Sermon on the Mount, his insights captured well the corporate transformation demanded by Paul of those living under the reign of grace (Rom 3:8; 6:1, 15; cf. 5:21b).²⁹

In the second half of the twentieth century, several systematic theologians comment on divine grace in their works. Otto Weber's two-volumed dogmatics devotes considerable attention to grace as a divine attribute and to its relation to justification and election.³⁰ Wolfhart Pannenberg ranges more widely on grace than most modern theologians, though within traditional systematic categories and without detailed attention to Paul.³¹ The evangelical systematic theology of Millard Erickson touches on grace intermittently, though his concentration on Paul in this regard is surprisingly minimal, congregating around the twin foci of justification and election.³² Finally, Thomas Oden's *The Transforming Power of Grace* is the first systematic study of divine grace in decades, incisive in its theological insight, and challenging in its cultural analysis and application.³³

Several comments on the understanding of grace evinced by systematic theologians are apposite at this juncture. Not unexpectedly, the theological construct that emerges is 'timeless,' with no reference to the historical situation that Paul was facing. Where the Jewish context is briefly referred to in dogmatic theologies, the Reformation paradigm of first-century Judaism as being a Torah and merit-based faith is uncritically perpetuated without qualification.

No consideration is given to the Graeco-Roman context of grace, even though Paul as the apostle to the Gentiles would have been forced by the pressures of his converts' social world to address the theological and social dynamics of χάρις, within the reciprocity system and within the cult of the imperial ruler-benefactors in the Greek East and Roman West.³⁴ Surprisingly, no attention is given to the

²⁹ See Bonhoeffer, *Cost*, 201–75.

³⁰ Respectively, O. Weber, *Foundation of Dogmatics Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 424–28; *idem*, *Foundation of Dogmatics Volume 2* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 280–314, 411–48, 487–92.

³¹ W. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology Volume 3* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993) Subject Index s.v. "Grace."

³² M. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990) Name and Subject Index s.v. "Grace." The same could be said about W. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester: IVP, 1994).

³³ T. Oden, *The Transforming Power of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1993).

³⁴ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, *passim*.

explosion of grace language in 2 Corinthians 8–9 regarding the Jerusalem collection.³⁵ The ‘unofficial’ brief of systematic theologians seems to be that once grace as an attribute of God, justification by faith, and divine election have been dealt with, little extra theological comment is required. Consequentially, a truncated understanding of the intersection of divine and human grace emerges.

Furthermore, where divine election is discussed in Romans, systematic theologians overlook the fact that Paul is writing to Gentile converts (Rom 1:13; 11:13) who are living in the capital where the imperial ruler resided. The imperial propaganda promoted a symbolic universe in which Augustus—the iconic Roman ruler who, in the view of posterity, had dispensed overflowing grace³⁶—was installed as the divinely elected vice regent of the gods.³⁷ The Priene inscription, as we will see, depicted him as the *telos* of world history in a manner reminiscent of Paul’s portrayal of Christ as the *telos* of the Jewish quest for Torah righteousness (Rom 10:4). We are witnessing here a collision of symbolic universes that lifts divine election from ‘timeless’ theology to something more germane for first-century Romans. Through the grace of Christ they could be immediately incorporated as siblings into the household of Abraham as opposed to being, only in select cases, clients of the household of Caesar and of his freedmen (Phil 4:22; Rom 16:11b). The political implications of Paul’s theology have been recently explored,³⁸ but the first-century imperial context of grace has been overlooked as far as his understanding of divine election in Romans.

Finally, systematic theologians misconstrue to some extent the way in which Paul theologically operates. The hurly-burly of the ecclesiastical and social context in which Paul pastors and evangelizes (e.g.

³⁵ Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 314–21.

³⁶ Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, 226–42.

³⁷ See J. R. Fears, *PRINCEPS A DIIS ELECTUS: The Divine Election of the Emperor as a Political Concept at Rome* (Rome: American Academy in Rome, 1977).

³⁸ D. Georgi, *Theocracy in Paul’s Praxis and Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); N. Elliott, *Liberating Paul: The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); R. A. Horsley (ed.), *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997); *idem* (ed.), *Paul and Politics: Ekklēsia, Israel, Imperium, Interpretation: Essays in Honor of Krister Stendahl* (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2000); B. Blumenfeld, *The Political Paul: Justice, Democracy and Kingship in a Hellenistic Framework* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001); J. D. Crossan and J. L. Reed, *In Search of Paul: How Jesus’ Apostle Opposed Rome’s Empire with God’s Kingdom* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004).

Rom 3:8; 15:23–33; 1 Cor 1:10–17; 5:1, 9–11; 7:1; 8:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 11:28–29; 12:14–21; Gal 1:6–10) provided the stimulus for the apostle’s creative application of his cruciform gospel to the pressing demands of his culture and his missionary outreach to the Gentiles. It might be concluded from this that Paul’s approach as a theologian of grace is diametrically opposed to the approach of systematic dogmatics, noted above. However, this would overplay the role of contextual issues in the development of Paul’s theology. Paul’s theological framework regarding the reign of grace and divine election was firmly in place from the outset of his missionary career (e.g. Gal 2:11–14; cf. 1:13–17; 1 Thess 1:4; 2:12; 5:9, 24; cf. Acts 9:15; 22:14–16; 26:15–17).³⁹ Notwithstanding, the collision of *first-century* symbolic universes regarding election—Jewish and Roman—probably contributed in some way to Paul creating the meta-narrative of electing grace in Romans 9–11 that has been so thoroughly combed over by systematic theologians.

We turn now to a survey of New Testament and Pauline theologians: do they adopt a more contextual approach to Paul’s theology of grace or is their *modus operandi* consonant with traditional systematic approaches? Do they perceive Paul’s understanding of divine grace to be the thematic lynchpin of his theology or is it more peripheral in comparison to other motifs?

3. *The Understanding of Grace in New Testament Theologies and in Theologies of Paul*

a. *Issues Arising from the Discussion of Grace in New Testament Theologies*

When Johann Philipp Gabler argued for the separation of biblical theology from dogmatic theology in 1787,⁴⁰ the historical analysis of biblical texts became increasingly the focus of a new generation of scholars over against theological dogmatics. Consequently, Old Testament and New Testament theology began to emerge as separate dis-

³⁹ F. Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) 227. For a discussion of grace in 1 Thessalonians, see Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective*, 85–100.

⁴⁰ For discussion, see Esler, *New Testament Theology*, 11–37; Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 23–24.

ciplines, and within these disciplines, specialist areas of study such as Pauline theology. What contribution has the biblical theology movement made to our understanding of Paul's theology of grace? Has it really advanced beyond the methodological impasse of systematic theology outlined above?

Only the most recent theologies of the New Testament are sensitive to the impact of the 'New Perspective' upon Paul's understanding of justification by grace. Howard Marshall, for example, while not endorsing the 'New Perspective,' discusses the legitimacy of using 'merit' terminology for Jewish boundary markers in Galatians.⁴¹ He acknowledges the (alleged) ambiguity of understanding of grace in the Qumran literature⁴² and also interacts incisively with the 'covenantal nomism' of E. P. Sanders.⁴³ Marshall's discussion alerts readers of systematic theology to the potential stereotypes of first-century Judaism contained in New Testament theologies of the past. For example, Rudolf Bultmann's heavy emphasis on Jewish 'works' righteousness⁴⁴ and Alan Richardson's dismissal of the Judaism of the rabbis as graceless are cases in point.⁴⁵

Other scholars are frustratingly imprecise. G. B. Caird, for example, correctly claims that Paul highlights the sovereignty of grace over against the 'Judaizers,' but he never specifies their provenance and the type of sectarian Judaism that they embraced.⁴⁶ Other theologies of the New Testament do not pause at all to consider the nature of the Judaism that Paul's theology of grace might be addressing.⁴⁷

⁴¹ I. H. Marshall, *New Testament Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2004) 212 n. 8. See also the critique of the 'New Perspective' in Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 272–74.

⁴² Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 227 n. 39.

⁴³ Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 227–29. Contra, see my discussion in §4.a *intra*.

⁴⁴ R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament Volume 1* (London: SCM Press, 1952) 281–92. Similarly, H. Conzelmann, *An Outline of the Theology of the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1969) 214.

⁴⁵ Richardson, *An Introduction to the Theology of the New Testament*, 283. G. E. Ladd (*A Theology of the New Testament* [Guildford and London: Lutterworth Press, 1974] 496–501) argues that obedience to the law became the condition of covenantal membership in the intertestamental period and replaced the grace-centred faith of the Old Testament. W. G. Kümmel (*Theology of the New Testament* [London: SCM Press, 1973] 195–96) proposes that the Qumran covenanters more emphasized obedience to the law than justification by grace.

⁴⁶ G. B. Caird, *New Testament Theology* (ed. L. D. Hurst; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994) 184–88.

⁴⁷ E.g. A. Schlatter, *The Theology of the Apostles: The Development of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998 [1922]); J. Bonsirven, *Theology of the New*

It is essential, therefore, for New Testament theologies to appreciate the variegated understandings of divine grace and election present in first-century Judaism if we are to avoid injudiciously imposing 'Reformation' or 'New Perspective' perspectives upon the Pauline evidence.

As regards the Graeco-Roman context of grace, Ceslas Spicq employs a wealth of inscriptional and papyrological evidence in order to illustrate the operation of grace in the honorific system of the eastern Mediterranean basin.⁴⁸ However, the imperial context of grace and its possible relation to divine election in Romans is overlooked.

Finally, three New Testament theologians identify divine grace as the motif undergirding Paul's gospel of Christ crucified. Werner Kümmel endorses H. D. Wendland's view that justification by grace through faith is "the centre of the Pauline message."⁴⁹ Donald Guthrie, identifying grace as a dominant feature of Paul's theology,⁵⁰ sums up his position thus: "If there was one characteristic of God which captured the imagination of Paul more than another, it was the grace of God."⁵¹

In the most recent theology of the New Testament published, Frank Thielman repeatedly drives home that divine grace is the centre of Paul's theology:

If one theological theme is more basic than others in Paul's letters, therefore, it is this notion that God is a gracious God and that he has shown his grace preeminently in his arrangement of history to answer the problem of human sinfulness in the death and resurrection of his Son, Jesus Christ.⁵²

Thielman highlights the role of grace in the Jerusalem collection,⁵³ in human suffering,⁵⁴ in the eschatological reversal of the gospel,⁵⁵

Testament (Westminster: Newman Press, 1963); L. Goppelt, *Theology of the New Testament, Volume 2: The Variety and Unity of the Apostolic Witness to Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982); F. Vouga, *Une théologie du nouveau testament* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 2001).

⁴⁸ C. Spicq, *Théologie morale du nouveau testament* (vol. 1; Paris: Librairie Lecroffre, 1965) 110–45. His appendix ("Qu'est-ce que la grâce?" pp. 451–61) is partially translated in C. Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (vol. 3; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994: [1978]) 500–506.

⁴⁹ Kümmel, *Theology of the New Testament*, 142.

⁵⁰ D. Guthrie, *New Testament Theology* (London: IVP, 1981) 620.

⁵¹ Guthrie, *New Testament Theology*, 106.

⁵² Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 479; also 230–33.

⁵³ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 338–40.

⁵⁴ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 340–41.

⁵⁵ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 281–82.

in relation to the Mosaic law,⁵⁶ and in divine election.⁵⁷ The graciousness of God, he asserts, is “the most characteristic element of Paul’s understanding of God.”⁵⁸ Singular among recent New Testament theologians in this regard, Thielman has emphasised with Barthian relentlessness the pervasive structure of grace holding together Paul’s theology.

Do we see the emphasis on divine grace so characteristic of Thielman’s work reflected in Pauline theologies?

b. *Issues Arising from the Discussion of Grace in Pauline Theologies*

Since the 1950’s theologies of Paul have devoted little space to an investigation of the role of grace in Paul’s thought.⁵⁹ This oversight may well have arisen because grace, in our post-Reformation and post-Barthian era, has almost attained an *axiomatic* status: if justification by faith and divine election are thoroughly discussed, then grace in the view of the Pauline interpreter has been effectively dealt with. This, of course, overlooks the vital fact that divine grace is not only favour granted but also power unleashed.⁶⁰ To ignore this plunges us into the morass of Bonhoeffer’s ‘cheap grace’ and robs Paul’s thought of its socially transformative impetus.

However, the two Pauline theologians, J. D. G. Dunn and T. R. Schreiner, have exerted great care in showing how grace unites key

⁵⁶ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 274–75.

⁵⁷ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 450.

⁵⁸ Thielman, *Theology of the New Testament*, 477–79.

⁵⁹ J. C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1980); L. Cerfaux, *The Church in the Theology of Paul, Christ in the Theology of Paul, The Christian in the Theology of Paul* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1959, 1959, 1967); C. A. Davis, *The Structure of Paul’s Theology: “The Truth Which is the Gospel”* (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 1995); T. Holland, *Contours of Pauline Theology: A Radical New Survey of the Influences on Paul’s Biblical Writings* (Fearn: Mentor, 2004); R. P. Martin, *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul’s Theology* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981); C. M. Pate, *The End of the Ages Has Come: The Theology of Paul* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995); H. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975); B. Witherington III, *Paul’s Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994); D. E. H. Whiteley, *The Theology of Saint Paul* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983); J. Ziesler, *Pauline Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983). Similarly, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century interpreters of Paul’s theology (e.g. A. Deissmann; P. Feine; O. Pfleiderer; F. Prat; A. Sabatier; C. A. A. Scott; G. B. Stevens) either discuss grace in traditional dogmatic categories or treat it very briefly.

⁶⁰ T. R. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God’s Glory in Christ. A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001) 246.

aspects of Paul's theology in a more comprehensive manner than before.⁶¹ As Schreiner astutely notes, many of the proposed centres of Paul's theology (e.g. justification, reconciliation, 'in Christ' etc.) "exalt the gift above the giver."⁶² What is required is a Pauline theme that unites the Father's soteriological and pneumatic gifts in their personal, ecclesiastical, and social expression. Certainly grace, the liberating and empowering characteristic of God's electing love, is a prime candidate.

In the following section we will explore how an historical understanding of grace in Second Temple Judaism allows us to ask new theological questions regarding the role of electing grace in Rom 9:1–13.

4. *Electing Grace in Romans 9:6–13 in Its Jewish Context*

a. *Grace and Second Temple Judaism*

At the outset, we must address the stereotype of Second Temple Judaism (§2 and §3 *supra*) as a Torah and works-based faith. Since I have dealt with this question elsewhere,⁶³ my brief exposition is meant to be cautionary, with a view to establishing a better methodology in speaking about grace in systematic and biblical theology. It is clear that certain sectors of rabbinic Judaism did have a clear understanding of divine grace, as evidenced in some of their sayings and in their exegesis of Old Testament grace texts.⁶⁴ Nonetheless, other sectors of rabbinic thought were penetrated by a merit theology,⁶⁵

⁶¹ J. D. G. Dunn (*The Theology of Paul the Apostle* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998] Subject Index s.v. "Grace," "Charism") brings a discussion of the *charismata* into his coverage of grace, while Schreiner (*Pauline Theology*, Subject Index s.v. "Grace") expends considerable effort in demonstrating how grace is the dynamic behind the diverse elements of Paul's theology. Dunn (*The Theology of Paul*, 499–532) also provides an outstanding coverage of electing grace in Romans 9–11.

⁶² Schreiner, *Pauline Theology*, 18.

⁶³ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 97–166. For my evaluation of the 'New Perspective,' see pp. 97–106.

⁶⁴ For sayings emphasizing grace, see *Mek.* 34.1.(5B); *Sifre Deut.* 329; *m. Abot* 1.3 III A, B; C. G. Montefiore and H. Loewe (eds.), *A Rabbinic Anthology* (New York: Schocken Books, 1974) §590, §597. On the rabbinic exposition of grace texts, see Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 157–66.

⁶⁵ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 164 n. 334.

and at times came close to emphasising the centrality of Torah at the expense of even Yahweh himself.⁶⁶

A unilateral understanding of divine grace was central to the Jewish synagogal sermons of the Diaspora, if Pseudo-Philo's two sermons, *De Sampson* and *De Jona*, are representative.⁶⁷ The same unilateral understanding of grace emerges in the Dead Sea Scrolls. There the theme of grace encompasses covenantal election, predestination, soteriology, pneumatology, eschatology, and wisdom teaching.⁶⁸ Significantly, justification is located with God alone and is based on his gift of righteousness and forgiveness.⁶⁹ It is with considerable warrant, therefore, that E. P. Sanders states that grace was emphasised in the Scrolls "as nowhere else in Judaism."⁷⁰

In the case of Philo and Josephus, Philo leans towards a Graeco-Roman conception of merit in describing covenantal χάρις, whereas Josephus excises any LXX reference to covenantal χάρις and dresses the Old Testament narrative in benefaction garb.⁷¹ Finally, the apocryphal and pseudepigraphical literature demonstrates that χάρις had acquired considerable theological versatility as a description of God's beneficence by the time of Paul. χάρις appears in eschatological and covenantal contexts, as well as being the dynamic animating God's bestowal of his Spirit and wisdom.⁷²

We are witnessing here diverse understandings of grace in Second Temple Judaism, some of which were riddled with merit-based and synergistic theologies, others of which highlighted the grace of a sovereign and merciful God in various contexts. This means that as theologians we must be more precise in speaking about the provenance of the 'grace' and 'works' traditions in order to avoid caricaturing Judaism and to ensure that we are being exegetically responsible in our interpretation of Paul.

These variegated traditions alert us to the fact that Paul was probably working on several fronts, Jewish and Graeco-Roman, in his

⁶⁶ *b. B. Mes'a* 59b. Cited by J. Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996) 337.

⁶⁷ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 151–57.

⁶⁸ Covenantal election: 1QH 7.11. Predestination: 1QH 9.14. Soteriology: 4Q434, 4Q436 ii 1 Column 1; 4Q521 i 2; 4Q525 i 4; 1QH 7.11; 1QH 9.14. Pneumatology: 1QH 9.22. Eschatology: 11QMelch. Wisdom Teaching: 1QH 10.16; 11.18; 4Q185.

⁶⁹ 1QS 11.

⁷⁰ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 269.

⁷¹ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 114–46.

⁷² Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 110–14.

presentation of grace in Romans. A few examples of the issues raised by the first-century context of grace should establish the point, even though we will only address two of these issues in §4 and §5.⁷³ Does the apostle endorse or subvert Graeco-Roman reciprocity ideology (Rom 11:35; 13:7–10)? Does Paul’s theology of election interact with the imperial theology of election (Rom 15:12; cf. 4:11–12, 16–17; 10:10)? Is Paul’s gospel primarily aimed at removing Jewish boundary markers (Rom 2:29–30; 4:1–25) or does he also attack all synergistic and merit-based distortions of grace (Rom 3:28; 4:6; 9:11–12, 32; 11:5–6)? Does Paul’s theology of grace challenge the *χάριτες* of the demonic powers, regularly invoked by the practitioners of Graeco-Roman magic in the magical papyri (Rom 8:38–39)? The answers to these questions would provide a more comprehensive distillation of Paul’s theology of grace than has been provided by the closed systematic categories of the past and would allow new hermeneutical perspectives that address our culture in fresh and relevant ways.

Before we discuss divine election in Rom 9:6–13 (§b and §c), it is worth noting that Paul was probably interacting with the variegated Jewish understandings of covenantal grace and addressing contemporary debates about the role of Abraham and his progeny in the formation of the eschatological household of God.

b. *Election and the Covenant in Second Temple Judaism: Romans 9:6–9*

The description of Israel as God’s ‘chosen’ and ‘elect ones’ was ubiquitous in Second Temple Judaism.⁷⁴ Just as interesting, however, are the theological traditions that reveal the understanding of election in certain sectors of Judaism, either in terms of group identity, or in relation to the Abrahamic covenant. What light do these traditions throw on Paul’s portrait of God’s electing grace in Rom 9:6–9?

First, in terms of the understanding of divine election and predestination in Second Temple Judaism, there were a variety of viewpoints. Josephus (A.D. 37/38–c. 100) says that while the Pharisees ascribe everything to the hand of God, they still acknowledge the

⁷³ For discussion of these issues, see Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, *passim*.

⁷⁴ See J. H. Charlesworth (ed.), *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha: Apocalyptic Literature and Testaments* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1983) Index s.v. “Elect ones,” “Jews (Hebrews) as chosen people.” See also the helpful comments in B. Witherington III and D. Hyatt, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 246–49.

importance of human cooperation in performing good or evil actions (*Ant.* 18.1–3; *War* 2.8, 14).⁷⁵ The Dead Sea Scrolls speak about the predestination of individuals, with strong emphasis on divine grace. According to 1QH 9.14, the psalmist had been chosen from the womb with the result that “[Thy grace was with me] in the lap of her who reared me.”⁷⁶ 1QS 3.13–4.1 provides an extended description of the elect (“the sons of light”) and the non-elect (“the sons of darkness”), spotlighting God’s predestinarian choice of “the sons of light.” The later rabbinic literature states that “all Israel will have a share in the world to come” and identifies all those who would have no share in eschatological bliss.⁷⁷ In each of the texts above, sectarian groups within Judaism define their individual and corporate identity over against other competing groups in terms of divine election and pre-natal predestination.

Secondly, more critical for our purposes is the manner in which Second Temple Judaism portrays covenantal grace in relation to Yahweh’s choice of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Once again, there is a strong emphasis on the unilateral nature of electing grace in many texts, but we do see the emergence of merit theologies in certain sectors of Judaism that throw light on the type of ‘works-based’ spirituality against which Paul is arguing. A few examples of the differing theological positions will establish the point. The Prayer of Azariah (early second century B.C.) pleads with God for an extension of his covenantal mercy, reminding God of his promise to Abraham (Gen 12:1–3) and its reaffirmation to his descendants:

For your name’s sake do not give us up forever, and do not annul your covenant. Do not withdraw your mercy from us, for the sake of Abraham your beloved and for the sake of your servant Isaac and Israel your holy one, to whom you promised to multiply their descendants like the stars of heaven and like the sand on the shore of the sea.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ For Jewish texts claiming that human free will is ultimate, see T. R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 499.

⁷⁶ Note, too, 2 *En.* 23.5: “For all the souls are prepared for eternity, before the composition of the earth.”

⁷⁷ *m. Sanh.* 11.1, 2; *b. Sanh.* 99b; 105a. Cited in Montefiore and Loewe (eds.), *A Rabbinic Anthology*, 604–605. Note, too, Add Esth 14:5: “you, O Lord, took Israel out of all the nations, and our ancestors from among all their forbears, for an everlasting inheritance, and that you did for them all that you promised.” See also 2 *Bar.* 75.1–6.

⁷⁸ Pr Azar 12–13.

The Hebrew additions to Sirach (c. 180 B.C.) highlight God's mercy throughout, discussing the three patriarchs within the framework of electing grace:

Give thanks to him who has chosen the sons of Zadok to be priests,
for his mercy endures forever;
Give thanks to the shield of Abraham,
for his mercy endures forever;
Give thanks to the rock of Isaac,
for his mercy endures forever,
Give thanks to the mighty one of Jacob,
for his mercy endures forever;
Give thanks to him who has chosen Zion,
for his mercy endures forever.⁷⁹

However, as noted, there were also Torah-based traditions within Second Temple Judaism that compromised the understanding of electing grace underlying the Abrahamic covenant:

Abraham was the great father of a multitude of nations, and no one has been found like him in glory. He kept the law of the Most High, and entered into a covenant with him: he certified the covenant in his flesh, and when he was tested he proved faithful. Therefore the Lord assured him with an oath that the nations would be blessed through his offspring; that he would make him as numerous as the dust of the earth, and exalt his offspring like the stars.⁸⁰

This text provides us with sympathetic insight into the type of merit-based Judaism that Paul was critiquing in Romans and Galatians (Gal 3:6–9, 15–18; Rom 4:1–25). Sirach depicts the Abrahamic covenant of grace (Gen 12:1–3; 15:1–6) as a divine reward earned by Abraham for his meritorious Torah obedience, circumcision (Sir 17:9–14, 23–27), and faithfulness to God under testing (Sir 22:1–19)—a radical chronological reversal of the grace-initiated events depicted in Genesis 12–22. Finally, and not unexpectedly, the Alexandrian exegete Philo (20 B.C.–A.D. 50) allegorizes Abraham's election in his discussion of the symbolic meaning of the patriarch's name.⁸¹

What light does this material throw upon Paul's theology of election in Rom 9:6–9? A real surprise for Paul's Jewish auditors would have been how the apostle understands the process of divine elec-

⁷⁹ Sir 51.

⁸⁰ Sir 44.19–21.

⁸¹ Philo, *Mut.* 66, 69, 71; *Abr.* 82–83; *QG* 3.43.

tion. It does not operate on the basis of physical descent: “not all who are descended from Israel are Israel” (Rom 9:6b; cf. 2:28). In Rom 9:7a, Paul reiterates the general point of 9:6b from the viewpoint of the Abrahamic covenant. There he distinguishes between Abraham’s physical descendants and Abraham’s children whose family line is determined by God’s sovereign grace (Rom 9:7b; cf. Gen 21:12 [cf. 18:10]).

Admittedly, sectarian groups restricted the membership of ‘Israel’ as well. The Dead Sea Scrolls community excluded Jews and Gentiles as the ‘non-elect’ (“the sons of darkness”) and the idea of ‘remnant’ Israel was current in circles of Second Temple Judaism.⁸² The same theme had been loudly sounded by John the Baptist (Matt 3:7–10). In our next section (§c), too, we will see that *4 Ezra* considers the ‘elect’ status of national Israel to be imperilled by the ‘evil heart’ of humanity. But the majority of our texts unequivocally assume that ‘elect’ status of Israel refers exclusively to *national* Israel.⁸³ The covenantal privileges of Rom 9:4–5a allows us to see why any idea of change in the election status of national Israel would have been inconceivable for Paul’s Jewish auditors.⁸⁴

In Rom 9:8 Paul underscores the fact that the natural children (Ishmael and the other siblings) were not God’s children, whereas God’s children (in this case, solely Isaac) were children of promise.⁸⁵ What may also have surprised Paul’s contemporaries was Paul’s restriction of Yahweh’s promise of numberless progeny (Gen 15:5) to the son and heir, Isaac (Rom 9:9; Gen 18:10, 14).⁸⁶ That Isaac is called “our father” (Rom 9:10b) in the same way as Abraham (Rom 4:12, 16–17) reinforces the point that only those who are the promised offspring of Isaac (Rom 9:7b, 8b)—as opposed to those who trust in physical descent from Abraham—will inherit eschatological glory. By contrast, as we have seen, some of our texts emphasize

⁸² J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9–16* (Dallas: Word Books, 1988) 539.

⁸³ L. Morris (*The Epistle to the Romans* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988] 352) notes that “[Paul’s] compatriots were in error in holding that the promise of God applied to the whole of Israel.”

⁸⁴ C. E. B. Cranfield (*Romans Volume II: IX–XVI* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1979] 475) observes that Paul’s distinction between ἡ υἰοθεσία (“the adoption”: Rom 9:4) and τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ (“children of God”: Rom 9:8) illustrates the difference between the national privileges of Israel and the selective connotation of an “Israel within Israel.”

⁸⁵ J. A. Fitzmyer (*Romans* [London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992] 561) refers to *Jub.* 16.17 as confirmation of Rom 9:8a.

⁸⁶ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 561.

the promise of numberless progeny through Abraham (e.g. Pr Azar 12–13; Sir 44:19–21). But Paul pinpricked this ethnocentric interpretation of the covenant in Judaism (e.g. *m. Sanh.* 11.1, 2; *b. Sanh.* 99b; 105a, *supra*) by restricting God’s ‘elect’ to the offspring of Isaac.

c. *Grace, Jacob and Second Temple Judaism: Romans 9:10–13*

In Rom 9:10–13 Paul appeals to the divine election of Jacob over his twin brother Esau (Gen 15:19–26) so that he might demonstrate the unilateral nature of electing grace independent of any human works. Paul cites two Old Testament texts regarding Jacob’s birth (Gen 25:23; Mal 1:2–3) in order to underscore his hermeneutic of unconditional election. What portrait emerges from the literature of Second Temple Judaism regarding the divine election of the patriarch Jacob? Surprisingly, Romans commentators have not explored this background in discussing Rom 9:10–13.

Several Jewish texts, such as *4 Ezra* (late first century A.D.), emphasize the election of Jacob by God through the covenantal line of Abraham:

And when they were committing iniquity before you, you chose for yourself one of them, whose name was Abraham, and you loved him and to him you revealed the end of the times, secretly by night. You made with him an everlasting covenant, and promised him that you would never forsake his descendants; and you gave to him Isaac, and to Isaac you gave Jacob and Esau. And you set apart Jacob for yourself, but Esau you rejected; and Jacob became a great multitude.⁸⁷

But, as *4 Ezra* expands, although God had elected Israel, the fate of his holy nation was progressively imperilled from the time of Adam’s fall to the Babylonian exile because God did not take away the evil heart from his people.⁸⁸ This was precisely the theological situation of first-century Judaism that Paul addressed with his Christ-Adam typology in Rom 5:12–21 and with his theodicy of electing grace in Romans 9–11.

Also the Syrian translator of the pseudepigraphical Davidic Psalm 155 (composed much earlier than the first century B.C.) summons God to deliver his nation because of his election of Jacob and his house:

⁸⁷ *4 Ezra* 3.13–16.

⁸⁸ *4 Ezra* 3.20–36.

Save Israel, your elect one;
and those of the house of Jacob, your chosen one.⁸⁹

While the two texts above faithfully render the Genesis narrative regarding Jacob's divine election (Gen 25:19–26), there are other examples in the literature of Second Temple Judaism where the unilateral understanding of electing grace to Jacob is compromised.

First, we have already seen that a Torah-based rather than a promise-based approach to the Abrahamic covenant underlies Sir 44:19–21. However, the blessings of the covenant of grace (Gen 12:1–3) are subsequently reaffirmed by God and are sovereignly passed on to Jacob via his father Isaac in Sir 44:22–23. Here we observe a synergistic mixture of grace and works operating in Sirach's distillation of the Abrahamic covenantal traditions. It stands at odds with Paul's focus on God's immovable purpose in the election of Abraham and Jacob: salvation is effected "not by works but by him who calls (οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ' ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος)" (Rom 9:12; cf. 11a).⁹⁰ As Dunn correctly notes, "the allusion to Paul's earlier exposition of justification is again clear."⁹¹

Secondly, a later rabbinic tradition, citing Ps 55:4, discusses the access of the 'non-elect' proselytes (Jethro and Jahab) to Yahweh in comparison to 'elect' patriarchs (Abraham, Jacob and Moses):

Happy is the man whom God has chosen, even if He has not brought him near, and happy, too, is he whom God has brought near, even though He has not chosen him. Whom has he chosen? Abraham, Jacob and Moses. But none of these God brought near, for they brought themselves near. But Jethro and Jahab God brought near, though He had not chosen them. Happy are they for this very reason.⁹²

While God's gracious openness to Gentile proselytes is highlighted in this rabbinic text, the proselytes are clearly the 'non-elect' within the scheme of salvation history. For Paul, however, the Gentiles are

⁸⁹ 5 *Apoc. Syr. Pss.*

⁹⁰ Note the observation of E. E. Johnson ("Romans 9–11: The Faithfulness and Impartiality of God," in D. M. Hay and E. E. Johnson [eds.], *Pauline Theology. Volume III: Romans* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995] 223): "Ishmael's genetic relationship to Abraham and Esau's moral superiority to Jacob are irrelevant to their ultimate roles in the people of God: Ishmael was Abraham's firstborn, but Isaac was his heir; God determined to love Jacob before either he or Esau had done anything at all—and it was Jacob who was the scoundrel."

⁹¹ Dunn, *The Theology of Paul*, 510.

⁹² *Rab. Num. Naso*, 8.9. Cited in Montefiore and Loewe (eds.), *A Rabbinic Anthology*, 572.

at the very heart of God's electing process (Rom 9:22–33, esp. vv. 23–24, 30; cf. 11:11–12; cf. 4:11–17), citing as support Hos 2:23 (Rom 9:25) and 1:10 (Rom 9:29). In Paul's view, the only distinction between Jew and Gentile as far as divine election is one of historical priority (Rom 1:16; 11:17). In contrast to the rabbinic proselyte traditions, Paul argues that the circumcision of the heart is more significant than the circumcision of the flesh (Rom 2:28). Moreover, under the reign of electing grace, the *uncircumcised* Gentile believers already bear the sign of the new covenant in the gift of the Spirit (Rom 2:29; cf. Jer 31:33–34; Ezek 36:26; Joel 2:28).⁹³

Thirdly, Philo allegorizes the Genesis birth narrative of Jacob (*Leg. Gai.* 3.88; *Mut.* 81–82).⁹⁴ He focuses not on divine election but on the spiritual athlete's conquest of passion in the soul by the use of reason and through the practice of virtue.⁹⁵ By contrast, the writer of *Jubilees* (second century B.C.) ignores the Genesis election tradition surrounding Jacob's birth, construing the divine favour ultimately given to Jacob as the result of a dynastic struggle among the various members of Abraham's family.⁹⁶

Fourthly, Josephus—who shows much less interest in Jacob than the Old Testament⁹⁷—plays down the key election text regarding the birth of Jacob in the Genesis text. Instead of saying “the older will serve the younger” (Gen 25:23b; cf. Rom 9:12b), Josephus renders the Genesis text as “he who appeared the second should excel the younger.”⁹⁸ Feldman argues that given the Jewish identification of Esau with Rome from the late first century onwards, Josephus's Roman readers and imperial benefactors would have balked at any suggestion that Rome (Esau) would serve Israel (Jacob)—hence Josephus's

⁹³ D. J.-S. Chae (*Paul as Apostle to the Gentiles: His Apostolic Self-Awareness and Its Influence on the Soteriological Argument in Romans* [Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 1997] 127) observes: “In Judaism the exhortation to have, or promise of, circumcised hearts is exclusively given to and for the Jews . . . it is nowhere considered possible for the Gentiles to receive this blessing of ‘circumcision of the heart.’”

⁹⁴ The author of *4 Ezra* also allegorizes the birth of Jacob and Esau, casting Jacob as the new age and Esau as the present age (*4 Ezra* 6.7–10).

⁹⁵ For extended discussion of Jacob in Philo, see L. H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998) 306 n. 4. The Dead Sea scrolls offer no midrashic commentary on the Jacob birth narrative in Genesis (cf. 4Q252 5 [Blessings of Jacob: Gen 49.3]).

⁹⁶ *Jub.* 19.10–31.

⁹⁷ Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible*, 305.

⁹⁸ Josephus, *Ant.* 1.297.

more mollifying use of “should excel.”⁹⁹ The focus of divine election found in Gen 25:23b has been again compromised for ‘political correctness’ on Josephus’s part.

Thus, in comparison to his Jewish contemporaries and to later rabbinic tradition, Paul has heightened the election focus of Gen 25:19–26. He does not adopt the political correctness of a Josephus or the allegory of a Philo in discussing Jacob. He highlights the election of *uncircumcised* Gentiles into the people of God, bypassing the later rabbinic discussions about the admission of proselytes. He totally avoids any hint of synergism by the interpretative addition of the phrase οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων ἀλλ’ ἐκ τοῦ καλοῦντος (Rom 9:12a) that prefaces his citation of Gen 25:23b (Rom 9:12b). Strategically, the phrase also recalls his earlier exposition of justification by faith in Romans 3–4. The focus on God’s sovereign decision in regards to Jacob’s election—and that ultimately of the Christian community—is made even clearer by Paul’s bringing into discussion with Gen 25:23b the perspective of God’s predestinarian choice in Mal 1:2 (Rom 9:13).¹⁰⁰

Conversely, C. A. Evans speaks of Paul’s “subversive application of the sacred tradition” in Rom 9:11–18.¹⁰¹ The bypassing and sovereign hardening of various individuals (Ishmael: Rom 9:8; Esau: 9:13; Pharaoh: 9:17) spotlights God’s mercy towards the elect (Rom 9:15b, 18b) and his wrath towards the objects of destruction (Rom 9:22). As Evans observes, “the implication of these comparisons is that unbelieving Israelites theologically play the role of Ishmael, Esau, and Pharaoh.”¹⁰²

Paul’s doctrine of divine election, therefore, functions theologically in Romans 9 as a sophisticated theodicy.¹⁰³ As we have seen, 4 *Ezra*

⁹⁹ Feldman, *Josephus’s Interpretation of the Bible*, 333.

¹⁰⁰ Referring to Paul’s two Old Testament citations in Rom 9:12–13, F. Watson (*Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 2004] 20) comments: “The purpose of these citations is to trace the origin of the Christian community back to the double-edged electing act of God, as announced by God himself in Scripture.” Cranfield (*Romans Volume II*, 480) notes that Paul chose Mal 1:2 because it confirmed and expressed “more clearly and pointedly” the words of Gen 25:23.

¹⁰¹ C. A. Evans, “Paul and the Prophets: Prophetic Criticism in the Epistle to Romans (with special reference to Romans 9–11),” in S. K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (eds.), *Romans and the People of God* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 124.

¹⁰² Evans, “*Paul and the Prophets*,” 124. Note the rabbinic tradition (*b. Pes.* 56a) in which Jacob on his death-bed observes the Shechinah departing him and says: “Perhaps there is a blemish in my household, as Ishmael was to Abraham, and as Esau was to Isaac.” Cited in Montefiore and Loewe (eds.), *A Rabbinic Anthology*, 4.

¹⁰³ B. Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville: Michael Glazier/Liturgical Press, 1996) 289.

wrestles with his own theodicy about the fate of historical Israel in exile. The apostle defends God against two specific accusations: namely, the arbitrariness of his justice (Rom 3:5–9; 9:14, 19) and his unfaithfulness to the covenantal promises (Rom 3:3–4; 9:6; 11:1a). Regarding the second accusation, Paul argues—notwithstanding Israel’s persistent disobedience and unbelief (Rom 9:1–4; 9:30–10:4; 10:16–21; 11:7a, 7c–10, 17a, 21a, 25b)—that God continues to call out the Jews of remnant Israel who are chosen by grace (Rom 9:24, 27; 11:1–6, 7b, 13). As a manifestation of his eternal election (Rom 9:22–26), God also grafts believing Gentiles, the ‘wild olive,’ into the established olive tree (Rom 9:17b, 22a, 24a). This prompts Paul to unveil God’s eschatological plan for national Israel. The reigning Messiah will come from the heavenly Zion and turn away all godlessness from Jacob by saving ‘all Israel,’ whether representatively or collectively, in a glorious demonstration of divine grace (Rom 9:25–26).

With this final deft touch, Paul completes his two vignettes of ‘Jacob’ in Romans 9 and 11 and offers his theodicy of electing grace as the solution to the dark throes of human disobedience (Rom 1:18–3:20; 5:12–21; 8:20–21). In the present age God would continue to save ‘Jacob,’ or remnant Israel (Rom 9:6, 10–13), because of his electing grace; at the *eschaton* God would save ‘Jacob,’ or national Israel (Rom 11:26–27), because of the electing love of God and the messianic grace of the returning Lord (Rom 11:26, 28b). In face of the wonder of electing grace (Rom 8:28–30; 9:1–10:32), the only appropriate human response is a paean of praise to the God of infinite mercy (Rom 8:31–39; 11:33–36).

Finally, Paul’s theology of electing grace has important social and ecclesiastical consequences for Roman believers. The rising anti-Semitism among Roman intellectuals in the late 40’s to the late 50’s may well have impacted upon the attitudes of Gentile believers towards their Jewish brethren in Christ in the house churches at Rome, displayed in their disputes over dietary and calendar issues (Rom 14:1–15:13) and in the Gentile arrogance towards Jewish believers (Rom 11:16). The imperial rulers had also provoked the Jews at Jerusalem through rulers such as Caligula (Philo, *Leg. passim*; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.257–309; *War* 2.184–203) and had twice expelled the Jews from Rome in the first half of the first century (A.D. 19; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.83–84; A.D. 49; Acts 18:2). As noted, many Roman intellectuals were stereotyping the Jews in a manner that must have, to some extent, fuelled anti-Jewish sentiment among Roman citizens.

The tensions caused by Jewish nationalism in the 40's could only have stirred up further Roman animosity.¹⁰⁴

In Romans 9–11 Paul proclaims a theology of electing grace that ends all ethnic divisions (Rom 9:24) and unites Jew and Gentile in Christ (Rom 10:12). As the *telos* of salvation history (Rom 9:5; 10:4), Christ had become the incarnate servant of the Jews (Rom 15:8); and, as the risen Root of Jesse, he had also become the ruler and hope of the Gentile nations (Rom 15:12). Both Jews and Gentiles, as fallen sinners, were to find in the historical outworking of electing grace the experience of divine mercy (Rom 11:28–32).

However, in this process of equalization of access to God, God had not rejected his original covenantal people (Rom 11:1–2). He continues to offer national Israel his covenantal blessings by virtue of their prior elect status (Rom 1:16; 9:3–5, 22a; 10:21; 11:28–29), notwithstanding the tragedy of their present stumbling. Elect Jews, as part of remnant Israel, were still coming to faith by divine grace (Rom 9:6, 27; 11:1–7, 13–14). Israel had only experienced a hardening ‘in part’ until the full number of Gentiles had come in (Rom 9:25b) and the promise of her eschatological reconciliation still lay ahead (Rom 11:25–26). In light of God’s eternal election, therefore, there is no room for anti-Semitism within God’s church or for judgmental attitudes between Jewish and Gentile believers. Grace had changed everything.

5. *Electing Grace in Its Imperial Context in Romans 9–11*

It is a curiosity of New Testament scholarship that J. Rufus Fears’s excellent book on the divine election of the imperial rulers has not yet been brought into discussion with Paul’s symbolic universe of Romans 9–11.¹⁰⁵ The Augustan eschatology promulgated in the honorific inscriptions of the Greek East was spread in the Latin West through the court propaganda of the imperial poets (Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Propertius) and by means of the calendar of the Julian year. The legends of the imperial coinage, the famous Priene inscription,

¹⁰⁴ On Jewish nationalism from the late 40’s–60’s, see J. R. Harrison, “Why did Josephus and Paul Refuse to Circumcise?” *Pacifica* 17/2 (2004): 121–58.

¹⁰⁵ Fears, *The Divine Election of the Emperor*. In my own case, I only came across Fears’s book after the publication of *Paul’s Language of Grace*.

and the statuary at the villa of Livia at Prima Porta also contributed powerfully to the aura of Augustus as the ‘providential’ ruler of all Roman history.¹⁰⁶ It is worth remembering that the Roman believers lived in the capital where the imperial ruler and his household lived. Even if Paul was not using a ‘hidden transcript’ to demote the elect status of the Roman ruler in Romans 9–11,¹⁰⁷ his Gentile converts probably drew their own conclusions about the superiority of the electing God anyway. God had established a counter-imperial household (Rom 8:14–16, 19; 9:8b, 26) through the covenantal fatherhood of Abraham and Isaac (Rom 4:12, 16–17; 8:15; 9:10).

More likely, Paul is working on several theological fronts in Romans 9–11 as he articulates his theology of electing grace. He strips away the ethnocentrism of the covenant theology of Second Temple Judaism so that Jewish and Gentile believers might understand their unity in Christ (Rom 10:12) and act non-judgementally towards each other in a city that had become increasingly anti-Semitic among its intelligentsia (Rom 11:17–21; 14:1–15:13). He interacts with ‘merit-based’ theologies that undermine the priority of electing grace, whether through the Judaism represented by Sirach (§4b and c), or by the status-riddled operations of the Graeco-Roman reciprocity system (Rom 11:35; 13:8–10).¹⁰⁸ He helps Gentile converts to understand their privileged place in salvation history (Rom 11:17–21) and enables established Jewish Christians, distressed by the impenitence of their Jewish brethren (Rom 9:1–5; 10:1–2, 16–21), to find comfort in God’s electing work in the life of national Israel, both in the present and at the eschaton (Rom 11:1–6, 11–16, 23–32).

But Paul is also engaging the imperial gospel of divine election that had held the East and the West enthralled for eight decades by the time he was writing Romans. In constructing an alternate symbolic universe based around divine election in Romans 9–11, Paul deconstructs the mythological universe of the ruler and thereby helps his auditors to discern the ruler’s real status: that is, clay in the potter’s hands (Rom 9:14–21) and a servant appointed by God (Rom 13:4). Given the potential for the ruler to wield the sword as

¹⁰⁶ On imperial eschatology, see J. R. Harrison, “Paul, Eschatology and the Augustan Age of Grace,” *TynBul* 50.1 (1999): 79–91.

¹⁰⁷ On the importance of James C. Scott’s “hidden transcripts” to New Testament studies, see R. A. Horsley (ed.), *Hidden Transcripts and the Arts of Resistance: Applying the Work of James C. Scott*, in *Semeia Studies* 48 (Atlanta: SBL, 2004).

¹⁰⁸ On reciprocity and divine grace, see Harrison, *Paul’s Language of Grace*, *passim*.

much in persecution as in the maintenance of civil authority (Rom 8:35; 13:4), Roman believers needed a balanced appraisal of imperial rule. What do we learn about the divine election of Augustus and his heirs from the literary, documentary, numismatic, and archaeological evidence? How does Romans 9–11 respond to it?

First, as regards the literary evidence, Vitruvius presents the gods congregating in heaven and deciding to apotheosize Julius Ceasar as an immortal and to delegate his *imperium* to his adopted son, Augustus.¹⁰⁹ The evidence of Virgil, however, spells out in greater detail the relationship between the elect emperor and the gods. In an extended speech, Jupiter explains that Augustus has been chosen by himself to establish a universal empire that would usher in the golden age:

From this noble stock there will be born a Trojan Caesar to bound his empire by Oceanus at the limits of the world, and his fame by the stars. He will be called Julius, a name passed down to him from the great Julius. In a time to come, have no fear, you will receive him in the sky, laden with the spoils of the East. He too will be called on in prayer.¹¹⁰

Fears sums up the significance of the text above succinctly: “Long before the foundation of Rome, before Aeneas had ever reached Italy, Augustus had been chosen by Jupiter.”¹¹¹ In a similar passage in Book 6, Virgil speaks of the imminent eschatological fulfilment of Jupiter’s prophecy with the coming of Augustus to establish his empire:

Here is Caesar, and all the sons of Julius about to come under the great vault of the sky. Here is a man whose coming you so often hear prophesied, here he is, Augustus Caesar, son of a god, the man who will bring back the golden years to the fields of Latium once ruled over by Saturn, and extend Rome’s empire beyond the Indians and the Garamantes to a land beyond the stars, beyond the yearly path of the sun, where Atlas holds on his shoulder the sky all studded with burning stars and turns it on its axis. The kingdoms around the Caspian Sea and Lake Maeotis are even now quaking at the prophecies of his coming.¹¹²

¹⁰⁹ Vitruvius, *Nem.* 4.65. In the discussion of the literary evidence below, I draw upon the excellent discussion of Fears, *The Divine Election of the Emperor*, 121–29.

¹¹⁰ Virgil, *Aen.* 1.286–291.

¹¹¹ Fears, *The Divine Election of the Emperor*, 124.

¹¹² Virgil, *Aen.* 6.789–799.

The decisive blow for Augustus in establishing his eschatological rule is recounted from a divine perspective. His famous naval victory at Actium over Antony and Cleopatra (31 B.C.) is achieved with the help of the Roman gods standing on the stern of his ship. A double flame emanates from Augustus's brow and his father's star dawns above his head.¹¹³ Virgil's portrait of Augustus as the elect one is reinforced when the gods (Neptune, Venus, Minerva, Apollo) fight at Augustus's side and help him to defeat the Egyptian forces with their loathsome gods and commanders.¹¹⁴ We are left in no doubt, therefore, that Augustus's election and the help given him by the gods proves the truth of Jupiter's prophecies a millennium ago. Propertius presents a similar scene regarding Augustus's victory at Actium, with Phoebus in that case delivering the divine help (*Elegies* 4.37–68).¹¹⁵

By contrast, Ovid concludes his *Metamorphoses* by demonstrating that the fame of Augustus had now surpassed the fame of his father, Julius Caesar. In an impassioned prayer, Ovid invokes all the gods (including Vesta, Apollo, Jupiter) and depicts Augustus as Jupiter's vice regent on earth:

Jupiter controls the heights of heaven and the kingdoms of the tri-formed universe; but the earth is under Augustus' sway. Each is both father and ruler (*pater et rector*). O gods. I pray you, . . . far distant be that day and later than our own time when Augustus, abandoning the world he rules, shall mount to heaven and there, removed from our presence, listen to our prayers.¹¹⁶

Velleius Paterculus climaxes his *History of Rome* with a similar prayer for Augustus's successor, his adopted son Tiberius.¹¹⁷

Horace, too, reiterates the theme of Augustus's vice regency under Jupiter ("with Caesar next in power . . . second to thee alone").¹¹⁸ As

¹¹³ Virgil, *Aen.* 8.678–681. For a discussion of the literary and numismatic evidence relating to the *sidus Iulium*, see Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 230 n. 72, 232–33 n. 81.

¹¹⁴ Virgil, *Aen.* 8.698–713.

¹¹⁵ Horace (*Carm.* 4.2.41–56) gives thanks to the gods for Augustus's safe return to Rome.

¹¹⁶ Ovid, *Met.* 858–861, 868–870. Horace (*Carm.* 1.2.41–52) presents a scenario to Ovid, emphasizing that Augustus was "father and *princeps*" (*pater atque princeps*). On Paul and the imperial apotheosis traditions, see J. R. Harrison, "Paul and the Imperial Gospel at Thessaloniki," *JST* 25.1 (2002): 71–96.

¹¹⁷ Velleius Paterculus, *History of Rome* 2.136.1–2.

¹¹⁸ Horace, *Carm.* 1.12.49–60.

he pithily comments, “We believe that Jove is king in heaven because we hear his thunders peal; Augustus shall be deemed a god on earth for adding to our empire the Britons and the dread Parthians.”¹¹⁹

Secondly, as regards the documentary evidence, the fragments of twenty calendars on stone in Italian towns during the Julio-Claudian era provide us evidence regarding the divine protection of Augustus throughout his reign. The entry for 15 December 19 B.C. highlights the role that Fortuna Redux had in returning Augustus safely from the provinces: “On this day the altar of Fortuna Redux was dedicated, she having brought Caesar Augustus home from the overseas provinces: *supplicatio* to Fortuna Redux.”¹²⁰

Similarly, the famous Priene inscription refers to the role that Providence had in providing Augustus as the unsurpassed benefactor of the world:

[S]ince Providence (ἡ πρόνοια), which has divinely (θείως) disposed our lives, having employed zeal and ardour, has arranged the most perfect (culmination) for life (τὸ τεληότατον τῷ βίῳ) by producing Augustus, whom for the benefit of mankind she has filled with excellence (ἐπλήρωσεν ἀρετῆς), as [if she had granted him as a saviour (σωτήρα χαρισσαμένη)] for us and our descendants, (a saviour) who brought war to an end and set [all things] in peaceful order; [and (since) with his appearance (ἐπιφανείς)] Caesar exceeded the hopes of all those who had received [glad tidings (εὐανγέλια)] before us, not only surpassing those who had been [benefactors] before him, but not even [leaving any] hope [of surpassing him] for those who are to come in the future; and (since) the beginning of glad tidings (εὐανγγελίων) on his account for the world was [the birthday] of the god . . .¹²¹

Thirdly, as regards the archaeological evidence, we briefly refer to the famous statue of Augustus at the Villa of Livia at Prima Porta. On the cuirass of the statue, which celebrates Augustus’s victory over

¹¹⁹ Horace, *Carm.* 3.5.1–4.

¹²⁰ V. Ehrenberg and A. H. M. Jones, *Documents Illustrating the Reigns of Augustus and Tiberius* (2d ed.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976) 55. Augustus (*Res Gestae* 11) refers to the establishment of the altar of Fortuna Redux at Porta Capena. The legends (FORT RED / FORTVN REDV) on Augustan coins commemorates the event as well (C. H. V. Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage. Volume 1 Revised Edition* [London: Spink, 1984] 45 nos. 53a, 55, 56).

¹²¹ Ehrenberg and Jones, *Documents*, §98b (*ll.* 32–41; Priene: 9 B.C.). *BMI* 894 (Halicarnassus: 2 B.C.) speaks of Augustus’s providential role thus: “in whom Providence has not only fulfilled but even surpassed the prayers of all men.” A coin of Tiberius has *Providentia* as its legend (Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, 99 no. 80 [PROVIDENT]). Note how Velleius Paterculus depicts Augustus in providential terms (*History of Rome* 2.89.2).

the Parthians, we see in the centre a Parthian looking up submissively at the Roman eagle. Before this central scene reclines Mother Earth, with Apollo and Diana riding nearby their cult animals (respectively, griffins and hinds). Above the central scene the astral deities (Sol ['Sun'], Luna ['Moon'], Caelus ['Sky'], Dawn) are all busy with their cosmic tasks. P. Zanker sums up the significance of the scene in this way: "The princeps who wears this image of victory on his breastplate becomes the representative of divine providence and the will of the gods."¹²²

What relevance does this material have for Paul's doctrine of electing grace in Romans 9–11? First, we have seen that the Roman idea of Providence producing Augustus as "the most perfect (culmination) for life (τὸ τελειότατον τῶι βίῳ)" is countered by the establishment of Jesus as the *telos* of salvation history (Rom 10:4: τέλος νόμου). Over against the 'realized eschatology' of the imperial gospel, Paul heralds the eschatological return of the Messiah from Zion to redeem his elect (Rom 11:26–27).

Secondly, whereas Augustus is the 'Father of the Country' (n. 116 *supra*: *pater et rector; pater atque princeps*), God has established his own counter-imperial family who by faith have Abraham and Isaac as their fathers (Rom 4:12, 16–17; 9:10).¹²³ Those who have entered this new family have the privilege of calling God 'Abba, Father'—Jesus' intimate address of God (Mark 14:36)—through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:15) and by experiencing his new community into which they, as God's elect (Rom 8:29–30; 9:6–13), are incorporated by grace (Rom 10:12; 11:5 [κατ' ἐκλογὴν χάριτος]; 11:6 [χάριτι οὐκέτι ἐξ ἔργων]). Whereas only the divinely elected Augustus embodies excellence in the imperial gospel (ἀρετή), the process is

¹²² P. Zanker, *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1990) 192.

¹²³ The title was bestowed on Augustus on 5 February 2 B.C. (*Res Gestae* 35; cf. Suetonius, *Aug.* 58). On 'Father' in its imperial context, see E. M. Lassen, "The Use of the Father Image in Imperial Propaganda and 1 Corinthians 4:14–21," *TynBul* 42.1 (1991) 127–36, esp. 129–33; M. R. D'Angelo, "Abba and 'Father': Imperial Theology and the Jesus Traditions," *JBL* 111.4 (1992) 611–30, esp. 623–26; T. R. Stevenson, "The Ideal Benefactor and the Father Analogy in Greek and Roman Thought," *CQ* 42.2 (1992) 421–36; J. R. Hollingshead, *The Household of Caesar and the Body of Christ: A Political Interpretation of the Letters of Paul* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1998) 136–37; J. L. White, *The Apostle of God* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999) 139–72. For Augustan numismatic occurrences of *pater patriae*, see Sutherland, *The Roman Imperial Coinage*, 55 (No. 203), 56 (No. 218), 57 (No. 230[ii]1).

democratized in Paul's thought with the 'called' being justified and glorified in advance of the eschaton (Rom 8:30: ἐδικαίωσεν καὶ ἐδόξασεν; 10:4b).

Moreover, the experience of grace is democratized in Paul's gospel, while in the Priene inscription Providence restricts its expression of grace to Augustus alone (σωτήρα χαρισαμένη). Grace, paradoxically, could only decline after the epiphany of Augustus because no benefactor afterwards, as the inscription notes, could ever compete again on such a large scale. For Paul, the overflowing grace of Christ continued to overflow into the international community of benefactors he established (Rom 5:17, 20; 2 Cor 4:15; 8:7; 9:8).¹²⁴

Thirdly, and last, Paul downgrades Augustus's 'Jupiter-like' status and his priestly role in the Roman cult (*Res Gestae* 7, 10) by demonstrating Jesus' superior prophetic credentials (Rom 1:2–4; 16:25–27), his eternal deity and cosmic rule (Rom 8:18–21; 9:5; 15:13), his triumph over death and sin (Rom 5:12–6:10), and his continual intercession for his dependants before his Father in heaven (Rom 8:34). Seen against the backdrop of Augustus's divine election, therefore, Paul's theology of electing grace dismantles the inflated claims of the imperial cult.

6. Conclusion

This paper sought to explore the role of divine grace in systematic and biblical theology, with a view to assessing the contribution that historical methodology, if applied to Paul's theology of electing grace, might make to each discipline. Not only have the systematic and biblical disciplines locked Paul's dynamic understanding of grace into abstract ideological categories, the interest of post-Reformation theologians in divine grace—notwithstanding important exceptions (e.g. Barth, Bonhoeffer, Dunn, Oden, Schreiner, Thielman)—has dwindled at the very same time that historical studies on grace have started to expand.

Without the benefit that historical studies bring to Pauline exegesis and theology, systematic and biblical theologians have traditionally caricatured Second Temple Judaism as Torah and works-based.

¹²⁴ Harrison, *Paul's Language of Grace*, 226–27.

We have emphasized the diversely coloured tapestry of grace in first-century Judaism that has emerged from recent historical studies, and our study of Paul's interaction with the patriarchal traditions of electing grace in Rom 9:6–13 highlights the contribution that historical methodology can make to traditional theological disciplines. Moreover, theologians have failed to realize the impact that Paul's theology of electing grace would have had upon the honour-driven networks of first-century social relations, inside and outside of the house churches. Such historical studies, if brought into conjunction with the traditional theological disciplines, would free Paul's understanding of divine grace to speak to our culture anew once again. As Thomas Oden observes,

In an era of performance-oriented religion, the rediscovery of grace presents a profoundly subtle challenge. Teaching a religionist grace is like teaching a workaholic to relax. In a fast-paced, lonely culture of self-congratulatory striving, the Good News of Grace is like a fresh breeze of relief.¹²⁵

Finally, in our study of the role of electing grace in Romans 9–11, we have also unearthed the political implications that Paul's gospel would have had for the early Christians as they struggled to grapple with the sycophantic veneration of the imperial rulers as 'divinely elect' benefactors. The εὐαγγέλιον of electing grace had triumphed over the Pharaohs of the past (Rom 10:6–18) and would do so again over the Julio-Claudian lords of grace and their εὐαγγέλια of election by Providence. Instead of being an 'axiom' that provided coherence for the apostle's thought, therefore, electing grace had become for Paul a dynamic power—soteriological, social and political—that energized and unified his rich and diverse theology around the covenantal God who had revealed himself in the impoverished Lord of Calvary.

¹²⁵ Oden, *The Transforming Power of Grace*, 17.

PAUL, THE LAW AND THE SPIRIT

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Introduction

The purpose of this essay is to explore the apostle Paul's teaching concerning the relationship between the Mosaic law and the Spirit of God following the coming of Christ. However, lest we fall into the trap of assuming that Paul's emphasis upon the role of the Spirit indicates a wholly negative attitude on his part towards the law, it is necessary to document briefly the many facets of the apostle's teaching about the law, noting both its positive and negative aspects.

Paul taught that the possession of the law was one of the great privileges of the Jews (Rom 2:17–20; 9:4–5). It was introduced for a limited period of time only—from Moses to Christ (Rom 7:1–4; 9:4; 10:4; 2 Cor 3:11; Eph 2:14–16) and one of its functions was to make sin known (Rom 7:7). While the law is holy, just, good and spiritual (Rom 7:12–14), it became the unwilling ally of sin thus compounding human slavery to sin (Rom 7:9–11; 1 Cor 15:56). It cannot give life (Gal 3:21–22)—in fact it brings condemnation and death (2 Cor 3:7, 9). It does not annul the promise God gave to Abraham (Gal 3:15–18), nor is it contrary to that promise (Gal 3:21–22). The law functions as a witness to the gospel of Christ (Rom 3:21; 4:1–25; 10:5–8; 2 Cor 3:14–15). One of its purposes was to restrain sin until the coming of Christ (Gal 3:23–24; 4:1–5), and thereafter it has no further role as a regulatory norm for those who believe in him (Gal 2:15–21).

Nevertheless, Paul has a lot to say about the law and the believer. He emphasizes strongly that believers are free from the law as a regulatory norm (Rom 6:14; 7:1, 5–6; 1 Cor 9:20–21; 2 Cor 11:24; Gal 2:3–5, 11–14; 3:23–4:5; 5:1, 18; Col 2:16–17), and that they need to stand fast in this freedom (Gal 5:1) so as to bear fruit for God (Rom 7:4–6). Gentiles who place themselves under the law fall from grace and become alienated from Christ (Gal 5:2–4). Paul used the law to instruct believers, especially in regard to its testimony to

the gospel (Rom 1:2; 3:21; Gal 3:6, 8, 16; 4:21, 30), and as a guide for Christian living when read paradigmatically in the light of Christ (1 Cor 5:6–8; 9:8–12, 13–14; 10:1–11; 11:7–10; 14:20–25, 34–35; 2 Cor 6:14–7:1; 8:13–15; 1 Tim 5:17–18; 2 Tim 3:14–17). The apostle expected the law to find fulfilment in the lives of believers (Rom 8:3–4) as they observed the law of Christ (Rom 13:8–10; Gal 5:14; 6:2). He also expected those who understood their freedom from the law (especially Gentile believers) to respect the convictions of those who did not understand that freedom (usually Jewish believers) (Rom 14:1–6), and even to forego their own freedom so as to enhance evangelistic efforts among Jewish people (Rom 14:13–18).¹

Whilst the apostle Paul had many positive things to say about the law, nevertheless, a very significant change took place in his understanding of its role with the advent of Christ, his death, resurrection and sending of the Holy Spirit. We will keep an eye out for the impact of the coming of the Spirit upon Paul's understanding of the role of the law as we examine those passages in the Pauline corpus where the law and the Spirit are brought together by the apostle.² These can be conveniently grouped under the following headings.

The Role of the Law and the Spirit Contrasted

In 2 Cor 3:7–11, there is an implied contrast between the role of the law in ministry under the old covenant and the role of the Spirit in ministry under the new covenant:

Now if the ministry of death, chiseled in letters on stone tablets, came in glory so that the people of Israel could not gaze at Moses' face because of the glory of his face, a glory now set aside, how much more will the ministry of the Spirit come in glory? For if there was glory in the ministry of condemnation, much more does the ministry of justification abound in glory! Indeed, what once had glory has lost its glory because of the greater glory; for if what was set aside came through glory, much more has the permanent come in glory!

¹ For a more detailed treatment of Paul's attitude to the law, see Colin G. Kruse, *Paul, the Law and Justification* (Leicester: Apollos, 1996), especially the summaries on pages 107–109, 112–14, 144–46, 158–60, 240, 242–43, 247–49, 271–72.

² Unless otherwise indicated all Scripture quotations are taken from the NRSV.

This passage is part of a longer section, 2 Cor 3:7–18, in which Paul seeks to neutralize any residual doubts his readers may have had about him, and also to carry the attack to the “false apostles” already present and voicing their criticisms of him in Corinth during the period of the crisis reflected in 2 Corinthians 1–7.³ The view that 2 Cor 3:7–18 does have such a polemic purpose has been supported by several modern commentators.⁴ Our passage is an exposition of Exod 34:29–32 (which tells of the glory that attended the giving of the law, a glory reflected in the shining face of Moses that struck fear into the hearts of the Israelites). Paul recognizes that the old covenant was accompanied by splendour, but using a rabbinic method of exegesis (from the lesser to the greater) he argues that the new covenant is accompanied by far greater splendour. The superiority of new covenant ministry is argued on three counts. The ministry of the Spirit is more splendid than the ministry of death, the ministry of justification is more splendid than that of condemnation, and the permanent ministry is more splendid than one that has been set aside.⁵

³ Cf. Colin G. Kruse, “The Relationship between the Opposition to Paul Reflected in 2 Corinthians 1–7 and 10–13,” *EvQ* 61 (1989): 195–202, esp. 199–202.

⁴ So, e.g., Dieter Georgi, *The Opponents of Paul in Second Corinthians* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 254, 260–61; William J. Dalton, “Is the Old Covenant Abrogated (2 Cor 3.14)?” *ABR* 35 (1987): 84–94, esp. 90–91. Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; New York: Doubleday, 1984) 225, recognizes that polemic concerns surface in 2 Cor 2:17; 3:1, 7–18 and 4:1–2, but argues that 2 Cor 3:7–18 is not fundamentally polemic. Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Waco, Tex.: Word, 1986) 66, speaks of a polemic undertone.

⁵ E. P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (London: SCM Press, 1985) 139, notes that the neuter participle καταργούμενον (“set aside”) in 3:11 refers to the law itself, not the glory with which it came (which would require a feminine participle). The temporary nature of the law has been the subject of some discussion in recent periodical literature. Peter von der Osten-Sacken, “Geist im Buchstaben: Vom Glanz des Mose und des Paulus,” *EvT* 41 (1981): 230–35, claims: “Nicht nur wohnt dem Dienst des Mose Doxa inne, es ist mit dieser Doxa auch nach Paulus noch keineswegs vorbei; ‘sie wird beseitigt’—viermal verwendet Paulus präsentische Formen, kein einziges Mal solche des Präteritium (vv. 7, 11, 13, 14)—nicht etwa, dass sie beseitigt worden wäre” (p. 231). While Osten-Sacken’s observations about the use of the present tense are correct, he appears to overlook the fact that Paul could have been speaking of a glory which had not yet faded only because he was presenting the situation as it appeared in Moses’ day, not as it had become following the Christ event. Dalton, “Is the Old Covenant Abrogated?” 90–91, says that the old covenant is still in force, arguing that Paul believed “the transitory nature of Moses’ glory is a sign of the passing relationship of the Law *with Gentiles*” (italics added). He appeals to Rom 9–11 (esp. 11:25–32) as evidence that the old covenant is still in force for Israel. However, Rom 11:25–32 does not say that the old covenant is still in force, but that God’s gift and calling in respect of Israel are

The primary instrument of the ministry of the old covenant was the law—chiselled in letters on stone tablets (2 Cor 3:7)—and in this passage Paul implies that it is the law that condemns and kills, and though attended with glory when given on Sinai, its role was temporary. The primary instrument of the ministry of the new covenant is the Spirit, and Paul implies the Spirit gives life.⁶

Paul describes the law “carved in letters on stone” as “the ministry of death.” This is best understood in the light of Rom 7:10 where the apostle says, “the very commandment which promised life, proved to be death to me.” Although Lev 18:5 may promise life to those who keep the law, Paul knew that no one does so in fact, and that the law pronounces the verdict of death over the transgressor. Unlike the law “chiseled in letters on stone tablets” that could not enable a person to fulfil its own demands, the Spirit given under the new covenant enlivens people and causes them to walk in the way of God’s commandments (cf. Ezek 36:27).

irrevocable. This means that God’s promises to them will be honoured if they do not persist in their unbelief (11:23). Unbelief in this context must be understood to mean rejection of the gospel, which indicates that even the Jews must now relate to God under the terms of the new covenant. Morna D. Hooker, “Beyond the Things that are Written? St Paul’s Use of Scripture,” *NTS* 27 (1981): 295–309, esp. 304, argues that the law was temporary in so far as its offer of life to those who fulfil its demands has been superseded with the coming of Christ, but that the law is abiding in so far as it is a witness to Christ. This seems to be a satisfactory approach, giving due weight to the various nuances of the text itself. However, it should be added that the law has an ongoing role in ethical instruction as long as it is read paradigmatically in the light of Christ.

⁶ Randal C. Gleason, “Paul’s Covenantal Contrasts in 2 Corinthians 3:1–11,” *BibSac* 154 (1997): 61–79, esp. 70–76, notes five interpretations of the *γράμμα/πνεῦμα* contrast: literal and spiritual senses of Scripture; the text written and the Spirit as interpreter; the legalistic misuse of the law and the Holy Spirit; outward conformity versus inward obedience to the Mosaic law; and the old covenant and the new covenant. Gleason opts for the last of these as the correct one. Karl Kertelge, “Letter and Spirit in 2 Corinthians 3,” in James D. G. Dunn (ed.), *Paul and the Mosaic Law* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 117–30, comments: “We cannot simply understand the antithesis of letter and spirit in 3:6 in terms of two opposing and exclusive orders of salvation. Instead, they point to the life-giving power of the Spirit at work in the gospel, which overcomes the death-dealing power of the law. The demonstration of the Spirit in the gospel erases the death-dealing power of the law, but not the (Mosaic) law as such. This law finds its new expression as the ‘law of Christ’ (Gal 6:2) which is binding on Christians” (p. 128). Michael Winger, “The Law of Christ,” *NTS* 46 (2000): 537–46, suggests that the law of Christ refers “to the way Christ exercises his lordship over those called by him,” and this means that “it is necessary for those who are ‘of Christ’ (5.25) to live in a way that is organised by the Spirit” (p. 544).

Redeemed from the Curse of the Law to Receive the Gift of the Spirit

Two passages in Galatians speak of the need for the redemption of Jewish people from under the law and its curse so that they may receive the gift of the Spirit:

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith (Gal 3:13–14).

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, in order to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as children. And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” (Gal 4:4–6).

Galatians 4:4–6 speaks in general terms of the need of redemption for those “under the law” (i.e. Jews), but Gal 3:13–14 is more specific speaking of the need for redemption from the “curse” of the law. In this case the apostle clearly connects redemption from the curse of the law and the reception of the Spirit.

“The curse of the law” brings to mind immediately the blessings and curses attaching to YHWH’s covenant with Israel. In Deut 11:26–28 Moses says to Israel: “See, I am setting before you today a blessing and a curse: the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God that I am commanding you today; and the curse, if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn from the way that I am commanding you today, to follow other gods that you have not known.” The curses that would befall a disloyal and disobedient Israel are described in detail in Deut 28:15–68, and they include suffering God’s curse in city and field, in basket and kneading bowl, in the fruit of the womb and of the ground, and of cattle and flocks. In addition Israel would experience panic and destruction, pestilence, diseases, blight and mildew, drought, defeat at the hand of their enemies, blindness and confusion of mind. They would plant vineyards and olive trees but not enjoy their produce. Others would eat the fruit of their vineyards, seize their cattle and flocks, and lie with their women. Aliens living among them would dominate them. A nation from far away would descend upon them, consuming their produce and livestock, besieging their towns with all the attendant horrors—they would be reduced

to cannibalism. The Lord would bring upon them maladies and afflictions until they were destroyed. And though they were once as numerous as the stars of heaven they would be left few in number. Israel would be taken into exile and serve other kings and other gods.

The ultimate expression of the curse was exile, a fate suffered by the northern kingdom of Israel at the hands of the Assyrians in the eighth century B.C., and by the southern kingdom of Judah at the hands of the Babylonians in the sixth century B.C. The question this raises is whether Paul thought of the curse of the law in terms of exile, or, as been suggested, in terms of Israel's subjection to Roman occupying forces. Was the occupation a sign that Israel was still suffering the curse of the law? And if so, did Paul understand the death of Christ as effecting Israel's redemption from the curse, so that God's blessings promised long ago to Abraham might now flow to Israel and then on to the Gentiles, blessings Paul understood to include reception of the promised Holy Spirit?⁷ There is a certain logic to this approach, but it is problematic because Paul never speaks of Roman occupation as the result of the curse of God because of Israel's sin (and neither did Jesus). Nor does he speak of redemption as release from the Roman occupation. When Christ became a curse for us he did so by enduring death upon the cross, suffering there the divine wrath towards human sin. That he did this "for us" indicates that the curse of the law from which "we" need redemption involved experiencing that same wrath ourselves.

In Gal 3:13-14 and 4:4-6, then, Paul says that God redeemed those under the law (Jews) from the curse of the law (exposure to God's wrath) with the result that when Jews believe in God's Son they would be adopted as God's children, and receive the promise

⁷ N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991) 140-54, argues that the curse of the law is to be understood in terms of Israel's ongoing exile. "Deuteronomy 27-30," he says, "is all about exile and restoration, *understood as covenant judgment and covenant renewal.*" On the basis of "many sources" in the Qumran documents (e.g. CD 1.5-8), he argues that some first-century Jews at least believed the exile still continued, and "as long as Pilate and Herod were in charge of Palestine, Israel was still under the curse of Deuteronomy 29." Wright asserts that Gal 1:4 (Paul's reference to "the present evil age") is enough to show that Paul thought in this way. Mark A. Seifrid, "Blind Alleys in the Controversy over the Paul of History," *TynBul* 45 (1994): 73-95, esp. 86-89, draws attention to several Jewish texts which indicate there was a range of views concerning the status of Israel, and not all of these reflect the view that all Israel was still in exile.

of the Spirit.⁸ The promise came first to the Jews (on the day of Pentecost), and then to the Gentiles as the gospel was taken to them.⁹

The Spirit Experienced Independently of Obedience to the Law

The apostle Paul insisted not only that the Jews had to be redeemed from the curse of the law so that they might receive the promise of the Spirit and so that this promise might extend to the Gentiles, he also insisted that the Gentiles received the Spirit without performing works of the law. In Gal 3:1–5 he says:

You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly exhibited as crucified! The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish? Having started with the Spirit, are you now ending with the flesh? Did you experience so much for nothing?—if it really was for nothing. Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

This passage is part of Paul's extended argument that Gentile believers are accepted as Abraham's children, true members of the people of God, and justified by faith without works of the law just as Abraham was. In Gal 3:1–5 Paul supports this argument by appeal to the Galatians' experience of the Spirit. He asks the Galatians five questions to make his point, and two of these are pertinent to our study. First, he asks: "The only thing I want to learn from you is this: Did you receive the Spirit by doing the works of the law or by believing what you heard (ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως)."¹⁰ In this context,

⁸ While many modern commentators take the "we" who are redeemed to be inclusive (Jews and Gentiles), there are a number who argue, rightly in my view, for the exclusive option (Jews), so e.g. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Exeter: Paternoster, 1980) 193; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1990) 164; T. L. Donaldson, "The 'Curse of the Law' and the Inclusion of the Gentiles: Galatians 3.13–14," *NTS* 32 (1986): 94–112, esp. 95–99.

⁹ Cf. e.g. Acts 10:44–46; 11:15–18.

¹⁰ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως has usually been construed by commentators to mean "by faith in what was heard," i.e. the gospel (so e.g. Heinrich Schlier, *Der Brief an die Galater* [KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1962] 122; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1977) 482–83; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in*

to ask whether they had received the Spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith was tantamount to asking whether they had been justified by works of law or by the hearing of faith. The expected answer was, of course, we received the Spirit “by believing what was heard,” and the corollary being our justification is also independent of our doing works prescribed by the law. Underlying Paul’s argument here is the assumption that the initial reception of the Spirit by Gentile believers was independent of their doing works prescribed by the law.

Secondly, Paul asks: “Well then, does God supply you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?” (Gal 3:5). The reference to the supplying of the Spirit (by God) is probably an allusion to the Galatians’ conversion when they received the Spirit initially, and the reference to the working of miracles (by God) is probably a reference to the ongoing work of the Spirit among them. If this is the case, this question picks up the two different aspects of the Galatians’ experience of the Spirit (the initial and the ongoing). What Paul is stressing is that neither the initial experience of the Spirit nor his ongoing activity among believers is dependent upon their doing the works of the law.¹¹

Freed from the Law to Serve in the New Way of the Spirit

One striking thing Paul says about the law is that people need to be freed from its demands so that they might walk in the Spirit and bear fruit for God. The most important text in this regard is Rom 7:4–6:

Galatia [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979] 133; Bruce, *Galatians*, 149; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 102–103). Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ. An Interpretation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1–4:11* (SBLDS 56; Chico, Ca.: Scholars Press, 1983) 143–49, esp. 197–98, prefers to interpret ἀκοή πίστεως as the proclaimed message that evokes faith. However, Sam K. Williams, “The Hearing of Faith: ἀκοή πίστεως in Galatians 3,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 82–93, suggests that “the hearing of faith” means “the hearing which Christians call faith” (p. 90). This was essentially how J. B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Macmillan, 1902) 135, preferred to read it as well. G. Walter Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians: Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts* (JSNTSup 29; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989) 110–11, argues for “hearing with faith,” by which he means the human activity of believing. This, he argues, is supported by the inferences Paul draws in Gal 3:7 from his citation of Gen 15:6 in Gal 3:6.

¹¹ Cf. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 105–106.

In the same way, my friends, you have died to the law through the body of Christ, so that you may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that we may bear fruit for God. While we were living in the flesh, our sinful passions, aroused by the law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death. But now we are discharged from the law, dead to that which held us captive, so that we are slaves not under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit.

Romans 7:4–6 is part of a longer passage Rom 7:1–6 that foreshadows what will be argued in more detail in Rom 7:7–8:13, and accordingly its programmatic nature has been noted by a number of scholars.¹² In particular, Rom 7:5 foreshadows Rom 7:7–25 where life in the flesh and under the law is depicted, and Rom 7:6 foreshadows Rom 8:1–13 where freedom and service in “the new life of the Spirit” is explained.¹³

Paul addresses “those who know the law” (Rom 7:1),¹⁴ reminding them that “the law is binding on a person only during that person’s lifetime.” He reinforces his reminder with an analogy based upon marriage law (Rom 7:2–4), arguing that just as the death of a husband discharges his widow from any obligation to observe the law that bound her to him, so likewise the death of Christ discharges believers from their obligation to obey the law (of Moses).¹⁵ Paul’s

¹² Cf. e.g. Bruce Morrison and John Woodhouse, “The Coherence of Romans 7:1–8:8,” *RTR* 47 (1988): 8–16, esp. 14; S. Voorwinde, “Who is the ‘Wretched Man’ in Romans 7:24?” *VR* 54 (1990): 11–26, esp. 21.

¹³ So Voorwinde, “Who is the ‘Wretched Man’ in Romans 7:24?” 21.

¹⁴ This expression taken on its own could refer simply to people who know about any system of marriage law, but in the context Paul would seem to have in mind the Mosaic law from which, he argues, believers have been set free. Therefore the expression has significance for discussions about the readership and the purpose of Romans. However, it is not as helpful to us in this connection as it might first appear because it is susceptible to several interpretations. Within the overall context of Romans “those who know the law” could refer to: (1) Christian Jews (who made up part of the Roman church); (2) Gentile Christians who had been formerly proselytes; (3) Gentile Christians who had been formerly loosely attached to the synagogue as God-fearers; (4) Gentile Christians who had gained an understanding of the law/Old Testament since they joined the church.

¹⁵ Luzia Sutter Rehmann, “The Doorway into Freedom: The Case of the ‘Suspected Wife’ in Romans 7.1–6,” *JSTOT* 79 (2000): 91–104, esp. 97–102, sees the background to Rom 7:1–6 in Num 5:29–30: “This is the law in cases of jealousy, when a wife, while under her husband’s authority, goes astray and defiles herself, or when a spirit of jealousy comes on a man and he is jealous of his wife; then he shall set the woman before the LORD, and the priest shall apply this entire law to her.” The law was that the woman be required to drink the *sotah* (the bitter water) to prove here innocence. However, according to *m. Sotah* 4.2, if her husband died

argument raises difficulties because of the lack of correspondence between the analogy itself and what he seeks to show from it. He asserts that “the law is binding on a person only during that person’s lifetime” (Rom 7:1), and in his application of the analogy he makes the same point: believers having died (in Christ) are discharged from their obligation to the law (Rom 7:4a). However, in the analogy itself (Rom 7:2–3) it is not the death of the wife that frees her from the law binding her to her husband (which we would expect and which Paul could have said to make this point), but it is the death of the husband that frees her. The reason why Paul did not construct his analogy with the sort of exact correspondence that we might expect is that he wanted to use the analogy to make an additional point. Not only did he want to show that the death of believers in Christ frees them from obligation to the law, but also that it frees them to belong to Christ and “bear fruit to God” (Rom 7:4b). For the analogy to be able to be used to make this additional point the wife must remain alive in order to be able to marry another man, and so it must be the death of the husband which discharges her from the marriage law. Paul does not seem to have been concerned about the lack of exact correspondence (as we, his modern readers, are), being satisfied with an analogy in which death (albeit the husband’s and not the wife’s) frees from the law so that the one freed can then belong to another.¹⁶

before she drank it then she was free from the requirement to drink the *sotah*, that is, free from the law of the husband, and she would still be able to receive her *ketubah* (dowry).

¹⁶ J. A. Ziesler, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989) 174–75, notes that the analogy makes one straightforward point (“legal obligations are removed by death”), and that attempts to work out the illustration in detail run into confusion. Joyce A. Little, “Paul’s Use of Analogy: A Structural Analysis of Romans 7:1–6,” *CBQ* 46 (1984): 982–90, discusses the inconsistencies in Paul’s use of the analogy. She disagrees with Dodd’s conclusion that “he [Paul] lacks the gift for sustained illustration of ideas through concrete images (though he is capable of a brief illuminatory metaphor). It is probably a defect of imagination.” Little argues instead that “the defect Paul suffers from in the writing of this passage is, if anything, an excess of imagination which propels him through the above-noted succession of ideas so rapidly that he has neither the time nor the opportunity to bring his images to completion.” She adds that it is not certain that Paul could have brought his images to completion, even if he had been so inclined (p. 90). But cf. John D. Earnshaw, “Reconsidering Paul’s Marriage Analogy in Romans 7.1–4,” *NTS* 40 (1994): 69–88, who argues that “Paul’s marriage analogy is properly understood only when *the wife’s first marriage is viewed as illustrating the believer’s union with Christ in his death and her second marriage is viewed as illustrating the believer’s union with Christ in his resurrection*” (p. 72).

This analogy and its application constitute one of the clearest expressions of Paul's belief that believers (Jews as well as Gentiles) are completely freed from all obligations to the Mosaic law as a regulatory norm. Like a person who has died, they have been discharged from all obligations to the law. Underlying this notion of freedom from the law is the assumption that the period of the law has come to an end with the coming of Christ.

For Paul this death to the law's demands has two positive outcomes that can be seen in Rom 7:5–6. In Rom 7:5 he implies that believers' release from the law means they may escape the dilemma of having their sinful passions "aroused by the law" (a dilemma which he expounds in Rom 7:7–25). In v. 6 he says that believers' release from the law enables them to live "the new life of the Spirit" (something he expounds in Rom 8:1–13). The implied contrast between the law and the Spirit is that under the law sin is aroused and so people are doomed to bear fruit to death, whereas under the reign of the Spirit they are free to bear fruit for God.

The other important passage in which Paul connects the need for people to be free from the law's demands with life in the Spirit is found in Gal 5:16–18. In this passage the apostle speaks of the tension between the flesh and the Spirit in the life of believers and urges his readers to walk by the Spirit:

Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

These verses are a part of the larger section, Gal 5:13–18, where Paul urges his readers not to use their freedom from the law as an opportunity for self-indulgence (Gal 5:13). They are to live by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh.¹⁷ What is involved in

¹⁷ Walter Bo Russell, "Does the Christian Have 'Flesh' in Gal 5:13–26?" *JETS* 36 (1993): 179–87, says, "I believe that *σάρξ* and *πνεῦμα* have become theological abbreviations in Paul's argument that represent the two competing identities of the people of God in Galatia. The 'flesh community' (Judaizers) is a community identified with the Mosaic era and is therefore a community identified and characterized by a person bodily in his or her frailty and transitoriness and not indwelt by God's Spirit. . . . By contrast the 'Spirit community' is a community identified and characterized by a person bodily aided and enabled by God's presence and also bodily liberated from sin's dominion, a person experiencing the full liberation of Jesus' death and resurrection" (pp. 186–87).

these two different life-styles Paul himself spells out in the section that follows (Gal 5:19–24) where he contrasts the “works of the flesh” (Gal 5:19–21) with the “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal 5:22–24).

In Gal 5:16–18 Paul reminds his readers of the conflict between the Spirit and the flesh: “For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want” (Gal 5:17). The next verse comes as something of a surprise. We might have expected Paul to say that if people are led by the Spirit they will not fulfil the desires of the flesh. However, what he says is not that, but rather, “if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law” (Gal 5:18). The implication of this surprising statement is that being free from the law is intimately connected with overcoming the desires of the flesh.

This is contrary to the fears that probably haunted many Jewish believers (including the Judaizers) when they heard about the influx of Gentiles into the Church as a result of Paul’s mission. They feared that the Gentile believers who were not under the law would quickly succumb to the desires of the flesh. But Paul implies that not being under the law had the opposite effect. It enabled people to resist the desires of the flesh. Longenecker sums up the matter well:

The Judaizers had undoubtedly argued that only two options existed for Galatian Christians: either (1) a lifestyle governed by Torah, or (2) a lifestyle giving way to license, such as formerly characterized their lives as Gentiles apart from God. The Christian gospel, however, as Paul proclaimed it, has to do with a third way of life that is distinct from both nomism and libertinism—not one that takes a middle course between the two, as many try to do in working out a Christian lifestyle on their own, but that is “a highway above them both” (Burton, *Galatians*, 302). The antidote to license in the Christian life is not laws, as the Judaizers argued, but openness to the Spirit and being guided by the Spirit. For being “in Christ” means neither nomism nor libertinism, but a new quality of life based in and directed by the Spirit.¹⁸

¹⁸ *Galatians*, 246. It may be asked whether there is evidence to justify the confidence with which Longenecker says that the Judaizers saw things as he describes them here. But this aside, Longenecker’s comments seem to be right on target.

The Law Written on Human Hearts by the Spirit

The prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel predicted a time when the law of God would be written on the hearts of God's people:

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant that I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt—a covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Jer 31:31–33).

A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances (Ezek 36:26–27).

In Rom 2:14–16 Paul appears to say that these prophecies find fulfilment in the lives of Gentile believers:

When Gentiles, who do not possess the law, do instinctively what the law requires, [or better: Gentiles who by birth do not possess the law, do what the law requires] these, though not having the law, are a law to themselves. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them on the day when, according to my gospel, God, through Jesus Christ, will judge the secret thoughts of all.

Gentiles do not have the law in the way the Jews do, but Paul says that “what the law requires is written on their hearts.” The NRSV’s “what the law requires” translates τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου (lit. “the work of the law”). This is an unusual expression found nowhere else in the New Testament or the LXX. Some scholars argue that this cannot be an allusion to the new covenant promise in Jer 31:33 because Paul does not speak of “the law,” but “the work of the law” written on Gentile hearts.¹⁹ They argue that τὰ τοῦ νόμου must refer to

¹⁹ Jeffrey S. Lamp, “Paul, the Law, Jews, and Gentiles: A Contextual and Exegetical Reading of Rom 2:12–16,” *JETS* 42 (1999): 37–51, esp. 47, argues against an allusion to Jer 31:33 on the grounds that Paul speaks of τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου being written on their hearts, not (ὁ) νόμος as in Jer 31:33, but this appears to be a splitting of hairs. Mark D. Mathewson, “Moral Intuitionism and the Law Inscribed on Our Hearts,” *JETS* 42 (1999): 629–43, esp. 633–42 also argues against an allusion to

something more limited and vague than the law understood in any comprehensive way.²⁰ However, Gathercole rightly points out that while the scope of the phrase τὰ τοῦ is general in its New Testament usage it is also nearly always inclusive and comprehensive in meaning. Thus, for example, the contrast between “the things of God” and “the things of men” referred to in Matt 16:23/Mark 8:33 (οὐ φρόνεις τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τὰ τῶν ἀνθρώπων) is comprehensive in meaning. Even when a contrast is not implied Paul uses such phrases in a comprehensive way (cf. Rom 14:19: “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace [τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης] and to mutual edification”; 1 Cor 13:11: “When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways [τὰ τοῦ νηπίου] behind me”; 2 Cor 11:30: “If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness [τὰ τῆς ἀσθενείας]”). There is, then, nothing to suggest that the meaning of τὰ τοῦ νόμου is anything but comprehensive here in Rom 2:14.²¹ This leaves open the possibility that Paul is indeed speaking of Gentile Christians in Rom 2:14–15; Gentiles on whose hearts the law has been written in accordance with the promise of the new covenant in Jer 31:33.²² Paul certainly believed that the law is “fulfilled” (though not observed in all its detail) by those who believe in Jesus Christ and walk in the Spirit (Rom 8:3–4; 13:10; Gal 5:13–25). Wright is correct when he says: “I find it next to impossible that Paul could have written this phrase, with its overtones of Jeremiah’s new covenant promise, simply to refer to pagans who happen by accident to share some of Israel’s moral teaching. More likely by a million miles is that he is hinting quietly, and proleptically, at what he will say far more fully later on: that Gentile Christians belong within the new covenant.”²³ If it is an allusion to Jer 31:33

Jer 31:33, suggesting instead that Paul has in mind “a moderate moral intuitionism,” a “natural ability of the mind to grasp immediately God’s moral demands in an a priori manner.”

²⁰ So, e.g., James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (WBC 38B; Dallas, Tex.: Word, 1988) 105; Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (SP 6; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996) 105.

²¹ S. J. Gathercole, “A Law unto Themselves: The Gentiles in Rom 2.14–15 Revisited,” *JSTNT* 85 (2002): 27–49, esp. 34.

²² Akio Ito, “νόμος (τῶν) ἔργων and νόμος πίστεως: The Pauline Rhetoric and Theology of νόμος,” *NovT* 45 (2003): 237–59, esp. 250–51, and “Romans 2: A Deuteronomistic Reading,” *JSTNT* 59 (1995): 21–37, esp. 28–35, reaches the same conclusion.

²³ N. T. Wright, “The Law in Romans 2,” in Dunn (ed.), *Paul and the Mosaic*

then “the law written on their hearts” means much more than an innate moral sense. It means a godly moral disposition. What is implied by Jer 31:33 is expressed more fully by Ezek 36:26–27: “I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws” (NIV). If this is the case, then we can say, in relation to the Law and the Spirit, Paul taught that, with the coming of Christ and bestowal of the Spirit upon those who believe in him, what the law required of the Jews would be written upon the hearts of the Gentiles by the Spirit.²⁴

The Law Fulfilled by Those who Live by the Spirit

Despite the fact that Paul strenuously argued that believers are no longer under the Mosaic law as the regulatory norm for their lives, in a number of passages he affirms that the law is fulfilled in the lives of those who live by the Spirit. One of the most important of these passages is Rom 8:2–4:

For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do: by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and to deal with sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

The expressions, “the law of the Spirit of life” and “the law of sin and death,” have both sometimes been interpreted as references to the Mosaic law,²⁵ and if this is the case they would provide us with

Law, 131–50. Wright adds: “In short, if 2.25–9 is an anticipation of fuller statements, within the letter, of Paul’s belief that Christian Gentiles do indeed fulfill the law even though they do not possess it, 2.13–14 looks as though it is a still earlier statement of very nearly the same point” (p. 147).

²⁴ They would be like the “true Jew” of Rom 2:28–29: “For a person is not a Jew who is one outwardly, nor is true circumcision something external and physical. Rather, a person is a Jew who is one inwardly, and real circumcision is a matter of the heart—it is spiritual and not literal.” Cf. also Deut 30:6: “Moreover, the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, in order that you may live.”

²⁵ So e.g. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 416–19.

important clues to Paul's understanding of the law and the Spirit. The two expressions would then reflect two aspects of the law. Dunn says:

The law caught in the nexus of sin and death, where it is met only by $\sigma\rho\zeta$, is the law as $\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha$, caught in the old epoch, abused and destructive . . . but the law rightly understood, and responded to $\acute{\epsilon}\nu$ $\pi\nu\epsilon\acute{\upsilon}\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ οὐ $\gamma\rho\acute{\alpha}\mu\mu\alpha\tau\iota$ is pleasing to God (2:29). The twofold law of v. 2 therefore simply restates the two-sidedness of the law expounded in 7:7–25.²⁶

One of the problems with this view is that it implies Rom 8:2 is saying that the law rightly understood sets us free from the law wrongly understood. But this is not what Paul has in mind. In the very next verse (Rom 8:3) he speaks of God sending his Son to deal with the problem of sin, something that the law (however understood) was unable to do. This, of course, was also in Paul's mind when he wrote Rom 7:7–25, except that there the law was not only unable to effect the deliverance, but, as the unwilling ally of sin, was itself part of the problem. It is therefore better to interpret the expressions, "the law of the Spirit of life" and "the law of sin and death," as the liberating power of the Spirit and the dominion of sin respectively.²⁷ It was the power of sin (admittedly using the law as an unwilling ally) that caused the "I" of Rom 7:7–25 so much anguish. It is through (justification and) the reception of the Spirit that believers are delivered from sin's dominion.²⁸ The law of the Spirit and life and the law of sin and death understood in this way do not then contribute to our understanding of Paul's views concerning the relationship between the Mosaic law and the Spirit of God following the coming of Christ.

²⁶ *Romans 1–8*, 416–17.

²⁷ So most commentators, including more recently, Ziesler, *Romans*, 202; C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (vol. 1; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975) 364, 373–76; Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 473–77. Cf. Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) 50–52.

²⁸ This is not to say that in Romans Paul implies that believers no longer struggle with sin, but rather that this struggle does not have to end in the sort of defeat portrayed in 7:7–25. The new alternatives are expressed in 8:12–13: "So then, brothers and sisters, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh—for if you live according to the flesh, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body [here obviously a synonym for flesh], you will live."

In Rom 8:3a Paul speaks of “what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do,”²⁹ without explaining what exactly that was. However, in Rom 8:3b–4 he proceeds to say that God has done what the law proved unable to do, that is, “by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh,³⁰ and to deal with sin,³¹ he condemned sin in the flesh³² so that the just requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” What the law cannot do, Paul implies, is to bring about the fulfilment of its own just requirement in the lives of those who lived under it.³³ The just requirement of the law has sometimes been

²⁹ J. F. Bayes, “The Translation of Romans 8:3,” *ExpTim* 111 (1999): 14–16, suggests the following translation of Rom 8:3: “For this being the Law’s disability while it used to be weak in the sphere of the flesh, God having sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh” (italics added). Bayes argues then that “Romans 8:3a implies that there is another sphere, that which Paul denominates ‘the Spirit,’ where the law is weak no longer. . . . In the power of the Spirit the law has become a mighty instrument for the sanctification of the believer” (p. 14). With some qualification this is true, the qualification being that the law is not reintroduced as a regulatory norm, but used as a witness to the gospel and, when read paradigmatically in the light of Christ, as providing guidelines for Christian living.

³⁰ There is ongoing debate whether Paul’s “in the likeness of sinful flesh” (ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας) implies a distinction or identification between Christ’s humanity and ours. Cf., e.g., more recently, Vincent P. Branick, “The Sinful Flesh of the Son of God (Rom 8:3): A Key Image of Pauline Theology,” *CBQ* 47 (1985): 246–62, esp. 247–52; Florence Morgan Gillman, “Another Look at Romans 8:3: ‘In the Likeness of Sinful Flesh,’” *CBQ* 49 (1987): 597–604, esp. 600–604.

³¹ It is not necessary for our purposes to decide between the two possible interpretations of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας* here, whether it means “as a sin offering” (following the LXX usage of *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*), or more generally “to deal with sin.”

³² Paul’s expression, “he condemned sin in the flesh” (κατέκρινεν τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί) is ambiguous. It could be taken to mean either “God condemned the sin which is found in human flesh,” or “God condemned sin in the flesh of Christ.” The former is unlikely because, as Ziesler, *Romans*, 205, points out, “sin in the flesh” is a tautology. There is no other sort of sin on the horizon in this context. The latter is preferable as it makes sense to speak of God condemning sin in the flesh (of Christ), another way of saying that, in the purpose of God, Christ in his death became a curse for us, bearing the burden and penalty of our sins (cf. Gal 3:13). Ziesler, surprisingly, interprets the verse to mean that “Christ, when in the flesh, condemned sin, either by his sinless life or by his death,” failing, it seems, to recognize that God, not Christ, is the subject of the sentence.

³³ It is important to note that the law was unable to do this, not because of any imperfection in itself, but because its power to do so was weakened by the flesh. This is what Paul argues at length in Rom 7:7–25. That Paul speaks about the law’s inability to bring about the fulfilment of its own righteous demand because of the weakness of the flesh excludes (*contra* Morrison and Woodhouse, “The Coherence of Romans 7:1–8:8,” 15) any interpretation of “the just requirement of the law” as death.

interpreted to mean “all that the law requires.” Such an approach has obvious problems because Paul clearly did not expect believers to fulfil all the demands of the law (circumcision, one of the basic demands of the law, Paul argued, was definitely not required of Gentile believers). A further difficulty for this view, often overlooked, is that Paul refers to the “just requirement” (singular—δικαίωμα), not the “just requirements” (plural—δικαιώματα), and while the plural, δικαιώματα, is used in the New Testament and the LXX to refer to the sum of the law’s demands, the singular, δικαίωμα is not.³⁴

Ziesler, taking note of the singular δικαίωμα, suggests that when Paul speaks of the just requirement of the law in Rom 8:4 he means the tenth commandment, which he had in mind throughout Rom 7:7–25. Because, on this view, Rom 8:4 refers only to the command not to covet, it cannot be taken to refer to the sum of the law’s demands (nor the love command, nor the moral law).³⁵ While it is important to note Paul’s use of the singular form δικαίωμα in Rom 8:4, it is not at all certain that it should be interpreted as narrowly as Ziesler suggests. Even interpreting it in the light of Paul’s reference to the tenth commandment in Rom 7:7–25, we need to remember that there Paul used the tenth commandment as a paradigm for the whole law, as Ziesler himself acknowledges.³⁶

A good case can be made for interpreting “the just requirement of the law” as the love commandment (despite Ziesler’s dismissal of this view), especially in the light of the parallels between Rom 8:4 and Gal 5:13–16. It is precisely at these points in Romans and Galatians respectively that (1) the notion of the Spirit first comes to the fore, (2) the Spirit/flesh antithesis is mentioned for the first time, and (3) there is a striking convergence of the concepts of freedom, fulfilment, walking in the Spirit and the negative aspects of the flesh.³⁷ In the light of the striking similarities between Rom 8:4 and Gal 5:13–16, it would seem to be desirable to interpret the former in the light of the latter, and to say that the fulfilment of the just

³⁴ Cf. J. A. Ziesler, “The Just Requirement of the Law (Romans 8.4),” *ABR* 35 (1987): 77–82, esp. 78.

³⁵ Ziesler, “The Just Requirement of the Law,” 80.

³⁶ “The Just Requirement of the Law,” 80.

³⁷ Cf. Richard W. Thompson, “How is the Law fulfilled in Us? An Interpretation of Rom 8:4,” *LS* 11 (1986): 31–41, esp. 32–33, who cites the observations of H. W. M. van de Sandt, “Research into Rom. 8:4a: The Legal Claim of the Law,” *Bijdragen* 37 (1976): 252–69.

requirement of the law (in Rom 8:4) is best understood in terms of the love of neighbour (in Gal 5:13–16).³⁸

It is significant that this text speaks about “the just requirement of the law” *being fulfilled* (divine passive) in those who walk according to the Spirit, not about believers *fulfilling* (active) this requirement. The fulfilment of the law in believers is therefore not achieved because they are continuously careful to observe its many stipulations. Rather it is fulfilled in them as they walk according to the Spirit and as by the Spirit they put to death the deeds of the flesh (Rom 8:13). Thus the real contrast between the law and the Spirit in Rom 8:3–4 is that while the requirement of the law is just, the law was powerless to bring about the fulfilment of that just requirement in sinful human beings. However, God brings about this fulfilment in the lives of those who walk according to the Spirit.

A second passage in which Paul affirms that the law is fulfilled in the lives of those who live by the Spirit is Rom 13:8–10. Here the apostle exhorts his readers, as part of their grateful response for the mercies of God, to:

Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbour as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law.

Paul’s intention is to exhort his readers to love one another and the idea that love is the fulfilment of the law is brought in to bolster that exhortation.³⁹ It is important to note that Paul is not saying that love will lead believers to carry out all that the law demands (which would have to include, e.g., the practice of circumcision, obedience to calendrical rules, and the observance of food taboos; things

³⁸ Such a conclusion is strengthened by the fact that, in Rom 13:8–10, Paul says all the other commandments are summed up in the commandment, Love your neighbour as yourself, and concludes: “therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law” (see discussion below), *contra* Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 211–12, who rejects this view, arguing instead that τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου means “the just decree of the law,” i.e. “the decree that gives life in accordance with the covenant.”

³⁹ Oda Wischmeyer, “Das Gebot der Nächstenliebe bei Paulus: Eine traditions-geschichtliche Untersuchung,” *BZ* 30 (1986): 161–87, esp. 182, goes too far when she says that Rom 13:8–10 was part of Paul’s program of abolishing the law by means of the law.

which Paul clearly thought were not obligatory for believers, cf. Rom 2:26; 14:2–6). What he says is that love *fulfils* the law, and that is clearly something different. When Paul claims that love is the fulfilment of the law, he has in mind particularly those laws that relate to the neighbour's wellbeing. Thus he cites four commandments from the second table of the Decalogue (only the commandment not to bear false witness is omitted from Paul's list), and says that these "and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, 'Love your neighbour as yourself'" (Rom 13:9). It is clear that what Paul is asserting here is of limited application: love is the fulfilment of the law in so far as the law is concerned to ensure no harm is done to one's neighbour (Rom 13:10); he is not saying that love leads believers to observe all the demands of the Mosaic law. This text has important implications for our understanding of the relationship of the law and the Spirit in Paul's gospel. His gospel is not antinomian, for it results in a fulfilment of the law. However, this does not mean a reinstatement of the law. Rather, the effect of Paul's gospel is that believers, by walking in the Spirit, are enabled to love one another, so that what the law sought, but was unable to produce, is fulfilled in them.

A third passage, Gal 5:14–18, makes a similar point:

For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." If, however, you bite and devour one another, take care that you are not consumed by one another. Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh. For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want. But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

Here obedience to the love command is seen as fulfilment of the *whole* law, but this does not mean carrying out all the law's demands (in Galatians Paul argues strenuously against the need for Gentiles to be circumcised). Once again Paul has in mind the way believers relate to one another.⁴⁰ And the ability to fulfil the law in this way

⁴⁰ Stephen Westerholm has shown that in the three places where Paul speaks about believers fulfilling the law (Rom 8:4; 13:8–10; Gal 5:14), he is *describing* not prescribing Christian behaviour. Paul's prescriptive statements are based on the new life in the Spirit that those in Christ enjoy. His references to fulfilling the law in these contexts are made to describe the results of new life in the Spirit. He is not

is linked to living “by the Spirit,” and this is linked in turn to freedom from the law: “if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.” Paul is here implying what he clearly asserted in Rom 7:6, i.e. believers’ release from the law enables them to live “the new life of the Spirit.”

A fourth passage, Gal 5:22–23, is also significant. Having listed the “works of the flesh,” Paul then lists the “fruit of the Spirit”: “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.”⁴¹ The first element of the fruit of the Spirit is love. Against this there is no law, and in fact, as the apostle says, love is the fulfilment of the law. As far as the relationship between the law and the Spirit is concerned, then, the Spirit is the one who enables believers to fulfil the law, doing this by overcoming the desires of the flesh and producing the fruit of love in their lives.

Conclusion

On first reading of Paul’s letters especially to the Galatians and the Romans one could get the impression that Paul’s attitude to the Mosaic law was largely negative, and that with the coming of the Spirit following the death and resurrection of Christ there was no further place for the law in the lives of believers. However, the material surveyed in this essay reveals that Paul’s teaching about the law and the Spirit is more complex than that. Our findings can be summarized as follows.

In what Paul says in 2 Cor 3:7–11 concerning ministry under the old and new covenants, a stark contrast is implied between the role of the law and the Spirit. The law condemns and kills, whereas the Spirit gives life. In Gal 3:13–14 and 4:4–6 the apostle argues that the Jewish people had to be redeemed from the curse of the law (it

re-introducing the law as a regulatory norm for those who are in Christ. See *Israel’s Law and the Church’s Faith: Paul and his Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 201–205, where Westerholm summarizes his article, “On Fulfilling the Whole Law (Gal 5:14),” *SEÅ* 51–52 (1986–1987): 229–37.

⁴¹ R. A. Campbell, “‘Against such things there is no Law’? Gal 5:23b again,” *ExpTim* 107 (1996): 271–72, says that τῶν τοιοῦτων in Gal 5:23 should be translated “such people,” not “such things.” Then the parenthetical remark in 5:23 (“there is no condemnation for people like that”) would balance the earlier statement in 5:21 (“those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God”).

condemned and killed) so that they might receive the promised Holy Spirit, and so that in turn the promise might extend to and the Spirit be received by the Gentiles as well. In Gal 3:1–5 Paul indicates that the reception of the Spirit by the Gentiles and their ongoing experience of the Spirit was independent of their observance of the law, and in Rom 7:4–6 and Gal 5:16–18 he even teaches that it is necessary to be freed from the demands of the law in order to “bear fruit for God.” And yet, paradoxically, the Spirit writes the law upon the hearts of the Gentiles (Rom 2:14–16), and the law is “fulfilled” in the lives of those who walk by the Spirit (Rom 8:3–4; 13:8–10; Gal 5:14–18, 22–23), though this does not mean they carry out all the demands of the law, but by walking in the way of love what the law was meant to achieve is produced in their lives by the Spirit.

As a final comment it may be added that, whereas the demands of the Mosaic law are no longer the regulatory norm for believers, the Old Testament is nevertheless their Scripture that when illuminated by the Spirit is seen to be a witness to Christ and a source of instruction for godly living when read paradigmatically in the light of the gospel (cf. 2 Tim 3:16–17).

PAUL'S CONCEPT OF RECONCILIATION, TWICE MORE

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1. *Introduction*

In the last twenty five years or so, there have been several major monographs on the important theological notion of “reconciliation” as it is found in passages with the verb *καταλλάσσω*. The first was by Ralph Martin, who published his major treatment in 1981, in which he tries to establish (but he is generally thought to have been unsuccessful in the attempt) that reconciliation is the center of Paul’s theology. He emphasizes the Jewish background to the term, Paul’s drawing upon previous usage (in 2 Cor 5:18–20), and the development of Paul’s thought in Eph 2:16.¹ A second monograph, published in 1983 by Hans Findeis, though it goes into significant exegetical detail on a wide range of issues, is more concerned with reception history (besides the two passages above, treating Rom 5:10–11 and Col 1:20–22).² A third major monograph was published in 1989 by Cilliers Breytenbach, who, while grounding reconciliation language in its Greco-Roman context, shows that *καταλλάσσω* is not found in contexts where justification or propitiation language is used.³ The fourth monograph was published in 1994 by myself.

¹ R. P. Martin, *Reconciliation: A Study of Paul’s Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981) *passim*. Martin had previously also published “Reconciliation and Forgiveness in Colossians,” in R. Banks (ed.), *Reconciliation and Hope: New Testament Essays on Atonement and Eschatology* (FS L. L. Morris; Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1974) 104–24.

² H.-J. Findeis, *Versöhnung–Apostolat–Kirche: Eine exegetisch-theologische und rezeptionsgeschichtliche Studie zu den Versöhnungsaussagen des Neuen Testaments (2Kor, Röm, Kol, Eph)* (FB 40; Würzburg: Echter, 1983). (So Breytenbach’s description, p. 29; see n. 3 below).

³ C. Breytenbach, *Versöhnung: Eine Studie zur paulinischen Soteriologie* (WMANT 60; Neukirchen: Neukirchener, 1989). Breytenbach is responding directly to E. Käsemann, “Some Thoughts on the Theme ‘The Doctrine of Reconciliation in the New Testament,’” in J. M. Robinson (ed.), *The Future of Our Religious Past* (FS R. Bultmann; London: SCM Press, 1971) 49–64. Breytenbach also published “Versöhnung, Stellvertretung und Sühne: Semantische und Traditionsgeschichtliche Bemerkungen am Beispiel der Paulinischen Briefe,” *NTS* 39 (1993): 59–79.

Following a scheme first developed by I. Howard Marshall (see below), I analyzed all of the uses of *καταλλάσσω* and its cognates from its earliest usage to the sixth century, focusing upon the four major Pauline texts.⁴ In the course of my research and writing, it has fortuitously befallen me to write a number of times on the notion of reconciliation and related concepts, and the words that are often used to convey it.⁵

As a result of such study, I believe that there are a number of decisive conclusions that can be reached regarding the use of reconciliation language in Paul. Reconciliation language focuses around *καταλλάσσω* and its derived cognates. The word-group seems to have been used by Greek writers to describe the exchange of goods or things, and to describe the process by which hostility between parties is eliminated and friendship is created. Thus, the basic sense of the word for exchange can be metaphorically extended to include the exchange of relations, such as the exchange of enmity for friendship, between persons or larger political entities. This usage can be refined further in terms of grammatical categories of usage. The following categories are relevant: (a) the subject effects reconciliation between mutually antagonistic parties (any voice form may be used); (b) the subject effects reconciliation by persuading a hostile party to give up its anger against the subject (active voice); (c) the subject is reconciled or effects reconciliation by persuading a hostile party to give up its anger, usually against the subject (middle or passive voice form); (d) the subject effects reconciliation by giving up its own anger against another party (passive voice form); (e) the subject effects rec-

⁴ S. E. Porter, *Καταλλάσσω in Ancient Greek Literature, with Reference to the Pauline Writings* (EFN 5; Córdoba: Ediciones el Almendro, 1994) (which I rely heavily upon in my responses below), following I. H. Marshall, "The Meaning of 'Reconciliation,'" in R. A. Guelich (ed.), *Unity and Diversity in New Testament Theology* (FS G. E. Ladd; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 117–32; repr. in Marshall, *Jesus the Saviour: Studies in New Testament Theology* (London: SPCK, 1990) 258–74.

⁵ See S. E. Porter, "Reconciliation and 2 Cor 5,18–21," in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The Corinthian Correspondence* (BETL 125; Leuven: Leuven University Press/Peeters, 1996) 693–705 (based upon ch. 6 of *Καταλλάσσω*, 125–44); Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament: Theory and Practice* (SBG 6; New York: Lang, 1996) 195–212 (based upon ch. 7 of *Καταλλάσσω*, 145–62); Porter, "Peace, Reconciliation," in G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin and D. G. Reid (eds.), *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1993) 695–99; Porter, "Peace," in T. D. Alexander and B. S. Rosner (eds.), *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000) 682–83; Porter, "Versöhnung: IV. NT.," in H. D. Betz, D. S. Browning, B. Janowski and E. Jüngel (eds.), *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, vierte Auflage* Volume 8 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005) 1054–55.

conciliation by giving up its own anger against another party (active voice form). Apart from a possible instance in Sophocles (*Ajax* 743–744), the first significant religious usage of καταλλάσσω-based reconciliation language is in 2 Maccabees (1:5; 7:33; 8:29). In none of these is the active voice form of the verb used in category e. Paul is the earliest known writer to use the active form of the verb for the subject effecting reconciliation by giving up its own anger against another party, with examples found in 2 Cor 5:18 and 19 (category c or possibly d is found in Romans).⁶ Further, the reconciliation passages have their objects being reconciled to God through the work of Jesus Christ.⁷

In the light of these results, in this chapter I wish to evaluate two recent treatments of reconciliation, and use analysis of these articles as a chance to examine the concept, at least in part, once more.⁸

2. Two Recent Treatments of Reconciliation

A study such as this cannot attempt to be comprehensive in the literature that is examined, so I wish to concentrate upon two reasonably recent works in English that are germane to study of reconciliation, one on 2 Cor 5:18–20 and the other on Rom 5:10–11.⁹

⁶ For discussion, see Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 159–60.

⁷ See Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament*, 197–201 for the language of this paragraph.

⁸ There have, of course, been a number of other important works on reconciliation written during this time and before. Some of these include: J. Dupont, *La réconciliation dans la théologie de St. Paul* (Paris: Brouwer, 1953); F. Büchsel, “ἀλλάσσω,” in *TDNT* 1 (1964): 251–59; J.-F. Collange, *Énigmes de la deuxième épître de Paul aux Corinthiens: Étude exegetique de 2 Cor 2,14–7,4* (SNTSMS 18; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972); J. A. Fitzmyer, “Reconciliation in Pauline Theology,” in J. W. Flanagan and A. W. Robinson (eds.), *No Famine in the Land* (FS J. L. McKenzie; Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1975) 155–77; M. Wolter, *Rechtfertigung und zukünftiges Heil: Untersuchungen zu Röm 5,1–11* (BZNW 43; Berlin: De Gruyter, 1978); C. Spicq, *Theological Lexicon of the New Testament* (3 vols.; trans. J. D. Ernest; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994 [1978, 1982]) 2.262–66; R. Bieringer, “2 Kor 5,19a und die Versöhnung der Welt,” *ETL* 63 (1987): 295–326; among others.

⁹ I do not treat commentaries separately here, but bring them into discussion below. However, those that do pay attention to recent discussion (and will be used in my discussion) include the following: 2 Cor 5:18–20: M. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994–2000) (who has an article on reconciliation: M. Thrall, “Salvation Proclaimed. V. 2 Cor. 5:18–21: Reconciliation with God,” *ExpTim* 93 [1981–1982]: 227–32); P. Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand

a. *2 Corinthians 5:18–20*

Seyoon Kim is one of the latest to enter into discussion of reconciliation. He recently has issued three different versions of the same essay, all addressing the topic of reconciliation in 2 Cor 5:18–20.¹⁰ The essay is a rigorous and detailed treatment of reconciliation within the context of 2 Corinthians. Continuing what he tried to argue in an earlier book, Kim wishes to see the reconciliation language as originating in Paul's Damascus road experience—although he admits that he finds it strange that more scholars have not recognized this connection (we shall see why it is perhaps not so strange below). As a result, he wishes to investigate (1) the linguistic background, (2) the uniquely Pauline nature of the terminology, (3) its origins, and then (4) the passage itself.

(1) Concerning the linguistic background of *καταλλάσσω*, Kim disagrees with Breytenbach that the origin of the term is solely in the peace-treaty language of Hellenistic literature,¹¹ and agrees with Marshall, who cites the several passages in 2 Maccabees noted above (1:5; 7:33; 8:29; cf. 5:20 with the cognate noun), to claim that usage reflects Hellenistic Jewish language—even though he must admit that Paul alters such usage—and Hellenistic language.

What Kim fails to realize is that Hellenistic Jewish literature *is* Hellenistic literature, and especially so for 2 Maccabees, which is a “fresh composition in Greek.”¹² The usage in 2 Maccabees, while reflecting Jewish events, is clearly Hellenistic and consistent with the Greek usage elsewhere.¹³ Kim further fails to distinguish the categories of usage as noted above. Lastly, the major issue seems to be whether the language before Paul was theologically motivated. As

Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); Romans: D. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

¹⁰ S. Kim, “God Reconciled His Enemy to Himself: The Origin of Paul's Concept of Reconciliation,” in R. N. Longenecker (ed.), *The Road from Damascus: The Impact of Paul's Conversion on his Life, Thought, and Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 102–24; Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21 and the Origin of Paul's Concept of ‘Reconciliation,’” *NovT* 39.4 (1997): 360–84; and in Kim, *Paul and the New Perspective: Second Thoughts on the Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002) 214–38. I will use the *Novum Testamentum* article. Kim had addressed the issue of reconciliation earlier in his *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981) 18–20, 311–15.

¹¹ The examples cited by Kim (“2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 361) from Breytenbach (*Versöhnung*, 73, 76, 78) do not have the verb *καταλλάσσω* in them, but other verbs.

¹² S. Jellicoe, *The Septuagint and Modern Study* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968) 304.

¹³ See Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 61–62. All of the instances are examples of usage d.

noted above, apart from the one possible instance in Sophocles, the three instances in 2 Maccabees are the only theological uses before Paul. However, in none of the instances is the uniquely Pauline usage evidenced, that of the offended party (God) initiating the act of reconciliation (with an active voice verb, usage e).

(2) Concerning the uniquely Pauline usage, Kim admits that the Pauline usage of God reconciling himself to humans (rather than God being reconciled) is not found in either Hellenistic or Hellenistic Jewish usage. In response to those, such as Käsemann and Martin, who have suggested that this unique usage is taken over from a “pre-Pauline hymnic fragment,” a “confessional statement,” or even a pre-Pauline unit,¹⁴ Kim believes that this hypothesis has been repudiated by Bieringer and Thrall.¹⁵

As already recognized above, Kim notes the unique usage but without formulating its usage in relation to other patterns. His comments dismissing the pre-Pauline material belie the fact that a number of scholars still accept this formulation. Nevertheless, the interpolation hypothesis is questionable for three major reasons: the grammatical elements of significance are paralleled in other Pauline literature, the “reconciliation” language is recognizably (and only) Pauline, and the vagueness of the hypotheses does little to resolve exegetical issues.¹⁶

(3) Concerning the origins of Paul’s usage, Kim first lists a number of options—Jesus tradition, Isa 52:13–53:12, Jewish martyr tradition¹⁷—before endorsing the opinion of Hofius that it originates in his “encounter with the Risen One.”¹⁸ That the origin of this passage is in Paul’s Damascus road experience is what Kim attempts to show in the rest of the article, and this is what I will be mainly

¹⁴ Besides Käsemann (“Some Thoughts,” 52–53) and Martin (*Reconciliation*, 94–95), he also cites P. Stuhlmacher, *Gerechtigkeit Gottes bei Paulus* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 77–78; V. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984) 334; Findeis, *Versöhnung*, 244–45; and Breytenbach, *Versöhnung*, 118–20.

¹⁵ Bieringer, “2 Kor 5,19a,” 429–59; Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.445–49.

¹⁶ See Porter, *καταλλάσσω*, 129–30. Kim does not raise the issue of whether the interpolation is supposedly in a context of addressing pastoral issues. See the response in Porter, “Peace, Reconciliation,” 695.

¹⁷ E.g. L. Goppelt, *Christologie und Ethik* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969) 152–53; O. Hofius, “Erwägungen zur Gestalt und Herkunft des paulinischen Versöhnungsgedankens,” *ZTK* 77 (1980): 186–99 (reprinted in his *Paulusstudien* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989]); Marshall, “Reconciliation,” 129–30.

¹⁸ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 366, citing Hofius, “Erwägungen,” 14 (in *Paulusstudien*).

concerned with in what follows. The reason is that, if he is correct, this has important implications regarding pinpointing the origins of Paul's beliefs regarding reconciliation.

(4) In order to make his case, Kim returns to an intensive examination of 2 Cor 5:11–21. I will concentrate on the part that is directly relevant to the reconciliation language, especially its supposed origins in Paul's Damascus road experience. (a) Kim begins with the structure of the passage, concerned mainly with v. 19 and what he perceives as its “disturbing” elements.¹⁹ There are essentially two issues for him: the meaning and use of ὡς ὅτι and the relationship in v. 19 of the three participles, καταλλάσσω, λογιζόμενος and θέμενος. He rejects that the participles can be coordinated for two reasons: the use of μή . . . καί to link the second and third in v. 19bc, and what he calls the “illogical sense” of the temporal ordering of events: putting “the entrusting of the ‘word of reconciliation’ prior in time to the reconciling act itself.”²⁰ As a result, Kim takes v. 19ab as an “insertion” within the argument and the second and third participles as coordinated, and ὡς ὅτι as introducing a “parenthetical statement.”²¹

I wish to deal with the participles first. If this issue is resolved, the other falls neatly into place. Kim argues that the linkage with μή . . . καί is “strange.”²² It may be infrequent, but it is no stranger than what is arguably roughly parallel in John 20:29: οἱ μὴ ἰδόντες καὶ πιστεύσαντες and (probably) Heb 11:13: μὴ λαβόντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας . . . καὶ ὁμολογήσαντες. Kim's real objection is to the fact that an aorist tense-form participle (θέμενος) follows two present tense-form participles (καταλλάσσω, λογιζόμενος). Following in a line of a number of other scholars,²³ Kim believes that the tense-forms—including especially here the participles—are used to make reference to external temporal events, that is, that the participles themselves

¹⁹ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 366.

²⁰ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 366, citing Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.435.

²¹ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 367. Kim thinks that A. Schlatter (*Paulus der Bote Jesu: Eine Deutung seiner Briefe an die Korinther* [Stuttgart: Calwer, 1962 (1934)] 566) explains the use of ὡς best, with it acting as a comparative reinforced by ὅτι to give the ground of Paul's experience (in v. 18) in God's reconciling action in the world (v. 19).

²² Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 366.

²³ This is a position he first assumed in his *Origin of Paul's Gospel*, 3ff.

are tensed and hence time indicators.²⁴ Kim takes such a position without reference to any Greek grammarian. If he had, he would have noticed that—whatever one thinks of the temporal indexicality of the indicative mood form—for over one-hundred years grammarians have recognized the non-temporal use of the participle.²⁵ In fact, it is now well-established in Greek grammatical study that the participles are not time-based indicators. If this is the case—and mostly those who have not studied the issue or do not show awareness of the issues seem to hold otherwise—then Kim's major and primary objection simply disappears. There is then no necessary reversal of the sequence of events, because present participles do not index present time and aorist participles do not index past time. Instead, they grammaticalize aspectual semantics (I will return to this below). Further, there is a pattern in Greek participial usage in which participles following their primary clause predicator tend (if time rather than kind of action is contextually indicated) to indicate concurrent or even subsequent action. This in fact makes good sense of this passage: "In Christ, God was reconciling the world to himself, [and he did this by] not counting their transgressions against them and placing the word of reconciliation with us." This understanding also alleviates the second issue, that of the comparative use of ὥς. A closer reading of Schlatter's statement indicates that he does not endorse Kim's perspective. Schlatter's analysis does not indicate a parenthetical insertion but a causal explication of what has just been said. That is the best way to take the passage. As Jannaris argues, the compound conjunction forms "an amplified or strengthened form of declarative ὅτι," best rendered "to wit that."²⁶

²⁴ See Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 136 and n. 41 for representative positions; including now also Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.435–36.

²⁵ E.g. J. H. Moulton, *Prolegomena to A Grammar of New Testament Greek* (3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908) 126–32; A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (4th ed.; Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 1111; S. E. Porter, *Verbal Aspect in the Greek of the New Testament, with Reference to Tense and Mood* (SBG 1; New York: Lang, 1989) 377–78; *idem*, *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2d ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994) 187–90; B. Fanning, *Verbal Aspect in New Testament Greek* (OTM; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990) 406–407.

²⁶ A. N. Jannaris, "Misreadings and Misrenderings in the New Testament. III," *The Expositor* 5th series 10 (1899): 142–53, here 147, 149. This is a position taken also by H. Windisch, E. B. Allo, R. Bultmann, N. Turner, P. E. Hughes, I. H. Marshall (see Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 132, for references) and now Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.432 (who gives the Jannaris reference) and Barnett, *Second Corinthians*, 306.

The passage may thus be displayed and rendered in this way:

τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ
 τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ
 καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς,
 ὡς ὅτι
 θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ,
 μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν
 καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

All this is from God
 who is a reconciler of us to himself through Christ
 and giver to us of the ministry of reconciliation²⁷
 that is
 in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,
 not counting their transgressions against them
 and placing the word of reconciliation with us.

Verse 18 indicates two important dimensions of reconciliation. The two participles are to be linked by the common article, so that it is saying that it is God who is both performing the work of reconciliation through Christ (usage e, with the offended party, God, initiating the reconciling action) and giving the ministry of reconciliation to believers. This is then restated and clarified by Paul in v. 19. Verse 19a is a periphrastic construction²⁸ that also indicates that the instrument for God's reconciling action (usage e) was Christ ("in Christ"), with the world as its object, here to be understood as the world of reconciled humanity.²⁹ God was doing this in two ways, Paul says. The first is by not counting human transgressions against them and the second by placing or entrusting the word of reconciliation with believers (this message of proclamation of reconciliation is then picked up in v. 21).

²⁷ I render the participles here so as to avoid—as much as possible in English—a temporal rendering.

²⁸ For reasons for taking this as periphrastic, see Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 132–39; Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.433–34 (although her idea of the periphrastic imperfect being a disguised aorist is not clear, following on from Collange, *Énigmes*, 271); Barnett, *Second Corinthians*, 306. Kim, "2 Cor. 5:11–21," 366, agrees.

²⁹ *Contra* J. D. G. Dunn (*The Theology of Paul the Apostle* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998] 229) this passage does not indicate the world as created order that is being reconciled. "World" is defined here in terms of both v. 18 as "us," that is humanity that is then reconciled, to whom the ministry of reconciliation is then entrusted, and the restatement in v. 19 as the body that has its transgressions not counted (only humanity can transgress God's law) and, again, with whom the word of reconciliation is placed. See Porter, "Peace, Reconciliation," 695–96.

(b) Kim now turns to what he calls “Allusions to the Damascus Event.”³⁰ He baldly declares that “The three aorist participles of vv. 18bc and 19c (καταλλάξαντος, δόντος and θέμενος) clearly allude to Paul’s experience of God’s forgiveness/reconciliation, his call to apostleship, and his revelation or entrusting of the gospel for him to preach.” His support for this is that he believes that v. 19c “corresponds to Paul’s testimony about his Damascus experience of God’s revelation of the gospel in Gal. 1:12,15–16a,” that “v. 18c corresponds to his testimony of God’s apostolic commission in Gal. 1:16b,”³¹ and that there is a “correspondence of v. 18ab to what is implicit in Paul’s emphasis on God’s grace to him over against his past as a persecutor of the church in Gal. 1:13–14.”³² Kim goes much further than these verbs, however, and claims that the use of ἐξέστημεν in v. 13, the words κρίναντας and συνέχει in v. 14, the use of ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν in v. 16 and the phrase καινὴ κτίσις in v. 17 also allude to the Damascus road experience.³³

Kim can be questioned at every point in his assertions.

The first issue to notice is the basis for the allusions in vv. 18 and 19. The lexical items themselves (καταλλάσσω, δίδωμι and τίθημι) do not provide support for such an allusion. They are not used in the Acts or other widely recognized New Testament conversion accounts (by Kim’s reckoning 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8–10; Gal 1:13–17; Phil 3:4–11), with only two uses of τίθημι in 2 Cor 3:13 (with reference to Moses, hardly germane) and 1 Tim 1:12, and three of δίδωμι in Eph 3:2, 7, 8 of other possible passages.³⁴ One instance of use of τίθημι in 1 Tim 1:12 and possibly three in Ephesians 3 is hardly a basis to establish these words as indicative of Paul’s Damascus road experience—especially as they are both words with a very broad semantic

³⁰ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 368. He cites in support C. Wolff, “True Apostolic Knowledge of Christ: Exegetical Reflections on 2 Corinthians 5:14ff.,” in A. J. M. Wedderburn (ed.), *Paul and Jesus: Collected Essays* (JSNTSup 37; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989) 81–98, esp. 92–94. However, Wolff can be criticized on the same basis as Kim (see below).

³¹ He attributes Hofius with these first two positions: O. Hofius, “Gott hat uns aufgerichtet das Wort von der Versöhnung’ (2 Kor. 5:19),” *ZNW* 71 (1980) (repr. in his *Paulusstudien*) 29 n. 66.

³² Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 368.

³³ One might as well ask what does not allude to the Damascus road experience!

³⁴ Kim, *Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 3. Kim also adds: Rom 10:2–4; 1 Cor 9:16–17; 2 Cor 3:4–4:6; 2 Cor 5:16; Eph 3:1–13; 1 Tim 1:11–14 (pp. 3–29). He also notes Acts 9:1–19; 22:3–16; 26:4–18.

range (“giving” and “placing”), and the contexts of their use are also broad.

Kim’s basis for reference to the Damascus road experience appears to be nothing more than the use of the aorist participles. The grammar will simply not hold such a supposition, for two major reasons. Kim accepts, as seen above, the position that the tense-forms are temporal indicators, including participles. As already noted above, this is a view that grammarians have disputed for one-hundred years and is clearly refuted in the latest sustained research. Further, Kim also endorses the idea of the aorist tense-form referring to a “single event in the past.”³⁵ This essentially punctiliar view of the aorist, with its origins in nineteenth-century *Aktionsart* theory, has long been disputed, so that today most grammarians would not endorse the idea of the aorist indicating a single or point action—but believe that it represents an action seen as a complete undifferentiated whole, that is, perfective.³⁶ It cannot be necessarily equated with a single event, but can be used to describe multifarious complex actions. Linked to Kim’s view of the aorist as punctiliar is the past-referring sense of the aorist indicative. This is a much more highly disputed area of recent Greek grammatical research. Some still maintain that the indicative in Greek grammaticalizes temporal reference, while others maintain that, like the other mood forms, it does not.³⁷ In any case, even if one admits that there is such debate among grammarians, it is incumbent upon those who invoke such arguments to acknowledge the debate and realize that they simply cannot invoke the aorist form as if it is commonly agreed that the aorist indicative indicates past action—especially as there are numerous examples where clearly it does not. As a result, Kim’s assertion is evacuated of much of its force, as there is no significant lexical item to indi-

³⁵ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 371, with reference to ἐξέστημεν in 2 Cor 5:14. Kim does not explicitly state in his article that he holds to the punctiliar or once-for-all view of the aorist, but his citation of Wolff indicates that he does. Wolff clearly does (“True Apostolic Knowledge,” 93, 94, 95), as does Thrall, *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.433–34. This view has now been superseded by aspectual theory, in which the tense-forms grammaticalize the semantic features of perfective (aorist) and imperfective (present/imperfect) aspect. See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 163–239.

³⁶ One of the first to point this out for biblical scholars was Frank Stagg, “The Abused Aorist,” *JBL* 91 (1972): 222–31. See now Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 75–109, 182–84 (where I critique Kim, *Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 3–31). There are other ways of conceptualizing the aspects as well.

³⁷ The differences are illustrated in Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, ch. 2, and Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 198.

cate the Damascus road experience and no means of linking the grammatical forms, especially the aorist participle, but also the aorist indicative (see below), to such an event—apart from simply assuming one's conclusion.

The other passages that Kim cites provide no more support. (1) The use of ἐξέστημεν in 2 Cor 5:13 essentially boils down to the use of the aorist in juxtaposition to the present σωφρονοῦμεν “to suggest that with the former Paul refers to a single event in the past.”³⁸ As noted above, one cannot simply invoke an aorist indicative as referring to either a single or past event. Kim also fails to note that these two verbs are used in the protases of first-class conditional clauses. Conditional clauses by definition set up a non time-bound syntactical construction that requires specific contextual indicators to establish time and fulfillment (so much has been widely recognized by the two major schemes of conditional statements).³⁹ These indicators are clearly missing in this context. Thus Kim's example fails on three fronts. (2) Kim asserts that the use of κρίναντας and συνέχει in 2 Cor 5:14 also refers to Paul's Damascus road experience. His contention is that it is “beyond doubt” that Paul arrived at a “new and correct ‘judgment’ about Christ's death as a vicarious death on the Damascus road.”⁴⁰ It is certainly not beyond doubt that Paul arrived at both a new and correct estimation of Christ's vicarious death on the basis of this experience. There is nothing that says that he understood everything correctly about Christ's vicarious death simply on the basis of his Damascus road experience. We simply do not know the full extent of what he realized at that moment. We do know that he went to Arabia for a number of years and then consulted with Peter (Gal 1:17–18). We also know that κρίνω is not used in any of the passages identified above as Damascus road passages by Kim. Kim also notes that it is the “aorist participle κρίναντας” that “alludes to Paul's Damascus experience.”⁴¹ We have already seen above that the fact that it is an aorist or a participle does not in fact necessarily indicate reference to such a past event. Likewise, συνέχω, though it may be a “strong” word, is not used in any of

³⁸ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 371, citing E. B. Allo, *Saint Paul: Seconde Épître aux Corinthiens* (Paris: Lecoffre, 1956) and R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Waco: Word, 1986) 127.

³⁹ See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, 292–95.

⁴⁰ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 370.

⁴¹ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 369.

the other Damascus road passages, and is not in the same semantic domain as the words that Kim identifies as strong words in those passages.⁴² Thus, this passage fails on all three fronts. (3) Kim then turns to the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν in 2 Cor 5:16. He claims that it is “almost universally recognized” that this verse alludes to Paul’s Damascus road experience.⁴³ Whether the verse alludes to his Damascus road experience or not, if it does do so it is not simply on the basis of the phrase ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν, which appears nowhere else in Paul’s letters. The phrase probably refers to the time from Christ’s death and resurrection to the present (v. 15), not from Paul’s Damascus road experience. This argument is thus similarly unconvincing. (4) The last example is the language of “new creation” (καινὴ κτίσις) in 2 Cor 5:17. This example dies the death of numerous qualifications by Kim himself. He admits that the new creation took place at Christ’s death and resurrection, the use of τις references an “individual person’s participation” in this new creation, and v. 17 is “formulated gnominically in general terms.”⁴⁴ Kim does not note that it is also used in a conditional clause, with “new creation” the consequence of the condition of someone (τις) becoming a new creature in Christ. It is Kim, not Paul, who makes the specification from the general transformative Christian experience (which would include Paul) to the particular situation of Paul’s Damascus road experience. Thus, this example also fails to be persuasive.

A much more plausible explanation of the origin of Paul’s reconciliation language is not the Damascus road experience—as the language of reconciliation is completely foreign to these contexts—but Paul’s realization of the human condition as antagonistic and at enmity with God on the basis of human transgression and sin. The language of “new creation” invokes the “old creation,” in which sinfulness entered the human race. Paul here divides human existence into two orders, the old and the new (v. 17), with Christ’s death and resurrection standing as the pivot point (v. 15; not Paul’s Damascus

⁴² See J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon* (2 vols.; New York: ABS, 1988).

⁴³ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 369. He cites in support the recent works of O. Betz, “Fleischliche und ‘geistliche’ Christuserkenntnis nach 2 Korinther 5:16,” *TBei* 14 (1983): 167–79, repr. in *idem*, *Jesus—der Herr der Kirche* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1990) 114–28; and Wolff, “True Apostolic Knowledge,” but who (pp. 87–88) cites in support Kim, *Origin*, 13ff. This circular argument goes nowhere.

⁴⁴ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 369.

road experience). If a person is in Christ, that person has moved from the old order to the new (v. 17). Paul's recounting of the fall of humanity as introducing enmity between God and humanity apparently calls forth in his mind Hellenistic treaty language. Paul sees this treaty language as two-pronged. God reconciles those who are his, but then gives them the task of the ministry (v. 18) or proclamation (v. 19) of reconciliation to those who are not, that is, the rest of humanity. The progression is clear: the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (v. 15) stands as the means by which God actively reconciles humanity (vv. 18, 19), and gives to humanity the task of being ambassadors for Christ, as if God himself were entreating through them to be reconciled to God (v. 20).

In the light of this discussion, Kim describes Paul's opponents and his response.⁴⁵ Regarding the "Doctrine of 'Reconciliation'" Kim lists four "facts" that he contends have been ascertained:

- (1) "reconciliation' language is uniquely Pauline in the New Testament"—indeed, Paul is the only one to use this reconciliation language in the New Testament;
- (2) reconciliation terminology reflects Hellenistic and Hellenistic Jewish background (disputed above) although the "formulation of God 'reconciling' human beings to himself is unique and represents a fundamental innovation in Religionsgeschichte"—this is the first recorded usage in the ancient literature in which the active form of the verb is used of the subject effecting reconciliation by giving up its own anger against another party;
- (3) 2 Cor 5:11–21 is "full of allusions to Paul's Damascus experience of conversion/call"—this has not been demonstrated, through either grammatical or lexical means;
- (4) Paul's reconciliation language, including his being a minister of reconciliation, was motivated by a "response to his opponents who criticized his past as an enemy of Christ and his church in order to discredit his apostolic claim based on the Damascus event"⁴⁶—whatever the position of his opponents, the link to his Damascus road experience has not been shown.

⁴⁵ This discussion takes me too far afield from the primary focus on reconciliation language and will not be treated here.

⁴⁶ Kim, "2 Cor. 5:11–21," 382.

On the basis of these supposed facts, Kim believes that it is “reasonable to conclude that Paul developed his soteriological metaphor ‘reconciliation’ from his own Damascus experience.”⁴⁷ This conclusion clearly does not follow and cannot be substantiated by Kim as he has argued. Instead, the immediate literary context, influenced by Paul’s knowledge of the Hellenistic usage, seems to provide the background for his reconciliation language in 2 Cor 5:18–20.

b. *Romans 5:10–11*

Ralph Martin has returned to reconciliation passages in a recent treatment of Rom 5:1–11.⁴⁸ He essentially divides his discussion of the passage into three parts: background regarding the human condition, the theological emphasis upon God’s action, and the trajectory of Paul’s belief regarding reconciliation. There is much that is unquestionable and unobjectionable to what Martin says, continuing and developing ideas that he put forward in his earlier monograph. However, at a number of points he raises questions of interpretation regarding the concept of reconciliation that merit further discussion.

1. *Background regarding the Human Condition.* After emphasizing that the human condition is one of helplessness on the basis of sin (Rom 3:23), and standing under God’s judgmental wrath (Rom 5:9), with the result that those outside of Christ are alienated and separated from him, Martin turns to the notion of being God’s enemies (Rom 5:10). In deciding between the active (“while we were hating God”) and passive (“while God was opposed to us”) senses of what it means to be God’s enemies, Martin contends for the latter on two grounds.⁴⁹ One is that the context of Rom 1:18–3:20 indicates that, as a result of his anger, the world stands under God’s sentence and hence his opposition or enmity. The second is that reconciliation, according to Rom 5:10, is “to God,” which indicates that it is God who has let go of his anger, not the human.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Kim, “2 Cor. 5:11–21,” 382.

⁴⁸ R. P. Martin, “Reconciliation: Romans 5:1–11,” in S. K. Soderlund and N. T. Wright (eds.), *Romans and the People of God* (FS G. D. Fee; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) 36–48. Much of this material is also found in his earlier *Reconciliation*, 135–54.

⁴⁹ Martin, “Reconciliation,” 38. Both arguments are from Wolter, *Rechtfertigung*, 86.

⁵⁰ I follow Wolter’s argument here, as Martin’s explication of it is unclear.

Martin has fallen into an unfortunate disjunction regarding human and divine enmity. Paul uses a parallelism in vv. 8 and 10 that indicates that humans, being sinners, are thus enemies of God. It is this human opposition that generates God's wrath. On the basis of Rom 1:18–3:20, Paul establishes that all humankind, including the Jews, is indicted, so that both active and passive senses of the concept of enmity are present.⁵¹ Romans states that humans constitute themselves as God's enemies not only by their sin, but also in their disdain for godly things. Being an "enemy" summarizes the human's status both as cut off in relation to God and as contentious with God. Human sin therefore precipitates God's wrath and hostility, thereby severing the relationship with humanity.⁵²

Concerning the wrath of God, Martin is probably correct that it has both forensic and eschatological dimensions. He states that the term ὀργή, reflecting the apocalyptic "day of judgment," is said by Paul to already be at work (1 Thess 2:16; Rom 9:22), but that its future dimension is also present (Rom 5:9). He thinks that this indicates that the "peace" in Rom 5:1 is consequently "a synonym in Jewish expectation for the new age of messianic bliss and favor."⁵³ This does not necessarily follow. "Peace" language is often linked with the notion of reconciliation, so that having peace with God (Rom 5:1) and reconciliation (Rom 5:10) are to be seen as partial synonyms that share the same semantic domain.⁵⁴ Romans 5:10 implies the sense of a state or time of peace without war, as reconciliation language is grounded in treaty language in which enmity and hostility are exchanged for peaceful relations. In the larger context of Rom 5:1–11, language of peace seems to function in the wider realm of relational words in which a state of objective well being, leading to harmonious relations between people or nations, is spoken of (a spiritual or eschatological sense is only secondary), a sense similar to the classical sense of the word.⁵⁵ This is consistent with the Hellenistic background of reconciliation language.

⁵¹ See Moo, *Romans*, 312.

⁵² Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 158–59; cf. O. Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1955) 136; R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament* (2 vols.; trans. G. Krodel; New York: Scribner's, 1951) 1.286.

⁵³ Martin, "Reconciliation," 39.

⁵⁴ See Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 502–503, subdomain 40.1. Martin also recognizes this (Martin, "Reconciliation," 41).

⁵⁵ See Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 154; *idem*, "Peace, Reconciliation," 696.

2. *Theological Emphasis upon God's Action.* (a) Martin defends the notion that "At the heart of this passage is the revelation of divine love" (Rom 5:8).⁵⁶ Contrary to what might be expected, he says, Paul does not use love language very often. Nevertheless, he contends that it is a "clear datum in Paul's soteriology."⁵⁷ Martin sees the love of God, first, as having such a character that Christ would die for sinners (v. 7),⁵⁸ that this love was expressed "at the right time" or "at the appointed hour" of what Martin calls "prophetic destiny and eschatological hope," and that Paul uses references to the "death" of Christ (Rom 5:10) and his "blood" (Rom 5:9) as "shorthand expressions" for the "self-sacrifice" of Christ for humans.⁵⁹ There is no doubt that there is some significance to the love of God in this context. And, whereas this may make sense as a theological analysis of reconciliation and related matters (see Martin's reference to soteriology), the text here does not make the correlation explicit. The text here constructs the correlation only in an indirect way. Romans 5:8 states that God proved or demonstrated his love to humankind because Christ died—it does not say that the love of God is the basis or source or ground of reconciliation. Keck states that "Although Romans is a theocentric book, everything about Paul that matters and everything that Christians are and hope for pivot on this figure 'in' whom and 'through' whom God effects salvation. That is, Paul refers to him 'adverbially'—to specify and qualify God's act."⁶⁰

There are two further observations to make regarding Martin's analysis. One is that he relies upon the Biblical Theology movement notion of *καιρός* indicating a "decisive moment." Consequently, he translates Rom 5:6 "at the right time" or "at the appointed hour," also citing Mark 1:15; 12:2; *Pss. Sol.* 17.21. I wish in no way to dispute that Christ died at the right time for sinners, but that right time is established by Christ's reconciling death, no matter what word for time is used for it (cf. Gal 4:4, where *χρόνος* is used of that same time; 1 Thess 5:1 where both words for time are used).⁶¹

⁵⁶ Martin, "Reconciliation," 39.

⁵⁷ Martin, "Reconciliation," 40.

⁵⁸ Martin, "Reconciliation," 40.

⁵⁹ Martin, "Reconciliation," 41.

⁶⁰ L. Keck, "Jesus' in Romans," *JBL* 108 (1989): 443–60, here 449.

⁶¹ See J. Barr, *Biblical Words for Time* (SBT 33; 2d ed.; London: SCM Press, 1969) esp. 21–47.

Martin also theologizes the tense-forms unnecessarily. Regarding God's love, he notes that its "proof was seen in what God did in the past event of the cross ('Christ died,' vv. 6, 8)," both of which are aorist tense-form verbs. Later he notes that Romans 5 emphasizes "by the use of past (aorist) tenses of the verbs that reconciliation is a historical event, complete in its 'having-happenedness.'"⁶² However, he also notes that "the demonstration [of God's love] continues—Paul's verb *συνίστησιν* ('shows,' 'proves' NRSV) is present tense—because the one historical event of the cross has given for all time the paradigm of what is always true of God, namely that he is love." Thus, Martin brings the two tense-forms together in theological harmony by seeing that God's "eternal nature once—and once for all—came into focus at Christ's cross, and its power remains."⁶³ The singularity of Christ's death on the cross is established on the basis of the event and its interpretation, not on the basis of what tense-form is used to talk about it (note that the aorist and present tense-forms of Greek are used to speak of his death).⁶⁴ The aorist tense-form does not indicate once for all action or even a past event (the aorist is not a or the past tense-form in Greek, and the use of an aorist does not necessarily imply historicity any more than any other tense-form). The present tense-form may grammaticalize imperfective semantics but it is clearly stretching the sense of the tense-form to state that it indicates that the event continues for all time (see above).

(b) Martin notes that Paul does not say how reconciliation occurs except that its background is in God's wrath toward sinners (but see above), God's unconstrained initiative proves his love (again, see above), and the human's part is to "receive the reconciliation" or "enjoy peace with God" as what Martin calls "a present possession."

⁶² Martin, "Reconciliation," 44. Martin continues by drawing unnecessary distinctions regarding other passages on the basis of the tense-forms—e.g. Col 1:22 and Rom 5:10 with aorist passive verb forms "leave no room for misunderstanding as to the completeness and certainty of what God has done," and 2 Cor 5:18 with the periphrastic imperfect indicating "the state of an ongoing process" rather than a "final deed." If there is no uncertainty regarding an action, it is not established on the basis of the aorist tense-form, and the periphrastic imperfect does not necessarily oppose the finality of a deed.

⁶³ Martin, "Reconciliation," 40.

⁶⁴ E.g. aorist tense-form in Rom 5:6, 8; present tense-form in John 11:51; 12:33; 18:32.

Martin accepts the subjunctive reading ἔχωμεν in Rom 5:1,⁶⁵ but says that the rendering “let us have peace” is “inappropriate as an unqualified translation in this context.”⁶⁶ Martin wishes to theologize the use of the subjunctive in two regards. The first is that he wishes to assert that humans must still receive reconciliation, and therefore exercise their individual human responsibility. He then wishes to equate this understanding with the “indicative” (“We have peace”) and “imperative” [sic] (“Let us have peace”) that is typical of Pauline ethics.⁶⁷ This is unnecessary theologizing. It may be true that Paul does not go into detail on how it is that one appropriates reconciliation. However, the use of the subjunctive (not the imperative, as Martin states) in Rom 5:1 is sufficient to understand the passage. Martin seems to reflect the perspective of those who argue for the indicative reading in Rom 5:1 on the basis that the use of the subjunctive in some way calls into question the effectiveness of the work of Christ.⁶⁸ Such interpretations have confused the issue of verbal attitude. This use of the hortatory subjunctive exhorts the reader to possess what is; it does not call into question what is.⁶⁹ The use of the subjunctive in Rom 5:1 is mirrored in 6:1. The effect of the use of the subjunctive in Rom 5:1 is to suggest that justification provides the groundwork for enjoying peace with God. Paul bases this relationship on Jesus Christ, who provides access to God (Rom 5:2). This relationship allows boasting despite ill-fortune which may also be experienced. As a result, contrary to Martin, who does not emphasize this tripartite linkage, Paul sees justification and reconciliation or enjoying peace as overlapping metaphors, even verging on equation, yet each suggesting a different perspective on God’s one work.⁷⁰ The parallelism of Rom 5:1 and 10a with God as the common object illustrates that the securing of peace is contextually synonymous with what is meant by reconciliation. The exhortation to enjoy peace (Rom 5:1) is not to be seen as exhorting movement to a subsequent

⁶⁵ Martin, “Reconciliation,” 36 (translation), 42.

⁶⁶ Martin, “Reconciliation,” 42. He recognizes that the textual evidence favors it. See Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 149.

⁶⁷ Martin, “Reconciliation,” 42.

⁶⁸ E.g. Wolter, *Rechtfertigung*, 91–94.

⁶⁹ See Porter, *Verbal Aspect*, chs. 4 and 7, esp. 163–78.

⁷⁰ See C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975–79) 1.266; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (HNTC; New York: Harper and Row, 1957) 108.

stage, but as exhorting appropriation of circumstances attendant with justification. Paul sees the expectation of final salvation as the result of this common act, called either justification or reconciliation, in his parallel use of the future passive form, σωθησόμεθα, in Rom 5:9b and 10b. This is part of an eschatological statement, in which reference in Rom 5:9 to salvation from the wrath of God is probably also to be understood in v. 10 (cf. Rom 2:5, 8).⁷¹

3. *The Trajectory of Paul's Belief regarding Reconciliation.* In his final section, Martin compares usage in Rom 5:1–11 with that in other Pauline passages. (a) Martin notes that Paul gives a heightened profile to love in Rom 5:1–11. I have already commented on the role that love plays in Rom 5:8. However, what Martin does not mention is that the love of Christ is mentioned in 2 Cor 5:14. The love of Christ is what constrains “us,” Paul says, having determined that one died for all, therefore all died. Martin does not refer to this here or in his book.⁷² What Martin does emphasize in this section and the next is the means of reconciliation. Here he is correct that whereas 2 Cor 5:18 and 19 mention the work of Christ twice, the work of Christ is mentioned in Rom 5:8, 9, 10 and 11, as well as in v. 1. Similarly Col 1:20 mentions the work of Christ two or three times (there is a textual variant)⁷³ and v. 22 twice (depending upon how one takes the phrase “by the body of his flesh through death”).⁷⁴ There is clearly an emphasis throughout on the work of Christ, especially in Romans 5.⁷⁵

(b) The last item I wish to discuss is Martin's assertion that Paul “was not the first to invent or use the term” reconciliation. It “was already part of the Christian vocabulary before he adopted it.”⁷⁶ There are two bases for Martin's assertion of this. The first is that he believes that Rom 3:25 uses “traditional teaching” regarding expiation/propitiation that he does not explain but that basically offers the “rationale” for reconciliation. The second is Martin's citation of Kim's article on 2 Cor 5:11–21 that attributes the reconciliation

⁷¹ Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 155–60.

⁷² Martin, *Reconciliation*, 90–110 (so far as I can tell).

⁷³ Note the parallel use of “reconcile” and “make peace” in Col 1:20.

⁷⁴ Eph 2:16 mentions the work of Christ once.

⁷⁵ See Porter, *Καταλλάσσω*, 157–58.

⁷⁶ Martin, “Reconciliation,” 48.

language to Paul's Damascus road experience.⁷⁷ I need not respond to the second basis, as I have already discussed it above. It is entirely plausible that, as Martin states, Paul "formulated his gospel in communicating it to the Gentiles" in terms of reconciliation language.⁷⁸ However, that is a far cry from proving that the language of reconciliation in Christian circles was pre-existent (a parallel he cites is Phil 2:6–11, a passage that Martin is closely identified with as believing it was pre-existent material, but a view that not all endorse).⁷⁹ There is no doubt that the Hellenistic language of reconciliation predated Paul, and that there was even some theological usage in 2 Maccabees that preceded him. However, all of the indications are that Paul was a linguistic innovator at least in Christian circles. There is no evidence of Christian usage of reconciliation language before Paul. 2 Corinthians 5:18–20 appears to be the first usage in Christian circles. This usage was, however, innovative in that Paul is the first author for whom there is extant evidence of using the active voice form of the verb with God, the offended party, as the instigator of reconciliation (usage e).

3. *Conclusion*

The Pauline concept of reconciliation continues to be of interest to scholars. However, a number of comments can be made about these two recent attempts to analyze the concept. One is that there has been a distinct failure to appropriate, incorporate and appreciate for theological purposes the latest developments in Greek grammar and linguistics. As a result, the foundations that are laid as the basis for further theological analysis are often faulty and in need of revisiting to see whether the implications drawn from the analysis can be firmly placed on the exegetical data. This is certainly the case with Kim's work on 2 Cor 5:11–21. His greatest difficulties with the passage are predicated on debatable judgments about the Greek text. When these

⁷⁷ Martin, "Reconciliation," 48 n. 18.

⁷⁸ Martin, "Reconciliation," 47.

⁷⁹ See R. P. Martin, *Carmen Christi: Philippians ii: 5–11 in Recent Interpretation and in the Setting of Early Christian Worship* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983). Contra G. D. Fee, "Philippians 2:5–11: Hymn or Exalted Pauline Prose?" *BBR* 2 (1992): 29–46.

underpinnings are taken away, both his exegesis and his attempt to establish the background of the passage are severely compromised. Martin's work too suffers from some of the same difficulties, although his textual analysis is often less tied to the particular text and more inclined to range more widely and theologically. Another implication is that these essays both show that theology requires a sturdy exegetical foundation in order to move forward. One of the neglected factors in some recent theologizing about the New Testament is the necessity of an accurate exegetical foundation. Theories that, for example, are based upon outmoded—or at the least unsupported—theories of the Greek language are rightly going to raise questions. The theology of the New Testament in general, and specific theological concepts such as reconciliation, among many others, are too important to our larger enterprise of understanding the New Testament and its writers to compromise it through neglecting fundamental steps of exegesis. Otherwise, the grand structures that we build will be subject to shifting and potentially collapsing foundations.⁸⁰ Thirdly and lastly, despite these several caveats and cautions, it is reassuring to see that scholars continue to develop their understandings of Paul's reconciliation passages. These passages—despite some limitations of the exegesis of them—are still very important for understanding the books in which they appear and the greater scope of

⁸⁰ A specific case in point is the reliance upon a temporal conception of the Greek tense-forms to establish the framework of New Testament theology. For example, G. B. Caird (*New Testament Theology* [ed. L. D. Hurst; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994] 118–35; cf. A. M. Hunter, *Interpreting Paul's Gospel* [London: SCM Press, 1954] 21–55) refers to the three tenses of salvation, although he recognizes that an interpreter must recognize what he calls the “ambiguities of the Greek tenses” (p. 120), and that it is not necessarily the case that what he calls “past verbs refer to salvation as an accomplished fact and all future verbs to the final consummation” (p. 120). Less guarded, and hence more vulnerable to undermining what he tries to accomplish, is Dunn. He believes that there are two epochs in Paul's theology, and that these two epochs had two stages: “It had a beginning, but it was also a continuing process. This is mirrored in the two [sic] tenses of Paul's Greek—the aorist, denoting a decisive event in the past, and the present, denoting an ongoing process” (*Theology of Paul*, 319). In one chapter he will focus on “the aorist tense, ‘the beginning of salvation,’ and return to the present continuous tense, ‘the process of salvation,’” later (p. 319). Further, he states that he had noted that “there were two tenses of salvation for Paul—the aorist and the continuous [sic]. These are the grammatical signifiers of the two phases of salvation, the beginning and the ongoing” (p. 461). Dunn seems unaware of recent grammatical research, sadly confirming A. T. Robertson's observation (taken slightly out of context) that in some cases “the theologian steps in . . . sometimes before the grammarian is through” (*Grammar*, 389).

Paul's thought. These two essays continue that productive discussion. Paul's notion still comes clearly through—he has theologically adapted Hellenistic exchange and treaty language to speak of the fundamental relationship between God and humanity. God, though the effected party, has instigated reconciliation of humanity by means of the work of Jesus Christ. Paul was, apparently, the first one to formulate the notion in this way, and the implications of this formulation still require further, productive elucidation.

COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES: RETHINKING HOW TO INTERPRET PAUL'S LETTERS

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1. *Introduction: Proposal to Color outside the Lines*

While there have been many efforts to find the center of Paul's theology or a consistent theology in Paul,¹ a resulting consensus has proven illusive. Instead of retreading well-worn paths or taking a side in current debates, this essay seeks to color outside the lines. Specifically, I propose that we rethink how we go about interpreting Paul's letters and develop well-thought-out approaches to using the latest informational and technological advances in aid of that task. What follows is the presentation of a preliminary framework and sample applications for the OpenText.org annotation of the Greek New Testament in a re-analysis of Paul's letters as individual communications.²

The method aims to describe the various phenomena in the text, with minimal commitment to any specific theories regarding the content, and uses categories based on linguistic distinctions. This type of analysis yields fresh, comprehensive information on a variety of levels, ranging from the relationship of the author and the audience and the beliefs of the author and audience as portrayed in the text.

¹ These include the efforts of the Society of Biblical Literature's Pauline Theology Group, which published its discussions in four volumes of collected essays, Jouette Bassler, David M. Hay and E. Elizabeth Johnson (eds.), *Pauline Theology* (4 vols.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1991–97). For recent treatments of Paul's theology, see, e.g., James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); Thomas R. Schreiner, *Paul, Apostle of God's Glory in Christ: A Pauline Theology* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2001); Ben Witherington III, *Paul's Narrative Thought World: The Tapestry of Tragedy and Triumph* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994); and N. T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said: Was Paul of Tarsus the Real Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

² The OpenText.org materials may be accessed at <http://divinity.mcmaster.ca/OpenText/about>. Part of the OpenText.org work has also been licensed to Logos Bible Software and is being integrated into version 3.0 of their software.

Partial re-analyses of Romans—a partial overview and two section analyses—serve as test cases.

2. *Explaining the Method*

In a written text, the combination of words and grammar we read gives more than just isolated meanings or ideas. The text, in fact, gives a representation of the world (or imaginary world) relevant to the particular communication involved. For instance, a romance novel will represent not only the process of falling in love, but also the characters who fall in love (as well as other characters involved in their story) and the various situations the characters go through. For a New Testament letter like Romans, the text likewise represents a world involving participants (i.e., the characters who do and receive actions), processes (i.e., things done or experienced), and circumstances (i.e., the situations the participants find themselves facing while doing or experiencing various actions). Therefore, to get a complete picture of the overall meaning of a text, we must ask at least three questions: (1) What is going on? (2) Who are the participants and how are they interacting with one another? and (3) How do what is going on and how the participants are interacting fit together under the given circumstances?

In suggesting these three lines of investigation, I have significantly adapted and simplified the threefold perspective on the functions of language in M. A. K. Halliday's systemic functional linguistics.³ Strictly speaking, a complete analysis of any text requires exhaustive examination of every linguistic feature for ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings. For ideational meanings, the task is to reconstruct the portrait of reality represented. It would involve a complete tracing of processes, participants, and circumstances expressed in all clauses in the text.⁴ For interpersonal meanings, it would involve a comprehensive study of the roles and interactions between the author and the audience in the text to uncover all the social relations and

³ The three metafunctions of language are the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual. See M. A. K. Halliday and Christian M. I. M. Matthiessen, *An Introduction to Functional Grammar* (3d ed.; London: Arnold, 2004). An accessible introduction is Geoff Thompson, *Introducing Functional Grammar* (2d ed.; London: Arnold, 2004).

⁴ The process is typically realized by a verbal group; the participant in a process by a nominal group; and circumstances by an adverbial or prepositional group.

social exchanges inscribed therein. In a departure from Halliday, I propose that we expand the investigation of interpersonal meanings to both internal (the characters in the text besides the author and the audience) and external participants (the author and the audience).⁵ For textual meanings, the task is to unravel how the text is put together as a message. It would involve tracing all linguistic elements that tie different parts of the text together as a cohesive (and coherent) whole and that advance, highlight, or support the themes. This essay will give suggestive, representative explorations of the theory and applications that need to be developed. Comprehensive study of Paul's letters will have to await the imminent release of the full corpus of the OpenText.org annotation of the Greek New Testament and extended computer-assisted analysis of that corpus.⁶

a. *Finding out What Is Going on: Studying Ideational Meanings*

One angle for figuring out what is represented as going on in a text is through analyzing the meanings of words. As already noted above, however, the combination of words and grammar we read give more than just isolated meanings or ideas. Fixating on individual words would be akin to losing sight of the forest by staring at individual trees. For this reason, the representational content of the text is best analyzed not primarily as individual lexical items, but more in terms of their fields of meaning using the semantic domains supplied by the Louw-Nida lexicon.⁷ This kind of investigation, called a semantic field analysis, involves "an interplay between the conceptual domains and the individual lexical items that fall within those domains."⁸ The Louw-Nida lexicon and its classifications of semantic

⁵ Such an approach takes better account of the fact that most of the so-called discursive material in the New Testament is not really discursive in the modern Western way of developing a topic. Whereas we are used to the expounding of ideas, even when the New Testament writers are explaining a concept, they do so by invoking stories about the past, present, and future that involve the interactions and activities of the main participants God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit that affect the writers and their audiences.

⁶ On the application of corpus linguistics to the Greek of the New Testament, see Matthew Brook O'Donnell, *Corpus Linguistics and the Greek of the New Testament* (NTM 6; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2005).

⁷ Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (2d ed.; New York: United Bible Societies, 1989).

⁸ Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation in the Book of Romans: Definitions, Proposals, Data and Experiments,"

domains form the foundation for exploring the semantic chains embodied in the text.⁹ The underlying assumption is that common fields and subfields of meaning in a text “point the focus of the subject matter in a particular direction.”¹⁰

While exploring the meaning fields within a discourse is a good starting point, fuller exploration must take into account the system of transitivity, since an author’s exploitation of fields of meaning is often not restricted to the same word class (another noun, an adjective, a verb, word groups, or even clauses could be linked to a previous noun in the meaning field), let alone the same word. In other words, all three of the basic elements of process structures—the process itself, the participants in the process, and the circumstances associated with the process (i.e., the transitivity patterns)—need to be examined.¹¹ Halliday distinguishes six process types. The three

in Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Diglossia and Other Topics in New Testament Linguistics* (JSNTSup 193; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) 160. This method builds on Reed’s development of the idea that there are semantic chains in a discourse (Jeffrey T. Reed, *A Discourse Analysis of Philippians: Method and Rhetoric in the Debate over Literary Integrity* [JSNTSup 136; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997] 297–331). The semantic chains are generally classified as (a) objects or entities (domains 1–12); (b) events or processes (13–57); (c) abstracts (58–88); and (d) discourse referentials (92–93). At this point of its development, the semantic domains annotation in the OpenText.org text simply records all the possible semantic domains for each word as catalogued in the Louw-Nida lexicon.

⁹ While the Louw-Nida lexicon has its imperfections, it is, nevertheless, a major accomplishment in lexicography. See Stanley E. Porter, *Studies in the Greek New Testament: Theory and Practice* (SBG 6; New York: Peter Lang, 1996) 69–73; and D. A. Black, review of *Greek-English Lexicon*, ed. J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *FN* 1 (1988): 217–18. For a critical analysis of the lexicon, see J. Lee, “The United Bible Societies’ Lexicon and Its Analysis of Meaning,” *FN* 5 (1992): 167–89. For Louw’s response, see J. P. Louw, “The Analysis of Meaning in Lexicography,” *FN* 6 (1993): 139–48. For details on the theory of lexicography reflected in the lexicon, see J. P. Louw and E. A. Nida, *Lexical Semantics of the Greek New Testament* (SBLRBS 25; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992); and J. P. Louw, “How Do Words Mean—If They Do?” *FN* 4 (1991): 125–42.

¹⁰ Porter and O’Donnell, “Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation,” 159.

¹¹ The concept of transitivity in Halliday’s grammatical system is a powerful tool in the analysis of the meanings expressed in clauses. The term transitivity has a broader and narrower meaning. The narrower meaning (found in traditional grammatical description and the one with which most readers are probably familiar) involves the verb’s relationship to dependent elements of structure. Transitive verbs take a direct object and intransitive verbs do not. Stated differently, the action of the verb extends to another entity in a transitive clause, but not in an intransitive clause. For example, the difference between “The tiger (Actor) pounced (Process)” and “The tiger (Actor) ate (Process) the deer (Goal)” is that the action “eat” extends to “the deer.” In the broader meaning (as proposed by Halliday and assumed in the OpenText.org annotation), transitivity refers to a system of describing the whole

main process types are: (1) material (i.e., what is going on outside oneself), (2) mental (i.e., inner experience—awareness of our own states of being and reaction to our outer experience), and (3) relational (i.e., classifying and identifying one experience with other experiences). Stated differently, material processes basically involve a participant (the Actor/Agent) doing something to another participant (the Goal/Object). Mental processes involve the human senses—perception, affection, and cognition. Relational processes relate two terms in a variety of ways (similar to how the verb “to be” is used in English). The other three process types are located at the boundaries between the main process types. Behavioral processes border the material and mental, being outward expressions of inner workings. Verbal processes straddle the mental and relational: symbolic relationships are recognized and constructed in human consciousness. Existential processes border the relational and the material: phenomena are recognized to exist or to happen.¹² Oftentimes, these distinctions may be collapsed to ask a more fundamental question, “Who is doing what to/for whom?” with the focus on the doing and how it is done.

Besides its cohesive function (i.e., tying different sections of texts together), lexical cohesion also contributes to the meaning of the discourse by emphasizing certain meanings. From the standpoint of semantic weight, a word or meaning field that occurs frequently within a connected section of text (whether a local unit or stretching across the entire discourse) is marked and likely a prominent meaning field (roughly related to traditional notions of “important

clause, which consists of the various types of processes together with the structures that realize these processes. In the OpenText.org model, the system of transitivity is seen to be constructed by two basic levels of grammatical structures above the individual word—the clause and word group. Greek clauses are typically made up of a predicator functional component at minimum, with optional subject, complement, and adjunct functional components. Individual words are often insufficient to fulfill the function of a clause component—hence groups of words that modify the semantic or grammatical function of the individual words are used. In fact, words will either occur singly or as a grouping with a single head-term and one or more dependent words that modify the meaning or function of the head-term. In other words, sometimes words form groups of one—the one word is sufficient to fulfill its function as a clause component—and sometimes words form groups with one head-term and one or more modifiers. Moreover, while frequently a clause component is made up of a single word group, often it is made up of a series of word groups conjoined together.

¹² See Halliday and Matthiessen, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 170–259; cf. Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 62–69.

or emphasized theme”).¹³ If the words involved refer to a participant in the text, that participant is marked and likely a prominent participant.¹⁴ Furthermore, words or participants that receive heavy semantic modification (i.e., defined or qualified significantly by other words) are usually prominent as well.

b. *Mapping the Roles and Interactions of the Participants: Studying Interpersonal Meanings*

The study of interpersonal meanings shares a concern with rhetorical criticism: it seeks to answer the question, “What kind of effect was [the text] intended to achieve and what does this tell us about the situation?”¹⁵ Specifically, interpreters can learn how Paul interacts with his readers by scrutinizing the interpersonal meanings he inscribed in the text. In doing so, one unveils Paul’s rhetorical aims and the social roles and social interactions underlying and communicated through the letter.¹⁶ This approach shares some of the con-

¹³ As Greek is an inflected language (e.g., the nouns change form depending on case and number and the verbs change form depending on tense, voice, mood, person, and number), inflectional differences do not disqualify an instance of word repetition from being considered a simple repetition. For example, the singular ἀμαρτία, “sin,” is a simple repetition of the plural ἀμαρτιῶν, “sins.” Words sharing the same morpheme, but which belong to different word classes (e.g., a verb with its cognate noun) are considered complex repetition. For instance, the verb ἔγνων, “I knew,” is a complex repetition of the noun ἐπίγνωσις, “knowledge.” On lexical patterning in texts, see Michael Hoey, *Patterns of Lexis in Text* (DEL; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991).

¹⁴ The term prominent is being extended to words, meaning fields, and participants here on the premise that since both grammar and lexis are on the same continuum of resources for making meaning, words and meaning fields can also be marked in opposition to the other words and meaning fields within a discourse. The usual criterion of distributional frequency would be reversed in this case—the more frequent word, meaning field, or participant is prominent over against the less frequent ones.

¹⁵ The question originated from Klaus Berger, “Rhetorical Criticism, New Form Criticism, and New Testament Hermeneutics,” in S. E. Porter and T. H. Olbricht (eds.), *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (JSNTSup 90; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993) 392.

¹⁶ “The interpersonal meanings are informative of how Paul interacts with his readers in the world of the text” (Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 347). “The situation as envisioned by the author is more important for understanding the message, than are the ‘actual’ historical circumstances. This implicit view can be perceived from the text” (Lauri Thurén, *Derhetorizing Paul: A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law* [WUNT 124; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 2000] 99). There is no chasm between the situation inscribed in the text and the actual historical circumstances, however. For instance, “We may assume that the epithets applied to

cerns of literary approaches to the problem of the reader. The portrait of the inscribed readers derived from interpersonal meanings corresponds to the encoded explicit reader in literary approaches.¹⁷ For Greek, the analysis mainly involves the modality of the verb and the participant structure, i.e., the realization of person (first, second, and third), and what roles the external participants (i.e., Paul and his audience) play in the discourse.¹⁸ As the other participants internal to the letter (especially God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit) are also portrayed as having relationships with the external participants, an exploration of their roles and interactions in the text can be equally informative.

The clearest expression of interpersonal meanings is found in explicit social designation of roles and relations between the participants. While these designations convey ideational meanings (i.e., as part of the representation of the world), they also portray the relational foundation for the social exchange. As the opening formula of Hellenistic letters set the social and interpersonal context for those letters,¹⁹ these explicit designations tend to congregate in the opening.

In addition to studying the explicit naming of roles and relations, I propose that each clause needs to be tracked in terms of “who is doing to or for whom?” with the focus on what it says about the roles and interactions of the participants. For instance, the clauses, “The teacher said to his disciple, ‘This is how you do it’” and “Jesus

a community, especially when unaccompanied by explanation or apology, correspond at least in some measure with the understanding which that community has of itself” (T. J. Deidun, *New Covenant Morality in Paul* [AnBib 89; Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1981] 3).

¹⁷ The three basic categories compatible with a wide range of literary approaches are the empirical reader, the encoded explicit reader, and the encoded implicit reader. The empirical reader refers to actual readers like the Roman Christians and interpreters like you and me. The encoded explicit reader refers to the audience explicitly inscribed in the text. The encoded implicit reader refers to the audience with all the knowledge necessary to fully understand the text—similar to the idea of the ideal reader. See Stanley K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 21.

¹⁸ Besides explicit labels like “all the gentiles, including you yourselves” (Rom 1:5), the encoded explicit reader includes “direct address of the audience in the second person plural and direct reference in the first person plural as well as the expression ‘brothers’” (Stowers, *Rereading of Romans*, 21).

¹⁹ Cf. Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 181–92. In a letter like Romans, it seems necessary for Paul to encode his perception of his relationship with his audience, especially given that he had never visited the Roman Christians. Both explicit social designations and speech roles within the discourse inscribe the social exchange that Paul sees happening (or desires to happen) between him and his readers.

taught him, “This is how you do it,” both involve the subject of the main clause playing the role of a teacher. In the former, the role is expressed by the noun, “teacher”; in the latter, the role is implicit in the process, “taught.”

For the investigation of social interaction, the classification of speech roles is also helpful. Two types of fundamental speech roles may be identified: (1) giving and (2) demanding. Equally fundamental are the two types of commodity being exchanged: (1) information and (2) goods and services. Taken together, these two variables make up the four basic categories of language functioning as an exchange: (1) statements, (2) questions, (3) offers, and (4) commands.²⁰

In Greek, the majority of speech functions (statement, question, offer, or command) can be determined through the mood of the verb.²¹ The indicative mood form grammaticalizes an assertion about what the speaker sees as reality (whether or not there is a factual basis for such an assertion) and thus represents the primary means of giving or demanding information (statements and questions). Commands and prohibitions are primarily grammaticalized by the imperative and subjunctive. Offers are rare, coming mainly in Paul’s “grace” wishes (optative or verbless).²²

²⁰ Halliday and Matthiessen, *Introduction to Functional Grammar*, 106–11. Cf. Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 80–81.

²¹ Mood concerns “the extent to which speakers/authors commit themselves to, or distance themselves from, propositions” (Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 82). Mood conveys interpersonal meanings in conjunction with the indication of the identity and role of the participants by means of voice, person, and number. Where the writer is indicated as the subject, the mood indicates whether the writer is (1) giving or demanding information (typically indicative mood); or (2) demanding goods-and-services (commanding and prohibiting uses of the imperative, subjunctive, optative). Where the discussion is done in third person, the writer is still giving information to his audience, but cannot directly demand anything since the third person participant involved is projected into the discussion, but is not identical with the second person audience.

²² Reed gives a more complete list: “The three moods—indicative, subjunctive and optative—may all be used in an exchange of information (statement or question), each indicating different gradations of probability from the speaker’s point of view. Exchanges of goods-and-services, however, are typically expressed by the imperative, negated aorist subjunctive, ‘hortatory’ subjunctive (command) or future tense-form (offer). Interrogatives . . . are often indicated by means of interrogative pronouns or particles. . . . [There are also] a variety of adjuncts . . . [that] modify the verb by expressing such functions as probability, usuality, obligation, [and] inclination” (*Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 82–83).

c. *Figuring out How Everything Fits Together into a Coherent Message: Studying Textual Meanings*

Study of the larger units of discourse and how they cohere together as a unified whole is still not a well-integrated discipline in New Testament investigation.²³ Within the OpenText.org project itself, the parameters of how to determine and annotate paragraphs are also not yet finalized.

A complete examination of the textual meanings was not attempted.²⁴ In lieu of a comprehensive approach, this essay explores some possible prongs of attack from the perspective of lexical cohesion and prominence in conjunction with analyzing ideational and interpersonal meanings.²⁵

²³ The scene in North America is dominated by the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL), whose work has largely been done in relation to Bible translation and is not well integrated into mainstream New Testament scholarship. For some representative works from this school, see the essays in D. A. Black *et al.* (eds.), *Linguistics and New Testament Interpretation: Essays on Discourse Analysis* (Nashville: Broadman, 1992); John Beekman, John Callow, and Michael Kopeseć, *The Semantic Structure of Written Communication* (5th ed.; Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981); and the application of their theory by Elinor MacDonald Rogers, *A Semantic Structure Analysis of Galatians* (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1981); Kathleen Callow, *Discourse Considerations in Translating the Word of God* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974); and Stephen H. Levinsohn, *Discourse Features of New Testament Greek: A Coursebook on the Information Structure of New Testament Greek* (2d ed.; Dallas: SIL International, 2000). Also of interest is K. Callow's recent work on how people form meanings and communicate them in *Man and Message: A Guide to Meaning-Based Text Analysis* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1998). The other schools of discourse analysis either have been eclectic or have not been very successful at analyzing the larger discourse levels. See further Stanley E. Porter, "Discourse Analysis and New Testament Studies: An Introductory Survey," in Stanley E. Porter and D. A. Carson (eds.), *Discourse Analysis and Other Topics in Biblical Greek* (JSNTSup 113; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) 24–34, on the various schools of discourse analysis.

²⁴ A complete study would include all elements involving cohesion and information flow. See Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 88–121, for one model of how to account for cohesion and information flow. Cf. Reed, "The Cohesiveness of Discourse: Towards a Model of Linguistic Criteria for Analyzing New Testament Discourse," in Stanley E. Porter and Jeffrey T. Reed (eds.), *Discourse Analysis and the New Testament: Approaches and Results* (JSNTSup 170 and SNTG 4; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) 28–46.

²⁵ The meaning fields and lexical repetitions simultaneously represent content and tie the text together as a message (i.e., convey both ideational and textual meanings). For a fuller treatment of prominence, see Randall K. J. Tan, "Prominence in the Pauline Epistles," in Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell (eds.), *The Linguist as Pedagogue: Trends in the Teaching and Linguistic Analysis of the Greek New Testament* (NTM 11; Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix Press, forthcoming 2006). For marked and unmarked terms in the Greek verbal network, see Stanley E. Porter and Matthew Brook O'Donnell, "The Greek Verbal Network Viewed from a Probabilistic Standpoint: An Exercise in Hallidayan Linguistics," *FN* 14 (2001): 3–41.

3. Test Case of Macro-Comparisons: Partial Overview of Romans

Paul's letter to the Romans can be looked at from various perspectives. Since the epistolary structure appears to be a constant in Paul's letters despite the different situations addressed in those letters, the data in Romans are overviewed initially using a basic division of the Opening (1:1–7), Thanksgiving (1:8–17), Body (1:18–11:36), Parenthesis (12:1–15:33), and Closing (16:1–27).²⁶ I will first highlight some significant findings from Porter and O'Donnell before adding my own.²⁷

a. Meaning Fields

Prior to exploring the meaning fields in Romans, a preliminary inspection of the most frequent words in Romans can help set the context.²⁸ Omitting function words (e.g., conjunctions and particles) and considering only content words (e.g., verbs, nouns, and adjectives), the twenty most frequent words in Romans are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1. Twenty Most Frequent Words in Romans

<i>Word</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>Freq.</i>	<i>Word</i>	<i>Freq.</i>
θεός “God”	153	πίστις “faith”	40	ἄνθρωπος “human”	27
εἰμί “to be”	113	Ἰησοῦς “Jesus”	36	σάρξ “flesh”	26
νόμος “law”	74	γίνομαι “to become”	35	ἔχω “to have”	25
πᾶς “all”	70	δικαιοσύνη “righteousness”	34	χάρις “grace”	24
Χριστός “Christ”	65	πνεῦμα “Spirit”	34	ἀποθνήσκω “to die”	23
ἁμαρτία “sin”	48	λέγω “to say”	34	ποιέω “to do”	23
κύριος “Lord”	43	ἔθνος “Gentiles”	29		

²⁶ On ancient letter forms, see William G. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (GBS; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973); Jeffrey T. Reed, “The Epistle,” in Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C.–A.D. 400* (Leiden: Brill, 1997) 171–93; John L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986); Brook W. R. Pearson and Stanley E. Porter, “The Genres of the New Testament,” in Stanley E. Porter (ed.), *Handbook to Exegesis* (NTTS; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 131–66; and Stanley E. Porter, “Exegesis of the Pauline Letters, Including the Deutero-Pauline Letters,” in Porter (ed.), *Handbook to Exegesis*, 503–53.

²⁷ The data in Tables 1, 2, and 3 are adopted for use from Porter and O'Donnell, “Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation,” 161, 181–83.

²⁸ See Porter and O'Donnell, “Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation,” 161.

Several questions arise from the frequency information above. First, while the prominence of participants like God (θεός), Christ (Χριστός, also κύριος, “Lord,” and Ἰησοῦς, “Jesus”), and Holy Spirit (πνεῦμα) are expected in a Christian religious text, how exactly do they function in the text? For instance, what are their social roles and relations with the other participants in the text (especially Paul and his audience)? Secondly, the participants ἔθνος, ἄνθρωπος, and σάρξ (“Gentiles,” “human being,” and “flesh”) also appear prominent. How do they function in the text? Thirdly, νόμος, ἁμαρτία, πίστις, δικαιοσύνη, and χάρις (“law,” “sin,” “faith,” “righteousness,” and “grace”) seem to be important in Romans. What are the meaning and function for each? Fourthly, in light of the frequency of the verbs ἔχω, ἀποθνήσκω, and ποιέω (“to have,” “to die,” and “to do”), is there any emphasis on processes involving possession, physiological states, or performance?²⁹

A partial answer to the above questions may be derived from surveying the semantic chains throughout Romans. Table 2 shows the number of occurrences per thousand words of verbs, nouns, and adjectives from the 10 most frequent semantic domains in Romans, broken down according to the Opening, Thanksgiving, Body, Parenesis, and Closing sections.

Table 2. Top Ten Semantic Domains (Per Thousand Words)

<i>Section</i>	<i>Semantic Domain</i>									
	<i>33</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>93</i>	<i>13</i>	<i>25</i>	<i>23</i>	<i>59</i>	<i>57</i>	<i>30</i>
<i>Opening</i>	90.9	64.9	90.9	143	39.0	13.0	26.0	26.0	0.0	13.0
<i>Thanksgiving</i>	57.3	12.7	44.6	25.5	31.9	31.9	6.4	12.7	25.5	12.7
<i>Body</i>	58.6	49.5	34.5	25.7	28.6	15.7	22.2	16.6	14.3	13.0
<i>Parenesis</i>	45.4	38.8	41.0	26.3	19.0	43.2	27.1	24.9	28.5	12.4
<i>Closing</i>	89.0	20.9	34.0	128	20.9	13.1	0.0	20.9	2.6	7.9

Key to Semantic Domains in Table 2:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 33: Communication | 25: Attitudes and Emotions |
| 88: Moral and Ethical Qualities and Related Behavior | 23: Physiological Processes and States |
| 12: Supernatural Beings and Persons | 59: Quantity |
| 93: Names of Persons and Places | 57: Possession, Transfer, Exchange |
| 13: Be, Become, Exist, Happen | 30: Think |

²⁹ The frequency of εἶμι (“to be”) verbs is expected given that frequent portrayal of relational processes is typical of all kinds of communication. The frequency of γίνομαι (“to become”), which conveys existential processes (e.g., happenings and becomings), is also not surprising. Frequent use of verbs of saying, like λέγω “to

Table 3. Second Ten Semantic Domains (Per Thousand Words)

<i>Section</i>	<i>Semantic Domain</i>									
	<i>8</i>	<i>31</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>67</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>53</i>	<i>37</i>
<i>Opening</i>	13.0	13.0	0.0	39.0	13.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	39.0	0.0
<i>Thanksgiving</i>	0.0	38.2	19.1	12.7	25.5	12.7	0.0	0.0	6.4	0.0
<i>Body</i>	14.3	12.5	13.0	8.7	8.1	8.3	7.4	8.3	7.2	6.3
<i>Parenesis</i>	8.1	7.3	3.7	7.3	8.8	14.6	9.5	5.1	4.4	8.1
<i>Closing</i>	7.9	7.9	18.3	23.6	20.9	0.0	13.1	15.7	5.2	2.6

Key to Semantic Domains in Table 3

8: Body, Body Parts and Body Products	15: Linear Movement
31: Hold a View, Believe, Trust	67: Time
28: Know	42: Perform, Do
10: Kinship Terms	53: Religious Activities
11: Groups and Classes of Persons	37: Control, Rule

As expected, the names of persons and places (domain 93) are concentrated in the Opening and Closing sections, since they frame the interpersonal setting of the letter. Domain 12 (supernatural beings and powers) is not especially revealing given that “God,” “Lord,” and “Spirit” are put here, but “Jesus” is in domain 93 and “Christ” in domains 93 and 53 (Religious Activities). One notable distribution is the higher proportion of words in domain 25 (Attitudes and Emotions) than of words in domain 88 (Moral and Ethical Behavior) in the Parenesis section.

Table 3 is structured in the same way as Table 2. It shows the second top ten semantic domains in Romans per thousand words of verbs, nouns, and adjectives.

The highest frequency of faith words (domain 31) is in the Thanksgiving section. The other information in the table is less helpful because, by the second ten most frequent semantic domains, the frequencies are not high enough to prevent the short length of the Opening and Thanksgiving sections from skewing the counts.³⁰ For instance, 13.0 per one thousand of domain 8 actually represents only 1 occurrence in the Opening section. Thus, the angle of viewing the semantic domains in terms of the divisions of Opening, Thanksgiving,

say,” also does not seem significant at first sight. The usage of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma$, “all,” may be significant, but must be examined in the context of the discourse.

³⁰ Porter and O'Donnell, “Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation,” 183.

Body, Parenesis, and Closing (as normalized per thousand words) seems to yield only limited insights.

More insights can be derived by comparing the semantic domain occurrences among smaller divisions of texts. For instance, Porter and O'Donnell discovered that there is a cluster of words from domain 23 (Physiological Processes and States) in Romans 5–8 and 14 after two chapters (3 and 4) with the highest concentration of words from domain 31 (Hold a View, Believe, Trust). They suggest that Romans 3–4 moves from a treatment of belief (and unbelief) to a focus on physical states, i.e., life and death.³¹

b. *Participant Structure*

One way of studying participant structure is by counting finite verbs and personal and intensive pronouns. Porter and O'Donnell described the patterns in Romans:

[There] is a noteworthy shift in 1.15, at the end of the Thanksgiving and the beginning of the Body, from first person singular to third person, where Paul describes God's wrath being poured out on all humanity (1.16–28). A consistent use of the third person continues throughout the Body, until the Parenesis begins in 12.1. The use of the third person returns in ch. 13, though not as intensively as before, but returns to its above intensity in chs. 14–15. Within the Body, there are several noteworthy uses of person that can be correlated with discussion of particular topics. For example, the second person is used at the beginning and the second half of ch. 2, when Paul is addressing various specific groups, such as judgmental people and Jews. The first person plural is used in 5.1–11, the reconciliation section; 6.1–8, the section on identifying with Christ; and 8.15–28, again a passage on Christian identification. There is of course the notorious problem of "I" in 7.7–25. Up until 7.7, the only concentrated occurrence of the first person singular is found in the Thanksgiving section (1.8–17). As would be expected, there is an increase and consistent presence of the second person after the beginning of ch. 12, which marks the start of the Parenesis section.³²

³¹ Porter and O'Donnell, "Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation," 163–64. Cf. Harvey's more simple word study with similar results (John D. Harvey, *Listening to the Text: Oral Patterning in Paul's Letters* [ETS Studies; Grand Rapids: Baker/Leicester: Apollos, 1998] 125).

³² Porter and O'Donnell, "Semantics and Patterns of Argumentation," 180–81. For their statistics on the verse-by-verse distribution of person and number (counting finite verbs and personal and intensive pronouns), see Appendix D of their article.

Table 4. Distribution of Person and Number in Paul

	<i>Rom</i>	%	<i>1 Cor</i>	%	<i>2 Cor</i>	%	<i>Gal</i>	%	<i>Phil</i>	%	<i>1 Thess</i>	%
<i>1st Sg</i>	113	14	191	19	145	29.3	68	22.7	65	40.6	2	1.4
<i>1st Pl</i>	78	9.8	71	6.9	93	18.8	24	8.0	4	2.5	47	33.6
<i>All 1st</i>	191	24	262	26	238	48	92	30.7	69	43.1	49	35.0
<i>2nd Sg</i>	65	8.1	23	2.2	0	0.0	9	3.0	1	0.6	0	0.0
<i>2nd Pl</i>	73	9.1	155	15	68	13.7	54	18.0	45	28.1	52	37.1
<i>All 2nd</i>	138	17	178	17	68	13.7	63	21	46	28.7	52	37.1
<i>3rd Sg</i>	376	47	487	48	169	34.1	115	38.3	38	23.8	32	22.9
<i>3rd Pl</i>	93	12	96	9.4	20	4.0	30	10.0	7	4.4	7	5.0
<i>All 3rd</i>	469	59	583	57	189	38	145	48.3	45	28.2	39	27.9
<i>Total</i>	798		1023		495		300		160		140	

In an effort to extend this kind of analysis, the statistics on the distribution of Person and Number in the finite verbs for Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Thessalonians are gathered in Table 4 above.

The higher proportion of third person singular in Romans compared to the other letters is consistent with what is previously known about its high proportion of impersonal expository material in relation to direct address and exhortation to the readers. The second person singular is rarely used in Paul's letters.

Romans has the highest proportion of second person singular (8.1 percent of all instances of Person and Number or 65 occurrences). There are no instances in 2 Corinthians and 1 Thessalonians. The only example in Philippians comes in 4:3, with the imperative *σὺλαμβάνου*, "help," addressed to the enigmatic *γνήσιε σύζυγε*, "true yokefellow."³³ The function of the occurrences in 1 Corinthians and Galatians are similar to one other. In 1 Cor 4:7, the singular can be explained as stemming from Paul's singling out of "any individual" who "might become puffed up in favor of one against the other"

³³ Much speculation has arisen over this expression, which will not be reproduced here. The two most likely suggestions are: (1) an influential member of the church (not identified explicitly because known to the congregation at Philippi); or (2) an address to individual members of the church. For the former view, see Peter T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991) 480–81. For the latter view, see Moisés Silva, *Philippians* (WEC; Chicago: Moody, 1988) 222. Silva cites Rom 2:1, 17; 8:2; 9:20; 11:17–24; 1 Cor 14:17; 15:36; and Gal 6:1 as examples of Paul's use of the second person singular to address the recipients of his letters (p. 222).

(ἵνα μὴ εἷς ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἑνὸς φυσιοῦσθε κατὰ τοῦ ἑτέρου). In the various occurrences in 1 Corinthians 7, individuals who belong to a certain class of people are singled out: any women contemplating leaving their unbelieving husbands, slaves discontent with their enslavement, and any Christian men who may be contemplating freedom from being bound to a wife or contemplating becoming bound to a wife.³⁴ Likewise, 1 Cor 14:16–17 singles out any individual belonging to the class of people who speak in tongues in the church (14:13). Galatians 2:14 singles out Peter in particular while 1 Cor 15:36 addresses the generic “anyone” (τις) who wonders how the dead are going to be raised. All the instances of the use of the second person singular surveyed above share two characteristics: (1) The addressee is singled out (and identified) as a particular person (e.g., Peter, and perhaps a particular “true yokefellow”) or as individuals belonging to a class of people; and (2) the addressee is not identical with the recipients as a group, though some of the recipients may fall under the class of people addressed.

In Gal 4:7 and 6:1, the switch from second plural to second singular is unexpected. The addressees seem to be identical to the recipients as a group, so this appears to be an exception to the pattern found above. Perhaps no distinction between plural and singular is meant. It is also possible that the shift to the singular focuses in on members of the group as individuals in the midst of plurals addressing them as a group.

The backdrop of Paul’s use of the second person singular in his letters above sheds light on Paul’s usage in Romans. In Rom 2:1–5, every human being belonging to the class of people who judge (ὁ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων) is singled out. The further definition in 2:3 (ὁ ἄνθρωπε ὁ κρίνων τοὺς τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντας καὶ ποιῶν αὐτά) explicates the nature of the group more clearly: “the human being who judges those who practice such things (i.e., evil) and does the same.” In 2:17–27, one who belongs to the class of Jews, who is identified with a series of other group attributes (e.g., “one who teaches another,” “one who preaches against stealing,” etc.), is singled out. In 9:19–20, the addressee is tagged as one who dares to question God’s authority (ὁ ἄνθρωπε, μενοῦνγε σὺ τίς εἶ ὁ ἀνταποκρινόμενος τῷ θεῷ—“O human

³⁴ The other occurrences are in 1 Cor 9:9 and Gal 4:27, with quotations of commands in the Old Testament (Deut 25:4 and Isa 54:1).

being, on the contrary, who are you who criticizes God in return?”).³⁵ These examples seem to conform to the pattern found in the other letters: (1) The addressee is singled out (and identified) as an individual belonging to a class of people; and (2) the addressee is not identical with the recipients as a group, though some (or all) of the recipients may fall under the class of people addressed if they fit the descriptions given.

The instances in Romans 12–14 may be explained similarly, even though they may also be explained as instances of the singular used indiscriminately with the plural. In the case of Rom 12:20, the singular may be because the enemy is “your enemy”—the enemies of individual Christians are in mind, not common enemies of the congregation. The person singled out in 13:3–4 may well be anyone who belongs to the class of people who “resist authority” (13:2). Romans 14:4, 10, 15, and 21–22 come in the context of (at least) two classes of people being distinguished (i.e., those who observe or those who do not observe certain diet restrictions and/or special days), so that the address may be meant to single out individuals who belong in one group or the other.

The survey of participant structure in Paul’s letters points to two characteristics of Paul’s usage of the second person singular: (1) he typically singles out and identifies the addressee(s) as a particular person or as individuals belonging to a class of people; and (2) the addressee is not identical with the recipients as a group, though some (or all) of the recipients may fall under the class of people addressed if they fit the description.

4. *First Test Case of Section-by-Section Analysis:* *Letter Opening (Romans 1:1–7)*

The opening formula in Romans is the lengthiest found in the thirteen canonical letters ascribed to Paul. Often interpreters have noted this fact and tied it to Paul’s need to introduce himself to a church

³⁵ The other occurrences are quotations of the Old Testament: Rom 3:4; 7:7; 10:6; and 11:10 (3:4 and 11:10 addressees God; 7:7 is the quoted address of the ninth commandment; 10:6 is a quoted address from Deuteronomy). Romans 10:9 may be explained as following in the second singular address of the Old Testament quotation in 10:8.

that he neither founded nor yet visited.³⁶ Moreover, interpreters sometimes posit more specific reasons for why Paul wrote such a lengthy introduction: e.g., Paul desired to highlight commonality of belief with his readers,³⁷ or to underscore his authority and message.³⁸

While all of the explanations advanced above seem supportable from the linguistic utterances in Romans (mostly in the opening formula and Thanksgiving section, but also elsewhere in the text), a better starting point would be to explore how the opening formula sets the social and interpersonal context for the entire letter.³⁹ Indeed, it seems that the Opening (and the Thanksgiving) serves as Paul's own introduction to why he was writing to the Roman Christians. Since the genre of Romans is clearly that of a real Hellenistic letter, insights from epistolary studies help set the framework for interpretation of this opening formula.

a. *Mapping the Roles and Interactions of the Participants:
Studying Interpersonal Meanings*

Paul follows the typical sender (superscription) to recipient (adscription) order of personal letters. As Reed points out, the “superscription and/or adscription were also often expanded with the addition of epithets, titles, terms of relationship (A to his mother B) and endearment (A to my most beloved friend B), and geographical location.”⁴⁰ Paul's practice of expanding upon the simple “A to B” (sender to recipient) obligatory element in the openings of all thirteen letters attributed to him is thus not unfamiliar to Graeco-Roman readers.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the employment of an expanded prescript is still

³⁶ See C. E. B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1975–79) 1.47; and Douglas J. Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 40.

³⁷ James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8* (WBC 38A; Dallas: Word, 1988) 5.

³⁸ Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (trans. Scott J. Hafemann; Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1994) 18. Some suggest that the opening was carefully crafted to give a favorable first impression because of controversy over Paul and his message among believers in Rome (e.g., A. J. M. Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988] 93). For a combination of reasons, see Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 31–45.

³⁹ Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 181–92.

⁴⁰ Reed, *Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 182.

⁴¹ As Reed elaborates, “Expansions of superscriptions in Hellenistic letters typically involve descriptions of the sender's identity (e.g. ‘son of’) or location (e.g. ‘from

a marked option over against the more customary simple “A to B.” This is especially so with the degree of expansion and the liberal use of religious group identifiers in Paul’s typical practice. Nowhere is the marked nature of the prescript more evident among Paul’s letters than Romans.⁴² What function, then, does the extended expansion of the prescript serve in Rom 1:1–7?

Despite the length of the opening unit, there are only two (verbless) primary clauses: the first clause describes the author and his audience; the second clause represents Paul’s desire for his audience (wish of “grace” and peace”).⁴³ From a grammatical perspective, the adjectives, participial clauses, and relative clauses that contribute to its disproportionate length further define Paul and, to a lesser degree, his readers. Hence, a reasonable hypothesis is that these nominal word groups give explicit representation (from Paul’s perspective) of Paul and his audience’s social roles. This suggestion is consistent with and provides more precise definition to the common opinion that Paul introduces himself to the Roman believers in this extended opening.

According to the criterion of heavy semantic modification, Paul is, at first glance, the most marked participant, followed by the Christians in Rome. Paul is defined as “Christ Jesus’ slave” (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ), “called to be an apostle” (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος), and “one separated for God’s gospel” (ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ). His audience, “all those who are in Rome” (πᾶσιν τοῖς οὖσιν ἐν Ῥώμῃ), are “called by Jesus Christ” (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), “beloved by God” (ἀγαπητοὶ θεοῦ), and “called to be holy ones” (κλητοὶς ἁγίοις).⁴⁴ The

the region of Oxyrhynchus). . . . In some cases, the social role of the sender is mentioned. . . . Expansions of adscriptions often involve additions of words expressing honour or endearment” (*Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 183).

⁴² Jervis observes, “The opening formula of Romans is quite ill-proportioned in comparison with that of Paul’s other letters, with the preponderance of its abnormal length occurring in the ‘identification of sender’ unit” (L. Ann Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans: A Comparative Letter Structure Investigation* [JSNTSup 55; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991] 85).

⁴³ Cf. Louw, who correspondingly finds 2 colons in this section (J. P. Louw, *A Semantic Discourse Analysis of Romans* [2 vols.; Pretoria, South Africa: Department of Greek, University of Pretoria, 1987] 2.33).

⁴⁴ The phrase ἀγαπητοὶ θεοῦ occurs only here in the whole Bible, but may be linked to frequent Old Testament affirmations that Israel is the special object of God’s love. Especially since it is combined with ἅγιοι, the likely implication is that “not only are Christians the true object of God’s elective love, but—as with Israel of old—the effect of this love is to *separate* them from the ‘world’ and *consecrate* them to the service of the true God” (T. J. Deidun, *New Covenant Morality in Paul* [AnBib

social roles of both Paul and his audience are both qualified by Jesus Christ and God. This qualification is achieved by having these two participants as genitive qualifiers to head terms referring to Paul and the Roman Christians. The effect is to bring Paul and the Roman Christians into indirect relationship through Jesus and God. This thesis is supported by the three relative clauses. On the one hand, prior to these relative clauses, Paul, as an apostle, is related to God's gospel ("being set apart" for it).⁴⁵ With the first relative clause, God's gospel is related to Jesus ("concerning his Son"). In the second relative clause, Paul (and other apostles?) is related to Jesus ("received grace and apostleship" through him). The goal of this reception of grace and apostleship is "obedience that is related to faith," the scope "among all the nations," and the purpose "for the sake of his name."⁴⁶ On the other hand, Paul's addressees are related to "all the nations" as also "ones called by Jesus Christ" (κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ) with the third relative clause. This series of linkages seems well designed to relate Paul to his audience: they are brought together as one called to be an apostle, who is separated for God's gospel, which concerns Jesus Christ, and who through Christ received grace and apostleship for the purpose of "obedience that is related to faith" among all the Gentiles, and as ones called by Jesus Christ among all the Gentiles.⁴⁷

89; Rome: Biblical Institute, 1981] 6). The translations "beloved by God" and "called by Jesus Christ" reflect the understanding that ἀγαπητός and κλητός are verbal adjectives with a passive meaning. The genitive thus qualifies by supplying the agent of the verbal process. On verbal adjectives with -τος ending, see, e.g., J. H. Moulton, *A Grammar of New Testament Greek*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena* (3d ed.; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1908) 221; and A. T. Robertson, *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research* (Nashville: Broadman, 1934) 372.

⁴⁵ As Weima points out, "Here we meet for the first time the intimate connection between the theme of the 'gospel' and 'apostleship'—correlated themes that will manifest themselves again and again in the epistolary framework of the letter" (Jeffrey Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Paul: A Study of the Epistolary Framework of Romans," in L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson [eds.], *Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker* [JNTSup 108; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994] 341).

⁴⁶ One could take all three prepositional word groups as adjuncts to ἐλάβομεν. Alternatively, one may construe the second prepositional word as a word group modifier to "obedience" (Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 18) or all three prepositional word groups as word group modifiers to "apostleship" (Louw, *Semantic Discourse Analysis of Romans*, 2.34).

⁴⁷ For the perspective of rhetorical criticism, Kim sees Paul creating a strong bond with his audience by emphasizing that "both have received the calling from the same person, Jesus Christ himself" (Johann D. Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles: Rhetoric and Situation in Romans 9–11* [SBLDS 176; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000] 67). According to Elliott, Paul creates "a rhetorical relationship

Clearly implied in this linkage is Paul's authority and responsibility as an apostle to the Roman Christians:

- 1st Premise: "I have received apostleship from Christ to preach the gospel among all the Gentiles."
 2nd Premise: "You believers in Rome belong to that group of people, the Gentiles."
 Conclusion: "I, therefore, have a divine responsibility to share my gospel with you."⁴⁸

Even though Jesus and God are not the external participants (who are Paul and his audience) who are engaged in the communicative act and they are often modifiers (as opposed to head terms) and/or occur in embedded clauses, they are the first and second most frequently occurring participants respectively. Especially since the social roles of Paul and his audience are modified by Jesus Christ and God, more consideration should be given to how prominent those two participants are in this section of text.

The decision with God was fairly easy. First, with the exception of "beloved by God" (*ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ*, which is still only a modifier of a modifier—"God" modifies "beloved" and "beloved by God" modifies "all those who are in Rome") and "from God our Father" (*ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν*, which is from the grace wish), God as a participant occurs only in embedded clauses (i.e., God is not a participant in the processes in the main clauses). Secondly and more specifically, God as a participant is the implicit subject of a relative clause (*προεπηγγείλατο*, "he promised beforehand"), the modifier of three adjuncts (*εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ*, "for God's gospel"; *διὰ τῶν προφητῶν αὐτοῦ*, "through his prophets"; and *περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ*, "concerning his Son") and the modifier of the complement of a doubly embedded participial clause (*υἱοῦ θεοῦ*, "Son of God"). Looking more carefully at the clauses involved, God appears to serve as an authenticating Associate. The gospel is "God's gospel." He promised it long beforehand through his prophets. The gospel is concerning his Son. Jesus was appointed God's Son. Therefore, Jesus and the gospel concerning

with his readers by relating himself and them to the call of God" (Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul's Dialogue with Judaism* [JSNTSup 45; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990] 71). From the perspective of oral criticism, Harvey identifies the three occurrences of *κλητός* as forming an inclusion in Rom 1:1, 6–7 (*Listening to the Text*, 122).

⁴⁸ Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Rome," 343. Cf. Moo, *Romans*, 45.

Jesus are authenticated by association with God to the Roman believers, who are beloved by God and for whom God is Father. While the frequency of occurrence and strong authenticating function of God does highlight God's role, relatively speaking, Paul and the Roman Christians are in the forefront of the social interaction and God is behind the scenes.

The centrality of Jesus Christ as a participant is harder to decide.⁴⁹ On the one hand, Paul is "Christ Jesus' slave" (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ). Paul is separated for God's gospel, which is "concerning his Son" (περὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ). Moreover, there is heavy semantic modification of Son by two embedded participial clauses and triple apposition by nouns: (1) "who was from David's seed according to the flesh" (τοῦ γενομένου ἐκ σπέρματος Δαυὶδ κατὰ σάρκα); (2) "who was appointed God's Son in power according to the Spirit that is related to holiness from resurrection from the dead" (τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει κατὰ πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν); and (3) "Jesus Christ our Lord" (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν). The two participial clauses further identify the Son—he is descended from David, he was resurrected from the dead, as well as linked to "flesh" (σάρκα) and "spirit of holiness" (πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης). These two participial clauses add significantly to the semantic markedness of Jesus the Son as a participant.⁵⁰ The triple apposition "Jesus Christ our Lord" has the effect of emphatically identifying Jesus as God's Son concerning whom God's gospel is about. Moreover, it is through Jesus (δι' οὗ) that Paul received grace and apostleship for the obedience that is related to faith among all the Gentiles for his (Jesus') name. Then the Roman believers were also identified as ones called by Jesus Christ among the Gentiles (ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ).

⁴⁹ Louw believes that Jesus Christ is the theme of Rom 1:1–6 (*Semantic Discourse Analysis of Romans*, 2.34). Cf. J. P. Louw, *Semantics of New Testament Greek* (SemeiaSt; Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982) 141–45.

⁵⁰ The interpretation of the meaning of these participial clauses is highly disputed and somewhat speculative. For instance, Morgan remarks that "God's Son is . . . described and identified in a couplet which contains ideas and phrases not found elsewhere in Paul's writings, and so looks like a quotation from some early Christian creed or confession used in worship" (Robert Morgan, *Romans* [NTG; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995] 17). Anderson points out, however, that the suggestion that Paul employs certain creedal formulae "can hardly be proved" (R. D. Anderson, Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* [rev. ed.; CBET 18; Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1999] 207). On the issues involved, see Schreiner, *Romans*, 38–45; Moo, *Romans*, 47–51; and Gordon D. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994) 478–84.

In addition, Paul wishes grace and peace to them from God our Father and “the Lord Jesus Christ” (κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). The main observation that can be made from the data is that Paul underscores the fact that he serves Jesus the Christ—he is *Christ Jesus’ slave*, he is separated for God’s *gospel concerning Jesus*, and it is *through Jesus* that he received grace and his apostleship.⁵¹ It also appears that Paul portrays the Roman Christians as servants of Christ as well—“Jesus Christ *our Lord*” and “*called by Jesus Christ*.”⁵² Therefore, it seems that Christ is not so much a central theme as a central person, who is Paul’s and his readers’ Lord. Even though Paul and his audience are the external participants involved in social interaction, Christ plays a central role in Paul’s and his audience’s lives, as evidenced by the frequency of occurrence, the heavy semantic modification, and the underscoring of Christ’s Lordship over both Paul and his readers.

b. *Finding out What Is Going on: Studying Ideational Meanings*

The portrait painted thus far can still be augmented. Three of the words in domain 33 pertain to God’s communication: “God’s gospel” (εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ), which “he promised beforehand” (προεπαγγέλλομαι) in the Holy “Scriptures” (γραφή). This concentration of words from domain 33 effectively affirms that God is the ultimate Agent responsible for the gospel. It is his gospel and he made prior promises concerning his Son in the Holy Scriptures (referring to the Old Testament). The significance of the other patterns of semantic field concentration is less clear.⁵³

⁵¹ If κλητός “called” (classed under domain 33, “communication”) is taken in the sense of “summoned” rather than “invited,” more light is shed not only on the pattern of association of the words in domain 37, but also on the interrelation of the triple apposition that Paul applies to his own name: Paul designates himself as Christ’s *slave*, one *summoned* to be an *apostle*, one *appointed* for God’s gospel . . . concerning his Son . . . Jesus Christ *our Lord* . . . through whom he received his summons to receive grace and *apostleship*. Servitude and Christ’s Lordship are thus mutually interpretive (but not synonymous), and so are calling to be an apostle and appointment for God’s gospel.

⁵² Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 208, thinks that Paul captures his audience’s goodwill “by emphasizing their inclusion, together with himself, as subjects of Jesus Christ (1.6).”

⁵³ A semantic field analysis of the opening of Romans reveals that the domains with the highest frequency of occurrence are domains 33 (communication, 8x), 93 (names of persons and places, 7x), 53 (religious activities, 7x), 12 (supernatural beings and powers, 7x), 88 (moral and ethical qualities and related behavior, 5x), and 10 (kinship terms, 4x). The words in domain 93 and 53, which mainly refer to the

Analysis of the ideational meanings in terms of processes and participant functions (transitivity analysis) yields the following insights. While there are two transitive verbs—προεπηγγείλατο (“he promised beforehand”) and ἐλάβομεν (“we received”)—only one involves a grammatical subject that is truly an active agent: God (the Agent) “promised beforehand” the gospel (the very lexical meaning of “receive” necessitates that the active agent bringing about the grace and apostleship received is not “we”).⁵⁴ Paul is passive: he is “called to be” (κλητός) an apostle, “set apart” (ἀφορισμένος) for God’s gospel, and “received” grace and apostleship. Paul’s audience is likewise passive: they are (relational process, domain 13) “called by Jesus Christ,” “beloved by God,” and “called to be holy ones” (all nominal descriptions of reception of another agent’s actions). With respect to their social roles and the relationship between them, Paul and his readers are passive recipients.

The status of Christ as an agent is less clear. The agent of the action of calling Paul as an apostle and of setting him apart for God’s gospel and of calling the Roman believers could be either Christ or God (though in the translation used in this section thus far, “called by Jesus Christ,” we have chosen to affirm Christ’s agency).⁵⁵ God’s Son is passive in his coming into existence (γενομένου)

participants, have already been dealt with in the discussion above. The kinship terms may subtly remind Paul’s readers that through Jesus they too are God’s sons. First, while only Jesus is explicitly designated as God’s “Son” (υἱός, 2x), God is “our Father” (πατὴρ ἡμῶν). Then before referring to them as those who are in Rome, who are beloved by God and called to be holy ones, Paul is careful to tag them as ones also called by Jesus Christ among the Gentiles. Three of the words in domain 88 belong to the “holy, pure” subdomain: κλητός (“holy,” 2x) and ἀγιωσύνη (“holiness,” 1x). The association of the Scriptures, the Spirit, and the Roman Christians as holy may or may not be intentional and significant.

⁵⁴ The use of the first person plural form of the verb may simply be epistolary convention (it refers to Paul alone; see Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.65; and Schreiner, *Romans*, 35), but may conveniently be explained as Paul including himself in a class of apostles sent to all the nations (cf. Rom 16:7). Cf. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 16. From the standpoint of rhetorical strategy, presenting oneself as one of the apostles, rather than the only apostle, is also understandable given that Paul neither founded nor had visited the churches in Rome (Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 73).

⁵⁵ If the underlying appeal is to his personal experience of calling on the Damascus road (Acts 9:1–9; cf. Gal 1:15–16), then the agent who called is Christ. See, e.g., Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 66–67. Some, e.g., Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 19, appeal to Paul’s statements elsewhere (e.g., Rom 8:30; 11:29; 1 Cor 1:9) to insist that it is God who issues the summons (though even Dunn sees Paul alluding to his experience with Christ at the Damascus road by ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ). With a verbal adjective with passive meaning like κλητός, the genitive most likely qualifies by supplying the agent, “called by Jesus Christ.”

in relation to the flesh and in his appointment (ὀρισθέντος) as Son of God in power in relation to the Spirit of holiness from his resurrection from the dead. Nevertheless, Christ is the Agent through whom (δι' οὗ) Paul received grace and his apostleship.⁵⁶ Since God is portrayed as authenticating Associate and ultimate Agent, the affirmation of both primary (God) and secondary (Christ) agency in the same events need not be precluded.

c. *Conclusion: Romans 1:1–7 as a Message*

Various proposals about the significance of Rom 1:1–7 may be evaluated according to the linguistic data highlighted above. The suggestion that Paul introduces himself needs qualification. Neither biographical nor activity details are offered. He does introduce his role as “Christ Jesus’ slave,” “one called to be an apostle,” and “one separated for God’s gospel.” Moreover, he seems to delineate the social roles of his addressees as well: “ones called by Jesus Christ,” “ones beloved by God,” and “called to be holy ones.” In this respect, God is highlighted as an authenticating Associate and ultimate Agent.⁵⁷ Jesus is even more prominently portrayed as the central Person through whom Paul and the Roman Christians are related together—as their common Lord.

The implication that can be drawn from above is that Paul underscores his common subservience to Christ with his audience. It is harder to find solid linguistic criteria to determine the validity of suggestions about Paul showing commonality of belief with his readers or summarizing his message. The plausibility of these suggestions hinges substantially on the widely-held hypothesis that Rom 1:3–4 reflects a pre-Pauline hymn or credal formulation.⁵⁸ The linguistic evidence that these verses summarize Paul’s gospel, at least as presented in Romans, is lacking.⁵⁹ Key lexical items like νόμος, δικαιοσύνη

⁵⁶ Cf. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, 16.

⁵⁷ Cf. Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans*, 75–77: “Unable to appeal to a history of personal acquaintance with the Romans, [Paul] relies instead upon premises that he expects the Romans to share—the divinely authorized role of apostle, for example, and the divine origin of the gospel.” Paul, in fact, explicitly defines the divine origin of his gospel and his authority as apostle by association with God and Christ as participants.

⁵⁸ See Schreiner, *Romans*, 38.

⁵⁹ Pre-Pauline hymn proponents could suggest that Paul accepts a traditional formulation in Rom 1:3–4 and expounds his own personal gospel in Romans—thus

and cognates, and πίστις and cognates are missing (“faith” does occur in v. 5). More important than missing lexical items are missing semantic fields: the fields involving the establishment of a right relationship (domain 34; whether also more specifically involving judicial processes, domain 56) and belief (domain 31) are lacking in these verses.⁶⁰ Paul does use two lengthy participial clauses to further describe God’s Son. The evidence of the text better supports the suggestion that Paul is further delineating who he understands God’s Son to be at the outset, given that both Paul and his audience are related to Jesus Christ and through him to each other in this section. Specifically, Paul is God’s appointed apostle to share the gospel with his audience.⁶¹

5. *Second Test Case of Section-by-Section Analysis:*
Thanksgiving (Romans 1:8–17)

The form and function of Paul’s thanksgivings has been the subject of extensive research.⁶² The general consensus, which this study follows, is that it partly reflects Hellenistic epistolary traditions. The end of the thanksgiving in Romans is disputed. The options are 1:12

the lack of correspondence. See, e.g., S. Brown, *The Origins of Christianity: A Historical Introduction to the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) 127.

⁶⁰ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993) 228, however, asserts that the terms “gospel, grace, apostolate, commitment of faith, the Scriptures, [and] the role of Christ Jesus” “foreshadow major ideas in the body of the letter.”

⁶¹ As Reed remarks, “The epistolary conventions which appear at the opening (and closing) of a letter establish who the participants of communication are and the nature of their immediate relationship” (*Discourse Analysis of Philippians*, 192). The following comment by Weima implicitly reveals the connection between the ideational and interpersonal meanings: “Paul has skillfully adapted and expanded the typical form of this opening epistolary unity such that the correlate themes of gospel and apostleship are highlighted in a most effective manner. Within the space of a few short verses, Paul presents himself to his unknown readers as the divinely appointed apostle to the Gentiles who has a God-given responsibility to share with them his gospel” (“Preaching the Gospel in Rome,” 344). As words representing semantic content, “gospel” and “apostle” provide ideational meaning. As applied to participants in social interaction, the roles and relations involved simultaneously yield interpersonal meaning.

⁶² See Paul Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgiving* (Berlin: Töpelmann, 1939); Peter T. O’Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul* (NovTSup 49; Leiden: Brill, 1977); Jeffrey T. Reed, “Are Paul’s Thanksgivings ‘Epistolary?’” *JSNL* 61 (1996): 87–99; and Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans*, 86–109. On the Thanksgiving in Romans in particular, see Weima, “Preaching the Gospel in Rome.”

(with the disclosure formula in 1:13 marking the body opening), 1:15, and 1:17.⁶³ Since only a convenient starting point for discussion is needed at this stage, the most inclusive option (1:8–17) is chosen.

As with the letter opening, epistolary studies illuminate the formal elements of the thanksgiving section. Building upon and refining the classic comparative study by Schubert, Jervis has proposed that Paul's thanksgivings are consistently composed of five distinct formal units:

1. Principal verb: verb εὐχαριστῶ and its personal object τῷ θεῷ (μου);
2. Manner of thanksgiving: adverbial and/or participial constructions that serve to indicate the manner in which Paul gives thanks; the pronominal object phrase περὶ (ὑπὲρ) πάντων ὑμῶν typically occurs (except in Philemon);
3. Cause of thanksgiving: causal constructions in the form of phrases using ἐπί or ὅτι and/or participial clauses (usually verbs of learning or hearing) that give the reason for Paul's thanksgiving;
4. Explanation: this section, begun either with καθώς, γάρ or ὥστε, usually modifies the preceding causal unit and so serves to elaborate on the cause for Paul's thanksgiving;
5. Prayer report: a report of what Paul prays for regarding his addressees, involving the verb προσεύχομαι and a ἵνα, ὅπως or εἴ πως construction that gives the content of the prayer.⁶⁴

This analysis is more successful than Schubert's precisely because the formal elements are realigned along more functional categories.⁶⁵ Nevertheless, I would suggest that the variations among the Thanksgiving sections in Paul's letters demonstrate that the consistent elements are fundamentally semantic and not structural. In other words, when one is giving thanks, the meaning elements that need to be

⁶³ See Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans*, 104–107 for an overview of the options.

⁶⁴ This convenient synthesis that vividly portrays Jervis's conclusions is given by Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Rome," 345. Jervis's discussion is found in *The Purpose of Romans*, 89–90 and her analyses of the respective thanksgivings (in the order of 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, and Romans) in pp. 91–109.

⁶⁵ Cf. the judgment of Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Rome," 345. Schubert's concentration on form led to the proposal that there are two basic types of Thanksgiving and a third mixed type. See Schubert, *Form and Function*. Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Rome," 344, has a convenient schematic summary of Schubert's proposed basic types.

conveyed are the giving of thanks, the person thanked, and the reason(s) for giving thanks. Oftentimes, the manner or frequency of giving thanks, further explanation of the reason(s) for giving thanks, and prayers and intercessions related to the reason for the thanks are communicated as well. The frequency of structural parallels has to do with the link between meaning and the structures that convey it—i.e., the typical structures come into play to convey the ideational and interpersonal meanings typically associated with the giving of thanks. And precisely because the structures serve the expression of meaning, variations in the circumstances and reasons for each particular giving of thanks are correspondingly expressed by variations in the structures and actual linguistic elements used.⁶⁶

Weima (following Jervis) outlines the thanksgiving in Rom 1:8–15 thus:

1. Principal verb (v. 8a)
3. Cause of thanksgiving (v. 8b)
2. Manner of thanksgiving (vv. 9–10a)
5. Prayer report (v. 10b)
- (!) Explanation of prayer report (vv. 11–15)⁶⁷

⁶⁶ Of interest is whether the two options of using the verb *εὐχαριστέω* or the adjective *εὐλογητός* in a verbless clause as the starting structure for giving thanks is associated with different ideational and interpersonal meanings. O'Brien points out that "although either *εὐχαριστέω*- or *εὐλογητός*- formulas could have been used of thanksgiving or praise to God for blessing *either* to others *or* for oneself, Paul, in the introductions of his letters, uses *εὐχαριστέω* consistently of *Fürdank* for God's work in the lives of the addressees, and *εὐλογητός* for blessings in which he himself participated" (*Introductory Thanksgivings*, 239). O'Brien further notices that the writer is included within the scope of God's blessing in Eph 1:3 and 1 Pet 1:3 (in addition to 2 Cor 1:3). His suggestion that the *εὐλογητός* formula with a Jewish background is more appropriate when the writer himself came within the circle of blessing (p. 239) while possible, is perhaps unnecessary speculation. From the angle of paradigmatic choice in grammar, Paul might have used the first person singular verb when *personally* giving thanks for others and the verbless clause *εὐλογητός* when he wanted the participants involved in the giving of thanks to be unrestricted by the verbal features of person and number. When comparing the syntagmatic differences in the two types, in the three *εὐλογητός* thanksgivings involved (2 Cor 1:3; Eph 1:3; and 1 Pet 1:3) participial clauses are used to further define God, the One who is blessed. The effect of those participial clauses seems to be to highlight God (the person thanked) and his activity (for which he is thanked). Combining these two observations, the explanation appears to be that Paul uses the unrestricted *εὐλογητός* thanksgivings (*εὐχαριστέω* is restricted by its nature as a finite verb grammaticalizing person and number) to call for *universal* or *inclusive* praise and thanks (including the writer and his readers, and perhaps beyond) and to highlight God as the person thanked and the activity for which he is thanked.

⁶⁷ Weima, "Preaching the Gospel in Rome," 346. The out-of-order numbering

From this outline, it becomes clear by simple verse count that the semantic weight falls on the prayer report and its explanation (vv. 10b–15). This finding is suggestive, but needs to be corroborated and examined in more detail below.

a. *Mapping the Roles and Interactions of the Participants: Studying Interpersonal Meanings*

After the explicit designation of social roles in the letter opening, Paul and his audience remain in the forefront of the social interaction. The only difference is that since the social roles have already been clearly delineated, Paul proceeds with his social interaction with his readers without adding extensive role designations. In fact, the lack of new expressed role designations gives the presumptive impression that the nature of the immediate relationship between Paul and his readers has been established. Thus, the definition of the relationship between author and readers in the letter opening should be kept in mind while interpreting the rest of the letter. Nevertheless, continued sensitivity to any changes in the portrayal of Paul or his intended audience is needed, including noticing the social exchanges happening between the participants in terms of “who is doing to or for whom?”⁶⁸

In terms of frequency of occurrence, Paul continues to be the prominent participant in Rom 1:8–17.⁶⁹ The dominant social interaction is the giving of information by Paul to the Roman Christians (who are next in prominence).⁷⁰ This speech function is reinforced by the disclosure formula “I do not want you to be ignorant” (οὐ

and the exclamation mark reflect unexpected ordering of elements in Weima’s scheme.

⁶⁸ It should be noted that the inscribed reader(s) in any section of text need not correspond with the actual makeup of the congregation(s) in Rome. For example, parts of or the entirety of the letter may be directed particularly to only a portion of the potential audience. Thus, extra-textual reconstructions of the historical situation in Rome do not answer the question of the identity of the inscribed readers of Romans. Cf. Mark D. Nanos, *The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letters* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996) 76.

⁶⁹ Paul as a participant occurs eighteen times. Moreover, he is implicitly the subject of eleven other clauses through the first person singular verbs.

⁷⁰ Most finite verb forms are in the indicative mood. The Roman Christians are predominantly the passive goal or beneficiaries of Paul’s actions or desires in this section.

θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν).⁷¹ The Roman Christians are Paul's "brothers and sisters" (ἀδελφοί). They are the beneficiaries of Paul's thanksgiving, with their faith specifically being the reason for Paul's thanksgiving. Paul remembers them in his prayers, asking to attain his longing to visit them.⁷² His purpose is to give them goods and services, "some spiritual gift" (τι χάρισμα πνευματικόν), so that they might be strengthened. The disclosure formula mentioned above is used to reiterate Paul's desire to visit them. Furthermore, Paul informs the Romans Christians that they are among those to whom he is a debtor (ὀφειλέτης) and that his eager desire (τὸ κατ' ἐμὲ πρόθυμον) is "to preach the gospel also to you who are in Rome" (καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι).

The overall portrait painted above is that of an apostle who tenderly longs for and is concerned for his charges.⁷³ At the same time, that Paul feels himself responsible to further the Romans' faith is also a secure conclusion from the data. When Paul's reiteration that his readers are among the Gentiles ("so that I might have some fruit also among you just as also among the rest of the Gentiles," ἵνα τινὰ καρπὸν σχῶ καὶ ἐν ὑμῖν καθὼς καὶ ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν) is given full weight, the obvious implication is that Paul's desire to visit the Romans Christians is in line with his apostolic commission to the Gentiles (see Rom 1:5–6).⁷⁴ Thus, Paul's eagerness to go visit the Roman Christians and his explicit characterization of himself as a debtor reveal another facet of Paul's motivation—his apostolic commission. This aspect of the interpersonal meaning is depicted below:

- 1st premise: "I am under divine obligation to preach the gospel among all the Gentiles" (v. 14).
- 2nd premise: "You believers in Rome belong to that group of people, the Gentiles" (v. 13; also 1:6a).

⁷¹ As Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.81 points out, Paul uses this, or a similar formula, in Rom 11:25; 1 Cor 10:1; 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8; and 1 Thess 4:13. Cf. Moo, *Romans*, 60.

⁷² Paul even appeals to God as an authenticating witness (μάρτυς μου).

⁷³ O'Brien has suggested that "the thanksgiving and petitionary prayer reports are evidence of the apostle's deep *pastoral and apostolic concern* for the addressees. This deep concern is shown not only by Paul's actual prayers but also by telling the recipients of his thanksgivings and intercession for them" (*Introductory Thanksgivings*, 13). This portrayal is in keeping with "the positive relationship he had already established with his audience in the prescript" (Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 79); cf. Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans*, 77.

⁷⁴ Cf. Kim, *God, Israel, and the Gentiles*, 103–104; and Schreiner, *Romans*, 48.

Conclusion: “Thus, I am most eager to preach the gospel also to you believers in Rome” (v. 15).⁷⁵

b. *Finding out What Is Going on: Studying Ideational Meanings*

Immediately apparent in Rom 1:8–17 is the high concentration of communication words (9x). The meaning field of belief (6x), by virtue of repetition alone, appears to be prominent in this section. Further analysis of how the meaning field of communication and the other frequently-occurring meanings fields of time (5x), attitudes and emotions (6x), and possession and transfer (4x) interact with the meaning field of belief (6x) reveals the fuller picture.

Paul’s vertical communication—his communication to God—consists of thanksgiving (εὐχαριστέω), prayers (προσευχή), and a request (δέω) to visit the Roman believers. His horizontal communication—his communication to the Roman believers and all others—consists of the gospel (εὐαγγελίζω, εὐαγγέλιον [2x]).⁷⁶ The locus of Paul’s service to God, in fact, lies in communicating the gospel to others (1:9). The meaning field of belief is closely tied to the meaning field of communication. The reason for Paul’s thanksgiving is that the Roman believers’ faith (πίστις) is announced (καταγγέλλεται; another communication word) in the whole world.⁷⁷ The reason for Paul’s desire to visit the Roman believers is that both he and they might be mutually encouraged through one another’s faith (1:12). The intensity of Paul’s desire to visit is highlighted by the repeated use of words of desire and longing (domain 25 “attitudes and emotions”—ἐπιποθέω, θέλω, πρόθυμος). Also used to strengthen the impression of Paul’s intense desire to visit are the time words (domain 67: πάντοτε, ἤδη, ποτέ, πολλάκις, δεῦρο). Words in the possession and transfer meaning field likewise serve to underscore the focus on faith: Paul’s pur-

⁷⁵ Weima, “Preaching the Gospel in Rome,” 351. Paul’s eagerness to preach the gospel to the Roman Christians does not mean that he wanted to convert his readers or that they needed an apostolic seal of approval. In Rom 1:11, Paul links his desire to preach the gospel in Rome with the purpose that his audience might be strengthened (Weima, “Preaching the Gospel in Rome,” 352; Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans*, 109; and Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans*, 82).

⁷⁶ Some are vexed by Paul’s desire to preach the gospel in Rome as he normally plants churches where there are none (Rom 15:20–21). See Schreiner, *Romans*, 52–55.

⁷⁷ “Your faith” (ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν) is prominent by first position in the clause, and the use of the passive voice also highlights “your faith” by downplaying agency (not only does the goal, “your faith,” take the subject slot, but agency is omitted altogether).

pose is to “share” (μεταδῶ) some spiritual gift (χάρισμα) with them, explained as mutual encouragement through one another’s faith (Rom 1:12). Given that Paul already described his goal as an apostle to be “the obedience of *faith* among the Gentiles for the sake of [Jesus] name” (ἀποστολὴν εἰς ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ὑπὲρ τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ), a likely referent for “fruit” (καρπὸν) for his ministry is “the obedience of faith.” Therefore, the reason for both Paul’s thanksgiving to God and his goal in visiting the Roman believers is their “faith.”⁷⁸ In view of the overall portrait of the text, a stronger assertion can be made: faith is the central object or goal around which all of Paul’s actions and desires converge.⁷⁹

Closely related to faith is the preaching of the gospel. As already noted above, Paul’s horizontal communication to others consists of the gospel. In the opening (Rom 1:1), Paul described himself as “separated for God’s gospel” (ἀφορισμένος εἰς εὐαγγέλιον θεοῦ). In Rom 1:9, Paul defines God as he whom he serves in his spirit in the gospel of his Son (ὃ λατρεύω ἐν τῷ πνεύματι μου ἐν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ).⁸⁰ The crucial piece of the puzzle, however, is why Paul wants to go to the Roman Christians. He explicitly states that his purpose is that he might have some fruit also among them just as also among the rest of the Gentiles (Rom 1:13). When one asks, “How did Paul attain fruit among the rest of the Gentiles?” the immediate answer that comes to mind is *by preaching the gospel*. Paul, in fact, explicitly supplies the answer in Rom 1:15: “in the same manner my eager desire is to preach the gospel also to you also

⁷⁸ Two observations concerning the nature of this faith may be made. First, “faith” is visible: (1) It is presumably seen by others and announced in the whole world (1:8); and (2) Paul and the Roman believers can be mutually encouraged by one another’s faith. Secondly, and by implication, this faith cannot simply involve intellectual assent. Garlington notes that Paul’s harvest among the Romans and the other Gentiles (1:13) “bears a striking resemblance to the ‘obedience of faith,’ which he seeks to engender not only among the nations but also on the part of the Romans (1:5–6). In short, this conjunction of 1:5–6 with 1:10–15 informs us that there is more at stake in faith’s obedience than the initial act of credence/trust which responds to (obeys) the gospel as preached by Paul” (Don Garlington, *Faith, Obedience, and Perseverance: Aspects of Paul’s Letter to the Romans* [WUNT 79; Tübingen: Mohr (Siebeck), 1994] 20).

⁷⁹ Similar observations and a similar conclusion are found in Louw, *Semantic Discourse Analysis of Romans*, 2.36–38, 41. Cf. Louw, *Semantics of New Testament Greek*, 145–49.

⁸⁰ Weima argues that “the gospel” in v. 9 is a verbal noun, so that Paul is affirming that he serves God by preaching the gospel concerning his Son (“Preaching the Gospel in Rome,” 348).

who are in Rome” (οὕτως τὸ κατ’ ἐμὲ πρόθυμον καὶ ὑμῖν τοῖς ἐν Ῥώμῃ εὐαγγελίσασθαι).⁸¹

If the fruit Paul sought was the obedience of faith and Paul sought to attain some fruit by desiring to go and preach the gospel to those who are in Rome, the implication is that preaching the gospel is the means by which Paul attains his goal of the obedience of faith of his intended audience. This inference sheds light on the logic of Paul’s continued statements in Rom 1:16–17. First, Paul is not ashamed of the gospel (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) because it is God’s power (δύναμις θεοῦ) leading to salvation (εἰς σωτηρίαν) for all who believe (παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι), both for the Jew first and also for the Greek. Stated differently, the gospel (the Agent) saves (Process) those who believe (the Recipients). Secondly, the gospel is God’s power leading to salvation for all who believe because in it (the Agent) the righteousness related to God (the Goal) is revealed from faith to faith (the Means). In other words, the reason the gospel saves those who believe is that the righteousness that is related to God (the Goal) is revealed in the gospel (the Agent) from faith to faith (the Means). Thirdly, this assertion that the gospel saves those who believe because it reveals the righteousness that is related to God from faith to faith is consistent with the scriptural dictum, “The one righteous, by faith, will live.” Reworded slightly, faith is the means by which one becomes righteous and one who has thus become righteous by faith will live (note that life and salvation may both refer to the eschatological life).⁸²

Following the line of reasoning from above, Rom 1:16–17 may be restated this way: The gospel saves those who believe. This is because the righteousness that is related to God is revealed in the gospel by means of faith going from strength to strength (ἐκ πίστεως

⁸¹ Weima argues that “when the purpose statements of the first two clauses are interpreted in light of the third, then it appears that Paul’s veiled references to imparting ‘some spiritual gift’ and having ‘some fruit’ among them already have in view his desire to preach the gospel to the believers in Rome” (“Preaching the Gospel in Rome,” 350). Cf. James C. Miller, *The Obedience of Faith, the Eschatological People of God, and the Purpose of Romans* (SBLDS 177; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000) 28–29.

⁸² Moo, *Romans*, 78, makes this connection between life and salvation. See also Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.101–102, on the arguments for construing “by faith” with “the one righteous” rather than with “live.” For the contrary view, see Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 265.

εἰς πίστιν, “from faith to faith”).⁸³ As we already know from Scripture, the one who is righteous by means of faith will live (i.e., be saved). Therefore, the probable reconstruction of the interconnections among gospel, faith, salvation, and the righteousness that is related to God is as follows: (1) the gospel saves those who believe because it elicits faith; (2) faith elicited by means of the gospel saves because it reveals “the righteousness that is related to God” (leaving this crucial term undefined);⁸⁴ (3) this revelation (of the righteousness that is related to God) by means of faith renders one righteous; and (4) one who is righteous by means of faith will live (i.e., be saved). The centrality of faith suggested here is consistent with the prominence that faith enjoys in the entire section of Rom 1:8–17.

c. Conclusion: Romans 1:8–17 as a Message

In the thanksgiving section (Rom 1:8–17), Paul’s portrayal of his relationship with his readers is consistent with his opening sketch (Rom 1:1–7). He is related to them as an apostle and his charges. In his vertical communication with God—thanksgiving and prayer—and his horizontal communication towards others—preaching the gospel—Paul’s concern is with his readers’ faith. The portrait of the interpersonal relations between them is enriched by the highlighting of Paul’s apostolic obligation and loving concern towards his charges. Simultaneously, the ideational picture links Paul’s concern over his readers’ faith with his desire to preach the gospel to them. The link from faith, gospel, and salvation to the righteousness that is related to God appears to be as follows: When one believes the gospel, one is saved. One is saved because the righteousness that is related to God is revealed by means of faith in the gospel.

⁸³ For alternatives on the meaning of “from faith to faith,” see Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.99–100. The interpretation above is consistent with the idea that faith is the origin and the goal of the revelation of the righteousness that is related to God (cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *Notes on the Epistles of St. Paul* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1995] 250). More specifically, the view adopted is that of passage from one degree to another (cf. 2 Cor 2:16; 3:18; and Ps 84:8). Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 263, sees both alternatives as possible.

⁸⁴ On the options, see Moo, *Romans*, 70–75. Cf. the helpful sketch in Wedderburn, *The Reasons for Romans*, 108–39.

6. *Conclusion: Invitation to Color outside the Lines*

Now that we have come to the end of our brief journey together in this study, you, the reader, may still ask, “What do all these new-fangled and labor-intensive approaches have to do with the study of Pauline theology?” After all, many of the insights into the meaning of Romans uncovered in this study have been discovered before through other means. First and foremost, the answer lies in a renewed focus on the text and language of the biblical text, the Pauline letters in particular in this case. As Porter eloquently states,

The study of the New Testament is essentially a language-based discipline. That is, the primary body of data for examination is a text, or, better, yet, a collection of many texts written in the Hellenistic variety of the Greek language of the first century C.E. Whatever else may be involved in the study of the New Testament . . . to remain a study of the New Testament it must always remain textually based, since the only direct access that we have into the world of the New Testament is through the text of the Greek New Testament.⁸⁵

This essay is an unapologetic call for rethinking how we interpret Paul’s letters, with a recommendation that we begin to develop frameworks for using the next generation of machine-tagged biblical texts in biblical studies and Pauline studies in particular. The completion and release of richly annotated computerized corpuses of both the Old and New Testaments are right around the corner. The advent of these tools will usher in an area of unprecedented possibilities in comprehensive and systematic analysis of the text and language of the Bible. Some of the new information available in one of these corpuses, the OpenText.org annotation of the Greek New Testament, was used to show the potential of computer-assisted macro-overviews and detailed section-by-section analyses as applied to Romans. Much of the value of this kind of data-intensive study is found in the detailed description of the text itself and so cannot be adequately summarized here without excessive repetition. Only a few highlights will have to suffice below.

In the course of the study, we found that Paul typically uses second person singular: (a) to single out and identify the addressee(s) as a particular person or as individuals belonging to a class of people;

⁸⁵ Porter, “Discourse Analysis and New Testament Studies,” 14.

and (b) to keep a distinction between the addressee and the recipients of his letters as a group—some (or all) of the recipients fall under the class of people addressed only if they fit the description. In the opening of Romans, we found that Paul stresses his common subservience to Christ with his Roman audience. God is highlighted as an authenticating Associate and ultimate Agent; while Jesus is even more prominently portrayed as the central Person through whom Paul and the Roman Christians are related together—as their common Lord. In the Thanksgiving section in Romans, Paul emphasizes his relationship with his audience as apostle to those under his charge. He underscores his concern for his readers' faith and his desire to preach the gospel to them. The link from faith, gospel, and salvation to the righteousness that is related to God seems to be that when one believes the gospel, one is saved; one is saved because the righteousness that is related to God is revealed by means of faith in the gospel.

The exegetical and theological results that were uncovered in the course of examining Romans are offered up as seeds of promise for far more bountiful harvests awaiting those who take up the invitation to color outside the lines and pioneer new pathways into computer-assisted discourse analyses of Paul's letters. Even if we end up supporting previous conclusions (often perhaps over against competing alternatives), the effort is still worth it because, through our investigations, at the very least we will have accumulated a mountain of evidence, which would contribute a firmer and more verifiable basis for those conclusions (and more possibilities for dialogue with those who advocate alternative conclusions as well).⁸⁶

⁸⁶ In defending Reed's use of a Hallidayan approach to substantiate that the primary participants in 1 Timothy are Paul and Timothy, Porter observes, "Some may brand it as special pleading that relies upon an obscure method to defend a traditional position. This would be to miss the point of the exercise, however, since to arrive at this conclusion, a mass of evidence has been accumulated that enables that conclusion to be quantified and hence discussed on a firmer basis" ("Discourse Analysis and New Testament Studies," 29–30). Moreover, Porter aptly notes, "At this stage in New Testament research . . . it might plausibly be asked whether there are many new conclusions to be found . . . or whether any interpretive model is more likely only to support or defend theories, although perhaps on different and more substantial theoretical grounds" (p. 30).

THE SPIRIT AND THE TEMPLE IN PAUL'S LETTERS TO THE CORINTHIANS

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When Paul raises the specter that the Corinthians ought to be more than a discordant band of converts, when he urges them to become more than a frayed knot of believers, he does so by way of reminder: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person. For God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16–17). The introductory phrase, “Do you not know?” consistently in Paul’s letters reminds his readers of something that they presumably *ought* to know but apparently *fail* to remember.¹ What this means is that the image of the Church as a holy temple does not arise from Paul’s imagination or the urgency of the situation; he apparently already adopted this metaphor, which may have circulated already in the early Church, in his preaching or a prior letter.² The importance of this metaphor is apparent further when he puts it to good use a second time as he deals with the matter of illicit sexual behavior that arises from the faulty assumption, which some of the Corinthians apparently hold, that all things are lawful for them. In this context, he reminds his recalcitrant community yet again: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God

¹ E.g., 1 Cor 5:6; 6:2, 3, 9, 15, 16, 19; 9:13, 24.

² W. Schrage (*Der erste Brief an die Korinther* [vol. 1; 1 Kor 1,1–6,11; EKK 7.1; Neukirchen: Benziger und Neukirchener, 1991] 288) supposes that the conception of the indwelling God Paul may have inherited from the early Church, in part because it became relatively widespread in early Christianity (e.g., Eph 2:21–22; 1 Pet 2:5; *Barn.* 6.15 and 16.6–10; Ignatius, *Eph.* 9.1). Paul adopts such language in a different context in Rom 8:9, 11. If Paul referred to the Corinthians in this way earlier, it may have been in the prior letter he mentions in 1 Cor 5:9. On a pre-Pauline origin of the indwelling motif in Hellenistic Judaism and early Hellenistic-Jewish Christianity, see F. W. Horn, *Das Angeld des Geistes: Studien zur paulinischen Pneumatologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1992) 62–76.

in your body” (6:19). This metaphor features once more in still another letter that Paul writes to the Corinthians. Set in a series of rhetorical questions that are baffling because of their combative tenor, Paul asks, “For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Beliar? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols?” (2 Cor 6:14b–16a).³

These texts are rich, not only with the resonance of metaphor, but with the residue of communal misunderstanding. While not all of the knots and twists that attend these texts can be solved here, we can make a start of clearing away some of the brush in order better to understand why in the first place Paul adopted the image of the temple and, once he did, why he took it in the directions that he did. From each of the three occurrences in the Corinthian correspondence will emerge, in differing degrees, two distinctive characteristics of this metaphor: its power to communicate both the need for unity and the indispensability of holiness. Both play pivotal roles in Paul’s adoption of the metaphor twice in 1 Corinthians. The scenario becomes more complicated, however, in 2 Corinthians, where Paul dispenses with his plea for unity—unity with unbelievers in this context—and presses instead for holiness. Although the metaphor communicates unity and holiness, in each of these occurrences it is possessed of its own peculiar stamp, and so we shall, in this study, identify both what these three texts have in common and what gives the metaphor of the temple in each of them its distinctive hues.

A Foundation Well Laid, a Spirit-Filled Temple
(1 Corinthians 3:16–17)

Crime and Punishment

In the first portion of his letter to the Corinthians, Paul’s appeal to the holiness of the temple, filled as it is with God’s spirit, is nothing less than a frontal critique of the splintering tendencies of those

³ It appears again in Eph 2:21–22.

who shatter the Church by their failure to appreciate and to appropriate the unifying presence of Christ in their midst.⁴ The issue to which Paul has devoted the bulk of his letter to this point is the divisiveness of the Church, the problem of divided and misguided allegiances to figures such as Apollos, Peter, even Paul himself. The way in which Paul structures his statements about the temple suggests that these divisions, casual membership with cliques, or informal alliances based upon alleged claims to wisdom, are anything but tolerable, casual, and informal modes of living in community. On the contrary, the disruption of unity is a direct attack upon the Church:

Do you not know

A: that you are God's temple⁵ and
that God's spirit dwells in you?

B: If anyone destroys [damages]⁶ God's temple, God will destroy
that person.

A¹: For God's temple is holy, and
you are that temple.

Sandwiched between two two-part affirmations of the Church as "God's temple" (A and A¹) is a judgment made in legal, or casuistic, form. While Ernst Käsemann has suggested that this was a sentence of holy law delivered by an early Christian prophet, this legal form is also familiar from Torah. "If someone leaves a pit open . . . and an ox or a donkey falls into it, the owner of the pit shall make restitution . . ." (Exod 21:33–34a).⁷ This casuistic form of legal discourse

⁴ The principal issue of schisms Paul introduces, directly following one of his typical benedictions, early in the letter, in 1:10–11: "Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you . . ."

⁵ Paul refers to the temple as ναός rather than ἱερός. Though ναός often refers to the inner sanctuary rather than the temple as a whole, word usage is by no means consistent, and so I think it unwise to extrapolate from Paul's use of ναός rather than ἱερός. See J. R. Lanci, *A New Temple for Corinth: Rhetorical and Archaeological Approaches to Pauline Imagery* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997) 91–93.

⁶ On the plausible interpretation of φθείρειν in reference to the damage rather than complete destruction of a building, see Lanci, *A New Temple*, 67–68. The issue raised by this interpretation concerns the so-called destruction of those who damage God's temple. Are they destroyed or just damaged? One could argue, I suppose, that this fits well the odd notion that the builder will be saved (i.e., only damaged), as through fire, though his or her work will be destroyed.

⁷ E. Käsemann; "Sätze heiligen Rechtes im Neuen Testament," in his *Exegetische*

indicates that clear consequences follow from concrete crimes, *even inadvertent ones*, such as neglecting to cover a pit. Paul's adoption of the casuistic form of legal discourse underwrites the gravity of the situation at Corinth. The Corinthians' lack of awareness of consequences does not exonerate them; they have dug a pit of dissension, so to speak, into which they have fallen, and they will pay the penalty. The cliques at Corinth, in other words, are not casual but criminal.

And the penalty is extraordinary. While a man who has sexual intercourse with his father's wife—immorality that outstrips the most vulgar of pagan sexual practice—receives the penalty only of temporary ostracism (1 Cor 5:1–8), the dividers of the Church are subject to destruction or severe damage, torn apart as they have torn apart the Church.⁸ Paul has unequivocally laid down the gauntlet. The Corinthians must stop destroying God's unified temple through cliques and quarrels or else they will be destroyed. It is inconceivable that the spirit of God should dwell in a portion of the holy of holies without filling the whole of it. God's spirit does not dwell in the midst of pockets of the Church; its presence is not sequestered among those cliques with a peculiar claim to superior wisdom. Those who attempt to create a spiritual provincialism, sanctified subdivisions, are doing dire damage to the fabric of the Church, according to Paul, for whom a parcelling of the spirit is an utterly inconceivable state of affairs.

Versuche und Besinnungen (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1964) 69–71. Against Käsemann, see K. Berger, "Zu den sogenannten Sätzen Heiligen Rechts," *NTS* 17 (1970–71): 10–40.

⁸ It may be that Paul has here resorted to language and ideas that are familiar from Qumran documents. The cognate noun, destroy (הרש), occurs in the Dead Sea Scrolls of "men of destruction" who, because they are bent on ruining the community, are liable to eternal destruction (e.g., 1QS 9.16). See B. Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament: A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (SNTSMS 1; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965) 59–60. The verb, φθείρειν, is used elsewhere by Paul only in 2 Cor 11:3; see also Eph 4:22.

A Living Temple

Paul's ability to *remind* the Corinthians that they are a living temple, the readiness with which he is able to recall rather than to introduce the metaphor, suggests that it was embedded in the tradition he conveyed to the Corinthians.⁹ Certainly there was no lack of temples, and incense filling them, at Corinth, and we know from 2 Corinthians 8–9, taken in tandem with Rom 15:25–26, that Paul held the impoverished believers in Jerusalem close to his heart, so much so that he wanted to bring an offering to them. It is hard to imagine that Paul spoke or wrote about Jerusalem without reference to the temple. In Romans 9, for instance, where he lists the qualities of the Jews, he includes temple worship (9:4).

How early the metaphor of the Church as a living temple emerged is impossible to pinpoint, though we know from the charter document of the Qumran community, the *Community Rule*, that these isolated Palestinian Jews of the Roman era considered themselves to be a living temple whose spiritual worship and holy life had supplanted the Jerusalem temple. The community is to “make atonement for all who freely volunteer for holiness in Aaron and for the house of truth in Israel.” They are, then, a living temple, the “house of Israel,” which exercises the priestly vocation of “atonement” (1QS 5.5–6).¹⁰

⁹ This metaphor is not unrelated to the metaphors of planting and building that precede it in 1 Cor 3:5–15. As a background to this combination of planting and building, see possibly Jer 1:10 and 12:16. It has also been suggested that the various elements that are destroyed (e.g., from gold, silver, precious stones, and wood, though not hay and straw) may be influenced by descriptions of the construction of the temple of Solomon in 1 Chron 29:2; also 22:14–16. If this is so, then the transition to the temple metaphor would have been effortless. See A. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 311.

¹⁰ G. Fee (*God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994] 114–15), while offering a concise survey of the foreground of 1 Cor 3:16–17, surprisingly makes no reference to the Dead Sea Scrolls. My inclusion of these texts is illustrative because they provide a similar identification of the community as a temple or house of God. Whether Paul was influenced by such a community we, of course, cannot surmise, though the correspondences are striking. Since this conception of the Church may have been pre-Pauline, it may be that the early Palestinian community was familiar with these conceptions or, in some way, shared these convictions with the devotees at Qumran. (See n. 2 above.) I do not intend to suggest with this comparison that Paul sought to replace the Jerusalem temple with a living temple. On the question of whether a replacement of the temple was meant or whether there is rather a transference of language in the Dead Sea Scrolls and 1 Corinthians, see Lanci, *A New Temple*, 7–19.

Later in the *Community Rule*, the community council, the circle of longstanding members, is characterized as precisely what Paul wants the Corinthian church to become. They are “an everlasting plantation, a holy house for Israel and the foundation of the holy of holies for Aaron, true witnesses for the judgment and chosen by the will (of God) to atone for the land . . .” (1QS 8.5–6).¹¹ This community is a “precious cornerstone,” “the most holy dwelling of Aaron . . . a house of perfection and truth in Israel” (8.7, 9).

The depth of their self-understanding is discernible in the breadth of detail which the community includes to depict itself as a living temple:

When these exist in Israel in accordance with these rules in order to establish the spirit of holiness in truth eternal, in order to atone for the guilt of iniquity and for the unfaithfulness of sin, and for approval for the earth, without the flesh of burnt offerings and without the fats of sacrifice—the offering of the lips in compliance with the decree will be like the pleasant aroma of justice and the perfectness of behaviour will be acceptable like a freewill offering—at that moment the men of the Community shall set apart a holy house for Aaron, in order to form a most holy community, and a house of the Community for Israel, those who walk in perfection (1QS 9.3–6).¹²

All of the familiar elements of Qumran temple imagery are here—the holy of holies or holy house for Aaron, atonement without actual sacrifices in the Jerusalem temple, and a holy community. Yet this passage includes an evocative reference to the “spirit of holiness.” It is evocative because, once again, the spirit exists in the *community* in a way that it does not quite exist within individual believers. It is the community, not merely a collection of spirit-filled individuals, that establishes the spirit of holiness. Further, this spirit is related to distinctive qualities. It is, of course, holy, but it is also associated with *eternal truth*. There is content here, knowledge, comprehensibility. The Corinthians, with their penchant for speaking in tongues, their prepossession toward an experience that entails an “unpro-

¹¹ On the likelihood that this passage characterizes the council at one and the same time as paradise and temple, as both a planting and a building—two metaphors for the Church that lead up to the language of spirit-filled temple—see Gärtner, *Temple*, 27–30.

¹² On a similar combination of conceptions in 4QFlorilegium, see Gärtner, *Temple*, 30–42. Quotations of the Dead Sea Scrolls are from F. García Martínez and E. J. C. Tigchelaar, *The Dead Sea Scrolls: Study Edition* (Leiden: Brill; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997).

ductive mind" (1 Cor 14:14), are unlike a community that associates the spirit with truth. And finally, this spirit is actively at work in the process of purification. The spirit is a spirit of *holiness* whose task is to bring holiness to bear upon the community and, in this text, to the whole earth. It is a spirit that by nature purifies and atones.¹³

These elements reappear, with an even more explicit communal emphasis, in a pivotal description of the annual covenant renewal ceremony, in which new members were taken into the community at Qumran (1QS 1.21–3.12). At one point in this description of covenant renewal ceremony, the spirit of holiness comes to the fore:

For it is by the spirit of the true counsel of God that are atoned the paths of man, all his iniquities, so that he can look at the light of life. And it is by the holy spirit of the community, in its truth, that he is cleansed of all his iniquities. And by the spirit of uprightness and of humility his sin is atoned. And by the compliance of his soul with all the laws of God his flesh is cleansed by being sprinkled with cleansing waters and being made holy with the waters of repentance (1QS 3.6–9).

This instruction is significant because of how clearly it locates the spirit within the community as a whole rather than simply within individuals that make up the community.¹⁴ These two conceptions are very different. In one, the community is a collection of spirit-filled individuals. This may have been a fundamental Corinthian misconception. Rivalries and cliques were possible because one person could have a greater spirituality, even a more profound measure of spirit, than another individual. Paul expends enormous energy to counteract this perspective and to communicate that they are an organic whole—a temple, a body, a new covenant community. They are not just a collection of individuals who can benignly co-exist in cliques.

¹³ A believer at Qumran was “drawn near” or brought into the community by the giving of the spirit of holiness within. This drawing near entails a sort of purification that is directly related to the gift of the spirit of holiness: “I have appeased your face by the spirit which you have placed [in me.] to lavish your [kind]nesses on [your] serv[ant] for [ever,] to purify me with your holy spirit, to bring me near by your will according to the extent of your kindnesses . . .” (1QH 8.19–20). See H. W. Kuhn, *Enderwartung und gegenwärtiges Heil: Untersuchungen zu den Gemeindeliedern von Qumran* (SUNT 4; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1966) 117–39.

¹⁴ In this respect the sprinkling of waters may recall the communal purification of Ezek 36:25–27.

There is something else, according to the *Community Rule*, that is taking place in the community from Qumran. There is a spirit that transcends individual spirit-filling, that provides a unity beyond what a collection of spirit-filled individuals can concoct. At Qumran, there is “the holy spirit of the community” into which individuals are absorbed, to whose instruction individuals must submit. This spirit exhibits clear qualities: true counsel or teaching, uprightness, humility, and, above all, holiness. The Corinthians have failed to appropriate such qualities as these. There is resistance to Paul’s instruction, hubris rather than humility, and a moral laxity that puts pagans to shame in its rejection of holiness. The Corinthian church, in other words, is no temple at all; it is a splintered collection of individuals and cliques who regard individual spirit-filling as a basis for establishing a spiritual hierarchy.

Alongside this communal understanding of the holy spirit as a reality that transcends individual spirit-filling, these instructions from Qumran address as well the relationship of inner and outer purification. It is clear from this text that moral or inner cleansing was an indispensable companion of cleansing with water. Anyone who refused to undergo this covenant renewal would “not be purified by the cleansing waters . . . nor shall he be purified by all the water of ablution” (1QS 3.4–5). No amount of physical cleansing could make any difference if a person was stubborn and untaught by the community as a whole, if they were not cleansed by the holy spirit of the community. This emphasis upon holiness and purity is fundamental as well to Paul’s vision of the living temple. After identifying the Church as a plant, a building, and, finally, a temple, and after describing the punishment that fits the crime of damaging or destroying the Church with schisms and quarreling, Paul then describes the sanctity of that temple: “for God’s temple is holy, and you are that temple.” This is no new element in the letter, the twenty-first word (1 Cor 1:2) of which is “sanctified” (ἡγιασμένοις). The further emphasis in the *Community Rule* upon both inner and outer purification resonates with the words with which Paul concludes another discussion of the Church as a spirit-filled temple in 2 Cor 6:14–7:1: “Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from *every defilement of body and of spirit*, making *holiness* perfect in the fear of God” (2 Cor 7:1; my italics). Paul offers here a perfect précis of the teaching on the spirit that is encapsulated by the *Community Rule*—whether or not he is familiar with the text itself. This is the quin-

tessential expression of the need for purification—both moral and physical—that issues in a life of holiness.¹⁵

It is as if Paul, or other followers of Jesus before him, has dipped into the self-perception of the Qumran community in order to straighten out his stubborn, unholy, impure, fractious, and fragmented community. The Qumran covenant renewal ceremony contains precisely what the Corinthians give no signs of having understood: there is a *communal spirit* that transcends individuals yet *purifies* and *instructs* individuals who submit to the corporate will of that community; this spirit exhibits indispensable qualities, such as *humility*, *uprightness*, and *holiness*, which ought to be evident in community life.

The Qumran community had its faults, to be sure. The community was ingrown and exclusive, hateful—at least in the scrolls it has left behind—toward outsiders, both Jewish and Roman, preoccupied with the sort of minutiae that were demanded of a residential desert community, and perhaps overly confident in its perception of truth and its interpretation of Scripture. Nonetheless, in many respects the Corinthian community must be compared unfavorably with this Palestinian community. The Corinthians were splintered, fractured by rival claims to leadership and competitive hierarchies that arose from misperceptions of the relative worth of spiritual gifts. They lacked a hunger for holiness and, instead, seem to have allowed reprehensible moral lapses to fester before their very eyes.

It is these faults that the metaphor of the temple so pointedly addresses. The metaphor of a spirit-filled temple presses the need for a spirit of holiness and a spirit of unity and, by doing so, provides a direct critique of the Corinthian penchant for discordant cliques. It also introduces another powerful dimension of communal life that the Corinthians, in their self-absorbed existence, seem to have overlooked: the universal nature of that unity.

The Temple and Universal Hope

In order to apprehend how much the Corinthians failed to grasp, we must reckon with the hopes that were riveted to the temple and its glorious future restoration. Ezekiel, of course, provided the architectural plans of this temple in an exilic vision that exemplified purity

¹⁵ See also 1QS 4.20–21.

and exclusion (chs. 40–48). Yet later prophets departed from this exclusive vision, and it was to these other prophets that Jesus and Paul were deeply indebted. An exilic or post-exilic prophet in the tradition of Isaiah proffered a vision of an open temple:

And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant—these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered (Isa 56:6–8).¹⁶

The post-exilic prophet, Zechariah, would share a similar vision in which the nations would be welcomed into the temple at Jerusalem:

Thus says the LORD of hosts: Peoples shall yet come, the inhabitants of many cities; the inhabitants of one city shall go to another, saying, “Come, let us go to entreat the favor of the LORD, and to seek the LORD of hosts; I myself am going.” Many peoples and strong nations shall come to seek the LORD of hosts in Jerusalem, and to entreat the favor of the LORD. Thus says the LORD of hosts: In those days ten men from nations of every language shall take hold of a Jew, grasping his garment and saying, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you” (Zech 8:20–23).¹⁷

What these representative oracles suggest is that the post-exilic prophetic tradition could envisage a future for the temple that was universal, attended to not just by Israel but by the entire world community. According to the Gospel writers, Jesus was influenced by this strand in the prophetic tradition, as his citations of Isaiah 61 in Luke 4:16–21 and Isa 56:7 in his attack upon temple customs demonstrate.¹⁸ Key moments in Paul’s letter to the Romans give further purchase to the influence these prophets had upon his vision of a mission to the nations. At a climactic moment, Paul cites LXX Isa

¹⁶ Isa 56:6–8; see also Isa 60:4–5, 7. See also R. J. McKelvey, *The New Temple: The Church in the New Testament* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969) 9–15.

¹⁷ In another oracle, Zechariah envisions, somewhat less felicitously, a period of time when nations who had fought against Israel and been punished with a plague would “go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the festival of booths. If any of the families of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain upon them” (14:16–17).

¹⁸ Matt 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46.

65:1–2: “Then Isaiah is so bold as to say, ‘I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me.’ But of Israel he says, ‘All day long I have held out my hands to a disobedient and contrary people’” (Rom 10:20–21).

Later in the letter, following a catena of scriptural texts in which Paul anchors his hope “that the nations might glorify God for [God’s] mercy” (Rom 15:9–12), Paul explains that God’s grace was given to him “to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the *offering* of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the holy spirit” (15:16).¹⁹ He develops this self-perception as a priest who brings the offering of the nations to God in part from an allusion to Isa 66:20, which reads, “They shall bring all your kindred from all the nations as an *offering* to the LORD, on horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and on mules, and on dromedaries, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites bring a grain offering in a clean vessel to the house of the LORD.” This allusion is positively essential for understanding Paul’s metaphor of the temple in his letters to the Corinthians. Isaiah envisages international pilgrimages to the temple, the holy mountain, with real camels and mules carrying grain in a pure vessel. Paul envisages a different sort of cosmopolitan pilgrimage; the offering of the nations will be made pure by the Holy Spirit.

Nor was Paul alone during the first century in following a tradition that perceived the temple as a point of unity rather than exclusivity. In his defense of the Jewish faith, *Contra Apionem*, Josephus writes aphoristically: “We have but one temple for the one God . . . common to all as God is common to all” (2.193). More to the point, in his *Antiquities*, Josephus interprets the detail in 2 Chron 7:1, that “fire came down from heaven,” as a combination of fire and air which composed the divine spirit. At the dedication of the temple, Solomon had prayed, “Beside these things I entreat Thee also to send some portion of Thy *spirit* to dwell in the temple,” in

¹⁹ What Paul describes sounds much like the Qumran self-presentation we noted earlier, in which they exist “to establish the spirit of holiness in truth eternal, in order to atone . . . the offering of the lips in compliance with the decree will be like the pleasant aroma of justice and the perfectness of behaviour will be acceptable like a freewill offering” (1QS 9.3–5). Qumran and Paul, of course, are separated by a wide rift. The community at Qumran functions as a priest in isolation from the world, while Paul’s vocation is to travel to the far ends of the world to present the nations as an offering.

response to which “. . . a fire darted out of the air and, in the sight of all the people, leaped upon the altar and, seizing on the sacrifice, consumed it all” (8.118).²⁰ Solomon prayed for a portion of the spirit, and now a mixture of fire and air consumes the sacrifice. While the entirety of Josephus’s paraphrase is permeated by Stoic vocabulary and concepts, his association of the spirit with fire and air encapsulates the quintessence of Stoicism, for, according to Stoic cosmology, fire and air are the components of *pneuma*.²¹ Further, the single defining function of *pneuma*, as a Stoic conception, is to unify the universe.²² For example, Balbus, in Cicero’s *On the Nature of the Gods* 2.19, claims that the world order is “maintained in unison by a single divine and all-pervading spirit,” while Alexander of Aphrodisias recalls that the founder of Stoicism, Chrysippus, “assumes that the whole material world is unified by a *pneuma* which wholly pervades it and by which the universe is made coherent and kept together and is made intercommunicating.”²³

There is, therefore, an extraordinary unifying dimension to temple imagery, particularly as it was envisioned by prophets following

²⁰ On the ways in which Josephus recasts the dedication of the temple (1 Kings 8) with a good deal of Stoic language, see J. R. Levison, *Spirit in First Century Judaism* (AGJU 29; Leiden: Brill, 1997) 133–37.

²¹ Alexander of Aphrodisias, *De mixtione* 224, lines 15–16. Quotation from A. A. Long and D. N. Sedley, *The Hellenistic Philosophers* (2 vols.; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987) 1.282; *De anima* 26.6. See also Plutarch who, in a complex attempt to discredit the Stoics, says that, according to their view of mixture, earth and water maintain their unity “by virtue of their participation in a pneumatic and fiery power, whereas air and fire because of their intensity are self-sustaining . . .” (*De communibus notitiis adversus Stoicos*, *Mor.* 1085D). Alexander of Aphrodisias (*De mixtione* 225, lines 14–16) asks, in his argument against the Stoics, “Moreover, if breath composed of fire and air passes through all bodies . . .” Galen (*De placitis Hippocrates et Platonis* 5.3.8), while objecting to Chrysippus, describes the two parts of *pneuma* which constitute the soul’s commanding faculty as air and fire.

²² In order to underscore the universal accessibility of the temple, Josephus removes exclusivistic statements from 1 Kings 8 and adds touches that underscore the philanthropic center which the temple offers the world. Josephus also exercises creative exegesis by removing all traces of exclusivism from Solomon’s prayer, particularly references to war and enemies in 1 Kgs 8:44–51, and by fanning the spark of the positive reference to foreigners in 1 Kgs 8:43 into a flame, at the prayer’s conclusion: “For so would all know that Thou Thyself didst desire that this house should be built for Thee in our land, and also that we are not inhumane by nature nor unfriendly to those who are not of our country, but wish that all equally should receive aid from Thee and enjoy Thy blessings” (*Ant.* 8.117).

²³ *De mixtione* 216, lines 14–17. On related Stoic conceptions, see H. Wenschkewitz, *Die Spiritualisierung der Kultusbegriffe Tempel, Priester und Opfer im NT* (Angelos 4; Leipzig: Pfeiffer, 1932) 70–230.

the return from Babylonian exile. Even Josephus, during the late first century, recognizes that the divine spirit which filled Solomon's temple was nothing less than the cohesive force of the entire universe. The Corinthians, though they are God's temple, fail to grasp that the spirit which fills them is intended to bring an uncommon unity into their midst; instead they shrink their capacities and minimize their potential by attempting to subdivide this living temple into cliques. The spirit which fills the temple cannot, of course, be subdivided; it has an existence that transcends merely individual experiences. Therefore, those who persist in privileging one group or individual over another, who hanker after quarrels and foster factions in the Church, cut across the grain of God's inclusive vision.

Such recalcitrance Paul seems unable to tolerate. He reminds the Corinthians, therefore, of what they should already understand themselves to be: "Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you?" He then accuses divisive people of destroying or damaging this temple of God. This is a harsh image that summons miserable memories and marks those who divide the Church as the heirs of the Babylonians, who dragged Israel into exile in the early sixth century B.C.E., and as the descendants of the infamous Antiochus IV Epiphanes, whose desecration of the temple by the sacrifice of a pig in the holy of holies precipitated one of the darkest periods in the tragic history of Israel's temples.²⁴

The Body as a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)

Paul's reminder that the Church is a living temple, coupled with the legal, or casuistic, condemnation of those who destroy it, comprises a more effective appeal than prosaic exhortations to unity. No wonder, then, that Paul picks this metaphor up once more, at a point in the letter when his attentions have shifted from the schisms that so rankled him to sexual matters, both the flagrant flaunting of self-evident morality by a man who sleeps with his father's wife (1 Cor 5:1-8) and, at the other end of the spectrum, by the eschewing of all things sexual even within marriage (7:1-16). Other issues rise momentarily to the surface—lawsuits among believers, and lawful or

²⁴ E.g., 1 Macc 1-6; Dan 7-8, 10-12.

unlawful food—but the predominant issues that Paul confronts in this portion of the letter are sexual. In this context Paul re-introduces the metaphor of the temple: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body” (6:19). The introductory words, “do you not know?” are precisely the words that occurred earlier in 1 Cor 3:16–17 to signal that Paul was reminding the Corinthians of something they ought to have known, something he had preached or written about in his prior communication with the Corinthians.

This reminder occurs toward the end of an extremely obtuse discussion of sexual relations that begins with what seems to be a quotation of a position held by some of the Corinthians: “All things are lawful for me” (1 Cor 6:12). Interpreters of the temple metaphor in this context typically suggest that Paul has taken the more common *communal* metaphor of 1 Cor 3:16–17 and 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 and applied it here to *individuals*. For example, G. Fee writes, “In referring to the body as the temple of the Spirit, of course, Paul adopted the imagery that first of all belongs to the church as a whole (cf. 3:16; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21–22) and applied it to the individual believer.”²⁵ H. Merklein writes, “Von einer Spiritualisierung der Tempelvorstellung kann man hier wie in 3,16f. nicht reden. Wie Paulus dort auf die konkrete Gemeinde abzielte, so ist jetzt in V. 19 die konkrete somatische Existenz der einzelnen Christen in den Blick gefasst.”²⁶ There are good grounds for this assessment. Sexual activity with a prostitute is an individual matter, a dangerous matter because, when a believer has sexual relations with a prostitute, he “becomes one body with her” and “the two shall become one flesh” (1 Cor 6:16, citing Gen 2:24). Two individuals, in other words, become one during sexual intercourse.

Many elements of Paul’s discussion, on the other hand, give the impression that this is not merely an individual metaphor. Not least, of course, is that Paul chooses to introduce the temple metaphor with the same words he had adopted to introduce the metaphor on the first occasion in 1 Corinthians 3. Presumably both reminders are

²⁵ *Empowering Presence*, 135–36.

²⁶ *Der erste Brief an die Korinther. Kapitel 5,1–11,1* (Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament 7.2; Gütersloh: Gütersloher/Echter, 2000).

intended to recall the same metaphor to mind. Since the first occurrence of the temple image was decidedly communal, it would naturally have a similar communal dimension in the second occurrence. It need not be here exclusively communal, but it would be strange were Paul to recall a metaphor that clearly was communal—it is communal in every other instance in the New Testament—without at least signalling clearly that he intends now to interpret that metaphor in an individualistic way.²⁷ He gives no such clear signal.

Further, while the word, “body” (σῶμα), which Paul uses several times in this discussion of sex with prostitutes, from its first occurrence in 1 Cor 5:3 until 11:29 is the individual human body, the word also becomes a dominant metaphor for the Church in 1 Corinthians 12–14 and Paul’s letter to the Romans, particularly when it occurs, as it frequently does, in relation to the body’s members (μέλη), as it does in this passage.²⁸ Every other instance in 1 Corinthians of the word, “members”—six occurrences in all—occurs in a discussion of the communal metaphor of the body.²⁹ For example: “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ” (1 Cor 12:12); “indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many” (12:14); “if one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it” (12:26–27). The communal dimension of the word, “members,” cannot be far from view, then, when Paul reminds his readers, “Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Never!” (6:15).

The presence in Paul’s discussion of these elements suggests that the communal dimension has, at the least, not been eclipsed by the individual. The metaphor of the temple which he recalls is elsewhere communal, and Paul does not here signal a shift from that perspective in this discussion. The words, “body” and “members,” particularly when they appear together, evoke another communal metaphor: the body of Christ. According to R. Kempthorne, in fact,

²⁷ The metaphor is communal in 1 Cor 3:16–17, 2 Cor 6:16, and Eph 2:21.

²⁸ E.g., 1 Cor 10:16–17; especially 12:12–27 and Rom 12:4–5, where it occurs in relation to the “members” (μέλη) of the body. 1 Cor 11:29 is ambiguous.

²⁹ 1 Cor 12:2 (twice); 12:14, 18, 19, 20.

Paul “is now writing unequivocally of the corporate Body.” This discussion is not, according to Kempthorne, about illicit sexual activity in general; rather Paul here picks up the discussion of the man who is living with his father’s wife and urging the community, once again, to guard against what he is doing, for he, as a member of the body, the Church, is sinning, not only against his own body, but also against the body that is the Church.³⁰

Whether or not Paul is introducing a new topic or returning to the case of this man, the permeable border between the individual and community is particularly transparent in Paul’s treatment of the man who was sexually involved with his father’s wife, with whom Paul dealt just a few paragraphs earlier. Paul consigns the man to Satan “for the destruction of the flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord” (5:5). The absence of pronouns in this directive is jarring. While we would expect to read, “his,” that is, the man’s flesh, Paul includes no personal pronoun. This permits an interpretation in which the community’s flesh may also be included in this condemnation. Similarly, we would expect Paul to write that “his,” that is, the man’s spirit, will be saved, but, once again, Paul omits the personal pronoun. This permits an interpretation in which the community’s spirit will be saved. Paul could readily have eliminated ambiguity by the addition of personal pronouns. Instead, his ambiguous syntax permits, perhaps even invites, a construal of the body and spirit as both individual and communal. What is at stake is not just the salvation of the man but of the whole Church, not just the arrogance of the individual but also of the Church (5:2). This sexual perversion has to do, not just with the individual man, but with the individual-in-community. Their thorough integration is, in fact, evident when Paul adopts, in the concluding paragraph of this discussion, the metaphor of the yeast. A little yeast leavens the whole batch of dough. A little impurity can infect the entire community.³¹

In light of the permeable border reflected in this metaphor of yeast that Paul adopts in relation to sexual scandal, the communal

³⁰ R. Kempthorne, “Incest and the Body of Christ: A Study of I Corinthians VI. 12–20,” *NTS* 14 (1968): 568–74, especially 572–73.

³¹ On this conception of porous borders in 1 Corinthians, see D. B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999) 168–79; see also A. Y. Collins, “The Function of ‘Excommunication’ in Paul,” *HTR* 73 (1980): 251–63.

dimension of the metaphor of the temple in 1 Cor 3:16–17 (and 1 Cor 6:19 and Eph 2:21), and the corporate residue of words, such as “your bodies are *members* of Christ” and “sins against the *body*,” then both individual and communal dimensions of the metaphor of the temple in this context are difficult to ignore. “The body is meant not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body” (1 Cor 6:13). Which body is meant here? Of the individual? Yes. Of the community? Of course. This is not exclusively a private matter between the Lord and the physical body of an individual; this is a matter as well between the Lord and the body of the Church. In other words, illicit sexual intercourse is an act that penetrates the permeable boundary between the body of the individual and the body that is the community.

By crossing the border between individual and community, the metaphor of the spirit-filled temple returns us to the fundamental Corinthian failure which Paul addressed when he first adopted the metaphor in 3:16–17. The Corinthians carry on with cliques and quarrels because they fail to understand that the Church is more than a collection of spirit-filled individuals. The Church as a whole, as a living temple, is filled communally in a way that transcends individual experience, that draws an indispensable relationship between the individual and the community. By the same token, the Corinthians do not excise the man who lives with his father's wife because they fail to understand that the yeast of his sin will infect the Church as a whole. And now, they fail to understand that sex with prostitutes is also a communal affair. The individual is not an isolated body but a *member* of Christ's body, someone who is organically related to the Church. When he has sex with a prostitute, the whole body is involved in this deleterious act.³²

³² On this interpretation, see Martin, *Corinthian Body*, 175–79. To penetrate a prostitute sexually is like compelling Christ's own member to penetrate her (1 Cor 6:15). In light of Gen 2:24, according to which “the two shall become one flesh,” sex with a prostitute is uniting with her rather than with the Lord (1 Cor 6:16–17). In fact, while it may appear that the believing male is penetrating the prostitute, he is actually sinning “into his body,” that is, he is, morally speaking, being penetrated by the prostitute. The Greek preposition, εἰς, no doubt has the sense of sinning “against his body,” but not without preserving the more typical sense of *into*. The irony, of course, is that the believing member, who is united to Christ, by penetrating a prostitute with his own “member,” is himself penetrated morally by the prostitute.

Paul is able to make this point vividly by using the word, “members,” which has a serious and unavoidable *double entendre*, as Paul’s discussion of the “less respectable” and “less honorable” members that are to be covered with honor and respect in 1 Cor 12:23 indicates; members are body parts and community members. The member that joins with a prostitute, that actually becomes one with a prostitute, according to Paul’s citation of Gen 2:24, can be easily inferred. It is, of course, the penis. Yet it is more than this, for the penis is part, a member, of the person as a whole, and the person is a part, a member, of Christ. Therefore, Paul asks, “Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute?” (1 Cor 5:15).

In a labored argument, then, Paul drives home this point, that individual believers do not live in isolation from Christ’s body. When individuals from this community release *pneuma* through sex with prostitutes, they do not do so in isolation, but as members of Christ, as a part of a temple that is filled with holy *pneuma*. Paul does all he can—reminds, cites Torah, explains, commands, and tenders a familiar temple metaphor—to convince the Corinthians that they have no right to buy the services of prostitutes when they and the community of which they are members—whether individual or communal is not clear, as Paul’s syntax is again ambiguous with respect to individual and community—have been bought with a price (6:20).³³

Once again, what is at stake is the holiness of the community and not just the holiness of individuals. The metaphor of “a temple of the Holy Spirit” evokes images of a community at worship, a universal and unified community, a community permeated by holiness and awe, a community comprised of members who devote themselves to God—a community that is distinctly unlike the community at Corinth. Yet this is a community that Paul identified as “sanctified” (1:2), as God’s “holy” temple (3:17). Paul knows—and he will tell the Corinthians so shortly—that relationships both within the community and with those outside are intended to make others holy. He even urges believing spouses to remain with unbelieving spouses in order to sanctify the unbelieving partner. Though this is difficult

³³ The final command is also possessed of a sublime ambiguity: “Glorify, then, God in your (plural) body” (1 Cor 6:20). Is an individual to glorify God in his or her body? Yes. Is a church to glorify God in their body? Yes. The individual glorifies God as a member of Christ, and the Church is a body composed of members.

to understand, he recommends that believers remain with unbelieving spouses because “the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through her husband. Otherwise, your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy” (1 Cor 7:14).³⁴ Yet precisely the opposite interchange is taking place, according to this discussion of sexual behavior, because members, or a specific member, of this community are being polluted by means of illicit sexual habits that are fueled by the utterly foolish assumption that “all things are lawful for me.” Rather than sanctifying unbelievers, members of the body are being polluted by uniting their members through illicit sexual activity, sometimes with the bodies of prostitutes, and thereby spreading that pollution throughout the body, the Church.

The Corinthians have obviously gotten into a mess to be assiduously avoided: “Never!” Paul responds to his own question about whether Christ’s members should be united to prostitutes, and then later he commands nearly as tersely, “Shun fornication!” (5:18).³⁵ Those Corinthians who embrace a reality in which all things are permissible live in moral and physical chaos; they fail to reckon with a communal reality in which their unholy behavior as individual members pollutes the entire body with unholiness, just as the use of a sexual member, or body part, in a relationship with a prostitute renders the entire body unholy. The spirit-filled sanctuary, in contrast, is a metaphor of stability, abundance, and holiness. It subordinates individual liberties to the communal breath as a whole. Paul offers a sharp contrast between such a disordered existence and a living temple that is filled with the Holy Spirit. There are, after all, two spheres represented here, one filled with the spirit of the world and the other with the spirit from God.

Christ, Beliar and the Temple (2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1)

Despite his best efforts, something has apparently gone awry since the Corinthians received the letter in which Paul reminded them

³⁴ On this notoriously difficult verse, see the excellent discussion of Thiselton, *Corinthians*, 525–33.

³⁵ Paul employs a pun with the word, “prostitute” (τῆ πόρνη), in 1 Cor 6:16, and “fornication” (τὴν πορνείαν) in 6:18.

that they are a temple in which God dwells. Paul is driven, consequently, to ask a series of five rhetorical questions that follow from the mandate: “Do not be mismatched with unbelievers.”³⁶ What is jarring about these questions is that their tone is harsh, their temperament belligerent, with each driving an uncharacteristic wedge between believers and unbelievers:

For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness?
 Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness?
 What agreement does Christ have with Beliar?
 Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever?
 What agreement has the temple of God with idols? (2 Cor 6:14b–16a)

The either-or nature of these questions, the contrasts Paul creates, are untypical:

Righteousness and lawlessness
 Light and darkness
 Christ and Beliar
 Believer and unbeliever
 The temple of God and idols

Once again, Paul’s temple imagery occurs in a context that is edgy and abrupt. In his first letter, he had been edgy too. He promised destruction, and not just ostracism, to the subdividers of God’s sanctuary. He answered, “Never!” to the question of whether Christ should be united to prostitutes, and urged curtly, “Shun illicit sex!” Yet in this later letter that edginess has exploded into an irrepressible excoriation of both unbelievers and Corinthian dalliances with them.

The Corinthians appear *not* to have continued egregiously off course with respect to either of the issues related to the temple metaphor in 1 Corinthians. His later letter, 2 Corinthians, has little to do with schisms or sexual immorality. There is no mention of the illicit relationship between a man and his father’s wife, nor does Paul mention in any detail sexual intercourse with either a spouse or a prostitute. His sole mention of the two harassing Corinthian flaws, schisms and sexual immorality, with which he dealt passionately and at length in

³⁶ While this may include marriage, Paul expresses himself in more general terms of other dimensions of relationships with unbelievers, including business ones. See, e.g., M. Thrall, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (vol. 1; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1994) 472–74.

his earlier letter, occurs in a tendentious, formulaic, and tentative conclusion to his own self-defense:

For I fear that when I come, I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish; I fear that there may perhaps be quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder. I fear that when I come again, my God may humble me before you, and that I may have to mourn over many who previously sinned and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced (2 Cor 12:20–21).

Paul is not entirely certain that he will find the community torn by schism and tattered by sexual immorality. Still, the blunt dichotomies of 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 suggest that something else has developed in the community or, at least, that Paul suspects that something else has grown like a blister on the Corinthian body, and he confronts it with a series of rhetorical questions that end with the temple metaphor, a catena of scriptural texts, and an exhortation to purity.

The recurrence of the temple metaphor exemplifies Paul's ability to contrast deftly current Corinthian behavior with what he has already taught them. He signalled this in 1 Corinthians by introducing the metaphor with the words, "Do you not know?" They should, but fail to, remember what they were taught through the temple metaphor. In the third occurrence of this metaphor, the bald dichotomies Paul develops suggest that the Corinthians have failed to incorporate Paul's insistence upon holiness, upon the maintenance of purity. He turns, therefore, his attention away from relationships between those *within* the Church to relationships with those who are *outside* the Church, that is, with the very nations to which he is called.

What possibly lies behind this insistence, behind this sharpening of tone, behind this unexpected shift in emphasis, is a Corinthian misappropriation of the familiar temple metaphor. The temple metaphor, we noted, had to do with both unity and *universality*, and it would seem from Paul's dichotomies that the Corinthians have not drawn adequate boundaries between themselves and unbelievers, between the particular and the universal. In other words, they have incorporated the unifying and universal dimensions of the temple metaphor—"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you?" (1 Cor 3:16)—without incorporating the second: "For God's temple is *holy*, and you are that temple" (3:17b).

The Corinthians can hardly be blamed for taking Paul's teaching about unity and universality as encouragement to establish and

strengthen their relationships with unbelievers. Certainly Paul did little to disabuse them of this in his directives about marriage to unbelievers, when he urged them to remain in such marriages (1 Cor 7:10–16), nor did he, in his instructions about idols, respond in a way that would require an end to concourse with unbelievers, for he encouraged believers not only to eat with unbelievers but to eat the meat they had sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 10:23–11:1). Paul himself was accused of compromise because he extended an apparently indiscriminate invitation to the nations. Such an application of Paul's teaching would seem to be entirely consistent with Paul's own vision of his mission, as he expresses it in Rom 15:16: "to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles in the priestly service of the gospel of God, so that the offering of the Gentiles [nations] may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit" (Rom 15:16). The implication of the temple metaphor, understood in this light, is clear: if the living temple is the sacred community into which the nations will be brought, believers ought to welcome them unreservedly without even a wisp of restraint.

What is baffling about Paul's return to this temple metaphor is that he casts those outside, whom he works relentlessly otherwise to save, in the dreariest and most dangerous of hues. They are aligned with lawlessness, darkness, Beliar, unbelief, and idols. What is equally baffling is how terribly uncharacteristic this language is for Paul. Six of the key words in this paragraph are not found in the rest of the New Testament, and the harsh approach to unbelievers suggests that Paul has reversed course and, in so doing, seems to have adopted language that is more at home in the Dead Sea Scrolls than in others of his letters. It has even been suggested more than once that he has taken up a composition from Qumran and adapted it to the Corinthian situation.³⁷

Whether or not that is the case, the surprising dichotomies Paul draws do suit perspectives that permeate the Dead Sea Scrolls. The

³⁷ The quintessential expression of this position is that of J. Fitzmyer, "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14–7:1," in his *Essays on the Semitic Background of the New Testament* (London: Chapman, 1971) 205–17 (originally published in *CBQ* 23 [1961]: 271–80). Fitzmyer (p. 217) regards this section as "a Christian reworking of an Essene paragraph which has been introduced into the Pauline letter." There are several balanced discussions of whether 2 Cor 6:14–7:1 is an interpolation. See, e.g., V. P. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1984) 375–83; R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Nashville: Nelson, 2002) 190–95; and Thrall, *Corinthians*, 25–36.

contrast of light and darkness recalls in shorthand the frequent Qumran contrast between the “sons of light” and the “sons of darkness,” or the “prince of light” and the “angel of darkness” (1QS 1.9–11; 3.19–22). Paul’s dual contrast between righteousness and lawlessness, on the one hand, and light and darkness, on the other, corresponds to a Qumran fragment which reads, “And this will be for you the sign that this is going to happen. When those born of sin are locked up, *evil* will disappear before *justice* as [*da*]rkness disappears before *light*” (1Q27 1 i 5–6). Equally noteworthy is the contrast between Christ and Belial; while Belial is never in the Hebrew Bible or New Testament an evil figure, the Dead Sea Scrolls frequently mention a figure named Beliar. In the *War Scroll*, for example, at the end of the final war, the priests, levites, and elders of the community—the community at Qumran is divided according to cultic roles to fight this final war—will “bless the God of Israel and all the deeds of his truth and they shall damn there Beliar and all the spirits of his lot. They shall begin speaking and say: ‘Blessed be the God of Israel . . . and blessed be all who serve him in *justice* . . . Accursed be *Belial* for his inimical plan . . . Accursed be all the spirits of his lot for their *wicked* . . . plan . . . For they are the lot of *darkness* but the lot of God is for [ever]lasting *light*” (1QM 13.1–6). This single vision contains three elements that characterize Paul’s letter as well: the presence of Belial (or Beliar), and the contrasts of darkness and wickedness with light and justice.

Something extraordinary has occurred during the time that separates 1 and 2 Corinthians. In 1 Cor 3:16–17, Paul adopted the metaphor of a spirit-filled temple to communicate a vision of unity and universality. In 1 Cor 6:19–20, he adopted this metaphor to communicate that there is an organic relationship between believing individuals and Christ’s body. Both occurrences of this metaphor convey the reality that the border between individuals and community is porous, that schisms destroy the Church as a whole, that one illicit sexual encounter is the yeast that infects the whole. The spirit does more than fill individuals; it also unites the whole, rendering perceived boundaries superfluous. In 2 Cor 6:16, Paul makes a dramatic about-face by situating the temple metaphor in a context rife with exclusive vocabulary that is more at home in the *Community Rule* than in a Pauline letter. His language is wildly uncharacteristic, less like his own and more like the Dead Sea Scrolls, the literary remains of an isolated and exclusive community. Even the scriptural citations

he proffers provide the grounds for an exclusive, and not at all inclusive, interpretation of God's presence in the temple. The great vision of Ezekiel 37, which provides Paul elsewhere with the building-blocks of universal resurrection, is interpreted narrowly by a subsequent citation of Isa 52:11, which, in its original context, is not a command to separate from darkness but a portion of new exodus imagery that portends departure from exile. Paul, however, applies it to the universal separation of clean from unclean:

I will live in them and walk among them (Lev 26:11, 12),
and I will be their God, and they shall be my people (Ezek 37:27).
Therefore come out from them, and be separate from them, says the
Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you . . . (Isa 52:11).³⁸

The dramatic shift in Paul's application of the temple metaphor suggests that, from his perspective at least, the Corinthians have grasped the point that the temple is universal, but they appear to have done so with no true eye for holiness, for the chasm that separates light from darkness, Christ from Beliar, the temple from idols. This sort of Corinthian misapprehension would explain why Paul shifts so precipitously from the universal vision of post-exilic prophets, from a conception of the spirit as the universal unifying presence of God, to an exclusive vision of the temple akin to the conception of the living, spirit-filled temple which devotees at Qumran express in the *Community Rule*.

The clue to Paul's frustration may lie, then, in the inability of the Corinthians to grasp the complementarity of this metaphor, which combines universality with holiness. This is not the first time he has pressed the point about holiness. Paul began by calling the temple holy (1 Cor 3:16). He then adopted the temple metaphor in order to urge sanctity upon a portion of the community that apparently believed that extra-marital sexual activity was not only permissible but even perhaps desirable (6:19). In 1 Corinthians 6, these boundaries have to do principally with sexual limits. In the later letter, he speaks even more emphatically but no more intransigently about the border that separates what is holy from what is unholy (2 Cor 6:14–7:1). Though no clear, concrete issue rises to the surface, he

³⁸ On this catena of quotations and the interpretation of scripture at Qumran, see Gärtner, *Temple*, 52–55, who sees resemblances between this catena and 4QFlorilegium and *Jub.* 1.17.

urges the Corinthians, as he had earlier, to make holiness perfect in both body and spirit. His assumption appears to be that they have forfeited their penchant for holiness while embracing a passion for the unholy.

What Paul confronts in 2 Corinthians, however, is not merely Corinthian shortcomings. He may well encounter the tension that lies latent within the metaphor of the temple. This temple communicates a vision which eliminates divisions within, such as the quarrels that threatened to damage or destroy the Corinthian community, and dividing-lines without, such as those that separated Jew from Greek, slave from free, and male from female (Gal 3:27–28). The spirit is the unifying force of the universe, in Stoic terms. It is, at its most fundamental level, akin to breath, which all breathe in common. The spirit-filled temple suggests powerfully that the Corinthians must live in the context of their community without schisms; they must also refuse to raise artificial borders against those outside the community, those they are called to make holy. Perhaps Paul's unexpected about-face in 2 Corinthians is an indication of the irresolvable tension between unity and holiness that is inherent in the conception of the community as a living temple in whom God, or God's holy spirit, is believed to dwell. How would it have been possible for the Corinthians to remain border-free with respect to their unbelieving neighbors while maintaining their holiness? Whether they ultimately did manage to become a community that balanced universality and holiness during Paul's lifetime we cannot finally know, as we have no continuing record of Paul's troubled relationship with the Corinthians from which to infer his later points of view or their communal character. What we do know is that Paul has bequeathed to succeeding generations an image of the Church as a spirit-filled temple that lives within a tension: it is unifying and universal in scope, open to the nations, and, at its best, devoted as well to purity and holiness.

Conclusion

In these three brief passages, Paul has undertaken an enormous task. He employs all sorts of methods—reminders, rhetorical questions, scriptural citations, and metaphors—to address the significant points that the spirit has an existence which transcends individual experiences,

that the spirit eradicates the alleged border between individual and community, and that the spirit is the source of holiness. Schisms are not benign; they violate the character of the Holy Spirit, which provides unifying and universal dimensions to the living temple that transcend personal proclivities. Nor is errant sexual behavior a matter of private interest only; the spirit lives in the individual body and the communal body alike, so that an individual's unholy sexual intercourse pollutes the body of Christ. Having established this, that the spirit is communal, holy, and universal, however, Paul then, in a subsequent letter, appears to turn tail and run from a portion of the vision he has labored so aggressively to inculcate. He apparently feels the need to teach wholeheartedly about holiness, perhaps because the Corinthians have become too intertwined with unbelievers with too little eye for holiness. This would certainly be an understandable misconstrual of Paul's instructions, delivered in 1 Corinthians, to eat idol meat and to remain married to unbelievers. It would have emerged as well from popular Stoic construals of the spirit as the unifying principle of the universe and idealized characterizations of the temple as the unifying point in the universe. The Corinthians may even have earnestly believed that they were carrying out Paul's mission to the nations. Whatever the reason, which we cannot finally know, Paul draws a line in the sand with respect to universality: believers share nothing with unbelievers. Holiness demands separation, cleansing of body and spirit—the ambiguity of Paul's syntax once again allows for the possibility of both an individual and a communal body—and necessitates a clear border between light and darkness, between Christ and Beliar.

This is not an entirely satisfactory moment in Paul's letters at which to end. Too much is left unsaid, and too many strands are left untwined. It was left to a later writer, or a more mature apostle, to restore the harmony of this metaphor. In the letter to the Ephesians, the tension between holiness and universality is left behind in favor of a vision of the Church in which Jew and Gentile are unified by the cross, in which they have no dividing-walls between them, in which those near and far are brought to God in one spirit. Strangers are now citizens, aliens are saints, and all are members of God's household, with Christ Jesus as the chief cornerstone. "In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God" (Eph 2:21–22). This is a splendid vision

indeed, but its beauty must not be allowed to eclipse the faulty Corinthian assumptions that prompted Paul, despite what he had learned about their schisms and sexual proclivities, to remind a fractured and frayed community in Corinth that they remain a temple filled with the Holy Spirit.

ESCHATOLOGY IN PHILIPPIANS

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As for all New Testament authors, so for Paul too, there is no question about the fact that the end time has begun with the Christ event. Christians, therefore, are already living in the end time even though the completion of their salvation is still outstanding. According to Phil 1:23 Paul clearly expects the completion of his salvation immediately after death. New Testament scholars see the reason for that to a great extent in his apparently hopeless situation. From that the question arises whether Paul regards this as a personal privilege or whether the completion of salvation immediately after death applies to all the faithful. The apostle expresses his view on eschatology not only in 1:23. Before dealing with 1:23 within its context (1:12–26) (§2), we analyze the crucial eschatological saying in 1:6 (§1). After that, we ask whether Phil 3:20–21 (§3.a) and Phil 4:5 (§3.b) are in conflict with Paul's statement in 1:23, as many scholars hold. Finally, the results of our study will be put into the context of eschatological statements in the other Pauline epistles (§4). Doing so, we shall pay attention to one possibility of explaining the different statements concerning the moment of the completion of salvation. In other words, does Paul restrict the completion of salvation in his other letters to the parousia or not? A further question involved is the question of Paul's development in his eschatological expectation.

1. *“He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 1:6)*

Right at the beginning of his letter, where he informs his readers about his personal¹ thanksgivings and intercessions for his community in Philippi, Paul turns to the discussion of the Christians' status

¹ See Gnilka 1968: 42–43; against Lohmeyer 1964: 14, who thinks of an inherited liturgical custom.

of salvation (Phil 1:3–11). Already in the first three verses, the strong theocentric tone sounds: Paul thanks his God for the good relationship between his congregation and him (1:3–5); he is convinced that God, who began a good work in the Philippians, will also carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (1:6). Because of this deep closeness of their friendship Paul is longing to see the Philippians again (1:7–9). Finally, the apostle expresses his thankfulness by interceding with God again on behalf of his congregation (1:9–11).

a. *Thanks for the Deep Communion between Paul and the Congregation (Philippians 1:3–8)*

What the thanks refer to in 1:3 depends on how the subject in v. 3b is to be defined and whether the phrase ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνηίᾳ ὑμῶν is to be interpreted causally or temporally. Whereas previously the majority of the interpreters took Paul as the subject of every remembrance, now the number of scholars is growing who do not take Paul but the Philippians as its subject. Accordingly, the apostle does not thank his God (in spite of Rom 1:8; 1 Cor 1:4; 1 Thess 1:2; Phlm 4) at every remembrance of himself in view of the Philippians (v. 3)² but at every remembrance of the Philippians in view of Paul.³

The reasons for this understanding, which can be given only briefly, are overwhelming: (1) As Paul Schubert has demonstrated, the structure of the thanksgiving periods are well developed in Paul. If the phrase ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνηίᾳ ὑμῶν were to be understood temporally, as the traditional interpretation does, then it would be the only structural peculiarity among the Pauline thanksgivings.⁴ That is for him decisive for the causal understanding of the phrase.⁵ (2) After εὐχαριστῶ,

² Thus and thereby temporally is ἐπί interpreted by most of the authors. E.g., de Wette 1893: 166; Haupt 1902: 4–6; Dibelius 1937: 62; Michaelis 1935: 13; Beare 1969: 52; Eichholz 1965: 139; Hendriksen 1996: 50; Gnlika 1968: 43; Mengel 1982: 225; Collange 1973: 44; Bruce 1984: 33; Hawthorne 1983: 16; G. Barth 1979: 19–20; U. B. Müller 1993: 39; Silva 1988: 44, 48; Bockmuehl 1998: 58; Fabris 2001: 51; Fee 1995: 78; Walter 1998: 34.

³ Cf. above all Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 44–47: “Ich meinerseits danke unserem Herrn für euer *gesamtes* Gedenken” (47). Schubert 1939: 60, 71–82; O’Brien 1977: 22–23, 41–46; O’Brien 1991: 58–61; Jewett 1971: 40–53; Schenk 1984: 94–95; Peterman 1997: 93–99: “I thank my God because of your every remembrance (of me)” (94). Witherington 1994: 37–38; Martin 1976: 64; Reumann 1993: 441.

⁴ Cf. table II in Schubert 1939: 54–55; Peterman 1997: 94 n. 11.

⁵ See Schubert 1939: 74.

the preposition ἐπί with dative always indicates the reason for the thanksgiving.⁶ (3) In favour of this interpretation are also the literal and functional relations between 1:3–11 and 4:10–20. Consequently, the apostle does not give thanks for the financial support from the congregation only at the end of his letter, but already in its introductory section.⁷ (4) In the New Testament μνεία only occurs in Pauline and Deutero-Pauline epistles (Rom 1:9; 1 Thess 1:2; 3:6; Phlm 4; Eph 1:16; 2 Tim 1:3). Admittedly, besides Phil 1:3 μνεία with genitive refers always to the remembrance of Paul.⁸ In all these passages, however, the subject of the remembrance is made explicit by a verb (ποιέω or ἔχω).⁹ If it is not clarified by a verb, μνεία can be accompanied by a subjective or objective genitive.¹⁰ (5) Where ἐπί in thanksgiving periods is used temporally, it is with a genitive (Rom 1:10; 1 Thess 1:2; Phlm 4). Conversely, in thanksgiving periods ἐπί occurs twice followed by the dative and it is causal (1 Cor 1:4; Phil 1:5; cf. 2 Cor 9:15; 1 Thess 3:9).¹¹ Consequently, Paul does not thank the Philippians¹² but his God¹³ for the fact that they support him.

As a prisoner Paul not only thanks God but even asks him on behalf of all of them with joy, whenever he intercedes in favour of them (v. 4).¹⁴ The reason for his thankful joy,¹⁵ which inspires him

⁶ See Schubert 1939: 75; Martin 1976: 63; O'Brien 1977: 43 with references. One finds more references in Peterman 1997: 95 nn. 14, 15.

⁷ See Schubert 1939: 77; Martin 1976: 63; O'Brien 1991: 61; Peterman 1997: 95.

⁸ Hawthorne 1983: 17. That is an objection often made against the subjective genitive in 1:23. E.g., Bockmuehl 1998: 58.

⁹ That is not taken into consideration by many authors. E.g., Silva 1988: 48; Fee 1995: 78–79.

¹⁰ Peterman 1997: 96 n. 20 quotes for the objective genitive: Wis 5:14; Diodorus Siculus 27.14, and for the subjective genitive: Bar 5:5; cf. 4:27.

¹¹ Cf. Peterman 1997: 96–97 to the objections made by Hawthorne 1983: 16–17, that the phrase ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ μνεία refers to fixed Jewish prayer times still observed by Paul as a Christian, and that the repetition of πᾶς in vv. 3–4 points to temporal statements.

¹² Against Watson 1988: 61.

¹³ With his address “my God” Paul expresses his intimate personal relationship with God. Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 17; Peterman 1997: 98; Fee 1998: 77.

¹⁴ Some authors take v. 4 as a parenthesis since the expected arguments for the thanksgiving appear only in v. 5. So Gnllka 1968: 43; Martin 1976: 64.

¹⁵ The reference to εὐχαριστῶ in v. 3 is hardly to be separated from the joy: Paul thanks his God with joy. Only with regard to εὐχαριστῶ see: Michaelis 1935: 13; Gnllka 1968: 44; Bonnard 1950: 16, who, however, stresses that this is without any theological importance. Collange 1973: 45. That joy and the prayer of supplication refer to v. 5: Haupt 1902: 7; Lohmeyer 1964: 16–17.

to include the Philippians in his prayers, is their communion¹⁶ in the gospel (εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) from the first day on,¹⁷ i.e., from his first stay in Philippi up to now (v. 5). Christian joy is no matter of emotion and feeling, but fruit and proof of their relationship to the Lord.¹⁸ That gives a fundamental and constant orientation to Christian life. It is an attitude which—as already in the Old Testament (e.g., Lev 23:40; Deut 12:7, 12; Zech 9:9)—can be positively requested (3:1; 4:4; cf. 2:18; Rom 12:1, 15; 1 Thess 5:16). As such it transforms sad circumstances into the joy of the Lord, who is at hand (4:4–5). Joy is not a temporary and passing happiness, but has eschatological quality.

The preposition εἰς indicates what the communion of the Christians is orientated to. It is meant not as a communion with the gospel¹⁹ so that Paul could be happy with the faith of the Philippians,²⁰ but as a communion in favour of the gospel²¹ and, consequently, a participation in the apostolic work of Paul, which includes their material support.²² It is a communion which exists not only among the

¹⁶ It is disputed whether Paul means here the communion respectively of participation of the Philippians with the apostle (so Bonnard 1950: 16) or only the fellowship with each other in the cause of the gospel (so Vincent 1897: 7). Seesemann, 1933: 74–76 understands κοινονία as a participation in the gospel (“Anteilhaben am Evangelium”) and thereby as a participation in faith (“Teilnahme im Glauben”). For further support of his thesis cf. *ibid.*, 73–79. Cf. the critique of these theses in Hainz 1982: 94; Lohmeyer 1964: 17; Bruce 1984: 33. Martin 1976: 65, however, understands κοινονία as “generosity” (*Mitteilsamkeit*) of the Philippians.

¹⁷ The phrase ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμέρας corresponds to ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου (4:15). Hainz 1982: 753: Paul thanks “den Philippern für ihre ‘Gemeinschaft im Bezug auf das Evangelium.’”

¹⁸ Cf. Bockmuehl 1998: 59–60.

¹⁹ Hainz 1982: 93; against Gnllka 1968: 45; G. Barth 1979: 18.

²⁰ Against Eichholz 1965: 142.

²¹ Vincent 1897: 7: “The meaning is their fellowship with each other in the cause of the gospel.” Hendriksen 1996: 54–55; Caird 1976: 107; Fee 1995: 81: “The reason is expressed in terms of *koinōnia* in spread of the gospel and focuses on a long enduring nature of their participation/partnership.” Cf. Fee 1998: 87; Gnllka 1968: 45.

²² Cf. already de Wette 1843: 167: “Denn so unwürdig es des Ap.(ostels) wäre, dieses als alleinigen Gegenstand seiner dankbaren Freude zu nennen, so unnatürlich wäre es im Anfange eines durch diess (sic) Geschenk vorzüglich veranlassten Briefes gar nicht daran zu denken.” Lightfoot 1881: 83; Haupt 1902: 8; Michaelis 1935: 13; Gnllka 1968: 45; Schenk 1984: 95–96; Hendriksen 1996: 53; Beare 1969: 53; Bonnard 1950: 16; Martin 1976: 65; Hawthorne 1983: 19; Ernst 1993: 39; Hainz 1982: 93; Mengel 1982: 228; O’Brien 1991: 61; Collange 1973: 45; U. B. Müller 1993: 40–41; Bockmuehl 1998: 60; Peterman 1997: 99–100. In 1:5 Paul “gives thanks more generally for their partnership in the gospel (ἐπὶ τῇ κοινονίᾳ), which includes their support but also takes into account their prayers for him (1.19), their own witness in Philippi (1.27–8; 2.15), their suffering with him (1.30) and their

Philippians,²³ but also between them and the apostle,²⁴ who knows himself bound to them by ties of friendship. The spread of the gospel, whose content is the person and the work of Jesus Christ, is made possible by the communion with Christ.

That this, beyond all the service of the gospel, matters to Paul,²⁵ proves v. 7, according to which Paul thinks so positively of all Christians in Philippi,²⁶ because he carries them in his heart,²⁷ i.e., because he is in heartfelt communion with those²⁸ who were his co-participants in grace²⁹ during his imprisonment³⁰ and at his defence and corroboration of the gospel. That allows for no other conclusion than that, already in v. 5, every active commitment for the gospel is meant.³¹ In that manner, it is already hinted to the addressees what Paul works out fully in 1:12–18, namely that the gospel is also furthered precisely by his imprisonment. That must surprise all the more, since Paul is a prisoner awaiting trial, the outcome of which—death penalty or acquittal—is entirely open. Paul is able to interpret even this awkward situation as grace, since he is convinced that

taking part in his affliction (4.14)” (100; cf. also 119–20). Fee 1995: 83–84; Fabris 2001: 52–53. Against Lohmeyer 1964: 17 with n. 3; Seesemann 1933: 74; Dibelius 1937: 63; Eichholz 1965: 139.

²³ Against Vincent 1897: 7.

²⁴ With Strecker 1980–1983: 182: “Das Evangelium ist eine Gemeinschaft stiftende Kraft zwischen Apostel und Gemeinde (1,5; 2,22; 4,3.15; Phlm 13).” Bonnard 1950: 16; Hainz 1982: 92; Witherington 1994: 37; Peterman 1997: 100.

²⁵ So also Reumann 1993: 441; Peterman 1997: 101; differently Dibelius 1937: 62–63; Walter 1998: 35.

²⁶ Bertram 1932–1979: 229: Paul uses *φρονέω ὑπέρ* in the sense of thoughtful thinking and doing (cf. also Phil 4:10). Cf. Paulsen 1980–1983: 1051; U. B. Müller 1993: 43: “Bis jetzt sind die Philipper auf ihre Weise an der Evangeliumsverkündigung beteiligt (V. 5), darin haben sie Anteil an seiner ‘Gnade’ (V. 7).”

²⁷ Lightfoot 1881: 84; Fee 1995: 90; Porter 1993: 197; U. B. Müller 1993: 42–43 with n. 51; Silva 1988: 56; Bockmuehl 1998: 63; Walter 1998: 36; Fabris 2001: 55. Against Hawthorne 1983: 22–23; Schenk 1984: 104–105; Witherington 1994: 38, who understands v. 7 in view of v. 8 so: “you have me in your heart,” as is shown by their gift.”

²⁸ So among others Lohmeyer 1964: 23–28; against Michaelis 1935: 15.

²⁹ So most of the authors, e.g., Schlatter 1964: 62; Hendriksen 1996: 56; Walter 1998: 36; Peterlin 1995: 25–29. Dibelius 1937: 63 refers the personal pronoun *μου* to *τῆς χάριτος* and translates: “Genossen meiner Gnade.” So also Michaelis 1935: 15; Lohmeyer 1964: 26–27; Beare 1969: 53; Ernst 1993: 40; Silva 1988: 53–54; U. B. Müller 1993: 43; Fabris 2001: 55.

³⁰ Chains are here equivalent with prison. Cf. Dibelius 1937: 63; Michaelis 1935: 15; Gnlika 1968: 48; U. B. Müller 1993: 43.

³¹ That corresponds to the fact that *κοινωνία* (v. 5) and *συγκοινωνούς* are referred to each other. So also Michaelis 1935: 15; U. B. Müller 1993: 43.

he is particularly strong when he is weak because his weakness is made strong by the power of Christ (cf. 2 Cor 12:9–10).

That *κοινωνία* does not exclusively include financial support,³² not only proves the parallel statements in v. 5 and v. 7, but above all Phil 4:14–15, where Paul speaks of his communion in terms of mutual giving and taking.³³ 1:5 opens and 4:15 closes the principal ideas, around which all issues in Philippians resolve.³⁴ According to Heinrich Seesemann, *εἰς* necessarily supersedes the genitive because of the preceding *ὑμῶν*,³⁵ so that the meaning is the same as *κοινωνία τοῦ εὐαγγελίου*, i.e., the participation in the gospel as the saving power. In my opinion, Paul would have written *ὑμῶν* before *τῇ κοινωνίᾳ* if he wanted to make such a statement. Hence, nothing is to be said against the decision to refer *εἰς* to the promotion of the proclamation of the gospel,³⁶ especially because also in the following section, 1:12–26, the spread of the gospel matters to Paul above all. Naturally, it is thereby not denied that the service in favour of the gospel presupposes participation in the gospel as a saving power (cf. Rom 1:16) that has been proved to be powerful among the Philippians from the very beginning.³⁷

In this communion established by the gospel, which Paul links with the Philippians, it has been proved that God began a good work (1:6). Exactly on that fact, Paul bases his confidence that he who began this work in the Philippians, i.e., in their hearts, will bring it to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (v. 6).³⁸ This theological statement is the foundation of the later request to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, particularly since here also it is confirmed that God is at work in them, both to will

³² Hainz 1982: 94; against O'Brien 1977: 24 n. 24.

³³ Cf. Martin 1976: 65; Schubert 1939: 77.

³⁴ Peterman 1995: 101.

³⁵ Seesemann 1933: 75; Dibelius 1937: 63; Hainz 1982: 93; cf. already Haupt 1902: 8.

³⁶ So also Zerwick and Grosvenor 1979: II, 592; Fee 1995: 81–85; U. B. Müller 1993: 40.

³⁷ Cf. Bockmuehl 1998: 60–61; Hainz 1982: 95: "Was Paulus und die Philipper verbindet, ist eine solche Gemeinschaft: durch das Evangelium gestiftet, an dem sie gemeinsam Anteil haben, und auf das Evangelium bezogen, dem sie je auf ihre Weise dienen."

³⁸ The participle *πεποιθώς* is to be taken causally. With Lighthfoot 1881: 83–84; O'Brien 1991: 63; Peterman 1997: 103–104; against Vincent 1897: 7; Hawthorne 1983: 20–21. *αὐτὸ τοῦτο*, therefore, refers to the following statement (with Gnilka 1968: 46; Ernst 1974: 41), but not to the preceding phrase *ἀπὸ πρώτης ἡμέρας* (against Haupt 1902: 9).

and to work for their good pleasure (2:12–13).³⁹ Even though Paul always envisages the ecclesial dimension of Christian life, he does not play off the collective against the individual perspective.⁴⁰ Rather, the individual is addressed as a member in the community, even though the emphasis is laid on the community.⁴¹

Because of the permanent participation of the Philippians in the gospel (v. 5), Paul is convinced that God himself is at work in them; that is why he puts his trust in him that he will carry on his work until the day of Christ Jesus. There is no reason, differently from the other uses in Pauline texts, not to translate the preposition ἄχρι with *until* but with *at*.⁴² The completion of the divine redeeming work is here not to be understood punctually, but as a process of inward sanctification which will be brought to its end at the day of Christ Jesus.⁴³ That corresponds to the engagement for the gospel from the very first day till now, for which Paul uses the preposition ἄχρι as well (v. 5). Their commitment to the gospel provides evidence of God being at work in them. That underlines the nature of salvation as a gift, which, however, does not exclude their own activity.⁴⁴ God gives his salvation not only at the beginning; he holds the Christians in that salvation until the present time but he allows it also to grow until it will attain its final completion. Because salvation is growing dynamically during one's earthly lifetime, Paul is able to write to the Romans that "salvation is nearer to us now than when we first came to believe; for the night is far spent, and day has drawn near" (Rom 13:11–12; cf. Mark 1:15).⁴⁵ Thereby—as already said—the good work refers to the salvation in Christ⁴⁶ and not only to the material support of Paul⁴⁷ or the partnership in the

³⁹ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 14; Bockmuehl 1998: 61–62.

⁴⁰ Against Silva 1988: 135, 138.

⁴¹ Similarly Fee 1995: 87 n. 72; against Gnllka 1968: 46 who argues in favour of his position that ἔργον is a building metaphor and that, in the given tradition, it is used of God's creative act (cf. Gen 2:2–3 LXX). See also Collange 1973: 46; Martin 1976: 65–66; G. Barth 1979: 18. Cf. the critique in Silva 1988: 51–52 who, in his turn, interprets purely individually.

⁴² Against Fee 1995: 86.

⁴³ See Fee 1995: 86 n. 64; Witherington 1994: 38, Silva 1988: 55, 137 (ad 2:13).

⁴⁴ Cf. Hainz 1982: 92–93 who rightly stresses that we must think—here as in v. 7—of both the saving message and the salvation in which the Philippians participate by the mediation of Paul. Against Dibelius 1937: 62.

⁴⁵ Cf. Giesen 1980–1983d: 1213; 1989: 593; 1995: 102.

⁴⁶ So most of the authors. Cf., e.g., Fee 1994: 11–13; 1995: 87; Martin 1976: 65.

⁴⁷ Martin 1976: 64; Silva 1988: 46–47.

gospel.⁴⁸ That the material support in favour of the gospel is included,⁴⁹ the numerous parallels in words and content between Phil 1:3–11 und 4:1–20 demonstrate.⁵⁰ It is not being said, however, what the Christians perform on behalf of God, but what God is causing in them.⁵¹ Nevertheless, it is no accident that Paul here speaks of a work; for him the ethical dimension is a part of salvation and thus the material support by the community also belongs to it (cf. 2 Cor 9:8; Rom 2:7; 13:3). That is in accordance with the content of his prayer of supplication for the community (vv. 9–11), which is both an admonition⁵² and an encouragement to prove themselves to be worthy of the gospel of Christ (cf. 1:27).⁵³

b. *Plea for Persistence and Growth in Faith and Love in View of the Day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:9–11)*

His prayer and his admonition demonstrate, however, that Christians always run the risk of losing their eschatological orientation. So one understands Paul's confession that he himself has not obtained yet the fullness of the communion with Christ, even though he presses "on toward the goal for the price of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (3:12–14). For the same reason he calls upon his fellow Christians to live according to his model since their true state is in heaven (3:17–19).⁵⁴ He is, therefore, deeply sad about the fact that many went astray (3:18–19).

The "day of Christ Jesus" is without any doubt the eschatological goal of Christian life. The phrase "day of Christ Jesus" (cf. still Phil 1:10; 2:16) is identical with "the day of the Lord," which the apostle employs in 1 Thess 5:2, 1 Cor 1:8, 5:5 and 2 Cor 1:14 (cf. Eph 4:30), and which he—like other theologians of the early Church—takes over from the Old Testament. Whereas the "day of the Lord"

⁴⁸ Against Lightfoot 1881: 84.

⁴⁹ Cf. Collange 1973: 46; Fee 1995: 85. Dibelius 1937: 63, in his turn, rejects every reference of the good work to the financial support.

⁵⁰ Peterman 1997: 91–92; Bockmuehl 1998: 60; according to Witherington 1994: 37 that can be only the primary meaning.

⁵¹ Cf. Fee 1995: 86–87.

⁵² Cf. Michaelis 1935: 17; Schubert 1939: 37–40; Martin 1976: 68; Collange 1973: 48. Gnllka 1968: 51 speaks of a prayer in a form of paraclesis. U. B. Müller 1993: 47.

⁵³ Cf. Fee 1995: 87 with n. 73.

⁵⁴ We return to this later on (§ 3).

in the Old Testament stresses the forensic aspect of Yahweh's day, the emphasis on the eschatological completion in meeting with the exalted Christ is to the fore for Paul (cf. 1 Thess 1:10).⁵⁵

Current exegesis identifies this day with the imminent Second Coming of Christ.⁵⁶ Whether that is Paul's understanding seems to me doubtful in the given context of Philippians. Already the fact that God is obviously doing a good work that will bring in every individual Christian of the community to completion contradicts the restricting interpretation towards the parousia.⁵⁷ After his experience that many Christians have already died, Paul has hardly the idea that all Christians would still be alive at the time of the parousia, especially since he expects for himself to be with Christ immediately after death (1:23), and, consequently, he excludes an intervening period between his death and his completion of salvation (cf. 1:20–26).⁵⁸ Christians are human beings who have got a secure future, which, however, has begun already in the present.

Philippians 1:9–11 confirms that the “day of Christ Jesus” does not necessarily coincide with the parousia, even though this text too is regularly linked to it.⁵⁹ Since Paul himself cannot fulfil his longing to visit the Philippians (v. 8), he requests from God that their love may considerably grow and that they may become richer in knowledge⁶⁰ and in all insight in order to be able to judge what really matters, to be pure and blameless in view of the day of Christ Jesus, and to be filled with the fruit of righteousness through Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.⁶¹ Love, knowledge and insight are, therefore, essentially a gift of God, which makes it possible to

⁵⁵ Cf. Beare 1969: 53; Schenk 1984: 121; U. B. Müller 1993: 46.

⁵⁶ So, e.g., Vincent 1897: 8; Michaelis 1935: 14; Beare 1969: 53; Bonnard 1950: 17; Gnilka 1968: 52; Collange 1973: 46; Fee 1995: 86; Bockmuehl 1998: 62; Peterman 1997: 104; Walter 1998: 35.

⁵⁷ That prohibits the translation of ἐν ὑμῖν with “among you.” Against O'Brien 1991: 64 n. 42; Peterman 1995: 104.

⁵⁸ We return to that later on (§ 3).

⁵⁹ Besides the commentaries ad loc. cf. O'Brien 1977: 37.

⁶⁰ Cf. O'Brien 1977: 33: “In Phil. 1:9 ἐπίγνωσις has neither definite article nor object, and is to be understood in the comprehensive sense of knowing God through Christ in an intimate way.” Therrien 1973: 176: “En résumé l'épignose nous apparaît ici comme la connaissance de Dieu et de sa volonté révélée en Jésus-Christ mort et ressuscité, conduisant à un engagement vital et à une vie morale digne du Seigneur.” Cf. Bockmuehl 1988: 67.

⁶¹ The genitive in the phrase εἰς δόξαν καὶ ἔπαινον θεοῦ is objective (so most authors; cf. e.g. Bockmuehl 1998: 70), not subjective. Against Schenk 1984: 123–28: “für die Vollendung und Anerkennung durch Gott” (128).

act accordingly.⁶² The prepositional phrase εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ (1:10) sets the goal toward which the Christians should live and which should motivate them. The preposition εἰς is, therefore, to be best interpreted in the face of the day of Christ Jesus.⁶³ Christian morality is thus motivated eschatologically.

Pure—not in its ritual but in its ethical meaning⁶⁴—and blameless are the Christians, if they are and remain filled (πεπληρωμένοι) with the fruit of righteousness (1:11). How the phrase καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης is to be understood is disputed, however. The genitive could mean the origin of the fruit which Christ has brought and, therefore, also its source. In this case, the fruit would thus be enabled by the gift of the righteousness.⁶⁵ It is far more probable that the genitive is exegetical, i.e., the righteousness is the content of the fruit.⁶⁶ The article τὸν after δικαιοσύνης, which here has the function of a relative pronoun, refers clearly back to καρπὸν. According to the perfect participle πεπληρωμένοι, the Christians were filled with the fruit of the righteousness in the past (baptism) and remain in it up to the respective presence of the glory and praise of God. The fact that the fruit of righteousness comes through Jesus Christ leads to the conclusion that God is its giver. The gift of righteousness demands and makes possible an appropriate conduct at the same time.⁶⁷ This understanding is supported by the fact that the phrase καρπὸς δικαιοσύνης corresponds to the usage of the LXX (cf. Amos 6:12; Prov 3:9; 11:30; Ps 15(14):2).⁶⁸ In our passage δικαιοσύνη does not mean justification, by which a human being is put into a new relationship to God. The apostle, on the contrary, underlines the ethical conduct of Christians,⁶⁹ which, however, is not to be separated from the preceding gift. That is exactly why it leads to the

⁶² Cf. Therrien 1973: 178: “Connaissance de Dieu et de sa volonté révélée en Jésus-Christ, et discernement moral se complètent pour former le chrétien adulte.”

⁶³ Cf. Vincent 1897: 14; Michael 1928: 24; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 70; Therrien 1973: 180; Hendriksen 1996: 61; Fee 1995: 102; Collange 1973: 49; O’Brien 1977: 35; Fabris 2001: 53.

⁶⁴ Cf. Büchsel 1932–1979a: 396; Bruce 1984: 38.

⁶⁵ So Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 70; Spicq 1939: 242; Beare 1969: 55–56; Hendriksen 1996: 62; Collange 1973: 50; Caird 1969: 109; Bruce 1984: 38; Hawthorne 1983: 29.

⁶⁶ See Martin 1976: 70; Silva 1988: 60–61.

⁶⁷ That emphasis in Ziesler 1972: 151, 203; O’Brien 1977: 36; O’Brien 1991: 79; cf. also Therrien 1973: 183–84.

⁶⁸ Cf. Gnlika 1968: 53; Fee 1995: 103–104.

⁶⁹ Vincent 1897: 14; Dibelius 1937: 64.

glory and praise of God as the final doxology emphasizes.⁷⁰ This interpretation is finally strengthened by the function of the participial clause in v. 11a which further explicates the pure and blameless conduct (v. 10).⁷¹ What Paul here describes as “fruit of righteousness” is called fruit of the spirit in Gal 5:22–23, which primarily love belongs to.⁷²

The phrase εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ occurs a second time in Phil 2:16b. 2:16 states that the new eschatological existence of Christians as children of God, who as stars shine in the world (v. 15; cf. Dan 12:3), should distinguish them by their holding fast the word of life, so that Paul may be proud of them until the day of Christ so that he did not run in vain or labour in vain (v. 16). “The word of life” means the gospel, as far as it mediates life and leads to eternal life (cf. also 2 Cor 5:19). It concerns, therefore, missionary work including holding fast and preserving Christian conduct.⁷³ In favour of this understanding Gordon D. Fee offers three arguments:⁷⁴ (1) The connection of v. 16a with v. 15 (“among whom you shine as stars in the world, holding fast the word of life”) points clearly to the context of missionary existence and ethics. (2) The unique expression “word of life” instead of gospel would make little sense, if Paul did not think of mediation of life. (3) The full text of Dan 12:3 (“And those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the firmament; and those who turn many to righteousness, [shall shine] like the stars for ever and ever”) indicates too the direction towards mission and ethics. Moreover, if one takes into consideration the great stress Paul lays on the spread of the gospel, then the connection between Christian conduct and mission is beyond any doubt.⁷⁵ As in 1:10, the phrase εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ does not mean at the day of Christ. Paul rather wants to say that the Philippians should live accordingly in the face of the

⁷⁰ Cf. Therrien 1973: 185–86: “Chez Paul, il n’y a pas de dichotomie entre religion et morale, la ‘fin ultime’ de l’homme, comme de toute la création, est de ‘rendre gloire à Dieu.’”

⁷¹ Cf. Gnllka 1968: 53; Fee 1995: 104.

⁷² Cf. Gnllka 1968: 53; Fee 1995: 104; U. B. Müller 1993: 46; O’Brien 1977: 36.

⁷³ Schenk 1984: 222–23; Cf. also Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 141–42; Fee 1995: 247–48. Against Haupt 1902: 97–98, Gnllka 1968: 153 and U. B. Müller 1993: 119 who only think of persistence.

⁷⁴ Fee 1995: 247–48.

⁷⁵ A pure ethical interpretation, however, does not justice to the context. Against Haupt 1902: 97–98; Gnllka 1968: 153; U. B. Müller 1993: 119.

day of Christ.⁷⁶ Mission and ethical conduct are, consequently, founded and motivated eschatologically.

2. *Departing in Order to Be with Christ (Philippians 1:23–24)*

a. *Philippians 1:23 in its Context*

Philippians 1:23 is a section in which Paul conveys very strongly some personal information to his favourite community in Philippi (1:12–26). The section following the introduction of the letter (1:1–11) is a literary unit. This becomes obvious, e.g., by the fact that the noun *προκοπή* forms an inclusion (1:12; 1:25).⁷⁷ Furthermore, Paul addresses the Philippians after 1:12 in 1:24–26 again in a direct way. The section beginning with 1:27 finally opens with an imperative.⁷⁸ A clear break is recognizable between 1:18a and 1:18b. Moreover, there exists a connection between 1:18 and 1:25 around the motif of joy.⁷⁹ Whereas in v. 18a Paul expresses his joy about the present state of the proclamation, full of joy he envisages in v. 18b the destiny of the gospel in the future.

For Paul the promotion of the gospel is to the fore. It is his interest to show that the gospel is gaining ground. After having expressed his joy about the progress of the gospel during his imprisonment he does not reflect so much upon his own personal future (Phil 1:18b–26) as mostly is assumed,⁸⁰ but—as we shall try to prove—upon the future of the gospel. Here we find the most important statements with regard to our theme, which are to be considered, however, in a tight connection with the preceding vv. 12–18a. This inference is to be drawn from the fact that v. 18a concludes the preceding subsection, as v. 18b opens the new one with the same motif of joy. For that reason it is appropriate to deal first with the subsection 1:12–18a.

⁷⁶ So with Fee 1995: 248 n. 40: *εἰς ἡμέραν Χριστοῦ* does not mean “at the day of Christ,” nor does it mean “until,” but “with the day of Christ in view.”

⁷⁷ Cf. Garland 1980: 331; Garland 1985: 159–60; Fabris 2001: 65; Peterman 1995: 107.

⁷⁸ Alexander 1995: 240, 241; Schenk 1984: 129; Peterlin 1997: 31.

⁷⁹ Cf. Peterlin 1995: 31 who also wants to include the verb “to know” in 1:12 and 1:25. In Greek, however, two different verbs are used.

⁸⁰ Cf. Hawthorne 1983: 34; Alexander 1995: 234, 240; Bloomquist 1993: 148 and most often the commentaries.

b. *The Current Progress of the Gospel (Philippians 1:12–18a)*

First, Paul speaks of the proclamation of the gospel both by himself and by the missionaries in Philippi caused by his imprisonment (1:12–14). Then he deals with the double motivation of the missionaries in Philippi (1:15–17). Finally, he expresses his joy about every kind of proclamation of Christ (1:18a).

1. *The Imprisonment of the Apostle as Cause of the Spread of the Gospel (Philippians 1:12–14)*

The fact that the gospel currently makes great progress (1:12b)⁸¹ is, by no means, a matter of course; for Paul is in chains, i.e. in prison (1:13). In a pagan environment, suffering for God could be considered to be a weakness of Paul and his message.⁸² Obviously, it is also a surprise to the Philippians that even the suffering of the apostle serves the spread of the gospel.⁸³ Contrary to expectation, his situation has a favourable effect on the gospel. Paul wants not only to inform his addressees of that success, but he also wants to challenge them to reflect on his communication⁸⁴ and to correct wrong assumptions.⁸⁵ That emphasizes the disclosure formula (“Kundgabeformel”) “Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters,” which moves on to the body of the letter (cf., e.g., Rom 1:13; 11:25; 1 Cor 1:10; 1 Thess 4:13).⁸⁶ In antiquity, above all in official letters, messages are introduced by such a formula.⁸⁷ Instead of suffering, as probably many Philippians expect, the gospel makes great progress even during Paul’s imprisonment. Paul can employ the noun τὸ εὐαγγέλιον without any special definition since he can presuppose that his addressees know its content (cf. already vv. 5, 7). How the gospel achieves this progress the apostle expounds in two subordinate clauses (vv. 13–14) introduced by ὥστε. That compellingly follows from the

⁸¹ προκοπή is used in Stoic ethics as a technical term for a process of moral development of the human being which leads from vice to virtue. Cf. Stählin 1932–1979: 706f.

⁸² Cf. Walter 1978: 417–34; Peterlin 1997: 49–50.

⁸³ Stählin 1932–1979: 715; Michael 1925: 27–28; Bloomquist 1993: 147–48.

⁸⁴ See Schenk 1984: 133; U. B. Müller 1993: 49.

⁸⁵ Cf. Peterlin 1997: 32–33.

⁸⁶ See Schneider and Stenger 1987: 171–72; Mullins 1964: 44–50; White 1971: 93–94; White 1975: 69; Alexander 1995: 233, 240–41; O’Brien 1991: 89; Peterlin 1997: 31; Peterman 1998: 107; Bockmuehl 1998: 71; Ernst 1993: 44.

⁸⁷ Roller 1933: 65–66 with n. 301 (p. 467); Gnilka 1968: 55; Collange 1973: 53; U. B. Müller 1993: 49.

change from the perfect tense to the aorist tense.⁸⁸ A consecutive or final understanding of ὥστε is thereby excluded⁸⁹ and an explicative one demanded.⁹⁰ For the perfect φανερόν γενέσθαι (v. 13) implies that the state described in vv. 13–14 has already been achieved.

2. *The Progress of the Gospel in the Pagan Environment (Philippians 1:13)*

The progress of the gospel is shown first by the fact that the imprisonment of Paul becomes obvious in Christ,⁹¹ that is, it becomes clear to all men and women, with whom Paul is in contact, that his imprisonment is not the consequence of crime, but has to do with his Christian faith, more precisely, with his apostolate.⁹² The imprisoned apostle, therefore, becomes known in Christ and thereby makes Christ known, in so far as he is determined by the redeeming events of Christ's death and resurrection. In such a manner, he serves the gospel and, consequently, Christ, even in his chains. That does not only genererally involve Paul's and the Philippians' common participation in the suffering of Christ (Phil 3:10).⁹³ Moreover, his imprisonment is already beneficial to the gospel, in so far as he proclaims Christ also this way (cf. 1:18).⁹⁴ For his chains do not hide Christ, but reveal him. The basic presupposition for that is his intimate relationship with Christ who is powerful in his weakness. Hence the apostle wants his addressees to know and to acknowledge the theological and missionary importance his imprisonment has.⁹⁵

Consequently, there is no reason to complain about the fact that Paul says only little about the course of the process and the conditions of his imprisonment.⁹⁶ His concern is exclusively to underline the fact that, contrary to expectation, his situation has advanced the cause of the gospel as the perfect ἐλήλυθεν (v. 12) shows, which indi-

⁸⁸ With Schenk 1984: 133–34; U. B. Müller 1993: 50; Bauer 1988: 1795: “derart daß.” Cf. Kühner and Gerth 1966: II/2 13 (§ 473,4 n. 11).

⁸⁹ Against Haupt 1902: 18 n. 3; Dibelius 1937: 64; Benoit 1956: 22; Lohmeyer, 1964: 38; Michael 1928: 31–32; Hendriksen 1996: 69.

⁹⁰ Vincent 1897: 16; Collange 1973: 53 n. 2; O'Brien 1991: 91 n. 19.

⁹¹ ἐν Χριστῷ is to be referred to φανερούς . . . γενέσθαι. Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 40 with n. 2; Gnilka 1968: 56 n. 11; Michael 1928: 31–32; Fee 1995: 112 with n. 29; O'Brien 1991: 92. Fabris 2001: 66 interprets, however, “a causa di Cristo.” Differently again G. Barth 1979: 25.

⁹² Cf. Spicq 1959: 245; Gnilka 1968: 57; Friedrich 1981: 141; G. Barth 1979: 25.

⁹³ So, however, Silva 1988: 68; Bruce 1984: 41; Fee 1995: 113; O'Brien 1991: 92.

⁹⁴ Cf. Bockmuehl 1998: 75; Bloomquist 1993: 148.

⁹⁵ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 49.

⁹⁶ See Gnilka 1968: 55.

cates the present state of the gospel. One often endeavours to explain this by the fact that after being proved to be innocent in his first interrogations (cf. Acts 17:6; 18:12–14; 26:31–32), Paul has only been accused because of Christ or because of the gospel message.⁹⁷ Such a differentiation, however, is an overstatement. Paul obviously only wants to make a statement of principle concerning his own situation: It is exactly in that way that the apostle becomes known in Christ even in prison. In that manner he serves Christ and, consequently, the gospel.⁹⁸

But why does Paul emphasize so much that his imprisonment serves the gospel? As already seen, the introductory disclosure formula indicates that Paul intends to correct wrong assumptions of some Christians among the Philippians. It is conspicuous that Paul pointedly addresses the Philippians all together as ἀδελφοί (v. 12a). The Philippians are his sisters and brothers since they are, as he is himself, sons and daughters of God and, therefore, sisters and brothers of Jesus. That, however, means that he addresses them as a Christian community (cf. above all Gal 4:4–6; Rom 8:12–19).⁹⁹ The disclosure formula makes clear, moreover, that he wants to tell them something they do not know yet.¹⁰⁰ How Paul came to the recognition that wrong assumptions circulate among the Philippians can remain open.¹⁰¹ More important is, however, what kind of assumptions are to be corrected. Most scholars think that the Philippians are concerned about the troubles Paul has had to endure in prison, i.e., that they are interested in Paul's current conditions.¹⁰² Hence, Paul would point to the fear of the Philippians with regard to his situation.¹⁰³ The apostle would like to correct in general an erroneous impression in view of his conditions of life in prison.¹⁰⁴ Others

⁹⁷ So Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 73; Vincent 1897: 16; Beare 1969: 56–57; J. J. Müller 1955: 49–50; Hawthorne 1983: 34; Schenk 1984: 134.

⁹⁸ See Haupt 1902: 18–20; Dibelius 1937: 64; U. B. Müller 1933: 50; Gnlika 1968: 57.

⁹⁹ Cf. Giesen 2001: 59–91; also Hawthorne 1983: 34.

¹⁰⁰ See Mengel 1982: 229; O'Brien 1991: 89.

¹⁰¹ It is possible that he got his information by a letter or orally by means of Epaphroditus.

¹⁰² Cf. Martin 1976: 71. Collange 1973: 9–10, 51, 53 thinks of a recent initiative of Paul that has made known his Roman nationality, which promised him a release soon. He admits, however, that there is no evidence for that assumption.

¹⁰³ Garland 1985: 152.

¹⁰⁴ G. Barth 1979: 26.

hold the opinion that the Philippians would be concerned about the outcome of his trial.¹⁰⁵ All these positions meet in the assumption that Paul is worse off than is actually the case. That is why Paul would want to inform them about what happened to him (τὰ κατ' ἐμέ)¹⁰⁶ and thereby to reassure them.¹⁰⁷

In conflict with this assumption is the fact that—as it is generally accepted—the concrete information Paul gives on his conditions in prison are next to nothing.¹⁰⁸ The answer of Paul, indeed, indicates a different purpose for his sayings. He talks of the spread of the gospel and reflects on life and death and his own future.¹⁰⁹ That is why it is obvious that the Philippians worry about how the spread of the gospel is going on in view of Paul's imprisonment since Paul possibly failed in proclaiming the gospel.¹¹⁰ Hence, as for Paul himself, so for the Philippians, the gospel is at stake as v. 14 demonstrates.

Against that background the adverb μᾶλλον (v. 12b) is to be understood. The adverb μᾶλλον is here to be translated with “rather”¹¹¹ or even better with “on the contrary.”¹¹² In contrast to the expectation¹¹³ of some Philippians, Paul's imprisonment does not prevent the spread of the gospel but furthers it more¹¹⁴ than one could expect. The comparative μᾶλλον means beyond that fact that especially under the unfavourable conditions of the apostle the gospel reaches more human beings than it would under better circumstances.¹¹⁵ The Philippians obviously fear that the message has been overthrown together with its messenger in prison. Paul does not take up the headword εὐαγγέλιον from 1:5, 7.¹¹⁶ Indeed, he probably alludes here

¹⁰⁵ See, e.g., Caird 1969: 109; Friedrich 1981: 143; Mengel 1982: 229; Hendriksen 1996: 67.

¹⁰⁶ So Gnlika 1968: 55: “Was die Philipper erfahren sollen, betrifft natürlich seine persönliche Lage.” Mengel 1982: 229; Hawthorne 1983: 34.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. Peterlin 1997: 33; Fee 1995: 108; Bockmuehl 1998: 74.

¹⁰⁸ Lohmeyer 1964: 39; Gnlika 1968: 55; Ernst 1974: 43–44; Hawthorne 1983: 33; Fee 1995: 108; Walter 1998: 38.

¹⁰⁹ See Peterlin 1997: 33–34.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Haupt 1902: 20; Peterlin 1997: 34, 39; Witherington 1994: 42–43; Fabris 2001: 70.

¹¹¹ Cf. Lightfoot 1881: 87; Vincent 1897: 16; J. J. Müller 1955: 48; Collange 1973: 53; O'Brien 1991: 90.

¹¹² Wolter 1980–1983: 940: “erst recht.”

¹¹³ The moment of unexpectedness is stressed also by Gnlika 1968: 55–56; Schenk 1984: 137; Michaelis 1935: 18; Mengel 1982: 230.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 39; Fee 1995: 110–11.

¹¹⁵ So Wick 1999: 87.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Eichholz 1965: 49; Peterlin 1995: 34.

to the dates of the trial, which give him the opportunity to stand up for the gospel.¹¹⁷ He thus furnishes proof of the fact that *his* chains are no chains for the gospel, but, on the contrary, promote its proclamation in so far as it is made accessible to a major audience, namely to the whole Praetorium and to all the others who became witnesses of his trial (v. 13).¹¹⁸

ὅλον τὸ πραιτώριον cannot naturally mean the building, but only its inhabitants, as the following phrase “and all the others” demonstrates. For our study also the localization of the praetorium is of some importance. τὸ πραιτώριον is originally the tent in which the praetor with his people dwells in a camp. In Rome also the Praetorian Guard and their barracks are thus called this.¹¹⁹ That in 1:13 the Praetorian Guard should be meant is improbable¹²⁰ though the official residence of the governor is also named Pretorium (cf. Matt 27:27; Mark 15:16; John 18:28, 33; 19:9).¹²¹ According to Acts 23:35, the residence is located in the former palace of Herod the Great in Caesarea. The fixing of the place of Paul’s imprisonment depends on where one locates the Praetorium. Whoever the Praetorium identifies with the Praetorian Guard allows Paul to write his letter during his Roman imprisonment.¹²² Consequently, Philippians would be the last Pauline letter preserved for us. It seems more probable that Paul is in Ephesian imprisonment when he writes his letter (cf. 2 Cor 1:8–11). That is why we must think of the residence of the governor there.¹²³ The double expression “in the whole Praetorium and all the others” probably signifies that Paul’s message not only gets known by the officials of the Praetorium as the court, but also

¹¹⁷ See Gnilka 1968: 58; U. B. Müller 1993: 50.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Gnilka 1968: 57.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Dibelius 1937: 64–65; Bauer 1988: 1397–1398; Gnilka 1968: 57–58; U. B. Müller 1993: 51–52.

¹²⁰ Against Lightfoot 1881: 99–104; J. J. Müller 1955: 49–50; Schnelle 1996: 160; O’Brien 1991: 93; Fee 1995: 34–36, 112 with n. 25; Witherington 1994: 45; Hawthorne 1983: 35; Bloomquist 1993: 149; Hendriksen 1996: 7, 69; Bockmuehl 1998: 75.

¹²¹ Cf. Cicero, *Vertr.* 2.4.65. Dibelius 1937: 55; Martin 1976: 71; Campbell 2001: 264; Walter 1998: 15, 38.

¹²² So e.g. de Wette 1843: 171. The claim is wrong in any case that there are only testimonies about an official residence of a Proconsul which is called Praetorium in imperial Provinces but not in Senatorial Provinces. Against Bruce 1984: 11; O’Brien 1991: 20–21, 93; Witherington 1994: 45. Cf., however, Lammert 1954 2535–2537; Schleiermacher 1962: 1180–1181; Egger 1966; Campbell 2001: 264.

¹²³ So recently also Walter 1998: 38; G. Barth 1996: 25; similarly Ernst 1974: 45. Hawthorne 1983: 35 thinks of Caesarea, however.

by the other persons present during the court sessions.¹²⁴ However, nothing is being said about a conversion of any people involved¹²⁵ so that Paul's saying must not be hyperbolic.¹²⁶ In disfavour of Rome is also the context of the court since the imperial palace in Rome is not called a Praetorium.¹²⁷ That is why the Ephesus-hypothesis has to be regarded as most probable so that Philippians was written before 2 Corinthians in 54 C.E.¹²⁸

3. *Progress of the Gospel in the Community (Philippians 1:14)*

Paul's imprisonment not only promotes the gospel in his environment (v. 13), but also in the community (v. 14),¹²⁹ for most of the brothers and sisters in the Lord dare to proclaim the word¹³⁰ more and more fearlessly. The determination of ἀδελφοί by ἐν κυρίῳ clearly distinguishes these from the before mentioned persons, namely from the officials of the Praetorium and all the others present in the court.¹³¹ This determination is, therefore, no tautology, because for

¹²⁴ Cf. Gnlika 1968: 58; U. B. Müller 1993: 52; G. Barth 1996: 25; differently Fee 1995: 114 "To everyone else." It is hardly thought of the whole city. Against Collange 1973: 53; Hendriksen 1996: 69.

¹²⁵ With Witherington 1994: 45.

¹²⁶ Against Fabris 2001: 71.

¹²⁷ So with Gnlika 1968: 57–58 n. 21; U. B. Müller 1993: 52. For a further argument in favour of the Ephesian imprisonment of Paul, see now Broer 2001: 386–91.

¹²⁸ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 60–62; Gnlika 1968: 18–21; Collange 1973: 30–34; Broer 2001: 391; Walter 1998: 39; against Wick 1999: 182–87; Schnelle 1996: 159–62; U. B. Müller 1993: 21–24, 52.

¹²⁹ That is hardly the Christian community in the place of Paul's imprisonment, as most scholars assume. In that case, some argue for Rome as Munck 1954: 317–18; J. J. Müller 1955: 52; Ernst 1993: 45–46; Beare 1969: 60; Fee 1995: 114–15; O'Brien 1991: 94; Hendriksen 1996: 70; Witherington 1994: 45; Bockmuehl 1998: 76. Others argue for Ephesus as Ernst 1993: 45; G. Barth 1996: 26; Walter 1998: 40, 70. Hawthorne 1983: 35 and again others argue for Caesarea. According to Schenk 1984: 137 beyond Paul's present residence are also addressed other communities.

¹³⁰ In spite of the good text-critical attestation of the reading λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ λαλεῖν (⊗ A B D* P Ψ 33 81 365 629 it^{sr} vg syr^{p,h*} copts^a.bo.fay goth, eth Clem al) the reading without τοῦ θεοῦ (p⁴⁶ D² and most of the Greek manuscripts) is most probably to be preferred. Cf. Metzger 1994: 544–55; Lohmeyer 1964: 42 n. 6; Gnlika 1968: 59; Collange 1973: 52; O'Brien 1991: 89. Differently Michaelis 1935: 19. Paul also uses ὁ λόγος for the message about Christ in 1 Thess 1:6 und Gal 6:6. Cf. also Col 4:3; 2 Tim 4:2.

¹³¹ Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 42; Dibelius 1937: 65; Kramer 1963: 177 with n. 559; Beare 1969: 59; Walter 1998: 39. A reference of ἐν κυρίῳ to πεποιθότας is "extremely unlikely." With Moule 1959: 108. Against Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 73; Haupt 1902: 21; Michaelis 1935: 20; Sand 1980–1983: 150; Gnlika 1968: 59; Collange

Paul the ἀδελφοί would be brothers and sisters anyway.¹³² The reference of the phrase ἐν κυρίῳ to ἀδελφοί is above all supported by the fact that in all other cases it points to an active action in community life.¹³³ Paul obviously speaks of the majority of the people actively cooperating in the community.¹³⁴ That is, therefore, not being said of the whole community,¹³⁵ but of the missionarily active Christians in Philippi.¹³⁶

In their confidence in Paul's chains they reveal their confidence in Christ as well, who proves to be strong in the weakness of the apostle. In this way they are encouraged to an even deeper missionary zeal so that it is in no way absurd that Paul says something about the situation in Philippi.¹³⁷ The motif for their fearless proclamation is obviously the information of Paul¹³⁸ that his imprisonment has promoted the progress of the gospel; for they learn this only from his letter (cf. 1:12). Obviously, they are motivated and encouraged to spread the gospel further by the fact that Paul was prepared to be sent to prison because of his conviction. It is even more probable that they are inspired by their ambition to commit themselves to the gospel while Paul is absent. Most of them were missionaries already before, but gave it up because of the imprisonment of the apostle, which was a danger for the whole community too. Now they are encouraged to proclaim the word, which is identical with the gospel (cf. 1 Thess 2:2),¹³⁹ with even more effort¹⁴⁰ than before

1973: 54; O'Brien 1991: 94–95; Fee 1995: 115–16. Bockmuehl 1998: 76 and Fabris 2001: 71. Gnlika's argument (1968: 59) that Paul does not speak everywhere else of "brothers in the Lord" is not only not decisive but also not correct (cf. Phlm 16; also 1 Cor 4:17; 9:1). See Schenk 1984: 135. Authors who refer "in the Lord" to the verb usually understand the dative τοῖς δεσμοῖς μου instrumentally. So Vincent 1897: 17; Hendriksen 1996: 69 with n. 44; O'Brien 1991: 95; Fee 1995: 95. Again differently Collange 1973: 54: "les frères persuadés, convaincus dans le Seigneur par mes liens."

¹³² Against Hawthorne 1983: 35.

¹³³ Cf. Schenk 1984: 134–35.

¹³⁴ Schenk 1984: 136.

¹³⁵ Against Michael 1928: 33; O'Brien 1991: 94; Ellis 1978: 6–15; Silva 1988: 69.

¹³⁶ See Gnlika 1968: 59; cf. Ellis 1978: 3–22. According to Ernst 1974: 45–46 it is probable that Paul consciously uses a theologically spontaneous formula indistinctly.

¹³⁷ So, however, Schenk 1984: 142.

¹³⁸ Against Eichholz 1965: 146–47; Gnlika 1968: 58; Mengel 1982: 230; Sand, 1980–1983: 150; Walter 1998: 39.

¹³⁹ See Collange 1973: 55 n. 3; Hawthorne 1983: 35; O'Brien 1991: 96–97; differently Ernst 1974: 46.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 42; Gnlika 1968: 58 n. 26; Schenk 1984: 137; Beare 1969: 59; Hawthorne 1983: 35; O'Brien 1991: 95; Fee 1995: 116.

in confidence in Paul's chains¹⁴¹ and thereby in Christ. At any rate, it is not a turning point in the trial¹⁴² which encourages the Philippians to spread the gospel since in that case their commitment to the gospel would be devaluated.¹⁴³ It is, therefore, obvious that the apostle's first concern is the spread of the gospel even if the manner how this is partly performed spoils his joy (v. 18a), as he demonstrates in vv. 15–17.

4. *Unselfish and Selfish Proclamation of the Gospel (Philippians 1:15–17)*

In a chiasmus Paul differentiates in v. 14 the principally positively characterized messengers (vv. 15–17).¹⁴⁴ To them belong both those who proclaim Christ out of envy and quarrelsomeness or rivalry¹⁴⁵ and who thereby endanger the unity of the community (v. 15a; cf. v. 14b),¹⁴⁶ and those who do so out of their good will (v. 15b).¹⁴⁷ The repeatedly emphasized courage in v. 14 includes all messengers. The main stress is put clearly on those who endeavour to inflict harm on Paul.¹⁴⁸ Verses 15–17 is, however, not to be understood as an excursus¹⁴⁹ but as an integral part of the subsection 1:12–18a.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴¹ With Lohmeyer 1964: 42–43.

¹⁴² Against Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 74; Michaelis 1935: 20.

¹⁴³ Gnlika 1968: 58; cf. G. Barth 1996: 26.

¹⁴⁴ Cf. Ernst 1974: 46; Martin 1976: 73; Hawthorne 1983: 36; Schenk 1984: 137; Bloomquist 1993: 149; against G. Barth 1996: 26–27.

¹⁴⁵ According to the catalogues of vices (Gal 5:20–21; Rom 1:29) both patterns of behaviour (φθόνος, ἔρις) exclude one from the heritage of the kingdom of God (Gal 5:21).

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Giesen 1980–1983c: 131. φθόνος is envy or quarrelsomeness, i.e., a behaviour of a human being who believes that he is not appreciated in a sufficient way and therefore begrudges other people's possession. Such a human being can only perceive the others as rivals and, therefore, damages or even destroys community life. Cf. Giesen 1999: 155. That makes it understandable why in his letter to the Philippians Paul gives priority to the issue of unity of the community and why he calls upon the Christians to reconcile with each other. Cf. Peterlin 1995: 39.

¹⁴⁷ Silva 1988: 71 thinks, however, "that the particular terms of description in v. 14 reflect Paul's estimate only of those who preach from goodwill—clearly they are not terms the apostle would have chosen as an adequate description of his opponents." So also Hendriksen 1996: 71.

¹⁴⁸ Silva 1988: 72; Fee 1995: 119; Schenk 1984: 138 who additionally points to οὐχ ἄγνως in v. 17 which interrupts the parallelism and strengthens the negative aspect. Differently Schütz 1975: 162 who surprisingly states that they would not criticize Paul as an individual but the whole community. Cf. the critique in Fee 1995: 119 n. 14.

¹⁴⁹ Collange 1973: 54; Martin 1976: 73; Hawthorne 1983: 36. Against, e.g., Gnlika 1968: 60. According to Vincent 1897: 18 and Dibelius 1937: 65 the differentiation of the messengers has nothing to do with the majority listed in v. 14.

¹⁵⁰ Peterlin 1995: 35. Schenk 1984: 141 prefers a classification of the subtext vv. 1–18a as an "Ergänzungsbericht."

The double adverbial καί which indicates a subsequent restriction does not show the following motifs as contrasts¹⁵¹ but as secondary motifs.¹⁵² The good will or the pleasure (εὐδοκία) is regularly understood as a positive relationship with Paul,¹⁵³ although δι' εὐδοκίαν does clearly refer to the proclamation of Christ (τὸν Χριστὸν κηρῶσ-σουσιν) and characterizes the unselfish proclamation as opposed to the egoistic proclamation. Moreover, according to Phil 2:13 εὐδοκία obviously means pleasure or the will of God.¹⁵⁴ Hence, it is not the will of Paul but the will of God which motivates the messengers.¹⁵⁵ That this has also something to do with their relationship with Paul only becomes clear when the proclamation is also motivated by love (v. 16a).¹⁵⁶ In that manner they demonstrate that they correctly evaluate Paul's attitude in the safe knowledge that also during his imprisonment and his trial he is not destined by God (divine passive) to defend himself but the gospel (v. 16b; cf. v. 13).¹⁵⁷ It is exactly this fact which the selfish messengers do not perceive because they let themselves be guided by their selfinterest and egoism (v. 17a; cf. 2:3). The rare noun ἐπιθεία is probably derived from ἐπιθεύω, which means "to work as wage-labourer" or "to work in favour of one's own profit."¹⁵⁸ By proclaiming Christ out of selfishness and obviously taking their missionary success into consideration, these kinds of missionaries additionally endeavour to cause grief to Paul's chains¹⁵⁹ and to hurt him (v. 17b). Their unfounded opinion (οἰόμενοι) is opposed to the safe knowledge (εἰδότες) of the meaning of Paul's imprisonment, which possesses those who act out of love. This makes it clear that their dishonest behaviour (οὐχ ἄγνως) aims at Paul personally.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵¹ Against Lohmeyer 1964: 44 n. 3; Gnilka 1968: 60 n. 5.

¹⁵² See Kühner and Gerth 1966: 524,1; Haupt 1902: 22; Schenk 1984: 138.

¹⁵³ See J. J. Müller 1955: 54; Ernst 1974: 46–47; Hawthorne 1983: 37; Collange 1973: 54–55; Fee 1995: 121 n. 15; Hendriksen 1996: 72.

¹⁵⁴ Cf. Giesen 1988: 93–94; Bockmuehl, 1998: 79 with further documentation from the LXX and Qumran.

¹⁵⁵ Bockmuehl 1998: 79 rightly points out that the preposition διὰ with accusative denotes the purpose of the divine will. Cf. also Spicq 1959: 250; similarly Dibelius 1937: 66: "Gesinnung für das Evangelium."

¹⁵⁶ Since it concerns the spread of the gospel the love towards Christ is probably included. Cf. Hendriksen 1996: 72.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. Collange 1973: 56.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Giesen 1980–1983b: 130; Büchsel 1932–1979: 657–58. Following Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 75, Schenk 1984: 139 thinks that one could best translate ἐπιθεία as a contextual synonym to the double expression φθόνος καὶ ἐρις with "rivalry." See also Peterlin 1995: 36.

¹⁵⁹ Literally: "to arouse grief (θλίψις) to my chains." Cf. Kremer 1980–1983: 901.

¹⁶⁰ Vincent 1897: 19; Fee 1995: 121; Peterlin 1995: 36.

The earlier discernible polemical thoughts of the apostle emerge now even more clearly¹⁶¹ and underline the personal tension between him and the dishonest missionaries. Whereas, however, the missionaries motivated by love, the defence of the gospel by Paul and his service of being a witness in public are to the fore, the other ones think of the chains in so far as they are signs of Paul's suffering.¹⁶² They fail to appreciate that for Paul the chains signify grace. Hence, their service is not honest.¹⁶³ More specific descriptions of the situation have to fail because of the scanty information.¹⁶⁴ Moreover, they are not necessary at all since Paul can presuppose that his addressees have learnt more details through personal experience. Scholars who think of missionaries in the local community of Paul's imprisonment find it difficult to explain why Paul writes about their weaknesses.¹⁶⁵

What to Paul finally matters is that Christ is proclaimed in every way. Against that background the motifs become less important. That is why in v. 18a Paul clearly refers his joy to both kinds of missionaries.¹⁶⁶ The missionaries characterized negatively by Paul do not fundamentally disagree with Paul,¹⁶⁷ i.e., they do not hold any teaching different from his own, otherwise he could not have addressed them together with all the other Christians as brothers and sisters (v. 14). Obviously, there is petty jealousy by which they want to demonstrate that they do not need the apostle at all (v. 17a).¹⁶⁸ For even those who proclaim Christ out of envy and quarrelsomeness and, therefore, out of dishonest motives are able to acknowledge that

¹⁶¹ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 54.

¹⁶² Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 45; Munck 1954: 318; Spicq 1959: 244–45.

¹⁶³ The fact that Paul polemicizes elsewhere against Jewish tendencies with the help of this noun does not mean, however, that this must be the case here, too. Against Lohmeyer 1964: 46; similarly Fee 1995: 122–23; Walter 1998: 40; rightly, however, Munck 1954: 318; Spicq 1959: 244; Hawthorne 1983: 37; Ernst 1974: 46; Witherington 1994: 45.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. on other attempts in Peterlin 1995: 36–37. Cf. also Ernst 1974: 46.

¹⁶⁵ Thus it is a mystery to Hawthorne 1983: 38 that Paul considers it necessary to communicate the weaknesses of the brothers and sisters in Caesarea. In his opinion, Paul wants the Philippians to recognize that they should not be surprised if there are missionaries in their community too who act with wrong motives.

¹⁶⁶ Cf. Schenk 1984: 137; U. B. Müller 1993: 53; against White 1975: 122 n. 68.

¹⁶⁷ Against Silva 1988: 10.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Schenk 1984: 137. Following Jewett 1971: 362–90, Martin 1976: 74 thinks of a different missionary strategy: "In effect they see themselves as 'divine men', similar to the ancient itinerant religious teachers and preachers who were familiar figures in the ancient Greco-Roman world."

Paul's imprisonment does not endanger but promote the gospel.¹⁶⁹ In my opinion, there is little doubt that Paul distinguishes between differently motivated missionaries working in Philippi¹⁷⁰ since the Philippians are his addressees. The essential difference between them clearly is their opinion on Paul's imprisonment.¹⁷¹ The apostle obviously criticizes, therefore, a widespread wrong behaviour among the missionaries. It is, however, not permitted to infer from that difference that they form a separate group within the community, as most scholars maintain.

5. *Paul's Joy about Every Kind of Proclaiming of Christ (Philippians 1:18a)*

That Paul, indeed, intends in vv. 15–17 to appreciate *all* missionaries is confirmed by his reaction to the controversy in v. 18,¹⁷² which would otherwise be surprising. Verse 18 forms an inclusion with v. 12.¹⁷³ Here he moderates the previously described conflicting motivations by asking the rhetorical question τί γάρ and thus heading to the most important thing: proclaiming the gospel. By doing so, he makes clear at the same time that the negatively characterized missionaries are mistaken if they think they could do any harm to him.¹⁷⁴ Paul, however, is not pleased that some preach out of wrong motivations, but that Christ is proclaimed in every way, no matter what the motives are. He is also not pleased about his imprisonment as such, but about the fact that it does not prevent the proclamation of the gospel, but promote it.

Paul is concerned about the progress of the gospel whether it is presented under pretence or pretext, i.e. out of dishonest motives or

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Haupt 1902: 22; Schenk 1984: 137. The difference is no contradiction. Against Schmithals 1965: 54 n. 45; Baumbach 1973: 296–98.

¹⁷⁰ Against Mengel 1982: 231 with n. 37; Gnlika 1968: 12 n. 58; Garland 1985: 141–73; Baumbach 1973: 297–98 who assumes different opponents in 1:15–17 and 3:2–3. Ernst 1974: 46 cannot perceive a concrete background. Rightly, however, Peterlin 1995: 38; Merk 1968: 188; Schmithals 1965: 54 n. 45. Schmithals presupposes that Philippians is a compilation. In my opinion, that is very doubtful. Cf. Wick 1999: 16–32; Schnelle 1996: 164–67; Guthrie 1995: 36–59, especially the conclusion, p. 47; Alexander 1995: 232–46; Luter and Lee 1995: 89–101; Broer 2001: 379–84.

¹⁷¹ See Martin 1976: 73–74. According to Munck 1954: 318 they differ in the assessment of the cause of Paul's imprisonment.

¹⁷² Cf. Schenk 1984: 142.

¹⁷³ See Peterman 1997: 109.

¹⁷⁴ Cf., however, Vincent 1897: 22: "Suppose this is so."

in truthfulness,¹⁷⁵ which, of course, presupposes the missionaries are invested with competence (εἰδότες).¹⁷⁶ With the headword “pretence,” Paul obviously takes up the dishonest motives of some missionaries (φθόνος, ἔρις, ἐριθεία, οὐχ ἀγνῶς) and with truthfulness the positive attitude of missionaries (εὐδοκία, ἀγάπη). The critique of the egoistic behaviour of some missionaries remains, though Paul does not reproach anybody with heretical teaching,¹⁷⁷ but criticizes the egoistic motives of some missionaries. There is, therefore, no theological disagreement, for apart from personal tensions, Paul does not know any compromise regarding doctrinal questions (cf., e.g., Gal 1:6–9).¹⁷⁸ But there is a different assessment of the meaning and value of Paul’s imprisonment owing to the proclamation of the gospel,¹⁷⁹ which is a power of God (Rom 1:16; 1 Cor 1:18, 24) that will be successful despite all opposition (cf. also Isa 55:10–11).¹⁸⁰ That is why Paul keeps calm, and not because he expects the imminent Second Coming of Jesus.¹⁸¹

c. *Paul’s Expectation for the Future (Philippians 1:18b–26)*

1. *Certainty of Salvation as Reason for Joy also in the Future (Philippians 1:18b–19)*

In v. 18b Paul moves on to a new topic. Now he reflects upon how his future will be and deals with questions of his addressees connected with his future.¹⁸² With the intensifying ἀλλά, which is trans-

¹⁷⁵ Because of its contrast to πρόφασις (pretence) ἀλήθεια is not to be understood as truth, but as truthfulness. Cf. Haupt 1902: 28 n. 1; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 80–82; Hübner 1980–1983: 142. Lohmeyer 1964: 49 n. 1 argues, however, in favour of objective truth. That is hardly possible, since Paul does not deal here with teaching.

¹⁷⁶ Schenk 1984: 140, who stresses that subjective truthfulness is not sufficient. So, however, Dibelius 1937: 56.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Eichholz 1965: 147–48; J. J. Müller 1955: 53; Beare 1969: 59; Gnilka 1968: 60, 64; Friedrich 1981: 142; Collange 1973: 55; Hawthorne 1983: 3; Hendriksen 1996: 71; against Lohmeyer 1964: 46–47 who thinks of Jewish Christians in Caesarea. Cf. already de Wette 1843: 173. According to G. Barth 1996: 28 they do not understand the Pauline *theologia crucis* and are close to the opponents in 2 Cor.

¹⁷⁸ Cf. Peterlin 1995: 41.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Ollrogg 1979: 199.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 56; G. Barth 1996: 28; Witherington 1994: 46.

¹⁸¹ With Schenk 1984: 141; against Gnilka 1968: 64; Ernst 1974: 47.

¹⁸² Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 81; U. B. Müller 1993: 57.

lated with “indeed,”¹⁸³ Paul prepares the Philippians for the following statement, which will certainly surprise some of them. He himself is certain of his joy also in the future, since, because of his faith, he knows that whatever will happen to him—capital punishment or release—will turn out for his salvation, as he says with the help of a literal quotation from Job 13:16a LXX (v. 19). Like Job in his suffering, so Paul confidently expects his vindication.¹⁸⁴ σωτηρία means eschatological salvation,¹⁸⁵ not only rescue from prison.¹⁸⁶ Paul already has in view in v. 20 both mentioned possibilities (εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου).¹⁸⁷ He is able to do so because to him not only the personal dangers are empirical-historical realities, but also Jesus’ resurrection and the presence of the exalted Christ.¹⁸⁸ With his expectation of salvation, Paul, therefore, does not break the limits of empirical reality.¹⁸⁹ Moreover, he can have both, in view in so far as he—like the psalmist (Pss 55:4–5; 88:4–6; 116:3)—understands his distress as a death situation and, consequently, the rescue from such dangers as rescue from death (2 Cor 1:10; cf. Pss 33:19; 56:14; 116:8).¹⁹⁰ That leads to the conclusion that the context exclusively decides whether σωτηρία means the completion of salvation or not. 1:19 in its context (vv. 21–25) refers to every kind of death which, according to biblical understanding, is possible, i.e., neither only physical death nor only the completion of salvation.

Paul does not attribute to himself his certainty in expecting salvation, but to the granted prayer of supplication of the community (cf. 2 Cor 1:11; 1 Thess 5:25), who intercede for him with God (cf.

¹⁸³ Cf. Blass and Debrunner 1976: § 448,6; Radl 1980–1983a: 147; Schenk 1984: 144; U. B. Müller 1993: 57.

¹⁸⁴ Grayston 1967: 18; Bloomquist 1993: 154; Collange 1973: 26–27.

¹⁸⁵ Beare 1969: 62; U. B. Müller 1993: 57; differently Vincent 1897: 23: “It is used here in its widest N.T. sense; not merely of future salvation, but of the whole saving and sanctifying work of Christ in the believer.”

¹⁸⁶ Michaelis 1935: 22–23; against Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 81–82; Hawthorne 1983: 53; Schelkle 1980–1983b: 785 who here as in 2 Cor 1:6 thinks of a rescue from an actual distress.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Silva 1988: 76.

¹⁸⁸ So with Schenk 1984: 145.

¹⁸⁹ Against Lohmeyer 1964: 50–51; Gnilka 1968: 65.

¹⁹⁰ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 22–23; Wolff 1989: 27; J. J. Müller 1955: 57; Martin 1976: 75; Schenk 1984: 146, who rightly emphasizes: “Was Schöpfung ist, ist für Paulus in der Auferweckung Jesu definiert und wird darum in der Gerechtmachung des Gottlosen ebenso erfahren wie in vorläufigen Todeserweckungen, die aus Todesgefahren retten.” Cf. also Schrage 1974: 152–53.

Rom 15:30), and, above all, to the support (ἐπιχορηγία) of the spirit of Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6, 17).¹⁹¹ ἐπιχορηγία (in the New Testament only here and in Eph 4:16) is *nomen actionis* and, therefore, to be understood actively. It means the equipment by the exalted Lord, who assists him in the power of his spirit. The spirit, however, is not identical with the exalted Christ, but separated from him as his power and mode of existence, in which Christ encounters the Christians.¹⁹² As a matter of fact, Christians not only experience the spirit, but, above all, they experience his support in the court (cf. Mark 13:11; Matt 10:20).¹⁹³

2. *Hope of Eschatological Salvation (Philippians 1:20)*

With the hendiadys κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαραδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου (v. 20a), Paul expresses his unshakable hope and expectation that he shall not be ashamed in anything (v. 20).¹⁹⁴ The ὅτι-clause continues the ὅτι-clause in v. 19. That Paul's hope is in no way to be brought to shame (v. 20b) recalls Old Testament statements in the Psalms requesting not being ashamed (LXX: Pss 24:2–3, 20; 68:7; 118:36, 80, 116). αἰσχυνθήσομαι, correspondingly, does not express—as in its original Greek meaning—any subjective feeling, but an objective event, namely the absence of the requested divine help.¹⁹⁵ Hence, Paul is constantly concerned neither about his fidelity¹⁹⁶ nor about his being tested and thereby about the presupposition for his σωτηρία.¹⁹⁷ Moreover, ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνθήσομαι means the same as σωτηρία.¹⁹⁸ Paul is convinced that hope cannot be dashed in any way (cf. Rom 5:5; 1 Cor 1:17–18), because God does not give up his elected ones even in death (cf. Rom 8:38–39).¹⁹⁹

¹⁹¹ πνεύματος is a subjective genitive. So also U. B. Müller 1993: 57.

¹⁹² Cf. Schweizer 1932–1979: 416; U. B. Müller 1993: 57; differently Schenk 1984: 146.

¹⁹³ Cf. Friedrich 1981: 143; Mengel 1982: 232; Martin 1976: 75; U. B. Müller 1993: 57.

¹⁹⁴ U. B. Müller 1993: 57; cf. Schenk 1984: 144.

¹⁹⁵ Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 83–84; Lohmeyer 1964: 53; Horstmann 1980–1983: 100–101; Wolter 1980–1983: 151–52: “das nicht als Täuschung entlarvt wird.” Schenk 1984: 147.

¹⁹⁶ Against Haupt 1902: 31; similarly Bultmann 1932–1979: 190; Beare 1969: 62.

¹⁹⁷ Against Gnllka 1968: 67–68; similarly Beare 1969: 62.

¹⁹⁸ So with Schenk 1984: 148.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Schenk 1984: 147; U. B. Müller 1993: 58; Bloomquist 1993: 152: “God will prove victorious regardless of the outcome.” Giesen 2000: 254.

What Paul hitherto said in a negative way, he is now going to put positively by stating that the true purpose of his life is magnifying Christ in his body with all openness, as always, even now (v. 20c). It is striking that not Paul but Christ is the subject of the sentence. Paul is so much at Christ's disposal and in communion with him that Christ will be magnified in his body. *σῶμα* is not the full Ego of Paul, but his physical existence, with which he gives testimony to the visible world.²⁰⁰ It is, therefore, identical with "life in the flesh" (v. 24), what is opposed to the departure in order to be with Christ. His communion with Christ is so obvious that, by the lot of the apostle, even the pagan public can recognize that Christ is the Lord.²⁰¹ That reminds us of Paul's chains, which were revealed in Christ (1:13). Just as the prayer in the Psalms, with the phrase *μεγαλυνθήτω ὁ κύριος* (LXX: Pss 34:27; 39:17; 69:5; cf. 68:30–31), acknowledges the sovereignty and power of God, so the pagan world will acknowledge the power and sovereignty of Christ.

Since Martin Luther, one nearly always translates *μεγαλυνθήσεται* with to "glorify,"²⁰² although there is not any christological doxology within Paul. In the only comparable passage in Paul (2 Cor 10:15), the apostle himself is the object of magnifying. But it is not Paul who should be shown to his best advantage, but greater tasks to be fulfilled. Concretely it refers to his further mission (10:16).²⁰³ Since the progress of the gospel (1:12, 25) and thereby the proclamation of Christ (v. 18) are the reason for the present joy which will still be surpassed in the future, *προκοπή εὐαγγελίου* (v. 12) and *μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστός* (v. 20) are to be understood as synonyms.²⁰⁴

"With all openness or confidence" (*ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ*; cf. also Acts 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 28:31), i.e., regardless of external conditions²⁰⁵ of possibly negative consequences, Christ shall be magnified by the earthly existence of Paul (*ἐν τῷ σώματί μου*) and just as in his unpromising proclamation, so also in his present situation. The apostle

²⁰⁰ Gundry 1976: 37. According to Vincent 1897: 25 Paul writes *ἐν τῷ σώματι μου* instead of *ἐμοί* with regard to his situation: "In his afflicted, imprisoned body Christ will be magnified." Cf. J. J. Müller 1955: 58.

²⁰¹ Dibelius 1937: 67; U. B. Müller 1993: 58.

²⁰² See Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 85–86; Lohmeyer 1964: 53–54; Beare 1969: 62; differently Schlatter 1964: 69; K. Barth 1959: 28–29; J. J. Müller 1955: 58–59.

²⁰³ Cf. Bultmann 1976: 198; Schenk 1984: 148.

²⁰⁴ Schenk 1984: 148–49.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 54; Schenk 1984: 148; U. B. Müller 1993: 58.

explicitly adds that this happens both by life and by death. Although in the context of his imprisonment “by death” means the active devotion of his life in the service of Christ,²⁰⁶ one cannot restrict it to this.²⁰⁷ Both by life and by death Christ is proclaimed. Here becomes effective what Paul has already said in v. 18 in a different way: the most important thing is that Christ is proclaimed in every way. Paul, therefore, regards life and death as a commitment to the gospel. Here we must take in account that to die (v. 21) and to depart (v. 23) are unique events, as the aorist tense demonstrates.²⁰⁸

Hence, in v. 20d, with great objectivity, Paul considers the two possibilities of how the trial against him could end. On the precondition that the Philippians are above all interested in Paul’s situation in prison or in the outcome of his trial (see 1:12), one notes that Paul does not answer the question put by the Philippians, but underlines that he knows that everything will turn out to the glory of Christ, no matter how the trial ends.²⁰⁹ According to our findings that the promotion of the gospel under the current awkward circumstances of the apostle is at stake for both the Philippians and Paul, we observe that the apostle specifically responds to their problem. Christ shall be magnified no matter whether he can leave the prison as a free man or he has to die the death of a martyr (cf. also Phil 2:17–18). By both outcomes Christ shall be magnified, both serve the progress of the gospel and he perceives both as grace (1:7). In that manner, he decreases the difference between life and death.²¹⁰ Death is, however, in no way the coronation of his life in Christ.²¹¹ That is made clear by the alternative: “whether by life or by death.”²¹²

3. *To Paul to Live is Christ and to Die is Gain (Philippians 1:21–22)*

The apostle obviously has got the impression that the Philippians are not satisfied with his information. That is why he feels obliged to substantiate his statement on the relativization of life and death (vv. 21–24). For that reason he applies an evaluative comparison

²⁰⁶ The active moment is underlined by the preposition *διὰ*. To him both his life and his death hold true as a means to magnify Christ. Paul understands himself as a missionary.

²⁰⁷ So, however, Schenk 1984: 149.

²⁰⁸ Blass and Debrunner 1976: § 389D; Schenk 1984: 149.

²⁰⁹ So, e.g., U. B. Müller 1993: 58.

²¹⁰ Eichholz 1965: 148; Mengel 1982: 232–33; U. B. Müller 1993: 58–59.

²¹¹ Against Gnlika 1968: 133.

²¹² With Dibelius 1937: 69; Schenk 1984: 151.

using the rhetorical pattern of the *synkrisis*.²¹³ Paul first emphasizes with an anticipated ἐμοί that *to him*²¹⁴ to live is Christ and to die is gain (v. 21). That implies a contrast of different views of what the meaning of life is, e.g., in the family or in the consumption of earthly goods.²¹⁵ Paul's life is moulded entirely by Christ who took him into his service. That is why his life transcends the bodily-earthly existence. Grammatically, Χριστός is clearly a predicative noun. Factually Christ is also not the subject of the sentence so that one has to translate "Christ is my life."²¹⁶ Paul wants to explain what "to live" means to him. Whereas to live is a continuum, to die is a unique act or a completed state,²¹⁷ as shown by the infinitive present τὸ ζῆν and the infinitive aorist τὸ ἀποθανεῖν.²¹⁸ For Paul, to die does not mean, therefore, the end of life, but gain (v. 21b). According to Paul, life includes death too (cf. Rom 14:7–8).²¹⁹ For he is convinced that it is no longer he who lives, but Christ lives in him (Gal 2:20). That is why the Christian belongs to the Lord whether he lives or dies (cf. Rom 14:8). To die is gain, because it leads into the full communion with Christ, since for Paul to live is Christ. For him, life cannot be thought of without Christ. From that is to be inferred that even the devotion of life paradoxically is gain and to die does not mean to become ashamed (v. 20). The fact that for Paul to die is devotion of life does not simply mean that what is a loss for the natural human being is gain for him.²²⁰ He shall be liberated precisely from death through death in order to be with Christ.²²¹ Hence, Paul's entire existence is eschatologically orientated.

²¹³ Cf. Vollenweder 2002: 238.

²¹⁴ ἐμοί is a *dativus commodi*. Cf., e.g., Edart 2002: 81. What applies to Paul, naturally applies to all the Christians too for whom Paul is an example. Cf. Gundry 1976: 149.

²¹⁵ Cf. Haupt 1902: 34; Schenk 1984: 150; U. B. Müller 1993: 59. There hardly is a contrast to the dishonest missionaries in vv. 15–17 or to the Philippians (δὲ ὑμεῖς, v. 24). Against Collange 1973: 60.

²¹⁶ Schenk 1984: 151; G. Barth 1996: 31; against Siber 1971: 88–89; Hoffmann 1978: 294; Friedrich 1981: 144; Gnilka 1968: 71; Schnelle 1989: 45 with n. 35; Mengel 1982: 234; U. B. Müller 1993: 59.

²¹⁷ Haupt 1902: 38.

²¹⁸ ἀποθανεῖν is a synonym of ἀναλῦσαι.

²¹⁹ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 59; against Eichholz 1965: 149; Michaelis 1935: 24–25; Beare 1969: 63; Michael 1928: 53. Totally mistaken, however, is the view that Paul here thinks of suicide as a legitimate means for himself and the Christians. Against Droge 1988: 264.

²²⁰ Schenk 1984: 153; against Haupt 1902: 34.

²²¹ Cf. Bloomquist 1993: 153: "... a desire to be with Christ by being released from death through death (1.21)."

At first glance, in v. 22 Paul seems to restrict (δέ) a comprehensive understanding of life which is Christ (v. 21) by speaking of living ἐν σαρκί, introduced by the adversative particle δέ.²²² Against such an interpretation, however, it can be argued that in v. 21 Christ is not the subject of “to live” but the predicate noun, as we have seen already. Paul is rather concerned with a life in favour of Christ (cf. 2 Cor 4:5, 11; Phil 3:7; 1 Cor 10:33–34) and in favour of the proclamation of the gospel (cf. 2:21; 1 Cor 9:16–17, 19–23). That corresponds exactly with the forgoing context from 1:12 on. What to “live is Christ” means to the apostle he tells us in v. 24: It is a life “because of you,” i.e. because of the community in Philippi.²²³ That is why the life that contrasts with death in v. 21 is to be understood as earthly life as in v. 20c and v. 22a.²²⁴

For Paul, not only life but also death is valuable. He compares, therefore, something good with something good.

The apostle considers dying very valuable because it is the presupposition for receiving unlosable life;²²⁵ thus v. 21 immediately prepares the expectation of being with Christ (1:23). Dying is a gain for two reasons: First, to live on earth means for him already to live with Christ and, secondly, after death, he expects to be with Christ.²²⁶ That leads to the conclusion that faith alone speaks of gain, where human experience only perceives loss.²²⁷ Paul is, therefore, certain not only in view of the progress of the gospel, but also in view of his resurrection, whether immediately after death or at the Second Coming of Christ.²²⁸

Parallel Greek statements considering death to be gain essentially differ from the Pauline view, as far as they assess death above all as release from earthly suffering or from the negatively regarded body as a dungeon of the soul.²²⁹ The apostle, however, is convinced

²²² Cf. Schmitz 1914: 155–69; Dibelius 1937: 67–68; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 84–85; Gnllka 1968: 70–71; Friedrich 1981: 144; Siber 1971: 88; Hoffmann 1978: 288–90; Mengel 1982: 233–34; U. B. Müller 1993: 59.

²²³ Cf. Vollenweder 2002: 243–44.

²²⁴ Cf. Vollenweder 2002: 243.

²²⁵ Cf. Mengel 1982: 234.

²²⁶ Cf. Siber 1971: 89; Hoffmann 1978: 289–90; U. B. Müller 1993: 59; against Michaelis 1935: 27.

²²⁷ Pesch 1969: 12; Bloomquist 1993: 156.

²²⁸ Bouttier 1962: 41; Bloomquist 1993: 156.

²²⁹ Cf. Hoffmann 1978: 295; Siber 1971: 91–92; U. B. Müller 1993: 60; against Dupont 1952: 173–78, who thinks of Paul depending on the Greek idea of passing

of being tightly bound with Christ from baptism on, so that the “being with Christ” beyond death only intensifies what is already determining his life on earth.²³⁰ For Christ is the foundation of his life,²³¹ although it cannot be said that the life which is Christ is only increased by death.²³² If it is true that for Paul dying means gain with regard to his final communion with Christ,²³³ then the thesis that he certainly shall still be alive at the time of parousia cannot be true. The apostle does not regard dying as gain because he resignedly turns away from life, as Greek parallels testify.

In v. 22 Paul first expounds what magnifying of Christ by his life (v. 20) does mean. To him “living in flesh” (v. 22; cf. v. 21a), i.e., his earthly existence and thereby his remaining in the body (cf. v. 20),²³⁴ is “fruit of work” (cf. Jer 3:10; 17:10; 32:19), i.e., the return from his missionary activity which means hard work.²³⁵ κέρδος (v. 21b) and καρπός (v. 22b) are synonyms.²³⁶ The apostle underlines thereby that the meaning of both his living and dying is his missionary commitment. Hence, his survival is only meaningful if it brings missionary success. That exactly corresponds to his apostolic vocation. That is why he further likes to carry on his task. From that the sincere question arises that Paul does not find an answer to: “Yet which shall I choose? I do not know.” The future tense of the question τί αἰρήσομαι represents the *coniunctivus deliberativus*, which depends on γωρίζω.²³⁷ Rightly, here the question can be asked whether Paul as a prisoner has a choice at all since his external conditions depend on the authorities’ verdict and all internal behaviour on the will of God, but in no way on him.²³⁸ αἰρέω is, therefore, to be understood

away of the soul to God after having left the dungeon of the body. Cf. the critique in Hoffmann 1978: 296–99.

²³⁰ Cf. Dibelius 1937: 67; Gnilka 1968: 71; U. B. Müller 1993: 60.

²³¹ Cf. Gnilka 1968: 71; U. B. Müller 1993: 60.

²³² Against Gnilka 1968: 71.

²³³ Cf. Siber 1971: 89.

²³⁴ Cf. Gundry 1976: 37 with reference to 1 Cor 6:15, where σῶμα and σὰρξ are interchangeable.

²³⁵ Cf. Vincent 1897: 27; Wrege 1980–1983: 622; Hoffmann 1978: 292; Friedrich 1981: 144; Gnilka 1968: 72; Ernst 1974: 50; Eichholz 1965: 149; Mengel 1982: 235; U. B. Müller 1993: 64.

²³⁶ Schenk 1984: 151; cf. Michaelis 1935: 26; Collange 1973: 60; against Hoffmann 1978: 292.

²³⁷ Vincent 1897: 27; Haupt 1902: 37; Gnilka 1968: 72; U. B. Müller 1993: 61.

²³⁸ Lohmeyer 1964: 61; Witherington 1994: 47; cf. Fortna 1990: 223.

with the meaning *to prefer* (cf. also Heb 11:25).²³⁹ Paul is, consequently, faced with the question of what he should wish with regard to himself and to his conscience: to survive in favour of the community or to die in order to attain soon the completion of salvation. But that is not to be understood in a way that the alternative faced by Paul brings great psychological distress upon him, for in vv. 19–25 he is going to explain why he has got reasons for joy both in the present and in the future, no matter what shall happen.²⁴⁰ In the end, Paul does not know what to prefer because his entire life means Christ. It is Christ, therefore, to whom he leaves the decision.²⁴¹ Paul does not consider his actual future fate, but thinks of what he should prefer with regard to his future: release or execution.²⁴²

4. “*Being with Christ*” as the far Better Choice (*Philippians 1:23*)

The reasons why Paul does not know what to prefer he further expounds in 1:23, which he introduces with an explanatory δέ.²⁴³ He is now pressed on two sides.²⁴⁴ But Paul does not consider survival and dying as two equivalent opportunities, as is clearly expressed by the sentence construction. Paul does not form two equally ordered sentences, but plainly he prefers the possibility of dying, as the participial phrase τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων²⁴⁵ demonstrates, which, with an emphatic hyperbolic exclamation, assesses this possibility as “by far, far better.” πολλῶ μᾶλλον twice strengthens the comparative κρεῖσσον.²⁴⁶ ἀναλύειν is a widespread euphemism for dying and to be translated with “to depart.”²⁴⁷ The goal of the departure is being

²³⁹ Cf. Bauer 1988: 45; U. B. Müller 1993: 61; differently Fortna 1990: 222.

²⁴⁰ With Schenk 1984: 159; Vollenweder 2002: 244; against Gnlika 1968: 72–73; Silva 1988: 81.

²⁴¹ Similarly Beare 1969: 63.

²⁴² Collange 1973: 59–60: “Mais il est clair que le doute de l’apôtre ne porte pas sur son sort prochain (acquiescement ou condamnation), mais sur l’attitudes à adopter, sur le choix à faire (ἀρήσομαι) face à l’avenir.”

²⁴³ See Vincent 1897: 28; Haupt 1902: 37; Lohmeyer 1964: 62 n. 1; U. B. Müller 1993: 61.

²⁴⁴ Cf. Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 88: “gedrängt,” “in Bann gezogen werden.” Michaelis 1928: 26; Kretzer 1980–1983: 732.

²⁴⁵ Paul uses the noun ἐπιθυμία positively only once more in 1 Thess 2:1. ἐπιθυμία is not to be interpreted negatively as an egoistic desire with regard to his community, which the apostle only can have with a bad conscience. Against Bonnard 1950: 30; Collange 1973: 61–63; considered also by Michaelis 1935: 26.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Hoffmann 1978: 298 n. 43; U. B. Müller 1993: 61.

²⁴⁷ The verb, which occurs in the New Testament only here, is used of break-

with Christ,²⁴⁸ which includes the absence of the body (cf. 2 Cor 5:7–9).²⁴⁹ Whereas, for Paul, living is Christ, “being with Christ” means life in its fullness.²⁵⁰ Since Paul awaits “being with Christ” with full consciousness, an intermediate state is excluded.²⁵¹ For this understanding one does not have to revert to the special Jewish expectation for martyrs in order to maintain the thesis of the imminent expectation of the Second Coming of Christ.²⁵²

A Greek burial epigram offers an interesting parallel which connects the idea of departure with a postmortal communion with the gods. “I departed (ἀνέλυσσα), however, to the gods and I come to the immortal ones. For whom the gods love, die [prematurely].”²⁵³ Paul, therefore, takes over a familiar Greek terminology in order to express his eschatological expectation, which aims at final salvation with Christ (cf. also 1 Thess 4:17: σὺν κυρίῳ; 5:10: σὺν αὐτῷ). As for the Greek, so for Paul, death is a departure for a better world. Paul, however, does not take over the assumption connected with Greek thinking that death includes a separation or deliverance of the soul from the body.²⁵⁴ Moreover, he keeps up the integrity of the Old Testament–Jewish anthropology. Differently from Plato (*Phaidon* 67A–68) he does not think of a transmigration of the soul after being separated from the body.²⁵⁵ Admittedly, v. 24 suggests understanding v. 23 in the sense of leaving the flesh,²⁵⁶ but what is meant is leaving behind one’s earthly existence (cf. 2 Cor 5:1).

ing a camp, of loosing a ship from its moorings and of death. Cf. Vincent 1897: 28; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 89; Bauer 1988: 113; Lohmeyer 1964: 62 n. 1; Hoffmann 1978: 289; U. B. Müller 1993: 61; Fabris 2001: 80. The noun ἀνάλυσις with the meaning of dying is to be found in 2 Tim 4:6.

²⁴⁸ Hoffmann 1978: 289, however, interprets καί expegetically so that the idea of being with Christ unfolds the statement about death. So also Schnelle 1989: 46 n. 36.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Gundry 1976: 37.

²⁵⁰ Cf. de Vogel 1977: 268.

²⁵¹ J. J. Müller 1955: 63; Fee 1995: 149; against Beare 1969: 64–65; Gundry 1976: 148, 154–55: “We conclude, then, that Paul along with most Jews and other early Christians habitually thought of man as a duality of two parts, corporeal and incorporeal, meant to function in unity but distinguishable and capable of separation” (154).

²⁵² Gundry 1976: 148–49; against Schweitzer 1930: 136–37; Lohmeyer 1964: 59–70.

²⁵³ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 61; for documentary proof cf. Hoffmann 1978: 44–57 (49).

²⁵⁴ Cf. Gnilka 1968: 74.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Hoffmann 1978: 298–99.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Gundry 1976: 147; de Vogel 1977: 264.

It is striking that the phrase “with Christ” in the context of salvation only occurs in Paul and in Colossians. Thus, in a concise way, he expresses the expectation of being moulded close to Christ and being in communion with him.²⁵⁷ In Rom 6:8, “dying with Christ” and “rising with him” refer to the sacramental event of baptism, and 2 Cor 13:4 to Paul’s apostolic existence. All Paul says about life due to resurrection he links up with communion with Christ which began in baptism (Rom 6:8) and which is shaping the lives of the Christians at present so that they already now are able to live ἐν Χριστῷ. In our context, however, Paul clearly means that he shall be with Christ immediately after death.²⁵⁸ Precisely because of that, for Paul dying is gain (1:21). That only contradicts Phil 3:11 if one connects the expectation of Paul’s resurrection mentioned there with the parousia, as most scholars do.²⁵⁹ In my opinion, however, that is absolutely improbable. Much more likely is that this expectation is only a different expression for the same desire of being with Christ as in 1:23; for Paul previously deals with the power of the resurrection of Christ and the sharing of his sufferings, and wishes to become like him in his death, if he only²⁶⁰ attains the resurrection from the dead (3:11). As in 3:11 the resurrection from the dead follows becoming like Christ in his death (3:10), so in 1:23 being with Christ at his departure. The καί in 1:23 is not explicative,²⁶¹ but clearly consecutive. Just because of that it is not allowed to presuppose the resurrection in 1:23 in the sense of an event taking place at the time of the parousia in order to keep up the imminent Second Coming of Christ in 1:23 as well.²⁶² Above all the immediate context argues against such an interpretation. If Paul could not be with Christ before the time of the parousia, there would not actually be the alternative between “being with Christ” and “being with you.” Paul would not be earlier with Christ than all the other Christians.²⁶³

²⁵⁷ Cf. Radl 1981: 237; Froitzheim 1979: 209–11; U. B. Müller 1993: 62.

²⁵⁸ Cf. de Wette 1843: 177; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 89 who rightly also points to 1 Thess 5:10. Vincent 1897: 29: “Paul assumes that, on parting this life, he will immediately be with the Lord.” Dibelius 1937: 68–69; Hoffmann 1978: 289; J. J. Müller 1955: 63; U. B. Müller 1993: 63; G. Barth 1996: 32; Giesen 2000: 254.

²⁵⁹ So, e.g., U. B. Müller 1993: 63.

²⁶⁰ Cf. Zerwick and Grosvenor 1979: 599: “εἴ πως ind. interr. w. force of if somehow, if only.”

²⁶¹ Against U. B. Müller 1993: 63.

²⁶² Against Michaelis 1935: 26–27.

²⁶³ So Dibelius 1937: 69; U. B. Müller 1993: 63–64; Giesen 1997: 334.

The same arguments are against the interpretation of Wolfgang Schenk who rejects understanding καί—as is obvious—paratactically, but as a conditional hypotaxis. He interprets: “If my wish occasionally turns to the departure, then it happens only under the condition and in view of the completed communion with Christ.”²⁶⁴ The preposition εἰς should correspondingly point to the direction but not to the goal itself.²⁶⁵ Paul would use shortened language which, admittedly, does not consider the resurrection, but includes it (*mitdenkt*).²⁶⁶ From that Schenk infers that there is no difference from the other statements about the eschatological completion in Paul.²⁶⁷

Especially close to Phil 1:23 is 2 Cor 5:8, although Paul uses a different terminology in each case. 2 Cor 5:8 reads: “We have got the courage and are decided to emigrate from the body and to walk home towards the Lord.” In 2 Cor 5:8 and its context, the apostle strongly emphasizes the transiency of the earthly body, from which, consequently, he wants to emigrate. That is understandable since, according to 2 Cor 5:6, being at home in the body means being away from the Lord. The reason for that is that we as Christians lead a life under the reality of faith but not under its visible form (v. 7).²⁶⁸ The emigration from the earthly body means getting into vision. Paul does not think at all here of the parousia,²⁶⁹ for he speaks of a process of alienation from the world in order to belong more and more to the Lord.²⁷⁰ The text does not state that this process will end for all Christians only at the parousia.

5. *The Greater Necessity of Paul's Survival because of the Philippians (Philippians 1:24)*

For Paul, departing in order to be with Christ, admittedly, is to be preferred by far, but he considers it more necessary still to remain “in flesh” (cf. v. 22) when suffering is still an abiding reality (cf. 1:22,

²⁶⁴ Schenk 1984: 155: “Wenn sich mein Wunsch gelegentlich auf den Aufbruch hin richtet, dann geschieht das nur unter der Voraussetzung und im Blick auf die vollendete Christusgemeinschaft.” Cf the critique in U. B. Müller 1993: 63 with n. 83.

²⁶⁵ Schenk 1984: 154, 156.

²⁶⁶ Schenk 1984: 156 following Hoffmann 1978: 226.

²⁶⁷ Schenk 1984: 157–58.

²⁶⁸ Cf. Baumert 1973: 222.

²⁶⁹ So, however, Hoffmann 1978: 284–85; Wolff 1989: 113; U. B. Müller 1993: 62–63.

²⁷⁰ Cf. Baumert 1973: 239.

24),²⁷¹ in order to be with the Philippians in support of their progress and joy in faith. This contrast between v. 23 and v. 24 is clearly expressed by the phrase σὺν Χριστῷ and (ἐν) τῇ σαρκί. For Paul, therefore, remaining in the flesh (cf. 1:22a: living in the flesh) is more necessary because of the Philippians than it is to be already with Christ.²⁷² That makes clear for which option Paul votes.²⁷³ He prefers the more necessary to the better. The phrase of the more necessary reminds us of 1 Cor 9:16, where Paul says that the proclamation of the gospel gives him no ground for boasting, but that a necessity (ἀνάγκη) is laid upon him to preach the gospel.

The change from the preference of death to the preference of life, which v. 24 initiates and which will be completed in vv. 25–26, seems to be unexpected. But in reality, Paul aims at it with great rhetorical skill from the very beginning. Of the preference of death, after all, only the apostle could have taken advantage.²⁷⁴ The continuation of life, on the contrary, concerns the community alone. It is love, therefore, which provokes the change of Paul's argumentation. On the basis of that consideration, continuing to live is to be preferred to dying.²⁷⁵

It is striking that with δι' ὑμῶς Paul restricts his wish to survive to staying with the Philippians.²⁷⁶ The arguments against this interpretation adduced by Wolfgang Schenk do not convince.²⁷⁷ (1) The fact that "because of you" in v. 24 is an antithesis to "not because of me" in v. 23²⁷⁸ does not allow the conclusion that Paul addresses other communities beyond the community in Philippi. (2) The fact that the address, ὑμεῖς, is already prepared by the *nomen actionis* ἔργου in v. 22, meaning the apostolic mission in general, is not in favour of other communities beside the one in Philippi. Paul can concretize his universal missionary commission without any difficulty in the community in Philippi. (3) That the apostle addresses the audience

²⁷¹ See Lighthfoot 1881: 92; Bloomquist 1993: 156; Jewett 1971: 116.

²⁷² Cf. Fee 1995: 150: "He would *prefer* 'death,' since that would be to *his* advantage ('better by far'); he *fully expects* 'life,' since that would be to *their* advantage." Peterlin 1995: 41; similarly Lighthfoot 1881: 94.

²⁷³ With Fabris 2001: 81.

²⁷⁴ That underlines also Edart 2002: 83.

²⁷⁵ Cf. Vollenweder 2002: 245.

²⁷⁶ With de Vogel 1977: 267; Peterlin 1995: 42; Fabris 2001: 81; Bloomquist 1993: 156; against Gnllka 1968: 76; Schenk 1984: 159; O'Brien 1991: 131–32.

²⁷⁷ Schenk 1984: 159–60.

²⁷⁸ See Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 90.

with $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu\ \acute{\upsilon}\mu\acute{\iota}\nu$ (v. 25) also does not support this thesis, because otherwise the addition of $\pi\acute{\alpha}\sigma\iota\nu$ would be entirely meaningless.²⁷⁹ One, on the contrary, must think of the differently motivated missionaries of whom Paul speaks in vv. 15–17 and whom he as a whole considers to be brothers and sisters in the Lord (v. 14).²⁸⁰ This way he demonstrates that he wants to strengthen the unity of the community.

6. *Surviving and staying with the Philippians to Strengthen their Joy in Faith (Philippians 1:25–26)*

Paul's conviction that it is more necessary to continue his earthly existence because of the Philippians is his presupposition and reason for his confidence to survive.²⁸¹ For with $\tau\acute{o}\upsilon\tau\omicron$ Paul takes up v. 24.²⁸² $\tau\acute{o}\upsilon\tau\omicron$ is to be explained as an accusative of reference which, in contrast to classical Greek, occurs seldom in the New Testament and whose function the dative of reference has almost always taken over.²⁸³ Paul's knowledge is not nourished by observation, experience or instruction, but by his insight,²⁸⁴ that it is more necessary to survive because of the Philippians. This insight moves on to the knowledge that he remains alive ($\acute{\omicron}\tau\iota\ \mu\acute{\epsilon}\nu\hat{\omega}$) and shall be released from prison. This knowledge consists of a strong confidence, but not of an absolute certainty.²⁸⁵ If it were certain, it would be entirely inconceivable why

²⁷⁹ See Haupt 1902: 45; Lohmeyer 1964: 69; Hendriksen 1996: 79.

²⁸⁰ See Lohmeyer 1964: 67; Fee 1995: 152.

²⁸¹ The participial phrase $\kappa\alpha\iota\ \tau\acute{o}\upsilon\tau\omicron\ \pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\iota\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$ is to be translated causally: "And since I am convinced of that, namely that it is more necessary to survive because of the Philippians (1:24), I know . . ." Similarly Funk 1967: 262 n. 1: "since he is confident ($\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\iota\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, 1:25) that it is necessary for him to remain in the flesh (1:24), he knows ($\omicron\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha$, 1:25, of his certainty in faith; cf. 1:19) that he will remain (1:25) in order to continue his fruitful labour (1:22) . . ." Cf. Bloomquist 1993: 155. $\pi\epsilon\pi\omicron\iota\theta\acute{\omega}\varsigma$, therefore, does not strengthen $\omicron\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha$. Against Michaelis 1935: 27.

²⁸² So Dibelius 1937: 68f.; Gnllka 1968: 94; Fee 1995: 152; according to J. J. Müller 1955: 64 with n. 1 it refers to v. 19–24. Against Bonnard 1950: 31; Lohmeyer 1964: 66; Michaelis 1935: 27.

²⁸³ Cf. Blass and Debrunner 1976: § 160,1.

²⁸⁴ This meaning corresponds to a category of the usage of $\omicron\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha$ in classical Greek. Cf. Burdick 1974: 347: $\omicron\acute{\iota}\delta\alpha$ "was commonly used to describe knowledge that was grasped directly, that came by insight, or that was intuitive in nature."

²⁸⁵ See Wick 1999: 89; G. Barth 1996: 32; cf. Dibelius 1937: 68; Bockmuehl 1998: 94, who compares Paul's knowledge in v. 19 with that in v. 25: "Here, there is no divine revelation about this staying alive and being released; but given the need for his Ministry to the Philippians, Paul feels sure that he will indeed *remain* alive *and continue* his ministry *with* them and *for* them." Differently Michaelis 1935: 27 according to whom Paul is certain that he survives: "Daß er nach der 1,12f.

in vv. 20, 23–24 Paul left undecided whether he survives or has to die. So one indeed states a contradiction between v. 20 and v. 25. Under the presupposition that Paul confidently speaks of his release from prison in v. 25, Ernst Lohmeyer thinks even of a special prophetic knowledge of Paul as a martyr.²⁸⁶

For dissolving the above mentioned contradiction, one points to the parallelism between 1:19–20 and 1:25–26.²⁸⁷ The parallelism between both periods introduced by οἶδα would allow us to conclude that vv. 25–26 is concerned with the goal indicated by the preposition εἰς and above all by ἵνα. Thus Paul does not stress his staying with the Philippians but the following purposes. Consequently, he is not interested in giving his opinion on his future to the Philippians, but, on the contrary, in making them unconcerned about his own decision. Whether he survives or has to die would not be the question, but the certainty that whatever happens causes him joy.²⁸⁸ This line of reasoning overlooks, however, that he links all that with his presence in the community.²⁸⁹ In addition, it is to be taken into consideration that Paul's conviction that living means Christ and dying means gain is not to be restricted to his situation in prison.²⁹⁰ By adding to his argument that he shall remain with all of them (καὶ παραμένω πάντων ὑμῶν)²⁹¹ in order to support them,²⁹² Paul confirms his statement in v. 24 that for him it is more necessary to survive, especially because of the need of the Philippians. He does not say, however, that he intends to stay with them to the end of his life.²⁹³

berichteten Wendung im Prozeß doch noch zum Tode oder auch nur zu längerer Freiheitsstrafe verurteilt werden könnte, ist ausgeschlossen."

²⁸⁶ Lohmeyer 1964: 66–67. His position is rejected by most scholars.

²⁸⁷ Lohmeyer 1964: 66; U. B. Müller 1993: 70.

²⁸⁸ So Haupt 1902: 44–45 who wants to substantiate this inference by understanding the ὅτι-clause conditionally: "If I remain, it is to your advantage." So also Schenk 1984: 164: "Wenn ich weiterlebe, dann um Euch und allen zur Verfügung zu stehen. . . ." Similarly Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 91–92; Mengel 1982: 235; U. B. Müller 1993: 70–71 who rejects, however, such a substantiation.

²⁸⁹ According to Bockmuehl 1998: 95 the phrase "through my being with you again" leaves unclear, "whether this eventuality is as yet merely possible, or plausible, or likely."

²⁹⁰ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 27.

²⁹¹ Admittedly, that is a pun. So Dibelius 1937: 68; both of the verbs stress, however, different nuances. Cf. Fee 1995: 152 with n. 10: "'remaining alive' and 'abiding with you.'" Differently Collange 1973: 66: παραμένω "signifie aussi 'tenir bon.'"

²⁹² παραμένειν has often got this meaning in the Koine. Cf. Michaelis 1935: 27–28; Lohmeyer 1964: 67 n. 3.

²⁹³ Gnlika 1968: 94 rightly emphasizes that this does not exclude further missionary plans.

Paul neither wants to retire²⁹⁴ nor assumes that he will remain with them until the parousia.²⁹⁵

Only when Paul's wish to survive is restricted to the Philippians²⁹⁶ does its urgency (1:23–24) become understandable.²⁹⁷ That is why the reason for that must be found in the situation of the community itself.²⁹⁸ In favour of that assumption is the fact that Paul in 2:25 considers it necessary (ἀναγκαῖον δὲ ἡγησάμην; cf. 2 Cor 9:5) to send back Epaphroditus because of difficulties in the community. But 1:25 also hints at such an assumption, for the goal of his staying with the Philippians is the progress of joy in their faith. Since “your progress and your joy” has got only one article, the genitive τῆς πίστεως most probably is to be referred to both προκοπή and χαρά.²⁹⁹ Paul, therefore, wants to promote the faith of the addressees and to make them happy in their faith. προκοπὴν καὶ χαράν are, namely, a hendiadys: the goal of Paul's stay with the Philippians is their pleasing progress in faith in the gospel³⁰⁰ which is always faith in Christ as well.³⁰¹ Since faith primarily expresses the relationship to Christ (*fides qua*),³⁰² like any other personal relationship, faith demands growing. Since any personal relationship cannot be kept up without joy, faith too cannot survive without joy. Both belong together; by his presence in the community, the apostle wants to contribute to both progress and joy in their faith.³⁰³ It seems to me less probable to

²⁹⁴ See Haupt 1902: 45–46.

²⁹⁵ Against Lohmeyer 1964: 67; Bonnard 1950: 31; Gnlika 1968: 94; Martin 1976: 80 who thinks it possibly could be a tautology.

²⁹⁶ Again differently J. J. Müller 1955: 64.

²⁹⁷ In v. 25 μὲν ὧ obviously refers to Paul's survival “in the flesh” (v. 24a) and παραμεινῶ to his stay with the Philippians (διὰ ὑμᾶς) (v. 24). Cf. Fee 1995: 152.

²⁹⁸ Cf. Hawthorne 1983: 51; Hendriksen 1996: 79.

²⁹⁹ Cf. Vincent 1897: 30: “Progressiveness and joyfulness alike characterise faith.” J. J. Müller 1955: 65; Fee 1995: 153 and most other scholars. Against Gnlika 1968: 94 with n. 5 who refers πίστεως only to χαράν.

³⁰⁰ Cf. Zerwick and Grosvenor 1979: 594: “πρ. καὶ χαράν form a handiadys = your joyful progress in the faith.” Fee 1995: 153, however, distinguishes between faith in Christ (cf. 2:17) and faith in the gospel; because of the context he decides himself for faith in the gospel and translates: “progress and joy, both with regard to their faith.” Cf. also Fabris 2001: 83. Others vote for faith in Christ. So Bockmuehl 1998: 94.

³⁰¹ Fee 1995: 153, however, differs between faith in Christ (cf. 2:17) and faith in the gospel. Because of the context he decides himself in favour of the second option.

³⁰² Bockmuehl 1998: 94 thinks that it here possibly could mean both “the trusting human response to the gospel” and “the corresponding object or content of belief.”

³⁰³ So also Fee 1995: 153 with n. 15 who πίστεως understands as a “genitive of reference.” If it refers to their faith, it would be a pure genitive.

understand καί epegetically and consequently the genitive πίστεως causally: “to your progress, yes to joy out of faith.”³⁰⁴ In contrast to v. 12 Paul here does not speak of the progress of the gospel in the sense of the spread of faith, but of the intensification of faith.³⁰⁵

In v. 26 Paul names the final and essential goal for preferring the more necessary to the better. His repeated presence (παρουσία³⁰⁶) with the Philippians³⁰⁷ should make them overflow the reason for their boasting in Christ Jesus because of Paul (ἐν ἐμοί³⁰⁸) or by him.³⁰⁹ That is why Paul is ready to renounce dying soon to be with Christ (1:23b) and why he prefers to survive (1:24). The apostle uses here the noun καύχημα positively, because it is a boasting in Christ Jesus, or Christ is the cause of boasting (cf. Phil 3:3: καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ).³¹⁰ Only the context decides whether καυχᾶσθαι and its derivatives have got a positive or negative meaning.³¹¹ Paul provokes the occasion of their boasting in Christ Jesus by his presence. The Philippians, therefore, do not brag of the apostle,³¹² but in Christ Jesus, who is the foundation and object of their boasting.³¹³ Here too, as in the whole section, the gospel and its proclamation is well to the fore.

It is of importance that, as already in the LXX (cf. Ps 48:7; Jer 9:23–24) so in Paul too, boasting includes the moment of confidence.³¹⁴ The human being allows knowing in his boasting, on which ground

³⁰⁴ So, however, Schenk 1984: 161; U. B. Müller 1993: 71; Gnlika 1968: 94.

³⁰⁵ Cf. Stählin 1932–1979: 714–15; Wick 1994: 86; differently Collange 1973: 66.

³⁰⁶ παρουσία means being there, arrival, presence. Whose presence etc. is meant is to be inferred from the context. That is why in my opinion one cannot speak of a technical term. Against Radl 1980–1983b: 103.

³⁰⁷ πρὸς ὑμᾶς is to be translated with “with you.” Cf. Bauer 1988: 1423.

³⁰⁸ Cf. de Wette 1843: 178; Vincent 1897: 31; Zerwick and Grosvenor 1979: 594: “ἐν ἐμοί because of me.”

³⁰⁹ ἐν can be understood also causally. Cf. Michaelis 1935: 28; Gnlika 1968: 93.

³¹⁰ καύχημα is to be linked also with ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Cf. Silva 1988: 86; Hawthorne 1983: 52. Less probable is, however, to refer ἐν ἐμοί to καύχημα as Peterlin 1995: 44–45 does. καύχημα expresses the reason for boasting. Cf. Zmijewski 1980–1983: 681; Fee 1995: 154.

³¹¹ See Berger 1977: 144; Hübner 1978: 104; Wischmeyer 1981: 84; Zmijewski 1980–1983: 681; Giesen 1984: 108.

³¹² J. J. Müller 1955: 65; against Peterlin 1995: 46, who understands ἐν ἐμοί as object of καύχημα and interprets that the Philippians are “boasting in Paul in a way which can be described as ‘in Christ Jesus.’” So already de Wette 1843: 178.

³¹³ Cf. Bockmuehl 1998: 95. Boasting has naturally to do with the apostle. Cf. Witherington 1994: 47: “to brag about, i.e., what God accomplished for and through Paul by delivering him from chains.” Cf. Gnlika 1968: 94–95; G. Barth 1979: 32–33.

³¹⁴ Cf. Zmijewski 1980–1983: 686; Fee 1995: 154–55.

he establishes his existence. Against the background of his message of justification, Paul radically rejects any self boasting. Whoever, on the contrary, boasts in the Lord (1 Cor 1:31) demonstrates that he establishes his life on him. That is precisely what Paul in Phil 1:26 means: his presence among the Philippians should be the cause of their boasting in Christ and this boasting should be there to an overflowing measure. The Philippians are asked to rely totally on Christ Jesus. In that way, like Paul, they too magnify Christ (1:20). Finally, that means nothing else than that their living too should be Christ and dying, therefore, gain (cf. 1:21).

3. *Eschatological Sayings in Philippians 3 and 4*

According to Paul the communion in Christ caused by the gospel is a work of God. In this communion God's work proves already to be a present reality. That is why Paul is confident that God will bring his work to completion until the "day of Christ Jesus" (1:10; cf. 2:16). The apostle is convinced that his being with Christ shall begin immediately after death (1:23). The beginning of his being with Christ, for him obviously the "day of Christ Jesus," consequently is not to be identified with the parousia. What applies to Paul should apply to all faithful too. For Paul does not anywhere give the impression that he has got a privileged position with regard to salvation or that he expects a special reward.³¹⁵ Against that background the question arises whether the understanding of salvation in Philippians has changed in comparison with the earlier Pauline epistles. Whoever holds the view—as do most scholars—that in all other relevant passages Paul is convinced that he will see the parousia, has to give an affirmative answer to that question. Whether this really is the position of Paul is, however, to be doubted. For 1 Thess 4:13–17, I endeavoured to prove that for Paul the date of the parousia is entirely open.³¹⁶ In other words, if Paul were asked whether he expected the parousia in his lifetime he most probably would answer: I do not

³¹⁵ Against U. B. Müller 1993: 69 who wants to make understandable Paul's statement on his postmortal future against the background of the topic of the martyr. Since the trial against Paul does not allow expecting capital punishment, in 3:11, 20–21 he would again express the hope of resurrection known from his other letters.

³¹⁶ Giesen 1989: 135–40; cf. also Bruce 1984: 135.

know. Before summarizing the most important results of my article on 1 Thess 4:13–17 in the context of other statements on individual eschatology in Paul and in the New Testament, I would like to deal with two further passages in Philippians which seem to contradict the statement in 1:23.

a. *The Expectation of the Lord Jesus as a Saviour (Philippians 3:20–21)*

1. *Paul and Other Christians as Examples of a Christian Life-style (Philippians 3:17)*

In 3:17, Paul admonishes the Christians in Philippi to be together his imitators³¹⁷ and to look out for those who live in a way that they are able to be models, as Paul, indeed, is. Paul most probably thinks not only of co-operators in the community who stand up to eventually appearing opponents,³¹⁸ but of all exemplary Christians,³¹⁹ otherwise the apostle would not have to ask to look out for them. If one takes seriously the present imperatives γίνεσθε and σκοπεῖτε, then Paul presupposes that they already are his imitators and that they should not stop being so in the future.³²⁰ The apostle is able to ask this of the Christians, as far as he—like the other Christians—is in Christ so that his life-style has the character of the imitation of Christ.³²¹ In what Paul is to be imitated, he tells us in 3:4–14,³²² where, because of the events of the cross and resurrection, he puts his own existence between the already achieved and the still outstanding salvation. He still knows himself on the way to completion of salvation and that is what he calls upon the Philippians to imitate.³²³ That Paul's imitation is imitation of Christ he clearly states in 1 Cor 11:1 and 1 Thess 1:6.

³¹⁷ So Haupt 1902: 161; Vincent 1897: 115, 116; Beare 1969: 135; Martin 1976: 142; Bruce 1984: 127; Hawthorne 1983: 160; Betz 1967: 145–53; Collange 1973: 120; Fiore 1986: 185; O'Brien 1991: 445: "Brothers, be united in imitating me." Fabris 2001: 195, 221. J. J. Müller 1955: 128 with n. 1 and Friedrich 1981: 165 interpret: "together with Paul." Differently Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 198: "become my imitators." To further explanations cf. Fee 1995: 364 n. 10.

³¹⁸ Michaelis 1935: 61; against de Boer 1962: 182–83; Merk 1968: 191; Martin 1976: 142; O'Brien 1991: 448–49.

³¹⁹ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 61; Bonnard 1950: 70; Fee 1995: 365–66 with n. 16.

³²⁰ So also Fabris 2001: 221. de Wette 1843: 207 points to the fact that σύν in the compound συμμίμηται is not superfluous, since Paul only refers to the Philippians.

³²¹ Betz 1967: 175; J. J. Müller 1955: 173.

³²² So, e.g., Becker 1995: 77.

³²³ G. Barth 1979: 66; Merk 1998: 333.

It is striking that at the end of v. 17 Paul moves from the singular *συμμιμηταί μου* on to the plural (*ἡμῶς*). Some assume that Paul, nevertheless, only speaks of himself as a model.³²⁴ Others include Silvanus and Timothy and, even further, leading members of the community.³²⁵ It is, however, most probable that Paul here also thinks of all those who live exemplary lives.³²⁶ It is, however, improbable that the imitation only aims at Paul's exemplary way of life, but not also his demand on authority and obedience.³²⁷ His request to imitate him, of course, presupposes such a demand.

2. *Warning to be Aware of the Example of the "Many"* (*Philippians 3:18–19*)

The request for imitation of Paul is proved to be necessary because there are many—as Paul emphasizes time and again, but now states even with tears—who do not behave like that, but live as enemies of the cross of Christ (v. 18). *πολλοί* certainly is a relatively great number.³²⁸ Paul does not obviously think of heretics,³²⁹ but of Christians who prove to be enemies of the cross of Christ by their life style.³³⁰ He is deeply concerned about those Christians, since their salvation is at stake and, above all, because they could endanger the faith of the Philippians. Their end and that of their possible imitators in Philippi is destruction (v. 19a). In Phil 1:28, *ἀπώλεια* is a counter-concept to *σωτηρία*. Since *σωτηρία* in 1:19 does not only refer to

³²⁴ So, e.g., Hawthorne 1983: 160–61; Silva 1988: 212. Lightfoot 1881: 152 thinks that in that way Paul wants to avoid appearing egoistic. Cf. the critique in de Boer 1962: 182–83.

³²⁵ So Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 199–200; Vincent 1897: 115; de Boer 1962: 183; Fee 1995: 365 n. 14; Timotheus; O'Brien 1991: 450; Fabris 2001: 222.

³²⁶ Cf. Lincoln 1981: 95.

³²⁷ See de Boer 1962: 184–87; against Michaelis 1932–1979: 670; Michaelis 1935: 61; Hawthorne 1983: 161.

³²⁸ So with Fee 1995: 368 n. 24; against Silva 1988: 284 who, following Schenk, understands *πολλοί* as rhetorical, so that nothing is said about the real number.

³²⁹ In spite of that, many interpreters think of heretics, whom they identify differently: as Jewish missionaries: Hawthorne 1983: 164–65, 167; Jewish Christian missionaries: Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 197–98; J. J. Müller 1955: 130; Bonnard 1950: 71; Koester 1961–1962: 331; Schmithals 1965: 78; cf. Gnllka 1968: 204–205, 211; Friedrich 1981: 165; Martin 1976: 143; Silva 1988: 208–10, who sees that confirmed above all by an allusion in v. 19b to Hos 4:7 LXX, where the disobedient Israel is rejected (4:6): “The more they multiplied, the more they sinned against me; I will change their glory in to shame.”

³³⁰ Similarly Michaelis 1935: 62; Beare 1969: 136; O'Brien 1991: 451; Fee 1995: 367; Bockmuehl 1998: 230; Cotter 1993: 95; Fabris 2001: 223. Non-Christians are, however, not in view. Against Cotter 1993: 98–101.

the completeness of salvation, but also to the rescue from present distresses, it is possible to think of a dynamic process toward the final destruction so that τέλος is translated as destination.³³¹ Consequently, such Christians are on the way to their final destruction. In that way their own responsibility for their fate is underlined.

It is said further that their god is the belly and their glory is in their shame (3:19b). δόξα is to be identified neither with pride or boasting nor with the object of which one is boasting,³³² but, as in v. 21, with glory as the definite, immediate closeness of God in which the saving power of God is manifest.³³³ “Their glory in their shame” (ἡ δόξα ἐν τῇ αἰσχύνῃ) is diametrically opposed to the “body of glory of Christ” in v. 21 which indicates that those affected by the glory in their shame are on the wrong road. In Paul’s view, they are no longer in communion with God. They do not belong to those who are not ashamed in anything (1:20b: οὐ αἰσχυνθήσομαι),³³⁴ but, as people who have their glory in their shame, they live in a state of mischief,³³⁵ which is manifested in an immoral life-style, but not necessarily especially in sexual sins.³³⁶ What is certainly not being thought of is circumcision.³³⁷

³³¹ See Fee 1995: 370 n. 34: τέλος “means ‘the end’ in the sense of ‘the goal’ toward which something has been pointed; thus ‘destiny.’” Schenk 1984: 287, also pronounces himself against linking the ἀπώλεια to a judgement in the future. Differently Lohmeyer 1964: 155; Gnilka 1968: 205. According to Schmithals 1965: 78 Paul obviously takes up the gnostic term τέλειος in the form of a playing on words: “The τέλος of the τέλειος leads to destruction.”

³³² Against Lightfoot 1881: 155; Vincent 1897: 117; Michael 1928: 175. δόξα is also not to be translated with honour or reputation, because it is expected from human beings. Against Hegermann 1980–1983: 835.

³³³ Schenk 1984: 288–89; U. B. Müller 1993: 178.

³³⁴ On the basis of Old Testament texts (e.g., Isa 42:24–25; Pss 34:26; 70:13) some authors connect it with the Last Judgement. So Gnilka 1968: 205; Silva 1988: 210; Baumbach 1973: 306; Schenk 1984: 289; O’Brien 1991: 457; U. B. Müller 1993: 178.

³³⁵ Cf. Horstmann 1980–1983: 102; Schenk 1984: 289. Against Bockmuehl 1998: 231.

³³⁶ Against Haupt 1902: 164; Dibelius 1937: 93; Michaelis 1935: 62; Bultmann 1932–1979: 190; Schmithals 1965: 79: “Zügellosigkeit und Mißachtung aller Speisevorschriften”; Collange 1973: 120–21; Silva 1988: 210; Koester 1961–1962: 326; O’Brien 1991: 456–57; Fabris 2001: 224: “abuso sessuale e alimentare.” Martin 1976: 145 assumes that they are charismatics who believe they have begun their heavenly existence already on earth.

³³⁷ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 62; Beare 1969: 133; Bockmuehl 1998: 231; O’Brien 1991: 457; Edart 2002: 251; against Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 205; K. Barth 1959: 111; Benoit 1956: 71; J. J. Müller 1955: 131; Koester 1961–1962: 331; Hawthorne 1983: 166.

Shame and destruction are synonyms;³³⁸ both point to the disappointment which follows, if one takes the “many” as examples. The same should be true of the belly,³³⁹ for κοιλία as the aim of food has got a tight link with σάρξ (cf. 1 Cor 6:13–16; Rom 16:18).³⁴⁰ In the light of the Easter reality the perishableness by death of the many is thus expressed. The belly as their god and thereby as their highest value is, therefore, doomed to be destroyed.³⁴¹ Their characterization as being interested only in earthly things (v. 19c) corresponds to that. They are, therefore, totally trapped in earthly things, which means enmity against the true God (cf. Rom 8:5–7). With Paul’s own words it means: they are enemies of the cross of Christ.³⁴² They do not allow to be destined by God, but by fleshly existence.³⁴³ In the eyes of Paul, they only look for transient things. That might be understood as an ironical reversal of their own claim of longing for heavenly things.³⁴⁴ These Christians do not belong to the community in Philippi;³⁴⁵ otherwise an ἐν ὑμῖν would be expected after “the many.”³⁴⁶ The apostle is obviously in agreement with his community (cf. also 4:2–3), but at the same time he summons their endangered members to deter them from such an ethically wrong life-style.³⁴⁷

3. *Eschatological Motivation for Christian Behaviour (Philippians 3:20–21)*

To the behaviour of the “many” who are heading towards their destruction, Paul in “we-form” opposes the right behaviour of the true Christians. He emphasizes this contrast by the preceding ἡμεῖς, in which he consciously joins together with his addressees and indirectly

³³⁸ Similarly Silva 1988: 210; Schenk 1984: 290. It does not consist of a shameful weakness of their imagination. Against Walter 1998: 85.

³³⁹ Similarly U. B. Müller 1993: 177; Fee 1995: 372; against Schmithals 1965: 79; disregard of the Jewish-Christian gnostics. See also Hawthorne 1983: 166.

³⁴⁰ Schenk 1984: 288.

³⁴¹ Cf. Walter 1998: 85; Collange 1973: 121: “leur dieu, c’est eux-mêmes.”

³⁴² See Edart 2002: 246: “Ἡ αἰσχρόνη et οἱ ἐχθροὶ τοῦ σταυροῦ τοῦ Χριστοῦ sont des métonymies, ainsi que τὰ ἐπίγεια que résume les attitudes précédentes.” Cf. *ibidem*, 248, too.

³⁴³ Cf. Böttger 1960: 255; Gnlika 1968: 205–206; Lincoln 1981: 96; U. B. Müller 1993: 178–79; O’Brien 1991: 458.

³⁴⁴ See Koester 1961–1962: 329; O’Brien 1991: 458; cf. Jewett 1970: 378.

³⁴⁵ So also Michaelis 1935: 61; Fee 1995: 367–69; O’Brien 1991: 452; cf. Beare 1969: 135; against Schmithals 1965: 77; G. Barth 1979: 66.

³⁴⁶ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 175; Fee 1995: 368.

³⁴⁷ Cf. Böttger 1960: 254.

points to his function as a model (cf. v. 17). By taking up the opposition between the “dogs” and the “we” who serve in God’s spirit (v. 3), he puts the whole section, 3:2–21, under the antithesis of we and the others.³⁴⁸ In our context we must not answer the question of identity of the opponents in 3:2–11 and 3:18–19.³⁴⁹ An answer is even unnecessary if Paul criticizes the ethical praxis of Christians who, admittedly, start from wrong theological assumptions, but do not form a separate group.

The Christians have their state in heavens (v. 20). There is not any documentary evidence³⁵⁰ for the usual translation of the New Testament *hapax legomenon* πολίτευμα with “home” or “homeland.”³⁵¹ πολίτευμα was first used for the subject of political actions and thus of administrative authorities or activities of individuals and finally for the state.³⁵² πολίτευμα cannot be understood against the background of a special usage as a colony vested with particular rights outside the homeland.³⁵³ In that case, the Christians are understood as heavenly citizens in the world that would underline both their being alien to all the earthly things and their belonging to the heavenly world.³⁵⁴ The state is rather primarily subject to the exercise of power regulated by its constitution.³⁵⁵ The life of the true Christian is, therefore, destined by a power in heaven, namely by the exalted Christ, as v. 20c clearly confirms.³⁵⁶ This power is not yet obvious, as long as the Christians still have their body of lowness (v. 21a).³⁵⁷

From the statement that the Christians have got their state in heaven two inferences can be drawn. On the one hand, Paul in that

³⁴⁸ Cf. Merk 1968: 192; Schenk 1984: 254–55; U. B. Müller 1993: 174.

³⁴⁹ Cf. Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 197–99; Schmithals 1965: 77–81; Merk 1968: 192; Schenk 1984: 255, 258–59, 291; U. B. Müller 1993: 176–77, 186–91; Walter 1998: 88–90.

³⁵⁰ See Böttger 1960: 252–53; cf. also Lincoln 1981: 99; O’Brien 1991: 460.

³⁵¹ So Lohmeyer 1964: 158; Gnllka 1968: 206; Becker 1976: 107–109; Martin 1976: 147.

³⁵² Böttger 1960: 245–53; Lincoln 1981: 98 both with documentary evidence; cf. O’Brien 1991: 460.

³⁵³ So, however, Dibelius 1937: 93; Martin 1976: 147; Hawthorne 1983: 173. Rightly Michaelis 1935: 63; Lincoln 1981: 99 with n. 220; Koester 1961–1962: 330 n. 1.

³⁵⁴ Niebuhr 1992: 102; Hawthorne 1983: 170; cf. also Beare 1969: 136–37.

³⁵⁵ Böttger 1960: 253; U. B. Müller 1993: 180.

³⁵⁶ Böttger 1960: 257; Radl 1981: 88; Schenk 1984: 324; U. B. Müller 1993: 180; similarly also Silva 1988: 93; O’Brien 1991: 458–59. Only to speak of the right of domicile (*Heimatrecht*) is not sufficient. Against Walter 1998: 86–87.

³⁵⁷ Böttger 1960: 256.

way separates the true Christians from those who are destined by earthly things. These Christians do not have to be opponents, from whom Paul took over the terminology, as often is maintained.³⁵⁸ Probably, like those who are beside Paul and with him examples to be imitated (v. 17), they are individuals, from whose bad examples Paul wants to deter his addressees. On the other hand, he keeps the eschatological tension between the already given salvation and the still outstanding completion of salvation.³⁵⁹ That implies a critical distance from the world (cf. 1 Pet 2:11–17).³⁶⁰ Philippians 3:19–20 does not, therefore, oppose a present and a future world,³⁶¹ but a lower, transient and an upper imperishable world, to which the faithful already belong in the present, toward which the present tense of ὑπάρχει draws our attention.³⁶² Like all human beings, the Christians, admittedly, live with their body of lowness in the perishable world, but they are already now destined by their exalted Lord Jesus Christ,³⁶³ whom they expect as their saviour in the future.

Philippians 3:20 is the only Pauline text where the exalted Lord is named σωτήρ. The saying of 1 Thess 1:9–10, according to which Christ as ῥυόμενος will preserve the Christians from the coming wrath, is mostly regarded as tradition-historically related to our passage. In support of that assumption could be adduced the context of both passages dealing with the completion of salvation,³⁶⁴ but, differently from 1 Thess 1:10, Phil 3:20 does not say anything about judgement. The apostle probably forms the concept in dependence on his frequent usage of σωζεν und σωτηρία,³⁶⁵ but does not use it as a christological title,³⁶⁶ but as a description of the function, as it

³⁵⁸ See Böttger 1960: 245, 247; Schenk 1984: 324; Cotter 1993: 101–102.

³⁵⁹ Cf. Bockmuehl 1998: 234–35.

³⁶⁰ Cf. Giesen 1998b: 114–31.

³⁶¹ Against Koester 1961–1962: 329–30; Gnilka 1968: 206; Becker 1995: 77.

³⁶² See Vincent 1897: 118; Michaelis 1935: 63; Strathmann 1932–1979: 535; Böttger 1960: 259; Schenk 1984: 324; Lincoln 1981: 101; O'Brien 1991: 461; against Hutter 1980–1983: 312; Gnilka 1968: 206; Martin 1976: 147.

³⁶³ ἐξ οὗ probably is to refer ad sensum to ἐν οὐρανοῖς and not to πολιτεύμα. See Vincent 1897: 119; Gnilka 1968: 207 n. 123; Siber 1971: 133 n. 113; Martin 1976: 148; Lincoln 1981: 102; Hawthorne 1983: 171; Silva 1988: 217; O'Brien 1991: 461; Fabris 2001: 226; against Güttgemanns 1966: 243.

³⁶⁴ Cf. Dibelius 1937: 93; Gnilka 1968: 207; U. B. Müller 1993: 181.

³⁶⁵ Cf. Schelkle 1980–1983a: 782–83; O'Brien 1991: 462–63. U. B. Müller 1993: 181 assumes either Hellenistic influence or LXX influence.

³⁶⁶ So most of the scholars. Cf., e.g., Becker 1995: 78.

is shown in v. 21.³⁶⁷ As a saviour, Christ is the one who brings salvation to its completion.³⁶⁸ For reference of the Pauline σωτήρ to Hellenistic saviours or to the imperial cult, there is not any indication.³⁶⁹

With his statement about the completion of salvation Paul does not intend to fight against a present consciousness of finality for his opponents by confronting them with the apocalyptic final events.³⁷⁰ The particular eschatological significance of Christ in 3:20–21 is also not explained by a further development of a tradition already known from 1 Thess 1:9–10,³⁷¹ but by Paul's own understanding of salvation. As our saviour, Jesus Christ will transform our body of lowness³⁷² to be like his body of glory (cf. 1 Cor 15:44, 49). The body of lowness means nothing negative of a human being, but characterizes his entire earthly existence, which is frail and doomed to die.³⁷³ Noteworthy, however, is that Paul speaks of *our* body of lowness, i.e., of the body of Christians, which is modified by its likeness with Christ's death and with his sufferings.³⁷⁴ Christ's body of glory is opposed to our lowly body. Whereas those Christians who live as enemies of the cross of Christ find their glory in their shame (v. 19b), the faithful Christians will be made to conform to Christ's body of glory. This conformity is no process which starts already in earthly life and will be completed at its end,³⁷⁵ but a unique action of Christ as saviour. Because it is different from conformity with Christ's death (Phil 3:10–11), the lowness of the body does not mean a participation in Jesus, but serves as an anthropological contrast to the glory of the heavenly world, which makes necessary a complete transformation (*Umschaffung*) of the human being.³⁷⁶ Both bodies have, in

³⁶⁷ Schenk 1984: 327; Martin 1976: 148.

³⁶⁸ Cf. Schenk 1984: 327.

³⁶⁹ Gnilka 1968: 207; Plevnik 1996: 187; against Martin 1976: 148; Bockmuehl 1998: 235; Fabris 2001: 226.

³⁷⁰ Against Siber 1971: 75–77.

³⁷¹ Cf. U. B. Müller 1993: 181.

³⁷² With Michaelis 1935: 63; Gnilka 1968: 207. "body of humiliation (der Erniedrigung)" presupposes the pre-existence of the body. Against de Wette 1843: 209; Vincent 1897: 120, Silva 1988: 215; O'Brien 1991: 464; Plevnik 1996: 183; Fabris 2001: 227.

³⁷³ See Gnilka 1968: 207; Plevnik 1996: 183.

³⁷⁴ Schenk 1984: 325.

³⁷⁵ Against Gnilka 1968: 207–208.

³⁷⁶ With Vincent 1897: 120–21; Gnilka 1968: 208, 209; U. B. Müller 1993: 182; O'Brien 1991: 465; σύμμορφος "suggests that the conformity is 'not simply a superficial and outward change of form, but a complete change of inward nature and quality.'"

common, however, that they are christologically moulded.³⁷⁷ It must be emphasized, however, that the resurrection from the dead in 3:11 is identical with the transformation happening at the beginning of being with Christ (cf. 1:23).³⁷⁸ That for the transformed ones, admittedly, the hostile powers are defeated is out of the question, nevertheless it concerns individual eschatology.³⁷⁹

Admittedly, transient things and perishable things or mortality and immortality exclude each other. That does not mean, however, that there is no continuity at all between earthly and heavenly existence; for the lowly body will be conformed to the glorious body of Christ, so that there is no question of an entirely new creation.³⁸⁰ If that were so, Paul could not speak of a new creation already realized in baptism (2 Cor 5:17).³⁸¹ Additionally, we must consider the fact that for Paul the body is identical with the entire personality (cf. also Rom 8:23; 12:1; 1 Cor 6:13–20).³⁸² In spite of all discontinuity, for Paul there is continuity between the present creation and the future new creation, as is clearly shown by Rom 8:20 and 8:24, where he expounds the eschatological difference between the Christians and the whole creation. Whereas the creation as a whole is subjected to futility in hope (8:20), the Christians were saved in hope in baptism (8:24).³⁸³ They are already now God's sons and daughters (8:14–17) and therefore Christ's fellow heirs (8:17), who still await the full adoption of sons and daughters (8:23).³⁸⁴

The moment of the transformation of the lowly body is not the parousia for all Christians;³⁸⁵ it will not only happen to people who

³⁷⁷ See Gnllka 1968: 210.

³⁷⁸ Lohmeyer 1964: 161; Schenk 1984: 325.

³⁷⁹ So Wiefel 1974: 80–81; against Schenk 1984: 325.

³⁸⁰ Against U. B. Müller 1993: 183. Rightly, however, Vincent 1897: 120: The new body is not identical with the present body, but "There is a change of *σχήμα*, but not a destruction of personal identity." Cf. Giesen 1987: 117–19; Fabris 2001: 227.

³⁸¹ Cf. Giesen 1983c: 100.

³⁸² Cf. Michaelis 1935: 64; Jewett 1971: 252–53; Gundry 1976: 177–83, 220; Hawthorne 1983: 172; O'Brien 1991: 464.

³⁸³ Cf. Giesen 1983c: 102, 109–110.

³⁸⁴ Cf. Giesen 2001: 82–100; Giesen 1983c: 109.

³⁸⁵ Against Michaelis 1935: 63; J. J. Müller 1955: 134; U. B. Müller 1993: 182, 183 with reference to 1 Cor 15:25ff; Friedrich 1981: 166; Beare 1969: 137; Koester 1961–1962: 330; Schenk 1984: 324; Bockmuehl 1998: 236; O'Brien 1991: 463–64. For Walter 1998: 87 that makes it evident that Paul is no longer in prison and that he again believes he belongs to those who will still be alive at the time of the parousia.

are still alive at the time of the parousia.³⁸⁶ For since Paul in 1:23 clearly awaits his completeness of salvation immediately after death, his other usage of ἀπεκδέχεσθαι (Rom 8:19, 25; 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5) cannot exclude the individual expectation of salvation,³⁸⁷ so that he could only mean the common hope of all Christians for salvation at the end of time.³⁸⁸ His being with Christ (Phil 1:23) presupposes without any doubt that also his lowly body will be conformed to the glorious body of Christ, because in 1:23 an intermediary time until the parousia is out of the question. A similar idea occurs in Rom 8:29, where the chosen ones are predestined to the image of the son, i.e., to the essential participation in his image.³⁸⁹ That also corresponds to Paul's conviction that absolutely nothing, not even death, can separate faithful Christians from the love of God in Christ Jesus their Lord (Rom 8:38–39).³⁹⁰ If we are allowed to assume an individual expectation of salvation in 3:20–21, the question resolves itself whether only those who are still alive at the parousia or all Christians are meant. For Paul does not, by any means, say that all Christians will be transformed at the same time.

The fact that Paul speaks of our expectation of the future in terms of "Christ's coming from heaven," but not in terms of our "going to heaven," is no valid argument against his coming already at the time of the death of the individual Christian,³⁹¹ but emphasizes Christ's initiative and thereby the completion of salvation as a gift.

New in comparison with the early Christian tradition is the fact that not God, but Christ transforms the lowly bodies.³⁹² He is enabled to do so because he has received the power to subject even all things to himself. Paul writes in 1 Cor 15:27 alluding to Ps 8:7 LXX that it is God who puts all things in subjection under Christ's feet. From the statement that Christ is able to subject all things to himself it cannot be inferred that for Paul the salvation of the individual and

³⁸⁶ Against Güttgemanns 1966: 244–45; Wiefel 1974: 80; Gnlika 1968: 209. Rightly Haupt 1902: 166; Schenk 1984: 325.

³⁸⁷ Lohmeyer 1964: 159 only assumes this for martyrs.

³⁸⁸ Against Gnlika 1968: 207; Bonnard 1950: 72; Martin 1976: 148; Radl 1981: 90; Glasswell 1980–1983: 990; Hawthorne 1983: 171; O'Brien 1991: 462; Plevnik 1996: 179–80; similarly Michaelis 1935: 63.

³⁸⁹ Cf. Michaelis 1935: 63–64; U. B. Müller 1993: 183; Fabris 2001: 228; Plevnik 1996: 182; also Beare 1969: 140.

³⁹⁰ Cf. Giesen 2000: 254.

³⁹¹ Against Beare 1969: 138.

³⁹² See Gnlika 1968: 208; Becker 1976: 114; U. B. Müller 1993: 183.

the completeness of the world belong together.³⁹³ He only intends to demonstrate that Christ has got the power over all transient things, so that he also is enabled to save the Christians already in their death.³⁹⁴ At the same time it becomes clear that the parousia does not mean the destruction of the world, but that it abolishes the opposition between the community and the world in a way that everything is subjected to him.³⁹⁵ The Christians live out of the hope for this power of Jesus, particularly since they already now know themselves destined by their Lord as saviour, for his state is in the heavens.

Paul finally calls on his beloved Philippians, whom he is longing for, to stand firm in the Lord, as up to now, so also in the future.³⁹⁶ If they do so, then they are a motive for joy and the cause of his boasting (4:1).

b. *“The Lord is near” (Philippians 4:5)*

After his insistent request to rejoice in the Lord (4:4; cf. 1:4, 18; 2:17, 18; 3:1)³⁹⁷ and to make all human beings know their goodness,³⁹⁸ Paul asserts: “The Lord (is) near” (4:5). Here first it is disputed whom the goodness stands in good stead. It is less probable that outsiders should experience the goodness of the community.³⁹⁹ The imperative $\gamma\omega\sigma\theta\eta\tau\omega$ suggests moreover that all human beings should find out both the goodness of the Christians to each other and their joy,⁴⁰⁰ which implies a missionary dimension (cf. 2:15).⁴⁰¹

³⁹³ See Michaelis 1935: 64; against Beare 1969: 138, 141.

³⁹⁴ Cf. Becker 1976: 115; U. B. Müller 1993: 184.

³⁹⁵ Lohmeyer 1964: 162; Schenk 1984: 326.

³⁹⁶ The present tense of the imperative $\sigma\tau\acute{\eta}\kappa\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ implies a continuation of an attitude and presupposes, therefore, that the Philippians already previously stood firm in the Lord. Cf. also G. Barth 1996: 69.

³⁹⁷ The imperative $\chi\alpha\acute{\iota}\rho\epsilon\tau\epsilon$ cannot mean “farewell,” because the present tense points to a continuation of an attitude and above all because Paul explicitly calls on the Philippians, to rejoice *always*. Against Beare 1969: 144–45.

³⁹⁸ Cf. Giesen 1980–1983a: 67.

³⁹⁹ So, however, Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 218–19; Michaelis 1935: 67; Schlatter 1964: 102–103; Friedrich 1981: 168; G. Barth 1996: 73; Bockmuehl 1998: 244; Walter 1998: 93. Fee 1995: 407 argues for both the Christians among each other and towards outsiders. So also Hendriksen 1996: 193; Schenk 1984: 244.

⁴⁰⁰ K. Barth 1959: 119–20; Beare 1969: 146; Bonnard 1950: 75; Gnika 1968: 169; Hawthorne 1983: 182; Fee 1995: 403; similarly O’Brien 1991: 488.

⁴⁰¹ So Martin 1976: 154; U. B. Müller 1993: 194; O’Brien 1991: 488; cf. Fee 1995: 403.

The closeness of the Lord mostly refers to the imminent parousia.⁴⁰² It is far more probable, however, that Paul thinks of the presence of the Lord in the community. Not the imminent parousia, therefore, but the closeness of the Lord to his community motivates the joy of the faithful (4:4)⁴⁰³ and enables them to stand firm in the Lord (4:1). That is only a consequence, since Paul emphasizes, time and again, that the Christians are in Christ or in the Lord. To that corresponds that Christ already now determines the life of the Christians, as we know from our explanation of the *πολίτευμα* (v. 20). Thus Walter Radl admits that the phrase in its present context is hardly to be understood in the sense of an acute imminent parousia.⁴⁰⁴ The presence of the Lord is also the presupposition for the following request not to be anxious about anything,⁴⁰⁵ but to entrust their lives to God by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving (4:6).⁴⁰⁶ The context of prayer makes it additionally probable that Paul is influenced by Ps 145:18: “The Lord is near to all who call upon him” (cf. also Ps 119:151).⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰² So de Wette 1843: 211; Haupt 1902: 174; Vincent 1897: 133; Ewald and Wohlenberg 1917: 219; Schlatter 1964: 103; J. J. Müller 1955: 141; Dormeyer 1980–1983: 898; Michaelis 1935: 67; Bonnard 1950: 75; Dibelius 1937: 94; Beare 1969: 146; Friedrich 1981: 168; Hendriksen 1996: 194; parousia and death; Gnilka 1968: 169; Martin 1976: 155; G. Barth 1996: 73; Radl 1981: 94–95, who—among others—assumes a traditional formula, which is related to the Maranatha in 1 Cor 16:22 or Rev 22:20. See also U. B. Müller 1993: 194–95: “Was nun den Kontext angeht, so nimmt der Ruf ‘Der Herr ist nahe’ die Erwartung und Verheißung der Parusie des Kyrios aus 3,20f. auf und charakterisiert sie als nahe bevorstehend.” So also Collange 1973: 126; Beare 1969: 146; O’Brien 1991: 489; Bockmuehl 1998: 246. 1 Cor 16:22 and Rev 22:20 are, however, by no means necessarily to be understood in the sense of an imminent parousia. On the contrary, their liturgical context indicates a request that the Lord may be close to his congregation without excluding the outlook on the eschatological future. Cf. Giesen 1989: 593; Giesen 2000: 493–96; Frankemölle 1998: 64; Baumert 1997: 132–42. The context with the maranatha is contested by Witherington 1994: 112–13 with n. 9 (165).

⁴⁰³ Caird 1976: 150–51; Bugg 1991: 253–57; Bruce 1984: 142. Michaelis 1935: 67 considers this interpretation as possible. A bit of both: Collange 1973: 126; Hawthorne 1983: 182, 192; Silva 1988: 227; O’Brien 1991: 489; Fee 1995: 407–408 with n. 36; Bockmuehl 1998: 246.

⁴⁰⁴ Radl 1981: 97; differently U. B. Müller 1993: 195; Fee 1995: 408.

⁴⁰⁵ On the condition of the imminent parousia, Friedrich 1981: 168 interprets as follows: “Der helle Schein des kommenden Tages leuchtet in das gespenstische Dunkel der Gegenwart und vertreibt alle Angst und Sorge.”

⁴⁰⁶ Bruce 1984: 143.

⁴⁰⁷ Cf. Lohmeyer 1964: 169, who, however, restricts it to martyrs. Against Gnilka 1968: 169; Michaelis 1935: 67; Caird 1976: 150–51, who maintains that *ἐγγύς* never refers to a person, but always only to a thing or an event. So also Witherington

4. *The Eschatology of Philippians in the Context of the Other Pauline Epistles and the New Testament*

According to Phil 1:23, Paul obviously awaits the completion of his salvation already in his hour of death. That seems to be in tension with other Pauline statements on the imminent parousia. Admittedly, it is beyond question that at least a portion of the Thessalonians lived in expectation of the imminent Second Coming of Christ.⁴⁰⁸ Moreover, 1 Thess 4:17 suggests that the Thessalonians imagined the resurrection as a taking up of the faithful.⁴⁰⁹ According to this imagination, only people who are still alive at the time of the parousia can be taken up. Against that background, the death of members in their community necessarily confronted them with an almost insurmountable problem. Paul, who, contrary to the *sensus communis*,⁴¹⁰ does not agree with the expectations of the Thessalonians,⁴¹¹ solves their problem very cleverly by allowing all Christians who have already died before the parousia to rise first (4:16c) so that they can be taken up together with those still alive in the cloud to meet the Lord in the air (4:17). The decisive sentence for the expectation of Paul is written in v. 15 (cf. v. 17). In v. 15 and v. 17 there are two participles in the present tense: οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι. If the apostle intended to affirm the imminent parousia, then one of the participles would be sufficient. The Greek grammar moreover suggests that the second participle οἱ περιλειπόμενοι limits and qualifies the first one, οἱ ζῶντες, so that its meaning is: should we who are alive be left till the parousia we shall not have any advantage over those who died before the parousia.⁴¹² Paul uses—as he often does when he makes statements on faith—an ecclesiastical “we.”⁴¹³ He has solved the problem of the Thessalonians by his statement that the dead ones will not have a disadvantage at the parousia. He is

1994: 112. O’Brien 1991: 489 makes out only a little difference between the phrase “The day/parousia of the Lord” and the one “the Lord is near.” He presupposes, however, the date of the parousia in both cases.

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Giesen 1985: 135.

⁴⁰⁹ Cf. Plevnik 1984: 276, 280–82.

⁴¹⁰ So, beside the commentaries, e.g. G. Barth 1996: 1, 23, 335.

⁴¹¹ Cf. also Baumert 1997: 28.

⁴¹² Cf. Giesen 1985: 137; Baumert 1973: 401–409; cf. also Frankemölle 1998: 63.

⁴¹³ Cf. Giesen 1985: 139. Thus, e.g., the statement that Christ for us (1 Thess 5:10) does not apply only to the Christians at the time of Paul, but to all Christians of all times.

not sure at all that the parousia is at hand, and because of this he leaves its date open and requests the Thessalonians to be ready at any time (cf. 1 Thess 5:1–11).⁴¹⁴ The same interpretation applies to 1 Cor 15:51–52, where Paul states that we shall all sleep, but we shall be changed when the last trumpet will ring out.⁴¹⁵

The fact that already in his first letter Paul does not think that he, or even all the Christians, would live until the parousia is not really surprising, because the vocation to his apostolate was nearly twenty years before he wrote his first letter. Meanwhile many Christians undoubtedly had already died. On what basis can he be justified in expecting to be alive at the time of the parousia?

If we compare the other Pauline texts which deal with the final salvation of the Christians with Phil 1:23, then we are able to discover two essential differences: these Pauline texts always speak about the completeness of salvation at the parousia, and they always refer to all the Christians or even to all human beings. Precisely the universality of these statements demands locating the event at the time of the parousia. The same idea of universality of the judgement forces also other New Testament authors to locate the completion of salvation at the time of the parousia, but there are also a few statements on individual eschatology in other writings of the New Testament.⁴¹⁶ Some New Testament scholars, however, call into question that the completion of salvation can take place immediately after death. According to Oscar Cullmann neither the promise to the thief in Luke 23:43 nor the parable of the rich man and the poor Lazarus (Luke 16:22) nor Phil 1:23 nor 2 Cor 5:1–10 testifies that the dying immediately will be clothed by a body of resurrection.⁴¹⁷ The Spirit would allow them to be with the Lord already during the intervening periods. Paul's opinion of the fate of those who died before the parousia would be meaningless, if one assumed the bodily resurrection immediately after death. In fact, there would be only one who has already got a spiritual body, namely Christ who, therefore, would be "the first born from the dead" (Col 1:18; Rev 1:5). He would have already won the decisive victory by his resurrection (Acts 2:24).

⁴¹⁴ Cf. Giesen 1985: 142–46.

⁴¹⁵ Giesen 1985: 140–46. For a summary of other eschatological sayings in Paul, cf. Giesen 1991: 592–93.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Giesen 1995: 110.

⁴¹⁷ Cullmann 1966: 403: "All diese Texte sagen lediglich, dass Christus anzugehören auch für die, die entschlafen sind, Folgen hat."

But only at the end of time when death as the last enemy will be destroyed would our bodies be transformed into spiritual bodies (1 Cor 15:44).⁴¹⁸

As Sebastian Schneider has recently shown in his doctoral thesis, Paul speaks—as he does already in 1 Cor 15:15, 16, 29, 32, 35, 42, 43—also in 1 Cor 15:44 of a resurrection with regard to the present and only in 15:52 of the resurrection at the end of time. Paul makes that clear by using first the present tense and only in 15:52 the future tense of ἐγείρομαι, which he additionally provided with the expression of time ἐν τῇ ἐσχάτῃ σάλπιγγι.⁴¹⁹ Paul, therefore, distinguishes between the already present resurrections and the last scale of the resurrection at the Last Judgement, thereby emphasizing the universality of the event. In both, in the death which is experienced in baptism and in the daily dying (15:31), a real resurrection takes place. The “daily dying” of Paul cannot be regarded as a hyperbolic danger in which he puts himself because of his mission, as mostly is assumed,⁴²⁰ nor as a real daily danger of death.⁴²¹

In opposition to the point of view of Cullmann, an especially clear example for individual eschatology is the promise of Jesus to the thief (Luke 23:43) to be with him in paradise on the same day.⁴²² That underlines the fact that already at the day of his death Jesus takes up his heavenly power. For Luke it does not seem to be a contradiction to his theological central idea that the ascension takes place only forty days after his resurrection.⁴²³ For our topic, however, only individual eschatology is important.⁴²⁴ In Luke 12:20, 33; 16:9, 22 and Acts 7:55–56, we find the same individual-eschatological idea of an immediate transition from earthly life to the completed communion with God without any interim period until the Last Judgement.⁴²⁵

⁴¹⁸ Cullmann 1966: 403–404.

⁴¹⁹ Schneider 2000: 203–205.

⁴²⁰ Weiß 1910: 365; Lang 1986: 230; Kremer 1997: 349 and most of the other commentaries.

⁴²¹ So Bieder 1980–1983: 322; Collins 1999: 559.

⁴²² Cf. Giesen 2005: 151–77.

⁴²³ According to Haenchen 1968: 529 Luke here presupposes the ascension on Easter day without paying attention to the difficulty which is connected with that speculation. Cf. also Wiefel 1987: 399 with n. 398.

⁴²⁴ Cf. Ernst 1993: 488; Wiefel 1987: 399.

⁴²⁵ See Giesen 1998a: 57; Ernst 1993: 356; Horn 1983: 79; Gräßer 2001: 309.

Against the majority of scholars, the same eschatological idea applies to Mark 13:13 in which Jesus promises to everyone who perseveres till the end that he will be saved, and, in this context, “the end” obviously means the death of the faithful.⁴²⁶ Correspondingly, Mark 13:24–27 does not deal with the gathering of the elect at the time of the Last Judgement, but with the gathering of Christ’s disciples after his resurrection. In apocalyptic language, Jesus expresses the same idea as—in a shepherd’s language—in Mark 14:28 and 16:7: only because Jesus—like a shepherd—goes before his disciples to Galilee and only because the risen one gathers his elect; after Easter the Church comes into being.⁴²⁷ Consequently, in Mark 13:32 Jesus does not speak about his ignorance of the time of the parousia, but about both the hour of his death and the beginning of the time after his resurrection.⁴²⁸ In the same way, Mark 9:1 refers to the situation of the faithful in the time after Easter, when, in faith, they experience the kingdom of God as already present in power.⁴²⁹ The seer John is also convinced that the faithful Christian accomplishes his salvation immediately after death without a preceding judgment (Rev 14:3c).⁴³⁰

These hints may be sufficient to show that the expectation of the completion immediately after death, clearly testified by Paul in Phil 1:23, is not isolated in the New Testament. Beyond that, I have shown in several articles, of which I have quoted here only a few, that the New Testament authors do not teach an imminent parousia.⁴³¹ On the contrary, New Testament authors react to the assumption of Christians who are convinced that the Second Coming of Christ would be at hand. In all probability probably, the so-called “delay of the parousia” in Luke–Acts does not intend to correct the teaching of other New Testament authors, but Christians within the communities who expect the Second Coming of Christ in an immediate future.

⁴²⁶ Cf. Giesen 1983a: 32–36; Giesen 1995: 114, 119, 121.

⁴²⁷ See Giesen 1983a: 40–50; Giesen 1995: 110–17; Giesen 1987: 119–25.

⁴²⁸ See Giesen 1983a: 51–56; Giesen 1995: 117–19.

⁴²⁹ See Giesen 1983b: 127–31; Giesen 1983d: 144–48; Giesen 1995: 99–122.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Allo 1921: 220; Giesen 2000: 253–55; Giesen 2000: 334.

⁴³¹ Cf. Giesen 1989: 346–59.

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NEITHER HIERARCHICALIST NOR EGALITARIAN: GENDER ROLES IN PAUL

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Debates about the Bible's teaching on gender roles seem to continue endlessly. The literature that one must master to say anything credible grows in intimidating quantity: general works on men and women in antiquity; specific studies of the classical world, the Hellenistic period, the Old Testament and subsequent Jewish tradition, and the New Testament and constituent parts of Scripture; analyses of specific biblical texts, broader liberationist or feminist approaches, theologies of the Bible, of one Testament, or of one specific part of one Testament; commentaries; histories of Jewish and/or Christian interpretation of texts; Church histories more generally; modern ecclesiastical debates; and contemporary social-scientific analysis!¹ At the same time, it does appear that scholarship is making progress, both in ruling out certain extreme or idiosyncratic perspectives and in gaining greater insight into the probable meanings of disputed terms and syntax in key texts. And a surprisingly small percentage of the last twenty years of study on the topic focuses solely on Paul and, at the same time, on all of his writings.² So it is appropriate here to take

¹ I have read widely in each of these areas for the last twenty-five years and published preliminary, partial findings in five different contexts: "Not Beyond What Is Written: A Review of Aida Spencer's *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry*," *CTR* 2 (1988): 403–21; *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994) 207–26, 277–92; the article on "Woman," in Walter A. Elwell (ed.), *Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996) 824–28; a previous version of this essay in James R. Beck and Craig L. Blomberg (eds.), *Two Views on Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001) 329–72; and "Women in Ministry: A Complementarian Perspective," in James R. Beck (ed.), *Two Views of Women in Ministry* (2d. ed.; Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005) 123–89. My footnotes in this essay thus focus almost exclusively on the most recent and/or important works, lest they overwhelm the text of the essay itself! The most comprehensive bibliography I know of is Mayer I. Gruber, *A Study Guide: Women in the World of Hebrew Scripture*, volume 1 of *Women in the Biblical World* (Lanham, Md.: Scarecrow, 1995). It would seem that a second volume related to the New Testament was conceived but has not appeared.

² After a flurry of such studies in the 1970's, the literature has tailed off substantially. The most important contributions of the last twenty-five years include

stock of the progress that has been made on this topic and to chart out a plausible synthesis in the midst of the plethora of competing opinions.³

My thesis is that Paul was neither a classic hierarchicalist nor a full-fledged egalitarian,⁴ despite numerous contemporary attempts to place him squarely in one or the other camp. Both attempts inevitably skew some of the data. Instead, Paul discerned no tension between preserving certain elements of his patriarchal culture and adopting countercultural, liberationist strands of thought within that larger framework. Careful exegesis discloses that Paul remains both coherent and consistent in articulating this middle ground throughout his apostolic career.

Historical Background

As with most other Jews and early Christians, the Hebrew Scriptures would have formed the most important background literature for Paul. Space precludes consideration of the huge debates that rage

James G. Sigountos and Myron Shank, "Public Roles for Women in the Pauline Church: A Reappraisal of the Evidence," *JETS* 26 (1983): 283–95; John T. Bristow, *What Paul Really Said about Women* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1988); Norbert Baumert, *Antifeminismus bei Paulus?* (Würzburg: Echter, 1992); Craig S. Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives: Marriage and Women's Ministry in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1992); Wendy Cotter, "Women's Authority Roles in Paul's Churches: Countercultural or Conventional?" *NovT* 36 (1994): 350–72; Judith M. Gundry-Volf, "Paul on Women and Gender: A Comparison with Early Jewish Views," in Richard N. Longenecker (ed.), *The Road from Damascus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997) 184–212; and Andrew C. Perriman, *Speaking of Women: Interpreting Paul* (Leicester: Apollos, 1998).

³ Anthony Thacker ("Was Paul a Sexist?" *Epworth Review* 23 [1996]: 85–94) identifies seven discrete perspectives, which he labels "misogynist," "confused oppressor and liberator," "male supremacist," "hierarchical authority," "dialectically egalitarian and supremacist," "partially implicit egalitarian," and "pragmatic egalitarian." Thacker himself determines Paul to be a "moderate feminist."

⁴ I use the word *hierarchicalist* here to refer to the view that Paul actively promoted the cultural and scriptural practices, which he inherited, of barring numerous roles to women in the domestic and religious arenas and intended those restrictions to be normative for all Christians throughout time. I use *egalitarian* to refer to the perspective that Paul did not promote any timeless role differentiation among men and women. I avoid using *complementarian* and *feminist* as exact synonyms for these two terms, respectively. *Complementarian* does not in and of itself suggest any role restrictions and therefore can mislead. *Feminist* in and of itself suggests a priority to things female, which is by no means the perspective of those who identify themselves as *evangelical* or *biblical feminists*. Of course, all terms create problems: *Hierarchicalist*

over the correct interpretation of Genesis 1–3, but it is interesting to note agreement among a cross section of conservative, centrist, and liberal commentators that, if these opening chapters of the Bible do not demonstrably promote a hierarchy of authority of the man over the woman, they at least leave the door open for such an interpretation.⁵ More pertinently, there is no evidence from ancient Jewish exegesis that Paul could have inherited an egalitarian interpretation of the beginnings of Genesis from his Jewish upbringing.⁶ Nor does a completely egalitarian interpretation of Paul appear in the writings of any ancient Christian commentator, suggesting that if Paul did articulate such a perspective, he was uniformly misunderstood in the extant sources.⁷

The rest of the Old Testament includes numerous positive, countercultural leadership roles for women,⁸ but every one of them remains the exception rather than the norm, and the Torah made it clear

can suggest someone who promotes an elaborate hierarchy with authoritarian leaders, while *egalitarian* can suggest someone who blurs all distinctions between men and women to promote androgyny. I do not imply either of these notions by my use of the terms.

⁵ See Thomas Finley, “The Relationship of Woman and Man in the Old Testament,” in Robert L. Saucy and Judith K. TenElshof (eds.), *Women and Men in Ministry: A Complementary Perspective* (Chicago: Moody Press, 2001) 49–71; Thomas R. Schreiner, “An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15: A Dialogue with Scholarship,” in Andreas J. Köstenberger, Thomas R. Schreiner, and H. Scott Baldwin (eds.), *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis of 1 Timothy 2:9–15* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995) 134–40; Francis Watson, “Strategies of Recovery and Resistance: Hermeneutical Reflections on Genesis 1–3 and Its Pauline Reception,” *JNT* 45 (1992): 79–103; David J. A. Clines, “What Does Eve Do to Help? and Other Irredeemably Androcentric Orientations in Genesis 1–3,” in *What Does Eve Do to Help? and Other Readerly Questions in the Old Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990) 25–48. Contra Max Kiichler (*Schweigen, Schmuck and Schleier* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986]), who argues that Paul’s use of the Old Testament in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and 1 Timothy 2 cannot be derived from legitimate exegesis, but comes from a tendentious, “frauenfeindlich,” Jewish interpretive tradition.

⁶ For a survey, see Paul Morris, “Exiled from Eden: Jewish Interpretations of Genesis,” in Deborah Sawyer (ed.), *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical, and Literary Images of Eden* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) 117–66.

⁷ See Gregory A. Robbins (ed.), *Genesis 1–3 in the History of Exegesis* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1988).

⁸ For helpful surveys, see Karen Engelken, *Fraue im Alten Israel* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1990); Athalya Brenner, *The Israelite Woman: Social Role and Literary Type in Biblical Narrative* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994); Alice O. Bellis, *Helpmates, Harlots, and Heroes: Women’s Stories in the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1994); Thomas Finley, “The Ministry of Women in the Old Testament,” in Saucy and TenElshof (eds.), *Women and Men in Ministry*, 73–88; Irene Nowell, *Women in the Old Testament* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1997).

that one leadership role—the Israelite priesthood—was exclusively reserved for men (Exod 28; Lev 9). Diversity in the extent of patriarchy seems to have existed within the various periods covered by the Old Testament, Second Temple Judaism, and the rabbinic literature,⁹ but again one looks in vain for anything resembling modern egalitarian perspectives. Many Christian scholars, especially those who embrace a more conservative feminism,¹⁰ have so exaggerated the allegedly favorable contrasts between Christian and Jewish positions on gender roles that more liberal Christian feminist¹¹ and Jewish scholars are now rightly protesting that justice has not been done to the positive, pro-women strands within the relevant subgroups of ancient Judaism.¹² Jewish and Christian scholars alike usually agree that the post-A.D. 70 rabbinic literature imposed restrictions on Jewish women that earlier periods did not always require.¹³ But at times it would appear that the scholarly pendulum has swung too far in the opposite direction; in an age of commendable ecumenicity, some are reluctant to acknowledge the genuine differences that did exist between ancient Judaism and emerging Christianity.¹⁴ At

⁹ See Carol L. Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988); Léonie J. Archer, *Her Price Is Beyond Rubies: The Jewish Woman in Graeco-Roman Palestine* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990); Shulamit Valler, *Women and Womanhood in the Talmud* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999); Jacob Neusner, *How the Rabbis Liberated Women* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998).

¹⁰ Those who accept the historic Christian canon as a binding authority for theology and ethics but think that it promotes egalitarianism pervasively.

¹¹ Those who do not accept the majority strand of biblical teaching, believing it to promote patriarchy, and focus instead on a minority strand of liberationist teaching—a *de facto* canon within the canon.

¹² A recurring theme throughout Ross S. Kraemer and Mary R. D'Angelo (eds.), *Women and Christian Origins* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

¹³ Some (e.g., Meir Bar-Ilan, *Some Jewish Women in Antiquity* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1998]) see a linear deterioration of freedoms for women from the Old Testament to the intertestamental period to the rabbinic era, while others (e.g., Leonard Swidler, *Biblical Affirmations of Woman* [Philadelphia: Westminster, 1979], 75–159) think the intertestamental period offered greater freedoms than those available in the eras before and after it.

¹⁴ One senses this with several of the chapters in Amy-Jill Levine (ed.), *Women Like This: New Perspectives on Jewish Women in the Greco-Roman World* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1991); and in Levine, “Second Temple Judaism, Jesus, and Women: Yeast of Eden,” *BibInt* 2 (1994): 8–33. Contrast this with Tal Ilan’s conclusion (*Jewish Women in Greco-Roman Palestine* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1996] 226): All sources describe the same ideal picture of society: women provide what is asked of them, be it producing legal heirs, doing housework, remaining faithful to their husbands, avoiding contact with other men unrelated to them, or using their beauty to make their husbands’ lives more pleasant. Women who deviate from this perfect behavior are described by all the sources as wicked.

any rate, it is difficult to imagine Paul inheriting terribly positive attitudes toward women from a culture that would shortly produce rabbinic debates as to whether women were even persons or merely chattel.¹⁵ And for all of the possible inferences about women in synagogue leadership that Bernadette Brooten has catalogued, there remains a complete absence both in her survey and in the encyclopedic Jewish literature of the Tannaim of women as formal religious teachers or rabbis.¹⁶

If Paul could not have learned egalitarianism from any extant Jewish source, what about from the Greco-Roman world of his day? Again, there is diversity among the documents. Greek philosophy developed a much more idealized view of the equal personhood of men and women from the minority legacy of the teachings of Socrates and Plato than from the dominant Aristotelian tradition.¹⁷ Roman laws combined significant restrictions with equally important freedoms for women.¹⁸ In some respects, first-century Roman women had greater social opportunities than their Greek counterparts; in other respects, particularly in the domestic arena, Roman women were more oppressed, especially due to the *patria potestas* (“power of a father”) that gave husbands almost unlimited authority as heads of their households.¹⁹

Local variation in practices must also be taken into account. It is interesting, for example, that all of Paul’s directives, and even the more positive models of what women in his churches did, occur in particularly Romanized cities in the Hellenistic world.²⁰ Recently,

¹⁵ See Judith R. Wegner, *Chattel or Person? The Status of Women in the Mishnah* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988).

¹⁶ Bernadette J. Brooten, *Women Leaders in the Ancient Synagogue: Inscriptional Evidence and Background Issues* (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1982). A random sampling of any portion of the Mishnah or other early rabbinic sources confirms this observation.

¹⁷ Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution, 750 B.C.–A.D. 1250* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); Eva Cantarella, *Pandora’s Daughters: The Role and Status of Women in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987); Matthew Dillon, *Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion* (London: Routledge, 2002).

¹⁸ Jane E. Gardner, *Women in Roman Law and Society* (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana University Press, 1986). Cf. also Suzanne Dixon, *Reading Roman Women: Sources, Genres, and Real Life* (London: Duckworth, 2001).

¹⁹ Deborah F. Sawyer, *Women and Religion in the First Christian Centuries* (New York: Routledge, 1996); Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives, and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* (New York: Schocken, 1975).

²⁰ Cotter, “Women’s Authority Roles in Paul’s Churches,” 350–72.

Bruce Winter has begun to call attention to the sexually liberated (that is, promiscuous!) “new Roman women” of more well-to-do first-century Hellenistic circles who possibly formed the backdrop to some of the problems in the Pauline churches that the apostle had to address.²¹ And across all of the cultures of antiquity, wealth almost always gave women freedoms that the vast majority of the poorer members of society lacked.²² Still, once again, no statements about the complete interchangeability of men’s and women’s roles in either public or private spheres emerge in any of the relevant literature.

Sooner or later, of course, influential teachers break free entirely from their surrounding cultures. Paul was not bound to repeat the social conventions of his era. While many dispute the extent to which he was aware of the life and teachings of Jesus, a credible case can be mounted for Paul’s substantial familiarity and continuity with Jesus by the time he began writing his epistles.²³ Perhaps he learned egalitarianism from this countercultural teacher from Nazareth; Jesus has, after all, frequently been viewed as a “proto-feminist.”²⁴ On the other hand, scholarship is increasingly reflecting a more restrained assessment of both the historical Jesus and the Gospels’ portrait of Jesus. After centuries of playing down the genuinely liberating strands embedded in the Gospels, and after initial liberationist and feminist euphoria about the potential for reconstructing egalitarianism from those same sources,²⁵ a third, more mediating position is frequently

²¹ Bruce W. Winter, *Roman Wives, Roman Widows: The Appearance of New Women and the Pauline Communities* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003); cf. *idem*, “The ‘New’ Roman Wife and 1 Timothy 2:9–15: The Search for a *Sitz im Leben*,” *TynBul* 51 (2000): 285–94.

²² For a helpful collection of primary texts illustrating these and other patterns in ancient Greece and Rome, see Mary R. Lefkowitz and Maureen B. Fant, *Women’s Life in Greece and Rome: A Source Book in Translation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

²³ See David Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995); *idem*, *Paul and Jesus: The True Story* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002). Cf. Ben Witherington III, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984) 128–30.

²⁴ See especially Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, *Jesus: Miriam’s Child, Sophia’s Prophet* (New York: Continuum, 1994). Luise Schottroff (*Let the Oppressed Go Free: Feminist Perspectives on the New Testament* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1993] and *idem*, *Lydia’s Impatient Sisters: A Feminist Social History of Early Christianity* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1995]) represents a common feminist trend to see a successive deterioration in pro-women attitudes from the Jesus of the Gospels to the undisputed Pauline Epistles, to Ephesians and Colossians, to the Pastoral Epistles, and finally to the post-New Testament Church.

²⁵ As in Elisabeth Moltmann-Wendell, *The Women around Jesus* (New York: Crossroad,

emerging. As Grant Osborne explains, “Jesus did not abrogate the basic ‘patriarchal’ views of his surrounding culture. He chose twelve men to form an inner core of disciples. Women’s place in the home is presented as honorable and part of the divine economy.”²⁶

To be sure, programmatic countercultural values were discernible as Jesus let Mary of Bethany learn in the manner male disciples would study with their rabbis (Luke 10:38–42) and as he permitted other women to travel with and even financially support his itinerant troupe (Luke 8:1–3). Throughout Jesus’ ministry (in his ministries of healing, in his compassion for outcasts, in his teaching on marriage and divorce, in his pairing of male and female illustrations in his teaching, and in his offers of forgiveness of sins), he affirmed the personhood of women and their equal value before God with their male peers. But as Helga Melzer-Keller’s careful and detailed study of all three Synoptic evangelists, the Q-Source, and the historical Jesus concludes, in every stratum of the Gospel traditions Jesus stopped short of ever making any explicit pronouncements about the equality of men and women (even to the extent Paul does in Gal 3:28), to say nothing of attempting to overthrow sociocultural conventions on gender roles. Melzer-Keller recognizes that Jesus cannot fairly be co-opted for modern liberationist or egalitarian agendas.²⁷

The final area of historical background that requires brief mention brings us closest to the ministry of Paul himself, namely, the experiences of earliest Christianity to the extent that they can be reconstructed from the book of Acts.²⁸ Once again there are important

1982). Cf. the anthology of Ingrid R. Kitzberger (ed.), *Transformative Encounters: Jesus and Women Re-viewed* (Leiden: Brill, 2000); and Satoko Yamaguchi, *Mary and Martha: Women in the World of Jesus* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2002).

²⁶ Grant R. Osborne, “Women in Jesus’ Ministry,” *WTJ* 51 (1989): 259–91.

²⁷ Helga Melzer-Keller, *Jesus und die Frauen* (Freiburg: Herder, 1997). Cf. also John H. Elliott, “Jesus Was Not an Egalitarian: A Critique of an Anachronistic and Idealist Theory,” *BTB* 32 (2002): 75–91; *idem*, “The Jesus Movement Was Not Egalitarian but Family-Oriented,” *BibInt* 11 (2003): 173–210; Kathleen Corley, *Women and the Historical Jesus* (Santa Rosa, Calif.: Polebridge, 2002). The same is increasingly proving true of feminist studies of Luke, the evangelist long viewed as most favorable to women. Contrast, e.g., Jane Kopas (“Jesus and Women: Luke’s Gospel,” *ThTo* 43 [1986]: 192–202) with Mary R. D’Angelo (“Women in Luke-Acts,” *JBL* 109 [1990]: 441–61).

²⁸ The substantial historicity of Acts has now been rehabilitated in the massive study by Colin J. Hemer (*The Book of Acts in the Setting of Hellenistic History* [ed. Conrad H. Gempf; Tübingen: Mohr, 1989]) and supported in the five-volume series edited by Bruce W. Winter and Andrew D. Clarke (*The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993–96]). For a balanced treatment that

countercultural models: the Spirit (and thus his gifts) being poured out equally on all disciples from Pentecost onward (Acts 2:17–21); Sapphira being judged independently of her husband (5:1–11); the ministry and resurrection of Tabitha (9:36–42); Lydia, the first European convert, and her role as head of the (presumably male-less) household (16:11–15); the exorcism of the girl with the Pythian spirit (16:16–18); the well-to-do Thessalonian women who joined Paul’s ministry (17:4); the joint ministry of Priscilla and Aquila (18:18–26); and the prophesying by Philip’s unmarried daughters (21:9). Yet again, the most recent detailed study of women in Acts concludes that Luke’s portrait remains androcentric even while introducing with varying degrees of emphasis important liberating motifs.²⁹ No text in Acts suggests that all roles in home and church are now open to men and women alike; prophecy was clearly distinguished in the ancient world from teaching,³⁰ and we actually know precious little about what Priscilla did, except for one occasion in which she joined with her husband in instructing Apollos in a context that suggests an informal, private encounter (“they invited him to their home,” with no indication of anyone else being present, 18:26).³¹

There is increasing agreement, therefore, that neither the Gospels nor the book of Acts can prove decisive in answering the question of whether the first generation of Christians in general or Paul in particular reserved any leadership roles for men. For that one must turn to Paul’s writings themselves. It is possible that Paul became the first in his world to articulate a thoroughgoing egalitarianism, but if he did it will have to have been presented very clearly and unambiguously for it to have been recognized in a combination of cultures that were all far more traditional.³²

desires to point out both the continuities and discontinuities between Luke’s portrait of the apostle and the picture that emerges from his epistles, with a special focus on the speeches of Paul in Acts, see Stanley E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1999; Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001).

²⁹ Ivoni R. Reimer, *Women in the Acts of the Apostles: A Feminist Liberation Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995).

³⁰ See especially Sigountos and Shank, “Public Roles for Women,” 283–95.

³¹ See Wendell Willis, “Priscilla and Aquila—Co-Workers in Christ,” in Carroll D. Osburn (ed.), *Essays on Women in Earliest Christianity* (2 vols.; Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1993–95) 2.261–76.

³² Similarly Ernest Best (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Ephesians* [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998] 535), with respect to Eph 5:21–33.

*Data from Paul's Epistles**Descriptive Material*

Methodologically, one should not treat Paul's didactic passages on gender roles in isolation from merely descriptive material. What did women actually do in the Pauline mission—actions for which Paul was grateful? Andreas Köstenberger has analyzed every reference to a named woman in the Pauline Epistles and comes to well-balanced conclusions.³³ In fact, he reflects a growing consensus across the theological divide with respect to the nature of Paul's coworkers. The references to Phoebe in Rom 16:1–2 suggest that she was a deacon (διάκονος) and a patron (προστάτις). We know that the office of deaconess existed for the first several centuries of Church history (even before the separate feminine noun was utilized in the Greek language),³⁴ and Paul's calling her a deacon "of the church which is in Cenchreae"³⁵ suggests a fairly formal role. That *προστάτις* means neither simply a "helper" nor anything as formal as a "church leader," but rather one who financially supported Paul's mission also now finds widespread acceptance.³⁶

The evidence is even more considerable that the person paired with Andronicus in Rom 16:7 is a woman—Junia—who is quite possibly his wife, and that both are considered to be apostles. On the other hand, this is clearly one of Paul's uses of "apostle" more akin to the gift listed among the *χαρίσματα* of 1 Cor 12:28 or Eph 4:11 than to the apostolate of the Twelve. In short, it refers to missionary service, in keeping with the primary Greek meaning of *ἀπόστολος* as "someone sent on a mission."³⁷ Apart from Phoebe and Junia,

³³ Andreas Köstenberger, "Women in the Pauline Mission," in Peter G. Bolt and Mark Thompson (eds.), *The Gospel to the Nations: Perspectives on Paul's Mission* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2000) 221–47.

³⁴ See Anne Jensen, *God's Self-Confident Daughters: Early Christianity and the Liberation of Women* (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1996) 59–73; Stephen Clark, *Man and Woman in Christ* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: Servant, 1980) 117–23.

³⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, all translations of Scripture are my own.

³⁶ On both points, see Caroline F. Whelan, "Amica Pauli: The Role of Phoebe in the Early Church," *JNTS* 49 (1993): 67–85; Bruce W. Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001) 199–203. *Contra* Kazimierz Romaniuk, "Was Phoebe in Romans 16:1 a Deaconess?" *ZNW* 81 (1990): 132–34.

³⁷ See John Thorley, "Junia, A Woman Apostle," *NovT* 38 (1996): 18–29; Richard S. Cervin, "A Note Regarding the Name 'Junia(s)' in Romans 16.7," *NTS* 40 (1994): 464–70. M. H. Burer and Daniel B. Wallace ("Was Junia Really an Apostle? A

however, no other women are mentioned in Paul's letters with terminology that naturally suggests any leadership roles. One reads only of συνεργοῖς ("coworkers," Rom 16:3; Phil 4:3; a term Paul can use of himself, Timothy, and God [1 Cor 3:9; 1 Thess 3:2], the three of whom are obviously not of identical status) and of others who labored very hard in Christian activity (Rom 16:6, 12) or who hosted churches in their homes (1 Cor 16:19; Col 4:15; Phlm 2). It is certainly significant that out of the thirty-five people named in Romans 16, Paul alludes to no less than eleven women. But attempts to link female names besides Phoebe and Junia in Paul's letters with identifiable leadership roles simply outrun the data considerably.³⁸

What emerges from this brief survey proves strikingly parallel to Brooten's catalogue of occasional references to female synagogue leaders—exceptional women playing significant roles who still remain in a small minority (19 out of 107 names in the letters attributed to Paul)³⁹—but no examples of women in the position of the ongoing authoritative teaching of God's word. When one adds unnamed women into one's purview, one must note that 1 Tim 5:2 addresses πρεσβυτέρας, which could theoretically be translated "women elders." But in the context Paul is contrasting the responsibilities of Timothy

Re-examination of Rom 16.7," *NTS* 47 [2001]: 76–91) have argued for the translation "well-known to the apostles," arguing that the "inclusive" sense of being one "of" the apostles would have been rendered by a simple genitive and that instances in the TLG database of ἐπίσημος + ἐν + the dative consistently yield an "exclusive" sense where the subject is not part of the group described by the dative noun. But they present only a handful of the relevant texts and the only close parallel (by their admission), in *Pss. Sol.* 2:6, still yields a locative sense (and they use "among" in their translation, even if exclusively), and may actually have been mistranslated altogether in which case it is irrelevant. See the detailed rebuttal to this article in Richard Bauckham, *Gospel Women: Studies of the Named Women in the Gospels* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002) 172–80. In addition, given how consistently ἐν + the dative in the New Testament is a locative or instrumental rather than a pure dative, it does not seem that Burer and Wallace have provided adequate counterevidence to the majority view. See also Eldon J. Epp, "Text-critical, Exegetical, and Socio-Cultural Factors Affecting the Junia/Junias Variation in Romans 16,7," in A. Denaux (ed.), *New Testament Textual Criticism and Exegesis* (Leuven: Peeters, 2002) 227–91 (on the overwhelming support for understanding Junia as a woman), and esp. pp. 284–90 in rebutting Burer and Wallace.

³⁸ Including the most recent analysis that concludes on the basis of contexts in which κοπιᾶω occurs (a term often connected with Paul's references to co-workers) that they were "charismatic leaders" whose position subsequently disappeared in early Church history. See S. Schreiber, "Arbeit mit der Gemeinde (Röm 16,6, 12): Zur versunkenen Möglichkeit der Gemeindeleitung durch Frauen," *NTS* 46 (2000): 204–26.

³⁹ Köstenberger, "Women in the Pauline Mission," 224.

toward older and younger men and older and younger women. A partially parallel passage in Titus 2:3 uses the unambiguous term *πρεσβύτιδας* for “older women,” at which point the case for women elders in 1 Timothy evaporates altogether.⁴⁰

Foundational Theological Principles

It is also appropriate to observe the larger theological framework into which Paul’s extended teaching passages on gender roles fit. Clearly freedom in Christ is a major theme (see especially 1 Cor 8:1–11:1), as is the newness (new creation) that Christian conversion brings (see especially 2 Cor 5:11–21). In 1 Cor 12:11 Paul stresses that God’s Spirit gives believers gifts as he determines, and there is no indication that any of the charismata are gender-specific (in light of Acts 2:17–21 quite the opposite is almost certainly the case). Thus, room must be made for Christian women to exercise such spiritual gifts as apostleship, prophesying, teaching, pastoring, and so on. But none of these necessarily requires a formal leadership office for its use, and conspicuously absent from all of Paul’s lists of gifts is anything corresponding to the elder/overseer. First Corinthians 7 includes a series of statements that make it clear that Paul treats husbands and wives equally with respect to their rights to marry (7:2, 28, 33–34), to engage in sexual intercourse within marriage (7:3–5), and to divorce or stay married (7:10–13, 15–16). But nothing in this chapter answers the question of whether Paul envisioned distinct roles for husbands and wives within marriage at any point.

Pride of place in setting the broader theological framework for Paul’s teaching on gender roles must, however, be given to Gal 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female. For you all are one in Christ Jesus.”⁴¹ Perhaps nowhere else in Scripture does it become as clear as it does here how regularly commentators line up according to theological predispositions without truly exegeting the text!

⁴⁰ On both texts, cf. I. Howard Marshall with Philip H. Towner, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1999) 243, 574.

⁴¹ With appropriate nuancing, see Stanley J. Grenz with Denise M. Kjesbo, *Women in the Church: A Biblical Theology of Women in Ministry* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1995) 99–107; and Brigitte Kahl, “No Longer Male: Masculinity Struggles behind Galatians 3.28,” *JSTOT* 79 (2000): 37–49.

On the one hand, as Ben Witherington stressed almost two decades ago, the baptismal context (Gal 3:27) suggests considerably more than the simple equality of all persons in God's eyes with respect to access to salvation (on which all parties today agree). In their emphasis on baptism as an initiatory rite replacing circumcision, Christians were making a public, socially inclusive statement that contrasted sharply with their Jewish forebears.⁴² To the extent that baptism no longer automatically communicates that contrast in contemporary cultures, believers seeking to emulate Paul should find other important, regular, visible, and public forms of affirming the full ontological equality of men and women in Christ (e.g., in serving Communion, since no biblical text ever limits that task to a particular church leader), a point missed by almost all of the contemporary hierarchicalist literature.

On the other hand, nothing in Gal 3:28 demonstrates that Paul was thinking in terms of abolishing all role differentiation among men and women. The word εἷς ("one") does not obviously mean "equal in all respects" in any of its 344 other New Testament usages; "equal" is not even a definition found in the standard lexicons.⁴³ Equality may be suggested by certain contexts, but at this point another of Witherington's largely neglected observations comes into play. Later rabbinic sources could articulate propositions strikingly parallel to Gal 3:28 (see especially *Seder Eliyahu Rabbah* 7; *Yalkut Lech Leka* 76) in the midst of literature that was far more chauvinistic than anything in the New Testament, even by typical hierarchicalist interpretations.⁴⁴ So the only way to determine Paul's views on specific questions like gender roles in home and church is to turn to passages that explicitly address them. They cannot be inferred one way or the other from Gal 3:28.⁴⁵

⁴² Ben Witherington III, "Rite and Rights for Women—Galatians 3.28," *NTS* 27 (1981): 601. Cf. Wilhelm Egger, *Galaterbrief, Philipperbrief, Philemonbrief* (Würzburg: Echter, 1985) 29. For Christians from Roman backgrounds, there may have been a contrast with the rite of passage for adolescent boys in which they donned a fancy new toga as a sign of adulthood. See J. Albert Harrill, "Coming of Age and Putting on Christ: The *Toga Virilis* Ceremony, Its Paraenesis and Paul's Interpretation of Baptism in Galatians," *NovT* 44 (2002): 252–77.

⁴³ Richard W. Hove, *Equality in Christ? Galatians 3:28 and the Gender Dispute* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1999) 69–76, 107–21.

⁴⁴ Witherington, "Right and Rites for Women," 593–94. Cf. Ed L. Miller, "Is Galatians 3:28 the Great Egalitarian Text?" *ExpTim* 114 (2002): 9–11.

⁴⁵ An interesting sidelight of Gal 3:28 is the terminology "no male and female"—almost certainly an allusion to the Septuagint's wording of Gen 1:27 on God cre-

*Didactic Material on Gender Roles**1 Corinthians 11:2–16*

Chronologically, the first of Paul's more specifically didactic passages on gender roles appears in his first letter to the church in Corinth. The utter lack of manuscript support for any missing or dislocated verses in this passage renders the interpolation hypothesis a counsel of despair.⁴⁶ Only slightly less improbable is the view that 1 Cor 11:3–7 (or 3–10) articulates a Corinthian slogan, which vv. 11–16 rebut.⁴⁷ There is nothing slogan-like about these unwieldy statements, and vv. 13–16 further support the position of vv. 3–10.⁴⁸ It is also widely agreed that, as with all of 11:2–14:40, Paul is referring to a Christian worship setting.⁴⁹

Beyond a general consensus on these three points, almost every clause in the passage is debated. Antoinette Wire's reconstruction of

ating humanity "male and female." This has led some expositors to propose that Paul (or some other wing of early Christianity that he cites) was promoting androgyny. See Dennis R. MacDonald, *There Is No Male and Female* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987). For a succinct refutation of this proposal, see E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) 82–85. More probable is the suggestion of J. Louis Martyn (*Galatians* [New York: Doubleday, 1997] 381), who thinks Paul is declaring that the answer to loneliness is no longer marriage but the "new-creational community" in Christ. See also Ben Witherington III (*Women in the Earliest Churches* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988] 125): "Galatians 3.28 was probably a dictum serving the same function for women in Paul's audience as Matthew 19.10–12 did for Jesus, i.e., allowing women to remain single for the Lord, a condition Paul dearly prefers (1 Cor. 7). As such it opened the possibility of women being involved in roles other than the traditional ones of wife and mother."

⁴⁶ As defended by a handful of exegetes; see especially William O. Walker Jr., "The Vocabulary of 1 Corinthians 11.3–16: Pauline or Non-Pauline," *JST* 35 (1989): 75–88. For a rebuttal, see Gwen Ince, "Judge for Yourself: Teasing Out Some Knots in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *ABR* 48 (2000): 59–71. Even more idiosyncratic is the suggestion of Hans-Friedemann Richter ("Anstössige Freiheit in Korinth: Zur Literarkritik der Korintherbriefe [1 Kor 8,1–13 and 11,2–16]," in R. Bieringer (ed.), *The Corinthian Correspondence* [Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1996] 561–75) that 1 Cor 11:2–22, 27–34 forms one of ten separate letters Paul wrote to the Corinthians!

⁴⁷ See Thomas P. Shoemaker, "Unveiling of Equality: 1 Corinthians 11:2–16," *BTB* 17 (1987): 60–63.

⁴⁸ *Contra* the improbable interpretation of Thomas Schirrmacher (*Paulus im Kampf gegen den Schleier* [Bonn: Verlag für Kultur und Wissenschaft, 1993]) that 1 Cor 11:14–15 together should be punctuated as an ironic exclamation: "Not even nature itself teaches . . .!"

⁴⁹ *Contra* Harold R. Holmyard III, "Does 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Refer to Women Praying and Prophesying in Church?" *BibSac* 154 (1997): 461–72.

the situation that generated Paul's correctives has, however, gained a fair measure of acceptance and remains plausible. Some Christian women (and maybe some men!) were interpreting their freedom in Christ to mean that they could flout social convention concerning public appearance with no adverse effects on the community.⁵⁰ Paul thus praises the Corinthians for recognizing the essentially liberating message of the gospel—part of his Christian traditions that he passed on to them (1 Cor 11:2)—but he cannot continue to allow their current behavior during worship.⁵¹

The specific problem is what men and women are or are not wearing on their heads (1 Cor 11:4–5). So to introduce his instruction further, Paul articulates a foundational principle about metaphorical headship: “Now I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man but the man is a head of a woman and God is head over Christ” (11:3). Here one becomes entangled in the controversy over the meaning of κεφαλή (“head”). After earlier allegations that the word virtually never meant “authority” or absolutely never meant “source,”⁵² it is increasingly agreed that both usages do occur in the relevant cognate Greek literature, but both are rare.⁵³ What has not been demonstrated, however, is that the singular κεφαλή (as opposed to the plural that can mean the source[s] of a river) ever means “source” or “origin” without simultaneously implying some dimen-

⁵⁰ Antoinette Wire, *The Corinthian Women Prophets* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). On the men, see David W. J. Gill, “The Importance of Roman Portraiture for Head Coverings in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *TynBul* 41 (1990): 245–60. August Strobel (*Der erste Brief an die Korinther* [Zürich: Theologischer, 1989] 165), however, thinks that 1 Cor 11:4–5 was not necessarily provoked by any specific situation in Corinth, much less a crisis in the church, but represented an issue Paul would have frequently encountered.

⁵¹ Gail P. Corrington, “The ‘Headless Woman’: Paul and the Language of the Body in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *PRSt* 18 (1991): 223–31. The further assumption, as in L. Ann Jervis (“‘But I Want You to Know . . .’: Paul’s Midrashic Intertextual Response to the Corinthian Worshipers [1 Corinthians 11:2–16],” *JBL* 112 [1993]: 231–46), that the women were promoting genderlessness is too specific to demonstrate, given the current state of the evidence.

⁵² See, respectively, Berkeley Mickelsen and Alvera Mickelsen, “What Does *Kephalē* Mean in the New Testament?” in Alvera Mickelsen (ed.), *Women, Authority and the Bible* (Downers Grove, Ill.: Inter Varsity Press, 1986) 97–110; Wayne Grudem, “Does κεφαλή (‘Head’) Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Survey of 2,336 Examples,” *TJ* 6 (1985): 38–59.

⁵³ Authors defending “authority” draw especially on the Septuagint, Philo, and Plutarch; those favoring “source” draw on Philo (again), Herodotus, Artemidorus, the Orphic literature, and the Life of Adam. See Andrianjatovo Rakotoharintsifa, *Conflicts à Corinthe* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1997) 208.

sion of authority.⁵⁴ So the statements about men's and women's origins in vv. 8–9 and 11–12 in no way preclude a sense of authority residing in this word for “head.” Egalitarians have frequently misrepresented Stephen Bedale's influential article by selective quotation as if he argued for “source” apart from “authority”; in his conclusion he explains that “the male is κεφαλή in the sense of ἀρχή (beginning) relative to the female; and, in St. Paul's view, the female in consequence is ‘subordinate’ (cf. Eph. v. 23).”⁵⁵ It is also clearly appropriate to speak of Christ as an authority over men and of God as an authority over Christ (1 Cor 15:28),⁵⁶ though again “source” fits in each of these instances too (as long as one does not lapse into Arianism, whereby God is viewed as the source of a Son who at one time did not exist).

Several recent writers have proposed intermediate solutions that translate κεφαλή as “preeminent” or “prominent”—and perhaps therefore “representative”⁵⁷—but it is unclear if an entity can be most or even more prominent without implying some functional superiority, at least in a context in which the terms are used of God's and

⁵⁴ See the more nuanced discussion in Wayne Grudem, “The Meaning of *Kephale* (‘Head’): A Response to Recent Studies,” in John Piper and Wayne Grudem (eds.), *Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 1991) 425–68. See also Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Another Look at κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11.3,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 503–11; and Fitzmyer, “*Kēphalē* in 1 Corinthians 11.3,” *Int* 47 (1993): 52–59.

⁵⁵ Stephen Bedale, “The Meaning of κεφαλή in the Pauline Epistles,” *JTS* 5 (1954): 214. See also Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (*In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins* [New York: Crossroad, 1983] 229), who explains Paul's perspective as “a descending hierarchy, God-Christ-Man-Woman, in which each preceding member as ‘head’ or ‘source,’ stands above the other ‘in the sense that he established the other's being.’” Most meticulous of all in rebutting those who would cite texts claiming “source” without “authority” as the full meaning of the word is Wayne Grudem, “The Meaning of κεφαλή (‘Head’): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” *JETS* 44 (2001): 25–65.

⁵⁶ A passage that has not been adequately explained by those who want to deny functional subordination of Christ to the Father throughout all eternity, as Victor Hasler (“Die Gleichstellung der Gattin: Situationskritische Reflexionen zu 1 Kor 11, 2–16,” *TZ* 50 [1994]: 189–200) also points out, rightly stressing κεφαλή as “authority” in a context here, and throughout Paul's writings, of honor and status.

⁵⁷ Walter L. Liefeld, “Women, Submission and Ministry in 1 Corinthians,” in Mickelsen (ed.), *Women, Authority and the Bible*, 134–54; Andrew C. Perriman, “The Head of a Woman: The Meaning of κεφαλή in 1 Corinthians 11:3,” *JTS* 45 (1994): 602–22; Richard S. Cervin, “Does κεφαλή Mean ‘Source’ or ‘Authority Over’ in Greek Literature? A Rebuttal,” *TJ* 10 (1989): 85–112. W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. E. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (3d ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999) s.v. “κεφαλή,” suggests “a being of high status.”

Christ's headships.⁵⁸ As for the unusual order of pairings, thought by some egalitarians to weigh against a hierarchicalist interpretation of the verse, it is more probable that Paul begins with the "head of the man" followed by the "head of the woman" because it is men's and women's misbehavior that triggers his teaching in the first place. This then allows his statement about the "head of Christ" to appear in the climactic final position of the verse. It is also worth noting that it is possible to take ἀνὴρ and γυνή in v. 3 as "husband" and "wife" (as in the NRSV),⁵⁹ an ambiguity that will recur in 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2 as well.

Paul proceeds to mandate that these men and women in church should use their literal heads properly to honor their metaphorical heads (1 Cor 11:4–6). The debate continues as to whether Paul has long and short hair in view, as he does unequivocally in vv. 13–16, or if he is referring to the presence and absence of an external covering. Several studies, however, offer considerable support for the minority position that favors hair as in view throughout the whole passage (as in the NIV margin), an approach that gives Paul's argument tighter coherence.⁶⁰ Numerous contexts in both the Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds vie as explanations for why such coverings, whether external or intrinsic, would have mattered, but all share one common feature: The Christian worshipers would have been sending misleading signals suggesting sexual or religious infidelity.⁶¹

In the midst of these primary concerns, the additional implications of 1 Cor 11:5 dare not be missed: Paul assumes women will continue to pray and prophesy. And despite several attempts to limit

⁵⁸ As Perriman ("The Head of a Woman," 616) himself concedes is true "in many instances."

⁵⁹ Especially since no one bothered with the head coverings or hairstyles of unmarried girls. See Jason D. BeDuhn ("Because of the Angels": Unveiling Paul's Anthropology in 1 Corinthians 11," *JBL* 118 [1999]: 300–301), who thinks Paul then begins to generalize to all men and women in 1 Cor 11:7–9.

⁶⁰ See Marlis Gielen, "Betten and Prophezien mit unverhülltem Kopf?" *ZNW* 90 (1999): 220–49; David E. Blattenberger, *Rethinking 1 Corinthians 11:2–16 through Archaeological and Moral-Rhetorical Analysis* (Lewiston, N.Y.: Mellen, 1997); Alan Padgett, "The Significance of ἀντί in 1 Corinthians 11:15," *TynBul* 45 (1994): 181–87.

⁶¹ See my commentary (*1 Corinthians*, 210–11, 215) for the various options and representative advocates. More recently, see the collection of primary quotations in Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1999) 397–401. Curiously, Bruce Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 121–41) opts for a veil without even discussing the alternatives, despite the fact that the Greek word for "veil" (κάλυμμα) appears nowhere in the text (except in a few very late manuscripts in 1 Cor 11:10).

prophecy in early Christian circles (or in the ancient Mediterranean world more generally) to spontaneous “inspired” utterances,⁶² it seems clear that the term was used for a whole range of messages believed to be from God, including those into which previous thought and preparation had been given.⁶³ Paul is therefore tacitly granting women permission to preach God’s word, so long as they do so under proper male authority. One must distinguish between the gift of prophecy, which could be exercised in the delivery of a sermon, and the ongoing office or more established role of overseer/elder (see also below, under 1 Tim 2:8–15).⁶⁴

With its lack of symmetry between the two halves of the verse, 1 Cor 11:7 supports the interpretation that Paul is setting up a hierarchy of authority: Only man is the glory of God, while woman is the glory of man. The other asymmetrical feature (man is called “the image of God,” but woman is not “the image of man”) remains precisely to guard against the assumption of some interpreters that Paul thought women were not equally created in God’s image.⁶⁵ Paul clearly knew Genesis (1:26–28) better than that!

Paul then goes on to ground his injunction in what have come to be called creation ordinances (1 Cor 11:8–9).⁶⁶ He makes two observations that are asymmetrical. The woman was created out of

⁶² See David E. Aune, *Prophecy in Early Christianity and the Ancient Mediterranean World* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983) 338; Christopher Forbes, *Prophecy and Inspired Speech in Early Christianity and Its Hellenistic Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1995) 218–21; Ben Witherington III, *Jesus the Seer: The Progress of Prophecy* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999) 321.

⁶³ See David Hill, *New Testament Prophecy* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1979) 213; Thomas W. Gillespie, *The First Theologians: A Study in Early Christian Prophecy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994) 23–28; Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 960–61.

⁶⁴ Prayer and prophecy, in fact, sum up the essence of Christian worship. As Francis Watson (“The Authority of the Voice: A Theological Reading of 1 Cor 11.2–16,” *NTS* 46 [2000]: 525) phrases it, “In prophecy one articulates the word of God to the congregation, in prayer one articulates the word of the congregation to God; and in the conjunction of these activities there occurs the divine–human dialogue that lies at the heart of the Christian community’s life and worship.”

⁶⁵ As, e.g., Jouette M. Bassler (“1 Corinthians,” in Carol A. Newsom and Sharon H. Ringe [eds.], *The Women’s Bible Commentary* [Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox, 1992] 326–27) alleges. Rakotoharintsifa (*Confits à Corinthe*, 219–20) stresses that the notion that the man is not fully honored without the woman’s glory also guards against the view that does not ascribe equal dignity to the woman.

⁶⁶ On Paul’s specific uses of Genesis 1 and 2 here, see Jervis (“But I Want You to Know . . .,” 231–46), even though her egalitarian conclusions differ from those defended here.

the man, not vice versa, and the woman was created for the man, not vice versa. It is important to note carefully just what this theology of creation is supporting—not the presence or absence of head coverings, but the relationships of honor and glory described in v. 7, the immediate antecedent to vv. 8–9. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Paul is promoting some timeless relationship of authority and subordination here.

In 1 Cor 11:10 Paul further grounds his commands in the fact that angels are present. Despite the great consternation this verse has caused commentators, as well as the numerous suggestions that have been proposed, it is hard to improve on Joseph Fitzmyer's treatment a half century ago in the wake of the Qumran discoveries. In much of ancient Jewish thought, angels watch over creation, protecting and at times even participating in the worship of God's people, and thus they would have a vested interest in seeing Christian services conducted with decorum.⁶⁷

More relevant to the gender-roles debate is the meaning of ἐξουσίαν ἔχειν ἐπί in 1 Cor 11:10. On the one hand, the NIV gratuitously adds "sign of" to the "authority" that the woman should have on her head. On the other hand, ever since Morna Hooker's influential article in the 1960's, many have assumed that Paul was here explicitly granting authority to the woman to pray and prophesy, when appropriately covered.⁶⁸ But every other use of this three-word expression in the New Testament means "to have authority (or control) over" (Matt 9:6 [parallels in Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24]; Rev 11:6; 14:18; 16:9; 20:6), as do similar constructions with synonyms for ἐπί (Luke

⁶⁷ Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "A Feature of Qumran: Angelology and the Angels of 1 Corinthians xi.10," *NTS* 4 (1957): 48–58. BeDuhn ("Because of the Angels," 308) has recently given this approach an interesting twist, suggesting that Paul is responding to a gnostic-like view that angels caused the original separation of man and woman. Winter (*After Paul Left Corinth*, 136–38) resurrects the idea of the ἄγγελου as human "messengers"—that is, as potential informants to the Roman authorities. Loren T. Stuckenbruck ("Why Should Women Cover Their Heads Because of the Angels," *Stone-Campbell Journal* 4 [2001]: 205–34) surveys all the main options and thinks the women are to protect themselves against the attacks of evil angels. L. J. Lietaert Peerbolte ("Man, Woman, and the Angels in 1 Cor 11:2–16," in Gerald P. Luttikhuisen [ed.], *Creation of Man and Woman* [Leiden: Brill, 2000] 76–92) likewise thinks Paul bases his views on the legend of the "Watchers" as in *1 Enoch*, concerned that with the shift of the ages primordial dangers will rear their heads again.

⁶⁸ Morna D. Hooker, "Authority on Her Head: An Examination of 1 Corinthians xi.10," *NTS* 10 (1966): 410–16.

19:17; 1 Cor 7:37) or without forms of the verb “to have” (Luke 9:1; Rev 2:26; 6:8; 13:7). This suggests a translation more along the lines of “For this reason . . . a woman should exercise control over her head [that is, keep the appropriate covering on it].”⁶⁹

In 1 Cor 11:11–12, Paul introduces an important qualification to his theological argument from creation found in vv. 8–9. In Christ—in the sphere of God’s redemptive activity—men and women are mutually interdependent. But as in Gal 3:28, Paul stops short of saying anything that can fairly be construed as excluding all role differentiation. What’s more, vv. 8–9 would be pointless if vv. 11–12 entirely canceled them out, as many egalitarians imply.⁷⁰ Rather, Paul can appeal “to creation to support instructions which presume a hierarchicalist relationship of man and woman as well as undergird their new social equality in Christ without denying their difference.”⁷¹

Finally, Paul returns in 1 Cor 11:13 to the specific topic of head coverings, this time unambiguously referring to long and short hair, but now using three specific culture-bound arguments: what is fitting (πρέπον) in v. 13, the ordering of how things are (φύσις) in v. 14,⁷² and current universal Christian custom (συνήθεια) in v. 16. There is little disagreement that the key words in vv. 13 and 16 suggest less than a once-for-all-time mandate. φύσις, on the other hand, in every one of its nine other Pauline usages, probably means “the way God created things” or “that which inheres in the essence of an entity.” Still, the word in Hellenistic Greek often meant simply “the regular or established order of things.”⁷³ Its other three New Testament uses are quite different (Jas 3:7 [2x]; 2 Pet 1:4), and Paul would have known of Jewish Nazirites, Pentateuchal legislation against cutting one’s hair (Num 6), and Spartans whose long hair was their

⁶⁹ Similarly Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “1 Corinthians 11:2–16 Once Again,” *CBQ* 50 (1988): 271; Collins, *First Corinthians*, 411; BeDuhn, “Because of the Angels,” 302–303; Iver Larsen, “1 Corinthians 11.10 Revisited,” *BT* 48 (1997): 345–50. *Contra* Linda L. Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church: Three Crucial Questions* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000) 130, 196 n. 3.

⁷⁰ E.g., Gilbert Bilezikian, *Beyond Sex Roles* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1985) 133–34. Rightly C. H. Talbert, *Reading Corinthians* (New York: Crossroad, 1987) 70.

⁷¹ Judith Gundry-Volf, “Gender and Creation in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16: A Study in Paul’s Theological Method,” in J. Ådna, S. J. Hafemann, and O. Hofius (eds.), *Evangelium, Schriftauslegung, Kirche* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1997) 152.

⁷² Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 844–46.

⁷³ Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich (*A Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “φύσις”) include 1 Cor 11:14 under this definition.

glory. Moreover, the “natural” thing for hair to do is to grow long if it is not cut!⁷⁴ So it seems best to acknowledge that Paul is using “nature” here in a different sense than he does elsewhere. In sum, he does not require the presence or absence of head coverings as a timeless mandate, but he does see male headship, at least within marriage and perhaps more broadly, as defining a timeless authority structure that the Corinthians’ current practices in their culture called into question.⁷⁵

1 Corinthians 14:33b–38

Three chapters later in the same epistle Paul again addresses gender roles in the Corinthian church. Because of the sequence of the two passages, Paul’s meaning in 1 Cor 11:2–16 should influence interpretation here, not vice versa. Whatever Paul means in silencing the women cannot be a timeless absolute for all kinds of speech in church, since he has already permitted them to pray and preach.⁷⁶ As in the previous passage some interpreters suggest a non-Pauline interpolation to account for the seemingly contrary nature of this text.⁷⁷ In this instance, there is at least manuscript evidence of textual displacement, primarily in the Western family of texts (see D F G it^{ar, b, d, f, g} vg^{ms} Ambrosiaster Sedulius-Scotus), in which 1 Cor 14:34–35 is placed after v. 40. This ordering is not likely to be original, since vv. 34–35 seems intrusive in its conventional location, interrupting a discussion of tongues and prophecy in vv. 26–33 and vv. 39–40. But the claim has been advanced that if Paul’s autograph lacked these verses altogether, this could also explain their insertion into two different places in 1 Corinthians 14.

⁷⁴ Yeo Khiok-Khng, “Differentiation and Mutuality of Male-Female Relations in 1 Corinthians 11:2–16,” *BR* 43 (1998): 20.

⁷⁵ See further my *1 Corinthians*, 207–26. *Contra* the view that sees Paul as opposing androgyny (again!), as in Birgitte G. Hjort, “Gender Hierarchy or Religious Androgyny? Male-Female Interaction in the Corinthian Community—A Reading of 1 Cor. 11,2–16,” *ST* 55 (2001): 58–80.

⁷⁶ *Contra* those who see the two passages as flatly contradictory and thus dismiss one or more as secondary; see, e.g., Wolfgang Schrage, *Der erste Brief an die Korinther* (Zürich: Benziger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1991–95) 3.479–92; Marlene Crüsemann, “Irredeemably Hostile to Women: Anti-Jewish Elements in the Exegesis of the Dispute about Women’s Right to Speak (1 Cor. 14.34–35),” *JSNNT* 79 (2000): 19–36.

⁷⁷ See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 699–708; Winsome Munro, “Women, Text and the Canon: The Strange Case of 1 Corinthians 14:33–35,” *BTB* 18 (1988): 26–31.

Philip B. Payne has thus argued that the sixth-century Latin Codex Fuldensis furnishes evidence for a textual tradition lacking 1 Cor 14:34–35 because, in addition to containing them in their normal sequence, it reproduces vv. 36–40 in smaller handwriting in the bottom margin of the text and uses a “bar-umlaut” in the left-hand margin at the beginning of verse 34. Payne suggests that bar-umlauts consistently indicate textual variants of addition or omission in Codex Vaticanus (B) and therefore that the scribe creating Fuldensis was indicating that he knew of a version of 1 Corinthians that lacked vv. 34–35 altogether.⁷⁸ Curt Niccum, however, has pointed out that the short horizontal bar and the umlaut appear in the left-hand sigla. The bars continue in the sixteenth-century additions to Vaticanus and merely indicate paragraph divisions. Only umlauts indicate textual variants, of all kinds, with the result that it is far more probable that Fuldensis was merely showing that it knew of the less common order—namely, vv. 1–33, 36–40, 34–35.⁷⁹

Undaunted, Payne subsequently turned to the twelfth-century Greek minuscule 88, which follows the less common sequence and also contains a “double slash” in the manuscript before and after 1 Cor 14:36–40. Payne again proposes that this indicates that the scribe knew of a textual tradition that lacked vv. 34–35, even while conceding that in principle the double slashes could just as easily mean the scribe simply knew of the traditional sequence of all the verses.⁸⁰ In the absence of any single manuscript actually lacking these verses, this latter explanation becomes far more probable. It seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that some scholars are so committed to finding proof for their theories that they will twist the evidence in whatever direction is necessary to generate apparent support!⁸¹

As with 1 Cor 11:2–16, some scholars have suggested that 1 Cor 14:34–35 reflects a Corinthian slogan, a theory that Paul rebuts in vv. 36–37. After a flurry of support for this proposal in the 1980’s,

⁷⁸ Philip B. Payne, “Fuldensis, Sigla for Variants in Vaticanus, and 1 Corinthians 14.34–5,” *NTS* 41 (1995): 240–62.

⁷⁹ Curt Niccum, “The Voice of the Manuscripts on the Silence of Women: The External Evidence for 1 Corinthians 14.34–5,” *NTS* 43 (1997): 242–55.

⁸⁰ Philip B. Payne, “MS. 88 as Evidence for a Text without 1 Corinthians 14.34–5,” *NTS* 44 (1998): 152–58.

⁸¹ Cf. further D. W. Odell-Scott, “Editorial Dilemma: The Interpolation of 1 Cor 14:34–35 in the Western Manuscripts of D, G and 88,” *BTB* 30 (2000): 68–74.

it largely and properly fell into disuse.⁸² Again, such a theory would require this particular slogan to be far more lengthy and cumbersome than any others known from either 1 Corinthians or cognate literature. It would require the proponents of the slogan to be from a conservative, law-abiding wing of the Church (for which we have no other solid evidence) rather than from the licentious (or at least Hellenistic) faction that accounts for every other slogan. And it would demand taking ἤ in v. 36 as a complete negation—an otherwise entirely unparalleled meaning of the word.⁸³

The two most probable explanations of 1 Cor 14:34–35, therefore, both acknowledge vv. 34 and 35 as an integral part of what Paul himself both wrote and supported. Among hierarchicalists, the most popular of these two approaches is to see the “speaking” that Paul prohibits as limited to the evaluation of prophecy.⁸⁴ Verses 26–33a discuss tongues and their interpretation, as well as prophecy and its evaluation, in that order. But the first three of these forms of speech reflect spiritual gifts given irrespective of gender. The evaluation of prophecy, on the other hand (to be distinguished from the gift of discerning spirits),⁸⁵ is at one level the responsibility of the entire congregation (v. 29), but in instances of disagreement it would have devolved to the leaders of the congregation, that is, to the elders or overseers, who were most likely men.⁸⁶ Given that the verb λαλέω (“to speak”) in twenty of its twenty-one other occurrences in this chapter refers to one of these more limited forms of charismatic speech or its evaluation, this approach gains a particular plausibility.

⁸² Two recent exceptions are Collins, *First Corinthians*, 514–17; and J. M. Holmes, *Text in a Whirlwind: A Critique of Four Exegetical Devices at 1 Timothy 2.9–15* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000) 229–38.

⁸³ See my *1 Corinthians*, 280.

⁸⁴ See, e.g., Simon J. Kistemaker, *Exposition of the First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993) 511–15; D. A. Carson, “‘Silent in the Churches’: On the Role of Women in 1 Corinthians 14:33b–36,” in Piper and Grudem (eds.), *Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 140–53. Holmes (*Text in a Whirlwind*, 221) perceives that this is the most common interpretation among those who reject the interpolation theory.

⁸⁵ Wayne A. Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in 1 Corinthians* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1982) 58–67.

⁸⁶ Based on a combination of the evidence of Acts 14:23 that Paul and Barnabas appointed elders wherever they planted churches and Paul’s greeting in Phil 1:1 that points to overseers and deacons as the two leadership offices in those churches, as well as with the observations made above about no mention of women elders and overseers in the Pauline churches. Chapters 2 and 3 of 1 Timothy reinforce this supposition.

The other common option, particularly among egalitarians, is to understand the largely uneducated women in the Corinthian church as asking disruptive questions, probably because they required so much or such basic foundational instruction that the flow of teaching and worship would be destroyed.⁸⁷ There is evidence from the practice of Greco-Roman philosophers for students to be encouraged to interrupt with questions (see Plutarch, *On Lectures*), so such a reconstruction seems credible. What is incredible, on this supposition, is Paul's response. Since there would also have been a large number of uneducated men and at least a few well-trained women, it seems "unbearably sexist" for Paul to have silenced all of the women and none of the men in this setting.⁸⁸ Anthony Thiselton, however, proposes a credible combination of these last two explanations—namely, that the women were asking disruptive questions as part of the evaluation of prophecy.⁸⁹ Not least because this could have led to wives contradicting their husbands, including husbands' prophecies, Paul must instruct them to refrain from this one specific kind of speech.⁹⁰

Paul's point again, therefore, is to insist on proper roles of authority and subordination between men and women, or at least between wives and husbands (1 Cor 14:34b).⁹¹ The reference to *ὁ νόμος* ("the law") does not likely point to Church law or Greco-Roman law⁹² or to Jewish tradition.⁹³ Paul nowhere else uses this term without qualification in either of these ways, and there are no contextual considerations that suggest such usage. Rather, he is likely appealing to "Torah" as Scripture as a whole and thinking of some combination of God's created order plus Old Testament regulations in general.⁹⁴ Verses 36–38 then provide further tripartite support for

⁸⁷ See, in various forms, Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, 80–88; Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 152–62; L. Ann Jervis, "1 Corinthians 14:34–35: A Reconsideration of Paul's Limitation of the Free Speech of Some Corinthian Women," *JSNNT* 58 (1995): 51–74.

⁸⁸ Carson, "Silent in the Churches," 147.

⁸⁹ Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1150–61.

⁹⁰ James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 592.

⁹¹ See E. Earle Ellis, "The Silenced Wives of Corinth (1 Cor. 14:34–5)," in Eldon J. Epp and Gordon D. Fee (eds.), *New Testament Textual Criticism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981) 213–20.

⁹² *Contra* Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 158–59.

⁹³ *Contra* Holmes's interpretation in *Text in a Whirlwind*, 267–98.

⁹⁴ See Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1153–55. This point is recognized also by Liefeld, "Women, Submission and Ministry in 1 Corinthians," 149–50.

obeying Paul: the Corinthians have no unique dispensation from God (v. 36) to contradict the universal practice of the Pauline churches (v. 33b); those who do think they are particularly spiritual must all the more recognize Paul's instruction as a commandment from the Lord (v. 37), and those who ignore this warning will themselves be ignored (by God?—v. 38). The application of Paul's injunction will look quite different from one time and place to another throughout Church history, not least because of so much diversity in belief and practice over what constitutes prophecy and how it is evaluated, but whatever mechanisms are developed must respect the authority of male leadership in at least the highest level of a given ecclesiastical context.⁹⁵

For many scholars, this study might come to an end at this point, because all of the remaining texts on gender roles in letters attributed to Paul appear in those epistles often labeled "deutero-Pauline." But, in fact, good cases can be marshaled for their authenticity,⁹⁶ and if there is even a slight possibility that Paul wrote them (or oversaw their writing by amanuenses with varying degrees of stylistic or literary freedom), one dare not exclude them from consideration in a study of this nature.

Colossians 3:18–19

This passage introduces a Christian *Haustafel* (literally, "house slate" or "household code") that spans Col 3:18–4:1. Without interacting in detail with the sizable quantity of literature on domestic codes, whether Christian, Jewish, Greek, or Roman, suffice it to say that what stands out about the New Testament codes is the reciprocal

It is not likely that Gen 3:16 is in view, since Paul elsewhere does not ground his ethics in the Fall (on 1 Tim 2:14, see below). *Contra*, e.g., Hans-Josef Klauck, *l. Korintherbrief* (Würzburg: Echter, 1987) 105.

⁹⁵ See further my *1 Corinthians*, 279–82, 286–87, 290–92. A new approach has recently been suggested by Terence Paige ("The Social Matrix of Women's Speech at Corinth: The Context and Meaning of the Command to Silence in 1 Corinthians 14:33b–36," *BBR* 12 [2002]: 217–42), who argues that the only kind of speaking Paul is forbidding is ordinary conversation between women and men to whom they are not related, which still would have been seen as dishonorable in Greek society. But this is precisely *not* what *λαλέω* consistently means in 1 Corinthians, as noted above.

⁹⁶ For judicious discussions, see the relevant introductory sections of James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996); Peter T. O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999); and William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles* (Nashville: Nelson, 2000).

responsibilities they give to leadership figures in relationships of authority and submission.⁹⁷ The one unambiguously Christian feature in the otherwise succinct set of instructions for husbands and wives in Colossians is that the wives must submit “as is fitting in the Lord.” As James Dunn explains, “only that degree of subjection to the husband which is ‘fitting in the Lord’ is to be countenanced.”⁹⁸ A Christian woman married to a non-Christian husband would already have been violating social convention by not maintaining (or converting to) the religion of her spouse. As with scriptural teaching on civil disobedience more generally (Exod 2:1–10; Dan 3, 6; Acts 4:19–20; 5:29–32), Paul⁹⁹ likewise would not have tolerated any behavior that violated the principles of the gospel, even on the grounds that the wife was simply obeying her spouse. When Eph 5:24 calls upon the wife to submit to her husband ἐν παντί, then, it must be referring to something like “in every area of life,” not literally in every single request.¹⁰⁰

The larger context of this Colossians text also gives the lie to the notion that there is a unique tension between the (supposedly egalitarian) teaching of Gal 3:28 and the (more hierarchicalist) New Testament *Haustafeln*. For Col 3:11 contains the closest New Testament parallel to Gal 3:28, but with clauses about “circumcised or uncircumcised” and “barbarian or Scythian” rather than “male or female.” The author of Colossians, even if not Paul, obviously did not feel the same kind of tension between programmatic mandates about oneness in Christ and subsequent role differentiation that modern egalitarians do. What is more, this supposed tension is found even *within* the Colossian *Haustafel*, as it can declare that in God’s economy

⁹⁷ Observed by Joachim Gnilka (*Der Kolosserbrief* [Freiburg: Herder, 1980] 205–16) in an excellent excursus on *Haustafeln* in Paul’s world. Andrew T. Lincoln (*Ephesians* [Dallas: Word, 1990] 374) notes that commands to husbands to love their wives are infrequent outside the New Testament (citing only the Jewish sources *Pseudo-Phocylides* 195–197 and *b. Yebam.* 62b), and that *agapē* (“love”) is never used in Greco-Roman household codes as a husband’s duty. Angela Stadhartinger (“The Origin and Intention of the Household Code in the Letter to the Colossians,” *JSNNT* 79 [2000]: 117–30) finds the code more conservative and predating Colossians in origin but nevertheless notes key details that encourage the audience to read “against the grain.”

⁹⁸ Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*, 248. See also Josef Pfammatter, *Epheserbrief/ Kolosserbrief* (Würzburg: Echter, 1990) 80.

⁹⁹ Without foreclosing the authorship debate, for convenience’s sake we will continue to refer to the writer(s) of Colossians, Ephesians, and the Pastorals as Paul.

¹⁰⁰ O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 417.

“there is no favoritism”—right in the very paragraph that enjoins slaves to obey their masters (Col 3:25).¹⁰¹ More likely, the perceived contradiction is one of more recent invention.

The paralleling of injunctions concerning marriage, parenting, and slavery also invites comparison and contrast. On the one hand, Willard Swartley has documented in detail the parallels in argumentation concerning the abolition of slavery and the liberation of women throughout the history of Christian discussion of these topics.¹⁰² On the other hand, other *Haustafeln* from antiquity, even in Christian circles, by no means necessarily group together institutions that they deem to be entirely parallel.¹⁰³ Moreover, strictly speaking, the parallels to the abolition of slavery in the Colossian *Haustafel* would be the abolition of marriage and of parenthood, causes that do not form the objectives of most egalitarians!

Ephesians 5:21–33

The author of Ephesians utilizes a *Haustafel* discussing the same three pairs of relationships: wives and husbands, children and parents, and slaves and masters (Eph 5:22–6:9). Here, however, the instructions, particularly to wives and husbands, are greatly elaborated. The domestic code is introduced by v. 21, “submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ”—a clause that has been the subject of endless controversy. Again, mutually exclusive options have been debated. One side argues that Paul is using ἀλλήλοις in its weakened, less than fully reciprocal sense to mean “some . . . to others,” so that v. 21 merely epitomizes the three relationships of submission to leadership about to be enunciated.¹⁰⁴ Interestingly, Luke 7:32 and Acts 19:37 both reflect this weakened sense where, in context, all people are not doing the same thing to all other people.¹⁰⁵ The other side

¹⁰¹ On both of these points, see Stephen Motyer, “The Relationship between Paul’s Gospel of ‘All One in Christ Jesus’ (Gal. 3:28) and the ‘Household Codes,’” *VE* 19 (1989): 37, 44.

¹⁰² Willard Swartley, *Slavery, Sabbath, War and Women* (Scottsdale, Pa.: Herald, 1983). Cf. also William J. Webb, *Slaves, Women and Homosexuals* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2001). Webb stresses the parallels between the debates over slaves and women but the differences in the biblical data when comparing either of those issues with homosexuality.

¹⁰³ See, e.g., *1 Clem.* 21.6–9; Ignatius, *Pol.* 4.1–5.2; Polycarp, *Phil.* 4.2–5.1.

¹⁰⁴ See James B. Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981) 139–41; O’Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 400–404.

¹⁰⁵ On Luke 7:32 and its parallel in Matt 11:16–17, see my *Interpreting the Parables* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1990) 208–10.

replies that fully mutual submission must be in view, in keeping with the much more common meaning of the reciprocal pronoun, so that Paul's subsequent commands cannot set up one-directional lines of submission to authority.¹⁰⁶ In fact, a "both . . . and" solution to this debate again seems by far the most probable.

Ephesians 5:21 is a hinge verse, serving to complete the series of participles that help define being "filled with the Spirit" (v. 18); in that context v. 21 means that there will be many situations in which every Christian will have to submit to many other Christians, irrespective of gender, status, and the like. But v. 21 also introduces the Ephesian domestic code, in which lines of submission are not described as reversible.¹⁰⁷ First Peter 5:5 affords the closest scriptural parallel to this dual function: Younger men must "submit" (ὑποτάγητε) to the church's elders—a one-directional command—but all the believers must clothe themselves with humility toward "one another" (ἀλλήλοις)—a functional equivalent to mutual submission.¹⁰⁸

Although attempts have been made to define ὑποτάσσω (Eph 5:21–24) so that no subjection to authority is implied at all,¹⁰⁹ none of the thirty-eight other occurrences of this verb in the New Testament suggests so weakened a usage.¹¹⁰ And the combination of ὑποτάσσω with κεφαλή ("head") makes it doubly difficult to erase all implications of authority and subordination.¹¹¹ On the other hand, ὑποτάσσεσθε as an imperative spoken directly to the wives is much more likely to be a middle than a passive voice, thus underlining that what Paul is enjoining is for them to voluntarily "submit themselves" to their husbands, not to forcibly "be subjected" by their spouses.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ E.g., Keener, *Paul, Women and Wives*, 168–72; Belleville, *Women Leaders and the Church*, 120–21.

¹⁰⁷ Similarly Michel Bouttier, *L'Épître de saint Paul aux Ephésiens* (Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1991) 236–37. See also Hans Hübner, *An Philemon, An die Kolosser, An die Epheser* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1997) 242.

¹⁰⁸ Similarly, Lincoln, *Ephesians*, 366; George W. Knight III, "Husbands and Wives as Analogues of Christ and the Church: Ephesians 5:21–33 and Colossians 3:18–19," in Piper and Grudem (eds.), *Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 167.

¹⁰⁹ J. Ramsey Michaels (*1 Peter* [Dallas: Word, 1988] 154) translates the word ὑποτάσσω simply as "defer."

¹¹⁰ Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, s.v. "ὑποτάσσω": to cause to be in a submissive relationship, to subject, to subordinate (or subject oneself, . . . to obey).

¹¹¹ O'Brien, *The Letter to the Ephesians*, 411.

¹¹² Best, *Ephesians*, 535. Just as in the extrabiblical literature, in Ephesians and Colossians κεφαλή can stress more the sense of "authority" (Eph 1:22; Col 1:18; 2:10) or more the idea of "source" (Eph 4:15; Col 2:19), but one never finds "source" without any sense of "authority" at all.

When one realizes that the same verb recurs, even in the passive voice, in the context of Christ's subjection to God (1 Cor 15:28), one should acknowledge that the concept can be entirely positive! And the absence of any command to the wives to "obey" (ὕπακούω) their husbands can scarcely be coincidental (contrast Eph 6:1 and 6:5). One may respectfully submit to an authority (see Eph 5:33) without, necessarily, "setting up chains of command."¹¹³

By the time Paul turns to his commands to the husbands, he has already radically redefined patriarchy. The asymmetrical relationship of "submission" (Eph 5:23–24) and "love" (5:25–30) is likened to the relationship between the Church and Christ. Without question Jesus is the authoritative head of the Church, and he does not submit to believers in the way that believers must submit to him. On the other hand, there is no greater example of love than his self-giving, sacrificial death for humankind. A husband who seriously attempts to model such sacrifice will lead by seeking what is in his wife's best interests; he will put her concerns above his own.¹¹⁴

Once again, this *Haustafel* must be read in light of the entire epistle in which it is embedded, noting particularly the emphasis throughout Ephesians on unity in diversity as a manifestation of love.¹¹⁵ Husbands and wives who consistently implement this radically redefined patriarchy need not fear the abuse and dysfunction so often associated with hierarchicalist marriages.¹¹⁶

Yet even more clearly than in the Corinthian passages, Paul puts forward these commands not merely as a vestige of creation and the old order of things, against which Christians should at times fight, but as a reflection of redemption—Christ's relationship with his people (Eph 5:25–33). Abandonment of these lines of authority and submission in marriage, however well-intentioned, would appear to

¹¹³ See Klyne Snodgrass, *Ephesians* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) 285–318.

¹¹⁴ See Jean-Noël Aletti, *Saint Paul Épître aux Colossiens* (Paris: Gabalda, 1993) 251–52; Rudolf Schnackenburg, *Ephesians: A Commentary* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1991) 245–46.

¹¹⁵ On which, see Gregory W. Dawes, *The Body in Question: Metaphor and Meaning in the Interpretation of Ephesians 5:21–33* (Leiden: Brill, 1998). *Contra* Karl-Heinz Fleckenstein (*Ordnet euch einander unter in der Furcht Christi* [Würzburg: Echter, 1994]), who seems to collapse all of Ephesians' teaching into an utterly reciprocal love-command.

¹¹⁶ On which, see James R. Beck and Catherine C. Kroeger (eds.), *Women, Abuse and the Bible* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

contravene the very foundation of *new* life in Christ.¹¹⁷ Not surprisingly, there is a fair consensus among recent specialized studies of this passage that it does not abolish patriarchy, even as it substantially refashions it into what has often been called “love-patriarchalism.”¹¹⁸ No longer does the husband have unique privileges, but rather unique responsibilities.¹¹⁹ This Ephesians text thus demonstrates even more clearly than the Corinthian passages that, at least in the domestic realm, Paul preserves an irreversible hierarchy between husbands and wives. But also more clearly than in 1 Corinthians, it becomes apparent how marvelously re-created and wonderfully loving this hierarchy is to become. Given that Ephesians in these respects seems clearer than 1 Corinthians, it is not surprising that a few scholars think Paul held to hierarchy in the domestic realm while abolishing it in ecclesial circles.¹²⁰ But given the early Church’s predominant use of private homes for congregational gatherings, it is much more likely that relationships in church would be modeled on Christian teaching about domestic relationships than the reverse.¹²¹

¹¹⁷ A point made convincingly throughout Stephen F. Miletic, “*One Flesh*”: *Ephesians 5.22–24, 5.31: Marriage and the New Creation* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1988). Andreas Lindemann (*Der Epheserbrief* [Zürich: Theologischer, 1985] 101) isolates three levels of rationale for the commands of submission and love: an anthropological-social level in the experience of loving one’s spouse as oneself, a Christological-ecclesiological level of Christ as the loving head of the Church, and a soteriological level of Christ as the Savior of the body. Cf. also Ian A. McFarland, “A Canonical Reading of Ephesians 5:21–33: Theological Gleanings,” *ThTo* 57 (2000): 344–56; and Annette Merz, “Why Did the Pure Bride of Christ (2 Cor. 11.2) Become a Wedded Wife (Eph. 5.22–33)?” *JST* 79 (2000): 147.

¹¹⁸ Thus, most recently, Turid K. Seim, “A Superior Minority? The Problem of Men’s Headship in Ephesians 5,” *ST* 49 (1995): 167–81. See also, with varying emphases, David M. Park, “The Structure of Authority in Marriage: An Examination of *Hypotassō* and *Kephalē* in Ephesians 5:21–33,” *EvQ* 59 (1987): 117–24; Robert W. Wall, “Wifely Submission in the Context of Ephesians,” *CSR* 17 (1988): 272–85; Andreas J. Köstenberger, “The Mystery of Christ and the Church: Head and Body, ‘One Flesh,’” *TJ* 12 (1991): 79–94; Russ Dudley, “‘Submit Yourselves to One Another’: A Socio-Historical Look at the Household Code of Ephesians 5:15–6:9,” *ResQ* 41 (1999): 27–44.

¹¹⁹ See Jostin Adna, “Die eheliche Liebesbeziehung als Analogie zu Christi Beziehung zur Kirche: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche Studie zu Epheser 5.21–33,” *ZTK* 92 (1995): 434–65.

¹²⁰ See, e.g., Richard M. Davidson (“Headship, Submission, and Equality in Scripture,” in Nancy Vyhmeister [ed.], *Women in Ministry: Biblical and Historical Perspectives* [Berrien Springs, Ind.: Andrews University Press, 1998] 259–95), who also cites Donald Bloesch, Ben Witherington III, and Sharon Gritz.

¹²¹ Rightly Andreas Lindemann (*Der Kolosserbrief* [Zürich: Theologischer, 1983] 64), who notes similar logic in Aristotle on the relationship between the family and

1 *Timothy* 2:8–15

It is sometimes implied that the hierarchicalist's argument all boils down to 1 Timothy 2. This is patently not the case; this study could end here and the conclusions would be reasonably secure. If anything, this passage complicates matters because the exegetical questions are so complex. On the other hand, some of the difficulties have been overestimated, and progress in interpretation has been made. The easiest way out, of course, is to declare the Pastorals non-Pauline and therefore not binding on Christians, but this move requires not merely rejecting Pauline authorship but also canonical authority.¹²² The claim that the Pastorals reflect a late, institutionalized form of Christianity incompatible with first-generation Pauline theology ignores the indications of Church organization alongside charismatic activity from the very beginning of the Christian movement,¹²³ as well as the evidence from throughout the Pastorals that places them much closer to Paul in time and character, even if pseudonymous, than to the end of the first century or into the second century, as has often been alleged.¹²⁴

There is no question that false teaching prompted Paul to write 1 Timothy (1:3–7; 4:1–8; 6:3–5, 20–21).¹²⁵ The most elaborate recent reconstruction of the heresy in Ephesus is Catherine and Richard Kroeger's highly touted work that centers around hints of an Artemis cult and Gnostic heresies that were putting women forward as superior to men and promoting the myth that Eve was even a creatrix

larger social institutions more generally. *Contra* Else Kähler (*Die Frau in den Paulinischen Briefen* [Zürich: Gotthelf, 1960] 140), who argues for the reverse.

¹²² See, e.g., Joanna Dewey, "1 Timothy," in Newsom and Ringe (eds.), *The Women's Bible Commentary*, 355–56; Otto Knoch, *1. and 2. Timotheusbrief, Titusbrief* (2d ed.; Würzburg: Echter, 1990) 26.

¹²³ For a wide-ranging discussion, see Ronald Y. K. Fung, "Ministry, Community and Spiritual Gifts," *EvQ* 56 (1984): 3–20; Fung, "Function or Office: A Survey of the New Testament Evidence," *Evangelical Review of Theology* 8 (1984): 16–39. Given that much of the argument for an early noninstitutionalized Church comes from the Corinthian epistles, Andrew Clarke's study of the structure and leadership of the Corinthian church (*Serve the Community of the Church: Christians as Leaders and Ministers* [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000]) proves highly significant.

¹²⁴ Marshall (*The Pastoral Epistles*) prefers to coin the term *allonymity* rather than use the term *pseudonymity*, which connotes intent to deceive. Luke T. Johnson (*The First and Second Letters to Timothy* [New York: Doubleday, 2001] 55–90) goes further and defends Pauline authorship, in part on the basis of such evidence.

¹²⁵ *Contra* Holmes, *Text in a Whirlwind*, 117–39.

of men.¹²⁶ This hypothesis then enables egalitarians to argue that 1 Tim 2:13–14 does not provide reasons for Paul’s silencing women in vv. 11–12, but for refutations of the pagan claims that have infiltrated the church. Careful study of the ancient sources has demonstrated, however, that the Kroegers have culled information from numerous unrelated documents spanning a period of several centuries before to several centuries after the time of Paul and that they have made numerous unwarranted inferences from very slender data.¹²⁷ The relevant Gnostic literature is no earlier than the third century A.D., and the pre-Christian information on the Artemis cult does not allow one to relativize 1 Tim 2:13–14 as responding to specific mythological claims.¹²⁸ And a careful study of the Pastoral Epistles discloses that, while women were being victimized by the false teaching in Ephesus, whatever it was (1 Tim 5:15; 2 Tim 3:6–9), no passage ever suggests that they were numbered among the false teachers themselves.¹²⁹ Again, as in 1 Corinthians 14, if all Paul were prohibiting were some kind of improper teaching, it would be horribly prejudicial for him to ban all women and no men. Obviously, plenty of men *were* caught up in the heresy; that much we know for sure! So no genuine evidence emerges from either the historical or literary contexts of 1 Tim 2:8–15 to predispose one to treat its teaching as merely culture-bound or situation-specific.

Paul begins here in 1 Tim 2:8 with a call to men “to pray in every place, lifting up holy hands without wrath or wranglings.” “Place” here probably means “place of worship,” just as τόπος (“place”) without qualification in Judaism often referred to the temple (and see 1 Tim 3:15).¹³⁰ The typical Jewish posture of prayer is presupposed;

¹²⁶ Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11–15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992).

¹²⁷ See Steven M. Baugh, “A Foreign World: Ephesus in the First Century,” in Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin (eds.), *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis*, 13–52. This is being increasingly recognized even by egalitarians. See, e.g., Kevin Giles, “A Critique of the ‘Novel’ Contemporary Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 Given in the Book *Women in the Church*,” *EvQ* 72 (2000): 213.

¹²⁸ See conclusions drawn by Sharon H. Gritz, *Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess at Ephesus: A Study of 1 Timothy 2:9–15 in Light of the Religious and Cultural Milieu of the First Century* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 1991) 157–58, conclusions that are almost always overlooked by egalitarians who cite her.

¹²⁹ As the egalitarian Walter Liefeld (“Response,” in Mickelsen [ed.], *Women, Authority and the Bible*, 220) concedes. Cf. also Raymond F. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus* (Louisville, Ky. and London: Westminster John Knox, 2002) 70.

¹³⁰ Everett Ferguson, “*Topos* in 1 Timothy 2:8,” *ResQ* 33 (1991): 65–73.

the actual mandate is to be *holy* in one's prayers, which is clearly a transcultural principle. If the men were the primary church leaders and were quarreling in some way with each other, one can understand why Paul would single them out for this rebuke. Next, he commands the women to dress modestly and to be adorned with good works rather than with ostentatious clothing and hairstyle (1 Tim 2:9–10). The NIV and the NRSV both mistranslate an important conjunction in v. 9; Paul does not object to braided hair per se, but to “braided hair and (καί) gold or (ἢ) pearls or (ἢ) costly clothing,” referring to lavish hairdos with precious gems interwoven.¹³¹ With a few exceptions, such adornment would be limited to the tiny but influential minority of wealthy women in town.¹³² Such fashion at best flaunted one's external beauty and at worst imitated the practice of a courtesan, or “available woman,” neither of which was acceptable for Christians.¹³³ Thus the inappropriateness of the behavior proscribed in vv. 9 and 10 remains as timeless as that in v. 8. Nothing in these first three verses, any more than the historical or literary contexts, suggests that we are dealing with merely situation-specific issues.¹³⁴

Paul proceeds in 1 Tim 2:11–15 to elaborate on the roles of the women in the Ephesian church. Verse 11 instructs them to learn with a quiet demeanor in proper subjection (presumably to those who are teaching—that is, certain men). ἡσυχία, like its cognate ἡσύχιος, refers to orderly behavior that causes no disturbance,¹³⁵ in none of their four other New Testament uses outside vv. 11–12 here do these words suggest total silence (Acts 22:2; 2 Thess 3:12; 1 Tim 2:2; 1 Pet 3:4). The 1 Tim 2:2 reference is particularly significant, appearing as it does earlier in this same chapter and speaking of the “quiet” lives believers should live in general—hardly an injunction to silence at all! As in 1 Corinthians 14, Colossians 3, and Ephesians 4, the women must also submit to their male leaders. But the countercultural force of the command to let the women learn, namely,

¹³¹ Thus Hurley, *Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 199.

¹³² Alan Padgett, “Wealthy Women at Ephesus: 1 Timothy 2:8–15 in Social Context,” *Int* 41 (1987): 19–31.

¹³³ George W. Knight III, *The Pastoral Epistles* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992) 135–36; Holmes, *Text in a Whirlwind*, 62–63.

¹³⁴ *Contra*, e.g., Steve Motyer, “Expounding 1 Timothy 2:8–15,” *VE* 24 (1994): 91–102.

¹³⁵ See Bauer, Danker, Arndt, and Gingrich, *A Greek–English Lexicon*, s.v. “ἡσυχία.”

the teachings of the Christian faith, must not be missed. Like Jesus with Mary of Bethany, Paul is cutting sharply against the grain of the vast majority of contemporary Jews and a sizable majority of Greeks and Romans.¹³⁶

Enormous controversy surrounds 1 Tim 2:12 and especially the meaning of ἀϋθεντεῖν. Attempts to relativize Paul's injunctions here on the basis of diction or grammar consistently misunderstand both Hellenistic Greek and basic hermeneutics. Paul's "I" does not relativize his teaching; he regularly believes his instructions come directly from the Lord (even 1 Cor 7:12 must be balanced by 7:40, understood as gentle irony).¹³⁷ The word "permit" (ἐπιτρέπω) does not relativize Paul's instruction, because it is negated. The negation of "I sometimes allow" is "I never allow," not "I sometimes do not allow" (which in fact is synonymous with, rather than the opposite of, the first of these three statements). Barring contextual qualifications, "I do *not* permit" is an absolute prohibition! The present tense does not suggest Paul is making only a temporary ban; it is regularly used in a gnomic or timeless sense for proverbial instruction.¹³⁸ In fact, the verbal aspect of the present tense ἐπιτρέπω, bolstered by the present tense non-indicative mood verbs διδάσκειν and ἀϋθεντεῖν, suggests continuous action: "I *continually* do not permit."¹³⁹

But what is Paul proscribing? Traditionally translations have answered with "to teach or to have authority over men." διδάσκειν ("to teach") is not difficult; without qualification it will refer to positive, Christian instruction (1 Tim 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2; while in Titus 1:11 the context clarifies that the teaching is negative—"what they shouldn't").¹⁴⁰

¹³⁶ Rightly, Aida B. Spencer, *Beyond the Curse: Women Called to Ministry* (Nashville: Nelson, 1985) 74, though her translation "they must learn" may be too strong for this third-person imperative.

¹³⁷ See my commentary *1 Corinthians*, 134–35, 153–54.

¹³⁸ Rightly, Marshall, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 454–55.

¹³⁹ See Holmes, *Text in a Whirlwind*, 82; F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R. Funk, *Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), sec. 318.

¹⁴⁰ Andreas J. Köstenberger ("A Complex Sentence Structure in 1 Timothy 2:12," in Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin [eds.], *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis*, 103) notes that Paul would have in all likelihood used ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖν or some other contextual qualifier if the teaching were viewed negatively. Marshall's objection (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 458 n. 157) that if the writer had used ἐτεροδιδασκαλεῖν he would have been implying "but I do allow men to [give false teaching]" does not carry force because the prohibition still could have been clearly framed to avoid this conclusion (e.g., "I do not permit the women to continue their false teaching").

αὐθεντεῖν (usually rendered “to have authority over”), a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, proves far more difficult. The more common Greek verb for exercising authority is ἐξουσιάζω. Egalitarians often argue that if Paul meant the positive (or even neutral) function of simple authoritative leadership, he would have used this verb and therefore, since he didn’t, one must look for some specialized (usually negative) meaning in αὐθεντέω.¹⁴¹ But interestingly, ἐξουσιάζω appears only four times in the New Testament, twice as the neutral or positive use of authority (1 Cor 7:4 [2x]) and twice as very domineering authority—“mastering” improper behavior in 1 Cor 6:12 and parallel to “lording it over” in Luke 22:25. So if it were determined that αὐθεντέω was commonly used positively, one might actually argue that Paul chose it to *avoid* the more ambiguous ἐξουσιάζω!

As it turns out, αὐθεντέω is ambiguous as well. Leland Wilshire’s survey of all the 329 occurrences of the word and its cognate αὐθεντής in the TLG database showed that, prior to the first century, this root often had negative overtones of “domineer” or even “murder.” After the first century, especially in Christian circles, it was frequently used positively for the appropriate exercise of authority.¹⁴² At the conclusion of his study, Wilshire understandably seemed to favor the more positive sense of authority for the interpretation of 1 Tim 2:12. After all, what would have led to this change of meaning, particularly for Christian writers of Greek, unless someone very influential (like Paul) had begun to use it differently?¹⁴³ Wilshire subsequently denied that this was what he meant and opted for a more negative definition.¹⁴⁴

Scott Baldwin observed that the most negative meanings occurred with the adjective αὐθεντής and argued that αὐθεντέω should be treated separately. His list of possible meanings in this context is “to control, to dominate,” “to compel,” “to influence someone,” “to

¹⁴¹ See, e.g., Walter L. Liefeld, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999) 99.

¹⁴² Leland E. Wilshire, “The TLG Computer and Further Reference to *Authenteō* in 1 Timothy 2.12,” *NTS* 34 (1988): 131.

¹⁴³ Wilshire, “The TLG Computer and Further Reference,” 131. This perception was confirmed by Paul W. Barnett, “Wives and Women’s Ministry (1 Timothy 2:11–15),” *EvQ* 61 (1989): 225–38.

¹⁴⁴ Leland E. Wilshire (“1 Timothy 2:12 Revisited: A Reply to Paul W. Barnett and Timothy J. Harris,” *EvQ* 65 [1993]: 52) opted for “to initiate violence,” a not terribly likely meaning in this context.

assume authority over,” and “to flout the authority of.”¹⁴⁵ Decisively supporting the more positive sense of assuming appropriate authority is Andreas Köstenberger’s study of pairs of infinitives in “neither . . . nor” constructions both throughout the New Testament and in a wide-ranging swath of extrabiblical Greek literature. Without exception, these constructions pair either two positive or two negative activities. So if the “teaching” in view in 1 Tim 2:12 is not false teaching but proper Christian instruction, then ἀυθεντεῖν must be taken as appropriate authority as well.¹⁴⁶ The upshot of the discussion is that the most probable meanings of the individual words in this verse yield the translation, “I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man.”

The next question, however, involves the relationship of the two infinitives (διδάσκειν and ἀυθεντεῖν). Do they represent two separate activities or one? Much ink has been spilled over whether to treat this as a formal hendiadys or not.¹⁴⁷ But largely overlooked is Paul’s more informal pattern throughout 1 Timothy 2 of using pairs of partly synonymous words or expressions to make his main points. Verse 1 speaks of “petitions,” “prayers,” “intercessions,” and “thanksgivings”; v. 2a, of “kings and all those who are in authority”; v. 2b, of “peaceful and quiet” lives and of “godliness and holiness”; v. 3, of “good and acceptable” behavior; v. 4, of being “saved” and coming “to a knowledge of the truth”; v. 7a, of a “herald and apostle”; v. 7b, of Paul’s assertion, “I speak truth; I do not lie”; v. 8, of “wrath and wranglings”; v. 9a, of “decency and propriety”; and v. 11, of “quietness and full submission.”¹⁴⁸

The point here is not that the two terms in each case refer to identical entities, but that in every instance they are closely related and together help to define one single concept.¹⁴⁹ This makes it

¹⁴⁵ H. Scott Baldwin, “A Difficult Word: *Authenteō* in 1 Timothy 2:12,” in Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin (eds.), *Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis*, 79–80.

¹⁴⁶ See Köstenberger, “A Complex Sentence Structure.” Belleville (*Women Leaders and the Church*, 176–77) notes other ways that the paired elements in “neither . . . nor” constructions are related to each other in the New Testament when one looks at parts of speech beyond just the infinitive.

¹⁴⁷ At this point, Belleville’s study does prove helpful, because she shows the diversity of relationships among paired items in similar constructions; one cannot simply assume the two terms are mutually defining because of the grammar.

¹⁴⁸ See my “Not Beyond What Is Written,” 412 n. 29.

¹⁴⁹ A point not grasped by Holmes, *Text in a Whirlwind*, 89 n. 56. How she can argue that my language betrayed my own “lingering doubts” is beyond me!

overwhelmingly likely that in 1 Tim 2:12 Paul is referring to one specific kind of authoritative teaching rather than two independent activities.¹⁵⁰ Given that 1 Tim 3:2 (in the very next pericope in this letter) requires an overseer to be able to teach (his most distinctive function as compared to a deacon), that 1 Tim 5:17 speaks of elders as teaching and exercising authority,¹⁵¹ and that Titus 1:5–7 equates elders and overseers, it seems highly likely that Paul is restricting women in one (and in only one) way: they must not occupy the office of elder/overseer.¹⁵² This meshes with the fact that women are mentioned among the deacons in 1 Tim 3:8–13 (see v. 11), but not among the overseers in vv. 1–7.¹⁵³

In 1 Tim 2:13 Paul gives the reason for the prohibition he declares in v. 12. Attempts to account for this clause as anything other than causal prove singularly unconvincing.¹⁵⁴ The vast majority of the γάρ

¹⁵⁰ Similarly Philip B. Payne, “*Oude* in 1 Timothy 2:12” (unpublished paper; Atlanta: Evangelical Theological Society, 1986).

¹⁵¹ It is sometimes argued, especially in Presbyterian circles, that 1 Tim 5:17 distinguishes between ruling and teaching elders. But see T. C. Skeat, “Especially the Parchments: A Note on 2 Timothy IV.13,” *JTS* 30 (1979): 173–77. In the Pastoral Epistles, μάλιστα consistently means “namely” or “that is,” not “especially.” Vern S. Poythress (“The Meaning of *Malista* in 2 Timothy 4:13 and Related Verses,” *JTS* 53 [2002]: 523–32) has challenged Skeat’s reading of the various biblical and extra-biblical texts cited, only somewhat successfully. A comparison of the two studies suggests Skeat’s readings are more plausible more often than Poythress’s replies.

¹⁵² See my “Not Beyond What Is Written,” 418. Robert Saucy (“Women’s Prohibition to Teach Men: An Investigation into Its Meaning and Contemporary Application,” *JETS* 37 [1994]: 91) does not think one can limit Paul’s meaning to a specific office, but in his conclusion he determines that the passage reserves merely “ultimate leadership of the Church” for men (p. 97). William Mounce (*Pastoral Epistles*, 124) misses my distinction between office and function by attributing to me the same general conclusion as his, namely, that “women may not, therefore, authoritatively teach the men in authority.” Holmes (*Text in a Whirlwind*, 90–95) is on the right track with her discussion of verbal aspect, but she does not observe how naturally this leads to a restriction solely on the office of elder. Andrew C. Perriman (“What Eve Did, What Women Shouldn’t Do: The Meaning of ἀυθεντέω in 1 Timothy 2:12,” *TynBul* 44 [1993]: 129–42) comes close with his argument that Eve took initiative or acted authoritatively in causing Adam to sin, that is, taking on an authority she did not have (p. 141), although he goes on to claim, without offering any evidence, that Paul’s prohibition is merely a specialized local reference. Victor Hasler (*Die Briefe an Timotheus und Titus* [Zürich: Theologischer, 1978] 25) recognizes that only a teaching office is in view, but strangely puts both elders and deacons into this category.

¹⁵³ There is increasing agreement that these are women deacons and not deacons’ wives. See Jennifer H. Stiefel, “Women Deacons in 1 Timothy: A Linguistic and Literary Look at ‘Women Likewise . . .’ (1 Tim. 3.11),” *NTS* 41 (1995): 442–57.

¹⁵⁴ The approach favored by the Kroegers has already been discussed. Even more tortuous is the suggestion of Holmes (*Text in a Whirlwind*, 267–98) that 1 Tim 2:13–15

clauses in ancient Greek are causal; the twelve other examples in 1 Timothy alone are unambiguously so (2:5; 3:13; 4:5, 8, 10, 16; 5:4, 11, 15, 18; 6:7, 10).¹⁵⁵ Paul is thus explaining that the reason he excludes women from the office of elder/overseer is because Adam was created first. Odd as the argument sounds to modern ears, it would have made perfect sense in a Jewish milieu that recognized the firstborn son as receiving a double portion of the inheritance.¹⁵⁶ That the Old Testament knows several celebrated exceptions to this principle (e.g., Ishmael, Esau, Manasseh) is significant precisely because they are exceptions and not the rule. Those who lampoon the hierarchicalist position by arguing that Paul was not inferring leadership of animals over humans when they were created first (Gen 1) miss the point altogether. Paul is not arguing that “first created” always leads to privilege; merely that it does in the case of the creation of Adam and Eve (Gen 2). Attempts to relativize 1 Tim 2:13 by appealing to the motive clauses in Titus 2:5, 8, and 10 that ground authority and submission in the need to make the gospel attractive to a patriarchal world that no longer exists miss the fact that Titus equally frequently describes his commands simply as “what is good” in and of itself (Titus 2:3, 7, 14).¹⁵⁷

Perhaps the hardest verse to understand in all of Paul’s teaching on gender roles is 1 Tim 2:14. Virtually all perspectives today have rejected the common Jewish and Christian belief throughout history that women are actually ontologically inferior to men.¹⁵⁸ Attempts,

constitutes a pre-Pauline Jewish saying quoted verbatim and identified as the faithful saying of 3:1a, thus making the γάρ at the beginning of v. 13 part of the quotation and not a causal connective with what goes before. Bernhard Heininger (“Die ‘mystische’ Eva: 1 Tim 2,8–15 und die Folgen des Sündenfalls in der *Apokalypsis Mosis*,” *BZ* 46 [2002]: 205–21) believes vv. 13 and 14 are referring to the Jewish tradition represented in the *Apocalypse of Moses* that Eve was a mystic who had visions of heavenly travel and revelation. Her eyes were thus open to good and evil (Gen 3:5) in ways that Adam’s were not.

¹⁵⁵ Douglas J. Moo (“The Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11–15: A Rejoinder,” *TJ* 2 [1981]: 202–204) expands the study to all of the Pastorals and comes to the same conclusion.

¹⁵⁶ Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 143. Lorenz Oberlinner (*Die Pastoralbriefe* [Freiburg: Herder, 1994] 1.106–107) agrees that the text is arguing from recognized Jewish and Hellenistic models of patriarchy.

¹⁵⁷ Rightly Knight, *The Pastoral Epistles*, 316–18. Against Padgett, “Wealthy Women at Ephesus,” 19–31.

¹⁵⁸ A point Kevin Giles (“A Critique of the ‘Novel’ Contemporary Interpretation”) exploits to argue that even Köstenberger, Schreiner, and Baldwin (*Women in the Church: A Fresh Analysis*) reflect a ‘novel’ interpretation with respect to the entire sweep of Church history. Cf. Andreas J. Köstenberger, “Women in the Church: A

however sophisticated, to defend the view that women are inherently more gullible fly in the face of all contemporary social-scientific analysis and do not fit the context of 1 Timothy, even if we assume a culture that did believe in the inherently greater defectibility of women.¹⁵⁹ For then it would surely be wrong for women to teach anyone, especially their own male children who will become the leaders of the next generation. An exegesis that sees Paul merely as claiming that Adam sinned without having been deceived in the manner Eve was deceived may be true to the Genesis 3 account,¹⁶⁰ but it again leaves Paul in the paradoxical position of favoring Adam because he sinned with his eyes wide open—a presumably less excusable situation and thus a greater character flaw than with Eve, who was tricked!

The view that carries “first” over from 1 Tim 2:13, making Paul’s point to be that Eve was deceived first, carries a certain grammatical plausibility.¹⁶¹ But there are no well-known principles from antiquity, like the Old Testament laws of primogeniture, that would make the order in which one was deceived in any way significant. The claim that “Eve was deceived by the serpent in the Garden (Gen 3:13) precisely in taking the initiative over the man”¹⁶² founders on the fact that she was tricked by Satan and sinned by eating the forbidden fruit *before* turning to Adam and thus only afterwards played a role in helping him to fall.

Response to Kevin Giles,” *EvQ* 73 (2001): 205–24; and Kevin Giles, “Women in the Church: A Rejoinder to Andreas Köstenberger,” *EvQ* 73 (2001): 225–45.

¹⁵⁹ After a thorough and helpful survey of approaches to this passage, Schreiner (“An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:9–15,” 145) concludes, with no exegetical or psychological support provided, that “women are less prone than men to see the importance of doctrinal formulations, especially when it comes to the issue of identifying heresy and making a stand for truth.” Marshall (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 466) rightly responds: “However one may evaluate this judgment, there is no evidence that such a thought was in the author’s mind, and therefore it must be pronounced totally irrelevant to the exegesis of the passage.”

¹⁶⁰ Hurley (*Man and Woman in Biblical Perspective*, 214–16) argues that only the man was given the power of religious discernment, even if it could be used for evil as well as for good. But this is scarcely a straightforward reading of the text, and it is probably susceptible to the same critique as Schreiner’s view presented in the previous note.

¹⁶¹ See Barnett, “Wives and Women’s Ministry,” 234.

¹⁶² Douglas Moo, “What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men? 1 Timothy 2:11–15,” in Piper and Grudem (eds.), *Rediscovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, 190.

I therefore stand by my suggestion, offered almost two decades ago, which has received almost no scholarly response, that perhaps 1 Tim 2:14 is not meant to provide a second rationale for Paul's proscription at all.¹⁶³ The γάρ is not repeated, vv. 13–14 are linked to each other solely with a καί, while vv. 14–15 are in a mildly adversative relationship to one another, as supported also by the postpositive δέ at the beginning of v. 15. Having alluded to Genesis 2, it would have been natural for Paul's thoughts to move to Genesis 3 and the fall of Adam and Eve, along with God's subsequent punishment of the first couple. If the heresy in Ephesus was promoting celibacy as a Christian ideal (probably implied by 1 Tim 4:3), Paul would have felt the need to stress the appropriateness of the traditional motherly roles of childbearing (and, by synecdoche, child rearing)—thus v. 15.¹⁶⁴

William Mounce objects on three counts: (1) 1 Tim 2:12–13 does not raise any “concern for Eve's salvation,” (2) “the structural similarities” between vv. 13 and 14 are ignored, and (3) the “emphatic negation of Adam's deception” at the beginning of v. 14 is unexplained.¹⁶⁵ By way of reply, I would observe that (1) both the Genesis story and the heresy's proscription of marriage would have made Paul think of the issue of women's (and men's) salvation, (2) there are at least as many differences as similarities in the structure of vv. 13 and 14, and (3) there is nothing emphatic about Adam's role in v. 14.

We do not have to solve all the vexed problems surrounding 1 Tim 2:15 in order to grasp Paul's main points. The verse literally reads, “But she shall be saved through the childbearing, if they continue in faith and love and sanctification with sobriety.” The “she” is probably generic, referring to the female gender as a whole. “Saved” will then refer to eschatological salvation, that is, the culmination of the process of restoring the cosmos to God's intended ideals (cf. the use of σώζω in 1 Tim 4:16 and 2 Tim 4:18). But not all women can or should bear children; the distributive plural “they” introduces the second clause, which *does* explain how every individual woman

¹⁶³ See my “Not Beyond What Is Written,” 414.

¹⁶⁴ Moo, “What Does It Mean Not to Teach or Have Authority Over Men?” 192.

¹⁶⁵ Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*, 142.

is restored to a right relationship with God.¹⁶⁶ As I wrote previously, one might paraphrase the flow of thought from 1 Tim 2:12–15 as follows:

Women are not to hold the authoritative teaching position in the church because that is not a role for which they were created. Moreover, things subsequently deteriorated for the woman, after creation, when she fell, through the deception of the serpent. But there is a bright side. . . . Women, collectively, will be preserved/restored as they exercise in a godly fashion their distinctive role of rearing children.¹⁶⁷

In light of the case that can be made for limiting Paul's instructions to husbands and wives in 1 Corinthians 11 and 14, and in light of the obvious limitations of the *Haustafeln* of Colossians 3 and Ephesians 5 to married men and women, it is tempting to argue that 1 Timothy 2 envisions similar semantic restrictions on ἀνὴρ and γυνή. Given the more general injunctions of vv. 8–10, most commentators think this to be unlikely here. Still, Sharon Gritz believes that the shift from the plural in vv. 8–10 to the singular in vv. 11–15a justifies narrowing the meaning of γυνή in the latter verses (see also NRSV text note).¹⁶⁸ Jerome Quinn and William Wacker appeal to the use of γυνή in Titus 1:6 and translate 1 Tim 2:11 as “Let a married woman learn . . .” and v. 12 as “Moreover, I do not allow a wife to teach in the public worship . . . and to boss her husband.”¹⁶⁹ It is

¹⁶⁶ See my “Not Beyond What Is Written,” 415. This approach combines the strengths of M. D. Roberts (“‘Women Shall Be Saved’: A Closer Look at 1 Timothy 2:15,” *Theological Students Fellowship Bulletin* 5.2 [1981]: 4–7), on the shift from singular to plural; with those of Andreas Köstenberger (“Ascertaining Women’s God-Ordained Roles: An Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:15,” *BBR* 7 [1997]: 107–44). Cf. esp. Collins, *1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*, 77. It is also close to the position of Stanley E. Porter (“What Does It Mean to Be ‘Saved by Childbirth’ [1 Timothy 2:15]?” *JSNNT* 49 [1993]: 87–102), but with a more nuanced understanding of σώζω. Mounce’s perspective (*Pastoral Epistles*, 146–47) is even more similar. The next most likely alternative may be that διὰ (“through”) refers to difficult circumstances through which women must pass (cf. similar grammar in 1 Cor 3:15 and 1 Pet 3:20), thus yielding the sense of “women will be saved *despite* suffering the pain of childbearing, so long as they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.” So Simon Coupland, “Salvation through Childbearing? The Riddle of 1 Timothy 2:15,” *ExpTim* 112 (2001): 303.

¹⁶⁷ See my “Not Beyond What Is Written,” 414, 416.

¹⁶⁸ Gritz (*Paul, Women Teachers, and the Mother Goddess*, 125) argues that the singular in the Pastorals *always* refers to a “wife.” This is probably true but is due to the context of each of the other occurrences and not necessarily to the number of the noun.

¹⁶⁹ Jerome D. Quinn and William C. Wacker, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 199–200. See also Gordon P. Hugenberger,

possible that a “both . . . and” approach again fits best. As Paul Barnett explains:

Paul’s negative response is not in terms of a woman’s inability to occupy the office of *episkopos* . . . *didaktikos* (bishop . . . teacher) but rather what effect this incumbency would have on marriages within the church and indeed on the value of the mothering role. Paul’s concern is not superficially cultural but profoundly creational.¹⁷⁰

One might suggest, in settings where these broader concerns do not come into play, that faithful application of Paul’s principles would require merely that a wife not be an overseer over her husband in the same congregation. Unmarried women would then have no restrictions placed on them, and Paul could not be accused at any point of setting up a system that forever barred half of the human race from a particular role.¹⁷¹ Marriage is entered into voluntarily; those not prepared to accept its restrictions “need not apply.” And even within marriage, a called and gifted woman could exercise every level of leadership, save the highest office in whatever congregation in which her husband participated.

If, on the other hand, Paul’s commands *are* intended for all men and women, it is still necessary to ask what the contemporary functional equivalent is to the New Testament office of elder/overseer. Except in the pure Plymouth Brethren model of a team of elders identically sharing in authoritative teaching responsibilities, contemporary congregationally organized churches would presumably identify their senior pastor (or in single-staff churches the sole pastor) as this functional equivalent of the elder/overseer. Women could then hold any other subordinate pastoral role.¹⁷² In presbyterian and episcopal forms of church government, one could argue that the equivalent

“Women in Church Office: Hermeneutics or Exegesis? A Survey of Approaches to 1 Timothy 2:8–15,” *JETS* 35 (1992): 341–60.

¹⁷⁰ Barnett, “Wives and Women’s Ministry,” 236–37. Timothy J. Harris’s subsequent critique of Barnett’s approach to 1 Timothy 2:14 (“Why Did Paul Mention Eve’s Deception? A Critique of P. Barnett’s Interpretation of 1 Timothy 2,” *EvQ* 62 [1990]: 335–52) does not invalidate this particular conclusion.

¹⁷¹ A point stressed frequently by Rebecca M. Groothuis. See especially her *Women Caught in the Conflict: The Culture War between Traditionalism and Feminism* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994); and *idem*, *Good News for Women: A Biblical Picture of Gender Equality* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997).

¹⁷² See Ann L. Bowman, “Women in Ministry: An Exegetical Study of 1 Timothy 2:11–15,” *BibSac* 149 (1992): 193–213.

is the person at the head of larger denominational structures.¹⁷³ But before straying too far into contemporary application, this study must be brought to a close.

Conclusions

It is difficult to improve on the conclusions of Judith Gundry-Volf in her comparative study of Paul, Philo, ben Sira, and Joseph and Aseneth:

In sum, Paul seems to affirm *both* equality of status and roles of women and men in Christ *and* women's subordinate or secondary place. He appears to think that sometimes the difference between male and female is to be expressed in patriarchal conventions and that sometimes these conventions should be transcended or laid aside.¹⁷⁴

Earle Ellis, Ben Witherington, Klyne Snodgrass, and Donald Bloesch have all come to similar conclusions.¹⁷⁵ We have discovered no evidence that the Paul of the undisputed epistles was a full-fledged egalitarian whose liberating emphases were increasingly lost in the deutero-Paulines—first in Colossians and Ephesians and then even more so in the Pastoral Epistles—as is so often alleged. The tensions between patriarchy and equality appear at every stage of the early Church's development.¹⁷⁶ There is in fact increasing agreement among both liberal feminist and hierarchicalist authors that neither Paul nor any other New Testament writer or character can be fairly labeled egalitarian.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷³ The expositor convinced on scriptural grounds of congregational government might then choose to protest these alternate forms of church structure before addressing the issue of gender roles.

¹⁷⁴ Gundry-Volf, "Paul on Women and Gender," 186.

¹⁷⁵ E. Earle Ellis, *Pauline Theology: Ministry and Society* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) 53–86; Witherington, *Women in the Ministry of Jesus*; Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*; Klyne R. Snodgrass, "Galatians 3:28—Conundrum or Solution?" in Mickelsen (ed.), *Women, Authority and the Bible*, 161–81; Donald G. Bloesch, *Is the Bible Sexist? Beyond Feminism and Patriarchalism* (Westchester, Ill.: Crossway, 1982).

¹⁷⁶ Witherington, *Women in the Earliest Churches*, 212. Marshall (*The Pastoral Epistles*, 438) generalizes, observing that "strongly feminist interpreters have tended to adopt the same understanding of [these passages] as the traditionalist."

¹⁷⁷ A trend presaged already by Clark H. Pinnock ("Biblical Authority and the Issues in Question," in Mickelsen [ed.], *Women, Authority and the Bible*, 55): "The radical feminists and the traditionalists both argue that such texts are not feminist in content, and I suspect that their view, agreeing as it does with the 'plain sense'

For non-Christian interpreters or for liberal Christians whose doctrine of Scripture does not bind them to the entire historic canon, this observation almost inevitably leads to a rejection of the authority of what they perceive to be the non-liberating portions of the Bible, usually including most or all of the passages in 1 Corinthians, Colossians, Ephesians, and 1 Timothy discussed here.¹⁷⁸

Hierarchicalists, who do not find Paul's restrictions objectionable, simply seek to implement his teachings according to their understanding of their contemporary significance. Egalitarians who do accept the authority of all of the New Testament (including evangelical or biblical feminists) have vacillated between two different exegetical approaches. The most common recent one has been to redefine key words in the relevant texts or to propose specific historical backgrounds that relativize Paul's apparently more sweeping charges and allow him to be viewed as an egalitarian. This option now seems to be the least convincing of all.

More promising is the second approach, which agrees that Paul was no egalitarian, and that he viewed his strictures as universally applicable in his day, but which argues that the world has changed sufficiently today to warrant a different approach that still fulfills the underlying intent of Paul's original commands.¹⁷⁹

Yet even this variation runs aground on Paul's appeals both to original creation and to re-creation in Christ as motives for his

reading so widely held, will prevail and not be successfully refuted by biblical feminists. Of course, the biblical feminist interpretation is possible; the problem is that it does not strike many people, either scholarly or untutored, as plausible."

¹⁷⁸ See, e.g., Caroline Vander Stichele, "Is Silence Golden? Paul and Women's Speech in Corinth," *LS* 20 (1995): 241–53; Jürgen Roloff, *Der Erste Brief an Timotheus* (Zürich: Benzinger; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1988) 125–47.

¹⁷⁹ Giles, "A Critique of the 'Novel' Contemporary Interpretation," 213. Cf. the particularly transparent comments of Andrew T. Lincoln (*Truth on Trial: The Lawsuit Motif in the Fourth Gospel* [Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000] 479–80): "A recognition is also required that the attitude of needing to have the Bible on one's side at all costs may well be detrimental to faithful witness. Instead of attempting a revisionist exegesis, it seems far better to admit, on some occasions, that John or Paul, e.g., said one thing but now contemporary advocates need to say something different in different circumstances, with different questions to address, as they strive to be faithful to the same gospel to which John or Paul bore witness—whether on obvious ethical issues such as the role of women, slavery, or homosexuality, or on Jew–Gentile concerns, or on soteriological formulations—and that they need to be open to debate whether and in what ways they are being faithful to the same gospel." A hybrid of both views often appears, too. See, e.g., Royce G. Gruenler, "The Mission-Lifestyle Setting of 1 Timothy 2:8–15," *JETS* 41 (1998): 215–38.

mandates. It may be time to admit that full-fledged egalitarianism is simply not the most likely synthesis of the biblical data within a historic Christian hermeneutic.

At the same time, Paul comes tantalizingly close to egalitarianism at numerous junctures. Most current hierarchicalists (or traditionalists or complementarians, depending on one's terminological preference) have not recognized just how much Paul (and the rest of the New Testament) permits to women. Only the single office of elder/overseer (or its functional equivalent) is excluded. Countless other contexts remain for women to exercise any spiritual gift to the full, and many other leadership offices or roles in hierarchicalist settings are not populated by women nearly as much as they could be. Many hierarchicalists seem to be more preoccupied with keeping men in positions of authority than in nurturing women to become all that God wants them to be in the spirit of Paul's radically redefined patriarchy and consistent with biblical *servant* leadership more generally. It is worth reminding those who remain dubious that Paul would exclude women from *only* one leadership role that this is precisely the pattern we see in both the Old Testament (only the priesthood is excluded) and the Gospels (only the apostles are all male) and in the descriptive material in Acts and the epistles (only women elders are missing). In short, we may have to coin a new term for Paul altogether. What seems certain is that he is neither hierarchicalist nor egalitarian, in the classic sense of either term.¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ Interestingly, this conclusion concurs with the findings of Thomas Schmeller (*Hierarchie und Egalität* [Stuttgart: Katholische Bibelwerk, 1995]) on Paul and his churches more generally. This essay was completed and submitted in 2003. Only one footnote has been subsequently updated.

WAS PAUL A TRINITARIAN?
A LOOK AT ROMANS 8

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1. *Introduction*

Scholars who ask about God in the New Testament tend to assume the Trinity is either implicit in the text or else a later ecclesial construct. Typically the debate centers on the role and person of Jesus.¹ New Testament scholars themselves operate with a New Testament theology approach to understanding or finding the Trinity, yet rarely do they ask whether certain authors actually held to some sort of trinitarian thought in their writings, let alone in their theology. As a result, Francis Watson accuses James Dunn of being an Arian based upon Dunn's reading of Paul.² Watson critiques Dunn's organization³ of Paul's theology and the relationship he posits between Christology and theology proper. In order to support a trinitarian position for Paul, Watson refers to Romans 8, using it as a *locus classicus*. He notes the function and work of the Spirit and Son, asserting that this is enough to show that Paul was a trinitarian. However, does appealing to Paul's distinctions between Father, Son, and Spirit warrant sufficient support for the conclusion that he would adhere to an approximation of the conciliar decision of Nicea? This study will examine Romans 8, looking specifically at the Father, Son, and

¹ One need only look at the debate over the type or types of Christology seen in the New Testament. For a comprehensive summary of various positions, see Larry Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003) 11–18.

² Francis Watson, "The Triune Divine Identity: Reflections on Pauline God Language, in Disagreement with J. D. G. Dunn," *JNT* 80 (2000): 99–124. See p. 117 where Watson declaims Dunn's exegetical decision as a "characteristic *Arian* move" (emphasis original). Watson would have been better served, however, to state that Dunn understands Paul as an Arian, since Dunn attempts to describe Paul's theology and not necessarily his own.

³ Watson is replying directly to James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

Spirit while assuming Paul to be a monotheist in order to test Watson's assertion by examining if he has an exegetical basis for stating that Paul was a trinitarian.

At first glance, this seems an absurd issue, as many scholars quickly point to passages like 1 Cor 8:6 that demonstrate the divinity of Christ in the Pauline writings.⁴ However, two problems arise with such a solution. First, this gives evidence only for a "binity," not a Trinity, as this passage excludes the Holy Spirit from consideration.⁵ Secondly, it does not answer the more nuanced question of how developed Paul's thought was on this matter. Clearly Paul had an open form of monotheism, yet one must consider to what extent he had developed his thought.⁶ He does not fully flesh out the implications of Jesus as Lord and as the one who saves with respect to the saving nature of the Father. Does Jesus fit into some sort of subset for Paul's theology proper, with Christology being inherently subordinate to it?⁷ Or is Jesus truly God, no matter the formulation of such an idea?⁸ How does the Holy Spirit fit into this picture?⁹ In the end, only careful exegetical work can point toward any conclusion.

Why does Watson refer to Romans 8 so often? The reason, as far as one can glean from his writing, lies in the confluence of the Father, Son, and Spirit. If one intends to offer a biblical or exegetical

⁴ In addition to the typical commentaries, see also the comments in Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism & Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 37–40.

⁵ Dunn says it "redefines Jewish monotheism in . . . a 'binitarian' direction." James D. G. Dunn, "Was Christianity a Monotheistic Faith from the Beginning?" *SJT* 35 (1982): 303–35.

⁶ Care must be taken as well not to project later formulations or controversies back onto Paul.

⁷ James D. G. Dunn, "In Quest of Paul's Theology: Retrospect and Prospect," in E. Elizabeth Johnson and David M. Hay (eds.), *Pauline Theology, Volume IV: Looking Back, Pressing On* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997) 95–115. Note what he says on p. 108, that "the context of Paul's christology was Paul's continuing monotheism which narrows the possible avenues of interpreting Paul's christology." To be fair, Dunn points to another article on the subject that he wrote, "Christology as an Aspect of Theology," in Abraham J. Malherbe and Wayne A. Meeks (eds.), *The Future of Christology: Essays in Honor of Leander E. Keck* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993) 202–12. This article aims at an intentionally Trinitarian understanding of Paul, though such a short article can only give a trajectory.

⁸ Thus beginning to answer the concern of Nils Alstrup Dahl, "The Neglected Factor in New Testament Theology," *Reflection* 73 (1975): 5–8.

⁹ A major source of interaction on this question will be Gordon Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994). Although delving into the Old Testament background of such an issue would be interesting, it lies beyond the bounds of this work.

critique of another's non-trinitarian leanings, Romans 8 provides an ideal foundation for at least four reasons. First, it includes questions of salvation (8:1–4). Secondly, it speaks about the new life to be had in a believer via the Holy Spirit (8:5–6, 9). Thirdly, it lays out some (though by no means all) of the roles of the Father, Son, and Spirit. Fourthly, it includes a strong eschatological dimension that shines a spotlight on those roles. Romans 8 weaves together the various threads of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit into a tapestry of the godhead. Clearly, this is why Watson leans so heavily upon it.

2. *The Father*

Typically when Paul uses the designation of θεός, he is referring to the Father, and so the investigation begins with him due to his unambiguous designation as God. Who is God in Romans 8? God is the Father of all who believe, in that those who believe are adopted into his family and called his children and heirs (vv. 14–17). This adoption, whether understood in the Jewish context or, more likely, within the Greco-Roman context,¹⁰ is a legally binding relationship. The function of the Father, in this instance, is truly to be Father to all his children by adoption through salvation. The Father has mercy on those he calls to be his children, those he calls to love him (vv. 27–28).¹¹ The “Golden Chain” in vv. 29–30 stresses the primary role the Father plays in the movement towards glorification through election, as God accomplishes it according to how his will.¹² At the same time, it is God who in fact subjects all of creation to decay, on account of Adam's sin.¹³ Through the glory of his children, God will renew creation and set it free (vv. 20–23).

¹⁰ See C. S. Wansink, “Roman Law and Legal System,” in Craig A. Evans and Stanley E. Porter (eds.), *Dictionary of New Testament Background* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000) 984–91. The portion of highest relevance is found in the discussion on inheritance and adoption within the Roman system (pp. 990–91).

¹¹ This language is taken from Richard B. Hays, “The God of Mercy Who Rescues Us from the Present Evil Age,” in A. Andrew Das and Frank J. Matera (eds.), *The Forgotten God: Perspectives in Biblical Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster John Knox, 2002) 123–43.

¹² For the implicit monotheistic tendencies of this passage, see Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer* (3 vols.; EKKNT 6.1–6.3; Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978–82) 2.166–67.

¹³ See C. E. B. Cranfield, *Romans* (2 vols.; ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark,

The major focus on the Father in this chapter, however, comes in the last pericope (though foreshadowed in 8:3, 11; this link will be developed later). Admittedly the adoption language and the renewal of creation point toward the Father as both an active and passive agent. At the least, he seems to work through others, as he renews creation through his children and he raises Christ from the dead. He also brings about new life through his Spirit, which will be touched on later.

Romans 8:31–39 stresses the acts of the Father through the Son, such that the Son is the agent by which God accomplishes his will. The opening question of this section, τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν, repeated throughout the book of Romans,¹⁴ often functions as an introduction to Paul's own thoughts on the matter at hand.¹⁵ This means the question heading 8:31 is not isolated, but instead proceeds from what comes before.¹⁶ The previous section of 8:18–30 shifts focus from the Holy Spirit back to the Father between 8:28 and 29.¹⁷ From the

1975–79) 1.414 and Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (BECNT; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998) 435–36.

¹⁴ Technically, the phrase appears seven times (3:5; 4:1; 6:1; 7:7; 8:31; 9:14; 30; though 3:5 is missing the οὖν).

¹⁵ Thus Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 189 and James D. G. Dunn, *Romans* (2 vols.; WBC 38A–B; Dallas: Word, 1988) 1.306. Schreiner (*Romans*, 304) says it is part of Paul's voicing the objections to his argument and clarifying what he means, which Cranfield agrees with (*Cranfield, Romans*, 1.297), while Fitzmyer calls it part of Paul's polemical style (Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *Romans: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB 33; New York: Doubleday, 1993] 432).

¹⁶ All commentators agree on the connection, but vary on the amount of connection. Moo (*Romans*, 539), Fitzmyer (*Romans*, 530), and Schreiner (*Romans*, 458) all argue for 5:1–8:30 being in view. Dunn argues for the entire epistle up to this point (*Romans*, 1.499) with Cranfield holding to only a minimalistic 8:29–30 (*Romans*, 1.434), though he does say it is a conclusion for the entire section from 5:1–8:30. John D. Moores, *Wrestling with Rationality in Paul: Romans 1–8 in a New Perspective* (SNTSMS 82; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) 118–21 wants to argue for 8:29–30 only based on the content of the question in 8:31 being pulled directly from 8:29–30, but his argument misses the link between 8:29–30 and the rest of Romans, especially ch. 5 (see Philippe Roland, "L'antithèse de Rm 5–8," *Bib* 69 [1998]: 396–400).

¹⁷ Many commentators place 8:28 in the section about the Father (Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.425–29; Moo, *Romans*, 527–28 [though he does make allowance for it to be transitional]; and Schreiner, *Romans*, 448–49) and a few in the section about the Spirit (F. F. Bruce, *Romans* [TNTC 6; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985] 166), but it makes more sense to see it as a transitional verse moving from the Spirit to the Father (so Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 521; seemingly Dunn, *Romans*, 1.481; and Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans* [IBC; Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985] 131), though this does not solve the dilemma of the subject of συνεργεῖ.

allusion to Genesis 22, Paul asks a set of questions in vv. 33–35, but scholars debate how many questions and the presence of answers to those questions. These verses can be read with at least five different understandings.¹⁸ To begin, though, the pattern of the last verses needs to be made clear. Talbert argues convincingly that vv. 35–39 are a chiasmic question and answer set.¹⁹ He explains that there are two questions in v. 35, the first being a “who” question and the second a “what” question. The responses come in the reverse, so that “what” is answered by vv. 36–37 and “who” by vv. 38–39.²⁰

One of the more important stories in the Old Testament with respect to Abraham is that of the Aqedah, the formal name for the binding of Isaac. Abraham, in obedience to God, takes his son Isaac up a mountain to sacrifice him. After Isaac is bound and put upon the altar, God stops the sacrifice and provides a ram in Isaac’s stead. Through this act of near sacrifice, Abraham shows his devotion to God and his faith in God.²¹ This story brings up a few questions. The Levitical law did not require any binding of the sacrifice, so why is it that this binding of Isaac is mentioned in this passage? Wenham speculates,

Perhaps it was because Abraham might relatively easily have slit Isaac’s throat when he was off guard; that an elderly man was able to bind the hands and feet of a lively teenager strongly suggests Isaac’s consent.

¹⁸ Instead of listing all the options and the supporting arguments for each, the reader is referred to Moo, *Romans*, 541 n. 27, which lists the possibilities. Moo himself argues that there is little difference between the views in that they all culminate in vv. 38–39 anyway, but this misses the importance of the quotation of Ps 44:22 (43:23 LXX) in v. 36. One should note that this quotation also includes a portion which is echoed in Isa 53:7, as the verbal parallels are direct in that ὡς πρόβατα and a form of σφαγή appear in both. Dunn (*Romans*, 1.505) and Richard Hays (*Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989] 62–63) make this connection explicit. The differences are minute as Isaiah places σφαγή in a prepositional phrase. For the context of the Isaianic passage, see especially J. Alec Motyer, *The Prophecy of Isaiah: An Introduction and Commentary* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993) 433.

¹⁹ Charles H. Talbert, *Romans* (Smyth & Helwys Bible Commentary; Macon: Smyth & Helwys, 2002) 229–30.

²⁰ Talbert, *Romans*, 229–30. Talbert actually does not place v. 36 in this chiasmic pattern, having A = v. 35a, B = v. 35b, B’ = v. 37, and A’ = vv. 38–39. However, v. 36 fits naturally as part of B’.

²¹ Claus Westermann, *Genesis* (3 vols.; CC; trans. John J. Scullion; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995) 2.361. Westermann says, “The reason consists in a positive and negative part: now I know that Abraham is God-fearing; this has been shown by the fact that he has not withheld his only son from God.” See also 2.362. Westermann goes on to note the similarity in the Hebrew of Gen 39:9, but the LXX does not pick this up.

So this remark confirms that impression given by vv. 7–8 that Isaac was an unblemished subject for sacrifice who was ready to obey his father, whatever the cost, just as his father had showed his willingness to obey God to the uttermost.²²

While Abraham actively showed faith, Isaac silently obeyed.²³ This does not make Isaac a main character, it instead makes him more of a narrative prop in that he does nothing but receive action throughout this section. Isaac is not a main character at all but a passive recipient of grace. What really comes out in this story is not the faithfulness of all involved, but the faithfulness of Abraham (in believing) and God (in providing). This theme will be picked up in Rom 8:32 and the surrounding context.

The opening word of 8:32 makes an immediate and strong connection to the previous verse and its subject.²⁴ What is interesting is not only what is said, but how it is said. There are clear affinities between the first part of Rom 8:32 and the LXX Gen 22:12, 16.²⁵ The two important parallels are the usages of the words φείδομαι and υἱός. This gives the entire sense of the passage, showing God's caring nature in that he is willing to sacrifice his very son. Grammatically, it is significant that ἀγαπητοῦ is replaced by ἰδίου in v. 32, making it an allusion instead of a loose quotation.²⁶ Paul previously

²² Gordon J. Wenham, *Genesis* (2 vols.; WBC 1–2; Dallas: Word, 1987–94), 2.109. Wenham argues (2.108) that, “Isaac is shown to have those qualities of perfection always looked for in sacrificial victims (cf. Lev 1:3). And either way, our appreciation of the trustful love that existed between father and son is enhanced.”

²³ David W. Cotter, *Genesis* (Berit Olam; Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2003) 143–58.

²⁴ BDF, §439.3, points out how the γε stresses the opening relative pronoun. This then should intensify the link with the antecedent. See also Nigel Turner, *Syntax* (A Grammar of New Testament Greek 3; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1963) 331, who agrees.

²⁵ Note the parallels in the table below:

Gen 22:12 (LXX)	Rom 8:32
12 καὶ εἶπεν μὴ ἐπιβάλης τὴν χεῖρά σου ἐπὶ τὸ παιδάριον μηδὲ ποιήσης αὐτῷ μηδὲν νῦν γὰρ ἔγνω ὅτι φοβῆ τὸν θεὸν σὺ καὶ οὐκ ἐφείσω τοῦ υἱοῦ σου τοῦ ἀγαπητοῦ δι' ἐμέ	32 ὅς γε τοῦ ἰδίου υἱοῦ οὐκ ἐφείσατο ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων παρέδωκεν αὐτόν, πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται;

²⁶ Hays, *Echoes*, talks of echoes and allusions. A more helpful designation, however, would be to talk of quotations (those verbatim or nearly verbatim mentions

had called all Christians sons, and so instead of using beloved, it made sense in the argument to single Jesus out in a poignant way.²⁷ This also constitutes a change that follows the Hebrew text as opposed to the Septuagint.²⁸ In all likelihood, however, Paul was more worried about distinguishing Jesus from “other” sons of God.²⁹ He wanted to keep Christ as the unique Son of God, specifically as a natural son instead of as an adoptive son (cf. Gal 4:4–5). A connection between Jesus and Isaac can be argued based on the type of sacrifice made by both: a sacrifice of life done willingly. Judaism, however, understood the Aqedah as an example of Abraham’s love and faithfulness, not Isaac’s.³⁰ As stated above, this is the point of the passage within Genesis.³¹ In turn, Paul is concerned with the Father and not the Son.³² The use of Genesis 22 further clarifies who God is by setting him in parallel with Abraham. Abraham had faith in God and loved him to the point where Abraham was willing to sacrifice his only son, his promised heir, though he ultimately was kept from such an act. God loved humankind so much that he was not only willing to sacrifice his son, but he actually went through with the sacrifice.³³

of a text from the LXX or Hebrew, usually accompanied by an introductory formula), allusions, and echoes.

²⁷ Origen, *The Fathers of the Church: Origen, Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, Books 6–10* (vol. 104; trans. Thomas P. Scheck; Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001) 93, says that, “lest it should be thought that he handed over one of these who appeared to be adopted amongst his sons, by the general sense of ‘sons,’ he has added, ‘his own Son,’ in order to point to him who alone is begotten by an ineffable generation from God himself.”

²⁸ The Hebrew is אֱלֹהֵי. The Greek of the LXX calls for Paul to use ἀγαπητοῦ instead of ἰδίου for a more precise allusion. See Nils Alstrup Dahl, “The Atonement—An Adequate Reward for the Aqedah? (Rom 8:32),” in E. Earle Ellis and Max Wilcox (eds.), *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honor of Matthew Black* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1969) 17.

²⁹ This is supported by Moo, *Romans*, 520; Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.436; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.501; and Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 530–31. Dunn is the only one, however, that explicitly mentions the Hebrew of the passage.

³⁰ Talbert, *Romans*, 228. Talbert cites eight different Jewish sources showing the use of the binding as an example of Abraham’s faithfulness.

³¹ Rom 8:32a is an allusion to Genesis 22 due to the verbal parallels being quite direct and the subject matter extending to encompass the purpose of the pericope.

³² For this reason, those who want to see Isaac as a type of Jesus in Romans 8 miss the thrust of both the passage in Genesis and the usage here. While it is a valid echo of who Christ is, the differences cause the concept of type-antitype to be invalid. Contra Walter Schmithals, *Der Römerbrief: Ein Kommentar* (Gütersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1988) 308, who wants to use this to argue for a functional sonship for Jesus.

³³ Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 530–31, points out how closely this idea fits with John 3:16. Contra Dahl, “Atonement,” 18, where he states, “It is unlikely that Abraham’s act

The full argument of Rom 8:32 is missed unless one continues on to the entire paragraph, for the rest of the verses support the idea detailed above. The Father is the main focus of the allusion made to Genesis 22. He is the focus at the end of 8:32 as well.³⁴ The entire section is not a typical doxology. If one instead sees this section as a group of questions and answers, the ideas fit more readily into a single scheme that leads from 8:31 all the way through 8:39.³⁵ Within this structure, the style changes from straight questions in vv. 31–32 to questions with answers in vv. 33–34, and finally there are two questions in v. 35 answered by vv. 36–39. In addition, most commentators see an echo of Isa 50:9 (50:8 LXX) in vv. 33–34, which means the construction of the two verses should be seen as unified instead of broken into separate statements.³⁶ Therefore, what we have is a section of carefully constructed questions with answers throughout all of vv. 31–39 and especially in vv. 33–34. Following this are the two questions asked in v. 35 which vv. 36–39 are set to answer. Thus, vv. 33–35 are specifically a type of give-and-take designed to focus the reader on a particular theme which Paul is trying to drive home. This means the entire section, 8:31–39, is answering the question of 8:31, and the answer is that nobody can stand up to God, not because of his power, but because of his

of obedience was ever considered a typological prefiguration of God's act of love." The problem with Dahl's reasoning is he bases it upon the idea that Paul's use of the Aqedah had to be parallel to other Jewish sources. Dahl misses the importance of the point he makes later when he says that Isaac was essentially never seen as a type of the Messiah in *Jewish literature* ("Atonement," 20). There are a lot of texts considered messianic by Christians that are not seen that way by Jews. Dahl seems as a presupposition to disregard any kind of christological reading of the Old Testament by Paul, instead only allowing parallel usages.

³⁴ Cf. Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 532.

³⁵ So Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.437–38; Moo, *Romans*, 541; Schreiner, *Romans*, 461–62; Hays, *Echoes*, 59. Achtemeier, *Romans*, 148–49; Barrett, *Romans*, 172–73; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 528–30; and Moores, *Rationality*, 122; all claim vv. 33–34 are entirely composed of questions (though in various ways).

³⁶ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.437; Dunn, *Romans*, 1.503; Moo, *Romans*, 542 n. 32 (Moo's grammar is confusing, but a quick check on 5:9–10 shows he must be referring to the allusion occurring here); Schreiner, *Romans*, 462; Schmithals, *Der Römerbrief*, 310–11; and Hays, *Echoes*, 59–60; all see the echo. Both this section of *Romans* and the section in *Isaiah* carry courtroom themes. For the full impact of the "court scene" in Rom 8:31–39, see Isabelle Parlier, "La Folle Justice de Dieu: Romains 8, 31–39," *Foi et Vie* 5 (1992): 103–10. For the legal language in Isa 50:8–9, see Claus Westermann, *Isaiah: A Commentary* (OTL; trans. David M. G. Stalker; Philadelphia: Westminster, 1969) 2.231, and Motyer, *Isaiah*, 400. John D. Watts, *Isaiah* (2 vols.; WBC 24–25; Waco: Word, 1985–87) 2.204, calls this political language, but his continued analysis actually fits more of a legal mode.

love made manifest in the person of Jesus Christ.³⁷ Thus, the Father is an active agent in that he sent the Son, but a passive agent in that it is the Son who dies. The Father in Romans 8 functions both actively and passively.

3. *The Son*

Christology peppers a large portion of Romans 8, though it does not take center stage. Jesus Christ functions in multiple ways in Romans, but Paul describes a more diversified set of functions in ch. 8. Jesus' role in salvation is highlighted in the chapter, particularly with the mentions of being in Christ (or Christ Jesus). "In Christ" (ἐν Χριστῷ) remains a debated phrase, yet it is integral to Pauline idiom with respect to salvation and the life of believers. Within Romans, the phrase functions as more than just an identifier for Christians, rather it maintains a communal unity within the sphere of the person Jesus Christ.³⁸ According to 8:2, the content of this salvation is life, specifically life in Christ. Most commentators, including Dunn, understand the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ to modify the verb ἠλευθέρωσεν.³⁹ This does not fit the context, however, nor the grammatical development of the sentence. Of the twelve other occurrences in Romans, ἐν Χριστῷ never modifies the phrase or word it precedes, rather it always modifies what it comes after.⁴⁰ In fact, Dunn points out that the theological understanding of Christian life being ἐν Χριστῷ appears explicitly in 6:23, yet he still objects to such an understanding in 8:2.⁴¹ For that matter, 6:11 also points in the

³⁷ The first part of 8:35 is a clear echo of 8:31 materially.

³⁸ See especially Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (SP 6; Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1996) 190, 235–36, who links 6:1–11 with 8:1. With respect to the comparison between ἐν Χριστῷ and ἐν πνεύματι, see below.

³⁹ See Dunn, *Romans*, 1.418.

⁴⁰ In addition to 8:1–2, the phrase also appears in Rom 3:24; 6:11, 23; 8:39; 9:1; 12:5; 15:17; 16:3, 7, 9, 10.

⁴¹ Dunn, *Romans*, 1.418. Dunn states, "The preposition phrase should probably be taken with the verb; to take it with the preceding phrase . . . would have very interesting corollaries for Christology and Pneumatology, but the lack of any real parallel elsewhere in Paul (though cf. 6:23) and its unusualness alongside his other statements on these themes tell strongly against such a construal . . ." This argument should carry no weight as the parallels of 6:11 and 23 negate it.

same theological direction (ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). Thus, eternal life can be found only in Christ Jesus.⁴²

Adjacent yet related to the idea of life in Christ, the place of Jesus as the firstborn or the coheir plays a major role. It takes pride of place due to its connection with the Golden Chain. Paul defines Jesus as a coheir, yet he retains the rights of firstborn. As Christians will come to share in his inheritance, so must they first share in his sufferings (v. 17). Paul compares the present suffering of the Church directly to the suffering of the Christ, yet he does so in passing only to stress the impending glorification, a future glorification promised by the glorification of Jesus.⁴³ One finds the practical culmination of this theme in v. 29, as God conforms all Christians into the image of his Son, namely Jesus. The importance of the συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνοσ τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ phrase remains debated, yet Cranfield makes a convincing case that it contains multiple theological truths.⁴⁴ First, he contends that it points toward the special relationship between the Father and Son in that Jesus himself is not limited to κατ' εἰκόνα, but rather is εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ.⁴⁵ Secondly, he suggests that Paul thinks of this conformity as a process that leads to glorification rather than being a single instantaneous event. Thus being like Christ should be a long term goal rather than a short term result. Again, Paul likely links this conformity to Christ as being through the agency of suffering, at least to some degree. Therefore this conformity to Christ is a subset of him being the firstborn and Christians being his coheirs.⁴⁶

Why is Jesus the preferred image instead of God himself? Would it not make more sense for those who bear the image of God to be conformed to the likeness of God?⁴⁷ There are two responses to this,

⁴² *Contra* Grant R. Osborne, *Romans* (IVPNTC 6; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004) 196, where he argues for the life here being from the Spirit in terms of Christian living instead of life being from Christ in terms of conversion, though his categorization fits the overall flow of the passage. The overlap between the indwelling of Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit will be addressed below.

⁴³ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2.138–39.

⁴⁴ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.432.

⁴⁵ See the brief discussion in Wilhelm Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum: Studien zur Verhältnis von Christozentrik und Theozentrik in den paulinischen Hauptbriefen* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965) 146–47.

⁴⁶ Schreiner (*Romans*, 453–54) makes this very point, though he uses different terminology.

⁴⁷ Quick appeal to certain Johannine passages could easily be done, yet that would be outside the scope of this investigation and fit better into a biblical theology approach. However, the obvious link would be John 1:18, among many others.

though the first will dominate the discussion. The first reason that Paul talks of Christians being conformed into the image of Christ is because Jesus is the firstborn. Within the realm of Christology, one major metaphor or type Paul uses throughout his writings pertains to Adam, i.e. Adam Christology.⁴⁸ Adam plays an important role in Romans, though he is only explicitly mentioned in 5:12–21 (named in 5:14 only). The argument in Romans 5 follows the logic of salvation coming through a conduit similar to which sin came, a single person who would found a new line. While God created Adam as the first human, Jesus is the antitype being the last Adam (cf. 1 Cor 15:45).⁴⁹ The last Adam entails more than just a title, it refers to the creation (or re-creation) of a new line, of which Jesus is the firstborn. While some argue that the status of firstborn is achieved through his resurrection, and literally speaking this would be true, this does not encompass the fullness of the term. Within Paul's works, the title holds at least two distinct meanings, signifying both unique status and the ability to inherit. Colossians 1 covers both meanings, as 1:15 speaks of Jesus' special status with respect to creation as being "firstborn," yet Paul juxtaposes this with being "firstborn" from among the dead, a clue to the type of inheritance. Dunn speaks of this as intentionally carrying the tension between immanence and transcendence.⁵⁰ In addition, Col 1:15 ties the language of firstborn directly to the image of God language (ὅς ἐστιν εἰκὼν τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀοράτου, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως), which gives a direct link in answering the question posed earlier.⁵¹ To claim that one meaning of firstborn is in view without the other misses the context of Paul's argument in Romans 8. This title shows the uniqueness of Christ's position, that he alone can claim such status or such a relationship with the Father, as opposed to the adopted sons.⁵² Firstborn also holds connotations of inheritance, which directly connects to the language of 8:17. Jesus holds the special honor of being the firstborn,

⁴⁸ See most notably the various works of James D. G. Dunn, culminating in his *Theology of Paul*, 199–204, 208–12, 241–42, and 288–93.

⁴⁹ See especially Gordon Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 788–90, and Anthony Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000) 1281–85.

⁵⁰ James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 90.

⁵¹ For more on this, see Peter O'Brien, *Colossians, Philemon* (WBC 44; Nashville: Nelson, 1982) 42–45.

⁵² Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.432.

in contrast with those adopted as being born later, and he holds the proverbial rights to doling out the inheritance, which is life.⁵³ The title stresses his preeminence among the sons of God; while there are many sons, there is only one who is firstborn. Thus, God will conform Christians to the image of Christ since he is the last Adam, the firstborn of the children of God.

The second reason for Jesus being the image to which Christians are conformed is that he is the sent one. This language of sending appears more often in John than in Paul, though it typically occurs in John only when Jesus speaks of himself, yet Romans 8 contains some important uses of it.⁵⁴ This image of sending likely reflects more than mere agency; it reflects a higher level of ontology and authority. Dunn notices how 8:3 echoes language found “in the book of Wisdom and including the sending of Wisdom and of the Spirit in 9.10 and 9.17.”⁵⁵ Dunn disagrees with any ontological referent, mostly because he considers sonship to be directly linked to the resurrection and not to the action of sending.⁵⁶ Indeed, the sending of the Son, as opposed to the creation of the Son, assumes the pre-existence of Jesus, otherwise it would not be a sending at all.⁵⁷ One can create something that does not exist, but one can only send something that already exists. Dunn counters this point by stating that the passage has such a strong Adam Christology that the nature of the verse allows this to only point at Jesus’ death (and possibly resurrection).⁵⁸ If left at this Dunn’s case might stand, yet he goes on to link Jesus’ sonship with “his whole life,”⁵⁹ negating his own

⁵³ See Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (PNTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988) 332–33.

⁵⁴ James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989) xvii. Dunn notes that one must be careful not to project the whole of the Johannine usage of being sent back into the Pauline usage. In reply, one must also not negate Pauline usage because of Johannine usage either. The assumption of a dichotomy is as dangerous as the assumption of a lack of dichotomy.

⁵⁵ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 44.

⁵⁶ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 44–45. Strangely enough, the evidence Dunn gives (e.g. Luke 20:13 and Mark 12:7–9) contradicts his own point since the sending motif always assumes sonship *before* sending, thus negating a resurrection scenario for sonship.

⁵⁷ Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (THKNT 6; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1998) 152 and Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 484–85. Haacker argues briefly for his position whereas Fitzmyer simply asserts it.

⁵⁸ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 45.

⁵⁹ Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 45.

point. By linking the sending to Jesus' entire life, Jesus must be sent into the world for this purpose rather than being sent after already being in the world, otherwise his "whole life" could not in fact be in view. Indeed, Moo considers this sending as pointing to the incarnation and beyond to the crucifixion.⁶⁰ If sending is linked directly to the crucifixion event (and not the resurrection only), then there is a clear connection between 8:3 and 8:32,⁶¹ since Paul stresses the motif of God's own Son again, though this time as an allusion to Gen 22:12, 16. In v. 32, the emphasis is on God's actions being performed through Christ, namely that God is the one who hands over his Son and God is the one who sacrificed Jesus for all. At the same time, God did not leave Jesus dead, rather the Father raised the Son both from the dead and to the height of being at God's right hand (v. 34).⁶² Jesus was sent in order to be a propitiation for sin, yes, but also to be glorified and exalted to the right hand of the Father. Jesus as the one who was sent covers his preexistence, his death, and his glorification. He is the image Christians are to be conformed to because he was the last Adam, thus the image of God, and he was the sent one, thus he suffered and was glorified.

Jesus also functions in other ways in Romans 8. For example, he intercedes (ἐντυγχάνει) for us before the Father (v. 34). This intercession likely fits into a royal court atmosphere, in that the context displays a regal setting. Moo argues that this intercession functions in a high priestly way.⁶³ However, the context does not support such a viewpoint, nor does Paul appeal to the metaphor of the high priest anywhere in Romans. Schreiner argues that the death of Jesus functions as the means by which he intercedes.⁶⁴ He makes a good point in that Jesus' death plays a central role in this section, but the present tense of the verb (thus giving an iterative sense, which would contradict Jesus' once for all death) coupled with the natural progression of the verse (from death, to resurrection, to glorification, to

⁶⁰ Moo, *Romans*, 478–81. He stresses the sacrificial aspect, something highlighted again in 8:32.

⁶¹ Fitzmyer (*Romans*, 484) also notes this link, though he mentions it only in passing.

⁶² The importance of the allusion to Ps 110:1 in Rom 8:34 should not be understated, but there is a lot of material on this as is (see John Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* [London: SCM Press; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1989] 229 n. x). For how the phrase operates in this passage, see Dunn, *Romans*, 1.504.

⁶³ Moo, *Romans*, 542–43.

⁶⁴ Schreiner, *Romans*, 463.

function) makes such a reference unlikely. Dunn looks at this intercession as being parallel to both the angels in Jewish apocalyptic literature and a possible hint of Adam Christology.⁶⁵ Rather than defending his point, Dunn is careful to point to these as possibilities. However, it is unlikely that Paul has Adam Christology in view here at 8:34: other metaphors are more at the forefront of the passage. The parallel with Jewish apocalyptic imagery, however, should not be so quickly brushed aside. Cranfield takes a slightly different view than Dunn, and instead of seeing it as the righteous sufferer making a case before the ruler, he believes the image most likely fits the picture of a king and his vice-regent, in that the vice-regent makes a case on behalf of the people.⁶⁶ The formal wording of the passage indicates one of two settings: either a legal courtroom or else a kingly throne room. The idea of intercession fits both pictures, and the language would seem to have more of a forensic tone, especially the usage of ἐγκαλέσει and κατακρινῶν, but the immediate allusion to Ps 110:1 would indicate the throne room setting is more likely. Jesus not only saves his people by his death and resurrection, he continues to intercede for them as vice-regent before the Father. Jesus existed before he was sent, he was sent as a sacrifice for God's people to become adopted as sons, he rose and was glorified, and now he serves as vice-regent.

4. *The Holy Spirit*

The Holy Spirit plays a central role in Romans 8.⁶⁷ This can be seen in the main idea of the chapter, as Paul brings the Holy Spirit into a discussion of the law by use of the phrase, “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” I have already argued that “in Christ Jesus” links directly to “life,” and therefore it is tied to the rest of the phrase. While the majority of commentators spend time talking about the relationship of the Spirit to the law (even putting the law in quotes), one needs to note that the Spirit is characterized by life. The contrast in 8:2 lies between the types of law, namely that of the Spirit of life against that of sin and death. While the parallel is

⁶⁵ Dunn, *Romans*, 1.504.

⁶⁶ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.438–39.

⁶⁷ Though limiting his discussion to 8:1–30, see Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 515–19.

not exact, the antithesis is.⁶⁸ Taken in conjunction with 8:10–11, this verse lauds the Spirit as the giver of life. Paul enumerates the reasons for the Spirit being characterized by life in vv. 3–11.⁶⁹ This section presents a dichotomy between flesh and Spirit which result in death and life, respectively. The flesh in and of itself will not remain, whereas the Spirit gives a resurrection life to the body (v. 11).⁷⁰ The contrast between life and death is a contrast between the Spirit and flesh, or restated as a contrast between living in the Holy Spirit versus living apart from him.

Life comes from the Spirit based also in part upon how the Spirit functions as a connective agency from Christ to the believer. Given the prominence of the phrase “in Christ” in the Pauline corpus (which was discussed earlier), the question now becomes: How is this related to being “in the Spirit” or living “according to the Spirit”? Ben Witherington argues for Jesus being present and active in believers through the work of the Holy Spirit.⁷¹ This life is made available by means of Jesus’ death and resurrection, but it only becomes a reality in the believer through the work of the Holy Spirit. The life according to the Spirit fosters the dwelling of Christ within the believer (v. 10).⁷² Thus, the work of Christ finds completion in the work of the Spirit. Life can be offered due to the work of Christ, yet it is only given through the work of the Holy Spirit. The indwelling Spirit, then, represents in a very real way Christ in the believer, and thus the Spirit serves as the actual presence of Christ.

What then does Paul envision as the relationship between Jesus and the Holy Spirit? If the Spirit serves as the real presence of Christ, then is the Spirit actually a part of Christ? What does it mean that both Jesus and the Spirit intercede before the Father on

⁶⁸ Dunn, *Romans*, 1.417–18. Cf. Moo, *Romans*, 476. Schreiner (*Romans*, 400) points to 8:6 in arguing that the result of the work of the Spirit is life.

⁶⁹ Cf. Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.378 who argues that the $\gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho$ links vv. 3–4 with v. 2. *Contra* Schreiner (*Romans*, 401) who thinks both vv. 1–2 are in view.

⁷⁰ See especially the discussion in Schreiner, *Romans*, 414–15. That Paul has in view the Holy Spirit in 8:11 can hardly be doubted due to the meaning of $\zeta\omega\acute{\eta}$ and the incomprehensibility of $\pi\nu\epsilon\delta\mu\alpha$ referring to a human spirit, notwithstanding the arguments of Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 491.

⁷¹ Ben Witherington with Darlene Hyatt, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004) 210–11.

⁷² Fee (*Empowering Presence*, 552) paraphrases the verse with, “if Christ by his Spirit is dwelling in you . . .,” making the same point that the Spirit serves as the presence of Christ.

behalf of believers? The last question derives from the fact that both Jesus and the Spirit serve as the subject of ἐντυγχάνει, in v. 34 and v. 27 respectively. Wilckens explains the repeated use of the verb as the difference between an intercessor within the Christian and an intercessor before the Lord (though he casts the discussion in strictly eschatological terms).⁷³ Moo agrees with this distinction, noting that Christ stands before the Father while the Spirit “prays . . . on our behalf” (cf. v. 26).⁷⁴ This function of the Spirit is concurrent with that of the Son, though Paul approaches them in different ways.⁷⁵ The role of the Spirit in terms of the life of the Christian is closely linked to the role of Christ in that Jesus enables the giving of life and the Spirit actually gives it, the Spirit actively brings believers into the adoptive relationship with the Father and therefore also with the Son, and Jesus intercedes before the Father as does the Spirit.

The question of the relationship between the Son and Spirit in Romans 8 cannot be answered until one examines 8:9. This verse contains two different titles for the Holy Spirit, both of which reflect on the relationship of the Spirit to the Son. First, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of God. There lies an obvious distinction between the Father and the Spirit in that the Spirit intercedes before the Father, so any argument for the Spirit being just an aspect of the Father in Paul and not a separate person is doomed from the start! The Spirit clearly has divine authority in that it can enable humans to call upon the Father as “Abba.”⁷⁶ That the Holy Spirit derives in some way from God would not be controversial to a Jewish audience, let alone a pagan one.⁷⁷ The Spirit knows the mind of the Father and acts according to his will (8:27; cf. 1 Cor 2:11).⁷⁸ Secondly, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ. Cranfield notes how

⁷³ Wilckens, *Römer*, 2.174–75.

⁷⁴ Moo, *Romans*, 527.

⁷⁵ Haacker, *Römer*, 168. Haacker states, “An eine Fürsprache des Geists vor dem Thron Gottes zu denken, liegt weniger nahe, weil V. 27a dann unmotiviert erschiene und eine Konkurrenz zur Rolle Christi in V. 34 entstünde.”

⁷⁶ Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.842. The essay by Cranfield at the end of his commentary briefly but cogently discusses how Paul’s concept of God coherently fits within a trinitarian scheme and only a trinitarian scheme.

⁷⁷ Dunn, *Romans*, 1.428–29. Dunn does not directly make this point, but reading his comments on the connection to the Judaic background gave me this insight.

⁷⁸ Thiselton (*Corinthians*, 258–59) makes reference to 1 Cor 2:11 indicating that such a close relationship between someone and God can only occur if both are indeed God in some respect.

the work of the Son and Spirit are so closely entwined that some have argued that the Spirit *is* the exalted Christ.⁷⁹ The statement fails to adequately account for the distinction embedded within this verse. Dunn moves in the opposite direction, noting how the movement from πνεῦμα θεοῦ to πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ redefines the Spirit into a narrower identity.⁸⁰ Both ideas miss the significance of the two parallel statements. The overlapping functions of the Son and Spirit in no way make the two identical, rather it displays the importance of those overlapping functions, especially since those functions tend to be performed in different ways. Rather, this shift hints at a true trinitarian doctrine within Paul.⁸¹

5. *Was Paul Trinitarian?*

Paul in Romans 8 hints at a trinitarian doctrine, but was he really a trinitarian? In one sense, the answer must be no. Paul did not use the explicit terminology that would later characterize the historic conflict within the early Church. In a less formal sense, however, Paul was trinitarian. Obviously the Father is God, in that θεός is often synonymous with God the Father in Romans.⁸² Paul is clearly monotheistic, and this monotheism must be understood as the basis of his theology proper. Again, other parallel texts both inside and outside of Romans make this more or less uncontroversial.⁸³ The Son, however, is equated with the Father by being the sent one, the one given authority to function as God on earth as the display of *God's* love occurs in the death of Christ (8:39; cf. 5:8).⁸⁴ At the same time, being sent shows Jesus' submission to the Father, especially since the crucifixion was the reason why the Father sent the Son.

⁷⁹ Cranfield, *Romans*, 2.843. Schreiner (*Romans*, 413–14) explicitly rules out this option by saying that they are not “identical, only that they are inseparable in terms of the saving benefits communicated to believers.”

⁸⁰ Dunn, *Romans*, 1.429. Dunn stretches the point too far, however, when he suggests that this is a part of the development of early churches' concept of the Spirit.

⁸¹ Schreiner (*Romans*, 414) declares, “Texts like these provide the raw material from which the church later hammered out the doctrine of the Trinity.”

⁸² Rom 9:5, and its attendant controversy, fall outside of the bounds of this article.

⁸³ For example, C. H. Giblin, “Three Monotheistic Texts in Paul,” *CBQ* 37 (1975): 527–47.

⁸⁴ Hays, “God of Mercy,” 135.

In addition, the Holy Spirit is both the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ, an overlapping relationship that points to authoritative equality between the Father and the Son with respect to the Holy Spirit. In fact, Cranfield says, “The ease with which Paul can pass from one expression to the other is one more indication of his recognition of the divine dignity of Christ.”⁸⁵ This gives us at least a binity, two who are the One God. The question arises as to the place of the Holy Spirit. Paul has called the Spirit both of God and of Christ, which would seem to give evidence for a decidedly subordinate position. However, the function of God the Son and the Holy Spirit overlap in complementary ways at numerous points. The freedom from the law found in the death of Christ becomes entwined with the need to walk in the Spirit.⁸⁶ The Christian life must be lived ἐν Χριστῷ, yet it also must be lived ἐν πνεύματι, phrases which carry parallel significance and deliver the same resulting state. The Holy Spirit, then, while being functionally subordinate to the Father and Son since he is “of” them, still maintains the function of deity, and thus the Holy Spirit is also God. Again, within the strict monotheistic background of Paul, this can only be reconciled through a trinitarian understanding of Romans 8. Paul not only displays a trinitarian understanding of the Father, Son, and Spirit, he also relates the subordination of the Spirit to the Father and Son and the Son to the Father.

6. Conclusion

This inquiry began by asking if Francis Watson’s use of Romans 8 as a trinitarian proof-text has a legitimate exegetical foundation. In order to find an answer to the question, the Father, Son, and Spirit were considered independently throughout the text of Romans 8, and this study took Paul’s monotheism as a given. In regards to the Father, there is no dispute that Paul considered him God. With respect to the Son, the concepts of life in Christ, being the firstborn, and being the image to which God will conform Christians gives credence to understanding Jesus as divine. The issue of intercession

⁸⁵ Cranfield, *Romans*, 1.388.

⁸⁶ Neil Elliott, *The Rhetoric of Romans: Argumentative Constraint and Strategy and Paul’s Dialogue with Judaism* (JSNTSup 45; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990) 258–59.

brought home the point. The Holy Spirit also intercedes for believers, and life comes to believers by way of the Spirit. Paul describes the Holy Spirit as both of God and of Christ, displaying a subordinate role for the Spirit, yet clearly the Holy Spirit executes functions reserved for God. There can be little doubt that, through reading Romans 8, Paul was indeed a trinitarian.

PAULINE PNEUMATOLOGY AND THE QUESTION OF TRINITARIAN PRESUPPOSITIONS

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This essay will explore Paul's understanding of the Holy Spirit's relation to Jesus Christ within the context of the discussion regarding the trinitarian presuppositions, or lack thereof, in Pauline thought. Focusing largely on the contribution of Gordon Fee, a key contributor to this Pauline discussion, I will first consider the presuppositions standing behind this theological presentation of Paul's thought and then examine two sets of biblical texts. The first set are those which are found to be explicitly triadic texts, and the latter consists of a set of texts which might appear to identify the Spirit with the risen Christ. Examining these texts will display how Paul, consistently viewing the Spirit as distinct from Christ, does indeed exhibit trinitarian presuppositions.

Many Christian theologians throughout history have identified a close link between the doctrine of the Trinity and the biblical text.¹ However, after Gabler asserted a clear distinction between systematic and biblical theology,² such close attention to scriptural discussion was soon removed from trinitarian theology. A positive result of this was that biblical scholars and theologians became aware, and now agree, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not a biblical theology, but rather a product of systematic theology. Donald Juell, for example, rightly observes that "the New Testament contains no doctrine of the Trinity."³ On the other hand, this realization has led

¹ For example, Augustine and Calvin focused their discussion on Scripture to prove and explain the doctrine of the Trinity. See Augustine, *The Trinity*, esp. Book I–IV, XV and John Calvin, *Institutes*, 1.13.

² Johann P. Gabler, "An Oration on the Proper Distinction between Biblical and Dogmatic Theology and the Specific Objectives of Each," in B. C. Ollenburger, E. A. Martens and G. F. Hasel (eds.), *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology: A Reader in Twentieth-Century Old Testament Theology, 1930–1990* (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1992) 493–502.

³ Donald H. Juell, "The Trinity in the New Testament," *ThTo* 54 (1997): 313. This is also noted by Arthur W. Wainwright, *The Trinity in the New Testament* (London:

some to conclude that there was no understanding or idea of trinitarian thought within the first century of the Church. This occurred largely because of a deficient understanding of the Holy Spirit (and the word πνεῦμα in particular) in the New Testament, often being considered as Jesus in spiritual form or even as nothing more than the human spirit. In other instances it seems simply to be the case that scholars are wary of being anachronistic by labeling Paul with a term which connotes many later theological developments.⁴ In contrast to these outlooks, Fee has argued that Paul's writings with respect to the Holy Spirit do in fact display that Paul had trinitarian presuppositions and that Paul is a "latent trinitarian."⁵ Ulrich Mauser similarly concludes that "it is appropriate to talk of trinitarian language in Paul."⁶

Presuppositions and Method

In arriving at his conclusion, Fee argues that the clear trinitarian Pauline texts should guide the exegesis of other unclear texts which might seem to suggest that Paul identified Jesus with the Spirit. That is, Fee uses the principle of interpreting unclear texts by the majority of clear texts.

This method and the conclusions presuppose that Paul is consistent and coherent in his theology and presentation of the Spirit. On

SPCK, 1962) vii, who, throughout his work, prefers to speak of the "problem" of the Trinity arising in the New Testament, rather than the "doctrine" (though, it must be noted, he is arguing that the doctrine of the Trinity *emerged* in the New Testament, against the belief that the doctrine is a speculative product of Hellenistic philosophy).

⁴ Noted by Gordon D. Fee, "Paul and the Trinity," in Stephen T. Davis, Daniel Kendall, and Gerald O'Collins (eds.), *The Trinity: An Interdisciplinary Symposium on the Trinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) 50. Fee is careful to maintain only that Paul contains "trinitarian presuppositions."

⁵ Fee, "Paul and the Trinity," 50; and Fee, *God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1994). Fee's work has been well received. For example, see Eduard Schweizer, "A Very Helpful Challenge: *God's Empowering Presence*," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996): 8, 13.

⁶ Ulrich Mauser, "One God and Trinitarian Language in the Letters of Paul," *HBT* 20 (1998): 108. Mauser does not specify just what that 'trinitarian language' might mean, but in the context of his article it must at least include the idea that God is 'one' and also the distinctiveness of God (Father), Christ (Son), and the Holy Spirit. Coming to similar conclusions regarding 2 Corinthians, see Frances Young and David F. Ford, "What about the Trinity?" in *Meaning and Truth in 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 255-60.

the other hand, it is possible that apparently contradictory texts are in fact contradictory.⁷ After all, Paul's writings were not theological treatises, but letters written for particular occasions to deal with particular issues. Nevertheless, there is merit behind the view that the occasional advice and instruction Paul provides in his letters does issue from what Thomas Schreiner refers to as "a coherent theological worldview."⁸ The interpreter must begin by assuming whether or not Paul's writings are coherent and then interpret his letters accordingly. Schreiner rightly posits that Paul's "letters would not be so profound if he were merely a pragmatist reacting to the situations occurring in the churches."⁹ In addition, Schreiner notes that Paul's thoughts can be seemingly contradictory even within one verse.¹⁰ Since these apparent contradictions in Paul can (and must) be explained, we may suppose that other alleged contradictions within the broader context of Paul's letters can also be explained. We may conclude with Schreiner that "since Paul was clearly an intelligent person, we should grant him the benefit of the doubt on the issue of consistency."¹¹

Nevertheless, another possible manner of explaining apparent inconsistencies in Paul's theology remains. One might suggest that Paul's letters reflect developments that occurred in his thought. For example, W. D. Davies claims that Paul's understanding of the resurrection changed between the writing of 1 Corinthians 15 and 2 Corinthians 5.¹² Paul's thought did likely develop to some extent (it certainly did upon his conversion with respect to Christianity), however, when specific assertions are made regarding revisions in Paul's thought they are usually based upon tentative historical reconstructions of Paul's life and often uncertain conclusions regarding the dating of his letters.

⁷ So, for example, H. Räisänen, *Paul and the Law* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), argues that Paul contradicts himself with respect to the significance of the Law for Jews and Gentiles.

⁸ Thomas R. Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles* (Guides to New Testament Exegesis 5; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990) 136.

⁹ Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 136.

¹⁰ Schreiner provides the example of 1 Cor 7:19 ("Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. Keeping God's commands is what counts" [English Scripture quotations are taken from the TNIV, except where noted]), which might seem to suggest that circumcision is not a command of God. Schreiner writes, "In the same verse Paul affirmed the abiding validity of the law and dismissed some of the law" (*Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 137).

¹¹ Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 138.

¹² W. D. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism* (London: SPCK, 1955) 311.

Beyond this, we must again note that Paul's letters were not meant to be comprehensive or systematic. The occasional nature of the letters presents us with only a portion of Paul's thinking on a topic at various times. Paul would emphasize different things in his letters as he felt it appropriate in order to respond to his or others' concerns. So, for example, it is only from 1 Corinthians that we learn that the Lord's Supper was celebrated in Pauline churches.¹³ Emphasizing the occasional nature of Paul's letters, Fee suggests that although Paul's thought likely did develop in minor ways, within Paul's letters we do not find any evidence of drastic developments and complete changes of thought (that would otherwise seem to be contradictory).

Schreiner suggests additional reasons as to why drastic developments were not likely (even possible?) for Paul.¹⁴ Paul had already been a missionary for a number of years before he wrote the letters and also had a Pharisaic background. Based on these factors, Schreiner concludes that Paul would have thought through theological issues and come to firm conclusions regarding them by the time he wrote his letters. There is, however, no reason to assume that a learned scholar could not change his mind on issues over time. This does in fact occur and there is no reason to assume that this could not have happened to Paul specifically. In contrast to Schreiner, Fee's conclusion does not mean that such theological developments were not possible for Paul. In fact, in *God's Empowering Presence* Fee does examine Paul's letters in what he believes is the chronological order in which they were written in order to see if there might be an indication of theological development regarding the Holy Spirit in the letters, and he finds no sufficient evidence for this.¹⁵ Given this, it seems that we are also safe to conclude that Paul is consistent in this matter. It is the "coherent theological worldview" that Paul held with respect to the triune God that Fee suggests is manifested within Paul's letters.

¹³ Gordon D. Fee, "God's Empowering Presence: A Response to Eduard Schweizer," *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 8 (1996): 24–26.

¹⁴ Schreiner, *Interpreting the Pauline Epistles*, 139–40.

¹⁵ To my knowledge, no one has suggested that Paul's theology developed with respect to the issue of trinitarian presuppositions. By contrast, on another issue regarding the Holy Spirit, Schweizer, "A Very Helpful Challenge," 10, suggests there was a historical development from the "free spontaneous nature of worship" to a more institutionalized church life" by the second century, as evidenced in the 'Pauline' letters.

Trinitarian Passages

It is clear that for Paul God was ‘one.’ This belief would have been part of Paul’s Jewish inheritance. Richard Bauckham suggests that the Jews of the Second Temple period were strict monotheists but that this monotheism allowed for the inclusion of the Word and Wisdom of God within the unique identity of God. He concludes that “the Second Temple Jewish understanding of the divine uniqueness does not define it as unitariness and does not make distinctions within the divine identity inconceivable.”¹⁶ This understanding of God as ‘one’ is not equivalent to a contemporary philosophical idea of ‘monotheism’ but may include the idea of diversity within God, as, we will see, it did for Paul.

The three texts which Fee views as “explicitly triadic”¹⁷ are 2 Cor 13:14; 1 Cor 12:4–6; and Eph 4:4–6. What Paul expresses here in succinct form are his presuppositions, which are also reflected in other Pauline texts regarding Jesus, the Father, or the Spirit.

Paul ends 2 Corinthians with a prayer:

ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ
καὶ ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ
καὶ ἡ κοινωνία τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος μετὰ πάντων ὑμῶν.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor 13:[13]14).¹⁸ Paul was not here attempting to explicate any theology. What is found is fully presuppositional material for him. This benediction is also significant because it is elaborated beyond Paul’s usual benediction, “the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you” (e.g., Rom

¹⁶ Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified: Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 22. Both Mauser, “One God and Trinitarian Language,” 100–102 and Juel, “The Trinity and the New Testament,” 313–15, emphasize that God’s oneness (as declared in the *Shema*) was essentially a statement of God’s exclusiveness. We note, however, Larry W. Hurtado’s observation that, along with other principal agents of God, the Word and Wisdom of God did not receive the devotion that was later given to Jesus. See *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005) 47.

¹⁷ Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 52.

¹⁸ On this text, see Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 363–65, 840; Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 53–54; and Joseph Maleparamil, *The ‘Trinitarian’ Formulae in St. Paul: An Exegetical Investigation into the Meaning and Function of those Pauline Sayings which comparatively make mention of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit* (European University Studies, Series 23, Theology 546; New York: Peter Lang, 1995) 79–112.

16:20). In the 2 Corinthian benediction, Paul equates the activity of the three and the remainder of the expressions describe how Paul viewed their soteriological work. This is not a random conclusion to the letter, but rather a dense summary of what we find expressed explicitly elsewhere in his writings. In his love, God determines to save people through Jesus Christ (2 Cor 5:18; Rom 5:11, 20–21). This love is expressed in the grace of Jesus Christ who died for those he loved, thereby effecting salvation (Rom 5:15; 2 Cor 5:14–15), and the Spirit’s fellowship¹⁹ gives us life, appropriating the love to us and leading us into and through the experience of salvation (2 Cor 3:6–8; Rom 5:5). In other words, the love of God is foundational, the grace of Jesus is the concrete expression and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit actualizes the love. Jesus, God, and the Spirit are united in their action. The divinity of the three is not stated here—that can be understood elsewhere and would likewise be understood by one reading this—though the ‘prayer’ character of this sentence seems to suggest that Paul is addressing God as the Lord, God, and the Holy Spirit. Nevertheless, what is crucial to note is that Paul makes a clear distinction between the three persons and their specific work in this action of salvation. This is seen by the use of three parallel clauses.

The second triadic text Fee identifies is 1 Cor 12:4–6:

διαρέσεις δὲ χαρισμάτων εἰσὶν, τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα·
καὶ διαρέσεις διακονιῶν εἰσιν, καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς κύριος·
καὶ διαρέσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσὶν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεὸς
ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God, who works all things in everyone” (author’s translation).²⁰ This passage falls within a context where Paul is discussing the diversity of gifts that the Church can expect to find among them while remaining one united Church. The lat-

¹⁹ Maleparamil, *The ‘Trinitarian’ Formulae*, 95–106, esp. 95, lists reasons why τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος (“the Holy Spirit”) should be understood as both an objective and subjective genitive. The parallel structure of the passage, where τοῦ κυρίου and τοῦ θεοῦ both function as subjective genitives, certainly constrains us to submit some level of active understanding for πνεύματος.

²⁰ On this text see Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 161–63, 840; Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 54; and Maleparamil, *The ‘Trinitarian’ Formulae*, 17–49.

ter is evidenced by the fact that they all confess “Jesus is Lord” (1 Cor 12:3) and this is all by means of the same Spirit who gives them various gifts. There may also be a wordplay in progress here as Paul notes that though there is *διαίρέσεις* (diversity) among them, there need not be the present *αἰρέσεις* (disunity/factions—1 Cor 11:19). Here in 12:4–6, as with 2 Cor 13:13, we find three parallel clauses in which Paul emphasizes by repetition and word order the diversity of gifts the Corinthians could expect to find in the church—“diversity, diversity, diversity.” He also uses diverse literary means to describe these gifts (*χαρισμάτων, διακονιῶν, ἐνεργημάτων*). On the other hand, in the same way he emphasizes the diverse gifts, Paul states that this diversity comes from ‘the same,’ repeating *ὁ αὐτὸς* in each clause. And yet, ‘the same’ is not ‘the same’ as it is the same ‘Spirit,’ ‘Lord,’²¹ and ‘God,’ while nevertheless being *ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα* (“the one working all things”). In this latter statement we see that ‘God’ is the foundation for these works. Overall, Paul posits diversity in God—Spirit, Lord, God, each being distinct from the other—in a context in which he nevertheless emphasizes that he is ‘the same.’ In summary, Paul argues that just as there is unity and diversity in God, the Corinthians can expect to be united and yet find diverse gifts among them, each originating from the same God. Fee correctly posits that “the Trinity is presuppositional to the entire argument.”²² That is, Paul’s message is not about God as triune, but this is the basis for his argument.

The third triadic text Fee identifies, Eph 4:4–6, reads:

ἓν σῶμα καὶ ἓν πνεῦμα, καθὼς καὶ ἐκλήθητε ἐν μιᾷ ἐλπίδι τῆς κλήσεως ὑμῶν·
εἷς κύριος, μία πίστις, ἓν βάπτισμα·
εἷς θεὸς καὶ πατὴρ πάντων, ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων, καὶ διὰ πάντων, καὶ ἐν πᾶσιν.

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”²³ Paul speaks of ‘one’ seven times in these verses, which are elaborating upon the unity that the Spirit brings (spoken of in v. 3). As with the emphasis in 1 Cor 12:4–6, Paul is here suggesting that the

²¹ The ‘Lord’ here being Jesus Christ (cf. 1 Cor 12:3). Paul usually reserves use of the term ‘Lord’ for reference to Jesus Christ.

²² Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 54.

²³ On this text, see Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 702–705, 841; and Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 54–55.

basis of unity in the Church is the one God. The structure of this passage seems to suggest a link between the Spirit, Lord and God and the Christian unity that Paul is discussing. Paul begins by stating what they are, ‘one body,’ and then how they came to be that way, that is, by one Spirit (cf. Eph 4:3). Paul also expresses this in 1 Cor 12:13: “For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body.” Paul continues by relating the Spirit’s role to God’s calling, which he had just spoken of in Eph 4:1. Paul then turns to speak of the one Christian faith by stating there is only one Lord, on whom this faith is based and to whom it is directed, and by further emphasizing the common experience of baptism into that one faith. Paul concludes by speaking of God, this time also as ‘Father.’ As with the 1 Corinthian passage above, God is again seen to be the foundation of the work of the Lord and the Spirit as he is the one who is in relation to ‘all.’

In each of these three ‘triadic’ texts Paul has not been concerned with theologizing about God. His discussion has received its impetus from different occasions. In the first case he prayed a blessing on the Corinthians, a blessing which summarized his thought. In the two latter texts he was emphasizing the unity of the Church, with the Ephesians passage also being a summary of thought. In all three of these cases Paul has applied his theological presuppositions as the occasion necessitated. And in each of these cases Paul spoke of the three persons and their work in concert with the others in the manner in which he understood (and likely his audience would identify with) his experience of God. It was a salvific experience of God as the Lord Jesus Christ, the Spirit, and God the Father.²⁴ The three texts considered above provide summaries of Paul’s soteriology.²⁵ Many other such texts could be cited.²⁶ Given that the outlook

²⁴ Mauser, “One God and Trinitarian Language,” 107. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 705, writes, “Paul merely asserts Trinitarian realities—because he presupposes them, based on his and the early church’s experience of God as Father, Son, and Spirit” (Fee’s emphasis).

²⁵ On the soteriological significance of the Spirit in particular for Paul, see Fee, “The Soteriological Spirit,” in *God’s Empowering Presence*, 846–69.

²⁶ Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 56; and Gordon D. Fee, “Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9–11—and Elsewhere: Some Reflections on Paul as a Trinitarian,” in Joel B. Green and Max Turner (eds.), *Jesus of Nazareth: Lord and Christ: Essays on the Historical Jesus and New Testament Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 329–30, lists many semi-creedal soteriological passages, which almost always include mention of the Spirit.

expressed above is so clear for Paul, it seems that an adequate pre-supposition to bring when interpreting the remainder of Paul's letters is to expect that he views the Spirit as distinct from Jesus and God. We now turn to consider certain 'problem' texts which might challenge this conclusion.

Christ/Spirit Passages

In contrast to the above conclusions, certain texts have caused many since Hermann Gunkel to suppose that Paul identifies the Spirit as the risen Christ and that, therefore, "Christ is himself this Spirit."²⁷ Along the same line of thought, Dunn has argued that "as the Spirit was the 'divinity' of Jesus, so Jesus became the personality of the Spirit."²⁸ Some of the key texts that have led some to this position include the 'Spirit of Christ' passages (Rom 8:9; Gal 4:6; Phil 1:19) as well as 2 Cor 3:17 and 1 Cor 15:45.

The 'Spirit of Christ' passages only occur three times in the Pauline corpus in the midst of the 145 times πνεῦμα occurs in Paul's letters.²⁹ Considering this, it seems that these texts should not be taken as determinant for our understanding of Paul's pneumatology. Nevertheless, given their prominence in the discussion, these texts must be examined.

In the three 'Spirit of Christ' passages we find the Spirit referred to as πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ ("Spirit of Christ"; Rom 8:9), πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ ("Spirit of his son"; Gal 4:6) and τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ("of the Spirit of Jesus Christ"; Phil 1:19). The various genitives modifying 'Spirit' might be considered genitives of apposition, in which the latter term is identical with the 'Spirit.' They would thus be interpreted to mean, "Spirit, namely Christ." This, however, conflicts with the above evidence which suggests that Paul saw the Spirit as

²⁷ Hermann Gunkel, *The Influence of the Holy Spirit: The Popular View of the Apostolic Age and the Teaching of the Apostle Paul* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979 [German original 1888]) 113.

²⁸ James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit: A Study of the Religious and Charismatic Experience of Jesus and the First Christians as Reflected in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975) 325. On the history of interpreting the relation of Christ to the Spirit in Paul see Mehrdad Fatehi, *The Spirit's Relation to the Risen Lord in Paul* (WUNT 128; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000) 23–45; and Fee, "Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9–11," 314–16.

²⁹ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 14.

distinct from Christ. Eduard Schweizer suggests that they might also be genitives of source—thus meaning “from Christ”—but the context gives no indication that this is the case. In addition, one of these passages occurs where Paul explicitly states that it is God who sent the Spirit (see the discussion on Gal 4:6 below).³⁰ It is more likely that these genitives serve as genitives of relationship. That is, in each case they are emphasizing the Spirit’s relation to Christ—thus, they would be interpreted to mean something like, “Spirit, of relation to Christ,” in a similar manner to how one would understand, “Paul, of relation to his Father,” or, “the ones of relation to Christ” (Gal 5:24).

In Rom 8:9–11³¹ Paul is emphasizing the indwelling Spirit, mentioning this dwelling three times in these verses, which guarantees their resurrection to come. In this sense the Spirit is the “Spirit of God,” suggesting that God will act in them just as God has raised Christ from the dead. The emphasis on the “Spirit of God” is not unusual, as Paul’s primary manner of speaking of the Spirit is in relation to ‘God.’³² On the other hand, Paul relates this “Spirit of God” to the “Spirit of Christ.” The use of “Spirit of Christ” emphasizes the relation of Christ and the Spirit, for the life that is being produced is on account of Christ’s righteousness (Rom 6:4–14).

Turning to Gal 4:6,³³ we find again that the ‘Spirit of Christ’ is found in the context of the Spirit’s relation to God. Here the Spirit is said to be sent by God. The emphasis in this passage is on sonship. This is seen in that the Spirit’s relation to Christ is referred to as the Spirit of “his υιοῦ” (son). The sonship motif is also evidenced in this context as Paul is discussing Christians who are adopted as God’s υιοί (children). The result of having the Spirit in one’s heart is that one, like Christ, is also a υιός (child) of God (Gal 4:7).

³⁰ Schweizer, “A Very Helpful Challenge,” 13 n. 14.

³¹ Fee, “Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9–11,” 323–26; Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 543–54, 836.

³² Fee, “Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9–11,” 317, writes “Not only does he [Paul] more often speak of the ‘Spirit of God’ than of the ‘Spirit of Christ,’ but God is invariably the subject of the verb when Paul speaks of human reception of the Spirit. Thus God ‘sent forth the Spirit of his Son into our hearts’ (Gal 4:6), or ‘gives’ us his Spirit (1 Thess 4:8; 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Gal 3:5; Rom 5:5; Eph 1:17), an understanding that in Paul’s case is almost certainly determined by his OT roots, where God ‘fills with’ (Exod 31:3) or ‘pours out’ his Spirit (Joel 2:28), and the ‘Spirit of God’ comes on people for all sorts of extraordinary (‘charismatic’) activities (e.g., Num 24:2; Judg 3:10).”

³³ Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 404–12.

Accordingly, in this context Paul speaks of the Spirit as the Spirit related to God's 'son.'

Philippians 1:19 is not in the context of speech about 'God,' nevertheless it also reflects the relation of the Spirit to Christ. This verse falls in the midst of Paul's thoughts on why he rejoices regardless of his impending trial—he expects that Christ is and will be magnified (Phil 1:18–20).³⁴ Paul knows that this experience will become "salvation" (σωτηρίαν) for him and this by means of the Philippian's prayers and the resulting help of the "Spirit of Jesus Christ." This should not be understood to mean that the Spirit is 'from' Jesus (genitive of source). For Paul, prayers are directed to 'God,' thus God is likely considered the source of the Spirit here. The singular use of the preposition διὰ to refer to both the prayers and the Spirit suggests that they are being considered as one means. That is, the prayers (to God) lead to the Spirit, which together lead to Paul's 'salvation.'

In this context Paul is not talking about being saved/delivered from imprisonment, but more likely about the vindication of Christ and the gospel—Christ will be magnified.³⁵ The Spirit, Paul expects, will be a supply resulting in the παρρησία (openness/boldness) which will result in Christ's glorification and Paul's 'salvation.' Given that the reception of the Spirit leads to this exaltation of Christ, Paul speaks of the Spirit as related to Christ, that is, the "Spirit of Jesus Christ." It is by this Spirit that Christ will be glorified.

In each of the "Spirit of Christ" passages considered above, Fee notes, "The Spirit to whom Paul is referring is the Spirit who is to be understood in terms of his relationship either with God or with Christ."³⁶ In this manner, in Rom 8:9–11 Paul is able to proceed from speaking of the "Spirit of God" dwelling in the believers, to the "Spirit of Christ,"³⁷ and then back to the "Spirit of God" in them. Given that the Spirit's relation is expressed as being with both God and Christ, we recognize there is no suggestion of the Spirit being equated with, that is identified as, the risen Christ. Nevertheless,

³⁴ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 736–43.

³⁵ He might also have in mind his final heavenly vindication. Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 738.

³⁶ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 836.

³⁷ Paul also speaks here of 'Christ' in them, but this, Fee notes, "is simply Pauline shorthand for 'the Spirit of Christ in you,' or perhaps better in this case, 'Christ in you by his Spirit.'" See *God's Empowering Presence*, 548, cf. 374.

there remain two key passages in Paul's letters which seem to suggest that this is the case.

Paul writes in 2 Cor 3:17, ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστίν, "The Lord is the Spirit." This text was key in Ingo Hermann's influential study *Kyrios und Pneuma*, where he suggested that Paul was saying that Christ, the Lord, is the Spirit, and that we should therefore understand 'Spirit' everywhere in Paul to mean 'Christ.'³⁸ However, this is not likely the case.³⁹ "Lord" might have connoted 'Christ' as he was mentioned in v. 14, but it certainly could not have denoted Christ, and in the end we learn that it was not Christ at all. This verse falls in the midst of a midrash on Exod 34:29–35, extending through 2 Cor 3:7–18, hence Paul must be speaking specifically of the 'Lord' of the LXX. Verse 16 is a reference to Exod 34:34 and vv. 17–18 are Paul's interpretation of this verse. In v. 17 Paul is clarifying who the "Lord" is in v. 16. Paul is saying that the 'Lord' of the LXX is in fact the Spirit whom he had referred to previously in vv. 3, 6, and 8—the veil that has been upon the hearts of Israel can be removed by the Spirit who gives life and liberty. With regards to the wider context of Paul's letters, Fee notes that the 'Lord' to whom Moses turned (v. 16) was the one whose 'presence' was with them, whereas for Paul the Lord is now present to his people by his Spirit, even to the point of saying that God's people are now the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19–20).⁴⁰ This gives further weight to the conclusion that Paul is not equating Christ and the Spirit in 2 Cor 3:17. Rather, Paul is simply interpreting "the Lord" of v. 16, and that being the 'Lord' of the LXX.

The last text we will consider which might suggest that Paul equates Christ and the Spirit is 1 Cor 15:45:

ἐγένετο ὁ πρῶτος ἄνθρωπος Ἄδὰμ εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν,
ὁ ἔσχατος Ἄδὰμ εἰς πνεῦμα ζωοποιούν.

³⁸ Ingo Hermann, *Kyrios und Pneuma: Studien zur Christologie der paulinischen Hauptbriefe* (Munich: Kösel, 1961), referred to in Fee, "Christology and Pneumatology in Romans 8:9–11," 315 n. 14; and Fatehi, *The Spirit's Relation to the Risen Lord*, 29–31. James D. G. Dunn, "2 Corinthians 3:17—'The Lord Is the Spirit,'" in *The Christ and the Spirit: Collected Essays of James D. G. Dunn: Volume 1: Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998) 115, notes that the idea that this text identifies the risen Jesus with the Spirit in some way is well represented.

³⁹ Dunn, "2 Corinthians 3:17—'The Lord Is the Spirit.'" Likewise, Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 312–14 (for a list of those who agree and disagree see 312 n. 92).

⁴⁰ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 313, 843–45.

“The first Adam became a living being; the last Adam, a life-giving spirit.” From this, Dunn proposes that “now the exalted Lord seems to be wholly identified with the Spirit, the source of the new life experienced by believers.”⁴¹

This text occurs in a context in which Paul is arguing for a future resurrection of the body, which will be a “spiritual” body (v. 44). Verse 45 maintains Paul’s contrast between the “natural” (ψυχικόν) body and the “spiritual” (πνευματικόν) body made in vv. 44 and 46. Adam is the representative of the “natural” body and Christ of the “spiritual” body. Verse 45 is a reference to Gen 2:7 and vv. 46–49 is Paul’s exposition of its meaning. He is seeking to show that there is something more ‘spiritual’ on the other side of the resurrection and that, even then, it includes a bodily existence.

Dunn suggests that in order for Paul’s argument to work, both he and his audience must have assumed two things: (1) that Jesus now had a spiritual body; and (2) that Jesus was a representative of the post-resurrection mode of existence for all humanity. The first presupposition, Dunn argues, would have come from their Christian experience of the Spirit, who was foundational for Paul’s understanding of the Christian life: “the believer’s experience of the life-giving Spirit is for Paul proof that the risen Jesus is *σῶμα πνευματικόν*” (“spiritual body”).⁴² The second presupposition would also have been grounded in experience—the experience of being transformed by the Spirit into the image of Christ. We see that the basis of Dunn’s conclusion rests on his own explanation of Paul’s assumption that Jesus had a spiritual body. That is, he supposes that Paul and the early Christians only experienced the Spirit as Christ.

By contrast, Fee notes that Paul’s emphasis in this context is not on the *present* experience of the Spirit at all, but rather on the *future* resurrection. In speaking of the “life-giving πνεῦμα” Paul was not referring to the experience of new life (of the Spirit) that the Christians were already participating in, but rather the experience which coincided with their *future* resurrection. The whole argument is centered on the reality of Christ’s resurrection and the similar resurrection of the believers yet to come. (It is similar in that they will have the

⁴¹ James D. G. Dunn, “1 Corinthians 15:45—Last Adam, Life-Giving Spirit,” in *The Christ and the Spirit: Collected Essays of James D. G. Dunn*, 154.

⁴² Dunn, “1 Corinthians 15:45,” 158.

same kind of body as Christ.) From this, we can suppose that the ‘life-giving’ of 15:45 refers not to a present reception of life by the Holy Spirit, but rather to the future ‘life-giving’ based upon Christ, as referred to in vv. 21–22. There Paul writes, “the resurrection of the dead comes also through a human being . . . in Christ all will be made alive.” Accordingly, Fee suggests that when Paul refers to Christ in 15:45 as πνεῦμα, he does so only to use language parallel to his citation of Gen 2:7. Thus, as Adam is ψυχικόν (in the context—vv. 44, 46) and ψυχὴν (Gen 2:7 in 1 Cor 15:45), so Christ, who is πνευματικόν, is correspondingly said to be πνεῦμα—but not as ‘the’ (Holy) Spirit, but as ‘a spirit.’⁴³ The parallelism between Adam and Christ, and the correspondence of the resurrection experience between Christ and the believers, suggest that just as all believers have received the ψυχικόν body of the first Adam and are also, like Adam, each a living ψυχὴν, so also they will receive the πνευματικόν body of Christ as each will become a living πνεῦμα. That is, they will reach the full potential of their spiritual existence. And just as they will not become the Holy Spirit, neither did Christ.

Paul’s Understanding of the Spirit

In each of the texts we have considered that either seem to or do relate the Spirit and Christ, it has been seen that Paul does not equate the Spirit and Christ—he never claims “Christ is now the Spirit.” Where any doubt remains as to whether the interpretation of these texts is correct, we may turn to the wider context of Paul’s letters and remember the triadic texts which were considered above (which were, we remember, only the most explicit and a sample of a much larger pattern in Paul). In these passages Paul clearly distinguishes between Christ and the Spirit (and ‘God’ for that matter) and expresses both a unity and diversity in God. Therefore we may conclude that for Paul the Spirit was not equivalent to Christ, and with Fee we may agree that Paul’s writings manifest trinitarian presuppositions. That is, Paul’s writings, written to address particular circumstances, exhibit the latent trinitarian thought of their author. It seems that Dunn was incorrect to suggest that “Immanent chris-

⁴³ Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 264–67. Cf. the TNIV translation given above.

tology is for Paul pneumatology; in the believer's experience there is *no* distinction between Christ and Spirit.⁴⁴ Fee does not deny that Paul relates the Spirit and Christ closely. In fact, he concedes, "it is fair to say with some that Paul's doctrine of the Spirit is christocentric, but only in the sense that Christ and his work give definition to the Spirit and his work in the Christian life."⁴⁵ Nevertheless, their activities remain distinct. In this manner Paul speaks of the Spirit interceding from earth and *also* of Jesus interceding at the right hand of God (Rom 8:26–27, 34).

We must make one more significant observation with regards to Pauline pneumatology. Throughout this study it has become apparent that Paul's emphasis in discussing the Spirit is not upon who the Spirit is as a 'being,' but rather how the Spirit is *experienced* in the Christian life. For Paul, the Spirit is the *soteriological* Spirit. Paul does not speak about God's eternal triune nature and he does not reflect on the ontological status of the divine persons (e.g. the *homoousious* of trinitarian theology).⁴⁶ He only speaks about what systematic theologians have referred to as the 'economic' Trinity, that is, God as he is in relation to creation. Fee himself recognizes this.⁴⁷ Fee even speaks of Paul as having "economic trinitarianism"⁴⁸ and "soteriological trinitarianism."⁴⁹ Nevertheless, Fee also submits that "If his [Paul's] concern is less with 'God in his being' and more with 'God our Savior,' there is plenty of good reason to see Paul as presuppositionally an ontological trinitarian as well."⁵⁰ For example, Frances Young and David Ford note that for Paul God's glory "is supremely an attribute that belongs to God 'in himself', yet it is also uniquely present in Jesus Christ and distributed through the Holy Spirit. . . . Above all, it is a glory imprinted so utterly with the face of Christ that it is wrong to conceive of any other sort of God 'in himself' behind or apart from it."⁵¹ We may also note that Paul appears to affirm the pre-existence of Christ, which would suggest that he might

⁴⁴ Dunn, "1 Corinthians 15:45," 165 (Dunn's emphasis).

⁴⁵ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 837.

⁴⁶ Notably, he also prefers to use the term 'God' instead of 'Father' (in contrast to trinitarian language).

⁴⁷ Fee, "Response to Eduard Schweizer," 27.

⁴⁸ Fee, "Paul and the Trinity," 50.

⁴⁹ Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 841.

⁵⁰ Fee, "Paul and the Trinity," 71.

⁵¹ Young and Ford, *Meaning and Truth in 2 Corinthians*, 259.

have had an understanding of God as eternally triune (i.e., a concept of what systematic theologians refer to as the immanent Trinity).⁵² There is no sure evidence that Paul thought this way, and he certainly does not theologize about God ‘in himself’ (i.e. outside of the economic Trinity), but likewise there is no evidence to suggest that he did not.

Conclusion

Along with the remainder of Scripture, Pauline literature does not contain an articulation of a doctrine of the Trinity. Nevertheless, Paul’s letters do exhibit trinitarian presuppositions. This has been seen in the examination of a number of explicitly triadic texts in which Paul expresses the unity and diversity of God. In these texts the Spirit, Jesus and God are listed as distinct from each other. By contrast, there are a few times where it might appear that Paul equates the risen Lord, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit. He has not done so. He expresses his soteriological experience of the Spirit as distinct from, though closely related to, his experience of Jesus Christ.

⁵² Consider for example Phil 2:6–11. Fee, “Paul and the Trinity,” 58–62 interprets the Philippians passage in this manner. In contrast, James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making: A New Testament Inquiry into the Origins of the Doctrine of the Incarnation* (2d ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996) 114–21, argues that the idea of pre-existence was a later development in Christianity and sees this passage as contrasting Jesus and Adam.

PAUL THE EXORCIST AND HEALER

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Paul's Letters

In Acts, Paul is presented as performing works of power, such as healing, raising the dead, and casting out spirits (cf. Acts 13:9–12; 14:3; 16:16–18; 19:11–12; 28:7–10). Although his letters do not provide specific examples, they do hint at such deeds.¹ There are at least two clear allusions to works of power that may coincide with the stories recounted in the book of Acts. One passage is found in 2 Cor 12:12:

The signs of the apostle [τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου] were worked [κατεργάσθη] among you in all patience, with signs and wonders and mighty works [σημείους τε καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν].²

The other is found in Rom 15:18–19:

¹ Studies devoted to the topic of Paul as miracle worker are not numerous. Two major, recent attempts include S. Schreiber, *Paulus als Wundertäter: Redaktionsgeschichtliche Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte und den authentischen Paulusbriefen* (BZNW 79; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1996); and S. Alkier, *Wunder und Wirklichkeit in den Briefen des Apostels Paulus: Ein Beitrag zu einem Wunderverständnis jenseits von Entmythologisierung und Rehistorisierung* (WUNT 134; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001). See also the briefer but very helpful studies by S. M. Praeder, “Miracle Worker and Missionary: Paul in the Acts of the Apostles,” in K. H. Richards (ed.), *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* (SBLSP 22; Chico, Cal.: Scholars Press, 1983) 107–29; J. Jervell, “The Signs of an Apostle: Paul’s Miracles,” in *The Unknown Paul* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1984) 77–95; and B. J. Lietaert Peerbolte, “Paul the Miracle Worker: Development and Background of Pauline Miracle Stories,” in M. Labahn and B. J. Lietaert Peerbolte (eds.), *Wonders Never Cease: The Purpose of Narrating Miracle Stories in the New Testament and Its Religious Environment* (LNTS 288; London and New York: T. & T. Clark International, 2006) 180–99. On the question of Paul’s portrait as miracle worker in the “we sections” of Acts, see S. E. Porter, *The Paul of Acts* (WUNT 115; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999) 60–62.

² C. K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1973; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987) 320–22; V. P. Furnish, *II Corinthians* (AB 32A; Garden City: Doubleday, 1984) 553, 555–56; R. P. Martin, *2 Corinthians* (WBC 40; Dallas: Word, 1986) 427–28, 434–38; F. J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary* (NTL; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003) 289.

For I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has worked [κατειργάσατο] through me to win obedience from the Gentiles, by word and deed [λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ], by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit [ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων, ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος], so that from Jerusalem and as far round as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ . . .

In this sense, we should probably understand Paul's polemical reference to the experience of the believers in the churches of Galatia, when he refers to God "who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you [τὸ πνεῦμα καὶ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν]" (Gal 3:5).³ If so, we have three clear allusions to works of power in Paul's letters.

Paul's reference to "word and deed" (λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ) in Rom 15:18 outlines what he says next, with *word* referring to preaching the gospel and *deed* referring to the signs and wonders (σημείων καὶ τεράτων), done in the "power of the Spirit." This linkage is implied in 1 Cor 1:18, where the "word of the cross" (ὁ λόγος . . . ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ) is equated with the "power of God" (δύναμις θεοῦ).⁴ This association of gospel and power may compel us to view other, more doubtful passages as yet more instances in which the apostle refers to his works of power.

Twice the apostle contrasts the power of the gospel with persuasive speech. In his first letter to the church at Thessalonica he reminds his converts: "For we know, brethren beloved by God, that he has chosen you; for our gospel came to you not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction [ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν δυνάμει καὶ ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ καὶ ἐν πληροφορίᾳ πολλῇ]" (1 Thess 1:4–5). Similarly, Paul reminds the Corinthians, evidently alluding to the eloquent Apollos: "My speech and my message were not in plausible words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power [ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως], that your faith might not rest in the wisdom of men but in the power [ἐν δυνάμει] of God" (1 Cor 2:4–5; cf. Acts 18:24 "an eloquent man, well versed in the scriptures"). Paul's comments in 2 Cor 12:12 and Rom 15:18–19 suggest that here in these passages also the apostle is referring to

³ H. D. Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979) 135; R. N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (WBC 41; Dallas: Word, 1990) 105–106; J. D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (BNTC; London: A. & C. Black, 1993) 159.

⁴ So E. E. Ellis, *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978) 65–66.

works of power performed while among the Thessalonians and the Corinthians.⁵

This is probably how the later remark in 1 Cor 4:19–20 should be understood: “But I will come to you soon, if the Lord wills, and I will find out not the talk of these arrogant people but their power [τὴν δυνάμιν]. For the kingdom of God does not consist in talk but in power [ἐν δυνάμει].” Paul contrasts “power” (δύναμις) with “talk.” In this case the juxtaposition is contrastive not complementary. The arrogant may be able to *talk*, perhaps with fancy, wise-sounding words, but they lack the *power* that Paul possesses. Paul’s preaching is complemented with the power of the Spirit, which I think entails miracles and not simply conviction and persuasion evoked by the message of the gospel.

The juxtaposition of word and deed noted above in Rom 15:18–19 is reflected also in the spiritual gifts outlined in 1 Cor 12:7–10.

7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing [ἰαμάτων] by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles [ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων], to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

Beside the familiar language “working of miracles” (ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων) and its parallel “healing” (ἰαμάτων), we find in this passage references to “utterance,” whether of wisdom or knowledge, to “prophecy,” to “various kinds of tongues,” and to the “interpretation of tongues.” In other words, we again find word and deed side by side. It is important to remember that the gifts imparted to the Corinthians reflect the gifts at work in the apostles themselves. This may even explain Paul’s interesting comment in a juridical context:

⁵ Commentators usually do not understand these passages in the sense that I have suggested. For example, see E. Best, *First and Second Thessalonians* (BNTC; London: Black, 1972) 75: “miracles . . . is not the meaning here”; F. F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Thessalonians* (WBC 45; Dallas: Word, 1982) 14: “Such signs there no doubt were in the earliest stages of their new life . . . but it is not to them that appeal is made here”; C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (HNTC; New York: Harper & Row, 1968; repr. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1987) 65: “supernatural conviction and force that accompanied the preaching”; G. D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987) 95: “It is possible, but not probable . . . that it reflects the ‘signs and wonders’ of 2 Cor. 12:12.”

“When you are assembled, and my spirit is present, with the power [σὺν τῇ δυνάμει] of our Lord Jesus . . .” (1 Cor 5:4).

Commentators have rightly noted that Paul’s language reflects Greek Scripture. In many passages, mostly in reference to the exodus from Egypt and the wilderness experience, we find “signs” (σημεῖα) and “wonders” (τέρατα) in combination (cf. Exod 7:3; 11:9, 10; Deut 4:34; 6:22; 7:19; 11:3; 26:8; 28:46; 34:11; Isa 20:3; Jer 39:20–21; Pss 77:43; 104:27; 134:9). In one passage, signs and wonders are accompanied by δύναντις, again in reference to deliverance from Egypt (Bar 2:11). This language, which became conventional in Jewish religious culture, appears in New Testament literature as well (cf. Matt 24:24; Mark 13:22; John 4:48; Acts 2:19, 22 [in reference to the ministry of Jesus]; 4:30; 5:12; 6:8).

Gospels and Acts

In the Gospels δυνάμεις (“mighty works” or “works of power”) occurs frequently in reference to miracles. Jesus upbraids certain villages “where most of his mighty works [δυνάμεις] had been done, because they did not repent: ‘Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works [δυνάμεις] done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes . . . And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You shall be brought down to Hades. For if the mighty works [δυνάμεις] done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day!’” (Matt 11:20–21, 23; cf. Luke 10:13). The skeptics from Nazareth ask: “Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? What mighty works [δυνάμεις] are wrought by his hands!” (Mark 6:2). Accordingly, Jesus “could do no mighty work [δύναμιν] there, except that he laid his hands upon a few sick people and healed them” (Mark 6:5). Indeed, false teachers and false apostles will someday make their appeal: “Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works [δυνάμεις] in your name?” (Matt 7:22). False Messiahs and false prophets will also “show great signs and wonders [σημεῖα μεγάλα καὶ τέρατα]” (Matt 24:24 = Mark 13:22).

The power at work in himself Jesus gave to his apostles: He gave them “power and authority [δύναμιν καὶ ἐξουσίαν] over all demons and to cure diseases” (Luke 9:1); “he gave them authority over the

unclean spirits [ἐξουσίαν τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν ἀκαθάρτων]” (Mark 6:7); “he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every disease and every infirmity [ἐξουσίαν πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων ὥστε ἐκβάλλειν αὐτὰ καὶ θεραπεύειν πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν] . . . ‘Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons [δαιμόνια ἐκβάλλετε]. You received without paying, give without pay”” (Matt 10:1, 8). It is to tradition such as this that Paul refers when he says, “the signs of the apostle” (RSV: “the signs of a true apostle”) in 2 Cor 12:12. This language is well known to the Lukan evangelist.

The template for the new Christian community is provided by Peter, who heals the lame man on the temple steps. In response to the astounded crowd, the apostle asks: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power [ὡς ἰδίᾳ δυνάμει] or piety we had made him walk?” (Acts 3:12). Peter and the apostles are later questioned by the Jewish authorities: “By what power or by what name [ἐν ποίᾳ δυνάμει ἢ ἐν ποίῳ ὀνόματι] did you do this?” (4:7). The same authorities later acknowledge among themselves: “What shall we do with these men? For that a notable sign [γνωστὸν σημεῖον] has been performed through them is manifest to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it” (4:16). Vindicated, the apostles rejoice, thanking God: “You stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders [σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα] are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus” (4:30).

This language appears in many summarizing statements: “And with great power [δυνάμει μεγάλῃ] the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all” (Acts 4:33); “many signs and wonders [σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πολλά] were done among the people by the hands of the apostles” (5:12); “Stephen, full of grace and power, did great wonders and signs [δυνάμεως ἐποίει τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα μεγάλα] among the people” (6:8); “And the multitudes with one accord gave heed to what was said by Philip, when they heard him and saw the signs [τὰ σημεῖα] which he did” (8:6); “Even Simon (Magus) himself believed, and after being baptized he continued with Philip. And seeing signs and great miracles [τε σημεῖα καὶ δυνάμεις μεγάλας] performed, he was amazed” (8:13).

Similarly, it is said of Paul and Barnabas: “So they remained for a long time, speaking boldly for the Lord, who bore witness to the

word of his grace, granting signs and wonders [σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα] to be done by their hands” (Acts 14:3); “And all the assembly kept silence; and they listened to Barnabas and Paul as they related what signs and wonders [σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα] God had done through them among the Gentiles” (15:12); and later, in reference only to Paul: “And God did extraordinary miracles [δυνάμεις] by the hands of Paul” (19:11). Indeed, the mighty works in the activities of Paul and Barnabas lead some pagans to proclaim: “The gods have become like men and have come down to us!” (14:11; cf. 14:8–18).

The Lukan evangelist goes to great lengths to draw comparisons between Peter and Paul. In fact, one may say that whatever Peter does Paul does. The principal points of comparison in Acts between Peter and Paul may be tabulated as follows:

<i>Peter</i>	<i>Activity</i>	<i>Paul</i>
3:1–10	A lame man is healed	14:8–10
3:11–26	Historical sermon	13:16–41
4:1–22	Brought before religious leaders	22:1–22
5:17–20	Miraculous release from prison	16:19–34
8:9–24	Encounter with a magician	13:4–12
10:1–48	Evangelization of Gentiles	13:44–52
11:1–18	Prominence at a Jerusalem Council	15:1–35

The parallels with Peter’s healing activity, including his besting of Simon Magus, suggest that the Lukan evangelist has portrayed Paul as a bona fide apostle.⁶ Although not one of the original Twelve, Paul met the risen Lord and received from him an apostolic commission and the empowerment whereby he might demonstrate the “signs of the apostle.”⁷ Paul’s “signs of the apostle” will be examined in five passages in Acts: 13:6–12; 14:8–12; 16:16–18; 19:11–20; and 20:7–12.

⁶ Lietaert Peerbolte (“Paul the Miracle Worker,” 187) rightly remarks: “The miracle stories about Paul in Acts . . . are narrated in such a way as to point out that Paul holds the same authority as Peter held. Even though Paul is not mentioned as an ‘apostle’ in Acts, he does share the same divine authorization that Peter was sanctioned by.” See also M.-E. Rosenblatt, *Paul the Accused: His Portrait in the Acts of the Apostles* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1995) 11–20; Praeder, “Miracle Worker and Missionary,” 114–20.

⁷ It is worth noting that in late antiquity the prophets and great men of Old Testament literature were increasingly remembered as having performed various miracles. See *Lives of the Prophets*, and Jesus ben Sira’s praise of famous men.

Acts 13:6–12

The commissioning of Barnabas and Saul by the Christian church of Antioch is prompted by the Holy Spirit (13:3). Members of the church fast, pray, and lay hands on these men, and then send them on their way, as it were, “sent out by the Holy Spirit” (13:4–5).⁸ The validity of this claim is seen in the dramatic encounter on the island of Cyprus with the Jewish prophet who opposes the apostles:

6 When they had gone through the whole island as far as Paphos, they came upon a certain magician, a Jewish false prophet, named Bar-Jesus. 7 He was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. 8 But Elymas the magician (for that is the meaning of his name) withstood them, seeking to turn away the proconsul from the faith. 9 But Saul, who is also called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him 10 and said, “You son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, full of all deceit and villainy, will you not stop making crooked the straight paths of the Lord? 11 And now, behold, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind and unable to see the sun for a time.” Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand. 12 Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had occurred, for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord.

Attentive readers of Acts will immediately think of Peter’s encounter with Simon, who practiced magic (cf. Acts 8:9: μαγεύων/8:11: μαγεία) and who wished to acquire the Holy Spirit when he saw its power through “the name of Jesus” (8:12–13, 18–19). In Paul’s case, however, he actually encounters a Jewish magician (μάγος)⁹ and false prophet, whose name is “son of Jesus” (i.e., Bar-Jesus; cf. 13:6), who is active in the court of Sergius Paulus (in office 46–48 C.E.).¹⁰

⁸ On this point, see Porter, *The Paul of Acts*, 73–75.

⁹ See J. J. Kilgallen, “Acts 13,4–12: The Role of the ‘Magos,’” *EstBib* 55 (1997) 223–37.

¹⁰ For another instance of a Jewish *magus* who came into contact with a Roman official, see Josephus, *Ant.* 20.142. Felix, the procurator of Judea, sends a Jewish magician to a woman, to persuade her to leave her husband and come to him. On the topic of professional *magi* employed by persons of rank, see H.-J. Klauck, *Magic and Paganism in Early Christianity: The World of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003) 51. Pace J. A. Fitzmyer (*The Acts of the Apostles* [AB 31; New York: Doubleday, 1998] 501), there is nothing “fantastic” about a Jewish *magus* in the court of a Roman official. Of course, he would not have been regarded as a “false prophet.” That is the critical opinion of Paul and the Christian author of Acts, which in their view was justified by the outcome of the story. The proconsul Sergius Paulus may be known from a Greek inscription found in northern Cyprus (cf. *SEG* 20.302).

Presumably, this “son of Jesus,” who is also called Elymas, is an even greater impostor than Simon whom Peter chastised earlier. The defeat of bar-Jesus, moreover, is far more dramatic. Whereas Peter rebuked Simon the Samaritan and Simon pleaded with Peter for prayer on his behalf (8:20–24), Paul calls down judgment on bar-Jesus the Jew for actively opposing the proclamation of the gospel. Instead of being a true “son of Jesus,” the false prophet is called a “son of the Devil,” who makes “crooked the straight paths of the Lord.” The latter phrase alludes to Isa 40:3, the prophetic Scripture that apparently lay at the very foundation of the Christian movement, beginning with John the Baptist. The Lukan evangelist knows this, of course, as we see in the several passages where the Christian movement is called “the Way” (cf. Acts 9:2; 19:9, 23; 24:22).

Because this false prophet attempts to pervert the way of the Lord, Paul, filled with the Spirit, declares that he will become blind for a period of time: “Immediately mist and darkness fell upon him and he went about seeking people to lead him by the hand” (13:11). Having attempted to turn back the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, bar-Jesus the false prophet suffers a reverse of his own. Isaiah promised recovery of sight to the blind (Isa 61:1–2; 35:5–6), which was understood as part of the restorative ministry of Jesus the Messiah (cf. Matt 11:4–5; Luke 7:21–22; 4Q521 frg. 2 ii 8). When the Roman proconsul saw what had happened, he believed Paul’s message, “for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord” (Acts 13:12). The reference to the “teaching of the Lord” [τῆ διδασχῆ τοῦ κυρίου] recalls the story of Jesus, where following an exorcism, the crowd cries out: “What is this? A new teaching with authority [διδασχῆ καινὴ κατ’ ἐξουσίαν]! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him” (Mark 1:27). Accordingly, Paul’s teaching stands in continuity with the teaching of Jesus.

Furthermore, the language of Paul’s rebuke may well echo the words of an imprecatory Psalm: “Let them be like the snail which dissolves into slime, like the untimely birth that never sees the sun” (Ps 58:8), though perhaps influenced by the Aramaic tradition: “Like the crawling snail whose way is slimy, like the abortion and the mole who are *blind and do not see the sun*.” It is important to observe that Psalm 58 is directed against the wicked, against those who “work unrighteousness” (Ps 58:2), which recalls Paul’s description of the false prophet as “an enemy of righteousness.” Bar-Jesus the false prophet has been overpowered by the Holy Spirit and by the “teach-

ing of the Lord,” both in concord with Scripture. The power of the real Jesus is manifestly superior to the power of the false Jesus.¹¹

Acts 14:8–12

Paul and Barnabas have left Cyprus and entered Asia Minor, where they pass through Iconium, Lycaonia, Lystra, and Derbe.

8 Now at Lystra there was a man sitting, who could not use his feet; he was a cripple from birth, who had never walked. 9 He listened to Paul speaking; and Paul, looking intently at him and seeing that he had faith to be made well, 10 said in a loud voice, “Stand upright on your feet.” And he sprang up and walked. 11 And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” 12 Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul, because he was the chief speaker, they called Hermes.

The healing of the man crippled from birth immediately calls to mind the earlier story where Peter healed the man “lame from his mother’s womb” (3:2–9). The miracles in both cases provide occasion to preach the gospel. The parallel suggests that God is now working through Paul and in the same way that he has worked through Peter, the latter in reaching out to fellow Jews, and the former in reaching out to Gentiles.¹²

But what is extraordinary in the Pauline counterpart is seen in the reaction of the Gentiles. They are so amazed by the miracle that they conclude that Barnabas is Zeus and Paul is Hermes. “The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!” This conclusion is in keeping with popular pagan beliefs, in which it was believed that the gods sometimes walked among mortals: “For gods wander

¹¹ The story of Paul’s victory over bar-Jesus may have been understood to parallel the story of Moses and Aaron who were opposed by Pharaoh’s magicians in Exodus 7–8. Klauck (*Magic and Paganism*, 54–55) also points out that readers of Acts may have noted the parallel between Paul and bar-Jesus, for both were struck with blindness. Pagans unacquainted with the Exodus story may have interpreted Paul’s success against bar-Jesus in terms of incantations and spells designed to seal and disable mortal and demonic enemies (with blindness, among other things). One Aramaic incantation reads: “Again blinded are all the idols, male and female, and sorceries and vows and curses and the evil spirit. (They are) bound and tied and sealed. Their mouth(s) are shut and their eyes are blinded and their ears are deafened.” See C. H. Gordon, “Aramaic Incantation Bowls,” *Orientalia* 10 (1991) 116–41, 272–80; here 124–25.

¹² Lietaert Peerbolte, “Paul the Miracle Worker,” 183.

even through the cities. They come in many forms, and have the appearance of strangers from a foreign country, But all the while they are testing human pride and righteousness" (*Odyssey* 17.484–487).¹³ The myth of Hermes, as the conveyor of divine messages for humans, was well known to Jews, as seen in Philo (cf. *Leg. Gai.* 99: "Hermes . . . must fly off in urgent haste—as the interpreter and proclaimer of divine commands") and in the Jewish historian Artapanus: "On account of these things then Moses was loved by the masses, and was deemed worthy of godlike honor by the priests and called Hermes, on account of the interpretation of the sacred letters" (*apud* Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 9.27.6).¹⁴

Of special relevance is the story related in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 8.626–724, which tells of two gods who visit Phrygia, which is near Lystra. According to the story, the locals fail to show respect and hospitality to the gods. The story is later updated in Greek tradition and the two gods are identified as Zeus and Hermes. The story may well have been known to the people of Lystra and to the Lukan evangelist himself.¹⁵ If so, then in a pagan sense the arrival of Paul and Barnabas fulfills the old legend. Of course, Paul and Barnabas are not gods; they are witnesses of the God of Israel and of his Son Jesus.¹⁶ The implication is that the miracle performed by Paul is so astounding (in contrast to other healings that may have been witnessed over the years) that the Gentiles who witness it cannot interpret it in any other sense than that the gods have visited them.

Acts 16:16–18

The first missionary journey of Paul is completed. He has returned to Antioch, and has reported to the council that convened at Jerusalem. Sometime later Paul and Silas commence a second missionary journey. They arrive at Philippi, where they meet and convert Lydia. In the first of the "we sections" of Acts we read:

¹³ From Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 57. For more examples and discussion, see pp. 57–59; and C. Breytenbach, "Zeus und der lebendige Gott: Anmerkungen zur Apostelgeschichte 14.11–17," *NTS* 39 (1993): 396–413.

¹⁴ Trans. J. J. Collins, "Artapanus," *OTP*, II, 899.

¹⁵ See F. G. Downing, "Common Ground with Paganism in Luke and in Josephus," *NTS* 28 (1982): 546–59.

¹⁶ See L. H. Martin, "Gods or Ambassadors of God? Barnabas and Paul in Lystra," *NTS* 41 (1995): 152–56.

16 As we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a slave girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners much gain by soothsaying. 17 She followed Paul and us, crying, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation." 18 And this she did for many days. But Paul was annoyed, and turned and said to the spirit, "I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." And it came out that very hour.

Literally the slave girl has a "python spirit" (πνεῦμα πύθωνα), which may suggest that she was a prophetess of Delphi. At Delphi was a cult dedicated to Apollo, who sometimes was called Python. Priests and priestesses were thought to speak, almost as ventriloquists, the very words of the god.¹⁷ The story in Acts says the slave girl brought "her owners much gain by soothsaying." Although we are not told, the girl's owners may well have purchased her because of her abilities. Indeed, she probably was little more than a business investment.¹⁸

The girl's cry, in reference to Paul and Silas, "These men are servants of the Most High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation," is true on different levels. Her statement, whether cynically motivated or genuinely prompted by a spiritual impulse, probably presupposed the public reputation of Paul and his companions. Word had spread that these men had healed people and had performed other remarkable works of power. Her acknowledgment of them in effect borrowed from their reputation. That is probably the implication of the notice that "she did this for many days." In other words, she was enhancing her own reputation by implying that the Python spirit in her was in a league with the Spirit at work in Paul. There is no hint that her owners tried to discourage her from making

¹⁷ Plutarch mocks the notion, saying that it is "childish to believe that the god himself . . . enters the bodies of the prophets and speaks from within them, employing their mouth and tongue as his instrument" (*Moralia* 414E: "On the Decline of Oracles" 8); cf. Apuleius, *Golden Ass* 8.26–30. See Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 65–67, for succinct discussion of the cult of Apollo.

¹⁸ This suggestion receives a measure of support from the actions taken by the girl's owners. When they see that the girl has lost her soothsaying ability, they bring Paul and Silas before the magistrates (Acts 16:19–21). For recent studies of this passage, see D. R. Schwartz, "The Accusation and the Accusers at Philippi (Acts 16,20–21)," *Bib* 65 (1984): 357–63; P. R. Trebilco, "Paul and Silas, 'Servants of the Most High God' (Acts 16.16–18)," *JST* 36 (1989): 51–73; F. S. Spencer, "Out of Mind, out of Voice: Slave-girls and Prophetic Daughters in Luke-Acts," *BibInt* 7 (1999): 133–55; C. S. de Vos, "Finding a Charge that Fits: The Accusation against Paul and Silas at Philippi (Acts 16.19–21)," *JST* 74 (1999): 51–63.

public statements about the Christian evangelists. On the contrary, they probably encouraged it.

Of course, from the author's point of view, the girl's cry is true. For the "Most High God" is not Zeus (as the girl and her owners and most of the people in Philippi would have understood it);¹⁹ he is Yahweh, the God of Israel.²⁰ Thus the essence of her cries is correct (succinctly summed up as "the way of salvation"), but their motive and effect on the public's understanding of Paul's message are misleading. Paul is annoyed and decides to silence her.

The language of Paul's command, "in the name of Jesus Christ [ἐν ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ]," has been heard several times in Acts. Peter commands those who repent to be baptized "in the name of Jesus Christ" (2:38; cf. 8:16; 10:48; 19:5). The Jewish council commands Peter and the apostles to cease preaching "in the name of Jesus" (4:18; 5:40). After his conversion, Paul preaches boldly "in the name of Jesus" and "in the name of the Lord" (9:27, 29). More to the point of the present context, Peter commands the lame man to walk, "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth" (3:6). The lame man was healed immediately; so also in the exorcism of the slave girl: the Python spirit "came out that very hour." Again we have a point of comparison between Peter and Paul.

In this story we have an exorcism. But this has been no ordinary exorcism. The spirit of Apollo, or the Python spirit, was highly regarded in pagan late antiquity. The shrines and inscriptions at Delphi bear witness to this regard. That Paul could eject such a spirit with a mere spoken word and without benefit of the rigmarole that usually accompanied exorcisms (of weaker, malevolent spirits) attests to the power of the Holy Spirit that resides within him. The power of this Spirit is attested in an even more dramatic way in the next passage.

¹⁹ See Pindar, *Nemean Odes* 1.60; 11.2.

²⁰ As in Jewish, pre-Christian sources (Gen 14:18–20, 22; Philo, *Leg. Gai.* 278; *T. Asher* 5.4; *Joseph and Aseneth* 8.2) and in Christian sources (Luke 1:32, 35, 76; 6:35; Acts 7:48; Heb 7:1; *I Clem.* 29.2; 45.7; 52.3; 59.3; Ignatius, *Rom.* 1.1; *Prot. James* 11.3; 24.1; *Acts Pilate* 1.4–5; and some Christian amulets; cf. *PGM* II, 210–11).

Acts 19:11–20

Paul has entered Ephesus (Acts 19:1). For three months he preaches in the synagogue; after this he takes up residence in a lecture hall belonging to one Tyrannus, where he continues for two years (19:8–10).

11 And God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, 12 so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them. 13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, “I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches.” 14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 But the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” 16 And the man in whom the evil spirit was leaped on them, mastered all of them, and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

The opening sentence, “God did extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried away from his body to the sick, and diseases left them and the evil spirits came out of them” (vv. 11–12), reminds the readers of Acts of the similar statement made in reference to Peter: “so that they even carried out the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and pallets, that as Peter came by at least his shadow might fall on some of them” (5:15). The power at work in Paul matches that in Peter in every way. The story that is narrated next offers a remarkable example.

Mention of “itinerant Jewish exorcists” who undertake to “pronounce the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits” (v. 13) should hardly occasion surprise. The practice in itself was conventional. Josephus tells us of one Eleazar, a Jew, who with the aid of a ring, the *baraas* root, Solomon’s name, and incantations supposedly composed by the famous monarch could cast out demons (cf. *Ant.* 8.46–49).²¹ Indeed, during Jesus’ ministry a professional exorcist invokes the name of Jesus to cast out demons (cf. Mark 9:38–39). The names of Solomon, Jesus, and other worthies appear in the spells and incantations of later papyri and lamellae.²²

²¹ See D. C. Duling, “The Eleazar Miracle and Solomon’s Magical Wisdom in Flavius Josephus’s *Antiquitates Judaicae* 8.42–49,” *HTR* 78 (1985): 1–25. On these interesting traditions, one should see the *Testament of Solomon*, a Christianized Jewish work, dated toward the end of the first century or beginning of the second.

²² An oft-cited example is from *PGM* IV, 3019–20: “I conjure you by the God of the Hebrews, Jesus [ὄρκίζω σε κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν Ἑβραίων Ἰησοῦ] . . .”

The attempt by the itinerant exorcists to cast out an evil spirit “by the Jesus whom Paul preaches” (v. 13) fails utterly. The spirit retorts: “Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are you?” (v. 15). The possessed man then attacks the exorcists, with the result that they flee wounded and naked (v. 16). The exorcists have not only failed to cast out the evil spirit; they were not even able to protect themselves.

What makes the failure of the itinerant exorcists so remarkable is that by conventional standards they represent a formidable force. They are brothers, seven in number. They are Jewish and are sons of a high (or, better, “ruling”) priest. The assumption here is that as sons of a ruling priest their knowledge of such arts would be as sophisticated and potent as available. Being Jewish implies their reliance on the one true God and his faithful servants, such as Moses and Solomon. Being seven in number would enhance their power, making it more difficult for the evil spirit to resist them. Finally, reference to their fleeing naked calls to mind their clothing, which probably consisted of robes adorned with special symbols, phylacteries, and amulets.²³

All of these advantages, however, are to no avail. The evil spirit knows who Jesus is and who Paul is, but he does not recognize or, it is implied, respect the seven sons of Sceva. The evil spirit is far too powerful for them. Neither their number, their ancestry, their professional status, nor their paraphernalia can effect the exorcism or even protect them. The possessed man leaps on them and masters and overpowers them all. The success of Paul’s works of power stands in such contrast with the failure of the sons of Sceva (and perhaps of others, we should assume) that many in Ephesus confess

A. Deissmann (*Light from the Ancient East* [London: Hodder & Stoughton; New York: George H. Doran, 1927] 260 n. 4) opines: “The name *Jesu* as part of the formula can hardly be ancient. It was probably inserted by some pagan. No Christian, still less a Jew, would have called Jesus ‘the god of the Hebrews.’” He is probably correct. Origen (*Contra Celsum* 1.6; 6.40) mentions pagan exorcists who invoke the name of Jesus.

²³ See the discussion in Klauck, *Magic and Paganism*, 99–100; Lietaert Peerbolte, “Paul the Miracle Worker,” 184–86; C. H. Talbert, *Reading Acts: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* (Reading the New Testament; New York: Crossroad, 1997) 175–77. Klauck calls our attention to a relevant tradition preserved in Plutarch: “The magicians charge those possessed by demons to recite the Ephesian writings by themselves and to pronounce the names” (*Moralia* 760E = “Table Talk” 7.5–4).

their practices in sorcery, burning their books of magic (19:17–20).²⁴

The repudiation of magic makes it clear that Paul himself is no magician and that Christian faith and practice give no room to magical practices. It is the Holy Spirit that effects healing and exorcism. The Spirit responds to faith, prayer, and fidelity to God's truth, especially as it is centered on Jesus the Messiah, not to formulas and manipulations.

Acts 20:7–12

Preparing to journey to Jerusalem, Paul spends a week in Troas (20:6).

7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the morrow; and he prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lights in the upper chamber where we were gathered. 9 And a young man named Eutychus was sitting in the window. He sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer; and being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. 10 But Paul went down and bent over him, and embracing him said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." 11 And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until day-break, and so departed. 12 And they took the lad away alive, and were not a little comforted.

This story is different from the other stories that have been considered. There is no conflict with evil; nor does the restoration of Eutychus occasion proclamation of the gospel. But the story does again exemplify Paul as a person empowered by the Holy Spirit, to heal and, perhaps in this case, to raise the dead. If the young man had in fact died from his fall, then Paul, in restoring him, has performed a feat that parallels the feat performed by Peter, who raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36–42).

In this story Paul's actions—"Paul went down and bent over him, and embracing him"—are reminiscent of Elijah's reviving the widow's son: "then he stretched himself upon the child three times" (1 Kgs 17:21); and of Elisha's restoring the life of another woman's only son: "Then he went up and lay upon the child . . . and as he stretched

²⁴ We have voluntary book burnings by Merocles (cf. Diogenes Laertius 6.95) and Theudas, a converted magician (cf. *Life of Barlaam and Ioasaph* 32.302).

himself upon him, the flesh of the child became warm” (2 Kgs 4:34).²⁵ Describing Paul’s actions in a manner that recalls Elijah and Elisha coheres with the Lukan portrait of the apostle, for the famous prophets were known for their empowerment by the Spirit (cf. 2 Kgs 2:9, 15).

Acts 28:7–10

We come to the final passage for consideration. While en route to Rome, Paul and company suffer shipwreck on Malta (28:1). While feeding a fire Paul is bitten by a poisonous viper (v. 3). The natives expect Paul to become ill and die, but he is unharmed (vv. 4–5). The natives then conclude that Paul must be a god (i.e., because he evidently is immortal), which recalls his experience in Lystra (14:12).

7 Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us and entertained us hospitably for three days. 8 It happened that the father of Publius lay sick with fever and dysentery; and Paul visited him and prayed, and putting his hands on him healed him. 9 And when this had taken place, the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured. 10 They presented many gifts to us; and when we sailed, they put on board whatever we needed.

Paul’s ministry to Publius, the “chief man” of Malta, recalls Paul’s earlier encounter with Sergius Paulus, the proconsul of Cyprus (13:4–12). In this case, it is the father of the authority, who is in need. Paul prays for the man, puts his hands on him, and heals him. The name of Jesus is not invoked (unless we should assume that his name was mentioned in the prayer). There is no mention of demonic powers. When word of what happened spreads, “the rest of the people on the island who had diseases also came and were cured” (v. 9). Numbers of people approaching Paul for healing reminds us of what was said of Paul in 19:11–12 and of Peter in 5:15.

Charles Talbert remarks that Paul’s action of praying for the sick man corrects the erroneous assumption on the part of the natives. After all, a god does not need to pray, in order to heal someone.²⁶ Talbert may be right. The healing of the man demonstrates that Paul is a righteous man, whose prayers are heard (cf. Jas 5:16–18).

²⁵ See the parallels with the OG; cf. Lietaert Peerbolte, “Paul the Miracle Worker,” 186–87; Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 183.

²⁶ Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 222.

In the wider context of Acts, Paul's efficacious prayer demonstrates that he is righteous in God's sight and so ought to be judged innocent in the sight of Rome.²⁷

Conclusion

The portrait of Paul in Acts as a healer and exorcist supports three important conclusions. First, Paul's credentials were consistent with those possessed by the original apostles, to whom Jesus himself granted authority, to heal, cast out demons, and proclaim the rule of God. Secondly, Paul's credentials matched those of Peter's. The evangelist's narrative supports Paul's description of himself as an apostle to the Gentiles and of Peter as an apostle to the circumcised. What Peter does, Paul does. The ministry of the latter is every bit as compelling as that of the former. Thirdly, Paul's works of power cohere with comments—often quite reserved—made in his letters. The stories of Paul in Acts not only cohere with comments in his letters, they explicate these comments and thus help us understand better what Paul means when, for example, he reminds his readers that he performed “the signs of the apostle” while with them.²⁸

²⁷ For more on this interesting point, see Talbert, *Reading Acts*, 222–24.

²⁸ In my judgment the conclusion recently reached by Lietaert Peerbolte (“Paul the Miracle Worker,” 180) is fully justified: “[T]here is ample evidence that Paul's ministry was interpreted by the generations after Paul in a way that considered the performance of miraculous deeds as part of his ministry. On the basis of the evidence from Paul himself, the conclusion . . . [is] that he did indeed perform such miraculous deeds.”

THE INTERPRETATION OF THE LETTER TO THE
ROMANS IN MELANCHTHON'S *LOCI COMMUNES*
FROM 1521

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With the publication of the *Loci communes rerum theologicarum* in 1521, the 24 years old humanist Philipp Melanchthon, a good scholar of Hebrew and Greek, became an official reformation theologian on Martin Luther's side. At the center of his work was the doctrine of justification, as the reformer in his personal study of the letters to the Galatians and to the Romans had developed it. Later editions of the *Loci communes*, the most important published in 1535, 1543 and 1559,¹ show that Melanchthon successively revised his work. A stronger independence from Luther's doctrine of justification and the Lord's Supper obliged him to accept a more conciliatory stand-point towards the catholics, especially in the *Confessio Augustana* (1530) and in his *Apologia* (1531).

For an exegete, the *Loci communes* from 1521 are more stimulating reading than the later revisions, which obliterate the biblical background of the young Melanchthon's work. I comment first on the letter of dedication, before I analyse the structure of the work in comparison with the structure of the letter to the Romans. My analysis will attempt to take into account the implied reader of Melanchthon's work.

¹ Scheible (1995: 19) writes: "Die theologischen Loci brachte er (Melanchthon) schon beim ersten Nachdruck 1522 auf seinen neuen Stand der Erkenntnis. Dann liess er sie einige Jahre ruhen, hielt 1533 eine Vorlesung über das Thema und legte 1535 eine völlige Neubearbeitung vor, die er schon 1543 durch die dritte Stufe ersetzte, an der er bis 1559 weitere kleinere Verbesserungen vornahm. Nachdem die ersten beiden Fassungen von den Mitreformatoren Georg Spalatin und Justus Jonas ins Deutsche übersetzt worden waren, schrieb er 1553 selbst eine deutsche Fassung, die er der Frau seines Freundes Camerarius widmete."

1. *The Letter of Dedication*

Melanchthon introduces into theology the concept of *Loci communes*, “general considerations” or “commonplaces.” He means main concepts, main sentences. This concept was later on often used in dogmatic works.² The dedication to the “pious and learned man” D. Tilemann Plettener mentions³ that the explanation of the letter to the Romans obliged him to establish a methodical order and “main theological considerations” (*communissimos rerum theologiarum locos*) in the letter (p. 13). This method as a help for memory comes from antiquity, which Melanchthon, who had edited Terence and lectured on Greek authors, knew very well. But in contrast to others, Melanchthon tries to arrive at the main concepts from his close reading of the text and not by a mechanical use of them.⁴

His former explanations he calls “nightthoughts” (*lucubrationcula*), which only describe the aim and the main contents of the letter in a rough way (*pinguissime*). But because they were published without his consent, he thinks it good to rework the little book, because it cannot be understood without Paul’s letter (cf. p. 13). Thus it is clear that the new book presupposes a good knowledge of the letter to the Romans.⁵ The title *Loci communes rerum theologiarum* is explained by *hypotyposes theologicae*, which we can translate “theological sketches” or “models.”⁶

We learn also in the letter of dedication that Melanchthon wants to inform the young about the main points of the Christian doctrine and avoid Aristotelian subtleties (p. 13). He supposes that main concepts of the letter to the Romans coincide with main concepts of the Christian doctrine. Against medieval commentaries, such as Lombard’s sentences, Melanchthon, who was no *sentarius*, writes that he does not value even the commentaries of the Church fathers (p. 15).⁷ He blames them for mixing the purity of the canonical writings with philosophical considerations (p. 15). He attacks Origen and Jerome in a way similar to Martin Luther in his commentary on

² Pöhlmann 1993: 12 n. 1.

³ I use Pöhlmann (1993), with the Latin text and a German translation. Page numbers are given in the text.

⁴ Scheible 1992: 372–73.

⁵ For Melanchthon’s interest in Paul, cf. the *Declamatiuncula in D. Pauli doctrinam* from 1520, edited by Knaacke (1904).

⁶ Pöhlmann 1993: 12 n. 2.

⁷ So Pöhlmann 1993: 14 n. 9.

the letter to the Galatians (p. 17).⁸ It is clear that Melanchthon thinks that the knowledge of holy things is dependent on the Holy Ghost and not on human endeavour (p. 17).

2. *The Structure of the Loci communes Compared
with the Letter to the Romans*

Melanchthon introduces his new book with a critique of the theologians and especially Damascenus and Lombard, because the first uses philosophy and the second human opinions, the same critique as in the letter of dedication (pp. 17 and 19).

Despite his objections against medieval philosophy, Melanchthon thinks that the main points of theology are God, creation, mankind, sin, the law, the promises, renewal through Christ, grace, faith, hope and love, predestination, the sacraments, the different classes, the magistrate, the bishops, the judgment and the blessedness (p. 19). This list shows that the humanist Melanchthon is not interested in systematic theology but only in main points of theology. His simple enumeration stands in sharp contrast to the systematic building of the well known *Summa theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. After the questions about God, Thomas deals with the creation as it comes from God and goes back to him. In the return to God, Thomas discusses the beatitude, the virtues and sin, the law and grace. In the end we have the life of Jesus, his sacraments and the resurrection. Thomas can also have different plans for his theology, as we can see in *Contra Gentiles* and *Compendium Theologiae*.⁹

The enumeration of main items is meant as a preparation for Melanchthon's critique and his own analysis. His famous sentence: *mysteria divinitatis rectius adoraverimus quam vestigaverimus* ("God's mysteries should be adored rather than investigated" p. 19) comes probably from Erasmus's *Ratio seu compendium verae theologiae*, where the pride of the theologians is sharply criticized.¹⁰ A quotation from 1 Cor 1:18ff.

⁸ Kieffer 1982: 103ff.

⁹ In the *Contra Gentiles*, a dialogue with non-Christians, Thomas deals first with the truth which the intellect can explore: God and his creation. Afterwards he considers the doctrine of faith: Trinity, Incarnation, the sacraments and the End of time. The *Compendium Theologiae* is built with the help of the apostolic creed and the Lord's prayer.

¹⁰ Cf. Pöhlmann 1993: 18–19 n. 19.

is used as an argument against studies about *De Deo uno et trino* or about the Incarnation (p. 21). The other main themes, such as sin and grace or the law, are important for a Christian (p. 23). An allusion to the letter to the Romans is used as an argument in favor of the plan of the *Loci communes*. Paul has not written about the Trinity or the Incarnation but about the law, sin and grace (p. 25). Here exegetes may have objections. Is the letter to the Romans really a summary of Christian doctrine and not an occasional letter?¹¹ Some aspects of Christian faith are not considered in the letter to the Romans but in other Pauline letters, e.g. the Lord's supper, the Church, the influence of the Spirit on the gifts in the Church. Paul's theology is limited and must be completed by other New Testament writings, especially the concrete narratives in the Gospels.

Melanchthon is right when he says that Paul did not write a treatise *De Deo uno et trino*, but every exegete knows that the Apostle in the letter to the Romans has many sentences about God, Christ and his Holy Spirit. In a presentation of Pauline theology not only the starting-point in man is important, but especially God's plan of salvation in Christ.¹² Melanchthon later showed awareness of this when he introduced traditional expressions about *De Deo uno et trino* and *De creatione*.¹³ A youthful enthusiasm for the great Pauline letters, especially the letter to the Romans, which he explains as a Greek philologist, makes him blind to the difficult task of theology. He rightly protests against the lack of respect of medieval theologians for God's mystery, but his own solution is too naive.

There are good arguments for his presentation of the following eleven matters in the letter to the Romans: The forces in man, especially free will; sin; the law; the gospel; grace; justification and faith; the difference between the Old and the New Testaments; the signs (= the sacraments); love; the authorities; the scandal.¹⁴ It is easy to

¹¹ See e.g. the discussion in the commentaries of Wilckens (1978–1982) and Stuhlmacher (1989).

¹² In Kieffer 1991: 287 I quote Fitzmyer 1970, who rightly has arguments against the anthropological interpretation of Bultmann 1968.

¹³ See especially Melanchthon 1559, where there are explicit reflections about *De Deo* and *De creatione*.

¹⁴ The titles in Latin are: (1) *De humanis viribus adeoque de libera arbitrio*; (2) *De peccato*; (3) *De lege*; (4) *De Evangelio*; (5) *De gratia*; (6) *De justificatione et fide*; (7) *De discrimine veteris ac novi Testamenti*; (8) *De signis*; (9) *De caritate*; (10) *De magistratibus*; (11) *De scandalo*.

find these themes in the letter to the Romans. In the beginning of the letter, Paul writes about the powerlessness of mankind, both of Jews and pagans. The lack of freedom is described in Romans 7, where man under the influence of sin and despite the law chooses what is contrary to the law. Justification by grace is naturally the main theme of the whole letter. The omission of the law is easier to see in the polemical letter to the Galatians than in Romans. The law of the Jews does not give man the strength to do the good, but the law is positive. Paul can say in Rom 13:10: "Love is the fulfilling of the law." The theme "suppression of the law" can not as easily be shown in the letter to the Romans as in Galatians. Melanchthon writes on the authorities, because Paul deals with them in Romans 13. But the sacraments are not very important in the letter to the Romans, only baptism in Romans 6. Here Melanchthon depends on former treatises on the sacraments.

The last item, "the scandals," is important in the Gospels, but not in the letter to the Romans. In Luther's translation of Rom 9:3 Christ is presented as "a rock of scandal." The Catholics accused the Protestants of causing scandals, and the Protestants did the same against the Catholics.¹⁵ Melanchthon writes that among the three important aspects about scandal: love, hope and faith, faith is the most important one.¹⁶ A real scandal is the scholastic doctrine, which praises the works and obliterates grace (pp. 371–73). When Melanchthon binds the scandal with the truth of the Holy Scripture, he separates himself from the more moral definition of scandal in Thomas Aquinas.¹⁷ It is possible that he is influenced by Martin Luther's second commentary on the letter to the Galatians (1519), where the scandal caused by Peter against the gospel's truth is attacked.¹⁸ Here Melanchthon is more a polemical theologian than an exegete. Even if one takes away the last chapter, one can hesitate to think that he really has presented the main themes of the letter to the Romans in their dynamic structure.

Modern exegetes have written much about the plan of the epistle. Chapters 12–16 are ordinarily presented as a kind of *parainesis*. In

¹⁵ Fagerberg 1996: 567. Cf. Hodler 1995.

¹⁶ This is contrary to what Paul himself says in 1 Cor 13:13: "Now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

¹⁷ See *Summa Theologica, Secunda Secundae, q. 43*; cf. Pöhlmann 1993: 370–71 n. 1190.

¹⁸ See Kieffer 1982: 105ff.

the dogmatic section, chs. 1–11, one can hypothetically find four parts:¹⁹ (1) The misery of pagans and Jews before the judgment of God (1:18–3:20), and justification by faith (3:21–4:25); (2) The misery of man, included in Adam's sin and saved by Christ, the new Adam (5:1–6:23); (3) The misery of mankind under the law is taken away by Christ and his Holy Spirit (7:1–8:39); (4) The misery of Israel will disappear in the future (chs. 9–11). The first part seems to be juridic, the second sacramental, the third anthropological and the fourth a matter of salvation history. When we compare this plan with Melanchthon's *Loci communes*, we see that main questions in Paul are omitted in his presentation, e.g. that Jews and pagans have sinned, or that mankind is included in Adam and Christ. Melanchthon studies the main questions one by one without showing how everything in the epistle is organized.

In his commentary on Romans from 1540 he is much more systematic. In Chapter 3 he discusses whether the Jews have advantages in comparison with the pagans.²⁰ At the end of Chapter 14²¹ he presents the opinions of the Church fathers, with their good and bad views. In the *Prolegomena* he describes the main theme of the letter: justice before God.²² In the 1559 edition of the *Loci communes*, Melanchthon has given up his main plan. He now does not treat *Loci communes*, but *Loci praecipui theologici*. The eleven chapters are now increased by fifteen new ones, which reflect Melanchthon's theological development. In the beginning he adds three chapters on God and creation. A new chapter on good works is introduced, where ideas similar to those in the *Confessio Augustana* 20 are discussed. The chapter on the difference between the Old and the New Testaments is no longer called the suppression of the law. Two chapters on sin and the Church constitute an addition to the chapter on the signs, which is more traditionally called *De sacramentis*. In place of the chapter on love, which now is discussed in connection with good works, Melanchthon adds six new chapters. One treats predestination, where Melanchthon tones down his sharp theology on predestination. Five chapters concern the Kingdom of Christ, the cross, the

¹⁹ Cf. the introduction in TOB 1972: 445–46.

²⁰ Cf. Nickel 1861: 85ff.

²¹ Nickel 1861: 249ff.

²² Nickel 1861: 6ff. In Latin: *Argumentum Epistolae ad Romanos. Summa doctrinae in prophetis et apostolicis scriptis traditae de iustificatione coram Deo. De particula gratis. Discrimen legis et Evangelii. Peccatum. Iustificatio. Gratia. De bonis operibus. Fides.*

resurrection of the dead, the Holy Spirit and prayer. The chapter on the authorities is replaced by considerations about the ecclesiastical ceremonies and the castigation of the flesh. The whole book is concluded with a chapter on freedom, which cleverly follows that on scandal.²³

Melanchthon comes back to the questions in the theological summaries, but continues to underline aspects of salvation more than systematic presentation.

3. *The Presentation of Pauline Theology in the Loci communes*

In the first chapter, about the forces in man, Melanchthon underlines the might of God's grace and the inscrutability of his will. That agrees with the letter to the Romans, where in chs. 1–5 God's grace is contrasted with mankind's shortcomings, and in chs. 9–11 the description of God's plan finishes with a hymn: "O the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgements and how inscrutable his ways!" (Rom 11:33). Melanchthon quotes in *Loci communes* 1.26 Romans 9 and 11 as an argument that everything depends on God's decisions (p. 31). But because the chapter deals with free will and criticizes former theologians as having introduced philosophy and human reason into the Christian doctrine, Melanchthon's conclusions do not agree with Paul. His deterministic doctrine of predestination differs from Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas. For Lombard predestination was a *praescientia* (a knowledge in advance) and for Thomas a part of *providentia* (providence).²⁴ One must naturally concede that Paul's doctrine on the will and the freedom of man is so unclear in the letter to the Romans, that different theories have been proposed.

²³ In Latin the titles of the 24 chapters are: (1) *De Deo*; (2) *De creatione*; (3) *De causa peccati et de contingentia*; (4) *De humanis viribus seu de libero arbitrio*; (5) *De peccato*; (6) *De lege divina*; (7) *De Evangelio*; (8) *De gratia et de justificatione*; (9) *De bonis operibus*; (10) *De discrimine veteris et novi Testamenti*; (11) *De discrimine peccati mortalis et venialis*; (12) *De ecclesia*; (13) *De sacramentis*; (14) *De praedestinatione*; (15) *De regno Christi*; (16) *De resurrectione mortuorum*; (17) *De Spiritu et litera*; (18) *De calamitatibus et de cruce, et de veris consolationibus*; (19) *De invocatione Dei seu de precatione*; (20) *De magistratibus civilibus et dignitate rerum politicarum*; (21) *De ceremoniis humanis in ecclesia*; (22) *De mortificatione carnis*; (23) *De scandalo*; (24) *De libertate christiana*.

²⁴ Lombard, *Sent.* 1, *dist.* 40,4; Thomas, *Summa theologica, Prima, q.* 23, *art.* 1; 3; cf. Pöhlmann 1993: 34 n. 58.

In the *Loci communes* from 1521, Melanchthon depends on Luther, who already in the Heidelberg Disputation from 1518 defended the thesis: *Liberum arbitrium post peccatum res est de solo titulo* (W.A. 1.359.33. “The free will is after the original sin a thing which is a mere title”), and in the *Assertio* from 1520 wrote: *Nulli est in manu sua quippiam cogitare mali aut boni, sed omnia de necessitate absoluta eveniunt* (W.A. 7.146.6ff. “In nobody’s hand is it possible to think of something good or evil, but everything happens with absolute necessity”). As H. G. Pöhlmann²⁵ underlines, Erasmus’s writing *De libero arbitrio* from 1524 is addressed against such a deterministic thesis, and Melanchthon has changed it in the following editions of the *Loci communes* and in other writings. In the *Confessio Augustana* from 1530 and in the *Apologia* from 1531 the question of predestination is omitted.

When Melanchthon in 1559 in the chapter on the forces in man indicated three causes for conversion and new life—the word of God, the Holy Spirit and man’s will—he was accused by his own people of synergism.²⁶ But Paul himself can without difficulties confess a kind of synergism when he writes: “For it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will (τὸ θέλειν) and to work (τὸ ἐνεργεῖν) for his good pleasure” (Phil 2:13). The Greek text is even clearer because God’s ἐνεργῶν has an influence on man’s θέλειν and ἐνεργεῖν, or, in other words, works together with man. But Paul writes so without knowledge of the later theological controversies.

The first chapter of the *Loci communes* is deceiving for the exegete who wants to understand Paul and not Luther’s theory of predestination. In his youthful enthusiasm, Melanchthon has fallen into a theological pitfall from which later on he had difficulties escaping. In the second chapter he writes in detail about sinful mankind and can quote many passages from the Scripture. In *Loci communes* 2.56, he reminds the reader that Paul in nearly all his letters, and especially in those to the Romans and to the Galatians, writes that all efforts of mankind are sins and vices. He quotes Rom 3:23 that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (p. 67). Melanchthon is right when he accuses the “sophists” of identifying “flesh” in Paul with sensuality and forgetting that the word describes the whole man, body and soul. He is also correct when he says that Paul is more

²⁵ Pöhlmann 1993: 35 n. 58.

²⁶ Pöhlmann 1993: 37 n. 62

pessimistic about sin in man than other Jewish writers. But he forgets that Paul in Phil 4:8 also writes about virtues: "Whatever is true, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Even a natural knowledge of God is accepted in Rom 1:19–20. Melanchthon underlines only man's limits, not his positive qualities. In later works he admits that the natural knowledge of God is weaker but has not entirely disappeared.²⁷ The following chapters about the law, the gospel, grace, justification, faith and the differences between the Old and the New Testaments, and the suppression of the law form a unity and concern the essential parts of the Reformation.

Melanchthon departs from the letter to the Romans when he discusses the scholastic division of the law into moral (*morales*), judicial (*iudiciales*) and ceremonial (*ceremoniales*) laws. He criticizes the division of ten commands (*praecepta*) for ordinary people and counsels (*consilia*) for monks and saints (celibacy, poverty, obedience and counsels in the sermon on the mount).²⁸ Luther had already criticized this division with the following words: "The evangelical counsels are not above but under the commands" (*consilia evangelica non sunt supra, sed intra praecepta*; W.A. 2.644.13–14). Melanchthon is right when he finds fault with the "sophists" who consider the injunctions in Matthew 5 as counsels (p. 121). Matthew has not written the sermon on the mount for an elite but for all the disciples.²⁹ Melanchthon can also easily show that in the Scripture there are no vows for monks (pp. 125ff.). But he must concede that celibacy is recommended, even if this recommendation is difficult to understand (p. 127). He thinks that poverty and obedience are recommended to all Christians. Formerly the life of monks was not an exceptional Christian life but only a beginning (pp. 129–31). According to Romans 13, one should obey the civil laws when they concord with God's law. Melanchthon is especially negative toward the papal laws which go against the Scripture. He criticizes that the eucharist is administered by a special group, the priests (*Loci communes* 3.191, p. 157). But later on he will

²⁷ Fagerberg 1985: 66.

²⁸ This division is found already in Lombard, *Sent. lib.* III 36,3. In Thomas it is found in *Summa Theologica, Prima Secundae, q.* 108, *art.* 4.

²⁹ See the history of interpretation in Barth 1980: 611–15 and Luz 1985: 191–97.

be more prudent. In the *Confessio Augustana* 14 only ordained men may administer the eucharist.³⁰

In the chapters on the gospel, grace, and justification, Melanchthon comes back to Romans 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and has many good arguments for his interpretation. An exegete today would have difficulties explaining Paul in such a straightforward way. New discussions about the law in Paul³¹ show that the apostle of the pagans is not always coherent in his concepts. In Romans 2 the Mosaic law establishes a difference between pagans and Jews, but in the letter to the Galatians both pagans and Jews seem to be liberated from the law. With his Pharisaic background, Paul sees the accomplishment of the law as positive, even when he discusses the novelty of justification by faith. In Gal 3:19ff. he shows that faith has liberated mankind from the law, but in Gal 5:14 he positively sums up the law in love. In Rom 1:18–3:20 and Gal 3:10, he underlines that it is impossible to fulfil the law, but in Rom 13:8–10, he admonishes Christians to fulfil the law by love. These difficulties in today's exegesis are absent in Melanchthon. He describes clearly a contrast between the law and the gospel, between the Old and the New Testaments, between God's justification and man's work and sin. In his later works Melanchthon wrote in more detail on man's work and sin (cf. *Confessio Augustana* 20). V. Pfnür writes that Melanchthon in article 4 of the *Confessio* tries to combine Paul's doctrine on justification, the Church's faith and the history of salvation.³² H. Fagerberg thinks that the difficulty of fulfilling the law concerns the first three commands. God wants us to have justice in our heart, which is impossible for sinful mankind.³³

For the chapter on the signs (= the sacraments) Melanchthon has only Romans 6 on baptism. Therefore he presents penance as both law and gospel (p. 357). Melanchthon thinks that confirmation, matrimony and the sacrament of the sick are not mentioned in Holy Scripture, and that all Christians are priests. On all these questions, the letter to the Romans does not help him. He gets more information from the letter about authority (cf. Rom 12–14). Despite what Paul says in Rom 12:14 and 1 Cor 13:13, Melanchthon prefers faith

³⁰ *Confessio*, in Bekenntnisschriften 1952: 69. The Latin text is: *De ordine ecclesiastico docent, quod nemo debeat in ecclesia publice docere aut sacramenta administrare nisi rite vocatus.*

³¹ E.g. Räisänen 1983; in another way Hübner 1978; Wunninge 1995.

³² Pfnür 1970: 108.

³³ Fagerberg 1965: 152.

more than love. The chapter on authority is short. According to Matthew 9 and 12, Christ has liberated us from the Pharisee's laws, but not from the State's laws. The main rule is faith and love (p. 371). Later on Melanchthon wrote more and better on these questions.

4. *Conclusion*

To sum up, we can say that the *Loci communes* are still interesting because they express a young man's enthusiasm for main subjects of the letter to the Romans and contain an argumentative rhetoric which the implied reader, a humanist or a theologian, has difficulties refuting. Melanchthon soon abandoned the limits of his youth and improved his knowledge of theology. We know that his main effort later was to keep the unity of the Church, despite his interest in Paul's doctrine of justification. The polemic in the *Confessio Augustana* is therefore written more against the recent theologians of the late scholastic theology than against the Church fathers.³⁴ In the Confessions of the evangelical-lutheran Church, tradition is important, especially because of the acceptance of the three old creeds. The *Loci communes* from 1521 are indeterminately addressed against the whole tradition of the Church. The reason is that Melanchthon then had humanistic interests in the epistle to the Romans which he explained with the help of polemical interpretations in Luther's theology.

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³⁴ So Pfnür 1970: 35.

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ADOLF DEISSMANN: A REAPPRAISAL OF HIS WORK,
ESPECIALLY HIS VIEWS ON THE MYSTICISM OF PAUL

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The writing of this article has given me a fair amount of pleasure in spite of the fact that it has been said that Deissmann's views may be out of fashion today (Hooker 1989: 342), and his views of the social world in which Paul lived and worked are being questioned by various scholars (e.g. Meeks 1982: 52). It is also well-known that Deissmann's views about Paul's mysticism have not been accepted by all (e.g. Ridderbos 1982: 26), and his treatment of the expression ἐν Χριστῷ and especially πίστις Χριστοῦ (the "mystical genitive" as he called it) encountered a vast amount of criticism as he himself attested (Deissmann 1926: 47, 163).

In the first place, I was fortunate enough to use Deissmann's first edition of his work on Paul, which appeared in German in 1911, as well as the second edition of 1925 which was translated into English by William E. Wilson in 1926 under the title *Paul: A Study in Social and Religious History*. In his preface to the second edition, Deissmann says that the second edition represents a thorough revision of the first, which had been out of print for many years, both in German and in English. Amongst the additions are discussions concerning the essential nature and types of mysticism. The peculiarity of the Pauline Christ-mysticism had been brought out altogether more sharply than before. He hoped that this may serve to clear away some of the manifold misunderstandings to which his interpretation especially of the Christ-mysticism had been exposed. What makes the reading of the second edition very interesting and even exciting at times is Deissmann's reaction—sometimes very personal and quite vehement—to criticism he received about his Pauline Christ-mysticism, especially for his view of the "mystical genitive" in the case of the πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

In the second place, Deissmann's approach to his treatment of Paul's mysticism makes interesting reading. In the preface to the first edition of 1911 in German he says that his book was written after

two visits in 1906 and 1908 to the places where Paul had lived and worked. These visits apparently affected him so much that he writes almost lyrically about what they meant to him. A short selection of what he had to say about this will certainly not be out of place here.

He sums up the effect of the travels upon himself by saying that the good germs of an historical appreciation of Paul, which he owed to his teachers and his own studies, underwent new growth in the apostle's own fields and beneath the rays of his sun, but that many rank shoots that had sprung up in the shade of the school walls withered under the same beams (1911: ix-x). Therefore alongside the Paul who has been turned into a western scholastic philosopher, alongside the aristocratized, conventionalized, and modernized Paul now suffering his eighth imprisonment in the paper bondage of "Paulinism," he would fain set the Paul whom he thinks to have seen at Tarsus, Jerusalem and Damascus, etc.

When Deissmann writes like this, the commentary of Wayne A. Meeks on his work is justified: "He had a genius for popularizing the results of his own and others' research, and two extended visits through the Middle East enabled him to reconstruct 'the world of St. Paul' in terms of a vivid, thoroughly romantic travelogue" (1983: 51). It is interesting that Richard B. Hays (1983: 3) also uses the word "romantic" about his work, and Stephen Neill (1988: 161) also speaks of him as "the incomparable populariser of the knowledge gained from the discovery of the papyri" (cf also Kümmel 1972: 438 n. 287).

Paul at his best, according to Deissmann, belongs not to theology but to religion. Paul, of course, had been a pupil of theologians and had learnt to employ theological methods; he even employed them as a missionary. But for all that, the tent-maker of Tarsus ought not to be classed along with Origen, Thomas Aquinas and Schleiermacher. His place is rather with the herdsman of Tekoa, and with Tersteegen, the ribbon-weaver of Mülheim. Paul the theologian looks backwards to Rabbinism. Paul the religious genius gazes into the future history of the world (Deissmann 1926: 6).

Paul is essentially and foremost a hero of religion. The theological element in him is secondary, naïveté in him is stronger than reflection, mysticism stronger than dogmatism. Christ means more to him than Christology, God more than the doctrine of God. He is far more a man of prayer, a witness, a confessor and a prophet, than a learned exegete and close thinking scholastic. To show that

this is so is, according to Deissmann, the object of his writing (Deissmann 1926: 6).

Preliminary Remarks about Paul's Mysticism

Before embarking on a description of Paul's mysticism, Deissmann devotes a few chapters to a treatment of the world in which Paul lived—the man Paul, and Paul the Jew—and to my mind attention should be given to this as background for the study of Paul's mysticism.

When Deissmann writes about the world of Paul he says that people of former times were dependent for their knowledge of the apostle mainly on ancient sources. He is convinced that the new discoveries of the papyri (see his 1923) help us to understand more of the world in which Paul lived and worked. It appears to him to be certain that Paul of Tarsus, although his native city was a seat of higher education, was not one of the literary upper classes, but came from the un-literary lower classes and remained one of them (see Wayne Meeks's comments later on). The inconspicuous remark of Acts 18:3, that Paul was a tent-maker and in Corinth worked as such in the tent-making household of Aquila and Priscilla, has a special importance in this connection. The tent-maker Paul ought certainly not to be thought of as a learned writer of books, who, to refresh himself from his brain work, would sit for an hour or two working as an amateur at the loom. Nor ought he to be disfigured with the bombastic-comical title "tent-manufacturer" as though the artisan missionary was a disgrace to a Christianity become respectable. Rather he was a simple man who as a journeyman worked at his trade for wages, which were the economic basis of his existence (Deissmann 1926: 48).

When Deissmann writes about Paul the man he says that it is not superfluous to emphasize strongly the genuine humanity of Paul. The traditional conception too often either has made him a parchment saint unacquainted with the world, or else has suffered the man to disappear behind the system. When he comes to the end of his discussion of the man Paul, Deissmann refers to what he sees as the apostle's real driving force in Paul's character. The thing that made this significant man what he became was his religious endowment.

Paul must be classed with the few people regarding whom that much misused phrase "religious genius" can rightly and fittingly be

used. His was a mystical-prophetical nature, and compared with this characteristic the theological entirely disappears. His mysticism is not acting mysticism, but reacting mysticism, not a mysticism which strives after absorption in the Deity, but a mysticism which received communion with God as a gift of grace (see below). He was mystical-prophetical also in the exceptional sense that he was capable of ecstatic experiences. True, he shuddered at the wild riot of unbridled wholesale ecstasies whether heathen (1 Cor 12:2), or Christian (1 Cor 14:23), and in Corinth, where it once happened that someone in ecstasy cursed Jesus (1 Cor 12:3), he waged war against speaking with tongues, although he recognized it in theory (1 Cor 14:5, 18–19). He himself had the gift of tongues (1 Cor 4:18), and could tell of datable ecstasies (2 Cor 12:2; Gal 2:1), and special revelations of his own. Caught up into the third heaven, he had heard “unspeakable words” which are not lawful for a man to utter (2 Cor 12:2–4). In hours when he was unable to pray, the Spirit had suddenly taken possession and prayed for him in his stead “with groanings which cannot be uttered” (Rom 8:26–27). In grace it was granted to him to hear the voices from on high in words he could understand (2 Cor 12:9; Acts 22:17ff.; 9:4ff.; 20:23; 16:6, 7), and dreams became to him divine signs (Acts 16:9; 27:23–24).

The enlightened Philistine feels superior to the delusions of the enthusiast, the dogmatic theologian with his love of order mistrusts the mystical or refers it to the faculty of philosophy or medicine, says Deissmann in an almost rhetorical way. But the historical student of religion knows that, puzzling as they may be to him, the experiences of the great enthusiasts are the source of power in the history of religion. Whoever takes away the mystical element from Paul, the man of antiquity, sins against the Pauline word “Quench not the Spirit” (1 Thess 5:19) (Deissmann 1926: 80).

Some have quenched the Spirit in putting a spirited Paulinism in the place of the Spirit-filled Paul, and what blazed and gleamed, like the tongues of fire on the heads of the apostles at Pentecost, then chills us like the garish frozen light of an electrically illuminated altar, with its hollow marble candles. The translator says in a footnote (Deissmann 1926: 80 n. 5) that he tried to preserve the play of words in the German. The German is “wenn er geistreichen Paulinismus an Stelle des Geistträgers Paulus setzte,” which is more literally: “putting a clever Paulinism in place of the Spirit-carrier Paul.”

Deissmann (1926: 81) concludes that for our part we will let the sacred fire burn, whose glow we trace in these letters. Paul is in the deepest sense of the word by the grace of God a *homo religiosus*.

Paul and the Old Testament

The influence of the Old Testament, in Paul's case the Septuagint, as well as the Jewish world in which the apostle grew up, should also be reckoned with. Paul, the Jew, was born into a human communion, in which the tremendous experience of heroic saints of bygone days, although hardened into text and letter, still made itself felt, a communion in which religion was everything. Paul, the religious Jew, was born and grew up a Jew (Deissmann 1926: 81).

Much has been written by scholars about Paul's relation to his Jewish heritage, but Deissmann maintained that Paul remained a pious Bible-Jew, a Septuagint-Jew. What separated him in this question from other Jews of the Diaspora, however, was the recognition that, in Christ, the Law had lost its binding force and the promises had received their fulfilment. But Paul remained a Jew while also a Christian in spite of his passionate controversy against the Law. Far from mechanically separating the Jew and Christian in Paul we may confidently call him the greatest Jewish Christian of primitive times (Deissmann 1926: 96). He had inherited his worship of God "from his fathers" (2 Tim 1:3).

The general religious and ethical contents of the Septuagint are for him the self-evident presuppositions even of his Christian piety. Paul, the Christian, never withdrew from the divine world of the Hellenistic Old Testament. To understand the whole Paul from the point of view of the history of religion one must know the spirit of the Septuagint. The historical presuppositions of Paul's religious life are not the Hebrew Old Testament, and not necessarily what we should call "Old Testament Theology," but the faith contained in the Greek Old Testament (Deissmann 1926: 99). The task of reconstructing the Jewish background of Paul's Christianity on the basis of the Septuagint conceived as a complete and uniform Bible has scarcely been recognized by scholars, let alone solved, says Deissmann (1926: 99). It resolves itself into a number of separate problems of which only a number can be mentioned: the certainties about God

in the Septuagint, the Spirit and Christ in the Septuagint, faith and righteousness in the Septuagint, and many others.

The great place held by Septuagint piety in the religious psyche of Paul is evident at once in the vast number of quotations from the Greek Bible which we find in his letters. It is not improbable that Paul made use of a text of the Septuagint which had already undergone a Jewish revision (Deissmann 1926: 100).

Paul's connection with the Septuagint shows itself even more strikingly in his whole religious and ethical vocabulary. But it becomes clearest to us when, possessing an accurate knowledge of Paul's letters, we read the Septuagint itself, not merely a few lines quoted by Paul, but the whole book as the Hellenistic Bible. Unfortunately there is still a great lack amongst us of a methodical reading of the Septuagint itself and even of what should come before that, exegesis of the Septuagint. But for the student of Paul there is scarcely anything more interesting and instructive, says Deissmann (1926: 101). In a footnote (1926: 101 n. 1) Deissmann says that in preparation of his first piece of work on the formula "in Christ Jesus" he read rapidly through the whole Septuagint in order to establish the use of the preposition "in—ἐν" in construction.

Deissmann also says later on (German 1911: 89, English 1926: 145) that, as powerful and original as the spiritual experience of Christ was with Paul, there were not lacking other stimuli which influenced him, derived most directly, he thinks, from the Septuagint religion. The Greek Old Testament has—and here we must recognize an important Hellenization of the original—a great number of prominent passages in which the formula "in God" or "in the Lord" are used in a mystical sense. The words of the prophet: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord" (LXX Hab 3:18), sounds like the prelude of the Pauline Jubilate: "Rejoice in the Lord" (Phil 3:1; 4:4).

The formula "in God," which is especially frequent in the Septuagint Psalms, is a great favourite with Paul (1 Thess 2:2; Gal 3:3; Eph 3:9; Rom 2:17), and is closely connected with the formula "in Christ" (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1). The confession in the speech on Mars Hill "In Him (God) we live and move and have our being" comes from the pre-Christian Jewish mysticism of Paul which had been inspired by the Septuagint, but Paul did not understand the being-in-God in a Neo-Platonic sense such as is presented to us in the works of Dionysius the Areopagite. In a footnote (1926: 145 n. 6) Deissmann says that the question of Jewish mysticism before Paul's

time is one that greatly needs to be solved. The Septuagint version of the Bible, which not infrequently softened the severities of the original in a mystical direction and then as the Greek Holy Scriptures had a further mystical influence, and Philo are the most important sources. The watchword "in Christ," inspired by the Damascus experience, seems to be a more vivid substitute for the sacred formula in God." But it only seems to be so. In reality the wider mystic circle "in Christ" lies like a concentric circle containing the older circle, as though protecting it and inviting "to that holy of holies in God," which from now onwards appears really accessible "through Christ" (Eph 2:18; 3:12; Rom 5:2), and "in Christ" (Deissmann 1926: 147).

To speak of Hellenistic influence is surely justifiable here, when we remember the importance in Greek mysticism of those inspired people who were filled with their God and given power by their God. Placed in the great context of mysticism in general, Paul's religion gains the stamp which indicates its true place in the history of religion. It is Christ-mysticism.

It is profitable to read H. A. A. Kennedy (1913: 31-67) for what he has to say about mysticism and the Old testament. He says that if we are to do justice to that environment in which Paul lived, we must attempt to examine those elements in Judaism, his ancestral faith, which may broadly be grouped under the comprehensive term "mysticism." For there certainly may be a germ of truth in Reitzenstein's statement (1910: 199): "Paul was a mystic before his conversion: this is attested by his allegorical exegesis of Scripture." He goes on to say that we should expect to find phenomena of the kind called "mystic" in experiences which reveal religious feeling at the highest pitch of intensity. These, in the history of Israel, are associated with the prophetic function.

Paul and Mysticism

In the second edition of 1925 (English translation, 1926) Deissmann says that his energetic advocacy of the classification of Paul's religion as mysticism has had all sorts of results for him: a sharp aversion and discord, which sometimes expressed itself in explosions of extreme irritation; personal following, at best of a romantic sort (which was no misfortune), at other times tending towards fanaticism

(which for many is the most painful thing that earth produces); ridicule; elaborate irony; friendly caution. Looking back upon these experiences, and upon thirty years of most fruitful discussions with his students and at theological conferences and lecture courses in Germany, Sweden and England, it became perfectly certain to him that an explanation, which is certainly to be desired, is only possible (as also in the cult question; see later on) by first of all coming to an understanding of the idea conveyed by mysticism. He ought to have done this before. People talk at cross purposes and over one another's heads if this is not done, and discussions carried on internationally add further misunderstanding, as for example when we translate the English term "mysticism" (which is used in a by no means bad sense) into German "Mysticismus," that word of evil association.

Deissmann (1926: 148) says that in Germany in the last few decades the idea of "Mystik" had been employed by many in a highly definite narrow sense, that of the Neo-Platonic type of deification mysticism, or to give it a more fitting name: mystical communion with the Deity. Many even think of "Mystik" in even narrower ways, having in mind only well-known caricatures and imitations. But this narrowing of the idea was only a recent academic usage. Deissmann (1926: 148) refers to the conflict over Albrecht Ritschl's attitude to mysticism when Julius Köstlin very justly protested against the narrowing of the idea of mysticism, which was already clearly coming into fashion. Reinhold Seeberg is also referred to (Deissmann 1926: 148–49, 150; cf. Seeberg 1977) as being on the right line when he speaks of the confiscation of the term "Mystik" for the Neo-Platonic type. Thus he is no innovator, says Deissmann, but seeks rather to re-establish the old German usage when he understands "Mystik" in the wider sense and gives the name "Mystik" to every religious tendency that discovers the way to God directly through inner experience without the mediation of reasoning. The constitutive element in mysticism is immediacy of contact with the Deity.

There is a double bifurcation of the types of mysticism according to whether they are judged by their origins or by their results, and this leads to a great multitude of blendings and combinations in which widely differing forms are often found in union (Deissmann 1926: 149). In the first place, when we investigate the question of origins, we see that "great dividing line" in the history of religion, which is also true in the case of cults (see later on), drawn through

the history of mysticism. The decisive matter is the initiative: who is it that gives (or gave in the first instance) the impulse of the mystical movement of the soul? There is acting mysticism and re-acting mysticism, *anabatic* and *catabatic* mysticism. Man approaches God, or God approaches man. Mysticism of performance or mysticism of grace. Striving mysticism and mysticism of the divine gift.

Secondly, the aim of mysticism is either *unio* or *communio*, either oneness with God or fellowship with God, either loss of the human personality in God or sanctification of the personality through the presence of God, either transformation into the Deity or confirmation of the human towards the divine, either participation in the Deity or prostration before the Deity. In fact ego-centric mysticism or Theo-centric mysticism. Mysticism of esthetic intoxication or mysticism of ethical enthusiasm. Mysticism that denies personality, or mysticism that affirms personality.

Paul is a reacting mystic and a *communio*-mystic. He was even, as a Jew, a fellowship mystic, but an acting mystic at any rate as regards his longings only; it would seem that through his actions he did not reach real communion with God. The fact that he remained far off from God he felt to be the bankruptcy of "works." The tragedy of this can still be felt as we read the letters he wrote as a Christian. It was Damascus that transformed his acting mysticism, into reacting mysticism, and the soul shaken and thrown open to creative energy by that impact from the time onward had its firm support "in Christ"—in communion with Christ he found communion with God. Christ-intimacy was experience and confirmation of God-intimacy. He was not deified, nor was he transformed into spirit by this communion, nor did he become Christ. But he was transformed by God, he became spiritual and he was one whom Christ possessed (Gal 3:29; 5:24; 1 Cor 1:12; 3:23; 15:23; 2 Cor 11:7), and a Christ-bearer (1 Cor 12-14) (Deissmann 1926: 153).

Paul himself was conscious of the difference between acting and reacting mysticism. His conflict with the "spirituals" at Corinth is the protest of reacting mysticism against the ecstatic chaos caused by the mysticism of intoxicated enjoyment developing into unrestrained action. But he had also conquered in the same battle within his own breast, when the old mystical activism had whispered to him its words of temptation, *eritis sicut Deus*—"you shall be as God." No doubt it was out of such a struggle that that wonderful paradox was born:

“I—not yet I,” which repeatedly flashes out of the lines of his letters (1 Cor 15:10; cf. also 1 Cor 7:10; Gal 2:20) (Deissmann 1926: 154).

In a kind of interlude, Deissmann (1926: 154) says that in his student days, a generation ago, a heavy hand stretched out from the side of the dogmatists and banished mysticism, which was forced into one narrow pattern from the German lecture-rooms. The study of Paul suffered, along with other things, from this anathema. The few scholars who then emphasized the mystical element in Paul could have appealed to teachers greater than Albrecht Ritschl. Luther and Calvin had a sympathetic understanding of the apostle’s Christ-mysticism and, going further back, we find the real Paul alive in the ancient Church, especially in the Greek Fathers. But the greatest monument of the most genuine understanding of Paul’s mysticism is the Gospel and the Epistles of John. Their Logos-Christ is the Spirit-Christ, once more made incarnate for the congregation of the saints in a time of fierce conflict by the evangelist who was inspired in equal degree by the earthly Jesus, by Paul and by the Spirit-Christ.

This also supplies the answer to the question of how Paul influenced later thought. There can be no doubt that Paul became influential in the world’s history precisely through his Christ-mysticism. The spiritual Christ was able to do what a dogmatic Messiah could not have done. Paul would certainly not have had this influence on such a great scale if the fires of the mystical elements in him had consumed the ethical. On the contrary, the ethos in his case stood the test of fire. The Pauline Christ-intimacy is no magic transformation, and it is no intoxication of ecstatic enthusiasts who are left as yawning sluggards when the transport is over (Deissmann 1926: 156). Paul himself subordinated ecstasy to ethos (1 Cor 13:1–3). Thus we may rightly and fittingly apply to him the conception of “voluntary” mysticism, which has lately come into vogue, understanding thereby the inner coming of the spiritual life-energy which directs us in the depths of our own being (Seeberg 1977: 31c). Christ-mysticism is in him a glowing fire rather than a flickering flame. He who was “apprehended” by Christ speaks with deep humility: “Not that I have already obtained (Him),” but he also makes the heroic confession: “I have the strength to face all conditions by the power that Christ gives me” (Phil 4:13, GNB).

Similarly, too, the gifts of the Spirit set the saints of Paul’s churches mighty tasks: they who had “put on Christ” (Gal 3:27), were daily

to put Him on anew (Rom 13:3), and “in” this Christ only that faith is of value whose energy is proved by love (Gal 5:6).

The Jesus Christ-cult and Christ-mysticism

In Deissmann’s preface to his first edition of 1911, he stresses what he saw as an important conception, namely that of the cult of Jesus Christ. The whole development of early Christianity—to which Adolf Harnack had applied the term “double gospel,” i.e. the gospel of Jesus and the gospel of Jesus the Christ—appeared to him to be an advance from the gospel of Jesus to the cult of Jesus Christ, that cult deriving its sustenance and its lines of direction from the gospel of Jesus and the mystic contemplation of Christ. This view, which regards the apostles as devotees of a cult (not of course to be confused with an established religion), seemed to him to do greater justice to the essential nature of primitive Christianity than any other that had been formulated. No other excludes altogether the possibility of mistaking the development of primitive Christianity for something in the mainly doctrinal.

Deissmann distinguishes two meanings of the word “cult”: a narrow one which has as its content the solemnities practised in worship by an organized religious body, and the formal expression of these solemnities. “Cult” in the wider meaning is what lies behind the “cultus” (worship or practice of religion) as its spiritual preconditions: a practical dependence upon the Deity, an attitude adopted towards the Deity, a readiness for religious dealing itself, as Deissmann puts it (1926: 115). The popular vocabulary of many languages in its simplicity has grasped the fact that it is a practical attitude towards the Deity, that it is religious practice, which is the essential feature in the idea.

To sum up: “cult” is a practical dependence upon, a practical attitude towards, the Deity on the part of a single individual or of a community. It is a *modus colendi Deum* (a way to worship or serve God). It is not essential that it be a formal or collective attitude towards the Deity; each stammering ejaculatory prayer of a single person is “cult,” says Deissmann (1926: 116). But “cult” becomes historically influential (and generally only can be grasped at all historically) where it has developed into the foundation of a church or

community. This does not overlook the fact that doctrine had an important place even in the earliest times, e.g. doctrines about God and divine affairs, theories which Jesus held, and theories about Jesus, but it does not see in doctrine the main emphasis of the history of the Church. The sacred history of those early days, however, actually had the source of its inner progress in the fact that the Messianic movement, released through the gospel of Jesus with its thoroughly practical attitude towards the approaching end of the world and the immediately expected Kingdom of God, in the end was historically consolidated into a cult, a cult of Jesus as Lord. To put it in other words: the gospel became transformed into Christianity (Deissmann 1926: 117).

What Deissmann says about cults and the way in which they are formed or come to exist is interesting reading. When he however illustrates what he means by cult as a *modus colendi Deum* and explains what he means by it, it comes very near to mean good, practical Christianity, in which the relationship of God and the believer is one of a very personal character and what accompanies it. Just as he differentiates between the separate types of contemplation and mysticism, he differentiates also between cults: they are either “acting” cults or “reacting” cults. In both cases an action takes place. But in the first type the action is a spontaneous performance of the individual or of the community, intended to produce in response to it a performance on the part of the Deity, effective through its own execution, effective as *actio acta*, as *opus operatum*. In the second, the reacting type, on the other hand, the action of the man is an action in response, a reaction. Here it is God himself who is really the *Leitourgos*, the *Theourgos* in the highest sense. The individual or the community only say Amen.

These two types of cult behind which the battle of shadowy giants—champions in the hoary strife between works and faith, between man’s will and God’s grace—is fought, were grasped with admirable clearness in the Augsburg Confession when it contrasted the cult of Law and the cult of the gospel and perceived the cult of the gospel to be a reaction. In the Augsburg Confession we find the following: *Ita cultus et latreia evangelii est accipere bona a Deo, e contra cultus legis est bona nostra Deo offere et exhibere. Nihil autem possumus Deo offere nisi autea reconciliati et renati* (article III), which can be translated: “The evangelical cult and service is acceptance, an acceptance of good things from God. On the other hand the legal cult is an offer: we offer

and present our good things to God. But it is utterly impossible for us to offer anything to God unless we have already been reconciled and born again" (Deissmann 1926: 118).

Paul, Christ and the Spirit

Against this background, what happened to Paul on the road to Damascus can be discussed. For this we have two sources: the apostle's own references, and three sketches in the Acts (9:1ff.; 22:3ff.; 26:10ff., not all their details quite in agreement with one another), which however—this is in the very nature of the case—must be in some way derived from accounts by Paul himself.

Paul described it once (1 Cor 15:8), with the same words which he used of the Christophanies to the other apostles (1 Cor 15:5, 6, 7), words, be it noted, which were already technical words for a divine epiphany in the Septuagint: "He appeared also to me." He speaks of the living Christ, and hints that the appearance of Christ to him was the last in a series. Another time (1 Cor 9:1), he says with even more ancient vividness: "I have seen the Lord," or he confesses, using an inner mystical expression, "I was apprehended of Christ Jesus (or: Christ once took hold of me)" (Phil 3:12, NEB).

In a fourth case (Gal 1:16), he uses almost modern psychological terms of the experience, speaking of a revelation of God's Son produced by God "within him." In a fifth case (Eph 3:3), he says in a more general way that the Christ-mystery has been made known to him by revelation. In the memory of that hour at Damascus there was no doubt always the impression of a tremendous shining light, like the light of the first day of God's creation shining out of the darkness, as is hinted in Second Corinthians (2 Cor 4:6). So too the Book of Acts, using the ordinary colours of antiquity, paints it all in that glorious blaze of light, in which the appearance of the Divine is always represented (Acts 9:3; 22:6, 9; 26:13). This experience, which Paul regarded as caused by God, meant the revelation of the living Christ or Christ taking possession of him, and included in itself both an inner transformation and the call to the apostolate of the before-time persecutor—that was the occurrence in Damascus for Paul himself. And this characterization of the conversion is amply sufficient for the historian, says Deissmann (1926: 130).

When we connect this single experience with the whole of Paul's

later mystical experience of Christ, we can obtain one more important result by combining together two confessions from Galatians. For the man who describes his position as a Christian with the phrase "Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20), Damascus was the beginning of that indwelling of Christ: "God revealed his Son in me" (Gal 1:16).

What happened at Damascus ought not to be isolated, but it should be regarded as the basal mystical experience of the religious genius to whom also in later life extraordinary and even ecstatic experiences were vouchsafed. All that can be called Paul's Christ-mysticism is the reaction to this initial experience. Damascus is perhaps the clearest example of an initial impulse to reacting mysticism, a mystical initiation arising from a divine initiative.

The secret of Paul's spiritual life has not only been recognized but also described with sacred Pauline formulae by two phrases that have been used: "Christ in Paul" (Gal 2:20), etc. and "Paul in Christ" (numerous passages). It is no doubt generally admitted that Paul's religious experience was Christocentric, but people view that Christocentric Christianity of Paul differently. Often Christocentric has been identified with Christological. But Paul's religion is Christocentric in a much deeper and more realistic sense. It is not first of all the product of a number of convictions and elevated doctrines about Christ. It is "fellowship" with Christ (1 Cor 1:9; 10:16; Phil 3:16). It is Christ-intimacy. The inimitably vivid expression for "fellowship" is *koinonia*, says Deissmann (1926: 135 n. 3). The translator says that the German for Christ-intimacy is "Christ-Innigkeit," and Deissmann says (1926: 135 n. 4) that with the coming of this expression "Christ-Innigkeit" he hopes to render a service to those who in carrying on Christian work at the present day want to speak about Paul's Christ-mysticism without using a word so productive of misunderstanding as "Christusmystik." In using this term "Christ-Innigkeit" he was consciously linking on to the ancient usage of "innic" and "innikeit" in the German mysticism of the Middle Ages.

Paul lives "in Christ," "in" the living and present spiritual Christ, who is about him on all sides, who fills him (Gal 2:20), who speaks to him (2 Cor 12:9), and who speaks in and through him (2 Cor 13:3); Christ is for Paul not a person of the past, with whom he can only come into contact by meditating on the words that have been handed down from him, not a "historical" personage, but a reality and power of the present, an "energy" (Phil 3:21; Col 1:29; Eph 1:19), whose life-giving powers are daily expressing themselves in him

(2 Cor 12:9; Phil 3:10; 1 Cor 1:24; 5:4), and to whom, since that day at Damascus, he has felt a personal-cult dependence (Deissmann 1926: 136).

Deissmann (1926: 126) feels that the difference between these two conceptions of Paul's Christocentric religion can be well expressed in Greek by contrasting *Christologos* and *Christophoros*. Certainly Paul was also a Christological thinker, but above all and in everything (even in his "Christology") he was a Christ-bearer. According to Deissmann (1926: 136 n. 6), ancient Christendom used this beautiful word, *Christophoros*, still in the fourth century as a technical term, for example of one specially gifted in prayer. He therefore thinks that it is more accurate and more in accord with historical sense to inquire about the "Christophory" or "Christolatry" of the apostle, or, if that sounds too strange, about his "knowledge of Christ," about his "experience of Christ" or his "revelation of Christ." Any tendency to petrify the original fellowship with Christ pulsating with life into a doctrine about Christ is mischievous. The only Christ that Paul knew, experienced, carried with him into the world and brought into the depths of the souls of his churches was the spiritual, living Christ.

This certainty of Christ, nevertheless, has different tendencies. In each case indeed the living, risen Christ stands at the centre, but two chief, opposing tendencies can be distinguished. On the one hand, Christ to the apostle is the Son of God "highly exalted" to the Father (Phil 2:9), who dwells in heaven above "at the right hand" of God in glory (Col 3:1; Eph 1:20; Rom 8:34), and "is coming" soon to the earth to judge the world. This assurance about Christ, which has strong Jewish tendencies, being especially influenced by Psalm 110, might be called in doctrinaire phrasing the assurance of the transcendence of Christ.

Even more characteristically Pauline is the other. It exhibits more the Hellenistic-mystical tendency of the experience of Christ: the living Christ is the Pneuma. As Pneuma (Spirit) the living Christ is not far off, above clouds and stars, but near, present on our poor earth. He dwells and rules his own. Here again there is no lack of suggestion in this direction in the Septuagint, and Paul himself created the significant formulae: "The Lord is the Spirit" (2 Cor 3:17), "The last Adam became a life-giving Spirit" (1 Cor 15:45), and others like them. Perhaps even more important than such symbolic phrases is the fact that, in a number of places, Paul makes precisely similar statements of Christ and the Spirit. This is especially to be noted in

the parallel use of the mystical formulae "in Christ" and "in the (Holy) Spirit." The formula "in the Spirit," which occurs in Paul's writings only nineteen times, is in almost all these places connected with the same specifically Pauline fundamental ideas which elsewhere he connects with the formula "in Christ," e.g. "faith" (Gal 3:26, etc.; 1 Cor 12:9), "righteousness" (2 Cor 5:21, etc.; Eph 2:21), etc.—all this is seen and experienced by the Christian who is "in Christ," but also by him who is "in the Spirit." For Paul, that means, as a matter of fact, "in Christ who is the Spirit," according to Deissmann (1926: 139). Therefore also the technical expressions "fellowship of the Son of God" and "fellowship of the Spirit" are parallel in Paul's use (1 Cor 1:9; Phil 2:1; 2 Cor 13:13). For it always refers to the same experience whether Paul says that Christ lives in him (Gal 2:20ff.; 2 Cor 13:5; Rom 8:10), or that the Spirit dwells in us (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19), and whether he speaks of Christ making intercession for us with the Father (Rom 8:34), or of the Spirit who helps us in prayer (Rom 8:26ff.). In John, who calls the Spirit (John 14:16, 26; 15:26; 16:7) and Jesus Christ (1 John 2:1) "advocate," *παράκλητος*, this great Pauline conviction is still more clearly worked out than in Romans (Deissmann 1926: 139 n. 22).

This Christ-experience of the apostle might be called in doctrinaire phrasing the experience of the immanence of Christ. It is more Pauline and, therefore, also historically more correct to speak of the experience of the Spirit-Christ.

This certainty of the nearness of Christ occurs far more frequently in Paul's writings than the thought of the distant Christ "highly exalted" in heaven. "Christ in me" is indeed a confession poured forth from the depths of the soul, the confession of an assurance which illuminates and holds under its sway the remotest recesses of the ego (Deissmann 1926: 140). Corresponding to this assurance is the other: "in Christ." Christ is Spirit, therefore He can live in Paul and Paul in Him. Just as the air of life, which we breathe, is "in" us and fills us, and yet we at the same time live in this air and breathe it, so it is also with the Christ-intimacy of the apostle Paul: Christ in him, he in Christ.

This primitive Pauline watch-word "in Christ" is meant vividly and mystically, as is the corresponding phrase "Christ in me." The formula "in Christ" (or "in the Lord") occurs 164 times in Paul's writings: it is really the characteristic expression of his Christianity. Much misunderstood by exegetes, rationalized, applied to the "his-

torical" Jesus in isolation, and thereby weakened, often simply ignored, this formula—so closely connected in meaning with the phrase "in the Spirit"—must be conceived as the peculiarly Pauline expression of the most intimate possible fellowship of the Christian with the living spiritual Christ, says Deissmann (1926: 140). He says that it has taken, comparatively speaking, a long time for the importance of this problem to gain general recognition. In his time, however, the question was well to the front. He sets down, without any attempt at completeness, the most important contributions and gives a full page of all the titles about the subject.

With the assurance of the Damascus experience of "Christ in me" and the assurance of equal content, "I in Christ," an inexhaustible religious "energy" was concentrated in the deep and, in so far as religious impulses, extremely sensitive soul of the convert. In every direction, Paul now radiated the "power of Christ" (2 Cor 12:9; cf. 1 Cor 5:4) that ruled in him, gave out the "riches of Christ" (Eph 3:8; cf. 2:7), the "blessing of Christ" (Rom 15:29), and the "fulness of Christ" (Eph 4:13) which had come to him. To designate this abundant "power of Christ," which flowed through him and took effect from him, Paul used a well-known technical religious word, the Greek πίστις, which we are accustomed to translate with "faith."

Deissmann (1926: 161ff.) then proceeds to discuss the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ("the faith of Christ Jesus"), which is used in Gal 2:16, 3:22; Eph 3:12; Phil 3:9; Rom 3:22, 26, and which has caused a lot of discussion and still does so. In this expression, Deissmann finds a characteristic feature of Paul's view of faith in Christ which has been overlooked and neglected. Faith is, in Paul's usage, faith "in Christ," that is to say, faith is *something* which is accomplished in union of life with the spiritual Christ. That is the meaning of those passages in which Paul connects "in" with the words "faith," "believe," "believer," and also of the passages in which the genitive construction appears.

It is not yet generally recognized that Paul uses the genitive "of Christ Jesus" in a wholly peculiar manner. There are numerous passages in Paul in which the usual rough classification of "subjective genitive" or "objective genitive" is insufficient. In Paul it would be possible to establish the use of a special type of genitive, which might be called the "genitive of fellowship" or the "mystical genitive" because it indicates mystical fellowship with Christ. "Of Christ Jesus" is here in the main identical with "in Christ."

“The faith of Christ Jesus” is “faith in Christ,” the faith which the Christian has in fellowship with Christ.

Numerous other religious root ideas are similarly bound up with the mystical genitive. Alongside “faith of Christ” we find in Paul the “love of Christ” (2 Cor 5:14; Eph 3:19; Rom 8:35), the “hope of Christ” (1 Thess 1:3), the “peace of Christ” (Gal 3:15), the “meekness and gentleness of Christ” (2 Cor 10:1), the “tender mercies of Christ” (Phil 1:8), the “patience of Christ” (2 Thess 3:5), and other similar technical expressions. Throughout it is understood that these special experiences or assurances of the soul in the Christian come about through the mystic-spiritual fellowship with Christ.

When Deissmann (1926: 163) says that numerous religious root ideas are similarly bound up with the mystical genitive, the translator refers to the German expressions the writer used for these ideas, namely “Christusglauben” and “Christusliebe,” etc. The German forms are not really adapted to the English usage, so the genitival forms as they appear in the English Bible are used in the translation. This remark was first made by Lionel R. M. Strachan.

It is interesting that Morna D. Hooker (1989: 349) says that she is intrigued to find that an equivalent German term—*Christusglauben*—was used at the beginning of this century by Adolf Deissmann in his study of Paul, though his translators abandoned hope of finding an acceptable English translation. She says that Deissmann has certainly put his finger on the crucial point, however out of fashion his views may be today.

So too “the faith of Christ” is faith which is alive in fellowship with the spiritual Christ, and it is faith “on” God (this “on,” ἐπί, is joined by Paul with “God,” Rom 4:5, 34; 10–11; with “Christ,” 1 Tim 1:16). In its content this is identical with the faith which Abraham had in the sacred past, an unconditional reliance upon the living God in spite of all temptations to doubt. This faith of Abraham (πίστις Ἀβρααμ, Rom 4:12, 16), heroic by its “nevertheless” which afterwards was made impossible by the law (Gal 3:12, 23), has in Christ again become possible and real for us. “Separated from Christ,” Paul says (Eph 2:12), we are “without God in the world”; in union with Christ we have boldness to approach God (Eph 3:12; cf. also Eph 3:17).

The faith of Paul is then the union with God which is established in fellowship with Christ. It is, like that of Abraham, an unshakable confidence in the grace of God. God-intimacy in Christ Jesus, God-

intimacy of those who are Christ-intimates, that is Paul's faith. Reference could here be made to what Paul says in Col 3:3: "and now your life lies hidden with Christ in God" (NEB), says Deissmann (1926: 165 n. 1).

In conclusion we may refer to Deissmann's effort to describe this "faith of Christ" of the apostle as the centre of energy, from which the many separate confessions concerning salvation radiate. We must seek to understand the variety of Paul's experience and testimony about salvation, which finds expression in the confessions in Paul's letters as refractions of the one beam of light, "faith of Christ" as Deissmann (1926: 165) puts it.

According to Deissmann the most important problem in the study of Paul, as far as that is concerned, lies with Paul's inner self. The solution to the problem lies in the recognition that the Pauline testimonies concerning salvation are psychically synonymous.

In the older study of Paul it was generally the custom first to isolate the so-called "concepts" of justification, redemption, reconciliation, forgiveness, and so forth, and then from these isolated and thereby theologically stiffened "concepts" to reconstruct the "system" of "Paulinism." It was the result of that dogmatic method, with its isolation and imposed system, that "Paulinism" appeared so hard and cold, so calculated and scholastic, so angular and complicated, and so difficult to assimilate, and that on account of "Paulinism" Paul seemed to many to be "the evil genius of Christianity" (Adolf Friedrich Graf von Schack, quoted by Deissmann 1926: 160 n. 2).

This is in contrast to Paul's message of salvation, which must have been simpler and more understandable to the common people. What we find in Paul's letters is not a reference to a diversity of many objects, but to a diversity of the psychological reflections of the one object of religion. As is the case with other religious writers like Luke, Paul Gerhardt and others, Paul bears witness in a continually new variation of figurative words of similar meaning and often with the parallelism of prophetic emphasis. And it is our business to grasp the figurativeness, the ancient popular pictorial character of these testimonies.

Deissmann (1926: 167) selects only those of Paul's pictorial expressions for salvation in Christ which have most seriously suffered violence at the hands of Paulinism-investigators. There are other synonyms, but the following five are the most important: justification, reconciliation, forgiveness, redemption, adoption (Luther used the word

“sonship”). These classical words have exerted such an enormous influence upon later dogma that they have themselves in the passage of centuries become covered with so thick a coating of dogmatic verdigris, that for many people it has become difficult to recognize their original meaning. But to the pre-dogmatic simple person of the ancient world the original meaning was clear because he understood without difficulty that the apostle’s words were pictorial.

In each of these five picture-words man stands before God—each time in a different guise before the same God: first as an accused person, secondly as an enemy, thirdly as a debtor, fourthly and fifthly as a slave. He stands there before God, but he is separated from God by a terrible barrier of sin, the flesh, the world, the law. Transferred into the position “in Christ” he experiences the setting aside of this barrier and finds access to God. And in accordance with the particular picture which Paul uses, this access to God in Christ is called acquittal, or reconciliation, or remission, or redemption, or adoption. Paul, the architect (1 Cor 3:10), did not plan five or more doors side by side, or one after the other into the royal palace of grace, but one single open door. But he had many different sketches of the *janua vitae*—the doorway to life—in his mind.

Perhaps we can conclude this excerpt or short survey of what Deissmann had to say about Paul’s “faith of Christ” with his remark that we shall not comprehend Paul until we have heard all these various testimonies concerning salvation sounding together in harmony like the notes of a single full chord. Once accused before God, an enemy of God, a debtor, a slave—now in Christ acquitted and redeemed, free from debt, the friend of God and the son of God—the man who makes this confession testifies that in Christ he is no longer “far off from God” but has come “near to God.” To raise scholastically pointed questions, which the controversial theology of exegesis finds indispensable, such as “What is the relation of justification to reconciliation in Paul, or of forgiveness to redemption,” is to break the strings of the harp and to twist them into a tangle that is hopeless to unravel. Such questions have surely no more value than if we were to ask what is the relation of an accused person to an enemy or of a debtor to a slave, and while they may, perhaps, furnish matter for pamphlets and make examination candidates uneasy, they are no help towards understanding Paul (Deissmann 1926: 178).

When an evaluation of Adolf Deissmann’s work and especially his views on Paul’s mysticism is given, one must keep in mind that many

years have elapsed since the first publication of his book on Paul in 1911 and the second edition of it in 1925 (English translation 1926), in which he tried to describe the social world in which the apostle had lived and worked, as well as his mysticism, which, according to him, formed the core of Paul's kerygma. In the meantime, however, New Testament scholarship has moved into so many directions, and so many other theories have evolved for its interpretation, as well as diverging ideas about the social world to which the first Christians and Paul belonged, that it may seem as if his work and views are no longer of any relevance for us.

It is well-known about Deissmann that his opinion contributed much in shaping this century's common view of Paul and his congregations. He was a professor of the New Testament at Heidelberg and then at Berlin. He saw that the hundreds of newly discovered documents written on papyri or ostraca—letters, contracts, school lessons, bills of sale, magical spells—had revolutionary implications for understanding not only the vocabulary and grammar but also the social setting of the New Testament. He had a genius for popularizing the results of his own and others' research, and two extended trips through the Middle East (as previously said) enabled him to reconstruct "the world of St. Paul" in terms of a vivid, thoroughly romantic travelogue (Meeks 1983: 51). In general his identification of the language of the New Testament with the vulgar Koine of the non-literary papyri supported the view that the writers had belonged to the lower classes. He had, however, some difficulty in situating Paul himself. According to his occupation he must have been one of the lowest of the free poor, like the weaver whom Deissmann had watched in Tarsus in 1909, "making a coarse cloth on his poverty-stricken primitive loom," yet "the very fact that he was born a Roman citizen shows that his family cannot have lived in absolutely humble circumstances" (Deissmann 1926: 49, 50; Meeks 1983: 52).

Paul wrote un-literary Greek, yet "not vulgar to the degree that finds expression in many contemporary papyri. On the ground of his language rather Paul should be assigned to a higher class" (Deissmann 1926: 50). Deissmann admits, however, that it is very difficult to solve the problem of the social classes of antiquity, but decides to say that Paul by birth and education, by sympathies and circumstances of life, belonged far more to the middle and lower classes than to the upper classes. Until recently most scholars who troubled to ask Deissmann's question at all ignored the ambiguities

of the evidence that Deissmann had at least mentioned. The prevailing viewpoint has been that the constituency of early Christianity, the Pauline congregations included, came from the poor and dispossessed of the Roman provinces.

Within the past two decades, however, a number of scholars have looked at the evidence afresh and come to conclusions very different from Deissmann's about the social level of the first-century Christians. The convergence of these enquiries, which have been undertaken from diverse viewpoints, has led Abraham J. Malherbe to suggest that "a new consensus may be emerging," which would approve Floyd Filson's dictum of more than forty years ago: "The apostolic church was more nearly a cross section of society than we have sometimes thought" (Malherbe 1977: 31; Filson 1939: 11; Meeks 1983: 52). The role of the upper classes is particularly emphasized by E. A. Judge, who points to the pervasive but seldom-mentioned importance of *amicitia* and *clientela* in Roman society to support his conviction that "Christianity was a movement sponsored by local patrons to their social dependents" (Judge 1960b; cf. 1960a; Meeks 1983: 52). Robert M. Grant, looking primarily at evidence from the second through the fourth centuries, concurs. "The triumph of Christianity in a hierarchically organised society necessarily took place from the top down." He infers that, also in the earlier period, Christianity should be viewed "not as a proletarian mass movement but as a relatively small cluster of more or less intense groups, largely middle class in origin" (Grant 1977: 11; Meeks 1983: 52).

Malherbe has drawn significant clues for the social level of the New Testament writers and their audiences from recent studies of language, style, and genre, which have the effect of refuting Deissmann in the area of the latter's central contributions. Malherbe emphasizes the ambiguities of the linguistic data that Deissmann noted but chose to set aside in his general conclusions (Malherbe 1977: 29–59). These studies, too, suggest that the educational and, therefore, probably the social level of Paul and at least some members of his congregations was a good bit higher than has commonly been assumed. The most careful, consciously sociological analysis of social stratification in the Pauline communities, however, is found in the series of articles published by Gerd Theissen, which discuss the situation in Corinth. He, too, finds leading figures in the Christian groups of that city who belong to a relatively high economic and social level, but Theissen emphasizes the evidence that the church, like the larger

society, is stratified. The conflicts in the congregation are in a large part conflicts between people of different strata, and, among individuals, between the expectations of a hierarchical society and those of an egalitarian community (Meeks 1983: 53; Theissen: 1974a, 1974b, 1975).

David E. Aune (1987: 160) also refers to Deissmann's comparative analysis of ancient letters in which he defined them as private personal conversations between people separated by distance. Because he saw similarities between the recovered papyrus Greek common letters and the authentic letters of Paul, he distinguished true letters (which are natural, spontaneous, and private) from literary letters or epistles (mechanical, artistic, and public). Deissmann considered all of the authentic letters of Paul, together with 2–3 John, as true letters, but the Pastorals and most of the Catholic letters (Hebrews, James, 1–2 Peter, Jude), as epistles. Deissmann's influential distinction between letters and epistles has, however, obscured rather than clarified the spectrum of possibilities that separated the short personal letter from the literary letters of antiquity. There are, for example, no really private letters among Paul's authentic letters. Nor was Deissmann sensitive to stylistic differences between papyrus letters and Pauline letters. The letters of Paul and Seneca, for instance, exhibit a dialogical style quite different from anything found in papyrus letters. Since Adolf Deissmann's time, research on Graeco-Roman letters has taken three different routes: formal literary analysis, thematic analysis, and rhetorical analysis (Aune 1987: 183).

Abraham J. Malherbe (1977: 58) refers to work done by members of the Society of Biblical Literature's seminar on "The Form and Function of the Pauline Letters," which has taken into consideration epistolographic materials excluded or neglected by Deissmann and most of his followers. Sensitivity to the classification of letters provided by ancient handbooks on letter writing, and utilization of "literary letters," especially those of Cicero and Seneca, as well as the work of ancient rhetorical theorists, have contributed to a different perspective on Paul's letters.

The primary importance of this approach to the study of Paul's letters is not the contribution that it makes to our understanding of the social level of Paul and his churches. What it does demonstrate is that a wider range of possibilities is open to us in our attempts to understand Paul more fully. However, it is likely that further investigation of Paul's style of letter writing will further modify Deissmann's

views of the social letter represented by Paul's letters. It may be significant, for example, that letters were written as an exercise in style early in the tertiary state of the education system. If Paul's letters can be shown to reflect the stylistic conventions associated with instructions on that level, we would have one more piece of evidence that shows that Deissmann aimed too low (Malherbe 1977: 59).

Another criticism that has been brought against Adolf Deissmann is regarding his views that the Greek of the New Testament is simply the Koine, the common form of Greek, simplified down from the classical standard, which had become widely used throughout the Middle East as a result of the campaigns of Alexander the Great and used in the papyri. Stephen Neill (1988: 160) also calls Deissmann "the incomparable populariser of the knowledge gained from the papyri." There is, however, an immense difference between the vigour and general correctness of the New Testament writers and the halting, broken jargon of so many writers of the papyri. T. R. Glover, who had an exceptionally wide knowledge of the literature of the time, Greek and Latin, once remarked that Paul is perhaps the greatest writer of the first and second centuries before or after Christ, an opinion which was shared by the most notable classical scholar of the twentieth century, Ulrich Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1912: 232). His words can be quoted: "At last we encounter a man who speaks in Greek out of a fresh and inner experience of life. This epistolary style is Paul's and Paul's alone." What the writers of the New Testament wrote was in the main the Greek of their own time, but it was Greek with a difference. It had the background of a long Jewish tradition, and it was concerned with religious events which were without parallel in the history of the world (cf. Hoskyns and Davey's and Moule's warning against an exaggerated estimate of the importance of the Koine itself; Hoskyns and Davey 1931: 19-20; Moule 1953: 3).

As regards the concept or expression "in Christ" about which so much has been written and which Deissmann sees as the key to the Christ-mysticism of Paul, I would like to refer to two books of Richard N. Longenecker: *Paul, Apostle of Liberty* (1976: 167-70), and *Galatians* (1990: 92-93), in which I find information with which I can associate myself. In his comment on Gal 2:20 (1990: 92-93) Longenecker says that the expression ἐν ἐμοί ("in me") ("The life which Christ lives in me" NEB) together with the converse ἐν Χριστῷ ("in Christ")

(cf. Gal 1:22; 2:4; 3:14, 26, 28; 5:6, 10), suggests what may be called “Christian mysticism”:

Mysticism, of course, frequently conjures up ideas about the negation of personality, withdrawal from objective reality, ascetic contemplation, a searching out of pathways to perfection, and absorption into the divine—all of which is true for Eastern and Grecian forms of mysticism. The mysticism of the Bible, however, affirms the true personhood of people and all that God has created in the natural world, never calling for negation or withdrawal except where God’s creation has been contaminated by sin. Furthermore, the mysticism of biblical religion is not some esoteric searching for a path to be followed that will result in union with the divine, but is always of the nature of a response to God’s grace wherein people who have been mercifully touched by God enter into communion with him without ever losing their own identities (cf. also Kennedy 1919: 122).

I agree heartily with this statement of Longenecker, although I think he could have referred to Gal 2:20 as a whole, in which Paul gives us an indication of what he meant by his Christ-mysticism: “I have been crucified with Christ: the life I now live is not my life, but the life which Christ lives in me, and my present bodily life is lived by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and sacrificed himself for me” (NEB). Here we have Christ-intimacy (to use an expression of Deissmann) which almost sounds like an absorption into Christ, but actually it is a relationship brought about and sustained by faith. It is not a mysticism of absorption, for the “I” and the “Thou” of the relationship retain their identities. Nor is it something separate from forensic righteousness before God, as though open to and experienced by only those who have been initiated into the more developed stages of the Christian life. Being “in Christ” is, for Paul, communion with Christ in the most intimate relationship imaginable, without ever destroying or minimizing—rather, only enhancing—the distinctive personalities of either the Christian or Christ. It is “I-Thou” communion at its highest (Longenecker 1990: 154; cf. 1976: 160–70).

For a study of the expression that Paul used, *πίστις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ* (“the faith of or in Christ Jesus”) the paper of Morna D. Hooker (1989: 321–42) as well as the dissertation of Richard B. Hays (1981: 139–93) and commentary of Richard N. Longenecker (1990: 87–88) are most enlightening. The question is whether the expression *πίστις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ*, which appears in Paul’s letters only seven times (Gal

2:16; 3:22; Rom 3:22, 26; Eph 3:12; Phil 3:9) refers to Christ's own faith or faithfulness or the faith of the believer. I think that Hooker's reference to Deissmann's classification of the expression as a "genitive of fellowship" or the "mystical genitive," and agreeing with it, is most commendable. Her own admission is that her study has driven her to the conclusion that the expression πίστις Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ must contain some reference to the faith of Christ himself. She suggests that we should think of it not as a polarized expression (which refers both to Christ's faith and to that of the believer) that suggests antithesis, but as a concentric expression, which begins always from the faith of Christ himself, but which includes, necessarily, the answering faith of believers, who claim that faith as their own. And then we must not only think in individual terms. Paul was much more likely to have been thinking primarily of the corporate response of the people of God—of the new community of those who are in Christ, who believe in him and trust in what he is (Hooker 1989: 341).

According to Hooker this view has important theological implications. First, the contrast between the righteousness based on the Law and that which is based on faith is far more fundamental than it has often appeared when faith is understood simply as the response of the believer. Faith is certainly not to be understood as a form of human works. Faith derives, *not* from the believer, but from the fact that he or she is already in Christ and identified with him. Those who exchange life under the Law for life in Christ exchange the righteousness which comes from the Law for the righteousness which belongs to those who are in Christ. The true antithesis is not between works and faith but between the works of the Law and the saving work of Christ.

This means, secondly, that this interpretation is very much in accord with those interpretations of Paul's theology which stress the importance of participation in Christ. The Christian moves from the sphere of Adam to the sphere of Christ by accepting all that Christ has done and by becoming one with him. Even the believer's initial response—his faith—is sharing in the obedient, faithful response of Christ himself. This interpretation in no way plays down the importance of the believer's faith. What it does is to stress the rule of Christ (Hooker 1989: 342).

A third implication is that there is perhaps a greater unity between justification and sanctification than has often been supposed. When

this is said, one cannot help thinking of Deissmann's description of Paul's pictorial expressions for salvation in Christ which actually are synonyms for him, e.g. justification, reconciliation, etc. (Deissmann 1926: 167). However, justification and sanctification are not synonyms for Paul, but there is a greater unity between them when we see things as Hooker does. Those who share Christ's faith share already in his righteousness. Sanctification is indeed a matter of becoming what one is. Christian life is a matter of conformity to Christ from beginning to end and a sharing in what he is: this is the whole matter of justifying faith and sanctifying obedience.

We may not agree with Deissmann's views in everything and some of them are definitely no longer tenable and even out of fashion. During the last century the expression "in Christ," which plays such an important role in his description of Paul's kerygma, has however become the subject of much investigation and debate. One can agree with Longenecker when he says that endless debate will probably continue to gather around Paul's expression "in Christ," for it signifies that central aspect of the Christian life which is much better experienced than explained. Indeed, the more confident we are that we have reduced the expression to the cold prose of the psychologist's laboratory, the more assured we can be that we have lost its central significance (1976: 167). Yet that relationship can be intellectually understood and expressed up to a point and that he tries to do.

Longenecker goes on to point out that the expression "in Christ" can have various meanings in certain contexts. It is, for example, true that in many places the expression can be viewed as merely synonymous with the adjective and noun "Christian." The various interpretations advanced, which fall easily into five basic categories, are discussed and followed by his own interpretation. While not assenting to all of Deissmann's positions, nor insisting that there be a unitary exegesis of the phrase, one must assert that Paul's "in Christ" carries a quite definitely local flavour. However, the question that arises when we insist upon a quite definite local and personal flavour for the phrase is the same one Deissmann wrestled with so valiantly: How can we speak of the intermingling of two personalities in local terminology? Deissmann argued along the lines of an ethereal Spirit and pneumatic Christ, in which the believer lived as if in a sort of rarified air and which could, as can air, also indwell the believer. But such an analogy is not Pauline, for it breaks

down the personality of both Christ and the Spirit (Longenecker 1976: 169; 1990: 153). Longenecker refers to Albrecht Oepke's view (1964: 542) that Paul thought more of Christ as a "universal personality" than as ethereal or pneumatic: "In him all things were created in heaven and upon earth, things visible and invisible" (Col 1:16). Furthermore, as the Old Testament can say that Abraham "trusted in Yahweh" (Gen 15:6—nine times using the preposition *be* with the *hipil* form of the verb when its object is God; cf. e.g. 2 Kgs 18:5–6; Ps 78:21–22, etc.), and as Jesus is reported to have spoken of his relationship with the Father as being "in the Father" (John 10:38; 14:10, 11, 20; 17:21), all without diminishing the concept of the real personality of God, so Paul with his high Christology could speak of being "in Christ" without softening or dissolving the fixed outlines of personality for either Christ or the Christian. To have been forced to give a definite psychological analysis of this relationship would have left Paul speechless. But he was convinced that he had experienced just such an intimacy with Christ, and he was also sure that his converts had experienced the same as well (Longenecker 1990: 153).

The importance of the Septuagint for Paul's mysticism, which Deissmann made much of, has also been questioned. One can, however, in spite of not agreeing with all his views, agree with Abraham J. Malherbe when he gives credit to the work of Deissmann in the following words: "My admiration for the generation of scholars spanning the last decade of the nineteenth and the first decade of the twentieth century must be recorded. That the work of Adolf Deissmann, for example, received as much attention as it does is not due to the errors that he may have made, but to the greatness of his accomplishments, which require that we still take him seriously. *Sic itur ad astra* (thus to immortality, Virgil)" (1977: xii).

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