Conspectus

The Journal of the South African Theological Seminary

Contents

Vehicles of Divine Mystery: Paul's Danielic Self-Understanding in Ephesians 3

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Abstract[2]

Recent applications of social identity theories in Pauline studies have highlighted the importance of considering Paul's self-understanding as a window through which to interpret his letters. Though this insight has proved fruitful with regard to Paul's earlier letters, its application in the later prison letters has been inconsistent. This article examines the precedence for Paul's self-characterization in Ephesians 3 as Christ's prisoner "for the sake of you Gentiles", and as one of the "holy apostles and prophets" who have received God's mystery by revelation and for which he "kneels" in prayer. It is argued that aspects of the language resonate with the characterization of Daniel in Babylonian exile and that Paul portrays himself as a vehicle of God's revelation in the mold of Daniel. External evidence is also adduced in support of this interpretation, which if correct, may have some implications for interpreting the later prison letters.

1. Introduction

1.1. The Need for Constructing the Self-Understanding of Paul in Ephesians

Recent applications of social identity theories to Paul have emphasized how consideration of the apostle's own self-understanding as portrayed in a particular letter significantly influences the direction of interpretation (e.g., Hodge 2005:270-288; Keay 2005:151-155; Esler 2003). Paul's perennial self-descriptions in his letters—for examples, as an apostle, as slave of Christ, as a "maternal" and "paternal" pastor, as prisoner, and so on—were not merely aimed at buttressing his teaching authority. They also provide us, his twenty-first century interpreters, with a window for ascertaining how he expected his statements to address the issues for which the letters were designed.

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[2] The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

Self-identities, as noted by Gerd Baumann, are in reality fluid constructs (1999:91-94). They are "multiple and situation specific", such that the person "activates, or brings to the fore a certain component or components of his or her self-concept in a particular context" (Esler 2003:271). In each letter therefore, "Paul, the real author" portrays himself in a specific way as "Paul, the implied author". And it is this particular implied self-concept which must shape the exegesis of that letter. The often generalized characterization of Paul as a former Pharisee, with largely Jewish apocalyptic leanings but frequently influenced by Hellenistic philosophy, proves inadequate for interpreting individual letters (Soards 1987:20).

To be sure, Paul was not being duplicitous in regularly refining his self-portrait in order to be "all things to all men" (1 Cor 9:22). On the contrary, he was following the contemporary philosophical conventions of "pedagogical adaptability", in which effective teachers honed their personalities and styles to suit the types of pupil(s) and the teaching situations (Glad 1995:2; cf. Malherbe 1970:203-217).[3] The dynamism in the apostle's self-characterizations was for that matter not only natural but also necessary for his success as a communicator of the gospel. Attridge's (1997:377) comment is therefore apposite—"Paul's adaptable behaviour is not idiosyncrasy or simple opportunism, but part of a consistent and recognized strategy for building and developing a community of morally committed individuals".

Although these insights have tremendously transformed Pauline studies, the applications have tended to focus on his earlier epistles to the relative neglect of the later prison letters. Considering the fact that some of these prison letters cover the final stages of Paul's career and contain significant data regarding his personal reflections on his apostolic mission, this deficit is clearly undesirable. The hope of this article, therefore, is to make a modest contribution to redressing some of this shortfall.

Constructing the specific self-concept that Paul portrays in his letter to the Ephesians is particularly critical for the letter's exegesis. For, the usual background contextual issues that are taken for granted with other letters are not as clear-cut with Ephesians. Firstly, the purpose(s) of the letter is shrouded in scholarly dispute.[4] That any of the diverse opinions could be correct

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[3] See for example a discussion of the parallels between the writings of Philodemus of Gadara, the Epicurean philosopher (110-135 B.C.) and the New Testament in Fitzgerald and colleagues (2004). It is interesting that the concept of "pedagogical adaptability" has been revived in recent discussions of Philosophy of education.

[4] Was Ephesians meant to be a systematic reflection on the nature of the apostle's Gentile mission (Hoehner 2002:9-34)—in which case it might have been "a letter of reminder and of encouragement" as noted by Nils Dahl (1978:141)? Or are we to construe Ephesians as an exposition of the gracious work of God in human history, as posited by John Stott (1979:24), or an encouragement towards Jewish and Gentile Christian unity in the universal church as

illustrates the difficulty. Secondly, and for several reasons, the situational context of the letter is also uncertain.[5] Consequently, the exhortations are to be regarded as general and should not be used to construct the situational context of the epistle.

Thirdly, though it is patent that Paul wrote Ephesians from prison (Eph 3:1; 4:1; 6:20), it will be exegetically misleading to transfer, wholesale and without refinement, the self-concept portrayed in the other prison letters, especially, Philippians. Ephesians has an interesting literary relationship with Colossians and Philemon, and the three letters were probably written and sent around the same period (Hoehner 2002:104-106; Bruce 1984:230; Macdonald 2000:4-6). Yet, whereas Colossians addressed a particular congregation and Philemon was sent to a specific person and situation, Ephesians is general, and should therefore be approached in its own right.

With this deficiency of contextual information, the construction of Paul's self-understanding as portrayed in Ephesians becomes crucial as a prerequisite for the letter's exegesis.

1.2. The problems with constructing Paul's self-understanding in Ephesians

Thankfully, the apostle has given us significant amount of information for making such a construction. In Ephesians 1:1, he states that he was an apostle of Jesus Christ. And in Ephesians 6:20, he describes himself as an "ambassador in chains". Prior to that in Ephesians 3:1, he introduces himself in a self-referential manner as "I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles". This self-introduction leads to a rather long digression in which he describes himself as one of God's "holy apostles and prophets" who through the Spirit have received revelation of God's mystery "to preach to the Gentiles". This statement, together with the fact that he was witnessing the fulfillment of God's purposes in his missionary enterprise (Eph 2:11-18), leads him to "kneel" before the Father in intercession.

Even though this self-description generally correlates with the portrayal of the apostle in his other letters, there are slight variations. The explicit link of his imprisonment with the reception of revealed mystery in Ephesians 3 is new. The nearest parallel is Colossians 1:24-26. Yet, even there, he refers in general

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argued by Marcus Barth (1974:56), or an elucidation of the influence and conquest of the evil powers as posited by Clinton Arnold (1989:167)?

[5] It appears that Ephesians was a circular letter from Paul to several churches in Asia Minor, including those in Ephesus—a view expressed as early as the second century by Tertullian (A.D. 155-230) and Origen (A.D. 185-254). Marcion, the heretic (A.D. 110-160) also regarded Ephesians to have been a letter to Laodicea. Most conservative commentators hold to this view, even though some, e.g., Black 1981: 73, disagree.

to his sufferings as a proclaimer of the mystery of the gospel[6] rather than
directly linking his imprisonment to being a vehicle for revelation of God's
mystery.[7] Secondly, Paul's inclusion of himself as one of the apostles and
prophets, and his qualification of these agents as "holy", though compatible
with his portrayal of the recipients as "saints" (e.g., Eph 1:1), have
nevertheless been labelled by a number of scholars as uncharacteristic of Paul
(e.g., Lincoln 1990:lxiii).

Thirdly, his self-characterization as "less than the least of all God's people"
(Eph 3:8), though chimes with 1 Corinthians 15:9 where he calls himself
"least of the apostles", is slightly different and needs further clarification. And
finally, the mention of Paul's posture as he prays is also new in his letters. The
three other occasions on which he refers to kneeling in his letters are all part of
quotations from the Old Testament and not describing his own posture.[8] In any
case, standing was the usual praying posture of the ancient Jews and earliest
Christians, even though kneeling is also mentioned in the gospels and Acts.[9]
How then do we explain these variations in Paul's self-portrait in Ephesians?

1.3. Pseudonymity of Ephesians is a misconceived approach

Among critical commentators, the commonest approach to explaining these
variations is to argue that the letter was written, not by Paul, but by an
imitating disciple after his death. Lincoln, for example, describes Ephesians
3:1-13 as "supporting the pseudonymous framework on which the
[subsequent] paranaesis rests" (1990:171). Arguing also that the self-
characterizations were meant to maintain a "Pauline façade" for the epistle, or
even a "Paulology", Robert Wild boldly asserts, "The author—and probably,
too, the original recipients of the letter—knew that there was no question of
Paul still being a prisoner—he had been dead for some thirty years"
(1984:289; see also Hoehner 2002:9-20 for a list of commentators who so
argue).

Claims that Ephesians is pseudonymous imagine a "static" Paul who did not
hone his self-characterizations to suit different circumstances. Paul's likely use

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[6] Elsewhere in the Pauline corpus, the apostle cites his imprisonment as an example of his
suffering to which his disciples were to aspire and at least not be ashamed of (Phil 1:7; 13-17;
2 Tim 1:8; 2:9; Phlm 1:10-13; 2 Cor 6:5) or as merely an emblem of his authority allowing
him to exhort other believers (Phlm 1:1, 9) and plead for intercession on his behalf (Col 4:3;
18).

[7] I am grateful to Dr Bill Domeris, my DTh supervisor with the South African Theological
Seminary, for introducing me to this terminology.

[8] Rom 11:3 cites 1 Kgs 19:18, and Rom 14:11 and Phil 2:10 both cite Isa 45:23.

[9] Matt 17:14; Mark 1:40; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60, 9:40, 20:36, 21:5. Acts 20:36 will be
discussed later.

of a scribe-secretary to write Ephesians, thus accounting for the epistle's distinctive language and style, does not amount to pseudonymity. Despite the claims to the contrary,[10] it would not have been acceptable to the earliest Christians to have knowingly endorsed the writing of a presumed imposter who, in the same deceptive breath, exhorts his readers to "put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbour" (Eph 4:15).

As cogently demonstrated by Jeremy Duff (1998) with regard to the prevailing negative attitudes of the ancient Mediterraneans to pseudonymous works, the earliest Christians had scruples about plagiarism and pseudonymity (cf. Wilder 1999:156-158). The ethical implications of speculating the pseudonymity of Ephesians are, for that matter, grave indeed. Pseudonymity as an explanation of the variations in the apostle's self-characterization in Ephesians 3 is, therefore, at best premature and misconceived, and so must be rejected.[11]

1.4. Paul's Danielic self-understanding as solution to Ephesians 3

Rather than sheltering under a theory of "Pauline façade", a more fruitful approach to explain the "implied" self-portrait of Paul in Ephesians 3 lies in first granting that the one who claims to be "I, Paul" is the apostle Paul himself. The next step should then be to investigate what would have been the precedence for this variation of Paul's self-understanding in the epistle, and, following that, to formulate how this refined self-portrait was designed to fit the first readers and the themes and issues for which the letter was written.

In what follows, I shall examine several parallels between the self-concept portrayed by Paul in Ephesians and the prophet Daniel. By summarizing how in his other letters, Paul frequently defined his apostolicity in the mould of the Old Testament prophets, and how Ephesians shares with the Book of Daniel the themes of reception of God's mysteries by revelation and the fulfilment of the plan of God in human history, this article will propose that several facets of Paul's self-concept in Ephesians 3 are also located in Daniel. With the help of external evidence, it will then be argued that by the early sixties A.D., the

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[10] See for example David Meade who claims that pseudonymity was not thought of as fraudulent (1987), and Boring who views the acceptance of pseudonymity in the New Testament by a number of evangelical scholars as a positive development (2004:358-367).

[11] In my view, it goes to the core of questioning the ethical validity of the Scriptures when it is argued that someone other than Paul, for whatever reasons, even "pious" ones, would deceptively claim to be "I, Paul" while at the same time branding other teachers as "cunning and crafty" for using "deceitful scheming" (Eph 4:14). For a recent discussion of the ethical implications of speculating pseudonymity of Scripture in general, both for the earliest Christians and their twenty-first century counterparts, see Wilder (2004:258) who concludes his published dissertation on the subject by arguing that ancient pseudonymous writers aimed to deceive their readers. Positing pseudonymity of Ephesians may therefore be construed as potentially impugning the integrity of the earliest Christians.

Danielic self-understanding would have resonated well with Paul in Roman prison and his readers in Asia Minor. The possible implications of this proposal will then be enumerated.

2. Paul's prophetic self-understanding of his apostolicity

In Ephesians 1:1, Paul introduces himself as "an apostle of Christ Jesus". What did he mean by this self-description? In Galatians 2:8, he definitely understood his apostolicity as at par with the other apostles and with Peter in particular (McLean 1991:70). The only difference that he consistently maintained was that he was an apostle to the Gentiles. This self-concept as apostle to the Gentiles was no doubt instilled in him at his conversion and call, when God described him as "my chosen instrument *to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings*" (Acts 9:15; cf. Acts 22:13-15; 26:15-17, emphasis added).

This self-concept is reinforced in Paul's letters. In Romans, for example, he insists that his ministry to the Gentiles would eventually result in the conversion of the Jews (Rom 11:11-13). To the Galatians, he goes as far as positing a "division of labour of the spread of the gospel" (Hodge 2005:270)—Peter to the circumcised, Paul to the uncircumcised (Gal 2:7-8). Consequently, it can be surmised that Paul understood his apostolicity in functional terms as related to his missionary work among the Gentiles. His self-introduction in Ephesians 1:1 as an apostle was no different.

Yet, even though Paul is never given the title of a prophet, he regarded these missionary apostolic functions as charismatic and prophetic in nature. As I shall shortly show to be prominent in both Ephesians and Daniel, this prophetic function included revealing new and unknown divine mysteries and interpreting existing scripture with new wisdom and understanding (Hall II 1982:218). To Paul these prophetic revelatory and interpretative functions were all centred in the person of Jesus and the operation of the outpoured Holy Spirit.

It is granted that Paul made definite distinctions between Christian prophets and apostles (e.g., 1 Cor 12:28). Yet, if we adopt M Eugene Boring's definition of an early Christian prophet as "an immediately inspired spokesman for the risen Jesus who received intelligible oracles that he felt impelled to deliver to the Christian community" (1982:16), then Paul operated in the prophetic tradition. It is no wonder therefore that he often described

himself in the mould of the Old Testament prophets (Nickelsburg 1986:202; see also Sandnes 1991).[12]

Sandnes rightly points out that "Paul's concept of apostlehood was the basic point in common with the essential features of the OT prophets", and that apostlehood for Paul theologically "moves beyond and transcends [Christian] 'prophets'" (1991:18). Nevertheless, it cannot be dismissed as irrelevant that Paul understood himself as operating in the mould of the Old Testament prophets. Like the Old Testament prophets, Paul's apostolic mission involved prophetic proclamation of God's mysteries, being "possessed" or "captured" by God's Spirit, suffering and rejection, intercession on behalf of God's people, and humility in the conduct of these functions (Lindbolm 1967).[13] As Acts 20:17-38 shows, all these functions were evident in Paul's missionary work at Ephesus.

A few specific examples will suffice to illustrate this prophetic self-understanding of Paul's apostolicity. When Paul states in Galatians 1:15-16 that he was "set apart from birth" to preach among the Gentiles, he was describing his self-understanding in the mould of the prophet Jeremiah, who was equally consecrated before he became an embryo for a similar function to the Gentiles (Jer 1:5 cf. Isa 42:6-7, 16; 9:1; 8:16-17, 61:1-2; 51:4-5; 49:6).

Likewise, in 1 Thessalonians 2:4, Paul's statement that "God tests our hearts" is an allusion to Jeremiah who also confessed how the Almighty judges and tests the "hearts and minds" of the righteous (Jer 11:20; 12:3). Furthermore, in Romans 9:3-4, Paul portrays himself in the mould of Moses—as one who was willing to be "cursed and cut off from Christ" for the sake of the salvation of the Israelites (cf. Exod 32:31-33). In the same way, Richard Hays has also shown how in several passages, especially in Romans, Paul adopts Isaiah's language as his own to show their fulfilment in his ministry (1989:226).[14]

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[12] The two concepts of are sometimes used together in the Bible. In 1 Kgs 14:6 for example, Ahijah the prophet performs both functions as God's emissary and prophet to Jeroboam. Similarly, the gospels depict the sending of the apostolic emissaries in parallel terms to the sending of the Old Testament prophets (Luke 11:49; Matt 10:41; 23:34). It is also important to note how in Acts 13:1, Paul is listed among one of the "prophets and teachers" of Antioch.

[13] For example, Jer. 7:3-4, 22-28, 17:19-27, 14:11, 31-31-34; Hos. 6:2-6; Ezek 3:16-21, 18:1-32; Amos 5:21-25; Micah 6:1-8; and Hab 3:1-2.

[14] It has also been frequently argued by scholars that in those passages where Paul describes himself as a slave of Christ, he sees himself as imitating the Servant of Yahweh passages of Isaiah in which he shares in the Lord's suffering for the sake of God's people (e.g., Fredriksen 2002: 235-260). In addition, in a number of passages where Paul uses the OT to support his apostleship, it is to the OT prophets that he alludes to (e.g., Phil 2:16; 1 Cor 9:16 [Jer 20:9 cf. Amos 3:8], 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10 [Jer 1:10]). The ancient Jews tended not to regard Daniel as a prophet, even though Jesus labeled him as such (Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14).

Consequently, it is fair to conclude that Paul's self-understanding of his mission as an apostle sent by God to teach Gentile kings and their peoples was firmly grounded in the Old Testament prophetic tradition. Of the Old Testament prophets, Daniel would seem as good a candidate as the others for such self-definition. After all Daniel's immense influence in the inter-testamental period on the Qumran Essenes,[15] and in the first century, in Jesus and the New Testament authors, is widely acknowledged (e.g., Beale 1980:163-170; 1984:413-423; Beasley-Murray 1993; Collins 1993). This influence is also manifested in Ephesians 3, to which we now turn.

3. Paul's Danielic self understanding in Ephesians 3

After expounding the fulfilment of God's plan for the Gentiles through his apostolic mission in Ephesians 2:11-18, Paul's intention, it appears, was to proceed on to prayer (Eph 3:14-18) and then to exhortation (Eph 4-6). However, before then, he interrupts himself with a digression to describe his apostolic mission to his readers who did not know him that well (Eph 3:2). This is one of the main internal evidences suggesting that Ephesians was a circular letter.

In the digression, Paul hones several of the self-introductory remarks in ways that echo the prophet Daniel. These refinements include the self-reference "I, Paul", the focus on revelation of mysteries and its link to his imprisonment, the use of the term "holy" to qualify the "apostles and prophets", the apparently self-depreciating characterization as "less than the least of God's people", and the reference to his kneeling posture in prayer.

Two caveats are necessary before proceeding to examine these parallels. Firstly, Paul perceived himself in his own right as Christ's apostle and *not* as an imitation of Daniel. Though his Danielic self-understanding affirmed his apostolicity in the line of the Old Testament prophets, Paul also emphasized his distinctiveness. Secondly, the construction of self-identities from literature does not depend on exact correspondence of words. Instead, it is the overall composite portrait that the correspondences depict which is in view.

3.1 "I, Daniel" in the Book of Daniel and "I, Paul" in Ephesians

The self-reference, "I, Paul", is used by the apostle on six occasions. In two of them (2 Cor 10:1; Gal 5:2), he uses "I, Paul" to precede an authoritative and solemn statement. In 1 Thessalonians 2:18, he uses it to single himself out

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[15] WS Hall has argued that the interpreters of Qumran regarded their charismatic expository function in the same way that Daniel approached the interpretation of dreams. Interestingly, by examining how Paul interpreted OT passages in pericopes such as Rom 9-11, Hall also concludes that like Paul, the "prophets practiced charismatic exegesis" (Hall 1982:218).

from among his team members in a particular, personal matter. And in
Philemon 1:19, "I, Paul" is used to do both. In the remaining two, in
Colossians 1:23 and Ephesians 3:1, the self-reference is used to describe his
mission as a receiver and proclaimer of God's mystery. "I, Paul" in Ephesians
3:1 is therefore Paul's familiar way of writing, even though its emphatic
timing near the beginning of what was meant to be a prayer report makes it
slightly different from Colossians 1:23.

There is a strikingly similar use of self-referencing associated with the
reception of God's revelation and prayer report in Daniel. On seven occasions
in the book of Daniel, the prophet uses the phrase "I, Daniel" (Dan 7:5; 8:15,
27; 9:2; 10:2, 7; 12:5).[16] In all of them, the self-reference is used to report the
reception of revelation. Daniel 9:2-3 in particular links the self-reference to
revelation and prayer report. It reads, "In the first year of his reign, *I, Daniel*,
understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to
Jeremiah the prophet that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.
So I turned to the Lord God and pleaded with him in prayer and petition, in
fasting, and in sackcloth and ashes" (NIV, emphasis added).

As we shall shortly see, this description of Daniel as a vehicle of revelation
who interprets existing scripture in a new way is also characteristic of how
Paul portrays himself in his other letters, and especially in Ephesians 3. For
now, it is pertinent to acknowledge the similarities between the self-references
in Daniel 9:2-3 and Ephesians 3:1. In both, they are placed before their self-
descriptions as vehicles of divine revelation who report their prayers.

3.2 Daniel as an exiled prophet and Paul as an imprisoned apostle

Paul understood his sufferings as affirming his apostolicity (Shreiner 2001:87-
102). His imprisonment was an important emblem of these sufferings (e.g., 2
Cor 6:5; 11:23; Phil 1:7). However, the emphasis on his imprisonment as a
symbol of his apostolicity became more pronounced in the later prison letters,
so that in Colossians, he could simply use the coded phrase, "Remember my
chains" (Col 4:18) as an authoritative signature to the letter. Likewise, in
Philemon, he repeatedly employs his imprisonment as an authoritative symbol
to persuade Philemon to receive Onesimus back (Phm 1, 9, 10, 13, 23, and
23).

Indeed, in Ephesians, his imprisonment not only indicated his authority as an
apostle on the basis of which he exhorts the readers (Eph 4:1). In addition,

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[16] On two other occasions, he uses "me, Daniel"—Dan 7:28 and 8:1. Though there is a
tendency for critical scholars to regard Daniel as pseudonymous and inauthentic, Jesus (e.g.,
Matt 24:15 & Mk 13:14) and the New Testament writers regarded both the prophet and the
book as authentic.

Paul regarded his imprisonment as turning him into a *presbeuō*, "an envoy", whose mission was to "fearlessly" declare the mystery of the gospel (see Bash 1997:81-138 for an examination of ambassadorial language in Paul). It is no wonder therefore that in Ephesians 3 the apostle describes himself as "*the prisoner* of Christ Jesus" who receives and conveys God's revelation. Even more striking is Paul's statement that his imprisonment is "for the sake of you Gentiles" (Eph 3:1). What was the precedent for Paul's linking of his imprisonment to being a vehicle of divine revelation in the service of "you Gentiles"?

There is a long biblical tradition that links the isolation of a prophet—whether in exile or imprisonment[17]—with reception of God's revelation. Moses, for example, received his revelatory call while in exile in Midian (Exod 3). However, this does not parallel what is being described in Ephesians 3. Jeremiah was also imprisoned for his prophetic utterances. Yet, and again, this is not a good fit for Ephesians 3, since the imprisonment of Jeremiah occurred in his own country (Jer 37-40). A number of Old Testament prophets, Jonah and Nahum being prime examples, were specifically sent to minister to Gentile nations. But, they could not be described as being in isolation in the same way as Paul was.[18] Daniel, however, is one Old Testament prophet who, while in captivity, literally performed his mission as an "envoy" in the service of Gentiles, revealing God's mystery.

The particular imprisonment of Paul associated with Ephesians is unknown. Judging by his request for prayer to enable him speak God's mystery with boldness (Eph 6:20), the situation would have been similar to the Roman imprisonment described in Acts 28:16-31 where the apostle was more or less under "house arrest". In that case, Paul's condition in prison at the time of writing Ephesians bears some resemblance to the situation of the captive Daniel in the Babylonian royal courts. Though a captive, Daniel, a receiver and interpreter of God's mysteries was nevertheless free to be Yahweh's witness to Gentile kings and peoples.

The link between Paul's imprisonment and being a vehicle of God's revelation "for the sake of you Gentiles" in Ephesians, is therefore not out of place. Paul's self-understanding in relation to the Ephesians, for reasons which I shall shortly investigate, was being expressed in similar terms to that of Daniel in Babylonian exile. This would especially have been so for Paul, having

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[17] Musonius Rufus' statements about *parrhësia* in *Phoenix* 391-392 (by Euripides) indicates that, at least, some people in ancient times equated exile to imprisonment. Interestingly, *parrhësia* is the term Paul uses in Eph 6:20 to describe his proclamation of the gospel, "freely", while in chains.

[18] Elijah's Mount Horeb "still small voice of God" experience is another example (1 Kgs 19). In Acts several revelatory experiences occur in prison (Acts 5:18; 12:7; 16:26; 27:21-25). And John had his visions in the isolated island of Patmos (Rev 1:9).

begun to see the fulfilment of the "kingdom of Christ and God" (Eph 5:5), a concept that dominated the prophesies of Daniel (e.g., Dan 2:44; 4:3; 34; 6:26; 7:14; 18; 7:22; 27). Though there is no direct evidence to the effect, this correspondence between Paul and Daniel would have been even more so if Paul, like some of his contemporaries, also regarded Rome as the "new Babylon" (cf. 1 Pet 5:3).

3.3. Daniel and Paul as vehicles of divine revelation of mysteries

One of the prominent theological themes of Ephesians is the concept of divine revelation of mystery. To be sure, Paul makes references to being a vehicle or steward of God's mystery in his other letters.[19] However, the emphasis in Ephesians is marked. *Mustērion* (six times) and its lexical and semantic cognates such as insight and knowledge (fifteen times), purpose and plan (fourteen times), wisdom (three times), understanding (three times), and enlightenment (once) are frequently referred to, and are directly linked to Paul's mission. Scholarly discussions of the possible precedents for this theology have rightly located it in the Old Testament concept of the revelation of the secrets of the Divine Council (Brown 1958:417-433). In the context of the Old Testament prophets, this denotes God's gracious act of allowing a human being to share in the secrets of His Council (e.g., Jer 23:18; Amos 3:7; Isa 6:8).

Though present in several Old Testament passages, it is in the Book of Daniel that the concept of *mustērion* is fully developed and acquires the two related meanings in which Paul also uses them in Ephesians—as "that which is factually known but not understood; or … that which is both unknown (or rather, forgotten) factually and also not understood" (Mare 1965:79; cf. Lawson 1997:61-76). In fact the word *mustērion* occurs only once in the whole of the Septuagint, and that is in Daniel 4:6.

The correspondences between the portrayal of Paul in Ephesians and Daniel in the book that bears his name, is therefore made prominent by focusing on the concept of *mustērion*. In particular, three parallels may be drawn between the two books in relation to the concept—(a) regarding its definition, (b) in the way mystery is said to be revealed to the saints or "holy people" through the

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[19] Of the 27 occurrences of "mystery" in the NT, 20 are by Paul—Rom 11:25; 16:25; I Cor 2:1, 7, 4:1; 13:2; 14:2; 15:51; Eph 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19; Col 1:26, 27; 2:2; 4:3; II Thess 2:7; I Tim 3:9, 16. Outside Paul's letters, four are in Revelation (1:20; 10:7; 17:5, 7) and three in parallel passages in the gospels (Matt. 13:11; Mark 4:11; Luke 8:10).

Spirit, and (c) in the way mystery is related to the fulfilment of God's
purposes in human affairs.[20]

Like Ephesians, mystery in Daniel is defined in two complementary ways. On
the one hand, mystery regards the ability of the prophet to receive *de novo*
revelation through the Holy Spirit—that is, revelation that was not previously
made known to others (Dan 2:28; cf. Eph 3:9). On another level, mystery in
both Daniel and Ephesians describes the interpretation of revealed
information, including Scripture, in far more extensive and new ways (Dan
9:2; cf. Eph 3:5; see also Freyne 1982:7-23).

A second parallel between the two books with regard to revelation of
mysteries is the active role played by the Holy Spirit as Revealer of mysteries
(Dan 4:8-9, cf. 4:18; 5:11-14; 6:3 and Eph 1:17; 3:5, 16). It is not an anomaly
therefore that Paul should categorize himself among the "holy" apostles and
prophets. For, on four occasions, Daniel is similarly described as one in whom
"the Spirit of the holy gods" resided (Dan 4:8-9, 18; 5:11). It has to be noted
that "prophets" in Ephesians 3:5, as in the rest of the epistle, refers to
"Christian prophets". Nevertheless, Paul's inclusion of himself among the
foundational pillars of the church shows how he elevated the revelatory
functions of prophets.

Thirdly, Daniel's visions of the establishment of the Kingdom of God in the
affairs of men and through the agency of God's "holy people" (Dan 8:24 and
Dan 12:7; cf. Thomas 1997:191-210) may also have influenced Paul's self-
concept in Ephesians. For, in both books God's purposes are fulfilled through
the agency of the "saints" (Dan 7:18, 21-27; Eph 1:18; 3:18; 4:12). Daniel's
emphatic statement that "the saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom
and will possess it forever" (Dan 7:18; cf. Dan 7:27) perhaps lies behind
Paul's prayer for the Ephesians that they might "know the hope to which he
has called you, *the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints*" (Eph 1:18,
emphasis added). In addition, just as Daniel depicted the spiritual warfare
waged by the "horn" against "the saints" in Daniel 7:21, so also does Paul
describe the spiritual battle between "the saints" and the evil powers in
Ephesians 6:10-18.

Of course, Paul is at pains to stress the distinctiveness of his stewardship of
God's mystery. In his case, the mystery is the *extent* of the "total inclusion of
the Gentiles into the commonwealth of God's people in fulfillment of the new
covenant promise of God" (Grindheim 2003:536). In this respect, Paul goes
further than Daniel in the interpretation and application of the divine mystery.
Frank Theilman's summary of the line from Daniel to Paul is therefore

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[20] The limits of space allow only a brief discussion of these parallels. The reader is
respectfully directed to the excellent treatment in e.g., Bruce 1984: 310-323 and Bockmuehl
1997:42-48.

correct—"Daniel described the divine mystery in general terms as the eventual establishment of God's eternal kingdom; Jesus defined it more specifically as His proclamation of God's kingdom; and Paul described it more specifically still as the constitution of a new people, from among both Jews and Gentiles, through the atoning death of Christ on the cross" (1996). It is in this sense that the apostle Paul could insist that the mystery that he proclaimed was "for ages past kept hidden in God" (Eph 3:9). God revealed his mystery in unanticipated ways and degrees in his mission.

3.4. The "lowliest of men" in Daniel 4:17 and "less than the least" in Ephesians 3:8

A number of commentators have made much of Paul's self-depreciating declaration that he was "less than the least of God's people" (Eph 3:8). It is, for example, argued that the description is rather "like false modesty … artificial and exaggerated" (Mitton 1976:125). To some, therefore, the statement in Ephesians 3:8 represents a clumsy attempt by a pseudonymous writer to imitate Paul.[21] This is despite the fact that elsewhere, the apostle similarly describes himself as the "worst of sinners" (1 Tim 1:15).

There is however an Old Testament precedent to this depiction of God's instruments in Daniel 4:17. As part of reporting his dream, Nebuchadnezzar states, "The decision is announced by messengers, the holy ones declare the verdict, so that the living may know that the Most High is sovereign over the kingdoms of men and gives them to anyone he wishes and *sets over them the lowliest of men*" (Dan 4:17, emphasis added). The Aramaic *šĕpal ʾănāšîm* literally means "the basest, worst and despised of human beings". It is such people, in the words of Nebuchadnezzar, that God sets over "the kingdom". This is clearly a Semitic euphemism affirming the grace of God by which He uses the lowliest and despised of human beings to fulfil His kingdom purposes.

Accordingly, just as in Matthew 11:11, Paul in Ephesians 3:8 was not "exaggerating" his self-portrait in a ridiculous manner. Neither is Ephesians 3:8 evidence of a clumsy mimicker. Rather, in characterizing himself as "less than the least of God's people", who had received the knowledge of God's mystery, Paul was simply restating his prophetic credentials. The revelation of the mystery of the kingdom came through the "least and the despised" of human beings (cf. Ps 25:14; Sir 3:19; 4:18; see also Viviano 2000:41-54).

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[21] If Ephesians were pseudonymous, then Eph 3:8 should be regarded as a calculated ploy by the writer to deceive his readers. For, one would rather have expected a pseudonymous writer *not* to have used such denigrating terms of his hero Paul. A profound ethical question is therefore posed by regarding Ephesians as pseudonymous and needs addressing by its proponents.

3.5. Kneeling during prayer in Daniel 6:10 and Ephesians 3:14

Another peculiarity of Ephesians 3 is the depiction of Paul's kneeling posture in prayer. It is interesting simply because the apostle does not state his posture during his other prayers in all of his letters. Yet, it is reported by Luke in Acts 20:36 that Paul solemnly knelt in prayer with the Ephesian church leaders during his farewell on the beach of Miletus. Hence, Paul's kneeling posture in Ephesians 3:14 is not an anomaly.

Nonetheless, the depiction is still striking for its rarity in Paul's letters and calls for further comments on the possible precedents. In the Old Testament, kneeling in prayer is reported only in Daniel 6:10, even though the Greek translation of 1 Chronicles 29:20 also states that the whole congregation of Israel "bowed their knees" in worship. Daniel's dramatic three-times-a-day kneeling in prayer, each time with his windows open in defiance of the king's decrees, constituted an imagery that must have been deeply etched in the minds of the Diaspora Jews of Babylonian descent, some of whom, as we shall shortly argue, may have been Christians in Ephesus. When Paul therefore reports that he "kneels before the Father", he was evoking a strong Danielic imagery that would have resonated with some of his readers. Like Paul, Daniel was a man of intercession who was deeply concerned about the progress of God's kingdom.

In a summary, the self-portrait that Paul depicts in Ephesians 3, as "Paul, the implied author", though correlates with the imagery of him in his other letters, is also slightly adapted for the specific readers of this letter. These refinements have correspondences in the prophet Daniel and are reflections of "pedagogical adaptability" in which ancient teachers honed their self-portrait to suit the pupils and the teaching situation.

4. External supporting evidence for the proposal

Two further questions now engage our attention. Firstly, what possible socio-historical situation in Ephesus and/or Asia Minor in general necessitated the refinement in the apostle's self-portrait? Secondly, how does the Danielic self-portrayal contribute to elucidating the epistle as a whole? These questions will be answered by drawing from the implications of external evidence. Though not direct, the evidence supports the view that Paul and his readers would have shared a bond related to the Danielic portrait.

4.1. Delivered from "wild beasts" and "the mouth of the lion" in Ephesus

In 1 Corinthians 15:32, Paul indicates that he fought "wild beasts" in Ephesus. Most recent commentators understand this statement as metaphorical (e.g.,

Thiselton 2000:1252; Fee 1987:770), even though in the past, several scholars did understand it literally (e.g., Osborne 1966:225-230). Paul's Roman citizenship is usually cited as militating against the possibility of a literal "feeding" him to wild beasts.[22] In the metaphorical sense, "fighting wild beasts" describes clashes with opponents in the city (e.g., LXX Ps 21:14; cf. Malherbe 1968:71-80).

Yet, if the phrase is metaphorical, it is still remarkable that Paul used it on only one occasion to depict his specific opponents in Ephesus. Opposition to the apostle was after all common in most of the cities he visited. How then did he come to associate the specific opposition in Ephesus with "fighting wild beasts"?

The anti-Paul riot in the theatre of Ephesus (Acts 19:29-41), though does not mention "wild beasts", may well have contributed to Paul's use of the metaphor in association with the city. For, as will shortly become apparent, there is evidence that gladiatorial fights with lions occurred in the theatres of Rome and Asia Minor during Paul's time. Archaeological excavations of ancient theatres in Asia Minor have also unearthed several mosaics and wall paintings of fights between humans and wild animals (see Wiedemann 1992:26-27, figures 5d, 6 and 8). Though these artifacts probably postdate Paul's time, the evidence discussed below suggests that gladiatorial fights with lions did occur in Rome and other parts of the Empire as early as the mid forties A.D.. The anti-Paul riot of Acts 19 may therefore have occurred in a theatre which hosted such gladiatorial sports. Consequently, it is most probable that Paul's statement that he "fought wild beasts" in Ephesus, if metaphorical, was related to this riot.

If that be the case, it is conceivable how Paul would have reflected on the riot in the Ephesian theatre in Danielic terms.[23] Like Daniel, who was eventually freed from his enemies by the king, so was Paul freed from the rioters by the city clerk (Acts 19:35). As noted by Jobes (2005:313-314), during the first century B.C. and especially among the Qumran Essenes, where Danielic imagery was influential, conflict with opponents was sometimes described using Daniel's experiences. Perhaps, therefore, the nature of the conflict with the opponents in the Ephesian theatre caused Paul to perceive himself in the mould of Daniel who was similarly faced with opposition and was literally "fed" to lions.

Paul's reference to escaping from "the mouth of the lion" in Ephesus in 2 Timothy 4:17, written perhaps some months after Ephesians, is also striking

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[22] MacDonald argues that the statement was rather aimed at denying a legend (1980:265-276).

[23] Seneca notes in *Clem 1.25.1,* that the lion was regarded as the "the wild beast par excellence" for the gladiatorial fights in the ancient theatres.

and confirms such a conclusion. Most recent critical commentators also regard this reference as metaphorical, and some even argue that it is pseudonymous and dependent on 1 Corinthians 15:32 (Harding 2001:12). If, however, 2 Timothy is accepted as it is, as written by Paul, then the use of this phrase, even if metaphorical, would seem to confirm the above thesis that Paul regarded his experiences in Ephesus in Danielic terms.

On the other hand, there is concrete evidence to suggest that Paul most probably meant his statement in 1 Corinthians 15:32 to be taken literally. The "feeding" of certain categories of convicted criminals to gladiatorial lions, even if Roman citizens, is a well-attested historical fact (Wiedemann 1992:67).[24] The ancient Roman historian, Gaius Suetonius (A.D. 69–130), documented for example, that as early as A.D. 37-41, during the reign of Emperor Gaius Caligula, "Many men of honourable rank were first disfigured with the marks of branding-irons and then condemned to the mines, to work at building roads, or to be thrown to the wild beasts" (*Lives of the Caesars I*, Book IV, Section XXVII)[25].

Similarly, the historical writer Dio Cassius (*Dio's Roman Histories* 59.10.3), reports that around the late thirties A.D., with "shortage" of condemned criminals, Emperor Caligula instructed that ordinary bystanders should be arrested and thrown to feed the lions of the theatres. Though Dio wrote a century after the purported incidents, the attestations regarding Caligula's cruelties are multiple. Therefore, the fact that such incidents could have occurred at all supports the plausibility that Paul meant 1 Corinthians 15:32 to be taken literally. At least he may have thought that the rioters in Ephesus were about to "feed" him to the lions. For, he also described his experiences there in Asia Minor as the "sentence of death" (2 Cor 1:9).

There is more external evidence in support of the probability that 1 Corinthians 15:32 is a literal description. Aulus Gellius recorded an eyewitness account by Apion during the reign of Emperor Claudius (A.D. 41-45) in which a runaway slave, Androclus, was thrown to the lions of the circus of Rome—"There were there many savage wild beasts brutes remarkable for their huge size ... the vast size of the lions excite wonder … There was brought in, among many others who had been condemned to fight with the wild beasts the slave of an ex-consul; the slave's name was Androclus" (*Attic Nights* 5.14.7-11).

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[24] See also Josephus' description of forcing criminals to fight wild beasts (*Wars of the Jews* 7.38).

[25] Quotations of Ancient works are from @ *http://www.hup.harvard.edu/loeb/* accessed August-September 2008.

As Wiedemann notes, these executions through feeding "criminals" to lions occurred in several places of the Roman Empire outside Rome (1992:26-27; cf. Paschke 2006:489-500). Eusebius also reported the execution of Roman citizens in as far away as Spain and Gaul. Many of these citizens were executed by "feeding" them to lions (*Ecclesiastical History* V.1.44 & 50). Considering that the Ephesian riot occurred at least a decade after these incidents, it is highly likely that Paul's description in 1 Corinthians 15:32 literally occurred.

It may be concluded therefore, that whether the descriptions in 1 Corinthians 15:32 and 2 Timothy 4:17 are metaphorical or literal, Paul, without a doubt, had an experience in Ephesus which, in his reckoning, was similar to Daniel's in Babylonian exile. The experience resulted in his Danielic self-understanding, especially in relation to the Ephesian churches. And this Danielic self-portrait became part of his means of reinforcing the bond he had with his readers.[26]

4.2. Babylonian origins of Jews in Asia Minor and the Ephesian congregation

A subsidiary question now needs addressing—would the first readers of the epistle have been so familiar with the story of Daniel to the extent that Paul's Danielic self-portrait would have resonated with them? In other words, would the first readers of Ephesians have grasped the Danielic overtones of Ephesians 3?

The answer to this admittedly difficult question may lie in another piece of circumstantial evidence related to the readers of Ephesians. Though it is apparent that the recipients of the letter were mostly Gentiles, some of them were Jews—hence the focus on Jewish and Gentile unity in the letter (see Yee 2005). In any event, the evidence from Acts suggests that the Jews of Ephesus and its surrounding region, unlike those in other regions, were more receptive to the gospel (e.g., Acts 18:19-21; 24-28; 19:1-10).

More specifically, there is well-attested evidence in Josephus that many of the Jews of Asia Minor were of Babylonian origins (e.g., *Antiquities* 14.10.22; 14.10.23-25, 16.6.1; 16.6.1-7). F. F. Bruce (1984:3-15) traces the backgrounds of some of these Jews to as far back as the Old Testament times. Some, in Sardis for example could be traced to the time of the prophet Obadiah

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[26] The Danielic significance of Paul's references to fighting wild beast is also noted by Hippolytus in his commentary on Dan 3:29, when he asks: "For if we believe that when Paul was condemned to the beasts the lion that was set upon him lay down at his feet and licked him, how shall we not believe that which happened in the case of Daniel" (*ANF* 05.176). The several post-biblical apocryphal portrayals of Paul in combat with lions may have been influenced by the above texts.

(1984:6). It is also multiply reported and supported by the evidence in 2 Maccabees 8:20, that, in 214 B.C., Antiochus III settled thousands of Babylonian Jews in Asia Minor. Josephus notes for example that about 2,000 families from Babylonia were specifically settled in the Lycus Valley to help stabilize the region during his reign (*Antiquities* 12.149). These settlers were enabled to thrive with provisions of houses, cultivatable land, exemption from taxation and self-rule (see also Safrai 1974:434; Rostovtzeff 1951:491).

It will not be a stretch too far of the historical imagination that descendants of some of these Babylonian Jews also became members of the congregations who received the epistle. To these Jews, the story of Daniel would have been pivotal to their self-identity in a Gentile environment. Similarly, the "God-fearing" Gentiles among them who became Christians would have been familiar with Daniel, a Jewish prophet who ministered in the corridors of power in a Gentile kingdom. Accordingly, the story of Daniel and his compatriots may have been part and parcel of the collective memory of the congregations which received the letter to the Ephesians.[27]

If this piece of circumstantial evidence is correct—and it is circumstantial because it requires verification as to whether the recipients really knew about Daniel—but if it is correct, then Paul would have had good reasons to portray himself in Ephesians in the mould of Daniel. With typical "pedagogical adaptability", Paul was employing the Danielic self-portrait to bond himself to his readers and so increase his chances of success as a communicator.

5. Implications of the proposal

The above interpretation and the evidence adduced in its support, if correct, have a number of implications for the interpretation of Ephesians. First and foremost, it undermines the approach in critical scholarship that denies Pauline authorship of Ephesians. The variations in the apostle's self-concept are not only explainable, but were also conducive to his success as a communicator. His twenty-first century interpreters would similarly be best served by taking this flexibility into account.

Secondly, the above findings demonstrate the utility of considering the distinctive self-concept portrayed by Paul in each of his letters. In introducing himself in Danielic terms in Ephesians 3, Paul no doubt was adapting his apostolic self-portrait in such a way as to evoke the authority inherent in that image. He was also closely associating himself with the recipients in such a manner as to make his instructions achieve their maximal rhetorical effect. The exhortations in Ephesians 4-6 should consequently be seen as deriving

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[27] On the role of Collective Memory in Social Identity Theory, see Esler & Piper (2006:23-44).

their authority from the Danielic self-portrait. Additionally, it indicates that Ephesians 3 is an important prism through which to interpret the whole epistle.

Thirdly, there may also be benefits in examining the other distinctive themes of Ephesians against the background of the Danielic self-portrait. Paul's focus on "principalities and powers", the theme of "inheritance" of the possession of the saints, and the emphases on the work of the Holy Spirit within the eschatological community of God appear to resonate with similar theological themes in the Book of Daniel. Studies exploring the trajectory of these themes from Daniel to Ephesians could therefore prove illuminating.

Finally, it is granted that theories about "progression" of Paul's self-definition must be approached with due care and tentativeness. Yet, if the above proposal is correct, it suggests that Paul's self-understanding, and perhaps his philosophical and psychological response to his imprisonment, as portrayed in Ephesians, progressed beyond what is depicted in Philippians. During the time of the imprisonment associated with Philippians, the apostle reflected on how his incarceration was not only leading to the boldness of other preachers, and his own increased opportunities to witness for Christ. It also resulted in a further self-evaluation of the worth of his life (Phil 1:11-26).

By the time of the imprisonment associated with Ephesians, however, Paul perceived his captivity as another affirmation of his apostolicity. He also became more explicit in articulating the link between the imprisonment and his role as a vehicle of divine revelation. It is being proposed that the prophet Daniel provided Paul with the precedent for this self-understanding.

This implication will have to be tested in 2 Timothy. If it is correct, as most conservative scholars believe, that 2 Timothy was Paul's final letter, then it has to be tested whether Paul's Danielic self-portrait is also pressed in 2 Timothy. If so, this insight may make a modest contribution to charting the possibly progressive spectrum of the self-portrait of the apostle in all the five prison letters.

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The Lord's Prayer: A Hebrew Reconstruction based on Hebrew Prayers Found in the Synagogue

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Abstract[2]

The purpose of this article is to show that a Hebrew reconstruction of the Lord's Prayer can be gained quite easily using idioms found in other Jewish prayers found to this day in the Authorised Daily Prayer Book used in modern synagogues. Such a Hebrew reconstruction also helps to shed light on the meaning of some of the Greek phrases we find in the biblical version of the Lord's Prayer.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to show that a Hebrew reconstruction of the Lord's Prayer can be gained quite easily using idioms found in other Jewish prayers found to this day in the Authorised Daily Prayer Book used in modern synagogues.

It is a lamentable fact that the words of Jesus have been handed down to the church in Greek rather than in Hebrew or Aramaic. In a great number of instances, reconstructing the sayings of Jesus in Hebrew and Aramaic allows a more authentic understanding of his teaching to be revealed. Nowhere is this truer than with the Lord's Prayer, which contains quite literal translations of idioms present in many ancient Jewish prayers. The Lord's Prayer, as it stands in Matthew 6.9-13, can actually be considered a very Jewish prayer. Examining these idioms as they are found in Hebrew allows a means of understanding the Lord's Prayer from a more Jewish perspective.

Using *The Authorised Daily Prayer Book* (ADPB) as a guide to the wording of ancient prayers is precarious at best and inaccurate at worst. Not all of the prayers contained within it go back to Second Temple times. However, some of them do. Therefore, particular stress will be laid on the wording of prayers which are considered to be the most ancient. The purpose for referencing these

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prayers from the ADPB is to demonstrate the fact that the idioms common to both the Lord's Prayer and other Jewish prayers have been in use in the synagogue and can be easily accessed by anyone (even non-scholars) with a copy of the ADPB. Thus, finding suitable idioms for a Hebrew reconstruction has never been that difficult. It must be made clear that a theoretical reconstruction does not displace the Greek text. Yet, the Greek wording must be governed by the semantic range of the Hebrew terms it represents.

2. Our Father, which art in heaven: πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς

It is perhaps fitting that this αddress is the easiest part of the Lord's Prayer to reconstruct from the ADPB. The Hebrew prayer address ~yIm;V'B;v, Wnybia' is found in the Morning service (Singer 1962:10) and frequently enough elsewhere.

3. Sanctified be thy name: ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου

An equivalent to the words a`giasqh,tw to. o;noma, sou is also not difficult to find amongst Jewish prayers. The Morning Service for Sabbaths and Festivals says in one place (Singer 1962:179): vD:q;t.yI WnheOla/ y"y> ^m.vi [*Thy name, O Lord our God, be sanctified*). The syntax is reversed a few pages later (Singer 1962:196), in another portion of the same service: yx'-lK' ynEy[el. WnyheOla/ y"y› WnB' ^m.Vi vD:q;t.yI !keb.W (*Therefore, sanctified be thy name upon us, O Lord our God, in the sight of all living*). The words ^m.Vi vD:q;t.yI seem to be a perfect match for a`giasqh,tw to. o;nama, sou and will be used in the reconstruction.

The addition of the word WnB' to this idiom in the prayer above finds a parallel in a textual variant to Luke's version of the Lord's Prayer found in Codex D (Luke 11.2) which adds the words *upon us* [evfV h`ma/j]. If this petition in the Lord's Prayer is interpreted with an unstated *upon us* understood, then a sanctification of the person and a divine favor resulting in answered prayer may be what early Jewish-Christians understood this to mean. Yet, this is not all that the idiom employed in this petition can mean.

In the Old Testament, God is frequently spoken of as desiring to make his name holy. He does so by manifesting his judgements (e.g., Isa 5.16). Here, especially, God makes his name (or himself) holy where his name has been profaned. Synonymous idioms include God revealing or making known his (holy) name (e.g., Ezek 39.6-7). God also makes his name holy through those who serve and worship him. Because God's name is synonymous with God himself, the idea of sanctifying God's name is closely related to the revelation of God's holiness in general (e.g., Lev 10.3; Isa 29.23; Ezek 36.23).

The Old Testament usage of this term was taken by the Rabbis and expanded by them in several ways. From God sanctifying his name through the righteous conduct of Israel, the idiom evolved to become understood as an action that people do. As a result, one could be said to sanctify God's name by doing the Law. Because of the connection between being faithful to God's law and sanctifying God's name, a deeper understanding emerged. The highest form of obedience was faithfulness to the point of giving your life. Sanctifying God's name therefore became a motivation for martyrdom. As such, in Jewish literature, tV;Wdq. ~Veh; (*sanctification of the name*) primarily means martyrdom. Thus, in the prayer *Avinu Malkenu* (Singer 1962:59), amidst four verses with parallel phrasing for martyrs, is one which says: ^m,v. vWDqi-l[; ~yIM;b;W vaeb' yaeB' ![;m;l. Hfe[] (*Our Father, our king, do it* [*have compassion upon us*] *for the sake of them that went through fire and water for the sanctification of thy name*).

It is not that Jesus is urging his disciples to volunteer for martyrdom. Yet, it must be recognized that the call for God's name to be sanctified is a declaration of willingness to allow God's sanctification process to include martyrdom (cf., Heb 2:10-11).

The use of *sanctifying* God's name as a synonym for *glorifying* his name developed from the recognition that the angels in heaven declare God's holiness. For instance, this theme, taken from Isaiah 6:3, is reflected in the ADPB in the Additional Service for the Sabbath (Singer 1962:212):

> We will praise and sanctify thee according to the secret thoughts of the Seraphim of the holy place, who hallow thy name in the holy place, as it is written by the hand of thy prophet, and they called to one another, and said: Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.

Similarly, the third of the Eighteen Benedictions (Singer 1962:47) is an appeal to worshippers to join with the angels in singing *Holy, holy, holy,* etc. Thus, *sanctifying* God's name is sometimes lumped together with various terms for praising God (Singer 1962:9):

> Therefore, we are obligated to thank thee, and to praise thee, and to glorify thee, and to bless, and to sanctify (vDeq;l.W) and to give praise and thanks to thy name.

4. Thy kingdom come: ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου

The theme of this petition is certainly exhibited in a variety of Jewish prayers but, it must be admitted that there was no regular idiom in Jewish prayers calling for God's kingdom *to come*. In fact, there seems to have been no

regular idiom regarding the kingdom of God in Jewish prayers at all. A variety of verbs are used with similar intent. Consider the following found in the ADPB.

p. 15	HteWkl.m; %ylim.y:	*May he inaugurate his kingdom*
p. 70	Wnyle[' AtWkl.m; ha,r"tew> hl,G"tiw>	*May his kingdom be revealed and be seen upon us*
p. 360	Wnyle[' ^t.Wkl.m; dAbK. hLeG:	*Reveal the glory of thy kingdom upon us*
p. 393	^t.Wkl.m; ~YEq;w>	*And establish thy kingdom*

The call for God to actively *reign* over his people in ancient prayers can be demonstrated from the *Amidah*. In what corresponds to the eleventh of the eighteen benedictions are the words *reign thou over us* (Wnyle[' %Alm.W) (Singer 1962:50). Similarly, God is adjured in the Morning Service (Singer 1962:79): yD:v; tWkl.m;B. ~l'A[!Qet;l. (*to perfect the world in the kingdom of the almighty*). Added to this is the call that all the inhabitants of the world take upon themselves ^t,Wkl.m; l[{ (*the yoke of your kingdom*), following which the worshipper prays (Singer 1962:80): d[,w" ~l'A[l. hr"hem.. ~h,yle[] %Alm.tiw> (*and may you (God) reign over them speedily and for ever and ever*).

The Rabbinic concept of taking upon oneself the yoke of the kingdom entails doing God's will. This was applied even to the angels in heaven, again, in reference to Isaiah 6.3 (Singer 1962:40): hZ,mi hz, ~yim;v' tWkl.m; l[{ ~h,yle[] ~yliB.q;m. (*They receive upon themselves the yoke of the kingdom of heaven one from the other*).

In this prayer, taken from the Morning Service, the aspect of God's rule as king is combined with the understanding of God's delivering power being manifested for his people (Singer 1962:40). Though the idiom, ^t,Wkl.m; aAbT', is not found in the ADPB, the great variety of prayer idioms calling on God to establish and manifest his kingdom reduces the amount of objection to a literal reconstruction of evlqe,tw h` basilei,a sou.

5. Thy will be done: γενηθήτω τὸ θέλημά σου

A Hebrew equivalent to this petition is found frequently in Jewish prayers: ^yn<p'L.mi !wOcr" yhiy> (e.g., Singer 1962:8, 49, 72). This idiom goes back, at least, to the Tannaitic period as *Pirque Aboth* 5.23 puts this in the mouth of Rabbi Judah, the son of Tema (Singer 1962:275). Evidence that Jesus prayed in such a way can be seen in Matthew 11.26, where ou[twj euvdoki,a

evge,neto e;mprosqe,n sou can easily be seen to stand for ^yn<p'L.mi !wOcr" yhiy>w>.[3]

It is difficult to know just how much force to impute to yhiy>, because, as a jussive, it can express a desire, a wish or a command. Jastrow ([1903] 1992:1492) translates ^yn<p'L.mi !wOcr" yhiy> as 'be it thy will' in *bBer* 60a and other places where it is so common that it is merely abbreviated as mry. If an imperative sense is given to yhiy> in this idiom then the object being prayed for is being commanded to be formed, created, manifested, done with an authoritative force. yhiy> seems to have had this sense for ancient Jews (in so far as they used it) when placing a blessing on someone. *Peace* (~Alv'), for example was seen in a tangible way as something within a person that they had the authority to bestow on or withhold from another. A blessing of peace often started with ~Alv'-yhiy> (e.g., *bBer* 64a; Singer 1962:162).[4]

A quick look in the Septuagint version of Genesis 1 shows that genhqh,tw is the word employed to translate yhiy> in verses three and six. Matthew has purposely sought to create a link between Jesus and Genesis 1. By translating yhiy> with genhqh,tw, rather than gene,sqw (as Luke does [cf., Luke 22.42]), Matthew provides an unavoidable homiletical connection between Jesus' teaching on prayer and creation. The connection between God's will and creation is confirmed in the first line of the *Kaddish: Magnified and sanctified be his great name in the world, which he created according to his will*.[5]

Though a direct reconstruction of genhqh,tw to. qe,lhma, sou would result in ^n>wOcr" yhiy>, the prolific use of ^yn<p'L.mi !wOcr" yhiy> in ancient sayings and prayers suggests that this idiom should be employed.

6. As in heaven and on earth: ὡς ἐν οὐρανῷ καὶ ἐπὶ γῆς

The phrase *on earth as it is in heaven* is usually taken to mean that God should do his will on earth the way it is done in heaven (i.e., perfectly). The presumption is that God's will is done in heaven, but not yet on earth. But the Greek text w`j evn toi/j ouvra,noij kai. evpi gh/j can just as easily be translated

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[3] This begs the question, why does Matthew render the words two different ways? One answer may be that Matthew has inherited a Greek form of the Lord's Prayer (evidenced by the fact that both he and Luke make use of the unusual word evpiou,sioj). Yet, both Matthew 6.10 and 11.26 show signs of deliberate interpretation rather than direct translation. For 6.10 see below. In 11.26 Matthew's translation of yhiy> by evge,neto reflects the fact that, in biblical Hebrew, yhiy>w> is also able to mean *thus it was*]. Other possibilities for translating include: ge,noito (cf, Lk 1.38) and e;stai (cf. Mk 11.24).

[4] An alternative syntax can be seen in a blessing found in the Dead Sea Scrolls (1QS 2.13): yli yhiy> ~Alv' [*peace be upon me*].

[5] Other evidence for this connection can be seen in the Thanksgiving Scroll (1QH col 1, line 20) as well as elsewhere in the New Testament (cf. Rev 4.11).

as in heaven and on earth. When heaven and earth are referenced in Jewish literature, it usually refers to the totality of God's creation (cf., Gen 1.1) rather than a contrast between the two. In the Morning Service (Singer 1962:10), the same paragraph in which the words ~yIm;V'B;v, Wnybia' are found, begins: #r<a'b'W ~yIm;V'B; WnyheOla/ y"y> aWh hT'a; (*You are he, O Lord our God, in heaven and on earth*). To emphasize the point, Psalm 135 is quoted in the Morning Service (Singer 1962:25), which includes the words #pex'-rv,a} lKo #r<a'b'W ~yIm;V'B; hf'[' hA"hy> (*All that the Lord desires, he does in heaven and on earth*).

Thus, it is true that the third petition of the Lord's Prayer asks for God's will to be done perfectly, but not from the standpoint of the earth in contrast to heaven. Heaven and earth, signifying creation, obey God's will and stand in contrast to that which resists his will and needs to be changed—be it the petitioner(s), a situation, or whatever the concern is. Even as God commanded: *Light, be (manifested)!* (according to his will), so those of the Kingdom, as his sons, should likewise command those things that are his will to be manifested.

7. Give us today our constant bread: τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον

One of the most perplexing problems in interpreting the fourth petition is the presence of the word evpiou,sioj in both Matthew and Luke's versions of the Lord's Prayer (as well as in the version contained in the *Didache*). Outside of the Lord's Prayer, it is not used anywhere else in the New Testament. In fact, even outside the New Testament it can only be found in literature discussing the Lord's Prayer. Papyrus fragments purported to contain this word are disputed and none are from the time of the New Testament.

The oldest attempts (for which we have manuscript evidence) to translate the Lord's Prayer into Hebrew seem to understand evpiou,sioj to mean *continual*. For instance, tydymt wnmxl !ttw (*give us our continual bread*) is found in both the Shem Tov and du Tillet Hebrew versions of Matthew 6.11. Both of these versions are only known from manuscripts dating from the Middle Ages, but represent a tradition which probably goes back hundreds of years earlier. Lapide (1984:8-10) gives several examples of Hebrew translations of the Lord's Prayer from the ninth and tenth centuries employing dymiT'. Readings utilizing dymiT' correspond well to the Old Syriac, which has "continual" (anyma). The idiom dymiT' ~x,l, (*continual bread*) does appear in the Bible, as a reference to the shew-bread (Num 4:7). Yet, an allusion to the shew-bread does not feature much in ancient Jewish prayers. Use of dymiT' in connection with the words ~x,l, (*bread*) and !Azm' (*food*) occurs several times in the Grace After Meals (Singer 1962:378) to emphasize the fact that God gives continual sustenance. For example: d[,w" ~l'A[l. !Azm' Wnl'-rs;x.y< la;w>

Wnl' rs;x'-aOl dymiT' lAdG"h; AbWjb.W (*And in his great goodness always
food has not been lacking to us; and may it not fail us forever …*).

The prayer goes on to connect God's continual provision of bread with the
Exodus and entry into the Promised Land. The word dymiT' is not used with
~Ayh; (*today*) (as is suggested by sh,meron in Matt 6.11), but it is used with
~Ay-lK' (*every day*) (as is suggested by kaqV h`mera in Luke 11.3) in a prayer
(Singer 1962:378) giving thanks for the food God has given h['v'-lk'b.W t[e-
lk'b.W ~Ay-lK' dymiT' (*always, every day, and at each time, and in every
hour*).

The Shorter Form of Grace (Singer 1962:384), which also thanks God for
leading the Israelites to the Promised Land, adds a word of thanks for [b;Av.l
~x,l, (*bread to satisfy*). This is an allusion to the promise of daily manna in
Exodus 16.7. The lack of dichotomy between the physical and spiritual
understanding of God's provision of bread (which is true for the Lord's Prayer
as well; cf. John 6.32-35) is apparent by the way this prayer joins thanksgiving
for bread with eschatological expectations, and concludes with an appeal aB'h;
~l'A[h' yYEx;l. (*for life of the world to come*).

8. Forgive our debts as we forgive our debtors: καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τὰ ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν, ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφήκαμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν

The word ovfeilh,mata seems to point to an Aramaism. The Aramaic word for
debt (ab'Ax) can also mean *sin*. It is used regularly in the Targums to translate
the Hebrew word for *debt* (bAx) as well as the word for *sin* (aj.xe). The
concept of *sin* as a *debt* was already popular in first-century Judaism.
However, it must be admitted that Mishnaic Hebrew did not use bAx or its
feminine counterpart, hb'Ax, to mean *sin*. They are most commonly used for
an obligation (Jastrow [1903] 1992:429), and, often in religious usage, *guilt*.
Though the plural tAbAx is not used in a prayer for forgiveness of sin *per se*,
an extremely close example from the ADPB can be seen in *Avinu Malchenu*
from the Morning Service, which has: QAxm. WnKel.m; Wnybia'
WnyteAbAx yrEj.vi-lK' ~yBir'h' ^ym,x]r:B. (*Our Father, our king, erase, in
your great mercies, all the records of our guilt*) (Singer 1962:58). This line is
used in synonymous parallelism with the two previous lines which beg
forgiveness of sin and the blotting out of transgressions. Could an Aramaic
meaning be given to hb'Ax in a Hebrew prayer? It is certainly possible. An
analogy can be gathered from *jBerechot* IX, 14b. This passage speaks of those
who would interpret the Hebrew phrase hN"f,[?a,w> ytib'Ax [d:ae (*I would
know my obligation and I will do it*) in Aramaic as Ht'ww"k. hw"c.mi
dybe[?a,D> tyDEb.[; ht'b.Ax ad" yhe (*what sin did I do that I may do a good
deed to equal it*).

The earliest example of the plural tAbAx used for ovfeilh,mata in a Hebrew version of the Lord's Prayer comes from the *Abinu Sebacamaim* of Cusa, dated from the end of the ninth century (Lapide 1984:9). A guide for the reconstruction of a;fej h`mi/n can be found in the sixth benediction from the *Amidah*. There, the use of Wnl'-xl;s. (Singer 1962:48) for *forgive us* mirrors quite well the a;fej h`mi/n of this petition.

9. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν

A very close parallel to this petition is in a prayer in the Morning Service (Singer 1962:8). It is also found in the Talmud (*bBer* 60b). It says:

aj.xe ydEyli aOl ynIaeybiT. la;w>	*And bring me not into the power of sin*
!A['w> hr"be[] ydEyli aOlw>	*And not into the power of trespass and iniquity*
!AyS'nI ydEyli aOlw>	*And not into the power of temptation*
!AyZ"bi ydEyli aOlw>	*And not into the power of anything shameful*

A Hebrew reconstruction of this petition need not use ydEyli. The eivj of the Greek text can be better accounted for by the preposition B.. An apocryphal psalm found at Qumran in the Psalms Scroll, 11Q5 (= 11QPsᵃ), contains a verse very similar to this petition in the Lord's Prayer. In column 24, line 10, are the words: ynmm twvqb ynaybt law ynxkvt law ynrwkz (*Remember me and do not forget me, and do not lead me into things too difficult for me*).

10. But deliver us from evil: ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ

The reconstruction of r`u/sai h`ma/j avpo. tou. ponhrou/ should be [r"h' !mi WnleyCih;. The word *evil* can be interpreted as:

- evil in general
- the evil one – Satan
- an evil person
- the evil inside of each one of us

The ambiguity present in the tou/ ponhrou/ need not be diminished. Neither Jews nor Christians in ancient times differentiated particularly between the various definitions of *evil*. Similar to the petition for deliverance from evil in the Lord's Prayer, the prayer in the Morning Service follows the request not to be led *into the hands of sin, trespass, iniquity, testing and shame* with a request to be safeguarded against some of the categories of evil mentioned above: [r" rbex'meW [r" ~d"a'me Wnqeyxir>h;w> [r:h' rc,yE WnB'-jl,v.T;

la;w> (*Let not the evil inclination have power over us; keep us far from an evil man and an evil companion*).

A prayer for personal deliverance from all the categories of evil follows soon afterwards:

[r" !keV'miW [r" rbex'meW [r" ~d"a'me ~ynIP' tWZ[;meW ~ynIp' yZE[;me ~Ay-lk'b.W ~Ayh; ynIleyCiT; Tyxiv.M:h; !j'F'miW [r" [g:P,miW

Deliver me this day and every day from the arrogant men, from arrogance (itself), from an evil man, from an evil companion from an evil neighbour, from an evil accident and from Satan the destroyer.

An example from the ADPB which comes close to this final petition can be found in another prayer in the Morning Service (Singer 1962:68), which uses the words: [r"-lK'mi WnleyCih;w> (*deliver us from all evil*).

11. The full reconstruction

Putting it all together, we now have the following reconstruction:

Hebrew	English
~yim;V'B;v, Wnbia'	*Our Father, who is in heaven*
^m.vi vD:q;t.yi	*Thy name be sanctified!*
^t.Wkl.m; aboT'	*Thy kingdom come!*
^yn<p'L.mi !wOcr" yhiy>	*Thy will be manifested,*
#r<a'b'W ~yIm;V'b;K.	*as in heaven and on earth!*
~AYh; WnnET. DymiT' Wnmex.l;	*Give to us today, our constant bread!*
WnyteAbAx Wnl'-xl;s.W	*And forgive us our debts*
WnbeyY"x; Wnx.l;s'v,K.	*as we forgive our debtors!*
!AyS'nIb. WnaeybiT. La;w>	*And lead us not into temptation,*
[r:h' !mi WnleyCih; aL'a,	*but, deliver us from evil!*

The Lord's Prayer, as with so many reconstructions of the words of Jesus, is not so much misunderstood as not *fully* understood. Jesus routinely spoke in idioms which were thoroughly Jewish. Only by examining the Lord's Prayer against similar Jewish prayers can the meaning of each petition emerge, releasing a more authentic understanding and a greater impact. If students of the New Testament want to truly appreciate the words and message of Jesus a trip to the local Synagogue might be the place to start.

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A Review and an Evaluation of Diverse Christological Opinions among American Evangelicals: Part 3: Incarnational Christology

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Abstract[2]

The writer, himself an American Evangelical, is discussing, in three articles, areas in which American Evangelicals disagree about how God the Son relates to God the Father and the meaning and effects of the true humanity and the true deity in Christ. Each position will be defined and exemplified. The rationale offered by proponents of each major position is provided. Evaluations are made. The first article focused primarily on the ancient doctrine of the eternal generation of the Son as held by some American Evangelicals but denied by others. The second article was used to consider the issue, within the perimeters of evangelicalism in America, of whether the Son is eternally or temporally only relationally subordinate to God the Father. This third article is devoted to addressing several different understandings within American Evangelicalism regarding the Incarnation. It will briefly cover Kenotic theory, views about what it means to say that Christ is true Man and true God, and how the two natures in the one Person of Christ relate to each other. Therefore, while this series is certainly connected to more general Trinitarian thought, the articles are written especially to focus on Christ. Aside from just exposing, perhaps for the first time to some readers, a number of the considerable differences among Trinitarians regarding the doctrines of God and Christ, it is hoped by the writer that these articles might also provide material useful to some to better understand the blessed Person of Jesus Christ our God, our Lord, and our Savior. To Him be glory forever.

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1. Introduction

The inability of evangelicals to agree on so central a doctrine as what basically constitutes the essential Person of Christ justifiably compels one to question either the perspicuity of Scripture or, with a sounder rationale and a happier outcome, the efficiency of the exegetical and theological method used in some quarters. One might assume that the ecumenical Creed of 451 would do much to unify Christological tenets among Evangelicals who say that they hold to it, but that assumption would be wrong. Of course, as Harnack illustrates with Basilikus (1961:227-228) and Grillmeier with the Alexandrians (1975:548), we would not expect non-Chalcedonian Christologists, as also exemplified below by modern anti-Chalcedonians, to agree with that Creed's affirmation that Christ is perfect in manhood, that His manhood includes a rational soul, that the human nature is *distinct* from the divine, that its properties are preserved in *separateness* from the deity, yet that both natures concur in one Person (Schaff 1983:62). And that formula rightly provides this description of the true and complete humanity of the Saviour, distinct from His deity, as Scripture seems to affirm without hesitation. Nevertheless, it is a mistake to suppose that Chalcedon effects much uniformity of belief over some of these issues, even among its modern evangelical adherents.

I do not see how any Biblicist can question the integrity of the humanity of Christ, namely, that He is just as human as we are, given the emphatic Biblical teaching on it. Christ is a Man (John 4:29; Acts 2:22; Rom 5:15; 1 Tim 2:5). He has a human soul (John 12:27). And, that term, *psuchē*, can mean "the locus of emotional movement of the psychological life" (Schweitzer 1981:649), or "the seat of man's intellect or emotions" (Morey 1984:65). How can anything which is not truly a human have such human faculties? Further, Christ has the limitations of a man. While God is not tempted (Jas 1:13), as Man, Christ is tempted (Heb 4:15), although He never yielded to such tests (1 Pet 2:22). As Man, our Lord wearies (John 4:6), falls asleep (Luke 8:23), and does not know some things (Mark 13:32), but such are not the experiences of deity. So, either nature experiences in distinction from the other. The intellect of God does not grow, but the intellect of the Manhood of Christ does (Luke 2:40, 52; Heb 5:8). These observations are important, and lest I be accused of just impractically theorizing, note that wrestling with such questions may have practical benefits.

This article is not an exercise in vain theory only; it has a praxis component too—unless we doubt that living for Christ and understanding the Gospels are practical. The topics of this article are related to other major doctrines and even to the Christian life. Unless Christ is truly Man, in distinction from His deity, as Chalcedon referenced above asserts, how can His rejection of temptation be any example for us to follow, as both Paul (Phil 2:5) and Peter (1 Pet 2:21) say it is? I am man facing temptation—not God. Or, if that is not a

Man suffering the Passion, then why must or how is Christ made like His brethren in all things as Hebrews in 2:17 insists? His humanity is required, that text says, for the propitiation He makes.

So, unless we understand the humanity of Christ, how shall we comprehend His maturation or His vicarious atonement? Is that God's nature which suckles at Mary's bosom in order to receive life giving sustenance? Does God not have life in Himself? Is that God who increases in size and understanding? Is God not unchangeable? Is that God who is led by the Spirit of God to be tempted by Satan in the wilderness? Does the divine faculty of will in Christ submit itself to the divine faculty of will in the Father, as if God has two or three faculties of wills of varying degrees of sovereignty? Is that God who is worn out while walking through Samaria? Is God not omnipotent? Is that God so troubled that He sheds great drops of sweat as blood in Gethsemane? Does a whip cause injury to the back of God's nature or do thorns or nails or a spear pierce His flesh? Can God die? Can burial cloth be wrapped around God? Can God rise from the dead? Can we see in God's resurrected flesh the holes in His hands and His side? Is God's nature not rather spirit and invisible? Is it not the humanity of Christ which is the Subject of all of these and, yes, which together with the immutable and impervious deity of Christ constitutes the one Person? We have significant motivations, therefore, to contemplate the answers to such questions by rigorously interacting with the issues which involve Incarnational Christology. And "issues" is the right word, not "issue".

The subject includes several difficult questions. First, certainly the topic of the integrity of Christ's human nature is at the forefront of the discussion. But second, while pursuing that topic, it must be questioned also whether the Incarnation affected the integrity of the deity of Christ (see Erickson below). Else, how can it be decided that the incarnated Christ is both true God and true Man? Did God the Son lose the divine essence, or any attributes, or even any use of these? Then, assuming that one arrives at the Chalcedonian under-standing that Christ has both a true human nature and a true divine nature, a cluster of several problems concerning how one of these natures relates to the other in Christ needs to be faced. But even these topics do not exhaust what I wish to do in this last article. For I feel a compulsion to selectively integrate nearly two millennia of thought into such things, and this invests the subjects with even more substance.

Despite the promise implied in the general title of these three articles to focus on the Trinal thought and Christology in American evangelicalism, I must abandon somewhat that limiting qualification in this final article. Historical theology simply provides too efficient an asset to help one understand, classify, and evaluate views on incarnational Christology to forego explanations of the opining of earlier theologians along with modern ones. Therefore, I must try to not only weave into the fabric of the discussion of the

integrity of our Lord's humanity such issues as whether even a mild form of kenotic theory is theologically tenable, whether one nature invests the other with its attributes (see Pieper below), and whether each nature in Christ is capable of knowing, willing, experiencing, and acting in distinction from the other, I also must attempt to describe the views of the ancients on some of these matters, and not just those of American moderns. These ancients and moderns, with varying degrees of success, and only by contradicting of each others' opinions at every turn, have tried to define what it means to believe that Christ is the God-Man.

In attempting this, I will divide the selected 25-30 theologians to be discussed into two camps. First, I will summarize and critique the opinions of those who in various times and manners have placed what I think are unwarranted qualifications on the humanity of Christ. These have been called "Word-Flesh" Christologists (Grillmeier 1975:132, 166, 288). Their basic position is that Christ lacks some human faculties as intellect or volition, and that as a result the humanity of Christ cannot know, experience, and will in distinction from the deity of Christ. So, it is God who lacks knowledge or falls asleep or suffers. God is the Subject—not Man—of all that Christ does. Second, I will do the same for the views of some who assert that the human nature is complete, having all the faculties of a man and consequently is able itself to know, will, experience, and act in distinction from the divine nature, not being dependent on the divine nature to be the Subject of all of such activities. These have been called "Word-Man" Christologists (Grillmeier 1975:287-477, passim). Yet, no one in either camp will say that the humanity of Christ exists apart from the Person.

Not being impaired by the humility and modesty which should adorn theologians, I have reached my own conclusions as to what is right and what is wrong on these mysterious matters. I believe firstly that in incarnating, God the Son lost nothing—not even divine attributes or the use of these. Secondly, I believe that the human nature of Christ wills, acts, and experiences in distinction from the divine nature, but not in separation from the one Person. What I wish to assert is that the second group of theories below evidence that these beliefs have been accepted among both ancients and moderns. My thesis, therefore, is this: *It is within orthodox Christology to believe that in the Incarnation of Christ the deity lost nothing, and the humanity acts and experiences.*

2. Discussion

2.1. Theories Which Limit Christ's Humanity

Apollinarius

Heick misrepresents Apollinarius' views when he states that the Bishop of Laodicea held that Christ "is both God and man" (1965:171). It is rather the case that Apollinarius maintained that "it is inconceivable that the same person be both God and entire man." Consequently, Christ has "God as His spirit-that is, His intellect …". The incarnation could not have been accomplished if "there was also a human intellect in Christ". Further, Christ "is … moved only by a divine will. … His activity is one" (Apollinarius 1980:107-111).

But how is that which lacks a human will and intellect man? The effect of these assertions by Apollinarius is that Christ is not completely human, and that the Subject of all the actions and experiences of Christ is the divine Word. This Christology, as is commonly known, was condemned in 381 at Constantinople during the second Ecumenical Council. Yet Apollinarius' basic notion, that God alone is the Subject of all the actions and experiences of Christ, inheres in the Christology of a number of writers, both ancient and modern too, as I shall now show.

Athanasius

It just must be accepted as an unfortunate fact that the most worthy among us is capable of not expressing Christology in what I would call correct terms. The defender of the Trinity of God seemingly may be found guilty of not adequately representing the humanity of Christ. Athanasius did not deny, as did his friend Apollinarius, that Christ has a human rational soul. But if it is true that Christ has such, then that human soul must be the Subject of some of Christ's actions. Otherwise, what is the function of that soul? Yet Athanasius repetitiously describes the Incarnation of Christ as the Word taking a body and the activities of Christ as the Logos moving that body around (Athanasius 1999:36-67).

This is not, in my opinion, proper Christology. It is not a satisfactory description of the deeds of Christ in the Gospels. A mere human body, animated only by the Logos, does not have human intellectual limitations because God has none. True man is not just God moving a body around.

Buswell

Even a modern evangelicals are not exempt from Apollinarius' error, as the writing of this Reformed theologian evidences. While affirming that the eternal Son became man, Buswell, nevertheless, asserts that the Incarnation is not God the Son adding humanity, but turning into humanity. This means that "His personal eternal being, His (divine) soul, became a human person, a human soul …". Christ's human will is not a faculty which makes choices, but only "a behaviour complex". The human nature is God as a person (Buswell 1976, vol. 1:55, 251; vol. 2, 30, 54)

But how do such explanations fit the definition of Chalcedon? The framers of that Creed believed that Christ has two complete natures; one nature did not merge with the other, resulting in there being only one nature. Christ's humanity is like ours in all things except sin, yet our own humanity is not made out of the essence or person of God. Christ's two natures are said to be distinct; it is not that one changes into the other. The qualities of each nature are preserved; they are not blended together. Buswell seems closer to Apollinarius, or even to Eutyches—whom Harnack, I think correctly, describes as holding that there is "one incarnate nature of the divine Logos" (1961:197)—than he (Buswell) is to Chalcedon. Harnack (1961:197) correctly Buswell as holding that there is "one incarnate nature of the divine Logos". Thus, Buswell seems closer to Apollinarius, or even to Eutyches, than to Chalcedon.

Cyril of Alexandria

A uniform Christology in Cyril is difficult to confirm with certainty. He may have been inconsistent over time in his views. Cyril also may have used ambiguous terminology or the same terms with different meanings (Norris 1980:27). The result is that opinions vary widely as to whether this father is rightly thought to have been a stalwart adherent to Chalcedon's Christology or instead to have been an unorthodox Monophysite (one who holds the belief that there is only one nature in Christ). Schmaus (1984:223) says that by "nature" (both *hypostasis* and *ousia*), Cyril, in applying these terms to Christ's humanity, at least sometimes meant "a concrete individual entity with its own activity". Therefore, Schmaus insists that Cyril could not have been a Monophysite. On the other hand, Harnack (1961:178-179) claims that Cyril was a Monophysite, teaching that after the Incarnation, Christ out of two natures had but one. Perhaps I can do no better in such a brief review as this than to make some tentative conclusions based on a few observations of what Cyril, himself, wrote and what some of his contemporaries thought he believed.

In *Adversus Anthropomorphitus*, Cyril wrote that the ignorance of Christ as depicted in Mark 13:32 was merely a deception made on the part of the divine Word (Bruce 1905:366).[3] Christ only appeared (*dokein)* to be ignorant; He really knew all things.[4] Cyril's position rather sounds Docetic. Tentatively I conclude that we seemingly see Cyril implying that that some of the limitations of Christ depicted in the Gospels are not genuine experiences of His humanity at all but are only a condition feigned by His deity.

Second, the above conclusion on Cyril's understanding is consistent with the fourth of the twelve Anathemas, as provided in Ferm (1964:163), which Cyril heaped on Nestorius' head in 431 at Ephesus. Cyril denied that any text in the New Testament can pertain to only one of Christ's natures. If that contention were true, there would be no room for the activity of Christ's humanity. However, that which is truly human is capable of being the subject of its own actions.

Third, Cyril, according to Grillmeier (1975:473-474), accepted the *mia phusis* (one nature) formula of Apollinarius, which Succenus (according to Cyril's second letter to Succenus) so vigorously found to be a fault in Cyril's Christology.[5]

And finally, were Cyril consistently demonstrating an adherence to what would be soon be codified by Chalcedon, then how could Eutyches in his trial dare argue that he, Eutyches, in believing that Christ is one nature *ek duo phuseōn* (from two natures) only taught what Cyril taught? Eutyches vainly pleads: "I confess that our Lord was of two natures before the incarnation, but after the union one nature … [In so doing] I follow the teaching of the blessed Cyril" (Ferm 1964:170). It seems highly unlikely that Eutyches would use a lie about Cyril before those who knew Cyril. Consequently, there is reason to suspect that Cyril's position, at least sometimes, was that the humanity of Christ is neither capable of being the Subject of action nor is it a nature distinct from the deity.

Waheeb and Sarkissian: non-Chacedonian Christology

These are two non-Chalcedonian Christologists. The first, Waheeb, was a professor at the Coptic Theological Seminary in Cairo. He believed that after the Incarnation there is only one nature. Sarkissian was a bishop in the

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[3] A.B. Bruce's (1905) *The Humiliation of Christ* is a helpful book on the history of Christology. Unfortunately, I think that it is out of print. But in it are excerpts from several of Cyril's writings in the original Greek with the English translation.
[4] This is contrary to Schmaus' (1984:223) view, who holds that Cyril believed the humanity in Christ is an individual entity with its own activity.
[5] For a contrary view on the meaning of *mia phusis* in Cyril, which view wrestles Cyril awkwardly back into orthodoxy, see Adam (1971:105-109).

Armenian Apostolic Church in Cilicia. He taught that there is one united nature in Christ (*mia phusis*) which is from two (*ek duo phuseōn*). Here are their supporting argument, with my brief reply after each one (see Tapia 1971:341-353):

1. *No single Biblical text proves that Christ is of two natures*. But, we are required to synthesize Scriptural doctrine, which teaches both the immutability of God and the humanity of Christ. There are, besides, such texts as Romans 1:3-4 and 9:5, which allude to both natures.
2. *Acts 20:28 says that the blood shed is God's*. There is, of course, some support for the variant reading "church of the Lord" (Metzger 1985:480-482). But, even were the original "church of God", Hodge based on his Ch*ristology* comments that here "the Person is designated from the divine nature when the predicate is true of only the human nature" (1981:393). Bruce, based on his understanding of the grammar says the translation should be, "by means of the blood of His own one."(1979:416)
3. *The two-nature doctrine does not denote a real union*. But the blending of deity and humanity into one nature is a denial of both the immutability of God and the integrity of the humanity of Christ.
4. *Were only Man crucified, there can be no redemption*. But God cannot die, and where does Scripture say that the flesh of the Man Christ is insufficient for redemption? It rather says, "there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. 2:5).
5. *If Christ has two distinct natures, then Mary cannot be the Mother of God*. Agreed—Mary is the mother only of Christ's humanity.
6. *Man also has an earthly and spiritual element, but only has one nature*. But it is the humanity of Christ which is like us (Heb. 2:14, 17). Christ is not merely physical and spiritual, He is God and Man.
7. *Cyril rejected the two-nature doctrine of Chalcedon*. But, even if he did, we are not required to accept Cyrillian Christology.

Erickson and mild kenotic theory

Erickson asserts that in the Incarnation, God the Son was required to accept "certain limitations" on His divine attributes. For example, as an incarnate being, He was limited in exercising omnipresence (1985:735). Also, after the Incarnation, God the Son was no longer omniscient in Himself. He no longer had direct access to the consciousness of the Father and the Spirit (1984:223). Can there two intellects in God, one omniscient and one not? If the infinite God cannot change (so Erickson 1985:274-279), then how can God become limited? These assertions require a mutability in God the Son, which Scripture does not seem to allow (Mal. 3:6; Heb. 1:12). Instead of denying God the use of His qualities, we should think of the divine Logos as existing both in Jesus' humanity and outside His humanity.

Others have denied the kind of mutability Erickson supports. Calvin, for example, does not limit God the Son after the Incarnation to a confinement in the body of Jesus . Although the Son descended, He did not abandon heaven. While in the Virgin's womb, He yet filled the world (outside the humanity) just as before. All properties of either nature, just as Chalcedon teaches, remain entire (Calvin 1979, sections II:XIII:4, II:XIV:1). So, how can God the Son lose or discontinue the use of any of His divine properties? Likewise, Grudem says that the eternal Son of God never ceased, *even "for a time"*, to be both omniscient and omnipresent (1994:551, italics added). So, the concept of God the Son, after the Incarnation, yet existing also out of the confines of His humanity is required to preserve God's immutability, and God, given that concept, remains unlimited even after the Incarnation.

But how then can we explain the obvious limitations of Christ as depicted in the gospels, and how, given these, can Erickson not be right? The answer is simple. As Calvin and Grudem explain, the human nature in Christ experiences in distinction from the divine nature. But Erickson, by making these limitations apply to Christ's divine too, is rejecting the view that the Subject of some of Christ's activity is distinctly and only His humanity. In fact, Erickson says, "His actions were always those of divinity-humanity" (1985:735). So God grows, sleeps, and tires? These are circumstances only true of humanity.

Up to a point, the more we distinguish Christ's deity from His humanity, the more we affirm the integrity of both.

Pieper and the communion of attributes

Despite in one place affirming that Christ has a true and full humanity, replete with a rational soul and a human will (1951:67-68), a sub heading in volume 2 of Pieper's four volume *Dogmatics* is, "The Impersonality of the Human Nature of Christ". How can a human rationale soul and will be impersonal? According to Pieper (1951:80-81), there is no incarnation if the Man Christ is "personally distinct from the Son of God". Pieper takes Dorner's view (see below), that the humanity of Christ is personal, to be naive. It is naive because (a) were the Man Christ a separate person, there would be no incarnation, and (b) "the human nature of Christ is the *body* of the Son of God" (emphasis added). This, Pieper asserts, is evidenced by Colossians 2:9. How a soul and will are the equivalent of a body, Pieper does not explain.

Pieper's arguments for saying that ''body" is the equivalent of what is Christ's humanity are flawed. Who is asserting that the humanity is a separate Person? Not even Nestorius said that. The humanity is distinct from the deity, and this means that the humanity experiences, wills, and acts in distinction from the divine, but not in separation from the Person. And if it does this, it is personal.

Personality is not the precise equivalent of individual being. It is no more difficult to conceive of two acting and experiencing natures in the one Being—Christ—than it is to conceive of three Persons who act in the one Being of God. The alternative is to have a body moved around like a robot by the Logos.

The Incarnation is not a metamorphosis of deity into humanity; it is rather, as Feinberg correctly understands based on the modal participle *labōn* ("took") in Philippians 2:7, the adding of something (humanity), not a changing into something. If God is not changed into Man, then it seems that the Subject of the actions of Christ at times is His humanity and at other times is His deity—unless we incorrectly suppose that real humanity is God acting like a man.

As for Pieper's argument regarding "bodily" (*sōmatikōs*) in Colossians 2:9, there is considerable difference of opinion over what "in bodily form" means (O'Brien 1982:112). Dunn suggests that *sōmatikōs* refers to "Jesus' life on earth" (1996:152). But "dwells" (*katoikei*) is present tense, so limiting the teaching of the text to the past seems improper. BAG (1952:807) suggests that Paul's point is the reality of the fullness in Christ, not a confinement of it to flesh. Lightfoot (1969:182) explains that as Paul did not write "*en somatikō*", he was not saying that God is "confined" in (*en*) the body, but rather that He is fully manifesting Himself through the body. Yes, the deity is manifested "through Him," but "Him" is more than a body. Colossians 2:9 does not say that the Incarnation is a changing of deity into a body; it also does not require that the body of Christ be His entire humanity.

In fact, I do not see how, given his understanding of the communication of attributes from the divine nature to the human nature, Pieper can think that the humanity in Christ is but the equivalent of Jesus' body. There are, Pieper teaches, three *genera* of the communication of the attributes. The first *genus* is that the acts of either nature are that of the Person (1951:135). This is agreeable also to such as me. But this is curious; how can the humanity act unless it is personal? The second *genus* is that the divine shares such attributes as omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence with the human nature (1951:152-243). But how can anything, save an intellect, be omniscient? So, there must be a human intellect in Christ. Yet were the humanity at first, before that communication of divine qualities, only knowing some things, how is that something which knows even some things not personal? Is God the Subject of a limited intellect? No, He is not! The human nature is limited, but even a limited intellect must have personality.

The third *genus* is that the acts of one nature are common to both natures (1951:243). But if the human nature is only an impersonal body, then how does it act at all? Do mere bodies move and think on their own? Pieper, in the references above, points out to his readers with various texts, which no one

rightly can deny, that Christ has all power, all knowledge, and is everywhere. Since we know those are not normally qualities of humanity, Pieper reasons those qualities are given to His humanity by His deity. Is there no escape from that clever logic? Sure there is: such texts describe the conditions of His deity only.

The last two of Pieper's *genera* are rejected by Reformed theologians such as Hodge. Hodge explains: one nature does not participate in the attributes of the other. But the attributes of both natures belong to the Person. Some acts of Christ are purely divine, as creation, but other acts, as digesting food, are purely human. Only the human nature obeyed, suffered, and died (1981:392-395). Clearly, Hodge would fall under Cyril's fourth anathema!

Strong

Strong, along with Pieper, exemplifies the inconsistency required to say that Christ is true man possessing "the essential elements of human nature" (1967:674), yet say that Christ lacks some faculty of man which is supplied instead by the deity of Christ. The human faculties which Christ cannot have, Strong asserts, are a human consciousness and a human will. Strong argues his position on the basis that "the Logos furnishes the principle of personality". That sounds like Apollinarianism, not orthodoxy. Otherwise, Strong explains, there would be two personalities in Christ" (1967:695). A response to whether Christ can lack a human will, will be discussed under Miley and Derickson below. But consider the matter of consciousness.

A human consciousness is required in order to be human. By "consciousness" I mean a "lived experience" (Revonvo and Kampinnen 1994:25) or the manifold sensations, perceptions, and ideas one has (Holt 1914:184). By these definitions Christ can only lack a human consciousness if He lacks the human potential to experience and have human perceptions. But, if He lacks that, then how is He human? Yet if He does not lack that, then He has a human consciousness. If Christ has a human consciousness, then how is the Subject of that consciousness not a human nature? Without a human consciousness, how can He be like His brethren in all things (Heb. 2:17)? But, if Christ has a human consciousness, how can He lack a human personality? To me the choice is clear: accept that Christ's human nature has personality, which while developed by interaction with the divine, remains, being human, distinct from the divine nature or, instead, deny that the incarnated Christ is true Man.

Miley and Derickson

While differing on other theological matters, Miley (a Wesleyan-Arminian) and Derickson (a Baptist) concur on what constitutes the essential nature of Christ's humanity—His humanity does not include a human will. Miley

(1989:8-9) states that Christ's human nature is "real and complete". But, he states, we must believe that it lacks a human volition lest we fall into Nestorian "dualism". I shall argue below that Nestorius was orthodox.

In denying Christ a human will, Miley (cf. Derickson 2001; Strong 1967) is rejecting the Christology of the Sixth Ecumenical Council at Constantinople of 680-681. This Creed was a reaction to Monophysitism (one nature) revived in the form of Monothelitism (one will) (Heick 1975:186-187). The framers of this Constantinople Creed assert that "we likewise declare that in Him are two natural wills … not contrary the one to the other … but His human will follows His divine and omnipotent will". In the view of Constantinople, Christ without a human will has only one nature, which is why Kerr (1989:732) calls the Monothelitism to which Strong, Miley, and Derickson subscribe a "heresy".

Derickson takes Grudem to task for writing that Christ has two wills (2001:223). But, were Christ to have only a divine will, how could He be tempted? How could His successful resistance to temptation be our example if it is God's omnipotent will which is resisting? This is an excellent example of the practical significance of these Christological issues.

2.2. Theories Which Do Not Limit Christ's Humanity

Leo

The most thorough source on Leo's Christology is Letter XXVIII, also called the Tome. With reference to Christ's natures, Leo states, "each form does what is proper to it … the Word performing what appertains to the Word, and the flesh carrying on what pertains to the flesh. … what was human not impairing what was divine. … The divinity has equal Godhead with the Father." This teaching is repeated in Sermon LIV: "Each nature does indeed express its real existence by actions that distinguish it … one of them gleams bright with miracles the other succumbs to injuries … the one departs not from equality with the Father's glory, the other leaves not the nature of our race." Clearly, according to Leo, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

John of Damascus

The Damascene taught, in Exposition of the Orthodox Faith, that the properties of Christ's humanity are not to be ascribed to His deity. The deity, for example, is not subject to passion (IV). John denies that the nature of the Word suffered; only the humanity did (VI).[6] "Each nature keeps its own

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[6] Cyril's fourth anathema also would fall heavily on the head of John.

natural individuality strictly unchanged" (V). Each also has its own subsistence as a nature cannot exist without a subsistence (IX). Each nature has its own energy and activity (XV). Clearly, according to John, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Theodoret of Cyprus

Theodoret reacted to Cyril's anathemas against Nestorius, who was Theodoret's friend, by writing the "Counter-Statements" against Cyril. Here Theodoret explains that the Incarnation is not the Word changing into flesh, but adding the form of a servant (I). While there is one Christ, there are two *hypostases* or natures (III). Only the human nature tires, sleeps, and does not know some things (IV). Each nature has its own properties and these remain unchanged (VIII). It is only human nature which learns obedience and suffers (X). Only Christ's humanity is passible (XII). Clearly, according to Theodoret, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Gregory of Nyssa

In his "Treatise Against Apollinarius", also called *Antirrheticus,* Gregory stated that it was not the divine nature that grew, slept, grieved, ate, or suffered blows and stripes; these are experiences of Christ's humanity (p. 38). God is immutable and so did not change into a created being (p. 67). And, only the humanity was separated from God on the cross, as God cannot be divided in suffering (p. 39). It was not God who died (p. 63). The humanity of Christ has its own intellect (p. 41) and will (pp. 46, 53). The divine nature remains immutable (p. 67) . Clearly, according to Gregory, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Constantinople

The framers of the Constantinopolitan Creed of 680-681 stated their belief that in Christ there are two natural (of the natures) wills and natural operations. Each nature (*morphē)* does what is proper to it. The properties of each nature are preserved. Clearly, according to the framers of this Creed, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Agatho

In his letter to the Emperor Constantine, Pope Agatho states that the Word in Christ is unchangeable. In Christ are "two natural wills and two natural operations". A will inheres in a nature. Obedience to God was of Christ's human will. Christ is perfect God and perfect Man. Clearly, according to Agatho, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Anselm

In his "On the Incarnation of the Word", Anselm teaches that while there is one Person, there are two natures (11); the humanity was not assumed into the deity (9). In "Why God Became Man", Anselm explains that the divine nature did not become human (2:7). The wholeness of either nature is kept intact. Man and God are distinct, but combine in one Person (2:7). The acts of the humanity are not those of the deity; only the humanity, by its weakness, suffered (1:8). Clearly according to Anselm, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Calvin

In the *Institutes*, Book II, Calvin affirms that in the Incarnation the Word retained His divine qualities (Calvin 1979:414). There is no mingling of attributes, but rather "the entire properties of each nature remain entire". Any knowings or doings which are limited are strictly those of the humanity (p. 415). Clearly, according to Calvin, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Chemnitz

This Lutheran theologian, a contemporary of Luther, wrote an excellent work called "The Two Natures in Christ". In this, Chemnitz explained that "the divine nature of itself is perfect and is immutable, nothing is added or subtracted to it by this union" (1971:71). The human nature has its own mind, will, power, and activity (p. 235). While it is the one Christ acting, each nature in Christ performs, in communion with the other, that which is proper to it (pp. 236-237). Clearly, according to Chemnitz, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Dorner

This Lutheran theologian taught that in the Incarnation neither is the Logos contracting Himself in order to dwell in Christ nor is God transformed into humanity (1882:302). The humanity has its own self-consciousness and self-determination (1882:309) as these are necessary to true humanity (1882:310, 313). Clearly, according to Dorner, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Charles Hodge

According to Charles Hodge, a nature (*phusis* or *ousia)* is a substance. Attributes cannot exist without a substance. Properties, powers, or forces

imply a substance. Each nature in Christ is a substance and is "an objective entity which acts". The attributes of one substance cannot be communicated to the other (1981:387). The divine and human natures cannot be mingled …; each retains its own properties and attributes. The humanity of Christ has its own intelligence, sensibility, and will as does the divine nature, Were the humanity given divine attributes, Christ ceases to be Man. Neither can the divine nature lose any properties as that would be a loss of essence (pp. 389-391).Clearly, according to Hodge, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Baille

D.M. Baille explains his view of incarnational Christology in his "God Was In Christ". I think Erickson (1989:734) wrongly criticizes Baille, saying that Baille denied the divinity of Christ. Rather, as Henry (1992:98) affirms, Baille was a defender of Christ's deity. Baille says that Christ is "God Himself" (1948:66). Baille also rejects the idea that the Incarnation required the divinity in Christ to empty Himself "of those attributes which essentially differentiate God from man". God does not change Himself temporarily into man or exchange His divinity for humanity (pp. 95-96). The humanity of Christ has both the limitations (p. 130) and the faculties of man (p. 91). The latter includes "a human centre of consciousness" (p. 91), which is the subject of "experiences mediated through the human body (p. 87). Clearly, according to Baille, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Warfield

In "The Person and Work of Christ", Warfield insists on the integrity of the divine nature in Christ as well as the human (1970:213). He asserts that Christ has "dual centers of consciousness" (p. 258). This "double consciousness" is human and divine (p. 260). To deny this is "a new Doceticism" (p. 259). Each nature has its own mental states (p. 259). Only this understanding can be the "solution of the enigmas of the life-manifestation of the historical Jesus" (p. 262). Clearly, according to Warfield, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

Shedd and Wiley

These two are treated together because they explicitly hold the view that the acts of Christ are coordinated by each nature, allowing the other to act. Shedd, who affirms the immutability of the divine nature in Christ (1980:331), therefore insists that each nature "retains its own properties" (pp. 267-268). It is not the Logos—which remained omniscient and omnipotent (1980:275)—which constantly acts through the human soul and body (p. 274). The

humanity of Christ has its own intellect and will (p. 313). Obviously, the
Logos does too (p. 276). As there are, then, two forms of consciousness,
divine and human, each must yield to the other for there to be one activity of
Christ. So, the human nature at times yields to the divine in Christ and the
divine sometimes yields to the human nature (p. 320). "[T]here was a
continual fluctuation of consciousness in Christ" (p. 321).

Likewise Wiley, who denies that either nature loses any properties or
functions (1952:183), understands that the Hypostatic Union requires two
forms of consciousness: human and divine (p. 181). The acts or qualities of
either nature cannot be predicated of the other (p. 183). In Christ the modes of
consciousness pass quickly from one nature to the other (p. 181). The "self" of
Christ is where each nature meets and communes with the other (pp. 180-181).
Clearly, according to both Shedd and Wiley, *the deity lost nothing, and the
humanity acts and experiences.*

Grudem

Wayne Grudem believes that upon incarnating God the Son did not cease,
even for a time, to be omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent (1994:551).
There are in Christ two wills and two centers of consciousness (p. 561). "One
nature does some things which the other nature does not do (p. 558). Clearly,
according to Grudem, *the deity lost nothing, and the humanity acts and
experiences.*

Clark

In "The Incarnation", Gordon Clark states that the Persons of God are
immutable and impassible. The Second Person "did not change one little bit"
in the Incarnation (1988:11-12, 43). Will and intellect are required of the
human nature for Christ to be a human person (p. 17). Therefore, in Christ
there must be two separated consciousnesses (p. 24). Scripture does not say
that Jesus is just a human nature; it says He is a Man (p. 50). Some
experiences or acts of Jesus are just those of His humanity (p. 67). Clearly,
according to Clark, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and
experiences.*

Nestorious

Nestorius, in my opinion, is wrongly identified, as by Buswell (1976:46), as
having taught that Christ is two Persons. Assuming that the "Bazaar of
Heraclides" is by Nestorius, Nestorius therein claims to believe that Christ is
one *prosōpon* (2057e). The confusion arises because Nestorius also calls
natures *prosōpa*, yet saying that the two natures make one Person (2057-58;

see also the Second Letter to Cyril, in Norris 1980). So, some moderns, not usually Catholic, are now questioning whether Nestorius really taught two Persons in Christ (e.g., Bruce 1905:49; Kyle 1989:74-75; Grillmeier 1975:449). Nestorious, in his second letter to Cyril, argues that while the divine nature remains impassible, the human nature is passible and that not the deity but the humanity in Christ suffered. Other acts and experiences of Christ as birth, growing, and eating also pertain only to His human nature. Clearly, according to Nestorius, *the deity lost nothing and the humanity acts and experiences.*

3. Conclusion

In my opinion, the material in this article has demonstrated that while some question the distinction and integrity of Christ's humanity, others maintain that the humanity is complete including a human intellect, will, and consciousness. It is within orthodox Christology to believe that in the Incarnation God the Son lost nothing and that His humanity acts and experiences.

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The Challenge of African Christian Morality[1]

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Abstract[3]

To recover our moral sanity, there is an urgent need to retrieve and restore some positive moral foundations and beliefs which were the moral fibre of the society. These moral foundations and beliefs, transformed through serious interaction with the Word of God and inculturated into African Christianity, will save and strengthen the moral stance of the church.

1. Introduction

We do not live in easy times. The world and especially the continent of Africa are beset by many political, social, economic, moral and religious problems. The observation that Gary Scott Smith made about the moral crises in the United States of America is very true in Africa.

> Abortions, child and spouse abuse, drug addition, alcoholism, sexual aberrations, and crime have steadily increased in recent years. Fraud, economic exploitation, and racism [continue to plague social relations. Underlying these manifestations and contributing significantly to them is a deep uncertainty about the nature of morality itself and the basis for law. Some have seriously questioned, challenged, and even rejected the traditional foundation for our ethical practices (Smith 1985:112).

In addition to these vices, Africa has many others such as ancestral worship, ritual killings, prostitution, cultism, gangsterism, manipulation and rigging of

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[1] This article was presented as a paper at the 2008 Theological Higher Education Conference in Johannesburg, South Africa. It is published here with only minor editorial changes because of the conviction that Prof. Kunhiyop's evaluation of the current state of African Christian morality represents a crucial perspective on the needs and challenges facing Christianity on the continent.

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[3] The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

votes, ethnic and religious violence, cohabitation, trial marriages, Satanism, suicide, rape and gang-rape, incest, HIV/AIDS, divorce, political assassinations, violation of fundamental human rights, failed states, and so on. Hannah Kinoti (1999:73) notes.

> Today Africa is at a crossroads and the path has forked. In terms of everyday conduct for individuals and communities there is uncertainty, disillusionment and even despair. There is much grumbling and lamentation. It is not difficult to conclude that people lament and grumble because they possess some knowledge of traditional African morality which ensured the well-being of communities and individuals alike. That morality has been superimposed, and in certain respects rudely crossed, by other influences of the day and age in which we find ourselves. Elderly people lament daily they are meeting behaviour that shocks them: sexual immorality, affectless relationship, scepticism about religious matters, and many things which hasten the old to their graves. Middle-aged people lament about children they fail to control and the youth complain of lack of example from the older members of the society.[4]

Pagan and unchristian practices have resurfaced with a deadly vengeance. According to recent BBC report, in Tanzania there have been at least 19 albinos who have been murdered and mutilated. People are marketing and using their bodily organs, particularly genitals, limbs, breasts, fingers and the tongue, for magical purposes. The malicious killings for witchcraft purposes are not limited to Tanzania, but have been reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Kenya. Children and even infants have been killed on allegations of being witches or wizards in Nigeria and other African countries. In every shape and form, African Christianity is facing real moral issues that must be addressed quickly. David Wells (1997:179) observed about the American moral state: "Today, the Church finds itself in the midst of a culture whose moral fabric is rotting and whose spirit is troubled." Conclusively, "Cotemporary African society is lamenting a moral world fallen apart" (Kinoti 1999:75). In *Things Fall Apart*, Chinua Achebe (1958) says it all. He alludes to these powerful and memorable lines are part of a poem by William Butler Yeats (1921, quoted in Drakes 1991).

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[4] Kinito, while describing the lamentable situation of African morality, gives a powerful folk lore: "The hyena in the folk tale was following the general direction of the aroma of barbecuring meat. He knew when he got there he would be given a share of the meat. When his path forked into two he was not sure which one would lead him to the meat. In his uncertainty he put his legs astride the two paths and tried to walk along both. He ended up splitting in the middle. Today Africa is at a crossroads and the path has forked" (1999:73).

> Turning and turning in the widening gyre,
> The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
> Things fall apart; the center cannot hold.

In both Yeats and Achebe, the picture is clear. The very foundations of our world are shaking and everything is in a state of chaos.

John Mbiti (1982:1) and many other authors have observed that Africa is incurably religious. The two major religions, Christianity and Islam, continue to show remarkable attraction to Africans. The average African today either subscribes to Christianity or to Islam, with a minority holding to African traditional religions. Many of us were born and raised in a Christian environment. I belong to a tribe in Nigeria that is 99.9 percent 'Christian'. The Bajju all go to church call themselves Christians. Though this is surely good news for the church numerically, it is not quite good news when we look at their life and practice. Though they are nominally Christian, their underlying beliefs, values and practices are rooted in a non-Christian worldview.

A Christian is a follower of Christ and should be positively different. But the situation is very different on this so-called 'emerging Christian continent'. This seemingly African religious continent is also beset with serious problems. In short, the challenge of African Christianity can be looked at in terms of moral life and practice. There are many questions and issues that concern the Christian and the church in Africa. The problems associated with African Christian morality are a microcosm of African Christianity in total. African morality significantly mirrors its worldview, beliefs and values. Questions of right and wrong are answered by the theological concepts of ontology, spirituality, anthropology, and so on. As I have tried to argue elsewhere, theology and ethics are intimate bed fellows in Africa (Kunhiyop 2008). Any attempt to disassociate one from the other will lead to incoherence and irrelevance. A discussion on morality necessarily touches on theology and vice versa.

2. Identifying the real issues

2.1. The questions are *not* …

The question is not whether Africa is becoming statistically a more Christian continent than the global north. This is a well-documented trend. Philip Jenkins (2006:9) believes that the evidence of numerical growth to the southern Christianity means that gravity has shifted to the South. He even predicts that as we move toward the year 2025, Africa and Latin America should be in competition for the title of the continent with the largest number of Christians. But, in the long run, as we move towards 2050, Africa wins;

Christianity becomes predominantly a religion of Africa and the African Diaspora in North and South America and the Caribbean. Along with other historians and church-growth experts, Andrew Walls, the distinguished church historian has written and spoken on many occasions about this fact. Many years ago, he also prophesied that the gravity of Christianity would indeed shift to Africa. We are impressed with these prophecies and believe and pray that these predictions will come to pass.

However, will this numerical growth bring about significant life and belief-system change? If there are just external conversions without internal, worldview changes, then the moral life of the African Christian is still on shaky foundations. Ideas, more than numbers, shake the foundations of a belief system. How many disciples were said to turn the world upside down? Surely not a million; it was probably a few thousand. What made the change were the ideas of Jesus—that salvation is found in no one else but Jesus Christ. This new allegiance in the lives of the new believers was really what signified real change. Sometimes I suspect that an overemphasis on this paradigm shift is a red herring. Yes, we should rejoice in the fact that many are becoming identified with the Christian religion, but the issues are deeper and more complex.

The question of African Christianity is not whether or not there are churches in every nook and corner of the continent. Again, a cursory tour of many large cities in Africa would indicate the existence of thousands of churches. If we are looking for the presence of churches in Africa, we shall have no trouble finding them. The question is *what kind of Christianity is lived out and experienced in by those who attend these churches?*

The question is not whether or not we are able to see many Christian practices across the continent. In many African cities, you can see thousands of Christians going to church on Sundays, giving their offerings, building Christian schools and universities. Although these are desirable things, they may blind us to the more important issues regarding the growth of Christianity in Africa.

The question is not whether or not we can discern some external conformity to Christianity life and ritual, baptism, speaking in tongues, Bible knowledge and reading, taking of sacraments, Christian weddings, and so on. Again, the evidence of these abounds in African Christianity.

2.2. The real questions are …

What kind of Christian morality is emerging or evolving in this statistically Christian continent? What are the evidences and consequences of this form of Christianity? How does the African Christian moral experience square with

the requirements of biblical Christian morality? What really is the moral authority of Christians? Is it the media, the internet, reason, tradition, secular value, Scripture (Bible)? Though the Bible is believed to be an authoritative source, to what extent is it a moral authority?

What are other moral evils that we see rearing their ugly heads in this statistically Christian continent? If Christianity is the norm, why then the rise of homosexuality, Albino killings, witchcraft, cultism, bribery and corruption, dictatorship, genocide, religious and ethnic tensions in Christian communities. In the name of civilization and freedom, we have gay rights, women's rights for abortion, and so on. Why do the witch doctors still have a hold on many Christians in Africa?

Why have African Christians, in moments of crisis, failed to live up to their Christian profession? I think here of many so-called politicians who have compromised their faith while in leadership. Some even deny the Master who bought them with his precious blood. This brings to mind Tombalbaye of Chad, who ordered the killing of many pastors in one day, including the pastor who baptized him. Why do many African Christians, in moments of crisis, revert to pagan practices? African movies accurately portray Africans' persistent struggle with the spirit world to solve their daily life struggles.

These are pertinent issues that bother me as a churchman and scholar. The resurgence of pre-Christian and pagan practices makes it a matter of grave concern and immediacy. The question is whether there has been a fundamental change in worldviews, beliefs, values, and loyalties—matters of ultimate concern.

How significantly different is the Christian from a non-Christian moral experience? To consider Africa as a Christian continent, we need more than the exclamation that "by 2025, Africa and … will vie for the title of the most Christian continent" (Jenkins 2006:9). We must ask what needs to be done to establish a true African morality. What will it take to entrench Christian morality among African Christians?

How will an authentic African Christian look like? What are the similarities and dissimilarities with the American and European Christianity? Just as the issues that bothered the Galatian Christians were different in kind from those affecting the Jerusalem Church, so also the issues African Christians face are different from those of their American and European brothers.

Whereas we are able to see the numbers and rapid religious change, the question must be asked if indeed Christianity and, in particular, Christian morality, has permeated African thinking and altered the worldview of African Christians. How closely do the beliefs and practices of the millions of converts

to Christianity line up with biblical Christian beliefs and ethics? Above all, what would it take to make African Christianity biblical and authentic?

These are the real questions that concern African Christianity and its morality. How we answer them will help us to think relevantly about the issues at hand. Rather than attempt to answer each of these questions. I will just try to cover the basic issues.

3. Paradigm Shift in African Christianity

As Jenkins has cogently argued, there is a certain gravitational shift of Christianity to the global south. The title of the book, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*, makes it abundantly clear that this paradigm shift has taken place. A paradigm shift usually means a radical shift and change in the way things have been done. Failure to understand and accept this paradigm shift will smother and hinder authentic African Christianity.

Though I generally agree that Jenkins has demonstrated his thesis, the point must be made that a true gravitational shift must involve a shift in the worldview of the people. Worldviews play a profound role in shaping life and morality. A worldview deals with basic assumptions about reality. A worldview brings out assumptions concerning the organization of the universe, human life, purposes, values, norms of behaviour, time/space, causation, the natural world, interpersonal relationships, and so on. This assumption of reality is basic and profoundly affects our behaviours and actions. Clifford Geertz (1973:89), a leading American anthropologist has defined worldview as:

> An historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men communicate, perpetuate and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life. Further that it acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long-lasting moods and motivations ... by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.

In summary, Geertz is saying that worldviews are: (a) historically transmitted and inherited conceptions of meanings; (b) models of reality, that is, they describe the nature of reality; (c) They describe models of actions. (4) They explain and provide motivations for behaviour. Actions are not ends of themselves, they point to something deeper. (5) They are very persistent and pervasive affecting every aspect of life. These beliefs, convictions and values

do not die quickly. When we are dealing with cultural and religious beliefs, we are dealing with very strong beliefs that exert powerful influences on our lives. We often bring these to bear even on our interpretations of our new faith. The gospel that was brought to the Africans was brought within a specific worldview. Though it was caste within a Christian message, it must not be confused with the gospel message. It must be realized that a paradigm shift necessarily involves a worldview shift. The Greek philosophical framework that has determined Western theology for centuries must give way to African mind set. The modern, rationalistic, scientific, compartmentalized, sceptical and postmodern mindset must be discarded in favour of an authentic African worldview which is different in many ways than one. The imposition of Western perception of Christianity on African Christianity is wrongheaded. The current tone of Christianity in contemporary African we are witnessing makes me feel that authentic Christianity must seek to take captive the African worldview. The posture which sees every belief and practice in pre-Christian as evil and pagan has not only been unproductive (old habits do not die easily), but has in effect thrown the bath water with the baby. There were good traditional beliefs and practices (e.g. respect for elders, community, respect and value for the unborn), that was good and respectable and needed to be retained.

My thesis is stated as follows: In order to recover our moral sanity, there is the urgent need to retrieve and restore some positive moral foundations and beliefs which were the moral fibre of the society. These moral foundations and beliefs, transformed through serious interaction with the Word of God and inculturated into African Christianity will save and strengthened the moral stance of the Church.

Before we start dealing with restoring some moral foundations and beliefs, there is need to briefly state some background issues such as how Christianity was transmitted and other related issues.

Christianity was introduced to Africa in the modern era by Westerners. The message did not come alone but came through the mouth, hands, tastes, feelings, etc of another person. Ultimately, what came out of the messenger also relayed and still relays the tastes, worldview and total package of the carrier. This received worldview though it came from Christians was not perfect. The message from the messenger had cultural wrappings. The messenger passed the message with the wrappings as if they were one and the same. What happened was that the wrappings of the message were always misunderstood by the receiver. There was a deliberate effort to dislodge and replace African worldviews with a Western mindset. Some of these wrappings include interpretation/reading of scripture. the scientific reading of Scripture, philosophical method of dealing with problems, proof-texting, denominationalism etc.

Compartmentalization of life and issues. The introduction of Christianity by the West introduced a new way of reality. Life was compartmentalized into theory and practice, classroom and practical life, knowledge and wisdom, abstract and practical etc. This compartmentalization was fundamentally alien to Africa. Life to the African is basically interpreted holistically. The radical split between the now and then, body and soul, religion and morality/ economics is alien to Africa. A study of God which is removed from the reality of life or just mere academics does no good for Africa.

Negative individualism which asserts individual moral freedom in total disregard to the community. It is a "belief that we inhabit our own private universe in which we are accountable to no one but ourselves in moral matters" (Wells 1997:149). In my opinion, negative individualism has contributed profoundly the current moral malaise that Africa has found itself today. Negative individualism basically holds that I can do anything I want without holding myself accountable or responsible to anyone. Negative individualism basically disregards what others think of him or her in matters of life and morality.

Shame and honour were key concepts which influenced behaviour and morality. Unfortunately, shame and honour have been replaced with shameless morality which has no regard for responsibility and respect to the total community. People restrained themselves from certain actions because of their community – uncle, brothers, and sisters, clan and cities. Today, everybody is a law unto himself and herself. Thus the moral collapse in our societies.

The narrative aspect of Scripture replaced by systematization of Scripture not relevant to context. Though Scriptures come to us in narrative form, the Church has reduced the Scriptures to isolated truths that have no immediate bearing to life situations.

The gradual decline of Scriptural authority in shaping morality. Though many parts of the Church in Africa still hold that the Scriptures are authoritative, there is a gradual disregard of the authoritative role of Scriptures in life. Unchristian moral beliefs and practices, secularism, postmodernism, negative individualism, and so on are slowly diminishing the authoritative role of the Scriptures in moral choices. Let me bold in providing ways in which we can overcome these problems.

4. Towards a solution

The challenge of African morality lies in locating our true elements, so that we live our Christian life truly. A fruitful way forward is for the church to recover and reaffirm what was good in her traditional culture. The belief that all

African traditional beliefs and practices were pagan and evil must be rejected. Mugambi (1999:14) has stated it so well:

> The modern Christian missionary enterprise has assumed, in general, that the culture and ethics of the missionary is "Christian" and "good", whereas that of the prospective converts is "non-Christian" and "evil". Missionary expansion has thus been rationalized in terms of going out to convert those of different cultures and religions so that they might become like the missionary.

All that happened was that these so-called evil practices of African beliefs were simply replaced with alien Western beliefs, which did not find a dwelling in our African souls. What is being called for is cooking Christianity in an African pot. The African pot "represents the African worldview, traditions, anthropology, and indeed African epistemology which ... form the substratum of the faith and life of the Christians in Africa" (Fiedler, Gundani, and Mijoga 1998:2). The following ideas do not follow any particular order of importance.

4.1. Holistic approach to life

Life is one big whole. Both the parts and the whole are intimately related.

> For Africans the whole brings about the unification of the parts. The whole is not a reality which ignores the parts: it would be contradictory and equally impossible to think of a "whole" without its parts. It would be equally difficult to think of the parts without having an idea of the "whole" to which they belong … African thought has a unified vision of reality in which there is no room for irreducible dichotomies between matter and spirit, religions tension and daily life, between soul and body (Nkemkia 1999:65).

The physical and the spiritual, training and ministry, academic and life situations, theory and practice, religion and economics, politics and religion, sex and faith, go together. Speculative reflection without practice has never been the thrust of African pursuit. Practice, reflection, and praxis always go together. This interconnectedness, relatedness, and cohesion are what Nkemnkia refers to as "vital force", by which he means "the parts are really indispensable for the whole, and enable the whole to include in itself all the parts, though different from them" (p. 166). Right belief without action is a paralysis. A right belief in a holy God results in righteous living. The right ethical life of Romans 12-15 is built upon a righteous standing with God. Formal moral ethics taught in class must go along with informal moral

education of the students. This must taught in our classes and churches. It is one package.

Theologians must bridge the compartmentalization of academic theology and moral transformation. Perhaps it is up to theological teachers at tertiary educational institutions to bridge the chasm between academic theologies and practical ethics, overcoming the compartmentalization of the intellectual, affective and volitional aspects of Christian practice (Kretzeschman 2004:104).

The traditional Western approach of emphasizing only the future must be discarded. Churches that are witnessing significant growth and impact in Africa are the ones who get their hands dirty trying to meet the current needs of people. If the church in Tanzania is going to be relevant and Christian, it must not just speculate about the problem of killings of the albinos, but it must get its hands dirty by getting involved in poverty and other social ills that are driving these evil practices. The killings are not isolated events. They involve important practical issues of life, hunger, poverty, and other social ills.

If evangelical Christianity is going to make sense and cut into the very fibre of the African, it must deal with life as one whole. Salvation must be seen to affect every aspect of life. Salvation is not just about cleansing and forgiving our sins, but also deals with our present needs and challenges. Keta Sempangi states correctly that "a religion that speaks only to man's soul and not his body is not true. Africans make no distinction between the spiritual and the physical" (quoted in Jenkins 2006:97). Christianity is not an abstract, theoretical matter. It is very concrete and practical, involving the present and the future, the now and the then, the spiritual and the material, the head and the body, politics and religion, and so on. A religion that seeks to answer only questions of the head will fail miserably. Christianity must touch every aspect of life. Any attempt to disjoint, dichotomize, compartmentalize, and over specialize life is foreign and alien and irrelevant to an authentic African Christianity.

4.2. Community life

Closely related to the holistic thinking is the idea of community, which is paramount in many African societies. Whether you see it in terms of the clan, tribe, or nation, the idea of community is still the *sine qua non* in Africa. "If the community exists, then the individual exists" (Nkemkia 1999:172). The individual is always aware of the fact that "I am because we are, and we are, therefore I am" (Mbiti 1982:214). This means that existence was basically interpreted in terms of relationships and the society. John Mbiti correctly notes that "within African communities where kinship makes a person intensely 'naked', these moral demands are uncomfortably scrutinized by everybody so

that a person who fails to live up to them cannot escape notice" (p. 214). Because of this very communal and relational dimension of ethics, the family, the clan, and the community serve as a public control on the moral lives of the individuals. The concepts of shame and honour are critical here. In community-based morality, how the individual conducts himself becomes critical—a person's actions either bring shame or honour to the family.

It must be noted that though individualism has contributed to many modern developments, it also has impacted negatively on Western morality. Individualism, as a major force in modern American-European ethics, is a demon that cannot be exorcised easily. Individual rights and freedoms are given as legitimate reasons for children to rebel against parents, girls aborting their babies, men and women cohabiting, and so on. Although Western individualism has threatened Africa, its community approach to life is one of God's gifts to Africa. Not only is this African, it is also a biblical idea. Christianity must link up to the community life. It rejects individualism that emphasizes self—personal achievement without other people.

It is a shame that negative individualism is beginning to be imbibed by Africans. The breakdown of law and other and the emergence of many moral crises can be attributed mainly to overemphasis on individual rights and freedom. The main reason for this is the rejection of community. The "I" is celebrated more than that "we". Individuals commit shameful acts without a feeling of shame or accountability to the group or community.

Throughout the Scriptures, the context of all individuals is the community or the group. There are families, clans, tribes, communities, and nations. The biggest and fullest is the "Christian tribe", to which Jesus gave birth. The blood of Jesus Christ runs through this organic body, called the church. The tribe is international and local. This international tribe has ancestors, great ancestors whose stories need to be told and retold in proverbs, songs, and riddles. These include the biblical ancestors such as Abraham, David, Daniel, Paul, Silas, and Timothy. Others include Augustine, John Calvin, Luther, Jonathan Edwards, continental ancestors such as Byang Kato, Bediako, John Mbiti, and so on. Personalities in the Bible are typically mentioned within the context of their family, tribe, and lineage. David Wells correctly notes that in the biblical world "people thought of themselves, not as free-floating, isolated individuals, but as belongers" (Wells 1997:165). In that world, "one stood by and within one's group, and it was from this group that one derived prestige." Jesus' genealogies illustrate this well (see Matt. 1; Luke 3). The ideas of connectedness, belonging, and togetherness are critical in the existence of persons. No one belongs to himself. Everyone belongs to a group. His morality is seen and judged in terms of his connectedness to the larger whole. No person stands alone or exists for himself. Paul, for example, took pride in belonging to the tribe of Benjamin and being a true blooded Jew (Phil. 3:5).

Moral judgments are made not only for the individual person, but for the good of the larger community. Adam's sin did not only affect him, but all of his descendents (Gen. 3; Rom. 5:12-21). The blessings of Abraham were blessings for the whole believing community (Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:14). The sins of Achan brought judgement on the whole clan (Josh. 7). The sin of the adulterer in 1 Corinthians 5 reflected greatly on the perception of morality in the church, because the moral failure of one person was a reflection on the entire assembly.

A very important reason for the community is that it is the best way to fight moral decay. Problems and challenges are better fought and won by the community than by the individual. If the church is to fight the moral problems in our society, it must fight collectively. Together is always better.

4.3. Shame and honour

In order to recapture our sense of morality, there is need to recapture quickly the key concepts of honour and shame. Shame and honour served as means of public control on morality. Honour—which included respect, dignity, pride, and sense of accomplishment for the community for exemplary conduct or actions by one of its members—served as a major motivation for morally praiseworthy acts. Shame, on the other hand, involves a feeling of letting the community down, and includes a sense of personal failure, or betrayal against oneself and the community (Magesa 1997:169). Shameful acts not only let the offending person down, but also disgraces his relations and community. There were two kinds of shame in most African communities, namely, as the people of New Guinea called them:

> the "shame of the skin" for minor transgressions, and deep shame" for major ones. To come into physical contact with an in-law may be shame of the skin or of the face, but to commit incest is deep shame or shame of the heart that calls for confession and retribution. If the person is to become whole again, the shame needs to be removed by special rites (Magesa 1997:173).

Shame and honour served as a major restraint against moral wrongdoing. Honour brings respect and pride to one's larger society. Shame is failing one's people by doing something disgraceful. He does not fail exclusively in his private capacity; he fails on behalf of his society. Thus the Kuria say, "Often the whole community suffered retribution collectively for the ills of individuals" (Kinoti 1999:79). People acted for the honour of their families and clans, and not for money and personal material gains. To be ashamed or to lose face means that the whole family or community suffers. The Saramis version of "to lose face" is "your face has fallen" or "our faces have fallen",

and the remedy is "clean your face" or "clean our faces". Failure was not personal, but communal. "To lose face is to suffer embarrassment because others see the offender as having let them down, or having dishonoured their family, or town, or business. Shame and dishonour become intertwined, the one hardly ever happening without the other, because of the sense of responsibility towards others" (Wells 1997:166). Restoring the concepts of honour and shame will put some checks in moral behaviour.

4.4. Hermeneutics and theology

African Christian morality, in order to be established, must reinterpret and find proper models that fit its situation. The quest for appropriate models and concepts is as old as Christendom. Jesus' disciples had to interpret the second person of the Trinity in models and concepts that made sense to the hearers. John the apostle, for example, had no qualms in using the Greek philosophical concept of *logos* to explain the pre-existent and incarnate son of God. The church fathers, through many lively debates and councils, articulated the Christian message in meaningful models and concepts best understood by their contemporaries. Justin Martyr, Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Anselm, and many others used philosophical categories to explain Scripture. The West used categories and models best suited to make Christianity meaningful for their contexts.

In the same way, African Christianity must aim to make "the Christian message really to enter the hearts of Africans, so that it may bear abundant fruit in a way of life which is at the same time both truly African and truly Christian" (Bujo 1992:76). As has been clearly demonstrated by Jenkins, Africans are a fertile ground for reading and applying Scripture as the Word of God. Africans in their own context are familiar with questions of evil spirits (demons), poverty, agriculture, divine healing, rituals, evil, and so on. Therefore, they are naturally familiar with many biblical themes. The political, economic, social, and religious concerns of Africa make the reading and application of the Scripture more palpable and relevant.

To date, most of the standard works on theology and ethics being used in Africa are by Westerners or Europeans. The worldview underlying them is often irrelevant to African Christianity. Both the books used and the issues discussed in seminary classes across Africa tend to be Western in nature, rather than indigenous problems and theologies. We must reject doing or mimicking or parroting foreign theologies. Just as the West found a relevant theology in its own context, we must do theology in the way that best fits our context.

Roman Catholic theologians have been courageous in trail blazing this route. Imagine referring to Jesus Christ as the Proto-Ancestor or Master of Initiation

(Benezet Bujo) or the Healer of Healers (A.T. Sanon). We can easily criticize this concept as reducing Jesus to no more than a great human being. Admittedly, these concepts are not without their shortcoming, but which concept is not. Surely this African knows what the concept of "Ancestor" invokes in an African. The ever-present nature, the undying ancestor, the ever-seeing ancestor, and the ever-protecting ancestor are paramount in this concept. The concept of Proto-Ancestor, though limited and potentially misleading, still captures the essential qualities of Jesus as pre-existent, omnipotent, omnipresent, and eternal God. He is not only God, but also Man in the fullest sense of the Word. He is God of very God and Man of very Man. All that is being argued is that there is a need to find and locate within the African worldview metaphors and symbols that bring out the truth of the gospel more forcefully. Philip Jenkins reminds us that "the task of the modern theologian is to strip away the Western accretions, to recover a gospel that in the modern world is to return to its natural social setting" (Jenkins 2006:48). Africans must seek to contextualize the Bible to fit their framework.

So far, the predominant reading, understanding, and interpretation of Scripture have been foreign. The reading of Scripture over the years has been intellectualized and secularized. Unbelieving and atheistic questioning colours our interpretation of the text, replacing the ordinary, author-intended meaning. One only needs to read some exegetical studies that are made on passages that deal with topics such as homosexuality, abortion, and marriage to see how liberal, secular, and postmodern biases influence the understanding of these texts. African theologies and Christianity must learn to read Scripture through their own lenses rather than through Western lenses, which are influenced by the kinds of damaging philosophies mentioned above. Africans are well position for a better reading of Scripture. Jenkins (2006:5) notes:

> A much greater respect for the authority, especially in matters of morality; a willingness to accept the Bible as an inspired text and a tendency to literalism; a special interest in supernatural elements of scripture, such as miracles, visions, and healings; a belief in the continuing power of prophecy; and a veneration for the Old Testament, which is considered as authoritative as the New. For the growing churches of the global south, the Bible speaks to everyday, real-world issues of poverty and debt, famine, and urban crisis, racial and gender oppression, state brutality and persecution. The omnipresence of poverty promotes awareness of the transience of life, the dependence of individuals and nations on God, and the distrust of the secular order.

Why are the Pentecostal churches growing more than the conservative, traditional, mainline denominations? I believe that they take the Scriptures at

face value, that is, literally. They avoid theological liberalism. For example, a line in the Lord's Prayer reads, "Give us our daily bread". Africans can relate to this. Many of them lack bread on a daily basis. They do not need a scholar in New Testament Greek to tell them what bread meant in the original languages. Where there are many poisonous reptiles, such as snakes and scorpions, the ending of Mark's gospel makes a lot of sense; critical arguments about the authenticity of the text are irrelevant. Where many people cannot afford modern medicine, divine healing is a practical need, not a theoretical debate.

4.5. Ministerial training

If an authentic African Christianity is going to be realized, it must challenge the old mode of ministerial training. Residential ministerial training grounds which remove student pastors from their local context and place them in strange environments with foreign curricula have been unsuccessful in producing productive ministers in the church. What residential seminaries have succeeded in doing is the reproduction of their mentors with foreign ideas who do not fit their ministry context. The Western mode of residential training has also resulted in a strict class distinction between teacher and student, learned and learner, master and disciple, clergy and laity. This class distinction has also been introduced into African Christianity.

There are many supersonic pastors who live an affluent lifestyle while their members live in abject poverty. Many of us who trained in the West or in traditional schools in Africa struggled to adjust to Africa in a relevant way. The catalogues, books, resources, and approach to ministry we had imbibed were completely Western. We uncritically imported Western resources to schools and churches in Africa. Though we did not have problems about the existence of God, Western theologies forced us to memorise theistic proofs for His existence. Even when we had no problem about the Bible as the Word of God, our curricula treated the inerrancy of Scripture in depth. Why did we need to belabour such point when we already believed in God and the Scriptures?

The Scriptures give us some clues about how to train ministers. Joshua learned from Moses; Elisha travelled with Elijah; Jesus and his disciples walked together, ate together, struggled together, and celebrated together. Joshua, Elisha, Paul, Timothy, and Titus became great spiritual leaders because they lived and worked alongside their mentors. The idea of a professor sitting and passing on learned ideas to a student "down there" does not make disciples; it produces academics. The most effective method of teaching has always been the intimate relationship between mentor and mentored. That is the biblical way. It is also the African method. Farmers took their children to the farm and the sons became farmers. Hunters took their children to the bush and the sons

became hunters. Mothers cooked with their daughters in the kitchen, while they taught them housekeeping, love, romance, and motherhood. We need to recapture those modes of learning in our ministerial training of pastors and leaders.

4.6. Double listening

John Stott (1992) recommends that the Christian should practice the art of double listening, by which he means that we need to listen carefully to what the Word of God is saying and, at the same time, listen to what the world is saying. Pastors may be careful in reading and interpreting the Word of God, but illiterate when it comes to understanding and reading the times. Our reading of culture, politics, economics, and ethics is so poor that we hardly know what is going on in the world. The Word of God cannot be preached and lived in a vacuum. People who hear and live the Word do not do so in a vacuum. To be relevant in preaching, we must know their circumstances.

African Christianity must balance historic faith and modern relevance. At the centre of this faith is the unchanging Word of God, which provides a basis for life and conduct. The West is losing this respect for biblical authority, which results in the distortion and confusion in Western theology. Sometimes, the theologies in the West do not have a semblance of biblical Christian.

However, our Christianity also cannot be frozen in the past, without a modern relevance. An authentic African Christianity is really an incarnational Christianity. Christianity must willing to become vulnerable, even to the point of death, getting its hands dirty in order to make the gospel real to the people. The challenge of African Christianity is to descend into the worldview of Africa, and capture it for Christ.

4.7. Back to basics

A sure way to recover our moral balance is to go back to the Bible as the Word of God. Most Africans have probably not heard of Vince Lombardi, the famous football coach of the Green Bay Packers. In one training session, feeling frustrated because he was getting nowhere with the plans, he blew his whistle and the all the players stopped and gathered around. He knelt down, picked up the pigskin, and said, "Let's start at the beginning. *This is a football. These are the yard markers.*" It was not that they did not know a football when they saw one, or the yard markers, but they needed to be reminded of the basics of playing football.

Perhaps many Christians have not forgotten what the Bible is. They need to be reminded that the Bible is the Word of God, the authoritative source of morality, the ultimate guide in matters of life and conduct. In going back to the

Bible as the basic source of judging our morality, the church needs to restore its *prophetic role* in being able to call sin "sin". Accommodating, tolerating, and justifying sin is unacceptable in the Word of God. Condemning sin in all its shades has never been a popular thing to do, but it is a compelling duty.

5. Conclusion

The challenge of African Christian morality is not to be satisfied with the status quo. The fantastic story of the gravitational shift of Christianity to Africa should not close our eyes to the stark realities and challenges of the many moral problems facing the African Christian continent. This is a time for some serious soul searching for African Christianity. Nobody, even the sophisticated North, can do it for us. We must do it ourselves. We must raise the questions and provide permanent and lasting solutions to the concrete problems that face us. Those solutions must be find a root in Scripture and a dwelling our souls.

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The Faith Journey of Paul: An Exegetical Analysis of Philippians 3:1-14

by Dan Lioy[1]

Abstract[2]

This journal article examines the faith journey of Paul, specifically as it is delineated in Philippians 3:1-14. Verses 1-6 reveal that in the past, before he put his faith in Christ, Paul trusted in his human attainments. According to verses 7-11, after Paul encountered the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, the apostle made growing in the knowledge of Christ the central focus of his existence in the here-and-now. Finally, in verses 12-14, it is disclosed that Paul set his sights on increasing in Christlikeness. Based on the sports analogy of athletes running in a race, Paul explained that following Christ requires unrelenting dedication and perseverance on the part of believers. This involves doing the following: (a) putting our past—with all its shortcomings and attainments, whether real or imagined—behind us; (b) living wholeheartedly for Christ in the present; and (c) using all our effort to press on toward the future goal of being made complete in spiritual union with Christ in heaven.

1. Introduction

A common practice is to divide the fundamental issues of human existence into three domains of inquiry: (a) where we come from (i.e. the origin of our existence); (b) why we are here (i.e. the purpose of our existence); and (c) where we are going (i.e. the ultimate destiny of our existence). This triad of issues deals, respectively, with the past, present, and future aspects of every individual's life. Admittedly, there is some fluidity and overlap between these three facets of existence. Be that as it may, philosophers and theologians have found this approach helpful to demarcate the odyssey of life and to fathom its short-term and long-term significance (cf. Chan 2007:307-311; Echeverria 2007:243-244; Emmons 2005:734-736; Metz 2007; Zinke 2004:63-64).

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[2] The views expressed in this article are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the beliefs of the South African Theological Seminary.

The preceding breakdown can be seen in the faith journey of Paul, especially as it is delineated in Philippians 3:1-14. An exegetical analysis of the passage indicates that in the past, before he put his faith in Christ, Paul trusted in his human attainments (vv. 1-6). Then, after encountering the risen Lord on the road to Damascus (cf. Acts 9:3-5; 22:6-11; 26:12-18), Paul wanted growing in the knowledge of Christ to be the central focus of his existence in the here-and-now (Phil. 3:7-11). Moreover, with the future looming over the horizon, the apostle set his sights on increasing in Christlikeness (vv. 12-14; cf. Fee 1995:304, 338; Fowl 2005:159; O'Brien 1991:345-346). While Paul never forgot the lessons learned from his past (including his mistakes), he did not let these stymie his present efforts to know Christ more deeply and one day arrive at his future home in heaven. Indeed, Paul's discussion of the past, present, and future aspects of his life represent an affirmation of the lordship and centrality of Christ in every area of human existence.

2. Paul's past: trusting in human attainments (Phil. 3:1-6)

The fullest account of Paul's life and ministry is recorded in the Book of Acts. He is first mentioned in connection with the stoning of Stephen. At that time (about A.D. 35),[3] Paul was an unconverted Jew known as Saul of Tarsus. A group of zealots brought Stephen before the Sanhedrin on charges that he had spoken against the temple and the law. His defense took the form of a historical survey in which he argued that God can be worshiped apart from the temple and that the Jews had a history of stubbornly disobeying God. Stephen so enraged the Jewish leaders that they dragged him out of Jerusalem and began to stone him. During this grisly episode, the witnesses removed their cloaks (or outer garments) and laid them at the feet of Saul, who agreed completely with Stephen's execution (7:1-8:1; cf. Betz 1992:187; Bock 2007:310-316; Bruce 1980:238-239; 1986:710-711; 1988:129-161; Ladd 1997:404-405; Longenecker 1981:349-352; Mauck 2001:75-84; Morris 1990:20-21; Pelikan 2005:100-109; Reese 1976:348-350; Purdy 1962:684; Tannehill 1994:85-101; Walaskay 1998:74-79; Wall 2002:125-132).

After persecuting the believers in Jerusalem, Saul decided to go after those Christians who had fled the city, to bring them back to face trial before the Sanhedrin and possible execution (Acts 9:1-2; 22:4-5; 26:9-11). On the road near Damascus, about noon one day (22:6), a light "brighter than the sun" (26:13)[4] blazed around Saul and his companions, who all fell to the ground. Saul heard the voice of Jesus asking, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (9:4), and received instructions to go into Damascus and find the house of

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[3] The dates used in this essay for Paul's life are based on the timeline appearing in the *Zondervan TNIV Study Bible* (2006:1854-1855).
[4] Unless otherwise noted, all Scripture quotations are taken from *Today's New International Version* (hereafter abbreviated, TNIV).

Ananias on the street called Straight. Saul was blinded, and for three days did not eat or drink anything (vv. 8-9; cf. Betz 1992:187-188; Bock 2007:353-359; Bruce 1988:180-185; 1993:682; Longenecker 1976:629; 1981:367-372; Mauck 2001:87-89; Morris 1990:56; Pelikan 2005:120-124; Tannehill 1994: 113-116; Walaskay 1998:91-94; Wall 2002:146-151).

In Damascus, Ananias received his own vision from the Lord. Ananias was commanded to go to Saul, restore his sight, and tell him of his new mission— not to persecute Christians, but to join them, and spread the gospel even further, to the Gentiles (vv. 15-16). Though Ananias was fearful of Saul because of what he had heard of Saul's persecutions (vv. 13-14), Ananias did what the Lord commanded, and a new Christian was baptized, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to share the good news with both Jews and Gentiles (vv. 18-20). According to 13:9, eventually Saul began using his alternate name, Paul, since the latter is Roman and Hellenistic in origin (cf. Bock 2007:359-362; Bruce 1988:185-189; Longenecker 1981:372-374; Mauck 2001:89-90; O'Brien 1991:375; Reese 1976:357-362; Pelikan 2005:124-127; Tannehill 1994:116-119; Walaskay 1998:95-98; Wall 2002:151-152).

After getting saved, Paul worked with the Christians in Damascus (9:22), the desert regions of Arabia (Gal. 1:17), and Jerusalem. Opposition from the Jewish leaders drove him to Tarsus (Acts 9:26-30). Paul worked with Barnabas to reach Gentiles through the church at Antioch of Syria (11:19-26). On the first missionary tour (about A.D. 46–48), Paul visited the island of Cyprus and the cities of Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe (Acts 13-14). On his second missionary tour (about A.D. 49–52), Paul carried the gospel further west to the province of Macedonia and the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, and Corinth (Acts 16-18). On his third missionary tour (about A.D. 53-57), he worked with churches at Ephesus, Troas, and Miletus (Acts 19-20; cf. Betz 1992:188-189; Bruce 1986:713-716; Bruce 1993:683-686; Polhill 1999:159-164; Purdy 1962:685-686).

Although Paul had zealously persecuted the earliest followers of Christ, the Lord still called this passionate Pharisee from Tarsus to be an important messenger of the gospel to the Gentiles (cf. Acts 8:3; 22:4-5; 26:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:12-14). Paul accomplished his God-appointed mission by both personally establishing churches throughout Greece and Asia Minor and writing divinely inspired letters to Christians throughout the Mediterranean world—including those living in Philippi. Throughout the Philippian epistle, Paul's deep affection for the believers who had supported him with their prayers and financial aid is evident. Though these Macedonian believers were being persecuted for their faith in Christ, they had neither abandoned Paul's teachings nor discarded his friendship. Such steadfast devotion to the Lord Jesus and His ambassador compelled Paul to pour out his heart to them.

During the course of Paul's tumultuous career as a travelling evangelist, he was held in custody at least four times: temporarily at Philippi (about A.D. 50); once in Caesarea (about A.D. 57-59); and twice in Rome (first in about A.D. 60-62 and second in late A.D. 66 or early A.D. 67). It is most likely that Paul wrote the letter to the Philippians during the first imprisonment in Rome while he was under house arrest (cf. Acts 28:14-31). During this period of detainment, the apostle had the freedom to entertain guests, preach the gospel, and write. His second imprisonment in Rome's Mamertine prison was far more restrictive. In fact, this second imprisonment apparently ended with his execution (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8, 16-18; cf. Hawthorne 1983:xxxiii-vi; Hendriksen 1962:21-31; Hooker 2000:473-475; Kent 1978:95-99; Lightfoot 1981:1-5, 49-60; Martin 1982:7-9; Müller 1984:13-14; Thielman 1995:16-18).

It was after the Philippian believers had sent Paul a generous gift while he was under house arrest in Rome that the apostle wrote a letter to thank them for their kindness and to report on his current situation. At the same time, Paul took the opportunity to urge them to remain strong and united in their faith in Christ, though many external and internal elements may have been discouraging them. The apostle began Philippians 3:1 with the exhortation to his readers to "rejoice in the Lord". Joy is a major theme that is stressed throughout Paul's letter (cf. 1:4, 18, 25; 2:2, 17-18; 3:1; 4:1, 10). In this instance, the apostle encouraged his fellow Christians to rejoice because they belonged to the Lord Jesus (Capes, Reeves, and Richards 2007:207, 210; Collins 2008:40; Fee 1995:291; 2007:408-409; Hawthorne 1983:124; Hendriksen 1962:147-148; Hooker 2000:524; Kent 1978:138; Lightfoot 1981:61-62, 125; Martin 1982:123; Müller 1984:104-105; O'Brien 1991:348-349; Thielman 1995:166-167).

Such an experience would aid in protecting Paul's readers from the heretical legalism of his doctrinal enemies. He referred to them as "dogs" (v. 2), "evildoers", and "mutilators of the flesh". Concededly, these words are harsh, yet they convey the seriousness with which the apostle viewed the imminent threat to his spiritual children in Philippi. (Similar concerns are expressed in the Galatians 5:2-12.) "Judaizers" is the term used to refer to the enemies of the gospel that Paul proclaimed. These were legalistic Jews who contended that all believers, regardless of their ethnicity, had to observe the ceremonial practices of the Old Testament in order to gain and maintain salvation. The Judaizers especially insisted that converted Gentiles had to be circumcised before they could be received into the Church (Acts 15:1-2). Moreover, the Judaizers rejected Paul's claim to be an apostle, arguing that he had watered down the gospel by ignoring the requirements and customs of the Mosaic law (21:20-21; cf. Aageson 1992:1089; Barnett 1993:649-650; Betz 1992:193-194; Beasley-Bockmuehl 1998:183-184; Murray 1993:654-655; Filson 1962:1005; Hall 1992, 1:1030; Harrison 1982, 2:1150; Marshall 2004:349-350; Rapa 2001:166-167, 254; Schreiner 1993:137-138).

Against this historical backdrop we can understand why Paul called the Judaizers "dogs" (Phil. 3:2). This was the term that orthodox Jews would call Gentiles, for they considered both Gentiles and dogs to be unclean, vicious scavengers (cf. 1 Sam. 17:43; 24:14; Prov. 26:11; Isa. 56:10-11; Matt. 7:6; 15:22-27; Mark 7:26-28; Bateman 1998:55; Bock 1994:330; O'Brien 1991:354-355; Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman 1998:214). In a way, the apostle reversed the use of this derogatory term by applying it to devotees of the Torah who insisted that Gentiles subject themselves to Jewish cleansing rites before they could become true Christians (cf. Isa. 56:10-11; Rev. 22:15; Holladay 1969:79; Marshall 2004:350; Silva 2005:147). Paul may have used this word also because these people harassed him at times during his missionary journeys (cf. 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Gal. 5:12; Fee 1995:294-295). Perhaps this is what prompted the apostle to refer to his antagonists as "evildoers" (Phil. 3:2). After all, the upshot of their troublesome actions and heretical teachings was injurious to the spiritual well-being of Jesus' followers (cf. Bockmuehl 1998:187; Collins 2008:64; Doughty 1996; Hawthorne 1983:125; Kent 1978:138; Lightfoot 1981:144; Martin 1982:125; Müller 1984:105-106; O'Brien 1991:355-356).

Moreover, Paul called the legalists "mutilators of the flesh", in which the Greek word translated "mutilators" (literally, "to cut down or off") is an ironic play on the term rendered "circumcision" (literally, "to cut around"; v. 3). This brings to mind the disfiguring injuries pagans inflicted on themselves as they participated in frenzied rituals (cf. 1 Kings 18:28; Fee 1995:296; Thielman 2005:317-318). The apostle's sarcasm was appropriate, for the religious frauds demanded that all Christians be physically circumcised as a prerequisite for becoming holy and acceptable to God. The apostle did not attack circumcision itself, but rather the significance that the Judaizers placed upon it. On the one hand, Paul affirmed the propriety of the Jews to be circumcised. In fact, on at least one occasion he circumcised a believer when he thought it was appropriate (cf. Acts 16:3). On the other hand, the apostle objected to anyone teaching that righteousness comes through obeying a Jewish ceremony such as circumcision (cf. Bateman 1998:55-56; Martin 1982:126; Hendriksen 1962: 151-152; Hooker 2000:524; Udoh 2000:223).

Originally, God instituted the rite of circumcision as a sign of the covenant between Him and Abraham's descendants (cf. Gen. 17:9-14, 23-27; 21:4; 34:13-17; Exod. 4:24-26; 12:44-48; Josh. 5:2-8; Luke 1:59; Hall 1992:1:125-1026; Grudem 1994:975; Lewis and Armerding 1979:1:701-702; Morris 1990:83). Circumcision was intended to mark their entry into the community of faith in Lord. In ancient Israel, circumcision was done on the eighth day after the son's birth, usually by the father. Several non-Jewish groups also practiced the rite. Later, rabbis performed the ceremony for the Jews (Hyatt 1962:629; Schreiner 1993:138; Woodbridge 2000:411-412). Over time, some Jews began to see circumcision, not as a *sign of* a relationship with God, but

rather as the *means to* a relationship with Him. This excessive valuation of circumcision carried over into the early church (cf. Acts 15:1, 5; Gal. 2:11-13; 5:2-3). Paul's view was that while Jews were free to decide whether to circumcise themselves and their sons, no one should try to force Gentile Christians to be circumcised (Longenecker 1976:638-639, 659-660).

Paul transformed the meaning of circumcision from an external mutilation of the flesh, which could be done only to men, to the internal work of God's Spirit that marks every believer's union with the Father based on the Son's redemptive work (cf. Lev. 26:41; Deut. 10:16; 30:6; Jer. 4:4; Ezek. 36:26; 44:7; Col. 2:11, 13; Erickson 1998:1046; Harrison 1996:99; Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman 1998:149; Udoh 2000:221, 223). Paul declared that it is Jesus' disciples—namely, everyone worshiping and serving God by the power of His Spirit (cf. John 4:23-24; Ridderbos 1975:286, 337, 481; Silva 2005:148)— who are the true "circumcision" (Phil. 3:3) and the real people of God (cf. Gal. 3:6-4:7). This included both believing Jews and Gentiles (cf. Fowl 2005:147-148; O'Brien 1991:359). Instead of bragging about what they have attained, they exulted in what the Lord Jesus had accomplished on their behalf through His atoning sacrifice at Calvary, resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven. Expressed differently, believers did not put any trust in their pious observance of religious rituals; instead, they rejoiced in the fact they had eternal life in spiritual union with the Redeemer (cf. Jer. 9:23-24; 1 Cor. 1:31; 2 Cor. 10:17).

Undoubtedly, there were legalists who challenged Paul's authority to teach as he did about circumcision. These same persons would also have contested his disparagement of the efficacy of human efforts to merit God's approval. Against the backdrop of these detractors, Paul delineated his stellar credentials. In this way, the apostle signaled that he had plenty of reasons to put confidence in his personal pedigree and professional achievements, especially based on the Judaizers' standard of righteousness. As a matter of fact, no one was a more zealous defender of the Jewish laws and customs than Paul had been. Moreover, whatever credentials the Judaizers claimed they had, the apostle contended that he was far more qualified than any of them to speak as a Jew on matters of observing the Torah (Phil. 3:4; cf. Bockmuehl 1998:195; Fee 2007:408; Hawthorne 1983:131-132; Hendriksen 1962:155-156; Hooker 2000:526; Kent 1978:139; Martin 1982:127; O'Brien 1991:367-368; Thielman 1995:169-170).

The apostle began by noting that he was circumcised on the eighth day after his birth (v. 5). The implication is that Paul's parents were devout Jews, who faithfully followed the Mosaic laws (cf. Gen. 17:12; 21:4; Lev. 12:3) and trained their son in his religious duties from the time he was an infant. How many of the apostle's detractors could say the same? Next, Paul stressed his birthright as a Jew. Not only was he a member of God's chosen people by birth

(cf. Rom. 9:3-4; 11:1), but also he was from the tribe of Benjamin. Jacob was the son of Isaac and the grandson of Abraham, and together these three men were the patriarchs of the nation of Israel. Jacob had twelve sons, two by his beloved wife, Rachel. The older was Joseph, and the younger was Benjamin (cf. Gen. 35:18, 24; 46:19; 1 Chr. 1:28; 2:1; Matt. 1:2; Luke 3:33). One of the twelve tribes of Israel was descended from Benjamin. Israel's first king was Saul, a Benjamite (cf. 1 Sam. 9:1-2; 10:20-21; Acts 13:21). When Israel divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin remained loyal to the tribe of Judah (cf. 1 Kings 12:20-24). Furthermore, Jerusalem and the temple in the holy city were located within the district of Benjamin (cf. Josh. 18:15-16; Fowl 2005:150; Hendriksen 1962:156-158; Hooker 2000:526; Kent 1978:139-140; Müller 1984:109-110).

Paul's list of credentials included being "a Hebrew of Hebrews" (Phil. 3:5). This meant, in part, that he was the Hebrew son of Hebrew parents (rather than merely a proselyte to the faith). In more contemporary parlance, one might say that Paul was a true or pure-blooded Hebrew—if one could ever be found. He was part of an elite group who had been taught Hebrew (or Aramaic), the ethnic language of the Jewish people, and schooled in the Jewish traditions (cf. Acts 22:2-3; Gal. 1:14). To his birth and training as a Jew, Paul added three personal achievements. Foremost, he was a Pharisee. Within the Jewish community, no group of people were more highly esteemed as strict observers of the Torah, the law of Moses. In fact, Gamaliel, one of the most highly respected rabbis in the Pharisee party of the day, was Paul's mentor (cf. Acts 22:3; 23:6; 26:5; Bruce 1980:236; Hawthorne 1983:133-134; Lightfoot 1981:147; Martin 1982:127-128; Reese 1976:347-348; Ridderbos 1975:36).

Moreover, the former Pharisee demonstrated his fervor for the law by zealously persecuting Christians, whom he once believed were God's enemies (cf. 1 Cor. 15:9). The zealot not only denounced the followers of Jesus, but also actively hunted them down in order to imprison and execute them (Phil. 3:6). As a matter of fact, before Paul's conversion, he would settle for nothing less than the total destruction of the Church (cf. Acts 8:3; Gal. 1:13). In a way, Paul was even more blind to the truth of the gospel than were the Judaizers. Finally, he said he was "faultless" (Phil. 3:6) according to the righteousness stipulated in the law. Put another way, if the law could produce righteousness in a person, then Paul would qualify, for by any human measure he was blameless in his observance of the Jewish commands and rituals (cf. Bockmuehl 1998:201-202; Bruce 1980:237; Eastman 1999:193; Fee 1995:309-310; Guthrie 1981:690; Martin 1982:129; Müller 1984:111; O'Brien 1991:380; Silva 2005:151-152; Thielman 2005:318).

3. Paul's present: growing in the knowledge of Christ (Phil. 3:7-11)

By any human standard of measurement, Paul's credentials were impeccable. Despite this, he rejected as inconsequential everything he had accomplished as an upstanding Jew before his dramatic encounter with Jesus the Messiah on the road to Damascus. In light of the Savior's work in the apostle's life, Paul considered his birth as a Benjamite Jew, his high standing in the party of the Pharisees, and even his scrupulous adherence to the Mosaic law to be ineffectual in securing his redemption. All that had been a profit to Paul (and which the Judaizers prized), he counted as a loss due to his devotion to Christ (Phil. 3:7). Expressed differently, what the apostle once regarded as sterling personal assets he now regarded as grave liabilities (cf. Marshall 2004:350; Ridderbos 1975:138, 140-141; O'Brien 1991:386-387; Silva 2005:157; Wenham 1995:162). In truth, after turning to Christ in faith, Paul's "previous balance sheet suddenly looked alarming" (Bockmuehl 1998:205; cf. Collins 2008:49-50). As a matter of fact, everything about which the apostle once boasted as a Jew he now considered as "garbage" (v. 8). The underlying Greek term was used in the vernacular of the day for fecal matter—that is, detestable excrement or worthless dung meant to be discarded in a sewer (cf. Isa. 64:6; Bock 1994:328; Collins 2008:64-65; Lightfoot 1981:149; Ryken, Wilhoit, and Longman 1998:222).

Amazingly, Paul did regret this "loss" (Phil. 3:8), for what he had gained in having an intimate, experiential knowledge of Christ Jesus as his Lord, was worth infinitely more (cf. v. 10). The apostle was now ready to press his point home. As righteous as he might have appeared in his relentless zeal to obey the Torah, he now realized that true righteousness can come only "through faith in Christ" (Phil. 3:9). The latter refers to trusting in the Messiah for salvation (cf. Fee 1995:324-326; Macky 1998:169; Ridderbos 1975:239; Silva 2005:161; Wenham 1995:356). A less likely option is to translate the original as "through the faith [or faithfulness] of Christ", which emphasizes the steadfast obedience of the Savior (cf. 2:6-11; Bockmuehl 1998:210-211; Hooker 2000:528; Martin 1982:132-133; Matlock 2007:174, 183; O'Brien 1991:398-399; Thielman 1995:171). The Judaizers had demanded that believers be ritually purified through circumcision. Paul's argument was that he was circumcised and did far more in his efforts to be justified under the Mosaic law—and yet none of that was of any value to God. The upshot is that no one can attain righteousness. Only God can offer it, and it is received when people believe in the Lord Jesus. The implication is that the merit arising from Christ's atoning sacrifice is the ground of salvation. Moreover, faith is the means by which believers are joined to Christ and His merit (cf. Eastman 1999:192; Ladd 1997:488-490; Morris 1990:83-83; Ridderbos 1975:170, 251; Schreiner 2008:355-356). These truths were at the heart of Paul's teaching, and he wanted his Philippian friends to permanently establish them as the doctrinal cornerstone of their church.

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated "righteousness" comes from a root term that means "straightness" and refers to that which is in accordance with established moral norms. In a legal sense, righteousness means to be vindicated or treated as just. From a biblical perspective, God's character is the definition and source of righteousness. As a result, the righteousness of human beings is defined in terms of God's holiness. Because the Lord solely provides righteousness, it cannot be produced or obtained by human efforts. God makes His righteousness available to all people without distinction. Just as there is no discrimination with Him in universally condemning all people as sinners, so God does not show partiality by offering righteousness to one particular ethnic group. The Lord freely gives it to all people—regardless of their race or gender—when they trust in the Messiah (cf. Achtemeier 1962:92-97; Brown and Seebass 1986:362-365; Erickson 1998:968-970; Grudem 1994:722-732; Kelly 1988:194-195; Ladd 1997:478, 480-482; Morris 1990: 33-34; Onesti and Brauch 1993:830-832; Schrenk 1999b:2:202-208; Spicq 1994:334-336; Webster and Gerstner 1986:726-727).

In the New Testament, the Greek word translated "justified" signified, in Paul's day, a court setting, with a judge declaring an individual "not guilty". The idea of justification comes from a judge pronouncing someone to be righteous or innocent of a crime. The word had a technical forensic application of a one-time rendering of a positive judicial verdict. Paul used the term to refer to God's declaration that the believing sinner is righteous because of the atoning work of the Messiah on the cross. Without question, then, faith in the Lord Jesus was the sole basis for repentant sinners to be justified in God's sight (cf. Rom. 1:17; 3:21-26; 9:30-32; Gal. 2:16; 3:22; Blackman 1962:1027-1029; Brown and Seebass 1986:362-365; Erickson 1998:968-970; Faulkner, Murray, and Bromiley 1982:1168-1170; Grudem 1994:722-732; Ladd 1997:478, 480-482; McGrath 1993:518-521; Morris 1990:69-71; Schreiner 2008:351-353; Schrenk 1999a:2:215-218; Spicq 1994:1:337-344; Webster and Gerstner 1986:3:727; Wenham 1995:54-55).

In Philippians 3:10, Paul reiterated that his lifelong aim was to "know" Christ (cf. v. 8). When the apostle spoke of knowing the Savior, he was not just referring to the gathering of theological facts about Jesus. More importantly, Paul had in mind experientially knowing the Messiah; in other words, the apostle desired to "know" (v. 10) Jesus in an ever deepening personal union. Furthermore, Paul wanted to have an ongoing relationship through his encounter with the Redeemer, especially as He worked in the apostle's life. This spiritual bond was characterized by "mutual faithfulness" (Bockmuehl 1998:205), in which God redeemed the elect (cf. Isa. 43:1) and they lovingly obeyed Him (cf. Hos. 4:1-2; 6:6; Eph. 1:17-19; Col. 1:10; O'Brien 1991:388). The Greek word that Paul chose for "know" expresses the idea of understanding and perceiving an object in an intelligent manner. The word implies personal acquaintance, experience, and familiarity. In brief, the apostle

did not just want to know about Christ. Paul also wanted to experience the Savior in the fullest way possible on a day-to-day basis (cf. Jer 31:34; Hos 6:3; 8:2; John 10:27; 17:3; 2 Cor 4:6; 1 John 5:20; Bock 1994:321; Fee 1995:318, 329; Fowl 2005:153; Capes, Reeves, and Richards 2007:213; Echeverria 2007:246-247; Longenecker 1976:4:662-663; Marshall 2004:351; Smith 2002:180-181; Ridderbos 1975:243-248; Wenham 1995:232; Zinke 2004:72-73).

Significantly, the apostle wanted to know more about both Jesus' sufferings and His resurrection power. While many believers want more of His power, few would seem to crave "participation in his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10). Paul, however, regarded suffering for Christ as a sought-after privilege (cf. Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 12:10). These, then, were the two realms in which the apostle wanted to grow in his knowledge of the Savior. The first included a personal awareness of the power that raised Jesus from the dead. To be specific, Paul wanted to experience that power working in his life in order to bring about Jesus' righteousness in the apostle (cf. Rom. 6:1-14; Eph. 1:18-23; 2 Cor. 12:1-10). Second, Paul wanted to have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings. The idea is that through Paul's own sharing in the adversity and anguish that came with being a committed believer, he would understand more fully the anguish Jesus endured on the cross. More generally, the "stinging reality of Christian suffering" is the means by which the Father "transforms" His spiritual children "into the image of his Son" (Silva 2005:165; cf. Col. 1:24; 1 Thess. 1:6; Heb. 10:34; Jas. 1:2; 1 Pet. 4:12-16; Erickson 1998:203, 967, 987; Fowl 2005:158; Lightfoot 1981:151; Martin 1982:134-135; O'Brien 1991:404-405; Perriman 1991:77; Schreiner 2008:311-312, 314, 332; Wenham 1995:154, 364).

In all this, Paul wanted to conform to Jesus' death—to the extent that the trajectory of the apostle's life was "deliberately patterned after the main thrust of the Christ story in 2:6-11" (Fee 2007:412; cf. Bockmuehl 1998:216-217). The latter consisted of Paul divesting himself of personal gains and regarding them as complete losses (3:7-8; cf. Capes, Reeves, and Richards 2007:213; O'Brien 1991:410). Being conformed to the Savior also involved crucifying the "sinful nature with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24; cf. Hawthorne 1983:144-145; Hendriksen 1962:168-169; Hooker 2000:529; Müller 1984:116-117; Perriman 1991:73). Paul's ultimate goal was not to languish moribund in a state of lifelessness; rather, it was to be raised from the dead along with other believers on the day appointed by God (3:11). At the Messiah's second advent, Paul would completely know Jesus as supreme Ruler and Redeemer. On the one hand, the apostle was uncertain about the outcome of his current situation as a prisoner in Rome and how boldly he would witness for Christ in the face of impending execution (cf. Otto 1995:324, 330-333). On the other hand, he had no doubt that he (and all believers) would be raised from death to life at the end of the age (cf. Dan.

12:2; John 5:29; Acts 24:15; Rom. 8:30-31; 1 Cor. 15:20-23; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; 2 Tim. 1:12). In short, Paul's confession of faith in the Messiah made it clear that salvation totally and without question depended on the atoning work of the Lord Jesus (cf. Eastman 1999:192; Guthrie 1981:386-387, 628; Smith 2002:181; Ridderbos 1975:487-488, 551, 538).

4. Paul's future: increasing in Christlikeness (Phil. 3:12-14)

Paul had just described the kind of knowledge of Christ he desired. The apostle also wanted to correct any misconceptions the Philippians might have had concerning what he had just said. He noted that he had not yet acquired a perfect knowledge of the Savior, nor was he in a state of spiritual flawlessness (cf. Guthrie 1981:671, 914; Lightfoot 1981:151-152; Macky 1998:278; Martin 1982:136-137; Ridderbos 1975:250-251, 271). Instead, Paul was pursuing the redemption that Jesus had attained for him—the redemption that the apostle would fully possess when God one day raises believers from the dead. On the one hand, the Messiah had already redeemed Paul; but, on the other hand, he needed to "press on" (Phil. 3:12) to achieve the goal Christ had set for him. For the apostle, the notion of "salvation … embraces more than conversion and even initial incorporation into a community". It should be "understood as both accomplished fact and ongoing process" (Barram 2006:62; cf. Bockmuehl 1998:217-218; Eastman 1999:195-196; Polhill 1999:175; Silva 2005:166-167, 174-175).

Paul used the metaphor of a race to illustrate what it means to follow Christ. Both the Greeks and the Romans were avid fans of sporting contests. Sometimes the Roman games were violent and cruel, but often combatants merely engaged in feats of strength, endurance, and speed. Running was one of the more popular sports. When runners won their races, they might win prizes of wealth. Of far more value to most of them, however, was the recognition and honor they received. After each contest, a herald proclaimed the victor and his hometown, and a judge presented him with a palm branch. At the conclusion of the games, each victor received a wreath made of olive or laurel leaves. According to Greek tradition, an oracle from the god Delphi had established this custom (cf. Collins 2008:57-58; Fee 1995:348-349; Hawthorne 1983:154; Hendriksen 1962:170-171; Hooker 2000:532-533; Kent 1978:142; Lightfoot 1981:152-153).

Paul repeated his statement that he had not yet attained the spiritual faultlessness that comes only with the final resurrection. Moreover, he emphasized to his "brothers and sisters" (v. 13) in Christ that human credentials were powerless in meriting God's favor. Assuredly, if the apostle did not claim to be spiritually complete, then the Christians in Philippi (as well as the Judaizers) could not make such a boast (cf. Bockmuehl 1998:222; Holladay 1969:84; Marshall 2004:352; Martin 1982:138; Müller 1984:123;

O'Brien 1991:426-427; Thielman 1995:194-195). The latter notwithstanding, there still remained two things Paul and all other believers could do as they strove with single-minded determination for the lofty goal held out before them.

First, believers could put their past behind them. For Paul this included his former life as a Jewish zealot and all his successes up to that point. In all likelihood, the apostle was thinking about his former life, since he had earlier described his attainments as a pious Jew. Despite his outward success and dedication to the Mosaic law, he had failed to acquire God's favor or personal righteousness. Paul was not talking about obliterating the memories of his former life. Instead, he did not want to recall his former achievements with the intention of noting how they had contributed to his spiritual progress. Nor did the apostle want to dwell on his past sins (which may have included the execution of Christians), for God no longer held these sins against him (cf. Hawthorne 1983:153; Hendriksen 1962:172-173; Kent 1978:142-143).

Second, Paul and his fellow Christians in Philippi could strive for the future prize that awaited them, namely, the "culmination or consummation of salvation" (Eastman 1999:193; cf. O'Brien 1991:433; Silva 2005:177). The apostle used specific Greek words to draw a picture in the minds of his readers of an athlete who is participating in a running contest. Just as sprinters exert all of their efforts to push forward and reach the finish line, so Paul used every effort to drive himself forward in becoming more conformed to Christ's glorious image (cf. Rom. 8:29; 2 Thess. 2:14; 1 John 3:2; Bock 1994:324-325, 328; Perriman 1991:71; Schreiner 2008:308-309). The great difference between races in a sporting event and the race Christians are running in is that a sporting event has only one winner. In the case of the Christian life, all who finish the race win (cf. 1 Cor. 9:24-27; 1 Tim. 6:12; Heb. 12:1).

Paul's utmost effort to win the prize was not to run faster or longer than all other Christians, but to reach a common "eschatological goal" (Thielman 2005:312). Expressed differently, the apostle was not trying to excel above all other believers, but to win a prize that Jesus will award to all who run for Him (Phil. 3:14; cf. Polhill 1999:175). Paul did not say exactly what the prize would be, but he did indicate that he would receive it in heaven in the presence of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (cf. Bockmuehl 1998:225; Fee 1995:341; Fee 2007:413). Moreover, God was the one who called Paul to press on toward this objective (cf. Rom 8:30; Gal 1:15), which especially included becoming more Christlike. Furthermore, it was God who enabled the apostle to run the race (Phil. 1:6; 2:12-13; cf. Barram 2006:122; Bock 1994:320). Thus, Paul fully participated in the race of the Christian life for the glory and honor of God (cf. Echeverria 2007:249-250; Schreiner 2008:312, 377).

5. Conclusion

This journal article has examined the faith journey of Paul, specifically as it is delineated in Philippians 3:1-14. Verses 1-6 reveal that in the past, before he put his faith in Christ, Paul trusted in his human attainments. According to verses 7-11, after Paul encountered the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, the apostle made growing in the knowledge of Christ the central focus of his existence in the here-and-now. Finally, in verses 12-14, it is disclosed that Paul set his sights on increasing in Christlikeness. Based on the sports analogy of athletes running in a race, Paul explained that following Christ requires unrelenting dedication and perseverance on the part of believers. This involves doing the following: (a) putting our past—with all its shortcomings and attainments, whether real or imagined—behind us; (b) living wholeheartedly for Christ in the present; and (c) using all our effort to press on toward the future goal of being made complete in spiritual union with Christ in heaven.

Sometimes we, as believers, can remain stuck in the past. Unless we learn to leave the failings and accolades of our past behind, we risk overlooking the eternal rewards God has for us in the future. If anyone had a past to dwell on, it was Paul. As a former persecutor of Christians, Paul had dragged believers off to jail and stood by approvingly as Stephen, the first recorded Christian martyr, was stoned to death. Paul once tried to destroy the church he later helped to build. It took an encounter with the risen Lord Jesus to turn Paul's life around. Thankfully, Paul had learned not to dwell on the sins of his past. Instead, he said "I press on," keeping his eyes on heaven and the future. Likewise, God has called us to run for Him. He wants us to strive for the prize that awaits us in the Lord Jesus and to put forth every ounce of effort to attain the goal God has set before us. The Savior will reward us with a prize of far greater worth than anything we could possibly receive on earth.

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The Role of the Pastor's Wife: What does the Bible Teach?

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Abstract[3]

The purpose of this article is to identify biblical pillars and parameters for establishing the role of a pastor's wife in a local church. The thesis of the article is that the Scriptures do not in any way define or prescribe the role of the pastor's wife, so we must infer the framework for her ministry as the pastor's wife from what the Scriptures teach about her identify, role, and purpose as a woman, a wife, and a believer. We propose that she is first a woman, designed to image her Creator, and then a wife, who ministers to her husband as his helper, and finally a believer who finds her identity in Christ and serves Him according to the gifts and calling He places on her.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this article is to identify biblical pillars and parameters for establishing the role of a pastor's wife in a local church. It is well known that the Scriptures contain no explicit teaching about "the role of the pastor's wife". Therefore, we must infer the framework for her ministry as the pastor's wife from what the Scriptures teach about her identify, role, and purpose as a woman, a wife, and a believer. We shall begin by examining three key Old Testament passages (Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18; Prov. 31:10-31), which lay a biblical foundation for understanding the role and purpose of women and wives. Next, we shall explore the implications of her identity and ministry as a New Testament believer. We shall conclude with some observations about her role as the pastor's wife.

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Our thesis is that the Scriptures do not in any way define or prescribe the role of the pastor's wife. She is first a woman, designed to image her Creator, and then a wife, who ministers to her husband as his helper, and finally a believer who finds her identity in Christ and serves Him according to the gifts and calling He places on her.

2. Her purpose as a woman and a wife

The pastor's wife is first and foremost *a woman* and *a wife*. Nowhere does the Word of God intimate that she belongs to a special class of women. Everything the Scriptures teach about the identity, role, and purpose of women and wives in general applies equally to the pastor's wife. A thorough understanding of her biblical role as a woman and wife must be foundational to the way she perceives her life and ministry. When she understands the reason for her creation as a woman, she will be able to build upon it as a foundation to establish her purpose and realise fulfilment in life as she is placed in different roles and positions.

2.1. She images her Creator (Gen. 1:26-28)

The climax of creation came on the sixth day as God created humankind, "male and female he created them" (Gen. 1:27). "The creation of humankind is specifically noted as a creation of 'male and female,' stressing the fact that God created 'man' as 'male and female'" (Sailhamer 1994:13). Both men and women are created in God's image, that is, to resemble and represent Him (Frame 1991:227; cf. Grudem 1994:442). Humankind represents God in the world and is under His Lordship, exercising "control, authority, and presence in His name" (Frame, 230). He concludes that men and women equally bear the image of God "in their sexual differences, even in their differences with regard to authority and submission" (p. 230).

While scholars agree that both men and women bear the image of God, there is some debate about whether each gender bears the image individually, or whether only in their union the couple fully bears the image of the Triune God, imaging the complementarity of unity in diversity. Lazenby (1987), for example, tends to focus primarily on the incompleteness of either gender without the other, thereby indicating the unity of the male and female within the sexual relationship of husband and wife to image God equally. Fitzpatrick (2003), by contrast, identifies the female, as well as the male, as created in God's image. Each is an equal representation of God. She identifies six key aspects in which men and women image God, namely, in calling humankind to rule, relate, reproduce, reflect, rejoice, and rest like Him (p. 30). In each of these areas, male or female equally represent God. Fitzpatrick does not claim

that they together, in union, image God; individually, both men and women image God.

On this point, we believe Fitzpatrick is truer to the biblical evidence than Lazenby. Both man and woman equally represent God. Each human being is created to bear God's image, therefore this could not be limited to a husband and wife relationship. Single Christians need to understand they are created in the image of God. However, the completeness found in the marriage relationship must be considered, as a Christian couple become one (Gen. 2:23; Eph. 5:31) they become the image of God in unity.

Being created in the image of God establishes human beings' purpose in life—each person is created to image God. We were each created to resemble and represent the Lord. Since we do not see bearing God's image as something purely static, such as wearing a jacket, we are using the expression *imaging God* to convey the active, dynamic outworking of resembling and representing Him. Human beings resemble God by who they are, but also by what they do. Therefore, believers may *image God* by feeding the hungry, giving wise counsel to a wayward friend, or on a continual basis as displaying unconditional love and respect to their husband or wife.

Whether or not she is a pastor's wife, every woman (and every man) is created to image her Creator in character and action. Her quest for her proper role in life and ministry must begin with an awareness that she is to resemble and represent the Lord in all she is and does.

2.2. She helps her husband (Gen. 2:18)

Genesis 1:26-30 provided a telescopic overview of the creation of humankind. In Genesis 2:4-25, the narrative focuses on the creation of human beings in greater detail, providing a microscopic perspective on the same events he treated briefly in 1:26-30. Just as the creation of humankind in God's image marked the pinnacle of the creation narrative in Genesis 1, so the creation of woman (Eve) as a suitable helper for man (Adam) marks the climax of chapter 2.

The meaning of the noun "helper" (*'ēzer*) in Genesis 2:18 has been much debated. The word essential refers to a "helper, assistant, i.e., one who assists and serves another with what is needed" (Swanson 1997:§6469). The majority of its twenty-one occurrences in the Old Testament depict God helping humans beings (Schultz 1980:660; Zodhiates and Baker 1993:§H5828) Since God Himself can be a "helper", it is clear that neither the word *'ēzer* nor the role of "helper" imply any sort of inherent inferiority. What it does imply is that the "helper" plays a supporting *role*, rather than bearing primary responsibility for a task.

In the Hebrew text, "helper" is modified by the "suitable for him" (*kĕnegdô*), which "seems to express the notion of complementarity rather than identity. … The help looked for is not just assistance in his daily work or in the procreation of children, though these aspects may be included, but the mutual support companionship provides" (Wenham 1998:68). Patterson (1994) argues that the word denotes function: "Designed as the perfect counterpart for the man, the woman was neither inferior nor superior, but she was alike and equal to the man in her personhood while different and unique in her function." Piper and Grudem (1991:408-409) point out that God has created woman as man's loyal and suitable assistant to help tend the Garden and for procreation. The function of Eve is not less valuable to the maintenance of the Garden or to the furthering of humankind, but the shared responsibilities involve each accomplishing complimentary tasks.

Peace (2005:49) attests to the fact that both man and woman were created to bear God's image. However, due to the fact that man was created first and given the responsibility to rule over the earth it becomes woman's responsibility to be a helper suitable for man as he carries out his ruling. Each person performs different roles within the relationship, each equally important and of worth, but distinct in authority. Many feminist theologians will disagree with Peace contending the idea that females are in some way subordinate to their male counterparts.[4] As Rosenzwig (1986:277-80) points out, God instructs humankind to be fruitful and multiply and to rule over all creation equally. The usage of the Hebrew term *'ēzer*, according to Rosenzwig, denotes far more than the English term helper can offer. The term indicates an "indispensable companion".

Defining the specific creative purpose for woman is vital for understanding her role as a wife, for the two are unmistakably intertwined. Should a woman be single, her primary purpose is to image her Creator and to glorify Him; she is singly focused (1 Cor. 7:34). Should a woman be married, joined to a man, her primary responsibility is to image her Creator and to glorify her husband (1 Cor. 11:7). A woman joined to a man in marriage is called to be his *'ēzer*, "a helper suitable for him", one to provide help or relief, one who surrounds, one who comes alongside and who comforts her husband, an indispensable companion" (Harris, et al. 1980). Fitzpatrick (2003:39) ably identifies this calling:

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[4] It would be very easy to become caught up in the gender role debate as we look at specific responsibilities assigned to wives within the marriage relationship. For the purpose of this study, it is not necessary to enter this debate. It is important to note that male and female, although equal in worth are formed differently. They are not only different physically, but also psychologically (Culver 1987:45). After the fall of man, both Adam and Eve were identified for certain roles. God instituted that Eve would bear children and nurture her family (Gen. 3:16), and that Adam would find hardship as he worked the ground to produce food (Gen. 3:17-19). From this standpoint, we acknowledge woman's place within the family and alongside her husband.

> A wife who is reflecting God's helping character desires to sustain or uphold her husband; she strengthens, comforts, and seeks to protect him. Because of her love for the Lord and for her husband, she endeavours to dispel his fears by being trustworthy and gracious. She leans for strength upon the Lord so that she might share that strength with her husband. In her heart he finds shelter and protection from the world; he finds a companion who offers him what he really needs: help in his God-given calling.

It is evident that a wife could never fulfil her husband's all-encompassing needs, as only God can. However, it is also evident that God's calling for the wife is that of great responsibility and elaborate care which can only be ministered through the gifting and grace of the Holy Spirit, a strength for which her husband may praise her (Prov. 31:28).

Aside from Genesis 2:18, the other major biblical passage dealing with the purpose of a woman is Proverbs 31:10-31, which teaches about the responsibilities of a godly wife.

2.3. She serves God and family (Prov. 31:10-31)

Proverbs 31:10-31 is a key biblical passage outlining the responsibilities and roles of a noble wife. This passage of scripture is a perfect description of a noble wife's duties and accomplishments. It illustrates a wide range of activities in which the wife may engage, varying her role and sphere of influence. Thus, the wife is not limited because of her gender or position; rather, she is praised for them (vv. 28-31).

The NIV's "noble" (v. 10) renders *ḥayil*, a root with the basic idea of "strength"; other nuances derive from this root idea (Harris, Archer, and Waltke 1980:§624a). When applied to a wife in Proverbs 31:10, the word refers to a woman who is strong in character, hence virtuous (Harris, Archer, and Waltke, 1980:§624a; Brown, Driver, and Briggs, 2000, s.v. 2; Gesenius and Tregelles 2003, s.v. 3), yet retains the nuance of one who is able or capable (Koehler et al. 1999, s.v. 2). The Proverb 31 wife is both virtuous and capable, a woman renowned for her "superior achievement in every area of life" (Hawkins 1996:19).[5]

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[5] Hawkins explores the identity of the noble wife in relation to Lady Wisdom in Proverbs 1-9. He finds that the noble wife has qualities relating specifically to being a wife and mother (vv. 11, 15, 21, 23, 27, 28), who is a model or example of a wise woman but is different to Lady Wisdom. Lady Wisdom is the personification of wisdom. Hawkins (1996:19) aptly points out that neither wisdom nor folly can be limited to a single gender.

This poetic passage of scripture identifies a godly woman who is able to find fulfilment in her home, community, and career (Shelley 1994:910). The noble woman is committed to the good of her husband and family (vv. 12, 15, 21, 27-28); she is godly, wise, and kind (vv. 10, 20, 25-26, 29-30); she is industrious and productive (vv. 13-14, 17, 19, 22, 27); she is an entrepreneur and leader (vv. 15-16, 18, 24, 26); her character and that of her husband is praiseworthy (vv. 23, 30-31). Many more adjectives could be used to describe the noble wife; however, the crux of the matter lies in her character and her relationship to her God—she is one who "fears the Lord" (v. 30).

Her responsibilities encompass a wide range of activities relating to her core purposes, which, in our opinion, are to image her Creator and to help her husband. Everything that she does relates to these two purposes. She reflects God's character as she extends her hand to the needy, gives wise counsel, and protects her household (vv. 20, 25, 26). She helps and works in unity with her husband, seeking to provide for his basic needs (e.g., clothing and food), establishing businesses and maintaining them, bringing security and respect (vv. 11, 12, 13-25). She rules over creation as she plants her vineyard, uses natural materials, and protects her family from the elements (vv. 13, 16, 21, 24, 27).

The noble woman is a real helpmeet to her husband (McGee 1981; Wiersbe 1997). "Her heart is faithful to the Lord and to her husband" (Wiersbe 1997; see vv. 11-12, 30). Falwell (1994) aptly points out that "the real worth of a woman is her devotion to God," he goes on to reference Tate (1971:99) who emphasises that the noble woman is a "person in her own right who takes a full and honored place in the life of home and Community." These scholars and many others identify the noble woman's godly characteristics and her purpose, in that of relating as helper to her husband, but they do not identify these qualities as a reflection of her Creator. Patterson's article (1991:369) proposes that the noble woman has no other purpose than "to meet the needs of her family in the best possible way." In Poythress' article (1991:244), he indicates that the noble wife, who is entrusted with God's property and the management of people, always shows others respect, as they are created in God's image.

It is the author's opinion that the noble woman, although created in the image of God, also reflects the image of God in and through her godly characteristics as she manages God's creation and interacts with God's people. She is a model helper that God intended for man as she shows goodwill toward him (Prov. 31:12). This woman is strong and able to do all that God has called her to do with the special gifts He has placed in her. We can identify from this passage of scripture and through scholarly resources that the noble woman is not limited to working within the home, but that her efforts are always directed

to that of imaging her Creator and helping her husband, thereby establishing her home.

Now that the biblical responsibilities allocated to the wife have been identified, it must be noted that she is unable to perform her responsibilities outside of her relationship to God. Hawkins (1996:22) explains that she has chosen "to anchor her life on the 'fear of Yahweh'". It is vital that special reference be made to highlight the attitude in which she lives her life. She takes her role and responsibilities seriously and enjoys them. This is not done in her own strength; her strength comes from the Lord, for whom she has great reverence (v. 31). This gives her momentum to live unselfishly for the good of her family. Today's woman will struggle to meet any of these responsibilities outside of her relationship with Jesus Christ.

With the understanding that the noble woman relies upon God for her strength let us explore in further detail the significance of the Christian woman and wife. A woman who firmly establishes her identity in Christ builds upon this foundation and is able to do great things with God. I will investigate the importance of the believing wife.

3. Her role as a believer in Christ

In addition to being a woman created in the image of God and a wife committed to helping her husband, we can also gain insight into the proper role of a pastor's wife by considering her identity and purpose as a believer in Christ.

3.1. She must find her identity in Christ

As the point of departure for identifying her role in the church, a pastor's wife must find her identity in Christ. She must understand her biblical woman-hood—the reason for her existence, her purpose, and her identity *in Christ*. This knowledge brings her confidence to fulfil her calling, honouring God by supporting her husband and actively serving alongside him and within the body of Christ.

This point, although seemingly simplistic, is important. Women often find their identity in their husbands or in a prominent figure within their lives, sometimes even in their children (Dobson 2004:37). Men, by contrast, tend to find their identity in their vocation (Eggerichs 2004:196). Women tend to be relationship-driven creatures, and therefore find it natural to establish their identity primarily in their husband (Culver 1987:46-47). However, if a woman understands her relationship with Christ, her identity is fixed and secure in Him (Eggerichs, 2004:126), allowing her to be a more confident woman, a better mother and wife (or widow), and ultimately a better servant of Christ.

In Scripture a female believer can be identified as a child (daughter) of God (John 1:12-13), a joint-heir with Christ (Rom. 8:16-17; Gal. 3:26-29), and a vessel or temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 3:17). As a believer, she becomes a part of the body of Christ, and is endowed with spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7; Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Pet. 4:9). In Romans 12, Paul urges his readers to evaluate themselves honestly, not to think of themselves more highly then they ought to think. A healthy self-image is vital in understanding self-worth. Shelley (1994:1566) indicates that true self-worth stems from understanding one's identity in Christ and accepting how God made and gifted each believer.

Since there is no special office of "pastor's wife", it is easy for a pastor's wife to inherit a set of (undefined) expectations from her congregation, and because she lacks the self-assurance that comes from having a clear sense of her identity in Christ, she feels duty bound to "just accept" all the roles she thinks others expect her to play. As a result, she labours under a burden too heavy for her to bear, and forfeits the joy of serving Christ in the way He created her to serve.

3.2. She should minister in keeping with her God-given gifts

If a pastor's wife finds her identity in Christ, it will set her free from external pressures to serve Him as He created her to do, that is, in keeping with her God-given spiritual gifts. As she becomes aware and confident of her identity as a woman of God, she is free to use the unique personality and special gifting.

Every believer is called to the priesthood (Hybels 2004:24-25; 1 Pet. 2:9), a priesthood which was ushered in by the events in Acts 2. This priesthood consists of all Christ's disciples living in submission to Him, giving their bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1), and being indwelt by the Holy Spirit, so that each can minister and serve others (1 Pet. 4:7-11).

In His wisdom, God gives each one of His children spiritual gifts which are complementary to their personality and calling. Fulfilment and effectiveness result, in part, from ministering in accordance with their gifts. The New Testament abounds with examples of women serving according to their spiritual gifts, such as:

- Anna: "prophetess … fasting and praying" (Luke 2:36-37)
- Dorcas: "doing good and helping the poor" (Acts 9:36)
- Lydia: showing hospitality (Acts 16:15)
- Priscilla: teaching "the way of God" (Acts 18:26)
- Philip's daughters: "prophesied" (Acts 21:9)
- Phoebe: "a servant of the church" (Rom. 16:1)
- Widows: serving and interceding (1 Tim. 5:3-10)

Because of the need for hospitality, all Christian women are challenged to open their homes without grumbling (1 Pet. 4:9). Even if this is not the wife's spiritual gift, it is necessary for the encouragement of the believers (Patterson 1995). While prioritising serving God in the area of her giving, a woman must keep her priorities in perspective. Her relationship with God, as well as to her husband and children, must come before the others in her life and before special service within the community (Patterson 1995).

Women may possess and exercise any spiritual gift (Schreiner 1991:215). These gifts are a stewardship from God. The gifts she receives gives the pastor's wife "a special function to perform as a member of the Body of Christ" (MacDonald 1995; cf. 1 Cor 12:4-11, 29-31; Rom. 12:6-8). The conviction that each believer, including the pastor's wife, is equipped with spiritual gifts from God, endowed and sustained by the Holy Spirit, should be the point of departure for discovering her God-intended role in the Body of Christ. This involvement is voluntary as it stems from a right relationship with God where one's identify is found securely in Christ.

3.3. She should mentor and/or be mentored (Titus 2:3-5)

In the household code in Titus 2, Paul places a special call on the older women, that of mentoring the younger women in the church (Titus 2:3-5). Using "an apprenticeship style of teaching, personal demonstration and assistance" (Smith 2000:157), the older women are to instruct the young women regarding their roles as women, wives, and believers. Patterson (1995) calls this spiritual mothering, "a relationship that suggests training in order to develop sound judgment and wisdom." Such hands-on training was not limited to women in formal leadership positions or to pastors' wives; it was the domain of all the "older", more spiritually mature women to impart their wisdom to other women. This would have been an invaluable discipling ministry in the early church (Schreiner 1991:222-223).

The relationship that developed between older and younger women within the church was in no way formal or structured, but rather nurturing (Patterson 1995). According to Smith (2000:159), the older women were to train the younger in three aspects, namely, relationships with their family, sexual purity, and management of their households (Titus 2:4-5). When the young women loved their husbands and children, maintained sexual purity, and managed their household with skill and grace, they did not discredit the gospel of Christ.

The importance of the relationship between the older and younger women is significant, especially when discussing the role of the pastor's wife within the church. She is not only a woman offering advice and guidance to younger women, but she may also need to be on the receiving end of the same kind of

ministry. Very often Christians tend to look to the pastor's wife as a role model, and yet in many ways she requires a role model herself (Haggard 2004:6-8). Her needs should not be overlooked when seeking to place women in mentoring positions.

There is, therefore, a biblical imperative for the pastor's wife to be involved in mentoring relationships with other women. This does not, however, imply that she must lead a formal women's ministry. If she is amongst the more mature women in the congregation, she should embrace the role of nurturing some of the younger women. If she is herself a young wife and/or mother, she may need to receive guidance from more mature ladies.

4. Her role as a pastor's wife

In her existence, purpose, and calling, the pastor's wife is no different from any other woman in the church; she is simply married to the man God has called to lead a particular local church. Her identity remains in Christ as a believer, and she is called to exercise her spiritual gifts within the church and the community. She is the pastor's *wife*, and a member of the Christian community.

There is no biblical basis on which to institute a particular role for a pastor's wife. If she were called to ministry within the church alongside her husband, specific duties would need to be established by the church. The same moral standards required of other leaders, such as the deaconesses/deacons' wives in 1 Timothy 3:11, would apply to her. Thereafter, her functions should take into account her God-given gifts (Schreiner 1991:218-220).

Some churches wrongly conclude that because she is his "helper" (Gen. 2:18), the pastor's wife should serve alongside her husband in the ministry of the church. However, the wife's role as helper does not extend into the area of the husband's vocation. In most societies, both past and present, women are more likely to perform the role of the homemaker (reference.com, 2007), supporting their husband without extending their influence into his work environment. Just as a surgeon's wife functions as his helper without working alongside him in the theatre, so a pastor's wife is called to help her husband *primarily* in relation to their home life.

Admittedly, in his discourse on the rights of apostles (1 Cor. 9), Paul claims that apostles have the right "to take [along] a believing wife" (v. 5). This implies that many of the apostles (including Peter) were married, and that their wives accompanied them on their ministry journeys. It is interesting that Peter's wife is never mentioned by name or by position; Scripture merely implies that he had a believing wife (Mark 1:30; 1 Cor. 9:5). Her role or responsibility within the church may have simply been to perform her wifely

duties. Is it possible that Peter ministered to the world, and she ministered to Peter?

Mrs Anna Droke's husband (a minister), said, "A minister's wife has no more call to public duty than any Christian woman in the congregation" (Droke 1914:61-62). The significance of this statement is that it was made in 1914 indicating that the role of the pastor's wife and her involvement in the church has been an unresolved issue for almost one hundred years. The church has taken the role of these particular women and in many cases extended her role into the environment of the husband's vocational position. If a pastor's wife should have a calling to ministry within the church, she should be welcome to fulfil that calling, whether as a paid employee or a willing volunteer. However, should a wife not be called to full-time church ministry, she ought to function within her primary role and spiritual gifting.

Dobson (2004:25) urges all pastors' wives to come to terms with the fact that they are prominent figures within the congregation and are often seen as role models. Nevertheless, the pastor's wife is not an official office within the church. Being married to the pastor should not imply that she must fulfil certain functions; she is a woman of God, as are many other women in the church. The behaviour of any woman in ministry or leadership must conform to that of 1 Timothy 3:11, that is, she must be "worthy of respect". Moreover, as a wife, she should be praiseworthy (Prov. 31:30). However, the simple fact that she is married to the pastor does not require of her any service or place her in a position of leadership.

5. Conclusion

We believe the Scriptures do not prescribe a particular role for "the pastor's wife". The biblical mandate as regards to her role comes from Scriptural injunctions regarding her identity and purpose as (a) a woman, (b) a wife and mother, and (c) a believer with God-given gifts. Her primary calling is to glorify God and be in fellowship with Him. As a wife and mother, her primary ministry is at home, where she seeks to help and bless her husband, and nurture her children. Her identity is formed in and through her relationship with Christ, and she is called to be a faithful minister of God's grace both in and out of the church.

When we understand this to be ideal for each woman we can begin to specify extra qualities related to specific assignments or positions within the church. The pastor's wife finds her primary position in the fact that she is a woman and wife. She is a believer who is to function within her spiritual gifting in the local church. There is no biblical mandate regarding role or responsibility of the pastor's wife. At most, moral characteristics are required of women in ministry as well as general spiritual characteristics responsible of all believers.

The ideal, from a biblical perspective, for the pastor's wife is that of any woman who is specifically influential in her conduct, to function effectively as a woman of God, to support her husband, and be an active member of the local church. Older women would have much to offer the younger pastor's wife in equipping her with the knowledge of homemaking. The older pastor's wife would have much to offer younger women within the church as a mentor or advisor. This ministry is valuable and necessary.

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