God the teacher in 1 Corinthians 2: God's threefold pedagogy and its resistance to prevailing forms of human wisdom

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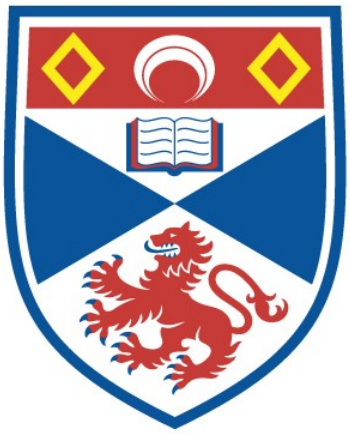

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Abstract

Since the Enlightenment, the philosophical study of knowledge has had a marked influence on the understanding of Christian faith and theology in relation to epistemology. The Enlightenment evaluated religious knowledge according to the same epistemic norms applied to all other forms of knowledge. In resistance to these epistemic norms, some theologians and Biblical scholars, such as Karl Barth and the apocalyptic interpreters of the Apostle Paul, have endeavored to describe an alternative theological epistemology found in Paul's epistles. However, in many cases, these interpretations and studies have not taken into account the specific social and historical circumstances that Paul's epistles were written to address.

This dissertation attempts to explain the epistemic and pedagogical norms implicit in 1 Corinthians 2. In resistance to the Greco-Roman conventions regarding wisdom and education that were fomenting competition and division in the Corinthian fellowship, Paul explains an alternative way of knowing God. This study establishes and articulates the interpretation of Paul via three arguments. The first argument demonstrates Paul's awareness of ancient pedagogy, particularly with regard to the Greco-Roman wisdom tradition, and the way philosophical education contributes to the ecclesial divisions in Corinth. Next, the case is made that Paul portrays God Himself as the Corinthians' teacher in opposition to the various human teachers the Corinthians would have been accustomed to trusting. Finally, the divine pedagogy found in 1 Corinthians 2 is described in a threefold pattern: (1) Jesus's story as the paradigm of human redemption, (2) the collaborative inspiration of human teachers by the Spirit, and (3) the transformation of the believers' propositional faith *in* God into a relational knowledge and love *of* God.

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As I have progressed through the two years that went into the learning, research, and writing of this dissertation, I have come to realize how fortunate I am to have the number of people who directly and indirectly helped me to complete this project.

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Abbreviations

The abbreviations used in this dissertation follow the conventions of the second edition of *The SBL Handbook of Style* when given. One additional abbreviation is given as follows:

L-S Long, A.A. and Sedley, D.N., *Hellenistic Philosophy.* Vol. 1. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

1.1 Conditions for Knowing God

How can people come to know God?

Various social norms for knowing God exist. While often implicit, such norms prescribe conditions for knowing God that are the regular subject of epistemology. Paul Moser defines epistemology as "the study of the nature of knowledge and justification: in particular, the study of (a) the defining components, (b) the substantive conditions or sources, and (c) the limits of knowledge and justification."[1]

Are the conditions for knowing God the same as for other types of knowledge, such as scientific knowledge? The Enlightenment assumed there were no unique conditions for religious knowledge that would not also be available to ordinary people pursuing truth.[2] This assumption, known as epistemic monism, is explicitly described by Laurence Bonjour:

> The distinguishing characteristic of epistemic justification is thus its essential or internal relation to the cognitive goal of truth. It follows that one's cognitive endeavors are epistemically justified only in and to the extent that they are aimed at this goal, which means very roughly that one accepts all and only those beliefs which one has good reason to think are true. To accept a belief in the absence of such a reason, however, appealing or even mandating such acceptance might

1 Paul Moser, "Introduction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, ed. Paul Moser (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 3.

2 Linda Zagzebski, "Religious Knowledge," in *The Routledge Companion to Epistemology*, ed. Sven Bernecker and Duncan Pritchard (London: Routledge, 2011), 395.

be from some other standpoint, is to neglect the pursuit of truth; such acceptance is, one might say, *epistemically irresponsible*.[3]

By regarding all epistemic justification to support a singular goal, the discovery of truth, the epistemology of the Enlightenment assumed that religious knowledge would require the same conditions of knowledge as any other domain of knowledge. The conditions for possessing knowledge of God would need to meet the same criteria as any other branch of knowledge.

Epistemic pluralism, an emerging research area in epistemology, provides some alternative accounts. While there is no single account of epistemic pluralism, as it can be used to describe multiple forms of justification, warrants, methods, etc.,[4] N.J.L.L. Pedersen defines "pure epistemic pluralism" (PEP) as the thesis that there are many, non-derivative epistemic goods that knowledge can deliver in addition to truth.[5] In PEP, the possession of knowledge, or an equivalent epistemic concept (e.g., understanding), is not reducible to the cognitive possession of truth but includes other valued goods that knowledge may deliver, such as wisdom[6] or coherence.[7] The conditions for knowledge can vary based upon the different epistemic goods that one considers knowledge to deliver.[8]

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3 Laurence BonJour, *The Structure of Empirical Knowledge* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1985), 8. Pascal Engel ("A Plea for Epistemic Monism," in *Epistemic Pluralism*, ed. Annalissa Coliva and Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), 96) presents Bonjour's paragraph as an explicit statement of the otherwise implicit assumption of epistemic monism.

4 Annalissa Coliva and Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen, "Introduction," in *Epistemic Pluralism*, ed. Annalissa Coliva and Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), 2.

5 Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen, "Pure Epistemic Pluralism," in *Epistemic Pluralism*, ed. Annalissa Coliva and Nikolaj Jang Lee Linding Pedersen (Cham: Palgrave MacMillan, 2017), 62.

6 Wayne D. Riggs, "Understanding 'Virtue' and the Virtue of Understanding," in *Intellectual Virtue: Perspectives from Ethics and Epistemology*, ed. Michael DePaul and Linda Zagzebski (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 214.

7 Jonathan L. Kvanvig, *The Value of Knowledge and the Pursuit of Understanding* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192-193. Although, Kvanvig does not consider coherence an epistemic good of knowledge but of understanding.

8 Pedersen, "Pure Epistemic Pluralism," 62-63.

One potential implication of PEP for religious knowledge is that if the epistemic goods that the knowledge of God delivers are different from the goods that one receives from other forms of knowledge, then the conditions for knowing God differ accordingly. For instance, Karl Barth's doctrine of revelation implicitly treats God's self-knowledge as the triune God as an epistemic good.[9] Consequently, the conditions for knowing God are determined by His action and activity as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[10]

Alternatively, John Stackhouse's vision for Christian epistemology in *Need to Know* considers vocation as an implied epistemic good: "What we must understand first, then, is the category of vocation. We must understand what is God's call upon humanity and upon Christians, such that we can proceed to conceiving of thinking in its proper context, as part of our whole-selved response to our divine vocation."[11] For the sake of human vocation, the necessary condition for knowing God's will is God's revelation and the Divinely bestowed capacities for knowledge, as well as the cooperation of human beings across the world to fulfill the human vocation.[12] However, God's epistemic provision furnishes multiple sources (i.e., experience, tradition, scholarship, art, and Scripture) and various modes of thinking (i.e., intuition, imagination, and reason).[13] To fulfill a Christian vocation, one is called to seek to live as a Christian in every part of one's life,[14] which is determined by the necessary epistemic goods for each circumstance (e.g., virtue amidst a heated conflict). Consequently, the conditions for knowing God's will are not determined by any single epistemic source or mode of thinking but entail a broad base of knowledge to bring about the epistemic good of vocational understanding.

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9 Karl Barth, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Thomas F. Torrance, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 67.

10 *Ibid.*, 66-67.

11 John G. Stackhouse Jr., *Need to Know: Vocation as the Heart of Christian Epistemology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 57.

12 *Ibid*., 90.

13 *Ibid*., 93-138.

14 *Ibid*., 68.

This brief mention of Barth's and Stackhouse's view of knowledge intends to point to an idea: the conditions for knowing God are not necessarily determined by the epistemic good of truth, at least as the Enlightenment understood truth, at the exclusion of all other goods, such as God's self-knowledge or Christian vocation. There may be other epistemic goods that the knowledge of God conveys while also delivering truth. Whether it is the good of God's self-knowledge or a sense of vocation, the epistemic possibility of Christian theology may be argued to have conditions that are unique to the goal of Christian faith in knowing God that includes, but is not limited to, the acquisition of truth.

Another implication of pluralist epistemic practices and conceptions, whether of the 'pure' form or its other variants, is that it has the potential to lead to the emergence of epistemic tensions and conflicts when there is a fundamental disagreement about what is necessary for specific cognitive judgment to be considered credible, as knowledge, as wisdom, etc. and, therefore, worthy of being acted upon. For example, what degree of credibility should legal systems assign to eyewitness testimony? Should eyewitness testimony be treated as evidence? Alternatively, does eyewitness testimony need to be verified by other evidence before being considered credible?[15] In the context of religion, what role do worldviews have in understanding faith and theology?[16] Is the study of worldviews as essential for doing theology, as NT Wright suggests?[17] Alternatively, according to James K.A. Smith, is worldview too focused on cognition, neglecting the affective and embodied aspects of religious faith?[18]

Epistemic disagreements like those above are regularly addressed under the assumption that there exists a common set of standards for adjudicating such disagreements, however initially unclear

15 Gary L. Wells and Elizabeth A Olson, "Eyewitness Testimony," *Annual Review of Psychology*, 2003, 277–95.

16 James P. Davies provides a brief discussion of this debate in his dissertation ("Paul Among the Apocalypses?: An Evaluation of the 'Apocalyptic Paul' in the Context of Jewish and Christian Apocalyptic Literature" (University of St. Andrews, 2015)).

17 N.T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 24-36.

18 James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation*, Cultural Liturgies (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 63-71.

these standards may be, which allows for non-antagonistic disagreement. However, this is not always the case. Epistemic tensions can sometimes result in forms of protest and epistemic resistance against a set of epistemic norms.[19] José Medina defines *epistemic resistance* as "the use of our epistemic resources and abilities to undermine and change oppressive normative structures and the complacent cognitive-affective functioning that sustains those structures."[20] When specific construals of knowledge and their concomitant practices are considered unacceptable or threatening, attempts at epistemic resistance emerge through challenging people's confidence in the threatening epistemic norms while also prescribing and building confidence in alternative epistemic norms.

Karl Barth and John Wesley serve as theological examples of epistemic resistance to the Enlightenment. Barth's theology of revelation challenges Adolf von Harnack's "contemporary scientific project" that found its origins in the Enlightenment.[21] For Barth, God is known through revelation, differing dramatically from the subjection of religious knowledge to the conventions and practices of Enlightenment epistemology. Alternatively, in "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion," John Wesley accepts the assumption that ideas about God should be "fixed, distinct, and determinate,"[22] reflecting John Locke's empiricism which considered that all ideas are derived from "clear and simple" ideas of sensory experience.[23] However, Wesley challenges Lockean empiricism by suggesting knowledge

19 José Medina ("Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism," *Foucault Studies*, Foucault and Race, 12, no. October (2011): 9–35) describes Foucault's epistemological pluralism as a *guerrilla pluralism*, which "tries to provoke [conflicts] and to re-energize [struggles]" (p. 24) that generate epistemic friction and resistance. Similarly, Sherry Turkle and Seymour Papert ("Epistemological Pluralism: Styles and Voices within the Computer Culture," *Signs* 16, no. 1 (1990): 128–57) report that epistemological pluralism in the field of computer programming can generate a counterculture to the canonical approach to programming.

20 José Medina, *The Epistemology of Resistance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3.

21 Kevin Diller, *Theology's Epistemological Dilemma: How Karl Barth and Alvin Plantinga Provide a Unified Response* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2014), 71.

22 John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 8 (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1872), 13.

23 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Kenneth P. Winkler (Indianapolis, IN; Cambridge: Hackett Publishing, 1996), 154.

of God can come from "a new class of spiritual senses open in your soul."[24] Both Wesley and Barth demonstrate resistance to Enlightenment epistemology through the epistemic claims that spiritual sense and revelation provide the conditions of theological knowledge.

These types of epistemic tensions between the Enlightenment and religion regularly get framed as a conflict between faith and reason. However, this framing is often misleading. One could more appropriately frame Barth's challenge against the Enlightenment in terms of disagreement about the basic sources of knowledge. Basic sources of knowledge do not rely on beliefs derived from another source to acquire knowledge.[25] Traditional epistemology considers reason, perception, memory, and consciousness as basic sources of knowledge. Alternatively, Barth's theological epistemology describes God as the one who provides knowledge of himself to others, without requiring other sources to legitimate God's self-testimony. Regarding God's self-disclosure as a condition for knowing God broaches the topic of testimony as a basic source of knowledge. The rejection of testimony as a basic source stems back to the Enlightenment philosopher David Hume and his rejection of testimonial accounts to miracles.[26] By virtue of Barth's theological reliance upon God's testimony about himself, Barth's theological epistemology challenges the Enlightenment epistemology, which diminished the role of testimony as part of an epistemic resistance to norms about religious knowledge.

Acts of epistemic deviance and resistance to the Enlightenment often lurk in the background of the question, "How is it that people can come to know God?" Must one regard theological knowledge as falling under the same epistemic assumptions and norms that are used to legitimate modern practices of reasoning and science? Alternatively, can one know God through means that are considered deviant from those epistemic norms, especially while maintaining the epistemic value of rationality and science?

24 Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley* (Vol. 8), 13.

25 Robert Audi, "The Sources of Knowledge," in *The Oxford Handbook of Epistemology*, ed. Paul Moser (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 72-79.

26 David Hume, *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Tom L. Beauchamp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 169-186.

Similarly, one can suggest that in 1st-century AD, Christians were engaged in epistemic resistance to the hegemony of imperial Rome and the prevailing wisdom of Greco-Roman society. The practice of epistemic resistance takes center stage for the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 2. Living in a society where Roman imperial power had fused with the practices and ideas of Greco-Roman philosophy, particularly Stoicism, the Corinthians were enculturated to have particular beliefs about wisdom, including wisdom about God, and how to obtain it. This thesis attempts to show that in 1 Corinthians 2, Paul informs the Corinthians that they do not come to know God by identifying wise people to learn from. Instead, they know God because God acts to teach them through the person of Jesus and the various forms of speech and action among the community, which are inspired by the Holy Spirit. Thus, beyond speaking truth about God, God's actions transform the believers to know God so that they not only possess truth known by faith but also that their faith and understanding grows into a love of God and an attitude of servant-hood.

1.2 Epistemic resistance in apocalyptic discourse

To make the above argument about 1 Corinthians 2, it is necessary to discuss apocalyptic literature and worldviews.[27] Multiple scholars have identified evidence that this passage contains ideas associated with apocalyptic literature.[28] For instance, Paul's expression of the ignorance of the "rulers of this age" (1 Cor. 2.6-8) seems suggestive of a pattern of resistance to imperial power characteristic of

27 Usage of the adjective "apocalyptic" is notoriously slippery in the academic literature. This dissertation primarily uses "apocalyptic" as an etic description of a regular feature of apocalyptic literature of Second Temple Judaism that is sufficiently distinct from non-apocalyptic literature of the same period and location (e.g., "apocalyptic discourse" as referring to patterns of discourse uniquely characteristic of apocalyptic literature).

28 Alexandra R. Brown, *The Cross & Human Transformation (*Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995); Richard B. Gaffin Jr., "Some Epistemological Reflections on 1 Cor. 2:6-16" 57 (1995): 103-24, 108ff. Also, Benjamin L. Gladd (*Revealing the Mysterion: The Use of Mystery in Daniel and Second Temple Judaism with Its Bearing on First Corinthians* (Berlin; New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2008), 120-123) connects Paul's "fear and trembling" (1 Cor. 2.3) with the response of persons who have received revelation and visions from God.

some apocalyptic literature. In 1 Corinthians 2.11-13, there also seems to be an apocalyptic influence on Paul's description of how God makes revelation compared to the story in Daniel 2.25-30 of Daniel's wisdom from God, which Nebuchadnezzar's court of wise men lacked.[29]

The creators of apocalyptic literature in Second Temple Judaism appear to have regularly employed it in resistance to imperial power. Richard Horsley has characterized apocalyptic texts as "not about the end of the world but the end of empires."[30] Ascribing their creation to Judean intellectuals who were experiencing the tensions of loyalty to imperial power and their priestly collaborators with their religious traditions, Horsley suggests those texts designated as apocalyptic were attempts to affirm that God is in control of history while resisting imperial rule.[31] According to Anathea Portier-Young, this could include "challenging empire's claims about knowledge and the world and destabilizing and disempowering apparatuses of social control."[32] However, as Portier-Young goes on to note, not all apocalyptic literature resists empires.[33]

Apocalyptic literature also shows evidence of epistemic tensions between many epistemic norms and practices. Christopher Rowland observes that "[the apocalyptic] is concerned with knowledge of God and secrets of the world above, revealed in a direct way by dreams, visions or angelic pronouncements. As such, it differs markedly from other ways of ascertaining the divine will which tend to rely on more indirect modes of discernment, like the interpretation of Scripture."[34] In surveying apocalyptic literature as a whole, Matthew Goff recognizes the existence of fluid boundaries between traditional Jewish and apocalyptic literature. Comparisons suggest that they have much more in common

29 H.H. Drake Williams III, *The Wisdom of the Wise: The Presence and Function of Scripture within 1 Cor. 1:18-3:23* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 2001), 129-132.
30 Richard Horsley, *Revolt of Scribes* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 1.
31 *Ibid*., 3.
32 Anathea Portier-Young, "Jewish Apocalyptic Literature as Resistance Literature," in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. John J. Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 146.
33 *Ibid.*, 154-156.
34 Christopher Rowland, *The Open Heaven: A Study of Apocalyptic in Judaism and Early Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), 9-10.

than Rowland's sharp distinctions might suggest.[35] Ben Sira considers the interpretation of Torah and other wisdom sayings in addition to the aid of God's inspiration to be a critical component in the education of the scribe (Sir. 38.34-39.6). Even though dreams are largely considered unreliable and unnecessary because of the possession of Torah and wisdom, he allows for the possibility that God may still provide dreams (Sir. 34.1-8). Thus, dreams from God function as a source of knowledge, distinct from the Torah and wisdom sayings. Ben Sira is an example of epistemic pluralism; there are multiple ways of obtaining knowledge that do not inherently clash with each other, albeit Torah and wisdom are more reliable sources than dreams – making sharp yet overarching distinctions about apocalyptic literature and the different epistemic methods risks overstatement.

While the epistemic conventions and practices associated with apocalyptic literature have the potential to be employed in resistance to other methods of knowing God, epistemic resistance was also directed towards concerns other than the right epistemic methods and practices. Apocalyptic visions and dreams can also function to designate particular persons as legitimately possessing knowledge about God in resistance to other figures considered to possess such knowledge. For instance, God's revelation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and its interpretation by Daniel serves to distinguish Daniel from the educated advisers in Nebuchadnezzar's courts, designating Daniel's God as capable in a way that other gods were not (Daniel 2.27-49). Similarly, in the Epistle of Enoch (1 En. 93-108), Enoch is construed as a teacher whose words and authority may be subverted by sinners (1 En. 94.5). Because he received the revelation from God (1 En. 93.1-10), he is implicitly legitimated as a unique human due to his understanding beyond that of other humans (1 En. 93.11-14). When apocalyptic visions and dreams present a condition for bestowing pedagogical authority upon the recipient of such revelation, it has the potential to resist the norms of the prevailing social order and contend with other persons who are

35 Matthew Goff, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Apocalyptic Literature*, ed. John J. Collins (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 60-61.

considered credible to instruct about God's wisdom. Consequently, the recipients of revelation are often presented as individuals who contest the wider, societal claims to knowledge.

In 1 Enoch 9.6, the watcher Asael is described as one who "*taught* all iniquity on the earth, and has *revealed* eternal mysteries that are in heaven." [Nickelsburg & VanderKam] Similarly, in 1 Enoch 10.1-3, the archangel Sariel is instructed to go to Noah and "*reveal* to him that the end is coming, that the whole earth will perish" and "*teach* the righteous one what he should do." [Nickelsburg & VanderKam] The contents of the two acts of revelation and teaching from Asael and Sariel are opposed, with the former being about heavenly matters, whereas the latter is about the destruction of the earth. Similarly, Asael teaches iniquity, whereas Sariel is directed to teach Noah as a righteous person. The tension between the two forms of revelation and teaching suggests that God's instruction of Noah through Sariel is a form of epistemic resistance against the impact that Asael's teaching and revelation had on humans (1 Enoch 8.1-2). As Portier-Young observes, there appears to be an "epistemological and theological critique" against the knowledge that comes from the Watchers, symbolically representing Babylonian and Hellenistic knowledge.[36] Speaking about the Book of Watchers, she notes that:

> The Book of the Watchers in particular takes great pains to identify the source and validity of the different forms of knowledge and relate these to the exercise of power, both good and bad. Through analogy with the fallen watchers, the Book of the Watchers exposes as false and destructive the transgressive knowledge on which empire is founded (16.3)."[37]

Another example of social epistemic resistance is evident in Daniel 2. In Daniel 2.1-11, Nebuchadnezzar has a troubling dream. He threatens the wise men of his court with death if they cannot

36 Anathea Portier-Young, *Apocalypse Against Empire: Theologies of Resistance in Early Judaism* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2011), EPUB Edition, ch. 1, "Hegemony and Domination."

37 *Ibid*., EPUB Edition, ch. 8, "Distinctive Features of Early Enochic Literature."

recount the dream to him and give an interpretation of it. Even under threat of death, the wise men are incapable of fulfilling Nebuchadnezzar's demand, believing it to be something only the gods can reveal, but they are not concerned to make that sort of revelation known (2.10-11).[38] However, when Daniel is brought before Nebuchadnezzar, he diminishes the epistemic status of the wise men of the court by (1) explicitly describing their epistemic limitations (2.27) and (2) attributing a revelation from God that the wise men suggested could not occur (2.28).[39] Not only is Nebuchadnezzar's court wrong, but their status as a source of knowledge for the king has been shattered, making way for Nebuchadnezzar to praise God as a revealer and promote Daniel as the individual through whom God revealed the mystery (2.46-48).

Both of these accounts share a pattern: God acts to reveal some understanding to a person whose divinely revealed knowledge stands in opposition to the knowledge and wisdom of the society they participate in, whether it be humanity in general or sages of high status. While there are notable differences between the two accounts, the presence of these basic features suggests a flexible pattern of epistemic resistance against imperial knowledge and wisdom among apocalyptic literature.

1.3 Apocalyptic and epistemology

Ernst Käsemann, Karl Barth's student and the initial popularizer of apocalyptic readings of Paul,[40] once remarked that "Apocalyptic was the mother of all Christian theology."[41] I. Howard Marshall states that Käsemann was referring to the "expectation of an imminent parousia" by his usage of the word

38 John Goldingay (*Daniel*, Revised., WBC (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019)) notes that "the expert's profession does presuppose that the gods reveal things, but not the kind of thing the king requires in the story."

39 Goldingay (*Ibid.*, 213) says, "The experts were right that a divine revelation would be needed to provide what the king asked for, wrong to assume that it was unavailable."

40 Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston, "Introduction," in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 7.

41 Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today*, trans. W.J. Montague (New York: SCM Press, 1969), 102.

apocalyptic.[42] This is not entirely false as Käsemann considers the delay of the parousia as responsible for collapsing post-Easter apocalyptic theology.[43] However, while the parousia may be considered the necessary condition of apocalyptic theology for Käseman, it does not sufficiently describe his full account. One of Käsemann's "characteristic apocalyptic themes" is the role of the Spirit and the prophetic message, "which brings the kingdom of Christ and the kingdom of Satan to the parting of ways."[44] The Spirit determines the prophetic authority and content in the Church: "Impersonal power is precisely what the Gospel is *not*: it is the miraculous power of the Christ who gives authority to his messengers and makes them personally responsible."[45] While Christ had yet to be revealed, the realization of God's justice would occur in the meantime by those "who hear and accept the prophetic proclamation of the standards of the Last Judgment and pass it on through the whole world."[46]

At stake in Käsemann's construal of apocalyptic is not just an understanding of the parousia, but the way Paul and the early Church understand prophetic authority as a bridge between Easter and the parousia. Part of Käsemann's understanding of "apocalyptic" pertains to whose message the Church should be listening. To that end, Käsemann's construal of apocalyptic is consistent with the theme of pedagogical authority present in some apocalyptic literature.

In modern epistemology, the topic of religious and prophetic authority to teach and instruct is a matter of *epistemic dependence.* According to Benjamin McMyler, epistemic dependence "concerns how exactly it is that in acquiring knowledge and justified belief of testimony is an audience epistemically dependent on a speaker and her testimony."[47] At stake in some apocalyptic literature is the evidence of a teacher's epistemic authority, whose testimony others should depend on and accept for the acquisition

42 I. Howard Marshall, "Is Apocalyptic the Mother of Christian Theology?," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Otto Betz (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 36.
43 Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 106.
44 *Ibid*., 102-103.
45 *Ibid*., 104.
46 *Ibid*., 105.
47 Benjamin McMyler, *Testimony, Trust, and Authority* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 77.

of specific epistemic goods (e.g., the truth about the eschatological future, ethical direction for living one's life amid oppression). In other words, who is authorized to communicate divine knowledge?

However, emphasizing the epistemic dependence upon the communicators of revelation has not been the focus in apocalyptic readings of the Apostle Paul. Instead, due to Barth's influence on apocalyptic interpretations of Paul,[48] his epistemic concerns predominate among apocalyptic interpreters. Barth's theology shifted the emphasis of theology away from how one knows God to the knowledge of the Triune God,[49] developing a top-down, 'theo-foundational' mode of knowledge in opposition to the bottom-up, epistemic foundationalism of the Enlightenment.[50]

This influence on apocalyptic interpreters of Paul is readily evident in Douglas Campbell's *The Deliverance of God*. Campbell contrasts Paul's proclamation of the Gospel in his epistle to the Romans as the story of the benevolent, non-retributive God revealed in Christ described in Romans 5-8 with the rebuttal of Romans 1-4 against the gospel of a counter missionary Jewish teacher.[51] According to Campbell, this Jewish teacher has not significantly revised his teachings based upon God's benevolence in the Christ event but has assimilated this into a retributive understanding of God. By virtue of relying upon a prior conception of God to understand the Christ event, Campbell labels the teacher as being a "theological foundationalist."[52] Treating epistemic foundationalism as synonymous prospective, forward-moving thinking,[53] Campbell's description of the Teacher foundationalism may be best described by his definition of prospective epistemology: "the self-impelled acquisition and accumulation of information by individuals as they explore the surrounding world, adding to their base of knowledge step by step."[54]

48 Blackwell, Goodrich, and Maston, "Introduction," 8.
49 Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God* (Vol. 1), 301; Diller, *Theology's Epistemological Dilemma,* 44-47.
50 Diller, T*heology's Epistemological Dilemma,* 73.
51 Douglas A. Campbell, *The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge UK: William B. Eerdmans, 2013), 527ff, 705-707,
52 *Ibid.*, 705-707.
53 *Ibid*., 520-521.
54 *Ibid.*, 30.

On the other hand, being influenced by E.P. Sanders' thesis that Paul "thought backwards, from solution to plight,"[55] Campbell understands Paul to be thinking retrospectively in Romans 5-8.[56] He similarly attributes this retrospective mode of thinking to Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Philippians.[57] As such, Campbell's anti-foundationalist interpretation of Paul closely resembles Barth's resistance to foundationalism.[58]

Alternatively, while not explicitly influenced by Barth, Alexandra Brown in *The Cross & Human Transformation* observes in 1 Corinthians that "Paul's Word is apocalyptic in part because it calls for an end to the world defined by the Corinthian categories of wisdom and power."[59] This change is brought about by the Word creating "cognitive dissonance" in Paul's audience, which leads to the generation of new beliefs.[60] Brown's description may be described in part as a form of epistemic resistance against the specific contents of knowledge enshrined in Corinthian's categories. While not explicit, the discontinuity between the Corinthian categories and the generation of new beliefs from the Word entails a rejection of prospective thinking as Campbell defines it.

Both Campbell and Brown interpretations focus on the contents of thinking through describing cognition and reasoning that emphasize a discontinuity with prior beliefs and knowledge. In describing a discontinuity between the knowledge before faith and what is had in Christ, they reflect the influence of Barth's resistance to Enlightenment epistemology. As such, interpreting Paul through the lens of an anti-foundationalism suggests a tendency to steer into various questions about epistemic rationality. As Campbell observes in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination,* "if God is not at work through Christ, we will

55 E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1983), 68. On Sander's influence on Campbell, see Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 97-100, 436-440.
56 Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 527.
57 *Ibid.*, 527, 902.
58 On Campbell's account of Barth in relation to epistemology, see *The Deliverance of God*, 203-205.
59 Brown, *Cross & Human Transformation*, 163.
60 Ibid.

have to supply a fundamentally different account of Paul's meaning – and motivations, and *perhaps even of his sheer rationality* – from the one he himself is supplying."[61]

While foundationalism was more or less universally accepted throughout Western philosophy, including ancient philosophy,[62] to what degree could one reasonably expect Paul, or the teacher Campbell suggests that Paul opposes, to have embraced or opposed this philosophical account of knowledge? It would suggest that Paul, or the Teacher, were deeply familiar with the logical arguments of Hellenistic philosophy during a period where philosophy had a distinctly ethical focus.[63]

Beyond the influence of Barth and epistemic rationality, both Campbell's and Brown's accounts of Paul reflects the influence of post-Enlightenment accounts of cognition. Brown's appeal to cognitive dissonance as an explanatory concept owes to the cognitive revolution of the 1950s.[64] Meanwhile, Campbell associates the traditional reading of Romans known as Justification Theory, the object of his criticism, with a focus on cognition.[65] However, his usage of perspectival language to give an account of Paul's transition to Christ and retrospective revaluation of Judaism is irreducibly cognitive.[66] Campbell's epistemic perspectivism contains intellectual echoes of Friedrich Nietzsche's perspectivism. Nietzsche criticized philosophers for failing to consider perspective in their pursuits of objectivity.[67] An ancient version of perspectivism may have been taught by the Sophist Protagoras of the 5th century BC.[68]

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61 Douglas A. Campbell, "Apocalyptic Epistemology," in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 68.

62 Ali Hasan, "Foundationalist Theories of Epistemic Justification," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

63 A.A. Long, "Roman Philosophy," in *The Cambridge Companion to Greek and Roman Philosophy*, ed. David Sedley (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192.

64 For a brief history of cognitive science, see Adele Abrahamsen and William Bechtel, "History and Core Themes," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Cognitive Science*, ed. Keith Frankish and William M. Ramsey (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 9–28.

65 Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 34, 187, 583.

66 Campbell, *The Deliverance of God*, 527, 902.

67 R. Lanier Anderson, "Friedrich Nietzsche," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

68 Nils Gilje and Gunnar Skirbekk, *A History of Western Thought: From Ancient Greek to the Twentieth Century* (London: Routledge, 2001), 35-36

However, the marginalized influence of the Sophists owing to the influence of Plato leaves the historical plausibility of Paul embracing an ancient form of perspectivism up in the air.

Given the primarily post-Enlightenment origins for the cognitive concepts Campbell and Brown used in interpreting Paul, a crucial exegetical distinction needs to be made. Are they suggesting that Paul's discourse may be considered to express content that corresponds to modern cognitive language? Or, are they offering a modern, cognitive explanation that explains what is not expressed by Paul? In either case, concerns about evidence for interpreting a 1st century individual along these lines may merit some caution.

This thesis argues that Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 2 can be coherently understood through the use of the concepts of epistemic resistance in regards to Roman hegemony and epistemic dependence upon others, both God and people. In so doing, it will minimize the use of epistemic rationality and modern cognitive language to interpret Paul's discourse, both of which focus on the way individual persons know. However, the overall argument is undecided about what accounts of epistemic rationality and cognition would be the best explanations for what is not expressed by Paul. While Paul does make references to various reasoning acts in 1 Corinthians (συγκρίνοντες in 2.13, ἀνακρίνει in 2.15, διακρίσεις in 12.10), it is regarded as uncertain if Paul presented or assumed an overarching account of reasoning and thinking for believers, either in 1 Corinthians or in the rest of his epistles.

1.4 Methodological Assumptions

Despite the apocalyptic background to 1 Corinthians 2, this thesis does not engage in the direct study of apocalyptic traditions. Discussions about the apocalyptic genre and worldviews can be slippery. Instead, Paul's discourse is interpreted in light of Greco-Roman conventions about wisdom and education to determine how Paul considers believers to come to possess knowledge of God. Putting the exegetical

implications of an apocalyptic reading in the background in favor of foregrounding discussion on Greco-Roman conventions can be legitimated on two counts: (1) the value of socio-historical analysis and (2) the value of limiting the way an interpreter's knowledge of apocalyptic bleeds into their understanding of semantics and the meanings of words without further warrant.

1.4.1 Generic vs. socio-historical analysis of apocalyptic epistemology

One approach to assessing the epistemic significance of apocalyptic discourse is a *generic analysis* that identifies a list of (nearly) essential features of knowledge across apocalyptic literature. For instance, Rowland's contrast between revelation with a more indirect form of knowledge obtained through interpretation presents a generic portrayal of knowledge in apocalyptic literature. Consider also J. Louis Martyn's epistemic description of apocalyptic:

> Epistemology is a central concern in all apocalyptic, because the genesis of apocalyptic involves a) developments that have rendered the human story hopelessly enigmatic, when perceived in human terms, b) the conviction that God has now given to the elect true perception both of present developments (the real world) and of a wondrous transformation in the near future, c) the birth of a new way of knowing both present and future, and d) the certainty that neither the future transformation, nor the new way of seeing both it and present developments, can be thought to grow out of the conditions in the human scene. For Paul the developments that have rendered the human scene inscrutable are the enigma of a Messiah who was crucified as a criminal and the incomprehensible emergence of the community of the Spirit, born in the faith of this crucified Messiah. The new way of knowing, granted by God, is focused first of all on the

> cross, and also on the parousia, these two being, then, the parents of that new manner of perception.[69]

Strictly speaking, Martyn describes the epistemic concerns that come with the emergence of apocalyptic. He then directly applies this description to the Apostle Paul's view of the Messiah and Spirit without considering the possibility of significant differences in meaning. Martyn seems to regard Paul's letter to the Galatians as a specific instance of a generic apocalyptic paradigm that is to be applied similarly across the board. Insofar as interpreters represent apocalyptic literature as a worldview,[70] the temptation exists to treat Paul as a specific instance of this generalized worldview.

NT Wright disagrees, "We must not imagine that all 'apocalyptic' writings necessarily carried the same or even parallel layers of meaning."[71] The problem with a generic analysis is that it regularly construes the apocalyptic genre's relationship to the cognitive aspects of apocalyptic literature as having a one-to-one correspondence. In other words, there is an implicit assumption that the discursive features of apocalyptic literature function in the same manner across all contexts as an expression of a singular form of thinking and knowing that is reliably present across the genre.[72] This general analysis could be reliable if the producers of apocalyptic discourses shared the same or highly similar worldviews from the start. However, as William Scott Green notes about the scholarly study of Judaism in regards to the idea of the Messiah: "It is no longer possible to justify the standard, homogeneous reading of the varied Jewish writings or to assume that different Jewish groups, even within Palestine, shared a single

69 J.L. Martyn, "Apocalyptic Antinomies in Paul's Letter to the Galatians" 31 (1985): 410–24, 424n28.

70 Campbell (*The Deliverance of God*, 190) observes that for some interpreters, "Jewish apocalyptic corpus and worldview" are considered to "characterize Paul's gospel."

71 N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God, Christian Origins and the Question of God* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1992), 283.

72 *Ibid.* Also, Davies (*Paul Among the Apocalypses*, 33) states that attempts to discern "*the* apocalyptic worldview risks flattening out the diversity of the apocalypses in the search for a monolithic construct."

outlook, social experience, or religious expectations simply because they were Jews."[73] Even if all the producers of apocalyptic discourse might be considered to share a similar worldview, it does not follow that one discursive pattern has the same meaning for every adherent of that worldview. Shared worldviews are a form of cultural cognition that is not uniformly distributed to all members of a speech community but instead are "heterogeneously" distributed to its various members.[74] Thus, even if authors share the same worldview, similar discursive patterns may function very differently. The general analysis of apocalyptic epistemology is susceptible to assumptions about the epistemic functions and features of apocalyptic discourse that may be unnecessary, if not a diversion from the original discursive purpose.

On the other hand, a multi-functional understanding of apocalyptic literature can recognize that while there is a relationship between the genre and cognitive meaning, it may take on the form of a one-to-many correspondence. In other words, a specific type of apocalyptic discourse may be used in two different settings while having salient, cognitive implications for the worldview and knowledge of its composer, yet one can not reliably provide a generic description of the worldview and epistemology across both instances. Instead, social and historical context becomes pertinent in determining the cognitive function of apocalyptic discourse, including its epistemic assumptions. A *socio-historical analysis of epistemology* considers the relevant social and historical factors that the apocalyptic discourse is addressing in order to determine its epistemic significance. Portier-Young's analysis of apocalyptic literature as resistance literature fits well within this type of analysis in recognizing that not all apocalyptic discourse functions to resist imperial systems of knowledge and control. In this form of analysis, the various discursive patterns of apocalyptic literature have the potential for conveying and

73 William Scott Green, "Messiah in Judaism: Rethinking the Question," in *Judaisms and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era*, ed. Jacob Neusner, William Scott Green, and Ernest S. Frerichs (Cambridge, UK; New York; Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 10.

74 Farzad Sharifan, *Cultural Linguistics, Cultural Conceptualizations, and Language* (Amsterdam; Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing, 2017), 22.

constructing varying accounts visions of knowledge that become actualized in a specific way based upon how it meets the perceived needs of the circumstance.

In conclusion, in so far as apocalyptic themes and motifs influence Paul's discourse, it will be approached under the assumption that it is best understood through a socio-historical methodology.

1.4.2 The relationship of Paul's language with historical knowledge of social and literary backgrounds

The lack of apocalyptic-styled metaphors in 1 Corinthians 2 should serve to limit the degree to which one's interpretation of Paul's discourse relies on the conventions of apocalyptic literature.[75] It bears stating that 1 Corinthians 2 is not an apocalyptic discourse, even if apocalyptic traditions influence it. While this may be obvious to anyone familiar with apocalyptic literature, interpreting Paul in light of the "apocalyptic" has the effect of diminishing attention to the actual form of the discourse and its role in communicating meaning. While some comparisons of the discourse of 1 Corinthians 2 to patterns in apocalyptic literature may help to clarify Paul's thinking, caution is merited in drawing connections between the two.

Käsemann presents an example of identifying specific words with apocalyptic concepts and worldviews is:

> Apocalyptic even underlies the particular shape of Pauline anthropology. For technical terms 'spirit' and 'flesh' do not signify, any more than the term 'body' does, the individuation of the individual human being, but primarily that reality which, as the power either of the heavenly or

75 N.T Wright (*The New Testament and the People of God*, 282) writes: "Apocalyptic language uses complex and highly coloured metaphors in order to describe one event in terms of another, thus bringing out the perceived 'meaning' of the first."

> the earthly, determines him from the outside, takes possession of him and thereby decides into which of the two dualistically opposed spheres he is to be integrated.[76]

Käsemann makes the semantic assumption that Paul's anthropological terms are to be comprehended in light of the apocalyptic dualism he understands and sees in the opposition of the two spheres. However, if Käsemann rightly represents the significance of Paul's uses of spirit and flesh, then successfully communicating those specific ideas would be impossible with anyone except those who share Paul's apocalyptic worldview in the first place. Alternatively, one can consider Paul's usage of spirit and flesh to be cognizant of the various senses the words take in broader society, especially in the discourse of Greco-Roman wisdom, even if Paul does not share the same understanding and significance that those concepts have within the worldview of the prevailing culture.

Similarly, Richard Gaffin identifies the background of 1 Corinthians 2.6-9 as a contrast between two aeons with God's wisdom pertaining to the eschatological realization of the final age, leading Gaffin to suggest the reason that the rulers of this age are disqualified is because "believers and unbelievers belong to two different worlds; they exist in not only separate but antithetical 'universes of discourse.'"[77] For such an idea to be the communicative intention of Paul would probably mean that Paul's selection of τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου (1 Cor. 1.20, 2.6, 2.8) and κόσμος (1 Cor. 1.20-21, 1.27-28, 2.12) draws on this conception of two distinctly different worlds. Would the Corinthians have understood Paul's language in this way? This is not likely. A significant portion of the Corinthians were likely Gentiles who had no prior involvement with a Jewish synagogue.[78] For Corinthians who are not familiar with the background ideas that Gaffin attributes to Paul's discourse, one may alternatively understand these words as more general

76 Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today*, 136.
77 Gaffin, "Some Epistemological Reflections," 109-110.
78 Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 24-28.

references to space and time. Κόσμος can be used as a universal description of the world in which all humans inhabit. Additionally, as it will be attempted to show, τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου can be understood as a reference to the political realities of the present period of history under Rome imperial rule with an implicit sense of its temporal limitations.

While some conventions in apocalyptic literature may influence Paul's thinking, a skilled communicator would not expect an audience who is unfamiliar with that body of literature to be familiar with those meanings. Paul's knowledge about the audience and their understanding would significantly influence his language usage if Paul is a competent communicator with an awareness of the differences in cultural backgrounds between himself and the audience.[79] While an overview of the Pauline corpus as a whole does not always demonstrate a concern for the audience's immediate intelligibility (cf. 2 Pet. 3.16), it is a safe assumption to make in regards to 1 Corinthians. First, Paul shows an awareness of different cultural forms of wisdom, including most explicitly in 1 Corinthians 1.20-23. Second, part of Paul's purpose for writing the epistle is to engage with a letter the Corinthians sent to him (1 Cor 7.1), making comprehension by the audience a higher priority than might otherwise be the case. Third, in 9.19-23, Paul expresses his *modus operandi* of partially accommodating himself to the people he evangelizes. Altogether, these three pieces of evidence suggest that Paul had the competence, need, and motivation to communicate to non-Jewish inhabitants of the Greco-Roman society in a way that they could comprehend.

To incorporate the way Paul's discursive meanings may be formed with the Corinthian's comprehension in mind, a sharper distinction can be made between the conventional significance and meaning of language and motifs used in apocalyptic discourses and Paul's communicative intentionality

79 Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Communication: Research, Theory, and Practice* (London; New York: Routledge, 2011), 33.

in the discourse of 1 Corinthians.[80] In so doing, multiple possibilities for how Paul's discourse functions can be considered, some of which may diminish or alter the nature of any apocalyptic influence from what is observed in apocalyptic literature in order for it to be comprehended by the audience. While attentive readings of Paul's letters may suggest his language is influenced by various themes and ideas of apocalyptic literature, John Barclay observes that care should be taken in how much of the thought evidenced in apocalyptic literature is used to interpret Paul:

> we can trace Paul's deployment of themes, motifs, and patterns of thought that are characteristic of such literature, without needing to make strong claims that their notions of revealed knowledge, oppressive powers, determinate times, or future cosmic change constitute a single package, or are taken over unchanged into Pauline theology.[81]

While the apocalyptic background of Paul's language may provide meanings that structure Paul's thinking about God, plausible influences from other social and literary backgrounds warrants hermeneutical caution. Given the various possible influences on Paul's language and thought, there is a risk of unwarranted assumptions about which of the various plausible literary and social backgrounds are appealed to so as to make sense of his discourse. Consequently, attempts to ascertain the specific meaning of Paul's usage of words and motifs that are held in common with multiple social and literary backgrounds should focus on their function within Paul's discourse and ascertain which backgrounds show the greatest degree of similarity and most plausible influence. More strenuous exegetical proofs

80 When it comes to meaning and communication, Kent Bach ("Meaning and Communication," in *Routledge Companion to Philosophy of Language*, ed. Gillian Russell and Delia Graff Fara (New York; London: Routledge, 2012), 79) comments that "we need to distinguish between the meaning of the linguistic expression—a word, phrase, or sentence—from what a person means in using it."

81 John M.G. Barclay, "Apocalyptic Allegiance and Disinvestment in the World," in *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, ed. Ben C. Blackwell, John K. Goodrich, and Jason Maston (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 258.

beyond historical plausibility and verbal and thematic similarities are to be sought before interpreting Paul's language and motifs as taking on the forms of meaning observed in apocalyptic literature, especially when such readings minimize or exclude the hermeneutical significance of other social and literary backgrounds.

Interpreters have regularly understood Paul's usage of αἰών against an apocalyptic background. Construing its significance in relationship to apocalyptic themes Hans Konzelmann suggests that "[this age] has its counterpart in the expectation of the 'coming aeon.'"[82] Alexandra Brown similarly argues that the language of "this age" distinguishes the present age from another age as it does in apocalyptic literature.[83] John Barclay notes that the language of "this age" matches motifs in apocalyptic literature.[84]

However, other literary and social backgrounds can also be plausibly advanced. For instance, πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων in 1 Corinthians 2.7 may be taken as an echo of πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος in Proverbs 8.23 LXX, suggesting a non-apocalyptic Jewish influence for Paul's usage. Furthermore, αἰών was used in Greek literature to refer to more extended periods of time, such as historical eras or eternity. [85] Similarly, the Latin equivalent *saeculum* is used by the Roman senator Cicero to refer to previous historical eras (Cicero, *Rep.* 2.18). The Stoic philosopher Seneca the Younger uses *saeculum* to describe the prosperity children enjoy that will emerge under the rule of a merciful king to the Roman Emperor Nero (Seneca, *Clem.* 1.13). Both uses of *saeculum* suggest αἰών could have been understood in the late Roman Republic and early Imperial era to refer to historical eras, including eras of political rule.

This example demonstrates that the mere presence of shared language or motifs between Paul and apocalyptic literature is insufficient to determine Paul's meaning when the language or motifs are

82 Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*. 36.
83 Brown, *Cross & Human Transformation*, 82.
84 John M. G. Barclay, "Crucifixion as Wisdom: Exploring the Ideology of a Disreputable Social Movement," in *The Wisdom and Foolishness of God: First Corinthians 1-2 in Theological Exploration*, ed. Christophe Chalamet and Hans-Cristoph Askani (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015), 3. See also Brown, *Cross & Human Transformation*.
85 LSJ, s.v. "αἰών."

more widely diffused; further evidence is necessary to narrow influence. One possibility for determining influence is demonstrating a close similarity between specific literary sources in terms of the quantity of shared vocabulary and concepts and their similar uses. For instance, this thesis argues on multiple occasions that Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 2 shares many similarities with Daniel 2 LXX. However, being able to demonstrate inter-textual influence decisively is a difficult task due to the usual paucity of evidence that can be marshaled in support of a specific background passage. Yet, even when such a task is feasible, this strategy by it self does not lend strong evidence for the influence of a broader social or literary background. Similarities between 1 Corinthians and Daniel do not establish the extent to which Paul's discourse reflects the conventions of Jewish apocalyptic literature as a whole. In that case, it is more reliable to speak of either a direct or indirect influence from Daniel on Paul rather than appeal to apocalyptic conventions more broadly.

Another strategy for narrowing the influence on Paul's language in the case of multiple possible backgrounds is to consider the relevance of the various possible usages of the word and motifs for the discourse in which they are present. Relevance theory, developed by Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, posits a 'communicative principle of relevance': "Every act of ostensive communication communicates a presumption of its own relevance."[86] As a consequence, communicative meaning is not determined simply by how words and motifs are conventionally used in specific cases, but how their varying senses and potential construals are relevant to both the communicative purposes of the communicator and the audience's perception of those purposes. Narrowing down specific meanings amid multiple possibilities entails recognizing the various possible conceptual encodings of a word and their relevance to contextual information.[87] In studying the diversity of potential linguistic meanings, the most substantial

86 Deirdre Wilson and Dan Sperber, *Meaning and Relevance* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 38.

87 *Ibid*, 43.

source of evidence for narrowing discursive meaning and relevance of communication can be obtained via knowledge of the way the communication was made and received. This can be done through understanding the broader content of the discourse, the circumstances of the communicator and audience, and their cognitive perspectives that influence the content and interpretation of communication.

Knowledge about the social, religious, philosophical, political, and textual backgrounds of the involved persons can also be instrumental in generating hypotheses about possible linguistic meaning. However, such semantic hypotheses need further evidence of their relevance to the content of the discourse to be considered warranted and plausible in interpreting the discourse. Hypotheses about semantic meanings generated from historical knowledge of social and literary backgrounds are not sufficient by themselves. Further evidence from the context of the discourse should be sought. In other words, the attribution of apocalyptic meanings to Paul's discourse, especially in a way that excludes or minimizes other plausible influences, should necessitate further discursive evidence.

This thesis' working assumption, which will be demonstrated throughout, is that there is evidence in 1 Corinthians that Paul's discourse more strongly suggests influence from the Greco-Roman wisdom conventions of Paul's Corinthian audience rather than the apocalyptic themes and motifs at the *explicit* level of the discourse. This is not an all-or-nothing judgment about other social and literary backgrounds. Certain ideas that Paul expresses may resemble apocalyptic themes and motifs, such as apocalyptic resistance to persons who are deemed to be wise by imperial powers. However, such resemblances with apocalyptic literature are observed to be implied through a second-order, coherent reading of the whole discourse. By contrast, the first-order, explicit meanings of Paul's words should primarily be situated within the Greco-Roman contexts with which the Corinthians would be familiar.

Roughly speaking, Paul was competently communicating with the Corinthians like an inhabitant of the Greco-Roman world, even as he thought like a Second Temple Jew.

The assumption of Paul's communicative competence suggests that Paul's discursive intentions in his word usage would correspond to meanings he would expect the Corinthian audience to be able to access and comprehend. In that case, the potential meanings of words used in Jewish literature, such as apocalyptic literature, should be considered explicitly communicated in Paul's discourse only insofar as they can be considered (a) relevant to making sense of the discourse as it is given and (b) readily understandable by the Corinthian audience. This does not mean that the Corinthian audience should be assumed to understand everything Paul intended in his discourse, but only that the communication is to some degree comprehensible by them. Paul's discourse may give the basis to infer meanings that span beyond what is immediately recognizable and comprehensible by the Corinthian audience. However, in such a case, the uncomprehended meanings for the audience would still be expected to be coherent with the discourse based on what is readily relevant and comprehensible to the audience. In other words, Paul's implicit communication of an idea or concept present in the apocalyptic literature may be novel for his Corinthian audience, but would be expected to still be intelligible to them in light of the linguistic meanings the Corinthians were readily familiar with from the shared Greco-Roman background with Paul.

Looking closer at αἰών, Paul's usage could potentially reflect some of the meanings in Daniel or Proverbs. However, if Paul was a competent communicator and assumed the Corinthians lacked a robust understanding of Jewish literature, his intentions in using αἰών could be primarily influenced by the word as a marker of historical time as it was used in Greek literature and the similar historical usage of the Latin equivalent *saeculum*, given the communicative relevance to the Corinthian audience. The combination of the singular αἰῶνος with the demonstrative τούτου in 1 Corinthians 1.20, 2.6 and 2.8, in

addition to τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ in 3.18, could have been readily recognized as a reference to the present period of time in history. This use to refer to historical time is suggested by the lack of the demonstrative pronoun with the plural αἰώνων in 2.7 and 10.11, suggesting multiple periods of time. The presence of the demonstrative pronoun with the singular αἰῶνος/αἰῶνι seems to highlight the present period of time over and against the various periods of human history up to that point of time as referred to by αἰώνων.

If this understanding of Paul's use of αἰών is correct, then τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is not intended to contrast with another age as Conzelmann and Brown suggest. Instead, it is implicitly understood in contrast with the whole of human history. Given the uniqueness of the time period, some ancient historians disconnected the Imperial era from its Republican past with little concern for continuity.[88] The Roman Empire was unique from its predecessors due to its economic prosperity ushered in through the *Pax Romana,*[89] which would have been particularly crucial for Corinth in the 1st century as a city growing in economic prosperity through trade and manufacturing, tourism, and religion.[90] Consequently, the phrase τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου could have been plausibly used with the social knowledge that the Corinthians considered the Roman era as a historically unique time of power, prosperity, and peace. The apparent echo of Proverbs 8.23 LXX in 1 Corinthians 2.7 would be consistent with this historical usage of αἰών, construing God's wisdom as being predetermined before human history.

The historical usage of αἰών may also implicitly refer to the transitory nature of the present state of affairs that will pass away and change with time, similar to what Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 7.31 and 10.11. This transitory nature of time and history is reflected in the book of Daniel. In Daniel 2.20-23 LXX, Daniel praises God who is blessed as εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα in 2.20, reflecting a future orientation of time.

88 Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern*, Third. (Chicago; London: The University of Chicago Press, 2007), 72-73.

89 Peter Temin, *The Roman Market Economy* (Princeton; Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013). 218. See also Seneca, *Clementia* 1.13.

90 Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 5-19.

Then, in 2.21a, Daniel talks about God's control over the changing of time and sovereignty over the fates of political rulers. The transitory, changing nature of history is under God's power to alter. That Daniel 2.20-23, and the surrounding context, is a highly plausible literary influence upon Paul is suggested by the multiple similarities it has with 1 Corinthians 1.18-2.16. First, both Daniel and 1 Corinthians use αἰών, although Daniel 2.20 uses it to highlight God's relationship to time, whereas Paul highlights human history. Furthermore, Paul's quotation of Isa. 29.14 in 1 Cor. 1.19 also bears a resemblance to Daniel 2.21b, with the one striking difference being that God grants wisdom and understanding in Daniel, whereas Paul describes God as putting an end to human wisdom and understanding. There are other similarities in language usage, such as ἀνακαλύπτων and τὰ βαθέα in Daniel 2.22 with ἀπεκάλυψεν and τὰ βάθη in 1 Corinthians 2.10.

Given the many similarities, one may appeal to the relation of the changing nature of historical and political circumstances to God's sovereignty in Daniel 2.20-23 to inform Paul's understanding of time in using αἰών. While Paul's Corinthian audience may not have been familiar with Daniel, they could comprehend the experience of change over time. For instance, when the Stoic Epictetus uses αἰών in reference to eternity, it is to refer to a permanent state of affairs that is distinct from uncertain and changing circumstances (Epictetus, *Diati*. 2.5.13; 2.8.20). This usage of αἰών to describe eternity seems to differ from Paul's historical usage in 1 Corinthians, which can be explained as a semantic ambiguity describing an extended period of time that is given a more specific meaning based upon its usage. Nevertheless, the temporal sense of αἰών would lead to the persistence of association with the transitory, changing nature of time, whether αἰών is used to refer to eternity and a historical era. As such, while the Corinthians may not explicitly understand Paul's usage of αἰών in terms of the conventions of Daniel or apocalyptic literature, the Corinthians would have been able to infer an implicit meaning of the transitory nature of historical periods of time, a meaning that is evident in the Danielic

influence upon Paul's discourse. Even so, the Corinthians may not have been immediately familiar with the novel idea that Paul implies about God as an agent of historical change. In such a case, it seems warranted to consider that the temporal sense of αἰών is used in association with the demonstration of God's sovereign power to change the present political realities, but in a way comprehensible by the Corinthian audience.

In his address to SBL in conversation with N.T. Wright, John Barclay rejects the premise that Paul refers to the Roman Empire in coded language, calling attempts to interpret Paul having a counter-imperial message a "pure hallucination" due to the lack of explicit references to Rome. Instead, Barclay sees no specific reference intended towards Rome or any other specific political entity. The political and social worlds are treated as an undifferentiated mass, whereas the only divide that is relevant for Paul is the world and new creation. As a consequence, Barclay notes that the rulers of the age in 1 Corinthians 2.6 are "nameless and undifferentiated" because their specific identities do not matter, but they simply belong to "this age." Speaking about 1 Corinthians 1, Barclay suggests the crucifixion of Christ "divides the world anew around the event of Christ."[91]

While hermeneutical precautions about too quickly inferring anti-imperial references in Paul's letters are likewise merited, Barclay is perhaps guilty of presuming that the absence of (direct) evidence is the evidence of absence. There are multiple reasons to consider the most relevant meaning of τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου for the Corinthian audience would be as an implicit reference to the Roman imperial power.

First, the "wisdom of this age" (1 Cor. 2.6; σοφίαν... τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) makes sense as a reference to Stoic philosophy, which enjoyed high status in the early Roman Empire. Stoics such as Seneca often inhabited high positions of political influence and authority. This can explain the similar

91 John Barclay, "Why the Roman Empire Was Insignificant to Paul" (presented at the SBL 2007 Annual Meeting, San Diego, 2007).

phrase ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in 2 Corinthians 4.4 as a reference to the social diffusion of Stoic descriptions of God by virtue of their political prominence, given the theological propensity of the Stoics to understand a single God as "the governing principle of the cosmos."[92] In addition, "the rulers of this age" (1 Cor. 2.8; τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) are said to have crucified Jesus. The most immediate recognizable reference would be the Roman governor Pilate who sentenced Jesus to death. The various uses of τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου can be readily understood in terms of a reference to Roman hegemony.

Second, the collocation of the "wisdom of this age" with "the rulers of this age" in 1 Corinthians 2.6 may reflect the social expectations that political rulers should learn and possess wisdom (Musonius Rufus, *Diatri.* 8.2). Paul seems to show implicit knowledge of this convention in his rebuke of the Corinthians for taking each other before secular judges in 6.1-6. He raises the expectation that there should be someone wise enough in the community to handle such cases, perhaps reflecting the social conventions that secular judges were expected to use wisdom in their judgments.

Additionally, Paul's usage of τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in reference to Roman influence and power would be consistent with the previously described epistemic resistance to imperial knowledge in some apocalyptic literature. In lieu of the form of wisdom associated with "this age," God's sovereign activity over the present historical era would operate to remove this form of imperial wisdom with the passage of time, replacing it instead with God's own wisdom (1 Cor. 2.7). The Corinthians would not likely have been familiar with the epistemic resistance in apocalyptic literature. Yet, they would have been more familiar with the regularly competitive nature exhibited between different teachers and their wisdom (see section 3.3), allowing them to make sense of "God's wisdom" as a wisdom in competition with "the wisdom of this age" in a way that corresponds to epistemic resistance in apocalyptic literature.

92 Keimpe Algra, "Stoic Theology," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 153.

This above example of αἰών demonstrates the importance and value of considering how specific language is relevant to the socio-historical circumstances in which communication occurs, especially when there are multiple plausible social and literary backgrounds for key words and ideas. While this thesis does not engage in the same degree of thoroughness throughout due to constraints of space, this analysis of αἰών functions as a prototype for the method that this thesis uses to interpret Paul's discourse primarily, but not exclusively, against the linguistic and social conventions of Greco-Roman society as Paul's Corinthian audience would have understood it.

1.5 Purpose and structure of this study

The thesis' purpose is to reconstruct the nature of Paul's implicit epistemology and epistemic resistance in 1 Corinthians 2 through evaluating how Paul's discourse can be made sense of in light of Greco-Roman conventions, particularly those of wisdom and education. 1 Corinthians 2 may be characterized as containing ideas and discursive features that correspond to those evident in apocalyptic literature. However, a proper understanding of Paul's communication should proceed from the assumption that Paul's language usage is better understood in terms of Greco-Roman linguistic and non-linguistic conventions about wisdom. Some of the ideas that emerge from this interpretation may be aptly identified as characteristic of some apocalyptic literature, particularly in terms of epistemic dependence and epistemic resistance to empire.

It will be argued that Paul ultimately considers God as the teacher of the Corinthians through Jesus Christ and the inspired speech and actions from the Spirit, which serves to provide an alternative way of knowing God in love unfamiliar to the Corinthians at that time. Ultimately, what will be argued is that for Paul, God's way of making himself known through Jesus and Spirit determines the way

Corinthians know God rather than the pervasive epistemic assumptions of the early Roman empire as influenced by Greco-Roman wisdom.

Chapter 2 will start by assessing the scholarship on the problems of division and wisdom in 1 Corinthians. It will be argued that the scholarship to date has not adequately taken Paul's discourse into account for understanding what Paul states about wisdom and the nature of the divisions in Corinth. Chapter 3 will proceed to look at 1 Corinthians as a whole, particularly chapters 1-4, to suggest that the primary concern for Paul and the primary driver of the ecclesial division are the views the Corinthians held about wisdom and education. Having established that, chapter 4 will argue that the best way to understand 1 Corinthians is in Paul's description of how God teaches believers from the beginnings of coming to faith to growth and maturity into wisdom. Then, chapter 5 will discuss how Paul's understanding of knowledge, faith, and wisdom is determined by the specific way in which God teaches the Corinthians about their redemption through the story of Christ crucified as the paradigm of God's wisdom and the inspiration of various humans agents by the Spirit to enable people to perceive and grow to comprehend God's power and wisdom.

Chapter 2 - Scholarship on conflict and wisdom in 1 Corinthians

2.1 Introduction

In 1 Corinthians 1.10-17, Paul begins his instruction to the Corinthians by exhorting them to be united. According to Paul, the Corinthians were experiencing divisions characterized by identifying with various teachers rather than finding their unity in Christ. While the passage does not provide much explicit information about the divisions within the community, Paul's description of his *modus operandi* provides one hint: his preaching was not with σοφίᾳ λόγου ("wisdom of speech"). It seems wisdom is the culprit of the ecclesial division.

This thesis assumes that an adequate account of the situation Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians necessitates being able to explain how wisdom is the contributor to division in Corinth. What follows is an overview of (a) the scholarship on the nature of the divisions and (b) recent proposals for the origins of wisdom. It will be argued that while various proposals have hit on important criteria for reconstructing the shape of the conflict and the origin of wisdom, no adequate account has been provided to date to explain all of Paul's discourse.

2.2 Nature of the division in Corinth

F.C. Baur provides the starting point for the modern discussion on the ecclesial divisions in 1 Corinthians and the Corinthian correspondence. In 1831, Baur produced his seminal essay on the Corinthian correspondence, "The Christ Party in the Corinthian Church," arguing a conflict exists between Petrine Christianity influenced by Judaism and Pauline Christianity for the Gentiles.[93] While this

93 Hughson T. Ong, "Ferdinand Christian Baur's Historical Criticism and Tendenzkritik," in *Pillars in the History of Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams, vol. 1, 2 vols. (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 121.

article was not translated into English, his later work *History of the Christian Church in the First Three Centuries* mostly reproduces this argument[94] in addition to offering further exposition upon it in *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ*.[95] At one level, the division was a conflict regarding Paul's authority among the Corinthians.[96] Baur states:

> Having arrived at this point, it seems to me that in making our next step we must take into account the suggestion made by J. E. Chr. Schmidt, in a treatise on 1 Cor. 1:12, namely, that there were really but two parties, one that of Paul and Apollos, while the Petrinists and Christ-ians, as Schmidt expresses it, also formed one party. In view of the well-known relation in which Paul and Peter, one the Apostle to the Gentiles, the other to the Jews, really stood towards each other, or at least the relation in which they were thought to stand towards each other by the chief parties of the early Christian Church, there can be no doubt that the chief difference lay between the two sects which called themselves after Paul and Cephas.[97]

However, the conflict was not only shaped by matters of power and party but was part of Paul's struggle in the development of the new religion of Christianity in opposition to Judaism.[98] Paul's conflict was situated along the lines of Baur's theological interpretation of the conflict between Ἑλληνιστής and Ἑβραῖος in Acts 6:1-6 as a paradigm for the development of the church.

The divide between Jewish and Hellenistic Christianity that Baur's thesis articulates has met numerous critiques. As early as J.B. Lightfoot, Baur's thesis met sharp criticism.[99] More recently, Martin

94 Bruce Kaye, "Lightfoot and Baur on Early Christianity" 26, no. 3 (1984): 193–224; 200.
95 Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, trans. Eduard Zeller and A. Menzies, 2nd ed., vol. 1, 2 vols. (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1876), 258-307.
96 *Ibid.*, 276.
97 *Ibid.*, 263-264
98 *Ibid*., 3.
99 J.B. Lightfoot, *Saint Paul's Epistle to the Galatians*, 10th ed. (London: Macmillan, 1890), 292-374.

Hengel has shown that the conventional distinction between Judaism and Hellenism is not meaningful for the 1st century A.D.,[100] rendering Baur's thesis as implausible.

In the aptly named chapter "The Church without Factions" in *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind,* Johannes Munck attempts to refute Baur's assertion that the Corinthian correspondence expresses a conflict between Peter and Paul.[101] Central to Munck's argument is that Paul was not addressing the existence of factions in 1 Corinthians. Based upon analysis of σχίσματα in 1 Corinthians 1.10, 11.18, and 12.25 where the word refers to divisions among the people but not specific, identifiable factions, Munck derives the following conclusion: "Paul... describes the conditions that he is combating not as factions but as bickerings, arising because the individual church members profess as their teacher Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ, and exclude the others."[102] Their divisions were not traceable to specific doctrinal differences.[103] The way the Corinthians regarded their leaders as teachers of wisdom through the form of the rhetorically captivating orator and the dramatic sophist is responsible for the division.[104]

In a chapter entitled "Discord in Corinth: First Corinthians and Ancient Politics," L.L. Welborn argues against the apolitical interpretations of Baur's religious conflict.[105] "It is a power struggle, not a theological struggle, that motivates the writing of 1 Corinthians 1-4," Welborn comments, "It is our contention that Paul's goal in 1 Corinthians 1-4 is not the refutation of heresy, but what Plutarch (*Mor.* 824C-E) describes as the object of the art of politics—the prevention of στάσις."[106] The division between the rich and poor that 1 Corinthians attests to serves as a primary cause for στάσις through the concomitant political tensions between the classes that the ancient Greek and Roman authors regularly

100 Martin Hengel, *The Problem of the "Hellenization" of Judaea in the First Century after Christ*, trans. Christoph Markschies (London: SCM Press, 1990), 53.
101 Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, trans. Frank Clarke (London: SCM Press, 1959), 135-136.
102 *Ibid.*, 135-139.
103 *Ibid.,* 140.
104 *Ibid.*, 153.
105 L.L. Welborn, *Politics and Rhetoric in the Corinthian Epistles* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1997), 2-3.
106 *Ibid.*, 7.

described.[107] What Paul fears is the third figure mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1.20, the "disputer," will undermine the community through the practice of rhetoric.[108]

Neither Baur's religious interpretation nor Welborn's political account of the conflict provide an adequate account of the division. Paul's reference to wisdom in connection with the divisions suggests the role of wisdom, whatever wisdom is, is more than merely a catalyst for what is otherwise a religious or political power struggle in the community; the Corinthian's understanding of wisdom is at the root of the conflict. The misstep made by both is explaining the divisions by postulating a theory or observation of a specific social or historical pattern that the conflicts exemplify and then determining how wisdom fits into that pre-fashioned account. Given the diverse forms of wisdom and its essential role in politics and religion in the ancient world, one can easily find an idea or practice associated with wisdom that can then be used to plausibly explain the various historical reconstructions of the conflict without defining how that idea or practice explains the discourse itself. Such an approach fails to provide an adequate account of Paul's discourse, which does not target a single type of wisdom as if the divisions are attributable to specific doctrines or practices. The three figures in 1 Corinthians 1.20 suggest Paul has a more universal scope of wisdom in mind.

Munck's thesis, by contrast, regards the theme of wisdom as central to the problems that Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians. That the Corinthians regard their leaders as teachers of wisdom provides a more straightforward explanation for the close association of the themes of conflict and wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1-4. Still, there are reasons to consider that the conflict in the Corinthian church did intersect with political matters, even though Welborn may have overstated the case for political factions. References to (1) "the rulers of this age" in 1 Corinthians 2.6-8, (2) the practice of fellow Corinthian believers taking each other to court in 1 Corinthians 6.1-6, and (3) the divisions existing along socio-

107 *Ibid*., 16-28.
108 *Ibid.*, 30.

economic lines in 1 Corinthians 11.17-22 suggest that the conflict in Corinth did have some wider-ranging social and political implications that Munck's thesis does not readily explain. Furthermore, Margaret Mitchell's analysis of the political terms 1 Corinthians 1.10-4.21 favors the overlap of the conflict of Corinth with political considerations.[109] Ultimately, Munck's thesis begs the question: how could the Corinthians' expectations for Paul and Apollos to act as teachers of wisdom by impressing them with rhetorical eloquence and dramatic gestures account for these socio-political features in 1 Corinthians?

2.3 Source of wisdom

Wisdom is a prominent theme in 1 Corinthians 1-4. σοφία and σοφός occur 26 times in chapters 1-4, whereas they occur only 14 more times in the rest of the Pauline epistles. Thus, σοφία (along with γνῶσις) has been a central concern for scholarship on the Corinthian correspondence, as C.K. Barrett observes: "No problem arising out of Christianity at Corinth has been more discussed during recent years than that which is suggested by these words."[110]

Barrett wrote these words while in the shadow cast by F.C. Baur. In the discussion following Barrett penning these words, the prevailing views of the scholarship have shifted. Most recent scholarship rejects Baur's thesis, with only a marginal amount of acceptance by scholars such as Michael Goulder. In explaining wisdom in 1 Corinthians, the scholarship has drawn towards a near-consensus regarding the influence of Greco-Roman rhetoric on the wisdom in Corinth through scholars such as Duane Litfin, Stephen Pogoloff, and Bruce Winter. There have been challenges to this consensus by

109 Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 68-111.

110 C.K. Barrett, "Christianity at Corinth," *Bulletin of John Rylands Library*, no. 46 (1964): 269–97.

scholars such as James Davis and Harm-Jan Inkelaar, who argue for the role of Hellenistic Judaism in Corinth, and Terrence Paige and Timothy Brookins, who argue for a Stoic influence.

2.3.1 Classical rhetoric

The identification of classical rhetoric as the source of the concern in 1 Corinthians is not a recent idea. Commenting on the "wisdom of words" in 1 Corinthians 1.17, John Calvin states that Paul "was not formed to be an orator, to set himself off by elegance of speech."[111] However, in the past few decades, a near-consensus has developed around classical rhetoric as the source of human wisdom in recent commentaries and articles. This consensus has developed thanks to the work of Litfin, Pogoloff, and Winter.

Litfin's *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation* sought to determine how Paul understood his preaching in 1 Corinthians 1-4. In rejecting Gnosticism and Hellenistic Judaism as the sources of wisdom in Corinth, Litfin argues for a rhetorical background to Paul's communication.[112] Surveying the history of rhetoric from Plato and the early Sophists to the early imperial age in rhetoricians Quintilian and rhetorician-turned-philosopher Dio Chrysostom, Litfin's sketch of the interplay between Greco-Roman philosophy and rhetoric highlights the complex, changing relationship between the two fields.[113] However, Litfin ultimately postulates the dominance of rhetoric during the first century A.D..[114]

At stake for Paul is providing a *modus operandi* in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 that rejects a particular style of preaching, "refer[ing] in essence to the form of speech recommended by Greco-Roman rhetoric and practiced everywhere by the speakers of the day."[115] However, classical rhetoric was not simply

111 John Calvin, *The First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. John W. Fraser (Edinburgh; London: Oliver and Boy, 1960), 31-32.
112 Duane A. Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 2-18.
113 *Ibid.*, 46-123.
114 *Ibid.,* 124-126.
115 *Ibid.,* 205-206.

about the practice of orators, but it also molded how the audience evaluated speakers based upon their oratorical skill.[116] Paul endeavors to guide the audience to recognize that their rhetorical expectations for Paul's preaching are ultimately of "human origin."[117] By contrast, Paul describes God's wisdom in 2.6-16 as an alternative vantage point by which people interpret the same Gospel preaching of the cross. In the case of the mature (1 Cor. 2.6), Paul's preaching about the cross of Christ is perceived as wisdom instead of foolishness.[118] Litfin's proposal ultimately sees the contrast between God's wisdom and human wisdom as hermeneutical.

Completed around the same time as Litfin's monograph was Stephen Pogoloff's *Logos and Sophia*. Whereas Litfin's project focuses on Paul's self-understanding of his preaching, Pogoloff dismantles the modern anachronism of rhetoric as mere form for his analysis of 1 Corinthians. Tracing the notion that rhetoric is merely a matter of a form from the prejudices of "scholarly contempt" of the 19th-century biblical scholarship, he credits the scholarship of E.A. Judge, in addition to Betz and Kennedy, for changing the role of knowledge about classical rhetoric in New Testament studies.[119] In showing that classical rhetoricians were concerned about matters beyond ornamentation and style but also about thinking and content as in philosophy, Pogoloff argues that the union of form and content was the norm in the Greco-Roman culture.[120] Consequently, rhetoric took on a pervasive and popular influence throughout society across all social statuses, transmitting σοφία to the whole populace.[121]

Pogoloff renders the identification of philosophical content in σοφία λόγου in 1 Corinthians 1.17 as unnecessary for the first century AD, where philosophy and rhetoric "overlapped, but more often they

116 *Ibid.*, 130-132.
117 *Ibid*., 206.
118 *Ibid.,* 213-220.
119 Stephen M. Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia: The Rhetorical Situation of 1 Corinthians* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 10-14.
120 *Ibid.*, 37-48.
121 *Ibid.,* 49-54.

conflicted and competed socially."[122] Instead, Pogoloff understands σοφία λόγου in 1.17 as eloquent or "cultured speech" that is a marker of status. In contrast, Paul's "rhetoric of the cross" disconnects the relationship between eloquence and status by instead lifting the life "marked by the worst shame and lowest possible status."[123] The critical difference between the two contrasting forms of wisdom is the different relationships they have to social standing: God's wisdom still retains a rhetorical practice but relies upon God's power rather than the power of persuasion.[124] This culture of rhetoric was enacted in competitions to demonstrate one's oratorical skills for the purpose of praise, thereby influencing how various members of the Corinthian church saw the rhetoric of Paul and Apollos as existing in competition with one another.[125] One manner in which this was exhibited was in the competitive attempt to demonstrate one's wisdom according to the conventions of the Greek *symposion* at the Lord's Supper.[126]

Bruce Winter's *Philo and Paul Among the Sophists* situates Paul's discussion about wisdom differently. Rather than rejecting rhetorical conventions, Winter follows in the footsteps of Johannes Munck and suggests Paul deliberately rejects the conventions of the Sophists.[127] The Sophists were highly competitive teachers who desired to impress other people for the hope of financial gain. Consequently, when they first arrived in a city, they would follow particular conventions in their first speeches and declamations to establish their reputation.[128] Winter observes in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 a cluster of terms (πίστις, ἀπόδειξις, δύναμις) that have rhetorical associations, suggesting that Paul originally had a "calculated anti-sophistic stance adopted to replace conviction derived from sophistic rhetorical wisdom with confidence in the power of God."[129] Nevertheless, it seems to Winter that the Corinthians had

122 Ibid., 55-69.
123 *Ibid.*, 108-121.
124 *Ibid.*, 137-143.
125 *Ibid.*, 173-196.
126 *Ibid.*, 255-271.
127 Bruce Winter, *Philo and Paul Among the Sophists* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 145-147.
128 *Ibid.*, 150-151.
129 *Ibid.*, 153-161.

begun to commit themselves to exclusive loyalty to and imitation of the style of Paul or Apollos as was customary among the Sophists, leading to the competition and conflict through such divided loyalties.[130] Winter describes Paul's response to the Corinthians in (a) overturning sophistic conventions of imitating a teacher's rhetorical style and techniques by instead emulating Paul's low status as disciples of the crucified Messiah and (b) censuring rhetorical skill as necessary to church leadership.[131]

2.3.2 Judaism

After Baur's thesis fell into disrepute, Michael Goulder's attempted to re-establish the thesis of J.E.C. Schmidt, upon whom Baur was dependent.[132] Schmidt argued that the four groups mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1.12 could be ultimately reduced to two; Paul and Apollos form one group whereas the second group contains Peter ultimately expressing allegiance to Christ.[133] Rather than Baur's view of the Petrine party being Judaizers, Goulder contends that Paul faces a conflict over the Torah's interpretation.[134] In drawing observations of the repeated recurrence of λόγος and σοφία in 1 Corinthians 1.17-2.13 and another in 12.8, Goulder states his conclusion: "the Petrine Christian leaders were delivering halaka as under inspiration of Spirit, 'words of wisdom' interpreted from the Bible."[135] By contrast, Paul's wisdom appeals to the cross of Christ rather than to the Torah. Goulder observes a family resemblance between 1 Corinthians 1.18-2.5 and Paul's arguments against the Torah elsewhere, concluding that Paul rejects the Torah-interpreted words of the Petrine leaders as "merely *taught* human wisdom."[136]

130 *Ibid*., 170-176.
131 *Ibid.*, 201-202.
132 Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ* (Vol. 1), 263.
133 M.D. Goulder, "Sophia in 1 Corinthians" 37 (1991): 516–34; 516.
134 *Ibid.* 526.
135 *Ibid.* 522-523.
136 *Ibid.* 525-526.

Developing his thesis in response to the thesis of Gnostic origins of wisdom in Corinth[137] and early versions of the classical rhetorical thesis, James Davis' dissertation *Wisdom and Spirit* argues that 1 Corinthians shows the influence of Hellenistic Jewish wisdom literature, using 1 Corinthians 1.18-3.20 to test this idea.[138] Davis traces the themes of wisdom and spirit and their interrelationship in Sirach, Qumran, and Philo, drawing four observations across all three sources: 1) linkage between the wisdom and Torah; 2) description of different levels of achievement in understanding and interpreting the Torah; 3) the highest levels of achievement attained by the aid of the Spirit; 4) specific titles bestowed on the highest achievers, including σόφος/הבם and τέλειος in Philo. Davis ultimately finds that for Paul, "[t]he Christ-event has displaced the Torah as the most complete source for a knowledge of the divine design and intention."[139]

Nearly three decades later, Harm-Jan Inkelaar's *Conflict over Wisdom* evidences a further developed analysis of 1 Corinthians 1-4 compared to Davis' solid work, focusing nearly half of the book on how Paul uses the Old Testament Scripture to address the topic of wisdom. For Inkelaar, the Corinthians' understanding of wisdom stems from Hellenistic Judaism influenced by Stoicism,[140] but Paul "return[s] to Scripture and there he finds confirmation that the cross is not a random happening but the central revelation of God's wisdom."[141] Distinct from Davis's thesis, Inkelaar does not focus on the role and interpretation of Torah as the place of contention between the Corinthian wisdom and Paul but shifts the focus to the interpretation of the cross.[142]

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137 See Walter Schmithals, *Gnosticism in Corinth: An Investigation of the Letters to the Corinthians* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1971).

138 James A. Davis, *Wisdom and Spirit: An Investigation of 1 Corinthians 1.18-3.20 Against the Background of Jewish Sapiential Traditions in the Greco-Roman Period* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1984), 3-5.

139 *Ibid.*. 94.

140 Harm-Jan Inkelaar, *Conflict Over Wisdom: The Theme of 1 Corinthians 1-4 Rooted in Scripture* (Leuven: Peeters, 2011), 107-147.

141 *Ibid.,* 306.

142 *Ibid.*, 303-304.

2.3.3 Stoicism

In a paper delivered at the Tyndale New Testament Conference, Terence Paige offered up one of the first extended treatments of the idea that Stoicism was a significant influence on the Corinthians.[143] He offers his thesis as an alternative to the Gnostic and Jewish Wisdom explanations, suggesting that the Corinthians were thinking in a Stoicizing manner; Paul employs Stoic terminology and thinking in response.[144] Drawing on various resemblances between Stoic thought and the concerns that Paul addresses,[145] Paige concludes a Stoicizing influence "would not only explain the presence of Stoic-like terminology, but the development of an elite group of self-styled *sophoi* within the church who held a highly individualistic, self-centered ethics."[146] By contrast, Paul argues for the "dependent status of their existence in Christ."[147]

Timothy Brookins more thoroughly explores the topic of a Stoic influence in Corinth in his monograph *Corinthian Wisdom, Stoic Philosophy, and the Ancient Economy*. Brookins targets the near-consensus in favor of the rhetorical thesis that developed in the 90s.[148] Whereas Paige argues Stoicism as a significant influence, Brookins provides a potentially stronger thesis for the sole influence of Stoicism, arguing "the division of 'wisdom' of the Corinthians, *qua wisdom*, can be accounted for as a *Christian development of Stoic philosophy*, arguably without remainder."[149] Like Paige, Brookins believes the problem stems from a "small but influential minority in the church" who are among the wealthier members and could afford a philosophical education.[150]

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143 Terence Paige, "Stoicism, Eleutheria, and Community at Corinth," in *Worship, Theology and Ministry in the Early Church: Essays in Honor of Ralph P. Martin*, ed. Michael J. Wilkins (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1992), 180-193.
144 *Ibid.*, 181-182.
145 *Ibid.*, 182-192.
146 *Ibid.*, 192.
147 *Ibid.,* 193.
148 Timothy A. Brookins, *Corinthian Wisdom, Stoic Philosophy, and the Ancient Economy*, Society for New Testament Studies, Volume 159 (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 8-61.
149 *Ibid.*, 4.
150 *Ibid.*, 5, 132-147.

Brookins considers the language of the wise man (σοφός) as belonging to the Stoic rather than to the rhetoricians.[151] To demonstrate this, Brookins observes the recurrences of five topics in 1 Corinthians: 1) wisdom and the wise man, 2) a strong emphasis on freedom, 3) the notion of "indifference," 4) subordination of the physical to the spiritual/intellectual, and 5) contrasting intellectual/spiritual status indicators.[152] In chapter 5, Brookins draws the connection of these themes in Paul to the teachings and practices of the Stoics.[153] Particularly salient is the resemblance of the predicates about the wise man (σοφός) in 1 Corinthians comparison to Stoic predicates and Paul's epistemic concerns in γνωσίς as being a particular focus and part of a definition of wisdom for the Stoics. Meanwhile, λόγος was used by Stoics in reference to argumentation.[154] Thus, the constellation of σοφός and γνῶσις with λόγος are used in manners that either resemble or are consistent with Stoicism.[155]

2.3.4 Analysis

This brief sketch of the scholarship has attempted to highlight how different theses for the origins of wisdom for 1 Corinthians 1-4 can be offered. One may plausibly consider classical rhetoric, Jewish wisdom, and Stoic philosophy as all possessing particular practices and language that could shed light on Paul's discourse about wisdom. While a near-consensus presently supports classical rhetoric, one may observe correspondences between Paul's discourse and Jewish wisdom and Stoic philosophy. One approach to the multiple possibilities is to determine which thesis best explains the data in 1 Corinthians by attempting to offer a closer reading of 1 Corinthians along with providing finer-grained studies of the historical and social environment of Corinth under imperial rule in 1st-century AD. This

151 *Ibid.*, 6-7.
152 *Ibid.*, 101-102.
153 *Ibid*., 153-200.
154 *Ibid.*, 159-165.
155 *Ibid.*, 153-200.

approach works under the assumption that Paul was targeting only a single form of wisdom in his discourse.

The assumption that Paul has in mind one specific type of human wisdom is not plausible. In fact, it seems dissonant with Paul's discourse under closer analysis. In 1 Corinthians 1.20, Paul refers to three different figures as representatives of the world's wisdom. While some have suggested the figures overlap with each other at varying degrees of generality and specificity,[156] the close resemblance of 1 Corinthians 1.20 to the three figures mentioned in Isaiah 33.18 LXX, where they refer to different persons, suggests the three figures in 1 Corinthians 1.20 should be considered distinct.[157] As will be discussed in the next chapter, it is perhaps best to take the three figures to reference the Stoic sage, the Jewish scribe, and the political orator as different representatives of wisdom. Then, Paul uses the plural ἀνθρώπων to refer to those who possess the wisdom of the world (1 Cor. 1.25; cf. 1 Cor. 2.5) rather than the adjective ἀνθρώπινος that he uses elsewhere (1 Cor 2.13; 4.3; 10.13). Paul construes the wisdom of the world as contained by various cultural prototypes of wise persons rather than understanding it simply as an abstract category or in terms of a single prototype of wisdom. Thus, rather than pitting ancient philosophy, rhetoric, and Jewish wisdom against each other to explain what precisely Paul is responding to in the wisdom of the world in 1 Corinthians, it seems more appropriate to consider that Paul directs his discussion on wisdom towards conventions regularly shared between the three representatives of the world's wisdom.

156 Roy E. Ciampa and Brian S. Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2010), 94.

157 Richard Hays (*First Corinthians*, Interpretation (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1997), 30) makes a brief comment comparing 1 Corinthians 1.20 to Isaiah 19.12. However, Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer (*I Corinthians*, The International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1914), 19), Hans Conzelmann (*1 Corinthians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 43), and David Garland (*1 Corinthians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 64) make a connection to Isaiah 33.18.

2.4 Conclusion

Based on a broad inspection of the scholarship, it has been argued that while Munck is correct to recognize wisdom as being central to the conflict in Corinth, his appeal to Sophistic practice fails to give an adequate account of the social and political factors evident in Paul's discourse as Welborn has pointed out. While the various theses as to the origins of wisdom that caused conflict in Corinth have their merit, none of the theses by themselves seem to provide an adequate account of Paul's diverse and universal description of human wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1-2. In response to the perceived inadequacies of the scholarship to date, the next chapter will posit that (a) Paul's discourse about wisdom is primarily concerned with matters related to education and teaching and (b) that education in wisdom and the motivations for such education can provide an account for the divisions in Corinth.

Chapter 3 - Wisdom and education

3.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, it was argued that various options for understanding the division in Corinth and the source(s) of wisdom that contributed to the division failed to provide an adequate account of 1 Corinthians. In response, this chapter will primarily attempt to answer the question: according to Paul's correspondence, what is it about wisdom that contributed to the divisions in Corinth? It is posited that at the center of Paul's concern about wisdom is the nature of education (παιδεία) in wisdom and its impact on how the Corinthians perceived teachers and regarded each other.

Five interpretive tasks will be attempted in this chapter: (1) identifying Paul's discursive style as a protreptic style that focuses on the Corinthians' thinking and expectations about wisdom and education; (2) describing the competition that existed between different figures of wisdom; (3) establishing the role of education and speech in regards to wisdom; (4) showing the pedagogical conventions and techniques that are present in Paul's discourse; and (5) explaining how education and differences between classes can contribute to the political and socio-economic problems Paul addresses. What each of these tasks together will endeavor to show is that one can interpret Paul's first correspondence to the Corinthians in light of Greco-Roman pedagogical conventions, particularly as it relates to the role of education in acquiring wisdom.

3.2 Paul's discursive style and framing of the problem of division and wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1-4

In 1 Corinthians 1.10-17, Paul transitions from the *exordium* in 1.4-9 to establish the first theme he provides instruction about: the conflict in the community of Corinthian believers. Paul exhorts them to cease from divisions (v. 10: σχίσματα) as he has received news that there are rivalries (v. 11: ἔριδες)

among the Corinthian believers. Margaret Mitchell thinks 1 Corinthians 1.10 provides the πρόθεσις that outlines the advice Paul is giving in the deliberative argument of 1 Corinthians.[158] Mitchell argues that the theme of division is the central topic of discussion for Paul in 1 Corinthians.[159] As deliberative rhetoric "seeks to persuade [the audience] to take some action in the future,"[160] Paul's discourse has a behavioral focus on ending divisive behaviors.

Mitchell's analysis was limited to the three styles of epideictic, forensic, and deliberative rhetoric,[161] following the standard conventions in rhetorical criticism.[162] Historically, this threefold categorization of style originates with Aristotle (*Rhet.* 3.5). Cicero, Quintilian, and the unknown author of Rhetoric Ad Herennium regarded these three styles as the norm. (Cicero, *Inv.* 1.5; Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.4; *Rhet. Her.* 1.2). However, as Quintilian observes, this threefold division of rhetoric was increasingly contested in the 1st century A.D. by those who advocated for more styles (*Inst. 3.4.2*). If Paul's style of discourse is influenced by other styles that did not fit the Aristotelian schema, a rhetorical analysis that is limited to three potential styles may overlook Paul's actual discursive style.

Diogenes Laertius reports that some Stoics addressed rhetorical matters in the philosophical branch of logic (*Lives* 7.41-42). His account focuses primarily on the Greek Stoics of the 4th and 3rd-century B.C, to whom he ascribes the traditional Aristotelian division. However, the Roman Stoics of the 1st century A.D. may have had a more novel approach that gave higher priority to rhetoric. Quintilian characterized the early Stoics as having little concern for matters of eloquence (*Inst.* 10.1.84) but recognized that later Stoics had a higher degree of rhetorical skill, especially in his ambivalent judgments towards Seneca (*Inst.* 10.1.123-131). Quintilian's younger contemporary Epictetus describes the three

158 Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 198-200.
159 *Ibid.*, 182.
160 George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill; London: University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 19.
161 Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, 1-19.
162 Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 19.

styles of philosophical teaching as protreptic, elenctic, and didactic, while excluding the epideictic style from being a fourth form (*Diatri.* 3.23.33).[163] Given the high degree of social influence that Stoicism had during the early Imperial period,[164] it is plausible that some people increasingly used Stoic styles of discourse, even if the discriminating Quintilian did not recognize them.

Given the precedence of language pertaining to wisdom and knowledge in 1 Corinthians, it is plausible that Paul adopted a more philosophical style of discourse rather than the more traditional rhetorical styles. One candidate is the protreptic style. James Collins regards protreptic discourse as emerging in the 4th century B.C. while not yet being a "genre in form or content."[165] He describes protreptic discourse as being dialogical, agonistic, situational, and rhetorical.[166] That Epictetus expressly excludes the epideictic style from his list of protreptic, elenchic, and didactic suggests that these three forms were more established genres in the 1st century AD. A.A. Long defines protreptic discourse as an "exhortative or admonitory discourse, either in monologue or in question-and-answer form, designed to make persons rethink their ethical beliefs and convert to a fundamental change of outlook and behaviour."[167] An emphasis on belief in protreptic discourse reflects the way later Stoics considered theory to be in service to practice, particularly in regards to ethical matters.[168]

Paul's contrast between the wisdom of the world and God's wisdom in 1 Corinthians 1-2 certainly echoes the agonistic nature of protreptic discourse. As will be discussed in the next section, Paul's quotation and change of the language of Isaiah 29.14 LXX in 1 Corinthians 1.19 suggests he construes God as having engaged in an argumentative victory over the representatives of human

163 For discussion of Epictetus's mention of the three forms of discourse, see A.A. Long*, Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2013), 52-53.
164 Long, "Roman Philosophy," 184-186.
165 James Henderson Collins, *Exhortations to Philosophy* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 34.
166 *Ibid*., 16-18.
167 Long, *Epictetus*, 54.
168 Gretchen J. Reydams-Schils, "Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer (Chichester; West Sussex, UK; Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 130-132.

wisdom. Furthermore, the abundance of terms in 1 Corinthians 1-4 that are related to thinking suggests Paul is concerned about the thinking of the Corinthians.[169] The exhortation in 1 Corinthians 1.10 pertains to the Corinthians sharing the same thinking in terms of mind (νοῦς) and agreement (γνώμη) rather than a description of an action that deliberative discourse seeks to persuade others to take.[170] While the ethical concerns of protreptic discourse overlap with concerns about action in deliberative rhetoric, the focus in protreptic is on addressing particular beliefs that direct actions.

In that case, Paul's instruction focuses on the Corinthians' thinking about their leaders as the cause of their division. Andrew Clarke argues based upon 1 Corinthians 1-6 that the Corinthian church was "employing secular categories and perceptions of leadership in the Christian community."[171] In 1 Corinthians 1-4, Paul describes the way the Corinthians think of themselves as relating to various leaders in the church, most particularly Paul and Apollos (1 Cor. 1.12-13, 3.3-4, 3.21-4.1). However, Clarke considers the problem to be how the Corinthians are "secular in their behaviour" and wrongly elevating social status and boasting;[172] the problem with worldly wisdom relates to the boasting practices of the Sophists and the role of rhetoric in conveying social status.[173] The emphasis on beliefs in Paul's protreptic discourse would suggest such secular behaviors are symptoms of the Corinthians' expectations about leadership.

As will be demonstrated, Paul's reference to σοφίᾳ λόγου (1 Cor. 1.17) can be taken as a reference to the type of tertiary level education that people who were considered to have wisdom had

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169 νοῦς - 1.10, 2.16 (2); γνώμη - 1.10; γινώσκω - 1.21, 2.8, 2.11, 2.16, 3.20; οἶδα - 2.2, 2.11, 2.12, 2.14; σύνοιδα - 4.4; σύνεσις - 1.19; πιστεύω - 1.21; πίστις - 2.5; πειθώ - 2.4; ἀπόδειξις - 2.4; κρίνω - 2.2, 4.5; συγκρίνω - 2.13; ἀνακρίνω - 2.14, 2.15 (2), 4.3 (2). 4.4; διακρίνω - 4.7; λόγος - 1.5, 1.17, 1.18, 2.1, 2.4, 2.13, 4.19, 4.20; λογίζομαι - 4.1; δοκέω - 3.18, 4.9; εὐδοκέω - 1.21; καρδία - 2.9, 4.5; βλέπω - 1.26; εἶδον - 2.9; ἀκούω - 2.9; αἰτέω - 1.22; ζητέω - 1.22, 4.2; ἐραυνάω - 2.10.

170 Anthony Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 118-120.

171 Andrew D. Clarke, *Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth: A Socio-Historical and Exegetical Study of 1 Corinthians 1-6* (Leiden; Boston; Köln: Brill, 1993), 129.

172 *Ibid.*, 110.

173 *Ibid*., 101-106.

acquired such as the Stoic sage, Jewish scribe, and the political orator (1 Cor. 1.20). E.A. Judges notes that Paul's letters elsewhere evidence signs of knowledge about the social boundaries that education presented in the Roman society.[174] It seems the Corinthians thought that Paul and Apollos should fit their expectations about wisdom and education.

3.3 Wisdom as a competitive enterprise

The philosopher W.B. Gaille articulated the idea of an Essentially Contested Concept (ECC). Gaille defines an ECC as "concepts the proper use of which inevitably involves endless disputes about their proper use on the part of their users."[175] He provides four necessary conditions of such concepts as 1) appraisive of achievement, 2) achievement of a complex character, 3) worth explained by reference to its various parts or aspects, and 4) recognition of achievement being modified by circumstance. He also includes 5) various groups recognize that their use of the concept is contested.[176] In addition to these five conditions, he adds two conditions that distinguish ECCs from concepts where there is simply confusion between parties: 6) the concept is derived from an exemplar and 7) competition for acknowledgment reinforces the understanding of the exemplar's achievement.[177]

It seems that ancient Greek and Roman understanding of wisdom qualified as an ECC. Wilcken's defines the general meaning of σοφία as "a materially complete and hence unusual knowledge and ability,"[178] satisfying ECC condition #1. Furthermore, Volpi's description of σοφία makes the place of achievement more explicit: "The Greek noun σοφία/sophía… generally refers to the superior skill and knowledge that distinguishes the expert and artist from the masses and accounts for the high regard in

174 E.A. Judge, "The Reaction Against Classical Education in the New Testament," ed. James R. Harrison (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 712.
175 W.B. Gaille, "Essentially Contested Concepts," *Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society* 56 (1955): 167–98; 169.
176 *Ibid.*, 171-172.
177 *Ibid.,* 180.
178 Wilckens and Fohrer, "Σοφία, Σοφός, Σοφίζω," TDNT 7:467.

which he is held."[179] Early on, σοφία described experience and skill. For ancient Greece, the persons of Thales, Bias, Pittacus, Cleobulos, Solon, Chilon, and Perlander were considered exemplars of this form of σοφία as sages. However, in the 6th century B.C., the idea of the sage shifted towards one who possessed theoretical knowledge.[180] This semantic change across time would provide the conditions for contesting over the nature of wisdom.

Plato's *Protagoras* evidences this conflict over the proper understanding of wisdom. Socrates' analogically compares the preeminent Sophist Protagoras' teaching to the teachers of skilled wisdom in medicine, sculpting, painting, and music (*Prot*. 311, 318). However, Protagoras claims the wisdom of a political nature he teaches is of a different form from the skilled arts (*Prot*. 321). For Protagoras, the wisdom he publicly teaches is a hidden art of preeminent exemplars of the poets (such as Homer), religious teachers, athletes, and musicians (*Prot*. 316; ECC #6). By treating these exemplars of skilled wisdom as containing hidden wisdom, Protagoras appeals to a theoretical form of wisdom that was not directly expressed but was contained in their arts (ECC #3). Whereas the past exemplars could not express their wisdom due to hostility, Protagoras' circumstances allow him to teach this wisdom publicly and be recognized for it (*Prot*. 316-317; ECC #4). It is oft-repeated throughout the dialogue that Protagoras was the most accomplished teacher of wisdom (ECC #1). As his understanding of virtue consists of other traits, such as justice, temperance, and piety, Protagoras' understanding shows virtue/wisdom to be of a complex character (ECC #2). Meanwhile, the characters of Callias and Alcibiades were drawing their judgments of the debate, recognizing that there was a contested understanding of wisdom and virtue (*Prot. 335-337*; ECC #5). Thus, even from the Socratic-Platonic roots

179 Franco Vicenza Volpi et al., "Wisdom," in *Brill's New Pauly*, ed. Hubert Cancik Helmuth Schneider, trans. Christine F. Salazar, n.d., http://dx.doi.org/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e12209760..

180 Wilckens and Fohrer, "Σοφία, Σοφός, Σοφίζω," TDNT 7:468.

of Greco-Roman philosophy, the concept of wisdom shows evidence of being an ECC formed by the dialectical opposition between parties.

This pattern continued into the Roman era, with a notable difference in the exemplars of wisdom. While Socrates was not initially considered an exalted figure to imitate, Socrates had become universally recognized as an exemplar of wisdom by philosophers and rhetoricians alike.[181] Philo of Alexandria even felt it necessary to recognize the wisdom of Socrates by comparing him to Abraham's father, Terah (*Dreams* 1.58).

Despite the broad-based recognition of Socrates as an exemplar of wisdom, there was no universal agreement on the concept of wisdom and its usage. Stoics defined wisdom as knowledge about divine and human matters.[182] For Seneca and Epictetus, wisdom was principally used in service of the individual in the type of judgments they made and the benefits accrued through such wisdom. By contrast, Cicero thought wisdom consisted of the discrimination of good and evil (*Off.* 3.71; cf. *Fin.* 1.46) and was of a political nature (*De Or*. 1.8). Jewish wisdom in Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon thought of wisdom as primarily defined by a person's reverential fear of the Lord (Sir. 19.20-24; Wis. 6.1-11).

This difference in understanding wisdom manifested in turf wars regarding wisdom and the way it is obtained and transmitted. Both Cicero and Quintilian considered philosophers to be engaging in topics that rightly belonged to rhetoricians (Cicero, *De Or*. 12.55-57. Quintilian, *Inst.* pref. 9-11). Quintilian prefaces his rhetorical treatise by extolling the ability of the perfect orator to speak to matters of truth and justice in a way the philosophers are unable to do (*Inst.* Pref.9-17). Meanwhile, Seneca and Epictetus believe the orator and his training diminish philosophy and that they lack the proper training in making judgments (Seneca, *Ep*. 40; Epictetus, *Diatr*. 3.9.8.). Seneca also casts the scholar, whose manner

181 Gretchen J. Reydams-Schils, *The Roman Stoics: Self, Responsibility, and Affection* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 34.

182 Aetius attributed to the Stoics the following definition: "scientific knowledge of the divine and the human." (L-S 26A) Seneca similarly recounts the definition as "wisdom is the knowledge of the divine and human and their causes." (L-S 26G)

of study resembles the methods of education of Jewish scribes according to Ben Sira,[183] as failing to obtain virtue through their studies (Seneca, *Ep*. 88.2). The Wisdom of Solomon considers the Roman rulers, who would have been influenced by the wisdom of both Stoics and orators, to be lacking wisdom because wisdom is found in the Torah (Wis. 6). The pursuit of wisdom was accompanied by various oppositional counter-claims that criticized not just the doctrines of other parties, but their methods.

As a consequence, what persons were considered to be wise was often contested. Epictetus devotes a whole discourse to the rejection of views he attributes to the Hellenistic philosopher Epicurus (*Diatr*. 1.23). Epictetus regards Epicurus as "dissuading the wise person from rearing children," thereby rejecting the notion that Epicurus had wisdom. The contentious nature of wisdom in the Greco-Roman world routinely pitted purported experts in wisdom against one another to determine who was to be considered superior in wisdom.

This theme of competitive intellectual argument resonates with Paul's usage of Isa 29.14 LXX in 1 Corinthians 1.19. The first verb ἀπόλλυμι is also used in the previous verse to describe the fate of the wise who deem Paul's word of the cross as foolishness. Ἀπόλλυμι could function as a metaphorical description of one statement contradicting another statement (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 9.76). In favor of this construal is Paul's substitution of κρύψω in Isaiah 29.14 LXX with ἀθετέω. Ἀθετέω was used in some philosophical discourse to refer to the rejection of a proposition or judgment (Epictetus, *Diatri*. 2.11; Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.65). This change in terminology suggests that ἀπόλλυμι could be used by Paul to describe God's superiority over the arguments and ideas of the reputedly wise. Similarly, Musonius Rufus describes the king who defeats the arguments of his opposition as being like a military victory (*Diatri*. 8). In this case, Paul's rhetorical strategy in 1.18-31 is to demonstrate how God has won the

183 Seneca describes the scholar's studies as the study of words include literary productions such as plays and poetry and also Homer (*Ep.* 88.36, 40), whereas Ben Sira considers the scribe to study the various linguistic features from parables, proverbs, and prophecies (Sir. 39.1-3).

intellectual victory with the wisdom of the world through the cross; the cross has put an end to human wisdom about God. God has won the contest to define wisdom about God.

Paul's rhetoric portrays three figures as losing the argumentative battle with God in 1 Corinthians 1.20. E.A. Judge proposes that the three persons refer to a philosopher, a Jewish scribe, and a rhetorician, respectively.[184] The first is the σοφός, which is likely to be more specific to the Stoic ideal of a sage. The Stoic sage was an ideal conceptualization of a person who "embodied theoretical and practical wisdom."[185] The second person is γραμματεύς. While it customarily described a secretary or clerk in a government position,[186] the term came to describe a person who had been educated in the Torah, along with other forms of knowledge, in Jewish sources.[187]

The third figure is named συζητητὴς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου. Judge considers this is to be a rhetorician.[188] Thiselton renders it as a "debater."[189] Ciampa and Rosner consider it to be a term referencing a philosopher.[190] The variance in determining the figure's identity stems from the lack of lexical data, as it is an *hapax legomenon* and does not appear in any Greek texts before 1 Corinthians. However, in the discussion of αἰών in section 1.4.2, it was proposed that τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is a reference to the Roman political power, which may help to identify συζήτησις as connected to Roman political power. BDAG defines συζήτησις and the cognate συζητέω as pertaining to matters of discussion and debate of particular topics.[191] Kennedy states that Hermagoras' rhetorical theory of stasis, which instructed orators to argue for specific propositions that correspond to συζήτησις/συζητέω, influenced

184 Judge, "Reaction Against Classical Education," 713-14.
185 Volpi et al., "Wisdom."
186 LSJ, s.v. "γραμματεύς."
187 Jeremias, "γραμματεύς," TDNT 1:740. See also Sirach 38.24-39.11 and Christine Schams' comments on 4 Ezra 14.50 (*Jewish Scribes in the Second-Temple Period* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1998), 204-205).
188 Judge, "Reaction Against Classical Education," 713-14.
189 Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians,* 164.
190 Ciampa & Rosner, *First Letter to the Corinthians*, 94.
191 BDAG, s.v. "συζήτησις"; BDAG, s.v "συζητέω."

the rhetoric of the Roman Republic.[192] Furthermore, according to Anthony Corbelli, "During the [Roman] republic… rhetorical education among the elite both entailed and emphasized involvement in the political world…"[193] Taken together, συζητητὴς τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου makes sense as a political orator during the imperial era.

In referring to the figures of the Stoic sage, the Jewish scribe, and the political orator, Paul portrays God's victory over human wisdom as a universal victory. The various persons the world lifts as figures of wisdom are not to be trusted to provide God's wisdom. Therefore, the way to identify those who possess God's wisdom dramatically differs from the way society generally identified wise people.

3.4 Identifying the "wise"

What influenced the Corinthians to start seeing their teachers as competitors? Part of the reason may stem from Corinth's competitive spirit and ambition due to its thriving economy.[194] However, the arrival of Apollos, described in Acts 18.24-28 as an educated and persuasive speaker, may have catalyzed the competitive spirit. Upon his initial arrival to Corinth, his style of speaking could have further influenced the Corinthians to evaluate their teachers according to their expectations about wisdom and education.[195]

Paul recounts negative judgments about his weak physical presence and contemptible speech in 2 Corinthians 10.10. However, the Corinthians may have rendered such judgments before Apollos' arrival. 1 Corinthians 1.26-29 may suggest the Corinthians were evaluating their teachers according to the appearance of intelligence, strength, and social standing to determine who they would consider their

192 George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 98-100.
193 Anthony Corbelli, "Rhetorical Education and Social Reproduction in the Republic and Early Empire," in *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, ed. William Dominik and Jon Hall (Oxford; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2007), 71.
194 Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 5-21.
195 *Ibid.*, 86.

leader in the community. Paul's consciousness of this evaluation by the Corinthians seems to undergird his statement in 1 Corinthians 2.1 about his first interactions with the Corinthians as not demonstrating a "superiority of speech or wisdom (ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας).[196] While some commentators regard ὑπεροχή as referring to the self-display of eminence or social status,[197] it could also refer to social authority, such as having power over people or expertise within a specific domain.[198] This second sense fits with a Stoic definition of wisdom as "fitting expertise."[199]

The demonstration of education in a person's speech could serve as a signal of a person's expertise. For instance, Cicero considers eloquence a sign of a high degree of education (*De Or.* 1.5).[200] As Cicero and Quintilian included philosophy in a rhetorical education, eloquence could also be considered a marker for wisdom (Cicero, *De Orat.* I.16-19; Quintilian, *Inst.*, Pref.16-20).[201] Ben Sira considers that the sage whose speech demonstrates his education from his study with the aid of a "spirit of understanding" will be praised by others (Sir. 39.1-10). However, verbal signals of wisdom can often mislead. Epictetus derides the "philosopher" who misleads the crowd through possessing knowledge about ethical matters but fails to put them into practice (*Diatri.* 2.9.13-22). In that case, λόγου ἢ σοφίας may refer to the type of speech the Corinthians were expecting from Paul that would denote him an authority on the subject

196 I take καθ᾽ ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας to be describing ἦλθον. Κἀγὼ ἐλθὼν πρὸς ὑμᾶς is understood as a nominative circumstantial frame, which functions in "a supporting role to the main verb" by providing background information for ἦλθον and highlights information about Paul as the subject (Steven Runge, *Discourse Grammar of the New Testament: A Practical Introduction for Teaching and Exegesis* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2010), 249-250).

197 Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 208; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 82-83; Ciampa & Rosner, *First Letter to the Corinthians*, 113.

198 ὑπεροχή is regularly used to describe the status and authority of people. Isocrates uses ὑπεροχή in reference to his skills at rhetorical discourse that others sought to imitate. (*Panath.* 12.16) Also, the Stoic Epictetus uses ὑπεροχή to describe the authority of a person who has great power. (*Ench.* 33.12-13) Dio Chrysostom uses the word to refer to the superior positions the gods have in relation to humans. (*Charid.* 26-27.)

199 Rene Brouwer, *The Stoic Sage: The Early Stoics on Wisdom, Sagehood, and Socrates* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 43-45.

200 In his discussion with his brother Quintus, Cicero says, "I consider eloquence to be the offspring of the accomplishments of the most learned men."

201 See also Kennedy (*A New History of Classical Rhetoric*, 8-9) on the wide scale of education for the ideal orator, which includes "rhetoric, philosophy, law, history, and all knowledge."

matter of God. An aversion to giving off an appearance of expertise may explain 1 Corinthians 1.17, where Paul states that he did not proclaim the Gospel with σοφίᾳ λόγου.

Multiple scholars take σοφίᾳ λόγου to refer to some form of rhetoric or eloquence.[202] By contrast, Brookins considers it as "a certain kind of rational argumentation."[203] *A*s Fee observes, "the precise meaning of the negative phrase... is not quite so clear. Is the emphasis on the content (wisdom) or form (word), or perhaps both?"[204] While Fee is right to emphasize the ambiguity of Paul's language, his distinction between form and content is perhaps artificial and anachronistic. Pogoloff demonstrated that the distinction between rhetorical form and intellectual content emerged from the foundationalist epistemology of the Enlightenment, from which modern biblical criticism emerged, but is not germane to Paul's Greco-Roman milieu.[205]

A comparison of σοφίᾳ λογόυ in 1.17 to λόγος σοφίας in 12.8 may provide a different way to assess the meaning of the phrase. *Prima facie*, Paul transposes these words in an apparent wordplay. *Rhetorica ad Herrenium* refers to this type of transposition in the figure of reciprocal change where "two discrepant thoughts are so expressed by transposition that the latter follows from the former although contradictory to it, as follows: 'You must eat to live, not live to eat'" (*Rhet. Her.* 4.39 [Caplan]).[206] Σοφίᾳ λογόυ may plausibly express an idea intended to be discrepant of λόγος σοφίας. Whereas λόγος σοφίας can refer to a person's speech that conveys wisdom, the transposed σοφίᾳ λογόυ could refer to the wisdom that comes from the study of speech, with the implication that it is not true wisdom.

The education of figures such as the Stoic sage, Jewish scribe, and political orator regularly

202 Pogoloff (*Logos and Sophia*, 110) understands σοφίᾳ λόγου to refer to "clever or skilled or educated or rhetorically sophisticated speech." Thiselton (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 143) renders this as "not by manipulative rhetoric." Witherington (*Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 103.) believes it to refer to "mere words without comparable content."

203 Brookins*, Corinthian Wisdom*, 164.

204 Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 64.

205 Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia*, 7-35.

206 Cicero refers to the common occurrence of transpositions in unskilled speech (*De Or*. 2.69-70).

consisted of the study of speech. E.A. Judge's describes the three figures of 1 Corinthians 1.20 as possessing a tertiary-level education.[207] For the Stoics, education about speech primarily considered the study of the logical content of speech (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.83). However, Seneca laments that "the study of wisdom has become the study of words" in criticizing teachers and pupils who excessively focus on developing their argumentative skills but fail to engage in the development of their personal life (*Ep*. 108.23; [Gummer]). Meanwhile, rhetorical education during the period of Augustan Rome consisted primarily of training in declamatory exercises.[208] Ben Sira characterizes a sage as someone who is "intelligent in words" (Sir. 18.28-29 LXX; συνετοὶ ἐν λόγοις). Furthermore, the scribe studied and interpreted various forms of discourse (Sir. 38.24b-39.6).

Whereas Paul states that he refrained from employing σοφίᾳ λογόυ in his preaching, he did contrast his preaching in 1 Corinthians 3.10-11 to that of a σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων ("wise builder"). While Paul's preaching did not verbally express wisdom, he considers his actions to have been wise. For Epictetus, it was better to demonstrate the result of one's learning by one's behaviors rather than claiming to be a philosopher and talking explicitly about philosophical ideas (*Ench.* 46). It would seem then that Paul's avoidance of employing σοφίᾳ λογόυ is due to the effect it could have had on the Corinthians' perceptions of Paul as a teacher of human wisdom (1 Cor. 2.5).

While σοφίᾳ λογόυ may generally refer to the education of different persons in pursuit of wisdom, Paul seems to direct it primarily towards philosophical speech and its regular expressions about theories. Paul's and Epictetus' distinction between spoken wisdom and wisdom in action reflects the division the Stoics made between theoretical knowledge (λόγος) and the technical knowledge of τέχνη.[209] There is a difference between being able to think about and describe someone or something

207 Judge, "Reaction Against Classical Education," 713-14.
208 Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric*, 159.
209 John Sellars, *The Art of Living: The Stoics on the Nature and Function of Philosophy* (London: Duckworth, 2009), 167-170.

and seeing the same being or thing in action. Rather than relying on obtaining an authority with the Corinthians based upon his λόγος or σοφία in his evangelistic preaching (1 Cor. 2.1), it is the demonstration of the power of the Spirit that brings the Corinthians to faith in God's power (1 Cor. 2.4-5). Hence, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4.20: "For the kingdom of God is not *known* in speech but in power."[210] Learning about God starts from an understanding of God's power, not theorizing speech. Nevertheless, Paul recognizes there is a place for spoken wisdom in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16, but it comes from the instruction of the Spirit rather than the schools of human wisdom (1 Cor. 2.13).

3.5 Learning wisdom

Commenting on the Corinthian culture, Witherington observes:

> Well-to-do or aristocratic Romans, like Greeks, often had a low opinion of those who practiced a trade, and many of Paul's problems in Corinth seem to have been caused by the wealthy and the social climbers among Corinthian Christians who were upset at him for not meeting their expectations for a great orator and teacher. Corinth was a city where an enterprising person could rise quickly in society through the accumulation and judicious use of newfound wealth. It seems that in Paul's time many in Corinth were already suffering from a self-made-person-escapes-humble-origins syndrome Corinth was a magnet for the socially ambitious, since there were many opportunities for merchants, bankers, and artisans to gain higher social status and accumulate a fortune in this city refounded by freed slaves.[211]

210 This translation considers the Greek of οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ' ἐν δυνάμει to have a verbal ellipse that takes the verb γινώσκω in 4.19 as describing the action.

211 Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 20.

During the Imperial era, the upper-class of Rome became thoroughly familiar with philosophy and the differences between the schools.[212] One way social climbers in Corinth could break through and change the negative judgments of elite Romans would be to obtain higher education in philosophy or rhetoric.[213] Such ambitions of social mobility would have made obtaining education from those considered wise to be in high demand. While the more affluent could have afforded such instruction through going to Athens for philosophical instruction like the Roman elite[214] or receiving an education at the Greco-Roman gymnasium,[215] this opportunity would not have been available to the less affluent of the Corinthian church. Out of concerns of social mobility, the Corinthians may have perceived teachers like Paul and Apollos as providing instruction in wisdom. Thus, upon closer inspection, Paul's discourse shows signs of different cultural expectations and conventions about how people obtain wisdom.

3.5.1 Inspiration and the scarcity of wisdom

In many cultures, wisdom is considered to be rare. As already mentioned, the Stoics held that there were no truly wise people, or at most, only a few. Similarly, the Psalms regularly affirm the lack of understanding among the people (Psalm 14.2-4, 53.2-3, 94.8). When wisdom is considered rare, it can lead to formulating explanations of how it is obtained.

Seneca and Epictetus both considered the gods to have given humans the ability to acquire wisdom through reason (Seneca, *Ep.* 90.1; Epictetus, *Diatr*. 1.7). Additionally, Seneca considers the presence of a "holy spirit" in people as God's presence, but this God is unknown until one observes the

212 Long, "Roman philosophy," 185-186.
213 Stanley Frederick Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (London: Methuen, 1977), 252; William A Johnson, "Learning to Read and Write," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer (Chichester; West Sussex, UK; Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 140.
214 Reydams-Schils, "Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy," 125.
215 Brookins, *Corinthian Wisdom*, 136-147.

world to prove the presence and existence of God (*Ep*. 41.2-3).[216] Similarly, Epictetus regards God as having created humanity to observe and interpret his work (*Diatr.* 1.6.18-19). Then, according to Seneca, a person rises above through imaginative contemplation of the entire scope of the world through observation of the whole world:

> Only when one has surveyed the whole universe can one truly despise grand colonnades, ceilings glittering with ivory, trim groves and cooling streams transported into wealthy mansions. From above, *one can now look down upon this narrow world*, covered for the most part by sea, and, even where it rises above the sea, an ugly waste either parched or frozen. (*Nat.* pref. 5-6 [Clarke])

In addition to reason, some Stoics accept divination through both the natural inspiration of a person and a "technical divination" that comes by learning from the results of natural inspiration (*De Div.* 1.10-12).[217] Thus, for the Stoics, foolishness is a consequence of the inappropriate usage of the faculty of reasoning, particularly as used in observations of the world and naturally inspired divination.

In contrast to Stoic teaching that divine providence provides humans the ability to reason, Ben Sira considered wisdom to be a consequence of an individual scribe's inspiration by "a spirit of understanding" (πνεύματι συνέσεως) from God as the scribe studies the Torah and other forms of wisdom and sayings, which allows them to speak words of wisdom (ῥήματα σοφίας; Sir. 38.34-39.6). For the scribe, wisdom emerges as a combination of leisure time to study, a pious life dedicated to God in prayer, and the willingness of God to inspire them. Whereas the Stoics would explain the scarcity of

216 Also, in the preface (Seneca, *Nat.* pref. 6-9) to *Natural Questions,* Seneca says a state of being united with God is prepared for by obtaining virtue, but it is acquired through observation of the whole universe.

217 R.J. Hankinson, "Stoicism, Science, and Divination," *Apeiron* 21, no. 2 (Summer 1988): 123–60; 123–60. Hankinson observes (p. 130-131) that "for the Stoics, *divination* is the foretelling of events that come about by chance, without, that is, any clear causal connection."

wisdom due to the failure to use reason appropriately, Ben Sira's view of wisdom highlights no single condition for obtaining wisdom.

Paul's account of God's wisdom would in part explain why no one comprehends (οὐδεὶς ἔγνωκεν) God's wisdom except through the Spirit (1 Cor. 2.11). Dirk Merwe has noted that Paul attempts to elicit curiosity from the Corinthians through the mention of God's wisdom, God's mystery, spiritual things, and the mind of Christ.[218] Paul's selection of terminology to convey the scarcity and exclusivity of wisdom reinforces this sense of curiosity. Paul restricts spoken wisdom for the mature (τοῖς τελείοις), conveying the notion of a limited number of people capable of understanding God's wisdom (2.6). The description of God's wisdom as a concealed knowledge (τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην)[219] also provides a reason people would be ignorant of it (2.7). The ignorance of "the rulers of this age" (2.8) would convey the loftiness and rarity of this knowledge since kings and rulers had access to the best advisors and accordingly were expected to rule with wisdom (Musonius Rufus, *Diatri*. 8). Paul's description of the Spirit searching the depths of God (τὰ βάθη τοῦ θεοῦ; 2.10) was likely a metaphor based upon the Stoic description of space. Diogenes Laertius describes the Stoic Apollodorus' account of bodies in terms of three dimensions of length, width, and depth (βάθος), but human perception only takes in the surfaces of length and width (*Lives* 7.135). The imperceptibility of (metaphorical) depths conveys the exclusivity of such knowledge to those who have the right thinking and reasoning. Finally, the rhetorical question in 2.16 assumes the answer is that no one can instruct the Lord concludes 2.6-16 with an implication of wisdom's scarcity.[220]

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218 Dirk G. van der Merwe, "Pauline Rhetoric and the Discernment of the Wisdom of God According to 1 Corinthians 2," *Journal of Early Christian History* 3, no. 2 (2013): 108–32; 108-132.

219 τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην in 1 Corinthians 2.7 is treated here as a substantival participle that functions in apposition to σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ to clarify the specific type of wisdom to which Paul is referring: a wisdom that is concealed by God from the abilities of human cognition to grasp (cf. 2.9).

220 Hays, *First Corinthians*, 46-47.

What explains human ignorance and the scarcity of wisdom for Paul? Ignorance is not caused by the lack of observations about the world, nor failing to learn from other teachers, nor failing to discover wisdom through thinking (1 Cor. 2.9). Ignorance of God's wisdom is due to God's actions in having concealed wisdom: "But we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the concealed [wisdom],[221] which God ordained before the ages for our glory." God's wisdom is something that only God knows. Therefore, only the Spirit inspires teachers to perceive God's wisdom in revelation and speak of it (2.10-13) and that it can only be received and accepted by others through the Spirit's influence in examining wisdom speech (2.14-15).

Paul's description of the inspiration of teachers through the two acts of revelation and training in speech in 1 Corinthians 2.10-13 expresses the notion that God's wisdom is not the possession of a singular, wise individual. The likely influence of Daniel 2.26-30 LXX on Paul's discourse, which has a similar set of terms to describe the event of Nebuchadnezzar's dream and Daniel interpretation, reflects this distribution of wisdom.[222] Just as Nebuchadnezzar had a dream that Daniel gave an interpretation (σύγκρισιν; Dan. 2.26 LXX), the teaching of God's wisdom for Paul comes from interpreting one spiritual teaching with another spiritual teaching (1 Cor. 2.13: πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες).[223] God's wisdom is distributed to various teachers of the community in various forms, which serves to legitimate both Paul and Apollos' collaborative work towards the same goal directed and enabled by God (1 Cor.

221 The Greek of 1 Corinthians 2.7 is notoriously difficult to parse. See T.J. Lang ("We Speak in a Mystery: Neglected Greek Evidence for the Syntax and Sense of 1 Corinthians 2:7," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 78 (January 2016): 68–89) for some of the difficulties, particularly related to understanding ἐν μυστηρίῳ.

222 Daniel 2.26-30 LXX employs the following terms: σύγκρῖσις (2.26), μυστήριον (2.27-29), ἀνακαλύπτω (2.29), καρδία (2.30), and γνῶσις (2.30). This constellation of terms corresponds to Paul's usage of συγκρίνω (1 Cor. 2.13), μυστήριον (2.7), ἀποκαλύπτω (2.10), καρδία (2.9), and γινώσκω/οἶδα (2.7, 11-2).

223 The meaning of συγκρίνω in 2.13 is not immediately clear. Robertson and Plummer (*I Corinthians*, 47) lay out numerous options. Thiselton observes that συγκρίνω can take on three different definitions based upon lexical evidence: (1) interpreting, (2) comparing, and (3) combining (Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 264). Fee (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 115) considers it to likely refer to some act of explanation. Ciampa and Rosner (*The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 133-134) consider it to be used to refer to interpretation. Witherington (*Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 128) similarly thinks it refers to the act of interpretation based on the usage of συγκρίνω in the Septuagint.

3.5-9). Similarly, the Corinthian community would need to learn to put this collaborative form of teaching and learning into practice in their worship (1 Cor. 14.26-33). Hence Paul presents his teaching about Apollos' and their collaboration as an example of how the Corinthians should regard each other (1 Cor. 4.6). No single person can be considered to possess God's wisdom at the exclusion of other persons.

3.5.2 Imitation

Wisdom is not learned exclusively through verbal communication. Imitation of wise people was another avenue for learning. Xenophon describes the origins of Socrates' moral influence:

> [Socrates] rid many individuals of these [vices], after making them desire virtue and providing them with hopes that if they attended to themselves they would be gentlemen (noble and good). And yet, he never promised at any time to be a teacher of this. But by visibly being so himself, he made those who spent time with his hope that **by imitating him** they would come to be of the same sort. (*Mem.* 1.2.2-3 [Bonnette])

As David O'Conner observes, "Socrates educated primarily by being an object of imitation and emulation, and only secondarily through percept or doctrine."[224] The Roman Stoics made imitation an important aspect of their philosophical education. Epictetus tasks the philosopher with imitating what they knew about God (*Diatr.* 2.14.9-13). Seneca shares similar thoughts (*Ep.* 59.18; 95.50). Furthermore, Seneca explicitly calls a morally good man, "God's pupil and imitator" (*Prov.* 1 [Davie]). Also, Epictetus exhorts a person he regards as mature (τέλειος; cf. 1 Cor. 2.6) to follow the example of how Socrates reasoned and lived (*Ench.*, 51.3).

224 David K. O'Conner, "Socrates as Educator," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer (Chichester; West Sussex, UK; Malden, MA: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 79.

Rhetorical education could also rely on imitation. Cicero considers imitation necessary for a student's training in rhetoric (*De Or.* 2.87-97). Similarly, Quintilian assigns it an essential role in rhetorical education, while recognizing the limitations of slavish imitations (*Inst.* 10.2.1-28).

The imitation of others was not always considered positive. As Winter notes, there was also an inappropriate form of imitation described of the Corinthians in the language of loyalty in the phrase ζῆλος καὶ ἔρις in 1 Co. 3.3.[225] While Paul can elsewhere speak of ζῆλος positively,[226] the Corinthian attitude of emulation is negatively construed as it is done with an attitude of rivalry (ἔρις; cf. Rom. 13.13). As Bruce Winter notes, "[Paul] denounces any improper 'emulation' of himself by which anyone on his behalf is 'puffed up' against a supporter of Apollos (1 Cor. 4.6c)."[227] Instead, Paul uses the synonym μιμητής in 4.16 to refer to the familiar role of pedagogy in wisdom and rhetoric in the Greco-Roman world. Μιμητής may emphasize the positive traits of a person to be imitated (cf. 1 Cor. 10.32-11.1), whereas ζῆλος is used with an eye towards socially distinguishing oneself from others.

3.5.3 Shame

According to Richard Rohrboaugh, honor "was the core value of the ancient Mediterranean world."[228] Bruce Malina defines honor as "the value of a person in his or her own eyes (that is, one's claim to worth) plus that person's value in the eyes of his or her social group."[229] Honor was a pervasive value where all interactions with other people aside from family or fictive kinship groups were a "contest for honor."[230] The pervasiveness of honor meant that any event that brought shame to a person or a

225 Winter, *Philo and Paul Among the Sophists*, 170-176.
226 *Ibid.*, 174. In footnote 137, Winter mentions 2 Corinthians 7.7, 7.11, 9.2, and 11.2 as positive uses, whereas Romans 13.13, 2 Corinthians 12.20, and Galatians 5.20 are other negative uses.
227 *Ibid.,* 174.
228 Richard L. Rohrbaugh, "Honor: Core Value in the Biblical World," in *Understanding the Social World of the New Testament*, ed. Dietmar Neufeld and Richard E. DeMaris (London; New York: Routledge, 2015), 109.
229 Bruce K. Malina, *The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology*, Revised. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1993), 31.
230 *Ibid.*, 37.

family was a disaster. Rohrbaugh describes this public loss of honor as a 'negative shame.'[231] By contrast, to have 'positive shame' is "to have a proper concern for one's honor and to know what can bring about its gain or loss."[232]

The pervasive concern about honor and shame diffused into the education of children. Quintilian commends students who are sensitive to praise and honor (Quintilian, 1.3.7). However, Quintilian warns against the practice of negative shame that was used in the training of children (Quintilian, 1.3.16). Similarly, Plutarch comments that philosophy is a helpful tool for allowing a child to acquire knowledge about what is honorable and what is shameful (Plutarch, Mor. 1.7.10), inculcating a positive sense of shame.

In philosophical and rhetorical education, teachers would employ pedagogical techniques of positive shame in which they would encourage their students to imagine the honor or shame that comes with specific practices. In his speech *To Demonicus*, Isocrates begins by stating that those who have educational ambitions should "emulate (εἶναι μιμητὰς) the good and not the bad" (Demon. 2 [Norlin]). Such moral education was often accomplished through moral principles (Demon. 12). One of these principles Isocrates mentions is: "Whatever is shameful to do (ἃ ποιεῖν αἰσχρόν) you must not consider it honorable to even mention" (Demon. 15). Later, Isocrates makes explicit the role of shame in moral education: "Practice self-control in all the things by which it is shameful for the soul to be controlled, namely gain, temper, pleasure, and pain." (Demon. 21) Cicero also recognizes an instrumental role of "honourable shame" in the virtue of modesty (Inv. 2.54). The anonymous author of *Rhetorica ad Herrenium* tries to convey the importance of virtue through the imagination of the shame that would occur by renouncing the virtues (Rhet. Her. 3.38). Also, the feeling of shame serves as a motivation for

231 Rohrbaugh, "Honor," 112.
232 *Ibid*., 112.

avoiding an artificial embellishment of rhetorical style (Rhet. Her. 4.1-2). For the rhetoricians, positive shame was considered instrumental for moral development, including in the correct use of oratory.

Stoic pedagogy also made use of techniques to inculcate a sense of positive shame. Musonius Rufus describes the capacity for reason as that by which "we consider whether each action is good or bad, and honorable or shameful" (Musonius Rufus, Diatri. 3 [King]). Consequently, Musonius Rufus considers training his pupils to feel shame about that which is bad because adults exhibit self-control through having such shame (Musonius Rufus, Diatri. 4). However, negative shame is considered helpful, as a person in exile may experience harm from the shame that comes from their unvirtuous behavior (Musonius Rufus, Diatri. 9). Similarly, Epictetus considers that shame differentiates humans from animals and allows humans to have the correct social relationship with one another (Epictetus, Diatr. 3.7.26-28). However, Epictetus considers the knowledge of what is shameful to be important for more than merely moral self-control, but also for the ability to follow logical arguments and proofs (Epictetus, Diatr. 2.14.19; Cf. 2.14.28-29). Hence, positive knowledge of shame is considered necessary not only for a virtuous person but also for the philosopher (Epictetus, Diatr. 3.26.7).

Ben Sira, like the rhetoricians and philosophers, also considers shame an integral part of an education in wisdom. Sirach 4.21 says, "there is a shame that brings on sin and there is a shame that is glory and grace," perhaps reflecting the distinction between negative and positive shame. Then in Sirach 41.16-42.8, Ben Sira offers examples of these two different forms of shame. However, the distinction Ben Sira draws is not between positive and negative shame, but rather a differentiation about what should and should not be considered a source of positive shame.

Paul can be seen as similarly engaging in the acts of inculcating positive shame. Paul expresses that he does not intend to shame (ἐντρέπω) the Corinthians in what he had written in 1 Corinthians 4.14. However, he then later rebukes them to bring about shame (ἐντροπή) in 6.5 and 15.34. Yet, by

virtue of not singling people out, Paul's discourse functions to encourage people to positive knowledge about shameful behaviors for the Christian community. In 6.5, Paul refers to the behavior of the Corinthians in taking each other to courts. As Malina notes, it is "highly dishonorable and against the rules of honor to go to court to seek legal justice from one's equal."[233] It seems Paul considers the Corinthians believers of equal status by virtue of their belief (1 Cor. 5.5-6). Meanwhile, in 15.34, Paul expresses that he is shaming them for their sinful behavior and ignorance about God, reflective of the regular association of honor and shame with wisdom and foolishness, such as in Proverbs 3.35 or by Plutarch (*Mor*. 6.51).

When Paul attributes to God an act of public shaming in 1 Corinthians 1.27, this does not reflect the usual pedagogical conventions of positive shame. Instead, Paul has attributed to God an act of negative shame, bringing a public loss of face to those reputed to be wise and strong.[234] Epictetus rhetorically disgraced the philosopher Epicurus in the eyes of his audience by demonstrating the absurdity of the position of not having a natural affection for one's children (Diatri. 1.23). Given the competitive enterprise of ancient wisdom, such a public disgrace would function to make people less inclined to follow the teaching of Epicurus. Similarly, for Paul, the word of the cross has brought a negative shame upon the reputedly wise in the eyes of the Corinthians because the "wise" considered Paul's preaching of the cross to be foolish. By bringing the "wise" to public shame and disgrace, God has acted to decrease the Corinthians' pedagogical dependence upon them, narrowing and increasing their dependence upon God instead (cf. 1 Cor. 2.5).

233 Malina, *The New Testament World*, 44-45.

234 καταισχύνω emphasizes a person being perceived as shameful in the eyes of others (c.f. Lk. 13.17, 1 Cor. 11.22, 2 Cor. 9.3-4), whereas ἐντρέπων in 1 Corinthians 4.14 refers to the personal feeling or response of shame (LSJ, s.v. "ἐντρέπω.").

3.6 Wisdom and politics

As mentioned in the last chapter, Welborn overstates the political nature of the divisions in Corinth, but there is ample reason to consider the political implications of the division.[235] In 1 Corinthians 1.20, Paul mentions the political orator (συζητητὴς τοῦ αἰῶνος). In 1 Corinthians 2.6-8, Paul describes the ignorance of "the rulers of this age" (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος). Then, in 1 Corinthians 6.1-6, Paul shames the Corinthians for bringing each other to the secular judges. This shaming is due in part to the role the power of the Roman power had in regulated the rivalry between the cities of Greece:

> Roman power had, of course, restricted the autonomy of Greek cities throughout the East, and in so doing had constrained the scope for action in the traditional rivalry of cities. Where cities could compete—indeed, where the fact of Roman power required them to compete—was in the contest for Roman esteem: a contest conducted through behavior and language, and drawing upon sentiments and aspirations, that were themselves long familiar.[236]

As a consequence, the art of rhetoric across the empire was increasingly used to unify the various cities under Roman rule leading up to the end of the first century AD.[237] Similarly, philosophy was used to legitimate the status of the Roman rule, such as Seneca's political philosophy expressed in *De Clementia*. While Epictetus was highly cynical of tyranny (*Diatri.* 4.1.60-61), he still accepted the political legitimacy of the Roman Caesar.[238] Epictetus advocated for the unity of humanity against the rivalry between Corinth and Athens (*Diatri.* 1.9.1-3), which was consistent with Roman political ideology. Meanwhile, critical judgments about the government were often held back by philosophers (Epictetus, *Diatri.*

235 Welborn, *Politics and Rhetoric*, 8-42.
236 Clifford Ando, *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2000), 132.
237 *Ibid.*, 6.
238 P.A. Brunt, "Stoicism and the Principate," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 43 (1975), 9.

*4.1.*138-143), leading to the adjustment of how philosophical discourse was altered to reinforce imperial power. In such an atmosphere, the city of Corinth would have been familiar with the philosophical and rhetorical pronouncements in favor of Roman rule. A regular association between philosophy and political power would have easily lead to wisdom being understood as a tool of political power.

Furthermore, as the Roman upper-class contempt for those working in a trade would have limited the ambitions of the citizens of Corinth to move up in social status, one way to move upwards in the eyes of the political elite would have been to be considered a person of virtue appropriate to bring into a patron-client relationship.[239] Given philosophy's focus on ethical development during the imperial era, philosophical training and education would have been particularly advantageous for being considered a suitable client (Seneca, *Ben.* 7). However, as patrons would be selective with whom they would establish a friendship, there would have been competition between potential clients to distinguish themselves, including possibly boasting about one's teacher as a signal of virtue.

Thus, by both its political associations and its advantage for the ambitious, motivations for the possession of wisdom would have been tightly connected with the political and social life under imperial rule. Seeking an education in wisdom would not have been a politically neutral act, but it would have regularly reinforced the idealization of Roman power and been instrumental in forming personal relationships with the Roman political elite.

3.7 Wisdom and economic class

While education in wisdom can explain the political features of Paul's discourse, differing types of instruction in wisdom can also offer an account of the economic division in the community.

239 David A. de Silva, *Honor, Patronage, Kinship & Purity: Unlocking New Testament Culture* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2000), 107-10.

Similar to 1 Corinthians 1.10, Paul states that he believes that there are divisions (σχίσματα) that take place when the Corinthians gather in 1 Corinthians 11.18. Some go without food and the impoverished are disgraced. Gerd Theissen considers that part of the food that was provided for the gathering was set aside as private, enabling the wealthier and those who contributed to the meal to get more food than those living in poverty.[240] However, Paul's exhortation for the Corinthians to wait and expect one another (ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε) in 1 Corinthians 11.33 strongly suggests that the division was not based upon favoritism in food distribution. The NRSV, NET, and NASB, among others, translate ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε as "wait for one another." However, Hays considers that ἐκδέχεσθε describes the hospitable reception of each other as guests rather than a matter of timing.[241] If Paul is encouraging the Corinthians to welcome everyone to the meal, the implication is that the Corinthians are meeting and eating separately, much as it occurred in Antioch (Gal. 2.11-14), and this separation is drawn along economic lines in Corinth.

Dennis Smith considers the meals in 1 Corinthians 11.20-34 and Galatians 2.11-14 as a full-course dinner, which included the dinner course that was then followed by the wine and intellectual conversation of the symposium.[242] Kathleen Lynch notes that in the 5th century B.C., the food was not considered a central element of Greek symposia. However, from the 4th century B.C. onwards, the place of food took greater prominence as it allowed the hosts of the symposium feasts to demonstrate and raise their social status by providing the meal.[243] Additionally, the symposium would provide the opportunity for intellectual conversations on topics. With the social ambition present in Corinth, the

240 Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 153-155.

241 Hays, *First Corinthians*, 202. See also Winter (Bruce Winter, "The Lord's Supper at Corinth," *The Reformed Theological Review* 37, no. 3 (1978): 73–82). However, the alternative view considers ἐκδέχεσθε as describing the act of taking the time to wait, which is based upon interpreting προλαμβάνει ἐν τῷ φαγεῖν in 1 Corinthians 11.21 describing people eating ahead of the time that they should (Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 545-558; Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 863, 898; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 540).

242 Dennis E. Smith, *From Symposium to Eucharist* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004), 173-180.

243 Kathleen Lynch, "The Hellenistic Symposium as Feast," in *Feasting and Polis Institutions*, ed. Floris Van Den Eijnde, Josine H. Blok, and Rolf Strootman (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2018), 233-252.

symposium would be an opportunity for individual Corinthians to raise their standing in the community through hosting the meal. Furthermore, as it was customary to personally invite people for the symposium banquets (Xenophon, *Symp.* 1.4), the host could fail to invite specific people based upon a litany of reasons.

Ethical norms may have been a motivating factor in excluding persons from the dinner. Firstly, Paul's letter is written in response to a request for ethical instructions (1 Cor. 7.1-11.1). The pursuit of wisdom was usually of an ethical concern. Perhaps judgments about people's virtue were being made based upon their adherence or deviance from specific ethical norms the various factions prescribed. According to José Marques et al., deviance from ethical norms is addressed first by persuading deviants, then by hostility towards those who resist persuasion, and, finally, by rejection and redefinition of group boundaries.[244] Whereas Paul recommends the exclusion of persons, including at meals, based upon egregious acts of sexual immorality (1 Cor. 5.1-13), it seems the Corinthians were making judgments regarding each other based upon dietary norms (1 Cor. 8.7-13, 10.23-30). Perhaps it is due to these types of judgments of others by the Corinthians that Paul exhorts them to examine and judge themselves (1 Cor. 11.28, 31).

What type of ethical conflict can explain the division along socio-economic lines? The influences of the philosophical schools of Stoicism and Cynicism provide one explanation. Timothy Brookins has argued that a wealthier elite in Corinth would have received philosophical training through being literate, reading philosophical handbooks, and receiving a formal philosophical education.[245] In particular, the teachings of Stoic philosophy would have dominated their education.[246] In regards to social responsibility, the Stoic doctrine of οἰκείωσις dictates that upon birth humans are focused on self-

244 José M. Marques et al., "Social Categorization, Social Identification, and Rejection of Deviant Group Members," in *Blackwell Handbook of Social Psychology: Group Processes*, ed. Michael A. Hogg and R. Scott Tindale (Malden MA; Oxford; Victoria, AU; Berlin: Blackwell Publishers, 2003), 402.
245 Brookins, *Corinthians Wisdom*, 151-152.
246 *Ibid*., 135-136.

preservation but that one redirects this focus onto others, starting with one's parents and eventually culminating with a focus onto broader society, providing the basis for justice within a society.[247] Specific to dietary conventions, the Stoics were noted for treating food as an 'indifferent' that is neither ethically good or bad, although it was a promoted indifferent because of its situational goodness (cf. 1 Cor. 8.8-9).[248]

Meanwhile, F. Gerald Downing has concluded that some Corinthians had acquired a "hedonist Cynic stance" intermixed with other influences, such as Stoicism.[249] The philosophical exposure of the less wealthy would have been primarily limited to the philosophers that wandered the streets, many of whom were Cynic philosophers (Dio Chrysostom, *Ep.* 32.8-9). Cynics were particularly known for their flouting of social norms and conventions, including the way that they restricted their diets.[250]

While the Stoics Seneca and Epictetus had varying degrees of respect for Cynic teachings and lifestyle, they are clear to distinguish Cynics from their Stoic philosophy.[251] Their qualified sense of respect for Cynics in part stems from Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, being a disciple of the Cynic Crates (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 6.91; 7.2). However, those unfamiliar with Stoicism's origins were not likely to be as charitable to Cynic practices and ideas. Instead, the wealthier Corinthian believers educated with Stoic ideals may have regarded less affluent persons influenced by Cynic teaching to flout social conventions and to have more ethical scruples about food as lacking virtue and thus being labeled

247 Tad Brennan, *The Stoic Life: Emotions, Duties, and Fate* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005), 154-168.

248 Brennan, *The Stoic Life*, 35-45; Tad Brennan, "Stoic Moral Psychology," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood, reprinted (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 269-274.

249 F. Gerald Downing, *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 85-127.

250 William Desmond, *Cynics* (Stocksfield, Newcastle: Acumen, 2008), 77-78.

251 Seneca makes a conscious distinction between his Stoic philosophy and the Cynics, but he is willing to acknowledge what they both have in common in their views on what a sage is like (*Ep.* 9.3). Epictetus, on the other hand, highly regards the Cynic way of life as exemplified in Diogenes as a calling from God (*Diatri*. 3.22), but he speaks with great disdain of those who falsely imitate Diogenes through simple disregard of social conventions through public flatulence (*Diatri.* 3.22.80).

as weak (ἀσθενής; 1 Cor. 8.7-13).[252] The wealthier hosts of the dinner may have chosen to exclude some of the poorer members of the community by virtue of their 'unconventional' manners and dietary behaviors.

If Welborn's judgment is correct that Crispus, Gaius, and Stephanus possess greater degrees of wealth,[253] then their mention as Paul he distances himself from the act of baptism (1 Cor. 1.14-16) may suggest that they as wealthier Corinthians were inclined to identify with Paul. Meanwhile, the criticism of Paul's bodily presence and speech in Corinth (2 Cor. 10.10), would have been less likely to come from the wealthier Corinthians educated in Stoicism, as Stoic teachers saw the focus on physical appearances and showy speech in a negative light (Seneca, *Ep.* 8.5; Epictetus, *Diss.* 3.23). On the other hand, Apollos' bolder manner of speaking (Acts 18.16) may have been more popular to those not taught to disregard appearances by a Stoic education and may have even seen as flouting social conventions that would draw the approval of those influenced by Cynic street preachers. In this case, Paul's reference to σχίσματα in both 1 Corinthians 1.10-17 and 11.17-34 may be taken to refer to the same divisions based upon identification with different Christian teachers, which was roughly drawn across socio-economic lines due to the varying forms and sources of philosophical education and instruction in Greco-Roman society.

252 Mahlerbe ("Determinism and Free Will in Paul," in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pederson (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 233-238) notes that for the philosopher, "weakness was frequently described as a condition that accompanies moral illness and as a condition or disposition of the self-indulgent." Knowledge provides the way for freedom from such weakness. As the Stoics considered it wrong to falsely regarded something as good or evil when it should be regarded as an indifferent (Brennan, *The Stoic Life*, 35-45), such ethical knowledge would be expected to show the error of making moral judgments about food as anything more than an indifferent.

253 L.L. Welborn, *An End to Enmity* (Berlin; Boston: Walter de Gruyter, 2011), 236-260.

3.8 Conclusion

The above arguments have sought to demonstrate the central role education can have in explaining Paul's language and in providing a plausible causal account for the divisions in Corinth. A summary account can be described as follows. The Corinthian believers were accustomed to thinking of Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ as teachers of wisdom. They identified with various teachers whom they deemed to have the necessary expertise about God to teach them, including most importantly in matters of ethics. Through obtaining wisdom, they would have the potential to raise their social status in the eyes of others, particularly through the development of their virtue. However, because judgments of both (a) those who were recognized as wise and (b) what wisdom consisted of were part of the essentially contested understanding of wisdom in the Greco-Roman culture, various members of the community also stood in conflict with each other based on their preferred teacher. Paul considers this behavior a mark against their ethical maturity. In addition, the pursuit of wisdom has divided the church along economic lines due to the differences in education. In response, Paul reminds the Corinthians how God demonstrated the folly of those recognized to be wise through the message of the cross, diminishing their status in the eyes of the Corinthians. Instead of regarding Apollos and himself as teachers of wisdom in competition with each other, he invites them to see their teaching roles among the Corinthians as collaborative and in terms of servant-hood and the conventions of education in the household.

As will be discussed and developed in the next two chapters, Paul ultimately considers God the teacher of the community through Jesus Christ and the inspiration of the community's various members by the Holy Spirit. In so doing, Paul describes to the Corinthians a way of learning and acquiring understanding about God that comes into stark contrast with the prevailing cultural conventions about wisdom, education, and imperial power.

Chapter 4 - God's pedagogy in 1 Corinthians 2

4.1 Introduction

The last chapter presented the argument that ancient educational conventions explain the theme of wisdom in 1 Corinthians and the ecclesial divisions. One potential corollary of this premise is that Paul construes God as the teacher of wisdom in distinction from ancient pedagogical conventions about human teachers. More specifically, this chapter argues that Paul construes God as the teacher to the Corinthians, guiding them from the beginnings of faith through to the maturation that prepares one to understand His wisdom.

To make this argument, it is necessary to describe Paul's purpose in 1 Corinthians 2 based upon an interpretation of 1 Corinthians 1.26-31, which contains an implicit narrative about God's actions to change social perceptions about social status and who is to be deemed fit to teach wisdom. After identifying 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and 6.16 with the actions of God's described in 1.26-29 and 1.30-31 respectively, it will be argued that the interpretations of Paul's discourse in both sections of 1 Corinthians 2 place emphasis on the actions of God and the Spirit to (a) shift the epistemic dependence of the Corinthians onto God rather than human wisdom in 2.1-5 and (b) an account of inspiration that makes the Spirit the condition of speaking and understanding wisdom for the whole community. It shall be argued that this emphasis on God's action in 1 Corinthians is best construed as a form of education and teaching, which will then be demonstrated in the identification of τοῖς τελείοις ("the mature") and τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ("the rulers of this age") as being consistent with a description of a divine pedagogy.

4.2 Structure and purpose of 1 Corinthians 2

The role of 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 in Paul's overall argument in 1 Corinthians 1-4 has been variously construed. In his article "Haggadic Homily Genre in 1 Corinthians 1-3," Wilhelm Wuellener considers 2.6-16 to be the last of three treatments on the central theme of God's judgment mentioned in 1.19, with the other two treatments being 1.20-25 and 1.26-31. Meanwhile, he regards 2.1-5 as a digression.[254] In so arguing, he seems to consider 2.6-16 as returning to the development of Paul's main argument. By contrast, Duane Litfin explicitly rejects Wuellner's description of 2.1-5 as a digression, regarding the passage as part of Paul's overall purpose.[255] Meanwhile, Litfin considers 2.6-16 to be a transition from Paul's argument in 1.18-2.5, which pertains to wisdom from the perspective of the world, to a description of God's perspective on wisdom.[256] While Wuellener and Litfin differ on the functions of 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 in Paul's overall argument, neither of them consider the two sections to be developments on common themes. However, based upon a comparison of features in 1.26-31 to chapter 2, it seems that 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 function to provide examples of God's action in relation to the Corinthian experience as described in 1.26-29 and 1.30-31, respectively.

In 1 Corinthians 1.26-29, Paul describes God's election (ἐκλέγομαι) of the foolish, the weak, and the low status as resulting in the shaming of the wise, strong, and high status. 1 Corinthians 2.5 similarly devalues human wisdom. Also, 1 Thessalonians 1.4-5 suggests a connection between the power of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2.4 (ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως) and election. Finally, the exclusion of boasting in 1 Corinthians 1.29 corresponds to Paul's self-description as lacking the demonstration of any speech, wisdom, or knowledge that could be used to distinguish himself. With 1.26-29 in mind, it seems

254 Wilhelm Wuellner, "Haggadic Homily Genre in 1 Corinthians 1-3," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 89, no. 2 (June 1970): 199–204; 201.
255 Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 204n77.
256 *Ibid*., 213-214.

2.1-5 describes how it is that God disgraced the wise in the eyes of the Corinthian believers, putting their faith instead in God's power.

Meanwhile, both 1 Corinthians 1.30-31 and 2.6-16 develop the themes of (a) God's agency in wisdom, revelation, and the giving of the Spirit and (b) human boasting in God. In 1.30, Paul provides a summary of the origin of the various benefits the Corinthians have, including wisdom from God, as due to God's own doing (ἐξ αὐτοῦ) to join the Corinthians to Christ (ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ). Similarly, in 2.10-12, Paul ascribes revelation as originating from God's agency and describes the Spirit as from God (ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ). Furthermore, whereas Christ is described as becoming wisdom from God in 1.30, the speakers of wisdom mentioned in 2.6 are described as possessing the mind of Christ (2.16). Finally, in contrast to the exclusion of boasting mentioned in 1.29, Paul quotation from Jer. 9.24 LXX in 1 Corinthians 1.31 commends boasting in God. We can suggest then that 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 develops the idea of 1.30-31 where God's actions are what people can boast about.

The change from the exclusion of boasting in 1 Corinthians 1.29 to the establishment of boasting in the Lord in 1.31 would seem to be contradictory *prima facie*. Litfin appears to regard 1.31 as a concession or exception to the limitation of boasting, saying, "if there is to be any boasting it must only be boasting in the Lord."[257] However, another explanation is that 1.26-31 has an implicit narrative of human transformation in the background that describes two different states of affairs both brought about by God's actions: (1) the devaluation of human wisdom by the Corinthians and (2) the obtaining of wisdom from God. This idea of transformation coheres with the developmental metaphor used in 1 Corinthians 2.6 and 3.1-2, as will be discussed later in this chapter. Thus, 1 Corinthians 1.26-31 may be briefly describing the development on one overarching idea that 1 Corinthians 2 more fully develops:

257 *Ibid.*, 204.

God's actions establish the constraints and conditions of social status and wisdom throughout the development of the believer's life.

4.3 A theocentric interpretation of 1 Corinthians 2

4.3.1 Theocentric focus in 2.1-5

Duane Litfin suggests Paul expresses a rejection of the practices of classical rhetoric in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5:

> The affirmations of 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 constitute a repudiation of the dynamic of rhetoric for the purposes of preaching. This becomes clear when we compare the approach Paul is proposing with the persuasive strategies we have already observed. Unlike for the persuaders, for Paul the message was not a manipulated variable; it was a sturdy, unchanging Constant—Christ crucified, simply proclaimed. The wavering variable was the matter of *results*. Instead of determining at the outset what results he would accomplish, Paul insisted on leaving the outcome to the Spirit.[258]

This interpretation portrays Paul as providing his *modus operandi* that distinguishes his preaching from other styles of human communication. Similarly, Garland observes that "God's spiritual power overrides and invalidates strategies of manipulative power and self-assertion where the desire to win applause trumps the obligation to speak the truth."[259] More than merely recounting his first contact with the Corinthian Christians, Litfin takes Paul's description of his communicative strategy as a description of a

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258 Duane A. Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 2015), EPUB edition, ch. 15, "2:1-5 - Paul's *Modus Operandi*."

259 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 81.

specific methodology for human communication about God. The idea that Paul is providing a general description of his preaching goes back, at the least, to John Calvin, who considered Paul to address the "general character of evangelical preaching" in 1 Corinthians 2.1-2.[260]

Taking 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 as describing a general *modus operandi* suggests Paul is making a distinction between different types of human practices.[261] However, the contrast between human wisdom and God's power in 1 Corinthians 2.5 suggests Paul's purpose is not to distinguish between human methodologies, at least not directly. For Litfin's interpretation to remain coherent, an additional explanation is needed to connect an implicit distinction of his communicative methods from others to the explicit distinction between God's power and human wisdom. One possibility is to connect Paul's preaching method with God's power by suggesting a psychological reliance upon God's power in his preaching. For instance, Litfin and Thiselton describe Paul's reliance upon the Spirit to persuade the Corinthians.[262]

The idea of psychological dependence[263] has two points against it. First, the idea of psychological dependence upon God has been absent in the discourse up to this point. The closest reference to the idea of dependency one can find is the quote from Jeremiah 9.24 in 1 Corinthians 1.31: "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." However, both the original context of the quotation from Jeremiah and Paul's usage of it in 1 Corinthians 1.26-31 contains references to those of high status: the wise, the strong, and the wealthy. Boasting seems to pertain to social relations to others (and God) rather than any specific type of psychological mindset. Second, the language of power (δύναμις) in 2.4-5 is also used to describe one of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12.10. If "the demonstration of the Spirit and

260 Calvin, *First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Corinthians*, 48.

261 Litfin (*St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 207) writes of 1 Corinthians 2.1-5: "In this passage Paul repudiates entirely the dynamic of rhetoric for the purposes of preaching and opts instead for its diametrical opposite."

262 Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 206-207; Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 214.

263 Psychological dependence as a description of inner mental states is to be distinguished from epistemic dependence as described in this thesis' introduction, which refers to relations to another person or being for knowledge.

power" (ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως) in 2.4 is the same power mentioned in 12.10, then Paul is describing a specific act that took place. In that case, Paul describes the event(s) that lead to the Corinthians' faith in 1 Corinthians 2.4, not his psychological dependence in his preaching. Insofar as the discourse in 2.1-5 describes Paul's preaching, the communicative intent is to describe factors relevant to the Corinthians' faith. In other words, Paul provides an account of how the Corinthians come to an epistemic dependence upon God and His power instead of humans.

Rather than describing Paul's preaching method, 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 seems to recount the Corinthians' memory of their calling as described in 1.26-29 when Paul first arrived. According to Quintilian, memory and imitation were considered the first abilities necessary for learning by children (*Inst.* 1.3.1). However, the development of memory was not exclusively considered a tool for the education of children. The Stoics considered the study of syllogistic arguments, which included demonstrative arguments (ἀπόδειξις), as an important practice in memory formation and recall (Diogenes Laertius*, Lives* 7.45). That Paul has such conventions associated with the education of children in mind is evident in calling the Corinthians children (1 Cor. 3.1) and referring to their various teachers as παιδαγωγοὺς (1 Cor. 4.15), who were responsible for guiding children to and from school. Furthermore, he exhorts the Corinthians to imitate him (1 Cor. 4.16). Thus, it seems the demonstration of the Spirit and power describes the Corinthians' memory of the event of their calling.

Furthermore, since ἀπόδειξις can refer to a syllogistic argument, Paul's usage suggests there is an inferential link between the power of the Spirit and God's power (δυνάμει θεοῦ; 2.5). While the nature of this inference will be discussed more in the next chapter, it is sufficient for now to point out that the power of the Spirit is the demonstration of God's power. As such, the recollection of the Spirit's action in the Corinthians' calling highlights the relationship of their faith to God's action.

Thus, God's agency rather than Paul's preaching is the primary focus in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5. Ultimately, Paul's purpose is theocentric in illustrating the epistemic relationship between God's powerful actions and the Corinthians' faith through recalling the memory of their calling.

4.3.2 God's inspiration in 2.6-16

Similar to 1 Corinthians 2.1-5, Paul's discourse in 2.6-16 focuses on God's agency through the ascription of multiple acts to God and the Spirit. God is the subject of the verbs of preordination (προορίζω; 2.7) and revelation (ἀποκαλύπτω; 2.10). Furthermore, the Spirit searches (ἐραυνάω) everything (2.10), knows (γινώσκω) the things of God (2.11), and is the agent of training in speech (2.13). By contrast, the actions attributed to humans pertain to speech and thinking. People are said to speak (2.6-7, 2.13), receive the Spirit (2.12), fail to acknowledge the things of God (2.14), and Spiritually examine (2.15). It seems 2.6-16 describes the content of human thinking about God's wisdom as conditioned by God's actions. In this case, Paul can boast in the Lord (1.31) by claiming that he and others teaching collaboratively have the mind of Christ (2.16), as it is God's actions that constitute the collective human knowledge of God's wisdom.

A few interpreters have offered a theocentric reading of 1 Corinthians 2.6-16. In *The Resurrection of the Dead,* Karl Barth offers a theological interpretation of 1 Corinthians 2 that prioritizes the references to God, Jesus, and the Spirit.[264] Barth's reading is influenced by his characteristic understanding of revelation, attributing to the rulers in 2.6-8 a "blindness for God," whereas saying "Only God Himself can be the subject of knowledge of God" based upon 2.12.[265] His comments in *Church Dogmatics* are also illustrative of his theology of revelation. Barth considers the ability to speak God's

264 Karl Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, trans. H.J. Stenning (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 1933), 26-28.
265 *Ibid.*, 27.

wisdom (λαλοῦμεν σοφίαν; 2.6) to not be possible "unless it is first of all revealed, and indeed revealed by the Spirit."[266] Similarly, Barth uses 2.9-13 in support of the idea that grace provides a "capacity of the incapable."[267] As such, he seems to consider 2.6-16 as an account of how God's act of revelation enables humans to know God.

Similarly, Mary Healy offers a theological and epistemic interpretation of 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 that addresses questions of epistemic rationality: "What does Paul have to say about the knowledge of God and how it is attained? In what way, if at all, does he see knowledge of God as different from ordinary knowing? How does knowledge relate to faith, one of his principal themes?"[268] Her reading provides an account that reflects both a theocentric, downward act of revelation and an anthropocentric, upward act of knowing in response to revelation.[269] More particularly, her understanding of revelation echoes Barth; "revelation in its most fundamental sense is thus God's definitive communication of himself through the person and life of Jesus Christ."[270] Meanwhile, Healy construes knowledge as a relational and experiential knowing,[271] which she describes as "a spiritual perception by which the Spirit, through a gift of grace, elevates the human mind to a share in his own personal 'acquaintance' with God."[272]

Both Barth and Healy's account of 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 make a particular assumption: the Greek word for revelation, ἀποκαλύπτω, describes a general action that encompasses all the actions of God and the Spirit in the passage. While God is said to have revealed (ἀπεκάλυψεν) through the Spirit in 2.10,

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266 Barth, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of God* (Vol. 1), 515.
267 Karl Barth, Geoffrey William Bromiley, and Thomas F. Torrance, *Church Dogmatics: The Doctrine of the Word of God*, vol. 1, 2 vols. (London; New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 241.
268 Mary Healy, "Knowledge of the Mystery: A Study of Pauline Epistemology," in *The Bible and Epistemology: Biblical Soundings on the Knowledge of God*, ed. Mary Healy and Robin Parry (Milton Keynes; Colorado Springs; Hyperabad: Paternoster, 2007), 135.
269 *Ibid.*, 137.
270 *Ibid.*
271 *Ibid.*, 143-149.
272 *Ibid.*, 150.

Paul also refers to the Spirit's instruction (διδακτοῖς πνεύματος) of human speech in 2.13 and the instrumental role of the Spirit in human discernment (ἀνακρίνετα/ἀνακρίνει) of the things of God's Spirit in 2.14-15. If the Barthian understanding of revelation is understood to be equivalent to Paul's usage of ἀποκαλύπτω, then the Spirit's instruction and a person's discernment through the Spirit are also considered part of the act of revelation.

It is similarly standard among many biblical scholars to regard 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 as providing a general account of theological knowledge. Witherington regards revelation in 2.10 to refer to God's self-disclosure, while also entailing the human inability to know God through reason.[273] Gaffin comments similarly.[274] Garland considers 2.10-13 to provide an account of how God's knowledge can be made known.[275] Similarly, in *Paul's Way of Knowing*, Scott considers that Paul's point is to describe the failure of ordinary standards of judgment for distinguishing truth from falsehood.[276] The common assumption is that Paul is describing a general theological epistemology or rationality. This epistemic emphasis has often led to the Spirit in 2.6-16 being described as the epistemic source of revelation. Thiselton considers 2.10-16 to be Paul's reflection on the Spirit as a source of revelation.[277] Ciampa and Rosner describe the Spirit as "the essential source of revelation from God."[278] Similarly, Garland describes heavenly truth as unknowable except by the Spirit.[279]

There are two reasons to question the exegetical adequacy of these epistemic accounts of revelation for understanding Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16. First, Paul does not describe a generic account of theological knowledge about God, but he is focused on a particular type of knowledge: God's wisdom. Would Paul have considered knowledge about the non-existence of other

273 Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 126.
274 Gaffin, "Some Epistemological Reflections," 112.
275 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 98ff.
276 Ian W. Scott, *Paul's Way of Knowing* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009), 38.
277 Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 256
278 Ciampa and Rosner, *1 Corinthians*, 128.
279 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 98-99.

gods except one as addressed in 1 Cor 8.4 to fall under God's wisdom? This premise is unlikely, as Paul does seem to assume the truthfulness of this monotheistic account in 8.7-13, even as he regards this knowledge leading people to act in opposition to love for their fellow believers.

Furthermore, Paul was familiar with multiple events of revelation where the activity of the Spirit is not explicitly said to be involved. God's speech to Moses at the burning bush (Exodus 3.1-6) and Paul's account of the revelation of Jesus Christ to him personally (Gal. 1.16) both present cases in which the Spirit is not mentioned as an agent of revelation. Also, there are numerous accounts in the Old Testament and apocalyptic literature where an angel provides direction or a message from God for someone.

Both of these points argue against reading 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 as providing a general epistemic explanation for any and all forms of theological knowledge. Instead, it is more plausible to suggest that Paul's focus is more particular, describing the Spirit as an agent in a specific type of human speech that communicates the specific content of God's wisdom. In lieu of construing 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 as a general account of revelation, it seems fitting to understand Paul as describing a diversity of acts that are all portrayed as the Spirit's acts of inspiration (cf. 1 Cor. 12.4-11). One is hard-pressed to find a modern commentary that discusses the concept of inspiration in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16. However, this is likely due to the absence of words with inspiration as part of their semantic sense. Nevertheless, in Greek literature, πνεῦμα sometimes describes people who came under ecstatic inspiration.[280] Regularly throughout the Septuagint, πνεῦμα is considered the origin of prophetic speech instruction from God (Zech. 7.12 LXX), cognitive phenomenons such as dreams and visions (Joel 2.28-29 LXX), and the ability to interpret puzzling phenomena like dreams (Dan. 5.12 LXX). It seems more plausible that Paul intends

280 Kleinknecht, "πνεῦμα," TDNT 6:343-353.

to present an account of the Spirit's inspiration that identifies and explains specific phenomena that provide the ability to communicate and understand God's wisdom.

A bit of definitional clarity is in order as revelation and inspiration are often treated as equivalents or near-synonyms. William Abraham observes that there is a fundamental difference between the two concepts:

> Revelation differs from inspiration, in that the former refers to any act of divine self-disclosure in time and space, while the latter has to do more specifically with the claim that particular communicative events (e.g., the production of the biblical texts) are a matter of divine rather than human will. The frequent confusion of the two categories tends to be driven by epistemic motivations: the inspiration of Scripture has been a bedrock for theories of scriptural inerrancy, so that attempts to conflate revelation with inspiration are closely connected with a desire to view the content of revelation in terms of fixed propositional content.[281]

Abraham goes on to state, "Revelation is an epistemic concept and, as such, is readily associated with that family of general ideas constituted by intuition, reason, experience, and testimony. Thus it functions to provide warrant and justification for a host of claims about God."[282] As such, the modern theological concept of revelation conventionally refers to a specific epistemic source of theological knowledge, especially about God and/or God's purposes. While there are various accounts of revelation, the concept of revelation primarily focuses on God's agency in making such knowledge available to humans. By contrast, inspiration is a concept that ascribes the activity of the Spirit/πνεῦμα as the cause of specific phenomena of speech and cognition, which is then communicated by the recipients of

281 William Abraham, "Revelation," *The Cambridge Dictionary of Christian Theology*, 445–47.
282 *Ibid*.

inspiration to other persons. Thus, an account of inspiration also includes the role of human experience and action in the communication of divine knowledge in addition to God's actions. As such, the concept of inspiration is more specific and less general than the theological concept of revelation, focusing on both the roles of divine and human agency to convey knowledge from God in addition to the specific form in which such divine knowledge is communicated. Divine inspiration may be considered to be a specific type of revelation, with inspiration (1) providing more information and explanation about a specific disclosure of divine knowledge and (2) being distinguished from other types of revelation, such as theophany and angelic meditation, or even the human apprehension of general revelation if one considers nature as a medium for revelation (cf. Rom 1.20).

By virtue of the causal explanation that an account of inspiration provides, Paul's discussion of πνεῦμα can be seen providing a specific explanation as to why God's wisdom is rare and exclusive, as discusses in section 3.5.1. God hid His wisdom (1 Cor. 2.7), where it was not accessible in the natural world and to human reason, the means by which the Stoics sought to acquire knowledge about God (1 Cor. 2.9). Instead, God's wisdom is to be understood and communicated through specific speech acts and cognitive phenomena that the Spirit is responsible for bringing (1 Cor. 2.10-15). Furthermore, given that inspiration provides an account of how human agents can communicate divine knowledge, Paul's account of inspiration also functions to explain why Apollos and himself possess wisdom, which distinguishes them from the teachers of human wisdom. Finally, that account of inspiration also entails specific phenomenological forms through which humans acquire knowledge of God, helping to make sense of the three different activities mentioned in 2.10-15 that the Spirit is said to be involved in 2.10-15: ἀπεκάλυψεν (2.10), words that are διδακτοῖς (2.13), and ἀνακρίνεται (2.14)

Ἀπεκάλυψεν merits special attention as its usual translation as "revelation" can be understood as a reference to all acts of divine self-disclosure. Ἀποκαλύπτω usually refers to an act of unveiling, which

is regularly ascribed to God, Jesus, and the Spirit in the New Testament.[283] However, the near-synonym ἀνακαλύπτω is used in Daniel 2.28-29 LXX to refer to the dream of Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel interprets. While the semantic meaning of both ἀποκαλύπτω and ἀνακαλύπτω generally describes an act of uncovering, they may also be used to metonymically refer to the production of a specific human phenomenon, such as Nebuchadnezzar's dream, which is caused by God's disclosure.[284] God's actions are directed to a specific person, as Nebuchadnezzar is explicitly encoded by the datives τῷ βασιλεῖ Ναβουχοδονοσὸρ (2.28) and σοι (2.29) as the recipient of revelation.

Does Daniel 2.28-29 provide the background for Paul's understanding of ἀποκαλύπτω? The phrase πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες (1 Cor. 2.13) suggests the plausibility of a Danielic echo in 1 Cor. 2.10-13, if not the likelihood. συγκρίνω is used in Daniel 5.7 LXX to refer to the act of interpretation of Belteshazzar's written letter. In 5.12, Daniel is described as having a holy spirit (πνεῦμα ἅγιον) in him and having provided an interpretation (συγκρίματα) for Nebuchadnezzar, Belteshazzar's father. Back in Daniel 2, God's action to reveal to Nebuchadnezzar has not yet provided knowledge about God, but merely a phenomenon of a dream that Nebuchadnezzar has yet to understand. It is only when Daniel's interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream is given that the dream provides knowledge from what is given in Nebucahnezzar's heart (2.30; τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ἐν γνώσει). If one takes πνευματικοῖς and πνευματικὰ to be referring to two distinct phenomena of inspiration, one of ἀπεκάλυψεν in 2.10 and the other of λόγοις which are ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος in 2.13, then πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνοντες corresponds to the pattern of the dream-interpretation script of Daniel 2.

As a consequence, it is better to understand ἀπεκάλυψεν in 1 Corinthians 2.10 as a reference to a specific type of phenomenon, analogous to Nebuchadnezzar's dream, that God acts to provide through

283 BDAG, s.v. "ἀποκαλύπτω." On God, Jesus, and the Spirit as the agent of ἀποκαλύπτω, see Mt. 6.17; Mt. 11.25-27/Lk. 10.21-22; Eph. 3.5; Phi. 3.15; 1 Pe. 1.12.

284 This form of metonymy refers to the product of the producer that words conventionally refer to. On metonyms and the substitution of the producer for the product, see *Zoltán Kövecses, Metaphor: An Introduction (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010*, EPUB edition, ch. 12.

the inspiration of the Spirit (διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος), rather than as a reference to any type of God's revelatory self-disclosure. However, this need not be taken as the technical definition for all uses of ἀποκαλύπτω by Paul. Its ranging uses in the Septuagint[285] and its apparent reference to the Christ-theophany in Galatians 1.15-16 (cf. ἀποκάλυψιν in 1 Cor. 1.7) argues against an overly narrow definition. In favor of understanding ἀπεκάλυψεν in 1 Corinthians 2.10 as referring to a specific phenomenon of human speech or cognition intended for human communication is the listing of ἀποκάλυψις in 14.26 alongside other forms of speech, suggesting it describes a specific communicative phenomenon.

Looking at Paul's overall account of the inspiration of the Spirit, its significant features become salient when contrasted with other accounts of πνεῦμα and inspiration. For instance, the Stoics as pantheists considered the divine πνεῦμα to be present everywhere and in everyone, including in people, but in different forms.[286] The form of this πνεῦμα that is present in persons is responsible for human thinking and reasoning.[287] However, Paul regards the πνεῦμα that believers have received as not of this world (1 Cor. 2.12), thus implicitly rejecting the Stoic cosmology and account of wisdom.[288]

The differences between Paul's and Ben Sira's accounts of inspiration are also insightful. Ben Sira considers the wisdom of the scribes to be due in part to their training in interpreting various forms of wisdom discourse in addition to Torah along with God's giving of "a spirit of understanding" (πνεύματι συνέσεως; Sir. 38.34-39.6 LXX). Then, the scribe obtains social influence as the result of his teaching (Sir. 39.8-11). Thus, Ben Sira's account of inspiration engenders expectations of the scribe obtaining an epistemic authority that culminates in his social preeminence. Meanwhile, the only type of speech Paul describes as teaching God's wisdom is that which comes from the Spirit's instruction (1 Cor. 2.13).

285 A sample of the diversity of uses can be seen in Gen. 8.2, Lev. 18.6-19, Num. 22.31, Judges 2.20, 5.2, 1 Kg 2.27, 2 Kg. 7.27, and Isa. 52.10.

286 Dorothea Frede, "Stoic Determinism," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood, reprinted (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 184-185.

287 R.J. Hankinson, "Stoicism and Medicine," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood, reprinted (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 298-301.

288 Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 260ff.

Furthermore, Paul's account of the inspiration of the Spirit also puts the learners in a relation of epistemic dependence on the recipient of God's inspiration like Ben Sira. However, rather than focusing on the social status and benefit that inspired persons accrue, Paul focuses on the benefits given to the person who learns from the inspired person's wisdom. 1 Corinthians 14.22 describes tongues and prophecy, both labeled as charismatic gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor. 12.4-11), as signs (σημεῖον) for other people, either believers or unbelievers. Ultimately, the inspiration of the Spirit is given to build other people up (cf. 1 Cor. 14.26). While both accounts of inspiration provide for a relation of epistemic dependence between the inspired agent and other persons, Paul's account of the Spirit's inspiration focuses on the benefits to the learner, not the inspired teacher.

Paul's account goes further by ascribing the comprehension of God's wisdom to the Spirit's inspiration. 1 Corinthians 2.14-15 describes how a person who is spiritual (πνευματικός) is able to examine and understand wisdom speech on account of the Spirit (πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται). By providing an account of God's inspiration of both the communicators (2.10-13) and hearers of God's wisdom, Paul's discourse functions to eliminate the distinctions of superiority and unequal status between teachers of wisdom and their learners. While those who possess inspired speech about God's wisdom may be considered to have an epistemic authority that others should depend upon, those who successfully comprehend what is spoken are similarly inspired. As a consequence, all boasting should be in God, whether it be in communication or comprehension of God's wisdom (cf. 1 Cor. 1.31).

4.4 God's teaching in 1 Corinthians 2

Up to this point, the concepts of God's agency and God's actions have been used to understand Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 2 as a whole. These concepts are useful for distinguishing theocentric interpretations with anthropocentric interpretations that place the interpretive emphasis in 1

Corinthians 2 on human communication. However, they do not provide an adequate way to distinguish between multiple theocentric interpretations of 1 Corinthians 2. To date, the theological understanding of divine agency and action is rather broad, with no real clear consensus as to the meaning and significance of the concepts.[289] Hence, a more specific account of God's action is needed to interpret 1 Corinthians 2 and distinguish between different theocentric accounts. For instance, Barth and Healy interpret 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 as a description of God's action as a revelation in a modern theological and epistemic sense, whereas it has been argued that a better account of Paul's discourse is as a description of human inspiration from God. To meet the need of differentiation, the description of God's actions in 1 Corinthians 2 as a divine pedagogy provides an account that (1) distinguishes the theocentric interpretation of 1 Corinthians 2 offered here from other theocentric interpretations, (2) situates it within conventions that Paul's audience in Corinth would have been familiar with, and (3) describes the account of inspiration in 2.6-16.

The previous chapter argued that one of Paul's overarching concerns was the way the conventions of Greco-Roman education impacted the Corinthians' expectations about whom they looked to for wisdom. Humans were usually considered the teachers of wisdom in various wisdom traditions. However, occasionally, God was construed as a teacher. For instance, Seneca spoke of a good person as "God's pupil and imitator" (Seneca, *Prov.* 1). This same metaphor is more extensively employed in Sirach (Sir. 18.13; 45.5) and Wisdom of Solomon (Wis. 7.15-22; 12.19-22). Furthermore, God's status as a teacher is a common theme in the Old Testament, particularly the Psalms (Psa. 25.8-12; 32.18; 70.17; 94.10) and Isaiah (Isa. 2.3; 54.13).

In favor of the construal of God as a teacher in 1 Corinthians 2, there are multiple indicators of an implicit pedagogical awareness. Διδακτοῖς (2.13) and συμβιβάσει (2.16) offers the most direct lexical

289 William Abraham, *Divine Agency and Divine Action: Exploring and Evaluating the Debate*, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 2.

evidence, as both have semantic senses that include teaching.[290] Additionally, Paul refers to the demonstration (ἀποδείξει) of the Spirit and power. Demonstrations were sometimes used as a teaching technique (Epictetus, Disc. 4.7.6). Alongside the lexical evidence, the possession of the mind of Christ spoken of in 2.16 likely expresses an implicit norm of imitating revered figures of wisdom (see section 3.5.2).

Furthermore, the act of revelation (1 Cor. 2.10) can be construed as a form of teaching. In Galatians 3.23, Paul describes the Torah as keeping Israel confined[291] until the faith was revealed. To explain this function of the Torah, Paul employs the metaphor of the pedagogue (παιδαγωγός) in Galatians 3.24, who was usually a family slave whose principal duties were to guide the family's children to and from school.[292] As the Torah is likened to the pedagogue who guides people to school, the revelation of faith is metaphorically linked with the instruction the children would receive after arriving at school. Similarly, in Gal. 1.12, Paul denies that the Gospel came to him either by receiving it or being taught it by humans, but that it is a revelation (ἀποκαλύψεως) of Jesus Christ. The contrast between human teaching and Jesus suggests that revelation is construed as an act of divine teaching.[293]

Finally, God's wisdom (2.7) was sometimes understood as a teacher. The speech of the personified Wisdom of Proverbs 8 is regarded as a source of wisdom. In Proverbs 8.23, Wisdom is said to be laid as a foundation before the age (πρὸ τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐθεμελίωσέν). In 1 Corinthians 2.7, Paul speaks of the wisdom decrees before the ages (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων) and Jesus, who was called wisdom from God in 1.30, is said to be a foundation (θεμέλιον) in 3.11. If these echoes are evidence that wisdom in Proverbs

290 BDAG, s.v. "Διδακτοῖς;" s.v. "συμβιβάσει."

291 Both συγκλείω and φρουρέω convey the idea of persons who are placed in restrictive custody.

292 Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome*, 37.

293 This assumes that the usage of οὔτε in Galatians 1.12 is intended to distinguish ἐδιδάχθην ("taught") as another form of transmission alongside παρέλαβον ("received"), but that human agents are responsible for both acts of transmission. In that case, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ can be taken to contrast with acts of transmission originating in human action, implicitly attributing to God's revelation of Jesus (cf. Gal. 1.16) the actions of giving and teaching.

8 is in the intertextual background for Paul, it is plausible that Paul construes the acquisition of God's Wisdom through instruction. This construal corresponds with other Jewish literature. Philo regards the personification of God's wisdom to be a child-rearer (κουροτρόφον) (Philo, *Worse*, 115). Similarly, Sirach 24.32-33 portrays Wisdom as providing training (παιδείαν) and teaching (διδασκαλίαν).

The recurrence of pedagogically associated terminology in 1 Corinthians 2 may imply that Paul's purpose is in part to describe a specific pattern of pedagogy. Who, then, is the teacher doing the instruction? Given the theocentric emphasis in 1 Corinthians 2, the most coherent suggestion is that Paul is construing God as the teacher, although Paul does not explicitly refer to God as a teacher. Given the central significance of education in the Roman Empire, especially for social advancement in the elite of the Roman Empire,[294] references to an agent's pedagogical action could lead to the implicit construal of the agent as a teacher without an explicit description. Analogously, in American politics, words and phrases such as 'bill,' 'passed,' 'amendment,' 'sign,' 'veto,' and 'judicial review' can all be used to describe the processes of law-making and are readily understood as such without using a word like 'law.' Insofar as God's agency is connected to pedagogical behaviors, God could have been understood by Paul and the Corinthian audience as a teacher.

In 1 Corinthians 2.5, the contrast of σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων with δυνάμει θεοῦ suggests that God's agency is highlighted over and above the human agents who teach wisdom. This contrast echoes 1.19-20, where God is portrayed as undermining the three representative teachers and disseminators of human wisdom. The phrase δυνάμει θεοῦ in 2.5 suggests God's agency in overcoming the human teachers of wisdom. Grammatically, this interpretation would entail that the genitive θεοῦ functions as a verbal and subjective genitive describing God as the subject of the implicit verbal idea expressed in δυνάμει, which could be understood as "God's powerful acting." As the noun δυνάμις has a verbal

294 Elizabeth Szabat, "Late Antiquity and the Transmission of Educational Ideals and Methods," in *A Companion to Ancient Education*, ed. W. Martin Bloomer (Malden, MS: John Wiley & Sons, 2015), 252.

cognate in δύναμαι and is likely used to refer to a particular type of action in 2.4 and later in 12.10, 18, 29,[295] δυνάμει in 2.5 satisfies the necessary criteria for the head noun to make θεοῦ function as a verbal and subjective genitive.[296]

Furthermore, the emphasis on God's agency in 2.5 may also imply that God is an agent in the demonstration of the Spirit and power in 2.4 (ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως). As the ἵνα conjunction in 2.5 usually describes a goal or aim,[297] the purpose is inferred through the relationship of the information that the conjunction links together. The repetition of δυνάμις in 2.4 and 2.5 explicitly highlights the connection between the two bodies of information that refer to the demonstration of the Spirit and power and God's power. Given the agentic construal of the subjective genitive of δυνάμει θεοῦ, Paul's discourse would serve to highlight how God is ultimately the agent of ἀποδείξει in 2.4. Given the previously mentioned pedagogical associations of ἀπόδειξις, the ἵνα clause of 2.5 suggests that God is engaging in an act of instruction that contrasts with the human teachers of wisdom.

Similar connections with terms potentially associated with pedagogy and God's agency occur in 1 Corinthians 2.10 and 2.13. God is spoken of as the agent of revelation in 1 Cor. 2.10, with the nominative ὁ θεὸς serving as the subject of the verb ἀπεκάλυψεν, which, as previously argued, Paul construes pedagogically in Galatians 1.12 and 3.23-34. Meanwhile, the subjective genitive phrase διδακτοῖς πνεύματος in 2.13 explicitly highlights the Spirit as the agent of teaching. Given Paul's previous association of God's agency with the Spirit in 2.4-5 and 2.10, it is perhaps strongly implied that God is also understood to be participating in teaching in 2.13 through the Spirit.

It seems plausible, if not likely, that Paul's discourse portrays God as a teacher. Given the Psalter's regular ascription of teaching to God, Paul would have been devotionally familiar with a God

295 The third definition for δυνάμις in BDAG is "a deed that exhibits ability to function powerfully" (BDAG, s.v. "δυνάμις")

296 Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1996), 112-113.

297 *Ibid.*, 676

who is a teacher. Meanwhile, it is also plausible that the Corinthian Christians would have been able to pick up on the pedagogical associations and their reference to God. If E.A. Judge's hypothesis is correct that the early Christians gathered together as a scholastic community from as early as Jesus' role as a rabbi[298]—then the corresponding practices of teaching and learning would have likely been established in early Christian communities. If the early Christian communities identified God by His relation to Jesus within the worship of the community,[299] it is plausible that the understanding of Jesus as a Rabbi would also be extended to the Corinthians' understanding of God.

There is also evidence within the New Testament for this construal of God. In the Gospel of John 6.45, Jesus quotes from Isaiah 54.13 to explain that those instructed by God come to him. In 1 Thessalonians 4.9, Paul uses the term θεοδίδακτος ("taught by God"), which was probably coined either by him or the early Church to distinguish God's acts of teaching from human teaching.[300]

The Spirit is also regularly considered to act as a teacher in the New Testament. In John 14.26, Jesus says that the Holy Spirit "will teach [the disciples] everything" (διδάξει πάντα). A similar idea occurs in 1 John 2.18-27. In 1 John 2.20, believers are distinguished from those who left the community by virtue of (a) their anointing by the Holy One (τοῦ ἁγίου) and (b) the entire community's possession of

298 E.A. Judge, "The Early Christians as a Scholastic Community," ed. James R. Harrison (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 532ff.

299 Francis Watson, "The Triune Divine Identity: Reflections on Pauline God-Language, in Disagreement with J.D.G. Dunn," *JSNT* 80 (2000): 99–124; 114-115; David S. Yeago, "The New Testament and Nicene Dogma: A Contribution to the Recovery of Theological Exegesis," *ProEccl* 3.2 (1994): 152–64, 157; Larry W. Hurtado, *One God, One Lord: Early Christian Devotion and Ancient Jewish Monotheism*, Second. (London; New York: T&T Clark, 1998), 93-99.

300 Abraham Mahlerbe, "Exhortation in First Thessalonians," *NovT* 25.3 (1983): 238–56, 253-254. Mahlerbe considers θεοδίδακτος to contrast with the self-taught (αυτοδίδακτος) person of Epicurean philosophy. However, it may also be in contrast to a common Stoic form of ethical teaching. Stoics regarded sex as neither good nor bad but as an ethical indifferent that people should not be emotionally attached to (Brennan, *The Stoic Life*, 96). Something considered as indifferent could still be virtuously engaged in based upon some non-emotional reasons (*Ibid.* 99), thereby possibly be used to provide a rational license for various sexual behavior. However, Paul's instructions regarding sex in 1 Thessalonians 4.2-8 instructs against such sexual license, especially including in not taking advantage of a fellow believer (vs. 6). So, when he describes the Thessalonians as taught by God to love one another in 4.9, θεοδίδακτος can describe Paul's teaching as ultimately a part of God's teaching rather than human teaching (4.8).

knowledge (οἴδατε πάντες), with the Holy Spirit as the likely referent of τοῦ ἁγίου and agent of the anointing.[301] Then, 1 John 2.27 expresses the role of the anointing Holy Spirit in teaching them: "as His anointing teaches (διδάσκει) you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught (ἐδίδαξεν) you, abide in Him." (NRSV) This ascription of teaching to the Spirit is comparable to 1 Corinthians 14.31, where Paul considers the Spiritual gift of prophecy to perform two functions within the Christian community: to allow all people to learn (μανθάνωσιν) and to be encouraged.

Although Paul does not directly refer to God as a teacher in 1 Corinthians 2, the various actions explicitly and implicitly ascribed to God could have been understood by Paul and an early Christian community as consistent with God's authority over believers operating through his role as a teacher.

4.5 Who are the "mature?"

The identity of the τοῖς τελείοις ("mature" or "perfect") in 1 Corinthians 2.6 has been the focus of no small disagreement. William Baird takes the τοῖς τελείοις to refer to an "an elite inner circle of converts" who are the recipients of a secret form of knowledge.[302] However, Garland and Thiselton strongly repudiate such elitism in the passage.[303] Jean Héring describes them as "Christians who are spiritually adult as is shown by the contrast to '*nēpioi*' (**3**[1])."[304] Garland considers the τοῖς τελείοις to be people who love God and have received the Spirit of God.[305] Sigurd Grindheim identifies them as all

301 Robert W. Yarbrough (*1-3 John*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 150-151) suggests that τοῦ ἁγίου could take Christ, God, Spirit or some combination as the referent. However, as Colin Kruse (*The Letters of John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000)*, 102-103) notes, anointing (χρῖσμα) in the New Testament regularly refers to Jesus being anointed in connection to the Holy Spirit, along with a similar usage by Paul in 2 Corinthians 1.21-22. Kruse (103) concludes, "the Holy One is best interpreted as a reference to the Holy Spirit with whom they had been endowed by God."

302 William Baird, "Among the Mature: The Idea of Wisdom in 1 Corinthians 2:6," *Union Seminary Magazine* 13, no. 4 (October 1959): 425–32; 425-426.

303 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 91-92; Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 232.

304 Jean Héring, *The First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians* (London: Epworth Press, 1962), 16; see also Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 231.

305 Garland, *1 Corinthians,* 92.

people who accept the Gospel.[306] Hays thinks it a self-designation of the Corinthians that Paul demonstrates is not suitable for them; maturity is defined by the ethical concerns of building up the community, submitting to God's will in servant-hood, and being conformed to the pattern of Jesus.[307] Gerhard Delling regards the mature to be "those who understand the message of the cross, namely, as the wisdom of God, and who embrace it in faith."[308]

The various opinions outlined reveals the difficulty in identifying τοῖς τελείοις. Part of this disagreement extends from trying to identify the original context of Paul's usage. For instance, Baird compares Paul's usage to the initiates of ancient mystery cults.[309] However, C.K. Barrett thinks connecting Paul's usage to the mystery cults is unnecessary, though he does perceive a gnostic influence in the passage.[310] In addition, τέλειος is regularly used in philosophy to describe advancement in wisdom among philosophers.[311] One could also point to the Jewish sapiential literature, which uses the term to distinguish a person advanced in wisdom and virtue in distinction from others (Wis. 9.6; Sir. 44.17). However, Garland more generally states, "Paul did not borrow the term "mature" from the vocabulary of the philosophical tradition to denote those who have attained the pinnacle of wisdom or from the mystery religions to denote one initiated into esoteric mysteries.[312]" The mistake is in trying to determine what specific tradition Paul borrowed the term from to determine Paul's meaning. Its uses in various religious and intellectual traditions suggest it was a common word that was not unique to any specific tradition.

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306 Sigurd Grindheim, "Wisdom for the Perfect: Paul's Challenge to the Corinthian Church (1 Corinthians 2:6-16)," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 121, no. 4 (2002): 689–709; 704.
307 Hays, *First Corinthians*, 42.
308 Delling, "τέλειος," TDNT 8:76.
309 Baird, "Among the Mature," 426; see also Héring, *First Epistle of Saint Paul to the Corinthians*, 16.
310 C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, Black's New Testament Commentaries (London: A & C Black, 1971), 69.
311 Delling, "τέλειος," TDNT 8:69-72.
312 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 92.

Multiple scholars have recognized that τέλειος seems to be a reference to maturity, appealing to the developmental metaphor in 1 Corinthians 3.1-2 where Paul refers to the Corinthians as infants that he has had to give milk to drink.[313] In so doing, they assign a definition that is not tradition specific, but this does not go far enough. The language of development was regularly used as a metaphor to describe the process of education and learning. In language reminiscent of Paul, Quintilian connects the metaphor of milk with the educational development and maturity of children:

> I would even have it an object with teachers themselves to nourish minds that are still tender with more indulgence and to allow them to be satiated, as it were, with the milk of more liberal studies. The body, which mature age may afterwards nerve, may for a time be somewhat plumper than seems desirable. (*Inst.* 2.4.5 [Watson])

Additionally, Quintillian uses the Latin *perficiō* (which is similar to the Greek τελειόω in that they both customarily mean "to complete") to describe an orators' development in virtue through instruction (*Inst*. 12.2.1). Meanwhile, Epictetus used τέλειος to refer to a man who no longer needed a teacher to convey philosophical principles and to take responsibility for his own progress (*Ench*. 51). With high confidence, we may conclude that Paul uses τοῖς τελείοις to refer to a group of Christians who have reached a degree of education and learning in the Christian community that other believers have not.

How are the mature considered to have developed? Ethically? Intellectually? Paul's excludes the Corinthians from the mature based upon their behavior (1 Cor. 3.3-4), suggesting it is an ethical development that resembles Quintilian's notion of ethical maturity instead of the intellectual development that Epictetus describes. The development of virtue as the condition of maturity is evident in 1 Corinthians 14.13-20. In 14.13-19, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to consider how to use their speech to build each other up, which Paul follows with a challenge in 14.20 to be mature persons (τέλειοι) in

313 For further analysis, see Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 231-232.

their thinking. To be among the mature for Paul requires being concerned about the way one's actions are building others up.

Put differently, to be mature is to have love as a motivation for one's actions. 1 Corinthians 2.9c states that God's wisdom pertains to what God has prepared for those who love him. However, the Corinthians' competitive behaviors represent not just their attitudes towards each other, but ultimately to God. In addressing the topic of food sacrificed to idols in 1 Corinthians 8.1-3, Paul first criticizes the mindset of deeming oneself to have knowledge that leads to distinguishing themselves from others in the community. Paul regards such thinking as fundamentally misguided and instead emphasizes that it is loving God and being known by God that should be considered what is important. Then, in giving specific moral guidance on the matter in question in 8.7-13, he encourages the Corinthians to consider the effect that their acts of eating meat offered to idols have on others in the community. Those who damage the weak ones by eating at the temple are not just simply harming them, but actively sinning against Christ (see section 5.4 for further comments on 1 Cor. 8). The competitive attitudes of the Corinthians rooted in conventions of Greco-Wisdom wisdom lead to them to inappropriate attitudes towards each other. It seems then that Hay's judgment may be correct.

Beyond love simply being an ethical motivation for a person's behavior, love could also be considered an essential part of the learning process. Paul considers the purpose of building each other up as a necessary condition for learning to occur from the various inspired speech acts within the Christian community (1 Cor. 14.26-31). In a somewhat similar manner, Quintilian notes its importance:

> Having spoken thus fully concerning the duties of teachers, I give pupils, for the present, only this one admonition: that they are to love their tutors not less than their studies and to regard them as parents, not indeed of their bodies, but of their minds. Such affection contributes

> greatly to improvement, for pupils under its influence will not only listen with pleasure, but will believe what is taught them and will desire to resemble their instructors. (*Inst*. 2.9.1-2 [Watson])

It thus seems that Paul's description of God's wisdom as something prepared for those who love God (1 Cor. 2.9) designates the mature as those who are capable of learning matters of God's wisdom because of their love for God, which allows them to learn from each other as agents of God's inspiration. In other words, to be mature is to be a person who has grown to love God and others, preparing them to be able to receive the wisdom that God has concealed from the world.

4.6 Identification and discursive function of "the rulers of this age"

The argument made up to this point in this thesis is that (1) one should primarily understand Paul's concerns about wisdom in 1 Corinthians against the backdrop of pedagogical conventions in wisdom and (2) Paul portrays God's agency in the form of teaching. However, Paul's reference to "the rulers of this age" (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) in 1 Corinthians 2.6-8 does not readily appear to fit into concerns about education *prima facie*. However, as Wesley Carr notes, these verses seem to come from out of the blue, at least to modern readers.[314] When sudden, unfamiliar inclusions occur in discourses, there are likely social conventions and understandings that connect the unfamiliar information with the general topic that are readily understood by the original communicator and audience who inhabit a particular culture and language community, but not by outsiders. As a consequence, the discursive function of the material is often understood implicitly. Further complicating matters is that the specific reference of "the rulers of this age" is not entirely clear. Therefore, to

314 Wesley Carr, "The Rulers of This Age - 1 Corinthians II.6-8," *New Testament Studies* 23 (1976): 20–35.

determine the function τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου in Paul's discourse, one option is to posit a potential identity and consider its possible functions within the discourse.

Thiselton has identified four possible references in the scholarship for the rulers of this age: (1) demonic powers, (2) earthly political rulers such as Pilate, (3) angelic custodians of nations, and (4) sociopolitical powers that include but also transcend humans persons.[315] The first option has some attestation in the patristic literature. According to Tertullian, Marcion rejected that 1 Corinthians 2.8 refers to human rulers (*Marc.* 5.6.5). Commenting on the "ruler of Tyre" in Ezekiel 28.12, Origen identifies the ruler as not human and appeals to 1 Corinthians 2.6-8 in support (*Hom. Ezek.* 13.1-5). Arguing for the fourth option that includes both demonic and human powers, Walter Wink considers Ignatius' knowledge of a tradition of demonic powers preserved in the Ascension of Isaiah as evidence for this interpretation at the end of the 1st century AD.[316] However, Paul's only reference to demons in 1 Corinthians occurs in 10.20-21 in the context of cult and idolatry. Paul's language alludes to Deuteronomy 32.17 LXX and Isaiah 65.11 LXX,[317] reinforcing the cultic concern. If Paul has in mind demonic powers in 1 Corinthians 2.6-8, either as the sole reference or in conjunction with human powers, he makes no further reference to their wisdom or their role in crucifying Christ.

Alternatively, if Paul thinks the rulers of this age to be the political leaders who examined Jesus in his trial and passed his sentence, most notably Pontius Pilate, then 1 Corinthians 6.1-6 can be considered a more general judgment of the Roman legal system in light of the judgment of Pilate's failures. If τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου is to be understood as an implicit reference to Roman power (see comments on αἰών in section 1.4.2), then it is likely Pilate's judgment of Jesus would be in the implicit awareness of the Corinthians. In that case, Pilate's decision to crucify Jesus may be employed by Paul as

315 Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 233-239.
316 Walter Wink, *Naming the Powers* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), EPUB edition, ch. 3, "1 Corinthians 2:6-8."
317 Ciampa and Rosner, *First Letter to the Corinthians*, 479; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 482.

a rhetorical *exemplum*, also referred to as παράδείγμα in Greek, that provides a negative example of the human wisdom that the Corinthians should not follow and trust in (*Rhet. Her.* 4.62; Quintilian, *Inst*. 5.11). If that is the case, then the rhetorical function of the reference to the rulers of this age is as a pedagogical technique of inculcating a sense of positive shame by reference to the shameworthy behavior (see section 3.5.3). Similarly, Paul's expression of shame for the litigious behaviors of the Corinthian believers stems from their failure to recognize the shame the Roman legal system had in crucifying Jesus and their ill-suitedness to judge between believers. If they were ignorant of God's wisdom when they examined Jesus Christ and crucified him, they should have no standing in the sight of the believing community.

That Paul regards the rulers of this age as a negative example is further evident in his comparison of the Corinthian believers to the rulers of this age in 1 Corinthians 2.14-3.4. In 2.14, Paul describes the inability of the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος to be able to comprehend the things of the Spirit because they are examined in a Spiritual manner (πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται). Ἀνακρίνω was regularly used in judicial settings to describe the act of examination,[318] suggesting Paul is explaining in an aphorism why the rulers of this age were ignorant of God's wisdom: they were not examining Jesus in the way the Spirit directs. Then Paul describes the Corinthians' contentious behavior in 3.3-4. In so doing, he uses ἄνθρωπος to describe the Corinthians just as he did the rulers of the age in 2.14, whereas ὁ πνευματικὸς in 2.15 operates as a substantive without the presence of the noun ἄνθρωπος. By virtue of describing the rulers of this age and the Corinthians as ἄνθρωπος, Paul implicitly compares the Corinthians with the rulers. Thus, like the rulers of this age, the Corinthian believers are incapable of comprehending God's wisdom because they are not living as spiritual people (ὡς πνευματικοῖς; 3.1).

318 BDAG, s.v. "ἀνακρίνω."

Even though Paul draws a comparison between the rulers and the Corinthian believers, he also differentiates between them. Whereas the rulers of the age were ψυχικὸς, Paul describes the Corinthian believers as σαρκίνοις (3.1) and σαρκικοί (3.3).[319] While scholars have studied the semantic relationship between ψυχικὸς and πνευματικὸς in 1 Corinthians 2.14-15 and 15.44-46 with no known primary literature that uses them together,[320] little attention has been given to comparing ψυχικὸς and σαρκικός. Both words may be used to describe particular anthropological and psychological ideas that were prevalent among the Stoics. According to A.A. Long, the Stoics used ψυχή to refer to the mental and ethical faculties of a person, in particular to the reasoning faculty known as the ἡγεμονικόν.[321] If the ψυχικὸς/πνευματικὸς pairing was a novel development from Paul or the Corinthians, Paul could use ψυχικὸς in relation to the Stoic ideal of a person's life being directed by their own capacity for thinking and reasoning.[322] By contrast, σάρξ was used to refer to people's more animal-like instincts in contrast to

319 On the difference between σάρκινος and σαρκικός, Witherington (*Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 131) writes: "One of the slight variations that makes a difference in Paul's argument in ch. 3 is between sarkinos and sarkikos. They both ostensibly mean 'fleshly,' but the former emphasizes the physical side of human makeup as opposed to the spiritual side. Sarkikos (twice in v. 3) means 'manifesting fleshly characteristics' and has a definite ethical quality. Sarkinos (v. 1) points to the Corinthians' fallen human nature when Paul first preached to them, while sarkikos expresses their present moral tendency to act according to the assumptions and value system that they were supposed to have left behind." Thiselton (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 228) comments that while morphological analyses of σάρκινος and σαρκικός used in 1 Corinthians 3.1 and 3.3 respectively have suggested that the former refers to a disposition whereas the latter describes nature, this is not a semantic argument. To make sense of Paul's usage of σάρκινος and σαρκικός, it is important to consider the pragmatic function of the discourse. By virtue of the common -ικός endings, ψυχικὸς, πνευματικὸς, and σαρκικός function in Paul's discourse to distinguish different modes in which people's thinking is directed. ψυχικὸς and σαρκικός define the two modes of thinking as being directed by reason and by one's instincts. πνευματικὸς refers to the mode of life as lived by God's Spirit that comes from outside the world, and thus can not be described by either ψυχικὸς or σαρκικός. σάρκινος by contrast functions to describe a person's origin or composition (cf. Rom 7.14, 2 Cor 3.3, Heb 7.16) but not their pattern of behavior, strictly speaking. This is apparent by Paul's parallel statement in 1 Corinthians 3.1 that they are infants in Christ (νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ).

320 Richard Horsley, "Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians," *The Harvard Theology Review* 69, no. 3/4 (October 1976): 269–88. Horsley considers the Hellenistic Jewish tradition as represented by Philo as the origin of the terminology. Birger Albert Pearson (Birger Albert Pearson, *The Pneumatikos-Psychikos Terminology*, SBL Dissertation (Missoula, MN: Scholars Press, 1973), 15-26) considers the terms to arise from a rival's Jewish-Hellenistic exegesis of Genesis 2.7 that Paul offers a reinterpretation of.

321 A.A. Long, *Stoic Studies* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 226-233.

322 However, Brookins (*Corinthian Wisdom*, 169-171) observes that πνευματικὸς emerged as a special term in Stoicism, not ψυχικὸς.

reason (Epictetus, *Disc.* 1.4.6-9). Within the framework of Stoic psychology, σαρκικός could be used to describe an instinctual pattern of life that would be the antithesis to the rational ψυχικὸς. In that case, the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος can be considered to be one who through developing reasoning capacities has overcome the natural inclinations and weaknesses that cloud judgment and thus is able to understand human wisdom.

If this analysis holds up, Paul is designating the Corinthians as acting in a lower status manner in terms of Stoic psychology than the self-directed reasoning of the rulers of the age. However, it is the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος who are ultimately unable to understand and examine God's wisdom, thereby placing the rulers of the age as less capable than the Corinthian believers, in whom the Holy Spirit dwells (1 Cor. 3.16). This status places the Corinthian believers somewhere between the rulers of this age as a ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος capable of comprehending human wisdom and ὁ πνευματικὸς of 2.15 who can understand God's wisdom. Whereas one can consider the ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος as referring to those who are directed by their reasoning capacities, ὁ πνευματικὸς is someone who is directed by the Spirit, who conveys the thoughts of God (1 Cor. 2.11). In that case, Paul is challenging the Corinthians to accept a different style of thinking and learning that is dependent upon the Spirit's action to inspire people rather than a self-directed form of reasoning.

It seems plausible that the function of Paul's discourse about the rulers of the age is to designate those implicated in crucifying Jesus as negative examples of human wisdom who fail to comprehend God's wisdom because of their education in wisdom based upon the (Stoic) ideal of self-directed reasoning. Paul urges that the Corinthians should instead be motivated to learn by the inspiration of the Spirit.

4.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, it was argued that 1 Corinthians 2 should be understood as a discourse focused on describing God's actions as a teacher through the Spirit so that believers may come to know God and His wisdom. However, Paul's portrayal of God's teaching is not of a singular event or action. Instead, God's teaching is involved in the development of believers from their calling to the mature's comprehension of God's wisdom through the Spirit's inspiration of various teachers and learners. As such, Paul does not present a "flat," generic description of God's pedagogy, but offers one that shows awareness of the various aspects of learning. The final chapter will argue that Paul's description of the divine pedagogy is highly specific to the roles of God, Jesus, and the Spirit in guiding the Corinthians to faith and mature believers to a comprehension of God's wisdom.

Chapter 5 - God's threefold pedagogy

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter made a case for interpreting 1 Corinthians 2 with a theocentric emphasis on God's actions to teach the Corinthians through the inspiration of the Spirit. However,1 Corinthians 2 as a description of a divine pedagogy does not sufficiently make sense of Paul's discourse. More than describing a singular type of action from God, Paul refers to the three distinct agencies of God, Jesus, and the Spirit, with each agent's role differing from the others.

In order to understand Paul's presentation of a divine pedagogy in 1 Corinthians 2, it is necessary to closely look at the construal of the actions ascribed to Jesus, the Spirit, and God. It will be demonstrated that Paul considers that the human knowledge of God is determined by the way God acts in Jesus and through the Spirit. The first section attempts to make sense of the similarities and differences between Paul's preaching in 2.1-5 and God's wisdom in 2.6-16 by describing the narrative knowledge of Jesus common to both sections as the source for paradigmatic knowledge of human redemption that differs between the two sections. Then, the next section will argue that Paul considers the inspired actions and words of the Holy Spirit to be the agent responsible for leading people to faith and the comprehension of God's wisdom. The last section will suggest that Paul conceives of two different ways of knowing God: knowing God's power in a propositional manner and a mature relational knowing of God in love.

5.2 Jesus as the source of multiple forms of knowledge

In *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology*, Gerd Theissen presents two options for interpreting the relationship between Paul's proclamation in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and God's wisdom for the mature in 2.6-16:

> In principle, there are two possibilities for determining the relationship of the preaching of the cross to the wisdom teaching. Either one conceives the wisdom teaching as a higher level for the advanced, or one conceives the two as a dialectical unity. Under the first supposition, foolishness and wisdom would relate to each other as initial teaching relates to doctrines for the perfect; 2.6-16 would be surpassing of the preaching of the cross. Under the second supposition, the preaching of the cross is foolishness with respect to the world, but wisdom in God's view. It is a matter not of two successive contents of preaching but rather of the same content under two aspects—as foolishness for those who reject it, as wisdom for those who concur with it.[323]

More recent scholarship remains divided along the same lines. Roy Ciampa and Brian Rosner support the first option, saying that wisdom "is not to be equated with the gospel, which is for all people without exception."[324] Ben Witherington similarly states that "there is teaching appropriate to each level of Christian maturity."[325] However, Duane Litfin considers God's wisdom in 2.6-16 to be God's perspective on the cross that contrasts with the unbelieving wisdom of the world in 1.18-2.5.[326] David Garland argues along similar lines:

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323 Gerd Theissen, *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology*, trans. John P. Galvin (Philadelphia: Fortress press, 1987), 346.
324 Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 123.
325 Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 123.
326 Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 213ff.

> The wisdom [Paul] speaks among the mature, then is not a more sophisticated instruction for the gifted few. It is the same wisdom he speaks to all concerning God's redemptive purposes for humankind revealed in the cross (1:18, 2:2). It is spoken to beginning and advanced Christians alike.[327]

There is evidence in support of both options.[328] Paul refers to the crucifixion of Jesus in both 2.2 and 2.8. The shared reference to the crucifixion is consistent with a dialectical unity, where the same content of Jesus' crucifixion is in view. However, in support of wisdom as advanced teaching, Paul informs the Corinthians that he cannot speak to them as spiritual people and makes a distinction between the two forms of teaching (3.1-2).

Theissen synthesizes these two options by suggesting the content of the Gospel remains the same, but there is a change in awareness between 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and 2.6.16: "The higher wisdom of Paul consists not in new contents but rather in a higher stage of consciousness in which the same contents are reflected upon… In brief, perfect wisdom consists in making conscious a previously unconscious content."[329] However, while Theissen's introduction of the psychological phenomenon of consciousness is a creative attempt to bridge this exegetical conundrum, it owes more to Theissen's methodological reliance on the psychoanalysis to explain what Paul describes rather than exegetical rigor to identify what Paul's discourse describes.[330] Additionally, a change in awareness does not adequately explain the difference between Paul's description in 3.2 of his teaching to the Corinthians as "milk" in

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327 Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 92.

328 Theissen (*Psychological Aspects*, 345-352) suggests that analysis of the form of 2.6-16 favors wisdom as a more advanced level, whereas the content favors the dialectical option.

329 *Ibid.*, 352. See also Ferdinand Christian Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ*, trans. Eduard Zeller and A. Menzies, 2nd ed., vol. 2, 2 vols. (London; Edinburgh: Williams and Norgate, 1876), 127-128.

330 Theissen, *Psychological Aspects*, 11-28.

distinction to "solid food." The distinction in forms of instruction is more suggestive of different abilities to comprehend rather than a change in awareness.

Theissen's creative attempt is praiseworthy. Theissen seeks to understand the relationship of the preaching of the cross and God's wisdom 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 along the line of two different explanatory concepts, rather than just asking a singular implicit question that much of the scholarship asks: is the content the same or different? The disagreement about the two options of wisdom as advanced teaching and wisdom as God's perspective of the same preaching about the cross may be principally due to trying to explain the relationship between 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 by reference to a singular type of content. God's wisdom as an advanced teaching suggests a difference in content, whereas God's wisdom as God's perspective on preaching on the cross suggests a different interpretation of the same content.

5.2.1 Narrative and paradigm

Another way around this exegetical dilemma in 1 Corinthians 2 is to propose that Paul has in mind two different bodies of didactic content: (1) narrative knowledge about Jesus Christ and His crucifixion and (2) general knowledge referred to by faith and by God's wisdom that is drawn by analogy to narrative knowledge of Jesus Christ as a paradigm of human redemption. The role of these two forms of knowledge is evident in the logical differentiation of the general resurrection of the dead from Jesus' resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.12-19.

Thiselton considers 1 Corinthians 15.15-19 to be a piece of deliberative rhetoric that addresses the disadvantages of rejecting the resurrection.[331] However, as argued in chapter 3, 1 Corinthians may be better described as protreptic discourse. Epictetus described protreptic discourse as "the style that enables one to show an individual, or a number of people, the contradictions in which they're

331 Thiselton, *First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1177.

entangled" (*Diatri.* 3.23.34 [Hard]). If 1 Corinthians is primarily protreptic, then Paul is likely explaining the logical contradictions that the Corinthians had in their beliefs about the resurrection: one can not consistently deny the general resurrection while maintaining the resurrection of Jesus. Thus, Paul shows a logical awareness of two different sets of beliefs: narrative knowledge about the resurrection of Jesus and the general resurrection, of which Jesus' resurrection is a paradigm.

What is the precise relation between Jesus' resurrection and the general resurrection? Both originate in God's power and wisdom. After demonstrating the self-contradiction of the Corinthian believers in 15.12-19, Paul transitions[332] to straighten out the Corinthians' thinking about the relationship between Jesus' resurrection and the general resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15.20-23. N.T. Wright suggests that Paul in 15.20-28 is "teach[ing] the Corinthians to think eschatologically, within the Jewish categories of 'apocalyptic,'"[333] but in 20-23 it appears that Paul may still be communicating in the categories of Greco-Roman wisdom in the word ἀπαρχή ("first fruits"; 1 Cor. 15.20, 23). Martinus deBoer connects ἀπαρχή to the Old Testament practice of offering the initial portion of a harvest or a flock to God.[334] Yet, it is unlikely the Corinthians would have understood the Old Testament practice of ἀπαρχή as it was also used for Greek religious festivals (Isocrates, *Hel. enc.* 10.66). Furthermore, God is the implied agent of Jesus' resurrection (cf. 1 Cor. 15.15), which is dissonant with the human practice of a religious offering.

Ἀπαρχή was a regular idiom used to describe the demonstration of wisdom by philosophers (Dio Chrysostom, *De philosophia* 71.2, 72.12). With God as the implied agent of Jesus' resurrection, ἀπαρχή may be taken in this philosophical sense to describe the demonstration of God's wisdom (cf. 1 Corinthians 2.6-9). In that case, ἀπαρχή implies that Jesus' resurrection is only the beginning of God's

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332 Paul's transition from showing the logical contradictions 15.12-19 to the appropriate beliefs in 15.20-28 is indicated by the adverb νυνὶ in 15.20 (BDAG, s.v. "νυνὶ.").

333 N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Christian Origins and the Question of God (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2003), 333.

334 Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death: Apocalyptic Eschatological in 1 Corinthians 15 and Romans 5*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Suplement (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988) 109.

power on display. More specifically, God's resurrection power is instrumentally realized in Jesus' resurrection as the cause of the general resurrection. In 1 Corinthians 15.21-22, Paul analogically compares Jesus to Adam, whose disobedience Paul considers as constitutive of the reality of sin and death for all people due to his disobedience (cf. Rom 5.12-21). So, the logic of the analogy follows with the idea that Jesus' resurrection is constitutive of the general resurrection, especially believers (cf. Rom. 6.1-14).

In other words, the logical connection between the narrative knowledge of Jesus' crucifixion and the beliefs about the general resurrection is that Jesus' resurrection is an example of God's power and wisdom and is also instrumental in bringing about the general resurrection. That is to state that the didactic function of the narrative knowledge of Jesus does not just describe an event that occurred, but also paradigmatically represents God's intentions to bring about the general resurrection through the event of Jesus' resurrection. As such, Paul's reasoning operates according to the pattern of narrative logic. Cognitive psychologist Jerome Bruner observes that "narratives deal with the vicissitudes of intentions."[335]

In *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, Richard Hays observes a similar pattern of narrative reasoning in Paul's letter to the Galatians:

> The gospel story is not just the story of a super-hero who once upon a time defeated the cosmic villains of Law, Sin, and Death and thus discharged us from all responsibility; it is also the enactment of a life-pattern into which we are drawn. This is why Paul can say, "I have been crucified with Christ" (Gal 2:19; cf. 6:15). The death and resurrection of Christ are the pivotal events in human history, cosmic events in which we are included vicariously: "One died for all;

335 Jerome Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds* (Cambridge, MA; London: Harvard University Press, 1986), EPUB edition, ch. 2.

> therefore, all have died. And he died for all, in order that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for the one who died and was raised for them" (2 Cor 5:14b-15). Because Jesus Christ is the prototype type of the new humanity, those whom God calls are conformed to the pattern defined by him, and the characteristic mark of this pattern is precisely πίστις.[336]

Hays refers to this form of reasoning in the narrative substructure as a shape argument, where "the action of Jesus Christ in the gospel story defines the pattern of justification and life (ἐκ πίστεως)."[337] Whereas Hay's argument for a narrative substructure in Galatians assumes the reasoning is implicit,[338] Paul's description of the death and resurrection of Jesus as constitutive of the believer's moral freedom and experience in Romans 6.1-11 shows that this narrative logic can become more explicit. The shape of Paul's narrative logic is even more explicit in 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians 15.12-19 demonstrates Paul's reflective capacity to distinguish the resurrection event in the life of Christ from a more general knowledge that is inferring from the event of Jesus' resurrection.[339] While Paul's narrative logic is generally implicit, Paul is capable of making distinctions between the narrative knowledge about Christ as his logical presupposition and the inferred paradigmatic knowledge about believers, especially when he deems there is a need to address potential misunderstandings and inconsistent thinking as appears to be the case in Corinth. The resurrection of Jesus Christ shows God's power and wisdom and provides a paradigm for God's redemption of humanity.

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336 Richard Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2002), 211-212.

337 *Ibid.*, 206.

338 *Ibid.*, 205-207.

339 On 1 Corinthians 15.12-13, Thiselton (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1217) comments, "these verses underline Paul's expectation that believing Christians will respect logical coherence and rational thought."

5.2.3 Knowledge through Christ as paradigm

In what way does the narrative of Christ function as a paradigm to provide further knowledge? In his postscript to the second edition of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions,* Thomas Kuhn provided two different senses of the concept of a paradigm:

> On the one hand, it stands for the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community. On the other, it denotes one sort of element in that constellation, the concrete puzzle-solutions which, employed as models or examples, can replace explicit rules as a basis for the solution of the remaining puzzles of normal science.[340]

Kuhn's second sense comes close to matching the ancient philosophical usage of the Greek word παράδειγμα. Παράδειγμα was conventionally used to refer to a model that an architect would use in erecting a building.[341] Epictetus uses the word to metaphorically describe the actions of persons that serve as exemplars whom others should emulate (*Diatri.* 1.2.22; 1.29.57; 3.4.5; 3.24.33; 3.26.28; 4.1.152, 159, 179; 4.5.2, 4.8.29, 31) as part of a philosophical pedagogy through imitation. Whereas Kuhn considers paradigms as models for scientific reasoning, Epictetus considers paradigms as a model for ethical reasoning.

In a usage that is similar to Paul's understanding of Christ, Epictetus uses παράδειγμα to describe the way God makes known his benevolent concern for humans, especially virtuous people:

> Does any good man fear that he may run out of food? The blind don't run out of food, nor do the crippled; so will a good man run out of it? A good soldier doesn't fail to find someone to employ

340 Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 174.
341 LSJ, s.v. "παράδειγμα."

> him and pay him his wages, nor does a good workman or a good cobbler; so will a good man fail to find anyone? Does God so neglect his own creatures, his servants, his witnesses, the only people he can make use of as an example (παραδείγμασιν) to the uneducated, to prove that he both exists and governs the universe wisely, and doesn't neglect human affairs, and that nothing bad ever happens to a good person, either during his lifetime or after his death? (*Diatri*. 3.26.27-28 [Hard])

Epictetus considers such examples that demonstrate God's benevolent intentions as directing human reasoning and obedience (*Diatri.* 3.26-29-36). In so doing, Epictetus follows the familiar relation of knowledge to human activity for the Stoics[342] by appealing to theoretical knowledge about God's providence demonstrated in a specific person as a παράδειγμα so that another person can learn to direct their reasoning and action. Human reasoning about the παράδειγμα is responsible for the realization of personal virtue.

As mentioned previously, Paul's account of the resurrection regards the causal link between Jesus' resurrection and the general resurrection as God's instrumental action through Jesus' resurrection. This link is perhaps evidenced by Paul's use of the architectural metaphor of a foundation (θεμέλιος) in 1 Corinthians 3.10-15 (cf. Epictetus, *Diatri.* 2.15.8-9), rather than παράδειγμα. Paul metaphorically describes believers as God's building (3.9) with Paul's proclamation of Jesus as their foundation in 3.11. The foundation metaphor implies that the content of instruction that follows the preaching of the Gospel, metaphorically represented by the building material (3.12), is shaped and determined by what is known of Jesus Christ. While not ruling out any possibility of error by Christian teachers (3.13-15), Paul regards the story of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection as responsible for

342 Sellars, *Art of Living*, 167-169.

determining what is taught after acceptance of the Gospel. Its collocation with the agricultural metaphor in 1 Corinthians 3.5-9, which highlights God as the one who ultimately causes the growth, further strengthens the suggestion that Paul employs the building metaphor to describe God's pedagogical agency.

To clarify, Paul is not presenting an ancient form of epistemological foundationalism. According to Robert Audi, epistemological foundationalism does not generally describe the specific content of knowledge but instead constitutes a class of epistemic theories about the relationship of propositional knowledge that either prescribes that (1) indirect, inferential knowledge depends on direct, non-inferential forms of knowledge or (2) beliefs that are indirectly justified depend on justified beliefs.[343] Instead, one may more aptly describe Paul's metaphor as a pedagogical foundationalism, where the foundational knowledge that is a necessary prerequisite for further comprehension shapes the content of later teaching. The narrative of Jesus Christ is the prerequisite knowledge that provides the ability to expand into and comprehend further knowledge (cf. Quintilian, *Inst.* 1.4.5; 10.3.3; Philo, D*reams*, 2.2.8). One may hypothesize from a modern perspective that foundational knowledge is a form of knowledge that is deemed suitable to use in analogical reasoning to understand someone or something else. As Douglas Hofstader theorizes, analogical thinking, defined as "the selective exploitation of past experiences to shed light on new and unfamiliar things belonging to another domain," is constitutive of most or all of human cognition.[344] If this is the case, it can explain how the narrative of Jesus Christ's crucifixion and resurrection serves as a paradigm of human redemption through analogical reasoning that takes God's act to raise Jesus from the dead as representative of God's intentions for humans.

343 Robert Audi, *Epistemology: A Contemporary Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge*, Third, Routledge Contemporary Introductions to Philosophy (New York: Routledge, 2011), 216-217.
344 Douglas Hofstadter, *Surfaces and Essences* (New York: Basic Books, 2013), 3-32.

5.2.4 Application of two types of knowledge in 1 Corinthians 2

Returning to the question of the different forms of knowledge in 1 Corinthians 2, a proposal can now be offered to explain the similarities and differences between 2.1-5 and 2.6-16. On the one hand, both passages may be considered to take the content of Paul's preaching about the narrative of Jesus and His crucifixion as a pedagogical foundation that determines via analogy the shape of the Corinthians faith in God's power and the understanding of God's wisdom. Both 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 rely upon the same body of knowledge of the life of Jesus Christ, including the climactic event of the crucifixion and resurrection. This narrative knowledge both defined Paul's original proclamation to the Corinthians (2.2) and is also the prototype of God's wisdom and the ignorance of the rulers of the age (2.7-8).

On the other hand, faith in God's power and the comprehension of God's wisdom may be distinguished as different types of knowledge that the Corinthians receive in taking the Jesus narrative as a paradigm through two different analogies. Differentiation of these two didactic contents is likely implied by the description of the two different speech acts in 2.1-5 and 2.6-16: a τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ θεοῦ (2.1) and θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ (2.7).

The manuscripts for 1 Corinthians 2.1 disagree as to whether Paul described his proclamation as a testimony (μαρτύριον) or mystery (μυστήριον). According to Bruce Metzger, μαρτύριον is more widely supported in the manuscripts, but earlier manuscript evidence seems to favor μυστήριον.[345] It has been proposed that a copyist changed it to μαρτύριον who recollected 1 Cor. 1.6.[346] However, given the closer proximity of μυστήριον in 2.7, it seems just as plausible, if not more likely, that a copyist changed 2.1 to read μυστήριον in mistaken anticipation of 2.7.

345 Bruce Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*, Second. (London; New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 480.
346 Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 207.

Furthermore, μαρτύριον in 1 Corinthians 2.1 seems to cohere better with the content of the whole letter, particularly its introduction. According to Witherington, 1.4-9 is a rhetorical *exordium* that introduces themes that become pertinent in the rest of the discourse.[347] In speaking about "the testimony of Christ" (τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ), it is probable that Paul would address this theme later in the epistle. The speech act referred to in 2.1 is immediately described as being about Christ and His crucifixion in 2.2, suggesting that an original reading of μαρτύριον would cohere with τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ of the *exordium*. However, aside from 2.1, Paul does not bring up the matter of testimony again until 15.15 (ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν). There is no further expansion on or description of the matter of testimony there, but it is simply mentioned as a chain in Paul's larger logical argumentation. An inferential link in an argument without further expansion would not seem to merit the mention of μαρτύριον in the *exordium*. Thus, it seems more consistent with the conventions of classical rhetoric to suggest that τὸ μαρτύριον τοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1.6 was originally discussed in 2.1-5, making μαρτύριον the more likely original reading based upon intrinsic probability.

As a consequence of this distinction, the type of beliefs and knowledge referred to in 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 may be considered to be distinguished from one another. While both pericopes share references to the narrative knowledge about Jesus Christ, they may be considered to refer to different didactic contents pertaining to distinct aspects of human redemption. Upon a closer look, it appears that 2.1-5 refers to the faith in God's power as it pertains to the future event of general resurrection as later described in 15.12-34, whereas 2.6-16 takes the nature of resurrected bodies as outlined in 15.35-57 as its principal content.

Regarding faith (πίστις) in God's power in 2.5, Paul's also uses πίστις in 15.17, which would make sense of the surrounding discourse if it refers to a type of belief or understanding that is paradigmatically

347 Witherington, *Conflict and Community*, 88-89.

drawn from the narrative knowledge of Jesus' resurrection. According to Paul, the denial of the general resurrection would logically entail that people were still in their sins. Previously in 15.3, Paul describes his teaching about Christ's death as a death for sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Given the correspondence between the theme of sin in 15.17 and Paul's description of Jesus death for sin as coming from the Scriptures, it is plausible that ματαία ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν corresponds to the understanding of the Scriptural significance of Jesus' resurrection in 15.4.

Multiple attempts have been offered to specify the scriptural texts Paul alludes to (further complicated by the exegetical dilemma of whether κατὰ τὰς γραφάς modifies ἐγήγερται or τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ), leading to Thiselton's opinion that it is reductionist to identify specific texts. Rather, Thiselton considers the references to the Scriptures to refer to "a cumulative tradition of God's promised eschatological act of sovereignty and vindication in grace."[348] However, while recognizing other texts would likely have also been employed in Paul's preaching, it seems plausible to consider that Paul is alluding to Daniel 12.1-3 as one of the Scriptures with which the Corinthians were familiar. Paul's discussion of the resurrection throughout chapter 15 resembles many of the features in Daniel 12.1-3, including: (1) the theme of affliction in Daniel 12.1b and Paul's difficulties in 1 Corinthians 15.30-32; (2) the criteria of inclusion in the resurrection in being in the book of life in Daniel 12.1c and belonging to Christ in 1 Corinthians 15.23; (3) resurrection as bringing eternal life in Daniel 12.2 and the immortality of the resurrected body in 1 Corinthians 15.50-53; (4) the analogy of the resurrection to celestial entities in Daniel 12.3 and 1 Corinthians 15.40-43. Additionally, Paul uses αἰών in the phrases τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου (1 Cor. 1.20, 2.6, 2.8) and τῶν αἰώνων (1 Cor. 2.7, 10.11) as temporal references to time-periods similar to that of τὸν αἰῶνα τοῦ αἰῶνος in Dan. 12.3 (LXX). Given the lack of reference to a specific individual in Daniel 12.1-3, Jesus' resurrection could be considered an initial fulfillment of this resurrection, which

348 Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1195.

was then considered as paradigmatic of the general resurrection.[349] In that case, πίστις in 1 Corinthians 15.17 and likely also 2.5 refers to a belief about God's power to bring about the event of the general resurrection, of which Jesus' resurrection is the first-fruits demonstration of God's wisdom.

Meanwhile, the speaking of God's wisdom in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 goes beyond a description of the event of the general resurrection to a description of the nature of the resurrected body by analogy to Jesus' resurrection. A hint as to the content of God's wisdom is evident in Paul's discussion of glory (δόξα) in 2.7-8. Paul expresses that glory is both something that God intended for believers and something predicated of Jesus as indirectly referred to by the title "Lord of glory," suggesting Jesus' glory is paradigmatic for believers. As Ciampa and Rosner observe:

> The use of "the Lord of glory" as a title for Christ in v. 9 [*sic*] gives a hint as to the way in which such exaltation is possible; believers expect glory because of their union with the risen and exalted Christ. 1 Corinthians 2:7–8 thus act as a precursor to Paul's argument in chapter 15 where Christ is "the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep" (15:20) and the link between the destiny of Christ and believers is a constant presupposition.[350]

The language of δόξα recurs six times in 1 Corinthians 15.40-43. In 15.40-41, δόξα is used to refer to the bodies of heavenly entities such as the sun, moon, and stars, which are contrasted with earthly bodies referred to as flesh (σάρξ). Paul employs this distinction between bodies of earthly and heavenly entities as an analogy for the resurrection in 15.42-44, describing the resurrection as occurring ἐν δόξῃ (43). Then, in 15.45-49, Paul makes an indirect reference to Jesus as the last Adam, who by virtue of becoming

349 Wright (*The Resurrection of the Son of God*, 553) observes that "one of the central redefinitions" of the early Christian belief about from that of Judaism is that the early Christians "believed it had happened in one person in advance of all the rest."

350 Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 126.

a life-giving spirit becomes the pattern of the resurrection as believers will bear his image as the man of heaven. Paul then clarifies the meaning of his discourse by describing the resurrection event as the point in which people are changed and possess immortal bodies (15.50-57). Therefore, it appears that Paul's language of δόξα in 2.7-8 refers to the nature of the human redemption of the resurrected body (cf. Rom. 8.18-23) according to the paradigm of Jesus' resurrection for understanding the ontological realities of the new body.

So, it seems to be that faith in God's power in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and the comprehension of God's wisdom in 2.6-16 do differ in terms of the specific didactic content about different aspects of human redemption, the event of the general resurrection and the nature of the resurrected body, while both retain an epistemic relation to the narrative knowledge of Jesus and His crucifixion and resurrection as the paradigm of human redemption.

5.2.5 The purpose of Paul's proclamation of the story of Jesus

While Paul's purpose in 1 Corinthians 2 does seem to be to describe how believers come to knowledge about their redemption by God's wisdom and power, this does not seem to exhaust the purpose Paul assigns to his preaching about Jesus Christ. In that case, what specific roles did Paul consider his preaching about the story of Jesus and His crucifixion to have in bringing the Corinthians to faith and understanding? Ian Scott thinks the Gospel provides a coherence that satisfies the necessary conditions of reason:

> [W]e can imagine how believers could have been impelled by the sheer coherence of the Christian message to abandon their ordinary assumptions about what constitutes a plausible view of the world. Paul's message of Christ crucified may be foolishness to Greeks and a

> stumbling block to Jews because of its violation of ordinary assumptions and values, but the vision of the world which it presents might still possess an internal coherence which rational minds can recognize and find compelling.[351]

Similarly, Litfin considers the message of the cross to be persuasive to those who believe because it has "an altogether more elegant appearance"[352] that he later describes as "the dynamic of the cross to create πίστις."[353] Thus, both consider the Spirit to be instrumental in the process of human cognition that leads to belief, whether through persuasion or reasoning.[354]

Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 1.18-25 discounts his preaching on the cross as having rational or persuasive power on its own merits. The force of Paul's argument is to highlight the inability of Paul's preaching to convince others. In 1.18, Paul describes τοῖς σῳζομένοις as those who accept the word of the cross as God's power. This present, substantival participle conveys a sense of on-going change that is occurring in the people, suggesting acceptance or rejection of the word about the cross is intimately tied to the effect of God's actions on their behalf to save them.[355] In other words, those who are being saved by God can recognize God's action in the cross of Jesus Christ by virtue of God's actions on their behalf, such as the power of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2.4). In this case, Paul considers the acceptance of His preaching about Christ as a consequence of salvation, not the condition of it.

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351 Scott, *Paul's Way of Knowing*, 280.

352 Litfin, *St Paul's Theology of Proclamation*, 200.

353 *Ibid.*, 207.

354 Scott (*Paul's Way of Knowing*, 33-34) considers the Spirit to reorient the moral life of those who come to believe, thereby providing the ability for them to see the message of the cross as wisdom. Litfin (*Paul's Theology of Preaching*, EPUB Edition, ch. 15, "2:1-5–Paul's Modus Operandi") considers the Spirit providing a conviction to the believers that gives Paul's preaching about the cross the capacity to persuade.

355 Conzelmann (*1 Corinthians*, 42) considers that salvation in 1 Corinthians 1.18 is a consequence of "a believing insight which is existent only in the hearing of the word," treating faith as the condition of salvation. However, this interpretation overlooks the potential significance of parallel between the participles τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις and τοῖς σῳζομένοις as expressed in the usage of the μὲν… δὲ construction. If the interpretation of the cross as foolishness is not considered the cause of perishing, then the contrast may suggest faith is not considered the condition of being saved.

The contrast between τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις and τοῖς σῳζομένοις in 1.18 can explain the discursive purpose of the theme of foolishness in 1 Corinthians 1.18-31. Litfin considers the foolishness of the proclamation to provide the conditions for salvation:

> And his terms are these: God will provide the race with an avenue of salvation, but it will be available only through a means that runs profoundly contrary to human pride. To discover this salvation, men and women will have to renounce their pretensions to self-sufficiency, acknowledge their helplessness and give up humanly striving to save themselves. Instead, they must humble themselves before God by acknowledging a crucified Jewish peasant to be Lord of the universe, and his death on a Roman cross as their only hope of salvation. They must trust him, and him alone, as their only means of salvation.[356]

However, Paul's introduces the concept of foolishness to describe the interpretation of the cross by those who are perishing (τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις; 1.18), not as a condition for salvation. Just as those who are being saved believe, those who are perishing do not believe. Instead, the foolishness of the proclamation may refer to the way those reputed to possess wisdom are openly disgraced in the eyes of the Corinthians (1.27-28) based upon their rejection of Paul's proclamation as foolishness. Believers in the power of the cross can recognize the "wise" as actually fools because of their rejection of Paul's preaching about Jesus' crucifixion. Thus, the story of Jesus' crucifixion appears to function as a litmus test that determines whom believers can and cannot trust as teachers of wisdom based upon the reputedly wise's response to the word of the cross. By implicating those who would otherwise be

356 Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, EPUB Edition, ch. 14, "The foolishness of the proclamation."

considered authorities on the subject of divinity, believers are freed to learn about God from God and those agents he chooses instead.

Paul's preaching about Christ and His crucifixion functions as a form of epistemic resistance against societal conventions about wisdom; it implicates the ignorance of those whom the Greco-Roman politics and society considered wise and possessing an epistemic authority. This epistemic resistance is evident in the structure of 1 Corinthians 2.1-5. Κἀγὼ precedes both 2.1-2 and 2.3-4, suggesting two parallel accounts of Paul's preaching from the perspective of the story of Jesus and the power of the Spirit. Meanwhile, 2.5 is demarcated by a purposive ἵνα clause that contrasts the Corinthians' rejection of human wisdom with their faith in God's power. The preceding discursive position of Christ and His crucifixion in 2.1-2 may be considered to correspond to the rejection of human wisdom in 2.5 that also has the same discursive position. On the other hand, the parallel "demonstration of the Spirit and power" in 2.3-4 can be considered to describe the condition for the Corinthians' placing their faith in God's power; the repetition of δύναμις in 2.4 and 2.5 further validates this connection. If the discursive positions correspond to a logical connection in the discourse, then Paul considers one function of his preaching about the story of Jesus is to show human wisdom's talk about God as untrustworthy.

Narrative knowledge about Jesus also seems to perform this purpose of epistemic resistance in 2.6-8 by implicating the wisdom of this age and rulers of this age as sources and people the Corinthians should not depend upon. As the Corinthians had appealed to the imperial courts to sue fellow believers (1 Corinthians 6.1-6), Paul appears concerned that the Corinthians fall into old habits about wisdom, including the acceptance of Roman imperial propaganda. Caesar and his appointed governors, such as Pilate who had the decisive role in crucifying Jesus, were reputed to possess wisdom based upon their numerous advisers.[357] The imperial rule was legitimized through their reputed possession of wisdom

357 Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 127.

(Tacitus, *Dial.* 41). Similarly, Seneca, writing to Nero in *De Clementia*, may provide some of the thinking and language of imperial propaganda:

> But of all men mercy becomes none so well as a king or an emperor. For great power bestows grace and glory (Latin: gloriaeque) only when its potency is for benefit; it is undoubtedly a deadly force whose power can only work harm. That man alone possesses greatness that is secure and of firm foundation who is known by all men as their friend no less than their superior, whose concern for the welfare of each and every citizen they daily find to be vigilant, whose approach does not cause them to scatter, as though some monster or dangerous beast has leapt forth from its lair, but rather to vie with one another in rushing up to him, as though towards a brilliant and benevolent star. (*On Mercy* 1.3 [Davie])

Thus, by describing the ignorance of the Roman political leadership to understand God's wisdom in Jesus Christ, Paul employs the narrative of Jesus Christ to invalidate the imperial propaganda of its leaders as wise (cf. Col. 2.15) in an act of epistemic resistance.[358] However, the narrative of Christ does not only serve this negative, deconstructive purpose of epistemic resistance to the authority of Rome, but it is also positive and constructive in establishing a new authority: the power of Roman Empire is not wise and can not bring glory, but Jesus as God's wisdom is the Lord of glory who brings grace and glory to the world.

Corresponding to this positive purpose is the way the story of Jesus serves as the pedagogical foundation for the Corinthians' knowledge about God. Paul recognizes his preaching about Jesus is instrumental in the Corinthians salvation based on their continuing tutelage. In 1 Corinthians 15.1-2, Paul

358 On the invalidation of Roman power, see Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God,* 1267-1319.

provides introductory remarks to the culmination of his letter to the Corinthians in the topic of the resurrection of the dead.[359] In 15.2 Paul describes the instrumentality of the Gospel that brings salvation (δι' οὗ καὶ σῴζεσθε; cf. 1 Corinthians 1.21) as being conditional upon their continuing adherence (κατέχετε) to the Gospel traditions. However, Paul expresses concern about that remaining the case, as it seems that the faith of some of the Corinthians was at risk of being reduced to merely a belief in God's providential concern for people up until death (1 Corinthians 15.19). In response, Paul redirects the Corinthians' thinking about the Gospel by instructing them in the way in which Jesus' resurrection is constitutive of the general resurrection, both in establishing the event of the resurrection (15.12-34) and the immortal nature of the resurrected body (15.35-57). The story of Jesus Christ remains salvific for the Corinthians in so far as their adherence to the Gospel proclamation enables them to retain their faith in God's redemptive intentions in the resurrection. In other words, the Corinthians' salvation seems to be tied together with their continuing pedagogy to grow in the understanding of God's redemption in contrast to relying on the benefits that are claimed to come from imperial power.

The combination of two functions of the story of Jesus' crucifixion in (1) diminishing the status of human wisdom and imperial power and (2) providing a paradigmatic understanding of God's redemption of humanity can provide an account for why Paul avoided using wisdom in his preaching. In 1.17, Paul explains that he did not preach with a wisdom of words (οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου) so that the cross would not be rendered ineffective (κενωθῇ). A reliance upon spoken wisdom in his proclamation would have potentially reinforced the role of human wisdom in the eyes of the Corinthians, thereby leading them to try to fit the story of Jesus' crucifixion into the theoretical propositions of Greco-Roman philosophy and the political aspirations of the imperial agenda. In Paul's eyes, the Corinthians needed to reject the

359 On the central position of chapter 15 in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, Karl Barth (*Resurrection from the Dead*, 107) observes: "It cannot be by chance that 1 Cor. xv., the chapter which deals with the most positive subject that can be imagined, forms the very peak and crown of this essentially critical and polemically negative Epistle. What is disclosed here is Paul's key position."

epistemic authority of human wisdom on divine matters in order to recognize the true nature of God's power and wisdom in the cross, lest they be like the Jew and Greek who look for signs and wisdom and find the cross scandalous and foolish (1.22-23). By failing to distance themselves intellectually from the type of people the wider society considered wise, the Corinthians would not come to a faith that construes Jesus' resurrection as the paradigm of God's future redemptive action to raise them from the dead; they would interpret the significance of Jesus' crucifixion along the lines of societal beliefs, keeping them dependent upon worldly wisdom and political power.

The function of Paul's proclamation about Jesus and His crucifixion may be considered as part of a pedagogy that first dismantles the Corinthians' confidence in those reputed to be wise and then as a pedagogical foundation to comprehend God's benevolent, redemptive intentions towards them. However, Paul does not consider the preaching of the cross to be persuasive on its own grounds. That role Paul attributes to the activity of the Spirit.

5.3 The pedagogy of the Spirit

Insofar as interpreters highlight the theological aspects of 1 Corinthians 2, the scholarship is divided between placing the interpretive emphasis on the references to Jesus and His crucifixion[360] or the Spirit.[361] However, it seems that Paul's primary purpose is to outline how God teaches the Corinthians through the power and inspiration of the Spirit. Harm Jan Inkelaar has observed the recurrence of

360 Gaffin, "Some Epistemological Reflections," 108; Ciampa and Rosner, *The First Letter to the Corinthians,* 112; Grindheim, "Wisdom for the Perfect," 696; Peter Lampe, "Theological Wisdom and the 'Word About the Cross,'" *Interpretation* 44, no. 2 (April 1990): 117–31; 125-128; Raymond Pickett, *The Cross in Corinth: The Social Significance of the Death of Jesus*, Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement 143 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1997) 74-78.

361 Scott, *Paul's Way of Knowing*, 30-48; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 81, 90; Simo Frestadius, "The Spirit and Wisdom in 1 Corinthians 2:13," *Journal of Biblical and Pneumatological Research* 3 (2011): 52–70.

conceptual contrasts in 1 Corinthians 2 taking the form of an οὐκ… ἀλλά structure known as a *correctio*:[362]

362 Inkelaar, *Conflict over Wisdom*, 231-232.

2.4	οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖ σοφίας	ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως
2.5	μὴ ᾖ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων	ἀλλ’ ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ
2.6-7	σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου	ἀλλὰ θεοῦ σοφίαν
2.8-9	ἣν οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου ἔγνωκεν	ἀλλὰ... ἃ ἡτοίμασεν ὁ θεὸς
2.12	οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου	ἀλλὰ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ
2.13	οὐκ ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις	ἀλλ’ ἐν διδακτοῖς πνεύματος

Paul’s usage of *correctio* follows the description contained in *Rhetorica ad Herrenium:* “Correction retracts what has been said and replaces it with what seems more suitable” (*Rhet. Her.* 4.36 [Caplan]). As such, Paul endeavors to adjust the Corinthians’ understanding of critical key ideas about God, the Spirit, and wisdom that may have been evident in the Corinthians’ request for instruction (1 Cor. 7.1). In each of these six instances, Paul refers to either God or the Spirit in the ἀλλὰ clauses. In the context of God’s actions to (1) render human wisdom and boasting unreliable mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1.26-29 and (2) lead to the human comprehension of God’s wisdom from Jesus mentioned in 1.30-31, the primary function of the *correctio* is to teach the Corinthians in what manner God acts to accomplish those two purposes. The Spirit is the agent of God’s power and God’s wisdom to bring understanding to the Corinthians. For Paul, the action of the Spirit is the indispensable condition for people to come to have faith in God’s power and comprehend God’s wisdom.

5.3.1 The Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5

The language and structure of 1 Corinthians 2.4-5 highlight the indispensable role the Spirit had in the Corinthians’ faith. Firstly, the persuasive role of the Spirit for Paul is most explicit in the *correctio* structure of 1 Corinthians 2.4: “My speech and my proclamation did not come in the persuasiveness of

wisdom, but in the demonstration of the Spirit and power (ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως)." Furthermore, the repetition of δύναμις in 2.5, which also contains the *correctio* structure and a prepositional phrase starting with ἐν (ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ) generates a conceptual connection between "a demonstration of the Spirit and power" and "God's power." Paul's usage of ἀπόδειξις can explain this connection. Ἀπόδειξις was used to refer to an argument in which something that is clearly understood is used to bring clarity to something that was previously unclear. While the truth of God's power being responsible for raising Jesus from the dead (cf. 1 Corinthians 15.15) may not have been altogether clear and apparent in Paul's preaching of the word of the cross, making Paul's preaching unpersuasive on its own terms, the power of the Spirit makes God's power readily apparent to the Corinthians.

The scholarship is divided on what exactly is referred to by "the demonstration of the Spirit and power." Fee considers it unlikely that "the demonstration of the Spirit and power" in 2.4 refers to the working of miracles but rather the Corinthians' experience in response to the Gospel.[363] Litfin regards the Spirit as creating "faith in the saving efficacy of the crucified Christ."[364] However, Hays considers it to be about God's miraculous agency:

> The "demonstration of the spirit and of power" (v. 4) probably refers to miraculous events, such as healings and outpourings of prophecy, that accompanied Paul's missionary preaching (cf. 2 Corinthians 12:12, "signs and wonders and mighty works"; Gal. 3:5; "God suppl[ies] you with the Spirit and work[s] miracles among you").[365]

363 Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 94.
364 Litfin, *Paul's Theology of Preaching*, EPUB edition, ch.17, "Paul's contrasting view."
365 Hays, *First Corinthians,* 36.

Hays is most likely correct here. One of the charismatic gifts of the Spirit that Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12.7-10 is the working of power (v. 10: ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων). This gift suggests that the demonstration of the Spirit and power was an action that the Spirit enabled Paul to accomplish. As such, ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως is probably not properly understood as a hendiadys ("the powerful Spirit").[366] Rather, the two genitives function to (1) describes the act's origination in the Spirit and (2) identifying the act as a work of power that is responsible for bringing the Corinthians to faith (cf. the separation of power and the Holy Spirit in 1 Th. 1.4-5). If such miraculous agency included acts that promoted the well-being and benefit of the Corinthians, it would be fitting to describe them as a part of God's salvation. In which case, this can explain why those who are being saved understand Paul's word of the cross as God's power (1.18): their own experience of God's saving power in their midst allows them to hear the word of the cross as a story of God's power.

The connection to be made between Paul's preaching about Christ crucified and the Corinthians' faith in God's power is not dependent merely on a perception of God's saving acts, but also the specific way the Spirit's power is demonstrated. Before referring to the demonstration of the Spirit, Paul refers to his weak presence in 1 Corinthians 2.3. In his later correspondence with the Corinthians, Paul reflects on the work of God's glory and power in himself, while his weakness demonstrates that this power does not originate from himself (2 Cor. 4.7, 12.8). In 2 Corinthians 13.4, Paul explicitly appeals to Christ's weakness in the crucifixion and God's power as an implicit reference to the resurrection as a paradigm to describe God's power working in Paul while he is weak. Consequently, the power that the Spirit demonstrated in Paul's weakness reflects the same manner in which God's power raised Jesus Christ from the dead. God's power in Jesus Christ is made clear and demonstrated through human weakness.

366 Fee (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians* 94-95) and Ciampa & Rosner (*The First Letter to the Corinthians*, 117) both take ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως as a hendiadys, while Thiselton (*1 Corinthians*, 222-223) considers it as hendiadys but with some careful qualifications on the meaning of the word "powerful."

5.3.2 The Spirit in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16

While the relationship of the Spirit to knowledge about the story of Jesus and his crucifixion is more implicit in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5, the connection is more explicit in 2.6-16. In 2.8 and 2.14, Paul highlights the Corinthians knowledge about Jesus' trial and the rulers' judgments. The rulers were ignorant of God's wisdom in Jesus (cf. 1.30) as they questioned him. Their ignorance is explained by their inability to examine Jesus in a Spiritual manner (2.14: πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνεται). Paul's references here may be an indirect echo of the early account of Pilate's inability to comprehend Jesus. Both the Gospels of Matthew and Mark describe Pilate as dumbfounded by Jesus.[367] The Gospel of John portrays Pilate as being unable to comprehend Jesus' explanation of himself.[368] Pilate's failure is contrasted in 2.15 with the one who is spiritual (ὁ πνευματικός), who is able to understand all things (τὰ πάντα); as it is the Spirit who searches everything (2.10: πάντα ἐραυνᾷ), so the spiritual person is capable of understanding all

367 Matt. 27.11-14/Mark 15.1-5 describes Pilate as dumbfounded (θαυμάζειν) by Jesus' refusal to defend himself of the charge of acting as King of the Jews. While many translations like the NRSV, NET, and NASB render θαυμάζειν as "marvel" or "amazed," θαυμάζω could be meant in a negative sense depending on the context (BDAG, s.v. "θαυμάζω."). Given Jesus' apparent refusal to give a full defense, θαυμάζειν more likely refers to the response of Pilate who is unsure how to respond to Jesus.

368 The more detailed account of Pilate's examination of Jesus in John 18.33-38 may share the sense of confusion that Matthew and Mark's account briefly mention. Jesus had stated in v. 36 that his kingdom was not "from this world" (Ἡ βασιλεία ἡ ἐμὴ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐκ τοῦ κόσμου τούτου) and in v. 37 that comes into the world to testify to the truth. In response, Pilate engages in a philosophical inquiry about the nature of truth in response to Jesus' claims that he testifies to the truth in v. 38. Stoic philosophy had an influential role in how Augustus ruled the Roman empire through his appointment of two Stoics philosophers as his advisers (Christopher Gill, "The School in the Roman Imperial Period," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood, reprinted (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 34). Tiberius, who had appointed Pilate as governor, treated the words of Augustus as having the rule of law (Brunt, "Stoics and the Principate," 24). Later, Seneca describes to Nero his power and influence on the lives of the nations throughout the world (*Clem.*, 1). If Seneca's advice to Nero reflects the Stoic influence on imperial politics from Augustus onward and this philosophical legitimization of imperial rule was instrumental in political judgments, then Pilate's question "what is truth?" may be understood as inquiring into what type of influence Jesus sees himself as having: does He testify to truth in this world and of its people, that is of the political realities of this world, and thus in conflict with Caesar's political rule, or a truth of some other realm and thus a 'king' in some metaphorical sense? In other words, Pilate is portrayed in the Gospel of John as incapable of comprehending Jesus, resorting to a philosophical question to try to make sense of Jesus' account of himself.

things by virtue of the inspiration of the Spirit. As a consequence, a spiritual person can think from the perspective of the mind of Christ (2.16) rather than from the rulers of this age.

What is the exact relationship between the inspiration of the Spirit and possessing the mind of Christ? Troels Engberg-Pedersen posits that the πνεῦμα, when received by a person, "is instrumental in "generating cognition" and suggests that πνεῦμα and νοῦς are synonymous.[369] However, as described in the previous chapter, the inspiration of the Spirit is primarily described in phenomenological terms. Strictly speaking, Paul is not describing the Spirit as generating a specific pattern of cognition in a person. Rather, his description of the Spirit is more generic as the source of inspiration for various phenomena, whether it be speech or thought. Given the evidence of educational and pedagogical conventions throughout 1 Corinthians, it is more coherent with Paul's letter to suggest that the inspiration of the Spirit acts in the role of a teacher through various means of inspiration, including but by no means limited to the direct generation of cognition in a person. As some forms of the Spirit's inspiration of persons are considered to have a role in teaching other persons (1 Cor. 14.22, 26-31), the generation of cognition instrumentally serves the purpose of inspiring a person to teach another. In that case, it is not likely that Paul uses πνεῦμα to be synonymous with νοῦς but rather as referring to the one who makes possible the acquisition of the νοῦς Χριστοῦ. πνεῦμα is instrumental in teaching believers so that they can comprehend God's wisdom and think from the perspective of Christ.

What then is the specific content of God's wisdom that the inspiration of the Spirit teaches? Healy considers the knowledge spoken of in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 to refer to a personal familiarity with God in response to His revelation.[370] Ian Scott thinks wisdom refers "not to some esoteric doctrine, but the Gospel itself," which corresponds to the solid food in 3.2 as a "radical reorientation of one's former

369 Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 107.
370 Healy, "Knowledge of the Mystery," 142-143.

word view and values."[371] Similarly, Simo Frestadius regards wisdom as the proclamation of Jesus Christ as in 1.18-2.5.[372] Upon closer analysis, Paul does not appear to specifically have in mind knowledge of any of those three suggestions, although they may be implied to various degrees.

If one considers the mind of Christ as a reference to the type of thinking that is capable of comprehending God's wisdom, then the content of knowledge may be definable by the service and benefit that Christ sought to bring to other people. Paul's reference to the mind of Christ would have understood as a reference to the imitation of a wise figure. The Roman Stoics Seneca and Epictetus regularly lifted Socrates and his style of reasoning as an exemplar that others seeking wisdom should imitate (Seneca, *Ep.* 6.6, 104.27-28; *De Ira* 15; Epictetus, *Diatr.*, 1.9.1, 22; 1.19.6; 2.6.26; 2.12.14-16; 2.18.19-23; 2.26.6-7; 3.12.15; 3.23.30-32; 3.26.23; *Ench.* 33.12.). However, Paul does not primarily portray Jesus as an example of reasoning like Socrates, but rather of servant-hood and love. In 1 Corinthians 12.5, Paul connects the diverse forms of services by believers to the Lordship of Jesus. Then, in 10.27-11.1, Paul describes his attitude of seeking the benefit of others above himself as an attitude that the Corinthians should imitate, just as Paul imitates that attitude in Christ. Philippians 2.1-11 is more explicit in portraying Jesus as an exemplar of servant-hood. In Philippians 2.4, Paul exhorts the Philippians to take on the attitude of being concerned about others rather than their own interest. In Philippians 2.5, Paul calls the Corinthians to think in with that attitude because Jesus Christ had the same attitude.[373] Then, Paul uses the cognitive word ἡγέομαι in Philippians 2.6 to describe Jesus' thinking as

371 Scott, *Paul's Way of Knowing*, 42.

372 Frestadius, "The Spirit and Wisdom in 1 Corinthians 2.1-13," 61.

373 Moisés Silva (*Phillipians*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005) 95-98) notes the difficulty with the Greek syntax in Phil. 2.5. While some translators consider 2.5 to describe Jesus's thinking in the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, it is hard to connect that phrase with φρονεῖτε, which is directed towards the Philippians. However, it is assumed here that both the demonstrative pronoun τοῦτο and the relative pronoun ὃ in Phil. 2.5 are anaphoric references to the attitude described 2.4. By virtue of treating the two pronouns as parallel, ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ can be taken as parallel to ἐν ὑμῖν to describe the attitude of both Jesus and the Philippians. Rather than taking ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ as a "reference to the Philippians' relationship to Christ" (*Ibid.* 97), this interpretation addresses the problems of the syntax while allowing Paul to describe the cognitive thinking of Jesus that coheres with the cognitive word ἡγέομαι

not taking his equality with God as something to assert (ἁρπαγμὸν) for his own benefit but rather adopts the life of a servant.

It is plausible that Jesus' attitude of servant-hood is in the background in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16. When Paul initially defines God's wisdom as pertaining to the glory for believers that God ordained in 2.7, the reference to Jesus as the Lord of glory in 2.8 has the effect of establishing Jesus as the one who provides that glory to believers. In other words, the relationship of Jesus' glory in crucifixion and resurrection with human redemption is effectively realized by virtue of Jesus' servant-hood. The servant-hood of Christ connects the narrative about Jesus to the paradigmatic knowledge about human redemption. In that case, the revelation through the Spirit and the training in speech by the Spirit (1 Cor. 2.10-13) can be considered to bring greater comprehension about God's redemption of humanity that can only be comprehended with an attitude of servant-hood that corresponds to Jesus' attitude.

The connection between comprehension and servant-hood provides a specific explanation for why one must examine things from a Spiritual manner to understand God's wisdom and why the Corinthians were unable to comprehend God's wisdom. By thinking of their teachers as being in competition per the conventions of Greco-Roman wisdom, the Corinthians are in a mindset that is incapable of understanding God's wisdom because they have an attitude that does not understand those things that God does with the purpose of love and an attitude of servant-hood. Because they included Jesus in this competition (1 Cor. 1.12-13), their competitive expectations would hinder them from being able to interpret the story of Jesus as a story of servant-hood and thus render them incapable of comprehending His death and resurrection as a paradigm for human redemption.

For Paul, a person's thinking determines the ability to receive and understand what God teaches through the Spirit. In Romans 8.7 Paul uses language that resembles 1 Corinthians 2.14, describing a

attributed to Jesus in 26.

person who has "the goal-directed thinking about the flesh" (τὸ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς)[374] as being unable to submit themselves to God's way of instructing through the Torah (νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ).[375] Similarly, due to the Corinthians' competitive expectations about wisdom, it would be impossible to examine the speech about God's wisdom from the perspective of the Spirit (πνευματικῶς ἀνακρίνετα; 2.14-15). Whereas the moral influence of the Spirit (1 Cor. 6.9-11; cf. Gal. 5.22-23) would guide the Corinthians towards love and service, the competitive and status-driven thinking of the Corinthians would hinder them from being inspired by the Spirit's moral leading. In that case, the mature (τοῖς τελείοις; 1 Cor. 2.6), of whom it was suggested in the previous chapter to refer to those who love God and others, can be considered those persons who the Spirit's moral influence has directed and formed.

Furthermore, the Corinthians' competitive attitude interferes with their ability to learn in the way that the Spirit teaches through multiple inspired persons (cf. 1 Cor. 14.31). As Winter notes in *After Paul Left Corinth*, disciples of teachers would often demonstrate their loyalty to their favored teacher in criticizing the failures and deficiencies of other teachers.[376] By criticizing everyone aside from their revered teacher, they would be unable to learn from the various persons the Spirit had inspired. Paul's recurrent use of the *correctio* in 1 Corinthians 2 redirects the Corinthians' expectations about education and wisdom about God away from the conventions of human wisdom and towards the Spirit as the

374 BDAG (s.v., "φρόνημα") defines φρόνημα as having a "focus on strong intention," describing a type of thinking that has a specific goal in mind. Thus, τῆς σαρκὸς in Romans 8.7 is taken as a genitive of content that describes the purpose that such thinking strives to achieve. Thus, it probably does not refer to what Douglas Moo (*The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1996), 488) refers to as the "mind-set produced by the flesh."

375 While Paul's usage of νόμος has the Torah in mind in Romans 8.1-7 (N.T. Wright, "The Letter to the Romans," in *The New Interpreter's Bible: A Commentary in Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck, vol. 10 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 576), νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ seems to serve as a contrast to the way that the powers of sin and death in the flesh make use of the Torah (Rom. 7.7-23). Thus, rather than simply describing the origin of the Torah as from God, νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ seems to refer to the way God instructs by the Torah through the Spirit (Rom 8.2). That νόμος has a connotation of instruction alongside being used as a reference to the Jewish Torah is evident in Romans 2.18 (κατηχούμενος ἐκ τοῦ νόμου).

376 Bruce Winter, *After Paul Left Corinth* (Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge UK: Eerdmans, 2001), EPUB edition, ch. 2, sect. III.

agent who is making God's power and wisdom known to them. Thus, in both pedagogical style and content, the Corinthians' expectations about wisdom interfere with their ability to comprehend God's wisdom in the way he makes wisdom known.

5.4 Transformation in knowing God

Up to this point, paradigmatic knowledge about human redemption has been described as being integrally connected to both the narrative of Jesus Christ and the inspiration of human agents and teachers by the Spirit. However, there is a third form of continuity between the two types of knowledge that is explainable by the use the genitive θεοῦ in God's power (1 Cor. 2.5) and God's wisdom (1 Cor. 2.7). The Corinthians are not just obtaining knowledge about the story of Jesus and their redemption, nor the inspiration of the Spirit. Instead, they are being brought into a specific way of knowing God that corresponds to those two types of knowledge.

In what way does their knowledge relate to God? Karl Barth considers God to be the subject of knowledge.[377] Similarly, Paul Moser considers the knowledge of God for the Apostle Paul to be a relational knowing: "Paul's epistemology largely concerns knowledge of God that is redemptively valuable for human salvation by God. Such knowledge brings one into a filial relation of (deepening) reconciliation to God, whereby one becomes volitionally cooperative with God."[378] For both Barth and Moser, knowing God seems to be understood in a personal, relational sense.

Countering this view of knowing in 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 is Paul's employment of πίστις/πιστεύω in 1 Corinthians. While Thiselton rightly acknowledges that faith for Paul is a "polymorphous concept" whose meaning is sensitive to the context in which it is used,[379] Paul appears to use the terms

377 Barth, *The Resurrection of the Dead*, 27.
378 Paul Moser, "Paul the Apostle," in *The Oxford Handbook of the Epistemology of Theology*, ed. Abraham, William J. and Frederick D. Aquino (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 328.
379 Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, 223.

consistently in 1 Corinthians. Πιστεύω is used to refer to belief in Paul's proclamation (1 Cor. 15.2; 15.11) and a report he had heard about the Corinthians' divisive behavior (1 Cor. 11.18). Furthermore, in 1 Corinthians 13.7, πιστεύω takes the neuter plural πάντα as its object. In each of these instances, πιστεύω describes a propositional belief about something rather than a relational knowing of someone. Thus, Paul's description of the Corinthians' faith as ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ rather than ἐν θεῷ suggests that πίστις in 2.5 is being used to describe propositional beliefs about God's power, rather than a relational form of knowledge. However, While Paul's understanding of faith in 1 Corinthians seems to be propositional, 1 Corinthians 13.1-7 does suggest that love and faith overlap. Paul's hypothetical self-description in 13.2 of possessing faith without love as having no value implies that faith can and should also be conjoined with love. In 13.7, Paul ascribes trusting all things as a property of love. In other words, while faith may be considered to be propositional, it should ideally be conjoined with love. This seems to be part of the problem for the Corinthians in Paul's judgment. While possessing faith in God's power (1 Cor. 2.1-5), he would not characterize them as possessing the love for God that is the prerequisite for being given God's wisdom (1 Cor. 2.6-9).

A distinction between two different modes of knowing through propositions and knowing through love may be evident in 1 Corinthians 8. Paul seems to address both specific types of propositional beliefs that the Corinthians held in accordance with Stoic philosophical practice. The Stoics had a concept of 'assertibles' (ἀχίωμα; DL 7.65-68), which according to Susanna Bobzien were potentially true and false claims about matters that are distinguished from their sentential expressions and are thus functionally similar to a modern account of propositions.[380]

Multiple features suggest Paul was addressing a pervasive Stoic influence on the Corinthians' understanding of γνῶσις. First, as Brookins notes, "in both Stoic and broader philosophical usage, γνῶσις

380 Susanne Bobzien, "Logic," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, ed. Brad Inwood (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 87-88.

in its various forms was understood to be that in which σοφία consisted."[381] Second, both of the ὅτι clauses in 1 Corinthians 8.4 use the language of κόσμῳ and θεὸς, which were topics in the philosophical domain of physics. Diogenes Laertius describes two different Stoic divisions of topics in the philosophical domain of physics, with θεῶν being a topic in one and κόσμου being a topic in the other division (DL 7.132). Third, as will be discussed, the transition from the discourse of 1 Corinthians 8.4-6, addressing topics related to physics, transitions to an ethical discussion in 8.7-13, which mirrors the way in which Stoics considered ethics to be based upon physics.[382] Fourth, 1 Corinthians 8.8 resembles how Stoics considered food an indifferent that was neither inherently good or bad.[383] Altogether, this suggests Paul may be responding to a Stoic-influenced account of knowledge among the Corinthians.

A Stoic influence offers an explanation for the usage of οἴδαμεν ὅτι, which for 1 Corinthians is exclusively used in 8.1 and 8.4.[384] If the phrase and the specific content following ὅτι in 8.1 and 8.4 are quotations from the Corinthians,[385] a Stoic influence would suggest this type of knowledge was propositional. In that case, γνῶσιν in 1 Corinthians 8 may be understood to refer to statements that were considered to be accurate and true beliefs about God and cosmology, much as it is used by Diogenes Laertius in his account on Epicurus (DL 10.78, 85, 123-124). The two sayings in 8.4 (οὐδὲν εἴδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ and οὐδεὶς θεὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς) contain cosmological and theological content, suggesting these are specific propositions containing traditional philosophical topics. Given their philosophical content and that they deny the existence of divinities besides one, it may be best to describe the two sayings in 8.4 as a propositional description of philosophical monotheism.

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381 Brookins, *Corinthian Wisdom*, 164.

382 Sellars, *Stoicism*, 107.

383 Brennan, The Stoic Life, 35-45; Tad Brennan, "Stoic Moral Psychology," 269-274

384 When Paul attempts to teach the Corinthians something, he uses the phrase Paul prefers to present his teaching to the Corinthians through the phrase οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι (1 Cor. 3.16, 5.6, 6.2-3, 6.9, 6.15-16, 6.19, 9.13, 9.24). However, in Romans and 2 Corinthians, Paul will use οἴδαμεν ὅτι to present a teaching, suggesting Paul's usage of this phrase in 1 Corinthians is unique for the epistle.

385 Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 620.

If Paul is describing philosophical propositions in 8.4, propositional logic can explain the word choice and syntax of 8.5-6. Εἴπερ in 8.5 may be considered to be a marker of a hypothetical proposition,[386] which was one of the logical tools used by Stoics (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.66; Epictetus, *Diatri*. 1.7). Epictetus uses the phrase εἴπερ γὰρ to introduce a hypothetical premise from which he then derives a conclusion (*Diatri*. 1.8.3). The usage of ὥσπερ then suggests a link between two different propositions. The first proposition of 8.5 posits the existence of multiple entities labeled as gods (λεγόμενοι θεοὶ), probably as an indirect way of referring to idols.[387] The second proposition of 8.5 draws from the previous proposition via analogy that there are multiple gods and lords. This inferential form follows the Stoics' willingness to draw inferences from the seen to the unseen, including about divinity and through analogical inference (Diogenes Laertius, *Lives* 7.52). If both of the propositions of 8.5 were true, they would be affirming the existence of a philosophical polytheism that contradicts the philosophical monotheism expressed in 8.4.

The usage of ἀλλ' in 8.6 presents an *anacoluthon.*[388] If Paul is engaging in a brief display of philosophical argument, the apparently abrupt inclusion of ἀλλ' may function to signal a surprising, logical conclusion. Even if the philosophical polytheism expressed in 8.5 is true, for Paul, the faith of believers is still to be directed toward one God and one Lord Jesus, and their cosmological roles in the creation of everything, which excludes any other divinities from having creative power.

The effect of Paul's argument is to render philosophical monotheism as an insufficient expression for the faith for the Corinthians. Rather than a philosophical monotheism that focuses on the lack of multiple divinities and draws ethical conclusions from that premise, Paul expounds upon a creational

386 On 1 Cor. 8.5 having a hypothetical force and its other logical possibilities, see the brief discussion in Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 631.
387 Ciampa & Rosner, *1 Corinthians*, 381.
388 Thiselton, *1 Corinthians*, 631.

monotheism[389] focused on the creative power of God. Perhaps echoing the expressed contrast between human wisdom and God's power mentioned in 2.5, Paul's argument attempts to redirect the Corinthians' thinking away from the generic philosophical propositions about divinity towards a specific faith in God and the Lord Jesus Christ.[390] Given this similarity between 2.5 and 8.4-6, it seems πίστις in 2.5 is understood to pertain to specific propositions about God's power, similar to 8.4.

After resisting the conventional philosophical propositions about theology and cosmology, in 1 Corinthians 8.7-13 Paul then diverges from a pattern of ethical reasoning among Stoics, particularly the Roman Stoics of the 1st century AD. Stoics conceived of philosophy as divided into three distinct types of philosophical discourse: logic, physics, and ethics. However, these were not considered separate domains of philosophy, but they were coherently interrelated as one philosophical system.[391] Knowledge in one domain was used to draw conclusions in the other domain, with the expectation that all knowledge in all three domains would be coherent with each other. As a consequence, propositions about physics were instrumental in drawing ethical conclusions. The Stoic doctrine of οἰκείωσις was the primary doctrine that related physics with ethics. The physical nature of living beings with their desire for self-preservation made people assign value to things as good and bad for one's well-being.[392] However, some 1st century A.D. Stoics such as Epictetus and Seneca considered knowledge of divinity to be a basis for drawing ethical conclusions. Long notes that while most Stoics philosophically proceed from the doctrine of οἰκείωσις to an understanding of God's providence, Epictetus tends to do the opposite,

389 On the creational monotheism of Jewish monotheism, N.T. Wright (*New Testament and the People of God*, 249) observes that "[i]t spoke of a god who had made the world" and ruled out, amongst other types of monotheisms, henotheism. Strictly speaking, however, the expression of Paul's hypothetical argument of 1 Corinthians 8.5-6 for creational monotheism allows for a henotheistic cosmology, but where the Father and Jesus Christ are distinguished from other gods and lords in virtue have being the ones who exclusively created everything (τὰ πάντα).

390 By contrast, Garland (*1 Corinthians*, 371) considers the two statements in 8.4 is Paul "build[ing] his case against eating food by affirming their belief in the one God and their rejection of the reality of idols."

391 Sellars, *The Art of Living*, 77-80.

392 Sellars, *Stoicism*, 107-109.

proceeding from discussing God to inferring specific ethical instructions.[393] Similarly, Seneca repeatedly draws practical advice based upon certain claims about God (Seneca, *Ep*. 41, 65.23, 74.14).

It seems that some Corinthians were engaging in a style of reasoning similar to the Stoics. The three-fold recurrence of γνῶσις in 1 Corinthians 8.7-13 is instrumental in highlighting the central role the Corinthians propositional knowledge about the non-existence of idols and other divinities had in their decisions to eat food offered to idols. It can be speculatively suggested that the already stated propositions about the non-existence of idols and other divinities implied that there was no ethical division of foods based upon association with idols. Combining this implicit proposition with the expressed physical proposition that food does not bring one closer to God in 8.8a would lead to the ethical conclusion expressed in 8.8b that eating at the temples neither benefits nor harms them, resembling the Stoic doctrine of moral indifferents.[394] In that case, the Corinthians believers were working under the Stoic assumption of the unity of philosophy. Their propositional knowledge about physics, particularly as it relates to theology and cosmology, was the basis for inferring propositional beliefs about ethics, which they used to direct their behaviors.

By contrast, Paul's argument runs counter to the conventional, philosophical unity between physics and ethics with an alternative unity between the love of Christ and the union with Christ. Paul points out that those who have the aforementioned theological and cosmological knowledge are hurting fellow "weak" believers who do not possess this knowledge (1 Cor. 8.9-10). This type of action contrasts with Christ's purposive, self-sacrificial action on behalf of the weak in 8.11. This reference to Christ can correspond to the servant-hood mindset that Paul expressed about Christ in 2.6-16, implying that those with knowledge are coming in conflict with God's wisdom in Christ. Then in 8.12, Paul draws an inference (οὕτως δὲ) between how those who eat food offered to idols work against Christ's purposes for the weak

393 Long, *Epictetus*, Kindle loc. 3822.
394 Brennan, *The Stoic Life*, 35-45; Tad Brennan, "Stoic Moral Psychology," 269-274.

and sin against fellow believers and Christ. The reason that sin against fellow believers is a sin against Christ is not explicit, but it may echo the sentiment in 4.23 that believers are united to Christ, thereby harm against the weak is to harm Christ to whom they belong. If Christ's union with believers is in the background, this suggests that Paul's ethical reasoning in 8.11-12 draws an inferential connection between Christ's purposes and the believers' union with Christ that contrasts with the conventional Stoic-like inference of ethical propositions from general, physical propositions about theology and cosmology.

What distinguishes Paul's ethical argument from what Paul expresses about the Corinthians' reasoning is that Paul does not develop an ethical outlook based upon specific philosophical propositions, but rather a loving concern for what happens to others that mirrors the purposes of Christ's sacrificial love (cf. 8.2-3, 13.2). Paul's vision of love presents a different mode of understanding than the conventional philosophical propositions do. Love recognizes the potential impact of one's action on another to either build up (8.1: οἰκοδομεῖ) or destroy (8.11: ἀπόλλυται) other persons and acting accordingly rather than rationalizing a course of ethical action for oneself based upon a generic, propositional comprehension about non-personal entities.

The various similarities between the discourses in 1 Corinthians 2.6-16 and 8.7-13 would suggest that the latter is an argumentative demonstration of the former. First, just as both believers and Christ share in glory in 2.7-8, both believers and Christ are said to be sinned against by those who eat meat in 8.12. Second, the mention of Christ's death is given in both 2.8 and 8.11. Third, the intentionality implied of Christ's death in 8.11 overlaps with Paul's focus on the mind of Christ in 2.16. Finally, the focus of the love of God in 2.10 corresponds to the concern for how one's actions affect other believers in 8.7-13.

Given how 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 are echoed in 8.4-6 and 8.7-13, respectively, it seems probable that there are two modes of how one comes to understand God as described by Paul. The first

form of knowing given in 2.1-5 pertains to propositional beliefs about God's power. The second form of knowing expounded in 2.6-16 is characterized by the attitude of love, which pertains to an understanding about both God and people. While not excluding the possession of propositional knowledge, the attitude of love indicates a different manner by which mature believers would come to understand the mystery of God's wisdom differently from the way that the Corinthians had come to understand God through the form of philosophical propositions.

What seems to be the case then is that 1 Corinthians 2.1-5 and 2.6-16 describes two related yet distinct ways of knowing God. Paul considers that the Corinthians presently have propositional knowledge about God's power. However, the mode of knowing God that brings a comprehension of God's wisdom is not a propositional knowledge, but a relational knowledge of God enabled by love. It is this relational knowing that makes possible the understanding of the more extensive knowledge about the glory of the Lord and believers as it pertains to the nature of the resurrected body. As such, this relational knowledge of God can be described in terms of learning from a beloved teacher, as such a form of knowledge including both a pupil's knowledge about the teacher and their knowledge about the (propositional) ideas the teacher instructs them about.

This change from propositional knowledge about God's power to a love for God that brings about an understanding of God's wisdom suggests that Paul recognizes the conditions for knowing God changes throughout the development of Christian maturity. In coming to faith, the Corinthians' knowledge about God was primarily propositional knowledge about God's power. However, by virtue of the Spirit, whose moral inspiration of believers directs them towards an attitude of servant-hood and love, believers may be considered to know God in a new way that understands God not just as an object of propositional knowledge like that of the philosophers but as a beloved teacher, who is presenting to

the Corinthians propositional knowledge about His redemptive intentions that is from before human history.

Through the cross of Jesus Christ and the power of the Spirit, God engaged in a form of resistance to the way the Corinthians were accustomed to knowing about God through the human teachers of philosophy and wisdom and the intellectual competition that regularly ensued. Instead, the Corinthians were situated in a new way of life that afforded them the opportunity to grow so as to learn about God through an attitude of love that defines their relationships with God and each other. By this maturation, they would be able to comprehend the redemptive significance of Jesus' servant-hood in the crucifixion and resurrection and learn through the Spirit's diverse inspiration of the community of believers.

5.5 Conclusion

For Paul, the problem that the Corinthian believers are facing is not simply that they are thinking and acting too much like the surrounding society, but that their thinking has caused them to misunderstand how God is teaching them. It is the power and inspiration of the Spirit that is demonstrating and making known to them what God has disclosed of His redemptive intentions in Jesus Christ. Insofar as the Corinthians continue to engage in a competitive style of thinking that treats wisdom as a zero-sum game, their ability to mature and learn from the Spirit is sharply curtailed, leaving their knowledge of God as a form of propositional knowing that they had from the beginning. God is their teacher through the Spirit, who empowers and inspires human teachers in addition to being the source of moral guidance in believers. Paul's discourse invites them to leave behind their competitive thinking for an attitude of servant-hood and love through the influence of the Spirit. By doing so, they will come to know God in a new way of love that allows them to comprehend more deeply God's redemptive

intentions in Jesus Christ as the servant whose glory in the cross and the resurrection brings glory to others.

Final Conclusion

By paying close attention to Paul's discourse in 1 Corinthians 2 and the surrounding passages, three points have been argued. First, Paul's concern about wisdom principally relates to concerns about who the Corinthians depend upon to teach them wisdom. The Corinthians were accustomed to rely upon human teachers to teach wisdom about God, leading to the contamination of the ecclesial community with the divisive behaviors customary of the competitive nature of Greco-Roman wisdom. Second, it is argued that Paul construes God as the teacher of the Corinthians. In so doing, Paul directly pits God against the expertise of the wise and the political leadership, suggesting that God has shown their ultimate ignorance to the Corinthians through the cross. Third, God's manner of teaching is realized through a threefold pattern of the narrative of Jesus Christ providing the shape of human redemption, the Spirit's inspiration of humans teachers, and the transformation of the Corinthian's relation to God from merely a propositional faith in God's power to relational love for God.

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