



BIC Volume 11
Second Corinthians
Lorin L Cranford
Ministry Part One C:
Topic 10.2.3.1.7 & 10.2.3.1.8
2 Cor. 4:16-6:13

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Quick Links to Study

[10.2.3.1.7 Ministry based on Faith](#)

[10.2.3.1.7.1 Not loosing heart, pt. 2](#)

[10.2.3.1.7.2 Ministry in an earthly tent](#)

[10.2.3.1.7.2.1 Expectation of a home](#)

[10.2.3.1.7.2.2 Determination to please Him](#)

[10.2.3.1.8 Ministry as Reconciliation](#)

[10.2.3.1.8.1 Persuading others](#)

[10.2.3.1.8.2 Avoiding stumbling blocks](#)

[10.2.3.1.8.2.1 First set of appeals](#)

[10.2.3.1.8.2.2 Second set of appeals](#)

10.2.3.1.7 Ministry based on faith, 4:16-5:10

Clearly this unit stands as two inner connected parts. Vv. 16-18 both repeats the introductory declaration in 4:1, but develops the idea in a somewhat new direction. 5:1-10 then comes as a justifying declaration (γάρ) to 4:16-18 looking forward to final judgment.¹ This lies behind the delimitation of modern Bible translators and their use of paragraphing of the translated text. No easy way exists to reflect this in the formatting of translations for this dual role of the pericope.

,διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα. 17 τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν, 18 μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

16 So we do not lose heart. Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature in contrast is being renewed day by day. 17 For this slight momentary affliction is preparing us for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure, 18 because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal.

The conjunction διὸ (# 78) links this pericope to what has preceded in 4:1-15, as an implication of the earlier declaration. Additionally the causal γάρ (#80) signifies the basis of the assertion of the first sentence in v. 16,

10.2.3.1.7.1 Not loosing heart, pt. 2, 4:16-18

16 Διὸ οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, ἀλλ' εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος

^{4.16} Διὸ

78 οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν,
ἀλλ'

εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται,
ἀλλ'

79 ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται
ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα.

^{4.17} γάρ

80 τὸ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν . . . αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν,
τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν

|
καθ' ὑπερβολὴν
εἰς ὑπερβολὴν
μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα
ἀλλὰ
(σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν) τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα·

^{4.18}

81 τὰ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα,
δὲ

82 τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

¹The richness of 5:1-10 I experienced many years ago in producing a 300 page doctoral dissertation on these verses.

which is then amplified substantially in 5:1-10. In sum, the sufferings of the present do not cause one to give up because of what lies ahead in final judgment before the throne of God. Thus the pericope is a beautiful example of how the apostle moved from one emphasis to another while tying the two larger units together in a progression of thought.

His first affirmation in #s 78 and 79 reflect upon his response to the hardships in ministry. Also οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν in # 78 repeats the οὐκ ἐγκακοῦμεν in the opening affirmation in 4:1 of this unit. Beyond serving as a boundary marker, the affirmation asserts a positive attitude and stance by the apostle throughout the duration of his ministry in spite of the difficulties.

While in 4:1 this stance is linked to knowing the mercy of God in ministry calling, here the apostle acknowledges the physical wear and tear from these hardships: εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται. This present tense form of διαφθείρω affirms a continual wearing down of his body ultimately leading to death. Ministry (τὴν διακονίαν ταύτην, cf. 4:1), and especially the hardships that come with it, can and will take a toll on one's life. Paul was a realist who well understood the physical limitations that every person faces. Fulfilling the will of God in demanding ministry has a high price connected to it. The prosperity gospel preachers miss the boat totally in making the false promises of everything being easy once you're a believer. Real ministry in the Kingdom of God is just the opposite. Sufferings are real and normally very painful.

But what keeps Paul going (# 79) is not the wearing down of his physical body. Rather it is what God is doing inwardly in his life. The rather unusual Greek construction² puts a high emphasis on contrast with ἀλλ' repeated before both the secondary and the main clause. The concessive clause with εἰ καὶ sets up the secondary statement of wearing away as being overcome in order to realize the primary assertion of renewal taking place inwardly. The boundaries are put in contrast to one another with a very Greek idiom, ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος, our

²“εἰ καὶ means ‘even though,’ ‘although,’²² introducing a concessive clause that describes an actual circumstance. In the apodosis of such a clause, ἀλλά means ‘yet,’ ‘certainly,’ ‘at least’ (BAGD §448 [5]) and ‘introduces with emphasis the opposite compensating relation’ (Meyer 502). The two verbs διαφθείρεται and ἀνακαινοῦται depict incessant and therefore simultaneous processes.³ The former may be translated as a passive (‘is being destroyed,’ NAB1; ‘is in process of destruction,’ Thrall 347) or intransitively (‘is wasting away,’ RSV, NRSV; ‘is decaying,’ RV). Either way, what brought about the destruction or debilitation was the combined effect of Paul’s circumstances. On the other hand, the implied agent behind the passive ἀνακαινοῦται (‘is being renewed,’ RSV, NRSV) is the Spirit, as 3:18 and Eph. 3:16 make clear.” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 359.]

outward person, over against ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν, our inner self. This is somewhat close to the English idiom the physical life verses the spiritual life but this doesn't quite capture the sense of Paul's terms here. One must be careful not to read from this a well developed anthropological view of humanity. This Greek idiom provided him with an easy contrast between the physical and the spiritual aspects of human existence.³

The contrast is extended to the two verbs. First, διαφθείρεται denotes being wasted away into death, but ἀνακαινοῦται signifies being renewed with new vigor and life. Both are present tense verb meaning the actions are continuous and simultaneous. Talk to an aged saint of God with a history of faithful commitment, and this person out of their experience can describe what Paul is alluding to here. Additional emphasis upon the ongoing nature of these experiences comes with the adverbial phrase ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα, which is close to the English expression ‘day by day.’⁴

The foundation for this continual renewal inwardly is set forth in the two sets of causal γὰρ clauses in vv. 17-18 (#s 80 - 82). Paul effectively gathers up the depiction

³“In the balanced pair of expressions ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος and ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν [ἄνθρωπος], the adverbs ἔξω-ἔσω, here used adjectivally, may be rendered ‘outer-inner’ or ‘outward-inward,’ while ἄνθρωπος has been variously translated—‘man’ (RV), ‘person’ (Martin 82), ‘self’ (Barclay, NAB2), ‘nature’ (NRSV), ‘human nature’ (NJB), ‘being’ (GNB), ‘humanity’ (NEB, REB in v. 16a)—and some versions render the complete phrases adverbially, ‘outwardly’ and ‘inwardly’ (TCNT, NIV). Because Paul’s anthropology is aspectival not partitive, and synthetic not analytic,⁷ when he speaks of ‘our outward self’ and ‘our inward self’ he is not thinking of two distinct entities, ‘the body’ (σῶμα) and ‘the soul’ (ψυχή), with the former as the receptacle for the latter.⁸ He is, rather, contemplating his total existence from two contrasting viewpoints.⁹ The ‘outer self’ is the whole person from the standpoint of one’s ‘creaturely mortality,’¹⁰ the physical aspect of the person. ὁ ἔξω ἄνθρωπος is therefore indistinguishable from τὸ σῶμα (4:10), ἡ θνητὴ σὰρξ (4:11),¹¹ and τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως (Phil. 3:21).” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 359–360.]

⁴“The phrase ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα is unique in the Greek Bible, and although it is often described as a Semitism⁴ it is more probably a colloquial use of the temporal dative, with the repeated ἡμέρα denoting repetition,⁵ ‘day after day,’ or, as in the colloquial English expression, ‘day in and day out.’ It is conceivable that the weakening and strengthening is progressive, that is, from one day to another or from one degree to another, but these twin processes are more probably to be seen as repeated ‘day after day.’⁶ If this is so, this process of renewal is unlike the process of transformation into the image of Christ, which is ‘from one degree of glory to another (more radiant degree)’ (3:18).” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 359.]

of suffering hardships in 4:1-15 under the label of τὸ παραυτικά ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν, **this slight momentary affliction**, in v. 17.

The core expression ὁ παραυτικά ἐλαφρὸν is made up of an adverb, παραυτικά, **momentary**, and an adjective, ἐλαφρὸν, **slight**, that together form a unitary idea of something happening only briefly and at a minor level of intensity. What that something is Paul labels as τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν, **of our affliction**. Contextually it refers back especially to vv. 7-12, which most would not define as temporary nor minor troubles. But this would be a purely human perspective on Paul's situation. The apostle downplays this aspect in comparison to the 'heavy weight' stuff that is ahead in eternity for God's people.

This he defines as αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης, **the eternal weight of glory**. Stark contrast is thus injected into the comparison between the present sufferings and what stands ahead in eternity for God's people. The temporal contrast is especially prominent here. The **suffering**, θλίψις, is but παραυτικά, **momentary**. On the opposite side, the δόξης, **the experiencing of the Divine Presence**, is αἰώνιον, **eternal**. But also the level of intensity of experience is stressed between ἐλαφρὸν, **slight**, and βάρος, **heavy**. Heaven for Paul, first and foremost, was the privilege of standing in the presence of the utterly pure and holy God of this universe. This is his meaning of δόξα. It is not something that we come to possess or some effect planted upon us. Never! Just the opposite is the case. δόξα is God in His overpowering presence as revealed through Jesus Christ which kills off everything impure and evil. Absolutely nothing impure can survive in this utterly pure presence of God. Yet through the sacrifice and resurrection of Christ, the dirty sinner can come into this divine presence and survive. Why? Because that holy purity of God has killed off the sin and filth of the sinner through the blood of the Lamb of God on the cross. Getting out this message to a sinful world thus stood as the central objective of Paul's τὴν διακονίαν ταύτην (4:1). Only by coming to Christ in unconditional faith surrender is one able to experience this cleansing for eternity.

And the reality of this cleansing is deepened through the experience of hardships and suffering for Christ in this earthly life. Thus Paul asserts that they κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν, **are preparing us**, for the profoundly more substantive experiencing of God's presence in eternity. The verb κατεργάζομαι has a wide range of meaning but in this context with βάρος as the direct object, the sense is that our sufferings produce an every increasing sense of the 'weightiness' or profound substance that is inherent to the divine δόξα. Thus the more we suffer the more substance in the divine presence we sense. The ultimate reality is that none of God's peo-

ple this side of eternity fully grasps all that God is and how that radiates out through His presence. John in the book of Revelation sought to give human expression to this via his use of prophetic apocalyptic visionary depiction. Yet it is obvious through this uniquely analogous language vehicle that John understood that his depiction only caught a small glimpse into all this. In 5:1-10, the apostle Paul will focus on one particular aspect of this divine presence, i.e., the coming judgment of believers in eternity at the return of Christ. Anticipating judgment before Christ to evaluate the quality of the believer's commitment to Christ on earth gives particular 'weightiness' to the experience of eternity.

Verse 18 is not a separate sentence from the one in verse 17, but rather a continuation of it. The Genitive Absolute construction⁵ introduced by μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν adds a causal expression to the core verb κατεργάζεται. What Paul 'looks at' forms the basis of his view of the role of sufferings preparing him for eternity. One should note that the verb σκοπέω defines careful and close observation, rather than superficial glancing at something.⁶ **Implication: only with spiritual eyes can one see**

⁵Simply explained, a Genitive Absolute construction in ancient Greek enabled the writer to attach a secondary verbal expression to a finite verb when the source of the verb action (i.e., subject) was different from the source of the genitive participle action. It's pattern is relatively simple: just attach an adverbial participle to the finite verb by placing both it and its 'subject' in the genitive case spelling and normally without using an article with the participle. This is one of many options the Greek writer had available to him for setting up such an idea. One should note that due to the adverbial nature of this participle use, it can play a wide range of roles in defining a link of the participle to the verb. Here the context demands a causal function, rather than the common temporal function.

Nothing comparable to the Greek Genitive Absolute expression exists in most modern western languages, including English. Thus translation of it necessitates the use mostly of appropriate dependent clause expressions, such as the "**because we look not...**" expression in the above NRSV for μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν.

⁶σκοπέω (σκοπός; Hom.+; ins, pap; Esth 8:12g; 2 Macc 4:5; TestNaph 3:1 v.1.; Philo, Joseph., Just.; Ath. 10, 2, R. 2 p. 49, 25 al.—B-D-F §101, p. 48; Mlt.-H. 258) fut. ptc. σκοπήσον (Just., D. 3, 2) to pay careful attention to, look (out) for, notice w. acc. of pers. or thing someone or someth. (Jos., Ant. 12, 30; Just., D. 2, 5) σκοπεῖτε τοὺς οὕτω περιπατοῦντας notice those who conduct themselves thus, i.e. in order to imitate them Phil 3:17. σκοπεῖν τοὺς τὰς διχοστασίας ποιοῦντας look out for those who cause divisions, i.e. avoid them Ro 16:17.—σκ. τὰ βλεπόμενα keep one's eyes on what can be seen 2 Cor 4:18.—τὰ ἑαυτῶν look out for one's own interests (Pla., Phdr. 232d) Phil 2:4. Also τὸ καθ' ἑαυτοῦς MPol 1:2. τὸ κοινὸν τῆς ἐλπίδος 1 Cl 51:1.—σκ. ἑαυτὸν foll. by μὴ look to oneself, that ... not Gal 6:1. σκόπει μὴ τὸ φῶς σκότος ἐστίν consider whether the light be darkness Lk 11:35 (μὴ interrog. = Lat. 'num' [cp. Zahn ad loc.; diff. Rob. 995] because of the indic.; cp. Epict. 4, 5, 18 ὅρα μὴ Νερωνιανὸν ἔχει χαρακτήρα).—DELG s.v. σκέπτομαι. M-M. TW.

[William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 931.]

through the physical aspects of suffering to the deeper spiritual reality going on in the suffering.

What does Paul notice through this close observation? He states it in a negative followed by a positive: *μη σκοπούντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια*, because we do not pay close attention to the things being seen but to the eternal things not being seen. This double direct object sets up an interesting concept. Paul asserts we do not see the things being seen but instead the things not being seen. Humanly such is virtually impossible! But for a believer such is simple. We do not pay attention to the outward physical sufferings that are obvious to people in general. Instead, the focus of attention is on the invisible spiritual dynamics that are just as real and as present as the pain and hurt from the physical sufferings. What Paul then sees is how the outward physical sufferings are being used by God to prepare him to experience the fully pure divine Presence of God in eternity.

Paul's stance here is so opposite of modern western pleasure oriented society that runs from any kind of pain and unpleasantness. One cannot label him a fatalist either. The physical pain of suffering persecution is very real. He never denies such. But within this pain exists a working of God to turn the intended destructive into something immensely beneficial to the people of God. We experience great measures of God's presence with every experience of painful suffering. Our western culture largely rejects such understanding and sees nothing but negative connected to pain and suffering. The prosperity preachers of a perverted version of the gospel have been trapped by this cultural blindness and fall in line with the non-Christian culture rather than with the apostolic Gospel of Paul and Jesus. They then miss the authentic spiritual blessing of pain and substitute it with a phony cultural sense of being happy. What a tragedy for them and the gullible people they influence. To put it in Texas terms, they trade a sirloin steak for an old greasy hamburger!

10.2.3.1.7.2 Ministry in an earthly tent, 5:1-10

5.1 Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνοῦ καταλυθῆ, οἰκοδομῆν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. 2 καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες, 3 εἶ γε καὶ ἐκδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθησόμεθα. 4 καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκηνῇ στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς. 5 ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

6 Θαρροῦντες οὖν πάντοτε καὶ εἰδότες ὅτι ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου. 7 διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους. 8 θαρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημησάμενοι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημησάμενοι πρὸς τὸν κύριον. 9 διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι. 10 τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι

δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομισθῆται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἐπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον.

5.1 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling — 3 if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord — 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

With the setup of 4:16-18, Paul now turns to amplify a major aspect of the *τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια*, the eternal things not being seen. At the center of the eternal things is being with Jesus in full experience. Ministry now thus means seeking to please the Lord, especially in light of the coming judgment when our earthly commitment will be exposed to divine examination.

The apostle presents this in a twofold emphasis in vv. 1-10. The inferential conjunction οὖν in v. 6 signals a turning point in the thought flow. In vv. 1-5 Paul reflects upon the dilemma of earthly ministry while wishing to be in the heavenly habitation with the Lord. Implicit in this dilemma is the implication, now made explicit in vv. 6-10, that his core wish is to be faithful to Christ whether here or there. One foundational motivation is the awareness of a day of accountability before the Lord in eternity.

In the history of interpretation this passage has played an important role in the theological exploration of the meaning of death for believers. The scripture text has generated substantial controversy as well due to Paul's non-treatment of the so-called 'intermediate state' here. What is implied in the affirmation of confidence of expecting a heavenly habitation upon dying in this life?⁷

⁷"In 5:2-4 Paul continues his discussion of the spiritual body, but why he does so is unclear. He speaks of putting on (ἐπενδύσασθαι) the heavenly body over the earthly tent (5:2). But into this discussion Paul brings the idea of being unclothed, naked (γυμνός, 5:3). We do not know for sure what was Paul's reason for including 5:2-4 in the epistle. Is Paul speaking of the Christian taking on the spiritual body at death or at the Parousia? Or does the Christian 'already' have this body? Furthermore, does the idea behind 'being naked' suggest an intermediate state (the period between the death of a Christian and the putting on of the spiritual body at Parousia) or does this suggest the concept of judgment as depicted in the Old Testament? There is no consensus as to the purpose for Paul's writing of 5:2-4." [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*,

A huge source for the differing readings of these verses arises out of the cultural influences of western individualism. The tendency of interpreters has been for several centuries in the west to see ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶς and οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς in verse one solely in individualized terms contrasting the physical and the resurrection bodies of believers. Toward the end of the previous century this cultural blind spot was overcome by a few western scholars in the realization that Paul functioned in the collectivistic world of the first century and not in the individualism of the modern western hemisphere. Thus the language of Paul here in chapter five is in no way contrasting the physical body with the resurrection body.⁸ To the contrary, Paul is contrasting physical life on earth, which in 4:7 he called ὀστρακίνοις σκεύεσιν, *clay jars*, with spiritual life in Heaven.⁹ As we will note below, his sense of confidence in not showing up 'naked' (v. 3) is Jewish in orientation and signals his expectation of standing before God in judgment not deficient in his obedience during his earthly ministry.¹⁰ That his continuing aim εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, *to be pleasing to Him* (v. 9), will be validated by God on judgment day is central to the confidence expressed by Paul in this passage.

10.2.3.1.7.2.1 Expectation of a home, 5:1-5

5.1 Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶς καταλυθῇ, οἰκοδομὴν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. 2 καὶ γὰρ ἐν τούτῳ στενάζομεν τὸ

vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1998), 97.]

⁸The later 'westernizing' of this passage has introduced a long list of unanswerable and ultimately useless issues into this passage. The theology of 'soul sleep' is one of the main by-products of such distortion of this scripture text. Whether Paul changed his mind about the timing of the resurrection from the second coming (1 Cor 15) to the moment of death (2 Cor 5) is another of these pointless issues.

But when the passage is properly viewed as a contrast between living on earth and living in Heaven, such issues are irrelevant to Paul's thought both here, and elsewhere in his writings. Paul's positive message can thus shine through without questionable blemishes being attached to it. Death is a transition of leaving this earthly life and stepping into the heavenly life that God prepares for His people. Thus comes his longing for this experience.

⁹"The image signifies man's total earthly existence. This is so in the use of the similar images in Isa 38:12 and Job 4:19. These texts may show the ego as inhabiting the dwelling, but the dwelling itself signifies the whole being.¹¹⁷⁷ Moreover, there is no evidence in (rabbinic) Judaism that the image of the house was ever used to distinguish between body and Soul.¹¹⁷⁸ The σκῆνος ('body') is the whole person." [Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 360.]

¹⁰A massive defense of this view was presented in my doctoral dissertation in 1975 at SWBTS.

οικητήριον ἡμῶν τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες, 3 εἶ γε καὶ ἐκδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθισόμεθα. 4 καὶ γὰρ οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκηνῶν στενάζομεν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῇ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς. 5 ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δούς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

5.1 For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. 2 For in this tent we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling — 3 if indeed, when we have taken it off we will not be found naked. 4 For while we are still in this tent, we groan under our burden, because we wish not to be unclothed but to be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. 5 He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

As the block diagram below highlights, this pericope revolves around the central point made in statement # 83 in verse one. The assertion of confidence in the heavenly habitation awaiting believers in eternity is then defended by three more assertions introduced by the causal conjunction γὰρ: #s 84-86. Central to this stands the verb στενάζομεν.

But the verb στενάζω adds a negative tone to this longing in acknowledgement of the physical limitations and sufferings from the sinful world of this life. Thus it is often translated as *groaning* in referencing this negative impact. The addition of the participle βαρούμενοι, *being weighted down*, as a circumstantial modifier in the second use of στενάζω in v. 4 is quite instructive in understanding Paul's use of the term. This longing for the heavenly habitation is defined and intensified by the burdens of living in this sinful world on earth. Paul's own sufferings have produced an even greater longing to be with the Lord in Heaven.

But this posed a dilemma for the apostle. Life in this world meant continued ministry even with suffering, while death would bring him into the heavenly habitation in deeper union with Christ -- something far better, as he will later relate to the Philippians in Phil. 1: 22-24. But ministry now is the primary concern as he relates to the Corinthians. It is hard and the groaning over the difficulties pushes him to yearn for the heavenly habitation awaiting him even more.

What he longs for is not in doubt at all: Οἶδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι... As the foundational affirmation asserts with graphic imagery, when death comes to this physical existence on earth, there awaits a heavenly home for the people of God. The contrast between physical life on earth as ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶς, *our earthly tent dwelling*,¹¹ and Heaven as οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον

¹¹To equate ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶς with σῶμα, strictly in the sense of the physical body, is seriously false here. This is at the heart of the wrong interpretation in western tradition and looks to the dualism of Plato philosophically rather than to Paul's Jewish heritage and orientation. The Garden of Eden in Genesis is the origin of Paul's thought here, not Plato. In the NT,

5.1	γάρ		
83	Οἶδαμεν	ἐὰν ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκήνου καταλυθῆ, ὅτι...οἰκοδομῆν ἐκ θεοῦ ἔχομεν, οἰκίαν ἀχειροποίητον αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς.	
5.2	γάρ καὶ ἐν τούτῳ		
84	στενάζομεν τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν	τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι ἐπιποθοῦντες, εἰ γε καὶ ἐκδυσάμενοι οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθησόμεθα.	
5.3			
5.4	γάρ	καὶ	
85	οἱ ὄντες . . . στενάζομεν	ἐν τῷ σκηνῶν βαρούμενοι, ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἄλλ' ----- ἐπενδύσασθαι, ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν ὑπὸ τῆς ζωῆς.	
5.5	δὲ		
86	ὁ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς... (ἐστὶν) θεός,	εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο	ὁ δοὺς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

αἰώνιον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, a permanent eternal home not
σῶμα, moreover, is more the sense of physical life than merely the physical body, which more naturally was referenced by βίος. And this corresponds generally to popular Greek usage of σῶμα in the ancient world as well. Death then is not just the end of existence of the physical body. Rather it is the termination of physical life on earth. One must never ignore the collective orientation of Paul's world in favor of western individualism.

The term γυμνός may refer to the soul when it is stripped of its earthly body. Plato speaks of the soul as going to the god of the underworld in this condition: ἡ ψυχὴ γυμνὴ τοῦ σώματος παρ' ἐκείνον ἀπέρχεται ('the soul goes to him without the covering of the body' LCL).¹²⁷⁹ Judgement takes place for the soul ἐπειδὴν γυμνωθῆ τοῦ σώματος ('when a man's soul is stripped bare of the body' LCL).¹²⁸⁰ In Philo's description of the death of Moses he uses the phrase τῆς ψυχῆς ἀπογυμνουμένης ('the soul was being stripped bare').¹²⁸¹ In Gnosticism also the soul stripped of the body can be described as naked.¹²⁸² Within this philosophical framework of thought the state of disembodiment is seen as desirable,¹²⁸³ though this may not have been the attitude of the ordinary person.¹²⁸⁴ At this point we also need to consider the Jewish attitude towards the idea of disembodiment, since this would affect Paul's attitude, and in consequence the significance of his 'Greek' terminology. The Jews, as is well known, had a horror of actual nakedness.¹²⁸⁵ But does this necessarily mean that the post-mortem 'nakedness' of the soul would be objectionable?¹²⁸⁶ In some circles where there emerged the notion of the separation of body and spirit at death there emerged also the idea of the joyful condition of the spirits of the righteous, as in Jub. 23:31: 'And their bones will rest in the earth, and their spirits will

made with human hands in the heavenlies, is very dramatic. The difference between life in a tent, σκῆνος, even if symbolized here as a tabernacle, and Heaven as a building under construction (cf. Jhn 14:1-7),¹² and as possibly symbolized here also as a temple, is dramatic. If religious tones stand in the background here for both σκῆνος and οἰκοδομή, the implication is contact with God through Christ in both. But the latter is far better and to be preferred. Additionally the σκῆνος is temporary and not enduring, while the οἰκοδομή / οἰκία is permanent and eternal. In this world, we as God's people are nomads without a permanent home on earth. But we have one under construction that will be ready for us when death comes. Of that we are certain!

The basis for this confidence is developed in the causal statements (#s 84-86) that follow, with # 86 as climactic. First in v. 2 (# 84), to this earthly life (= ἐν τούτῳ) Paul adds (καὶ) his yearning for the eternal home being

increase joy.' (OTP II p. 102)¹²⁸⁷

[Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 374.

¹²The term οἰκοδομή stresses a building under construction, while οἰκία is the completed dwelling place. This latter term is used with the stress on permanency in v. 1b.

prepared for God's people (τὸ οἰκητήριον ἡμῶν). The groaning in this earthly life (στενάζομεν) is qualified by intense longing (ἐπιπιοθοῦντες) to put on the heavenly life (τὸ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπενδύσασθαι). Quite graphically the image of getting dressed (ἐπενδύσασθαι) / undressed (ἐκδυσάμενοι) for the experience of death is vivid. The latter ἐκδυσάμενοι (v. 3) is but another way of asserting καταλυθῆ (v. 1). The apostle sees death as both the shedding of the filthy garments of this world and the being dressed with the pure garments of the heavenly life. John in Revelation depicted this as being given white robes upon entrance into Heaven (Rev. 3:18). Just as John envisioned the white robes of heavenly existence as covering our deficits (ἵνα περιβάλη καὶ μὴ φανερωθῆ ἢ αἰσχύνῃ τῆς γυμνότητός σου, *to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen*), Paul expresses similar confidence of facing God without deficits in his commitment to Christ: οὐ γυμνοὶ εὐρεθησόμεθα, *we will not be found naked* (v. 3).

Although debated for many centuries,¹³ the unusual Greek expression εἶ γε καὶ is contextually an expression of confidence, not apprehension. The proper translation is thus *Since indeed*, rather than that of the NRSV which reflects the false westernizing of the text. The western interpretation tradition of doubt depends mostly on later post apostolic theology that can never be certain about the outcome of divine judgment of believers. Paul's expressed intention εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, *to be pleasing to Him* (5:9) is no sentimental musing but the serious confidence of his life being pleasing to the Lord. Chapters 4 and 5 literally abound with such expressions of confidence about his Christian commitment.

The second (καὶ) justifying statement (γὰρ; v. 4; # 85) also builds off the core verb στενάζομεν. The inclusiveness of 'we' is asserted by οἱ ὄντες ἐν τῷ σκῆνῃ στενάζομεν, *and we as those being in the tent life*. The groaning of longing is intensified by βαρούμενοι, *being weighted down*.

The classical Greek adverbial use of the relative clause in ἐφ' ᾧ οὐ θέλομεν ἐκδύσασθαι ἀλλ' ἐπενδύσασθαι, *in that we don't want to be unclothed but clothed*, specifies that which weights down the apostle. This image here in context clearly means the desire to be in Heaven with Christ over the struggles of this earthly life. The ἐπενδύσασθαι experience means ἵνα καταποθῆ τὸ θνητὸν *ὕπὸ τῆς ζωῆς*, *so that what is mortal may be swallowed up*

¹³ "Some witnesses (P⁴⁶ B D F G 33. 1175 pc) read εἴπερ. For a detailed defence of the reading εἶ γε see Thrall, '2 Corinthians 5:3', pp. 223–9. Briefly, it is the more difficult reading, since it might be interpreted as expressing a real doubt, which would contradict the certainty of v. 1. Hence, it would be more susceptible to scribal alteration." [Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004).]

by life. As already affirmed, here the apostle reiterates again his deep longing to pass through death into the heavenly life that God is preparing for him.

This leads to the climatic third justifying statement (v. 5; # 86): ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο θεός, ὁ δὸς ἡμῖν τὸν ἀρραβῶνα τοῦ πνεύματος, *and He who has prepared us for this very experience is God who has given to us the down payment, His Spirit*. The bottom line guarantee of the Heavenly life is God Himself. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer stands as God's guarantee of this life as the vivid image of ἀρραβῶν, *down payment*, from the ancient economic world asserts. The prepositional phrase εἰς αὐτὸ τοῦτο, *for this very thing*, captures dramatically the previous depiction of death as a being clothed with heavenly garments.

Thus Paul's confidence about death and what stands beyond is based not on anything human, but fundamentally upon God's action of placing His Spirit in Paul's life and ministry. His longing is not an escape mechanism from the hardships of this life. To the contrary, it represents the deep desire to experience the full presence of God in eternity through deeper union with Christ.

10.2.3.1.7.2.2 Determination to please Him, 5:6-10

6 Θαρροῦντες οὖν πάντοτε καὶ εἰδότες ὅτι ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου· 7 διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους· 8 Θαρροῦμεν δὲ καὶ εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον. 9 διὸ καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι. 10 τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομισθῆται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἐπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον.

6 So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord — 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 9 So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. 10 For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

As highlighted in the block diagram below, this pericope is structured around the concept of θαρρέω, *being confident*. The entire pericope is presented via the inferential conjunction οὖν (v. 6) as making explicit what was considered implicit in vv. 1-5. Central to this is confidence (# 87), which is followed by a series of justifying declarations (#s 88-91). Another inferential conjunction διὸ in v. 9 (# 92) introduces an additional implication of vv. 1-5, that of Paul's intention to always be pleasing to God, and this is based (γὰρ) upon the anticipation of divine judgment (v. 10, # 93).

The concept of θαρρέω centers a combination

5.6	οὖν		
87	(ἔσμεν) Θαρροῦντες	πάντοτε	
		καὶ	
	εἰδότες		ἐνδημοῦντες
			ἐν τῷ σώματι
		ὅτι...ἐκδημοῦμεν	
			ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου·
5.7	γὰρ		
	διὰ πίστεως		
88	περιπατοῦμεν,		
89	οὐ (περιπατοῦμεν)		
	διὰ εἰδούς·		
5.8	δὲ		
90	θαρροῦμεν		
	καὶ		
91	εὐδοκοῦμεν	μᾶλλον	
	ἐκδημῆσαι	ἐκ τοῦ σώματος	
		καὶ	
	ἐνδημῆσαι	πρὸς τὸν κύριον.	
5.9	διὸ		
	καὶ		
92	φιλοτιμούμεθα,		εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες
			εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες,
		εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι.	
5.10	γὰρ		
93	τοὺς πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ	ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ,	
		ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος	
		πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν,	
		εἴτε ἀγαθὸν	
		εἴτε φαῦλον.	

Two spellings of it surface inside the NT. The emerging Koine spelling θαρρέω shows up five times inside Paul's writings (all in 2 Cor: 5:6, 8; 7:16; 10:1, 2) with one additional use in Hebrews (13:6). The classical Attic dialectal spelling θαρσέω is found six times (7 with codex D in Lk. 23:43) among the gospel writers and Acts: Mt. 9:2, 22; 14:27; Mk. 6:50; 10:49; Lk. 23:43 (D); Jn. 16:33; Acts 23:11. Interestingly this earlier form is found only in the Aorist imperative form (θάρσει, θαρσεῖτε) as an admonition to be courageous.¹⁵ θαρσέω is

2 5 . 1 6 2
τολμηρότερον: (comparative adverb of τολμηρός 'bold, daring,' not occurring in the NT) pertaining to an activity involving unusual boldness or daring—'boldly.'
25.163 ἀποτολμάω: to be particularly bold or daring in what one does—'to be very bold, to be very

of confidence leading to courageous expression.¹⁴

¹⁴θαρρέω is especially a Pauline word in the NT with 5 of 6 NT instances found just in 2 Corinthians: 5:6, 8; 7:16; 10:1, 2. Louw-Nida list it under *Courage, Boldness (25:156-166)*:

25.156 θαρρέω or **θαρσέω** (alternative dialectal forms, with θαρσέω occurring in the NT only in the imperative): to have confidence and firmness of purpose in the face of danger or testing—'to be courageous, to have courage, to be bold.'

25.157 λαμβάνω θάρσος: (an idiom, literally 'to take courage') to become confident or courageous in the face of real or possible danger—'to become confident, to take courage.'

25.158 παρρησία, ας f: a state of boldness and confidence, sometimes implying intimidating circumstances—'boldness, courage.'

25.159 παρρησιάζομαι^b: to have courage or boldness in the face of danger or opposition—'to be bold, to have courage.'

25.160 ἐπαίρω τὴν κεφαλὴν: (an idiom, literally 'to raise up the head') to demonstrate courage in the face of danger or adversity—'to have courage, to lift the head.'

25.161 τολμάω: to be so bold as to challenge or defy possible danger or opposition—'to dare.'

daring.'

25.164 τολμητής, οὗ m: one who is particularly bold and daring—'daring person.'

25.165 ἀνδρίζομαι: (a figurative extension of meaning of ἀνδρίζομαι 'to be manly' or 'to become a man,' not occurring in the NT) to exhibit courage in the face of danger—'to be brave, to be courageous.'

25.166 πείθω τὴν καρδίαν: (an idiom, literally 'to convince the heart') to exhibit confidence and assurance in a situation which might otherwise cause dismay or fear—'to be confident, to be assured.'

[Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 305-306.] York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 305-306.]

¹⁵**θαρρέω** or **θαρσέω** (alternative dialectal forms, with θαρσέω occurring in the NT only in the imperative): to have confidence and firmness of purpose in the face of danger or testing—'to be courageous, to have courage, to be bold.'" [Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testa-*

the dominant translation word in the LXX with θαρρέω only in 4 Maccabees, which incidently is a late first Christian century document.

The core concept is that of courageous confidence in a positive sense. The apostle here uses both the present participle (# 87) and finite verb (# 90) to define the by-product of his faith commitment and certainty in the promises of God for eternity. Haughtiness and arrogance are excluded from the idea since these come from human pride. Paul's confidence comes from God instead.

In the elliptical expression assuming the declarative ἔσμεν, Θαρροῦντες is adverbially qualified by πάντοτε with the sense of continuously. It is thus an integral trait in Paul's ministry. Additionally Θαρροῦντες is closely linked to εἰδότες ὅτι..., and knowing that.... His courageous confidence is linked to what he knows. Here that is specified as ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου, while being dressed up in the body we are undressed in separation from the Lord. In a manner quite typical of Paul, he uses the dressed up / undressed imagery in a reverse role from that in vv. 2-4. ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι, being dressed up in the body, signals his physical life on earth prior to death. To be so dressed means to be undressed in regard to the heavenly habitation and this implies separation from the Lord. These statements must be considered in the context here. Spiritual union with Christ was established on the road to Damascus for Paul and he had an ongoing sense of the presence of Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. But still be in this world rather than in Heaven brought limitations on that relation. The transition to Heaven would eliminate these limitations and bring the union with Christ to its full and eternal expression.

The following assertion in v. 7 (#s 88-89) identify the heart of the limitation: διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἶδους, for through faith we are walking, not through sight. Some consider this statement an 'interruption' to Paul's line of thinking, but properly understood the declaration is a natural affirmation as a justifying statement (γὰρ) to define clearly the intent of his dressed up / undressed imagery. The image of walking in περιπατοῦμεν was a very common first century Greek expression for living out one's life. It simply defines ἐνδημοῦντες ἐν τῷ σώματι from v. 6. And οὐ διὰ εἶδους, not by sight, defines ἐκδημοῦμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ κυρίου.¹⁶ What is it that

ment: *Based on Semantic Domains* (New York: United Bible Societies, 1996), 305.]

¹⁶“But to get a complete idea of what Paul means by 5:7 is difficult because his use of εἶδος, ‘sight,’ is debated. The question centers upon whether εἶδος is to be given an active (‘sight’) or passive (‘being seen’) meaning. G. Kittel⁵⁵⁹ argues that εἶδος is not to be understood in the active sense (cf. LSJ); thus διὰ εἶδους means ‘on the basis of what is seen.’⁵⁶⁰ Kittel then interprets 5:7 as suggesting that the believer is controlled not by the things he cannot see but by the faith that they do exist (we walk by faith, not by the appearance of things). However, Lietzmann and Kümmel⁵⁶¹ point out that εἶδος can have an active sense (Num 12:8 LXX), and thus 5:7 emphasizes that faith in Christ is the determining factor in the Christian's life even though he remains invisible.⁵⁶² In terms of context, Paul probably meant the latter, for to evaluate εἶδος in a passive sense (‘being seen’), as understood by Kittel, loses Paul's use of it as an

Paul does not see while living out his life on earth? Of course, it is the Lord. His vision of the risen Christ on the Damascus road was a momentary experience, rather than an ongoing one. But by means of his πίστεως, faith surrender, the apostle sensed the ongoing presence of the risen Christ in his daily living.

Thus it is while in this life on earth that Paul lives in courageous confidence. His faith then became the channel of courageous confidence as he repeats in θαρροῦμεν δὲ, and we are confident... (v. 7; # 90). This time θαρρέω is linked up to εὐδοκοῦμεν μᾶλλον, we desire rather.... Here the apostle expresses his preference to be in Heaven with Christ rather than still in this physical life on earth. Once again the imagery of being dressed up / undressed is used but in reverse meaning to that in v. 6 and along similar lines to its meaning in vv. 2-4. His preference is defined by two Aorist infinitives as complement objects of εὐδοκοῦμεν: ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος καὶ ἐνδημῆσαι πρὸς τὸν κύριον, to be undressed from the body and to be dressed up before the Lord. That is, he much prefers to leave behind the physical life with all its limitations and to stand dressed up before the Lord in his heavenly garments.

What prompts the apostle to utilize the images of a tent vs. a permanent home and being undressed and dressed up? Is he targeting the ‘knowledgers’ (cf. 1 Cor. 5:12 et als) who depended upon ecstatic experience as the source of their understanding of the Christian experience? If so, then the apostle is asserting that living the Christian life and understanding it comes out of one's faith commitment to Christ and not from outward ecstatic experience (1 Cor. 12:12). His statement in 4:18 seems to point this direction: μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα, we do not focus on the things that can be seen, but rather on those that cannot be seen. Clearly this focus on faith by Paul and his associates distinguished them from many in Corinth who were centered on the outward and showy expressions of religion.

In contrast to this outward focus of ecstatic seeing, Paul asserts that his approach centers in one guiding principle: εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, to be pleasing to Him. The issue here goes beyond a concern for salvation. To the

antithesis to faith. The parenthesis (5:7) has been inserted to correct any misunderstanding presented in 5:6. The faith of the Christian overcomes the problem set by the invisibility of the Lord. To be away from the Lord is not to be out of communion with him. Rather, our walk with him in fellowship, though not yet perfected, is possible because of faith.⁵⁶³ Barrett⁵⁶⁴ argues that the passive sense of εἶδος, ‘being seen,’ could also mean ‘we live by believing in the absent and invisible Christ, not by looking at visible forms.’ If this is true, then regardless of our choice as to the meaning of εἶδος, the emphasis of 5:7 centers on faith in Christ as possible.” [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 266–267.]

Lord who so generously had blessed the apostle the driving passion then became pleasing this Lord in every aspect of one's life. The use of *καὶ φιλοτιμούμεθα, we indeed make it our aim...* puts highest priority upon the objective expressed in the infinitive object *εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι*. The inferential conjunction *διὸ* introduces this statement (# 92; v. 9) as being implicit in what he has claimed in vv. 1-8 and especially in vv. 6-7. Thus whatever location we find ourselves in *εἴτε ἐνδημοῦντες εἴτε ἐκδημοῦντες, whether dressed up or undressed,*¹⁷ the objective remains the same: *εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι*. That is, whether we are in this physical life or in our heavenly habitation, the aim is to be pleasing to Him.

A gigantic lesson is to be learned here. Many professing Christians are only concerned about escaping Hell in a very egocentric oriented religious stance. For Paul, however, everything is about Christ and not Paul. As the absolute center of our life, Christ is the one to be happy and satisfied with our lives. To give Him pleasure ought to be the single driving dynamic of our Christian life.

The meaning of *εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ, pleasing to Him,* is defined in part by the justifying statement (*γὰρ*) in v. 10 (# 93): *τοὺς γὰρ πάντας ἡμᾶς φανερωθῆναι δεῖ ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἵνα κομισθῆται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον, for we all must appear before the judgment seat of Christ in order to receive -- each one -- what we have done in this physical life whether good or bad.* The axiomatic nature of this declaration¹⁸ puts it as foundational to understanding the Christian life.¹⁹ All of God's people are accountable for how they live out their faith commitment to Christ.

Clearly the language here alludes to divine judgment of every person. It centers on each believer appearing *ἔμπροσθεν τοῦ βήματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, before the judgment seat of Christ.*²⁰ Interestingly in Rom. 14:10c

¹⁷He uses the dressed up / undressed imagery this time without defining which one means this world and which one means Heaven. The point here is to stress inclusiveness of both existences.

¹⁸This is clearly signaled by both the inclusive *τοὺς πάντας ἡμᾶς, we all,* and by the individualized *ἕκαστος, each one.*

¹⁹"In 4:16a, Paul is still speaking without doubt about his own apostolic attitude; yet by the time he gets to 5:10 ('we ... all') he most probably points to all Christians. It would be rather unwise to hold that this change took place no earlier than v. 10. One has the impression that Paul has been broadening his horizon, perhaps beginning already in 4:16b. This is due partly to the density or importance of the refection. Considerations about the eschatological future concern all Christians. There should, however, be no misunderstanding: in v. 10 a general, universal judgment (cf. Rom 2:6-11) is not meant, only that of Christians." [Daniel J. Harrington, *Second Corinthians*, ed. Daniel J. Harrington, vol. 8, Sacra Pagina Series (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 86.]

²⁰ "CL In secular Gk. *bēma* is used in the sense of step or stride, as in walking (Pindar, Aeschylus). It has also the associative connotation of a pace as a unit of measure. The word is also used as a platform for a public speaker and, in legal contexts, it denotes



the place where litigants stood for trial (Demosthenes, Aeschines).

^{20T} In the LXX *bēma* stands for two Heb. words *midrāk* and *miḡdāl*. The word *midrāk*, from the root *dārak* (tread), denotes the area covered by placing down the foot, hence a footbreadth. It occurs only in Deut. 2:5 where it is used in the sense of a unit of measure. In this context the Lord affirmed to Moses that he would not allow the people of Israel to take any of the territory belonging to the descendants of Esau, 'not so much as for the sole of the foot to tread on.' A somewhat similar expression utilizes the word *māqim* (place) rather than *midrāk* (Deut. 11:24; Jos. 1:3). In this latter expression the emphasis is more geographical and the concept of space or area is minimized. The word *miḡdāl*, from the root *gādāl* (grow up, become great) chiefly denotes a tower, but is used in Neh. 8:4 of a wooden platform on which Ezra stood to read from the book of the law. The word is used in the same sense in the parallel passage in 1 Esd. 9:42. In Sir. 19:30 *bēma* occurs in the plur. (but in the v. l. S2 *bēma podos* in the sing.) in the sense of the steps of a man, i.e. his manner of walking which reveals his character. Eth. Enoch 62:3, 5 depicts the Son of man judging the mighty on his throne.

^{21NT} In the NT *bēma* occurs once in the sense of step as a unit of measure (Acts 7:5). It is found in the expression *bēma podos* ('a foot's length' RSV), i.e. a small area. The usage is similar to the Heb. expression in Deut. 2:5.

"The word is used most frequently in the NT of the platform or *dais* on which was placed a seat for an official. The *bēma* was the platform from which orations were made (Acts 12:21) as well as the place where civil officials held session to hear certain legal cases and render judgment in such cases (Matt. 27:19; Jn. 19:13; Acts 18:12, 16f.; 25:6, 10, 17). Thus Jesus was brought before the *bēma* of Pilate (cf. A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Society and Roman Law in the New Testament*, 1962, 24 ff.), and the Jews at Corinth accused Paul before the tribunal of the Proconsul Gallio who drove them out, but ignored the beating of Sosthenes. The remains of a public rostrum still stand among the ruins of Corinth (cf. O. Broneer, "Corinth: Center of Paul's Missionary Work in Greece", *BA* 14, 1951, 91 f.). Later Paul appeared before the *bēma* of Festus at Caesarea.

"The word was twice used by Paul in his letters of the judgment seat. Rom. 14:10 speaks of 'the judgment seat of God,' and the following verse cites Isa. 45:23 as confirmation that all men will appear before it (cf. also Phil. 2:10f.). 2 Cor. 5:10 speaks of 'the judgment seat of Christ', drawing attention to the fact that Christ will be the judge of all men (cf. Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46). In Rom. 14:10ff. the emphasis is on the role of the litigant before the *bēma*: 'So each of us shall give account of himself to God.' In 2 Cor. 5:10 the emphasis falls on the judgment rendered: 'So that each one may receive good or evil, according to what he has done in the body.' Both passages draw attention to the reversal of roles: Jesus who

Paul speaks of this as πάντες γὰρ παραστησόμεθα τῷ βήματι τοῦ θεοῦ, **for we all will be presented to the judgment seat of God.**

That believers will be evaluated as to the quality of their obedience growing out of their faith commitment is a basic teaching of the apostle Paul. In 1 Cor. 4:5, the apostle had described this judgment in slightly different terms: ὥστε μὴ πρὸ καιροῦ τι κρίνετε ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ ὁ κύριος, ὃς καὶ φωτίσει τὰ κρυπτὰ τοῦ σκότους καὶ φανερώσει τὰς βουλὰς τῶν καρδιῶν· καὶ τότε ὁ ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἐκάστῳ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ. **Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive commendation from God.** The second coming of Christ means a public disclosure of every aspect of the life of every person. And it begins with examining the motivations that stand behind every word and deed.

And this is not an exclusively Pauline teaching. Jesus stressed similar themes in Matt. 16:27 and 25:31-46 with an emphasis upon every single person standing before God in judgment. The Kingdom entrance sayings of Jesus likewise stress judgment based upon the actions and words of individuals as a reflection of the condition of their inward life: e.g., Matt. 7:21-23, 24-27, along with 5:20; 19:17.

In Paul's statement here in v. 10 the goal or intention of this appearance before the judgment seat is expressed as ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος τὰ διὰ τοῦ σώματος πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξεν, εἴτε ἀγαθὸν εἴτε φαῦλον, **so that each person may receive recompense for the things through the body, for what he has done, whether good or bad.**²¹ Both a positive evaluation and a negative evaluation are put **on the table.**²² **This follows what he had said earlier to** (like his apostle) appeared before the judgment seat of men and suffered unjust judgment will one day sit in righteous judgment over unjust men. But Paul reminds his readers that believers are not exempt from this scrutiny and judgment. Even though reconciled (cf. 2 Cor. 5:20f.) and justified (Rom. 5:1; 8:1), they still have to give account and have their work tested (cf. 1 Cor. 3:13ff.)."

[T. McComiskey, "Bῆμα," ed. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther, and Hans Bietenhard, *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986), 369-370.]

²¹"The words 'through the body' apparently go with the words according to what he has done and not with the words one may receive. The sense is that people will be judged according to the things that they did while living here on earth, that is, in the body." [Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 95.]

²²One should take note of the use of the singular number here ἕκαστος, each one, along with ἀγαθὸν, good, and φαῦλον, bad. What is highly questionable is to see this as indicating a comprehensive view of one's life rather than a compilation of individual actions. Some commentators find this through the singular number usage, but the counter balance is the plural τὰ and ἃ that clearly reference individual actions being weighed in divine judgment.

the Corinthians in 1 Cor. 3:10-15. Note especially vv. 12-15,

12 εἰ δέ τις ἐποικοδομεῖ ἐπὶ τὸν θεμέλιον χρυσόν, ἄργυρον, λίθους τιμίους, ξύλα, χόρτον, καλάμην, 13 ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον φανερόν γενήσεται, ἡ γὰρ ἡμέρα δηλώσει, ὅτι ἐν πυρὶ ἀποκαλύπτεται· καὶ ἐκάστου τὸ ἔργον ὁποῖόν ἐστιν τὸ πῦρ [αὐτό] δοκιμάσει. 14 εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον μενεῖ ὁ ἐποικοδόμησεν, μισθὸν λήμψεται· 15 εἴ τινος τὸ ἔργον κατακαήσεται, ζημιωθήσεται, αὐτὸς δὲ σωθήσεται, οὕτως δὲ ὡς διὰ πυρός.

12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— 13 the work of each builder will become visible, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. 14 If what has been built on the foundation survives, the builder will receive a reward. 15 If the work is burned up, the builder will suffer loss; the builder will be saved, but only as through fire.

This is consistent with Jesus' words in Matt. 16:27, μέλλει γὰρ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἔρχεσθαι ἐν τῇ δόξῃ τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ μετὰ τῶν ἀγγέλων αὐτοῦ, καὶ τότε ἀποδώσει ἐκάστῳ κατὰ τὴν πρᾶξιν αὐτοῦ, **For the Son of Man is to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay everyone for what has been done.** One must never forget the Jewish heritage behind these words. What one says and does marks what's on the inside of him more than anything else. Empty claims to loving God only increase divine displeasure on judgment day. What we claim must be demonstrated in what we do day in and day out.

Paul makes his view clear in both First and Second Corinthians that the judgment of believers is not to determine eternal destiny. That has already been settled. But divine praise and/or displeasure will surface at our being judged. Both here and in Col. 3:25,²³ Paul uses κομίζω to speak of the divine response to being judged. But he does not spell out exactly what this is either the positive or the negative aspects.²⁴ Neither

What really matters is that our Christian life is being divinely scrutinized in great detail. Jesus made a similar point in Matt. 12:36, λέγω δὲ ὑμῖν ὅτι πᾶν ῥῆμα ἄργον ὃ λαλήσουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἀποδώσουσιν περὶ αὐτοῦ λόγον ἐν ἡμέρᾳ κρίσεως, **I tell you, on the day of judgment you will have to give an account for every careless word you utter.**

²³Col. 3:23-25. 23 ὁ εἰς τὸν κύριον ἐργάζεσθε ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώποις, 24 εἰδότες ὅτι ἀπὸ κυρίου ἀπολήμψεσθε τὴν ἀνταπόδοσιν τῆς κληρονομίας. τῷ κυρίῳ Χριστῷ δουλεύετε· 25 ὁ γὰρ ἀδικῶν κομίζεται ὃ ἠδίκησεν, καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν προσωποληψία.

23 Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters, 24 since you know that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward; you serve the Lord Christ. 25 For the wrongdoer will be paid back for whatever wrong has been done, and there is no partiality.

²⁴The personal character of the retributive process and the fact that recompense might be received for good as well as for bad

does he indicate the point when this will take place, although commentator misguided preoccupation with the resurrection body blows this question up unnecessarily.²⁵ But this language is consistent with the larger NT teaching of different levels of blessing in Heaven and different degrees of punishment in Hell. Given the intensely confident tone of this larger passage, Paul's main point was the expectation of divine praise from God upon having his earthly life examined on judgment day. That was his hope for the Corinthians as well.

The ongoing truth here for modern Christians is to never take advantage of divine grace. God has mercifully saved us from our sins and made us Heaven bound as His people. But that same God maintains very high expectations upon us to live in faithful obedience and unconditional surrender to Him. And He holds us accountable as will be expressed on judgment day when we give an accounting of ourselves to Him. We don't serve in order to gain praise. But our devotion to our Lord should put us with Paul in saying φιλοτιμούμεθα... εὐάρεστοι αὐτῷ εἶναι, *we make it our highest aim ... to be pleasing to Him* (v. 9).

actions prove that, in Paul's thought, the notions of recompense and reward are not incompatible.²⁴³ Reward may be recompense for good; the 'suffering of loss' (ζημιωθήσεται, 1 Cor. 3:15), the forfeiture of reward or privilege, may be part of the requital for evil.²⁴⁴ Whatever else may be involved in the Christian's μισθός,²⁴⁵ an essential element in it is God's ἔπιαιος (1 Cor. 4:5; cf. εὐάρεστοι, 2 Cor. 5:9; τιμή, Rom. 2:10) and δόξα (2 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 8:17-18), which may be given or withheld, and given in varying measure. If, in 1 Cor. 4:5, Christ is the assessor of evidence and God the executor of judgment, in 2 Cor. 5:10 both roles are fulfilled by Christ. In Pauline thought it is sometimes Christ,²⁴⁶ sometimes God,²⁴⁷ and sometimes God through Christ²⁴⁸ who exercises judgment upon humans.²⁴⁹ [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 408.]

²⁵⁴“When would the φανερωθῆναι occur? By some it has been referred to a so-called ‘particular judgment’ occurring after the death of each individual;²⁵² by others, to a judgment which takes place at or after the parousia.²⁵³ V. 10 clearly implies that the requital is made immediately after the φανερωθῆναι, but Paul does not specifically relate this φανερωθῆναι to the time of the receipt of the spiritual body (v. 1), to the time of the εὐρεθῆσθαι (v. 3), or to the moment of departure from earthly existence (v. 8). While ἕκαστος means ‘each individually,’ it need not imply ‘each in his turn, at death’ as opposed to ‘each, separately, at the parousia.’ Nor does Paul's desire to gain Christ's approval when ἐκδημῶν [ἐκ τοῦ σώματος] (v. 9), that is, at the βῆμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, necessarily associate the φανερωθῆναι with the ἐκδημῆσαι ἐκ τοῦ σώματος (v. 8) which occurs at death. The issue, it seems, cannot be finally decided. But in comparison with the supreme and sobering fact of his accountability to Christ, the precise time of the φανερωθῆναι would have been a matter of relative insignificance to Paul.” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 409.]

10.2.3.1.8 Ministry as reconciliation, 5:11-6:13

In this section two perspectives are presented around the central topic of καταλλαγῆ, *reconciliation*, or the restoring of broken relationships. In 5:11-21, Paul presents the preaching of Christ as the basis of such restoration, and in 6:1-13, he stresses his intensive efforts to not in any way create a stumbling block to that message. Connected to this is his concern that the strained relationship with the Corinthian church could become a stumbling block to that message to the lost at Corinth. He is doing his part to keep it from such and appeals to the Corinthians to do their part also.

10.2.3.1.8.1 Persuading others, 5:11-21

11 Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν, θεῷ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα· ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι. 12 οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν ἀλλ’ ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ καυχωμένους καὶ μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ. 13 εἴτε γὰρ ἐξέστημεν, θεῷ· εἴτε σωφρονοῦμεν, ὑμῖν. 14 ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἶς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον· 15 καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι.

16 Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν. 17 ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινὰ. 18 τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, 19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς. 20 Ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι’ ἡμῶν· δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. 21 τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

11 Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. 12 We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. 13 For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. 14 For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. 15 And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a

human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. 17 old has passed away; see, everything has become new! 18 So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through

5.11 οὖν
Εἰδότες τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου
94 ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν,
δὲ
95 θεῷ πεφανερῶμεθα·
δὲ
καὶ
ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν
96 ἐλπίζω... πεφανερῶσθαι.

5.12 οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν
ἀλλ'
98 (ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν)
ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν
καυχήματος
ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν,
ἵνα ἔχητε
πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ καυχωμένους
καὶ
μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ.

5.13 γὰρ
εἴτε ἐξέστημεν,
99 (ἐστίν) θεῷ·
εἴτε σωφρονοῦμεν,
100 (ἐστίν) ὑμῖν.

5.14 γὰρ
101 ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς,
κρίναντας τοῦτο,
ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν,
ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον·

5.15 καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν,
/---|
ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν
ἀλλὰ
ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν
(ζῶσιν) τῷ...ἀποθανόντι
καὶ
ἐγερθέντι.

5.16 Ὡστε
ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν
102 ἡμεῖς...οὐδένα οἶδαμεν
κατὰ σάρκα·
εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν,
ἀλλὰ
103 νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκουμεν.

5.17 ὥστε
εἰ τις ἐν Χριστῷ,
104 (ἐστίν) καινὴ κτίσις·
105 τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν,
ἰδοὺ
106 γέγονεν καινά.

5.18	δὲ	
107	(ἐστίν) τὰ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ	τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ
		διὰ Χριστοῦ
		καὶ
		--- δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν
		τῆς καταλλαγῆς,
5.19	ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ,	
	μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν	
	καὶ	
	θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.	
5.20	οὖν	
108	ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ πρεσβεύομεν	ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος
		δι' ἡμῶν·
109	δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ,	
110	καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.	
111 ^{5.21}	τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν,	ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ
		ἐν αὐτῷ.

Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. 20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

As becomes visibly clear from the block diagram below, this pericope divides itself into two basic sections. First, vv. 11-15 centers on Paul and the Corinthians with Christ as the linking presence between them. The conjunction ὡστε in vv. 16 and 17 draws two conclusions in vv. 16-19 from the above unit. The inferential conjunction οὖν in v. 20 introduces what is implicit in vv. 16-19.

The general theme of καταλλαγῆ, *reconciliation*, pulls these statements together. People can be reconciled to God (# 110) and also to one another (# 98). But only in the Christ who died for them and was raised from the dead. It is the powerful dynamic of ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ, *Christ's love*, that propels the apostle and his associates in ministry. The apostle utilizes several axiomatic principles, especially statement #s 104-107, from the Gospel to make his appeal to the Corinthians.

In vv. 11-15, he appeals to the Corinthians to reach out to him in a positive manner. One should note the role of the inferential conjunction οὖν that ties vv. 11-15 back to vv. 1-10 and especially to the v. 10 theme of final judgment. What he says in vv. 11-15 is implicit in what is contained in vv. 1-10. The sentence prefield position of the causal participle phrase Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου, *therefore knowing the fear of the Lord*, highlights

this linkage even further. The objective genitive role of τοῦ κυρίου conveys the sense of 'because we hugely respect the Lord.' His perception of the awesomeness of Christ stood as a motivating dynamic pushing him to encourage others to Christ: ἀνθρώπους πειθομεν (#94). This present tense of πειθω underscores ongoing actions of appealing to the principle of Christ in efforts to convince others to commit themselves to Him.²⁶ But additionally he is motivated by his respect

²⁶ *persuade, appeal to*, also in an unfavorable sense *cajole, mislead* (so TestDan 1:8; ApcMos 21; Jos., C. Ap. 2, 201) τινά someone ἀνθρώπους (Ael. Aristid. 34, 19 K.=50 p. 552 D.) **2 Cor 5:11**; perh. also **Gal 1:10** (but s. c below). Cp. MPol 3:1; 8:2, 3, τινά w. inf. foll. (X., An. 1, 3, 19; Polyb. 4, 64, 2; Diod S 12, 39, 2; 17, 15, 5; Herodian 2, 4, 2; Jos., Ant. 8, 256; Just., A II 2, 10, D. 112, 3; Tat. 21, 3) Ac 13:43; MPol 4; 5:1. ἐπειθεν (sc. αὐτὸν) ἀρνεῖσθαι *he tried to induce him to deny* 9:2. Perh. this is the place for the textually uncertain pass. **Ac 26:28** ἐν ὀλίγῳ με πείθεις Χριστιανὸν ποιῆσαι *you lose no time trying to make me play the Christian* (cp. the tr. in Beginn. IV 322, w. ref. to 3 Km 20:7 and patristic authors cited in Soph., Lex. s.v. ποιέω 3; s. also Lampe s.v. ποιέω C). Because of apparent misunderstanding of the idiom, this wording is simplified in a widespread v.l. in which ποιῆσαι is replaced with γενέσθαι *in a short time you are persuading (or trying to persuade) me to become a Christian* (cp. Jos., Vi. 151 πρὸς ὀλίγον ἐπειθοντο='they were nearly persuaded'), prob. meant ironically. Bauer considered it prob. that the rdg. of the text be understood as a combination of the two expressions 'in a short time you are persuading me to become a Christian' and 'in a short time you will make me a Christian', so that the sense is someth. like you are in a hurry to persuade me and make a Christian of me (so Goodsp, Probs. 137f [but it is not clear whether "make" here is to be understood in the sense 'play the part of']. S. the lit. s.v. ὀλίγος 2bβ and under 3a below, also AFridrichsen, SymbOsl 14, '35, 49-52, ConNeot 3, '39, 13-16 [w. ref. to X., Mem. 1, 2, 49; cp. PBenoit, RB 53, '46, 303]; DHesseling, Neophilol 20, '37, 129-34; JHarry,

for Christ to be completely transparent to God: θεῶ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα (#95). Here the perfect tense passive voice form of φανερώ stresses being absolutely clear in the eyes of God. Nothing is hidden or covered up before Almighty God. Although this is ultimately due to who God is, Paul's emphasis here is upon a deliberate intention by his associates and himself to willingly open up themselves to God's full inspection. Their ministry and including motivations are known completely by God.

This leads to his appeal to the Corinthians: ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι, *And I also trust that they are clear to your consciences* (# 96). The sense here is an appeal that the Corinthians, in their ability to make decisions properly, will see the full transparency of Paul and his associates to the same level that God does. The volitional side of human existence is the point of the use of συνείδησις, i.e., the capacity to properly evaluate and draw conclusions.²⁷ The appeal is to the assumed ability of his Corinthian readers to properly evaluate his ministry and then draw the same conclusions about it that God does. The modern western idea of conscience is alien to Paul and the first century Greco-Roman world. Here for Paul is real confidence that an honest appraisal of his ministry will lead to the positive conclusion that it indeed is guided and blessed by Christ. In v. 10, Paul is convinced this will come to light on the day of judgment. He expects the Corinthians to be able to see it now.

In v. 12, amplification is given in reassurance that he is not bragging or boasting about himself as evidently some of those opposing him did about their work: οὐ πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνομεν ὑμῖν, *we are not commending ourselves again to you*. The present tense verb συνιστάνομεν from συνιστάνω / συνίστημι has the literal meaning of *to put together*. Here as a transitive verb with the direct object ἑαυτοὺς the sense becomes that of commending oneself in inappropriate self-commendation. This Paul insists is not what he and his associates were seeking to do. With his frequent use of συνιστάνω in Second Corinthians -- 3:1; 4:2; 5:12; 6:4; 10:12, 18 (2x); 12:11 -- the background issue was such self-commendation of Paul's opponents to the various house church groups at Corinth. The earlier use in 3:1 makes this picture clear: Ἀρχόμεθα πάλιν ἑαυτοὺς συνιστάνειν; ἢ μὴ χρῆζομεν ὡς τινες συστατικῶν ἐπιστολῶν πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἢ ἐξ

ATR 28, '46, 135 f; EHaenchen ad loc.). Instead of the inf. we have ἵνα (Plut., Mor. 181a πειθόμεν ἵνα μείνη) **Mt 27:20** (B-D-F §392, 1e; Rob. 993)." [William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 791.]

²⁷For an in-depth analysis of συνείδησις in the first century world see my "*The Western Introspective Conscience: A Biblical Perspective on Decision Making*," at [volume 37](#) of the **Biblical Insights Commentary** series in [cranfordville.com](#).

ὑμῶν; *Are we beginning to commend ourselves again? Surely we do not need, as some do, letters of recommendation to you or from you, do we?* In 4:2, the sense is of putting oneself before another for examination: συνιστάνοντες ἑαυτοὺς πρὸς πᾶσαν συνείδησιν ἀνθρώπων, *commending ourselves to every conscience of men*.

Instead, Paul presents himself in full disclosure in order to give the Corinthians a basis for answering criticisms being leveled at him and his associates: ἀλλ' ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, ἵνα ἔχητε πρὸς τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ καυχωμένους καὶ μὴ ἐν καρδίᾳ. *but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart* (v. 12). Perhaps there lay in the background the Aristotelean glorification of the physical body on the part of τοὺς ἐν προσώπῳ καυχωμένους, *those boasting in appearance*.²⁸ But the emphasis could very well have been imperial in orientation. That is, reality centered on the material that could be touched, seen, smelled, tasted, heard etc. For them religion was an outward display of piety that others could easily spot.

Paul had experienced the phoniness of this while a Pharisee in Judaism and knew out of his encounter with the risen Christ that the bottom line of authentic religion is what is on the inside, ἐν καρδίᾳ, of a person. It is out of the quality of spiritual life inwardly that authentic outward expression of true commitment to Christ emerges, just as Jesus had stressed in His Sermon on the Mount (cf. Matt. 5-7). Thus contextually some par-

²⁸"Their pride was constantly focused (τοὺς ... καυχωμένους) on what was external, what caught the eye, what was clearly demonstrable, not on what was inward, what was not outwardly evident or fully provable. The ἐν προσώπῳ ... ἐν καρδίᾳ antithesis does not describe manner, "openly ... secretly," but the object, and by implication the ground, of the καυχᾶσθαι,²⁹ 'those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart' (NRSV) (cf. Rom. 2:28-29). Because πρόσωπον usually denotes the 'face' or 'outward appearance,' it has been suggested that ἐν προσώπῳ refers to what may be expressed on the face,³⁰ such as piety or zeal, especially during religious ecstasy (cf. ἐξέστημεν, v. 13). But it is preferable to take πρόσωπον as a metonym for 'what is outward,' 'externals,' and καρδιά as standing for 'what is inward,' the 'character.' On this understanding, πρόσωπον corresponds to τὰ βλεπόμενα (4:18) and κατὰ σάρκα (5:16; 11:18),³¹ while καρδιά matches τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα (4:18) and κατὰ κύριον (11:17). The contrast is between 'externals' and 'inward reality' (Moffatt).³² Apparently Paul's rivals at Corinth were making superficial claims to superiority over him — such as their relation to the Jesus of history (5:16) and to Palestinian orthodoxy (11:22) or their greater number of visions and revelations (cf. 12:1-7). Paul was content to take his stand on what was 'in the heart' — transparency before God and people and the testimony of the conscience (v. 11b). For the Christian superficial appearances count for nothing, the state of the heart is everything." [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 416-417.]

allels emerge here:

ἐν προσώπῳ (v. 12) equals τὰ βλεπόμενα (4:18)

ἐν καρδίᾳ (v. 12) equals τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα (4:18)

The noun καυχήματος and the verbal καυχωμένους are both translated 'boasting' but the idea is far deeper than mere verbal bragging. At its core is an inward experience and conviction of something immensely satisfying that the individual may or may not talk about openly. The apostle deeply sought to convince the Corinthians that true devotion to God must be centered in the inner life of the individual which then will radiate outwardly in actions, words, and behavior. His life exemplified this principle and he wanted them to understand this clearly and with conviction. Then when the religious 'show-offs' bragged about their piety, the Corinthians would not only recognize the falseness of this display of religiosity but could counter it with assertions of what true piety meant and how it actually worked. Thus Paul invited the Corinthians to scrutinize his life and ministry in order to discover this authenticity in him for themselves.²⁹ They would be 'better armed' to defend the apostolic Gospel against the perverters of it with their phony piety approach. The elliptical ἀφορμὴν διδόντες ὑμῖν καυχήματος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν, *giving you a basis for boasting about us*, highlights the tension still present at Corinth between Paul's supporters and detractors. The opponents made the easy choice to what could be supposedly seen about piety as 'spiritual.' But this was highly deceptive and dangerous. Authentic spirituality must begin from inside the person with sincere commitment to Christ. It then comes to the surface in clear ways that focus on ministry and service to others, rather than by a series of seemingly religious acts. Paul was exemplifying this to them along with teaching them the religious basis of it in the apostolic Gospel.

In vv. 13-15 (#s 99-101 in the above diagram), the causal conjunction γὰρ sets forth a series of justifying declarations as the foundation for Paul's claim in vv. 11-12. The twin assertions in v. 13 (#s 99-100), reflect the apostle's hesitancy to engage in claiming superiority over these opponents: εἶτε γὰρ ἐξέστημεν, θεῷ· εἶτε σωφρονοῦμεν, ὑμῖν, *For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you*. What he says here does not reflect any kind of post enlightenment pattern of thinking and thus is not easy to understand beyond a surface level.³⁰ Evidently some irony

²⁹Phony outward religion is never made transparent by its practitioner. To the opposite, outward religion carefully controls its image to others so that they see only what the practitioner wants them to see. Authentic piety says to others, "Look at me inside and out so that you can determine that sincere commitment to Christ permeates my entire life inside and out."

³⁰Paul continues his rejoinder against those who question his sincerity of motive.⁶⁶⁹ On the surface, it comes into view that no matter the state of Paul's mind or disposition, he does nothing for himself; all is done for God and the Corinthians. But under the sur-

with a touch of sarcasm is expressed in the contrastive ἐξέστημεν, *we are out of our minds*, and σωφρονοῦμεν, *we are of sound minds*, verbs. To Paul's opponents his reasoning seemed irrational and totally invalid.³¹ But he was expressing how one properly relates θεῷ, *to God*. To these people he gladly appeared to be off his rocker while authentically serving God.³² But to his readers, ὑμῖν, whom he assumes know what he is talking about, this reasoning comes across a solid, correct thinking. He expects them to understand true spiritual dynamic as opposed to the phony showy religion his opponents were presenting.

The second set of justifying statements in vv. 14-15 (# 101), also introduced by γὰρ, provides amplification of the heart of the spiritual principle being advocated by

face is the mystery of what he means by ἐξίστημι, "'be out of one's mind.' The total understanding of this passage may be beyond our grasp." [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 283.]

³¹"The meaning of ἐξίστημι, 'be out of one's mind,' found here in contradistinction⁶⁷⁰ to σωφρονέω, 'be of sound mind' (mental health; BAGD), may denote a type of mental derangement (at least in the eyes of Paul's opponents).⁶⁷¹ The use of σωφρονέω in 5:13 is the only time the verb is used in the epistle, and indeed in the Pauline corpus. Usually in the rest of the NT this verb is translated 'be amazed' (Matt 12:23; Mark 2:12; Luke 8:56; Acts 2:7, 12; 8:13; 9:21; 10:45; 12:16; see the LXX of Exod 19:18; Ruth 3:8, where the verb from ἡράδ, *hārad*, 'tremble,' is rendered ἐξέστη, 'were astonished').⁶⁷² Also, the related noun ἔκστασις, 'ecstasy,' either means 'amazement' (Mark 5:42; 16:8; Luke 5:26; Acts 3:10) or is used to describe an event in which someone is 'not in his right mind' because of a vision or trance (Acts 10:10; 11:5; 22:17). Moreover, one could ask why Paul does not use μανία, 'insanity,' or μαίνομαι, 'be insane,'⁶⁷³ terms used when he was before Festus (Acts 26:24-25) to describe his 'madness.'⁶⁷⁴ Hence, this line of reasoning leads us to doubt seriously that Paul was speaking of 'mental illness,' though his opponents possibly saw his fanaticism (11:1, 16-32) as 'religious mania.'⁶⁷⁵ [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 283-284.]

³²To inject visionary ecstatic experience into this is unjustified. The exclusive use of ἐξίστημι only here in all of Paul's writings points away from some kind of ecstatic reference. That Paul was unconditionally committed to following Christ through all the sufferings he detailed earlier is the proper defining contextual framework here. His opponents were stressing outward religious actions not much unlike the patterns of activities of their pagan neighbors. No persecution would ever come from these religious actions. For his opponents general conformity to outward forms of religiosity acceptable in ancient Corinth was key to their Christian profession. For Paul to utterly reject this in favor of a deep inner transformation that then shaped the manner of one's living regardless of whether other people accepted it or not was insanity to these people. In truth, following Paul's way still produces the same mockery especially from nominal Christians in our world. But if you are a nominal Christian exegeting this text, some other explanation no matter how far fetched has to be adopted.

5.14 γὰρ
101 ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς,
κρίναντας τοῦτο,
ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν,
ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον·
5.15 καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν,
/---|
ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν
ἀλλὰ
ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν
(ζῶσιν) τῷ...ἀποθανόντι
καὶ
ἐγερθέντι.

Paul: 14 ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον· 15 καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι. 14 *For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died.* 15 *And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.* Showy religiosity totally misses this foundational truth of the apostolic Gospel.

As the block diagram (cf. below) illustrates, central to authentic spirituality is the transforming love of Christ: ἡ γὰρ ἀγάπη τοῦ Χριστοῦ συνέχει ἡμᾶς, *for Christ's love compels us.* The divine ἀγάπη is not a passive feeling but rather a forceful spiritual dynamic that pushes us powerfully forward in commitment, as the verb συνέχω defines with the literal sense of seizing hold of something and pulling it tightly together with something else. Here that love of Christ grabs hold of us and presses us hard into obedience to Christ.

What gives Christ's love such power over individuals? The lengthy participle phrase in an adverbial causal role defines this powerful dynamic as the basis for Christ's compelling power: κρίναντας τοῦτο, ὅτι εἷς ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἄρα οἱ πάντες ἀπέθανον· καὶ ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀπέθανεν, ἵνα οἱ ζῶντες μηκέτι ἑαυτοῖς ζῶσιν ἀλλὰ τῷ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν ἀποθανόντι καὶ ἐγερθέντι, *having come to this judgment that because One died for all, therefore all were dead; and He died in behalf of all, so that the living might not live any longer for themselves, but for the One who from them died and was raised.*

Two key verbs provide the core structure of the pharticiple phrase: ἀπέθανεν / ἀπέθανον / ἀπέθανεν ("died") and ζῶντες / ζῶσιν ("live"). Christ died for all humanity while all humanity was dead. The goal (ἵνα) of His dying is that those living would not longer live for themselves but instead for the One who died and was raised for them. At the heart of God's redeeming work in Christ is the liberation of a person's egotism. His self-centeredness traps him in a death trap of eternal damnation. Crucial contextually is this contention over against the egocentric focus of the showy, outward display of religion by Paul's opponents. The axom

set forth by the apostle strongly asserts that the death and resurrection of Christ has made no impact upon these kinds of religionists. Any message they spew out is nothing but a false message contrary to the apostolic Gospel. But Paul's message emerges out of a live that has been transformed away of egotism to sacrificial service to God and others. And thus reflects the truth of the apostolic Gospel.

What is core here is the transforming power of Christ's death. As he will expand in vv. 16-21, that sacrificial death of Christ cleanses us of our sinful nature and orientation, and refocuses our commitment to serving others in the power of the risen Christ present inside us. This is far more than a mere judicial action where a holy God in judgment declares us free from the penalty of our sinfulness based on the death of Christ on the cross. The work of divine grace changes us inside out into a new person. It is this powerful changing process in the cross that gives Christ the compelling dynamic drawing us to Him for commitment and a new style of living. Showing, outward focused religion completely misses this dynamic and continues in its heresy. Paul knew this was happening in Corinth and sought to correct it.

What then comes out of this powerful work of Christ? Vv. 16-19 answer this question.

16 Ὡστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα· εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν. 17 ὥστε εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά. 18 τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, 19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

16 *From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.* 17 *So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!* 18 *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation;* 19

that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

on this same principle in regard to his 'knowledge' of Christ. The concessive clause εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν, even if we indeed had known Christ from

5.16 ὥστε
 102 ἡμεῖς...οὐδένα οἶδαμεν ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν
 κατὰ σάρκα·
 εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν,
 ἀλλὰ
 103 νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν.
 5.17 ὥστε
 104 (ἐστίν) καινῇ κτίσις· εἰ τις ἐν Χριστῷ,
 105 τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν,
 ἰδοὺ
 106 γέγονεν καινά.
 5.18 δὲ
 107 (ἐστίν) τὰ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ
 τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ
 διὰ Χριστοῦ
 καὶ
 --- δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν
 τῆς καταλλαγῆς,
 5.19 ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσων ἑαυτῷ,
 μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν
 καὶ
 θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς.

a human perspective, sets up a slight possibility of having known about Christ prior to his conversion. Modern western languages provide no way to convey the nuanced meaning contained in the construction used by Paul in Koine Greek.³³ The concessive statement assumes a scenario in which some awareness of the historical Jesus existed among himself and his associates. But whatever its extent was, the understanding wasn't much and was from a purely human standpoint. No spiritual angle was present. None of them thought of Je-

The result conjunction ὥστε underscores a result of the preceding depiction, here in vv. 11-15. Put another way, what is the consequence of Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection? Vv. 16-19 describe this consequence. The repeating of ὥστε in v. 17 adds a second set of consequences to Christ's death. These two sets of depictions of consequences through ὥστε lay the groundwork for some implications that are made explicit through οὖν in vv. 20-21. The 'consequences' center on who believers are in Christ, while the implications stress ministry obligations arising out of this transformation of being in Christ depicted in vv. 16-19.

The first consequence (v. 16a; # 102) of the compelling force of Christ's love is a change in relationships and perspectives. Prior to Paul's conversion, he looked at other people purely κατὰ σάρκα, i.e., from a human perspective, rather than seeing them as spiritual entities. But coming to Christ changed all that. His perspective of others from his conversion onward has become to see them from God's perspective. The construction although using the first person plural, "we," ἡμεῖς, to highlight himself and his associates, takes on a slight axiomatic tone, implying that this should be the case for every person who comes to Christ in faith.

The second consequence (v. 16b; # 103) focuses

Jesus as anything more than another Jew. To be sure, a heretical teacher, but still just a Jewish man. Hints of this surface in Luke's narrative in Acts:

7:58b, καὶ οἱ μάρτυρες ἀπέθεντο τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν παρὰ τοὺς πόδας νεανίου καλουμένου Σαύλου, and the witnesses laid their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul.

8:1a, Σαῦλος δὲ ἦν συνευδοκῶν τῇ ἀναιρέσει αὐτοῦ. And Saul approved of their killing him.

8:3, Σαῦλος δὲ ἐλυμαίνετο τὴν ἐκκλησίαν κατὰ τοὺς οἴκους εἰσπορευόμενος, σύρων τε ἄνδρας καὶ γυναῖκας παρεδίδου εἰς φυλακὴν. But Saul was ravaging the church by entering house after house; dragging off both men and women, he committed them to prison.

9:1-2, 1 Ὁ δὲ Σαῦλος ἔτι ἐμπνέων ἀπειλῆς καὶ φόνου εἰς τοὺς μαθητὰς τοῦ κυρίου, προσελθὼν τῷ ἀρχιερεῖ 2 ἠτήσατο παρ' αὐτοῦ ἐπιστολάς εἰς Δαμασκὸν πρὸς τὰς συναγωγάς, ὅπως ἐάν τις εὑρῆ τῆς ὁδοῦ ὄντας, ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας, δεδεμένους ἀγάγῃ εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ. 1 Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem.

³³One can really tell whether a commentator knows ancient Greek or not by how this clause is interpreted.

22:4-5a, 4 ὅς ταύτην τὴν ὁδὸν ἐδίωξα ἄχρι θανάτου δεσμεύων καὶ παραδιδούς εἰς φυλακὰς ἄνδρας τε καὶ γυναῖκας, 5 ὡς καὶ ὁ ἀρχιερεὺς μαρτυρεῖ μοι καὶ πᾶν τὸ πρεσβυτέριον, 4 *I persecuted this Way up to the point of death by binding both men and women and putting them in prison, 5 as the high priest and the whole council of elders can testify about me.*

26:9-11, 9 Ἐγὼ μὲν οὖν ἔδοξα ἑμαυτῷ πρὸς τὸ ὄνομα Ἰησοῦ τοῦ Ναζωραίου δεῖν πολλὰ ἐναντία πράξαι, 10 ὃ καὶ ἐποίησα ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις, καὶ πολλοὺς τε τῶν ἁγίων ἐγὼ ἐν φυλακαῖς κατέκλεισα τὴν παρὰ τῶν ἀρχιερέων ἐξουσίαν λαβὼν ἀναιρουμένων τε αὐτῶν κατήνεγκα ψῆφον. 11 καὶ κατὰ πάσας τὰς συναγωγὰς πολλάκις τιμωρῶν αὐτοὺς ἠνάγκαζον βλασφημεῖν περισσῶς τε ἐμμαινόμενος αὐτοῖς ἐδίωκον ἕως καὶ εἰς τὰς ἔξω πόλεις. 9 *Indeed, I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things against the name of Jesus of Nazareth. 10 And that is what I did in Jerusalem; with authority received from the chief priests, I not only locked up many of the saints in prison, but I also cast my vote against them when they were being condemned to death. 11 By punishing them often in all the synagogues I tried to force them to blaspheme; and since I was so furiously enraged at them, I pursued them even to foreign cities.*

During this period the apostle learned many things about the teaching of Jesus from the Christians that he took prisoner, but this was merely information about a Jewish man claiming to have been the Messiah. Such information was simply evidence for convicting the captured Christians of treason against the Jewish nation. It was not information that Paul accepted as being correct, especially since it contradicted massively the contours of whom the Jewish Messiah was expected to be in the teaching of the Pharisees.³⁴

Not until the face to face encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus did Paul discover who Jesus really is. Luke makes this abundantly clear in his conversion narratives in Acts.³⁵ Paul likewise makes this clear in

³⁴One would reasonably assume that Paul was familiar with the messianic pretenders, such as Judas the Galilean (cf. Acts 5:36-37), Theudas et als. prior to Christ. Their efforts to liberate the Jewish people from Roman rule ended in disastrous failure and caused the death of several hundred Jews in Palestine. For more details, see the article “Josephus on the Messiah Concept,” at <http://yeshuaincontext.com/2010/11/josephus-on-the-messiah-concept/>.

³⁵**Acts 26:12-18**, 12 Ἐν οἷς πορευόμενος εἰς τὴν Δαμασκὸν μετ’ ἐξουσίας καὶ ἐπιτροπῆς τῆς τῶν ἀρχιερέων 13 ἡμέρας μέσης κατὰ τὴν ὁδὸν εἶδον, βασιλεῦ, οὐρανόθεν ὑπὲρ τὴν λαμπρότητα τοῦ ἡλίου περιλάμπαν με φῶς καὶ τοὺς σὺν ἐμοὶ πορευομένους. 14 πάντων τε καταπεσόντων ἡμῶν εἰς τὴν γῆν ἦκουσα φωνὴν λέγουσαν πρὸς με τῇ Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ· Σαοὺλ Σαοὺλ, τί με διώκεις; σκληρόν σοι πρὸς κέντρα λακτίζειν. **15 ἐγὼ δὲ εἶπα· τίς εἶ, κύριε;** ὁ δὲ κύριος εἶπεν· ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὃν σὺ διώκεις. 16 ἀλλ’ ἀνάστηθι καὶ στήθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου· εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ὠφθην σοι, προχειρίσασθαι σε ὑπηρετὴν καὶ μάρτυρα ὧν τε εἶδες [με] ὧν τε ὀφθῆσομαί σοι, 17 ἐξαιρούμενός σε ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰς οὓς ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω σε 18 ἀνοῖξαι ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν, τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκότους εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σατανᾶ

Gal. 1:15-16a, 15 Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεός] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ 16 ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, 15 *But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased 16 to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, Thus Paul’s clause here εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν carries a lot of background that is important to understand.*

But the apodosis main clause in elliptical expression is the more important declaration: *ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν, instead we no longer know (Him this way).* The obstacle of limited human perspective has been over- ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, τοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτοὺς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ κληρὸν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ.

12 “With this in mind, I was traveling to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests, 13 when at midday along the road, your Excellency, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and my companions. 14 When we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? It hurts you to kick against the goads.’ **15 I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’** The Lord answered, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. 17 I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

Compare also the parallel accounts in 22:6-11 and 9:1-9. Central is Paul’s question to the risen Jesus:

9:5-6, 5 **εἶπεν δὲ· τίς εἶ, κύριε;** ὁ δὲ· ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὃν σὺ διώκεις· 6 ἀλλ’ ἀνάστηθι καὶ εἴσελθε εἰς τὴν πόλιν καὶ λαληθήσεται σοι ὃ τί σε δεῖ ποιεῖν. 5 **He asked, “Who are you, Lord?”** The reply came, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. 6 But get up and enter the city, and you will be told what you are to do.”

22:8, 8 **ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπεκρίθην· τίς εἶ, κύριε;** εἶπέν τε πρὸς με· ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος, ὃν σὺ διώκεις. **8 I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’** Then he said to me, ‘I am Jesus of Nazareth whom you are persecuting.’

26:15-18, 15 **ἐγὼ δὲ εἶπα· τίς εἶ, κύριε;** ὁ δὲ κύριος εἶπεν· ἐγὼ εἰμι Ἰησοῦς ὃν σὺ διώκεις. 16 ἀλλ’ ἀνάστηθι καὶ στήθι ἐπὶ τοὺς πόδας σου· εἰς τοῦτο γὰρ ὠφθην σοι, προχειρίσασθαι σε ὑπηρετὴν καὶ μάρτυρα ὧν τε εἶδες [με] ὧν τε ὀφθῆσομαί σοι, 17 ἐξαιρούμενός σε ἐκ τοῦ λαοῦ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἐθνῶν εἰς οὓς ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω σε 18 ἀνοῖξαι ὀφθαλμοὺς αὐτῶν, τοῦ ἐπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκότους εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, τοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτοὺς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ κληρὸν ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ. **15 I asked, ‘Who are you, Lord?’** The Lord answered, ‘I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. 16 But get up and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to appoint you to serve and testify to the things in which you have seen me and to those in which I will appear to you. 17 I will rescue you from your people and from the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you 18 to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.’

come in conversion so that a brand new perspective takes its place. Here is a fundamental principle of the Gospel. Conversion means coming into a completely new perspective about Christ. Up to that point, knowledge of Christ is not relationship, but rather knowing information about Christ which we may accept as true or we may completely reject as false as was Paul's case. But in face to face encounter with the risen Christ our perspective shifts to a completely new understanding, for out of this encounter comes an intimate spiritual relationship with Christ.

The third consequent, introduced by the second ὥστε in v. 17 (# 104). Actually a series of consequences are set forth as axiomatic Gospel principle (#s 104-107) and are introduced as explanations of this new perspective of knowing Christ. 1) εἶ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις, *since one is in Christ, he is a new creation*.³⁶ The new perspective begins with the realization that he has been changed into a new person, radically different from the previous old person. 2) τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, *the old things have passed away*. His sinful lifestyle of self-centered passion has died along with everything connected to it. 3) ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινὰ, *indeed everything has become new*.³⁷ In an unimaginable way, his life is starting over from scratch with the divine intent to fill

³⁶The terminology employed by Paul here, καινὴ κτίσις, is the abstract noun, *new creation*. Elsewhere one discovers κτίσμα for *creation* or *creature*. Also κτίστης as *Creator*. And the verb κτίζω, I *create*. As topics 42.29-42.49 reflect in the Louw Nida Greek lexicon, this group is but one of several word sets used for creating, although mostly in reference to the material world.

³⁷2 Corinthians 5:17

WH NU γέγονεν καινά

“they have become new”

P⁴⁶ κ B C D* F G 048 0243 1739 cop Clement

RSV ESV NIV TNIV NEB REB NJB NAB NLT HCSB NET

variant/TR γέγονεν καινα τα παντα

“all things have become new”

D2 L P Ψ (075 33) Marcion according to Tertullian

KJV NKJV NRSV NASB HCSBmg NETmg

“According to WH NU, a rendering of the full passage is: ‘if anyone is in Christ he is a new creation; old things have passed away, behold they have become new.’ The variant has ‘all things’ becoming new. The variant reading could have first been created by a scribal error, due to dittography—τα and παντα occur at the beginning of the next verse. But the sequence τα δε παντα (with the δε interrupting τα and παντα) makes this unlikely. Thus, the variant reading is more likely a scribal assimilation to Rev 21:5, in which God says, ‘I make all things new.’ Marcion would have promoted the expansion because it shows the full superiority of the new covenant over the old. Whether intentional or not, both NASB and NRSV reflect TR, whereas the KJV and NKJV do so by design.”

[Philip W. Comfort, *New Testament Text and Translation Commentary: Commentary on the Variant Readings of the Ancient New Testament Manuscripts and How They Relate to the Major English Translations* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 2008), 541–542.]

it with nothing but good. 4) τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ δόντος ἡμῖν τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, *and all things come from the God who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation*. Here is the heart of Christian conversion. God has brought us back to Himself through the work of Christ so that now we are in relationship with Him. Out of this has come the divine mandate that our lives are to be centered on helping others discover this reconciliation as well.

These *new things*, καινά, have their exclusive source in God: τὰ δὲ πάντα ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ. How this happens is the amazing aspect since it comes solely from the One who reconciles us believers to Himself through Christ: τοῦ καταλλάξαντος ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῷ διὰ Χριστοῦ. Clearly this is a divine action, not possible for any human to achieve on their own. Our old self is sinfully depraved and incapable of transforming itself at the mandated level required by God's holy purity. It has to be completely shoved aside, τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, before God can do the renewing work of transformation.

The nature and content of this τὴν διακονίαν τῆς καταλλαγῆς, *ministry of reconciliation*, is defined in v. 19 by the adverbial causal clause: ὡς ὅτι θεὸς ἦν ἐν Χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσων ἑαυτῷ, μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς, *in that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, by not counting against them their transgressions and by entrusting to us the message of reconciliation*. The ability of God to erase τὰ ἀρχαῖα, *the old things*, and begin creating *the new things*, καινά, depends upon the work of Christ in dying and being raised to life. One major aspect is God's ability to effect this reconciliation is μὴ λογιζόμενος αὐτοῖς τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν, *by not counting against them their transgressions*. This is due to Christ bearing the penalty of humanity's transgressions in His own body through dying sacrificially on the cross.³⁸ This implies what Paul makes explicit in v. 21, τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἀμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God*.

Not only do God's people in coming to Christ experience this profound reconciliation, they also become obligated to work toward helping others experience

³⁸**First Peter 2:24-25**, 24 ὃς τὰς ἀμαρτίας ἡμῶν αὐτὸς ἀνήνεγκεν ἐν τῷ σώματι αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον, ἵνα ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ἀπογενόμενοι τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ ζήσωμεν, οὗ τῷ μῶλωπι ἰάθητε. 25 ἦτε γὰρ ὡς πρόβατα πλανώμενοι, ἀλλ' ἐπεστράφητε νῦν ἐπὶ τὸν ποιμένα καὶ ἐπίσκοπον τῶν ψυχῶν ὑμῶν.

24 *He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. 25 For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.*

this same reconciliation: *καὶ θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς, and by entrusting us with the message of reconciliation.* Of course the ‘we’ used here references Paul and his associates in the context. He wants the Corinthians to understand what stands behind the ministry these individuals have given to the Corinthians over the years since the founding of the church a few years earlier. Unlike the opponents who mostly pulled apart the community of believers, Paul’s ministry has centered on pulling them together in reconciliation with God so that the new life in Christ could develop and grow in the community.

Out of these sets of consequences in vv. 16-19 come a set of implications that are stated explicitly. The inferential conjunction οὖν, *therefore*, links up vv. 20-21 to vv. 16-19 in this manner. In a Jewish pattern rather typical of the apostle Paul, the two sets of implications are set up in informal step parallelism to the consequences:

A, #s 102-103, Paul’s knowing of others changed

B, #s 104-107, theological depiction of reconciliation

C, #s 108-109, Paul’s ministry of reconciliation to others

D, # 110, theological depiction of Christ in reconciliation

5.20	οὖν	
108	ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ πρεσβεύομεν	ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι’ ἡμῶν·
109	δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ.	
110 ^{5.21}	τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν,	ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

Thus οὖν pulls implications from the previous sets of consequences but does so in parallel sequence and connection with them.³⁹ For the ancient listeners of this text being read in the house church groups at Corinth, such made grasping and remembering the ideas much easier, as well as created a close sense of intercon-

³⁹A lot of recent discussion in commentaries sees vv. 18-21 as a piece of Christian tradition that Paul has reworked to fit into his argument here. This may be possible but the evidence for it is rather slim and only mildly persuasive. The interpretive impact of this view is that the passage thus takes on more forcefulness by picking up ideas currently being taught as a part of the apostolic Gospel by Christian leaders generally.

Yet how systematically the Gospel was taught by the mid 50s is not really known because of extremely limited evidence. The broad contours of what was taught is readily observable from the NT documents themselves which arise in the second half of the first Christian century. But specific teachings as fixed form teachings are far less clear from this database.

Now beginning in the second century the situation shifts dramatically as signaled by the writings of the apostolic fathers and documents such as *The Didache*. But the content, and particularly the orientation, of the Gospel is also undergoing profound changes away from what Jesus and the apostles taught.

nectivity of these ideas. This provides some basis for linking vv. 16-21 together as a single pericope, but the clear twofold distinction between vv. 16-19 and 20-21, defined by οὖν, argues against blurring the nature of the distinction.

20 ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι’ ἡμῶν· δεόμεθα ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ. 21 τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ.

20 So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

The core affirmations in v. 20 fall into either two or three segments (#s 108 - 109), depending upon whether καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ is taken as direct discourse or not. If so taken as seems likely here, the two elements in # 109 merge into a compound sentence structure with καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ as the direct object of δεόμεθα. The verb δεόμαι, *I ask, plead*, does function frequently in the NT as a transitive verb with a direct object. But

typically the direct object is introduced by an infinitive or the subordinate conjunction ἵνα. This use of ἵνα especially to introduce indirect discourse in the form of a polite request, which dominates the usage, is uniformly the way of petitioning God, and only rarely of requests made to other humans. The transitive use of δεόμαι with direct discourse following is limited to Acts 8:34; 21:39; Lk. 8:28 and Gal. 4:12 and follows a distinctive pattern as in Acts 21:39b: δεόμαι δέ σου, ἐπίτρεψόν μοι λαλῆσαι πρὸς τὸν λαόν, *but I beg you, permit me to speak to the people*. It loses some of its politeness and takes on a mild tone of demand. Paul’s couching of δεόμεθα with the prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, in behalf of Christ, shifts the emphasis back to the initial declaration in # 108 to the role of ambassadors for himself and his associates. But the greater forcefulness is retained.

Paul’s assertion of pleading with the Corinthians to be reconciled to God comes not from within himself or from some personal authority that he possessed. Instead, the authority behind the plea is God Himself speaking through the apostle, as v. 10a makes clear:

Ἵπὲρ Χριστοῦ οὖν πρεσβεύομεν ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν, *therefore in behalf of Christ we 'ambassadorize' as God exhorting through us.* Only Paul uses πρεσβεύω and then just here and in Eph. 6:20. The core idea is to define actions of an individual commissioned to represent some authority.⁴⁰ Usually in the secular world of that

⁴⁰ In line with the basic sense of πρέσβυς (→ 652, 10 ff.) πρεσβεύω can mean 'to be the older or the eldest' (most with gen. comp.), Soph. Oed. Col., 1422; Plat. Leg., XII, 951e etc.; 'to occupy the first place' Soph. Ant., 720 or trans. 'to honour (someone or something) very highly,' Aesch. Eum., 1; Choeph., 488; Plat. Symp., 186b etc. Then in line with the special sense of πρέσβυς for 'one who is sent' (→ 683, 18 ff.) 'to be or to act as one who is sent,' 'to bring a message,' 'to negotiate' etc. In this political-legal sense πρεσβεύω is also common in the med. (corresponding to πρεσβευτής), Hdt., Thuc., Xen., Aristoph., Plat., inscr., pap., Philo, Jos. etc. The ambassador legally represents the political authority which sends him; his competence is acc. to its constitution. Athens had πρέσβεις αὐτοκράτορες who were entrusted with some freedom of action in detail but not with full authority to conclude treaties.¹ In the Rom. period πρεσβευτής is the Gk. equivalent of *legatus*, Polyb., 35, 4. 5; Plut. Mar., 7, 1 (1, 409a), etc.² It is commonly used for the imperial legates.³ In the private sphere, too, the agent of another can be called πρεσβευτής, though not in the sense of a tt. [terminus technicus] for legally necessary or proxy representation. The one who gives the authority or commission is often introduced by ὑπέρ, e.g., Demosth. Or., 45, 64 (of a friend commissioned to negotiate): καὶ ὑπὲρ τούτου (Phormion) πρεσβευτῆς μὲν ὄχρετ' εἰς βυζάντιον πλέων, ἦνικ' ἐκεῖνοι τὰ πλοῖα τὰ τούτου κατέσχον ... For πρεσβεύω ὑπὲρ τινος cf. also Ditt. Or., I, 339, 6; Syll.3, II, 656, 19; 805, 6; P. Lond., III, 1178, 14; P. Lips., 35, 12. In a transf. sense πρεσβεύω can be used gen. with acc. rei for 'to represent something.' Epict. Diss., IV, 8, 10; Luc. Piscator, 23; Gal. De bonis et malis suis, 1, 10 (CMG, V, 4, 2, p. 391, 18), etc.

"2. An important pt. for primitive Chr. usage is that the idea of the envoy is found fig. in the religious sphere. Thus πρεσβευτής is used for God's emissaries in Philo: for angels who deliver God's message to men (Abr., 115) and who represent men before God (Gig., 16), also for the mediatorial ministry of Moses (as ἀρχάγγελος and πρεσβύτατος λόγος): ὁ δ' αὐτὸς ἰκέτης μὲν ἐστὶ τοῦ θνητοῦ κηραίνοντος ἀεὶ πρὸς τὸ ἄφθαρτον, πρεσβευτῆς δὲ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος πρὸς τὸ ὑπήκοον, Rer. Div. Her., 205. In particular the concept of the ambassador plays a dominant role in Gnostic texts to denote the heavenly origin and revelatory task of the Redeemer.⁴ though πρεσβευτής and πρεσβεύω are seldom used; cf. the Redeemer as ὁ πρεσβευτῆς ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ ὕψους ἀποσταλείς in Act. Thom., 10; ἐλθὲ ὁ πρεσβευτῆς τῶν πέντε μελῶν,⁵ ibid., 27, cf. 85. πρεσβευτής is a stock term for heavenly envoys in Manichaean texts,⁶ also for Mani himself and for those who proclaim Manichaean teaching.⁷ The wandering Stoic-Cynic teachers of the Hell. period are also shown with the halo of a messenger and herald of God, → I, 408 ff.; III, 693, 2 ff.⁸ In early Christianity, too, πρεσβευτής is used for the messenger of God. Thus Ign. Phld., 10, 1 asks the church to choose a διάκονος and to send him to Antioch εἰς τὸ πρεσβεῦσαι ἐκεῖ θεοῦ πρεσβείαν, cf. also Ign. Sm., 11, 2: χειροτονήσαι ... θεοπρεσβευτήν. The message which they have to pass on to the church in God's service is thereby said to be divinely authorised and inspired. In this usage it is everywhere evident that πρεσβευτής is not a title but denotes a specific function. This consists simply in the delivery of a divine message; there is no ref. to the other duties of an envoy (in the secular political sense), e.g., negotiation with other parties, reporting to the sending authority

day πρεσβεύω meant to communicate a message from either the emperor or high ranking officer in the Roman army. Other actions might be possible in certain situations, but dominantly the 'ambassador' was to communicate the ideas and demands of a higher authority than the ambassador himself.⁴¹ That the term is also connected to πρεσβύτερος carried subtle tones of anticipated respect being given to the ambassador as one authorized to speak for the higher authority.⁴² Paul asserts this in two ways here: 1) Ἵπὲρ Χριστοῦ and 2) ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν.⁴³ The prepositional phrase ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ, repeated again in the following assertion of v. 20b (# 109) typically denoted the one having commissioned the ambassador. That calling to Paul came directly from Christ. The ultimate authority, however, is indicated in the adverbial comparative participle phrase where Paul's speaking is seen as God urging the Corinthians rather just as Paul speaking. A deeper dynamic was present beyond just human words being spoken. For the Corinthians to reject the apostle's words meant they were rejecting what God was trying to say to them through the apostle. Although his opponents at Corinth may have viewed the issue as disagreement with the words of the man Paul, in reality the issue was a rejection of God's way for them.

The heart of the message delivered by these ambassadors of Christ to the Corinthians is summarized in the imperative καταλλάγητε τῷ θεῷ, *be reconciled to God*. Here Paul reaches back to vv. 16 in amplification of the dramatic change of perspective he experienced in his conversion. Now he saw all people as at odds with God and desperately needing to be reconciled to God. And as depicted in vv. 17-18, this becomes possible only in Christ.

How Christ becomes the vehicle of reconciliation described in vv. 17-18 is now stated in v. 21 (# 110): τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν, etc., nor to his protection or legal status.⁹⁹

[Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 6:681–682.]

⁴¹One should recognize the close affinity between πρεσβεύω as used by Paul and the much more common ἀποστέλλω. The two verbs are roughly interchangeable in Paul's usage.

⁴²πρεσβεύω is a part of the word group πρέσβυς, πρεσβύτερος, πρεσβύτης, συμπρεσβύτερος, πρεσβυτέριον, πρεσβεύω* [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 6:651.]

⁴³It would be wrong to inject issues of divine inspiration into the phrase ὡς τοῦ θεοῦ παρακαλοῦντος δι' ἡμῶν as defining the parameters of πρεσβεύομεν. What Paul claims here is divine authorization to speak the words of God as he understood them. He in no way claims to be under divine inspiration while speaking these words. The Damascus road encounter with and the calling of Christ to Paul stands in the background here.

ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. *For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.* This One who did not experience sin at all in His life (τὸν μὴ γνόντα ἁμαρτίαν) was turned into sin (ἁμαρτίαν ἐποίησεν). Paul alludes to the sacrificial death of Christ on the cross in this statement with profound insight into the meaning of Calvary. In a mysterious action Christ turned into sin on the cross as He died for us the sinner (ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν). The objective of this wonderful action is ἵνα ἡμεῖς γενώμεθα δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ. *so that we might become God's righteousness in Him.* By our own abilities we can never ever achieve the purity of God, which is essential to stand in His presence throughout eternity. But in this marvelous action of Christ on the cross not just our sins are removed but much more importantly a process is begun that Paul describes in vv. 17-18. εἴ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καινὴ κτίσις· τὰ ἀρχαῖα παρῆλθεν, ἰδοὺ γέγονεν καινά. . . *when one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old things have passed away and indeed everything has become new.* . . . How is such possible? It is because of Christ. His death on the cross enables this transformation to take place. A spiritual dynamic was expressed that day far beyond the tragic death of a geniunely good man. The sacrificial system in the Jewish temple anticipated this but few far short of achieving such a transformation. Just how all this worked stands a mystery hidden from our full understanding. But we are called upon to both experience this transforming presence of the risen Christ and then to celebrate and proclaim it to the entire world. As Paul will later put it to the Colossians, τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης τοῦ μυστηρίου τούτου ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, ὃ ἐστὶν Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν, ἡ ἐλπὶς τῆς δόξης, *the riches of the divine presence, this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the expectation of the divine presence* (Col. 1:27b).

The expression δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ is sometimes translated 'righteousness before God' but the contextual sense here clearly is that God's own character of purity is transferred into our lives as we stand in union with Christ. This is both a beginning in conversion, a process to be worked out in obedient commitment to Christ, and a glorious final transformation in the resurrection at the end of time. It is a package, not a one time event. This is packed into the verb γενώμεθα as it envisions this righteous purity of God transforming our life and our living in anticipation of standing before God as believers in final judgment (cf. 5:10).

10.2.3.1.8.2 Avoiding stumbling blocks, 6:1-13

6.1 Συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς· 2 λέγει γάρ· *καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι.*

ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας. 3 Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία, 4 ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις, 5 ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις, 6 ἐν ἀγνόητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, 7 ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὄπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, 8 διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, 9 ὡς ἀγνωστοὶ καὶ ἐπιγνωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι, 10 ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

11 Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Κορίνθιοι, ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτυνται· 12 οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε ἐν ἡμῖν, στενοχωρεῖσθε δὲ ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχχνοις ὑμῶν· 13 τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν, ὡς τέκνοις λέγω, πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς.

6.1 As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 2 For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! 3 We are putting no obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7 truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8 in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9 as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

11 We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. 12 There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. 13 In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

The syntax of this pericope is distinct and somewhat complex. The diagrams below will illustrate this clearly. Clearly the text divides itself naturally into two distinct sections, vv. 1-10 and 11-13. In the first section, the apostle develops something of a long virtue list in affirming the character and defining traits of the ministry he and his associates follow. Flowing out of the initial admonition (# 111), these stand as examples of how to allow the grace of God to flow into one's life and service to Christ. In the second set of short, pointed appeals (#s 115-119) in vv. 11-13, the apostle reaches out to the Corinthians generally in passionate urging of them

6.1 δὲ
 Συνεργοῦντες
 καὶ
111 παρακαλοῦμεν

6.2 γάρ
112 λέγει
 α **καὶ ρῶ δεκτῶ
 ἐπήκουσά σου**
 καὶ
 β **ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας
 ἐβοήθησά σοι.**

ἰδοὺ
 νῦν
113 (ἐστίν) καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος,
 ἰδοὺ
 νῦν
114 (ἐστίν) ἡμέρα σωτηρίας.

6.3 ἐν μηδενὶ
 Μηδεμίαν...διδόντες προσκοπήν,
 ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία,

6.4 ἀλλ'
 ἐν παντὶ
 συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς
 ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι,
 ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ,
 ἐν θλίψεσιν,
 ἐν ἀνάγκαις,
 ἐν στενοχωρίαις,
 6.5 ἐν πληγαῖς,
 ἐν φυλακαῖς,
 ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις,
 ἐν κόποις,
 ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις,
 ἐν νηστείαις,
 6.6 ἐν ἀγνότητι,
 ἐν γνώσει,
 ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ,
 ἐν χρηστότητι,
 ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ,
 ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ,
 6.7 ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας,
 ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ·
 διὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν,
 6.8 διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας,
 διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας·
 ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς,
 6.9 ὡς ἀγνοοῦμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι,
 ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες
 καὶ
 ἰδοὺ
115 ζῶμεν,
 ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι,
 6.10 ὡς λυπούμενοι
 δὲ
 ἀεὶ χαίροντες,

to eliminate any barriers of communication between them and his group of leaders. This would indeed mean that God's grace has taken hold of their lives and is guiding their attitudes and relationships.

With the unifying theme of reconciliation, both vertical and horizontal, this completes the larger unit of the ministry of reconciliation that begins in 5:11 and continues through 6:13. In this the apostle underscores that his and his associates' calling to ministry gives major emphasis to reconciling people to God and then inside the community of believers to one another. This latter aspect the Greek heritage of most of the Corinthians would affirm the critical value of community and its functioning in unity. Their society was comprised of small 'communities' as ἐκκλησιαί built around social, sports, religious, governmental, and other civic cores. One's identity was largely determined by participation in these groups. Through these communities came a networking that provided mutual help, encouragement, and camaraderie. Community the Corinthians understood and valued. But the very different way a Christian community was to be structured and how it was to function under God's leadership was not well understood by most of the Corinthians. Far too many wanted church to work just like the other communities they belonged to. That is, basically top down leadership, reasonably well de-

ὡς πτωχοὶ
 δὲ
 πολλοὺς πλουτίζοντες,
 ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες
 καὶ
 πάντα κατέχοντες.

fined rules and regulations governing the life of the community, and clearly defined ‘pecking orders’ for the participants. These among other patterns were the commonly accepted ways such communities operated. The Christian community tended to reverse or nullify virtually every aspect of the other communities in in first century Corinth. Adjusting to such drastic change posed big challenges to many of the Corinthian house church groups.

The idea of reconciliation loomed large over the needs of the Corinthians. At its core was respect for God as the central and exclusive authority and mutual respect toward one another as standing all on the same level of submission to God’s exclusive authority. The Platonic background to everyone having a distinct στάσις in a hugely varied tier of importance had to be ditched completely inside the Christian community. There were leaders to be sure, but the leaders were servant leaders and not bosses. Reconciliation, meaning mutual acceptance of one another as equals before God, came only through the powerful influence of divine grace operating inside the community. Paul’s appeal of the Corinthians to accept him and his associates came out of this background, and must be understood properly against it. Paul wanted no power over the Corinthians. Rather he sought their acknowledgement of the working of God’s grace in the ministry of his associates and himself. If the Corinthians could see and accept this, they could then work together harmoniously with one another in promoting the Gospel to the lost of Corinth.

10.2.3.1.8.2.1 First set of appeals, 6:1-10

6.1 Συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς· 2 λέγει γάρ·

καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου

καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι.

ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας. 3 Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ ἡ διακονία, 4 ἀλλ’ ἐν παντὶ συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις, 5 ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις, 6 ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, 7 ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὄπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, 8 διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, 9 ὡς ἀγνοοῦμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ

μὴ θανατούμενοι, 10 ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.

6.1 As we work together with him, we urge you also not to accept the grace of God in vain. 2 For he says,

“At an acceptable time I have listened to you, and on a day of salvation I have helped you.”

See, now is the acceptable time; see, now is the day of salvation! 3 We are putting no obstacle in anyone’s way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry, 4 but as servants of God we have commended ourselves in every way: through great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, 5 beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger; 6 by purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, holiness of spirit, genuine love, 7 truthful speech, and the power of God; with the weapons of righteousness for the right hand and for the left; 8 in honor and dishonor, in ill repute and good repute. We are treated as impostors, and yet are true; 9 as unknown, and yet are well known; as dying, and see—we are alive; as punished, and yet not killed; 10 as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing everything.

The anchor point of vv. 1-10 is the initial statement in v. 1 (# 111): Συνεργοῦντες δὲ καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς, *And while working together we also exhort (you) to not receive the grace of God in vain.* The participle form from συνεργέω at the beginning signals a cooperative effort in ministry. Likely the implicit partner in this work is God or Christ, as is reflected in the NRSV translation “we work together with him.” This would reach back to θεοῦ or αὐτῷ in the preceding verse of 5:21. The participle summarizes in one word the heart of ministry as depicted in vv. 16-21. This its being positioned at the beginning of the statement in v. 1 ties what Paul goes on to say with what he has just said as a κεφαλή header link between the two units of material.

Thus the admonition καὶ παρακαλοῦμεν, *we indeed urge*, represents a cooperative effort of both Paul and Christ to the Corinthians. The content is spelled out in the infinitive phrase which serves as an indirect command in this kind of construction: μὴ εἰς κενὸν τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ δέξασθαι ὑμᾶς, *to not receive in vain the grace of God.* The



double negative of μή and εἰς κενὸν sets up the idea of receiving God's grace in a way where it makes no impact upon how one lives. Probably, although not without some uncertainty, the aorist infinitive δέξασθαι implies a prior reception of God's grace in conversion. What the apostle here underscores is that God's grace is in no way passive or merely connected to conversion. To the contrary, the grace of God is a powerful, life changing spiritual dynamic that immediately goes to work changing the individual as it enters his / her life (cf. Eph. 2:8-10).⁴⁴ But the apostle is not seeing significant evidence of this happening in the lives of at least some of the Corinthians as signaled by their behavior and attitudes.⁴⁵ The life changing grace of God was being hindered by the lack of obedience to Christ at Corinth. Thus the apostle stresses that this appeal to them comes not just from him but also from God Himself. The Corinthians dare not ignore it.

The defense of this admonition in v. 1 begins in verse two with an OT scripture reference from Isa. 49:8 in the LXX:

8 οὕτως λέγει κύριος **Καιρῷ δεκτῷ ἐπήκουσά σου καὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας ἐβοήθησά σοι** καὶ ἔδωκά σε εἰς διαθήκην ἐθνῶν τοῦ καταστῆσαι τὴν γῆν καὶ κληρονομήσαι κληρονομίαν ἐρήμου,†

8 Thus says the Lord: **In a time of favor I have answered you, on a day of salvation I have helped you;** I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people, to establish the land, to apportion the desolate heritages;⁴⁶

⁴⁴The two phrases ἡ χάρις τοῦ κυρίου and ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ are relatively common expressions especially inside Second Corinthians, as reflected in most of the 18 uses of χάρις in the letter. It stands as a significant foundational theme in Paul's preaching of the apostolic Gospel.

⁴⁵"In the Pauline corpus ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ is often simply the apostle's shorthand for all the benefits of the gospel that are secured by Christ and mediated by the Spirit.²¹⁴ In this context (5:16–21) those blessings are in particular the arrival of the new order with its new attitudes and new life (5:16–17), the receipt of reconciliation with God through the forgiveness of sins (5:18–19), and the acquisition of a right standing before God (5:21). All of this is included in what Paul calls σωτηρία in 6:2. But within the wider context of the letter, 'the grace of God' will also refer to the present opportunity that the Corinthians have to become fully reconciled to Paul.²¹⁵ From this perspective 6:1 is in part a preparation for Paul's entreaty in vv. 11–13 for the Corinthians to throw their hearts wide open to him. With this said, it remains unlikely that he is equating his own ministry at Corinth with 'the grace of God,'²¹⁶ for τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ stands unqualified (contrast the same expression in 8:1); that is, he did not write τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν εἰς ὑμᾶς δι' ἡμῶν, 'God's grace shown to you by us'." [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 457–458.]

⁴⁶"Isa. 49:1–13 is the second of the four so-called 'Servant Songs'²³² in which the circumference of the term 'Israel' expands and contracts, sometimes being a corporate reference to the whole nation or to the faithful remnant within the nation, and sometimes

The apostle sees the messianic tones in this Servant Song in Isaiah 49 and uses relevant parts of it to admonish the Corinthians. The anticipated return from Babylonian exile expressed in the OT text is seen as also anticipating the salvation to be discovered in Jesus Christ as the divinely appointed Messiah. In the larger Servant Song (49:1-13) signal emerge suggesting that the use here of this messianic text was seen as foundational to Paul's own preaching of the Gospel, and in particular to the Corinthians themselves.⁴⁷

One should note that Paul does something in the Greek expression that cannot be preserved in translation. The infinitive δέξασθαι, **to receive**, plays off the same root stem for the adjective δεκτῷ, **favorable**, in the OT quote and again in the commentary expansion with the adjective εὐπρόσδεκτος, **acceptable**. The Corinthians are urged to not miss the marvelous opportunity of the grace of God, here defined in the OT reference as ἐπήκουσά σου, **I heard you**, and ἐβοήθησά σοι, **I helped you**. God's deliverance of the Israelites from Babylonian

being an individual reference to the Messiah as ideal Israel. In Isaiah 49 Yahweh's servant cannot be the nation as a whole, for 'my servant, Israel' (v. 3) has the task of restoring Israel (vv. 5–6, 8). In its original context v. 8a contains Yahweh's promise to his servant (σου ... σοι) of answered prayer and personal support 'in the time of my favor' or 'in the day of salvation,' that is, at the time of the nation's return from their Babylonian exile. In spite of being 'despised and abhorred' by the nation (v. 7), the servant would receive ready help (v. 8a) and divine vindication (vv. 7, 8b). He would ultimately be rewarded (v. 4b) by spiritual offspring (cf. 53:10) of both Jews and Gentiles (vv. 5–6)." [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 460.]

⁴⁷There are three aspects of Paul's ministry that correspond to Isa. 49:1–6.

1. his call, as one set apart before his birth (Gal. 1:15–16)
 - v. 1 "Before I was born the LORD called me"
 - v. 5 "He who formed me in the womb to be his servant"
2. his twofold mission (Acts 9:15; 22:15; 26:17):
 - to Israel
 - v. 5 "to bring Jacob back to Israel ... and gather Israel" (cf. v. 6)
 - to Gentiles
 - v. 6 "I will also make you a light for the Gentiles"
3. certain misgivings about the result of his mission (Gal. 2:2; 4:11; Phil. 2:16; 1 Thess. 3:5)
 - v. 4 "I have labored in vain, I have spent my strength for nothing and to no purpose"

"To judge from these correlations and from other citations of and allusions to the "Servant Songs" in the Pauline epistles²³³ and in sections of Acts that relate to Paul,²³⁴ Paul envisaged his ministry as a continuation of the role of the Servant of Yahweh."

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 460.]

captivity was a hugely transforming favor expressed to these people. God's deliverance in Jesus Christ, i.e., ἐν ἡμέρᾳ σωτηρίας, is an equally huge expression of His favor to sinful humanity.

Paul elaborates on this blessing of divine grace in two ways. First, in v. 2b (#s 113-114), he amplifies the extent of this blessing. Then second, in vv. 3-10 (# 115), he stresses that his ministry in no possible way sets up any obstacle causing someone to miss this enormous blessing of divine grace. And that especially includes the Corinthians.

First in v. 2b comes the amplification: ἰδοὺ νῦν καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, ἰδοὺ νῦν ἡμέρα σωτηρίας, **behold now is the opportune moment for acceptance, behold now is the day of salvation.** Primarily these two exclamations apply the OT quote to the situation of the Corinthians: ἰδοὺ νῦν...; ἰδοὺ νῦν.... The salvation provided in Christ is a huge opportunity to welcome enthusiastically, i.e., καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, the marvelous grace of God into their lives. The deliverance of God in Christ is a deliverance of one's entire life, not just the invisible spiritual side of the individual. Just as those Israelites who returned home from Babylonian captivity had the opportunity to become a transformed people, so also do those who commit themselves to Christ in conversion faith surrender.⁴⁸ Paul passionately desires all the Corinthian believers to experience this transformation and to not miss the opportunity that God's grace provides them for this.

Verses 3-10 is a single sentence in the Greek, as is illustrated above in statement 115 in the diagram, and on the right side of this page as well. The core clause is simply καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, **wow we also live**, in v. 9b. Everything before and after this core declaration modifies it in a variety of very creative ways. In the pre-position before the verb two participle phrases set up qualifications the declaration καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν **we indeed also live.**

The first participle phrase modifier Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία, also reflects creativity no possible in translation. The negative pronoun Μηδεμίαν as the first word in the phrase is an adjective modifier of προσκοπήν the last word in the core phrase thus setting up clearly defined boundaries with the translation meaning of **absolutely no obstacle.** But in the emphatic pre-position of Μηδεμίαν he can make a dramatic play off of the negative pronoun with Μηδεμίαν ἐν μηδενὶ, **absolutely no in**

⁴⁸In this mini-commentary on Isaiah 49 in v. 2b, we catch a glimpse into how Paul approached the Hebrew scriptures as an authority base for his Christian Gospel preaching. His 'application' of the OT text was not based on 'this equals that.' Instead, the hermeneutical principle was simply 'this is parallel to that.' The legitimacy of the original meaning was not denied, as usually required in the 'this equals that' approach. Rather, it was affirmed and similarities of the first event to the later second event are highlighted.

6.3 ἐν μηδενὶ
Μηδεμίαν... διδόντες προσκοπήν,
ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία,
6.4 ἀλλ'
ἐν παντὶ
συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς
ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι,
ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ,
ἐν θλίψεσιν,
ἐν ἀνάγκαις,
ἐν στενοχωρίαις,
6.5 ἐν πληγαῖς,
ἐν φυλακαῖς,
ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις,
ἐν κόποις,
ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις,
ἐν νηστείαις,
6.6 ἐν ἀγνότητι,
ἐν γνώσει,
ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ,
ἐν χρηστότητι,
ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ,
ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ,
6.7 ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας,
ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ·
διὰ τῶν ὀπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης
τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν,
6.8 διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας,
διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας·
ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς,
6.9 ὡς ἀγνοούμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι,
ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες
καὶ
ἰδοὺ
115 ζῶμεν,
ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι,
6.10 ὡς λυπούμενοι
δὲ
ἀεὶ χαίροντες,
ὡς πτωχοὶ
δὲ
πολλοὺς πλουτίζοντες,
ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες
καὶ
πάντα κατέχοντες.

the life of no one. The participle διδόντες with its direct object προσκοπήν then carries the sense of creating or generating an obstacle with these two forms of the negative pronoun, Μηδεμίαν in the accusative feminine form matching προσκοπήν as a adjective modifier and μηδενὶ as a pure pronoun in the locative masculine form.⁴⁹ The emphatic nature of the pronoun is also hard to bring out in translation as well.

The sense then becomes 'we indeed also live while generating absolutely no obstacle to anyone.' The purpose behind this is the negative ἵνα μὴ clause attached as a modifier to the participle διδόντες. The literal sense of ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία then becomes **lest our ministry**

⁴⁹The forms used here from μηδεῖς, μηδεμία, μηδέν rather than οὐδεῖς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν reflect usage with a participle since οὐδεῖς, οὐδεμία, οὐδέν are only used with indicative mood regular verbs in ancient Greek.

may become moronized. The idea is that obstacles in the way of accepting the apostolic Gospel would expose gaps or deficiencies in Paul's ministry. The reception of God's grace can be hindered severely in the preacher of that grace has inconsistencies or sinful behavior existing in his service of Gospel ministry. Paul's claim here is that absolutely none of these things exist in the ministry that he and his associates are carrying out, and in particular ministry to the Corinthians.

Now the role of this first participle phrase in this lengthy sentence becomes clear. It is an emphatic denial that he or any of his associates have compromised their Gospel ministry in any possible way, thus legitimately calling their message into question as evidently had been done by some in the Corinthian community of believers.

The second participle phrase *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς*, *presenting ourselves* (vv. 4-9a), is then qualified by numerous evidences in order to substantiate the claim made in the first participle phrase.⁵⁰ The grouping of these qualities by the use of the prepositions *ἐν*, *διὰ*, and *ὡς* helps in bundling sets of traits together in this extensive listing.⁵¹ Additionally the beginning sets play off the participle modifying phrase *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς*, *presenting ourselves*. Also the pre-position of *ἐν παντί*, in

⁵⁰“Paul's elevated style in this section should not be taken as an indication that he is using some preexistent text, whether of his own composition or borrowed (with modifications and additions) from some Stoic source. He was not incapable of lofty diction, witness 1 Cor. 13:1–13 or Rom. 8:28–39 or Col. 1:15–20. Certainly, the autobiographical touches are so particularistic in v. 5 and the polemical note so pronounced in vv. 8–10 that we may safely assume that if Paul has incorporated some existing text into his argument at this point, he himself was its composer.” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 464–466.]

⁵¹“Within 2 Corinthians there are four ‘catalogues of hardships,’ 4:8–9; 6:4b–10; 11:23b–29; 12:10.1 The ‘tribulation list’ in 6:4b–10 may be analyzed by structure or by content (see p. 465). This analysis shows that the catalogue is sophisticated from the viewpoint of structure and style. Two of the common meanings of *ἐν* and of *διὰ* with the genitive are employed (as it happens, in a chiasmic arrangement, ABBA, circumstances—means—means—circumstances). There are breaks in the repetition to avoid monotony: the qualification of the four nouns in the second set (b) of 1; the absence of a matching or antithetical phrase in 2 (a); the presence of *ἰδοῦ* and *μή* in the second element in 3 (a); the isolation of the final *ὡς ... καί* antithesis and the presence of matching accusatives. Then there are the literary flourishes of anaphora (*ἐν*, 19x; *διὰ*, 3x; *ὡς*, 7x), homoioteleuton (*-[τ]αῖς* in 1[a], *-ιας* in 2[b], *-μενοι* in 3[a], assonance and paronomasia (*δυσσημίας-εὐφημίας* in 2[b]); *ἔχοντες-κατέχοντες* in 3[c]), and chiasmus (*δόξης-ἀτιμίας-δυσσημίας-εὐφημίας* in 2[b]).” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 464.]

every way, stands as an inclusive header which is then spelled out in the series of modifiers introduced by *ἐν*, *διὰ*, and *ὡς*. Thus the content of the all inclusive claim *ἐν παντί* in front of the core participle phrase is spelled out in detail by the series of prepositional phrases (vv. 4c-9a) following the core expression *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς* as adverbial modifiers as well. This kind of pattern is very common through ancient Greek, in both the classical and the Koine forms.

The core idea of *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς* is *standing ourselves alongside points of comparison*. The literal meaning of *συνίστημι / συνιστάνω* as a transitive verb is *to stand something together with something else*. Thus the phrase *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοῦς* contextually takes on the sense of *presenting ourselves for comparison and evaluation in specific areas and aspects of our living*.

In these specific evidences, another organizing feature clear in the Greek expression but usually obscured in translation is the role of the first post modifier *ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι*. The comparative function of *ὡς* defines the basic point of evaluation to be made of Paul and his associates: *presenting ourselves as God's servants*. That they generated no obstacle for anyone accepting their Gospel message can be substantiated by examining how they functioned *ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι*, *as God's servants*. Don't overlook the link of *διάκονοι*, *servants*, to *ἡ διακονία*, *ministry*. Being a *διάκονος*, *servant*, means *διακονία*, *service*. Remember also the first century social meaning of both these terms from the same root in designating the house slaves responsible for preparing and serving the food to the entire household. The social image of a slave serving nourishing food to the members of a household provided a rich image for God's servants serving healthy spiritual nourishment to the members of God's household, i.e., the communities of believers.

Places of evidence for genuineness (vv. 4c-7a). The preposition *ἐν* identifies areas to check to see whether these men are *θεοῦ διάκονοι*, *God's servants*, or not. Remember that Paul is urging the Corinthians to check these areas to determine his genuineness as a servant of God. In all likelihood standing somewhat behind all these is the assumption that when the Corinthians did the same checking of Paul's critics in the church they would make a different discovery regarding genuineness.

The first listings with *ἐν*, life experiences (vv. 4c-5): *ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις, 5 ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις, in great endurance, in persecutions, in hardships, in calamities, 5 in beatings, in imprisonments, in riots, in hard labors, in sleepless nights, in times of severe hunger.* Note the uniform plural form used here, except for the initial *ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ* which functions as an introductory header for the following nine plural forms

defining life situations. These life experiences could reflect clearly on the genuineness of one's claim to being a servant of God. Notice the broadness of the first three plural form phrases in v. 4c that define opposition from others. The first three phrases in v. 5a allude especially to violence against the individual. The last four in v. 5b allude to difficulties in serving. In all of these Paul claims ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, *with much endurance*.

The second listings with ἐν, character traits, (v. 6): ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, *in purity, in understanding, in patience, in gentleness, in the holiness of spirit, in unhypocritical love*. The shift from the plural forms in vv. 4b-5 to the singular forms in vv. 6-7a with ἐν signals a new set of evidences for authentic ministry. True servanthood in ministry is also an issue of personal character. One must be before doing. Inner virtues demonstrated in outward actions stand as important signals of authentic ministry.

Paul begins with ἐν ἀγνότητι, *in purity*.⁵² The emphasis is upon pure devotion to God that is not contaminated by various compromises of commitment. Its broad scope stands in some contrast to ἁγίῳ below with a more moral focus where behavior reflects devotion to God. The noun ἀγνότης is only found in the NT at 2 Cor. 6:6 and 11:3.

Then comes ἐν γνώσει, *in understanding*. The knowledge gained through experience signal authenticity as it guides and frames actions in ministry. Proper ministry arises from deep understanding of life and spiritual realities. Clearly from what is reflected in Paul's writings it becomes clear that his ministry reflected deep spiritual understanding.

Thirdly is ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, *in patience*. Etymologically the noun μακροθυμία comes from μακρός and θυμός with the sense of extended heat / burning. The figurative sense here becomes holding our passions under control over an extended period. The derivative adjective μακρόθυμος, -ον takes this idea and turns the sense into self-control in the face of provocation. Paul's ability to remain calm and self-controlled in the midst of many provocations against him reflects authenticity.

Fourth is ἐν χρηστότητι, *in gentleness*. Playing off of

⁵²“ἐν ἀγνότητι, ‘in purity.’ After listing the many traumas that have overtaken him, Paul again picks up the idea of personal reaction (‘great endurance’ [6:4]) as inward proof of his ministry.⁹⁷⁸ This shift of thought is seen to be ‘a breathing place in the outburst of the apostle’s feeling.⁹⁷⁹ The appeal to purity (‘innocence’)⁹⁸⁰ carries with it the idea of complete integrity of life⁹⁸¹ as well as moral purity.⁹⁸² Friedrich⁹⁸³ finds an allusion to sexual purity in contrast to the state of the church, which leads Paul to mourn over examples of Corinthian libertinism (see 12:20–21). But it is purity of intention (3:13; 4:2) that is more probable in this context.” [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 337.]

μακροθυμία, χρηστότης stresses kindness and generosity as the controlling posture toward others. This superlative form spelling of χρηστός, *helpfulness*, stresses a strong positive reaction to others who often are negative in their words and actions. How Paul is defending his ministry in Second Corinthians provides as good a commentary as available on this word χρηστότης here.

Fifth comes ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ which is understood in two very different ways. Everything revolves around whether πνεύματι is taken as the human spirit (*in holiness of spirit*) or the divine Spirit (*with the Holy Spirit*).⁵³

⁵³“ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ, ‘in the Holy Spirit.’ The inclusion of this phrase has raised questions as to its meaning. Is it to be translated (and understood) as the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, or is it meant to convey the idea of a ‘spirit of holiness’ or even ‘holy zeal’ (le zèle la sainte énergie)?⁹⁹⁶ Moreover, if it is an allusion to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of God, why include it in a list of human virtues?

“The problem presented by our second question has led Plummer,⁹⁹⁷ to view ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ as being equal to ‘a spirit that is holy.’ The point is that it seems unlikely that into a list of the qualities of a dedicated Christian life the apostle inserted the mention of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, if Paul meant this phrase to signify the Holy Spirit, then he would have put the title either at the head of the list or at its conclusion for emphasis. Plummer is following this line of thinking because of Paul’s desire to distinguish between a false and a true minister.

“While we agree with Plummer’s last point, it appears that he has overlooked the use of the expression in an identical manner elsewhere (Rom 5:5; 9:1; 14:17; 15:13, 16; 1 Cor 6:19; 12:3; 2 Cor 13:13; 1 Thess 1:5–6; 4:8). That is, in several other places Paul uses πνεῦμα ἅγιον for the ‘Holy Spirit.’ Furthermore, if Paul was concerned to denote a ‘spirit of holiness,’ he could have penned πνεῦμα ἁγιωσύνης (cf. Rom 1:4).⁹⁹⁸ Swete⁹⁹⁹ writes that it is not the person but the gift of the Spirit that is intended by Paul. Swete concludes that Paul is concerned to show ‘the Spirit which is common to all true ministers of God, distinguishing them from false apostles.’ Hence, we find Plummer’s position, though interesting, still unconvincing.¹⁰⁰⁰

“Barrett holds¹⁰⁰¹ a view similar to that of Plummer’s, noting that it is surprising that Paul should include the Holy Spirit in this list. Barrett thus concludes that Paul uses ‘spirit’ in terms of the human spirit, and ‘holy’ in terms of its ethical quality. He bases his findings on Paul’s use of πνεῦμα, ‘spirit,’ as an element of the human makeup (Rom 1:9; 8:16; 11:8; 1 Cor 2:11; 4:21; 5:4–5; 7:34; 14:14, 32; 16:18; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:1, 13; 12:18; Gal 6:1, 18; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:23; Phlm 25). However, he omits an important piece of evidence. In each of these references, the term ἅγιος, ‘holy,’ is missing. Thus, while Paul includes the πνεῦμα, ‘spirit,’ in a descriptive summary of the human spirit, he separates this part of the human makeup from the third person of the Trinity by use of the adjective ‘holy.’ Therefore, we conclude that when Paul writes πνεῦμα ἅγιον, he means or implies a reference to ‘the Holy Spirit,’¹⁰⁰² but with emphasis on the ‘power’ that derives from him.¹⁰⁰³

“But we are still faced with the question of why Paul inserts this reference to the Holy Spirit in the list. There seem to be several good answers that, though only partial in themselves, when taken in toto, present convincing logic. For one, Paul is writing in free style and is not concerned with logical niceties.¹⁰⁰⁴ Next, Paul, who has an excellent ear for words and phrases, starts a series of double

Although it is unusual to insert a reference to the Holy Spirit in a listing of human virtues, the similarity of the phrase πνεύματι ἁγίῳ to the many other obvious references to the divine Spirit in Paul's writings (Rom 5:5; 9:1; 14:17; 15:13, 16; 1 Cor 6:19; 12:3; 2 Cor 13:13; 1 Thess 1:5–6; 4:8) argues strongly for this understanding here, along with the use of πνεῦμα in reference to the human spirit in Paul's writings never attaching the adjective ἅγιον to the noun (Rom 1:9; 8:16; 11:8; 1 Cor 2:11; 4:21; 5:4–5; 7:34; 14:14, 32; 16:18; 2 Cor 2:13; 7:1, 13; 12:18; Gal 6:1, 18; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:23; Phlm 25).

The evidential point of this reference to the divine Spirit here is to claim the presence and leadership of God's Spirit in his ministry. The Holy Spirit is strongly associated with character in the life of believers in Paul's writings, which is the point of the traits listed both immediately before and following this reference. As such in συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, **presenting ourselves as God's servants**, the point is made that the virtues indicated in the list come from the Holy Spirit and are not human accomplishments. Thus they reflect indications of authentic ministry to the Corinthians.

Sixth⁵⁴ is ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ, **in unhyppocritical love**. The double negative here with the adjective from ἀνυποκρίτος, -ον is a strong denial of deception or pretense in Paul's love for others including the Corinthians. Of course, ἀγάπη stresses the volitional and not the emotional with its meaning of sacrificial commitment. This the apostle had already spelled out in great detail in First Corinthians thirteen to the folks at Corinth.

When taken as a unit these six qualities stress the critical importance of inner character, produced by the Holy Spirit, for Christian ministry. If the servant of God is not of a high quality in character, his / her service to the Gospel will not have the stamp of God's blessing and approval. Who we are is essential to validating our ministry.

The third listings with ἐν, ministry actions, (v. 7a): ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ, with the Message of truth,

terms¹⁰⁰⁵ (see Form/Structure/Setting) and needs this phrase to pair with δύναμις θεοῦ, 'the power of God,' and both have a polemical slant.¹⁰⁰⁶ Also, Paul is not apt to divorce the gifts of the Spirit from the Spirit himself.¹⁰⁰⁷ In addition, Paul is listing some of his favorite phrases that demonstrate the work of the Spirit (love, longsuffering, kindness — Gal 5:22–23). Therefore, whether planned or spontaneous, the person of the Holy Spirit fits in (at least in Paul's mind) with the list of these positive attributes and in fact gives a rationale to that list by showing that divine power-in-the-Spirit matches the apostle's human weakness, the point under discussion at Corinth.

[Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 338–340.]

⁵⁴Perhaps some symbolic significance should be attached to the listing of six traits in this group of evidences of genuineness in ministry. But no clear signal of any particular meaning is present in the listing.

with God's power. Here continues the use of the singular form from the preceding group in v. 6. But the thrust of these two evidences centers on ministry actions rather than character traits. Again as is reflected in [the above block diagram](#), they continue to modify the participle phrase συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, **presenting ourselves as God's servants** (v. 4a). Additionally, they are a part of the inclusive ἐν παντί, **in all things** (v. 4a).

First is ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, **in the message of truth**. Here a diversity of understandings will surface in both translations and commentaries. They all center around how ἀληθείας is taken. In Greek grammar tones, is the genitive case form functioning as a descriptive adjective (i.e., truthful speaking) or identity / objective (i.e., message of Truth)? The NRSV reflects the former understanding with 'truthful speech.' But the NLT reflects the latter with 'We faithfully preach the truth.' The earlier phrase in 4:2b, μηδὲ δολοῦντες τὸν λόγον τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλὰ τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας, **refusing to defile the Word of God but instead clearly manifesting the Truth**, tips the scales here toward the objective genitive understanding of 'message of the Truth.'⁵⁵ Paul's claim to authentic ministry is predicated on his preaching the truth of the Gospel, rather than a twisted version like his opponents at Corinth.

One must be exceedingly cautious about the translation word 'Truth.' In the Post Enlightenment western culture, the meaning of truth is radically different than for the biblical use of ἀλήθεια in the NT. John 14:6 is the starting point for ἀλήθεια in Christianity. Post Enlightenment truth has roots in Aristotle but essentially is an abstract idea where two realities exist in harmony with one another. When applied to history, for example, a historical claim is true only when it corresponds to factually established information of human activity. Otherwise it is a false claim. Or at best it stands as possibly being true. In the apostolic Christianity of the NT, ἀλήθεια means something is true only to the extent that

⁵⁵“Three times Paul uses the expression ὁ λόγος τῆς ἀληθείας (Eph. 1:13; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:15), once defining it as ‘the gospel’ (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, exegetical apposition, Eph. 1:13) and once defining the ἀλήθεια as ‘the gospel’ (τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, exegetical genitive, Col. 1:5). The anarthrous expression ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας is not to be distinguished in meaning from the articular ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας, given the canon of Apollonius.⁴⁶ In the present context ἀληθείας could be an attributive genitive, giving to the whole phrase the meaning ‘the message characterized by truth,’ ‘the true message,’ or ‘truthful speech,’⁴⁷ but in light of the close parallel in 4:2 (τῇ φανερώσει τῆς ἀληθείας, ‘by setting forth the truth openly’), λόγος should be given a verbal sense, with ἀληθείας construed as an objective genitive, ‘by declaring the truth’ (NEB, REB).⁴⁸ As in Col. 1:5; 2 Thess. 2:12 the ‘truth’ is to be identified with the gospel.” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 476.]

it reflects the being and essence of God. If it doesn't reflect God, then it is false.

When Jesus made the claim in Jhn. 14:6, ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ ὁδὸς καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια καὶ ἡ ζωή, **I am the Way and the Truth and the Life**, He claimed to correctly reflect God's being and essence as ἡ ἀλήθεια. His statement is neither a factual one nor an abstract issue. To the contrary, it is a faith issue where one must accept or reject Jesus as reflecting God. This is the foundation of His subsequent statement, οὐδεὶς ἔρχεται πρὸς τὸν πατέρα εἰ μὴ δι' ἐμοῦ, **No one comes to the Father except through Me**. Verse seven continues to elaborate on this with the affirmation that to see Jesus is to see the Heavenly Father for Jesus is the very reflection of God available to folks on earth.

For Paul and the other apostles, Jesus as reflecting God is the center of the apostolic Gospel they preached. Everything in that message flows out of this core reality. Thus the preaching ministry of Paul and his associates is authentic because it correctly identifies Jesus as the reflection of God in His will and way for humanity. The Gospel is not a factual message in the modern sense. Instead, it is a message asserting who Jesus is and demanding one's commitment to Jesus. Truth comes into the picture only to the extent that the message accurately portrays who Jesus is against the standard of God's being and character.

Paul's opponents at Corinth did not understand this and consequently mixed foreign elements from their cultural world into the message about Jesus. From the early chapters of First Corinthians, it reflected Greek philosophical thinking in first century Corinth more than it did the divine revelation given to the apostles and Paul.

Closely connected then to his preaching of the Gospel is also ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ, **in God's power**. In presenting himself and his associates as God's servants, the validation of this is in part from the clear demonstration of God's power in this ministry of preaching.⁵⁶ Moderns often ask Where does one observe God's power in

⁵⁶“That what Paul is preaching is more than human speech is seen in this phrase.¹⁰¹⁵ The genuineness of Paul's message and person is made apparent by the power manifested in his preaching and experienced by his Corinthian listeners.¹⁰¹⁶ Paul's convincing manner was due not to his own eloquence but to God's power (1 Cor 2:3–5; 1 Thess 2:13). And this was displayed best in his ability to serve with patience and strength in spite of trying circumstances ('power experienced becomes power communicated').¹⁰¹⁷ The context here needs to be borne in mind when we come to 12:12 and ask what the 'signs of an apostle' really consist in, given Paul's self-confessed frailty and finitude.” [Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Ralph P. Martin, Lynn Allan Losie, and Peter H. Davids, Second Edition., vol. 40, Word Biblical Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 340.]

the ministry of one serving God? The misleading answer usually focuses attention on the eloquence of the preacher (cf. 1 Cor. 2:3-5:1; 1 Thess. 2:13). Or on how many converts he generates through his preaching. Or on some other purely human element linked to the preacher. All of these have utterly no connection to God's power at all!

The power of God, especially in preaching, centers on the listener, not on the preacher. It is visible in true conversion to Christ as God's provided Savior and Redeemer. When the listener 'sees' Jesus clearly as God in preaching, the convicting work of the Holy Spirit produces true conversion to Christ. Here is demonstration of δυνάμει θεοῦ. This Paul sees as vindication of his ministry to the Corinthians. The true believers at Corinth who responded to his preaching of the Gospel are themselves the correct reflection of God's power in Paul's ministry.

6.8 διὰ τῶν ὀπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας

The listings with διὰ, ups and downs in ministry (vv. 7b-8a): διὰ τῶν ὀπλων τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας, **through the weapons of righteousness for the right hands and for the left hands, through glory and dishonor; through disrepute and good repute**. This grouping is characterized by the use of the preposition διὰ rather than ἐν.⁵⁷ The three prepositional phrases used here are also paired by opposites τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν; δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας; and δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας. The first set are inclusive while the two following sets are more specific. But all three sets have the positive followed by negative sequence (+/-).

These three sets play off a military image (τῶν ὀπλων, **with the weapons**), which the apostle occasionally appeals to (cf. 10:4; 1 Thess. 5:8; cf. Eph. 6:13–17). There is a Greek military background present here as well, thus making it easier for the Corinthians to understand.⁵⁸ In

⁵⁷“The third section, verses 7b–8a, is clearly defined in the Greek by a change of preposition (note the English ‘with’) but is not so clearly marked out by content. Paul employs the metaphor of armor regularly (e.g., 10:4; 1 Thess. 5:8; cf. Eph. 6:13–17). Here he is probably indicating through ‘right’ and ‘left’ that he is equipped both for the good and the ill that may come to him (in Greek, as in most languages, right and left are used of good and bad fortune). Whatever befalls Paul, honor, dishonor, good repute, ill repute, he has weapons for attack (a sword held in the right hand) and for defense (a shield in the left). ‘Honor, dishonor,’ and the like represent the opinions others have of Paul. Some have stood by him, but there have been those who have been extremely critical. Whatever they say, he will endure.” [Ernest Best, *Second Corinthians*, Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta, GA: J. Knox Press, 1987), 62.]

⁵⁸“Conflicts suggest the need for **weapons**. In his encounters

the earlier mention of conflict and confrontation behind most of the sets with ἐν above naturally leads to the military image here. Paul's weapons for these kinds of hostile situations are τῶν ὀπλῶν τῆς δικαιοσύνης, *with the weapons drawn from righteousness*. Warfare itself is inherently evil, so Paul engages opponents with skills etc. that come out of God's righteous character. For him then to encounter an opponent to his ministry functions on a different level. Its not an issue of winners and losers, nor of destroying one's opponent. Rather it is a matter of how to encounter someone outside God's will in a manner consistent with God's holy character.

The genitive of advantage function of the two adjectives linked together by the common article, τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, *for the right hands and for the left hands*, most likely alludes to the soldier's use of a sword in the right hand and a shield in the left hand.⁵⁹ Either for offense or defense the apostle is fully prepared to meet the opposition and stand his ground in the apostolic Gospel. One should be highly reluctant to try to identify specific weapons from the metaphor here. Such misguided efforts immediately push the central point of the metaphor to the side lines if not out of the picture completely. Rather, Paul's point is to stress full preparation to encounter anyone in opposition to the apostolic Gos-

with opposition forces Paul's weapons are forged out of **righteousness**, one of his favorite terms and one of the cardinal virtues in both Greek and Roman society. The topic of uprightness is a major feature in Plato's dialogues. And to be committed in a just cause was every good Roman's dream. The term is standard in descriptions of ancient public-spirited persons, who are praised for their just and equitable conduct. The fact that the weapons are **for the right hand and for the left** suggests that uprightness is applicable to every situation, and Paul features it in all his personal relations. He does not cater to one at the expense of another." [Frederick W. Danker, *II Corinthians*, Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Publishing House, 1989), 92–93.]

⁵⁹"But what are these weapons provided by God? It is unlikely that they are to be identified as virtues already mentioned in v. 6a or as any or all of the items in the tetrad of vv. 6b–7a.⁵⁷ Probably the answer is to be found in the phrase that qualifies τῶν ὀπλῶν, namely τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν. Ἄοπλον δεξιόν is a weapon used in the right hand and ἄοπλον ἀριστερόν is a weapon used in the left, so that τὰ ὄπλα τὰ δεξιά καὶ ἀριστερά will refer to weapons, presumably two in number,⁵⁸ one for the right hand, another for the left. The sword in the right hand (cf. Eph. 6:17) is used for offense, the shield in the left (cf. Eph. 6:16) for defense.⁵⁹ We should not, however, take the next step and identify the sword as ἡ μάχαιρα τοῦ πνεύματος and the shield as ὁ θυρεὸς τῆς πίστεως as in Ephesians 6, for that degree of specificity lies beyond the time of 2 Corinthians. But some commentators find in the qualification τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν simply a reference to Paul's readiness to repel an attack from any quarter (Hughes 231) or "the completeness of the equipment provided by God" (Barrett 188).⁶⁰ [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 477–478.]

pel. And this readiness comes from God's righteousness which stands as the source of his preparation, not in the skills of eloquent rhetoric in either speaking or writing, or anything else on the human side. Everything is from God and about God through Christ.

The second and third pairs then in v. 8a, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας, stand essentially in parallel to one another, and extend the military metaphor. Both δόξα, *praise*, and εὐφημία, *good repute*, on one side are offset by their opposites, ἀτιμία *dishonor*, and δυσφημία, *disrepute*. Note the chiasmic AB//B'A' sequence here in the listing δόξης / ἀτιμίας // δυσφημίας / εὐφημίας (+/- // -/+).⁶⁰ This ties the two pairs closely together in meaning.⁶¹ Every Roman soldier sought passionately the positive side and complete avoidance of the negative aspects. But Paul asserts that he is fully prepared to handle successfully both the positive and the negative that come at him. He sees through phony praise -- or even sincere praise -- and is unmoved by slanderous criticism. Neither will shake his commitment to the principles of the apostolic Gospel that is the center of his ministry. Thus the chiasmus here stresses strongly the readiness of the apostle to meet any kind of challenge, no matter what it may be. This full preparation therefore signals authenticity in ministry, in that these three prepositional phrases modify the parti-

⁶⁰"The words *honor, dishonor, ill repute, and good repute* form a stylistic construction known as chiasmus. In such a construction the two center words are paired together, and the two outer words are paired together in the form a-b-b'-a'. In both cases the paired words are basically synonyms. In some languages it may be more natural to put the positive element first in each of the two pairs, but in others the negative element may come first in each case. Naturalness in the receptor language should be the determining factor in the arrangement of these four expressions." [Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 114–115.]

⁶¹"*In honor and dishonor*: the word translated as honor is the Greek word often translated as 'glory' (see 1:20 and 3:7–18). In this context it means 'in good reputation,' making it virtually synonymous with the following statement good repute. The term dishonor is elsewhere translated 'menial' (Rom 9:21), 'degrading' (1 Cor 11:14), 'shame' (2 Cor 11:21) and 'ignoble' (2 Tim 2:20). This noun is made up of a negative prefix and the stem of a verb meaning 'honor,' 'revere' or 'value.' It seems to refer to the same sort of activities that result in ill repute which follows. Here it may be translated as 'by shameful treatment' or 'someone esteems me, someone else treats me with contempt' (ItCL).

"*In ill repute and good repute*: the two Greek terms refer to having a bad reputation and a good reputation. The first two pairs of words may be translated 'sometimes people respect us and sometimes they shame us. Sometimes they mock us and sometimes they praise us.' This will also solve the problem of translating passive meanings where this is a problem."

[Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 115.]

ciiple phrase συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, presenting ourselves as God’s servants (v. 4a). Authentic servants of God should stand fully prepared for anything thrown at them!

The listings with ὡς, extremes in ministry (vv. 8b-10): ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, 9 ὡς ἀγνοούμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι, 10 ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες, as deceivers and as true, as unknown and as fully knowledgeable, as being dead and indeed we live, as being disciplined and not as being killed, as sorrowful but always rejoicing, was poverty stricken but as making many rich, as having nothing and as possessing all things.

The contrasts in these pairs of references cover a wide range of situations. The Greek syntax used here is complex and not possible to reproduce in modern English. In the diagram on the right this structure is visually set off in the various groupings. In the pair ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, as being dead and indeed we live, the apostle inserts a finite verb, ζῶμεν, rather than the expected participle ζώνοντες, so that it serves as the core for the early participles διδόντες and συνιστάντες to be linked to. At the same time it also serves as the second half of the contrasting pair ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν. Further it marks a shift in emphasis found in the sets of pairs.

One of the key translation issues is the handling of καὶ in all the pairs except for the second and third sets following ζῶμεν, which switch to δὲ rather than καὶ. Clearly, contrast between each element in the pairs is uniformly the point. The interpretive aspect is whether καὶ can assume a contrastive meaning along with δὲ, although perhaps not quite as strong as δὲ. This leads to the question of how to take the second element in each pair. Contextually a strong argument can be made that the first element assumes a negative view that is offset by a positive element in the second item of the pair.

If this is correct, then the above translation⁶² should

⁶²as deceivers and as true, as unknown and as fully knowledgeable, as being dead and indeed we live, as being disciplined

6.3	ἐν μηδενὶ Μηδεμίαν...διδόντες προσκοπήν, ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῆ ἡ διακονία,
6.4	ἀλλ’ ἐν παντὶ συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι, ἐν ὑπομονῇ πολλῇ, ἐν θλίψεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις,
6.5	ἐν πληγαῖς, ἐν φυλακαῖς, ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις, ἐν κόποις, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις, ἐν νηστείαις,
6.6	ἐν ἀγνότητι, ἐν γνώσει, ἐν μακροθυμίᾳ, ἐν χρηστότητι, ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ, ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀνυποκρίτῳ,
6.7	ἐν λόγῳ ἀληθείας, ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ· διὰ τῶν ὀπλῶν τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῶν δεξιῶν καὶ ἀριστερῶν, διὰ δόξης καὶ ἀτιμίας, διὰ δυσφημίας καὶ εὐφημίας· ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, ὡς ἀγνοούμενοι καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες
6.8	καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι, ὡς λυπούμενοι δὲ ἀεὶ χαίροντες, ὡς πτωχοὶ δὲ πολλοὺς πλουτίζοντες, ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες.
6.9	
6.10	

be revised to read, as deceivers but true, as unknown but fully known, as dead but indeed we live, as sorrowful but always rejoicing, as poverty stricken but making many rich, as having nothing yet possessing everything. The first element usually represents an accusation while the second element responds with a claim to what is actually the case. On the negative side, the range of activities in the first set in front of ζῶμεν covers hostility expressed against Paul and his associates, the ‘we’ of ζῶμεν, from both pagan and Christian sources. In spite of these things, their integrity remains in place as the series of second elements maintain.

The switch from ἐν and διὰ to ὡς shifts the qualities into a comparative relationship to either συνιστάντες for the first three or to ζῶμεν for the subsequent set of four and not as being killed, as sorrowful but always rejoicing, was poverty stricken but as making many rich, as having nothing and as possessing all things.

pairs (cf. above diagram). The contextual sense is ‘as though we are’ in referencing various accusations leveled against Paul and his associates.

ὡς πλάνοι καὶ ἀληθεῖς, *as deceives but being true*. The adjective πλάνος, -ον used here is built off the same root stem as the verb πλανᾶω, *to lead astray*. Paul was frequently accused by fellow Christians and Jews alike of leading people away from God through his preaching of the apostolic Gospel.⁶³ But his response is simply καὶ ἀληθεῖς, *but we are true / truthful*. That is, by their words and their lifestyles, these men consistently reflected Jesus who reflects God Himself.

ὡς ἀγνωστοὶ καὶ ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι, *as unknown but being fully known*. The exact thrust of this contrastive pair is not absolutely certain.⁶⁴ What seems to be the

⁶³“The term πλάνος, from πλανᾶω, ‘lead/go astray,’ ‘deceive,’ is used as an adjective in 1 Tim. 4:1 (πνεύματα πλάνα, ‘deceitful spirits’) but here is used substantivally, ‘deceiver’ or ‘imposter.’ Obviously Paul did not regard himself as a deceiver, so the sense must be ‘considered impostors’ (BAGD 666a) or ‘treated as impostors’ (RSV, NRSV). During his ministry Jesus had been accused of leading the people astray (πλανᾶ, John 7:12), and after his death he had been called ‘that imposter’ (ἐκεῖνος ὁ πλάνος, Matt. 27:63). It was now a case of ‘like master, like slave’ (cf. Matt. 10:25), as Paul in turn was deemed a deceiver, perhaps in connection with his altered travel plans (1:15–2:1), perhaps because his pastoral techniques or financial dealings were seen as manipulative (cf. πλεονεκτέω in 7:2; 12:17), or perhaps those of his compatriots who saw Jesus as a messianic pretender viewed Paul as a champion of a false Messiah and therefore a deceiver. Whatever the reason or reasons for this charge against Paul, he rebuts it in the only way he can — by affirming his truthfulness (ἀληθεῖς). His divine call and mission are genuine (cf. Gal. 1:1, 15–16), his message is true (4:2; 6:7), and he does not lie (cf. οὐ ψεύδομαι in 11:31; Rom. 9:1; Gal. 1:20; 1 Tim. 2:7). What Paul signifies by ἀληθεῖς (‘truthful,’ ‘honest,’ ‘genuine’) is partly summed up in 2:17, ‘we act from pure motives, and, as persons sent from God, we speak in the sight of God and at Christ’s direction.’” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 480.]

⁶⁴“(1) Here the contrast may be between views of Paul held outside and within the church. The sense is not exactly ‘obscure yet famous’ (JB) or ‘as nobodies to these, and celebrities to those’ (Plummer 166), but rather that non-believers would or did view him as an insignificant non-entity, someone uncelebrated for wisdom or scholarship or oratorical skills (cf. Windisch 208), whereas believers in general acknowledged his apostolic calling and recognized his distinctive gifts. Thrall comments (465) that ‘since this section as a whole (vv. 3–10) is primarily concerned with the apostle in relation to his fellow-men and to external circumstances it is probable that ἐπιγινωσκόμενοι does refer to human recognition.’

“(2) It is, however, equally possible that a human perspective is being contrasted with a divine viewpoint that is shared by some humans. Apparently Paul’s rivals at Corinth and some of the Corinthians influenced by them regarded him as non-credentialed as an apostle or at least as lacking the proper apostolic credentials (cf. 3:1; 5:12; 10:10; 11:6; 1 Cor. 9:1). In contrast, Paul’s genuine apostolicity was known to God (1:1; Gal. 1:1) and recognized by

point here is that some, even inside Christianity, did not recognize Paul’s claim to being an apostle and thus authorized to speak for God. This was evidently the case at Corinth. And if Paul was not authorized by God, then neither were the close associates working with him. His response here asserts that God fully recognizes him as do many believers.⁶⁵ Those denying him simply failed to see the authorization of God upon his ministry.

ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, *as being dead but indeed we live*. Here the grammatical unevenness of the syntax serves several roles. First, the finite verb ζῶμεν, *we are living*, provides a base point to attach all of these many modifiers, as illustrated in the above diagram. Second, as the contrastive element to the participle ἀποθνήσκοντες, it stands as a dramatic, undeniable rebuttal to those claiming that Paul was ‘dying.’ Third, this ‘uneven grammar structure’ serves to place primary emphasis upon καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν, *but indeed we are alive*. The particle of emphasis ἰδοὺ heightens the emphasis even more. Out of the life given him by God all of the positive elements in the long sentence arise.

When then is Paul alluding to with the ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες, *as though being dead*, phrase? Most likely he points to accusations that the apostle lived in such risk of being killed that whatever he said wasn’t worth listening to.⁶⁶ Both in the background streams of Jewish

the ‘pillars’ of the Jerusalem church (Gal. 2:7, 9), and Paul still hoped it would be recognized by the Corinthians themselves (5:12) (Barrett 189). Support for this second view may be found in 1 Cor. 13:12 where the same verb, ἐπιγινώσκω, is used in the passive (as here) with God as the implied agent (‘then I shall know in full even as I have been fully known [ἐπεγνώσθην]’).⁷¹”

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 481.]

⁶⁵“*Unknown, and yet well known*: the sense may be that they are unknown in the sense that most people do not know them, or, more specifically, the sense is probably that their apostolic authority is ‘unrecognized’ by some Christians (so Barrett). The Greek does not state who knows Paul and his associates. According to TEV it is other Christians (‘by all’). REB says ‘whom all men know,’ and CEV says ‘but well known to you.’ Possibly Paul means that, even though certain Christians do not recognize his authority, yet God does, that is, ‘we are known by God.’ Or perhaps Paul is thinking of both people and God. The passive ideas will have to be made active in many languages. Some suggested models are: ‘people do not accept us, but God accepts us’ or, following the other interpretation, ‘people say they don’t know us, but they are always watching us.’ Brç reads ‘no one knows us and everyone knows us.’ However, it is probably more likely that different agents are intended for the words ‘known’ and ‘unknown.’ The probable meaning is ‘some Christians do not recognize our apostolic authority, yet our authority as apostles is well known to Christians everywhere.’” [Roger L. Omanson and John Ellington, *A Handbook on Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 115–116.]

⁶⁶“‘Death-life’ terminology is common in Paul’s letters, espe-

messianic expectation and Greco-Roman heroism, the central figure was above dying, at least in some normal way. Heroic representatives of the gods were not subject to being killed by enemies. But to Paul's critics in the synagogues and churches he seemed to be constantly on the verge of being killed. In their thinking this raised serious questions about his legitimacy to speak correctly about God.

Following the core phrase *καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν* comes four more pairs of contrastive declarations. The rationale for grouping these four together in a post position is not clear, although they do go in a little different direction than the first three. Numbers three and four are closely related via content emphasis. Possibly *παιδευόμενοι* and *λυπούμενοι* are to be seen as linked via content as

cially 2 Corinthians. It is possible but unlikely that Paul is speaking here of death to sin and self (Rom. 6:1–14) through being crucified with Christ (Gal. 2:20), for this is a wholly positive spiritual concept for Paul whereas the antithetical *καί* presupposes that the preceding concept is in some sense negative in import. At best *ἀποθνήσκοντες* could refer to both physical death and spiritual mortification (thus Martin 181–82). Another option is to relate *ἀποθνήσκοντες* purely to physical debilitation and *ζῶμεν* to spiritual rejuvenation, which would make this antithesis precisely parallel to 4:16 (*εἰ καὶ ὁ ἔξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλ' ὁ ἔσω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα*). To be preferred, however, is the view that sees in *ἀποθνήσκοντες* a reference to continual exposure to physical death or encounters with death, and in *ζῶμεν* a reference to ongoing physical life: 'as ever at death's door, and yet behold! we live on' (Plummer 166); 'we are constantly exposed to death, and yet (as you see) we continue to live.'⁷² Two points support this interpretation. (1) Paul has already mentioned such exposure (4:10–11) and such encounters (1:9–10; 4:12) as he did earlier in 1 Cor. 15:30–31 ('Why do we face danger every hour? Not a day passes without my being at death's door') and will later in 11:23 (*ἐν θανάτοις πολλάκις*). (2) The whole phrase alludes to Ps. 117:17 (LXX): 'I shall not die (*οὐκ ἀποθανοῦμαι*), but I shall live (*ζήσομαι*) and recount what the Lord has done.' (The next phrase is based directly on the following verse in this psalm—see below.) Since the psalm is a song of thanksgiving for victory in battle, the reference to escape from death and to the celebration of divine deliverance by the living must apply to physical life and death. (3) As well as meaning 'I am dying,' the present tense of *ἀποθνήσκω* can mean 'I stand in danger of death.'⁷³

'*ἰδοὺ* marks a surprise, introducing something contrary to all appearance or expectation. The change from participles to finite verb (*ζῶμεν*)⁷⁴ — and further participles follow — also indicates the intensity of Paul's relief at deliverance from death: 'As dying, and yet here we are—alive!' The classic instances of such an experience for Paul occurred at Lystra when, after being pelted with stones and left for dead, he simply stood up (*ἀναστὰς*), perhaps in answer to prayer offered by the recent converts from Lystra who had formed a circle around him (Acts 14:19–20); and 'in Asia' when, after being utterly and unbearably crushed so that he despaired of life, he was delivered by the God who raises the dead (1:8–10)."

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 481–482.]

well.

ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι, *as being punished but not being put to death*.⁶⁷ Important to understanding this set is the meaning of *παιδευόμενοι*, the present passive participle from *παιδεύω*. The core idea in English relates to discipline either in a positive or negative manner. The interpretive issue here is whether the discipline is 'training' (+) or punishment (-), and who is doing it, either God or humans. In the 13 NT uses of the verb, these four alternatives in a wide range of combinations are found: God punishes or trains and humans punish or train. Often God works through humans to punish or train. Then flip this into the passive voice, as with the participle here, and the options become Paul and his associates receive either punishment (cf. Heb. 12:6, God) or discipline (Rev. 3:19, God) from either God or other people (cf. Heb. 17:7; Lk. 23:16, 22).⁶⁸

⁶⁷Possibly in the back of Paul's mind here stands Psalm 118:17 (LXX 118:17), *οὐκ ἀποθανοῦμαι, ἀλλὰ ζήσομαι καὶ ἐκδιηγῆσομαι τὰ ἔργα κυρίου. I shall not die, but I shall live, and recount the deeds of the Lord*. But considerable caution should be exercised here.

⁶⁸ὡς παιδευόμενοι καὶ μὴ θανατούμενοι. 'As punished and yet not killed.' Both participles are in the passive voice. But who is the implied agent or agents? If Paul has in mind purely human action, the sense could be either 'rumoured to be (= ὡς) executed before we are sentenced [to death]' (JB), or 'scourged but not executed' (NJB). In the former case the point is the patent miscarriage of justice; in the latter, the avoidance of the death penalty. Neither interpretation can be ruled out as impossible, but both must be deemed improbable because although a life setting could be envisaged for both views, they overlook the unambiguous OT background of the statement.

"With regard to agency, the choice is not between human action and divine action, but between human action and divine action lying behind human action. Those who carry out the punishment and yet do not kill Paul are humans, but their actions fulfill a divine purpose. This becomes clear when we consider the OT passage which lies behind our phrase. 'The Lord punished me severely (*παιδεύων ἐπαίδευσεν*) and yet (*καί*) he did not give me over to death (*τῷ θανάτῳ*)' (Ps. 117:18, LXX). Psalm 118 (in the MT and EVV) is the last song and the climax of the 'Egyptian Hallel' (Psalms 113–18) that was sung at the great Jewish religious festivals and is frequently cited or alluded to in the NT. It is a processional thanksgiving liturgy, celebrating a God-given military victory. In the presence of the congregation the king testifies to Yahweh's powerful intervention in answer to prayer when he and his army were confronted in war by a confederacy of nations (possibly 2 Chron. 20:1–30). 'Yahweh's right hand has done mighty things! Yahweh's right hand is lifted high; Yahweh's right hand has done mighty things!' (Ps. 118:15b–16). In spite of being brought face to face with death, the king was spared: 'I did not die, but survived'⁷⁵ to proclaim what Yahweh has done' (v. 17). Paul has alluded to this verse in the previous phrase (*ὡς ἀποθνήσκοντες καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν*). Then the king continues: 'Yahweh punished me severely, but he did not give me over to death' (v. 18). That is, the king interprets the machinations of his enemies that led to the endangerment of his life as evidence of Yahweh's drastic but beneficial discipline. So too, we suggest, Paul perceives the disciplinary hand of God

The difficulty in clear understanding is in part created by large cultural gaps between Paul's world and our. The verb παιδεύω is a part of a larger word group -- παιδεύω, παιδεία, παιδευτής, ἀπαιδευτος, παιδαγωγός⁶⁹ -- that in ancient Greek related to education primarily of children.⁷⁰ To be sure vocational training was not included here but the instilling of moral values, patterns of proper behavior, along with understanding of one's heritage were central themes of Greek education by what was done at home and that done by teachers in a school. The use of physical force, sometimes severe, to educate was a significant tool.⁷¹ Thus the line of demarkation between training and punishing was not very clearly drawn in Paul's world, unlike in the modern western world.

Via the context here, what probably was Paul's intent was to assert that the human induced hardships that brought him and his associates often to the brink of execution were indeed being used by God to validate their ministry rather than to raise doubts about its divine nature. The παιδεία coming out of these experiences were strengthening them to give a better witness to the grace of God in the Gospel. But to fully grasp this one

behind the punishing hand of man.⁷⁶ Paul had endured physical punishment for the gospel's sake (e.g., Acts 16:22–23; cf. 2 Cor. 11:23, 'with innumerable beatings'), but the outcome had not been death but the benefits of παιδεία κυρίου, whose 'fruit is seen in the peacefulness of a righteous life' (Heb. 12:11, TCNT). Trials and hardships are not proof of God's displeasure but are evidence of his painful but loving discipline (cf. Prov. 3:11–12; Heb. 12:4–11) that seeks the refinement of our faith (cf. 1 Pet. 1:6–7). 'In Rev 3:19 the basic principle of παιδεία κυρίου is adopted: ὅσους ἐὰν φιλῶ, ἐλέγχω καὶ παιδεύω, God Himself intervenes with educative punishments in the life of men because He loves them and can in this way kindle zeal for repentance.'⁷⁷

[Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 482–483.]

⁶⁹Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 5:596]

⁷⁰“παιδεία, παιδεύειν, denotes the upbringing and handling of the child which is growing up to maturity and which thus needs direction, teaching, instruction and a certain measure of compulsion in the form of discipline or even chastisement. παιδεία is both the way of education and cultivation which has to be traversed and also the goal which is to be attained. Apart from the words in the title ref. might also be made to παιδεύμα, παιδευσις, and various compounds belonging to the group. The basis is a relatively late development of παιδ- (παῖς), and in the first instance it is obviously as difficult as in the case of τρέφειν to distinguish between the senses 'upbringing' (e.g., Soph. Fr., 433 [TGF, 235]) and 'education.'¹¹ [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 5:596.]

⁷¹The ancient Jewish approach to education would reflect very similar thinking to this aspect of ancient Greek education.

has to step out of modern cultural thinking and adopt that of Paul's world.

ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as though being sorrowful yet always rejoicing*.⁷² Not only were his hardships a challenge to ministry but he experienced considerable grief in ministry as well. Of the 26 NT uses of the verb λυπέω, 15 of them are in Paul's writings, and that includes 12 uses just in Second Corinthians. This compares to 40 NT uses of the noun λύπη with 9 Pauline uses, including 6 of them in Second Corinthians. Paul speaks *grief* (λύπη) and *grieving* (λυπέω) some 21 times in Second Corinthians. Chapters two and seven are where most of these uses are found. He experienced real pain and sorrow in his ministry. Most of it was caused by actions or attitudes of other Christians either in hostility toward him or in disappointment over their failures to obey Christ.

But such sorrow never ever crushed his experiencing of joy and rejoicing. Note the emphatic ἀεὶ, *always*, added here. One should note that the verb χαίρω, *re-joyce*, used here and the noun χαρά, *joy*, are built off the same root stem.⁷³ The English words *glad / gladness* are the most accurate translation. The primary emphasis falls on the inner sense of well-being that can on occasion be expressed outwardly mostly by speaking. The Stoics of Corinth would have seen all this as negative since they believed all emotions are defective judgments of the λόγος.⁷⁴ To be sure, this ran contrary

⁷²“The noun λύπη (“pain,” “sorrow”) and the cognate verb λυπέω (“cause pain/sorrow”) are common in this epistle, being used six times and twelve times (respectively), out of twenty-four total Pauline uses. Sometimes Paul's sorrow was personal, as when he was grieved by slander or groundless accusation (2:5; see the commentary there) or when he was acutely disappointed by the behavior of his converts (2:4). But at other times his sorrow was vicarious, as when he sympathized with others in pain (cf. 1 Cor. 12:26). But perhaps his deepest sorrow was occasioned by the unbelief of his fellow Jews (Rom. 9:1–3); this caused him ‘great grief’ (λύπη ... μεγάλη) and ‘constant anguish’ (ἀδιάλειπτος ὀδύνη) (Rom. 9:2). Yet whatever the reason for his sorrow, his joy was inextinguishable. This joy is ‘in the Lord’ (cf. Phil. 3:1; 4:4) in the sense that he is its object (cf. Rom. 5:11; Ps. 32:11; 64:10) and it is prompted by having or remembering all the spiritual benefits afforded those ‘in Christ.’ Because those benefits are unchanging, the joy can be constant (cf. πάντοτε with χαίρετε in Phil. 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16), as Jesus promised (John 16:22), and it can be experienced in the midst of suffering (Rom. 5:3–5; cf. Jas. 1:2–4; 1 Pet. 4:13).” [Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Milton Keynes, UK: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.; Paternoster Press, 2005), 483–484.]

⁷³χαίρω, χαρά, συγχαίρω, χάρις, χαρίζομαι, χαριτώ, ἀχάριστος, χάρισμα, εὐχαριστέω, εὐχαριστία, εὐχάριστος [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 9:359.]

⁷⁴Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand

to most ancient Greek understandings of χαρά. It especially was prominent positively in the mystery cults around the city. Paul's Jewish heritage provided a defining context for χαρά out of the religious expression of gladness over the kingship of God.⁷⁵ Thus χαρά is festive joy, i.e., gladness over God's salvation and rulership over all creation. Although often used in the first Christian century in a non-religious sense, for the early Christians χαρά was deeply religious in orientation.⁷⁶

This was the basis of Paul's αἰ χαίροντες claim. The circumstances around him, even inside church life, might produce λυπούμενοι, but by looking beyond human failures to the majesty and rulership of God he found continual gladness.⁷⁷ Ministry then was embed-

Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 9:361.

75 “In the OT24 the experience and expression of joy are close to one another. One can see this in the juxtaposition of related expressions and their transl. into Gk. The usual Hebr. equivalent is *שמח*, *התעורר*, cf. *היה* and terms for the expression of joy *גן*, *לג*, *שש*, *גלגל*, etc.²⁵ In the Ps. *שמח* is transl. by *εὐφραίνομαι* → II, 773, 12 ff.²⁶ It is often combined with *ἀγαλλιάομαι* (→ I, 19, 1 ff.), *ψ* 9:3; 30:8; 89:14.27” [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 9:362–363.]

76“As in profane Gk. and the OT *χαίρω* is associated with related verbs: *ἀγαλλιάομαι*, Mt. 5:12; 1 Pt. 4:13; Rev. 19:7, *εὐφραίνομαι*, Lk. 15:32; Rev. 11:10. The part. qualifies acts in Lk.: ‘full of joy,’ Lk. 19:6 etc.; we find the acc. of inner obj. at Mt. 2:10: *χαρὰν χαίρω*, 61 cf. *φόβον φοβέομαι*, Mk. 4:41 → 209, 16 f., with dat.⁶² *χαρᾶ χαίρω*, Jn. 3:29, cf. Is. 66:10. The obj. or reason may be indicated by the prep. *ἐπί* with dat., Mt. 18:13; Lk. 1:14; 13:17; Ac. 15:31; R. 16:19; 1 C. 13:6; 2 C. 7:13; Rev. 11:10, *διὰ* with acc., Jn. 3:29; 1 Th. 3:9, and *ἐν*, Phil. 1:18a, by *ὄτι*, Lk. 10:20 (twice); Jn. 11:15; 14:28; 2 C. 7:9, 16; Phil. 4:10; 2 Jn. 4, cf. 2 C. 13:9, or by part., Mt. 2:10; Lk. 23:8; Jn. 20:20; Ac. 11:23; Phil. 2:28; Mk. 14:11, cf. Ac. 13:48; Col. 2:5; 3 Jn. 3.⁶³” [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 9:366–367.]

77 “Here [in Paul] *χαρά*⁸⁷ is never a profane mood. In Paul it is bound up with his work as an apostle. It is *χαρὰ τῆς πίστεως*, Phil. 1:25,⁸⁸ a fruit of the Spirit, Gl. 5:22. There is thus reference to the eschatological and paradoxical element in it.⁸⁹ ‘The kingdom of God is righteousness and peace and joy,’ R. 14:17 → II, 416, 10 ff.⁹⁰ The eschatological significance may also be seen in the connection with *ἐλπίς*, R. 12:12; 15:13 → II, 417, 11 ff.⁹¹ The material relation between the two is brought out in R. 5:1 ff. with the help of the opposite concept of *θλιψις*.⁹² Joy is the actualisation of freedom, which takes concrete form in fellowship, R. 12:15.⁹³ The dialectic is worked out most sharply in 1 C. 7:30. Those who rejoice should be *ὡς μὴ χαίροντες*.⁹⁴ Joy is an essential factor in the relation between apostle and community. Paul asks the Roman church to pray that he might come with joy, R. 15:32. Joy is reciprocal, Phil. 2:28 f.; 2 C. 2:3 in contrast to *λύπη*. It is a matter of more than mood. In 1 Th. 3:9, with a play on *εὐχαριστέω*, joy is in God, and in Phil. 3:1; 4:4, 10, with the formula *ἐν κυρίῳ*, which has ecclesiological significance, it is in the Lord. Joy in the relation between apostle and community is eschatological. In the parousia the community will be manifested as the apostle's work, 1 Th. 2:19,

ded with this sense of gladness and thus was validated through χαρά being centered on God.

ὡς πτωχοὶ πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες, *as though being poverty stricken but enriching many*. Both this set and the following one stand in close relationship to one another via common content. The common contrast is between poverty / wealth but with slightly different meanings.

Paul and his associates lived literally as beggars materially. The adjective *πτωχός*, -ή, -όν denotes extreme poverty. They were dependent on others for financial support, places to stay etc. Religion did not make them wealthy in any way possible.

But their ministry made many rich: πολλοὺς δὲ πλουτίζοντες. Not materially but as 1 Cor. 3:21-23 asserts, rich in spiritual blessings from God. Many people, i.e., those who heard the apostle Gospel and committed themselves to Christ, became possessors of God's blessings, something far more valuable than material possessions.

ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες, *as though not having anything but possessing everything*. Again the contrast is between material poverty and spiritual riches. But it is Paul and his associates who are now the focus of attention. Interestingly, very similar expressions were common among the Greek and Latin philosophers of Paul's time.⁷⁸ Paul seems to have adopted this philo-

cf. Phil. 4:1. The same thought stands behind the prologue to Phil. In Phil. 2:17 f. we find *συγχαίρω* alongside the simple *χαίρω*; this reflects the mutuality → lines 21 ff.” [Gerhard Kittel, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964–), 9:369.]

78“The antitheses are brought to a climax in the final *ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες*, with a heightening of the rhetorical effect in relation to the immediately preceding contrast: the *πτωχοὶ* now becomes *μηδὲν ἔχοντες*. This is surely to be understood in the material sense, of lack of possessions and financial resources.¹⁹⁶¹ The content of the *πάντα*, on the other hand, is clearly of a spiritual nature. There are parallels in 1 Cor 3:21–22 and Rom 8:32. In the former passage the *πάντα* refers to the services of the various apostles, at the disposal of the Corinthians, and also to control over the universal forces of life, death and present and future vicissitudes, in the sense that believers are no longer dominated by these powers.¹⁹⁶² In Rom 8:32 Paul may have in mind the future glory, or simply ‘the fullness of salvation’¹⁹⁶³ in a general sense. Any or all of these ideas may be in view in 2 Cor 6:10. In any case, the *πάντα* must be filled with Christian content. But the general idea that the one destitute of material possessions may yet in some different sense be rich, and ‘possess everything’ was familiar to anyone acquainted, directly or indirectly, with the popular philosophy of the day, especially as found in the Stoic and Cynic traditions.¹⁹⁶⁴ The Cynic philosopher Crates is represented as claiming *ἔχοντες μηδὲν πάντ' ἔχομεν*.¹⁹⁶⁵ Diogenes is said by Diogenes Laertius to have argued that the wise man possesses all things since he is a friend of the gods to whom all things belong and friends have property in common,¹⁹⁶⁶ and Philo uses the same argument in claiming that God put the whole cosmos into the hands of Moses.¹⁹⁶⁷ Philostratus represents Apollonius of Tyana as saying: *εἶδον ... Ἰνδοῦς Βραχμᾶνας ... οὐδὲν κεκτημένους*

sophical saying, given it Christian meaning, and then asserted it as validation of his ministry to the Corinthians, some of whom were highly influenced by Greek modes of philosophical thinking. Thus this final claim possesses a subtle nuanced meaning distinctly targeting these people in the Corinthian church.

In summary, for Paul his ministry had the stamp of God’s approval on it that could be clearly seen in the way he and his associates lived out their lives. The stacking up of these 28 comparative sets of modifiers to both *συνιστάντες ἑαυτοὺς ὡς θεοῦ διάκονοι* (v. 4a) and *καὶ ἰδοὺ ζῶμεν* (v. 9b) become a compelling argument for legitimate ministry. The apostle through these pleads with all the Corinthians to accept his and his associates’ ministry claims. To be sure many in the church had already given him a ‘thumbs up’ but there were others who still did not want to admit that the true Gospel was being brought to them by Paul.

10.2.3.1.8.2.2 Second set of appeals, 6:11-13

11 Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Κορίνθιοι, ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτνται· 12 οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε ἐν ἡμῖν, στενοχωρεῖσθε δὲ ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ὑμῶν· 13 τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν, ὡς τέκνοις λέγω, πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς.

11 We have spoken frankly to you Corinthians; our heart is wide open to you. 12 There is no restriction in our affections, but only in yours. 13 In return—I speak as to children—open wide your hearts also.

115^{6.11} Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν
πρὸς ὑμᾶς,
Κορίνθιοι,
116 ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτνται·
117^{6.12} οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε
ἐν ἡμῖν,
δὲ
118 στενοχωρεῖσθε
ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ὑμῶν·
6.13 δὲ
τὴν αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν
ὡς τέκνοις λέγω,
119 πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς.

Here the way of presenting his ideas shifts dramatically from that in the preceding pericopes. Comparison of the diagrams above highlights visually this shift. In a single Greek sentence the apostle packs together five very forceful appeals to the Corinthians. The ideas are ἢ τὰ πάντων (‘“I saw Indian Brahmins ... possessing nothing, yet having the riches of all men”’, LCL).¹⁹⁶⁸ It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Paul intentionally takes over a familiar philosophical motif and christianises it. This last antithesis, like five out of the six which precede it, expresses in paradoxical fashion two aspects of Paul’s existence.” [Margaret E. Thrall, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (London; New York: T&T Clark International, 2004), 467–468.]

communicated via metaphorical language rather than by direct expression.

Structurally he begins with two declarations in #s 115-116 affirming his positive stance toward them. Their response in #s 117-119 is essentially twofold with the play on *στενοχωρεῖσθε* in #s 117-118. To this point the apostle has made a series of claims, but in #119 he shifts from indicative mood verbs to an imperative verb in pleading with the Corinthians to reverse the *στενοχωρεῖσθε* of # 118. Thus the pericope is built around declarations (#s 115-118) and an appeal (# 119). The focus in #s 115-116 is on Paul and his associates and their reaching out to the Corinthians. The inadequate response of the Corinthians then occupies #s 117-119.

Reaching out to the Corinthians, v. 11: Τὸ στόμα ἡμῶν ἀνέωγεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, Κορίνθιοι, ἡ καρδία ἡμῶν πεπλάτνται· *our mouth is open wide to you, Corinthians; our heart is enlarged greatly.* The images of mouth and heart communicate Paul’s ideas here. The common point of these two images is enlargement that makes the point of inclusion of the Corinthians.

The symbolism of mouth is communication and of heart is deliberate commitment. The first metaphor alludes to his speaking not only the Gospel to the Corinthians but also as he has just written to them up to this point in the letter, in particular 6:3-10. The second metaphor, heart, has nothing to do with feelings but the volitional use of the metaphor in the ancient world speaks here to Paul’s sincere commitment to ministry to the Corinthians that he is defending in this letter. The enlarging of his heart stresses expansion of that commitment to them in spite of their improper treatment of him.

Corinthians’ response to this reaching out, vv. 12-13: 12 οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε ἐν ἡμῖν, στενοχωρεῖσθε δὲ ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις ὑμῶν· 13 τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν, ὡς τέκνοις λέγω, πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς. *You are not being squeezed by us, but you are being squeezed by your guts. But as to children I speak -- you too must open wide your own response.* Here the central image is the *guts*, *σπλάγχνον*, as the source of feelings. The point of the images is the reverse of enlargement above in v. 11. Their gut has been squeezed closed but it must be opened up for inclusion of Paul and his associates. The distinctive use of the metaphors of eye, heart, and gut makes unique points in the context of first century use of these human organs metaphorically. What Paul seeks is the Corinthians’ acceptance of him and his associates to the same level as their acceptance of the Corinthians.

The *σπλάγχνον* in the ancient world stood as the symbol of emotions and affections. Besides the one literal usage in Acts 1:18 in reference to Judas, the remaining nine uses (all but two in Paul) are figurative

uses referring to emotions of some sort. Paul's appeal to the Corinthians is to at least have a positive feeling toward him and his associates. That positive attitude is not being squeezed off by him or his associates (#117). Instead, the Corinthians are squeezing their own gut in adopting negative feelings toward him (#118). But they desperately need to do just the opposite. That is, they need to expand their gut (# 119) by coming up to the same level of posture toward Paul as he and his associates have toward them. It was unlikely that the Corinthians as a whole Christian community would ever possess the same kind of commitment to the Gospel and toward Paul as he possessed. But at minimum, they could adopt increasingly positive attitudes.

With this set of appeals the apostle reaches out to the Corinthians urging them to adopt increasingly greater positive attitudes toward him. He and his associates have reached out to them in ministry in sincere commitment and frank, honest preaching of the Gospel. Some of them have shut him off in adopting negative attitudes toward him and his associates. But the Corinthians themselves have done this, not Paul or his associates. The Corinthians themselves then can reverse this stance and the apostle lovingly urges them to do so.

In Christian ministry not everyone is going to like you. Some people in fact will despise you, even inside the Christian community of believers. But from Paul's words here a couple of important principles emerge. First, by your words, behavior, and attitudes do not give them any justification for shutting you out. Second, continue reaching out to them even when they do reject you. In God's strength you can do this. Be true to the Gospel and speak encouraging words of reconciliation even if these words fall on deaf ears.