

Hendrikus Boers
Christ in the Letters of Paul

Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die
neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
und die Kunde der älteren Kirche

Herausgegeben von

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Band 140



Walter de Gruyter · Berlin · New York

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In Place of a Christology



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⊗ Printed on acid-free paper which falls within the guidelines of the ANSI to ensure permanence and durability.

ISBN-13: 978-3-11-018992-6

ISBN-10: 3-11-018992-5

ISSN 0171-6441

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Boers, Hendrikus.

Christ in the Letters of Paul : in place of a Christology / Hendrikus Boers.

p. cm. — (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche ; Bd. 140)

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 3-11-018992-5 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Jesus Christ — History of doctrines — Early church, ca. 30–600.
2. Bible. N.T. Epistles of Paul — Criticism, interpretation, etc. I. Title.
II. Series.

BT198.B615 2006

232.092—dc22

2006016014

Bibliographic information published by Die Deutsche Bibliothek

Die Deutsche Bibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data is available in the Internet at <<http://dnb.ddb.de>>.

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Printed in Germany
Cover design: Christopher Schneider, Berlin

For Ernst Käsemann

July 12, 1906 – February 17, 1998

Preface

This study is a reading of Paul in an attempt to learn from his writings what Christ meant for him. For that reason I quote him repeatedly to focus on his own formulations of his thoughts to prevent the development of abstractions of his meanings based on prior readings, also those that develop in the course of the investigation. Methodologically, this procedure is important for the investigation. It ensures that the Pauline text always remains in focus, not an abstraction from memory. Thus, the repeated readings were not always identical in meaning, leading frequently to different, sometimes corrected, understandings of the texts.

The investigation proceeded on two levels. At the basic level it is a reading of those texts which express the meaning of Christ for Paul, without attention to the secondary literature, as described in the previous paragraph. This constitutes the main text. At a second level, represented by the footnotes and excurses, I take into account the texts exegetically, to make sure that there are not meanings I missed, and to control possible misreadings. Here too my interest is not primarily in abstractions or abstracts of the scholarly discussion, but to present the accumulation of scholarly insights on the texts. Only rarely do I find it necessary to engage in the general issues involved in their interpretation. I hope they make good reading for the Pauline scholar. My interest at this second level is not limited to what these texts reveal about the meaning of Christ for Paul, but extend to all aspects of the texts as background to the readings that form the substance of the investigation at the primary level. They can be read in that way; I tried to make sure that one could move fluently from the primary investigation in the main text to this exegetical level in the footnotes and excurses.

I dedicate this investigation to Ernst Käsemann, who, along with Herbert Braun, was a decisive influence on my thinking throughout my entire academic career. My relationship with him continued to the end of his life, as my initial methodological reflections in this investigation will show.

A few expressions of appreciation are in order. I started this investigation at the Philipps-Universität in Marburg, and remember with appreciation the hospitality I received there, especially from the colleagues in New Testament, Dieter Lührmann, Wolfgang Harnisch and Gerd Schunack. Part One was read by Wolfgang Harnisch of the Philipps-Universität in Marburg and Steve Kraftchick of Emory University in Atlanta. Both provided important

information about details, and Steve especially made some insightful and sensitive observations about the content, including that the original title was misleading about the purpose of the investigation, which lead to many hours of reflection to find one that more accurately expressed that purpose. Carl Holladay encouraged and supported my submission of the manuscript to Walter de Gruyter for possible publication. At the press I found understanding support from the editor of the *Beihefte*. Given the history of our family names — Bur- (North-West German) = Boer (Dutch) —, I would like to think of him, not as Carsten Burfeind, but as what he has been to me, Carsten Burfreund. To all of them my sincere appreciation.

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Christ in the Letters of Paul In Place of a Christology

Introduction: In search of a method

In my previous studies of the way Paul thought it had become increasingly clear that Christ was one of the most fundamental factors in his thinking. The question arose whether Christ may not be the unifying center of his thought. With that in mind I gathered the texts in which Christ plays a central role to determine whether it was not possible to find some central configuration which determined the direction of his thought. My approach was to avoid secondary literature at the beginning of the investigation, not because of a lack of appreciation for contemporary Pauline scholarship,¹ but because my interest was in a study of Paul's thought through a concentrated investigation of his own writings. I was concerned not to allow a single text that could provide insight into the role Christ played in his thought to escape my attention. It soon became clear that his statements concerning Christ do not arise from anything approximating a unified conception. However, it also became clear that my intention of discussing every text in which Christ plays a role would have been an impossible task. I had to limit the scope of the investigation to make it manageable. I limited myself to texts in which the meaning of Christ for Paul personally comes to expression, and to those expressing the meaning of Christ's death/crucifixion, resurrection and parousia for the believer.

What played an important role in my initial attempts at understanding the place of Christ in Paul's thought was correspondence with Ernst Käsemann just as I was preparing for this research. Considering this correspondence in the context of my search for a method it appeared to me that Käsemann had an understanding of Christ so similar to Paul that he did not seem to have to reflect on Paul's usage, and I assumed that that meant a similarly clearly defined conception of Christ. I found myself at a great disadvantage in not having the religious sensitivities through which I might find access to Paul's thought, but I hoped to find guidance from Käsemann. I was sure that Paul must have had a deeply religious sensitivity through which Christ determined

1 After completion of my investigation, I consulted the secondary literature in search of supplementary information and as a control of my results.

his thinking, something for which Käsemann appeared to have had an almost innate affinity. The question was how I could gain access to it.

I did not consider appropriate the method I used to understand the grammar of Paul's thought through an investigation of his use of critical terms, originally suggested in "A Context for Interpreting Paul" with a preliminary investigation of his use of πίστις,² followed by an investigation of his use of ἀγάπη and χάρις,³ and then of νόμος and the large number of terms related to it, ἐντολή, ἔργον/ἐργάζομαι, Ἰουδαῖος /περιτομή, and ἔθνος /ἀκροβυστία.⁴ It was not that I had become persuaded that Paul thought in terms of some fundamental principle which functioned as the basis of his reasoning as he addressed the various issues with which he found himself confronted, but I did expect Christ to be a reality which determined his thought in a way that could provide an important key to understanding him. My intention remained to clarify the grammar of his thought. What was different was that the subject-matter was now not lexical-syntactic, but semantic. It concerned no longer the forms of his expressions, but their content. My problem was that I did not know how to gain access to this aspect of his thought. Unlike in the previous lexical-syntactic studies in which I investigated the ways in which Paul used the available linguistic means to express his thoughts, the issue now concerned the content of his thoughts, in which it was clear that there was no content except what was expressed by means of the lexical-syntactic resources available to him. The task remained an understanding of a material feature of his thought, without falling back into taking the expressions themselves as the content. Christ determined Paul's thought — about that I had no doubt —; the question was how that took place. My problem was to avoid identifying an abstraction from Paul's expressions as the foundation of his thought. Such an abstraction would be an idea, the *idea* of Christ as the foundation of his thought, which was precisely what I wanted to avoid.

Even after I had given up the idea of Christ as a central reality which informed Paul's thought, I was still trying to arrange his thoughts in such a way that a fundamental configuration could emerge — or something like that. I was not sure what it was I was looking for, but hoped that it would emerge through a constant engagement with the texts. More than once I thought there was progress, only to find that I was once more at a dead-end.

I was able to overcome this impasse only when I realized that there was no fundamental configuration of the meaning of Christ which informed Paul's

2 H. Boers, "A Context for Interpreting Paul," *Texts and Contexts: Biblical Texts in Their Textual and Situational Contexts. Essay in Honor of Lars Hartman* (ed. T. Fornberg, Helholm; Oslo-Copenhagen-Stockholm-Boston: Scandinavian University Press, 1995) 429–53.

3 "Αγάπη and Χάρις in Paul's Thought," *CBQ* 59 (1997) 693–713.

4 "Paul and Justification Through the Law" (Unpublished).

thinking, but that in a variety of contexts he placed his understanding of himself and of his readers in the context of Christ as he experienced him, and as he expected his readers to experience him. Even though Christ could not have functioned like a word which Paul used to express a variety of meanings, his fundamental commitment to Christ made it possible for him to come to new insights about Christ as he engaged with issues in continually changing circumstances. His understanding of Christ was as a real being, not a theological idea, the person whom he had encountered at a time when he was still persecuting the church, as he states in Gal 1:15–16b:

¹⁵ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεός] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ¹⁶ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν . . .

Paul's purpose in this statement is not to clarify who Christ is, not even by referring to him as God's son,⁵ but to interpret the meaning of God revealing Christ "in me" (ἐν ἐμοί)⁶ as the foundation of his conversion — by implication from the textual setting⁷ —, grounding it in God through Christ. He also interprets the meaning of God's revelation of Christ ἐν ἐμοί explicitly as having been for the sake of his commission as an apostle to the gentiles, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (v. 16b).⁸

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- 5 God's revelation of Christ to Paul did reveal something about who Christ was, as James D. G. Dunn (*The Epistle to the Galatians* [BNTC; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrikson, 1995]) states, "[The revelation of Jesus Christ] also meant the recognition that God had acknowledged as indeed his Son the very one whom the law had consigned, like the Gentiles, to the status of an outsider" (67). Similarly, Richard N. Longenecker (*Galatians* [WBC; Dallas: Word Books, 1990]), "What Paul received by revelation on his way to Damascus was (1) a new understanding of Jesus Christ, which he shared with others who had come in contact with the resurrected Lord" (31). However, Paul does not present God's revelation of Christ here as a statement about Christ, but of what Christ had now come to mean to him.
 - 6 On ἐν ἐμοί, see Hans Dieter Betz (*Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979]): "We should not suppose that Paul feels he contradicts himself in Gal 1:16 [where the meaning is primarily internal] and 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8 [where the meaning is clearly external]. Apparently for him the two forms of the visions (external and internal) are not as distinct as they may be for some commentators. . . . The 'in me' corresponds to Gal 2:20 ('Christ . . . lives in me') and 4:6 ('God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts')." (71). In this interpretation he is followed by Dunn (*Galatians*, 64) and Longenecker (*Galatians*, 31).
 - 7 So Dunn, "The implication clearly is that it was a new perception of Christ which made the transformation (from zealot within Judaism to 'apostle to the Gentiles') both possible and necessary" (*Galatians*, 67).
 - 8 So Adolf Schlatter (*Die Briefe an die Galater, Epheser, Kolloser und Philemon* [Schlatter's Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1908; 4th ed. 1928, reprint 1949]): "Gott hat [Paulus] deshalb zum Empfänger seiner Gnade gemacht, damit er ihr Werkzeug sei" (26). Also Herman Ridderbos (*The Epistle of Paul to the Churches of Galatia* [Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1976] 64) and Dunn (*Galatians*, 71).

Paul does not develop the meaning of Christ into a configuration of ideas at the basis of his thought — a christology — because Christ continually achieves new meaning for him in changing situations. The pervasiveness of Christ in his letters makes it clear that Christ was in his mind almost all the time. Because of the pervasiveness of Christ in his life, Paul evidently did not try to define what Christ meant to him, but discovered that meaning anew in ever changing situations. Even though Christ was not like another term he used to express his meanings, there is nevertheless a similarity in the way Christ functioned in his thinking and the way he used terms to express his meanings. As little as of words, does he appear to have had a defined meaning of Christ. Nowhere does he attempt to provide a coherent explication of such a meaning; nowhere is there a suggestion of a teaching about Christ, a christology.⁹ There are cases where he does make use of existing expressions of the meaning of Christ, most notably in the tradition he quotes in 1 Cor 15:3b–7,

^{3b}παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον, ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, ⁴καὶ ὅτι ἐτάφη, καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφάς, ⁵καὶ ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ, εἶτα τοῖς δώδεκα· ⁶ἔπειτα ὤφθη ἐπάνω πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς ἐφάπαξ, ἐξ ὧν οἱ πλείονες μένουσιν ἕως ἄρτι, τινὲς δὲ ἐκοιμήθησαν· ⁷ἔπειτα ὤφθη Ἰακώβω, εἶτα τοῖς ἀποστόλοις πᾶσιν·

and in the Philippians hymn, Phil 2:6–11,

¹⁶ὃς ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων οὐχ ἄρπαγμόν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, ⁷ἀλλὰ ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν μορφὴν δούλου λαβὼν, ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων γενόμενος· καὶ σχήματι εὐρεθεὶς ὡς ἄνθρωπος ⁸ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν γενόμενος ὑπῆκοος μέχρι θανάτου, θανάτου δὲ σταυροῦ. ⁹διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ὑπερέψωσεν καὶ ἐχαρίσατο αὐτῷ τὸ ὄνομα τὸ ὑπὲρ πάντων ὀνομα,

9 After I had been well into this investigation, I came across Calvin J. Roetzel's *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Columbia, South Carolina: University of South Carolina Press, 1998). He has an understanding of Paul's "theologizing" which agrees with the understanding of Paul's "christologizing:" to which I came in this study. He points out the "[his] approach will necessarily leave out much that is important in order to make a rather simple point that is widely acknowledged in theory but denied in practice, namely, that it is inappropriate to speak of Paul's theology as a fixed entity or as a systematic achievement. To put it directly, Paul composed letters, not a systematic theology. And, while he [93] hardly came to the epistolary context theologically empty, he responded to each context in a certain ad hoc manner. The letters thus offer a window onto Paul's interpretation of the gospel for a variety of contexts — situations in which persecution undermined confidence in Paul's gospel and hope for the future (1 Thess.), situations in which religious enthusiasm generated factions that threatened the very existence of the church (1 Cor.), situations in which competing apostles ridiculed Paul and sought to discredit his gospel (2 Cor.), situations in which rumors of Paul's notoriety threatened to undermine support for his mission (Rom.)" (*op. cit.*, 93–94).

¹⁰ἵνα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι Ἰησοῦ πάν γόνυ κάμψη ἐπουρανίων καὶ ἐπιγείων καὶ καταχθονίων, ¹¹καὶ πάντα γλῶσσα ἐξομολογήσεται ὅτι κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός εἰς δόξαν θεοῦ πατρὸς.

In neither case, however, does he use the quotation as the basis for an exposition of the meaning of Christ. In 1 Corinthians the tradition he quotes functions as the foundation for his reasoning in support of the resurrection of the dead in verses 12–23, εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν; (v.12),¹⁰ and in Philippians he quotes the hymn for purely paraenetic reasons,¹¹ as is shown by the statements with which he introduces the hymn,

⁴μὴ τὰ ἑαυτῶν ἕκαστος σκοποῦντες, ἀλλὰ [καὶ] τὰ ἐτέρων ἕκαστοι.
⁵τοῦτο φρονεῖτε ἐν ὑμῖν ὃ καὶ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (Phil 2:4–5),

and by the statement with which he concludes:

ὥστε, ἀγαπητοί μου, καθὼς πάντοτε ὑπηκούσατε, μὴ ὡς ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ μου μόνον ἀλλὰ νῦν πολλῶ μᾶλλον ἐν τῇ ἀπουσίᾳ μου, μετὰ φόβου καὶ τρόμου τὴν ἑαυτῶν σωτηρίαν κατεργάζεσθε (Phil 2:12).

In neither case does the quotation function as the foundation for the presentation of a teaching about Christ.

More typically, Paul does not rely on existing expressions of the meaning of Christ in his reasoning, but on the experience of Christ, his own as well as that of his readers. For example, in Philippians, to answer the charge that he has abandoned obedience to the Law, he describes the overwhelming experience he had of Christ,

⁷ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἤγημαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. ⁸ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω ⁹καὶ εὐρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ

10 So, for example, Hans Conzelmann (*Der erste Brief an die Korinther* [KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969]): “Das Thema wird dem Leser . . . erst von V. 12 ab sichtbar. Im Rückblick sieht man dann, wie V. 12ff. durch V. 1–11 vorbereitet wurden.” (293).

11 So Wilhelm Lueken (“Der Brief an die Philipper,” *Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1971] 383–402): “Man muß, um die dogmatische Bedeutung dieser berühmten Stelle nicht zu überschätzen, im Auge behalten, daß das Ganze eigentlich nur ein Nebensatz ist, der den Zweck hat, die vorbildliche Demut Christi auszuführen. Man darf die Stelle aber auch nicht zur bloßen Erläuterung einer sittlichen Mahnung verflüchtigen. In diesem Zusammenhange hat Paulus freilich keine Lehre über Jesu vorirdisches und gegenwärtiges Dasein geben wollen.” (390). Similarly, Marvin R. Vincent, (*The Epistles to the Philippians and Philemon* [ICC; Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1950] 78–9).

δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, ¹⁰τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, ¹¹εἴ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν (Phil 3:7–11).

And in Galatians, after he argued biographically to prove the validity of his proclamation of the gospel to the gentiles, he does not rely on that reasoning when he addresses his readers, but on their experience of Christ,

¹ὦ ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; ²τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως; (Gal 3:1–2)

Similarly, in 1 Corinthians, he challenges his readers to compare for themselves his and their relationships with Christ,

ἡμεῖς μωροὶ διὰ Χριστόν, ὑμεῖς δὲ φρόνιμοι ἐν Χριστῷ· ἡμεῖς ἀσθενεῖς, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἰσχυροί· ὑμεῖς ἐνδοξοὶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄτιμοι (1 Cor 4:10).

And in 2 Cor 13:5 explicitly as a self-test:

ἐαυτοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἐστὲ ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἐαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε· ἢ οὐκ ἐπιγινώσκετε ἐαυτοὺς ὅτι Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐν ὑμῖν; εἰ μήτι ἀδόκιμοὶ ἐστέ.

These texts will receive more detailed attention in the investigation which follows. In discussions which follow below, the texts which express the meaning of Christ for Paul himself, and the meaning of Christ's crucifixion, resurrection and parousia for his readers show that in his letters Paul relies very little on teachings about Christ, nor does he produce any of his own. What he relies upon are his own experiences and the experiences which he attempts to call forth among his readers.

How is it possible to write a christology of Paul when what Christ meant to him and to his readers kept finding new expressions as they, he himself and his readers, were confronted by new situations? There is no foundation in Paul's letters for a Pauline christology. Studies on Pauline christology have validity as scholarly abstractions drawn from Paul's letters, as constructive products of the scholars who engage in such endeavors, not as presentations of Paul's own christology.¹²

12 As I have commented a number of times, the same applies to so-called theologies of the New Testament. Those theologies too are abstractions from the New Testament by their authors. The most magnificent example remains Rudolf Bultmann's *Theology of the New Testament*. Today we know how well he served his own time by writing a "Theology of the New Testament" that was relevant for the time between the two world wars. Karl Barth recognized the issue very well when he abandoned his project of writing a *Christian Dogmatics* in favor of a *Church Dogmatics*.

In this regard Wilhelm Bousset (*Kyrios Christos: Geschichte des Christusglaubens von den Anfängen des Christentums bis Irenaeus* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913; 5th

One cannot take it as if Paul's relationship with Christ, even though personal, was similar to the relationships he had with other living persons, such as, Barnabas, Apollo, Peter, his readers, etc. On the other hand, Christ was not someone he knew and thought about in the abstract, either from information (teachings) which he received from others or a configuration of his own ideas about him. Christ was present to him as a living being, in the spirit, not in the flesh, and not only for him, but also for his readers. In this regard his denial of having received his gospel from human beings gains new significance, as he states in Galatians,

¹¹γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον· ¹²οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτό, οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην, ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:11-12).

He did not know Christ through a teaching, but through revelation:

¹⁵ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεός] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ¹⁶ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοὶ ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι (Gal 1:15-16).

The purpose of this study, thus, is not to extract the meaning of Christ for Paul from his thoughts, but to try and understand the role Christ played in his thinking. I begin with the meaning of Christ for Paul personally.

ed. 1965]; ET John E. Stealy [tr.], Nashville/New York: Abingdon Press, 1969) sounds a very different tone. Christ was a living reality for Paul and on that basis he should be understood. "Für den Apostel ist der in der christlichen Gemeinde verehrte Herr eine Wirklichkeit, die er als selbstverständlich und gegeben voraussetzt. Aber das alles wird für ihn nun freilich nur der Ausgangspunkt für eine weitere Entwicklung. In der Christusfrömmigkeit des Paulus klingt nun doch eine ganz neue Note an und wird zur Dominante: das intensive Gefühl der persönlichen Zugehörigkeit und geistigen Verbundenheit mit dem erhöhten Herrn" (*Kyrios Christos*, 104; ET, 153).

Part One

The meaning of Christ for Paul personally

1. Christ's appearance to Paul

One of the clearest expressions of Christ's meaning for Paul is Phil 3:2–14. After listing those virtues which made of him, to use his own words, a perfect Jew,

⁵περιτομή ὀκταήμερος, ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ, φυλῆς Βενιαμίν, Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων, κατὰ νόμον Φαρισαῖος, ⁶κατὰ ζήλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, κατὰ δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐν νόμῳ γενόμενος ἄμεμπτος (Phil 3:5–6),

he explains what the encounter with Christ meant for him,

⁷ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἡγῆμαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. ⁸ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω ⁹καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, ¹⁰τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, ¹¹εἰ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν (Phil 3:7–11).

Taken by itself, this statement could be understood as a clarification of the meaning of Christ in a generally valid sense, that is, as a meaning from which Paul could draw to express his thoughts. The context in which it occurs, however, makes it clear that what Paul wrote was not the expression of a general truth, but was formulated as a direct response to a personal challenge:¹

²βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας, βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας, βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν. ³ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἡ περιτομή, οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες

¹ In all of these cases I am not interested in the question whether Paul was replying to actual accusations or challenges, also not how well he understood challenges that may have been brought against him. My interest is entirely in the way Paul formulates his responses, which makes it irrelevant whether that to which he responded was real or formulated rhetorically.

I do assume, however, that the accusations to which Paul responded were not formulated rhetorically purely for the sake of his responses, but that he formulated the accusations as well as his responses to actual situations in the churches to which he wrote. So, for example, the challenge to which he responds in the Philippians fragment has to be distinguished concretely from that to which he responds in Galatians.

καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκὶ πεποιθότες, ⁴καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον (Phil 3:2–4).²

It is important to note that here, whatever may have prompted his attack, Paul does not answer a challenge concerning the justification of the gentiles, but a challenge to his credentials as a Jew.³ His defense is of himself personally. In verse 3, he begins by referring generally to ἡμεῖς as the circumcised, but then, in verse 4 he turns to himself, personally, with ἐγώ, as the one whom he defends.⁴ Paul reinforces this focus on himself by referring to Christ

- 2 There is an abrupt break between these verses and what precedes, although scholars disagree where the break actually occurs. Pierre Bonnard places it between 2:30 and 3:1, but possibly between 3:1a and 1b (*L'Épître de Saint Paul aux Philippiens* [CNT; Neuchâtel-Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1950] 59). Gerhard Friedrich considers the break to occur between 3:1a and 1b, assigning 3:1b to the discussion which follows. "Die nächsten Worte passen nicht in den Zusammenhang. Wahrscheinlich ist mit der Entschuldigung des Apostels, daß er immer wieder dasselbe schreibe, nicht die Ermahnung zur Freude gemeint — warum sollte eine so schöne Aufforderung dem Paulus lästig werden und der Gemeinde Sicherheit geben? —, sondern die Warnung vor Ihrlehrem" (*Der Brief an die Philipper* [NTD; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963] 116). He points out that with his words in verse 1a, Paul frequently introduces his final remarks (2 Cor 13:11; Gal 6:17; 2 Thess 3:1; Phil 4:8). "An 3,1a könnte sich gut 4,10 oder 4,21 anschließen" (*op. cit.*, 115). Irrespective of where the break actually occurs, Paul's turn to an attack in 3:2 is abrupt, without a connection to what precedes.
- 3 The abrupt break between 3:2 and what precedes, wherever one places the break, leaves no context within which Paul's reasoning can be placed. Thus, there is nothing by means of which one can determine what Paul means by his abrupt turn to an attack on opponents. For most scholars the obvious solution is that it must have been Paul's Judaizing opponents: J. B. Lightfoot (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians and Philemon* [Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 1881] 143, cf. 69–70); Vincent (*Philippians and Philemon*, 92–3); Karl Barth (*Erklärung des Philipperbriefs* [Zollikon: Evangelischer Verlag, 1947] 91–2); Friedrich (*Philipper*, 116); Schlatter (*Die Briefe und die Thessaloniker, Philipper, Timotheus und Titus* [Schlatters Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1908; 4th ed. 1928; 1949] 84); Bonnard (*Philippiens*, 60). Ernst Lohmeyer considers the opponents to have been non-believing Jews in agreement with the different context he established for the letter. According to him, the local synagogue tempted the believing community to be part of Judaism as the means by which they could avoid martyrdom for being involved in an illicit religion (*Der Brief an die Philipper, an die Kolosser und an Philemon* [KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917] 124–26). For Lohmeyer the topic throughout the letter is martyrdom. Bonnard correctly rejects martyrdom as the context: "... comme nous l'avons déjà noté, nous ne trouvons dans toute l'épître aucune allusion explicite au martyre" (*op. cit.* 59).
- 4 So, explicitly Lohmeyer: "Hatte Pls. bisher von 'Wir' gesprochen, so redet er jetzt nur noch von sich" (*Philipper, Kolosser und Philemon*, 128); Also Bonnard (*Philippiens*, 61), who refers to Gerhard Heinzelmann (*Das Neue Testament Deutsch* [1935]): "Heinzelmann relève que la passion avec laquelle Paul s'exprime fait penser qu'il ne se défend pas seulement contre des adversaires lointains, mais contre une tentation personnelle de retourner aux valeurs juives; l'apôtre est encore dans le combat de la foi." (Bonnard, *op. cit.*, 64). I have not been able to trace a copy of Heinzelmann's book.

as [ὁ κύριος] μου, in contrast with the more typical ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν.⁵ He continues in this personal vein beyond his attack on his opponents all the way through verse 16. Only in verse 17 does he begin to apply his own experience of Christ to his readers, but by then he has left his attack on his opponents well behind. It is difficult to see how what Paul wrote in 3:2–11, especially in the context provided by verses 2–6, could apply to the situation in Philippi.⁶

Within the larger context, however, the challenge about Paul's un-Jewish behavior does concern his proclamation to the gentiles. It was within that context that he surrendered submission to the Law for the sake of what he found in Christ. Here, however, the issue is specifically his having given up living as a Jew under the Law.

Listing his virtues as a Jew in verses 5–6 brings to expression what he means by his denial of reliance on the flesh, καίπερ ἐγὼ ἔχων πεποιθήσιν καὶ ἐν σαρκί. εἴ τις δοκεῖ ἄλλος πεποιθέναι ἐν σαρκί, ἐγὼ μᾶλλον (v. 4). That it is an issue of the justification of the Jew, and not the gentile,⁷ is also clear from the words with which he introduces his defense, ἡμεῖς γάρ ἐσμεν ἢ περιτομή, οἱ πνεύματι θεοῦ λατρεύοντες καὶ καυχώμενοι ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐν σαρκί πεποιθότες (v. 3), in contrast with what he perceives about his accusers, βλέπετε τοὺς κύνας, βλέπετε τοὺς κακοὺς ἐργάτας, βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν (v. 2). He formulates it as an issue of circumcision. Against those who are, in his understanding, challenging him concerning circumcision in the flesh he replies with circumcision in the spirit. Verses 7–11 give expression to what he understands to be the true meaning of being circumcised.

In 2 Cor 11:22 Paul responds to what appears to have been a similar challenge to his credentials as a Jew, Ἑβραῖοι εἰσιν; καγὼ. Ἰσραηλῖται εἰσιν; καγὼ. σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ εἰσιν; καγὼ. What is different is that he understands the challenge to which he responds in 2 Corinthians to have been aimed at his credentials as an apostle as well, διάκονοι Χριστοῦ εἰσιν; παραφρονῶν λαλῶ,

5 So, Friedrich: "Die Worte des Apostels Paulus haben an dieser Stelle den Charakter eines persönlichen Bekenntnisses. Er nennt sonst Christus 'den Herrn', oder, wenn er sich mit den andern Christen zusammenschließt, 'unsern Herrn'. Im Gegensatz dazu steht hier das bei Paulus ungewöhnliche 'mein Herr'" (*Philipper*, 118).

6 A solution of the problem how Paul's attack on his opponents relates to the Philippians is that he presents himself as an example. So, for example, Vincent: "In illustration of the statement that Christians have no confidence in the flesh, he adduces his own case, showing what exceptional ancestral and ecclesiastical advantages as a Jew he renounced for Christ's sake" (*Philippians and Philemon*, 94); Friedrich (*Philipper*, 116). Or as a warning against false teaching; Bonnard (*Philippiens*, 60–1). Also Luecken, even though he considers it not to have been an issue that arose in Philippi. "Vielleicht hat Paulus gerade aus einer andern Gemeinde schlimme Nachricht erhalten oder in Rom selbst schweren Verdruß durch seine alten Gegner gehabt" ("Philipper," 395).

7 As we will see below in connection with Gal 1:16, however, Paul's understanding was that Jews too were not justified by their submission to the Law, but through the faith of Christ.

ὑπὲρ ἐγὼ (v. 23a–c). The similarity of Paul's Jewish credentials in 2 Corinthians to what he states in Phil 3:2–14 is such that one might well wonder if his outburst in Philippians may not have been prompted by the same kind of a challenge to which he responded in 2 Cor 11:22–23c.⁸ Even then, however, the difference in the expressions should be noted. In the 2 Corinthians passage apostleship is included among the credentials about which he defends himself, whereas in Phil 3:5–6 it is solely his Jewish credentials which stand over against the life he found in Christ for which he surrendered reliance on his superlatives as a Jew (vv. 7–11). The list of what Paul suffered for the sake of Christ in 2 Cor 11,

^{23d}... ἐν κόποις περισσοτέρως, ἐν φυλακαῖς περισσοτέρως, ἐν πληγαῖς ὑπερβαλλόντως, ἐν θανάτοις πολλάκις· ²⁴ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων πεντάκις τεσσεράκοντα παρὰ μίαν ἔλαβον, ²⁵τρὶς ἐραβδίσθην, ἅπαξ ἐλιθάσθην, τρὶς ἐναυάγησα, νυχθήμερον ἐν τῷ βυθῷ πεποίηκα· ²⁶ὁδοιπορίας πολλάκις, κινδύνους ποταμῶν, κινδύνους ληστῶν, κινδύνους ἐκ γένους, κινδύνους ἐξ ἔθνων, κινδύνους ἐν πόλει, κινδύνους ἐν ἐρημίᾳ, κινδύνους ἐν θαλάσῃ, κινδύνους ἐν ψευδαδέλφοις, ²⁷κόπῳ καὶ μόχθῳ, ἐν ἀγρυπνίαις πολλάκις, ἐν λιμῷ καὶ δίψει, ἐν νηστείαις πολλάκις, ἐν ψύχει καὶ γυμνότητι· ²⁸χωρὶς τῶν παρεκτός ἡ ἐπίστασίς μοι ἢ καθ' ἡμέραν, ἡ μέριμνα πασῶν τῶν ἐκκλησιῶν. ²⁹τίς ἀσθενεῖ, καὶ οὐκ ἀσθενῶ; τίς σκανδαλίζεται, καὶ οὐκ ἐγὼ πυροῦμαι; (2 Cor 11:23d–29),

8 Scholars disagree who Paul had in mind with his challenge in 2 Cor 12:22–29. One view is that the “pillars” in Jerusalem were intended: Schlatter (*Die Korintherbriefe ausgelegt für Bibelleser* [Schlatters Erläuterungen zum Neuen Testament; Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 3. Auflage 1920, reprint 1950] 338–39, also *Paulus der Bote Jesu. Eine Deutung seiner Briefe* [Stuttgart: Calwer Verlag, 1934; 2nd ed. 1956; 1962] 636–41), Héring (*La Seconde épître de saint Paul aux Corinthiens* [CNT; Neuchâtel-Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1958] 83) and Barrett (*The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* [BNTC; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1973] 278). Others consider it to have been a direct attack on Paul's opponents in Corinth: Alfred Plummer (*The Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians* [ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915] 319), Hans Windisch (*Der Zweite Korintherbrief* [KEK; Göttingen, 1924] 330, 350 and 352) and Bultmann (*Der zweite Brief an die Korinther* [KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1976] 205, 210 and 216). Héring, as others, distinguishes between the opponents in Corinth who challenged Paul and the Jerusalem apostles with whom Paul compares himself: “Il est difficile de ne pas penser aux frères de Jésus et aux Douze, qui aux yeux de certains missionnaires judéo-chrétiens étaient les seuls qui comptaient, ce qui ne prouve pas absolument qu'ils aient dénigré eux-mêmes l'œuvre de Paul” (*loc. cit.*). It is difficult to prove either understanding conclusively. Schlatter (*Der Bote Jesu*, 636–41) and Windisch (*op. cit.*, 352) provide extensive discussions which carefully weigh the evidence on both sides.

Bultmann considers the opponents in Corinth not as Judaizers, but as gnostic pneumatics: “[Es ist] ausgeschlossen, daß die Gegner Judaisten sind; denn der νόμος und die Bescheidung stehen nirgends in Frage. Sie sind vielmehr die gnostisierenden Pneumatiker” (*op. cit.*, 216).

also clearly places the focus on his apostleship as what he perceived to have been the main challenge, in which, in contrast with Phil 3:2–11, the challenge to his Jewish credentials fades into the background.

Returning to the meaning of Christ's appearance to Paul: In Phil 3:2–11 it was the challenge to his credentials as a Jew which prompted him to state what it meant for him to have given up reliance on his virtues as a Jew, that is, what his acceptance of Christ meant to him. He is not drawing on an idea of Christ, but on the reality of Christ in his life. The understanding to which he gives expression is not a general truth, but something which he formulates specifically in answer to the challenge that he no longer lived according to what was expected of a Jew under the Law. In his reply to the challenge, Christ plays the central role. The meaning which Christ has for him in Phil 3:2–11 arises from the challenge to which he responds, and is formulated specifically with that challenge in mind. Christ was so real to him that he did not have to rely on preformulated ideas about him.

In my discussions with Käsemann I had been led to believe that what Christ meant to Paul was the manifestation of a, for me, incomprehensible religious power. That, in part, led me astray. It now appeared that there had been nothing particularly incomprehensible about the great religious power which Christ had over Paul. Something Käsemann wrote now became clear, a close parallel to that about which Paul wrote in Phil 3:2–11. Like probably many others, I had always wondered what Käsemann meant when he said that he "learned theology from the Nazis." In this letter he explained how he had appropriated, inexplicably, as applicable specifically to himself a saying he heard when he was still at school, aged 15 or 16, quoted from memory: "Every human being must find his [or her] own master whom he [she] would follow to Olympus." The question he asked himself was who his master was. Where did he have to follow? Where was the Olympus that would and could give meaning to his life? The first to give him directions was the Essener youth pastor, Weigle, whose answer too he would not forget, "Do you ask who he is? . . ." [For an answer, Weigle advised]: He [Käsemann] had to become a theologian, not a pastor nor a teacher, as most of his relatives had been. He had to read the Bible; study! The way was prepared by Erik Peterson, Rudolf Bultmann, Adolf Schlatter, Karl Barth, Julius Schniewind, Hans Lietzmann, . . . until he encountered the Nazis. "Paradox: One has to have seen the devil to know, 'there is no other God.'" The question was to whom the world belonged.

The identity of the person he would follow to Olympus became clear when he observed Gestapo informers among the presbyters sitting on the bench next to the pulpit, writing down what he preached: Jesus Christ, whose

lordship over the world was denied by the Nazis.⁹ An even closer parallel to Käsemann's experience may be Gal 2:11–16.

¹¹ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν Κηφᾶς εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν, κατὰ πρόσωπον αὐτῷ ἀντέστην, ὅτι κατεγνωσμένος ἦν. ¹²πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ ἔλθειν τινὰς ἀπὸ Ἰακώβου μετὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν συνήσθιεν· ὅτε δὲ ἦλθον, ὑπέστελλεν καὶ ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτόν, φοβούμενος τοὺς ἐκ περιτομῆς. ¹³καὶ συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ [καὶ] οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι, ὥστε καὶ Βαρναβᾶς συναπήχθη αὐτῶν τῇ ὑποκρίσει. ¹⁴ἀλλ' ὅτε εἶδον ὅτι οὐκ ὀρθοποδοῦσιν πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου, εἶπον τῷ Κηφᾷ ἔμπροσθεν πάντων, εἰ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐχὶ Ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆς, πῶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις Ἰουδαΐζειν; ¹⁵ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἀμαρτωλοί, ¹⁶εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ

- 9 "Irgendwann in meinem Schultage hat sich ein Wort unvergeßlich bei mir eingebohrt. Ich zitiere frei: 'Ein jeder muss sich seinen Herren suchen, dem er die Wege zum Olymp nachgehen will'. Erstaunlich, daß ich, zu Hause, in der Schule und Kirche schon damals ein Rebell, — mein Vater war 1915 gefallen, meine Mutter hatte weder Zeit noch Kraft, mich zu lenken, die Schule haßte ich bis auf ein paar Lehrer, die ich respektierte, ohne mich ihnen zu fügen, — dieses 'Muß' hörte, als sei es mir gesagt und meinte mich allein. Wo war mein Herr? Wo hatte ich zu folgen? Wo war der Olymp, der meinem Leben Sinn geben sollte und konnte — gegen all meinen Willen? Der Essener Jugendpfarrer, vielleicht der unübertreffliche Charismatiker für tausende von Schülern und Lehrlinge, gab mir Antwort, die ich auch nie vergessen konnte: 'Fragst du, wer der ist' . . . Ich mußte Theologe werden, nicht Pastor, schon gar nicht Lehrer, wie meine ganze Verwandtschaft es war. Ich mußte die Bibel lesen, studieren. Wenn es sonst etwas Notwendiges gab, für mich gab es nur dieses Eine, 15-16-jährig. Niemand anders konnte mein Lehrer sein und werden. Peterson, Bultmann, Schlatter, Barth, Schniewind, Lietzmann bereiteten den Weg, bis ich zu den Nazis kam und in kurzer Frist, wieder unumkehrbar, durch meine Gemeinde lernte: Die nicht und nie. Da war nur noch Einer, der nicht Hölle verkörperte, die weltweit auf Erden herrschte. "Bultmanns Anthropologie war nach Peterson zu individuell. Exegese half auch zur Anthropologie. Ihr Thema aber war: Wem gehört die Weltherrschaft? Nicht nur die Bibel hatte es mit den Dämonen zu tun. Ich sah sie in jeder Predigt beim Blick auf die Gestapoleute, die mitschreiben, in den Presbytern auf der Bank neben dem Altar. Hier gab es nur eins zu entscheiden. Es ging nicht mehr um den Sinn einer Weltanschauung, auch nicht bloß um die Humanität des Idealismus. Entmythologisierung bedurfte nicht nur einer sakralen Sprache. Entmythologisiert werden mußte der Mensch und eine Menschheit, die wie im Sündenfall Autonomie und Emanzipation begehrte. Ihr Herr rief dazu gegen alle Philosophie, welche sich im Besitz der Wahrheit dünkte. Jesus entmythologisiert, 'der Herr Zabaoth.' 'Daß Jesus Christus sei mein Herr' war, das 1. Gebot interpretierend und konkretisierend, die Antwort auf meine Lebensfrage — "Paradox: Man muß den Teufel gesehen habe, um zu wissen: 'Und ist kein anderer Gott.' " (From a letter dated, May 1995).

Unlike Paul, Ernst Käsemann had no problem recognizing those who led him to Christ — his youth pastor, Peterson, Bultmann, Schlatter, Barth, Schniewind, Lietzmann — but in the end there is no difference. He did not learn who Christ was from those who pointed the way. For that reason he could state, so many times, paradoxically, I learnt theology from the Nazis. In the end, like Paul, he did not receive his gospel from any human being, but through the encounter with the reality of Christ himself, brought about by those who dared to challenge Christ's sovereignty over the world.

Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεῦσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

In each case it was the actions of opponents which led to a deeper, not a new, understanding of the reality and meaning of Christ. In the Antioch incident that meaning for Paul was that in Christ there could be no separation between Jewish and gentile believers; that Jews too, similar to gentiles, were not justified by the Law unless, ἐὰν μὴ,¹⁰ it was through the faith of Christ. Jews too were justified through the faith of Christ, which meant that in Christ there was no difference between Jewish and gentile believers. In the Philippians passage it was the value of what he found in Christ which justified him to count as nothing those qualities which, he could claim, made of him a perfect Jew. For Käsemann the issue was to whom the world belonged, to Christ or to the Nazis. The challenge of the Nazis gave decisive new meaning to his understanding of Christ.

Paul presents the incident in Antioch as a watershed in the relationship between Jewish and gentile believers. That is what it may indeed have been, also from the point of view of those against whom he positioned himself. From their point of view it was a question of the integrity of Jewish believers; whether, in the face of the acceptance of gentiles into their community, they could abandon their adherence to the Law.¹¹ From Paul's point of view,

10 Dogmatic considerations continue to prevent interpreters from accepting that Paul is not posing works of the Law and justification by faith as irreconcilable opposites here. So explicitly Ernest De Witt Burton: "ἐὰν μὴ is properly exceptive, not adversative . . . , but it may introduce an exception to the preceding statement as a whole or to the principle part of it — in this case to οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or to οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος alone. The latter alternative is clearly to be chosen here, since the former would yield the thought that a man can be justified by works of the law if this is accompanied by faith, a thought never expressed by the apostle and wholly at variance with his doctrine as unambiguously expressed in several passages" (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* [ICC; New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1920] 121). Also Lightfoot: "ἐὰν μὴ" retains its proper meaning, but refers only to οὐ δικαιούται, 'He is not justified from works of law, he is not justified *except* through faith.'" (*St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* [J. B. Lightfoot's Commentary on the Epistles of St. Paul; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993] 115). Similarly Albrecht Oepke (*Der Brief des Paulus an die Galater* [THKNT; Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1937] 45–6).

11 A decision had evidently not yet been made with regard to restrictions on Jewish believers in their relationships with gentiles. Peter had been uncertain on how he had to behave towards gentile believers, which led to his ambivalence when the brothers from James arrived. Scholars generally agree that no-one was in the wrong when the incident occurred. So already Burton: "... the situation at Antioch was not the result of repudiation of the Jerusalem agreement by any of the parties to it, but was simply the coming to the surface of the contradictory convictions which were only imperfectly harmonised in the compromise in which the Jerusalem conference issued" (*Galatians*, 106). Similarly, Oepke (*Galater*, 43–4); Schlatter (*Galater, Epheser, Kolosser und Philemon*, 43); Dunn (*Galatians*, 125).

Christ meant full acceptance of gentile believers without the boundaries of the Law which separated them from Jewish believers. The conflict had become inevitable. In Paul's presentation, he had been able to assert his point of view. In reality it was almost certainly the other point of view which prevailed. All the Jewish believers, including Barnabas, had already sided with Peter.¹²

It was not as if Käsemann encountered Christ for the first time in the Nazi challenge, or Paul in the challenges to which he responded in Phil 3:2–11 and Gal 2:11–16, but the challenges to which they responded brought greater, more decisive clarity concerning who Christ was, and of the meaning of their callings in Christ.¹³ What made Christ a new revelation for Käsemann was when Christ's authority over the world was challenged by the Nazis, similar to the deeper meaning Paul found in Christ when he found his understanding of the meaning of Christ challenged by the behavior of Peter and the other Jewish believers in Antioch, and, in the Philippians passage, when certain persons challenged him because of his un-Jewish behavior.

Paul's presentation of the incident in Antioch is not a factual report, but part of his means of guiding his gentile Galatian readers in their decision concerning circumcision.¹⁴ In that regard, there is an important difference be-

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- 12 Hans Lietzmann formulates the issue well: "Als Erfolg ist natürlich stillschweigend vorausgesetzt, daß sich Petrus der Rüge des Pls beugt und somit selbst dieses Haupt der Zwölf die paulinische Autorität anerkennt. Ob der Vorfall von der Gegenseite ebenso angesehen wurde, ist eine andere Frage" (*An die Galater* [HNT; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1971] 15). According to Longenecker "... while we may believe that Paul's case was right in the conflict at Antioch, we do not know how the situation was actually resolved in the church there. Paul tells us what he said to Peter (see also the discussion of 2:15–21 to follow), but he does not tell us how Peter, Barnabas, or the Antioch church reacted to what he said" (*Galatians*, 79). Paul may not tell us how Peter and the others reacted, but his report leaves little doubt that he had probably been defeated. Banabas no longer accompanied him.
- 13 Käsemann's experience does not have to be considered unique, and accordingly, also not Paul's. Another powerful example which comes to mind is Martin Luther King Jr. Similar to Käsemann, King's studies at Crozier Theological Seminary and Boston University prepared the way, but the challenge of Selma provided him with a decisive encounter with Christ, what Christ meant to him, and what his call in Christ required of him. It is not as if King had not previously been deeply involved in the struggle for civil rights, as Paul had been in a life in Christ and Käsemann in opposition to the Nazis, but in each case the manifestation of radical opposition led to a new, deeper understanding of the meaning of Christ.
- 14 The main concern in interpretations of the passage is whether Paul reports what he actually said to Peter, and if so where his speech to Peter ends and changes to an address to his readers. This is formulated in its plainest form by Lightfoot: "Were all the concluding verses of the chapter actually spoken by St Paul at the time, or is he adding a comment while narrating the incident afterwards to the Galatians; and if so, where does the text cease and the comment begin? To this question it seems impossible to give a definite answer. St Paul's narrative in fact loses itself in the reflexions suggested by it. Text and comment are so blended together that they cannot be separated without violence" (*Galatians*, 113–14). Similarly, Lietzmann (*Galater*, 15); Burton (*Galatians*, 111); Dieter

tween the Philippians and Galatians passages. In Phil 3:2–11 we have a direct confrontation with the issue at hand: In Gal 2:11–21 Paul does not address the situation in Antioch, but the situation in Galatia. The meaning of Christ for him in the Philippians passage was immediate in his response to that of which he found himself accused: In the case of Galatians, in addition to the meaning which Christ had for him in his confrontation with the issue which arose in Antioch, Paul made that meaning immediately relevant for the issue of circumcision in Galatia through the context in which he placed his account of the incident. This is clearly shown by the unmarked transition in Paul's speech from Peter to his Galatian readers, and vividly by Paul's implicit reference to circumcision in his accusatory question to Peter, πὼς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν,¹⁵ for which there is no reason in his report of what happened.¹⁶ He read it back into the incident to make it relevant for the situation in Galatia. As Kang-Yup Na has shown, in Paul's report of the incident, what he said to Peter was not intended for Peter's or the other Jewish believers' ears, but for the ears of his Galatian readers.¹⁷

In Gal 2:11–21, thus, Christ has a double meaning, first for Paul himself in the confrontation with Peter and the other Jewish believers in Antioch, and then, through his report of the incident, for his readers in Galatia. Paul made the meaning Christ had for him in the Antioch incident relevant for his readers in Galatia through his report of the incident. We do not have direct access to what Christ meant for him in the incident; we have access to that meaning

Lührmann (*Der Brief an die Galater* [Zürcher Bibelkommentare NT 7; Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1978] 41); Dunn (*Galatians*, 132).

Basing his inquiry on Wilhelm Diltthey's concept of autobiography, Kang-Yup Na ("The Meaning of Christ in Paul. A Reading of Galatians 1.11–2.21 in the Light of Wilhelm Diltthey's *Lebensphilosophie*" [Atlanta: Emory University, 2001]) has shown that not only Paul's reported speech in Gal 2:14d–21, but his entire autobiography in 1:13–2:10 was formulated with his Galatian readers as his primary focus.

15 So, for example, Heinrich Schlier (*Der Brief an die Galater* [KEK; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949, 4th Schlier edition, 1965] 87): "Ἰουδαΐζειν meint hier nicht nur mit der jüdischen Lebensweise sympathisieren, sondern an ihr teilnehmen, wobei Paulus im Sinn seiner damaligen Rede natürlich an den konkreten Fall der Unterwerfung unter die jüdischen Speisegebote dachte. Im Blick auf die jetzige Auseinandersetzung mit seinen galatischen Gegnern gehört zum ἰουδαΐζειν vor allem die Beschneidung."

16 Burton's explanation is to the point: "[The Jewish believers] were not dictating to the Gentile Christians what course they should pursue; it did not concern them which horn of the dilemma the Gentiles chose, whether they elected to observe the Jewish law, or to constitute a separate body from the Jewish believers; they were concerning themselves only with the conduct of Jewish Christians" (*Galatians*, 113).

17 "... although what Paul says in 2.15–16 does not apply directly to the Gentile Galatians, but to Cephas and the other Jewish believers in Antioch, it is really not intended with Cephas and the others in mind. Hence, even though 2.15–21 may be addressed to Cephas and the others in Jerusalem, they are actually intended for the ears of Paul's Galatian audience" ("The Meaning of Christ in Paul," 157).

only through his report of it with a view to its relevance for his Galatian readers.

In a similar way Paul makes the meaning which Christ had for him in his initial encounter with Christ relevant for his readers through his report of that event in Gal 1:15–16, to which I already referred above in connection with his conversion:

¹⁵ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν [ὁ θεὸς] ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ¹⁶ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί, ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, εὐθέως οὐ προσανεθέμην σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι.

Here too we have a statement that is formulated to have meaning in the context of the issues in Galatia to which Paul was responding. Paul's narrative of Christ's revelation to him is not intended as a report of his conversion and of his call, but to underscore the divine origin of his commission to proclaim the gospel to the gentiles, and so his authority in the face of the Galatians' temptation to have themselves circumcised. This appeal to the divine origin of his call is already indicated in the prescript of the letter,

Παῦλος ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν (Gal 1:1),

re-affirmed in the following:

¹¹γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τὸ εὐαγγελισθὲν ὑπ' ἐμοῦ ὅτι οὐκ ἔστιν κατὰ ἄνθρωπον. ¹²οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον αὐτὸ οὔτε ἐδιδάχθην ἀλλὰ δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:11–12).

We may leave aside here the question whether Paul had actually been accused in the sense in which he formulates what he negates.¹⁸ The point of his

18 Most scholars assume that Paul's authority as an apostle (or the gospel as he proclaimed it) had been denied and that the purpose of his statements had been to defend his authority by insisting that he had his authority from God. This assumption is based on what has become known as "mirror reading," that is, reading back from what is perceived as Paul's defense to what it was he had been accused of. So, most explicitly, Longenecker: "... by a process of 'mirror reading,' we can say with some confidence that Paul's converts had undoubtedly been given by the agitators at Galatia an account of his apostleship quite different from what he told them or what they had been led to believe by his early evangelistic preaching — an account which claimed that, despite what he asserted, Paul had actually received his authority from certain Christian leaders before him" (*Galatians*, 4). Similarly, Dunn: "The fact that Paul puts the negative part of the definition first strongly suggests that he was rebutting and rebuking an alternative way of defining his apostolic status. Paul had evidently heard that there were those among the Galatian churches . . . who affirmed what he here denies — that his apostleship was 'from men and through man'. What they would be referring to, no doubt, was the fact that Paul had been commissioned as a missionary by

formulation is an affirmation of the gospel as he proclaimed it over against an opposed gospel to which the Galatians were subjecting themselves:

⁶Θαυμάζω ὅτι οὕτως ταχέως μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι [Χριστοῦ] εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, ⁷ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο· εἰ μὴ τινὲς εἰσιν οἱ ταράσσοντες ὑμᾶς καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. ⁸ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐὰν ἡμεῖς ἢ ἄγγελος ἐξ οὐρανοῦ εὐαγγελίζηται [ὑμῖν] παρ' ὃ εὐηγγελισάμεθα ὑμῖν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. ⁹ὥς προειρήκαμεν,

the church of Antioch (Acts xiii. 1–3)” (*Galatians*, 25). The view that what Paul had been accused of was that his apostleship depended on human beings is also the view of Pierre Bonnard: “Personne ne contestait à Paul le droit de se nommer apôtre. Mais ses adversaires en parlaient comme d'un apôtre de second ordre, comme d'un tard venu tenant son autorité autant des hommes que de Jésus-Christ. . . . on peut imaginer qu'on le présentait soit comme un envoyé d'une Eglise (Antioche, par ex., v. 2 Cor. 8. 23; Ph. 2. 25), soit comme un émissaire des apôtres de Jérusalem” (*L'Épître de saint Paul aux Galates* [CNT; Neuchatel-Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1953] 19). Similarly, Burton (*Galatians*, 2); Lietzmann (*Galatians*, 3); Schlier (*Galatians*, 25); Ridderbos (*Galatians*, 40). Some of these scholars understand the focus of the objection against Paul to have concerned specifically the gospel he proclaimed, for example, Lietzmann (*op. cit.*, 6); Schlier (*op. cit.*, 25); Betz (*Galatians*, 56). Lüthmann is cautious. With regard to Gal 1:1 he writes, “Gegen welche Vorwürfe er [seine Unabhängigkeit unterstreicht] wußten natürlich seine Leser in Galatien sehr genau. Für uns, die wir nicht mehr in ihrer Lage sind, läßt sich von [Vers] 1 her noch nichts über die Art dieser Vorwürfe sagen” (*Galatians*, 15–6), but then, on the basis of 1:11–12 he concludes, “Als Vorwurf, auf den Paulus hier eingeht, ist dann zu erschließen, daß er für sein Evangelium keine Legitimation vorweisen könne wie seine Gegner, die Tradition und Lehre hinter sich hatten” (*op. cit.*, 22–23). Schlatter understands the issue to have been a question of specifically the authority of Peter versus that of Paul (*Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon*, 15–6).

The essential unity of the interpretation among so many scholars about the purpose of Paul's claim that he received his authority from God to proclaim the gospel is based on the assumption that the only way to understand what Paul meant in these passages was that he was defending himself against accusations that are reflected in what he wrote. George Lyons (*Pauline Autobiography. Toward a New Understanding* [SBLDS; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985]) has argued convincingly, based on contemporary parallels, against this limited view. What is especially questionable about these interpretations is that an alternative purpose for Paul's statements is not considered. Furthermore, no attention is given to the place of these statements in the structure of Paul's reasoning. Within the structure of the letter as a whole, Paul's claim that he received his call to proclaim the gospel from God is recognizable as the establishment of the divine source of his authority and of the gospel he proclaimed as the foundation for his rejection of the suggestion that the Galatians should have themselves circumcised. Paul understood the Galatians' willingness to consider having themselves circumcised as submission to another gospel, as he wrote, Θαυμάζω ὅτι οὕτως ταχέως μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι [Χριστοῦ] εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον, ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο· εἰ μὴ τινὲς εἰσιν οἱ ταράσσοντες ὑμᾶς καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:6–7). Such an interpretation allows for a coherent understanding of the letter, including what had been at issue in the Antioch incident.

καὶ ἄρτι πάλιν λέγω, εἴ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ' ὃ παρελάβετε, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω (Gal 1:6–9).¹⁹

- 19 Scholars generally recognize that, at least here, Paul is not defending his apostolic authority, but the gospel. So, explicitly, and well formulated, Longenecker: "It is the message of the gospel that is all important and not Paul's authority or anyone's status, however exalted. Of course, the authority and character of the preacher are important, as Paul has asserted of himself in 1:1 and will continue to assert throughout the autobiographical section of 1:11–2:14 . . . Their importance, however, is secondary to that of the gospel itself. . . . Paul saw the preacher's authority as derived from the gospel, and not vice versa. So he was not prepared to allow any change in the focus or content of that gospel on the basis of someone's credentials or by an appeal to some more imposing authority" (*Galatians*, 16–7). Furthermore: "[Paul] subordinates all authority and status — including his own and that of even an 'angel from heaven' — to the one true gospel" (*op. cit.*, 19). Similarly, Bonnard: ". . . Paul rappelle aux Galates, d'abord, que son autorité personnelle d'apôtre repose tout entière sur la vérité de sa prédication; l'apôtre ne peut se contredire" (*Galates*, 25). Less incisive is the formulation of Ridderbos who understands the truth of the gospel and Paul's authority to be more integrated: ". . . this gives expression [on the one hand] to how deeply conscious the apostle was of the divine truth of the gospel he preached and of his apostolic authority; on the other, it gives expression to how entirely subjected as a person he wanted to be to this truth and to the commission assigned him" (*Galatians*, 50).

An important issue concerning the passage for most interpreters is the question of "another" gospel, focussing especially on whether Paul does actually admit the existence of another gospel, that is, his apparent recognition of a ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον at the end of verse 6, but then immediately denying such an alternative in the beginning of verse 7 with ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο. It might be possible to find a solution if one takes ἕτερος and ἄλλος as having distinctive meanings, ἕτερος as enumerative, "another of the same kind" and ἄλλος as differentiative, "another of a different kind," as in Oepke's clarification, "Wo unterschieden wird, hat ἕτερος (= *alter*) enumerativen, ἄλλος (= *alius*) qualitativen Sinn. Ein zweiter Sperling gegenüber dem ersten wäre ἕτερος ὄρνις, ein Adler gegenüber einem Zaunkönig wäre ἄλλος ὄρνις (*Galater*, 17). The problem is, as Oepke, in agreement with other interpreters, notes, "Dieser Unterschied ist aber tatsächlich weithin verwischt" (*loc. cit.*). This problem extends beyond the question of distinctive meanings. Burton, after citing examples to show that the terms could be used as equivalents, interprets the distinctive meanings of the two terms in exactly the opposite way: ". . . in so far as there is a distinction between the two words ἄλλος is enumerative and ἕτερος differentiative" (*Galatians*, 421). Longenecker follows Burton: ". . . here in context there seems little doubt that he means to suggest a qualitative difference, with ἕτερος signaling 'another of a different kind' and ἄλλος 'another of the same kind'" (*op. cit.*, 15). It is difficult to figure out how Longenecker can conclude: ". . . Paul moves to an analysis of the problem at Galatia and a definition of the gospel that excludes any possible alternative version" (*op. cit.* 19). Why would Paul write ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο, in the sense of Burton and Longenecker, that there could not be another version of the gospel of the same kind, for example, the gospel as proclaimed to the Jews, which he evidently accepted also when he wrote in his report of the Jerusalem conference that the pillars recognised ὅτι πεπιστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς (2:7).

More to the point is Bonnard who does not consider there to be a difference in meaning between Paul's usage of the terms: ". . . le neutre ἄλλο = *autre* est pléonastique et exprime ici la même idée que ἕτερον = *autre* du verset précédent" (*op. cit.*, 23–24). He sees Paul as correcting himself: "Paul se corrige, cet autre évangile n'existe pas, est impensable. . . . un tel autre (ἕτερον — ἄλλο) évangile n'existe pas. Par cette expression l'apôtre ne veut pas relever l'impossibilité intellectuelle d'une autre prédication évangélique que la sienne; il ne veut pas non plus nier la possibilité d'une autre prédication apostolique à côté de la sienne

He responds by insisting that he proclaims the gospel in obedience to God's call, as a slave of Christ: ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν; ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; εἰ ἔτι ἀνθρώποις ἡρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἄν ἦμην (Gal 1:10), and reinforces his defense with even greater clarity in the verses that follow, that is, Gal 1:11–12, quoted earlier.

In the context of the challenge as he understands it, in Gal 1:15–16 Paul recalls the revelation of Christ to him at a time when he was still persecuting the church. It was the result of God's will even before he had been born. The purpose of that revelation, also relevant for the context of the letter as a whole, was that he was called to proclaim the gospel to the gentiles, of whom the Galatians were a part. It is a calling that had become relevant for what was at issue in Galatia, that is, the question whether it was necessary for the Galatians as gentiles to become circumcised, that is, proselytized as Jews, in order to participate in the salvation in Christ. Paul does not depend on a doctrine of Christ to defend his gospel but on the reality of Christ's appearance to him, similar to his insistence that his readers face up to the reality of Christ among them in Gal 3:1–2, which I will discuss in more detail below in connection with the meaning of Christ for the believer,

s'exprimant en d'autres termes et sur d'autres lèvres; le mot *autre* porte sur le fond ou le contenu de l'évangile: il ne peut exister, en substance, un autre évangile que celui de Paul puisqu'il en a été directement chargé par Jésus-Christ lui-même" (*op. cit.*, 23–24).

That does not altogether solve the problem of Paul's formulation because he writes, literally, the Galatians were turning to another gospel, which is not another [gospel]. His intention is clear: The Galatians were turning to something which they also call a gospel, but there is no other gospel than the one he proclaimed to them.

Betz has a different take on the matter. "There is also a strange disagreement here compared with Gal 2:7, where Paul distinguishes between 'the gospel of uncircumcision' (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας) and 'the gospel of circumcision' ([τὸ εὐαγγέλιον] τῆς περιτομῆς). He seems to hesitate in calling the latter a 'gospel' and we must supplement what is left out. He also connects only the 'gospel of uncircumcision' with the notion of grace. But the whole context of the conference in Jerusalem presupposes that there were two gospels. What the conference agreed upon was that there is no material difference between the two gospels and that both are the work of God . . . Therefore, Paul would not have denied the quality of 'grace' to the 'gospel of circumcision' at the time of the Jerusalem conference. In the meantime, however, things have changed (since Antioch, 2: 11–14). Now Paul and his opponents deny each other the salvific power of their gospel" (*Galatians*, 49).

Without getting too deeply involved in an issue which is of little real significance for this study, it is nevertheless worth noting that in Paul's formulation in Gal 1:7, ἰδόντες ὅτι πεπίστευμα τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τῆς ἀκροβυστίας καθὼς Πέτρος τῆς περιτομῆς, there is no need to supplement, as Betz suggests, what would be a redundant second εὐαγγέλιον. Furthermore, it is an unproven assumption that what Paul had to contend with in Galatia was the εὐαγγέλιον τῆς περιτομῆς for which Peter had been responsible, and that Paul denied "grace" to the "gospel of circumcision". In any case, Betz' interpretation too does nothing to resolve the difficulty with Paul's formulation.

ἵνα ἀνόητοι Γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος; ²τοῦτο μόνον θέλω μαθεῖν ἀφ' ὑμῶν, ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως;

similar to the challenge he throws out to his Corinthian readers in 1 Cor 4:10, as we will also see below in the discussion of the meaning of Christ for the believer:

ἡμεῖς μωροὶ διὰ Χριστόν, ὑμεῖς δὲ φρόνιμοι ἐν Χριστῷ· ἡμεῖς ἀσθενεῖς, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἰσχυροί· ὑμεῖς ἐνδοξοὶ, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἄτιμοι.

Whereas the appearance of Christ to Paul functions in support of his apostolic claim in a highly complex form in Gal 1:1, 11–12 and 15–16, it is expressed in a straightforward way in 1 Cor 9:1, οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐόρακα; That Paul saw Christ functions here explicitly in support of his claim that he is an apostle.²⁰ He does not *report* his having seen the Lord Jesus, but *recalls* it in support of his apostleship. Taken by itself, it is a very narrow basis, but it shows what a fundamental meaning having seen Jesus — or Jesus having appeared to him — had for Paul: It meant affirmation of his call to the apostleship.

In that regard Paul's report of the appearances of the resurrected Christ in 1 Cor 15 is an interesting case. It culminates with the appearance to him-

20 This is recognized by Schlatter, "Er ist Bote; denn 'er hat Jesus, unseren Herrn, gesehen'. Daran ist nicht zu zweifeln, daß er mit dem zweiten Satz den ersten begründet . . ." (*Der Bote Jesu*, 269) and Conzelmann, "V. 1b begründet seinen Anspruch auf diese Stellung mit seiner Christusvision . . ." (*Korinther*, 180).

It is generally understood by interpreters that having seen Christ and having been called by him was fundamental to apostolic authority. So, for example, again Conzelmann, "[Seine Christusvision] ist ein schlüssiges Argument, sofern die Beauftragung durch den auferstandenen Herrn für den Apostelbegriff konstitutiv ist" (*loc. cit.*); Similarly Jean Héring: "Un premier signe indispensable de l'apostolat, c'est le privilège d'avoir vu le Christ ressuscité et d'avoir été appelé par lui." (*La Première épître de saint Paul aux Corinthiens* [CNT; Neuchâtel-Paris: Delachaux & Niestlé, 1949] 70); also Barrett (*The First Epistle to the Corinthians* [BNTC; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1968] 200–1). Conzelmann qualifies his formulation: "[Das Argument ist dann] wieder nicht schlüssig, da offenbar nicht jede Vision diese Würde verleiht. Daher wird ein Argument ad hominem hinzugesetzt [οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἔστε ἐν κυρίῳ;], das doch keineswegs subjektiv ist, da das Verhältnis von Apostel und Gemeinde kein beliebiges ist: Die Gemeinde in Korinth ist sein Werk" (*loc. cit.*). Similarly, Barrett: "How could [those whom Christ commissioned] be distinguished? Apart from their own claim (made e.g. by Paul in Gal. i. 1, 16), by the results of their apostolic activity" (*op. cit.*, 201). Philipp Bachmann sees it less as the fulfillment of another condition: "Dieser seiner apostolischen Stellung fehlt es aber auch nicht an einem apostolischen Werke (cf 4, 20), also nicht an der Gewährleistung durch eine greifbare Tatsache. Wie dieses Moment durch die Stellung von τὸ ἔργον am Anfang stark heraustritt, so hebt das am betonten Ende stehend ἐν κυρίῳ hervor, das jener Erfolg in dem Herrn begründet ist, daß also auch der Herr sich tatsächlich und auf die Dauer zu dem Apostel bekannt hat, den er einst berief" (*Der erste Brief des Paulus an die Korinther* [KNT; Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung Werner Scholl, 1910] 310).

self: ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὥφθη καμοί (1 Cor 15:8). Having provided the relevant evidence for the resurrection of Christ with the list of appearances in verses 5–8, Paul could not refrain from deviating from his primary concern — the resurrection of the dead for which the resurrection of Christ is the foundation, all of which is gathered together in the single statement, εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν; (v. 12). The reference to Christ's appearance to him with which he concludes the list of those to whom Christ appeared leads him to deviate from his primary topic, the resurrection of the dead, to a discussion of his own call to the apostleship, and what it means in relationship to the others, to which verse 8 forms the transition

⁸ἔσχατον δὲ πάντων ὡσπερὶ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὥφθη κάμοι. ⁹ἐγὼ γάρ εἰμι ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων ὃς οὐκ εἰμι ἱκανὸς καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος, διότι ἐδίωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ. ¹⁰χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὃ εἰμι, καὶ ἡ χάρις αὐτοῦ ἡ εἰς ἐμὲ οὐ κενὴ ἐγενήθη, ἀλλὰ περισσώτερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα, οὐκ ἐγὼ δὲ ἀλλὰ ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ [ἡ] σὺν ἐμοί (1 Cor 15:8–10).²¹

For Paul, the meaning of Christ's appearance to him cannot be separated from his call to the apostleship. The point of his reasoning in 1 Corinthians 15 is Christ's resurrection as an argument in support of a general resurrection of the dead — to which he returns in verse 12 and in what follows, after the interlude concerning his apostleship —; his point in the chapter is not his call to the apostleship, but here in verses 8–10 his reference to the appearance of Christ to him, although called forth by different circumstances, immediately brings to his mind his call to the apostleship. In verse 11 he makes the transition to the main point of his reasoning, εἴτε οὖν ἐγὼ εἴτε ἐκεῖνοι, οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπιστεύσατε.

The mere appearance of Christ to him is not Paul's intended meaning. It was not that to begin with, but along with the appearances to the others it had meaning in the context of the problem of the resurrection of the dead, of which Christ was the firstfruits as he makes clear in verse 20. But here in verses 8–10 it serves briefly to bring to expression another meaning, that of

21 Wilhelm Bousset provides an interesting, positive interpretation of the appearance of Christ to Paul. It was a vision, which also applies to the other apostles. "Wir werden . . . also das Erlebnis des Paulus — und somit auch das der ersten Jünger — als eine innere geistige Erfahrung in der Form der Vision zu verstehen haben. Der Inhalt derselben war immer derselbe: Sie sahen mit dem Auge des Geistes den Herrn lebendig vor sich, sie hörten daneben vielleicht dieses oder jenes kurze Wort, sie kamen zu der Überzeugung: *der Herr lebt* . . . Aber deshalb darf man nicht von Einbildung, von Illusion reden" (*Der erste Brief an die Korinther* [Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917] 153)

his own call with particular emphasis on its relationship to the call of the other apostles.²² There is a multivalence of meaning in Paul's reference to Christ's appearance to him and to the others: The original meaning as the foundation of his reasoning concerning the problem of the resurrection of the dead, and a second meaning which it brings to mind parenthetically, the appearance of Christ to him as his call.

Of particular significance is a comparison of this expression of Paul's encounter with Christ with the way he expresses it later in Gal 1:15–17 where the relationship to the other apostles also comes to expression, but in a different way, that is, to set off his call from an involvement with the others. The most important difference between the two passages is that whereas the revelation of Christ to Paul in Gal 1:15–17 is expressed as the outcome of what God had prepared for him before he had even been born, Christ's appearance to him in 1 Cor 15:8–10 is presented initially with a deep sense of shame, ὥσπερ τῷ ἐκτρώματι ὠφθη καμοί (v. 8).

References to the same incident in which Paul himself had been involved thus also appear in a different way multivalent, for which the fact that he refers to it as Christ's appearance to him (ὠφθη καμοί) in 1 Cor 15:8 and as a

22 Paul mentions specifically that compared with the other apostles, Christ's appearance to him was as to an ἔκτρωμα. Scholars generally agree that ἔκτρωμα is not used in a temporal sense but as an expression of radical unworthiness. So, for example, Bachmann: "ἔκτρωμα selbst aber bezeichnet nicht den zwar zu früh geborenen, aber lebensfähigen, sondern den lebensunfähigen, durch einen Abortus aus dem Mutterschoße hervorgegangenen Embryo (cf LXX Hiob 3, 16; Eccl 10, 3; Ps 58, 9; Nu 12, 12), der eben deshalb das Licht nicht zu sehen vermag, sondern tot an das Licht kommt (Theodoret: ὁ τῶν ἀνθρώπων οὐκ ἐγκατα-εἰλεκται καταλόγῳ). Damit fallen alle die Deutungen, welche das Bild auf die Plötzlichkeit und Unvermitteltheit der Bekehrung des nicht langsam zum Glauben ausreifenden Pl beziehen, von selbst weg" (*Erste Korinther*, 429–30); also Héring: "Ἐκτρώμα n'est pas une «naissance tardive», comme le contexte pourrait le suggérer, mais le contraire. Aussi le point de comparaison ne réside-t-il pas dans l'époque de la conversion de l'apôtre, mais dans l'idée d'infériorité et d'indignité" (*Première Corinthiens*, 136). Also Schlatter (*Der Bote Jesu*, 400) and Barrett: "It suggested the characteristics of an unformed, undeveloped, repulsive, and possibly lifeless foetus" (*First Corinthians*, 344). The extremely negative connotation of the term leads scholars to assume that Paul may have taken it over from his opponents. For example, Héring: "De fait ἔκτρωμα était un terme injurieux. L'article τῷ devant ἔκτρωμα pourrait même indiquer que d'autres l'avaient déjà désigné par ce terme grossier et insultant; mais il pourrait aussi s'agir d'un sémisme, vu que l'hébreu affectionne l'emploi de l'article dans les comparaisons («enrouler le ciel comme le livre» dit Esaïe 34. 4 dans le texte mass.). En tout cas l'apôtre accepte, ou adopte ce terme, parce qu'il avait persécuté les chrétiens (Gal. 1. 13; Actes 9. 1–2)" (*loc. cit.*).

To make up for this negative aspect of his calling, Paul claims that he worked harder than all the others, which, rhetorically, may have been his purpose all along. Bachmann: "Den vermeintlichen Nachweis seiner Apostelwürde hätte hier Pl nicht an die Christuserscheinung, sondern an seine berufliche Tätigkeit und ihren Erfolg geknüpft; denn eine Christuserscheinung war ja auch soeben den Fünfhundert zugeschrieben worden, die nur Brüder und nicht Apostel heißen" (*op. cit.*, 431).

divine revelation (ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί) in Gal 1:16 is certainly not without meaning. That it is referred to as a revelation in Galatians clearly has to do with the context of Paul's denial that he received his gospel from human beings; he received it from God through the revelation of Christ. In 1 Corinthians the emphasis is on the fact that Christ who had died was resurrected and appeared to a series of persons, finally to Paul himself.

To these two expressions of the meaning of Paul's encounter with Christ we may add 1 Cor 9:1, οὐκ εἰμι ἐλεύθερος; οὐκ εἰμι ἀπόστολος; οὐχὶ Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἑώρακα; οὐ τὸ ἔργον μου ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν κυρίῳ; and Phil 3:7–11,

ἵτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, ταῦτα ἡγῆμαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. ⁸ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω ⁹καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, μὴ ἔχων ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ νόμου ἀλλὰ τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ, τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει, ¹⁰τοῦ γνῶναι αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ καὶ [τὴν] κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ, συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ, ¹¹εἰ πως καταντήσω εἰς τὴν ἑξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν,

to which I already referred above, each of which again has another meaning: In 1 Cor 9:1 the appearance of Christ to Paul serves as straightforward proof in support of his apostleship and in Phil 3:7–11 his relationship to Christ functions as the foundation for his answer to the challenge concerning his un-Jewish behavior. What that shows is that Christ, in these four cases specifically Paul's encounter with him, means something different in different situations. In *simplified* language: In different situations the same incident in Paul's life, his encounter with Christ, had something different to say to him, which he then also brought to expression in different ways.

Paul gives expression to a meaning of Christ for him similar to Phil 3:7–11 in Gal 2:19–20,

¹⁹ἐγὼ γὰρ διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω. Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι. ²⁰ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοί Χριστός· ὃ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ἀγαπήσαντός με καὶ παραδόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ.

It comes at the conclusion of his apology for the validity of his gospel to the gentiles (Gal 1:10–2:16), in which 2:11–16 forms a transition to the issue at hand in Galatia, Judaizing of gentiles through circumcision.²³ Unlike

23 Scholars generally recognize Gal 2:19–20 as an answer to the question raised in verse 17, εἰ δὲ ζητοῦντες δικαιωθῆναι ἐν Χριστῷ εὑρέθημεν καὶ αὐτοὶ ἁμαρτωλοὶ, ἄρα Χριστὸς ἁμαρτίας διάκονος; So Wilhelm Bousset (*Der Brief an die Galater* [Die Schriften des

in Philippians, it is not a defense of his un-Jewish behavior, but a challenge to those who want to make Jewish identity a foundation for the existence of believers. A brief excursus on issues in the interpretation of Gal 2:19–20 and its textual context may be appropriate here.

Neuen Testaments neu übersetzt und für die Gegenwart erklärt; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1917] 49): “Das ‘denn’, mit dem V. 19 beginnt, begründet, inwiefern für Paulus Christus ‘nimmermehr’ ein Beförderer der Sünde ist.” Also Lietzmann, who considers verse 18 a parenthesis: “γὰρ knüpft wie v. 19 überhaupt an das μὴ γένοιτο v. 17 an, so daß v. 18 als Parenthese erscheint” (*Galater*, 17). Furthermore, Schlier (*Galater*, 98), Ridderbos (*Galatians*, 103), and Betz, who, contrary to Lietzmann, considers verse 19–20 an answer “the question raised in vv 17–18” (*Galatians*, 121).

Excursus: Issues in the Interpretation of Gal 2:19–20

The context of Gal 2:19–20 is the report of Paul's sharp criticism of Peter and the others because, according to him, they expected gentile believers to be Judaized through circumcision. The context of his reasoning here, thus, is the justification of the gentiles by faith, his fundamental concern in the letter as a whole. In verse 14 he accused Peter of living like a gentile and not a Jew.²⁴ How do they, thus including himself and the others, want to Judaize the gentiles, when they, themselves Jews, and not from the gentiles, sinners (v. 15) know that they are not justified by virtue of being Jews, but through the faith of Christ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰσοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ (v. 16c–f). Effectively, thus, even they as Jews are justified not as Jews, but as gentiles, a justification on which

24 Interpreters differ on what Paul means by ἐθνικῶς ζῆς (v. 14c). There is agreement that it means to adopt gentile customs. The question is how far that goes. Most interpreters understand it to refer to table fellowship with gentiles. So, for example, Lightfoot: “ἐθνικῶς ζῆς] i.e. mix freely with the Gentiles and thus of necessity disregard the Jewish law of meats” (*Galatians*, 114). More emphatically, Dunn: “It is important to recognize here that these are relative terms: ‘to live like a Gentile’ does *not* necessarily mean that they had wholly abandoned everything that would normally mark out a Jew (‘Cephas’ total emancipation from Judaism’ — Betz 112); the contrast is primarily with ‘live like a Jew’, and is determined by what ‘live like a Jew’ was understood to mean in that context” (*Galatians*, 127–28). He justifies this as an accusation of Peter by Paul by claiming that Paul is echoing an accusation by the brothers from James: “Here, then, we should probably recognize that Paul was using not his own language (by that time Peter had ceased ‘living like a Gentile’), but the language used against Peter earlier by the ‘individuals from James’. That is to say, Paul was probably echoing the accusation made by those from James against the practice of ‘eating with the Gentiles’; for the James group, what Peter was doing when they arrived was ‘living like a gentile and not like a Jew’” (*op. cit.*, 128).

That is an odd reasoning; that Paul should have accused Peter exactly of that to which he (Paul) was opposed. More convincing is the view that Peter's gentile behavior went beyond his table fellowship with gentile believers. So, for example, Schlier: “Das ἐθνικῶς καὶ οὐκ ἰουδαϊκῶς ζῆν bezieht sich natürlich auf die Tischgemeinschaft mit den Heidenchristen. Das Präsens bei ζῆν steht nicht deshalb, weil damit ausgedrückt werden soll, daß Petrus sein Verhalten nur in Bezug auf die Tischgemeinschaft geändert hat, während er sonst bei dem ἐθνικῶς ζῆν bliebe. . . . Es ist vielmehr auf das dauernde Verhalten des Petrus gesehen, dem die jetzige Tat überraschend gegenübersteht” (*Galater*, 86). Well-founded by Betz: “[Peter] lives like a Gentile (ἐθνικῶς), that is, no longer in observation of Jewish customs and law (οὐκ ἰουδαϊκῶς). The present tense of ζῆς (‘you are living’) implies much more than an act of table fellowship with Christian Gentiles. It suggests that the table fellowship was only the external symbol of Cephas’ total emancipation from Judaism” (*Galatians*, 112). So also Burton, with the further observation that “Peter had not really in principle abandoned the Gentile way of life, though temporarily from fear returning to the Jewish way of living” (*Galatians*, 112). Similarly Longenecker: “. . . as Paul saw it, Cephas had not abandoned a nonlegal style on any permanent basis, but only temporarily as a matter of expediency (*Galatians*, 78).