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„Galatians 3:26-29: The Magna Charta of the Theology of Non-Discrimination”.

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<b>Table of Content</b>	<b>pages</b>
Forward.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Chapter One .....	11
1. Methodology .....	11
1.1 Text Analyses.....	14
1.2 The Pauline Magna Charta.....	16
Chapter Two .....	18
2. Paul and his Background .....	18
2.1 Paul of Tarsus.....	18
2.1.1 Where Was He Born.....	19
2.1.2 His Educational Upbringing .....	20
2.1.3 Born of Hebrew Parents.....	21
2.2 Classification of Pauline Letters.....	23
2.2.1 The Tradition of the Time and its Effect on Pauline Letters .....	25
2.2.2 Letters and Non-Letters of Paul.....	26
Chapter Three.....	30
3. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians .....	30
3.1 Authorship .....	31
3.1.1 The Dating of the Letter ca. 55-56 AD? .....	31
3.1.2 The Location of Galatia .....	32
3.1.3 The People’s Culture .....	32
3.1.4 Where, When and Why was the Letter written? .....	35
3.2 “From Paul, an Apostle” (Gal 1:1) .....	37
3.3 The Content and Borderline of Galatians Chapter Three.....	39
3.3.1 You Stupid People in Galatia (v. 1) .....	40
3.3.2 Abraham’s Faith (vv. 6-9 & 29) .....	44
3.3.3 The Curse of the Law (v. 10) .....	48
3.3.4 What is the Purpose of the Law? (v. 19) .....	50
3.3.5 The Personification of Faith and Law (vv. 23-25) .....	52
3.3.6 All of you are the children of God through Baptism (vv. 26-27) .....	54
3.3.7 The Magna Charter of Equality (v. 28).....	56
Chapter Four .....	62
The Theology of Non-Discrimination.....	62
4. The Characteristics of the Modern Society.....	62
4.1 A Society Without Religion?.....	65
4.1.1 The Relevance of Religion.....	67
4.1.2 The Denial of Religious Freedom.....	69
4.2 A Society of Discriminations.....	71

4.2.1 Ethnophaulism and other Forms of Discriminations.....	71
4.2.2 Racial Profiling.....	75
4.3 There are Slaves and Freed.....	78
4.4 There are Male and Female Roles?.....	81
4.5 A Christian Community of Non-Discriminations .....	88
4.6 The Equality of all the Baptized.....	91
4.6.1 Basileia tou theou.....	93
4.6.2 The Baptismal Formula .....	94
Chapter Five .....	97
Evaluation and Conclusion .....	97
Recommendations.....	107
Selected Bibliography.....	109
Abstracts in English.....	114
Abstracts in German.....	115
Curriculum Vitae .....	117

## Forward

This work is called The Magna Charta of Pauline Theology of Non-Discrimination. It follows a social scientific and feminist model. That the social scientific model and feminist model are fused together is explainable: the methodology is new. May be with time, the two models would be separated from one another.

The work centers on Paul, his background and his letter to the Galatians. I concentrated on chapter 3:26-29. Here Paul says, there is neither Jew nor gentile, there is neither slave nor freeborn, there is no man and woman. For you are all brothers and sisters in Christ. The equality of all is effected through baptism. Baptismal initiation is seen as “a melting point” of all social and gender discriminations.

This work is part of the requirements for a masters degree program at the University of Vienna. I am grateful for the rare opportunity of studying at this great University. I am indebted to my moderator, O. Uni. Prof. Mag. Dr. Roman Kühschelm who meticulously read through the pages and made far reaching insightful contributions and corrections. The work is what it is because of his patience.

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Life is a gift from God. To him who gives it to all be the glory forever. Amen.

## Introduction

It will be good to begin this work with a personal story that reflects what the early Christian community did to show that God is the God of all, that He is no longer the God of the Jews alone. I was with some members of the Parish Zum Göttlichen Erlöser, 1200, Wien in a Sommerfahrt<sup>1</sup> i.e. Summer excursion to Grado in Italy<sup>2</sup>. We came to the basilica of Aquileia dedicated to the Virgin Mary and saints Hermagoras and Fortunatus. It was started at about 313 AD, when the Edict of Milan abolished the persecution of Christians. The Christian community was legally able to build its first place of public worship. On the floor of the Basilica of Aquileia which is 760 square meters (the largest Paleo-Christian Mosaic of the western World) is an old but well preserved drawing showing a young man who is a shepherd. He is carrying a lost but found sheep on his shoulder and is also carrying the straw for the sheep in the right hand. He is surrounded by land, water, sky and animals of all kinds. Gabriella Brumat Dellasorte interprets this drawing in the "Short Guide" (translated into German by Rebecca Sandrigo) in the second article:

Einige Schritte weiter rechts sehen wir die Szene des Guten Hirten mit der mystischen Herde. Christus wird jung und bartlos dargestellt und trägt das verlorene Schäfchen auf den Schultern. In der Hand hält er eine Syrinx, die Hirtenflöte, das Symbol der Lieblichkeit, mit der er sich um seine Herde kümmert. Der Hirte ist von Land, Himmel, und Wassertieren umgeben. Damit wir unterstrichen, dass zu seiner Herde alle Menschen der Erde ‚guten Willens‘, unabhängig von ihrer Rasse und Kultur zugehören<sup>3</sup>.

This story is told to let you know what the Christian community did immediately after the abolition of the persecution of Christians to restate that God is the God of all, independent of culture, race and nationality. This assurance of oneness was necessary because the persecution brought many Christians from different cultures together. They wanted all to feel at home in the very first basilica they could erect after the killings and persecutions of the Christians by the Roman Emperors.

It was exactly the same for the earliest Christian communities. After the conversion/call of Saul, the Christian Communities had peace. Saul was on a holy

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<sup>1</sup> Yearly the members of the Parish visit places of interest that are connected with the Catholic faith. They visit also sites of important events to see how those events took place and how they have helped to change the world. They visit ancient churches, say short prayers, sing short hymns and light candles for their beloved ones. They celebrate the Holy Eucharist when they are travelling with a priest. They also take the opportunity to visit state museums, traditional markets and shops etc. It lasts usually a week before they come back to continue with their daily lives.

<sup>2</sup> Marocco, Ezio: Grado. A Guide to the City. Town & Monuments Map, Bruno Fachin Editore, Grado, 2000.

<sup>3</sup> Dellasorte, Gabriella Brumat: Die Basilika zu Aquileia. Kurzführer von Deutsche Übersetzung, Rebecca Sandrigo, Aquileia, 2010, N0 2.

duty according to his own perspective before he was reoriented by God. His encounter with the risen Lord changed all his biases and prejudices (Acts 9). The very first thing he did in Galatia was to welcome all men and women of good will to the faith: Jews and gentiles, men and women, slaves and freeborn without discriminations (Gal 3:28).

Before his conversion Saul was a normal zealot Jew who labored for the promulgation of Judaism. According to Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, Saul believed that the new Christian communities “represent an illegal religion that had disrupted the ancestral customs and religion of their patriarchal household”<sup>4</sup>. He wanted the trouble-making “new religious sect”<sup>5</sup> called Christianity to be stamped out once and for all, and that all the adherents to this new religious movement should be punished for upsetting the peace of the Jewish nation in the name of one crucified impostor called Jesus of Nazareth. Paul’s hatred for the new sect knew no bounds. According to David Horrell, “Paul’s own testimony confirms that he was indeed a persecutor of the church before his conversion”<sup>6</sup>.

The members of this new sect met for fellowship in private homes; to hear the Word of God and to commemorate the Lord’s Supper in the ‘breaking of bread’. According to Murphy-O’Connor, “unlike the Jews whose synagogues were legally recognized public meeting places, the first Christians had to make do with the hospitality offered by the more affluent members of the community. There is no evidence that any of these belong to the patrician class which owned vast mansions”<sup>7</sup>. For David Horrell, one important point to be kept in mind is that “at this point in time the church was comprised entirely of Jews who believed in Jesus as

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<sup>4</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, Elizabeth: *In Memory of Her*, Crossroad Pub., New York, 1994, 261.

<sup>5</sup> “Following W. Stark, Robin Scroggs has applied the sect typology most faithfully to the beginnings of early Christianity in order to show ‘that the community called into existence by Jesus fulfils the essential characteristics of the religious sect’. It can be shown that the Jesus group fulfils all seven characteristics of a sect. It began as a protest (1) rejecting the view of reality taken for granted by the Jewish establishment (2). As an egalitarian and not hierarchically ordered community (3), it offered love and acceptance to all those who joined it, especially the outcast (4). As a voluntary association (5), the Jesus group demanded a total commitment (6). Since not all sects are Adventist, its apocalyptic character shows that the Jesus movement had its major roots and support among the disinherited and suffering poor (7)... Scroggs therefore stresses that the term sect ought not to be misunderstood as counter term to church but as counter term to the wider society, the ‘world’. In this sense Jesus movement was a countercultural movement. Whereas Scrogg’s typology is somewhat generalized, S. R. Isenberg and John Gager have attempted independently to specify the sectarian character of the Jesus group as millenarian movement”. Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 72.

<sup>6</sup> Horrell, David: *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, Continuum, New York, 2000, 17.

<sup>7</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Jerome: *Paul A Critical Life*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2008, 149.

Messiah, but in all other aspects continued to live and worship as loyal Jews (Acts 2:46-3.1)”<sup>8</sup>.

According to Luke, Saul was on his way to bringing the members of this new dissident Sect back to Jewish folk when he was met by the risen Lord. On the strength of this meeting, he was “forcefully converted” to Christianity (Acts 9). He accepted baptism. From now on, all things including his previous desires, studies, passions, confessional belief, family heritage and ambitions passed swiftly away. This is why David Horrell says “Paul’s Jewish pedigree, he asserts, is all ‘crap’ compared to knowing Christ”<sup>9</sup>. Christ is the new order and “in him we live and move and find our being” (Acts 17:28). David Horrell rightly says, “what is certain, from Paul’s own testimony is that the persecutor experienced a dramatic change, and became an ardent believer in that which he had sought to stamp out”<sup>10</sup>.

He understood his call as a divine gift from God, and his apostolate as a mission to the Gentiles (Gal 1:15-16; cf. Rom 11:13). His personal philosophy was being "all things to all men" in order to win as many as possible for Christ (1 Cor 9:22). No power human or divine could hinder his incorporation of the gentiles into Christianity. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor would say, “From the beginning he had understood his conversion to be a call to preach among the Gentiles. Even if he was no longer the emissary of a church, the divine commission, which had inspired his abortive mission among the Nabataeans, would validate his subsequent career. He was ‘an apostle, not from men or through a man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father’ (Gal 1:1)”<sup>11</sup>.

Having found Christian communities outside Jerusalem, his problem became how to bring Christian Jews and Christian gentiles together? He was not concerned with how one can enter into the Christian community. He was concerned with how the people who had entered into the communities through baptism could enjoy the freedom of the children of God (Rom 8:21), without hindrances or discriminations. In other words, Jews had their own customs, religion and culture and the Galatians had their customs, religion and culture. The issue then was: where could the two cultures meet each other?

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<sup>8</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 13.

<sup>9</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 45.

<sup>10</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 17.

<sup>11</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 158.

Paul strongly believed that Jesus preached a new religious movement- *basileia tou theou*. This brought about a new inclusive understanding of the socio-religious and cultural world views that was opposed to the Jewish socio-religious and cultural world views that were exclusive. What then was to be accepted as particularly Jewish and what was to be accepted as distinctively Galatian and what was to be universal if the salvation event ought to be a universal one? The solution to these problems would be to accept all in whatever and whichever state he or she was called (1 Cor 7:25). According to Fredrick. F. Bruce:

Paul makes some references to these three dual categories in 1 Cor. 7 where he exhorts the circumcised and uncircumcised to remain as they were in this regard at the time of their conversion (vv 18f.), the slave and the free person to be content with their respective situations in life and not to try to change them (vv 21-23), and married and unmarried persons to continue so, in the one way or the other; 'in whatever state each was called, there let him/her remain with God' (v 24). Either way, it can make no difference to one's status in Christ<sup>12</sup>.

It was an adoption of a "culture of co-existence of differences". For neither the law of circumcision nor uncircumcision itself counts. What counts now is being baptized in the name of the Lord, being a new creation in Christ (Gal 6:15-17). Schüssler Fiorenza attests that for "those who have become a part of the new creation, Jewish concepts and rituals (circumcision or uncircumcision) have lost their meaning. Faith in Christ has become the decisive basis for salvation".<sup>13</sup> According to Stephen Andrew Cooper, "in Christ Jesus there is no social status or any discrimination; all who follow Christ acquire eternal life equally. For it is not because of circumcision that one becomes something in Christ; nor because the foreskin is there, does one become something in Christ"<sup>14</sup>.

David Horrell compares Ed Parish Sanders' Pauline concept of the law and that of James Dunn's. He believes that Paul was attacking the Jewish laws. He asks: "If he was not attacking legalism and self-righteousness, what was he criticizing?"<sup>15</sup> He says, "Sanders' own answer essentially turns on its head the direction in which Paul's thought is conventionally understood. Instead of seeing Paul as someone conscious of a problem (the impossibility of fulfilling the law well enough to be save) who then finds the answer in Christ, Sanders proposed that Paul reasoned 'from

<sup>12</sup> Bruce, Fredrick F: The Epistle to the Galatians, Paternoster Press, London, 2003, 188.

<sup>13</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 185.

<sup>14</sup> Cooper, Stephen Andrew: Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, Oxford Press, Oxford, 2005, 344.

<sup>15</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 86.

solution to plight'. Sanders' Paul makes an arbitrary and inexplicable jump from one religious system to another, without there being any substantive reason for his criticism of his former position or any real sense of continuity with his Jewish faith"<sup>16</sup>.

David Horrell insists that Paul was attacking the laws that exclude gentiles from being members of Christ's body, the church. He proposes that the interpretation of "being a new creation in Christ" should be inclusive and not exclusive.

What Paul objects to... is the way in which the Judaism of Paul's time used the law as a boundary marker, defining a particular racial and cultural group as inside the covenant and others as 'out'. Circumcision, food laws, and Sabbath observance were the most prominent examples of the 'works of the law' which served as the badges of covenant membership and thus functioned to demarcate Jews from Gentiles. Paul is not therefore criticizing legalism, nor the doing of good deeds, when he criticizes those who depend on the works of the law. Rather he is criticizing the use of the law to mark out certain people as belonging, as coming exclusively within the sphere of God's grace. To this nationalistic and ethnocentric exclusivism Paul opposes his gospel message that salvation is available to all who have faith in Christ, both Jews and Gentiles, without the need for Gentile converts to adopt the marks of Jewish belonging (circumcision etc)<sup>17</sup>.

The new principle of belonging is faith in Christ. Respect, tolerance, indifference to cultural variations and seeing all as children of God in whose name all were baptized would be the means of breaking down the walls of enmity between the Jews and the gentiles. Henryk M. Broder brings out the difficulty in the concepts of respect and tolerance.

Tolerieren bedeutet wörtlich dulden, ‚gewähren lassen‘. Wer die Güte hat, jemand zu tolerieren, hat auch die Macht, ihn zu vernichten, wenn er es sich anders überlegt hat. Das Wort ist positiv besetzt, hat aber eine fragwürdige Bedeutung. Es beinhaltet keinen Anspruch, keine Garantie und kein Recht, auf das man sich berufen, das man einfordern kann, es ist nur eine Absichtserklärung, eine Geste der Großzügigkeit, sozusagen ein privater Schutzraum für marginale Existenzen, die auf das Wohlwollen der Gesellschaft angewiesen sind<sup>18</sup>.

For Paul L. Sampley, "Paul treats many things as indifferent: social class, ethnic identity, gender, food, education, speaking in tongues, life and death, marriage, slavery and circumcision"<sup>19</sup>. The correct understanding of these notions in the theology of Paul would be an in-road to the globalization of Christianity which was by then a Jewish event. It would serve also as a lee-way to gender equality since

<sup>16</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 86-87.

<sup>17</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 87.

<sup>18</sup> Broder, Henryk M: Kritik der reinen Toleranz, wjs verlag, Berlin, 2008, 15.

<sup>19</sup> Sampley, L. Paul: Pauline Greco-Roman World, Trinity Press International, New York, 2003, 388.

there is neither male and female, because “male and female are equal in divine likeness” and “on the level of soul there is neither male nor female<sup>20</sup>”.

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<sup>20</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 277.

## Chapter One

### 1. Methodology

Biblical theology has its own methodology. It has developed from textual critical methods that seek the synchrony and diachrony of the texts, to historical methods, the hermeneutics of the text, the 'Sitz im Leben', up to the feminist, liberation and psychological exegeses. This work is a socio-ethical and theological approach. The methodology to be used is called socio-scientific and feminist model. Georg Fischer represents part of the claims of the supporters of this methodology, which holds that biblical texts are the works of men, written for the good of men, without due consideration of the opinions of women.

Ausgangspunkt ist die Erkenntnis, dass biblische Texte situationsbedingte Produkte größtenteils männlicher Arbeit sind (*von Männer primär für Männer* geschrieben). Glaubenserfahrungen von Frauen sind daher bereits in den biblischen Schriften selbst, aber auch in deren Übersetzungen und Auslegungen, weitgehend unerwähnt geblieben oder an den Rand gedrängt oder verfälscht worden... Biblische Texte und deren Auslegungen sind zunächst immer unter dem Verdacht androzentrischer Fehlübersetzung und patriarchal (die Männerherrschaft in allen öffentlichen Belangen voraussetzend) verfälschender Interpretationen zu lesen...<sup>21</sup>

This methodology is new, but "among the most prominent new approaches in the recent study of Paul and the Pauline churches have been social-scientific and feminist modes of interpretation"<sup>22</sup>. Although the methodology is new, "what is certain is that these new areas of biblical study have been growing and developing in recent years, and show no sign of fading away"<sup>23</sup>. "In part these methods were adopted as a way of redressing what was seen as an overemphasis on theological ideas and their interpretation, to the exclusion of the social context within which these ideas were formulated"<sup>24</sup>. The aim of this methodology is to ask questions about "the cultural and social world which the early Christians inhabited, about the relationship between the early Christian groups and the wider society within which they were located, about the kinds of people who joined the Christian movement, about the rituals and structures of the earliest congregations, about how power and authority were exercised and legitimated within them and so on"<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Fischer, Georg: *Wege in die Bibel*, Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, Stuttgart, 2008, 80.

<sup>22</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul* 96.

<sup>23</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 108.

<sup>24</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 97.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

This methodology is concerned with such sociological concepts like identity, acceptance and rejection, belongingness and the other, “we and they and they and us syndrome”, “us against them”, “their gain or our loss”, “either us or them”<sup>26</sup>, differentiations, demarcations within a community of believers and within the society. These in no way reduce theology to sociology. Nor do they suggest that theological arguments are shadowboxing<sup>27</sup>. They stress the fact that the issues Paul is addressing in his letter to the Galatians can provide for us a starting point to address also some major socio-religious and cultural issues of our own day<sup>28</sup>. The social scientific method gives credence to the fact that Pauline theological exegesis must not remain at the speculative level but should help us to address the social issues of our time as he did in the first century of Christianity. The methodology stresses the point that nations have different cultures like the Galatians who were characterized as “a mixed race”<sup>29</sup>. They believe that “the very fact of difference is positive”<sup>30</sup>. And that nationals are the people of a God who has drawn up quite clear conditions precisely for communal life and that whenever these principles are violated there are crises that do not glorify him, but cause pains to the members of the community involved.

The supporters of this methodology maintain that the world has become a global community. Pauline theology of non-discrimination is relevant to the global community divided into villages, tribes, races, lower and upper classes, the third and first worlds, the world powers and the G 20, the have and the have nots, the wise and the ignorant etc. Robin Scroggs believes that if Paul had lived up to our time, he would “have been in the front of protest marches against racism and the war in Vietnam”<sup>31</sup>, Iraq, Iran, Gaza, Palestine, Israel, Ireland, Afghanistan as part of the reasons for these wars are show of power and lack of tolerance. He would have done this because “Paul was himself an activist. As a Jew, he was fanatic; as a Christian, frenetic”.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Volf, Miroslav: *Exclusion & Embrace*, Abingdon Press, Nashville, 1996, 99.

<sup>27</sup> Wright, N. T: *The Letter to the Galatians: Exegesis and Theology, Between Two Horizons*. Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology, Green, B. Joel & Turner Max, William B. Eerdmans Pub. Grand Rapid, Michigan/Cambridge, 2000, 230.

<sup>28</sup> Wright, *Between Two Horizons*. Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology, 229.

<sup>29</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 188.

<sup>30</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 243.

<sup>31</sup> Scroggs, *Paul for a New Day*, 55.

<sup>32</sup> Scroggs, *Paul for a New Day*, 47.

They maintain that part of the reasons why classifications of people, ethnicisms and discriminations have continued to thrive within and outside the Church is because of lack of attention to the non-discriminatory theology of Paul.

On the academic level, they see the “willful ignorance” of many theologians who use non-Pauline letters (Deutero-Pauline or Pastoral Letters), to substantiate their claims in the name of Paul. Sometimes also, Pauline texts are used to substantiate one’s own opinion even when that was not implied by the original intention of Paul. Schüssler Fiorenza would give an example when she makes a distinction between ‘deriving an interpretation from a text and reading an interpretation into a text’ for personal reasons<sup>33</sup>.

For them, Pauline views should be distinguished from the contested Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral Letters on sensitive social and feministic issues. When this is done, it will be breaking down the ice of ignorance and unveiling most of the veiled eyes of the ignorant positions that have been held by many for years and which have not allowed them to see Paul as he truly is; which have also not allowed the true image of Paul to challenge us in our time. David Horrell is at the heart of the issue when he “argues that ‘the real Paul’ is all too often concealed beneath an ecclesiastical image of Paul. But whenever the real Paul is ‘rediscovered-which happens almost exclusively in times of crisis, there issues from him explosive power’...”<sup>34</sup> Explosive power erupts in explosive changes and these changes are what they are seeking for in the interpretation of Pauline Letters in the light of social-scientific and feministic model. Their aim is clear: “It is to make it impossible for us to any longer to ignore the radical challenge of the Apostle. It is to tear down the façade of the domesticated Paul so that the real Paul can confront us, assault us, if you will, with his challenge”<sup>35</sup>.

On the socio-religious level, people forget so easily that all are created in the image and likeness of God; and that all were baptized in the name of Christ, whom they have come to put on during and after their baptism. God endowed all with the power of reason and an inalienable right to be treated with respect because of the dignity of the human person. Paul wants to remind all that “we are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28), in whom there is no discrimination of culture, custom, color, gender, race, tribe or class.

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<sup>33</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xxv.

<sup>34</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 127.

<sup>35</sup> Scroggs, *Paul for a New Day*, 3.

## 1.1 Text Analyses

This work is centered on Galatians 3:26-29. To enable us have a solid foundation, we will begin with the Greek New Testament text. Its form in the modern critical edition reads as follows (with The New Jerusalem Bible translation inserted in between the texts).

26 Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.  
For all of you are the children of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus

27 ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.  
Since everyone of you that has been baptised has been clothed in Christ.

28 οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ.  
There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female-  
πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.  
for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ' ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.  
And simply by being Christ's, you are that progeny of Abraham, the heirs named in the promise.

Bruce's representation of the text notes i.e. the explanations for the variations, is what we have adopted. There are still other variants like the text notes from Nestle-Aland: *Novum Testamentum Graece* variations follow Bruce's formula even though we take the explanations to the key notes as represented below<sup>36</sup> from Nestle-Aland.

v 26 τῆς *om* P<sup>46</sup> P Clem. Alex Cyr  
ἐν Χριστῷ/χριστου P<sup>46</sup> 1739 *pc*  
v 28 οὐκ ἐνι... οὐκ ἐνι... οὐκ ἐνι.../ οὐκετι... οὐκετι (*vid*)... (*lacuna*) P<sup>46</sup>  
οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος / ἡ ἐλεύθερος D<sup>\*</sup>  
καὶ θελυθῆλυ Chr  
εἷς/ ἔν G 33 *lat*  
εἷς ἐστε ἐν χριστῷ / ἐστε χριστου P<sup>46</sup> κ<sup>\*</sup> A<sup>37</sup>.

Our text takes its bearing from v. 26. The logic of the agitators to the Pauline theology of non-discrimination was simple: to inherit the promises made to Abraham, you needed to be circumcised as he was. Paul's response is also clear: you are all sons of God through baptism in Christ Jesus, v. 26. The law makes a distinction between the people of Israel, to whom it was given, and the gentiles, to whom it was thought. But the promise made to Abraham in v. 29 explicitly embraced the gentiles

<sup>36</sup> „P Paulinische Briefe, lat altlateinische und Vulgata, *pc* (*pauci*) wenige, *om* (*ittit/-tunt*) auslassen, \* ursprüngliche Lesart, *vid*(*videtur*) (wie es scheint) nicht ganz sichere Lesart, *lac*(*una*) Lücke, G die älteste griechische Übersetzung des AT (*Septuaginta*), *a*(*nte*) vor, KTL (*καί, τα λοιπά*), D *del*(*evit*) tilgen“. Cf. Nestle-Aland: *Novum Testamentum Graece*, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 2006, 27. Auflage.

<sup>37</sup> Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 183.

(πάντα τὰ ἔθνη-all the nations) within its scope; they were to have a share in the blessings promised to him. For Paul, however, Circumcision was a seal “in the flesh” (ἐπί τῆς σαρκός ὑμῶν) which belonged to the wrong side of the antithesis flesh/spirit. In Paul’s eyes, for those who had been justified by faith to be subsequently circumcised would be a perverse attempt to seek perfection in the flesh after “having begun with the Spirit”<sup>38</sup>. But then: τί οὖν ὁ νόμος “Why then the law?” (Gal 3:19). He gives two reasons why the law was given. (a) it was given to multiply (even to stimulate) transgressions i.e. τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν in order that there might be transgressions, the conscious disobeying of definite commandments; (b) to confine all in the prison house of sin<sup>39</sup>. But by dying on the cross, Christ has redeemed all from the curse of the Law (Gal 3:13). Fredrick F. Bruce would say that Christ has redeemed us “from affront to God” by becoming a curse on our behalf (γενόμεος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα)<sup>40</sup>.

The text is inclusive because υἱοὶ includes θυγατέρες, as in v 26, where it is obvious from the context that υἱοὶ θεοῦ translated in our text as children of God embraces both men and women<sup>41</sup>. It is through faith in Christ that all became the children of God. Therefore, our text “Through the faith in Christ Jesus” v. 26- διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, is an inclusive text. Bruce comes to the same conclusion. “Believers in Christ are united with him, participate in him, are incorporated into him, and as he is God’s Son inherently, so in him they become God’s sons and daughters by adoption, anticipating now by the Spirit what is to be fully manifested in the coming glory”<sup>42</sup>.

Each believer is baptized into Christ. “v 27 ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε.-all who are baptized have clothed themselves in Christ. “To be baptized into Christ is to be incorporated into him by baptism”, hence to be a member of Christ’s body. But each individual believer is a man or woman in Christ. Christ lives in him or her. Their inclusive relationship in Christ is to be shown forth in the ordinary life of each and every one of them<sup>43</sup>.

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<sup>38</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 155.

<sup>39</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 175.

<sup>40</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 164.

<sup>41</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 155.

<sup>42</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 184.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

## 1.2 The Pauline Magna Charta v. 28

With this text, Paul tries to counteract the existing socio-religious and cultural differences between the church in Galatia and the church in Jerusalem or Antioch or Judea, the Jews and the Galatians and the male and female self-identifications. He comes to the heart of the matter by looking for the means of justifying the equality of all even though the people come from different cultural backgrounds and have different world views, have little or nothing in common and have lived their lives in double hatred for one another for ages before the coming of Christ. According to Frederick Bruce, “The law kept the Gentiles out of the privileges of the people of God and kept Israel apart from the rest of mankind; this divisive force has been overcome by the unifying effect of Christ’s redemptive act”<sup>44</sup>. It became necessary to destroy the barriers because “*culture can also function like a nature*, and it can in particular function as a way of locking individuals and groups a priori into a genealogy, into a determination that is immutable”<sup>45</sup>.

The center of equality is faith in Christ. According to Engberg-Pedersen, “Paul’s ostensive point is that by the coming of Christ, his addressees have themselves become sons of God (3:26), as opposed to being under a male chaperon as Jews under the law had previously been (3:25). This has apparently happened through their coming to be in (en) Christ Jesus (3:26, again 28). And the way this has come about is through baptism, in which they have put on Christ as their new garment (endysasthai, 3:27)”<sup>46</sup>.

The means of initiation is baptism. All the baptized are equal. Cultural differences such as circumcision or uncircumcision, “pure race, mixed race or mongrel race” are externalities and not the core of Christian message. Being a Jew (etc) is of course a socially ascribed property. But is also something that enters into a person’s understanding of him or herself. Therefore, when Paul says that ‘there is’ no Jew (etc) among them, but they are all one in Christ Jesus, the point must be that even though there certainly remain Jews (etc) among them as viewed from the exterior, they will no longer let these properties play any normative role whatever in their own self-definition. They will see themselves as one in Christ Jesus, that is, for their normative self-identification they will focus on no other self-defining characteristic than the one which they all equally share, that of being in Christ

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<sup>44</sup> Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 182.

<sup>45</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 242.

<sup>46</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, Troels: *Paul and the Stoics*, T & T Clarks, Edinburgh, 2000, 149.

Jesus<sup>47</sup>. Being one in Christ means that they have left their individual traits behind and now are willing to follow the example of Christ who died for all. This reading is supported by Stephen Andrew Cooper. He writes that Paul has annulled the outstanding forms of external identity which can accrue to human beings on the basis of social status, human nature, or ethnicity. We are liable to be divided amongst ourselves by these, such that one person is a Jew and another a Greek, one person a slave and another free. These latter sets of distinctions exist on the basis of social status or law, but the other pair is natural: there is neither male nor female, he says. So what? When all these distinctions have been annulled, you are all one, he says, in Christ Jesus. Now, because you are one with the reception of the Spirit from Christ, you are Christ's. You are therefore sons of God in Christ. *Therefore you are the seed of Abraham, heirs according to the promise (3:29)*<sup>48</sup>.

For Engberg-Pedersen, Galatians 3:26-29 is best understood in terms of normative self-identification. Paul is talking about the kind of self-definition which locates the self in something outside one's individual self, something one shares with (the relevant) others<sup>49</sup>. Frederick Bruce expresses better what and how we should understand Gal 3:26-29. He expresses it as a radical formula for change in the Greco-Roman world:

The principles enunciated in this paragraph (vv 26-29) were revolutionary enough even within the fellowship of small local groups here and there throughout the Greco-Roman world. But when these groups and their members multiplied until they formed a significant segment of society, there was a real possibility that such revolutionary principles would infect society at large, and the imperial authorities in the second and third centuries saw the spread of Christianity as a disintegrating ferment in the body politic<sup>50</sup>.

Paul revolutionarized the ancient world with this formula. "Now after two thousand years of church tradition in which this has become dogma, we can hardly appreciate the radicalness in his day of this judgment"<sup>51</sup>. This formula is the basis of non-discrimination.

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<sup>47</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoic, 151.

<sup>48</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, 299-300.

<sup>49</sup> Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics, 151.

<sup>50</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 191

<sup>51</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a New Day, 5.

## CHATER Two

### 2. The Man Paul and his Background

This chapter is concerned with the man Paul. Who was he? Where was he born? What are the names of his parents? And what roles did his family background and educational upbringing play in his later apostolate?

#### 2.1 Paul of Tarsus

Paul's Latin name is Saulus, from Greek Saulos and from Hebrew *Shā'ul*-meaning Saul. We know little about Saul's background except that he was popularly called Saul of Tarsus. Most of what we knew of the background of Saul comes from Luke and what Paul says about his past life, his Hebrew origin, his love for his ancestral traditions and how he persecuted the Church of Christ. But in the man Paul you will meet a man who was well known in the Christian tradition, known among the Christians, loved and respected by them. But at the same time he was called cynical names by those who disapproved of his inclusion of gentiles into Christianity, the negative roles he played against Judaism and the Jewish traditional religion and socio-cultural life and customs. David Horrell represents this view better.

To say that Paul is a man of enormous influence, however, is not to say that everyone regards his influence positively. For some, Paul is indeed the great hero of the Christian church, the one who most clearly perceived the meaning of the death and resurrection of Christ and most energetically presented the message of the gospel. For others, however, Paul was largely responsible for taking the Jewish message of Jesus and corrupting it, turning it into a Greek ('Hellenistic') type of religion which Jesus would hardly have recognized, let alone approved. For some, Paul is a social political radical who announced a message of liberation and equality for women and slaves, a feminist before his time. For others, Paul is responsible for keeping women and slaves in their place, and for fostering attitudes of misogyny and anti-Semitism<sup>52</sup>.

He was also misunderstood by many especially because of his paradoxical ways of life: Yesterday a zealot and today a believer. The summary of Robin Scroggs is ad rem; he says: "The problem with Paul is that he has too many friends and too many enemies. The one thing that the friends and enemies tend to have in common is that they do not really know what Paul is all about. At least the Paul I hear defended and the Paul I hear attacked is not the Paul that I have come to know and appreciate"<sup>53</sup>. For David Horrell Paul was a great man, a mountain that all have labored to reach

<sup>52</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 1-2.

<sup>53</sup> Scroggs, *Paul for a New Day*, 1.

the apex but none has succeeded in doing so. He also believes that Paul was a man loved and hated at the same time. Each school of thought saw him through its own stained glasses, which reflected what they thought of him. But Paul is rightly described as “the mountain the teaching of the carpenter of Nazareth congealed into. The theologians have walked round you for centuries and none of them scaled you. Your letters remain unanswered, but survive the recipients of them...”<sup>54</sup> What is good about these opinions is that they go a long way to confirm how influential he was in his time.

### 2.1.1 Where Was He Born?

Paul never says where he was born. We learn from Luke that he came from Tarsus. This city was believed to be located along "one of the great trade routes of the ancient world; the easiest and most frequented land route from Syria and the East to Asia Minor and the Aegean crossed the Amanus by the Syria Gates and the Taurus by the Cilician Gates"<sup>55</sup>. It was an agrarian community, which produced "cereals and grapes, and above all the flax which provided the raw material for the linen industry"<sup>56</sup>. According to Murphy-O'Connor, Dio Chrysostom testifies to the greatness of the city by admiring the Tarsian: your “home is a great city and you occupy a fertile land, because you find the needs of life supplied for you in greatest abundance and profusion, because you have this river flowing through the heart of your city; moreover, Tarsus is the capital of all the people of Cilicia”<sup>57</sup>.

Another factor that contributed to the rise of Tarsus and its continued rapid growth was because Mark Anthony conferred on Tarsians the right to freedom and immunity from state taxation. In this way they have the right to control their own natural and economic resources. The right of freedom and immunity from taxation could have been also accompanied by Roman citizenship<sup>58</sup>. Based on these advantages Jerome Murphy-O'Connor comes to the conclusion that the city into which Paul was born was “well governed and prosperous. Its Greek orientation had to struggle with a strong Eastern spirit. It stood on the frontier of east and west, and

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<sup>54</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 1.

<sup>55</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 33.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>58</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 34.

its citizens were prepared to function in both"<sup>59</sup>. These advantages would play great roles in the apostolate of Paul whose presence in the early church would turn out to be a blessing to all who met him personally or read his letters.

The educational system and the people's love for education played also an important role in the development of the city. This is also a vital factor that will shed light to the personality of Paul. Freed very early from slavery and domination, the people devoted themselves to education and the general idea of the development of the whole person. This system is described by Murphy-O'Connor as follows:

The people at Tarsus have devoted themselves so eagerly, not only to philosophy, but also the whole round of education in general, that they have surpassed Athens, Alexandria, or any other place that can be named where there have been schools and lectures of philosophers. But it is so different from the other cities that there the men who are fond of learning are all natives, and foreigners are not inclined to sojourn there. Neither do these natives stay there, but they complete their education abroad. And when they have completed it, they are pleased to live abroad, and but few go back home... Further the city of Tarsus has all kinds of rhetoric, and in general it not only has a flourishing population but also is the most powerful, thus keeping up the reputation of the mother-city<sup>60</sup>.

### 2.1.2 His Educational Upbringing

Paul was born into a city that loved education. According to Murphy-O'Connor, Paul's educational attainments suggest a background of someone who was "infinitely superior to that of the average artisans"<sup>61</sup>. He was an eloquent speaker and a voluminous writer. He was also a great orator and a complicated thinker whose work was grounded in sophistry. David Horrell writes of him thus: "Even while Paul was alive, however, at least one of his opponents suggested that his letters were much more powerful and impressive than his personal presence (2 Cor 10:10)"<sup>62</sup>. However, he denies all philosophical attributes. This may be due to his philosophy which holds that whatever we have was given to us by the Lord. What have we that we did not receive from the Lord? Hence to the Corinthians he says "let him who wants to boast, boast in the Lord" (2 Cor 10:17). He rejected "the philosophers and debaters of this age" (1 Cor 1:20). He would insist on saying "And these are what we speak of, not in the terms learnt from human philosophy, but in terms learnt from the Spirit, fitting spiritual language to spiritual things" (1 Cor 2:13). It could also be because

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<sup>59</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 35.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 40.

<sup>62</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 41.

Rhetoric was studied for political reasons and he never wanted people to associate his ministry with politics<sup>63</sup>.

But many scholars reject his protestations. The question is: was Paul trained in such school of thought and techniques? His social position argues in the affirmative. For Murphy-O'Connor "what Paul says about his social status is also considered an objection... and by his rather upper-class view of manual labour as 'slavish' (1 Cor 9: 19) and 'demeaning' (2 Cor 11:7)"<sup>64</sup>, he confirms where he belongs. But he himself appears to deny it. He claims that he was not sent to preach in human eloquence and that he was not "a trained speaker" (2 Cor 11:6). The Corinthians criticized him when they said that his speech was "beneath contempt" (2 Cor 10:10). But the observations of Murphy-O'Connor should be a sound summary of Paul's knowledge of rhetoric. "Neither Paul's protestations nor the criticism of the Corinthians should be taken at face value... What we have seen of Paul's rhetoric suggests mastery and an assurance unlikely to have been gained without long practice and possible long study as well"<sup>65</sup>.

Many exegetes present Paul as a sophisticated and rhetoric thinker. Frank J. Matera brings out "Paul's rhetoric structure" in his letter to the Galatians.

Paul's letter to the Galatians is no exception to this rule of rhetoric. In Galatians, Paul is intent upon showing his Gentile converts the utter folly of accepting circumcision. In order to persuade them to adopt his point of view, he arranges his arguments in such a way that by the end of the letter the Galatians find themselves in a rhetorical maze with only one exit: they must refuse to be circumcised because Gentiles who accept circumcision are cut off from Christ; circumcision will relegate them to the realm of the Law<sup>66</sup>.

In summary, Paul was a learned man and his writes attest to this.

### 2.1.3 Born Of Hebrew Parents

It is from Luke that we came to know that he was born in Tarsus (Acts 21:39), as well as that he was a Roman citizen (Acts 22:27-28). His Roman citizenship, although sometimes put into question, was his passport in distant lands. It served as

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<sup>63</sup> "Rhetoric was essentially the art of public speaking, originally in the public gatherings of the ancient city states and later especially in trials before magistrates and jury, where both prosecutors and defenders made lengthy speeches intended to persuade the listeners one way or the other... The art of rhetoric was thus codified in handbooks and taught by teachers to pupils". Cf. Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 48.

<sup>64</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 40.

<sup>65</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 50-51.

<sup>66</sup> Matera, J. Frank: Galatians, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1992, 12.

“his talisman” in seasons of difficulties and in times of danger. It helped to “save him from non-Roman provincial justice. Yet only those citizens who also possessed wealth and prestige as well as the citizenship were in the position to procure any certain legal advantages”<sup>67</sup>. But it reduced and never stopped what was done to him. He laments thus: “Five times I have been given the thirty-nine lashes by the Jews; three times I have been beaten with sticks; once I was stoned...” (2 Cor 11:25 & 26). But even at that it helped him. Hence his question; “is it legal for you to flog a Roman citizen?” (Acts 22:25). Luke tells us that he had also a Nephew who heard of the plot of his would be murderers and saved him from their deadly plots (Acts 23:12-16).

Neither Luke nor Paul himself tell us the names of his parents, nor their social status. These uncertainties have given room to so many speculations and doubts of their nationality and their Roman citizenship. Even though there are other opinions which hold that he was never a Roman citizen, it is more plausible to accept that he was "since there is no evidence of Lukan creativity and no objection based on the epistles", particularly by Paul himself and, “since the history of the parents constitutes a plausible historical context for its conferral”<sup>68</sup>.

Paul stresses his ancestral roots. His use of expressions such as "I am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin" (Rom 11:1) or “a Hebrew born of Hebrew parent” (Phil 3:5) etc confirms “his Jewish credentials and betrays the expatriate, i.e. a Jew living in the Diaspora”<sup>69</sup>. It is often said that "only the descendants of those who emigrated from Ireland to the United States find it necessary to insist that they are Irish"<sup>70</sup>. Those who are born in a country and those who grow up in a country of their origin do not need to insist that they are citizens. They take it for granted that they are citizens and owe nobody an apology for coming from there. But that was not the case with Paul. When the community in Corinth was challenged by the "trouble makers who are seeking to pervert the gospel of Christ" as preached by him (Gal 1:7), he bursts out shouting: "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I" (2 Cor 11:22). The outburst "are they Hebrews" etc is an assertion of the right of belonging to a group or a nationality.

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<sup>67</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 39-40.

<sup>68</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 41.

<sup>69</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 32.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

To be born a Hebrew was to share the right of Abrahamic ancestral promises. As a Hebrew Paul must have learnt to read Hebrew Bible which was only available in the form of scrolls upon which the Masoretic texts were written. But being a Hellenistic Jew or Jew in Diaspora, he must know Greek. Murphy-O'Connor concludes: "Given his stress on being a 'Hebrew' (Phil 3:5), Paul must also have learnt Hebrew and or Aramaic. Knowledge of the former was rare in the Diaspora, but commitment, and the availability of personal copies of the Scriptures (1 Macc 1:56-7), mean that it cannot be excluded apriori"<sup>71</sup>. The use of Hebrew carries also religious, ethical, political and linguistic connotations. It was a privilege to know Hebrew and Greek. This is confirmed by the response of Ptolemy's request for translators to render the Law into Greek. The high priest sought for scholars, who had received an education in Greek as well as in their native lore, and joyfully sent them<sup>72</sup>.

Pauline Letters were written in Koine Greek. His knowledge of Hebrew helped him to defend himself in Hebrew. In Acts 11:18 and Acts 21:2 he presented his defenses in Hebrew language. When the people heard him speak Hebrew, they were astonished. The whole assembly was quiet and all wanted to hear what he was going to say. They were also surprised that he was a Hebrew<sup>73</sup>.

His knowledge of languages also helped him in his letters. However, the letters were only secondary part of his apostolate. "His task in response to God's commission was to spread the gospel among the gentiles... He wrote letters only to already established communities of converts, encouraging and instructing them in their faith, confronting problems and disputes"<sup>74</sup>. But how many letters did he write? Which are Pauline letters and how can we distinguish between accepted and the contested letters of Paul? These questions have become necessary because Paul was not the only Christian writer and because many of those who wrote wanted to use undisclosed identities based on the tradition of the time.

## 2.2 Classification of Pauline Letters

The aim of this section is not to go into details with the letters of Paul, the Deutero-Pauline and the Pastoral Letters but to classify them according to where

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<sup>71</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 47-48.

<sup>72</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 36.

<sup>73</sup> Pate, C. Marvin: The End of the Age has Come. The Theology of Paul, Zondervan Pub., Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1995, 14.

<sup>74</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 51.

they should belong. We are emphasizing the importance of the individual letters written to unique communities for the particular need of that community, within a certain epoch. "It is important to appreciate the distinctive character of each letter Paul wrote, and not to proceed to hastily to a synthesis of Pauline theology"<sup>75</sup>. Each letter is unique because in each community he addresses particular needs.

Our aim is to classify the letters according to the major theological opinions. The Bible would lose nothing when we know that the letters of St. Paul to Timothy, Colossians, Ephesians and Titus were letters written to Christian communities by one or more of their elders, for the need of their community which is also useful for our time because the "Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim 3:16).

The better classification would reduce the quarrels between experts and non-experts who use the Bible. It would also solidify the faith of millions of Christians whose faith is strengthened in their daily readings of the Bible. It will also reduce the fanaticism of "sola scriptura doctrine"<sup>76</sup> as many will come to know that the New Testament Bible is a revelation of the Word of God authored by men. As Schüssler Fiorenza would say, "Biblical texts are not verbally inspired revelation nor doctrinal principles but historical formulations within the context of a religious community. Although this insight is challenged today by literary formalism as well as textual Biblicism, it nevertheless remains basic to any historical reconstruction"<sup>77</sup>. It is a book of faith written within the community of faith for the faithful people of God.

The knowledge of the *Sitz im Leben* of the Scriptural texts and the historical life situations of the people are necessary for the better understanding of the Bible. It will also reveal to us that the Bible was written within a specific milieu and that the writers followed the thinking of their time.

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<sup>75</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 51.

<sup>76</sup> "In what is otherwise an astonishingly sophisticated discussion, we find written, "For certain societies, in certain eras of their development, the scriptures have acted culturally and socially in the same way the human genetic code operates physiologically. That is, this great code has, in some degree, directly determined what people would believe and what they would think and what they would do..." No interpretation is necessary; Scripture speaks with perfect transparence". Cf. Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 247. This view sounds strange but it is typical of many African Christians. The fanaticism is so glaring that one hears very often "my Bible says, my Bible teaches, or where is it in the Bible" etc. For many African Christians, anything that the Bible does not say is rejected and seen as ungodly.

<sup>77</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xiv.

### 2.2.1 The Tradition of the Time and its Effect on Pauline Letters

In the then world people wrote letters and books as we do today. But the differences are who wrote them and why they were written? The signature on the letter determined the relevance attached to it. A letter written by a king was not the same as a letter written by an ordinary man. A freed slave who wrote a book would not expect the feudal lords and masters of the time to consider reading it. A captive who wrote about his/her horror and maltreatments in the detention camp would be day dreaming to think of the captors allowing him/her to portray them and their kingdom in his/her most heinous ways.

To be heard and to cause people paying attention to what you wanted to say, many chose to backdate their works. Not only that, some used names of great men/women who had died years back to publish their letters or revelations. This conferred authority and gave credibility and relevance to their works. In modern society it would be called deceit but by then it was used as a “backup authority” for the writer and the readers. Again, in the modern world, there are the freedom of expression and more avenues of making oneself heard.

The quest to be heard and the zeal to spread the Good News led many to write letters. Some of these letters are what we have today as part of the New Testament Bible. Some of the letters were rejected, and so we have their scraps or full work, but are not accepted as “good enough” to be part of the inspired Holy Bible. Some of the writers were not eyewitnesses of the historical Jesus, what they depended on was what they were told by those who witnessed the Jesus events. Luke follows this tradition. He wrote to Theophilus to enable him to have a better knowledge of the Jesus event:

Seeing that many others have undertaken to draw up accounts of the events that have reached their fulfillment among us, as these were handed down to us by those who from the outset were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, I in my turn, after carefully going over the whole story from the beginning, have decided to write an ordered account for you, Theophilus, so that your Excellency may learn how well founded the teaching is that you have received (Lk 1:1-4).

Paul was not the only Christian writer. Some other Christians may have also written letters. These letters written under his name have come down to us as Pauline letters. But their methodology, style of writing, choice of words, the events they speak of, the construction of longer sentences and messages without rhetoric questions so frequently used by Paul have come to reveal that they were not Pauline letters. In the

above mentioned areas they differ greatly from those letters that are authentically accepted as Pauline. They wrote in his name but they lacked his courage and radicalism. Their letters lack the egalitarian nature of Pauline writings. Robin Scroggs maintains that “The post-Pauline period, and even those anonymous folk who wrote in his name, betrayed these views of egalitarianism, because they no longer had the courage or insight to live out of the basic rubric of justification by grace... In the post-Pauline writings using his name there emerges a particular form of ethical admonition, which is apparently borrowed from the larger Greek culture and thus is not created by Christians themselves”.<sup>78</sup> Those ideas borrowed from the larger Greek society includes: the household code, the pater familias, the concept of authority, the defense of genuine doctrines and the zeal to defend institutionalized structures etc. These were not the main concerns of the generally accepted letters of Paul<sup>79</sup>.

When the issues of pater familias, household code etc are sieved out of Pauline theology, there will be a new understanding of him. This could also portray him in a new form for those who because of the scriptural subjugation of women to their husbands, children to their parents and slaves to their masters do not want to have anything to do with the man whom they believe to be autocratic. While most feminists believe that he was a misogynist, Pauline theologians know that some of the key texts which are so hard on women come either from the Deutero-Pauline, Pauline polemics or the Pastoral Letters and that some of these were written years after his death.

### **2.2.2 Letters and Non-Letters of Paul**

According to David Horrell what is debated upon is “where does Paul’s writing stop and that of his successors commence?”<sup>80</sup> He expresses his views thus:

Some of the letters attributed to Paul in the New Testament, however, are widely thought not to have been written by the apostle himself, but to have been written in his name, sometime after his death. There are no absolutely objective or indisputable criteria on which to make such judgments, but on the basis of differences in vocabulary and style, theology and ethics, and the level of church order and organization which is presupposed, most scholars conclude that the Pastoral Epistles (1Timothy, 2 Timothy,

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<sup>78</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a New Day, 48.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Horrel, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 112.

Titus) were written in Paul's name some decades after his death... Most scholars think that Ephesians was also written by a follower or followers of Paul after his death, and many think the same about Colossians, although the debate in this case is more finely balanced. Indeed, some of those who think that Paul did not write Colossians nevertheless consider that it was written in his lifetime, perhaps with his explicit approval. 2 Thessalonians is also debated, some regarding it as authentic, others as 'pseudonymous' (literally: written under a false name)<sup>81</sup>.

David Horrell goes on to say that there are "seven letters unanimously accepted as having been written by Paul himself and six letters which are frequently regarded as pseudo-Pauline, that is, written in Paul's name by someone other than Paul"<sup>82</sup>. He classifies them in this order: Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philipians, 1 Thessalonians, and Philemon. The first four are often referred to as the *Hauptbriefe*-a German word meaning 'major letters'<sup>83</sup>. Schüssler Fiorenza illustrates why Colossians is not accepted as one of the letters of Paul based on the household code. For her Colossians is the "most precise form of the domestic code in the New Testament"<sup>84</sup>. It was "written by a disciple of Paul, who quotes Gal 3:28 but changes it considerably. Moreover, he balances it out with a household code of patriarchal submission. The relationship of Jews and gentiles was no longer a great problem and concern for the author. The separation between the Jewish and Christian communities probably had already taken place at the time of his writing"<sup>85</sup>. Another characteristic that she notes is that baptism means resurrection and enthronement with Christ in heaven. The baptized are already delivered from the dominion of darkness and are transferred into 'the kingdom of his beloved son' (1:13)<sup>86</sup>. The masters on earth are likened to the master in heaven. Slaves were to serve their masters as they would serve the Lord (3:23). The writer did not only promise eschatological reward to good slaves but threatens eschatological punishment for any misbehavior (3:24)<sup>87</sup>. It is obvious according to the author that good behavior of the slaves is the concrete realization of Gal 3:28, insofar as both slaves and freeborn have one Lord in heaven. Because of this Schüssler Fiorenza says that what we hear in these injunctions is "the voice of the propertied class"<sup>88</sup>. She comes to the

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<sup>81</sup> Horrell, A Introduction to the Study of Paul, 5.

<sup>82</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 112.

<sup>83</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 6.

<sup>84</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 253.

<sup>85</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 251-252.

<sup>86</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 252.

<sup>87</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 253.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

conclusion that the only Christian element in the Colossian code is the addition of “in the Lord”<sup>89</sup>.

The Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral Letters appear to have followed the structure and pattern of Paul’s letters but there are technical reasons why they are not Pauline. Some of the reasons for their similarities are: They could have been written by fellow workers of Paul. There were also schools of Paul and communities of Paul who tried to continue the community’s life in the spirit of the apostle, Paul. These led to the multiplication of letters in his name. David Horrell notes some of the similarities and differences of the Pastoral and Pauline Letters:

The differences in vocabulary and style between the undisputed Pauline letters and the Pastoral letters are significant. There are a number of words which appear in the Pastorals but are never used elsewhere by Paul. Examples include: *eusebia* (godliness), *sôphrosuné* (modesty), *theosebeia* (purity, religion). There are also a number of words which seem characteristic of Paul but do not appear in the Pastorals, such as *euangelizô* (to proclaim the gospel), *pneumatikos* (spiritual), *soma* (body) etc<sup>90</sup>.

However, Pauline theologians do not agree among themselves on why some letters must be Deutero-Pauline and why others cannot be. An example would be the issue of realized eschatology in Deutero-Pauline Letters and the futuristic eschatology in Pauline Letters<sup>91</sup>. On this issue there are divided opinions. Murphy-O’Connor would maintain that there are reasons why he and others would not accept the issue of realized eschatology in the second letter to the Thessalonians. His emphasis would be the motive of Paul, the conversion of the gentiles was more dear to him than any other reason.

The doubt as to whether Paul actually preached a realized eschatology at Thessalonica, or was mistakenly assumed to have done so, is not resolved by the fact that he instructed converts in ethical behavior during his initial visit (1 Thess. 1:11-12; 4:1,6, 11; 2 Thess. 3:10). Moral teaching was not an afterthought dictated by the delay of the Parousia. Even at the stage when his eschatological expectation was most intense, Paul’s perspective was radically apostolic. No matter how limited the time remaining, his mission was to convert the Gentile world<sup>92</sup>.

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 120.

<sup>91</sup> “Here as in Col 2:12; 3:1-4 the use of the past tense shows that resurrection and triumph of Christians in heaven is considered as actually existing, whereas the future tense in Rom 6:3-11, 17... treats it as something that has still to take place. Treating the eschatological reality as already existing is a characteristic of the captivity epistles”. Cf. *The New Jerusalem Bible*, standard edition, Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd, London, 1985, 1935, (Eph 2: 6<sup>e</sup>).

<sup>92</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 124.

For him the controversy of realized eschatology in the second letter to the Thessalonians is not as important as the goal of Pauline theology: the proclamation of the Gospel to the gentiles. He is not alone; until recently many would not accept that the letters to the Colossians and Ephesians were Deutero-Pauline. The major issues in these letters are the use of household or table code, the *pater familias* etc. Paul certainly knew of these codes but he never used them. Robin Scroggs observes that he would have twisted the codes in whichever direction he wanted if he had believed in the inequality of human beings as the post-Pauline letters seem to do. For him it is interesting to know that he did not use this code even though “this form was at hand in the larger Greek culture, Paul must surely have known of it. Yet he never used it. Is this an accident, or is it a deliberate act, necessitated because he is aware that the structure itself is false to his basic theology of justification by grace?”<sup>93</sup>

David Horrell shares the view that “the real Paul, as known to his followers and opponents alike, has been replaced by a Paul seen through the eyes of a later age”<sup>94</sup>. This is because “the writers of the post-Pauline literature advocated the adoption of the Greco-Roman patriarchal order of the house with its injunctions to subordination and submission of the socially weaker party. At first they might have done so with a view to lessening the political tensions between the Christian group and the pagan patriarch household. However, at the same time, Christian writers apply this pattern of patriarchal submission also to their own communal self understanding and life in the church as the household of God”<sup>95</sup>. Such ideas we do not find in proto-Pauline letters. Their inclusion into the New Testament writings go a long way in confirming the views of Fredrick Bruce who says that “In historical fact, however, influences worked in two directions: if the church increasingly influenced pagan society, pagan society in some degree at least influenced the church”<sup>96</sup>.

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<sup>93</sup> Scroggs, *Paul for a New Day*, 48-49.

<sup>94</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 11.

<sup>95</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 245.

<sup>96</sup> Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 191.

## CHAPTER Three

### 3. Paul's Letter to the Galatians

The locus standi of our work is the letter to the Galatians. It is “one of the earliest letters of Paul that we possess”<sup>97</sup>. According to N. T. Wright “The dense and dramatic argument of Galatians excites and baffles by turns. Sometimes perceived as a flamboyant younger sister of the more settled and reflective letter to Rome, this epistle has provoked endless controversy at all levels, from details of exegesis to flights of systematic theology”<sup>98</sup>. The area of concentration is chapter three. It is from chapter 3:26-29 that we took our theme. According to G. W. Hansen Paul's letter to the Galatians “addresses Christians whose preoccupation with keeping the Law was splitting their churches along racial lines, separating Jews from Gentiles”<sup>99</sup>. But such splits could not be tolerated because “there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus (Gal 3:28). This new unity which transcends all racial, social and sexual barriers is based upon the “truth of the gospel” (Gal 2:5): “Christ was crucified to set us free...”<sup>100</sup> He goes on to say: “We are no longer under the Law that divides us; we are led by the Spirit who unites us”<sup>101</sup>. G. W. Hansen believes that the letter to the Galatians is one of the most important letters of Paul when he writes: “The significance of these central themes (equality of male and female, non-racial discrimination etc) in Galatians give this letter a predominant place in any consideration of Pauline chronology and theology. The letter has had a profound impact on Christian thought and action throughout the history of the church”<sup>102</sup>.

In dealing with the letter to the Galatians some critical questions are to be kept in mind. Where was Galatia located? Which Galatia are we talking about? Where the addressees gentiles of Galatian origin or inhabitants of the Roman province who lived in Galatia? To answer these questions, two theories have been developed: the southern and the northern theory. Did Paul ever visit Galatia and when did he do that? What did he do there and what was going on among the Galatians that made him write them a letter? What was their socio-religious and cultural setting? Had the

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<sup>97</sup> Matera, Galatians, 20.

<sup>98</sup> Wright, *Between Two Horizons*. *Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology*, 205.

<sup>99</sup> Hansen, G. W: Galatia, *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*. *A Compendium of Contemporary Biblical Scholarship*. Hawthorne, Gerald F. et al, InterVarsity Press, Illinois, 1993, 323.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

people their own customs and traditions? What are the relationships between the letter to the Galatians and the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem (Gal 2:1-10 as it is recorded in Acts 15)?<sup>103</sup> What was Paul having in mind when he wrote certain coded expressions like “being clothed with Christ” (Gal 3:27)? Who were “the false brothers” (Gal 2:4) he was referring to? Where did they come from?

### 3.1 Authorship

The letter to the Galatians is generally accepted by most Pauline theologians as one of the authentic letters of Paul. “His authorship is accepted by all except a few radical critics. Almost all scholars view Galatians as the standard example of Paul’s style and theology”<sup>104</sup>. In this letter Paul introduces himself as “Paul an apostle” (Gal 1:1); with this statement Paul underlines his authority with regards to the problems in the Galatian churches<sup>105</sup>.

#### 3.1.1 The Dating of the Letter ca. 55-56 AD?

In dating the letter to the Galatians two theories have been formed: “the North Galatian hypothesis and the South Galatian hypothesis”.<sup>106</sup> Frank J. Matera represents the two theories like this:

*North Galatian hypothesis:* The letter is addressed to the territory to the north inhabited by the old Celtic tribes; this ‘usually’ results in a later dating of the letter, the mid-fifties, because it presupposes further (unattested) missionary activity by Paul.

*South Galatian hypothesis:* The letter is addressed to the province of Galatia which Paul visited on his first missionary journey; this ‘usually’ results in an early dating of the letter, e.g. the late forties or early fifties, because it fits the evidence of Acts<sup>107</sup>.

Majority of exegetes accepts the northern theory (ca 55-56) as when the letter was written<sup>108</sup>.

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<sup>103</sup> Wright, *Between Two Horizons. Spanning New Testament Studies & Systematic Theology*, 208.

<sup>104</sup> Hansen, *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*, 326.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> Matera, *Galatians*, 19.

<sup>107</sup> Matera, *Galatians*, 20.

<sup>108</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 189.

### 3.1.2 The Location of Galatia

Paul addresses this letter to the ekklesiais tês Galatias (to the churches of Galatia). It is clear that the Apostle is not writing to a single community but to a number of congregations in Galatia<sup>109</sup>. The Galatians to whom the letter is addressed were Paul's converts (Gal 4:8-9). They are most likely among the descendants of Celts who had invaded western and central Asia Minor in the third century BC. Part of the province of Galatia is located in the territory around Ancyra (modern Ankara, Turkey)<sup>110</sup>. Peter Ellis upholds that, "the country that is today called Turkey was called Galatia in Paul's time. It acquired its name from the Celtic tribes called the Galloi, who moved into north-central Asia Minor in the third century B.C. The territory they occupied came to be called Galatia. Later the Romans took over the whole Asia Minor and made it a Roman province called Galatia"<sup>111</sup>. According to Jerome Murphy-O'Connor Galatia became part of Roman Empire in about 25 BC. "Dio Cassius notes in his report for the year 25 BC, 'on the death of Amyntas he (Augustus) did not entrust his kingdom to his sons but made it part of the subject territory. Thus Galatia together with Lycaonia obtained a Roman governor, and the portions of Pamphylia formerly assigned to Amyntas were restored to their own district'"<sup>112</sup>. This province is assumed to be surrounded by other towns like Antioch in Prisidia, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 13:13 -14:28).

### 3.1.3 The People's Culture

Before the arrival of Paul, the Galatians were a full province of their own. They had their own customs and religion. They had relationships with their neighbors. The intermarriages between the people of these towns as well as with their Celtic or Roman conquerors, foreigners and visitors made the Galatians a "mixed race". They were despised by the Greeks for being ignorant and vulgar. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor would describe them thus:

The quick-witted, enterprising Greeks of the province of Asia looked on those who dwelt in the middle of Asia Minor with contempt. The Phrygians had a reputation of being 'slow, apathetic, contented, and unutterably ignorant, incapable of being roused or excited by any cause except their vulgar and degrading superstitious rites'. Understandably, then,

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<sup>109</sup> Matera, Galatians, 19.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ellis, Peter: Seven Pauline Letters, The Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota, 1982, 173.

<sup>112</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 159.

there was nobody more despicable than a Phrygian, and to be a slave among them was the nadir of human existence. The Galatians for their part were considered to be large, unpredictable simpletons, ferocious and highly dangerous when angry, but without stamina and easy to trick. They were the archetypal barbarians. It would be hard to find a more charitable comment on the mixture of Galatians and Phrygians than that of Livy, 'a degenerate, mongrel race'.<sup>113</sup>

They must have lived all their lives in this mixed province. They simply accepted their mixed marriages, social differences as well as racial and cultural inheritances. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor writes:

The Galatians were an aristocratic caste, but this did not make them immune to their environment. The extent of intermarriage with the indigenous population is underlined by Livy's characterization of the Galatians 'a mixed race'. They adopted the local Phrygian religion. Not only was it more prudent to propitiate the local gods, but the Celtic nobility gained access to indigenous power through membership in the immensely influential priesthood of Pessinus.<sup>114</sup>

In Galatia Paul was confronted with a multiracial society, a province with its own religion, system of administration and culture. The socio-cultural situations of the people of Galatia was at the background of his thought when he wrote the letter to them. He knew that God called him to evangelize the people with different cultural ways of life (Rom 11:13). But the Jewish Christians could not accept the new cultural situations in Galatia. Daniel Boyarin is of the opinion that cultural differences was at the root of Paul's letter to the Galatians<sup>115</sup>. Against most cultural critics of Paul, Daniel Boyarin insists that "Paul's so-called ramblings about cultural problems and situations are, indeed, at the heart of his ministry"<sup>116</sup>. He goes on to advocate for the interaction of different cultures. This is because "Diasporic cultural identity teaches us that cultures are not preserved by being protected from mixing but probably can only continue to exist as a product of such mixing. All cultures, and identities, are constantly being remade"<sup>117</sup>.

Another group of people within the province were the Gauls. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor cites this long text as a "vivid portrait" of the culture of the Gauls "attested to by both monument and text". He represents their cultural situation thus:

The Gauls are tall of body, with rippling muscles, and white of skin, and their hair is blond, and not only naturally so, but they also make it their practice by artificial means to increase the distinguishing colour which nature has given it... Some of them shave the beard, but others let it grow a little; and the nobles shave their cheeks, but they let the

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<sup>113</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 189-190.

<sup>114</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 188-189.

<sup>115</sup> Boyarin, A Radical Jew, 181-182.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Boyarin, A Radical Jew, 243.

moustache grow until it covers the mouth. Consequently, when they are eating, their moustaches become entangled in the food, and when they are drinking, the beverage passes, as it were, through a kind of strainer...

They invite strangers to their feast, and do not inquire until after the meal who they are and of what things they stand in need. And it is their custom, even during the course of the meal, to seize upon any trivial matter as an occasion for keen disputation, and then to challenge one another to single combat without any regard to their lives...

The clothing they wear is striking-shirts which have been dyed and embroidered in varied colours, and breeches, which they call in their tongue *bracae*, and they wear striped coats, fastened by a buckle on the shoulder, heavy for winter wear and light for summer, in which are set checks, close together and of varied hues...

The Gauls are terrifying in aspect and their voices are deep and altogether harsh; when they meet together they converse with few words and in riddles, hinting darkly at things for the most part, and using one word when they mean another; and they like to talk in superlatives, to the end they extol themselves and depreciate all others. They are also boasters and threateners and are fond of pompous language, and yet they have sharp wits and are not without cleverness at learning. Among them are found lyric poets whom they call Bards.<sup>118</sup>

It was this socio-religious and cultural ways of life of different groups, the Gauls, Celts, Phrygians, the Galatians etc that Paul met. He wanted their *integration* into the larger Jewish Christian community without Jewish ritual purifications and religious initiations which culminated in circumcision. This request probably was too far reaching demand on the side of Paul. For him it was better to welcome the gentile converts into the folk without strict observances of the Jewish customs than to insist on the legalism of the law.

The Gospel therefore has always moved in between cultures and people's customs. At the same time, the welcoming of what is foreign has also always been problematic because people are usually reserved when they are confronted with what they do not understand. The normal human reaction to what is foreign is aversion. The welcoming of gentiles by Paul was seen as "reform ethos"<sup>119</sup> by Jewish Christians. But it would have been a socio-religious and cultural impasse to preach Christ to a mixed race based on Jewish principles of "a chosen race, a people set apart" (Deut 7:6-9). Paul went to the Galatians with the principle of universal Christianity and the formation of a race-less society. The situation in Galatia called for the abolition of racial, gender and cultural exclusivism. It calls for the respect of other people's customs, religion and culture, without which there would be no

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<sup>118</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 188.

<sup>119</sup> "While the reform ethos of the Jesus movement is articulated in the context of Jewish society, culture, and religion, that of Paul is articulated in the context of Roman Hellenism and has missionary aims. The interaction between culture and subculture, dominant ethos and emerging ethos is therefore very different for Jesus and Paul. This interaction or interplay has produced different forms of Christian lifestyle (ethos) not only within the Jewish but also within the Greco-Roman contexts". Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 82.

evangelization in the province. Schüssler Fiorenza articulates this “free status” based on baptism thus:

That such an expectation of free status on the grounds of baptism was not merely excessive enthusiasm is apparent if we look at the first opposites of the baptismal formula, Jew/Greek. One could show that Paul's whole work centered around the abolition of the religious distinctions between Jew and Greek. ‘For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek. The same Lord is Lord of all and bestows his riches upon all who call upon him’ (Rom 10:12). Equality among all those who call upon the Lord is based on the fact that they have all one and the same master who shares his wealth with all of them (cf. also Rom 3:22). That such ‘religious equality’ had social-ecclesial consequences for the interrelationship between Jewish and gentile Christians is apparent from the Antioch incident, which seems to have been well known in the early church. Peter and Barnabas had entered into table sharing with the gentile Christians in Antioch but, after pressure from Jerusalem, discontinued it. They again adhered to the Pharisaic Christian purity rules against eating together with the ‘unclean’. Paul publicly confronts Cephas and the Jewish Christian group around him because ‘they did not act in consistency with the truth of the gospel’ (Gal 2:14). The whole letter to the Galatians is written to make the same point. It is not circumcision or uncircumcision that counts, but the new creation<sup>120</sup>.

When this objective of Paul was threatened by the Judaizers or “false brothers” as he calls them (Gal 2:4), there was need to write a letter, refuting, rebuking and restating that in Christ there is no discriminations between the Jews and the Gentiles, the Jews and the Greeks, slaves and freeborn, male and female “for you are all one in Christ” (3:28).

### **3.1.4 Where, When and Why Was the Letter Written?**

One certainty is that the letter was not written in Galatia. It was written when Paul could not go to the churches personally to attend to their different pastoral needs. He also could not just send one of his co-workers without an authorizing document. The aim of the letter was to clarify the pressing issues, and to encourage the Galatians in their faith. It was written when Paul was at Ephesus. It could have been during the winter when there were limited movements. It could have also been during the spring as he was always on the move. But most probably he wrote the letter while he was in Ephesus.

Paul's thinking was dialogical. Each community generated questions to which he had no ready-made answers. His answers responded to specific cases which were tailored toward the particular situation, but rooted in a consistent core: his vision of the risen Christ. Situations may have forced him into developing new ideas

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<sup>120</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 210.

like the law of celibate life vs. married life. According to Schüssler Fiorenza Paul's advice that young women should remain unmarried was a difficult one.

It is therefore important to note that Paul's advice to remain free from the marriage bond was a frontal assault on the intentions of existing law and the general cultural ethos, especially since it was given to people who lived in the urban centers of the Roman empire. It stood over and against the dominant cultural values of Greco-Roman society. Moreover, his advice to women to remain non-married was a severe infringement of the right of the *paterfamilias* since, according to Roman law, a woman remained under the tutorship of her father and family, even after she married. Paul's advice to widows who were not necessarily old- since girls usually married between twelve and fifteen years of age- thus offered a possibility for ordinary women to become independent. At the same time, it produced conflicts for the Christian community in its interaction with the society <sup>121</sup>.

Paul's position on the issue of circumcision and the uncircumcision, man and woman, the slave and the freed, the Jews and the Gentiles (Gal 3:28) was also hard, but they never forced him out of the centre of his thought, the risen Christ who is the Lord of all.

However, what is vital is the fact that different Christian communities had their own problems which varied from the problems of the Galatians. As David Horrell writes:

One thing that should be clear to even a casual reader of Paul's letters is that they are enormously varied. Because Paul deals with particular problems and issues facing particular communities, and because the situations he addresses vary greatly, the content of each of his letters is distinctive. Certainly there are themes, convictions, ideas, phrases and so on which appear in more than one letter, but the unique character of each letter should be appreciated <sup>122</sup>.

There were particular issues at stake which needed to be addressed. And that was why he wrote the letter to the Galatians. The first and uppermost of these issues was his "apostolic authority" to preach a gospel different from that of the Jewish Christians. According to L. L. Belleville "Paul's apostolic authority is particularly at issue in his letters to the Galatians and Corinthians. In Galatians we read of Jewish-Christian itinerant missionaries who preached a message of circumcision (Gal 2:3-4; 5:2-12; 6:12-13) and obedience to the Mosaic Law (Gal 2:15-16; 3:2; 54), and who seek to erode Paul's authority among the Gentile churches by claiming that his apostleship is secondary (Gal 1:1; 1:13-2:10) and his gospel fashioned to be palatable to the Gentiles (Gal 1:11-12; 2:1-10)"<sup>123</sup>. For him "authority and apostleship are closely linked in Paul's letters. Indeed, his ability to exercise authority stems from

<sup>121</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 225-226.

<sup>122</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 41.

<sup>123</sup> Belleville, L. L., *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*, 55.

his commission as an apostle”<sup>124</sup>. The opponents would ask: Who is this Paul who arrogates to himself all the apostolic authority on earth, even to the extent of wanting to corrupt the Jewish Christian religion with the customs of a “mongrel race”?

### 3. 2 “From Paul, an Apostle” (Gal 1:1)

Παῦλος ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου  
From Paul, an apostle appointed not by human beings nor through any human being

ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν  
but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead,

An apostle (apostolos) is someone who is sent as a messenger, though in the New Testament the word most often has somewhat more specialized meaning, referring to a special circle of leaders in the earlier church. Luke generally restricts this title to the twelve, only rarely applying it to Paul and Barnabas (Acts 14:14). Paul, however, insists that he is an apostle, on the basis of his having seen the risen Lord and been commissioned by him to proclaim the gospel among the gentiles (1 Cor 9:1-2; 15:8; Gal 1:1)<sup>125</sup>.

Paul was not one of the twelve Apostles. The obvious implication of this fact is that he was not called nor sent out directly by the historical Jesus<sup>126</sup>. The basic questions then are: Who called him? Who sent him? Why is he preaching? What is he preaching? In whose name is he preaching? However, Paul had his defense. “When his authority is challenged, Paul points to the validating marks that he shares with other apostles. Witness to Christ’s resurrection is a primary credential (1 Cor 9:1; cf. 1 Cor 15:7; Gal 1:15-16)”<sup>127</sup>

He does not say anything in all his letters about his direct contact with the historical Jesus. Rather he confirms that he is like the last born, born even as an illegitimate child born from another stock (1 Cor 15:8) after the Lord had commissioned the twelve who were with him, to learn from him and to be sent out (Mark 3:13-14). Paul saw himself as the “thirteenth apostle” commissioned by the Lord who appeared to him, and needed to be accepted into the community based on this divine calling. For David Horrell “he did not single-handedly or uniquely start a Christian mission to Gentiles, nor dream up on his own the gospel which we later find

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 26.

<sup>126</sup> Pate, *The End of the Age has Come*, 20.

<sup>127</sup> Belleville, *Dictionary of Paul and his Letter*, 55.

in his letters"<sup>128</sup>. He had to struggle hard to come into the mission and the apostolate to the gentiles. The driving force is that it is the Lord who called him. As he would say to the Galatians, "God chose to reveal his son to me, so that I should preach him to the gentiles" (Gal 1:16).

But now the authenticity of this apostolate and ministry is questioned and even discredited in Galatia. He has to prove now that he is definitely an Apostle of Christ. To the Galatians he begins with this apology: "From Paul, an apostle appointed not by human beings nor through any human being but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from the dead" (Gal 1:1). He appeals to all the authorities and powers in heaven (God the Father and the Son) to substantiate the authenticity of his writing and of his calling. In doing this, he followed "the format of the time"<sup>129</sup>. About the gospel he preached he says "Now, I want to make it quite clear to you, brothers, about the gospel that was preached by me, that it was no human message. It was not from any human being that I received it, and I was not taught it, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal 1:10-12). To the Romans he writes the same with little modifications: "From Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle, set apart for the service of the gospel that God promised long ago through his prophets in the holy scriptures" (Rom 1:1-2). Against the bias of the opponents, he accepts his past life thus: "You have surely heard how I lived in the past, within Judaism, and how there was simply no limit to the way I persecuted the Church of God in my attempts to destroy it; and how, in Judaism, I outstripped most of my Jewish contemporaries in my limitless enthusiasm for the traditions of my ancestors" (Gal 1:13-14).

His call is based on God's choice and his grace. He cites the prophets of old to substantiate his call: "But when God, who had set me apart from the time when I was in my mother's womb, called me through his grace and chose to reveal his Son to me, so that I should preach him to the gentiles, I was in no hurry to confer with any human being, or to go up to Jerusalem to see those who were already apostles before me" (Gal 1:15-16). This claim of Paul is challenged by some scholars who

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<sup>128</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 16.

<sup>129</sup> It was the format of the time to begin a letter with an introductory paragraph, prescript of name of the writer, the person it is addressed to, followed by thanking and praying for the person (address). This is followed by the content and closed with the postscript. In Paul's case however, this letter was written following the format: he is also an apostle. The introduction serves to prove the authenticity of the letter and his call from God whose mission he is carrying out among the gentiles and against the oppositions from the side of the false brothers.

believe that “this is not the whole story”<sup>130</sup>. This position of Murphy-O’Connor belongs to those who criticize “not the Paul I have come to know and to appreciate”<sup>131</sup>.

### 3.3 The Content and Borderline of Galatians Three

In seeking for the borderline and content of a given text few key concepts are to be kept in mind. They include: the change of time, the Place of the event, the vocabularies used, style and the persons involved in the scenes. Georg Fischer represents this opinion better<sup>132</sup>. Our text is from the letter to the Galatians chapter three. This chapter is coherent (holds itself together). The people involved are the Galatians, the Jewish Christians and Paul. The content and the borderline will be taken according to themes that occur within and outside the chapter which are relevant to our discussion. Each theme will be given a subtitle. The division of the Bible into chapters and verses play no significant roles in determining the uniformity of a text. Georg Fischer hold this view:

Beide Beispiele belegen, dass Texte einheiten nicht mit Kapitelgliederungen übereinstimmen müssen. Vorsicht ist auch gegenüber den Überschriften und Unterteilungen mancher Bibelausgaben geboten. Diese Angaben können zutreffen, leiten aber gelegentlich auch abseits<sup>133</sup>.

Georg Fischer maintains that the letters of Paul is preserved in its modern Greek form. But there are many manuscripts and editions to the letters. This is why the borderline does not follow chapters and verses as they occur in the letters. He writes:

Von keinem biblischen Text ist uns das Original überliefert. Uns liegen nur verschiedene Abschriften, Manuskripte und Ausgaben vor. Die Textkritik kann versuchen, über sie zu einem dem Original möglichst nahekommenden Text zu gelangen. Zufügungen bzw. Veränderungen an einem Bau, wie Gasthausschild, Schaukasten und Satellitenantenne,

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<sup>130</sup> “It would be easy to charge Paul with being somewhat less than honest, because he had learnt much from the Christian communities of Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch in which he had lived. He was thinking, however, of the core of his law-free gospel which, as we have seen, flowed directly from the rearrangement of his ideas caused by his encounter with the Risen Lord. What he absorbed from believers in Damascus, Jerusalem, and Antioch was so thoroughly sifted through his mental filters that it became merely the confirmation and elaboration of his intensely personal fundamental insight. It is doubtful that Paul was conscious of the selectivity operative in his appropriation of the embryonic Christian tradition. That which harmonized with his perspective was integrated, but that which did not fit was ignored without being repudiated”. Cf. Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 202-203.

<sup>131</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a New Day, 1.

<sup>132</sup> „Wechsel in der Handlung, bes. von Ort, Zeit, Personen... Veränderungen in Vokabular, Stil, Gattung, Thema... innere Zusammengehörigkeit (Kohärenz) größer als Verbindungen nach außen... neue Information, so eher am Beginn, oder Redundanz, wiederholend, mehr am Ende“. Cf. Fischer, Wege in die Bibel, 6.

<sup>133</sup> Fische, Wege in die Bibel, 8.

stellen die Frage nach dem ursprünglichen Zustand. Musikstücke werden meist für die Herausgabe bearbeitet, manchmal auch für andere Besetzungen umgeschrieben<sup>134</sup>.

In determining the borderline, we will allow the text to speak for itself. It seems necessary to clarify the background of the idea or to clarify an idea itself or to present other readings of the text to help in the better understanding of it. This will help us to avoid one sided presentation of ideas. David Horrell believes that most of those who read Paul's letters end up presenting their own opinion and understanding of him without due considerations of other theological views.

All of the introductions published in English in recent years, enormously valuable though they are, share one thing in common: they are attempts to introduce Paul and his thought. That is to say, they present a brief interpretation of major themes in his writing, an overview of the main thrust of his gospel, or a resume of his life and work<sup>135</sup>.

Having taken care not to fall into the same error of self-understanding and self-interpretation of Paul, we will allow the text to speak for itself. The Greek texts are taken from Nestle-Aland<sup>136</sup> and each text is followed by The New Jerusalem Bible translation.

### 3.3.1 You Stupid People in Galatia! (v. 1)

ὦ ἀνόητοι γαλάται You stupid people of Galatia!

τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν, οἷς κατ' ὀφθαλμοὺς ἰησοῦς χριστὸς προεγράφη ἐσταυρωμένος.

After you have had a clear picture of Jesus Christ crucified, right in front of your eyes, who has put a spell on you?

Paul begins this section with a quarrel: *ὦ ἀνόητοι γαλάται, Oh, foolish Galatia!* The opinion of David Horrell is very correct. He writes:

Galatians is a letter in which Paul's anger is obvious. Here there is no opening 'thanksgiving', as is usual in Paul's letters, instead Paul expresses his astonishment that the Galatians are so quickly turning to 'another gospel' (Gal 1:6) and curses those who proclaim this other gospel (Gal. 1:8-9). This is strong language indeed!... What is clear is that the Galatian converts, having heard and accepted Paul's gospel, have since been informed that this gospel is really incomplete. Missionaries announcing a more 'Jewish-Christian' version of the gospel have told them that if they truly want to be children of Abraham, to belong to God's people, then they must obey the law set out in scripture and be circumcised (Gal. 5:2). Paul is vehemently opposed to such a message, and deeply angered and distressed by his converts' attraction to it<sup>137</sup>.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

<sup>135</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, ix.

<sup>136</sup> Nestle-Aland: Novum Testamentum Graece, Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, Stuttgart, 1993.

<sup>137</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 42-43.

Jerome Murphy-O'Connor's reading is not very different: "Not unnaturally Paul got a reputation for being erratic, which surprised and angered him"<sup>138</sup>. For N. L. Calvert "Paul's angry tone is evident from the beginning of his letter to the Galatians..."<sup>139</sup>

In this section, Paul is no longer worried about his authority, his problems with Peter, the Council meeting in Jerusalem but with the people of Galatia. According to Stephen Andrew Cooper the Galatians were going astray "because they are linking the gospel of faith, which is a faith in Christ, to Judaism. On account of their corporeal understanding, they observe the Sabbath and circumcision, likewise other works they picked up from the Law. Upset by these things, Paul wrote the letter wanting to correct them, and to summon them back from Judaism in order to keep faith in Christ alone, and to have the hope of salvation from Christ, the hope of his promises"<sup>140</sup>. He begins this section of the letter with a quarrel: "You stupid people in Galatia!" (v.1a). Paul is so upset that he does not thank the Galatians as he used to do in other letters. But there were genuine reasons why he should have thanked them; even though exegetes believe that the situation at hand does not call for frivolities and undue cordiality. Paul believes that the Galatians were cast a spell on by the Judaizers. Hence he asks "ὦ ἀνόητοι γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν", oh foolish Galatians, who bewitched you? According to Stephen Andrew Cooper, "People do not suffer from a spell unless they are growing strong in something good, and then come under affliction by the doing of spiteful thing and jealous people"<sup>141</sup>.

These opinions notwithstanding, Paul is supposed to have thanked the people. When he was very sick, the people cared for him. He got all the honor and respect from them. They welcomed him like "a messenger of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself... I can testify to you that you would have plucked your eyes out, were that possible, and given them to me" (Gal 4:14 &15). As if he has forgotten their hospitality to him, he goes straight to attack them because he believes that the gods of this world have cast a spell on them. For him, the pagan idols made with human hands are demons in disguise. But by the Spirit of the risen Lord, those who were once enslaved by the things that are not gods have been liberated from them and have come to the knowledge of the true God (Gal 4:8).

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<sup>138</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 203.

<sup>139</sup> Calvert, N. L.: Abraham, Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 2.

<sup>140</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, 249.

<sup>141</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, 286.

But why did Paul begin with this sharp scolding of and quarrelling with the people of Galatia? ὧ ἀνόητοι γαλάται, τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβάσκανεν -oh foolish Galatians, who bewitched you? He gives us an answer: “θαυμάζω ὅτι οὕτως ταχέως μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι [χριστοῦ] εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον”. “I am astonished that you are so promptly turning away from the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are going over to a different gospel”<sup>142</sup> (Gal 1:6). There is only one gospel, that which was preached by him. “To stand for anything other than what the apostle stands for is to articulate for oneself a place of difference, which has already implicitly been associated with discord and disorder. To stand in a position of difference is to stand in opposition, therefore, to the gospel, the community and Christ”<sup>143</sup>. God called him from his mother’s womb to preach the gospel to the gentiles (Gal1:15 & 16). Therefore, he places a curse on the trouble makers and on anyone who would try to preach a gospel contrary to or different from what he had preached. “But even if we ourselves or an angel from heaven preaches to you a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let God’s curse be on him” (Gal 1: 8 & 9). He concludes this phase by reminding them that he was once a preacher of circumcision. But now he is a preacher of Christ. The Judaism he preached before his conversion did not bring him salvation and the acceptance of the gentiles into the community of the faithful children of God. This is why he is now proud to be a servant and a preacher of Christ (Gal 1:10). With this transferred aggression, he begins chapter three.

Paul has another reason for his anger. He gives this in verse three. “οὕτως ἀνόητοί ἐστε; ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε”. “Having begun in the Spirit, can you be so stupid as to end in the flesh?” (Gal 3:3). “In v. 3 Paul berates the Galatians for their foolishness. Not only have they foolishly fallen under the spell of the agitators; now they are so foolish as to think that having received the Spirit they can be perfect by the flesh, that is, the mark of circumcision”<sup>144</sup>.

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<sup>142</sup> “‘Different Gospel’ would mean abounding the message of Christ the Lord preached by St. Paul in favor of any other type of teaching which does not place Christ at the centre. In this case the ‘intruders’ i.e. the Judaizers wanted to reintroduce Jewish Norms and cultures as prerequisite to salvation. They accused St. Paul of making the Gentile conversion easier by not insisting on circumcision. ‘They would call ‘misyoking’ what Paul has done in bringing the Galatians into the church without subjecting them to the Torah covenant’. Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 195. But St. Paul insists that his apostolate was to the gentiles just as Peter, James and John, the Pillars of the Faith were apostles to the Jews (Gal: 2:8-9). David Horrell would say, “What drove Paul to write his beautiful and not-so-beautiful phrases, his encouraging and angry words, was his enduring conviction that the God of Israel had acted in Jesus Christ for the salvation of the world”. Cf. Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 132.

<sup>143</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 230.

<sup>144</sup> Matera, *Galatians*, 115.

Paul still has another reason for his quarrels. He is worried that all his efforts were trying to be in vain. He says “ἡμέρας παρατηρεῖσθε καὶ μῆνας καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἑνιαυτούς”. “I am beginning to be afraid that I may, after all, have wasted my efforts on you” (Gal 4:10). He is so worried that he says “ὅτι ἀποροῦμαι ἐν ὑμῖν”. “I am quite at a loss with you” (Gal 4:20b). He sees the pains he was going through as a process of “child bearing”<sup>145</sup>. “Then he was pregnant with indignation”<sup>146</sup>. There is need for a reconversion of the Galatians (Gal 4:20), because the false brothers have cast a spell on them.

Paul concludes with a defined stand: it is stupidity to go back to the law of circumcision. Whoever does that, himself or the Galatians, or the false brothers and sisters, that person is (or those people or groups of persons are) stupid. He asks rhetorical questions: “How was it that you received the Spirit? Was it by the practice of the law, or by believing in the message you heard? Having begun in the spirit, can you be so stupid as to end in the flesh?” (Gal 3:2). To return to the law would mean that “Christ died needlessly” (Gal 2:21). This would mean “falling away from the Grace of God” (Gal 5:4).

While the false brothers boast of the combination of Jewish Torah with the message of salvation, Paul categorically distances himself from them. He sees the absolute power of the risen Lord over Jewish laws. However, some scholars “hold other opinions”<sup>147</sup>. He does not want to mix the message of salvation brought about through the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ with Jewish laws. “If the agitators are so intent upon circumcision, let them go all the way. Let them castrate themselves”<sup>148</sup>. But for him it is out of the question. This is because “through the law I

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<sup>145</sup> “Of particular significance here are his missionary self understanding of the ‘father of the Community’ and the bride image for the Christian community. Paul not only uses the metaphor of “father” but also that of ‘mother’ and ‘nurse’ to describe his relationship to the communities he founded and to the individuals he converted to the gospel. By the transmission of the gospel he has begotten them, given them new life, nourished them like babies, and formed them as children of God...” Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 233-234.

<sup>146</sup> Edward, J. *Mark: Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, Fitzroy, Chicago, 1999, 34.

<sup>147</sup> “Often Rom 10:4 has been translated improperly, ‘For Christ is the end of the law...’ The Greek word *telos*, which is translated as ‘end’ in this verse, is better understood in its wider meaning, ‘goal’ or ‘purpose’. Paul viewed the coming of the Messiah as the climax of salvation history. When the New International Version, New American Standard Bible, Revised Standard Version, and King James Version translate the Greek word *telos* with ‘end’, the result is devastating. Instead of stressing the crucial significance of reaching the ultimate goal of Torah, which is indeed foremost in Paul’s thought, Christians fall prey to Marcionism: the ‘end’ of the law means license; the law has been cancelled and has lost its practical application in living. On the contrary, through Jesus, Paul argued, Torah had reached its objective by bringing the Gentiles into a right relationship with God”. Cf. Young, Brad H: *Paul the Jewish theologian*, Hendrickson Pub., Massachusetts, 2009, 31.

<sup>148</sup> Matera, *Galatians*, 17.

am dead to the law so that I can be alive to God” (Gal 2:19). It is important for Paul that Christ and Torah are separated from one another in this sinful world (Gal 1:4). Christ has liberated all from the wicked world of sin and the law, going back to them is being stupid (Gal 4:5). Faith in Christ supersedes the role of Torah.

Daniel Boyarin sees the views of Brad Young which places Jewish laws above the resurrected Christ as not only "unsupportable in scholarly terms, but that it is an ethical scandal as well, and one that does Christianity no credit"<sup>149</sup>. This position of Brad Young stands in direct opposition to some other theological views of Paul. Paul asks this question: “Why am I still being persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision?” (Gal 5:11). For David Horrell “it is clear that, by the time he wrote his letters, Paul was convinced of his call to be Apostle to the Gentiles, his commission to take the good news of God’s saving grace in Christ to all the nations”<sup>150</sup>. “Paul was called to the specific task made clear to him by his experience of the risen Lord, of apostleship to the Gentiles”<sup>151</sup>. He concludes by saying that “Paul is convinced that God has now acted in Christ for the salvation of all who believed, and that salvation comes through Christ and not through the law”<sup>152</sup>. According to Christian J. Beker, it is because lawless gentiles are full members of the people of God by faith alone that Paul was named a revolutionary. He ruptured the connection between the Torah and Christ so decisively that Jewish life as such is invalidated. This was why he became an ardent enemy of the Pharisees. He was hated for violating the laws that he knew so well. But for Paul, to reiterate the Torah is rebuilding of those things which he, Paul had turned down (Gal 2, 18). By affiliation at least Paul is now a gentile among the Christians. This sparked off the hatred from his brothers who wished him death<sup>153</sup>. But for Paul faith in the law should be separated from faith in Christ. For it is foolishness and stupidity to combine the two.

### 3.3.2 Abraham’s Faith (vv. 6-9 & 29)

6 καθὼς ἀβραάμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην.  
Abraham, you remember, put his faith in God, and this was reckoned to him as uprightness.

7 γινώσκετε ἄρα ὅτι οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, οὗτοι υἱοὶ εἰσὶν ἀβραάμ.  
Be sure, then, that it is people of faith who are to be children of Abraham.

<sup>149</sup> Boyarin, A radical Jew, 11.

<sup>150</sup> David Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 28.

<sup>151</sup> David Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 27.

<sup>152</sup> David Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 84.

<sup>153</sup> Beker, J. Christian: Paul, The Apostle, Scotland, Fortress Press, Edinburgh, 1980, 249- 250.

8 προϊδοῦσα δὲ ἡ γραφή ὅτι ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοῖ τὰ ἔθνη ὁ θεὸς προεηγγελίσαστο τῷ ἀβραάμ  
 And it was because scripture foresaw that God would give saving justice to the gentiles through faith,  
 that it announced the future gospel to Abraham in the words:

ὅτι ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοὶ πάντα τὰ ἔθνη.  
 All nations will be blessed in you.

9 ὥστε οἱ ἐκ πίστεως εὐλογοῦνται σὺν τῷ πιστῷ ἀβραάμ.  
 So it is people of faith who receive the same blessing as Abraham, the man of faith.

29 εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ ἀβραάμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ' ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.  
 And simply by being Christ's, you are that progeny of Abraham, the heirs named in the promise.

Having finished with “the foolish people of Galatia”, the role of the law and Christ’s Spirit that works miracles, Paul goes on to give an example of Abraham who believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness. For N. L. Calvert, “the role played by the patriarchs became increasingly important to the Jewish people after they returned from exile in Babylon. Abraham was one of these important figures whose stature is reflected in extra-biblical Jewish literature and in the NT”<sup>154</sup>. He is of the view that Abraham has a central role in the arguments of Paul’s opponents. Paul’s opponents were those who thought that the gentiles turning to Christ was not enough. In order to be sure that God’s blessings was upon them and that they were true children of Abraham, they had to participate fully in the Torah<sup>155</sup>. In Gal 3:7 Paul commands the Galatian believers to recognize from his proof in Galatians 3:6 that ‘it is the people of faith who are the sons of Abraham’. Anyone among them who was at all familiar with the traditions of Abraham as the first monotheist and anti-idolater would realize that the Jewish people had seen Abraham as the man of faith all along<sup>156</sup>. According to Frank J. Matera, “Paul is making a comparison between the situation of the Galatians and that of Abraham. Jewish tradition praised Abraham for his faithfulness to God’s commandments (Gen 26:5; Sir 44:20; 1 Macc 2:52)”<sup>157</sup>. The Galatians are to imitate the faith of Abraham.

Dieselbe Verbindung von Glauben und Gerechtigkeit, die bei Paulus großes Gewicht erhält, begegnet im AT in Bezug auf Abraham. Von ihm wird rückblickend konstatiert: ‚Abraham glaubte dem Herrn, und der Herr rechnete es ihm als Gerechtigkeit an‘ (Gen 15,6; vgl. Gal 3,6; Rom 4,3.922; Jak 2, 23). Aus diesem Satz, der für ihn zum Grundsatz schlechthin wird, zieht Paulus den für seine Verkündigung fundamentalen Schluss, das der Mensch nicht aufgrund seiner Werke, sondern durch den Glauben allein gerechtfertigt wird<sup>158</sup>.

<sup>154</sup> Calvert, Abraham, Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 1.

<sup>155</sup> Calvert, Abraham, Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 2.

<sup>156</sup> Calvert, Abraham, Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 3.

<sup>157</sup> Matera, Galatians, 113.

<sup>158</sup> Kogler Franz: Glaube, Herders Neues Bibellexikon, Herder, Freiburg, 2009, 261.

Abraham is the father of all nations because of his faith. He is also our father in faith. God promised that through him “all nations will be blessed” (Gen 15:6)<sup>159</sup>. Through faith gentiles have become also the people of God. The entire Mystery, which was enacted by our Lord Jesus Christ, requires faith alone. The Mystery has been enacted on our behalf, enacted for our salvation and liberation, therefore, we should but have faith in Christ and in the Mystery of his resurrection<sup>160</sup>.

“From praising faith Paul goes on to disparage legalism”<sup>161</sup>. “Circumcision does not play a role in this covenant. Abraham believed that his descendants would be as numerous as the stars, even though he was childless”<sup>162</sup>. Frank J. Matera concludes: “Paul shows the Galatians that they are Abraham’s true descendants because they already enjoy the Spirit and belong to Christ who is Abraham’s promised seed. The law does not supersede the promise made to Abraham nor was it intended to grant righteousness”<sup>163</sup>. The law is subordinate to the promise made to Abraham and cannot alter God’s promises made to him. “The Law came 430 years after the promise and was given through the mediation of angels”<sup>164</sup>.

“Paul’s exegesis of the Abraham story probably counters that of the agitators who have argued that only the circumcised are the true descendants of Abraham”<sup>165</sup>. The Galatians who were not circumcised are the true community in Christ (Gal 3:6-9). He makes a comparison between the children of Abraham, Ishmael, the son he had with Hagar, the Egyptian slave girl (Gen 16:1-6 and Isaac the son he had with Sarah, his freedom wife (Gen 21:8-12). Isaac is the heir and Ishmael is the slave girl’s child (Gal 4:21-31). According to Stephen Andrew Cooper, Paul wants to prove that what originally belongs to the Jews have been extended to the entire people through the slave girl, Hagar. At the same time now, the son from the free woman signifies the church and the Christians. Paul is indicating that there are two people, but the better one, who is from the free woman is Isaac. Figuratively, Isaac is Christ<sup>166</sup>.

In the Galatians the promise made to Abraham is fulfilled. Peter Ellis argues:

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<sup>159</sup> “They will be blessed by God means to have been justified. And to be justified means to be freed from the law of servitude. Therefore, those who will be blessed on the basis of faith will be blessed because Abraham was. So faith is everything”. Cf. Cooper, Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians, 291.

<sup>160</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians, 290.

<sup>161</sup> Edwards, Ancient Christian Commentary, 38.

<sup>162</sup> Matera, Galatians, 113-114.

<sup>163</sup> Matera, Galatians, 114.

<sup>164</sup> Matera, Galatians, 16.

<sup>165</sup> Matera, Galatians, 114.

<sup>166</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians, 321.

Paul's argument has special force for the Galatians because it presupposes that Abraham like the Galatians, was a Gentile when he made his act of faith in God. The promise that in you shall all the nations be blessed refers directly to Gentiles like the Galatians, since they by definition belong to the nations. Circumcision, the sign of a Jew, and the law of Moses, which is the heritage and badge of Judaism, *came later*... Thus faith and the promise preceded both circumcision and the law. The Galatians, like all Gentiles, have been promised blessings in Abraham, blessings that come to them as they came to Abraham, their father, through faith!<sup>167</sup>.

Frank J. Matera compares the Galatians with Abraham. "Just as Abraham was justified by the God in whom he believed, so the Galatians received the Spirit from the message of faith (the faith of Christ) in which they believed. Abraham was not declared righteous because of legal works, and the Galatians did not receive the Spirit because of legal works. In both instances the determining factor was the prior act of God. In the case of Abraham it was God's promise, in the case of the Galatians it was the message of the crucified Christ. In both instances there was the necessary response of faith"<sup>168</sup>.

Through faith, all who are baptized have become the children of Abraham (Gal 3:7; Rom 4). They are and remain saved even though they are not circumcised. All those who have faith like Abraham will be saved like him. The new circumcision is baptism done in the name of Christ the risen Lord. We are justified through faith (Gal. 5:6). According to Stephen Andrew Cooper faith supersedes every other thing. He writes: "Everywhere Paul states that when it comes to faith, all else ceases to count. This means social status, gender, or anything done that concerns the body, whether about, on, or for the sake of the body: circumcision, works, and other practices of this sort. None of these, he says, counts as anything in Christ"<sup>169</sup>. Through faith the Galatians became a new creation. Just as anyone who is initiated into Judaism through circumcision takes upon him/herself the conditions of the Old Covenant, the New Covenant with God is effected through baptism in the name of Christ. The Galatians and all those who come to believe in Christ as the Messiah belong to "the new Israel of God" (Gal 6:16). Before the coming of Christ, the old Israelites were only the Jews. The commandment: you shall love your neighbor as yourself (Lv 19:18) applied only to fellow Israelites. They were also the only people who accepted circumcision in fulfillment of God's Covenant with Abraham. They were also the only chosen race, the people of God, the Lord's own treasured possession, set apart to

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<sup>167</sup> Ellis, *Seven Pauline Letters*, 185.

<sup>168</sup> Matera, *Galatians*, 116.

<sup>169</sup> Cooper, *Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians*, 330.

sing his praises (Deut 14:2). But that was the old Israel. The new Israel of God are all those who accepted baptism in the name of the Lord who died and rose again not only for the Jews but for the whole world. What God did for the Jews alone in Exodus event He has done now for the whole world through the Death and Resurrection of Christ. And that is why all those who are baptized belong to the new Israel of God. The old Israel is nationalistic and exclusive but the new Israel is universal and inclusive. Daniel Boyarin concludes: “Christianity is the system that proposes that there is something which is necessary for all: faith in Jesus Christ”<sup>170</sup>.

### 3.3.3 The Curse of the Law (v. 10)

ὅσοι γὰρ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου εἰσὶν ὑπὸ κατάραν εἰσὶν·

On the other hand, all those who depend on the works of the Law are under a curse,

γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὃς οὐκ ἐμμένει πᾶσιν τοῖς γεγραμμένοις ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ποιῆσαι αὐτά.

Since scripture says: Accurse be he who does not make what is written in the book of the Law effective, by putting it into practice.

Having stated the blessings that accompanied the promises made to Abraham, Paul goes on to narrate the curses that are associated with the law. First and foremost, he had in mind the principles of “Lex Talionis”<sup>171</sup>, that is, the law of retribution. It was the principle based on tit for tat, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life, and an eye for an eye. Its biblical form is found in Exodus 21:24 which goes on to add “foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stroke for stroke”. The law therefore was vindictive and negative. Again, it became practically impossible to keep 613 principles of the law. The law i.e. the Ten Commandments/Decalogue (Exodus 20), written on two tablets of stone was handed over to Moses on Mount Sinai (Exodus 34). As time went on the principles of the law became more and more. The Ten Commandments were interpreted and duplicated so much that it became impossible to keep 613 of them. T. R. Schreiner says:

The reason for this is twofold. For one thing, Paul says, no one can keep the whole law. Paul’s opponents themselves demonstrate this by their own inability to do the Law (Gal 6:13); the Galatians will discover it too if they undertake its yoke (Gal 5:3); and the historical experience of Israel with the curse of the Law for disobedience proves it to be true (Gal 3:10-12, cf. Col 2:14). Why is it impossible to keep the Law? Paul hints at what

<sup>170</sup> Bayarin, A Radical Jew, 233.

<sup>171</sup> „Was hier vorliegt, scheint aus einer juristischen Ausbildungssituation zu stammen, was auch in der Einführung der Talionsformel, „Auge um Auge...“ in v. 23-25 als übergreifendem Prinzip abzulesen ist“. Cf. Zenger, Erich: Stuttgarter Altes Testament, Katholisches Bibelwerk, Stuttgart, 2005, 130.

he thinks on his important issue in Galatians 2:16, when he says that 'by works of the Law no flesh shall be justified...' The second reason that 'works of the Law' cannot place one within this harmonious covenant of which these works are part was temporary<sup>172</sup>.

That notwithstanding, the curse of the law was clearly stipulated: "Accursed be anyone who does not make the words of this law effective by putting them into practice" (Deut 28:26). Taking upon themselves the obligations of the law which they were most likely not going to keep was to take the curse of the law upon themselves (Gal 5:3). Paul knows that no one can keep all the laws because some of them are "superfluous; others are abhorrent and thus abandoned by the true and really pure Christians. It is to give an example: the case when a man's wife is joined to his brother for the sake of raising up offspring" (Deut 25:5-6)<sup>173</sup>. But the Galatians have the blessings of the faith of Abraham as opposed to the principles of the law, so why take a curse upon oneself rather than the blessings? Paul says in Gal 3:13-14:

13 χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου γενόμενος ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν κατάρα,

Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law by being a cursed for our sake

ὅτι γέγραπται, ἐπικατάρατος πᾶς ὁ κρεμάμενος ἐπὶ ξύλου,

since scripture says: Anyone hanged is accursed,

14 ἵνα εἰς τὰ ἔθνη ἡ εὐλογία τοῦ ἀβραάμ γένηται ἐν χριστῷ ἰησοῦ,

so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the gentiles through Christ,

ἵνα τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πνεύματος λάβωμεν διὰ τῆς πίστεως.

and so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

They have also more reasons to be happy. The statement "cursed is he who hangs on the tree" (Deut 21:23) has been abolished by Christ. Christ took this curse upon himself by accepting death, even death on the cross (Gal 3:13). Frank J. Matera says, "Christ redeems humanity from the Law's curse (Gal 3:13), and God sends his Son to redeem those under the Law (Gal 4:5). Paul views being under the Law as a kind of slavery from which one must be ransomed"<sup>174</sup>. "Moreover, Paul seems to imply that everyone under the Law is under this curse since no one perfectly fulfills all of the prescriptions of the Law"<sup>175</sup>. Peter Ellis has the same opinion:

<sup>172</sup> Schreiner, T. R: Law, Dictionary of Paul and his Letters, 538.

<sup>173</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, 328-329.

<sup>174</sup> Matera, Galatians, 120.

<sup>175</sup> Matera, Galatians, 123.

By removing us from the realm of the law, Christ has delivered us from the precarious position of being cursed by the law for non-observance. He has delivered us by himself becoming a curse in the crucifixion. According to Jewish law, 'a hanged man is accursed by God' (Dt. 21:23). Since Jesus was hanged on a tree, he has borne the curse of the law. But a law that can curse Jesus, the Son of God, in his very act of dying for us, cannot be absolute. Indeed, in cursing Jesus, the law has brought about its own downfall. It is in this sense that Paul means the words: 'For I through the law died to the law that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ...' <sup>176</sup>

Christ has therefore redeemed all from the curse of the law while the blessings promised to Abraham remain for all those who had faith like Abraham. The blessings of Abraham is found in Gen 22:17-18, "I will indeed bless you, and I will make your offspring as numerous as the stars of heaven and as the sand that is on the seashore". "Paul sees the fulfillment of the blessing through the Spirit. Abraham has become the father of innumerable descendants" <sup>177</sup>. "Through the Spirit Abraham has gained innumerable children from among the Gentiles. The Gentiles have become Abraham's descendants through the Spirit which they have received on the basis of the faith of Jesus Christ in whom they believe" <sup>178</sup>. Paul sees the promises made to Abraham as God's will for humanity. And this promise cannot be changed by any law. If the promises superseded the law why do the Galatians still have to take the law of circumcision upon themselves?

### 3.3.4. What is the Purpose of the Law? (v. 19)

τί οὖν ὁ νόμος;

Then what is the purpose of the Law?

τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη

It was added to deal with crimes

ἄχρις οὗ ἔλθῃ τὸ σπέρμα ᾧ ἐπήγγελται, διαταγείς δι' ἀγγέλων ἐν χειρὶ μεσίτου.

until the 'progeny' to which the promise had been made should come.

Having presented the law very negatively Paul asks rhetorical questions: What was the purpose of the law? Was it necessary at all? Are the aims of the law already fulfilled or are they ab initio unnecessary? "Paul provides three answers: the Law was added to make transgressions known; its role is temporary; and it is inferior to the promise because it was promulgated by angels, through the hand of a mediator" <sup>179</sup>. There is no society without a law and there is no law without a people to obey it. The

<sup>176</sup> Ellis, Seven Pauline Letters, 186.

<sup>177</sup> Matera, Galatians, 120.

<sup>178</sup> Matera, Galatians, 125.

<sup>179</sup> Matera, Galatians, 132.

law was given to deal with criminality in the society. It was a crime to eat pork which the Jews abstained from like a human flesh. It was against the *holiness code*<sup>180</sup> to interact with women and gentiles. There were stringent laws against adultery, incest, homosexuality and sex in general. The punishment for adultery was being stoned to death outside the gate (Deut 22:24).

The law was also given to help guide Israel against polytheism. Hence the Decalogue obliterates the worship of other gods and forbids Israel from prostrating before them. Israel was mandated: “You shall worship the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might” (Deut 6:4- 6). It is to him alone that honor is due. “For I the Lord your God, I am a jealous God” (Exodus 20:5) and “a consuming fire” (Deut 4:24).

The law was mediated by the Angel. It was the Angel of the Lord who appeared to Moses on Mount Sinai, when “the law was given to him”<sup>181</sup>. The same angel guided Israel to the promised land. They were not to defy him/her because they will not be forgiven (Exodus 23:20). The law therefore was given through the intermediary of Moses and the angels. But Christ is the mediator between God and humanity. According to Stephen Andrew Cooper, “Christ is a mediator and one who is a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one, it is Christ who brings back and joins his members to the church. So does the Law do this? The Law couldn’t be a mediator, could it? If it is a law, then, it is not a mediator. For because the Law is a law of deeds, it does not join whatever things have been separated; it judges only about what has been done... Christ himself is the only mediator”<sup>182</sup>. Through these laws, humanity was enslaved under the “elemental principles of this world” (Gal 4:3b).

The law became a problem not because of God who gave it but because of the interpretations and multiplications of the Decalogue into 613 commandments.

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<sup>180</sup> “The prescription of the Holiness Code, as well as the scribal regulations, controlled women’s lives even more than men’s lives, and more stringently determined their access to God in Temple and Torah” Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 141.

<sup>181</sup> “Paul’s resort here is based on intricate rabbinic reasoning and is intended to demonstrate further the inferiority of the law to the promise. From the fact that Moses functioned as an intermediary at Sinai, it can be deduced that there must have been two groups at Sinai. This is deduced rabbinically, because it is only where groups are concerned that one needs an intermediary. At Sinai, the Israelites composed one of the two groups. Since God himself is one and cannot therefore be considered the other group, the other possibility is that angels constituted the other group. This shows the inferior character of the law when compared with the promise. The promise was one-on-one-God and Abraham. The law was group-with-group. The former was direct; the latter, indirect”. Cf. Ellis, *Seven Pauline Letters*, 187.

<sup>182</sup> Cooper, *Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians*, 292-293.

Stephen Andrew Cooper maintains that, as long as this law which is based on works calls souls away from faith, as long as it keeps souls occupied with some other thing, the law is opposed to the promises<sup>183</sup>. But in contrast with the promises made to Abraham no mediation was needed. It was a direct promise of God to Abraham “through your offspring all nations will bless themselves” (Gen 22:18). And the law did not cancel this promise (Gal 3:16). The law itself was incapable of bringing salvation to the whole world. It was only for the Jews. But sin is a master everywhere (Gal 3:22), and that was why the Jews who were circumcised found it impossible to keep the law (Gal 6:13). Of what use then, are laws that are not kept and will not be kept and may never be kept?

Even though the law was not sinful, it has not fulfilled the purpose, the liberation of all from sin. It did not fulfill its aim among the Israelites. But its aim has to be fulfilled in time according to the will of God (Gal 4:4). It was fulfilled in Christ “who gave himself for our sins to liberate us from this present wicked world” (Gal 1:4). Christ not the law is the mediator between God and humanity (Gal 4:5). “Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes” (Rom 10:4).

### 3.3.5 The Personification of Faith and Law (vv. 23-25)

23 πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἐλθεῖν τὴν πίστιν ὑπὸ νόμον ἐφρουρούμεθα  
But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the Law,

συγκλειόμενοι εἰς τὴν μέλλουσαν πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι.  
Locked up to wait for the faith which would eventually be revealed to us.

24 ὥστε ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς χριστόν,  
So the Law was serving as a slave to look after us, to lead us to Christ,

ἵνα ἐκ πίστεως δικαιωθῶμεν·  
so that we could be justified by faith.

25 ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς πίστεως οὐκέτι ὑπὸ παιδαγωγόν ἐσμεν.  
But now that faith has come we are no longer under a slave looking after us.

In verses 23 and 24 Faith is personalized. Before Faith came, we were “guarded by the law, locked up to wait for faith” which will be revealed. David Horrell says that the law was a teacher before the coming of Christ. When Christ came, the law ceased to be our teacher.

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<sup>183</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians, 296.

In Gal. 3:23-5 Paul makes it clear that the law was given for a time: it played its role as a guardian (Greek: paidagógos) up until the time when Christ came, when God's children now come into their true inheritance and so no longer (need to) live under the law... Paul has taken up thoroughly Jewish themes, themes known from his scriptures, and developed them in the light of his new conviction that God's saving grace is now manifest in Christ. From this Christian perspective, he reasons that the law itself cannot save, and thus has to rethink the purpose for which God gave it<sup>184</sup>.

The law was “serving as a slave to look after us”. The law was like the slave whose duty it was to serve the master/mistress. The sole aim of the slave was to wait on him/her. The slave had no free will of his/her own. The slave whose duty it was to look after the child of the master was an educated slave. He/she accompanied the child to the real teacher. It was his/her duty to make sure that the child did not misbehave on the way, that he/she rehearsed what they were taught on the way to the teacher and on their way home as well as that he/she reminded the child of their home works. Stephen Andrew Cooper writes:

The paedagogus was a slave designated to accompany a child to school, his duties being largely tutelary and disciplinary. He ‘was not an instructor, not a ‘peadagogue’ in the modern sense’, although in some cases he would have made the child to recite the day’s lessons at home...<sup>185</sup>

Similarly, the law led us to Christ who is the real master. Accordingly, the law was our caretaker until Christ came (v. 24).

Having made the law a slave, Paul goes over to Faith and what it can do for those who believe. Faith is also personified as Christ. That is why Paul says “Now faith has come” v. 25. In other words “Christ has come”, so let us follow him to God our Father. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, God invites all men and women to himself through faith<sup>186</sup>. Christ’s coming is the fullness of God’s invitation to humanity. The intention of the coming of Christ was “that the whole creation itself might be freed from its slavery to corruption and brought into the same glorious freedom as the children of God. We are well aware that the whole creation, until this time, has been groaning in labour pains. And not only that: we too, who

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<sup>184</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 89-90.

<sup>185</sup> Cooper, *Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians*, 298.

<sup>186</sup> “By his Revelation, the invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men as his friends, and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company. The adequate response to this invitation is faith. By faith, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God. With his whole being man gives his assent to God the revealer. Sacred Scripture calls this human response to God, the author of revelation, the obedience of faith. To obey (from the Latin *obaudire*, to hear or listen to) in faith is to submit freely to the word that has been heard, because its truth is guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself. Abraham is the model of such obedience offered us by Sacred Scripture. The Virgin Mary is its most perfect embodiment”. Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 2003, N0s 142-144.

have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we are groaning inside ourselves, waiting with eagerness for our bodies to be set free” (Rom 8:21-23).

Paul writes, “when the completion of the time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born a subject of the law, to redeem the subjects of the law, so that we could receive adoption as sons” (Gal 4:4-6). “Christ set us free, so that we should remain free. *Stand firm*<sup>187</sup>, then, and do not let yourselves be fastened again to the yoke of slavery” (Gal. 5:1). We are now freed and should enjoy “the glorious freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21).

It was also the duty of the law to specify what was to be done and how it was to be done. The law was a good companion. But now Faith has come. Faith is now our new teacher and not the law (1 Cor 4:15). Faith came at the fullness of the time and made us adopted children of God. We can now call God ‘Abba’, Father. We are now God’s children. God who was sacred and far away from the people, whose name was pronounced over the people once a year by the priest is now “Abba, Father”<sup>188</sup>. The Galatians, who are now God’s children, have the right of inheritance (Gal 4:6 & 7). Unlike the slave who has no right of inheritance they have faith in Christ which gives them access to the promises of God the Father of us all (Gal 3:25b). The certificate to the right of inheritance is baptism. This is because “there is no favouritism in God” (Gal 2:6).

### 3.3.6 All of you are the children of God through Baptism (vv. 26-27)

26 πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν χριστῷ ἰησοῦ.  
For all of you are the children of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus,

27 ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε, χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε·  
since every one of you that has been baptized has been clothed in Christ.

Paul chooses words to achieve his aim of including *all* in the promises of God to humanity. He says: “For *all* of you are *sons* of God through faith in Christ Jesus” v. 26. According to Frank J. Matera, “the Greek word *gar* (for) indicates that this verse is

<sup>187</sup> “*Stand*, he says—a thing impossible for someone under a yoke, who bends his neck with a submissive nape, so as not to stand upright. *Stand then*, he says—which means to hold the body erect with one’s limbs free—do not be again confined, he says, by the yoke of servitude”. Cf. Cooper, Marius Victorinus’s Commentary on Galatians, 327.

<sup>188</sup> “The Galatians’ experience until confronted by the Judaizers’ demand that they become subject to the law had been an experience of the freedom of the sons of God who could call God “Abba Father.” This meant they were no longer slaves to anybody or anything (as the Jews were to the law), but true sons and true heirs who had come into the inheritance promised to all who would become sons of Abraham by faith in Jesus”. Cf. Ellis, Seven Pauline Letters, 190.

providing the proof for Paul's statement in v. 25: believers are no longer under the custodianship of the Law *because* they are sons of God (hyioi theou)"<sup>189</sup>.

The right of inheritance (even though he is not speaking of legal right) is hereditary. One who is born into a family has an automatic right to the family properties. So also it is with Baptism. One who has been born anew through baptism has an automatic right to the promises of God to Abraham. The Baptized person inherits the salvation of all the children of God enacted through the death and resurrection of Christ. The promises made to Abraham and his descendants have been fulfilled in Christ. All those who accept baptism therefore are heirs to the Kingdom, Jews as well as Gentiles. David Horrell writes:

Paul spends some time in Galatians arguing that the true descendants of Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, are those who have faith, specifically faith in Christ (Gal. 3:6-4:31). The promise of blessing was made to Abraham and his seed (Gen. 13:15; 17:8 etc), 'seed' being clearly a collective noun referring to Abraham's descendants. Paul, however, rather cleverly points to the fact that the noun is singular (as collective nouns generally are!) and claims that *the seed* of Abraham is Christ (Gal. 3:16). Consequently, all who are in Christ are the descendants of Abraham, and thus are inheritors of the promised blessing<sup>190</sup>.

A *proselyte*<sup>191</sup> was a non-Jew who converted to Judaism. David Boyarin is of the opinion that you can convert into Judaism but you cannot convert out, and anyone born of Jewish parents is Jewish, even if she doesn't know it<sup>192</sup>. However, there is always "an unequal right" between a convert and a Jew. A gentile who became a proselyte crossed over to the Jewish side of the gulf; however, the gulf remained. According to Frederick F. Bruce, "it is clear both from Paul's letters and Acts that the gospel principle of complete equality of Jew and Gentile before God was not accepted in the early church without a struggle"<sup>193</sup>.

A proselyte was initiated into the Jewish community through the rite of circumcision. This was in keeping with the covenant God made with Abraham (Gen 17). A new convert is initiated into the Christian community through baptism. The efficacy of baptism is effected through the death and resurrection of Christ. His death

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<sup>189</sup> Matera, Galatians, 141.

<sup>190</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 90-91.

<sup>191</sup> "Proselyt (griech. Hinzukömmling), Heide, der durch das Zeichen der Beschneidung zum Judentum übertrat; seit den 1. Jh. n. Chr. kam dazu auch ein Tauchbad, die sog. Proselytentaufe. Der Proselyt war verpflichtet, das ganz Gesetz des Mose zu halten. Die Rabbinen haben Proselyten nicht uneingeschränkt anerkannt. Das NT kennt Proselyten als Zeugen beim Pfingstereignis (Apg 2, 11), als Hörer des Paulus (Apg 13,43) und als aktive Christen (Nikolaus: Apg 6,5)". Cf. Kogler, Herders Neues Bibellexikon, 604.

<sup>192</sup> Boyarin, A Radical Jew, 241.

<sup>193</sup> Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 188.

is for the salvation of humanity. This becomes the melting point of ethnic differences. All who are baptized have “put on Christ” (v. 27). “To put on Christ” is a figurative language. For Schüssler Fiorenza, “the figurative language of putting on Christ like a robe has parallels in the mystery religions, where putting on or putting off the redeemer figure is also connected with the initiation rite. The same language of Gal 3:26f is found in Col 3:10 and Eph 4:24, and in Gnosticism, where it is connected with putting off the old man and putting on the new man... Being baptized into Christ means entering the sphere of the resurrected Lord, the life-giving Spirit whose reality and power are manifested in the Christian community”<sup>194</sup>. Paul uses this figurative language of “putting on mask”. In the mask, one played a role which normally was not his/her own. In the mask one often played the role of the gods. Schüssler Fiorenza makes a good distinction between “putting on Christ” in the theatrical form and in the baptismal form: “It is not anthropological oneness but ecclesiological oneness or unity in Christ Jesus which is the goal of Christian baptism”<sup>195</sup>.

Here, there is a play on simile. All Christians who are baptized have on put Christ; they can play the role of Christ in whom they are baptized. This is because the baptized are now Christ-like. Christ is not for the Jews alone nor for the gentiles but for the whole humanity. Having accepted baptism the Galatians are to remain firm in Christ in whom they are clothed (v. 27).

### 3.3.7 The Magna Charta of Equality (v. 28)

28 οὐκ ἔνι ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ ἕλλην, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ·

There can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male nor female.

πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν χριστῷ ἰησοῦ.

For you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Having laid the foundation upon which he wants to build the theory of equality, Paul states the Magna Charta of Equality that will remain a landmark for all ages. He says: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freed, there is no man and woman. For you are all one in Christ” (v. 28). The first question will be: Is Paul the originator of this formula? For David Horrell,

<sup>194</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 215.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*

There are good reasons for suggesting that this may be a traditional formulation learnt by Paul, perhaps at Antioch, might it even have been a declaration which was formulated by those... missionaries who arrived in Antioch and shared the gospel with non-Jews? The passage is marked off from its context by the change from we forms, used by Paul before and after this section, to you (plural) forms in these verses; the phrase no longer slave or free, no longer male and female has no particular relevance to Paul's argument in Galatians (though no longer Jews or Greek' certainly does) and thus suggests the quotation of an already established creed... However, there are also reasons why some doubt that such 'pre-Pauline' formulae can really be identified as such. First, it is only by somewhat subjective judgments that we can claim that a passage does not represent Paul's own words but those he has received from others, not least because Paul's own vocabulary and phrasing vary so widely from letter to letter. Second, it is important to remember that Paul was converted only a few years after the crucifixion of Jesus, so the period of time in which there was a strictly *pre-Pauline* Christianity was very short. Paul was active as a Christian missionary for some years before he wrote his first letter, so even if Paul cites what seem to be established traditions in his letters, they may be 'traditions' that he himself has formulated, or at least had a hand in formulating<sup>196</sup>.

Peter Ellis is not worried about the root of the formula, but about Paul's understanding of the formula. He says, "it is disputed whether Paul understood what he says in 3:28 about no more distinctions between Jews or Greeks, slave or free, male or female, etc., to be understood literally as applicable to social conditions or as applicable only in an ideal but unattainable way. Without denying the arguments that can be made against Paul's understanding of it as applicable to social conditions, this author believes that that is indeed the way Paul understood it"<sup>197</sup>. This formula is hard. Therefore Marvin Pate would say: consider how different the message of this verse was from an ancient Greek statement apparently condoned by the likes of Socrates and Plato, in which the speaker gives thanks that he 'was born a human being and not an animal, that I was born a man and not a woman, and that I was born a Greek and not a Barbarian'. The Jewish version of this thanksgiving, prayed three times daily by the male Jew, reads, 'Blessed art thou, Lord, who has not made me a heathen, who has not made me a woman, and who has not made me a brutish man. Sometimes a fourth element was included in the Jewish blessing, 'that I was not made a slave"<sup>198</sup>. Marvin Pate's position is accepted by Fredrick F. Bruce who states that we have parallels of Galatians 3:28 in antiquity. There is an account of a private cult-group in Philadelphia, found in the first or second century BC by one Dionysius in pursuance of directions received from Zeus in a dream, which was explicitly open to 'men and women, free persons and household slaves', and in which ethical probity was insisted upon<sup>199</sup>.

<sup>196</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 20-21.

<sup>197</sup> Ellis, *Seven Pauline Letters*, 188.

<sup>198</sup> Pate, *The End of the Age Has Come*, 192.

<sup>199</sup> Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 187.

The first stipulation here, however, is that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek (ἔλλην in the sense of ‘Gentile’). There is the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between these two groups. By similarly excluding the religious distinction between slave and the freeborn, and between male and female, Paul makes a threefold affirmation which corresponds to a number of Jewish formulas in which the threefold distinction is maintained, as in the morning prayer in which the male Jew thanks God that he was not made a gentile, a slave or a woman. This threefold thanksgiving can be traced back as far as R. Judah b. Elai, c. AD 150 (t. Ber. 7.18), or his contemporary R. Me’ir (b. Men. 43b), both with ‘brutish man’ [bôṛ] instead of ‘slave’. The reason for the threefold thanksgiving was not any positive disparagement of gentiles, slaves or women as persons but the fact that they were disqualified from several religious privileges which were open to free Jewish males<sup>200</sup>. The formula may be even earlier, for it seems to have been modeled on a Greek formula going back as far as Thales (6<sup>th</sup> century BC), who is reported by Hermippus to have said that there were three things for which he was grateful to fortune: that he was born a human being and not a beast, a man and not a woman, a Greek and not a barbarian<sup>201</sup>.

Fredrick Bruce is of the opinion that, it is not unlikely that Paul himself had been brought up to thank God that he was born a Jew and not a gentile, a freeman and not a slave, a man and not a woman. If so, he takes up each of these three distinctions which had considerable importance in Judaism and affirms that in Christ they are all irrelevant. He took the three principles of exclusivism: being a Jew and not being a gentile, being a male and not being a female, being a freeborn and not being a slave and rendered them irrelevant for the sake of the gospel<sup>202</sup>. According to Schüssler Fiorenza, the prayer format has Jewish origin<sup>203</sup>. But Paul takes the baptismal declaration of Gal 3:28 which “runs as counter to the general acceptance of male religious privileges among Greeks, Romans, Persians, and also Jews in the first century C. E.”<sup>204</sup>. Paul’s argument is: It was in the name of the same Lord that you

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid.

<sup>203</sup> “Rabbi Jehuda said, one must speak three prayers every day: Blessed be God that he has not made me a Gentile: “because all Gentiles are nothing before him” (Jer 40:17). Blessed be God that he has not made me a woman: because woman is not obligated to fulfill the commandments. Blessed be God that he has not made me a boor: because a boor is not ashamed of sin”. Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 217.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

were baptized. You were not baptized into Judaism but into Christ. You did not clothe yourselves with the law but with Christ. You approached the water of baptism not based on racial, ethnic or male-female biological differences but based on the same ecclesiological formula, and as the children of God who have inherited the same promises made to Abraham our father in faith. Therefore in Christ “there can be neither Jew nor Greek, there can be neither slave nor freeman, there can be neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ” (Gal 3:28).

In Christ, all are equal. Schüssler Fiorenza rightly says:

While the baptismal declaration in Gal 3:28 offered a new religious vision to women and slaves, it denied all male religious prerogatives in the Christian community based on gender roles. Just as born Jews had to abandon the privileged notion that they alone were the chosen people of God, so masters had to relinquish their power over slaves, and husbands that over wives and children. Since these social-political privileges were, at the same time, religious privileges, conversion to the Christian movement for men also meant relinquishing their religious prerogatives<sup>205</sup>

Therefore the Jesus event is a story that leaves no human being, institutions either divine or human, organizations, secular or religious, ethnic groups, black or white in a position of power to lord it over others. According to David Boyarin, “on the political or ethical level, then, Paul presented (and presents) Jews with a set of powerful questions that cannot be ignored. Echoing Alan F. Segal, I claim that Paul’s letters are letters addressed to us-to me, as a (post)modern Jew... How can I ethically construct a particular identity which is extremely precious to me without falling into ethnocentrism or racism of one kind or another?”<sup>206</sup>

The story of the Jesus event has made those who were previously looked upon as second-class citizens (slaves, gentiles and women) to be welcomed and treated as equals. This is a new way of knowing God, the God who is for all and in all. Paul rejects circumcision as ethnic identity marker. He rejects gender as the basis for the categorization of persons. He sees slavery as a means of demeaning humanity. The Jesus saving event is God’s love for humanity. He refuses to establish a kind of ethnic or para-ethnic identity which marks a group, a class or a tribe as superior over others.

He shows that discrimination in whichever form is dehumanizing and simply based on “marks made on human flesh”, marks such as circumcision, gender, the color of a man/woman’s eyes, the shape of one’s nose, the social statue he/she has

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<sup>205</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 217-218.

<sup>206</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 228-229.

or the role he/she plays in the society. But the death and resurrection of Christ is a single moment by which the whole world is changed forever. Paul's primary aim therefore is to take Christianity out of every geographical and territorial limitations to a level of equality where all are brothers and sisters in Christ in whom they were baptized<sup>207</sup>.

In Gal 3:28 Paul wanted to establish a society of equals in Christ, which has become a model for the modern society. David Horrell come to this conclusion: "In recent decades, many societies in the world have become concerned about the inequalities between women and men, and have debated the position of women in society: in the home, the workplace, the church, and so on. Because of Paul's influence on what may broadly be called Christian (or post-Christian) society, and especially because of his influence in the church, where his letters are part of the canon of scripture, it becomes important to ask what Paul's attitudes to women were"<sup>208</sup>.

From the above arguments, one sees that Galatians chapter three holds itself together. Marvin Pate gives the summary of the content of Galatians Chapter three. Gal 3:1-14 forms the basis of Paul's thought in verse 28. Verses 1-5 criticize the Galatians for replacing faith in Christ with the practice of the law as presented to them by the Judaizers. The law of Moses was for the Jews alone. But the promise made to Abraham (father of all nations, Gen 12:3) validates the welcoming of the gentiles into the Christian faith. The law brings a curse with it ("he is the cursed of God who hangs on the tree" Deut 21:23), which all were under before the coming of Christ. But Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal 3:13). He took the curse upon himself, cancelled the curse of the law and brought blessings on all who are in him (Gal 3: 16; 29)<sup>209</sup>.

Therefore there can be neither Jew nor gentile, Greek nor Jew, slave nor freeborn, man and woman. All have become brothers and sisters in Christ. Frank J. Matera maintains that in Christ, "all the baptized form a single person"<sup>210</sup>. They are a new creation (Gal 6:15). "Here, in Galatians, the new creation refers to what God has done in Christ by tearing down the barriers of race, class, and sexuality (3:28) that formerly separated people. This new creation results from being in Christ"<sup>211</sup>. In

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<sup>207</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 2.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Pate, The End of the Age has Come, 194-195.

<sup>210</sup> Matera, Galatians, 143.

<sup>211</sup> Matera, Galatians, 226.

Christ therefore, there is no discrimination and classification of people. Because of this equality in Christ, Marvin Pate comes to this wonderful conclusion: "the cross of Christ is the great leveler of society, and it can only be embraced by faith, which alone is the means of receiving the Spirit"<sup>212</sup>.

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<sup>212</sup> Pate, *The End of the Age Has Come*, 195.

## Chapter Four

### The Theology of Non-Discrimination

#### 4. The Characteristics of the Modern Society

According to Masoud Kamali, the term 'modern' is one of the most discussed concepts in the social sciences. Modern, modernity, and modernization are interrelated concepts by which social scientists have tried to refer to an epochal change in human history. Despite some disagreements about the origins and the starting point of the modern time, it seems that there is a common understanding of the European origin of modernity. In almost all cases, the modern is coupled with the emergence and development of the capitalist system that changed the history of human beings (Mark, 1954, 1956)<sup>213</sup>.

The Document *Gaudium et Spes* summarizes the modern society very well. It sees the world as "the theater of man's history and the heir of his energies, his tragedies and his triumphs"<sup>214</sup>. It goes on to insist that the human person and the society at large need to be preserved and renewed and God given his proper place. The council fathers hope to do this by giving full attention to the human person, body and spirit.

For the human person deserves to be preserved; human society deserves to be renewed. Hence the focal point of our total presentation will be man himself, whole and entire, body and soul, heart and conscience, mind and will. Therefore, this sacred synod, proclaiming the noble destiny of man and championing the Godlike seed which has been sown in him, offers to mankind the honest assistance of the Church in fostering that brotherhood of all men which corresponds to this destiny of theirs<sup>215</sup>.

Fostering the brotherhood and sisterhood of all is another way of saying that the council is seeking the equality of all and the good of all. But how far is the modern man and woman 'preserving or destroying' the world and him/herself, his/her neighbour and the environment? How far is he/she fostering the sisterhood or brotherhood of all?

The modern society is a digital age. It is a technological society with "latest communication techniques"<sup>216</sup>. A click on one button opens for you a door to the whole world. No doubt, science has shaped the entire structure of our day to day activities. According to Mike Hayes, "the world also has become a place where

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<sup>213</sup> Kamali, Masoud: *Racial Discrimination*, Routledge, New York, 2009, 16.

<sup>214</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, NO. 2.

<sup>215</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 1965, NO. 3.

<sup>216</sup> Fromm, Erich: *The Revolution of Hope*, Harper & Row Pub., London, 1968, 1.

technology and fast-paced media have shaped our expectations not merely about the news, but also about the way we live our everyday life”<sup>217</sup>. It has improved tremendously man's nature and dignity. For Richard R. Osmer, “our world is in the midst of a major sea-change which is altering long-standing patterns of governance, culture, economic life, and religion”<sup>218</sup>. Nothing in this present age is devoid of scientific explanations, not even God. Hence the Philosopher Nietzsche says ‘God is dead’. Pope Benedict XVI says: „In jeder Epoche gab es die Bestrebung, Gott für tot zu erklären; sich dem vermeintlich Greifbareren zuzuwenden, und wenn es goldene Kälber sind“<sup>219</sup>.

Scientific researchers have shown that sicknesses formally thought of as ‘incurable diseases’ like leprosy, tuberculosis short and long sightedness etc. are now things of the past. Equally man/woman has improved his/her livelihood through the use of modern gadgets like refrigerators, heaters, fans etc. The electronic system of communication and transportation have made the world a global village. Through the use of modern agricultural equipments the quality and quantity of consumer goods have been improved. The recreational facilities of the modern era manufactured by scientist for man’s leisure are innumerable. On the area of sports man/woman has no limits. Extreme sports are routinely carried out and watched all over the world as if in a single room. For record purposes, everything necessary for preserving events for life (computers, video machines and cameras, printing press etc.) is at hand.

The freedom of the individual person is almost absolute. The rights of the individual person are more respected and recognized world wide. Sex differentiation is almost a thing of the past. Gaudium et spes recognizes these effects of the scientific age thus:

This scientific spirit has a new kind of impact on the cultural sphere and on modes of thought. Technology is now transforming the face of the earth, and is already trying to master outer space. To a certain extent, the human intellect is also broadening its dominion over time: over the past by means of historical knowledge; over the future, by the art of projecting and by planning. Advances in biology, psychology, and the social sciences not only bring men hope of improved self-knowledge; in conjunction with technical methods, they are helping men exert direct influence on the life of social groups... Thus, the human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one.

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<sup>217</sup> Hayes, Mike: Googling God. The Religious Landscape of People in their 20s and 30s, Pauline Press, New York/Mahwah, NJ, 2007, xi.

<sup>218</sup> Osmer, Richard R. & Dean, Kenda Creasy: Youth, Religion and Globalization. New Research in Practical Theology, LIT Verlag, Wien, 2006, 3.

<sup>219</sup> Benedict XVI, Licht der Welt, 11.

By this very circumstance, the traditional local communities such as families, clans, tribes, villages, various groups and associations stemming from social contacts, experience more thorough changes every day. The industrial type of society is gradually being spread, leading some nations to economic affluence, and radically transforming ideas and social conditions established for centuries. It is also noteworthy how many men are being induced to migrate on various counts, and are thereby changing their manner of life. Thus a man's ties with his fellows are constantly being multiplied, and at the same time "socialization" brings further ties, without however always promoting appropriate personal development and truly personal relationships<sup>220</sup>.

Through technological developments the world has become a global village. Globalization is "giving rise to and shaping contemporary patterns of mobility with particular attention to economically-motivated mobility... including the movement of highly skilled, semi-skilled workers, student mobility, short-term travel for tourism and business purposes, family migration, internal migration and irregular migration"<sup>221</sup>.

The modern man and woman migrate more freely with his/her own cultures and customs into a different society. In the new cultural environments that many have migrated into, the issue is: "how to live with it, manage it and benefit most from it"<sup>222</sup>. However, some have been made objects instead of subjects because of cultural differences. The cultural shocks have devastating effects. They have forced many people to become alien to themselves and to those around them. The alienation is caused by the social constructs that they are forced to fit into. There are also the inexpressible fears of being thrown out of the country in the name of "integration". Part of the reasons why the modern man and woman live in Martin Buber's "I-It relationship" and not promoting "I-Thou relationship" are elaborated by Erich Fromm:

In the search for scientific truth, man came across knowledge that he could use for the domination of nature. He had tremendous success. But in the one-sided emphasis on technique and material consumption, man lost touch with himself, with life. Having lost religious faith and the humanistic values bound up with it, he concentrated on technical and material values and lost the capacity for deep emotional experiences, for the joy and sadness that accompany them. The machine he built became so powerful that it developed its own program, which now determines man's own thinking<sup>223</sup>.

Women and men are expected to obey rules mechanically. They are expected to function mechanically. One of the grave consequences of mechanized ways of thinking is the usurping of the place of God by the sciences.

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<sup>220</sup> Gaudium et spes, N0s 5-6.

<sup>221</sup> World Migration 2008. Managing Labour Mobility in the Evolving Global Economy, vol. 4, IOM World Migration Report Series, International Organization for Migration Pub., Geneva, 2008, xix.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, 3.

## 4.1 A Society Without Religion?

Henry W. Holloman explains religion (θεοσιδαιμονία) as: A multidimensional system of beliefs and practices that govern human existence through ideology, ritual, experience, thought pattern, and ethic. At its most basic level, religion is whatever one grasps and holds on to as a guide through life. Religions express a response to some ultimate thing or person, whether gods, spirits, superhuman figures, or other objects of devotion. Religion touches all human interactions: self-awareness; relations with family, faith community, and those outside the faith; and connection to the reality that is seen and unseen<sup>224</sup>.

In the ancient times religion held the upper hand but in the modern era secularism and scientificism hold the upper hand. The two have different methodological approaches: Science begins with methodological doubt. The father of western philosophy, Rene Descartes says “Cogito ergo sum”, I think, therefore I am. The symbol of existence is the I who thinks. On the other hand Christian religion begins with the God who revealed himself as the “I Am WHO I AM” (Exodus 3:14). The symbol of existence for the modern era is self-subsistence. The council fathers call this modern atheism.

Modern atheism often takes on a systematic expression which, in addition to other causes, stretches the desires for human independence to such a point that it poses difficulties against any kind of dependence on God. Those who profess atheism of this sort maintain that it gives man freedom to be an end unto himself, the sole artisan and creator of his own history. They claim that this freedom cannot be reconciled with the affirmation of a Lord who is author and purpose of all things, or at least that this freedom makes such an affirmation altogether superfluous. Favoring this doctrine can be the sense of power which modern technical progress generates in man<sup>225</sup>.

Prayer is looked down upon as what thwarts woman/man’s autonomy through economic and social emancipation. “This form (of atheism) argues that by its nature religion thwarts this liberation by arousing man's hope for a deceptive future life, thereby diverting him from the constructing of the earthly city”<sup>226</sup>. Humanity must therefore liberate itself from religious believes.

The modern age therefore has found a substitute for God: the impersonal calculation. This new god has been turned into an idol to whom all men and women

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<sup>224</sup> Holloman, Henry W: Kregel Dictionary of the Bible and Theology, Kregel Pub., Grand Rapids, 2005, 449.

<sup>225</sup> Gaudium et Spes, NO, 20.

<sup>226</sup> Gaudium et Spes, NO. 20.

may be sacrificed. A new concept of the sacred and unquestionable is arising: that of calculability, probability and factuality<sup>227</sup>.

Those who profess this kind of atheism maintain that freedom consists in this theory: man/woman is an end to her/himself, and the sole maker, with supreme control of his/her own history<sup>228</sup>. This view is detrimental not only to religion but also attempts the dethronement of God who is Lord of history, the father of us all. The God who Paul preached is regrettably proclaimed dead by modern atheists.

The inclinations of man/woman toward secularization of religion have presented its own loopholes. Firstly, what has been rejected in modern man/woman's rejection of Christianity is really only something peripheral to Christianity. For example, western culture emphasizes the freedom and the dignity of the human person etc. When it emphasizes the freedom of all, it must be freedom for something, for commitment. "Human freedom belongs to us as creatures; it is a freedom which is given as a gift, one to be received like a seed and to be cultivated responsibly. When the contrary is the case, freedom dies, destroying man and society"<sup>229</sup>.

That traditional Christian way of life is hard should not be confused with the illusion that it has been found wanting. The values rejected by the secularized world are the values Christ died for. These rejected values are the values Paul spent his life trying to spread to the then "gentile world". The church only tries to rid society from the evils of anarchy in civil affairs, sexual excesses dangerous to family and authentic personal life, and lack of care for the needs of others. She tries to inculcate a love of truth, honesty and fair dealings between man and woman. She directs man/woman to regard the need for reforming his/her own life and living by the standards set down by Christ. She encourages the most difficult of all revolutions, the respect for all persons independent of race, religion and culture<sup>230</sup>. She teaches woman/man the truth and assures him/her of the grace needed to live.

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<sup>227</sup> Shea, John: *The Challenge of Jesus*, Thomas More Press, New York, 1977, 65.

<sup>228</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, NO. 20.

<sup>229</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Pub., Washington D. C., 2007, 61.

<sup>230</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 63.

### 4.1.1 The Relevance of Religion

Paul Gwynne narrates the importance of religion to man and woman's daily lives. "Few would deny that religion constitutes a vital piece of the jigsaw when it comes to fully understanding human societies and their members, both past and present. It is a key influence on a host of cultural activities around the globe, from weddings and funerals to public holidays and festivals. Religious belief is frequently a source of inspiration for works of literature, art, and architecture, and can significantly shape everyday life at the level of diet and clothing"<sup>231</sup>. However, part of the consequences of modernization are the rejection of God and institutionalized religion etc. Mike Hayes says, "consider the widespread assumption in our 'seeker' milieu that one can be close to the divine without being close to a church"<sup>232</sup>. Masoud Kamali says,

The transformation process from premodern societies to modern ones that came to be called modernization of society, also entailed disruptions in established social institutions, the disintegration of society, wars over nation borders, internal and external migration, and social movements and revolutions<sup>233</sup>.

But it is good to ask this critical question: *Can the Modern man and woman Dispense of God?* The answer is no. Henry W. Holloman affirms this. "Pagan religion originates from each person's inherent religious nature (Gen 1:26-27), cultural influences, and exposure to general revelation"<sup>234</sup>. Despite the cultural changes and secularization, despite the proclaimed death of God, man/woman's religious needs still persist, almost unchanged and unconquered. Humanity cannot write "God off" in the process of explaining itself to itself. Through the indwelling spirit, the Christian is urged to struggle on because the church knows quite well that she is a community whose members are weak (Rom 7:14). She knows that "the modern man is a meeting point of many conflicting forces... he feels himself divided and the result is a host of discords in social life"<sup>235</sup>. She knows also that these reactions are "man's repressed and suppressed need for the sacred"<sup>236</sup>.

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<sup>231</sup> Gwynne, Paul: *World Religions in Practice. A Comparative Introduction*, Blackwell Pub., Malden, 2009, 1.

<sup>232</sup> Hayes, *Googling God*, vii.

<sup>233</sup> Kamali, *Racial Discrimination*, 16.

<sup>234</sup> Holloman, *Kregel Dictionary of the Bible and Theology*, 451.

<sup>235</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 10.

<sup>236</sup> Rodger, Charles: *The Church and the World. Theology Today*, Series NO. 43, Mercier Press, Dublin, 1977, 83.

At no stage in world history of religion, sociology, psychology, and cultural anthropology has it been proved that humanity is purely religionless. Her zeal to worship God through a variety of ways shows her as a religious being. She manifest the desire in her to be in communion with the God of our fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob who sustains her and protects the yet to be generations. Humanity cannot do without religion and religious practices because they are part of her nature. They provide for her the highest interpretation scheme which is an explanation of the imponderable and unpredictable that happen in life. It helps her to cope with the strange, the unexpected, the tragic, and the ultimate things in life. It enables man/woman to cope with disappointments, with loss and especially with death<sup>237</sup>.

Religion is also seen as a social integrator. It holds society together as well as maintains social order. Religion is seen as an act of “belonging, a religion which provides a social location, you have to be either a protestant or a Catholic or a Jew to be anybody in American society”<sup>238</sup>. In this highly disorganized, chaotic and dynamic modern culture, man/woman needs something upon which he/she can anchor his/her root on. Most sociologists suggest that “the drug pits, the psychedelic arts and the rock music, all these things are merely man’s repressed and suppressed need for the sacred”<sup>239</sup>. The chasm created in woman/man by religious mood can only be satisfactorily closed up through hope in the transcendental God. Purely scientific, psychological and rational theories can no longer cope with man/woman’s religious life without God.

Man/woman is created in the image and likeness of God. On this rests her/his dignity. Religion enhances rather than degrades this dignity. Consequently the church holds that to acknowledge God is in no way to oppose the dignity of man. Since such dignity is grounded and brought to perfection in God. She further teaches that hope in a life to come does not take woman/man away from the importance of the duties of this life on earth but rather adds to it by giving new motives for fulfilling those duties. When on the other hand man/woman is left without this divine support and without hope of eternal life his/her dignity is deeply wounded<sup>240</sup>.

In resume, God has remained the crux of all socio-religious and cultural controversies. He moves from generation to generation. Sometimes he is reviled and

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<sup>237</sup> Aumann, Jordan: *The World in the Church*, The Priory Press, Chicago, 1969, 18.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Aumann, *The World in the Church*, 24.

<sup>240</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, NO. 21

sometimes prayed to, sometimes he is seen as mere religious tinsel, sometimes as a ragged figure motioning from darkness and sometimes as the splendiferous pantocrator gloriously reigning, but he is always there. He has become a cultural constant, one of those ineluctable societal facts which everybody at one time or another must confront<sup>241</sup>. In spite of the criticisms and the systematic doubts, the perennial question “who is Christ for you?” remains valid for all Christians and for all ages. It is undoubtedly true that humankind is entering a new age, a post-Christendom era, but it also seems that the companion we need for the future is the same Jesus who appeared to Paul and forced him into the apostleship of the gentiles<sup>242</sup>.

#### 4.1.2 The Denial of Religious Freedom

We are called to freedom and should not submit to slavery (Gal 5:1). However this freedom of religion and worship has been denied to many people in the form of fundamentalism, intolerance or authoritarianism. This denial has continued to inflict injuries on the consciences of such people. Because injury “is done to the human person and to the very order established by God for human life, if the free exercise of religion is denied in society, provided just public order is observed”<sup>243</sup>. “Religious freedom therefore ought to have this further purpose and aim, namely, that men may come to act with greater responsibility in fulfilling their duties in community life”<sup>244</sup>. Unfortunately, these are only recommendations as modern men and women have different attitudes toward freedom of religion, freedom of worship and freedom of conscience.

The fact is that men of the present day want to be able freely to profess their religion in private and in public. Indeed, religious freedom has already been declared to be a civil right in most constitutions, and it is solemnly recognized in international documents. The further fact is that forms of government still exist under which, even though freedom of religious worship receives constitutional recognition, the powers of government are engaged in the effort to deter citizens from the profession of religion and to make life very difficult and dangerous for religious communities<sup>245</sup>.

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<sup>241</sup> Shea, *The Challenge of Jesus*, 15.

<sup>242</sup> Shea, *The Challenge of Jesus*, 15-16.

<sup>243</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Dignitatis Humanae*, NO.3.

<sup>244</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Dignitatis Humanae*, NO. 8.

<sup>245</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Dignitatis Humanae*, NO.15.

“Sadly, religious motives are also an ingredient in many political conflicts and even acts of terrorism that currently dominate the world stage. For better or for worse, religion is still very much a part of the human story and cannot be ignored if we hope to explain fully what makes individuals and communities think and act in the way that they do”<sup>246</sup>.

Even though some situations still deter people from their religious worships, more people can now profess their faith freely. It is no longer a taboo in the developed western world to be a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or an atheist. Many world leaders are agnostics or friends of natural religion. People are known and are accepted as theists or atheists. But it has become an issue to belong to minority religious groups or to belong to non official religious confessions in a state. It is an issue to be a Christian in most strong Muslim states and Arabic countries. It is an issue to be a Christian in the northern part of Nigeria because of the Sharia laws that are operated alongside the national constitution. Since September 9/11 it is an issue to be identified as a “radical Muslim”. It has also become an issue to ask critical questions about Islam. An example is the case of Pope Benedict XVI’s lecture in Regensburg, Germany. In his speech, the Holy Father says:

In the seventh conversation (διάλεξις-controversy) edited by Professor Khoury, the emperor touches on the theme of the holy war. The emperor must have known that surah 2, 256 reads: ‘There is no compulsion in religion’. According to some of the experts, this is probably one of the suras of the early period, when Mohammed was still powerless and under threat. But naturally the emperor also knew the instructions, developed later and recorded in the Qur’an, concerning holy war. Without descending to details, such as the difference in treatment accorded to those who have the “Book” and the ‘infidels’, he addresses his interlocutor with a startling brusqueness, a brusqueness that we find unacceptable, on the central question about the relationship between religion and violence in general, saying: ‘Show me just what Mohammed brought that was new, and there you will find things only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached’<sup>247</sup>.

Since after the Anti-Semitism and the process of Assimilation in Europe, it is an issue to be Jewish. David Horrell speaks of what he calls “the horrors of anti-Semitism”<sup>248</sup>. Pope Benedict XVI speaks of “tolerance that creates intolerance”.

Dass im Namen der Toleranz die Toleranz abchafft wird, ist eine wirkliche Bedrohung, vor der wir stehen... Es ist sehr wichtig, dass wir uns seiner solchen Absolutheitsforderung einer bestimmten Art von ‚Vernünftigkeit‘ widersetzen<sup>249</sup>.

<sup>246</sup> Gwynne, Paul: World Religions in Practice, Blackwell Pub., Singapore, 2009, 1.

<sup>247</sup> Benedict XVI: Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Benedict XVI to München, Altötting and Regensburg, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 2006.

<sup>248</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 2.

The modern society has become a society that does not tolerate the “other” person’s religious confessions. It is a society that classifies people according to their religion, faith or belief. It interprets the actions of the “other” based on his/her religious confessions. The pathetic example is the killing of Theo Van Gogh, a Dutch film director by a Muslim fanatic<sup>250</sup>. It accuses the “other” of the protection of his/her religious interests and the destruction of the “other” people’s religion and culture. The Modern society therefore is a society that would want to exclude the “other” from its existence.

## 4.2. A Society of Discriminations

Modern society does not want to hear of a God who is like “a big brother”, watching over us to know what we are doing and how we are doing it. She rejects instructions as she would prefer to be her own master. She wants absolute freedom which is like an illusion and chasing of the wind<sup>251</sup>. Having enthroned absolute freedom as her idol she uses the other person as a means to achieving that end. Nothing is sacred, not even the human person. Money, exploitation, self-gain and self-fulfillments are more important than the other person, who is created in the image and likeness of God. In the words of Caspar Dohmen, “Geld ist zum absoluten Maßstab geworden...Geld regiert die Welt sagt man”<sup>252</sup>.

### 4.2.1 Ethnophaulism and other Forms of Discrimination

Ethnophaulism combines two words: the prefix ethno and phaulism which comes from the Greek word φαυλίζειν, vilify and φαῦλος, unjust. It is the creating of a negative imagery about a given group. It can mean the caricaturing of a group in order to disrespect them or to show them that they are nothing. Here we speak of

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<sup>249</sup> Benedickt XVI, Licht der Welt, 72-73.

<sup>250</sup> “As Theo cycled down the Linnaeusstraat, Muhammad Bouyeri approached. He pulled out his gun and shot Theo several times. Theo fell off his bike and lurched across the road, then collapsed. Bouyeri followed. Theo begged, ‘Can’t we talk about this?’ but Bouyeri shot him four more times. Then he took out one of his butcher knives and sawed into Theo’s throat. With the other knives, he stabbed a five-page letter onto Theo’s chest. The letter was addressed to me... People ask me if I have some kind of death wish, to keep saying the things I do. The answer is no: I would like to keep living. However, some things must be said, and there are times when silence becomes an accomplice to injustice”. Ali, Ayaan Hirsi: Infidel, Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, London, 2007, xi-xii.

<sup>251</sup> Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 61.

<sup>252</sup> Dohmen, Caspar: Let’s make Money, Freiburg, Orange Press, 2008, 9.

Ethnophobia as insinuating words, phrases and generalized allegations against members of a given ethnicity. They are normally derogatory words and or ethnic slogans used to insult a specific race or nationality<sup>253</sup>. Erwin Ebermann represents Africans in Vienna like this:

Wir begegnen ihnen-den Afrikanerinnen und Afrikanern-auf den Straßen, in Bahnhöfen und Zügen, in Cafes und Hochschulen, meistens gleichgültig, manchmal freundlich, aber nicht selten mit Blicken oder einer Körpersprache, die Distanz oder sogar Ablehnung verraten. Sie leben unter uns, aber nicht mit uns. Zwar verrät die Hautfarbe, daß sie aus Afrika kommen, aber wir wissen nicht, warum sie gekommen sind, was sie hier tun, wie sie hier leben und was sie hier alltäglich erleben<sup>254</sup>.

Masoud Kamali holds the view that “there are many forms and variants of ‘racism’, hence the coining terms such as biological racism, genetic racism, cultural racism, religious racism, and so on... Such a category may be linked to visible physical characteristics, such as skin colour, hair type, or anatomical sex that are relatively easy constructions for distinguishing between ‘Us and Them,’ but also imagined or real ‘cultural properties’ are used as ‘ethnic markers’ in the process of ‘Otherization’”<sup>255</sup>.

The modern society develops one-sidedly. It forms a segregated and individualistic society. One is simply born into a streamlined system. He/she is made to grow up with defined principles. The analogy of Jerome Murphy-O’Connor fits into the society of discrimination: “Just as those living in polluted environment have no alternative but to breathe in toxins, so those born into the world are automatically infected by its attitudes and standards, its root principles”<sup>256</sup>. Their efforts are nothing compared to the fast flowing thread of thoughts into which they are born. In this way the society one is born into makes things very difficult for him/her. The society molds you into what she wants you to be. It goes on to justify itself. It propounds theories and principles to this effect. Examples are the slogans or contractions “mighty is right”, or “wealth confers authority and honor in a society divided into classes”, “the rich should marry from the upper class while the poor marry from the lower class”, “the richer you are the happier you shall be”. But practice is different from theory. The

<sup>253</sup> “Während unsere europäischen Völker, Gott sei lob und dank, in den Zustand eines Körperlichen und moralischen Aussatzes verfallen, wandert der fromme Missionar nach Zentralafrika und errichtet Neger missionen, bis unsere ‚höhere Kultur‘ aus gesunden, wenn auch primitiven und tiefstehenden Menschenkindern auch dort eine faulige Bastardbrut gemacht haben wird“. Cf. Adolf Hitler, Mein Kampf, Zentralverlag, Band 1 & 2, München, 1925 & 1927, 446.

<sup>254</sup> Ebermann, Erwin: Afrikaner in Wien. Zwischen Mystifizierung und Verteufelung Erfahrungen und Analysen, LIT Verlag, Wien, Band 3, 2007, i.

<sup>255</sup> Kamali, Racial Discrimination, 3.

<sup>256</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 209.

negativity of being described as snobbish or called a “racist”, or being regarded as one who discriminates, makes people perpetuate these theories behind smoke screens. But that these theories exist at all is an indication of the degenerated humanity.

Paul insisted that there is neither Jew nor Greek (Gal 3:28). That was a radical statement because there were Jews and Greeks all over the world. It was an issue then to be Greek or a barbarian, Jew or gentile. People identified who was who based on their cultural differences. Nowadays, it is no longer an issue to be a Jew. Jews are found all over the world. And the consequences of the holocaust make anti-Semitism to be an international crime. It is no longer an issue to be a Greek. Greece is an independent nation and is a member of the European Union. But there is still the first and the third world distinction. It is an issue to come from the Third World, Africa, Asia, Latin America etc. It is an issue to be “identified as a the Roma”<sup>257</sup>. Tünde Puskás expresses it thus:

There are two factors which can explain the differences in experiences of migration to Sweden. Firstly, Hungarians from Romania and Yugoslavia were identified by the Swedish authorities as Romanians and Yugoslavs and their place in the ‘pyramid of migrant’ was determined accordingly. Secondly, by the end of the 1980s and early 1990s Swedish migration policies and the Swedish society’s attitude towards immigrants had gone through considerable changes<sup>258</sup>.

However, the members of a committee on UN experts on the elimination of racial discrimination sharply criticized France and Italy for their maltreatment of the Roma. They held the opinion that racism and xenophobia were undergoing a “significant resurgence” and warned of “resurgent racism”. For Daniel Boyarin, this would be a discrimination based on group identity: “Traditionally, group identity has been constructed in two ways: as the product of either a common genealogical origin or a common geographical origin”<sup>259</sup>. Masoud Kamali maintains that, “all societies have ideologies and discourses which discriminate by placing, in a hierarchical order of superiority, groups of people on the basis of sociocultural, religious, physical, or innate hereditary characteristics. In Europe, more recent stereotypes and prejudices

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<sup>257</sup> In the Book *Peaceful Coexistence or Iron Curtain?*, Wolfgang Mueller puts it like this “As the ‘people’s democracies’ were forced by Stalin into isolating themselves from Western Europe, contacts became more and more restricted, and Austria began to be shut off from its Eastern neighbors and former trading partners. Beginning in 1948, an Iron Curtain was erected directly on Austria’s eastern border: a deadly wall of barbed wire, watchtowers, guards, and minefields that separated the Eastern bloc from the West and prohibiting undesired human movement”. Cf. Suppan, Arnold & Mueller, Wolfgang: *Peaceful Coexistence or Iron Curtain*, LIT, Band 7, Berlin, 2009, 9.

<sup>258</sup> Puskás, Tünde: “We Belong to Them”, P.I.E. Peter Lang, Bruxelles, 2009, 17-18.

<sup>259</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 229.

are added to earlier forms, for instance against Jews and Roma”<sup>260</sup>. “Discrimination does not only exist in the form of observable social actions, but also as subtle, hidden, and sometimes unintentional actions, that indirectly harm some groups of people in a society”<sup>261</sup>.

The Roma were deported from France and Italy for being sources of crimes in the society. Many Africans are deported from Switzerland and Austria for the same reason. In this case, being a Roma like being an African in Europe is associated with being a potential criminal. To resist this bias is to question the authority of the state you live in and to risk deportation. Hence the voluntary organization against racism in Austria writes,

AfrikanerInnen sind leicht erkennbar, haben keine Lobby, sind kolonialimperial stigmatisiert, verfügen über keine Ressourcen, haben keine Rechte. Die ideale Zielgruppe... Wenn AfrikanerInnen (und auch andere!) die Amtshandlung hinterfragen, sich nicht fesseln, mitschleppen or beschimpfen lassen wollen, dann heißt es gleich, Widerstand gegen die Staatsgewalt und sie müssen mit weiteren Anklagen und Urteilen rechnen.<sup>262</sup>

The effort to limit migration and mixture of cultures in the modern European society is the new form of Iron Curtain in human hearts. This problem is attested to by Wolfgang Mueller who also shares the view that no one should think that the issue of discrimination in Europe and in the world is come and gone without lingering effect. It is there and that is why he says, “the full integration of the Central European states into the European Union and NATO, the role of Ostpolitik and neutrality has been reduced further” but not removed completely. “The icebreaker has been scraped... No diplomatic post-box is necessary... However, this fortunate development should not let us underestimate the historic merits and the shortcomings of past efforts to promote peace relations across an Iron Curtain in times of the Cold War and détente”<sup>263</sup>. According to Julia Heneis “Migration innerhalb der EU wird erleichtert, die Außengrenzen werden immer besser abgeriegelt”<sup>264</sup>. This is done in the name of security of the state, but “freiheit stirbt mit sicherheit”<sup>265</sup>. Maybe if Paul were to migrate in our time as he did in the ancient world, the evangelization would have been hampered by migration laws, all in the name of security. According to Masoud

<sup>260</sup> Kamali: Racial Discrimination, 4.

<sup>261</sup> Kamali: Racial Discrimination, 5.

<sup>262</sup> 1000 Jahre Haft. Operation Spring & institutioneller Rassismus Resümee einer antirassistischen Gruppe, Finidr, Wien, 2005, 29.

<sup>263</sup> Arnold Suppan & Wolfgang Mueller, Peaceful Coexistence or Iron Curtain, 29.

<sup>264</sup> Heneis, Julia: Inkulturation und ihre Relevanz für die Sozialarbeit mit AfrikanerInnen in Wien, Peter Lang, Frankfurt, 2010, 15.

<sup>265</sup> 1000 Jahre Haft, 29.

Kamali: “European societies, notwithstanding the increasing attention of the European Union to antiracist efforts, consistently exhibit high levels of xenophobia and racism in attitude surveys, a desire to limit immigration and acceptance of refugees, and a readiness to exclude those defined as ‘foreigners’ from certain social areas and arenas...”,<sup>266</sup> depict the high level of discrimination and its tendency to increase.

Even though some of the countries that made up the Eastern Bloc are in Europe, many of them do not belong to the European Union. Not being democratically developed and economically well off to fit into the First World or European Union standards leave them at the same level with those who are from the poorer continents of the world. Nationalities are now distinguished between Europeans and Eastern Europeans, the Third and the First Nationals, Europeans and others living in Europe, European Union member and non-European Union member states. And so there is still with us: the haves and the have nots. The haves are the civilized and the have nots are the barbarians. The have nots who migrated to Europe and the non-European Union members who migrated into the European member states and other civilized countries of the world are “the suspects” in the society of the haves. The criminalization of foreigners is sometimes coded in expressions such as “Migrationshintergrund”, “those with foreigner’s background”, the “other” etc. Their backgrounds are foreign because either one or both of the parents are non natives of the country they migrated to.

#### **4.2.2 Racial Profiling**

In the night all cats are grey. According to Tukufu Zuberi and Eduardo Bonilla-silva racial profiling refers to the use of an individual’s race or ethnicity in judging what that person is capable of doing. It classifies all the people from the same race or cultural group as the same. “In other words, race is conceptualized as a fixed characteristic, rooted in biological or genetic differences between easily distinguishable groups”<sup>267</sup>. Racial profiling demeans a group of people, treats them as if they are nobodies, tells one-sided stories about them and makes sure that they realize that they are different from “us”. It depersonalizes and criminalizes them. It

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<sup>266</sup> Kamali, Racial Discrimination, 2.

<sup>267</sup> Zuberi, Tukufu & Bonilla-Silva, Eduardo: White Logic, White Methods, Rowman & Littlefield Pub., Lanham, Maryland, 2008, 43.

makes one fear the “other” or makes the “other” an enemy before meeting him/her. It creates an image of what the “other” should be like without realizing that he/she need not fall into the constructed image. Sometimes these mental constructions portray the “other” person as “half-human and half-devil”. “They are not like you, stop going out with them”, many parents would advise their children. “They” are not teachable, “they” are irresponsible, “they” cannot learn anything new, parents would conclude.

Those who are not like “us” are poor, never do well, have criminal intent, and are not in any way equal to us. That is why Masoud Kamali says, “Racism involves ideas about inferiority, superiority, or essential differences of groups of people based on essentialist elements, but it also involves power. As Anthias and Yuval-Davis point out: Racism involves the ability to impose those beliefs or world views as hegemonic, and as a basic denial of rights and equality”<sup>268</sup>.

Under these conditions, one meets the “other” with a stereotyped attitude. The “other” will not get a good Job because we do not trust him/her. The “other” will not come into the party hall because he/she does not look like us and we are not sure of what the “other” will do. The “other” will have to do a less rewarding job because that is where he/she belongs. The “other” is always aggressive. The “other” must be avoided etc. Masoud Kamali speaks of “the logic of exclusion”<sup>269</sup>.

The resultant effects of categorization of persons and discriminations are grave. It is “us against them”, “their gain or our loss”, “either us or them” says Miroslav Volf who gives the following examples: “A man who left Sarajevo before the war in 1992 and joined the Serbian army that was shelling the city said in the course of a phone conversation to his best friend, who had remained and whose apartment was destroyed by a shell: “There is no choice. Either us or them... Either we will inhabit this place or they will; either we will destroy them or they will destroy us; no other option is available”<sup>270</sup>.

Because of fear of the “other” or fear of what is alien and foreign Freiheitliche Partei Österreichs-The Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ) campaigns with these slogans: “Das FPÖ-Sicherheitspaket: Verhinderung von Asylantenlagern in Wien” .

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<sup>268</sup>Kamali: Racial Discrimination, 4.

<sup>269</sup> “Xenophobia is presented as ‘fear of foreigners’. The definition is rather old and does not express the real state of xenophobia as a social phenomenon engaged in the relationships between those with access to and control over legitimate power means, that is, ‘Us’, and those excluded from access to equal life chances, that is, ‘Them’. Xenophobia as a form of ‘Otherism’ is shaped by the logic of exclusion, the separation of ‘Us’ from ‘Them’,-and the construction of adversarial frames, requiring a negative identification by which ‘Them’, becomes not only a feared other but an enemy”. Cf. Kamali, Racial Discrimination, 3-4.

<sup>270</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 99.

The security packet of FPÖ is the “protection of the real Austrians” from Asylum Seekers by not allowing Asylum homes to be built in Vienna. Masoud Kamali gives reasons why it is so: “Particularly acute is the security problem in those areas where the current flow of asylum seekers has turned the whole villages to crisis region... Above all, the African drug mafia targets Vienna. Drug trafficking is going on almost uninhibitedly on the open street”<sup>271</sup>.

There were other racial slogans of FPÖ: “Mehr Mut für unser “Wiener Blut””- more courage for our Vienna blood, “zu viel Fremdes tut niemandem gut”, too many aliens/foreigners do not do anyone good or do not bring in anything good. This placard from the FPÖ caused a lot of reactions. There are other placards showing the party leader Heinz-Christian Strache cleaning the recreational parks in the city of Vienna of the Turks and the streets of black African drug vendors. These two sets of people are treated as one and the same inferior race in many European countries, including Austria. Hence Masoud Kamali says, “The history of the racialization of Africans and indigenous peoples are not separated from that of Muslims and Jews... For instance, the term Moors at first referred to Arab Muslims, but over time Moors came overwhelmingly to be associated with blackness, as is evident from the ‘blackmoors’. Religious and cultural prejudices against both blackness and Islam, each of which was seen to be the handiwork of the Devil, intensified the connection between them”<sup>272</sup>.

Keim Curtis dates this “Otherisation” back to the 1400s. “As Europeans spread across the world from the 1400s onward, they had to make sense of the new people and places they encountered. Over time... Africa became representative of extreme “otherness”... The real problem has been that using Africa as a *symbol* of difference has meant that the continent has been treated as an object. As an object, Africa is described and manipulated, but Africans, as objects, cannot speak for themselves, or make comments on who we are”<sup>273</sup>. Unfortunately most people’s impressions of the black Africans on the street of Switzerland, Vienna, Holland etc are that they are asylum seekers and drug dealers, those who go about poisoning innocent European children with hard drugs. The evil deeds of few black Africans speak for the rest of the blacks on the street.

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<sup>271</sup> Kamali, Racial Discrimination, 77.

<sup>272</sup> Kamali Racial Discrimination, 27-28.

<sup>273</sup> Keim, Mistaking Africa, West view Press, Boulder, 2009, 11.

### 4.3 There are slaves and Freed

During the slave trade Africans were the most brutalized victims. The summary of Enrique Dussel is a wonderful one. He writes

In the famed triangle of death, ships left London, Lisbon, The Hague, or Amsterdam with European products, such as arms and iron tools, and exchanged these goods on the western coasts of Africa for slaves. They then bartered these slaves in Bahia, Hispanic Cartagena, Havana, Port-au-Prince, and in the ports of the colonies of the New England for gold, silver, and tropical products. The entrepreneurs eventually deposited all that value, or coagulated human blood in Marx's metaphor, in the banks of London and the pantries of the Low Countries. Thus modernity pursued its civilizing, modernizing, humanizing, christianizing course.<sup>274</sup>

Officially, slavery has been abolished. But modern slavery exists in many forms. One can speak of economic slavery, sex slavery, household slavery, forced labor, child labor etc. The common characteristic of modern slavery is the illegal use of the person for the benefit of the "master" who lords it over the victim. The victim is powerless before the master. He/she is often subjected to fear and made to work against freedom of conscience and will. The remuneration is often far below the set standard. This lording of oneself over others for the sake of economic gain was condemned by Paul who saw all as equal when he said "there are no slaves and free born" (Gal 3:28). Schüssler Fiorenza writes:

The goal of Christian calling is freedom: "You were called to freedom" (Gal 5:13), because where the Spirit of the Lord is there is freedom (2 Cor 3: 17)... Liberation from the slavery of sin, law, and death, from the conditions of the 'present evil age' (Gal 1:4) has 'freedom' as its purpose and destiny. As a result, *eleutheria* (freedom) is the central theological concept which sums up the Christian's situation before God as well as in this world<sup>275</sup>.

Paul's general attitude to the status of Christian slaves is shown in 1 Cor 7:22, 'he who was called in the Lord as a slave is the Lord's freedman (ἀπελεύθερος); likewise he who was free when called is Christ's slave'. Christian slaves should not chafe at their underprivileged status in the world; 'in Christ' and on the practical level that meant in the church they were entitled to enjoy equal rank with their free brothers and sisters. This could mean, for example, that someone who was a slave in the outside world might be entrusted with spiritual leadership in the church, and if the owner of the slave was a member of the same church, he would submit to that spiritual

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<sup>274</sup> Dussel, Enrique: *The Invention of the Americas Eclipse of "the Other" and the Myth of Modernity*, Translated by M. D. Barber, Continuum, New York, 1995, 122-123.

<sup>275</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 209-210.

leadership. There is sufficient evidence that this was not merely a theoretical possibility<sup>276</sup>

Unfortunately, slavery still exists within the modern society. There are examples to illustrate this. Modern slaves are made of those who are normally employed to work in family houses or in companies. Sometimes they simply live or work under inhuman conditions for the economic benefit of the employers. They are those who are employed to do “black Jobs”. They work in restaurants, cafés, stores, shops and warehouses. They are supposed to be treated like every other worker, but the reverse is often the case. They are mostly paid “under the table”<sup>277</sup>. They are used as cheap workers. They may not have the courage to report themselves to authorities because they belong to undocumented migrants who came into the country under illegal migration laws. As a result of these, their stay in the country is illegal.

Another form of modern slavery is human trafficking. Each year many young girls and women are trafficked into one city or the other and are used as sex slaves. Part of the 2008 International Organization for Migration report goes like this: “Every year an estimated 12, 000 Nepalese women and girls are trafficked into India. The Asian Development Bank estimates that 100,000 to 200,000 Nepalese women and girls are held against their will in Indian brothels, with roughly 25 per cent under the age of 18 years. Traffickers typically lure impoverished girls with promises of jobs in urban areas or abroad. Some families knowingly send their daughters to brothels because they consider them a burden. Many of the women and girls are illiterate and are not even aware that they have been taken across the border. The Government of Nepal has identified 26 districts from which women and girls have disappeared”<sup>278</sup>.

This happens in almost all the third world countries. Some young girls are means of making money for their relatives. But what is unfortunate about it all is that many women are lured into developed cities for commercial sex without their consent. Most often, they are never informed of the motive of their travels. At the point of their destination, their “madams” collect their travelling documents and they are force to work for them. The “madams” literarily exchange the girls as

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<sup>276</sup> Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 188-189.

<sup>277</sup> This is a common form of illegal payment, which is used to reimburse people who are not licensed to work in a particular country. They are mostly undocumented migrants as opposed to migrant workers. They could be Asylum seekers or Refugees who do not have the legal right to work in many European countries. But they needed to survive because some of them are Economic Asylum/Refugee Seekers.

<sup>278</sup> World Migration 2008, 220.

commodities. Hence the statement: „Die Madame, die Grace bestellt hat, will ihr Geld“<sup>279</sup>-the Madam who ordered for Grace wants her money back. Very emotionally, Mary Kreutzer and Corinna Milborn speak of women trafficking as modern evil that one cannot overlook.

Grace wurde belogen und nach Europa verkauft, doch sie verweigerte sich der Zwangsprostitution. ... Ich muss 45, 000 Euro abzahlen. Ich kann nicht in der Prostitution arbeiten. Ich bin sehr gläubig, und es ist für mich völlig unmöglich, mit fremden Männern Sex zu haben und mit meinem Körper Geld zu verdienen. Ich kann das nicht machen, unter keinen Umständen... Ab da begannen die Repressalien gegen meine Familie zu Hause. Erst wurden mein Bruder und Schwester aus fadenscheinigen Gründen verhaftet: Ich musste 400 Euro schicken, um sie aus dem Gefängnis zu bekommen. Man kann in Nigeria dafür zahlen, dass jemand verhaftet wird, und man muss zahlen, damit er wieder freikommt<sup>280</sup>.

Paul addresses the issue of prostitution directly in his letter to the Corinthians 6:18-20. It is sin against one's own body, which exposes him/her to HIV/AIDS infections.

18 φεύγετε τὴν πορνείαν·  
Keep away from sexual immorality.

πᾶν ἁμάρτημα ὃ ἐὰν ποιήσῃ ἄνθρωπος ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος ἐστίν,  
All other sins that someone may commit are done outside the body;

ὁ δὲ πορνεύων εἰς τὸ ἴδιον σῶμα ἁμαρτάνει.  
but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body.

19 ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐστίν,  
Do you not realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit

οὗ ἔχετε ἀπὸ θεοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἐστὲ ἐαυτῶν;  
who is in you and whom you received from God?

20 ἡγοράσθητε γὰρ τιμῆς· δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σώματι ὑμῶν.  
You are not your own property, then; you have been bought at a price. So use your body for the glory

Paul is against slavery. In Galatians 4:6-7 Paul writes:

6 ὅτι δὲ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν,  
As you are sons, God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son,

κράζον, ἀββα ὁ πατήρ  
crying, Abba, Father.

7 ὥστε οὐκέτι εἶ δοῦλος ἀλλὰ υἱός·  
and so you are no longer a slave, but a son;

εἰ δὲ υἱός, καὶ κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ.  
and if a son, then an heir, by God's own act.

<sup>279</sup> Kreutzer Mary & Milborn Corinna: Ware Frau. Auf den Spuren moderner Sklaverei von Afrika nach Europa, Salzburg, Ecowin Verlag GmbH, 2008, 196.

<sup>280</sup> Kreutzer, & Milborn, Ware Frau, 189-192.

The phrase “and because you are sons”, “ὅτι ὁ ἐστε υἱοί” is the reason why they are no longer slaves. Everyone who is a believer is a son and daughter of God. According to Frank Matera, “Here Paul’s meaning is more individualized: the believer becomes an adopted son of God through Christ”<sup>281</sup>. The son or daughter of God cannot be a slave in the house of his/her father.

#### 4.4 There are Male and Female Roles?

Paul has said that there is neither male and female, all are one in the Lord (Gal 3:28). By so doing he tried to abolish classism based on gender. But the society we live in has an unaccepted Motto “mighty is right”. The male folk have more political power than the female folk. There are more men in the parliaments or in the Senates. More men are on managerial positions than the women. They decide what happens, when it will happen and how it should happen. It is an unacceptable motto but it is a working concept: The salary of a man who has the same qualifications and years of experiences are often not the same with that of a woman with the same qualifications and experiences. The man is paid more just for being a man and the woman receives less just for being a woman. “Mighty is right”, the men know that this motto is a truism. Against this opinion Pope John Paul II says:

And what shall we say of the obstacles which in so many parts of the world still keep women from being fully integrated into social, political and economic life?... Certainly, much remains to be done to prevent discrimination against those who have chosen to be wives and mothers. As far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve *real equality* in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State<sup>282</sup>.

Manhood and womanhood are forces and negations depending on the society one is living in. For feminists and Pauline theologians there is neither male and female. Classism based on gender should be a thing of the past. For the Catholic Church there are roles meant for men and those meant for women. Miroslav Volf presents the view which speaks of the replacement of once hierarchically segmented societies with a “functionally differentiated” society, in which inclusion became the general norm: every person must have access to all functions and therefore all

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<sup>281</sup> Matera, Galatians, 151.

<sup>282</sup> John Paul II, Letter to Women, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican City, 1995, 4.

persons must have equal access to education, to all available jobs, to political decision-making, and the like..."<sup>283</sup> He adds, "the progress of 'inclusion' is one important thing to celebrate about modernity"<sup>284</sup>. The theory which excludes a class of people from any job opportunity is considered as an outdated theory.

Once upon a time, it is said, such societies were ruled by privileged elites. Governing circles were restricted to those of the correct gender, breeding, education, and social exclusiveness. All this changes as a result of those multiple forces usually identified by the democracy. First the middle classes, then working men, then women, then racial minorities all won not only economic rights but political and social rights as well.<sup>285</sup>

This position can be seen as a wish not yet fully actualized. In principle this is possible but in practice many of the groups mentioned by him are yet to attend the political and social rights.

Some scholars argue vehemently in favor of equality in diversity based on biological data differences. The Catholic Church supports this opinion. By this they mean a notion which denotes complementarity between man and woman, where equality and diversity are based on biological data. It concerns also roles to be held and functions to be performed in the society. In that regard, equality is not sameness, and difference is not inequality. The Catholic Church defends the notion that we are equal as persons created in the image and likeness of God. But our roles in the Society and in the Church are biologically defined and "fixed" by the creator<sup>286</sup>: "There are values which time and change cannot alter because time and change did not bring them about"<sup>287</sup>. On this note women are not to be admitted into the clerical offices because it is a value not created by time and cannot be changed by time.

However, Paul and the first century Christian communities had female deacons. In the letter to the Romans 16:1, he writes:

1 συνίστημι δὲ ὑμῖν φοῖβην τὴν ἀδελφὴν ἡμῶν,  
I recommend to you our sister Phoebe,

οὗσαν [καὶ] διάκονον τῆς ἐκκλησίας τῆς ἐν κενχρεαῖς,  
a deaconess of the church at Cenchreae

The key concept is "diakonon", servant or minister. Phoebe is a deacon of the church at Cenchreae. She is a minister: apparently a person with administrative

<sup>283</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 58.

<sup>284</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 59.

<sup>285</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 58.

<sup>286</sup> Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 64.

<sup>287</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 68.

responsibility in the early church, but which in Paul's letters usually refers to a minister of God's word, such as himself. He also calls her helper (prostatos) of many, a term which normally referred in antiquity to patrons, some of whom were woman. As a patron, she would own the home in which the church met and she holds a position of honor within the community<sup>288</sup>.

The fixed roles are values created by the Church and not by any other person. After years of study research work, Noonan Marie Sabin comes to the conclusion that "there is nothing for or against the ordination of women"<sup>289</sup> in the New Testament. On this note, the Church in our time, Church's exegetes and Paul are on parallel lines. According to Schüssler Fiorenza the issue is "not biological sex differences", but patriarchal household and marriage relationships, which generate the social-political inferiority and oppression of women. Patriarchy is rooted in the patriarchal household and its property relationships rather than in innate biological differences between women and men<sup>290</sup>. She continues: "The androcentric linguistic sex/gender system that uses gender classifications rooted in biological sex cannot but reify and naturalize socio-political gender constructs"<sup>291</sup>. She goes on to argue against the notion of equality as sameness in the sharing of functions in the community:

In the *sôma/polis* of Christ, all have equal access to the gifts of the Spirit. This equality in the Spirit does not mean that all are the same, but that the gifts of the members vary and their individual functions are irreplaceable. No one can claim to have a superior function because all functions are necessary and must be honored equally for the building up of the 'corporation'. Social status distinctions and privileges between Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and Barbarians, slave and free both women and men- were no longer believed to be valid among those who were 'in Christ' (Gal 3: 28). Their equality in the Spirit is expressed in alternating leadership and partnership, in equal access for everyone, Greek, Jews, Barbarians, slaves, free, rich, poor, both women and men. They, therefore, name their assembly with democratic term *ekklesia*<sup>292</sup>.

Miroslav Volf also criticizes the views of the Church very strongly. For him, the Church belongs to "those who are conveniently left out of the modern narrative of inclusion because they disturb the integrity of its happy ending"<sup>293</sup>. He concludes very strongly: "Exclusion is barbarity *within* civilization, evil *among* the good, crime against the other *right within the walls of the self*"<sup>294</sup>. He goes on to make the distinction

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<sup>288</sup> Keener C. S., Man and Woman, Dictionary of Paul and his Letter, 589.

<sup>289</sup> Sabin, Noonan, Marie: Becoming Christ. The Vocation of Women in Theology and Scriptures, Irish Theological Quarterly, 74, 2009, 156.

<sup>290</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 86.

<sup>291</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, xix.

<sup>292</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, xxxi-xxxii.

<sup>293</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 59.

<sup>294</sup> Volf, Exclusion & Embrace, 60.

between differentiation and exclusion. For him “differentiation consists in separating-and-binding. By itself, separation would result in self-enclosed, isolated, and self-identical beings. Feminist thinkers have rightly rejected separation as an ideal”<sup>295</sup>. He writes:

The account of creation as ‘separating-and-binding’ rather than simply ‘separating’ suggests that ‘identity’ includes connection, difference, heterogeneity. The human self is formed not through a simple rejection of the other -through a binary logic of opposition and negation- but through a complex process of ‘taking in’ and ‘keeping out’. We are who we are not because we are separate from the others who are next to us, but because we are *both* separate and connected, both distinct *and* related; the boundaries that mark our identities are both barriers and bridges... Identity is a result of the distinction from the other *and* the internalization of the relationship to the other; it arises out of the complex history of ‘differentiation’ in which both the self and the other take part by negotiating their identities in interaction with one another<sup>296</sup>.

This would mean full interaction of all in the society including the hierarchy of the Church. But the Church argues further in favor of exclusion: Jesus never made a woman an Apostle and so there can never be a woman Apostle in our time. But Andrea Taschl-Erber has a different view on this<sup>297</sup>. For the Catholic Church, the hint that women were apostles and co-workers in Pauline days are simply “Pauline inconsistencies”, which stands in contrast to the essential remarks that women should not speak in the Church (1 Cor 14:34 & 35), women were to be submissive and obedient to their husbands (Eph 5:22-33). “For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands” (1 Peter 3:1 & 5).

The Catholic Church accuses Paul of discrimination in the use of these two terms “*my fellow workers*” and “*God’s fellow workers*”. The official Church’s teaching on this runs like this:

In the Pauline Letters, exegetes of authority have noted a difference between two formulas used by the Apostle: he writes indiscriminately ‘my fellow workers’ (Rom 16:3; Phil 4:2-3) when referring to men and women helping him in his apostolate in one way or another; but he reserves the title ‘God’s fellow workers’ (1 Cor 3:9; cf. 1 Thes 3:2) to Apollos, Timothy and himself, thus designated because they are directly set apart for the apostolic ministry and the preaching of the Word of God. In spite of the so important role

<sup>295</sup> Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace*, 65.

<sup>296</sup> Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace*, 66.

<sup>297</sup> According to Andrea Taschl-Erber Jesus made Mary Magdalene an Apostle and that she was a female leader just as Peter was a male leader. “Dass Marta dabei mit ihrem Messiasbekenntnis- wie andere TraditionsträgerInnen im JohEv- eine Position einnimmt, welche die Synoptiker Petrus zuschreiben, wirft ein bezeichnendes Licht auf die joh Tradition auch in ekklesiologischer Hinsicht: In John, the primacy seems to be a share charism. The Beloved Disciple has primacy as the authoritative witness to revelation (cf. 19:35); a certain Pastoral primacy is recognized in Peter (cf. 21:15-17); apostolic primacy as witness to paschal mystery belongs to Mary Magdalene (20:17-18)”. Cf. Taschl-Erber Andrea: *Maria von Magdala- erste Apostolin?*, Herder, Wien, 2007, 385.

played by women on the day of the Resurrection, their collaboration was not extended by Saint Paul to the official and public proclamation of the message, since this proclamation belongs exclusively to the apostolic mission<sup>298</sup>.

This accusation is a direct contradiction to the Pauline position and the theology of Paul. It would be a surprise to many Pauline theologians to believe that Paul discriminated against “his fellow workers” by reserving for himself and the male co-workers the term “God’s fellow workers” while the female fellow workers were addressed only as co-workers, after teaching them not to discriminate against one another. The position of the Catholic Church is already a categorization of persons based on their roles in the apostolate. Paul uses “God’s fellow workers” and “my fellow workers” interchangeably and not categorically. One should rather ask: what is the mind of Paul in his use of these terms? <sup>299</sup> The categorization was not the intention of Paul when he says that there is neither male and female (Gal 3:28c).

As at the time Paul worked with Priscilla, Lydia, Phoebe etc (cf. Rom 16:3-12) and Euodia, Syntyche, Clement (Phil 4:3) there were no emphasis on the ordination of women nor the hierarchy of the apostles. One should not forget Paul’s rhetorical questions to the Corinthians: “What I mean is this: every one of you is declaring, ‘I belong to Paul’, or ‘I belong to Apollos’, or ‘I belong to Cephas’, or ‘I belong to Christ’. Has Christ been split? Was it Paul that was crucified for you, or was it in Paul’s name that you were baptized?” (1 Cor 1:12 &13). In Christ, there is no categorization of persons or groupism which Paul will not also accept when he speaks of not regarding any one according to the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα), in the text translated as according to the human standard ( 2 Cor 5:16).

Ὅστε ἡμεῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ νῦν οὐδένα οἶδαμεν κατὰ σάρκα·  
From now onwards, then, we will not consider anyone by human standards:

εἰ καὶ ἐγνώκαμεν κατὰ σάρκα Χριστόν,  
even if we were once familiar with Christ according to human standards,

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<sup>298</sup> Inter Insigniores, N0.3.

<sup>299</sup> “However, since God speaks in Sacred Scripture through men in human fashion, the interpreter of Sacred Scripture, in order to see clearly what God wanted to communicate to us, should carefully investigate what meaning the sacred writers really intended, and what God wanted to manifest by means of their words. To search out the intention of the sacred writers, attention should be given, among other things, to ‘literary forms’. For truth is set forth and expressed differently in texts which are variously historical, prophetic, poetic, or of other forms of discourse. The interpreter must investigate what meaning the sacred writer intended to express and actually expressed in particular circumstances by using contemporary literary forms in accordance with the situation of his own time and culture. For the correct understanding of what the sacred author wanted to assert, due attention must be paid to the customary and characteristic styles of feeling, speaking and narrating which prevailed at the time of the sacred writer, and to the patterns men normally employed at that period in their everyday dealings with one another”. Cf. Dei Verbum, N0 12.

ἀλλὰ νῦν οὐκέτι γινώσκομεν. We do not know him in that way any longer.

Paul treated all as equals. Both male and female did their works mutually without categorization. It was because all did the work interchangeably that even led to the point of Priscilla and Aquila “being teachers to Apollos”<sup>300</sup> (Acts 18:26).

Priscilla and Aquila donated their home as a house church. It would be difficult to maintain that Priscilla never played active public roles in the communal worship in her house. It would also be hard to substantiate that in ecclesiastical gatherings in her house decisions were taken without her participation in the meeting as it is done today hierarchically without the women. That Luke attributed the educational role of a newcomer to a woman reflects an exception to the spirit of the time, where women rarely played instructional roles in the community. In this spirit Priscilla certainly must have preached and ministered to the community members when they gathered in her house to pray and to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. In many churches of the saints women prayed, prophesied (1 Cor 11:5) and most probably led in the celebrations<sup>301</sup>.

Again, Priscilla may have been a very intelligent woman that she is mentioned as a teacher to a learned Jewish man. Given the culture of the time, she may have been an exceptional woman which made Apollos to agree to sit in her house and at her feet for lectures and for the fine tuning of his Christology as opposed to only the theology of John the Baptist. In this case we see an example of “*female agency*”. One cannot help admiring the humility and willingness of such a learned Jewish teacher sitting at the feet of a Christian woman and her husband.

Paul treated the women with great respect. He recommended the deacon Phoebe to the church of God and sent “greetings to Prisca and Aquila, my fellow-workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks to save my life... my greetings to the church at their house” (Rom 16:1-4, cf. 1 Cor 16:19). The Church uses “my fellow workers” (Rom 16:3), “the presiding elders and the deacons” (Phil 1:1), and non-Pauline texts like “let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man, but to be in silence” (1

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<sup>300</sup> “Apollos was a cultured Jew from Alexandria, a theologian well versed in the Scriptures, who had been baptized with the baptism of John and had learned of the teaching of Jesus (Acts 18:24-19:1). We do not know whether he was converted in Alexandria, or who preached the gospel to him. It is possible he heard the story of Jesus from members of the Jesus movement who might have preached the baptism of repentance and the ministry of words of Jesus, as the communities in Galilee and those behind Q seem to have done. Be that as it may, Acts stresses that Priscilla, together with her husband? Aquila, instructed Apollos more accurately in the way of God. Again what this more accurate instruction entailed is not certain, since the way of God is a stereotypical expression of Luke to characterize Christian preaching and life”. Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her* 188-189.

<sup>301</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 183.

Timothy 2:11-2) to substantiate her position against this reading. Worse still, she mixes them up with Galatians 3:28. She places Deutero-Pauline texts, Pauline polemics and the Pastoral Letters on the same level with Pauline letters:

The Apostle's forbidding of women 'to speak' in the assemblies (cf. 1 Cor 14:34-35; 1 Tim 2:12) is of a different nature, and exegetes define its meaning in this way: Paul in no way opposes the right, which he elsewhere recognizes as possessed by women, to prophesy in the assembly (cf. 1 Cor 11:5); the prohibition solely concerns the official function of teaching in the Christian assembly. For Saint Paul this prescription is bound up with the divine plan of creation (cf. 1 Cor 11:7; Gen 2:18-24): it would be difficult to see in it the expression of a cultural fact. Nor should it be forgotten that we owe to Saint Paul one of the most vigorous texts in the New Testament on the fundamental equality of men and women, as children of God in Christ (cf. Gal 3:28). Therefore there is no reason for accusing him of prejudices against women, when we note the trust that he shows towards them and the collaboration that he asks of them in his apostolate<sup>302</sup>.

The declaration *Inter Insigniores* concludes with a differentiation between universal "sonship" as opposed to the ministerial priesthood. To this end use is sometimes made of the text quoted above, from the letter to the Galatians (3:28), which says that in Christ there is no longer any distinction between men and women. But this passage does not concern ministries: it only affirms the universal calling to divine filiation, which is the same for all. Moreover, and above all, to consider the ministerial priesthood as a human right would be to misjudge its nature completely: baptism does not confer any personal title to public ministry in the Church<sup>303</sup>.

Among many other theological views on the issue of equality of all and the capability of all to be admitted in all offices in the Church, Schüssler Fiorenza would conclude that the contemporary discussion linking Gal 3:28 and the household-code tradition points to a historical-political dynamic that does not come to the fore when it is forced into the oppositions of "order of creation" and "order of redemption" on the one hand, and of "enthusiastic excess, or Gnostic heresy" and "Pauline theology and New Testament orthodoxy" on the other hand. Some scholars maintain that Gal 3:28 has no political implications. Such commentators are prepared to state the opposite of what Paul actually says in order to preserve a purely religious interpretation. In doing so, they can strongly emphasize the reality of equality before God sacramentally and at the same time deny that any conclusions can be drawn from this in regard to the ecclesiastical offices (!) and the political order all of which, I

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<sup>302</sup> *Inter Insigniores*, NO. 4.

<sup>303</sup> *Inter Insigniores*, NO.6.

would add, rest on the assumed natural differences between the sexes institutionalized in patriarchal marriage<sup>304</sup>.

The equality of all was at the heart of the early Christian communities. That is also what many Pauline theologians accept as what was at the root of the Pauline concept of early Christian communities.

#### 4.5 A Christian Community of Non-Discriminations

When exegetes speak of the early Christian communities/the early churches, it would be wrong to see the communities with the modern eyes: rich and well organized with hierarchical structures. That would be far from what it was. Jesus founded a community of simple and poor people. Paul preached to the poor communities outside the Jewish territories which the Galatians happened to be one of them. David Horrell tries to reconstruct the early Christian communities and the 'character of the Pauline congregation'. He wants to do this with the social-scientific method, hence he writes:

Social-scientific interpretation has attempted to bring to the centre of attention realities all too often forgotten in the quest to understand Paul's theology: that Paul's letters are addressed to groups of ordinary people who met together in ordinary homes and shared a common identity as brothers and sisters 'in Christ'. How then were membership, identity, and community boundaries indicated? What kind of groups were the Pauline congregations?<sup>305</sup>

Schüssler Fiorenza makes the investigations and attempts to answer the questions raised by David Horrell. She presents the identity, membership and the nature of the life situations of the Early Christian communities thus:

The majority of them were not rich, like the Cynic philosophers who could reject property and cultural positions in order 'to become free from possessions'. Rather, they were called from the impoverished, starving, and 'heavy laden' country people. They were tax collectors, sinners, women, children, fishers, housewives, those who had been healed from their infirmities or set free from bondage to their evil spirits. What they offered was not an alternative lifestyle but an alternative ethos: they were those without a future, but now they had hope again; they were the 'outcast' and marginal people in their society, but now they had community again; they were despised and downtrodden, but now they had dignity and self-confidence as God-Sophia's beloved children; they were, because of life's circumstances and social injustices, sinners with no hope to share in the holiness and presence of God, but now they were heirs of the *basileia*, experiencing the gracious goodness of God who had made them equal to the holy and righteous in Israel. As such

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<sup>304</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 207.

<sup>305</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 99.

they came together in the discipleship of equals and shared their meager bread with those who came to hear the gospel<sup>306</sup>.

It was this poor people, the *Anawim Yahweh* that one is talking of when one speaks of the Christian communities that Paul was born into and that he continued to spread among the gentiles. It was this poor society that Paul, “a middle class educated Jew”<sup>307</sup> found himself in. He wanted them to continue treating one another as equals. To the Corinthians he was very plain when he appeals to them thus:

Consider, brothers (sisters), how you were called: not many of you are wise by human standard, not many influential, not many from noble families. No, God chose those who by human standards are weak to shame the strong, those who by human standards are common and contemptible, indeed those who count for nothing to reduce to nothing all those that do count for something, so that no human being might feel boastful before God (1 Cor. 1:26-28).

Not being wise by human standard could also mean not being educated to the then world standard or not being regarded as very intelligent or, negatively, very crafty or cunning. Not being influential could also mean that they had no political powers, could not come to the assembly or the senate for any reason. Not coming from a noble family background sums up the state in which they were called from, the poor of the poor of the society who never existed in the eyes of the rich before they were ennobled by their call. It was this poor Christian group that was charged with the responsibility of welcoming more poor people and the rich few whom the Lord had added to their numbers. According to Schüssler Fiorenza, the Jesus movement was a messianic community which brought together impoverished and marginal people, as well as house owners and farmers<sup>308</sup>. David Horrell puts the question like this: “What does the evidence from Paul’s letters themselves reveal about the character of the Pauline congregations and specifically about Paul’s attempts to shape that character?”<sup>309</sup> He answers: “There is certainly some evidence to suggest that the Pauline churches were communities in which conventional distinctions between Jews and Gentiles, slaves and free persons, men and women, were transcended through the adoption of a new unity and identity in Christ, communities where all could participate fully according to whatever gift the Spirit gave them (Gal 3:28)”<sup>310</sup>. This messianic community was different from what used to be. In the past, slaves served

<sup>306</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 135-136.

<sup>307</sup> Pate, The End of the Age Has Come, 19.

<sup>308</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 147-148.

<sup>309</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 99-100.

<sup>310</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 100.

their masters. They were obedient to them, and were at their beck and call. But in the messianic society all were equal. Schüssler Fiorenza affirms that it was not only that “you are all equal”, it even made a demand on those who were formally masters:

It clearly presupposes a society in which masters and slaves exist, and challenges those in positions of dominance in a feudal society to become ‘equal’ with those who are powerless. Masters should relinquish domination over their slaves and tenants, and ‘serve’ them in the same total fashion as a slave had to serve her/his master<sup>311</sup>.

The equality of all is what makes the difference. And that was why Callistus, a slave, could become the Bishop of Rome at the beginning of the third century<sup>312</sup>. According to Stephen Andrew Cooper, “if it could be established that Philemon’s slave was the Onesimus who was bishop of Ephesus half-a-century later (Ign. Eph. 1:3; cf. J. Knox, Philemon among the Letters of Paul, [London, 1960], 88-92), this would provide sufficient evidence that former servile status was no bar to church leadership”<sup>313</sup>. The inter-marriages between the lower class (those born as slaves) and the upper class (those born as nobles and rulers) which was prohibited by the Roman Law was legalized by Callistus. In this community of equals all were brothers and sisters in the risen Lord.

The master of the community is the risen Lord. Paul who though himself a noble has become a slave for the sake of the risen Lord and in order to win as many as possible for the Lord (1 Cor 9:19-23). His request of the Galatians: “Γίνεσθε ὡς ἐγὼ, ὅτι κἀγὼ ὡς ὑμεῖς”- “become like me as I have become like you” (Gal 4:12) could be interpreted in more flexible ways. It was not only that they should not allow themselves to be circumcised in keeping with the Jewish laws and customs or be celibates as he was; it could also mean that he has become a slave of God just for them so that they too could become slaves to one another. As Christ’s slaves, he expected them to serve one another in the Lord (Gal 6:2).

In the Christian community of equals, the certificate of membership is Baptism. The welcoming of new members were not complicated. It was simply “confess with your mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord and believe that God raised him from the dead and you will be saved” (Rom 10:9). With this simple confession and believe you are a member. And being a member you share in the equality of the baptized.

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<sup>311</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 148.

<sup>312</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 167.

<sup>313</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus’s Commentary on Galatians, 189.

## 4.6 The Equality of all the Baptized

Baptism confers to the Christian not only the right of equality but also the right of respect in the community. It does not come from ethnicity (Jew or gentile), tradition, religion and culture of a nation (circumcision), male or female domination (Greco-Roman law of gender inequality), freeborn or slave (classism), rich or poor (the haves and the have nots). It comes from the Lord whom all have “put on at baptism” (Gal 2:28). Paul’s stand for the equality of the baptized is also emphasized in his first letter to the Corinthians, when he writes, “we were baptized into one body in a single Spirit, Jews as well as Greeks, slaves as well as free men, and we were all given the same Spirit to drink” (1 Cor 12:13). Christians, who have put on Christ at baptism, are now united with him and with one another in the Christian eucharistic assembly.

The arguments of some exegetes as presented by Murphy-O’Connor that Jews were justified to carry their own food to the assembly because gentile’s food and meat were regarded as contaminated or because gentiles were under obligation “to provide them with Jewish food”<sup>314</sup> holds no weight at all because Paul would not accept this idea when he quarrels the Corinthians for celebrating their “own super” and not the “Lord’s Super”. Their “own super” was selfishness while “the Lord’s supper” is egalitarian and a communal celebration. Based on some discrepancies in some communities, Paul says to them, “I cannot congratulate you on the meetings you hold; they do more harm than good” (1 Cor 11:17). David Horrell articulates it like this:

But it also seems clear that life in the churches fell short of the ideal vision, expressed in baptism and the Lord’s Supper, that many different people had become one body in Christ. At Corinth, for example, the believers were divided in their loyalties to different missionary figures (1Cor. 1:10-17); they took one another to court to settle what Paul regards as petty differences (1Cor. 6:1-11); and the Lord’s Supper had become an occasion for division and social distinction (1 Cor. 11:17-34)<sup>315</sup>.

For Paul, all the baptized are equal (Gal 3:28). In life, there is equality or inequality. Just as there is no half pregnancy and full pregnancy; so, there is no half person or full person and there is no half equality and full equality. It is either equal or unequal. This is why Paul says “for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Gal 3:28). The writer of the Letter to the Ephesians puts it like this:

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<sup>314</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 150.

<sup>315</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 100.

There is one Body, one Spirit, just as one hope is the goal of your calling by God. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all, over all, through all and within all (Eph. 4:4-6).

Paul expresses this equality of the baptized in a dialogical form. He asks, “the blessing-cup, which we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ; and the loaf of bread which we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ? And as there is one loaf, so we, although there are many of us, are one single body, for we all share in the one loaf” (1 Cor 10:16 & 17). For Robin Scroggs, “within this eschatological community, people, no matter of what background, shape, or form, are seen and accepted as equals”<sup>316</sup>. For Boyarin equality of all exists in the spiritual realm. Apart from that “much hierarchy subsists and needs to subsist in the flesh, in the life of society even in Christian communities”<sup>317</sup>. The argument that the equality is realizable eschatologically does not hold because one who enters into a Christian community would expect to be treated equally like every other person. If equality is only possible eschatologically why worry about being treated as a slave when you are already one? Why not wait for the Lord till the last day so that he will come and repay each one according to his/her deeds (Rom 2:6; Matt 16:27).

The Christian community is a human community made up of saints and sinners. They are aspiring to heaven and so heaven for Paul is not already realized. It is not eschatology itself but a preparation for the eschatology. It is a (audition) reality of what heaven would be like. It is a life lived out in a community of believers where people were allowed the right to be different from others and they themselves also allowed others the right to be different from them. This view cannot be better criticized than the way Schüssler Fiorenza did when she says: “The distinctive gift of Christianity was the vision of community expressed in Gal 3:28, not as a millenarian ideal but as a communal reality”<sup>318</sup>. Robin Scroggs seems to have had a rethink on his former view of “certain equality” and to have joined rank with the stand of Schüssler Fiorenza when he writes:

I believe that from these arguments it can be legitimately concluded that Paul supported the equality of male and female in the church just as certainly as he did that of Jew and Greek, slave and free. Thus his working out of relationships in the church is consistent with his theology of liberation and equality of all persons before the gracious God who gives life.<sup>319</sup>

<sup>316</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a New Day, 44.

<sup>317</sup> Boyarin, A Radical Jew, 194.

<sup>318</sup> Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 78.

<sup>319</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a new Day, 48.

The non-discrimination is a reality realizable in a Christian community beginning from the baptized members who welcome the new members into the new society, the Christian community. Why welcome a social outcast into a religious group with the same rites of initiation, if it is only for the day of baptism? After baptism the status of the baptized like that of Onesimus changes from being a runaway slave to being a brother in the Lord (Philemon 12-21). He was no longer going to be punished under the law like a runaway slave. This is because the law has been replaced by the risen Lord. He becomes one with the brothers and sisters after his baptism. Robin Scroggs sees conversion and entering of a Christian community as a process of re-socialization. The believer has to relearn what he/she has learnt before: “The first process of primary socialization has to be redone; the old world has to be destroyed and the new learned and internalized. And this process must be done in a social setting, that is, in a community. This new community must provide a ‘plausibility structure’ which gives the new member confidence that his or her new world is in fact the truly real one”<sup>320</sup>. Baptism therefore is “a melting point” of all discriminations, ethnicities and differences, a new beginning for all who join the Christian community.

#### 4.6.1 Basileia tou theou

The *basileia tou theou*, *Kingdom of God* founded on earth by Jesus was a movement of Jews, gentiles, women, men and the *Anawim Yahweh*. It was never a Jewish movement alone. It originated from the Jews but went beyond the boundaries of the Jewish territories<sup>321</sup> as the fulfillment of the risen Lord’s Magna Charta and mandate on the apostles “to proclaim the Good News to the ends of the Earth” (Matt. 24:14; Acts 1:8). According to Brad H. Young, “Jesus represents a break to Judaism; he is a Jew who became the fountain head of another faith, a religious child that broke from its parents”<sup>322</sup>. For Schüssler Fiorenza, “the Christian movement applied the ‘inclusiveness’ of Jesus’ vision and movement not only to members of Israel but also to the gentiles. It was thus constituted when it admitted gentiles as equal members to the community without requiring that they first become members of the

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<sup>320</sup> Scroggs, Paul for a New Day, 41.

<sup>321</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 2.

<sup>322</sup> Young, H. Brad: Jesus The Jewish Theologian, Hendrickson Pub., Peabody, Massachusetts, 1995, xi.

Jewish covenant people”<sup>323</sup> through circumcision. Again the inclusive Jesus movement has many female followers, such as Martha and Mary, Veronica, Mary Magdalene, Salome, Mary the mother of James (Mark 16:1-3).

Paul was on a wrong mission to kill but the Lord intercepted him and sent him further on the true mission to preach the Good News to all. The primary aim of the *basileia tou theou* is the spread of the Kingdom of God on earth. Paul categorically states: “For if I preach the gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!” (1 Cor 9:16). The ordination was not an issue, the issue is the preaching of the Kingdom of God on earth. All, male and female are called to proclaim the message of the risen Lord. Andrea Taschl-Erber is of the opinion that Mary Magdalene did not just deliver the message of the resurrected Lord to the apostles, she continued to proclaim the message among other women and men of the time. “Solche Kommentierungen bewahren nicht nur die Erinnerung daran, dass Frauen ebenso wie Männer jüngerinnen Jesu und erste Verkündigerinnen des Evangeliums waren, sondern unterstreichen auch die Faktizität und Legitimität solchen Tun”<sup>324</sup>.

The structured and systematic Church was a later development. David Horrell writes:

This process of institutionalization continues through the decades after Paul’s death, and the establishment of more formal leadership offices is a part of this sociological process, spurred on not least by the death of the first generation of apostles, especially Peter, James and Paul. In this process, it may be suggested, the early Christian ‘sect’ becomes gradually like a ‘church’<sup>325</sup>.

Schüssler Fiorenza sees this process of institutionalization as a movement “from charismatic and communal authority to an authority vested in local officers...”<sup>326</sup> This shift destroyed the equality of all in the early Christian community.

#### 4.6.2 The Baptismal Formula

Paul may have known the Jewish formula and process of the initiation of a proselyte. Many exegetes accept the fact that Gal 3:28 is a fragment of an ancient

<sup>323</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 100.

<sup>324</sup> Taschl-Erber, *Maria von Magdala- Erste Apostolin?*, 633.

<sup>325</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 102.

<sup>326</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 286-287.

liturgical formula taken upon oneself before the Baptism itself<sup>327</sup>. In this vow of equality all were admitted to share in the family of God who is the Father of all and in all, and all were brothers and sisters without hierarchy. For Boyarin, “Paul dreamed of a day in which all human distinctions that led to hierarchy would be erased and not merely one in which there was a place in God’s saving plan for all”<sup>328</sup>. According to Schüssler Fiorenza the later violation of this baptismal formula was as a result of the tension between the later Christian communities and the pagan society<sup>329</sup>. The community leaders sought “to lessen the tension between the Christian community and the pagan patriarchal household”<sup>330</sup>. The conversion of wives and slaves provoked political tensions between the Christian movement and its pagan society. This conflict was a conflict of values and allegiances between the Christian community and the patriarchal family<sup>331</sup>.

The Christian community was not the only group of equals. There were other local associations. The business groups came together to celebrate for one reason or the other, the Christian Communities came together to celebrate the Lord’s Supper. Those who joined the business class joined on the bases of their professions, wealth or status in the society. On the other hand, those who joined the Christian community joined them in the name of the Lord who is the Father of all. The initiation of the Christians was through baptism in the name of the risen Lord. The initiation of the business class was done in the name of their association or in the name of their founder likes Orpheus. Hence Schüssler Fiorenza concludes: “Those who joined the Christian house church joined it as an association of equals. It was

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<sup>327</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians, 187.

<sup>328</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 216.

<sup>329</sup> “The Roman emperor held the life or death of the Jewish people in the palm of his hand; the governor’s sword was always at the ready; the high priest’s eyes were always penetrating and his ears were always keen; the soldiery was always eager for the slaughter... The emperor sought to govern an empire; the governor sought to hold anarchy in check; the high priest sought to hold on his office; the members of the high priest’s Sanhedrin sought to spare the people the dangerous consequences of a charismatic’s innocent vision of the Kingdom of God, which they themselves believed was not really at hand... For he had taught and preached that the Kingdom of God was near at hand, a kingdom which were it to come, would displace the Kingdom of Rome. By creating the impression that he... would usher in the Kingdom of God... he had readied the people for riotous behaviour. The fact that the charismatic of charismatics had taught no violence, had preached no revolution, and lifted up no arms against Rome’s authority would have been utterly irrelevant. The High Priest Caiphas and the Prefector Pontius Pilate cared not a whit how or by whom the Kingdom of God would be ushered in, but only that the Roman Emperor and his instruments would not reign over it”. Cf. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, xxxiii.

<sup>330</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 262.

<sup>331</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 262-263.

especially attractive to those who had little stake in the rewards of religion based either on class stratification or on male dominance<sup>332</sup>.

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<sup>332</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 181.

## Chapter Five

### Evaluation and Conclusion

This work is a contribution from the view of Pauline theology, using social-scientific and feminist models to see how the ancient problems that confronted Paul have continued to be a problem in the modern world. It is my believe that answers to the problems of our time cannot be read off from the Bible. The ancient society had its own social and religious laws that kept a group away from the rest of the society. Women, gentiles and slaves were the underdogs. They had little political power. Aristotle writes of them: "Among barbarians no distinction is made between women and slaves, because there is no natural rule among them: they are a community of slaves, male and female... Hesiod is right when he says, first house and wife and an ox for the plough, for the ox is the poor man's slave"<sup>333</sup>.

But, "we do not any longer live in small self-governing city states where women are excluded from all communal decisions and ordinary, decent citizens own slaves"<sup>334</sup>. Our society is a modern society that has its own ways of discriminating against "the other", those who are not like us and we are not like them". It is always "us against them" or "them against us". Tünde Puskás illustrates this with the Hungarians who live in Sweden.

Hungarianness was a popular subject during the dinner table discussions. Sometimes complaints were raised about 'the others' Hungarianness; and Hungarians were categorized under two healings: 'good Hungarians' and 'bad Hungarians'. Who the 'others' often named as bad Hungarians were, depended on the context. Sometimes the good ones were those who kept their Hungarianness intact, who resisted assimilation by every means; but another evening we met Swedish-Hungarians who were complaining about the opposite, that the newcomers, usually the ones who came from Romania (as it was said) did not want to integrate (not enough anyway) into the Swedish society and gave a negative picture of Swedish-Hungarians. There was only one thing everybody could agree about, namely that they were all Hungarians: good ones, bad ones, more or less Hungarian Hungarians, but they all were identified as Hungarians"<sup>335</sup>.

It is also an era of technological changes, a time of freedom and rejection of institutionalized authorities. These societal changes have their own conflicts. For example, the liberalist philosophers believe that "sex is the centre around which social life and even the individual's inner life must revolve"<sup>336</sup>. The suppression of these individual rights is a move against modernism. The modern man and woman

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<sup>333</sup> Aristotle: Selections from Nichomachean Ethics. Politics, The Collector's Library of Essential Thinkers, CRW Pub., Gloucester Crescent, London, 2004, 8.

<sup>334</sup> Aristotle. Selection from Nichomachean Ethics. Politics, 198-199.

<sup>335</sup> Puskás, "We Belong to them", 13.

<sup>336</sup> Javier Broer: The Sexual Revolution: pluses and minuses, Theology Digest, Vol. 32, 1985, 37.

would prefer to be their own lord and master. This has led to debates between the 'liberalists' and the 'conservatives' in the theological sphere. The liberalists tend to argue that Christians' personal behaviours are irrelevant to salvation. Any rigid regulation that does not take into consideration the absolute private freedom of the individual must be rejected. Miroslav Volf observes:

With the American and French revolutions the idea of freedom emerged as the pillar of modern liberal democracies. All people are equal and all are free to pursue their interests and develop their personalities in their own way, provided they respect the same freedom in others. Such freedom is inalienable; it is not conferred by others and cannot be taken away by them. Rather, if the exercise of freedom does not interfere with the freedom of other citizens, freedom must be respected, even if society at large finds the pursuits of its individual members repugnant. Freedom is the most sacred good. When this inalienable freedom is either denied by a totalitarian state or suppressed by a dominant culture we speak of oppression; when the cage that holds people back from doing and being what they prefer is dismantled, we speak of liberation<sup>337</sup>.

The conservatives would want the respect of the individual freedom, but it should be freedom for, with individual responsibility and not freedom from fear. For Schüssler Fiorenza freedom without individual responsibility is in direct contradiction to Pauline theology, who "focused instead on the moral and ecclesial behavior of the individual Christians irrespective of their social status"<sup>338</sup>. Without individual moral and ecclesial standards subjectivism becomes the measure of all things. And how would a society function when the self is the standard, especially when "the I" becomes the guiding principle and the determinant of what is right or wrong, good or bad, what is to be done or not to be done etc? These concepts of absolute individual freedom, mass production, consumerism and egoism have helped to dehumanize woman/man so much that we need urgently "the alternative to dehumanization"<sup>339</sup> in the society. Since modern man and woman have rejected God and institutionalized religion but enthroned the individual moral concepts instead, what then do they do with themselves? They have constructed segregated religious and social classes where membership is limited to those who belong, and "others" are excluded from these religious and social classes, not because they do not want to belong, but because they should not belong.

Paul's utmost concern after his conversion to Christianity was to make Christ known to the segregated world. He needed first the liberation of Christianity from

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<sup>337</sup> Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace*, 101.

<sup>338</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 192.

<sup>339</sup> Fromm, *The Revolution of Hope*, vii.

Jewish Christians who resisted the incorporation of slaves, gentiles and women into the normal life of their communities. The Jewish men were the true Israelites (John 1:47) who could enter the sanctuary and the Holy of Holies. Women, slaves and the gentiles were left at the gallery alongside with children. For the Pharisees, it was a “taboo to welcome gentiles into one’s own house, or into the cult of Israel”<sup>340</sup>, or to speak with women on the streets or to allow them into public gatherings. Norbert Baumert writes: “In der griechischen Stadt (*,polis‘*) war es unmöglich, dass eine Frau bei einer ‚politischen‘ „*ekklesia*“, einer Vollversammlung der Bürger einer Stadt, auch nur anwesend war, geschweige denn, dass sie dort das Wort ergriff“<sup>341</sup>.

Paul who has become an apostle to the gentiles writes to the Romans: “ὄμῖν δὲ λέγω τοῖς ἔθνεσιν· ἐφ’ ὅσον μὲν οὖν εἶμι ἐγὼ ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος τὴν διακονίαν μου δοξάζω”, “Let me say then to you gentiles that, as far as I am an apostle to the gentiles, I take pride in this work of service” (Rom 11:13) could not understand these barriers. He believed that God wanted him to be apostle to the gentiles. He began with a self-revolt: leaving everything behind, forgetting all his entitled Jewish rights and privileges. He went out to help the gentiles hear the Good News of the risen Lord. He counted everything as lost for the sake of Christ crucified (Phil 3:8-10). Even though he was proud of who he was, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin (Rom 11:1), he gave up everything to win the gentiles for God.

Paul played a decisive role in the gentile mission. How he did it, has been a source of admiration for centuries. He demanded that pagan converts should have faith in the risen Lord and not in the law of circumcision. According to Murphy-O’Connor, „it was in this spirit of freedom that Paul labored in Asia Minor and Greece”<sup>342</sup>. When Antioch later changed its stance and aligned itself with Jerusalem, which insisted on observance of the Law, the status of its churches to the north and west came under attack. The very nature of gentile Christianity was put at risk. Paul was its main defender. For five or six years in the middle of the first century AD he invested every ounce of his energy, and every scintilla of his intelligence, in devising a response which was ultimately to prevail. He comes to the conclusion that even if Pauline writings were not part of the canon, the incalculable debt we owe him is

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<sup>340</sup> „Der Hauptmann weiß, dass sich ein frommer Jude durch das Betreten eines heidnischen Hauses unrein macht“. Cf. Bruners, Wilhelm: *Wie Jesus glauben lernte*, Herder, Freiburg, 2006, 135.

<sup>341</sup> Baumert, Norbert: *Sorgen des Seelsorgers*, Echter, Würzburg, 2007, 264.

<sup>342</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A *Critical Life*, v.

adequate justification for yet another attempt to understand how and why he achieved what he did<sup>343</sup>.

Paul single handedly took the Gospel of Christ to the gentiles. He used his own authority to incorporate women, slaves and gentiles into the mainstream of Christianity. This was directly against the practices Jewish Christians and the apostles who were still loyal Jews. This was also an innovation that was difficult to assimilate. In a normal Jewish setting during the time in which Christ lived, women and slaves had no voting rights and no public power. Gentiles were foreigners and so had no rights to socio-cultural and political Jewish ways of life. The Jesus movement as championed by Paul was new. John Wijngaards supports this opinion when he writes:

In the past the Gentiles had been excluded from the Covenant. God's great mystery now revealed is that the Gentiles too can be members of Christ's body. You can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to people of other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets through the Spirit, that is, how the Gentiles are co-heirs, members of the same body and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus<sup>344</sup>

For David Horrell "it is clear that, by the time Paul wrote his letters, he was convinced of his call to be Apostle to the Gentiles, his commission to take the good news of God's saving grace in Christ to all the nations"<sup>345</sup>. "Whatever we label it, Paul certainly saw his call/conversion, at least in retrospect, as the moment when he was commissioned by God to the task of being Apostle to the Gentiles (Gal 1.15-16; 2.7-8)"<sup>346</sup>. He concludes by saying that "Paul is convinced that God has now acted in Christ for the salvation of all who believed, and that salvation comes through Christ and not through the law"<sup>347</sup>. This was why he became an ardent enemy of the Pharisees. He was hated for violating the laws that he knew so well. But for Paul, to reiterate the Torah is rebuilding of those things which he had termed rejected (Gal 2:18). By affiliation, at least Paul is now a gentile among the Christians. This sparked off the hatred from his brothers who wished him death. David Horrell concludes that in Paul's theology there is a "fundamental tension between continuity and

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<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Wijngaards, John: The ordination of women in the Catholic Church, Darton, Longman & Todd, London, 2001, 117.

<sup>345</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 28.

<sup>346</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 27.

<sup>347</sup> Horrell, An Introduction to the Study of Paul, 84.

discontinuity”<sup>348</sup>. God’s promises to the Jews are valid. But the blessings of the covenant are no longer for the Jews alone but for all who are in Christ. He writes:

Paul’s theology, his gospel, is profoundly and thoroughly Jewish: it tells the story of how the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God who spoke through Moses and the prophets, has now acted to fulfill the promises made long before and to enable God’s people to inherit the long-awaited blessings through the coming of Messiah. Yet according to Paul’s gospel, the people who inherit these blessings, the people who are the true ‘children of Abraham’ are not all who are Jewish, but all who have faith in Christ, whether they be Jew or Gentile. Indeed, ‘in Christ’, according to Paul, ‘there is no longer Jew and Gentile’ (Gal. 3:28; cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Col. 3:11)<sup>349</sup>.

Salvation is no longer a Jewish thing but a universal event brought about by the death and resurrection of Christ. Paul took upon himself the task of the realization of the mandate to make Christ known to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). He was a migrant preacher more than a theologian. It was his teachings to various Christian communities of which Galatians is one of them, that we possess today. These teachings were his personal convictions expressed in circumstances which the various letters reflect. Pauline theology therefore can be called “adoptable theology”<sup>350</sup>, being all things to all men in order to win them for Christ (1 Cor 9:20-23). From the unsearchable riches of Christ who appeared to him on the way to Damascus, he draws theories to correct one error after another, to deal with one heresy after another. In each of his letters to the communities, he draws up new ideas to meet their urgent need.

The objective content and universal claim of the gospel against false teachers compelled Paul to give an orderly intelligible account of God’s act in Christ to each specific need and situation of the early Christian communities, in order that every one may know what God has done for humanity through Christ. Paul was drawing from his wealth of knowledge in ancient Greco-Roman and Hellenistic philosophies, Masoretic texts, Jewish laws and customs in answering the questions he was asked. Hence the letter to the Galatians is one of the “occasional pastoral writings”<sup>351</sup> of Paul, geared towards the good of the Christian community founded by him. It is an occasional pastoral letter because “each community generated questions to which he

<sup>348</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 82.

<sup>349</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>350</sup> “Adaptation is characterized by substitution and assimilation. The former is carried out by replacing pagan cultic elements with Christian one. By assimilation, the church adopted pagan rituals and gestures into which she infused with the Christian meanings. However, it was at the Second Vatican Council that the concept was fleshed out and given impetus. Cf. Chukwu, Donatus Oluwa: *The Church as the Extended Family of God. Towards a New Direction for African Ecclesiology*, Xlibris Pub., Bloomington, Indiana, 2011, 101.

<sup>351</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 160.

had no ready-made answers. His response in each case is tailored towards a particular situation, but rooted in a consistent core, which is his vision of Christ<sup>352</sup>.

In Galatians 3:26-29 Paul comes to the conclusion that the risen Lord is the centre of his missionary activities. Making Christ known is more important than any culture, race, gender, custom, religious institution or social differentiations. There was no way Christianity could have been preached in Galatia if the concept of discrimination was not destroyed. This is because Galatia was a multiracial and multicultural territory.

Why does Paul insist on the theology of non-discrimination and the equality of all as brothers and sisters in the Lord? Why is this approach so dear to him? What did he do to counteract the Jewish concepts of a chosen race, a holy nation, a people set apart from other nations? What did he do to counteract the Jewish daily prayer formula that solidified this believe? What did he do to bring the two socio-cultural and religious setting together? The answer to these questions is given by Stephen Andrew Cooper when he writes:

It is not unlikely that Paul himself had been brought up to thank God that he was born a Jew and not a Gentile, a freeman and not a slave, a man and not a woman. If so, he takes up each of these three distinctions which had considerable importance in Judaism and affirms that in Christ they are all irrelevant. He may here express an insight of his own, arising out of his sure grasp of what was involved in the attitude and achievement of Jesus<sup>353</sup>.

Paul developed a non-Jewish/non-racial based theology in keeping with his philosophy “of being all things to all men” (1 Cor 9:22). He stressed this point because it was the solution to the situation at hand. Every other option was considered a failure. Hence he opted out of Jewish Christianity to a universal Christianity, even when the pillars of the faith were against him. Jerome Murphy-O’Connor would style this as “Paul’s self made theology” against the will of the established religion, against the approaches of the Jerusalem authorities. “If Paul could no longer be a member of such a community, still less could he propagate its vision of Christianity”<sup>354</sup>. He wanted his own type of Christianity: a call to welcome the Galatians into the Christian folk for that was why God captured him (Phil 3: 14).

I will join the majority of scholars’ opinion by maintaining that Paul broke ranks with the authorities in the Holy City in order to be all things to all men. The fear of his

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<sup>352</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A Critical Life, vii.

<sup>353</sup> Cooper, Marius Victorinus’ Commentary on Galatians, 187.

<sup>354</sup> Murphy-O’Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 194.

being thrown out by the authorities in Jerusalem which he regarded as imminent did not make him change his philosophy. He could stand and attack Peter to his face, just for not standing firm when the faith of the gentiles was being discussed (Gal 2:11-14).

From the other perspectives however, we are not told about the reactions of the Galatians when they got the letter. Did they “leap for joy” or did they throw it away? Of course if they had committed it to fire or had thrown it away we would not have this Letter to the Galatians today. Did they reject the intruders/false brothers? Did they follow Paul’s instructions? Did they accept circumcision and racial discriminations which they were not used to? That seems to raise more questions than answers. But these questions help us to see that Paul’s letter to the Galatians especially chapter 3:26-29 is a Christianization of a territory with different cultural backgrounds. We live in a multiracial and multicultural society. A homogenous society or culture is an illusion. And just as intermarriages, intercultural relations, intertribal wars and travels made the Galatians a mixed race, so these factors, and still more with the help of sophisticated technological developments, electronic means of communications etc our society has become a global community.

Paul would say that what is most important now is that one is “in Christ” (Gal 5:6). “Being in Christ” elevates the person to being a son and daughter of God through faith. Schüssler Fiorenza says, “through Christ gentiles are no longer foreigners who are excluded from the inner sanctum of the temple, but have access in one Spirit to the Father. They have become full members of the temple community, the household of God, and are one with the holy angels”<sup>355</sup>. So also are all who are baptized in our time. They have become “one in the Lord”. All those who are baptized can be welcomed into the temple of God, male or female, black or white, the Roma (Gypsies) or those from the Eastern Bloc. Women can also preach in the temple as women did in the household churches in the days of Paul<sup>356</sup>. Up until today, unfortunately they cannot preach in the Catholic Church but they can in some other denominations.

Pauline theology is not devoid of criticisms. For Schüssler Fiorenza Pauline theology was responsible for many lapses. It opened an avenue for the subordination of women. On one side, she argues, Paul favored the equality of all in the assembly

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<sup>355</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 194.

<sup>356</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 183.

but on the other hand he opened a loophole through which women were marginalized in the family and in the ministry:

Thus Paul's impact on women's leadership in the Christian missionary movement is double-edged. On the one hand he affirms Christian equality and freedom. He opens up a new independent lifestyle for women by encouraging them to remain free of the bondage of marriage. On the other hand, he subordinates women's behavior in marriage and in the worship assembly to the interests of Christian mission, and restricts their rights not only as 'pneumatics' but also as 'women', for we do not find such explicit restrictions on the behavior of men *qua* men in the worship assembly. The post-Pauline and pseudo-Pauline tradition will draw out these restrictions in order to change the equality in Christ between women and men, slaves and free, into a relationship of subordination in the household which, on the one hand, eliminates women from the leadership of worship and community and, on the other, restricts ministry of women<sup>357</sup>.

She is saying that "women were not marginalized in the earliest beginning of Christianity; rather, biblical texts and historical sources produced the marginality of women"<sup>358</sup>. The texts created the loopholes. "Hence texts must be interrogated not only as to what they say about women but also how they construct what they say or do not say. Such an argument challenges the claims to validity and objectivity of theoretical work that does not account for the historical agency of all persons without exception"<sup>359</sup>. But Paul's letter to the Galatians stands out: women and men, citizens and foreigners are equal before the Lord.

Another critique of Paul concerns "Pauline inconsistency". Most often theologians accuse him of inconsistency. According to Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, "he was consistent, however, only in what he positively chose from the Christian tradition; what he accepted or permitted however important it might be to others, was to him irrelevant and implied no commitment on his part"<sup>360</sup>. Others would say, "his texts contradict themselves". For Karen Armstrong he was "struggling with persecution, stupidity, ignorance, arrogance and genuine mistakes"<sup>361</sup>. But his thought was coherent. He bequeathed to Christianity "a rational logical frame work out of the essential irrationality of faith and vision"<sup>362</sup>. The problem is: For those who do not believe, faith might appear to be irrational and stupid. But to those who believe, it is God's saving work among the gentiles. That is why Paul asks rhetorical questions and answers them also. He writes:

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<sup>357</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, 236.

<sup>358</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her, xx.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, Paul A Critical Life, 203.

<sup>361</sup> Armstrong, Karen: The First Christian. St. Paul's Impact on Christianity, Cavaye Place, Pon Books, London, 1983, 141.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid.

Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength (1 Cor 1:20-25).

Another school of thought maintains that the letters are not uniform as issues contained in some are lacking in others. Schüssler Fiorenza gives us an example:

In Gal 3:28 Paul proclaims that all distinctions between Jews and Greeks, free and slave, male and female are obliterated, but he does not repeat in 1 Cor 12:13 that maleness and femaleness no longer have any significance in the body of Christ. Therefore, no exegetical consensus is achieved on whether Gal 3:28, like 1 Cor 12:13, applies to the Christian community, or to the eschatological future, or to the spiritual equality of souls<sup>363</sup>.

For Daniel Boyarin, however, "Paul is granted absolution, as it were, from the sin of inconsistency by being absolved of any desire for consistency to start with"<sup>364</sup>. The reason is that the motive of Paul's letter to the Galatians is not the same as in his letter to the Corinthians. Categorically Boyarin states, "there is thus no contradiction between Galatians and Corinthians on the question of gender. As I have suggested, Paul's preaching always intended a moderate pneumaticism but not more, a spirit-flesh hierarchy in which spirit was, of course, higher than flesh but the flesh, that is, sexual morality, propriety, and ethics, was not thereby canceled (as the end of Galatians makes entirely clear)... There is thus no contradiction in Paul's thought at all. He held out the possibility of a momentary ecstatic androgyny but only that; on the corporeal level of human society, sex/gender difference was maintained. Paul on gender, it seems to me, represents then neither the more misogynistic trend of such thoroughly Hellenized Jews as Philo nor a breakthrough in politics of gender as some Christian feminists would have it"<sup>365</sup>. Schüssler Fiorenza, however, comes to the conclusion that "the inconsistencies in our New Testament sources indicate that the early Christian traditioning and redactional processes followed certain androcentric interests and perspectives"<sup>366</sup>. On this note the inconsistency could be accounted for by the interests of the redactors more than of Paul's and that could have been the reason why Paul's letters appeared inconsistent.

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<sup>363</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 50.

<sup>364</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 183.

<sup>365</sup> Boyarin, *A Radical Jew*, 190-191.

<sup>366</sup> Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*, 49.

It seems to me also that we have forgotten the uniqueness of each letter and the community and the need of the moment that led to the writing of the letters. David Horrell rightly says “Paul’s own vocabulary and phrasing vary so widely from letter to letter”<sup>367</sup>. What was the issue in Corinthians is not the same as in Galatians or in Philippians etc. Pauline letters are not reprints of the same document but an explanation, answer, a rebuke and encouragement, of a community by their founder, their teacher, their leader and their slave brother.

Modern society is different from the first century society. There is a gap of 2000 years between them. But humanity remains the same. The problems raised in Pauline days may only have been given new names and not solved. The people found within these milieu are still the same human beings created in the image and likeness of God. Multicultural and multiracial differences found in Galatia are part of our world, as well. Modern means of communication, migrations and need for greener pastures and the quest to see and experience what one lacks in one’s own land, have brought people from all races and cultures all the more together. The society has to do more to bridge the gap between “they and us”. There are wonderful laws on the equality of all. There is for instance the Universal Human Rights declaration to guide all:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

The society has to enforce these laws of equality. Good laws that have no moral obligations are like toothless bulldogs that can bark but cannot bite.

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<sup>367</sup> Horrell, *An Introduction to the Study of Paul*, 21.

## Recommendations

We all are to make the words of Paul our own. He says to the Romans, “I have an obligation to Greeks as well as to barbarians, to the educated as well as the ignorant” (Romans 1:14-15). These words challenge us in our daily lives.

We must, in our own daily lives, become the kind of man Paul was in his own time in order to produce in this century the same moral and social effects as the Apostle did in his time. How did he do it? He sought for places where he could meet people in their daily lives and needs. Evangelization must not only be waiting in the Church on Sundays. We have to visit schools, hospitals, recreational parks, have to publish educational but not very academic books, visit people in their homes. Without disturbing other people’s freedom, we must preach Christ to them.

And what was Paul’s methodology? It was the methodology of incarnating Christ in every culture. The Lukan example is “the altar of the unknown gods” (Acts 17:23ff). Greeks worshiped a deity called “ἄγνωστω θεῷ”, unknown god. The Lukan Paul began with what his audience knew and took them to what he wanted them to know. No culture is totally evil. Therefore, the Vatican II Spirit of “Ad Gentes” needs to be encouraged.

Paul saw Christ as the unifying factor. He played down the use of authority and power, when he says, “let anyone who wants to boast, boast in the Lord” (1 Cor 1:31). “For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?” (1 Cor 4:7). This is very difficult for the Church in the modern world because in *matters of faith and moral the Church is not democratic*. Paul was a rebel and his views are radical. The Church’s authority ought to accept those with different theological opinions. She should also look for ways of accommodating women in her hierarchy. This is where Pauline exegesis conflicts strongly with her dogma. In the words of N.T. Wright “we allow questions of exegesis and theology to stare each other in the face”<sup>368</sup>.

Paul became all things to all men. To the Galatians he started with stressing the equality of all: freedom of all, genderlessness in allocation of duties, and a raceless society that gives way to brotherly and sisterly relationships with one another. To the Corinthians he started with the agape meal as opposed to ritual

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<sup>368</sup> Wright, The Letter to the Galatians: Exegesis and theology, 205.

circumcision and “dietary laws”<sup>369</sup>. To the Romans he changed the legalism of the law of tit for tat, foot for foot, hand for hand, blood for blood, life for life etc to “the spirit of the law”, the love of all for the sake of Christ who teaches us to “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Matt 5:44). In Christ there is no Jew nor gentiles, no foreigner and nationals, no male and female, for you are all brothers and sisters (Gal 3:28).

He took what was most important for the people and Christianized it. So we should incarnate Christ into all cultures by seeing all as human beings no matter of what color, race, gender, language or culture the person is coming from. Paul’s theology is an adoptive theology. He allowed Christ to be born into the cultures he met. Theologically we speak of inculturation<sup>370</sup>. Socio-anthropology we speak of acculturation<sup>371</sup>, but “incarnation” is chosen here because it means making Christ known or allowing Christ to be born into a given culture. Hence he says “I have come not to abolish the law and the prophets but to make them new” (Matt 5:17).

The Pauline Theology is inclusive and welcomes all in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:1). He calls us to “follow me as I follow Christ” (1 Cor 11:1). And in following Christ, there is no Jew or gentile, no slave or freeborn, no man and woman. For you all are brothers and sisters in Christ (Gal 3:28).

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<sup>369</sup> “Nowhere was the significance of the meal more accentuated than in Judaism... 67 percent of Pharisaic legislation which can be dated with some plausibility to the pre-AD 70 period is concerned with dietary laws, 229 specific rulings out of 341... It was a matter of principle for which their ancestors had died (1 Macc. 1:62-3), and it was one of the most obvious identity markers of the Jewish religion. ‘Separate yourselves from the nations, and eat not with them’. .. What this meant in practice for the relations between Jews and Gentiles is well spelt out by E. P. Sanders, ‘All the Jewish evidence thus far considered presents the legal situation perfectly clearly: There was no barrier to social intercourse with Gentiles, as long as one did not eat their meat or drink their wine’. Cf. Murphy-O’Connor, *Paul A Critical Life*, 150.

<sup>370</sup> “Inculturation is a theological method that is fundamental to the deep rooting and implementation of the Gospel in any culture”. Cf. Chukwu, *The Church as the Extended Family of God*, 97.

<sup>371</sup> “Although acculturation differs from inculturation, it is a sine qua non for inculturation. While acculturation is a cultural anthropological concept denoting the interaction of two cultures and the changes that result, inculturation, as we mentioned earlier, is a theological concept”. Cf. Chukwu, *The Church as the Extended Family of God*, 100.

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## Abstract in English

The society we live in is different from the society that Paul lived and worked in. His was the ancient conservative society; the primitive dark age, a time when Judaism was the official religion of the Jews and God was the God of the Jews. Only those who followed the Jewish traditional religion and cultures which culminated in circumcision and monotheism were the chosen people of God. Israel therefore was the only chosen race, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, a people set apart to sing the praises of Yahweh (Deut 26:19).

Christ proclaimed *basileia tou theou*, the Kingdom of God on earth. Christianity came to be known as “a Sect” religion. Even though it was treated as a sect religion, the followers of Christ still followed the Jewish customs and religious practices. To incorporate people from other customs, cultures and races into Christianity was a herculean task. Paul fought and won the “freedom of the children of God” (Rom 8:21) by welcoming the gentiles into the early church. He did this by (a) moving from one city to another preaching the crucified Christ; (b) in Galatians, Paul took the most three daily prayer principles of Judaism: “thank you Lord for creating me a Jew and not a gentile, a man and not a woman, a free born and not a slave”<sup>372</sup> and made them irrelevant in order to incorporate all into the Body of Christ, His Church. Paul therefore was a migrant or itinerant preacher who saw to it that Christianity incarnated into all cultures of the then world.

Our society is a different one from that of the Galatian community. Ours has new infrastructures, democratic principles and improved technological achievements, internet and electronic facilities. It is also a secularized society that questions the validity of God’s existence, it favors the rejection of institutionalized religion, the enthronement of individual freedom and the evaluation of the human person based on where you come from, what you have and how you look like. It is to this new socio-cultural society that the same gospel is to be preached.

But what holds the two societies together? What are their differences? If Paul wanted to preach the same gospel from city to city as he did then, will the modern woman or man be welcoming him as the Galatians did? Will the immigration laws and the migrants phobia of the modern European nation states allow him the freedom he enjoyed in the ancient world?

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<sup>372</sup> Bruce, Frederick F: *The Epistle to the Galatians. A Commentary on the Greek Text*, Paternoster Press, London, 2002, 187.

Paul says: there is no male and female, there is no slave and freed etc, for you are all equal in the Lord (Gal 3:28). But do women play equal roles with the men? Are there still slaves in the world of the have and the have nots?

The answers to these questions are sought for in this work.

## **Abstract in German**

Die Gesellschaft, in der wir leben ist von der, in der Paulus lebte und arbeitete, verschieden. Die Antike war eine Zeit, in der das Judentum die einzige offizielle Religion der Juden war und Gott war der Gott der Juden. Nur jene, die der jüdischen traditionellen Religion und Kultur folgten, die in der Beschneidung und dem Monotheismus gipfelte, waren das auserwählte Volk Gottes. Daher war Israel das einzige auserwählte Volk, eine heilige Nation, ein königliches Priestertum, ein Volk, erwählt den Lobpreis Jahwehs zu singen (Dtn 26,19).

Christus verkündete die „basileia tou theou“, das Reich Gottes auf Erden. Das Christentum wurde als „eine Sekte“ bekannt. Obwohl es wie eine Sekte behandelt wurde, folgten die Nachfolger Christi den jüdischen Sitten. Menschen aus anderen Sitten, Kulturen und Rassen in das Christentum aufzunehmen, war eine schwierige Aufgabe. Paulus kämpfte um und gewann die Freiheit der Kinder Gottes (Röm 8,21), indem er die Heiden in die frühe Kirche aufnahm. Er tat dies indem er (a) von einer Stadt zur anderen wandert und den gekreuzigten Christus verkündete; (b) im Brief an die Galater übernahm er die drei wichtigsten Prinzipien des täglichen jüdischen Gebetes: „Danke Herr, dass du mich als Jude erschaffen hast und nicht als Heide/Fremden, als Mann und nicht als Frau, frei geboren und kein Sklave“<sup>373</sup>, und machte sie irrelevant, damit er alle in den Leib Christ, seine Kirche aufnehmen konnte.

Paulus war ein Wanderprediger. Er sorgte dafür, dass das Christentum in alle Kulturen der damaligen Welt eingebunden werden könnte.

Unsere Gesellschaft ist von der Gemeinschaft in Galatien verschieden. Unsere hat neue Infrastrukturen, demokratische Grundsätze, technische Errungenschaften, bemüht Internet und elektronische Möglichkeiten. Sie ist auch eine säkularisierte Gesellschaft, die die Gültigkeit von Gottes Existenz hinterfragt, und institutionalisierte Religion eher ablehnt. Die Betonung der persönlichen Freiheit

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<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

und der Entwicklung der menschlichen Person basiert auf dem, woher man kommt, was man hat und wie man ausschaut. Dieser neuen soziokulturellen Gesellschaft, soll dasselbe Evangelium gepredigt werden.

Aber was verbindet die beiden Gesellschaften? Was sind ihre Unterschiede? Wenn Paulus dasselbe Evangelium von Stadt zu Stadt verkünden wollte, wie damals, würden die heutigen Frauen und Männer ihn so freundlich aufnehmen, wie es die Galater taten? Würden die Einwanderungsgesetze und die Fremdenfeindlichkeit des modernen Europa ihm die Freiheit erlauben, die er in der antiken Welt genoss?

Paulus sagt: „Es gibt nicht Sklaven und Freie, nicht Mann und Frau“ usw., denn ihr seid alle gleich im Herrn (Gal 3,28). Aber haben Frauen heute die gleiche Rolle wie die Männer in der modernen Gesellschaft und in der Kirche? Gibt es noch Sklaven in der Welt der Besitzenden und der Habenichtse?

Die Antworten auf diese Fragen werden in dieser Arbeit gesucht.

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1. Obioha Primary School, Amagu, Ishiagu, 1975/76-1980/81.
2. St. Augustine's Seminary Ezzamgbo, 1980/81-1985/86.
3. Bigard Memorial Seminary, Ikot-Ekpene  
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### **Pastoral Experiences**

1. Associate Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church, Owutu Edda, August 1994-October 1995.
2. Pastor, Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church Owutuu Edda, October 1995-September 2003.
3. Pastor, St. Anthony's Parish Ishiagu, September 2003-April 2005.
4. Lecturer, Mater Hospital Afikpo (2001/2002).
5. Assistant Chairman, Diocesan Project Committee 2003-2005.