

New Interpreter's Bible:

GALATIANS 5:16–26, THE WORKS OF THE FLESH AND THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Commentary

5:16–18. Paul now addresses the question of how the community can receive moral guidance in the absence of the Law. As we have seen, the Missionaries have argued that only the Law can curb and discipline the unruly human impulses that lead to moral chaos. In v. 16, Paul sets forth his own opposing view in the form of a thesis: “But / say [in distinction to what the Missionaries are saying] walk by the Spirit and you will never carry out the desire of the flesh.”

The first verb in the thesis is an imperative directing the Galatians to “walk” (περιπατεῖτε *peripateite*) by the guidance of the Spirit. (Both the NIV and the NRSV translate this metaphorical verb by the more colorless “live.”) Paul’s metaphor of “walking”—a figure for conducting one’s life in a certain manner—is based on a common Hebrew idiom; the verb הלך (*hālak*, “walk”) is regularly used in this sense in the OT. This verb is the root of the noun הלכה (*hālākā*), the body of Jewish didactic tradition about how to comply with the Law in one’s daily life.

The more crucial point of translation concerns the verb in the second clause, “gratify” (τελέω *teleō*; more lit., “carry out,” “bring to completion”). The NRSV has interpreted it as though it were an imperative, coordinate with the first verb in the sentence: “Live by the Spirit and do not gratify ...” while the NIV has read it, correctly, as an aorist subjunctive, spelling out the consequences that will follow from obeying the imperative of the first clause: “Live by the Spirit, and you *will not* gratify....” These are two significantly different interpretations: the first a command, the second a promise. On grounds both grammatical and theological, the NIV is to be strongly preferred. The double negative οὐ μὴ (*ou mē*), which regularly occurs with the aorist subjunctive, expresses emphatic negation of a future possibility. On this reading, the sentence is a conditional promise: “If you walk by the Spirit, you will never carry out the desire of the flesh.”

The expression “the desire of the flesh” (“desire” [ἐπιθυμία *epithymia*] is singular, not plural, in the Greek text) is probably a Greek rendering of an underlying Hebrew expression יצר בשׁר (*yēṣer bāśār*), which describes the fleshly evil impulse that underlies and empowers human sin.²⁶⁵ It is important to recognize that “desire of the flesh” does not refer only to sexual passions. Indeed, the list of “works of the flesh” in vv. 19–21, though it begins with three terms designating sexual misconduct, gives far more emphasis to other offenses. “The flesh” is a comprehensive term for the sphere of autonomous fallen humanity, conceived as standing in opposition to God. “Flesh”

asserts itself anywhere that self-seeking human desire opposes itself to the divine will and the wholeness of the community. It is likely that the Missionaries had waxed eloquent about the fearsome power of this evil impulse and about the necessity of obeying the Law to overcome it. In contrast to their claims, Paul reassures the Galatians that they do not need the Law to resist this impulse. (Indeed, as he argues more extensively in Romans 7, the Law is actually ineffectual against the problem of fleshly desire.) The Spirit of God is the only agent powerful enough to overcome the desire of the flesh.

Why is walking by the Spirit the effective way to hold the desire of the flesh in check? Paul goes on to explain that the Spirit and the flesh are fundamentally opposed. The singular desire of the Flesh (here still, as in v. 13, imagined as a malevolent power) is to oppose the Spirit of God, while the Spirit is fundamentally set against the Flesh. The two are, as Paul explains, set in opposition to each other, like soldiers lined up in opposing ranks on a battlefield. Given this opposition, there is no doubt in Paul's mind about the eventual victor: God will finally overcome all enemies (cf. 1 Cor 15:20–28). Those who walk by the power of God's Spirit will receive the empowerment necessary to subdue the Flesh. That is why Paul can express such confidence about the outcome of the struggle.

The whole passage will be badly misinterpreted if one understands Spirit and Flesh as anthropological terms for a perennial duality within the individual human personality. "Flesh" may be in some sense an anthropological term, though it should be noted that the human self remains intact as a moral agent after the "flesh" has been crucified (v. 24). The Spirit, on the other hand, is not the human spirit; it is God's Spirit, sent into the human sphere only after Christ's death and resurrection (3:13–14; 4:6). This means that the opposition between Flesh and Spirit came into being only through Christ; the war between them, described in v. 17, is part of the eschatological rescue mission through which God is bringing redemption to an enslaved world.²⁶⁶

The last clause of v. 17 is difficult to interpret, because it seems to undercut what Paul has just asserted in v. 16. If Flesh can frustrate the aims of the Spirit, or if Flesh and Spirit are locked in a standoff, then how can Paul make the confident claim that walking by the Spirit will overcome the desire of the flesh? John Barclay has convincingly argued that the metaphor of warfare provides the crucial clue to interpreting the conclusion of v. 17:

Warfare excludes some options and necessitates others. If they walk in the Spirit they are caught up into this conflict, which means that they are not free to do whatever they want—*ἵνα μὴ ἅ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε* (5:17). Such conflict ensures that their freedom is not absolute, for their walk in the Spirit will set them against the flesh and thus define the moral choices they must make.²⁶⁷

This interpretation would yield a slightly different translation, as follows: "for these are opposed to each other, so that you might not [just] do whatever you want." The advantage of this interpretation is that it shows how v. 17 advances Paul's argument. He is rebutting the charge that he has left the Galatians with no moral guidance. He responds by insisting that those who walk by the Spirit will in no way carry out the desire of the Flesh (v. 16), because Flesh and Spirit are at war, so that the Spirit "provides a counteracting force which motivates and directs them to *exclude* the flesh."²⁶⁸

Consequently they are not, as the Missionaries charge, left in a position where they are simply free to follow their own whims and do whatever they want. They are, in fact, given very clear marching orders.

That affirmation leads nicely into v. 18. As they walk, even though they are not under the Law, they nonetheless have clarity of purpose, because they are led by the Spirit. The expression “under Law” (see 3:23–25; 4:4–5; cf. Rom 6:14) refers to the state of slavery from which Christ has set his people free. The concept of being led by the Spirit of God also appears in Rom 8:14, where it is part of a much longer discussion (Rom 8:1–17) about living according to the Spirit rather than according to the flesh. That whole passage may be taken as an expansion of ideas developed more briefly here.

The central point of vv. 16–18, then, is that the Spirit provides strong leadership and direction in a world that is described as an eschatological war zone. Those who say the Law is sufficient to overcome the Flesh do not recognize the time of crisis in which the church walks; those who charge that without the Law the Galatians will be left undisciplined and confused do not know the power of the Spirit.

5:19–21. Indeed, Paul continues, there is no reason at all for anyone to be confused about what is going on in the world, because “the works of the flesh are obvious.” In other words, we do not need the Law to identify them. He then gives a list of fifteen such works. The list, of course, is not comprehensive; it is merely an illustrative catalog of the human behaviors that result when the flesh is given a base of operation (for similar vice lists, see Mark 7:21–22; Rom 1:29–31; 1 Cor 6:9–10; 2 Cor 12:20). The list is in some respects conventional. It begins with three terms identifying sexual offenses, continues with two words for idolatry and occult magical practices, and concludes with two terms for self-indulgent partying. The most interesting feature, however, occurs in the middle of the list: a lengthy catalog of eight words that highlight dissension and offenses against the unity of the community—enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, and envy. Paul’s concentration on these community-destroying behaviors shows that his primary concern is for the unity and peace of the Galatian churches (cf. vv. 15, 26). It also reinforces the point that “works of the flesh” are not just sensual vices. The meaning of walking according to the flesh is articulated by Paul’s question to the divided Christians at Corinth: “As long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving [lit., “walking”] according to human inclinations?” (1 Cor 3:3 NRSV).

The NIV’s translation in v. 21, “those who live like this,” is an attempt to render the linear aspect of the present participle *πράσσοντες* (*prassontes*); it refers to continuing action over time, not to a single violation. Paul is not saying, for example, that a single outburst of anger will result in exclusion from the kingdom of God.

This is not the first time, Paul indicates, that he has warned the Galatians about these nasty competitive behaviors. Presumably he warned them already during the time that he was present with them, for the reference cannot be to anything he has written earlier in this letter.

Unlike the vice lists in popular Hellenistic philosophical texts, Paul’s list does not simply serve the purpose of advising the readers about how to develop a virtuous character and avoid bad habits.²⁶⁹ Instead, the list functions as an eschatological warning: Those who practice the works of the flesh “will not inherit the kingdom of God.”²⁷⁰ Paul only occasionally refers to the “kingdom of God” (Rom 14:17; 1 Cor 4:20;

15:24; Col 4:11; 2 Thess 1:5; cf. Eph 5:5; Col 1:13; 1 Thess 2:12; 2 Tim 4:1, 18), which was a major theme of Jesus' teaching. To "inherit" the kingdom means to receive the eschatological blessings promised to those who are God's children (see Matt 5:5; 25:34; 1 Cor 6:9–10; 15:50; Rev 21:7). In the context of Galatians, where the metaphor of inheritance has played a central role in the argument of chaps. 3–4 (esp. 3:15–18; 3:29–4:7), Paul's choice of language is highly significant. The Missionaries have taught that circumcision is necessary to inherit the kingdom. Paul, by contrast, indicates that one is excluded from the inheritance by these flesh-driven, community-splitting behaviors—precisely the outcomes produced, in his view, by the politics of the circumcision faction (2:11–14; 4:17; 5:15, 26; 6:13).

5:22–23. In contrast to the multiple and various "works" of the flesh, the Spirit produces the singular "fruit" of a community characterized by the gracious qualities listed in these verses. We should not interpret this fruit as referring only to character qualities of the individual; Paul is primarily concerned with the way in which the Spirit's work is made manifest in community. This catalog, like the foregoing list of fleshly works, should be understood as illustrative rather than comprehensive. Paul offers different lists of gifts and workings of the Spirit in Rom 12:6–8 and 1 Cor 12:7–11. Here in Galatians, his emphasis is on the peaceful and community-building character of the Spirit's work.

We should observe that Paul is not directly exhorting the Galatians to cultivate these qualities. Rather, he is speaking descriptively, painting a picture of the harvest the Spirit produces. The metaphor of fruit suggests one of Paul's primary points. Fruit cannot be humanly manufactured; it can grow only organically, as God gives the growth—in this case, through the life-giving energy of the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:9–11).

Not every item in Paul's catalog of fruit requires comment, but it is noteworthy that the list begins with "love" and ends with "self-control." Love, produced by the Spirit, should set the tone for all that occurs in the community's life together (cf. 5:6, 13; 1 Corinthians 13:1). "Self-control" (ἐγκράτεια *egkrateia*), a term that appears only here in Paul's letters, is set in deliberate contrast to the drunken revelry that concludes the list of works of the flesh. Paul concludes the list of fruit of the Spirit by asserting that the Spirit produces peaceful and orderly self-discipline. This is particularly significant as a response to the Missionaries' claim that only the Law could provide a means of controlling the fleshly evil impulse.²⁷¹

Finally, we should note that amid the fruit of the Spirit, we find "faithfulness" (πίστις *pistis*). This is the same word translated elsewhere in the letter as "faith." By rendering it in v. 22 as "faithfulness," the translators of the NIV and the NRSV recognize its proper semantic range. This faithfulness granted to the church as a fruit of the Spirit is no different from the *pistis* by which the Gentiles are rectified (3:8), no different from the *pistis* of Jesus Christ (2:16, 20; 3:22). Faith(fulness) is a sign of the Spirit's presence and work.

Paul concludes his list of the Spirit's fruit with the slightly acerbic remark that "there is no Law against such things." The force of this comment may best be understood against the background of the common Jewish characterization of Gentiles as "lawless" sinners. The Galatians may have been warned by the Missionaries that unless they are circumcised they will fall into moral confusion, doing things contrary to God's Law. In response, Paul describes the gracious behavior that flows from the Spirit even among

uncircumcised Gentile believers, and then comments, with gentle irony, that there is no Law against this kind of conduct. The effect is comparable to the argument that Paul makes in Rom 2:25–29, where he comments that “those who are physically uncircumcised but keep the Law will condemn you that have the written code and circumcision but break the Law” (Rom 2:27).

5:24–26. In the summarizing sentences of this unit, Paul returns explicitly to the problem raised in vv. 13 and 16. “Those who belong to Christ” (cf. 3:29) will not, despite the Missionaries’ warnings, be overwhelmed by the impulses of the Flesh, because they have “*crucified* the Flesh with its passions and desires.” This strange formulation seems to violate the usual syntax of Paul’s theology. Ordinarily, Paul speaks of Jesus Christ as the primary agent who overcomes God’s adversaries, and he speaks of other human beings as the recipients of Christ’s grace-giving actions. They participate mysteriously with Christ in his crucifixion and death (2:19; 6:14; Rom 6:6) and thereby are set free from sin, whose power is destroyed in Christ’s crucifixion. Here, however, it is Christ’s people who are said to be the agents that do the crucifying of the flesh (cf. Rom 8:13). What does Paul mean by this? The likeliest interpretation is that v. 24 is a reference to baptism; by choosing to undergo baptism, believers willingly put to death their old fleshly identity. They actively identify with Christ’s crucifixion and death. In this way they “crucify” the Flesh, putting its divisive desires behind them.

This baptismal interpretation is supported by the next turn in Paul’s argument in v. 25, where he refers to the Spirit’s life-giving role, also strongly associated with baptism. The verse is closely parallel to v. 16, but unlike v. 16 it is clearly hortatory. The NIV rendering in this verse is helpful. Paul takes it as a given that he and his readers share together in the experience of new life brought by the Spirit (3:2; 4:6–7). If that is so—if the Spirit is the power that gives life—Paul exhorts the Galatians to “keep in step with the Spirit.” The verb here is *στοιχέω* (*stoicheō*), perhaps used here in playful counterpoint to the earlier references to the oppressive *στοιχεῖα* (*stoicheia*, 4:3, 9). Rather than being regimented under the confining *stoicheia*, those who belong to Christ now “walk in line” with the Spirit. The Spirit gives freedom without aimlessness and order without repression.

In v. 26, Paul once again urges the Galatians to abandon their infighting. In v. 15, he made the appeal by comparing them to snarling wild animals; here in v. 26 he speaks literally, exhorting them to forswear arrogant, envious, and competitive behavior. As noted in v. 15, this warning may have become particularly necessary because of the activities of the Missionaries, whose message and *modus operandi* resulted in sharply defined group barriers, separating Law-observant Christians from those who did not keep the Law. Their strategy, as Paul sees it, is to foster envy (4:17). Paul’s vision for his churches, by contrast, is that they should embody the love of Christ in ways characterized by the fruit of the Spirit. The dissension in Galatia, brought on the scene by Missionaries who championed a flesh-marked covenant, was a palpable sign that the power of the Flesh was at work to disrupt the church. Paul urgently calls them, therefore, to recover their humility and unity under the guidance of the Spirit.

Reflections

1. Galatians 5:13–26 is the most impassioned defense anywhere in Scripture of the sufficiency of the Spirit to guide the community of faith. The Missionaries' message that the Law must provide ordered governance for the community was powerfully appealing to the Galatians because it tapped into a deep and persistent human need for rules and structure. We fear that without firm guidelines we will fall into chaos. The Missionaries brought a gospel that answered this felt need. They could offer an entirely persuasive interpretation of Scripture, and they offered clear guidance about how the Galatians should conduct their lives. Their Law-observant version of the gospel could claim to be rooted in an ancient and holy tradition. It is no wonder that their message found a hearing among a group of recent converts struggling to work out how to reorder their lives in response to the gospel.

Paul insists, however, that the security offered by the Law is false security and that the gospel summons those who belong to Christ to live in freedom. (*The Revised Common Lectionary* helpfully attaches 5:1 to the reading of 5:13–25; however, it also omits 5:26, thus ending the lection on the upbeat hortatory note of 5:25 and deleting Paul's specific warnings against rivalry and envy.) Paul's counsel is a daring summons, urging the church to trust that it can live without being subject to the Law of Moses as long as the Spirit guides and shapes the community, for the community will organically produce fruit formed by the Spirit. A church guided by Paul's hopeful word would cultivate a community of flexibility and freedom, living with openness toward the unpredictable liberating movement of God's Spirit. It is a radical and inspiring vision. The church at its best has been willing to take the gamble that Paul recommends, wagering its future on the guidance of the Spirit, trusting God and performing without a safety net. One thinks of the stories of the earliest church in the Acts of the Apostles, of John Wesley going into the fields to preach to coal miners, or of the Spirit-led African American church during the civil rights movement.

But is Paul right? Can we really trust the Spirit to guide the community, or is Paul's vision of the church an ideal that cannot stand up to the pragmatic tests of human experience? Is it, therefore—as Paul's adversaries charged—a prescription for disaster? Everyone knows that there are dangers, as Paul himself saw in the Corinthian church, in communities that throw away rules and traditions and seek to live in pure spiritual spontaneity. It is all too easy for talk about the Spirit to grow careless and to serve as a cover for sexual misconduct, financial irresponsibility, and manipulative abuses by the community's leaders. In the absence of Israel's Torah as a guide to life, then, must the Spirit-led church inevitably settle into a new law of some sort, a system of rule-governed institutions? (This tendency is already exemplified within the New Testament canon by the Pastoral Epistles.) Is "the institutionalization of charisma" a necessary and unavoidable development?

Our answer to these questions will depend upon whether we believe in the real presence and activity of the Spirit in our midst. Paul is not making a theoretical appeal for human moral intuition and spontaneity over written law codes. When Paul counsels the Galatians to keep in step with the Spirit (5:25), he is not thinking of the Spirit as a theological abstraction or as an inference from human subjectivity; rather, he is thinking of the Spirit as the active presence of God that does mighty deeds in the community (3:5) and cries out audibly in the church's worship (4:6). Only a church that knows the presence of the Spirit in this way can regard Paul's counsel as credible. At the same

time, Paul affirms clearly that the guidance of the Spirit will have a recognizable character (5:22–23) that distinguishes it from the works inspired by the flesh. All things considered, the dangers of seeking to follow the guidance of the Spirit are fewer than the dangers of living under the stifling and divisive regulation of the Law.

2. The opposition between Spirit and Flesh (5:17) is not an anthropological dualism, not a conflict in the human individual between the sinful lower nature and the higher, better self. Rather, the opposition is a cosmic conflict between the redemptive power of God and the rebellious fallen creation. This conflict may play itself out partly in the arena of the divided self (Rom 7:14–15), but the warfare of which Gal 5:13–26 speaks cannot be reduced to a battle within the human psyche. The arena that draws Paul’s special interest is the corporate life of the church, in which the Flesh seeks to produce factions and strife (5:20), while the Spirit brings peace (5:22). But we need not limit our field of vision to ecclesiological concerns. Wherever there is violence in the world, the Flesh is rampant. Those who belong to Christ will oppose violence not by counterviolence—that would be to succumb to the deception of the Flesh—but by manifesting the fruit of the Spirit even in the face of murderous opposition, keeping in step with the Spirit of Christ.

3. A corollary of the preceding point is that sex is not the only problem. The power of the Flesh is not confined to sexual misconduct. The problem with the Flesh is much bigger, and sexual misbehavior is only one of its manifestations. It is noteworthy that in the Letter to the Galatians Paul mentions sexual offenses only in passing in his conventional vice list (5:19*b*), but devotes no further discussion to them. His warning against the Flesh’s works focuses instead on envy, backbiting, and competitiveness (5:15, 20, 26). Many hearers of this letter—especially in our sexually overstimulated culture—will hear the term “flesh” and think immediately of sexual scandal. An important part of the interpreter’s task, then, is to recover the fuller meaning of Paul’s theological vocabulary. “Flesh” is the realm of autonomous fallen humanity, living at odds with God.

4. In addition to the call to walk by the Spirit, the other major imperative sounded in these verses is found in 5:13. The way we avoid giving the Flesh a base of operations is by becoming slaves of one another, through love. That is what Paul calls his readers to do. The freedom won by Christ must be employed as Christ employed his freedom in the act of winning ours. The antidote to fleshly rivalry is self-emptying love. According to Paul, it is through such love that Christ brought the Law to fulfillment, and it is such love that should govern our relations to one another.

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NRSV New Revised Standard Version

lit. literally

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²⁶⁵ J. Marcus, “The Evil Inclination in the Letters of Paul,” *IBS* 8 (1986) 8–21.

²⁶⁶ J. L. Martyn, *Galatians*, AB 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997) 494.

²⁶⁷ J. M. G. Barclay, *Obedying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians*, Studies of the NT and Its World (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988) 112.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

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²⁶⁹ F. J. Matera, *Galatians*, Sacra Pagina 9 (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press) 207–10.

²⁷⁰ Matera, *ibid.*, 208–9, notes several parallels between Gal 5:19–23 and the exposition of “the Two Ways” in 1QS 3:13–4:26.

²⁷¹ On the importance of self-mastery in Greco-Roman thought, see S. K. Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994) 42–82.

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Richard B. Hays, [“The Letter to the Galatians,”](#) in *New Interpreter's Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck, vol. 11 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1994–2004), 324–330.

Hermeneia:

■ **16*** Paul's own ethical theory now focuses upon the central issue with which the Galatians have to come to grips: how to deal effectively with the powers of the “flesh.” λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε (“but I say, walk by [the] Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of [the] flesh”). The introductory λέγω δέ (“but I say”) marks the fact that Paul is about to make an important statement.

⁵¹ This statement contains two parts:

(1) The imperative πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε (“walk by [the] Spirit”) sums up the Apostle's parenesis, and therefore defines Paul's concept of the Christian life. The concept of περιπατέω (“walk”) describes this life by one of the more important terms of ancient anthropology and ethics, both Jewish and Greek.⁵² The term expresses the view that human life is essentially a “way of life.” A human being must and always does choose between ways of life as they are presented in history and culture. For ancient man, ways of life are more than “styles of life”: they are not only different in their outward

appearance, but their different appearance is the result of different underlying and determining factors. These factors influence human behavior by providing the “way” in which human beings “walk”. Therefore, the way of life of human beings determines the quality of their life. More than merely a matter of outward style, the way of life provides continuity, guidance, and assistance for the task of coping with the daily struggle against evil.⁵³

As far as the Galatian Christians are concerned, they had chosen the way of life that is based upon the Spirit.⁵⁴ The dative πνεύματι (“by the Spirit”)⁵⁵ which is so typical for Galatians expresses the origin as well as the quality of that way of life.⁵⁶ Paul’s advice, therefore, amounts to the rather laconic “continue to do what you have been doing.” The Galatians owe their present way of life to the Spirit; it is based upon the Spirit; it depends upon the Spirit. Consequently, defending this life against the forces of evil can only mean letting the power of the Spirit do its work⁵⁷ against its opposite force, “the flesh” (σάρξ). If the Galatians have problems with the flesh, they are advised to seek assistance from the very power that gave them this life, rather than its opposite, that same flesh.⁵⁸

(2) Verse 16* contains a promise: “you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” This promise⁵⁹ depends upon the preceding imperative and is its result. In order to understand the promise, one must realize the implicit presuppositions. It is understood that the statement presupposes the radical dualism of πνεῦμα (“Spirit”) and σάρξ (“flesh”).⁶⁰ The flesh is active, a force which carries out intentions—of course, evil intentions. This is what the Apostle means by ἐπιθυμία σαρκός (“desire of [the] flesh”).⁶¹ If the “desire of the flesh” is permitted to be carried out, the result is manifest in the “works of the flesh” (ἔργα τῆς σαρκός) which are listed in 5:19–21*. As these “works of the flesh” happen, the goals of the flesh are fulfilled.

The term τελέω (“carry out”)⁶² is complex: its grammatical subject is the human individual who carries out the “desires of the flesh.”⁶³ But in reality the human subject is manipulated by the flesh which is the logical subject fulfilling its own intentions. The conclusion is that if the human subject allows the Spirit to completely influence and fill out his life, then the opposite force, the intentions of the flesh, will be prevented from accomplishing their goal, so that the “works of the flesh” cannot happen.⁶⁴

■ 17* Paul submits an anthropological-soteriological theory which underlies not only v 16*, but his entire parenthesis: ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός (“for the flesh sets its desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh ...”). Clearly we have before us in a very concise form one of the fundamental anthropological doctrines of Paul.⁶⁵ It is stated as a principle in chiasmic form,⁶⁶ but it also assumes common knowledge.⁶⁷ This statement of principle creates serious problems for Paul’s theology as a whole and raises the question of its origin and background in the history of religions. The fact that the Apostle submits this theory here does not mean that he himself has created it; it is not simply his own hypothesis.⁶⁸ He shares it with other varieties of the same doctrine in Judaism⁶⁹ and the Hellenistic religions.⁷⁰ He shares it also with other Christian authors, especially the Gospel of John.⁷¹ One of the disputed questions in present Pauline research is the question of the origin of the dualism of Spirit and flesh.⁷² Another problem is raised by the fact that the discussions in Galatians and in Romans do not seem to harmonize. In Romans, it is the power of sin (ἁμαρτία) which produces desires in the body through the law (6:12*; 7:7–

8*), while the flesh looks more like a passive victim and tool of sin. In Galatians the flesh is the active power which generates the desires, while the power of sin is not part of the picture at all. In both Romans and Galatians however, the dualism of Spirit and flesh is retained. How do we account for the differences and the agreements?

In v 17a* the dualism is set up in a rather simple form: flesh and Spirit are named as opposite forces, both agitating against each other. The flesh and its “desiring” (ἐπιθυμέω) are human agents of evil, while the Spirit is the divine agent of the good. Verse 17b* spells out the anthropological consequences of this dualism:⁷³ ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται, ἵνα μὴ ἃ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε (“for these are opposed to each other, so that you do not do the things which you intend”). The neuter ταῦτα (“these things”) identifies flesh and Spirit as impersonal forces acting within man and waging war against each other.⁷⁴ Man is the battlefield of these forces within him, preventing him from carrying out his will. The human “I” wills, but it is prevented from carrying out its will (ταῦτα ποιῆτε) because it is paralyzed through these dualistic forces within.⁷⁵ As a result,⁷⁶ the human “I” is no longer the subject in control of the body.⁷⁷

This description of the anthropological situation raises a number of questions: (1) does Paul want to say that *both* powers prevent man from carrying out his will?⁷⁸ Or is it only the flesh that frustrates the will, while the divine Spirit tries to cooperate with it?⁷⁹ The answer to these questions depends to a good deal on another question: (2) what is the relationship between Gal 5:17* and Rom 7:15–24*? Clearly, Gal 5:17* deals with the Christian man, while in Rom 7:15–24* Paul evaluates the pre-Christian situation from the Christian perspective.⁸⁰ At least this is the common opinion in present New Testament scholarship. But if Gal 5:17* applies to the Christian and Rom 7:15–24* to the pre-Christian situation, what is the difference? Are we methodologically allowed to interpret Gal 5:17* on the basis of Rom 7:15–24*? Can we assume that Paul had his anthropology all worked out and that we can piece it together from the various letters? Or do we have to assume changes and development in Paul’s thinking itself? Are these changes simply reflections of changed situations, so that the expression of Paul’s positions could be different while his essential position would remain the same? Or are the changes indications that Paul has modified his position in substance, in order to respond to problems in a more constructive way as they occur in new situations?⁸¹

In Romans 7 Paul makes a distinction between the “inner man” (ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος)⁸² who wills the good, but must witness as through a prison window how “his other will,” which is the power of sin (ἁμαρτία), not only wills but also carries out evil. Thus, Romans seems to have two “wills” set against each other: “the inner man” and the power of sin. Even the “I” is split up into two, while the role of the Spirit is left out of the picture. In Gal 5:17*, on the other hand, we have three “wills”: the “I,” the “Spirit,” and the “flesh.” This arrangement seems to ignore the cooperation between the Spirit and the “I,” which we would expect to take place in Christian existence, but in v 18* we do have a clarification of this point. It appears that in v 17* Paul submits his anthropological presuppositions in rather simple terms, but he leaves open the question how his soteriology affects this anthropology. In v 18* the soteriological presuppositions are brought in, but the theory in v 17* is left untouched. This situation forces us to conclude that the theory in v 17* is basically “pre-Pauline.” It states the common anthropological

doctrine on the basis of which Paul works out his own doctrine, but his own doctrine is much more complex.

In Romans 7–8 we find an even more developed and more complex reworking of the elements which occur also in Galatians 5. This means that Gal 5:17* is not simply an abbreviated and simplified form of what we have in Romans 7. Nor does it mean that in describing Paul's anthropology one should replace the statements in Galatians as insufficient and preliminary, and substitute as more adequate the formulations of Romans 7. But we should assume that Paul's theological thinking did not stop between the letters, that because of new situations he encountered and new insights he gained, new efforts were required to state his position.

The theory in Gal 5:17* must be taken for what it says: the human body is a battlefield on which the powers of the flesh and the Spirit fight against each other, so that the human will is disabled from carrying out its intentions.⁸³ This is true of Christian existence, since only there we can assume the Spirit is present.⁸⁴

■ 18* This adds the soteriological presuppositions which were missing in v 17*. The protasis states a reality (εἰ with the indicative),⁸⁵ in fact reminding the readers of the "indicative of salvation": εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε ("if you are led away by [the] Spirit ..."). The foundation of the Galatians' existence as Christians is that they are possessed by the Spirit.⁸⁶ This experience of the Spirit is "enthusiastic" in nature, and it is an experience of "being carried away" (ἄγεσθαι). In the battle between the forces of flesh and Spirit there is no stalemate, but the Spirit takes the lead, overwhelms, and thus defeats evil.⁸⁷ How this is to be imagined Paul explains in the following passage 5:19–24*. The apodosis reminds the reader of another "indicative": οὐκ ἔστέ ὑπὸ νόμον ("you are not under [the] Law").⁸⁸ If they are driven by the Spirit, they do not need to be under the Torah.⁸⁹ Why this is true and how the Spirit defeats evil, without committing the Christian to the Torah, is explained in the next section, 5:19–24*.⁹⁰

Excursus:

A Catalogue of Vices and Virtues

In Gal 5:19–23* Paul employs a literary genre which scholarship has come to call a "catalogue of vices and virtues."⁹¹ The catalogue includes ethical conceptuality which has its origin in Hellenistic philosophy. Some of the concepts indicate that the material has passed through Hellenistic-Jewish adaptation.⁹² In addition, v 21* bc shows that the original *Sitz im Leben* of the whole passage was primitive Christian catechetical instruction, most likely in connection with baptism. We can, therefore, assume that Paul quotes the passage here for the purpose of reminding the Galatians of what they have been told initially, when Paul had taught them the Christian faith. With the exception of "love" (ἀγάπη, v 22*) all concepts are common in Hellenistic philosophy. But also the form of the catalogues is traditional.⁹³ There is no parallel in the Old Testament, but the history of the catalogue form can be traced back at least to Plato's Hades myth (*Gorg.* 525A); perhaps an origin in ancient Iran has to be assumed.⁹⁴ In New Testament times ethical lists of this kind were enormously popular. Without much difficulty they could be adapted to the various philosophical and religious schools of thought. Therefore, we find them in various forms and contexts, and with various functions.⁹⁵ In Judaism we find

them especially in Wisdom and in Philo; clearly these catalogues have been taken over from Hellenistic philosophy.⁹⁶ A special problem is presented by the long double catalogue in 1QS 4.3–11, since it shows no influence of Greek philosophy.⁹⁷ Recently, catalogues have turned up in gnosticism, especially in the Nag Hammadi texts.⁹⁸

Early Christianity seems to have been fond of the catalogues, which served in the largely unknown process of instruction. In the many catalogues which we find in the New Testament and in the Apostolic Fathers little effort to introduce specifically Christian concepts can be detected. The catalogues differ greatly in length, in the order of concepts, and in their transmission in the textual tradition. There was apparently little interest in completeness, systematization, or creativity. The reason was probably that the catalogues sum up the conventional morality of the time. Christianity was interested in that morality to the extent that Christian existence should not be “against the conventions” (cf. Gal 5:23b*). As Paul shows, the Christian interest did not concern itself with the concepts themselves and their relationship to a theory of ethics; the concepts can be changed at will, without indication of the reason why. The primary function was to make clear that Christian ethical life should roughly conform to the moral conventions of the time. This function was of course preliminary and confined to the life in this world, although the eschatological dimension should not be denied. The limited propaedeutic character of the catalogues is also clear. As such they do not contain all the concerns early Christianity had with regard to the life of the Christian. To be sure, Christian life went beyond common morality, and it certainly included a critique and even a replacement of conventional morals. At this point a tension is to be noticed between the forces of change, implicit in the preaching of the Christian message, and the weight of convention which the catalogues of vices and virtues exert. This conflict has become part of Christian ethics ever since.

As far as the catalogues in Gal 5:19–23* are concerned, several matters should be kept in mind: (1) the individual concepts are not in any way specifically “Christian,” but represent the conventional morality of the time. (2) They do not represent vices and virtues in the sense of Greek ethics, but describe phenomena or manifestations of the powers of evil (“the works of the flesh”) and of the Spirit (“the fruit of the Spirit”). In this respect the Pauline catalogues are remarkably close to gnosticism. (3) Only the catalogue of virtues is related to the divine Spirit; this marks both the similarity and the difference in comparison to the catalogues in 1QS 4, where both catalogues are related to the two spirits opposing each other. (4) It seems intentional that the catalogue of vices contains a chaotic assemblage of concepts, while the catalogue of virtues is well ordered; thus the catalogues represent the dualism between, the chaotic multitude of evils and the unity of the Spirit.⁹⁹

■ 19* Paul now proceeds to demonstrate how in his view evil comes into existence, in order then to show how it can be defeated. First of all, he explains in greater detail what he means by evil. While he had spoken in 5:16–17* of the “intentions of the

flesh” (ἐπιθυμίαι τῆς σαρκός), he now states that the result of such intentions is the “works of the flesh” (τὰ ἔργα τῆς σαρκός). These “works of the flesh” are “evident” (φανερὰ)¹⁰⁰ in the sense that they can be easily observed. This seems to include another important assumption. Considering what the Apostle had stated in v 18b*, it is strange that in v 19* he fails to describe “the works of the flesh” as the result of transgressions of law.¹⁰¹ In fact, “evident” seems to imply “without Law”; one does not need to transgress a law in order to do evil. Rather than defining evil as transgressions of existing law, Paul treats evil as *manifestations*. Of course, evil deeds are done and therefore called “works.”¹⁰² They are done by man, but in reality they are the work of the flesh,¹⁰³ which dominates man and dictates his activities (cf. 5:16–17*).

Also typical of the phenomena of evil is that they occur without order or system.¹⁰⁴ When Paul makes use of the form of the “list of vices” he puts together a random collection of terms, describing the ordinary occurrences of evil among men.¹⁰⁵ The seemingly chaotic arrangement of these terms is reflective of the chaotic nature of evil; this chaos is to be contrasted with the oneness of the “fruit of the Spirit” and its orderly arrangement (v 22–23*). Verse 19* contains the first¹⁰⁶ three of the concepts: “illicit sexual activities” (πορνεία),¹⁰⁷ “moral impurity” (ἀκαθαρσία),¹⁰⁸ and “licentiousness” (ἀσελγεία).¹⁰⁹

■ 20* The concept of “idolatry” (εἰδωλολατρία) is Hellenistic-Jewish in origin;¹¹⁰ it points to the history of religions background of the entire catalogue. Then comes “sorcery, magic” (φαρμακεία),¹¹¹ “hostile feelings and acts” (ἐχθραί),¹¹² “strife” (ἔρις),¹¹³ “jealousy, envy” (ζήλος),¹¹⁴ “outbursts of rage” (θυμοί),¹¹⁵ “quarrels” (ἐριθειάι; Bauer: “disputes” or “outbreaks of selfishness”),¹¹⁶ “dissensions” (διχοστασίαι),¹¹⁷ and “factions” (αἰρέσεις).¹¹⁸

■ 21* The list concludes with three concepts: “outbreaks of envy” (φθόνοι),¹¹⁹ “cases of drunkenness” (μέθαι),¹²⁰ and “excessive banquets” (κῶμοι).¹²¹ The final phrase “and things like these” (καὶ τὰ ὅμοια τούτοις) makes sure that the list should not be taken as exhaustive. Evil occurs in innumerable forms, and only some examples are provided in the list.

The following remark in v 21b* is puzzling: “in respect to which I predict to you as I have predicted [*sc.* in the past]” (ἃ προλέγω ὑμῖν καθὼς προεῖπον).¹²² The parallels show that we have before us a quotation formula indicating a set style of quoting what the individual himself has stated previously. What Paul quotes is a prediction and a warning of an eschatological nature. The term προλέγω (“I predict”) refers to the sentence quoted in the following, but καθὼς προεῖπον (“as I have predicted”) recalls a past event. This past event must have been one when Paul provided the Galatians with basic instruction. Therefore, we can also assume that his remark includes the material in vv 19–21*, 22–23a* which can be related to primitive Christian catechetical instruction. Though we do not know precisely at which occasion this instruction was given, the parallels from Gal 1:8–9*; 3:26–28*, and from other early Christian sources make it highly probable that we have before us baptismal instruction.¹²³

The somewhat archaic language of the quotation is also confirmation of its origin in pre-Pauline catechetical instruction:¹²⁴ “those who do such things will not inherit the Kingdom of God” (οἱ τὰ τοιαῦτα πράσσοντες βασιλείαν θεοῦ οὐ κληρονομήσουσιν). The language contains a number of non-Pauline terms and, therefore, is in some tension with Paul’s theology. “Kingdom of God” (βασιλεία θεοῦ)

here refers to the eschatological realm of heaven or paradise.¹²⁵

“Inherit” (κληρονομέω)¹²⁶ stands for “enter into”¹²⁷ and does not completely harmonize with other instances of the term in Galatians.¹²⁸ Also “doing” (πράσσω)¹²⁹ is traditional and in tension with the concept of “works of the flesh” and other instances of the verb in Galatians. Form-critically, v 21b* is an eschatological warning and in this sense a statement of eschatological law.¹³⁰ It is related to the catalogues of vices and virtues¹³¹ because they contain the conditions for entering into the Kingdom of God. Parallels show that this whole complex was part of baptismal instruction,¹³² but of course could also function separately.¹³³ In Galatians we have such an instance where the instruction is recalled for the purpose of a parenetical argument. Paul argues that he considers his view of Christian ethics to be part of the tradition of the church, a tradition in which the Galatians themselves stand. Paul’s present recommendation as to what to do about the flesh does not intend to bring in new ideas hitherto unknown to the Galatians, but consists of a restatement of the original agreement upon which the churches were founded by Paul.

■ 22* The catalogue of vices (v 19–21a*) is followed by the catalogue of virtues (v 22–23a*). However, the nine concepts of this list are not virtues in the Greek sense of the term. They do not represent qualities of personal behavior which man can elect, cultivate, and appropriate as part of his character. Nor are they “good deeds” in the sense of Jewish ethics: they do not come from or constitute a code of law which must be obeyed and which can be transgressed. Although it may sound strange, the catalogue is *not* simply to be identified with the “law of Christ” mentioned in Gal 6:2*. Compared with the catalogue of vices the catalogue of virtues is peculiar for several reasons. Paul does not call it “works of the Spirit,”¹³⁴ in analogy to v 19*, nor does he attribute to it the quality of “evidentness” (cf. above, on 5:19*).

It is certainly with intention that the open-ended and unstructured list of vices¹³⁵ is contrasted by a *unity*¹³⁶ called “the fruit of the Spirit” (ὁ καρπὸς τοῦ πνεύματος),¹³⁷ a unity consisting of three sets of three concepts, the most important of which are at the beginning and at the end. The expression “fruit of the Spirit”¹³⁸ means that the nine concepts should be taken as “benefits” which were given as or together with the Spirit.¹³⁹ In other words, when the Galatians received the Spirit, they were also given the foundation out of which the “fruit” was supposed to grow.¹⁴⁰ At this point the question arises whether Paul thinks that the “fruit” was simply given, so that the concepts of the list became the possession of the Galatians, or whether by receiving the Spirit they were enabled and motivated to bear that fruit themselves. In the present context of ethical exhortation we can conclude that a simple possession of the “fruit of the Spirit” cannot be what Paul means. Contrary to, e.g., the gnostic concept which we find in *Corpus Hermeticum* 13,¹⁴¹ the “fruit of the Spirit” presupposes man’s active involvement (cf. 5:25*).

As mentioned before, the structure of the catalogue is such that three sets of three concepts¹⁴² follow each other, the most important of which are placed at the beginning and the end.¹⁴³ The first three notions are different from the rest in that they can be attributed to God, Christ, and man. “Love” (ἀγάπη) is the love of God,¹⁴⁴ Christ,¹⁴⁵ and the Spirit,¹⁴⁶ and it is required of the Christian.¹⁴⁷ “Joy” (χαρά) is not clearly attributed to God or Christ, probably because of its emotional overtones, but its character as a divine gift is strongly emphasized.¹⁴⁸ The third concept is that of “peace” (εἰρήνη): the peace

of God,¹⁴⁹ Christ,¹⁵⁰ and the Spirit, given to man.¹⁵¹ Christian existence is characterized by peace.¹⁵²

The three concepts have in common the fact that they represent “spiritual powers” of the first order. In man they come close to being psychosomatic dispositions which must first be created in him before they can be required as deeds. This structure reveals an important aspect of Paul’s ethics: people cannot be expected simply to act in an ethically responsible way, but they must first be enabled, empowered, and motivated before they can so act. Now since the Galatians *did* receive the Spirit of God, the love, joy, and peace of God and of Christ were made present to them, and on the basis of this gift they can be expected to act ethically as Christians.

The second set of concepts takes us further in the direction of human action. “Forbearance” (μακροθυμία)¹⁵³ can be attributed to God¹⁵⁴ and required of man.¹⁵⁵ The same is true of “kindness” (χρηστότης).¹⁵⁶ The concept of “goodness” (ἀγαθωσύνη) represents a late development in the Greek language; it may come from Hellenistic Judaism.¹⁵⁷

■ 23* The last group of concepts includes three famous virtues from Hellenistic ethics: πίστις (this concept is usually regarded as still being part of v 22*) in the sense of “faithfulness”;¹⁵⁸ πραύτης (“humility”, “meekness”);¹⁵⁹ and finally ἐγκράτεια (“self-control”).¹⁶⁰ Especially important is the last term: Socrates had introduced it into Greek ethics, and by the time of Paul it was a central concept of Hellenistic ethics, whence it was taken up by Jewish and Christian writers. In Paul, it appears in the context of radical asceticism.¹⁶¹ Its place at the end of the list in v 23*¹⁶² is conspicuous, and this is certainly intended; it stands in juxtaposition to love (v 22*). The concept of self-control in the present context implies the claim that Christian ethics is the fulfillment not only of the Torah (cf. 5:14*), but also of the central demand of Greek ethics. The gift of the Spirit and the “fruit of the Spirit” reach their climax in the fulfillment of the old Greek ideal of self-control. This outstanding position of self-control is unique in Paul and may indicate that he quotes the entire passage from a source.

What is the relationship of the “list of virtues” to the Law? Paul’s statement immediately following brings some clarification: κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος (“no law is against such things”). Two things are implied: (1) the “list of virtues” is not itself “law”; (2) the virtues do not violate any law; they are all “lawful.” It is not certain¹⁶³ whether τῶν τοιούτων is masculine¹⁶⁴ or neuter,¹⁶⁵ but the latter is more likely because of the analogy in v 21b*.

How do we have to understand this concluding remark?¹⁶⁶ It corresponds to v 19*: as one does not need to transgress a law in order to do evil, one can “do good” (cf. 6:10*), that is, one can be ethically responsible without “obeying law.” In view of the situation which the Galatians have to face, Paul suggests that it is more important to be enabled to act with ethical responsibility than to introduce a code of law which remains a mere demand. In other words, the introduction of the Torah into the Galatian churches would not lead to ethical responsibility, so long as the people were not motivated and enabled ethically. If they were motivated and enabled, however, the Torah is superfluous.

■ 24* The purpose of this concluding statement is to spell out the connection between christology/soteriology and the dualism of the “flesh” and the “fruit of the Spirit”: οἱ δὲ τοῦ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ] τὴν σάρκα ἐσταύρωσαν σὺν τοῖς παθήμασιν καὶ ταῖς

ἐπιθυμίαις (“but those who belong to Christ [Jesus] have crucified their flesh together with the passions and the desires”).¹⁶⁷ In form, the statement is dogmatic, a definition of Christian ethical existence with specific reference to the “flesh.” It is related to 2:19–20*, but it is an expanded and interpreted form of what was said briefly in the *propositio*. The *propositio* had stated the basic components: the Christian is “crucified together with Christ,” and “Christ lives within him.”

In 5:24* the Christians are further defined as “those who belong to Christ.”¹⁶⁸ Christ is their “Lord” (κύριος)¹⁶⁹ who redeemed them.¹⁷⁰ They are “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ);¹⁷¹ they have “put on Christ” (3:27*: Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε); they were given the Spirit of Christ (4:6*). It is this overwhelming presence of Christ, the crucified and resurrected Lord, his Spirit, the “fruit of the Spirit,” which prevents the intentions of the flesh from accomplishing the “works of the flesh” (cf. 5:16*, 19–21a*). Therefore, Paul can say that “the flesh has been crucified”.¹⁷² The presence of the crucified Christ as the “fruit of the Spirit” means the crucifixion of the flesh together with its “passions” (παθήματα)¹⁷³ and “desires” (ἐπιθυμῖαι).¹⁷⁴

We find a remarkably close parallel to Paul’s teaching at this point in Philo: “but thanks be to the victorious God who, however perfect in workmanship are the aims and efforts of the passion-lover, makes them to be of none effect by sending invisibly against them winged beings to undo and destroy them. Thus the mind stripped of the creations of its art will be found as it were a headless corpse, with severed neck nailed like the crucified to the tree of helpless and poverty-stricken indiscipline.”¹⁷⁵ Both Paul and Philo share the assumption that the “flesh” (σάρξ) has a powerful life of its own which expresses itself in its “passions and desires.”¹⁷⁶ “Crucifixion” of the flesh results in its neutralization: having lost its life it is no longer capable of producing the “works of the flesh.”¹⁷⁷

In terms of Paul’s theology, this means that the Christian who continues to live “in the flesh” (ἐν σαρκί) can now “live to God.”¹⁷⁸ With this argument, the section vv 16–24* is concluded.

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16 (NRSV)

⁵¹ Cf. Gal 1:9*; 3:17*; 4:1*; 5:2*.

⁵² For this concept see Georg Bertram and Heinrich Seesemann, “πατέω,” *TDNT* 5.940–45; F. J. Helf-meyer, “גלל,” *TWAT* 2.415–33; Gustav Wingren, “‘Weg,’ ‘Wanderung’ und verwandte Begriffe,” *StTh* 3 (1951) 111–23; Betz, *Nachfolge*, 76ff.; Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 227ff..

⁵³ The concept of περιπατέω (“walk”) is used often by Paul: Rom 6:4*; 8:4*; 13:13*; 14:15*; 1 Cor 3:3*; 7:17*; 2 Cor 4:2*; 5:7*; 10:2*, 3*; 12:18*; Phil 3:17*, 18*; 1 Thess 2:12*; 4:1*, 12*. Synonymous is στοιχέω: Gal 5:25*; 6:16*; Rom 4:12*; Phil 3:16*.

⁵⁴ See Gal 3:3*: ἐναρξάμενοι πνεύματι (“you have begun by the Spirit”); also 3:2*, 5*; 4:6*; 5:5*.

⁵⁵ Gal 3:3*; 5:5*, 16*, 18*, 25*; furthermore Rom 8:13*, 14*; 12:11*; 1 Cor 14:2*; 15*; 2 Cor 3:3*; 12:18*; Phil 3:3*; 1 Pet 4:6*. See also Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist*, 193 n. 2.

⁵⁶ Bauer, *s.v.* πνεῦμα, 5, d, β, renders “in the Spirit” or “through the Spirit.” See also Schlier, pp. 247f.

⁵⁷ Cf. Gal 5:18*.

⁵⁸ Cf., esp., Gal 3:2*, 3*, 5*; 5:18*, 24*; 6:13*.

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16 (NRSV)

⁵⁹ The promissory character of the statement is rightly emphasized by Schlier, p. 248. Cf. Gal 6:7–10*. For οὐ μὴ with subjunctive as “the most definite form of negation regarding the future” see BDF, § 365; BDR, § 365.

⁶⁰ Cf. Gal 5:17*.

⁶¹ The concept must not be misunderstood as restricted to sexual desires (Vg *desideria carnis*), but it describes the “flesh” as goal-oriented energy, not as substance (cf. Gal 5:17*, 24*; and esp. Rom 7:7–11*; also 1:24*; 6:12*; 13:14*; 1 Thess 4:5*; Eph 2:3*; 4:22*; Col 3:5*; etc.). See on the whole concept Friedrich Büchsel, “ἐπιθυμία, ἐπιθυμητής, ἐνθυμέομαι, ἐνθύμησις,” *TDNT* 3.168–72; Bultmann, *Theology*, § 23, 3; Bauer, *s.v.*, 3; Käsemann, *Römer*, 184.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NRSV)

⁶² On. the meaning of τελέω in 5:16 see Bauer, *s.v.*, 2; Gerhard Delling, “τελέω,” *TDNT* 8.59.

⁶³ Cf. Gal 3:3*: νῦν σαρκὶ ἐπιτελεῖσθε; (“now do you ‘complete’ it through the flesh”). Paul ridicules the goals of the opponents; perhaps 2 Cor 7:1* contains what the opponents really had in mind: ἐπιτελεῖν ἁγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ (“achieving holiness through the fear of God”). See Betz, “2 Cor 6:14–7:1,” 98, and below, Appendix 2.

⁶⁴ What should happen, according to Paul, is formulated for a different context in 2 Cor 12:9*: ἡ γὰρ δύναμις ἐν ἀσθενείᾳ τελεῖται (“For the power [of Christ] comes to perfection in weakness”). Scholars have often pointed to the great similarity between Gal 5:16ff.* and the anthropological passage in 1QS 3.13–4.26; however, the differences are more striking and illuminate Paul’s theology only by way of contrast. See Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 169ff.; Braun, *Qumran* 1.213ff.; Peter von der Osten-Sacken, *Gott und Belial* (SUNT 6; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1969) 116ff..

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16 (NRSV)

⁶⁵ For the dualism of “flesh” and “Spirit” see Gal 3:3*; 4:29*; 5:19–24*; 6:8*; Rom 2:28*; 8:4ff.*: etc. A survey of the material is found in Eduard Schweizer, “πνεῦμα, πνευματικός” *TDNT* 6.428–30; Eduard Schweizer, “σάρξ,” *TDNT* 7.125–35; Bultmann, *Theology*, § 22–23, 38–40. Basic studies are Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist, passim*; Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, esp. 49ff.; Schottroff, *Glaubende*.

⁶⁶ On chiasmus see BDF, § 477; BDR, § 477; Joachim Jeremias, “Chiasmus in den Paulusbriefen,” *ZNW* 49 (1958) 145–56.

⁶⁷ Despite the new studies the whole problem of its origin has not been sufficiently investigated. Hildebrecht Hommel (“Das 7. Kapitel des Römerbriefs im Licht antiker Überlieferung,” *ThVat* 8 [1961/62] 90–116) has shown that the theory is related to the philosophical critique of the Socratic idea of *paideia*. But Hommel does not pay attention to Gal 5:17*. The background in

Hellenistic philosophy would then provide an explanation for the many parallels between Rom 7/ Gal 5:17* and Hellenistic writers, among them Hellenistic Judaism including Philo. It is the weakness of Brandenburger's study of the problem that he neglects the wider background. For further parallels see Wettstein on Rom 7:15*; Lietzmann, *Römer*, on Rom 7:15*.

⁶⁸ Against Eduard Schweizer, who has argued that Paul is responsible for the formulation. See his articles mentioned above n. 65; also Eduard Schweizer, "Die hellenistische Komponente im neutestamentlichen σάρξ-Begriff," in his *Neotestamentica* (Zurich: Zwingli-Verlag, 1963) 29–48; Begriff, "Röm. 1, 3f und der Gegensatz von Fleisch und Geist vor und bei Paulus,"

Neotestamentica, 180–89; Begriff, "Gegenwart des Geistes und eschatologische Hoffnung bei Zarathustra, spätjüdischen Gruppen, Gnostikern und den Zeugen des NT," *Neotestamentica*, 153–79. For a critique of Schweizer, see Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist*, 18ff. and *passim*.

⁶⁹ Besides the previous studies see esp. Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 17ff.; Davies, "Paul and the Dead Sea Scrolls," in his *Christian Origins and Judaism*, 145–77 (n. 29 above); Braun, *Qumran*, 2, § 15; other studies are discussed and evaluated by Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, 82–95.

⁷⁰ See Reitzenstein, *Mysterienreligionen*, 71, 282, 284ff., 308ff., 333ff., 377ff., 420; Bousset, *KyriosChristos*, 172ff.; Goodenough, *By Light, Light*, esp. 370–413; Goodenough, with Alf T. Kraabel, "Paul and the Hellenization of Christianity," in *Religions in Antiquity, Essays in Memory of E. R. Goodenough* (Leiden: Brill, 1968) 23–68, esp. 53f.

⁷¹ Cf., esp. John 3:6*. On the problem of the dualism of flesh and Spirit in John see Bultmann, *John*, 62f, 138–43; Schottroff, *Glaubende*, 273ff.; cf. also Jas 4:1ff.*.

⁷² See the reviews of the history of research in Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist*; Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, 49ff..

* ¹² Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.

Romans 6:12 (NRSV)

* ⁷ What then should we say? That the law is sin? By no means! Yet, if it had not been for the law, I would not have known sin. I would not have known what it is to covet if the law had not said, "You shall not covet."

* ⁸ But sin, seizing an opportunity in the commandment, produced in me all kinds of covetousness. Apart from the law sin lies dead.

Romans 7:7–8 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

⁷³ The majority of witnesses relate the sentence to the preceding by γάρ ("for"): P⁴⁶ B **N*** D* G lat; others by δέ ("but"): A C **u** pl.

⁷⁴ ἀντίκειμαι ("be opposed") is used here as elsewhere in the early Christian literature in the figurative sense ("spiritual warfare"). See Friedrich Büchsel, "κεῖμαι κτλ.," *TDNT* 3.655; Bauer, *s.v.*; LSJ, *s.v.*; *PGL*, *s.v.*

⁷⁵ The "I" as the subject of willing is not identical with either flesh or Spirit. This problematization of the will is carried further in Rom 7:15–24*.

⁷⁶ The ἵνα (“in order that”) can be taken in a final or consecutive sense (see BDF, § 391, 5; BDR, § 391; Bauer, *s.v.*, II, 2; Schweizer, “πνεῦμα, πνευματικός,” *TDNT* 6.429 n. 641). If it is taken in the final sense, it would express the view that each of the opposing powers tries to impose its will upon the human will. See Schlier, p. 249; Mussner, pp. 376–78; Paul Althaus, “ ‘... Dass ihr nicht tut, was ihr wollt’ (Zur Auslegung von Gal. 5, 17),” *ThLZ* 76 (1951) 15–18.

⁷⁷ That is, in control of the “doing” (ποιεῖν).

⁷⁸ So Schlier (p. 250) with most exegetes.

⁷⁹ The problem was clearly pointed out by Althaus (see n. 76 above).

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

¹⁹ For I do not do the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do.

²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want, it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand.

²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self,

²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Romans 7:15–24 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

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²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Romans 7:15–24 (NRSV)

⁸⁰ See Rudolf Bultmann, “Römer 7 und die Anthropologie des Paulus,” in his *Exegetica*, 198–209; Käsemann, *Römer*, 188ff..

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁵ I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate.

¹⁶ Now if I do what I do not want, I agree that the law is good.

¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

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²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Romans 7:15–24 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

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¹⁷ But in fact it is no longer I that do it, but sin that dwells within me.

¹⁸ For I know that nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh. I can will what is right, but I cannot do it.

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²¹ So I find it to be a law that when I want to do what is good, evil lies close at hand.

²² For I delight in the law of God in my inmost self,

²³ but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind, making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members.

²⁴ Wretched man that I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?

Romans 7:15–24 (NRSV)

⁸¹ There is no investigation which pays adequate attention to these problems. See for the present state of research Ernst Käsemann, “On Paul’s Anthropology,” in his *Perspectives*, 1–31; Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms, passim*.

⁸² See on this concept the material and bib. in Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 394ff..

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

Galatians 5:18 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

Galatians 5:18 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

⁸³ Against Mussner (pp. 377f) who interprets Paul in the opposite sense: the fact that both powers oppose each other neutralizes their impact and provides for man a situation for freedom of choice. “The freedom to which Christ has liberated the baptized (5:1*, 13*) is a real freedom of

choice between good and evil” (p. 378). In his view, Gal 5:17* is the basis for ethics: the Christian has the freedom of will to do the good. Mussner tries to avoid a Pelagian interpretation of Paul and quotes Bonnard on the point, but he inevitably makes Paul a Pelagian when he states: “The Pneuma assists him [*sc.* the Christian] to fulfill the will of God, but it does not compel him.”

⁸⁴ It should be noted that Paul does not consider here, but only in the next section, what he had stated in 2:19f.*

* ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

Galatians 5:18 (NRSV)

* ¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:17 (NRSV)

⁸⁵ See BDF, § 372; BDR, § 372.

⁸⁶ See Gal 3:2–5*, 14*; 4:6*, 29*; 5:5*, 16*. On the “indicative” of salvation, see above on 5:1a*, 13a*, and below on 5:25*.

⁸⁷ Cf. Rom 8:14*, where the “sons of God” are defined as those who are led by the Spirit of God (πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται). See also 1 Cor 12:2*; Luke 4:1*, 9*. On the term see LSJ, *s.v.*; Preisigke, *Wörterbuch*, 4/1 (1944) 23, *s.v.*; Bauer, *s.v.*, 3; Betz, *Lukian*, 40 n 10.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:19–24 (NRSV)

⁸⁸ See Gal 3:2*, 5*, 23–25*; 4:21*; 5:1*.

⁸⁹ On the phrase “under the law” see 3:23*; 4:4f*, 21*.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

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²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

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²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:19–24 (NRSV)

⁹⁰ It should be emphasized against most commentaries that Gal 5:18* should *not* be interpreted in the light of Rom 7:7ff.* and Phil 3:2ff.*, where the “law” stimulates man to seek his own righteousness (ἰδία δικαιοσύνη), which is “sin.” Not even in Gal 3:22–25* does Paul say that the “law” stimulates “sin”; according to Gal, it is the “flesh” that produces its evil works.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:19–23 (NRSV)

⁹¹ For other catalogs in primitive Christian literature, see Rom 1:29–31*; 13:13*; 1 Cor 5:10f*; 6:9f*; 2 Cor 12:20f*; Eph 4:31*; 5:3f*; Col 3:5*, 8*; 1 Tim 1:9f*; 2 Tim 3:2–5*; Titus 3:3*; 1 Pet 2:1*; 4:3*, 15*; Mark 7:22*; Matt 15:19*; Rev 21:8*; 22:15*; *Did.* 2.1–5.2; *Barn.* 18–20; *Pol. Phil.* 2.2, 4.3; *Herm. Mand.* 5.2.4, 6.2, 8.3–5; *Sim.* 6, 9.15, etc.; *Apoc. Pet.* 21–34; etc. Cf. Jas 3:13–18*. Especially interesting for Paul is the doctrine of baptism which includes catalog material in the *Kerygmata Petrou* (ps.-Clem. *Hom.* 11.27–28). For the usage in the liturgy of Chrysostom, see Hugh M. Riley, *Christian Initiation* (Washington, D. C.: The Catholic University of America, 1974) 165ff..

⁹² On the individual concepts and for bib., see below.

* ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21 (NRSV)

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,
Galatians 5:22 (NRSV)

⁹³ See the basic studies by Anton Vögtle, *Die Tugend und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament* (NTAbh 16.4–5; Münster: Aschendorff, 1936); Lietzmann, *Römer*, 35f; Burton S. Easton, “New Testament Ethical Lists,” *JBL* 51 (1932) 1–12; Siegfried Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament und ihre Traditionsgeschichte* (BZNW 25; Berlin: Töpelmann, 1959); Erhard Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese im Neuen Testament* (WUNT 7; Tübingen: Mohr, Siebeck, 1964) esp. 14–18; Schlier, pp. 251ff.; Johannes Thomas, “Formgesetze des Begriffskatalogs im Neuen Testament,” *ThZ* 24 (1968) 15–28; Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon*, 136ff.; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 100f; M. Jack Suggs, “The Christian Two Way Tradition: Its Antiquity, Form, and Function,” in *Studies in the New Testament and Early Christian Literature, Essays in Honor of A. P. Wikgren* (Leiden: Brill 1972) 60–74; Mussner, pp. 379–89; Vielhauer, *Geschichte*, 50, 54, 120f.

⁹⁴ See on this point Kamlah, *ibidem*, *passim*.

⁹⁵ Large collections of material from the Hellenistic and Roman literature are found (apart from literature in n. 3) in the following studies: Bultmann, *Stil*, 19 n. 3; *SVF* 3.377–490 (Stoics in general); Betz, *Lukian*, 185–94, 206–11; *PECL*, 31, 33, 40, 157, 208, 209, 227; Gerd Petzke, *Die Tradition über Apollonius von Tyana und das Neue Testament* (SCHNT 1; Leiden: Brill, 1970) 220–27; Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 67–70, 172–77, 184f.

⁹⁶ Cf. esp. also Justin *Oratio ad Graecos* 5.7–9. See the material collected in Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese*, *passim*; Conzelmann, *1 Corinthians*, 100 n. 66.

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⁹⁷ See the study of Wibbing (cf. n. 93 above); Kamlah, *ibidem*, 39ff.; Osten-Sacken, *Gott und Belial*, esp. 150ff.; Braun, *Qumran* 1.214.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Corp. Herm.* 13.7ff.; also 1.22f, 25. See Richard Reitzenstein, *Poimandres* (Leipzig and Berlin: Teubner, 1904) 231f; Albrecht Dieterich, *Nekyia: Beiträge zur Erklärung der neuentdeckten Petrusapokalypse* (Leipzig: Teubner, ³1913) 163ff.; Kamlah, *ibidem*, 115ff..

Parallels from Nag Hammadi texts have been collected by Mussner, p. 379 n. 32.

* ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:23 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:19–23 (NRSV)

1QS *Serek hayyahad* (*Rule of the Community, Manual of Discipline*)

⁹⁹ Cf. Luther's comments (1535, on Gal 5:15*): "According to the mathematicians, beyond the unit there is an infinite progression of numbers. Thus if the unity of the Spirit is injured and destroyed, ... errors will go on arising into infinity." On 5:20* Luther states: "Paul does not enumerate all the works of flesh, but he uses a certain number in place of the infinite number of such works."

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:16–17 (NRSV)

¹⁰⁰ For the meaning of this term cf. 1 Cor 3:13*; 11:19*; 14:25*; 2 Cor 5:10*; 1 John 3:10*; 2 Clem. 16:3; Barn. 8:7; Herm. Sim. 4.3f; Mand. 11.10; Ign. Eph. 14.2. See Bauer, *s.v.*, 1; Rudolf Bultmann and Dieter Lührmann, "φανερῶν," *TDNT* 9.3.

* ¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

Galatians 5:18 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

¹⁰¹ Cf. Gal 6:1*.

¹⁰² Cf. Rom 13:12* "the works of darkness" (τὰ ἔργα τοῦ σκοτίου) and similar expressions in Eph 5:11*; Col 1:21*; John 3:19*; 7:7*; 8:41*; etc. See Bauer, *s.v.* ἔργον 1, c, β. The terminology in the Qumran texts is similar, but not the same; cf. מַעֲשֵׂי רָשָׁע (1QS 2.5), מַעֲשֵׂי רָמִיָּה (1QS 4.23); see Braun, *Qumran* 1.185; Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese*, 16 n. 2 (see n. 93 above).

¹⁰³ Cf. the term "bring about, produce" (κατεργάζομαι) in Rom 7:8*, 13*, 15*, 17*, 18*, 20*.

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

Galatians 5:16–17 (NRSV)

¹⁰⁴ Attempts to find some systematic order in the catalog have failed. Cf. Schlier, p. 251; Johannes Thomas, "Formgesetze des Begriffs-Katalogs im Neuen Testament," *ThZ* 24 (1968) 15–28, 25f. Correct is Mussner's statement that an order is not recognizable (p. 381).

¹⁰⁵ For this use of the relative pronoun ὅστις, see BDF, § 293; BDR, § 293.

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

¹⁰⁶ α D (G) pl it sy^h Irenaeus have first "adultery" (μοιχεία). Zahn (p. 264 n. 98) is probably right in assuming this order is the result of a harmonization with Matt 15:19*; Mark 7:21f*.

¹⁰⁷ The term is used by Paul also 1 Cor 5:1*; 6:13*, 18*; 7:2*; 2 Cor 12:21*; 1 Thess 4:3*; it is part of lists in Matt 15:19* // Mark 7:21*; 2 Cor 12:21*; Eph 5:3*; Col 3:5*. See for further material Bauer, *s.v.*; Friedrich Hauck and Siegfried Schulz, “πόρνη κτλ,” *TDNT* 6.579–95; Petzke, *Apollonius*, 225.

¹⁰⁸ For this term, cf. the lists in Rom 1:24*; 2 Cor 12:21*; Eph 5:3*; Col 3:5*; furthermore Rom 6:19*; Eph 4:19*; 1 Thess 2:3*; 4:7*. See Bauer, *s.v.*, 2; Friedrich Hauck, “ἀκάθαρτος, ἀκαθαρσία,” 3.427–29; Wilfried Paschen, *Rein und Unrein* (SANT 24; Munich: Kösel, 1970); Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 70.

¹⁰⁹ For this term see the lists Matt 7:22*; Rom 13:13*; 2 Cor 12:21*; Eph 4:19*; 1 Pet 4:3*; furthermore 2 Pet 2:2*, 7*, 18*; Jude 4*. See Bauer, *s.v.*; Otto Bauernfeind, “ἀσέλγεια,” *TDNT* 1.490; Betz, *Lukian*, 199 n. 3.

* ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

Galatians 5:20 (NRSV)

¹¹⁰ It or εἰδωλολάτρης occurs in lists also 1 Cor 5:10*, 11*; 6:9*; Col 3:5*; 1 Pet 4:3*; *Did.* 3.4; 5.1; *Barn.* 20.1; cf. furthermore 1 Cor 10:7*, 14*; *Barn.* 16.7. See Friedrich Büchsel, “εἰδωλολάτρης, εἰδωλολατρία,” *TDNT* 2.379–80; Bauer, *s.v.*; Betz, *Lukian*, 194; Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 70; Betz, “2 Cor 6:14–7:1,” 92; Horst D. Preuss, *Verspottung fremder Religionen im Alten Testament* (BWANT 92; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1971).

¹¹¹ The term is found in lists *Did.* 5.1; *Barn.* 20.1; cf. also Rev 9:21*; 18:23*. See Bauer, *s.v.*; Betz, *Lukian*, 201 n. 7; Petzke, *Apollonius*, 217; Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 70; ps.-Phocylides *Sent.* 149 (ed. Denis).

¹¹² Cf. Rom 8:7*; Eph 2:14*, 16*; Jas 4:4*; Luke 23:12*; see Werner Foerster, “ἔχθρα,” *TDNT* 2.815; Bauer, *s.v.*; Petzke, *Apollonius*, 227; Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 184f.

¹¹³ Cf. the list in Rom 1:29*; 13:13*; 1 Cor 3:3*; 2 Cor 12:20*; Phil 1:15*; 1 Tim 6:4*; Titus 3:9*; also 1 Cor 1:11*. See Bauer, *s.v.* The textual tradition is divided: the sing is read by \aleph A B D* 1739 syr^p, while \mathfrak{A} , following C, D^{hc} F G K L N P *al* have the plur. The sing. is the more difficult and hence the more probable reading. See for more evidence Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 597.

¹¹⁴ Cf. the term in lists Rom 13:13*; 1 Cor 3:3*; 2 Cor 12:20*; Jas 3:14*, 16*. See Albert Stumpff, “ζῆλος, ζήλωω,” *TDNT* 2.877–82; Bauer, *s.v.*; Mussies, *Dio Chrysostom*, 185. The plur. ζῆλοι is read by \aleph C \mathfrak{A} *pl*.

¹¹⁵ Cf. the term in the list 2 Cor 12:20*; *1 Clem.* 46.5. See Friedrich Büchsel, “θυμός,” *TDNT* 3.167–68; Bauer, *s.v.*, 2.

Bauer W. Bauer, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*.

¹¹⁶ The term is rare, the meaning probably political (cf. in lists 2 Cor 12:20*; Phil 2:3*; Jas 3:14*, 16*; also Rom 2:8*). For the problem of interpretation see Friedrich Büchsel, “ἐπιθεία,” *TDNT* 2.660–61; Bauer, *s.v.*

¹¹⁷ The term is political (cf. Plutarch *Adulat.* 20C; *Fort. Rom.* 321C; *Praec. gerend.* 788E; *Pyrrh.* 397C); ps.-Phocylides *Sent.* 151 (ed. Denis); see Rom 16:17*; 1 Cor 3:3* *v.l.*; *1 Clem.* 46.5; 51.1, etc. For further references see Bauer, *s.v.*

¹¹⁸ Cf. 1 Cor 11:19*; see Heinrich Schlier, “αἵρεσις,” *TDNT* 1.180–83; Bauer, *s.v.*

* ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21 (NRSV)

¹¹⁹ Cf. in lists Rom 1:29*; Phil 1:15*; 1 Tim 6:4*; Titus 3:3*; 1 Pet 2:1*. Cf. also the verb in Gal 5:26*. For further material see Bauer, *s.v.*; Ernst Milobenski, *Der Neid in der griechischen Philosophie* (Klassisch-philologische Studien 29; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1964), and the review by A. W. H. Adkins, *CIR* NS 21 (1971) 293f.

A large number of witnesses read the word-play φθόνοι φόνοι (“murders”) which is known since Euripides *Tro.* 766ff. and which was often quoted in antiquity; since it also occurs Rom 1:29* (in the list) it may come from there. See Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 597f.

¹²⁰ Cf. the term in the lists Rom 13:13*; *1 Clem.* 30.1.; also Luke 21:34*. See Bauer, *s.v.*; Herbert Preisker, “μέθη κτλ.” *TDNT* 4.545–48.

¹²¹ Originally, the term referred to the festivities of Dionysos. See the term in the lists Rom 13:13*; 1 Pet 4:3*. See for further material Bauer, *s.v.*

* ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21 (NRSV)

sc. scilicet, namely

¹²² A similar formula occurs Gal 1:9*; cf. also 2 Cor 13:2*; 1 Thess 4:6*; *Did.* 7.1.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NRSV)

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NRSV)

* ⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel contrary to what we proclaimed to you, let that one be accursed!

⁹ As we have said before, so now I repeat, if anyone proclaims to you a gospel contrary to what you received, let that one be accursed!

Galatians 1:8–9 (NRSV)

* ²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith.

²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:26–28 (NRSV)

¹²³ *Did.* 7.1 is most important for the possible *Sitz im Leben* of the passage: “Concerning baptism, baptize in this way: Having first repeated all of these things [*sc. Did.* 1–6], baptize in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit ...” (Περὶ τοῦ βαπτίσματος, οὕτω βαπτίσατε ταῦτα πάντα προειπόντες, βαπτίσατε εἰς τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ πατρὸς...). Cf. also Justin *Apol.* 1.61.

¹²⁴ See Alfred Seeberg, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit* (Leipzig: Deichert, 1903; rep. Munich: Kaiser, 1966) 11, 43; Weiss, *Der erste Korintherbrief*, 153f; Hans Windisch, “Die Sprüche vom Eingehen in das Reich Gottes,” *ZNW* 27 (1928) 163–92; Johannes Schneider, “εἰσέρχομαι,” *TDNT* 2.676–78; Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, 38–45 (see n. 93 above); Philip Carrington, *The Primitive Christian Catechism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1940)

17f; Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese*, 14f, 21–3 (n. 93 above); Johannes S. Vos, *Traditionsge-schichtliche Untersuchungen zur paulinischen Pneumatologie* (Assen: van Gorcum, 1973) 26ff..

The earlier *Sitz im Leben* of the quotation most likely was in Jewish instruction. See on this Davies, *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism*, 118 n. 1; Str-B 4/2.1183–92; John Gager, “Functional Diversity in Paul’s Use of End-Time Language,” *JBL* 89 (1970) 325–37, 333ff..

¹²⁵ The term is rare in Paul: Rom 14:17*; 1 Cor 4:20*; 6:9f*; 15:24*, 50*; 1 Thess 2:12*. See Kamlah, *ibidem*, 14 n. 2; Joachim Jeremias, “Flesh and Blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Cor 15, 50),” *NTS* 2 (1955/56) 151–59; rep. in his *Abba*, 298–307.

¹²⁶ Cf. esp. 1 Cor 6:9f*; 15:50*; Matt 25:34*; Ign. *Eph.* 16.1; Ign. *Philad.* 3.3; furthermore Eph 5:5f*; Col 3:24*.

¹²⁷ Cf. the sayings dealing with “entering into the Kingdom of God” (e.g., Mark 10:15* par.; Matt 7:21*; 18:8f*; 19:17*; etc.). For a collection of passages, see the articles by Schneider and Windisch (n. 124, above).

¹²⁸ Cf. Gal 3:18*, 29*; 4:1*, 7*, 30*.

¹²⁹ The term is connected with catalogs Rom 1:23* (cf. 2:1–3*); 2 Cor 12:21*; also Ign. *Eph.* 16.2; John 3:20*; 5:29*; Rom 9:11*; 13:4*; 2 Cor 5:10*. In Gal, *πράσσω* occurs only here, but cf. *ποιέω* 3:10*, 12*; 5:3*, 17*; 6:9*.

* ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21 (NRSV)

¹³⁰ The term *προλέγω* (“tell beforehand”) indicates that the quotation is a warning. Cf. 1 Thess 3:4*; part of the textual tradition (A C **u** D *pl* Marcion Irenaeus Clement) adds *καί* (“and”) before *προεῖπον* (“I forewarned, predicted”).

An impressive parallel from the Qumran texts is the eschatological warning following the catalog of “the ways of the spirit of falsehood” (1QS 4.11–14): “And the visitation of all who walk in this spirit shall be a multitude of plagues by the hand of all the destroying angels, everlasting damnation by the avenging wrath of the fury of God, eternal torment and endless disgrace together with shameful extinction in the fire of the dark regions. The times of all their generations shall be spent in sorrowful mourning and in bitter misery and in calamities of darkness until they are destroyed without remnant or survivor” (tr. Geza Vermes, *The Dead Sea Scrolls in English* [Baltimore: Penguin, 1962] 77). Cf. Osten-Sacken, *Gott und Belial*, 160–63.

¹³¹ Rom 1:32*; 1 Cor 6:9f*; Eph 5:5*; Col 3:6*; Herm. *Sim.* 9.15.2, 3; *Did.* 6.1; *Barn.* 21.1; also Matt 25:34*.

¹³² The connection with baptism is made in *Did.* 7.1; Herm. *Sim.* 9.16.2–4.

¹³³ Matt 5:20*; 7:13f* // Luke 13:23f* // *Did.* 1.1; Matt 7:21*; 18:3*; 25:34*; Mark 10:23–5* // Matt 19:23f* // Luke 18:24f*; John 3:5*; Acts 14:22*; Ign. *Eph.* 16.1; *Philad.* 3.3; Pol. *Phil.* 2.3; 5.3; 2 *Clem.* 9.6; 11.7; 12.1; Herm. *Sim.* 9.12.3, 4, 5, 8; 9.20.2, 3; etc.

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

Galatians 5:22 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NRSV)

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:22–23 (NRSV)

* ² Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 (NRSV)

¹³⁴ So rightly Schlier, p. 255; Mussner, p. 384.

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

¹³⁵ See above, the introduction to 5:19–23*.

¹³⁶ See above, on 3:20*. Cf. esp. *Corp. Herm.* 13.12: the 10 “virtues” are called a “decade,” a unity (ἡ ἐνάς) originating from the Spirit: the unity contains the decade, and the decade the unity. An interesting contrast parallel is the “Midrash on the Steps to Perfection,” attributed to Pinchas ben Jair (c. 200); see Felix Böhl, *Gebotserschwerung und Rechtsverzicht als ethisch-religiöse Normen in der rabbinischen Literatur* (Frankfurter Judaistische Studien 1; Freiburg: Schwarz, 1971) 109–17. Marcus Aurelius 6.30.4: “One is the fruit of earthly life, a religious disposition and social acts” (εἷς καρπὸς τῆς ἐπιγείου ζωῆς, διάθεσις ὁσία καὶ πράξεις κοινωνικαί).

¹³⁷ The concept is unique in Paul. Cf. Eph 5:9*: ὁ καρπὸς τοῦ φωτός (“the fruit of light”); *Herm. Sim.* 9.19.2: καρπὸς ἀληθείας (“fruit of truth”); also Rom 6:21f*; 15:28*; Phil 1:11*, 22*; 4:17*; John 15:2ff.*; Jas 3:12*, 17f*. Related is the term καρποφορέω (“bear fruit”): Rom 7:4f*; Col 1:6*, 10*; Mark 4:20* par.; cf. Ign. *Eph.* 14.2; Ign. *Trall.* 11. 1, 2; Ign. *Smyr.* 1.2; Pol. *Phil.* 1.2; 2 *Clem.* 1.3; 19.3; 20.3; *Barn.* 11.11. See Friedrich Hauck, “καρπός, ἄκαρπος, καρποφορέω,” *TDNT* 3.614–16; Bauer, *s.v.*; *PGL s.v.*; Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese*, 181ff.; Harald Riesenfeld, “La langue parabolique dans les épîtres de S. Paul,” in *Littérature et théologie pauliniennes* (Bruges: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960) 47–59 (tr. in his *The Gospel Tradition* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1970] 187–204).

¹³⁸ The closest analogies to the concept are found in Stoic philosophy (cf. esp. the notion of ethics as the “fruit of a garden”: *SVF* 2.38) and, esp., in Philo. In this context, the “fruit(s) of the soul” refer to the “virtues” (cf. Philo *L.A.* 1.22f, 3.93; *Mig.* 140, 202, 205; *Deus* 166; *Mut.* 74, 98, 192; *Post.* 171; *Det.* 111; *Agr.* 9; *Mos.* 2.66; *Cher.* 84). They can also be called ὁ διανοίας καρπός (“the fruit of intelligence”): *Plant.* 138; *Somn.* 2.272; Epictetus *Diss.* 1.4.32; cf. 1.15.7, 8; 2.1.21; 4.8.36; Cicero *Tusc.* 1.119. Typical is Philo’s definition (*Fug.* 176): καρπὸς δ’ ἐπιστήμης ὁ θεωρητικὸς βίος (“The contemplative life is a fruit of knowledge.”) Cf. also Marcus Aurelius 9.10.1; for gnosticism, cf. *Corp. Herm.* 13.22: The “good fruit, the immortal produce” is identical with the “decade” of powers constituting “regeneration.”

¹³⁹ See esp. Philo *Sacr.* 19–42, where the two women “Pleasure” and “Virtue” are described; they are “followed” (συνείποντο) by catalogs of vices and virtues.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. *Barn.* 11.11: ... ἡμεῖς μὲν καταβαίνομεν εἰς τὸ ὕδωρ γέμοντες ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ ῥύπου, καὶ ἀναβαίνομεν καρποφοροῦντες ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τὸν φόβον καὶ τὴν ἐλπίδα εἰς τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐν τῷ πνεύματι ἔχοντες (“... We go down into the water full of sins and foulness, and we come up bearing the fruit of fear in the heart and having hope in Jesus in the Spirit”).

e.g. *exempli gratia*, for example

¹⁴¹ On the catalog in *Corp. Herm.* 13, see above, n. 136. Cf. Epictetus *Diss.* 4.8.40: “Allow us at least to ripen as nature wishes. Why do you expose us to the elements, why force us? We are not

yet able to stand the open air. Let the root grow, next let it acquire the first joint, and then the second, and then the third; and so finally the fruit will forcibly put forth its true nature, even against my will” (... εἴθ’ οὕτως ὁ καρπὸς ἐκβιάσεται τὴν φύσιν, κἂν ἐγὼ μὴ θέλω).

*²⁵ If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.

Galatians 5:25 (NRSV)

¹⁴² Schlier (p. 256) points to this “triadic pattern” and feels reminded of 1 Cor 13:4–6*.

¹⁴³ Cf. 1 Cor 13:13*: νυνὶ δὲ μένει πίστις, ἐλπίς, ἀγάπη, τὰ τρία ταῦτα· μείζων δὲ τούτων ἡ ἀγάπη (“But now remain faith, hope, love, these three, the greater of them being love”).

¹⁴⁴ Rom 5:8*; 8:35–39*; 2 Cor 13:11*, 13*; 1 Thess 1:4*; cf. Eph 1:4*; 2:4*; Col 3:12*; 2 Thess 2:13*, 16*; 3:5*; Col 1:13*; Eph 1:6*.

¹⁴⁵ Gal 2:20*; Rom 8:35*, 37*; 2 Cor 5:14*; Eph 3:19*; 5:2*, 25*.

¹⁴⁶ Rom 15:30*; it is “poured out into our hearts” (Rom 5:5*).

¹⁴⁷ Gal 5:6*, 13*, 14*; in catalogs it is found 2 Cor 6:6*; Eph 4:2*; Col 3:14*; 2 Pet 1:7*, and often in the Apostolic Fathers. See for further references above, on Gal 5:6*.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Rom 14:17*: δικαιοσύνη καὶ εἰρήνη καὶ χαρὰ ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ (“righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”); 15:13*, 32*; 1 Cor 7:30*; 2 Cor 1:15*, 24*; 2:3*; 7:4*, 13*; Phil 1:4*, 18*, 25*; 2:2*, 28f*; 4:1*; 1 Thess 1:6*; 2:19*, 20*; 3:9*; Phlm 7*. For further references see Bauer, *s.v.*; Hans Conzelmann, “χαίρω κτλ.,” *TDNT* 9.359–72, esp. 369f.

¹⁴⁹ Rom 15:33*; 16:20*; 1 Cor 14:33*; 2 Cor 13:11*; Phil 4:7*, 9*; 1 Thess 5:23*; 2 Thess 3:16*.

¹⁵⁰ Col 3:15*; Eph 2:14f*.

¹⁵¹ Rom 8:6*; 14:17*; 15:13*; cf. Gal 1:3*; 6:16*; Rom 1:7*; 2:10*; 5:1*; 1 Cor 1:3*; 2 Cor 1:2*; 13:11*; Phil 1:2*; 4:9*; 1 Thess 1:1*; 5:23*; Phlm 3*; etc.

¹⁵² Rom 5:1*; 12:18*; 1 Cor 7:15*; 2 Cor 13:11*; 1 Thess 5:3*, 13*; etc. See Burton, 424–6; Bauer, *s.v.*; Gerhard von Rad and Werner Foerster, “εἰρήνη κτλ.,” *TDNT* 2.400–20; Gerardo Zampaglione, *The Idea of Peace in Antiquity* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University, 1973); Erich Dinkler, “Friede,” *RAC* 8.434–505, with bib.

¹⁵³ The concept is prominent in Hellenistic and Roman ethics. See LSJ, *s.v.*; Bauer, *s.v.*; Johannes Horst, “μακροθυμία, μακροθύμως,” *TDNT* 4.374–87; *PGL*, *s.v.*; R. A. Gauthier, *Magnanimité. L’idéal de la grandeur dans la philosophie païenne et dans la théologie chrétienne* (Paris: Vrin, 1951), esp. 202ff..

¹⁵⁴ Rom 2:4*; 9:22*; cf. 1 Pet 3:20*; Ign. *Eph.* 11.1.

¹⁵⁵ 2 Cor 6:6*; cf. 1 Cor 13:4*; 1 Thess 5:14*; Eph 4:2*; Col 1:11*; 3:12*; etc.

¹⁵⁶ Of God: Rom 2:4*; 9:23* *v.l.*; 11:22*; cf. Eph 2:7*; Col 3:12*; Tit 3:4*; 1 Pet 2:3*, and often in the Apostolic Fathers. See Bauer, *s.v.*, 2, b. Of man: 2 Cor 6:6*; Gal 5:22*; Col 3:12*; cf. Eph 4:32*. See Bauer, *s.v.*; Konrad Weiss, “χρηστός, χρηστότης, χρηστεύομαι, χρηστολογία,” *TDNT* 9.483–92; Mussner, p. 387 n. 85.

¹⁵⁷ It occurs first in LXX (Jud 8:35*; 9:16*; 2 Chr 24:16*; Neh 9:25*, 35*; 13:31*; Ps 37:20*; 51:5*; Ec 4:8*; 5:10*, 17*; 6:3*, 6*; 7:15*; 9:18*; 2 Ezra 19:25*, 35*; 23:31*). It is attributed to God *Barn.* 2.9; to man Rom 15:14*; Gal 5:22*; Eph 5:9*; 2 Thess 1:11*. See Burton, p. 316; Walter Grundmann, “ἀγαθωσύνη, φιλάγαθος, ἀφιλάγαθος,” *TDNT* 1.18; LSJ, *s.v.*; *PGL*, *s.v.*; Schlier, p. 259 n. 3.

*²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:23 (NRSV)

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

Galatians 5:22 (NRSV)

¹⁵⁸ It is generally agreed that the term does not refer to the Christian faith specifically, but to “faithfulness” (cf. of God Rom 3:3*; also 2 Thess 1:4*; 2 Tim 4:7*; Tit 2:10*). In this sense also 1 Cor 13:7*: (ἡ ἀγάπη) πάντα πιστεύει (“love believes everything”). See Bauer, *s.v.*, 1, a; Rudolf Bultmann, “πιστεύω κτλ.,” *TDNT* 6.204, 206–07.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. esp. Gal 6:1*; 1 Cor 4:21*; 2 Cor 10:1*; also Eph 4:2*; Col 3:12*; 2 Tim 2:25*; Tit 3:2*; etc. See Bauer, *s.v.*; Friedrich Hauck and Siegfried Schulz, “πραῦς, πραῦτης,” *TDNT* 6.645–51; Klaus Winkler, “Clementia,” *RAC* 3.735–78; Schlier, p. 260 n. 3.

¹⁶⁰ The term is rare in the NT (only Acts 24:25*; Gal 5:23*; 2 Pet 1:6*) but becomes more frequent in the Apostolic Fathers (*Barn.* 2.2; *2 Clem.* 15.1; *Pol. Phil.* 4.2; *Herm. Vis.* 2.3.2; 3.8.4, 7; *Mand.* 6.1.1; 8.1; *Sim.* 9.15.2). See Walter Grundmann, “ἐγκράτεια,” *TDNT* 2.339–42; Bauer, *s.v.*; Henry Chadwick, “Enkrateia,” *RAC* 5.343–65.

¹⁶¹ The verb ἐγκρατεύομαι (“control oneself”) occurs 1 Cor 7:9*; 9:25*; cf. Tit 1:8*.

* ²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Galatians 5:23 (NRSV)

¹⁶² Several witnesses have a longer list: D* F G it^{d, g} goth Cyprian Irenaeus^{lat} Ambrosiaster *al* add ἀγνεία (*castitas* “chastity”). This concludes the list with a religious rather than a philosophical concept. Vg has 12 terms, rendering μακροθυμία by *patientia* and *longanimitas*, and πραῦτης by *mansuetudo* and *modestia*. It is interesting that the “Midrash on the Steps to Perfection” (see above, n. 136) differs in the traditions between 10 and 12 steps. Cf. the 12 “vices” in *Corp. Herm.* 13.7. See Schlier, p. 262 n. 2, 5; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 598. ἀγνεία (“chastity”) is found also at the end of the list 1 Tim 4:12*; cf. *1 Clem.* 64.1 (following ἐγκράτεια); 21.7; Ign. *Eph.* 10.3; Ign. *Pol.* 5.2; etc. See Bauer, *s.v.*

* ²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

Galatians 5:22 (NRSV)

* ¹⁴ For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

Galatians 5:14 (NRSV)

¹⁶³ See the discussion in Oepke, p. 183; Schlier, pp. 262f; Mussner, p. 389.

¹⁶⁴ In this case we would have a parallel in Aristotle *Pol.* 3.8, p. 1384a14: ... κατὰ δὲ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστι νόμος, αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰσι νόμος· (“but there can be no law against such men, for they are themselves a law”). I am indebted to Helmut Koester for this suggestion. Lütgert (*Gesetz und Geist*, 18), following de Wette, takes the reference to point to the “pneumatics” who are free of the law (cf. Gal 6:1*). See also the list of commentators in Sieffert, pp. 327f.

¹⁶⁵ So most commentators, including Burton, Schlier (pp. 262f), Mussner (p. 389).

* ²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:21 (NRSV)

¹⁶⁶ For the opposite anti-Pauline doctrine, cf. *Ep. Petr.* (ps.-Clem. *Hom.*) 2.3–5 (Appendix 3).

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

Galatians 5:19 (NRSV)

* ¹⁰ So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.

Galatians 6:10 (NRSV)

* ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.
Galatians 5:24 (NRSV)

¹⁶⁷ Text according to Nestle-Aland, 26th ed. P⁴⁶ \aleph D G lat sy^p Marcion Clement do not read Ἰησοῦ (“of Jesus”), which because of the parallels (see following n.) may be original.

* ¹⁹ For through the law I died to the law, so that I might live to God. I have been crucified with Christ;
²⁰ and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 2:19–20 (NRSV)

* ²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:24 (NRSV)

¹⁶⁸ Cf. Gal 3:29*; 1 Cor 1:12*; 3:23*; 15:23*; 2 Cor 10:7*. See the remark by Schmithals (*Paul and the Gnostics*, 53 n. 120): “The Χριστοῦ εἶναι [“belonging to Christ”] is the exclusive self-designation of the Corinthian Gnostics (1 Cor 1:12*; 2 Cor 10:7*). That in Gal 5:24* Paul is taking up the same-sounding designation of the Galatian Gnostics is of course unlikely, since this originally Gnostic-mythological formula is familiar to Paul himself for designation of the Christian status (Rom 8:9*; 1 Cor 3:23*; 15:23*).”

¹⁶⁹ See Gal 1:3*, 19*; 5:10*; 6:14*, 18*.

¹⁷⁰ See Gal 1:4*; 2:20*; 3:13*; 4:4f*; 5:1*.

¹⁷¹ See Gal 2:16f*; 3:26–28*; 5:6*.

* ²⁷ As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Galatians 3:27 (NRSV)

* ⁶ And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

Galatians 4:6 (NRSV)

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

Galatians 5:16 (NRSV)

* ¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Galatians 5:19–21 (NRSV)

¹⁷² See Gal 2:19*; 3:1*; 5:11*; 6:12–14*. Following Lagrange, Schlier (pp. 263f) interprets the aorist of ἐσταύρωσαν (“they have crucified”) and the whole sentence on the basis of Rom 6:6* as “sacramental”: the aorist, in his view, refers to the “decision” to accept baptism (similarly also Burton; Oepke; Wilhelm Michaelis [“πάσχω,” *TDNT* 5.930 lines 23ff.]); Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese*, 15f (n. 93 above); Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 105. But this “sacramental” interpretation is as artificial here as it is elsewhere in Gal; cf. Schulz, *KD* 5.36ff.; Betz, “Spirit, Freedom and Law,” 148 n. 10; Mussner, pp. 390f; questionable also is Johannes Schneider (“σταυρόω,” *TDNT* 7.583), who thinks of the moral-religious decision (“sittlich-religiöse Entscheidung”) which the Christians have made *after* their baptism.

¹⁷³ The term is technical in Hellenistic anthropology and used by Paul only here and Rom 7:5*. See Bauer, *s.v.*, 2; Michaelis, *ibidem*, 930–35; *PGL*, *s.v.*; Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 102ff..

¹⁷⁴ Here in the plural; cf. Gal 5:16*.

¹⁷⁵ *Som.* 2.213, tr. Colson and Whitaker in LCL. The decisive words are: ... ὥσπερ τὸν αὐχένα ἀποτμηθεὶς ἀκέφαλος καὶ νεκρὸς ἀνευρεθήσεται, προσηλωμένος ὥσπερ οἱ ἀνασκολοπισθέντες τῷ ξύλῳ τῆς ἀπόρου καὶ πενιχρᾶς ἀπαιδευσίας. Cf. Clitarchus *Sent.* 86 (Chadwick, *Sextus*, 80):

οὐκ ἔστιν ἐλεύθερον εἶναι κρατούμενον ὑπὸ παθῶν. For further passages, see Brandenburger, *Fleisch und Geist*, 216ff..

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Brandenburger (*Fleisch und Geist*, 19, 51, 55, 117f, 177ff.), who corrects Eduard Schweizer, “σάρξ,” *TDNT* 7.121ff.; Eduard Schweizer, “Die hellenistische Komponente ...” (see above on Gal 5:17*, n. 68) 40–55.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. Philo *Cher.* 8: “Then too there shines upon them the light of Isaac—the generic form of happiness, of the joy and gladness which belongs to those who have ceased from the manner of women ... and died to the passions ...” (ἀποθανόντων τὰ πάθη). See also the parallels *Gig.* 33; *Agr.* 17; *Ebr.* 69; *L.A.* 3.131, 190.

¹⁷⁸ See Gal 2:19f* (*propositio*), and the beginning of the next section 5:25*. Important is the parallel Rom 8:13b*: “If, then, through the Spirit you kill the acts of the body you shall live” (εἰ δὲ πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε, ζήσεσθε).

* ¹⁶ Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.

¹⁷ For what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh; for these are opposed to each other, to prevent you from doing what you want.

¹⁸ But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.

¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness,

²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions,

²¹ envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²² By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness,

²³ gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

²⁴ And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

Galatians 5:16–24 (NRSV)

Hans Dieter Betz, [*Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*](#), Hermeneia—a Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 277–290.

Anchor Yale Bible:

16. *In contradistinction to the Teachers, I, Paul, say to you: Lead your daily life guided by the Spirit, and, in this way, you will not end up carrying out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.*

In contradistinction to the Teachers, I, Paul, say to you. With the words *legô de*, “But I say,” Paul emphasizes that the sentence thus introduced is spoken by him, not by the Teachers.⁶⁴ We can surmise, then, that he is rewording a promise issued to the Galatians by the Teachers, and from 3:21 we can easily guess what it was: “Lead your daily life guided by the Law, the gift by which God grants life, and we promise you that you will not fall under the power of the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh (the Evil Impulse).” See Comment #49.

the Spirit. Earlier in the letter Paul has used the term *pneuma* seven times, referring in each instance to the Spirit whom God has sent into the Galatians’ hearts, the Spirit, specifically, of Christ (3:2, 3, 5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5). Here, too, he speaks not of a component of the human being, but rather of the Spirit of God’s Son. Like Christ himself, the Spirit of Christ is in effect God coming on the scene in order to act here and now.

Lead your daily life. Employing the verb *peripateô*, “to walk,” as the equivalent of the Hebrew *hālak*, Paul refers to daily conduct in the Galatian communities.

Lead your daily life guided by the Spirit. In order to speak of the relationship between the Spirit of Christ and daily conduct in the Galatian churches, Paul constructs a sentence with two clauses. In the first he uses an imperative verb with the dative noun “Spirit”—*pneumati peripateite*, “walk in the Spirit”—and in the second, using a verb preceded by the accented negative *ou mê*, he answers the first clause with an emphatic assurance that a certain thing will not happen: “you will by no means end up carrying out the dictates of the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.” In mentioning the Spirit, Paul presupposes yet again the letter’s major motif, that of the redemptive invasion God has carried out by sending into the present evil age his Son and the Spirit of his Son. The way in which this motif of divine invasion affects Paul’s use of the imperative verb “lead your daily life” is a crucial matter (Comment #49).

you will not end up carrying out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh. Paul uses the verb *teleô*, “fully to carry out,” “to perform,” in a construction (aorist subjunctive following the emphatic negative *ou mê*) indicating something that definitely will not happen in the future (BDF §365).⁶⁵

the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh. Literally, Paul writes *epithymia sarkos*, a Greek expression rendering the Hebrew *yēšer bāšār*, “the desire of the flesh.”⁶⁶ In Comment #32 and in the Note on 5:13 we have seen that Paul is almost certainly following a locution being used by the Teachers to refer to the Evil Impulse (hence the addition of the adjective “impulsive”). In Comment #49 we will also see that he is going beyond the Teachers, in that, instead of speaking of an entity that is merely internal to the individual human being, Paul refers to a cosmic power arrayed against God, standing, as it does, in the company of other anti-God powers, the cursing voice of the Law, Sin, and the elements of the cosmos. Using the abbreviation “the Flesh” in vv 13, 17 (twice), 19, 24, and partly in 6:8, Paul continues to speak of this malignant power, noting that it can take

up residence in a human community, leading that community into patterns of behavior that destroy it as a corporate entity. Seeing the Evil Impulse in its apocalyptic frame, Paul considers it neither a dictator whose power is so great as to relieve the human being of all responsibility nor a mere inclination that can be easily resisted.

17. *For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. Indeed these two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another, the result being that you do not actually do the very things you wish to do.*

For. Concerning the sense in which Paul can offer v 17 as (part of) the ground of the promise in v 16, see the Appendix to Comment #49.

actively inclined against. The Flesh and the Spirit are mutually exclusive, but not as distinct orbs, as though Flesh were simply the human sphere, and Spirit the sphere of God (contrast Isa 31:3). We may indeed think of them as orbs of *power*, but we must then add that the orb of the Spirit has now invaded and thus penetrated the orb of the Flesh. More fully expressed, the two are *actors* engaged in combat with one another.⁶⁷ That point is clear, and it is essential. In making it, however, Paul composes a sentence whose syntax and word selection will probably have been surprising to the Galatians.

Aside from the present text, there is no instance known to us of the Greek expression *epithymeō kata* and the genitive, lit. “to desire against.”⁶⁸ It is strange, therefore, that Paul should write *hē sarx epithymeī kata tou pneumatos*, lit. “the Flesh desires against the Spirit.” Paul’s meaning was surely grasped, however, by Polycarp, when, drawing on Gal 5:17, he said *pasa epithymia kata tou pneumatos strateuetai*, “every (evil) desire wars against the Spirit” (*Phil.* 5:3). Polycarp, that is, understood Paul to be speaking of a war between (evil) desires and the Spirit. And, sensing the strangeness of Paul’s apparently un-Greek expression, *epithymeō kata*, he changed it to the common locution *strateuomai kata*, “to make war against.”⁶⁹

But how is Paul’s strange expression to be explained? Attention to Hebrew syntax may help. In the Talmud one notes, for example, *b. Ber.* 5a (cf. 61b): “A man should always *incite* the Good Inclination *against* the Evil Impulse.”⁷⁰ It may even be pertinent to note that Rashi (eleventh century) explains the passage in *b. Ber.* 5a in a way similar to that taken in *Pol. Phil.* 5:3: a man “should wage war against the evil inclination.”⁷¹

In short, having accepted the expression *epithymia sarkos*, “Impulsive Desire of the Flesh,” as a way of referring to an anti-God power, Paul moves from the noun *epithymia* to the verb *epithymeō*, and—consciously or unconsciously—he draws on Hebrew syntax in order to paint an emphatically dynamic picture: “The Flesh incites a community against the Spirit ...” Both the Flesh, that is to say, and the Spirit awaken desires; both have their own plans for the human race; and their plans are so thoroughly at odds that they themselves are constantly at war with one another.⁷²

constitute a pair of opposites. Using the verb *antikeimai* in one of its technical senses, “to constitute a pair of opposites (in the Table of Opposites),” Paul continues to speak of the way things really are. For, erroneously considering the Flesh to be opposed by the Law—whereas the two are in fact secret allies—the Teachers and their followers among the Galatians fail to see and to participate in the true war of liberation from the Flesh (cf. 1QS 4:17–18a, 23).⁷³ The fact is that, since the advent of the Spirit, it is the Spirit itself that is opposed to the Flesh (cf. v 16). It is with the Galatians’ baptism, then, that the real war has begun. This war is not, therefore, a timeless anthropological rivalry, a struggle that has been raging in the heart of the human being since the dawn

of time.⁷⁴ On the contrary, it is the apocalyptic battle of the end-time, the war that has been declared by the Spirit, not by the Flesh.

at war with one another. For reasons stated above, this clause is added to the translation, in order to assure that the bellicose dimension of Paul's picture is not overlooked. Note that elsewhere Paul uses the verb *antikeimai* to refer to adversaries and enemies (1 Cor 16:9; Phil 1:28; cf. also 2 Thess 2:4; 1 Tim 1:10; 5:14; Exod 23:22).

the result being that you do not actually do the very things you wish to do. The *hina* clause is consecutive (as it is in 1 Thess 5:4; 2 Cor 1:17; 7:9), stating the result, not the purpose.⁷⁵ The particle *mê* almost certainly negates *poiête* (so most exegetes except Borse).

Given the promise of v 16, one should have expected quite a different closure in this sentence:

For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. These two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another, and the result of this war, commenced by the Spirit, is that the Spirit is in the process of liberating you from the power of the Flesh.

Why does Paul portray instead a decidedly negative result to the Spirit's war of liberation, seeming to indicate that the result of that war is the inability of the Galatians to carry out their intentions? The picture, unusually difficult to understand, has led interpreters in various directions.⁷⁶ In the Appendix to Comment #49 we will see grounds for thinking that Paul refers specifically to an absence of active integrity that characterizes those Galatians who are embracing the message of the Teachers. The "you" to whom he speaks are the members of the Galatian churches who think they can seek rectification in observance of the Law, while remaining followers of Christ (5:4): "Having received the perfectly potent Spirit (4:6; 5:16), but being now led by the Law that is decisively impotent to curb the Flesh (cf. 3:3), you are swept up willy-nilly in the whirlwind of the battle between the Spirit and the Flesh. Lacking active integrity, you find that, when you want to end your dissensions, you succeed only in intensifying them."

18. *if, however, in the daily life of your communities you are being consistently led by the Spirit, then you are not under the authority of the Law.*

however. The particle *de* has here its strongly contrastive force. The portrait of behavioral failure (v 17) does not describe the church when it is led by the Spirit.

in the daily life of your communities you are being consistently led. The verb (present tense) points to a continuous state of affairs, and, being plural, it refers to the communal life of the Galatian churches, insofar as they continue in the truth of the gospel. The lack of integrity portrayed in the final clause of v 17 is overcome when the community of God's new creation is consistently led by the Spirit.

not under the authority of the Law. Repeating a linguistic pattern he has used extensively in Galatians 3 and 4 (on *hypo tina einai*, "to be under the power of," see Comment #39), Paul reminds the Galatians that they are free of the tyranny of the Sinaitic Law, the Law that is observed by some and not observed by others.⁷⁷ Given the work of the Teachers, however, the Galatians are constantly tempted to reenter the world of the Law/the Not-Law. What is startling, then, is the line of thought followed by Paul as he moves from v 18 to vv 19–21a. Because the Galatians are tempted to

reenter the Law's world, and because the Law lacks the power to curb the Flesh, Paul will now speak of the effects of the Flesh, in order to portray the daily life of the community that looks to the Law for its guidance! We could paraphrase v 18: "If, however, in the daily life of your communities you are being consistently led by the Spirit, then you are not under the authority of the Law, the weakling that cannot deliver you from the power of the Flesh." Thus, Paul's portrait of the-Flesh-run-wild is fundamentally as characteristic of the nomistic community as it is of the pagan world!

19. *The effects of the Flesh.* Lit. "the works of the Flesh," an expression that may owe something to a locution preserved in *T. Levi* 19:1—"the works of Beliar" (cf. *Herm. Man.* 6.2.4). With this verse Paul begins two lists, first what he calls typical "effects of the Flesh" (*erga tês sarkos*; vv 19–21a) and second what he terms "the fruit of the Spirit" (*karpos tou pneumatos*; vv 22–23a). Interpreters commonly refer to these lists as catalogues of vices and virtues. This identification seriously distorts Paul's understanding (Comment #49). For Paul speaks neither of vices nor of virtues attributable to individuals, but rather of marks of a community under the influence of the Flesh and marks of a community led by the Spirit.

are clear. In the indicative mood Paul *describes* the effects that the Flesh actually produces, just as in v 22 he will describe the fruit borne by Christ's Spirit (*estin* in both instances).⁷⁸

and those effects are: fornication, vicious immorality, uncontrolled debauchery, 20. the worship of idols, belief in magic, instances of irreconcilable hatred, strife, resentment, outbursts of rage, mercenary ambition, dissensions, separation into divisive cliques, 21. grudging envy of the neighbor's success, bouts of drunkenness, nights of carousing.

fornication, vicious immorality, uncontrolled debauchery. Paul begins his list with three terms used in Jewish polemic against Gentiles. The first sometimes denotes sexual activity with a prostitute, but it can also refer more generally to sexual unfaithfulness in marriage.⁷⁹ The second can take its coloring from forms of violence in sexual activity. The third points to the prideful flaunting of debauchery. The terms are traditional, but, in using them here, Paul may imply that some of the Galatians are tempted to participate in the rites of "holy prostitution" practiced in such cults as that of Cybele.⁸⁰ In any case, he refers to the misuse of the God-given human capacity for engaging in sexual activity.

20. the worship of idols, belief in magic, instances of irreconcilable hatred, strife, resentment, outbursts of rage, mercenary ambition, dissensions, separation into divisive cliques, 21. grudging envy of the neighbor's success. The next group of words begins with what might be considered the source from which the others spring, and thus the essence of which the others are specific instances: the worship of idols. Paul may think quite concretely of the Galatians' former religious practices as worshipers of the Great Mother etc. But he surely has in mind that there are many ways in which people can worship something other than God, and he explicates the effect of such idolatry by referring to developments that destroy community. As he indicates by the second term (*pharmakeia*), one can find a pseudo-peace and security in the black magic of drugs. Or one can deify one's own opinion and person, with the result that one harbors irreconcilable hatred, strife, rage, and jealousy toward persons of other opinions (*echthrai, eris, zêlos, thymos*). Or financial prowess and uncontrolled ambition (*eritheiai*)

can become one's highest good, producing a condescending attitude toward others. Or several people can escalate differences of opinion into dissensions and divisive cliques (*dichostasiai, haireseis*). Or one can embody a form of envious narcissism that is able only grudgingly to enter into the celebration of a neighbor's good fortune (*phthonos*). This last matter is one to which Paul gives special attention, suggesting that he knows it to be a problem in the Galatian churches (*phthonos*, "grudging envy," in v 21 is a motif Paul specifies by the participial expression in v 26, *allêlous phthonountes*, "envying one another").⁸¹

bouts of drunkenness, nights of carousing. Having emphasized developments that are destructive of community, Paul reflects on the way in which the use of wine and liquor can lead one to withdraw into oneself, thus being absent to the neighbor who may be in genuine need. One sees again that Paul's major emphasis in speaking of the Flesh lies on the ways in which that power destroys community life.

and other things of the same sort. Paul takes care that his list not be read as a new kind of law, covering in detail every possibility.

I warn you now, just as I warned you before. Paul's use of the verb *prolegô* in 1 Thess 3:4 and 2 Cor 13:2 suggests the meaning "to warn ahead of time." He insists that, when he was with the Galatians, he issued a warning about future judgment essentially equivalent to that of v 21b (in Qumran an eschatological warning follows a list of vices: 1QS 4:12–14). Why does he do this? He knows that the Galatian communities are presently having severe behavioral problems (v 15). He also knows that the Teachers are blaming these disorders on the inadequacy of the moral instruction he gave the Galatians when he was with them (Comment #33). He therefore reminds the Galatians that, before he moved on from their cities—probably indeed in the course of baptizing them—he employed some such list as the one he has just given, warning the Galatians about the future of those who practice such things.

those who practice things of this sort. What Paul says in 6:2 suffices to show that he does not mean his list to refer to one or two isolated missteps. With the verb *prassô* he speaks of regular activity, hence "practice." The list of vv 19–21a points to the effects of the Flesh that are at the same time deeds practiced by human beings in community.

will not inherit the Kingdom of God. As H. D. Betz points out, v 21b may be a piece of a catechetical tradition that antedates Paul, Jewish-Christian in origin (cf. 1 Cor 6:9–10; Eph 5:3–5). Paul himself is concerned to speak of God's judgment in the church. God has not set the Galatians right, simply to have them enjoy that condition apart from his continuing presence. If some persons wish to have the gift while spitting into the face of the Giver, they incur his judgment. Nothing Paul has said about God's grace implies that God has removed himself from the seat of the absolute sovereign, whose gift of freedom is the gift to be obedient to him in his presence.

22. *By contrast, the fruit borne by the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faith,* 23. *gentleness, self-control.*

By contrast. Using the particle *de* with its contrastive force, Paul indicates that the two lists are totally incompatible; a middle ground (*ana meson*) is excluded.

fruit. We have noted that the Spirit and the Flesh are like one another in that both are supra-human powers. Whereas, however, the Flesh is *somewhat* like the operator of a marionette, pulling certain strings to produce certain effects (*erga*), the Spirit is like

a healthy tree or vine that continuously bears fruit, and this fruit forms a single unit (*karpos* is singular), even though several of its marks can be listed.⁸²

If the list of the effects of the Flesh is somewhat disorganized, reflective of chaos, the list of the marks of the Spirit's fruit is carefully structured, though it, too, is not intended to be exhaustive. There are three groups, each composed of three words.

love, joy, peace. Continuing his emphasis on community life, Paul probably draws the terms for the first three marks of the Spirit's fruit more from Hebraic tradition (Deut 6:4–5; Lev 19:18) than from a traditional list of virtues an individual might seek to possess (note the inclusion of "love toward all the sons of truth" as a community characteristic in Qumran; 1QS 4:5; and cf. *Barn.* 19:2 and *Did.* 1:2). Paul does not speak of a romantic emotion between two persons, but rather of the kind of love that was defined by Christ when he gave his life "for us." Thus, the love that is now a communal characteristic of daily life in the church as community is the love that has its ultimate source and pattern in God (5:6, 13, 14; 2:20).

Few aspects of the picture Paul is drawing are as important as the fact that, in the warfare commenced by the Spirit against the Flesh, the violence that is a major characteristic of the Flesh (vv 19–21a) is not met by a greater violence, but rather by love, joy, and peace.⁸³

One sees this kind of love when one encounters communal joy and peace (1:3; cf. 1 Cor 13:4–6; Rom 14:17). One sees it when one meets the kind of patience, kindness, and generosity that reflects God's:

patience, kindness, generosity. The first of these, *makrothymia*, is sometimes understood to be a virtue along with such other virtues as gentleness (*epieikeia*; 1 Clem. 13:1) and kindness (*chrêstotês*; 2 Cor 6:6) and self-control (*egkrateia*; *Barn.* 2:2). For Paul all three of these terms are communal marks of the Spirit's fruit because they are characteristics of the God who sent the Spirit (Rom 2:4; cf. *Letter of Aristeas* 188).⁸⁴

faith, 23. gentleness, self-control. One recalls that in 3:2, 5 Paul referred to the gospel of Christ as the power that kindled the Galatians' faith, bringing about their reception of the Spirit (Comment #31). In that instance one could refer both to faith and to the receipt of the Spirit as the fruit of the gospel. But the interrelationships among the gospel, faith, and the Spirit are complex and rich. The gospel link between faith and the Spirit is also characteristic of the continuing life of the Galatians' churches. For faith is more than a onetime occurrence. Like gentle humility, faith is a mark of the fruit that the Spirit is bearing in the daily life of the community of Christ.⁸⁵

While several terms in the list of the effects of the Flesh indicate lack of control—uncontrolled debauchery, outbursts of rage, bouts of drunkenness—Paul fundamentally transforms the opposite motif of self-control by referring to it as a mark of the Spirit's fruit. In fact, that transformation is a key to the way in which Paul understands what he has listed in vv 19–21a as the effects of the Flesh. His mentioning uncontrolled debauchery, for example, does not function, in the first instance, as an exhortation for the individual to exercise greater self-control. For the strength to exercise self-control comes only in community, and specifically in the community in which the Spirit is bearing its fruit. Here again, at the climax of vv 19–23a, Paul transforms lists of vices and virtues into something fundamentally different—marks of a community under the sway of the Flesh contrasted with marks of a community under the leading of the Spirit. Self-control is known only in the latter community.

The Law does not forbid things of this kind! Following expected form, Paul has earlier closed his list of the effects of the Flesh with an eschatological threat (v 21b). Tradition would now suggest that he end the list of the Spirit's fruit with an eschatological promise, referring to the future of those who are led by the Spirit (cf. 1QS 4:6–8). Later, in Gal 6:7–8, Paul adheres to the expected form, linking Flesh to threat and Spirit to promise:

For whatever a person sows is exactly what he will reap. One who sows to his own flesh will reap corruption from the Flesh; but one who sows to the Spirit will reap eternal life from the Spirit.

Why does Paul not follow this form in 5:23, closing the list of the Spirit's fruit with the promise that those led by the Spirit will reap a rich harvest in the future?

To some extent he does follow the traditional form, but he tailors his promising assurance to the Galatians' need. Hearing Paul's letter, the Teachers will certainly threaten the Galatians: "Once again Paul is misleading you with his antinomian message! Following the guidance of the Spirit without observing the Law will lead to the disaster of Law-less patterns of life." Knowing that the Teachers will issue this threat, Paul is now concerned to put the Galatians' minds at ease:

Let me assure you, dear Galatians, that the fruit-bearing Spirit will never lead your communities into patterns of behavior that are against the Law.

This assurance will scarcely have silenced the Teachers. They will have said, one supposes, that, although what Paul has listed as marks of the Spirit's fruit are not violations of the Law, his consistent polemic against circumcision shows that the Spirit of which he speaks *does* lead the church into marked infractions of the Law.

In his assurance, however, Paul presupposes what he has said about the whole of the Law in 5:14. Loosed from its paired mode of existence (circumcision/uncircumcision etc.), the promissory and guiding Law of love (the Law of Christ; 6:2) has *become* the whole of the Law. In light of that fact the Spirit that bears the fruit of love will never lead the church into patterns of behavior that are against the Law.

24. *those who belong to Christ.* In the broad context—see especially 5:5 and 5:17—this expression has about it the note of exclusivity: "those who belong to Christ and to him alone" (cf. 3:27–29).

have crucified the Flesh, together with its passions and desires. The Flesh, as a cosmic power, reveals its strength by having its own passions and desires (vv 19–21a), and by using them to acquire a base of military operations in communities of human beings. It arouses not only desires (note *epithymia* in 5:16) but also passions that destroy community, both of these being amply exemplified in 5:19–21a. New is the picture in which those who belong to Christ are not being crucified (Comment #30), but are, rather, carrying out a crucifixion, thereby vanquishing the Flesh.⁸⁶ The resultant vista brings together three pictures that Paul has sketched in earlier parts of the letter.

First, there is the picture in which Paul presents Christ's cross not as defeat, but rather as victory over the curse of the Law (3:13). Second, there is the picture in which Paul portrays, in promissory form, the victory of the Spirit over the Flesh (5:16). And third, there is Paul's portrayal of the church's participation in the Spirit's victorious war

against the Flesh (5:16–23). Bringing these pictures together, Paul now says that the superior power in that war can be identified not only as the Spirit but also as the cross. The church, that is to say, participates victoriously in the Spirit’s apocalyptic war by participating in the victorious cross of Christ. Several dimensions of this new vista are striking.

In presenting it Paul emphasizes a point he has had in mind all along: The Spirit that is locked in combat with the Flesh—and that achieves its victory by bearing the fruit of love, joy, and peace in the daily life of the church—is not an amorphous spirit running here and there in the world. It is the Spirit of Christ, and specifically the Spirit of the crucified Christ. Being the Spirit of Christ, it is permanently bound up with the real and earthly event of Christ’s crucifixion.⁸⁷ In a word, the Spirit leads its column of soldiers to victory over the Flesh not via observance of the Law (the secret ally of the Flesh!), but rather via their corporate participation in the cross.

For this very reason, however, one is surprised to hear Paul say that it is the believers themselves who have crucified the Flesh. One might have expected him to say that it was in Christ’s own crucifixion that the Flesh suffered its death (just as the curse of the Law suffered there its defeat; 3:13). Or Paul could have extended the picture of war painted in 5:13–23 by promising that at the end, with the arrival of God’s kingdom (v 21), the Spirit will bring its work to completion in a total triumph over the Flesh. Instead, he says that the vanquishing of that enemy is a deed of the believers themselves.

Moreover, the victory of which Paul speaks does not lie in the future; it has already been accomplished—those who belong to Christ “have crucified the Flesh.” This temporal note provides a key to Paul’s affirmation. It was at some point in the past that, as Christ’s own, the Galatians vanquished the Flesh, nailing it to the cross (to borrow an expression from Col 2:14). Precisely when did they do that?

We can answer the question by going back to the beginning of v 24. As we have noted above, Paul’s use of the expression “those who belong to Christ” indicates that it was in their baptism that the Galatians crucified the Flesh. Just as their baptism into Christ gave them a new Lord, so it involved a decisive separation from the Flesh, a separation so radical as to amount to the death of the Flesh, whose effects are pictured in 5:19–21a.⁸⁸

That victory was decisive, but it is paradoxically incomplete. To attend to the whole of 5:13–26 is to hear Paul speaking both of the past victory in baptism (the present verse) and of the constant reenacting of that victory in the daily life of the community (5:16 and 5:25). It is an instance of the famous Pauline “already” and “not yet.” We return to the fact that Paul refers here to crucifixion. The cross is for Paul (a) a real and victorious event accomplished by Christ in the past, (b) an event in which believers have participated at their baptism, both by being themselves crucified (2:19–20) and by crucifying the Flesh, and (c) an event which they repeat every day, as—in their daily life as communities marked by mutual service—they are led by the Spirit of the crucified one to utter the “Abba! Father!” to God (cf. 2 Cor 4:10–12).

In 5:13, having warned the Galatians not to allow their freedom to be turned into a military base of operations for the Flesh, active as a cosmic power, Paul issues an exhortation: “On the contrary, through love be genuine servants of one another.” Then, using the indicative mood in v 14, he speaks in a descriptive and decisively affirmative way about the Law:

For the whole of the Law has been brought to completion in one sentence: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself!”

Given the fact that Paul has previously painted for the Galatians a strongly negative and even malignant picture of the Law—regarding the term *nomos*, the sole formal exception in earlier parts of the letter is 4:21b—one is astonished to find him saying in 5:14 that the Law is positively related to the life of the church. How is this surprising assertion to be understood?

A simple observation brings that question into focus, even though it does not itself provide an answer. Paul’s affirmative reference in 5:14 to “the whole of the Law” has its *literary* parallel in 5:3, where, speaking with equal clarity of “the whole of the Law,” Paul continues the letter’s malignant portrait of the Law. Is there a true paradox here, the whole of the Law in 5:14 being the same as the whole of the Law in 5:3, so that Paul both denies and affirms the Law’s pertinence to the life of the church?⁹⁰ Or is there some sense in which Paul speaks in 5:3 and 5:14 of genuinely different aspects or voices of the Law?

The Whole of the Law in Gal 5:3

In the cautionary paragraph made up of 5:2–12 Paul focuses one of his warnings on both the obligation and the danger attached to observance of the Law, when (as in the case of Gentiles) that observance is thought to be salvific:

I testify once more to everyone who gets himself circumcised, that he is obligated to observe the whole of the Law (*holon ton nomon poiêsai*). Speaking to those of you who think you are being rectified by the Law, I say: You have nothing more to do with Christ; you have fallen out of the realm of grace (Gal 5:3–4).

The identity of the Law in 5:3 is easily discerned. Continuing, as we have noted, the negative portrait he has drawn in virtually all of his previous references to the Law (*nomos*), Paul speaks in 5:3 of the Sinaitic Law that is inexorably linked with observance (*erga nomou, poieô ton nomon*, etc.), the Law that—in Galatians—pronounces a curse on all of humanity (3:10), the Law that speaks a false promise (3:12; Lev 18:5), the Law that pronounced its climactic curse on God’s Christ (Gal 3:13), the Law that was instituted at Sinai by angels acting in God’s absence (3:19–20), the Law that holds the whole of humanity under its power, being, together with the Not-Law, one of the enslaving elements of the cosmos (4:3, 5, 21a, 24; Comments #38, #39, and #41).

Two further observations will prove to be important. First, by its nature, the Sinaitic Law is plural: it consists of numerous commandments, each of which must be observed, once the life of observance is commenced in the rite of circumcision (note not only 5:3 but also the plural references to commandments in 3:10 and 3:12). Second, for the Galatians to seek their rectification by taking up the observance of these many

commandments is for them to place themselves again under the enslaving power of this plural Law, thus being separated from Christ (5:4; cf. 4:9).⁹¹

The Whole of the Law in Gal 5:14

The linguistic fact that in 5:14 Paul speaks again of “the whole of the Law” need not mean that he intends in 5:14 to paint a picture of the Law in all regards the same as the one he has painted in 5:3.⁹² Indeed, there are unmistakable differences between these two pictures. How are these differences to be interpreted?

(1) *In Gal 5:3 and 5:14 Paul gives different, dialectically related portraits of the Sinaitic Law.* This is the dominant interpretation, and certainly the one with which to begin.⁹³ For, as we have seen, Paul refers in both verses to “the whole of the Law,” giving the Galatians no hint by that expression itself that he intends to speak of two different Laws, or even of two distinguishable voices of one Law. Some interpreters have said, then, that the significant difference between 5:3 and 5:14 lies simply in the change of verbs: Whereas in 5:3 Paul speaks of *observing* (*poieô*) the whole of the Sinaitic Law (all of its many commandments), in 5:14 he says that one *fulfills* (*plêroô*) the whole of the Sinaitic Law by keeping the single commandment of neighbor love, Lev 19:18 being the Law’s *essence*.⁹⁴ Following this route, interpreters commonly speak of Gal 5:14 as a “reduction” of the many into the one. Or, alternatively, drawing either on rabbinic data or on Rom 13:9, they say that Paul is here “summarizing” the plural Law in a single commandment.⁹⁵

As we proceed, and especially in Appendices A and B, attached to the present Comment, we will see reasons for questioning this common reading. And, in any case, before turning from Galatians either to rabbinic materials or to Romans, would it not be wise to ask whether the differences between the portraits of the Law in 5:3 and 5:14 are well explained by passages in Galatians itself?

(2) *In Gal 5:14 Paul refers to a voice of the Law that is distinct from the voice of the Sinaitic Law to which he has referred in 5:3.* As we will see below, earlier passages in the letter strongly suggest that Paul considers the Law to have more than one voice (4:21; 3:8, 10–12, 15–18).⁹⁶ With regard to 5:3 and 5:14, then, one is led to propose an hypothesis that can be tested as to its heuristic power:

Whereas Paul refers in 5:3 to the voice of the Sinaitic Law that curses and enslaves (3:10, 13, 19; 4:3–5, 21a, 24–25), he speaks in 5:14 of the voice of the original, pre-Sinaitic Law that articulates God’s own mind (3:8; 4:21b).⁹⁷

Even at first glance, one sees four motifs in 5:14 that begin to provide support for this hypothesis.

(a) *Positive.* As we have noted, Paul’s reference to the Law (*nomos*) in 5:14 is the first formally affirmative one in the whole of the letter, except for 4:21b.⁹⁸ The Law of 5:14 does not have a voice that curses, does not make a false promise, and does not separate one from Christ. On the contrary, this Law speaks in such a way as to be positively related to daily life in the church, a characteristic one would expect in Galatians of the original, Abrahamic Law that speaks God’s own mind (3:8; 4:21b; cf. 3:11).

(b) *Brought to completion.* The change of verbs from *poieô*, “observe,” to *pelêrôtai*, “has been brought to completion,” involves much more than a substitution of “fulfill” for

“observe.” In the Note on 5:14 we have seen that, taking the perfect tense of the verb *pelêrôtai* at face value, one finds Paul referring in this verse to *an event in the history of the Law*. The whole of the Law *has been brought to completion*, and this event in its history has now caused the Law to be pertinent to the daily life of the church. After a close reading of 4:21–5:1, one can scarcely imagine Paul’s saying this in Galatians of the enslaving voice of the Sinaitic Law (Comment #45). It is easy, however, to think that he says it of the voice of the Abrahamic Law that speaks in God’s behalf (again 3:8; 4:21b).

(c) *Singular*. The reading thus suggested receives further support in Paul’s use of the motif of singularity. One can say immediately that the Law of 5:14 is smaller than the Law of 5:3, lacking at least the commandments of circumcision, dietary laws, and regulations for holy times. Far more may be involved, however, than comparative difference in size. In 5:14 Paul speaks of a Law that has been brought to completion “*in one sentence*” (*en henî logô*). He thus connects this Law emphatically, not with a small number of commandments, but rather with the motif of singularity.

To be sure, as we have seen, numerous interpreters have credited Paul with “summarizing” the Sinaitic Law. But we have expressed doubts about this reading, noting Paul’s reference to an *event* in the history of the Law. Could it be, then, that in 5:14 Paul thinks of a Law that was singular at its inception, its singularity being now revealed and/or climactically restored at the juncture at which it has been brought to completion?

Singularity is precisely a characteristic one would expect in Galatians of the Law that, in the time of Abraham, uttered God’s own promise. In 3:8 Paul says specifically that what the scripture preached ahead of time to Abraham was not a series of commandments, but rather the word of the promissory gospel, “In you all the Gentiles will be blessed.” And in 3:10–18 Paul speaks, on the one hand, of the plural commandments of the cursing, Sinaitic Law, and on the other hand, of the singular promise spoken by God 430 years earlier, both to Abraham and to Abraham’s singular seed, Christ.⁹⁹

(d) *Sentence rather than commandment*. When Paul says that the Law has been brought to completion in one “*sentence*,” he apparently avoids the term “commandment” (*entolê*), thus connecting this Law with one sentence, rather than with many commandments. Noting this locution, one is yet more confident that, unlike the Sinaitic Law of 5:3, the Law of 5:14 does not consist of commandments at all.¹⁰⁰

A convincing reading of Paul’s reference to the Law in 5:14 will take into account all four of these motifs, and other factors as well. We return, then, to the testing of the hypothesis proposed above, noting especially the references to passages in Galatians 3 and 4:

Whereas Paul refers in 5:3 to the voice of the Sinaitic Law that curses and enslaves (3:10, 13, 19; 4:3–5, 21a, 24–25), he speaks in 5:14 of the voice of the original, pre-Sinaitic Law that articulates God’s own mind (3:8; 4:21b).¹⁰¹

Does a close reading of those earlier passages support this hypothesis?

The Law Has Two Voices¹⁰²

(1) *The Law in its paired existence with the Not-Law, that is to say the Sinaitic Law, consisting of numerous commandments.*¹⁰³ As we have seen, Paul's negative reference to the Law in 5:3 is no surprise. Before that point, he has twenty-five times spoken of the Law in its paired existence with the Not-Law, thus referring to the Sinaitic Law (4:24–25) that curses and enslaves (note especially the cumulative effect of analyses given in Comments #34, #38, #39, and #41).¹⁰⁴

(2) *The Law prior to—and, at a later time, loosed from—its paired existence with the Not-Law, that is to say the original, pre-Sinaitic Law, consisting of God's single, promising word.* Paul's positive reference to the Law in 5:14 is indeed surprising, but a close reading of Galatians 3 and 4 shows that, like the negative reference in 5:3, it has its precedent, even if less obvious.

In 4:21 Paul tells the Galatians, in effect, that the Law has two voices. The Galatians can come *under* the Law, thereby being enslaved by the power of its cursing voice (4:21a; cf. 3:10), or they can *hear* the voice with which the Law speaks of the birth of circumcision-free churches among the Gentiles, thereby sensing their own true identity (4:21b, 22, 27, 31).

Taking our bearings from 4:21b, we can also retrace certain aspects of the argument of Gal 3:6–4:7. We have seen that, in constructing that initial exegetical argument, Paul draws a sharp contrast between two voices, the blessing/promising voice of God and the cursing/enslaving voice of the Law (Comment #34). Equally important for the present inquiry is the observation that in 4:21 Paul finds precisely the same contrasting voices *in* the Law. Thus, he does not link the Law monolithically with the curse. On the contrary, he hears both the promising voice and the cursing voice in the large complex of the Law.¹⁰⁵ Not only in 4:21b but also in 3:8, Paul refers to what we have called the original, pre-Sinaitic Law as an entity with a voice that does not curse, uttering, as it does, God's promise to Abraham. Thus, prior to the Sinaitic genesis of the Law/the Not-Law as one of the enslaving cosmic elements (3:17, 19; 4:3), there was the promissory voice of the Law, the voice with which, speaking in God's behalf, the Law (as *hê graphê*) preached the gospel ahead of time to Abraham (and to Abraham's seed; 3:16) in the form not of commandments, but rather of the promise: "In you all the Gentiles *will be blessed*" (Gal 3:8; Gen 12:3; Gal 3:16–18).¹⁰⁶

This original voice also pronounced the promise that is a statement of God's rectifying good news—"the one who is rectified by faith *will live*" (Gal 3:11; Hab 2:4)—proving itself thereby to be the singular, true promise that is altogether distinct from the false promise of the Law in its plural and paired existence (Gal 3:12; Lev 18:5). Moreover, the contradiction between Hab 2:4 and Lev 18:5 (Gal 3:11–12; Comment #35), taken together with the polarity between Gal 4:21a and 4:21b, shows conclusively that, in writing Galatians 3 and 4, Paul has in mind a Law with two quite distinct voices, one false and cursing, and one—representing God—true and promising. Thus, both from 3:11–12 and from 4:21, the attentive reader learns—before coming to 5:3 and 5:14—that, after hearing the promissory voice of the Law testify successfully *against* the Law's cursing voice, Paul cannot consider the Law to be a monolith.¹⁰⁷

Does the distinction between the Law's two voices in Galatians 3 and 4 illuminate Paul's negative and positive references to the Law in 5:3 and 5:14? That question can be profitably pursued by recalling the verb Paul uses in 5:14. As we have seen, he speaks there of an *event* in the Law's history, identifying the Law that is pertinent to the

church's daily life as the Law that *has been brought to completion*. We may ask, then, whether this reference to an event in the Law's history may be closely related to the distinction between the voice of the Sinaitic, cursing Law (3:10, e.g.) and the voice of the original, Abrahamic, promising Law (3:8; 4:21b). And since, with its original voice, the Law spoke its promise both to Abraham and to Abraham's seed, Christ (3:16), we may also ask whether the distinction between these two voices may be related to the advent of Christ, his advent being the event that has enacted that distinction.

Christ and the Law's Two Voices¹⁰⁸

In Galatians the Law's relationship to Christ is a subject best approached by noting, first, that the Law has done something to Christ, as we have begun to sense above (see also Comment #34), and, second, that Christ has also done something to the Law.

(1) *What the Law did to Christ*. In its Old-Age, paired existence with the Not-Law, the plural, Sinaitic Law formed the inimical orb into which Christ came. Thus, like every other human being, Christ himself was born into the state of enslavement under the power of that Law (4:4; cf. Phil 2:7). Together with all others, Christ was subject to the curse of the Law in its plural mode of existence (Gal 3:10; 4:3). But in his case there was also a head-on and climactic collision with that curse. As Christ hung on the cross, dying for us (1:4), the Law pronounced a specific curse on him (3:13; Deut 21:23), doing that with the malignant power it possessed as one of the enslaving, paired elements of the old cosmos.

(2) *What Christ did to the Law*. Nothing in Galatians suggests that—unlike the very elements of the cosmos—the Law has escaped the influence of Christ. Quite the reverse. When, then, we turn the question around, asking what Christ did to the Law, we see three motifs that are both distinct from and closely related to one another.¹⁰⁹

(a) *Christ has defeated the cursing voice of the Law*. In the collision between Christ and the cursing voice of the Sinaitic Law, Christ was distinctly the victor (3:13; 4:5; 5:1). In his crucifixion Christ bore the Law's curse for us, thus vanquishing the cursing voice of the Law, confining it—properly speaking—to the era before his arrival (3:17).¹¹⁰ Christ's victory over the Law's cursing voice is, to a large extent, the good news that permeates the whole of the letter (cf. Col 2:14–15).

(b) *Christ has enacted—and is enacting—the promise of the Law's original voice, being the seed to whom, along with Abraham, the promise was spoken*.

There was, first, the promise of the Law's original voice in the time of Abraham. The message that the Law (as *hê graphê*) preached ahead of time to Abraham did not consist of numerous commandments, or even of one commandment, such as covenantal circumcision.¹¹¹ In the time of Abraham the Law consisted solely of God's promise, and, for that reason, it preached nothing other than the singular gospel of Christ himself (3:8). For Christ is the singular seed of Abraham, and there is no gospel other than his (3:16; 1:6). From its Abrahamic inception, then, the original voice of the Law was positively and closely related to Christ, and, from its inception, this voice was the singular, evangelical promise, not a series of commandments. By the same token, the true promise pronounced in Hab 2:4 was and is the promise of the gospel of the Christ who is now making things right by his faith and by the faith that his faith elicits (3:11).¹¹²

There is, second, the promise of the Law's original voice in the present time. These indications themselves speak of the present connection between the promissory voice of the Law and Christ. One is not surprised to see, then, that the circumcision-free mission, promised in the original, covenantal Law of Genesis 16–21 and Isa 54:1, is the mission in which the gospel of Christ is presently marching into the Gentile world, giving birth to churches among the Gentiles and freeing them from the cursing voice of the Law/the Not-Law (Gal 4:21–5:1). In that mission the gospel of Christ has unleashed the promissory voice of the Law (4:21b), affirming and enacting its distinction from the Law's cursing voice (4:21a), and thus restoring it to the singularity it had in the time of Abraham.

(c) *Christ has brought to completion the imperative of the Law's original voice, the imperative that provides guidance for the everyday life of the church.* We can now return to 5:14, noting again Paul's use of the perfect-passive verb: "the whole of the Law *has been brought to completion.*" In light of indications earlier in the letter that Christ has done something to the Law—defeating its cursing voice and enacting its promissory voice—we may ask whether Paul words 5:14 as he does because he is still thinking of Christ's effect on the Law. Specifically, does Paul think that, in his loving death for us, Christ acted in a way that has had *two* positive effects on the Law? Does Paul think, first, that Christ enacted the *promise* of the Law's original voice, the promise that is now *giving birth* to circumcision-free churches among the Gentiles (3:8; 4:21b)? And does he think, second, that Christ has brought to completion the *imperative* of the Law's original voice, the imperative that provides guidance for the *everyday life* of those churches, precisely in the form of neighbor love (5:14)?¹¹³

The second of those questions is the important one for our understanding of 5:14. It is also a question to which we can attend by posing yet another. Precisely where is Lev 19:18 in Paul's view of the Law? We can be certain that for Paul Lev 19:18 is part of the original Law that speaks in God's behalf. It is therefore not one of the commandments that make up the plural and cursing Law of Sinai (5:3).¹¹⁴ We can see that in form Lev 19:18 is a commandment (belonging literarily to the Sinaitic legislation), but *Paul* clearly does not consider it to be such, almost certainly avoiding the word "commandment" when he refers to it as a "sentence." We can also see, however, that in form Lev 19:18 is not a promise that can easily be equated with, or subsumed under, the Abrahamic promise, to which Paul refers in Galatians 3 and 4.¹¹⁵ Three factors suggest, however, that, in his view, Lev 18:5—along with the Abrahamic promise—belongs to *the original—pre-Sinaitic—Law* that articulates God's mind:

Like God's promise to Abraham (Gen 12:3; Gal 3:8; 4:21b), Lev 19:18 is a word of God pertaining to the circumcision-free churches made up of former Gentiles. Those churches are to *hear* both the promise of Gen 12:3 and the guiding imperative of Lev 19:18.

Like God's promise, Lev 19:18 is a *singular sentence*, not a series of commandments.

Like God's promise, the singular sentence of Lev 19:18 is closely *related to Christ*. In restoring the Law—silencing its cursing voice and enacting its promissory voice—Christ has also brought to completion the power of the Law to speak again the

imperative that proves now to be God's guidance for the daily life of the church, the imperative of Lev 19:18 being an echo of Christ's love.¹¹⁶

Thus, the harmonious relationship between the Law's promise and the Law's imperative is a matter Paul senses only after the advent of Christ. That is to say, in Christ Paul sees two things about the original Law. That pre-Sinaitic and thus pre-religious Law was both a *singular word of promise*—pointing to the *birth* of circumcision-free churches among the Gentiles—and a *singular word of imperative guidance*—pointing to the *daily life* of those churches. Regarding the latter, with the main clause of 5:14—“For the whole of the Law has been brought to completion”—Paul speaks of the deed of Christ that has *caused* the Law's imperative to be addressed to the church.

To recapitulate, then, in Galatians the promise of Gen 12:3 (Gal 3:8) and the imperative of Lev 19:18 (Gal 5:14) constitute the voice of the original Law of God. As accents of that voice, this promise and this imperative have waited, so to speak, for the time when Christ would decisively differentiate them from the accents of the cursing voice of the Sinaitic Law. And when Christ carried out that differentiation, he brought the Law to completion, restoring the promissory and guiding accents of the Law to their original singularity, indeed to their original unity.

The motif of unity requires emphasis. Following Paul's own manner of speech in 4:21, we have referred repeatedly to distinct voices of the Law. We have also said that the original voice of the Law is itself complex, being made up of two accents, promise (3:8) and imperative (5:14). Illuminating as we have found that way of speaking to be, however, it has limitations. For Paul himself does not follow it in 5:14. With emphasis he refers there to “the whole of the Law,” not to one or more of its voices and accents. It must be, then, that, when Christ enacted the Law's promise (4:21b), and when he brought to completion the Law's imperative (5:14), he profoundly singularized the Law, thus restoring it to its original form. That is to say, not only did Christ silence the Law's cursing and plural voice. He also caused the Law's promise and the Law's singular imperative to become—in their coalescence—the unified whole of the Law that speaks in God's behalf.¹¹⁷ Nothing God promises and nothing God demands is absent from this whole Law. For Christ's complex effect on the Law is the crucial, restorative, and all-determining event in the history of the Law (5:14).

It is now clear that we are speaking, in fact, of the Law “in the hands of Christ.” Even prior to our detailed consideration of that expression (Comment #50), we can add, then, one more word about the way in which this promissory and guiding Law is related to Christ.

This Law is permanently secondary to Christ. One recalls Paul's exhortation in 5:13b: “do not allow freedom to be turned into a military base of operations for the Flesh, active as a cosmic power.” One also recalls that the primary ground of that exhortation is Christ's deed of liberation—“For [by Christ] you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters” (5:13a repeats 5:1). That loving and liberating deed of Christ, then, stands at the foundation of the loving pattern of mutual service in the church of God (2:20). In 5:14 Paul can *add* an assertion about the Law. Knowing, that is, that the Galatians are now concerned to be positively related to the Law, Paul can give them a word of needed assurance (cf. 5:23b): The pattern of mutual and loving service in daily life is positively related to the Law, *because* Christ himself has brought the whole of the

Law to completion in the one imperative sentence of Lev 19:18: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself!”

Thus, the Law of love written in Lev 19:18 does not at all stand by itself. In the life of the church this Law is specified by its relation to Christ (6:2; Comment #50). It follows, then, that mutually loving behavior in the church is not a matter of *Law and order*, the former being the parent of the latter. It is a matter of *order and Law*, in the sense that the order of Christ’s love proves to be the foundation for—indeed, proves to be—the Law of Christ (6:2).¹¹⁸

One question remains. If the reading presented above is what Paul intended when he wrote 5:14, why did he not make it easier for the Galatians to grasp it? In what we think of as a plain manner of speech, he could have avoided altogether a reference to the Law, speaking instead of Lev 19:18 as God’s promissory guidance:

Through love be genuine servants of one another. For the whole of God’s *promissory guidance* (*hê agôgê tês epaggelias tou theou*) has been brought to completion by Christ in the form of a single guiding sentence (*logos agôgos*), an imperative that reflects Christ’s love for us: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself!” (Lev 19:18).¹¹⁹

We can scarcely doubt that such a statement would have made things much plainer to the Galatians.¹²⁰

By referring to promissory guidance, and by thus avoiding a positive reference to the Law, however, Paul would have played into the hands of the Teachers. For in effect, he would have given them the right to say that his gospel cuts his Gentile churches altogether loose from the guidance of the Law. Paul takes pains, therefore, to preclude that reading of his gospel, even at the expense of simplicity. One recalls that in 4:21 Paul did not write,

Tell me, you who wish to live under the power of the *Law!* Do you hear what the *promise* says?

Instead, presupposing that the *Law’s* promising voice has now been distinguished from the *Law’s* cursing voice, he wrote,

Tell me, you who wish to live under the power of the *Law!* Do you really hear what the *Law* says?

Similarly, in 5:3 and 5:14, Paul speaks first of the plural and enslaving Law of Sinai and then of the singular and guiding Law that is God’s own imperative. It is in this way that Paul is able to refer in 5:14 to *the Law* apart from which the church does not live its daily life. He insists only that that Law, far from consisting of many commandments, is the single, guiding word of God that—together with God’s powerful promise—has now become the whole of the Law for the church.¹²¹

Appendix A to Comment #48: Gal 5:14 and Traditions About Summarizing the Law

Is Gal 5:14 illumined by Jewish and/or Jewish-Christian traditions relating the whole Law to a single commandment or principle?

A Point of Entry into the Law

Does Paul refer in Gal 5:14 to the singular Law in order to identify a point of entry into the Law of Moses? The tradition in which a scholar identifies a point of entry into the Law eventually made its way into rabbinic literature.¹²² Among numerous rabbinic examples, one passage is especially revealing. In the famous story recounting a Gentile's visits to Shammai and Hillel (ca. the time of Jesus) there are significant references to "the whole Law":

On another occasion it happened that a certain heathen came before Shammai and said to him, "Make me a proselyte, on condition that you teach me the whole Law (*kōl hattôrâ kûllâ*) while I stand on one foot." Thereupon Shammai repulsed him with the builder's cubit which was in his hand. When he went before Hillel, he said to him, "What is hateful to you, do not to your neighbor. That is the whole Law (*kōl hattôrâ kûllâ*), while everything else is commentary. Go and learn it" (*b. Shabb. 31a*).¹²³

Here, Hillel uses the expression "the whole Law" in the course of identifying for a would-be proselyte the point of entry into the Law. He provides, that is, a pedagogically effective introduction to the Law in its entirety. For, as he explicitly says, "everything else" is to be learned and observed no less than that point of entry. Is it perhaps Paul's intention in Gal 5:14 to identify for the Galatians the door through which a Gentile can enter into the whole of the Mosaic Law?

The formal similarity between Paul's assertion and Hillel's comment could cause one momentarily to entertain that possibility, in spite of the differences between 5:14 and 5:3 noted earlier. In fact, however, that reading is altogether precluded by the context of Gal 5:14.¹²⁴ As we have seen, nothing is clearer from previous parts of the letter than Paul's sharp negation of circumcision, the food regulations, and the stipulations for holy times. He can scarcely be citing Lev 19:18, then, as a point through which the Galatian Gentiles are to enter into the whole of the Law, thereafter observing all of its commandments.¹²⁵

A Great Principle in the Law

Does Paul refer in Gal 5:14 to a (or the) great principle in the Law of Moses, identifying it as Lev 19:18?¹²⁶ It is again the form of Paul's assertion that might lead one to this interpretation, for he says that the *whole* of the Law has been brought to completion "in *one* sentence." We are reminded of the fact that, given the large number of commandments in the Law, some rabbis searched for one underlying principle or a few underlying principles, with a result somewhat similar to that reached in the quest for a point of entry into the Law.¹²⁷ One of the traditions about Rabbi Akiba (ca. 50–135 c.e.) calls for citation, not least because of its reference to Lev 19:18. About that verse in Leviticus, Akiba is said to have remarked,

That is a great principle in the Torah (*Gen. Rab. 24:7*).

Just as Hillel identifies a point of entry into the Law in order to lead a neophyte into the observance of all of it, so (with other rabbis) Akiba speaks of a “great principle *in the Torah*” (*kělāl gādól battôrâ*) in order to facilitate the observance of all other parts of it.¹²⁸

The same motif dominates the Jewish-Christian traditions in which Deut 6:4–5 is linked with Lev 19:18 to form a kind of double commandment that can serve as the principle of the Law. The tradition in Luke 10:25–28 is particularly instructive:

Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” And he (Jesus) said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this and you will live” (NRSV).

The form of this tradition suggests that the Jewish Christians who preserved it may have known the combination of Deut 6:4–5 and Lev 19:18 to be a Jewish formulation antedating Jesus.¹²⁹ In any case, for these Jewish Christians the issue was that of the comparative importance *among* the many commandments. There was no thought of deleting or negating some of them.¹³⁰ With the *Shema* and Lev 19:18 identified as a kind of basic principle, the other elements of the Law could be put in order of importance, its being assumed that all are to be observed (cf. the rabbinic “light” and “heavy” commandments, *each* of which is to be observed; e.g., *m. ’Abot* 2:1).¹³¹

Thus, both the rabbinic quest for a great principle underlying the whole of the Law and the similar Jewish-Christian tradition just cited are, in intention, worlds removed from Paul’s assertion in Gal 5:14. Given Paul’s pointed polemic against circumcision, the food laws, and stipulations for holy times, as noted above, it is clear that the apostle does not function in a rabbinic manner, citing Lev 19:18 as a broad principle, a *kělāl*, that is to be distinguished from a *pěrâṭ*, an individual and specific rule. Nor does he think of reducing the numerous commandments to one commandment, thus providing in that sense a “summary” of the Law.¹³² Indeed, in formulating the assertion of 5:14 Paul does not even think of a Law that contains commandments, as we have already noted.¹³³

We must conclude that Paul’s intention in wording the assertion of 5:14 is foreign to the intentions reflected in the traditions displayed above. Indeed, a comparison of his assertion with those traditions is helpful precisely in showing us what Paul does not have in mind. The apostle is concerned to speak neither of a point of entry into the Law nor of a principle under which the detailed rules of the Law can be arranged as specific instances.¹³⁴

Appendix B to Comment #48: 1 Cor 7:19 and Rom 13:8–10

1 Cor 7:19

In Gal 5:6 and 6:15 Paul employs a formula with three members, the first two being negated, the third affirmed. The formula may be his own creation; he uses it twice in Galatians and once in 1 Corinthians:

Gal 5:6

Gal 6:15

1 Cor 7:19

- (a) Neither circumcision
- (a) Neither circumcision
- (a) Circumcision is nothing
- (b) nor uncircumcision accomplishes
- (b) nor uncircumcision is anything at all.
- (b) and uncircumcision is nothing.
- (c) The real power is faith actively working through love.
- (c) What is something is the new creation.
- (c) What counts for something is keeping the commandments of God.

Striking is the fact that, both in Gal 5:6 and in Gal 6:15, the third member of the formula is a single entity—*faith* active in love, and the *new creation*, respectively. One is reminded of the motif of singularity in Gal 5:14: Christ has brought the whole of the Law to completion, not in many commandments, but rather in one sentence, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself!”

We are therefore astonished to find Paul using the three-membered formula to tell his church in Corinth that what counts for something is “keeping the commandments of God” (*têrêsis entolôn theou*). Using psychological terms, one can say that whereas the Galatian churches were “overcontrolled,” the Corinthian church was somewhat “out of control.” A better reading can be had, however, simply by attending closely to the text.

It is precisely the startling expression “the commandments of God” that is the major clue to Paul’s intention. To be sure, this expression is traditional, being found many times in the OT and in various pieces of Jewish literature. One may nevertheless ask whether in 1 Cor 7:19 Paul attaches a particular meaning to the qualifier “of God.” Indeed, one may even ask whether he may know some form of the tradition, according to which Jesus set over against one another “the commandment of God” and “the tradition of human beings” (Mark 7:5–13; cf. Rom 14:14).¹³⁵ In any case, the wording of 1 Cor 7:19 itself suggests that Paul uses the expression “the commandments of God” because he presupposes something he does not explicitly state: Not all of the commandments come from God!¹³⁶

The verse itself shows that Paul does not consider circumcision to be one of the commandments of God.¹³⁷ It follows that here, as in Gal 3:11–12; 4:21, Paul does not at all assume the integrity of the Law as a homogeneous monolith (Comment #35). On the contrary, he takes for granted precisely the differentiation we have seen in our consideration of Gal 5:3 and 5:14. That is to say, in 1 Cor 7:19, as in Gal 5:14, Paul presupposes, in his own mind, Christ's act of differentiating the promising and guiding Law of God from the cursing and enslaving Law of Sinai.¹³⁸ The commandments mentioned in 1 Cor 7:19 do not include circumcision, food regulations, holy times, etc. The commandments of God are the whole of the Law to which Paul has referred in Gal 5:14. They are the commandments—as we will see below—that are brought to their completing sum total in love of neighbor (Rom 13:9), that sum total being the result of Christ's having brought the whole of the Law to its completion in love of neighbor (Gal 5:14). The commandments of God in 1 Cor 7:19 are thus the commandments that members of the church bring to completion by actively loving the neighbor (Gal 6:2; Rom 13:8–10).

Rom 13:8–10

We have already briefly noted that, when Gal 5:14 is rendered “For the whole law is summed up in one commandment ...” (NRSV; NEB, “can be summed up”; JB, “is summarized”), it is not being translated on the basis of its own Greek text, but rather on the basis of Rom 13:9.¹³⁹ For it is only in the latter text that, using the verb *anakephalaioô*, “to bring certain things to their sum total,” Paul identifies Lev 19:18 as the sum total of the commandments.¹⁴⁰ Gal 5:14 must be translated, of course, on the basis of its own text. A brief comparison of Gal 5:14 (and 6:2) with Rom 13:9 (in the context of Rom 13:8–10) may prove helpful, however, in one's attempts to understand Paul's intention in speaking as he did in the latter text.

Writing to a church he did not found, the one in Rome, and looking over his shoulder at the church in Jerusalem (Rom 15:25–31), Paul speaks in Rom 13:8–10 of the fabric of daily life in the Christian community, as that life is related to the Law and its commandments.¹⁴¹ We begin with the NRSV translation:

(Rom 13:8) Owe no one anything, except to love one another; for the one who loves another has fulfilled (*peplêrôken*) the law. (9) The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word (*logos*), “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev 19:18). (10) Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling (*plêrôma*) of the law.

The similarities with Gal 5:14 and 6:2 are obvious. (1) In Romans, as in those earlier texts, Paul uses the verb *plêroô* (together with one of its nouns, *plêrôma*) to link the life of mutual love to the Law. (2) He again cites Lev 19:18. (3) He again identifies that text in Leviticus as a sentence (a *logos*), rather than as a commandment. And (4), even more clearly than in Gal 5:3, 14, Paul moves from plural commandments to the single sentence of Lev 19:18.¹⁴² These similarities suffice to show that, in writing Rom 13:8–10, Paul will certainly have known that, to a large extent, he was repeating what he had said in the earlier letter, speaking in Rom 13:8 and 13:10 not of fulfilling the Law (NRSV; NEB margin; JB), but rather of *bringing it to completion*.¹⁴³

The differences between Gal 5:14; 6:2 and Rom 13:8–10 are even more interesting than their similarities. Whereas in the whole of Galatians Paul does not use the term “commandment,” in Rom 13:9 he quotes several commandments, explicitly identifying them by the term *entolê*, “commandment.”¹⁴⁴ And in referring to these commandments, he uses a verb he did not employ in Galatians, saying that in the sentence of Lev 19:18 the commandments are “brought to their sum total,” their *kephalaion*.¹⁴⁵ The major issue posed by Rom 13:8–10 is the interpretation of this new verb. One asks specifically, how does Paul view the commandments, once he has been shown their sum total in the sentence of Lev 19:18? A single observation will enable us to answer that crucial question.

Noting the literary structure of Rom 13:8–10, we see that Paul does more than recall his references in Galatians to the bringing of the Law to completion in the love of neighbor (Lev 19:18). In Rom 13:8 and 10 he uses those references to frame, and thus to interpret, his new assertion in Rom 13:9 that *the commandments are brought to their sum total* in the love of neighbor (Lev 19:18). That is to say, in wording Rom 13:8–10, Paul not only presupposes what he had said earlier in Gal 5:14 and 6:2. He also takes for granted a sort of nimble movement back and forth between those two earlier affirmations, using them as the framework within which he will speak not only about the Law but also about the commandments:¹⁴⁶

Galatians

Romans

6:2: Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will bring to *completion* the Law of Christ.

13:8: The one who loves another has brought the Law to *completion*.¹⁴⁷

5:14: For the whole of the Law has been brought to *completion* (by Christ) in one sentence: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself!”

13:9: For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are brought to their *sum total* in this sentence: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

6:2: Bear one another’s burdens, and in this way you will bring to *completion* the Law of Christ.

13:10: Love does no wrong to the neighbor; love, then, is the *completion* of the Law.

To take seriously the reminiscence of Gal 5:14; 6:2 in Rom 13:8–10 is to see that in Romans—as in 1 Cor 7:19—Paul is interpreting his Galatians assertions as they bear on the commandments of God. Just as the *whole of the Law* has been brought to its completion in love of neighbor (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8, 10), so *all of God’s commandments* are brought to their sum total in love of neighbor (Rom 13:9).

If we ask why Paul should introduce the verb “to bring certain things to their sum total” in Rom 13:9—rather than using there, as in Rom 13:8, the verb “to bring something to its completion”—the answer is easily found. He is concerned to speak explicitly of the plural commandments (cf. again 1 Cor 7:19). *They* are brought to their sum total, just as the Law is brought to *its* completion. By the framework of Rom 13:8 and 10, then, Paul shows that the completion of the Law (*plêrôma nomou*) is the same as the sum total of God’s commandments (*kephalaion entolôn*).¹⁴⁸ When he says, therefore, that all the commandments are brought to their completing sum total in love of neighbor, he means that—*post Christum*—love has *taken the place of the commandments*, being itself the comprehensive and indelible guard against violation of the neighbor.¹⁴⁹ Thus, Rom 13:8–10 is as far removed from the rabbinic and Jewish-Christian traditions analyzed in Appendix A as is Gal 5:14.

Moreover—and more important—Gal 5:14, 1 Cor 7:19, and Rom 13:8–10 show that Paul knows nothing of the use of the Sinaitic Law to guide the daily behavior of the church.¹⁵⁰ God’s absolute demand of loving the neighbor stands in place of the commandments, because nothing contained in the commandments *of God* is absent from that single demand.¹⁵¹ Paul can therefore prepare the way for his reference to the commandments themselves by saying with emphasis in his topic sentence: “Owe no one *anything at all*, except to love one another” (Rom 13:8).

In writing to the church in Rome does Paul abandon the view of Galatians that the Law has two voices? One has only to note the similarity of Gal 4:21 and Rom 3:21 to see that he does no such thing:

Gal 4:21

Rom 3:21

Tell me, you who wish to live under the power of the Law! Do you really hear what the Law says?

But now the rectifying action of God has been disclosed apart from the Law, although the Law and the prophets bear witness to it.

In Romans, no less than in Galatians, Paul’s portrait of the Law is complex.¹⁵² The Law has a condemning voice (e.g., Rom 3:19–20), so that God must reveal his rectification in Christ apart from it (Rom 3:21; 8:1). And the Law has the voice with which it speaks of the gospel (e.g., Rom 4:3–25). In Romans the Law is far more passive than it is in Galatians, being taken in hand first by Sin, and then by the Spirit of Christ (Romans 7–8). But, as one passes from Galatians to Romans, one finds no substantive and fundamental change in Paul’s view of the Law.

What one does find is a remarkable malleability in Paul’s thinking about the Law. For, in wording Rom 13:8–10, Paul gives to all of God’s commandments the role he earlier gave in Galatians to the original *pre-Sinaitic* Law, spoken by God to Abraham.¹⁵³ In Galatians it is that *pre-Sinaitic* Law that Christ has brought to its completion in the love of neighbor (Lev 19:18). In 1 Corinthians that same, original Law proves to be the commandments *of God*. And in Romans Paul closes the circle, returning to Lev 19:18

by saying that the commandments of God are brought to their sum total in the love of neighbor. Underlying 1 Corinthians and Romans, then, are the affirmations of Gal 5:14 and 6:2.¹⁵⁴

Rather than translating Gal 5:14 on the basis of Rom 13:9, then, one does almost the reverse. The reminiscence of Gal 5:14; 6:2 in Rom 13:8–10 provides grounds for a new paraphrastic translation of the latter text:

Owe no one anything at all, except to love one another. For the one who loves another has brought the Law to completion (*nomon peplêrôken*). What does one say, then, of the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not murder; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”? Like the whole of the Law, these and all other commandments are brought to their completing sum total (*anakephalaioutai*) in this sentence: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor, such as the wrongs mentioned in the commandments. For that reason, taking the place of the commandments, love is the completion of the Law (*plêrôma nomou*).¹⁵⁵

Comment #49: The Galatians’ Role in the Spirits War of Liberation

The Problem of Providing Specific Guidance for the Church’s Daily Life

In Comment #48 we have seen that, according to Gal 5:14, the whole of the Law *post Christum* is the Law that Christ has loosed from its paired and plural mode of existence, restoring it to the original singularity in which it spoke God’s own word.¹⁵⁶ It is the singular Law of love, and nothing other than that. We have also seen that this is the Law that is positively related to daily life in the church, because it does nothing other than reflect the preeminence of Christ’s love. For that reason it is the Law apart from which the church does not live. Turning from 5:14 to 5:15–24, one notes, however, that, when Paul takes up the matter of specific and detailed guidance for the church’s everyday life, he repairs neither to the plural Law of Sinai nor to the singular Law of love. He could easily have done the one or the other.

He could have reverted to the Sinaitic Law, drawing on the Jewish traditions in which the Law is said to be the antidote to vice and the producer of virtue.¹⁵⁷ Thus, he could have said in effect that, although the plural, Sinaitic Law has nothing to do with the rectifying event that occurs at the point of one’s entry into the church (so 2:16; 3:21; 4:24–25; 5:3–4), that Law nevertheless remains—with its commandments—the guide to the daily sustenance of Christian behavior, when circumcision, food laws, and regulations for holy times have been removed from it.¹⁵⁸ This seems to be the reading of Paul’s ethics proposed by a number of interpreters.¹⁵⁹

For two reasons it is also a reading that cannot be supported from Galatians. First, according to this letter, the daily life of the church *is* the scene of God’s rectification, not an addition to it (Comments #47 and #48).¹⁶⁰ Second, Galatians 5 and 6 show that Paul is worlds away from finding the guide to Christian behavior in the Sinaitic Law. Immediately before giving the first of two lists by which he speaks of daily life, he emphatically repeats his assurance that the Galatians are not under the authority of the Law (5:18). Consequently, in composing the pastoral section of his letter, Paul does not

seek to guide the daily life of the Galatian churches by drawing on the commandments that are found in the Sinaitic Law.¹⁶¹

Nor does Paul develop a detailed picture of Christian life by drawing on various commandments in the singular Law of love (5:14), not least because, as we have seen, that Law does not consist of commandments. Even so, however, Paul could have turned to it for specific guidance. Drawing, that is, on the Jewish tradition in which the Law is said to be the producer of virtues, being itself the epitome of virtue, Paul could have considered one after another the various aspects of love—patience, kindness, endurance, and so on. Developing each aspect, he could have arrived at a comprehensive and detailed picture of behavior in a community that is informed in the whole of its life by the Law of love. That is the route Paul will later elect in writing 1 Corinthians 13, and it is not altogether unlike the way by which he proceeds to compose the second of his behavioral lists in Galatians itself (5:22–23a: love, joy, peace, and so on). The first of those lists, however—the effects of the Flesh—is not drawn from the Law of love (even negatively) any more than it is composed on the basis of various commandments in the Sinaitic Law.

Where will Paul turn, then, in order to provide the Galatians with specific guidance for the daily life of their communities? In reading 5:16–24 one sees that Paul takes four major steps. First, he issues a promise explicitly focused on the Spirit, rather than on the Law (v 16). Second, referring to one of the presuppositions of that promise, he speaks of the Spirit and the Flesh as two combatants, engaged in a war with one another (v 17). Third, certain that that war is the determinative context for the Galatians' daily life—that war being the scene of the Spirit's victory and thus of the Galatians' real life (5:25)—Paul gives the Galatians a description of the war. He provides specific guidance, that is, by transforming the traditional lists of vices and virtues into community characteristics in the midst of the war. On the one hand, there are marks of a community under the influence of the Flesh and, on the other hand, there are marks of a community in which the Spirit is fruitfully active (vv 19–24). Fourth, centrally concerned with the Spirit's apocalyptic war against the Flesh, Paul employs the language of exhortation in the promise itself (v 16), thus giving to hortatory expressions a very peculiar stamp.

The Promise in 5:16, Foundational Guidance

As we have seen in the Notes, one can begin fully to sense the impact of Paul's promise in 5:16 only by seeing first that, in wording it, he is keenly aware of current developments in the Galatian churches. He knows, that is, that the Galatians will hear his promise as a rewording of a promise they are already hearing from the Teachers. It is, then, in the differences between the two promises—and not least in the differences between their presuppositions—that we can see yet further into the issue of daily life as Paul perceives it.

The Guidance Provided by the Teachers

Identifying the Law as the God-given antidote to “the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh” (see definition below), the Teachers are providing the Galatians with what they consider to be comforting assurance:

If you Galatians will *become* observant of the Law, we can promise you that you will not fall prey to the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.

It is a conditional promise, holding good *if* the Galatians do what the Teachers exhort them to do, namely become observant of the Law. It is also a promise founded on a view of the Impulsive Flesh and the Law that is familiar to us from both Jewish and Jewish-Christian traditions.

(1) *The Flesh*.¹⁶² Drawing on these traditions about the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh, we can suggest six motifs that the Teachers probably included in their own instruction:¹⁶³

- (a) Internal to the individual, the Impulsive Flesh has the individual as its major locus of operations.¹⁶⁴
- (b) The Impulsive Flesh is to some extent an entity with a life of its own, but it remains within the individual.¹⁶⁵
- (c) It is dangerous to the individual.¹⁶⁶
- (d) But the individual can master the Impulsive Flesh by choosing to observe the Law.¹⁶⁷
- (e) Viewed in the framework of the doctrine of the Two Ways, the Impulsive Flesh presents the individual with the necessity of making a choice; the individual is competent to make that choice and is responsible for the effects of that choice.¹⁶⁸
- (f) To choose to observe the Law is not only to master the Impulsive Flesh; it is also to achieve perfection of virtue.¹⁶⁹

(2) *The antidote: observance of the Law*. Holding such views of the Flesh and of the Law, and concentrating their attention on human acts, the Teachers are exhorting the Galatians to make the right decision. By choosing to observe the Law, these Galatian Gentiles are to transfer from the path of the Flesh (an entity essentially internal to each of them as an individual) to the path of the Law, thus mastering the Flesh and achieving perfection of virtue (3:3).¹⁷⁰ For the human act of circumcising the flesh—as the commencement of Law observance—is the antidote to the human act of following the dictates of the Flesh.¹⁷¹

The Guidance Provided in Paul's Promise

(1) *The Flesh*. In 5:13–24 Paul speaks for the first time in his letter of the Flesh as a distinctly assertive actor (hence the capital *F*), in all probability following the Teachers in doing so. Indeed, to some degree, he shows that he is in agreement with them. He believes, for example, that the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh exists, and that it is itself the major reason for the Galatians' need of guidance in daily life. Certain, however, that the opposite of the Flesh is not the Law, but rather the Spirit, Paul presents a picture of the Flesh that is different from that of the Teachers in regard to all six of the motifs mentioned above:

- (a) As the Spirit is invading the present evil age by creating the new community in which it bears its fruit of love, joy, and peace, so the Flesh has its major locus of action in the community, not in the individual.
- (b) As the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, a power distinct from the Galatians, so the Flesh is an entity that has, to an important extent, a life of its own. It is not a mere

part of the human being, less noble than other parts, “our lower nature” (so NEB in 5:13, 16, 17, 19). Both the Flesh and the Spirit are apocalyptic powers that do things not only *in* but also to the Galatians (5:13, 17, 19–21a, 22–23a).¹⁷²

- (c) As noted above, the Flesh is a danger to the Galatian communities, being intent on maintaining in communal form its own orb of power, the present evil age (1:4; 5:13).
- (d) Nothing is more foreign to Paul than the thought that the Flesh can be defeated by a course of human action.¹⁷³
- (e) As we will see in greater detail below, for Paul the Spirit and the Flesh are not related to one another in such a way as to call upon the Galatians to decide for the one or the other.
- (f) In Paul’s view there is no thought that human beings can achieve perfection.¹⁷⁴

(2) *The antidote: the Spirit.* Returning to 5:16, we see that Paul considers the Teachers’ promise to be lethally false, not least because it presupposes fundamental misunderstandings of the Flesh, the Law, and the Spirit. Because the Spirit is the Spirit of Christ (4:6), because this Spirit—rather than the Law—is the opposite of the Flesh, and because the Flesh is known on the basis of its opposite, it follows that the true character of the Flesh, and of the drama in which it is an actor, has only recently been revealed. In 5:16, then, Paul issues a comprehensive correction, thus providing in his own promise the foundation for the specific guidance he believes the Galatians to need:

Even after the advent of Christ and his Spirit, the Flesh does in fact continue to exist, and, unrestrained, it will destroy your communities. It is clear, however, that the antidote to the Flesh does not lie in something you can do, namely commence Law observance. The God-given antidote to the Flesh is the Spirit of Christ. And, since the antidote to the Flesh is the Spirit rather than the Law, the solution to the problem of the Flesh lies in something God has already done. For God has already sent the Spirit into your hearts, calling you into existence as his church. Continue to lead your communal life guided by the Spirit, then, and I can promise you that you will not end up carrying out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh (paraphrase of 5:16).

The Spirit and the Flesh as Warriors¹⁷⁵

With the promise of v 16 Paul provides the foundation for daily guidance, but he does not yet give details. From that promise, therefore, he moves first to one of its major presuppositions: The Spirit and the Flesh are engaged in a dramatic conflict (v 17). Then he turns to the task of portraying the nature of that conflict, the basic character of its major actors, and the place of the Galatians in it (vv 18–24). Remarkable is the fact that in referring to this conflict, and in analyzing its actors, Paul speaks in a thoroughly descriptive fashion: all of the verbs in vv 17–24 are in the indicative mood. Paul does not initially move from his foundational promise to specific details by means of exhortation. On the contrary, he seems to think that he can develop the promise of v 16 into the particulars of daily guidance by first of all *describing* for the Galatians the world in which they actually live *post Christum*.

The War (5:17)¹⁷⁶

Paul is quick to state the obvious presupposition of the promise of v 16: The Spirit and the Flesh are at war with one another:

For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. Indeed these two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another ... (5:17a).

One recalls the weighty role Paul has given in prior sections of the letter to the motif of divine invasion (Comments #37 and #42). That motif is also central to 5:13–24. As we have noted, the Spirit to which Paul refers here is not an inherent component of the human being, comparable, let us say, to an individual's heart.¹⁷⁷ It is the Spirit of God's Son, the Spirit that God has sent invasively into the human orb (4:6).

In a significant sense, peace is a result of that invasion, for the Spirit bears its fruit of love, joy, and peace in the community of God's church (5:22; contrast 5:15). In another sense, however, the divine invasion has certainly not happened peacefully. Indeed, it has been necessitated by the fact that the human orb has been subject to an alien, occupying power, the Flesh. With the sending of the Spirit, then, God has invaded the territory of the Flesh (cf. 1:4), inaugurating a war against that monster.

It follows that the opposition between the Spirit and the Flesh cannot be grasped either in the image of an infection and a medicinal antidote or in the picture of the Two Ways that are set before the human being, in order to call for a decision.¹⁷⁸ On the contrary, that opposition is a genuine conflict, an apocalyptic war. It is also of recent vintage. For the Spirit's war against the Flesh is not an inherent part of creation (as in Qumran), a conflict that was inaugurated with the genesis of the Sinaitic Law, or the result of a human decision to attack the Flesh. This war was declared by God when he sent his Son and the Spirit of this Son into the territory of the Flesh. This war is, then, the new-creational struggle, the apocalyptic war of the end-time, the war in which God's forces are the ones on the march (regarding the line of movement, see Comment #37). The Spirit's weapons, however, are strange indeed. For example, the Spirit bears the fruit of communal *peace*, in order to overcome the *violence* engendered by the Flesh (vv 15, 22; cf. Eph 6:10–20).¹⁷⁹

The Galatians' Place in This War

(1) *Distant observers?* If Paul identifies the major actors in this war as the active belligerents, the Spirit and the Flesh, does he then portray a drama in which the Galatians themselves are essentially inactive characters, persons who view the battlefield from afar? One might think so for a moment, for, as we have seen, the two warriors are distinct from human beings.

A further moment of reflection shows that, although distinguished from the Galatians, the Spirit and the Flesh are at war in such a way as vitally to affect the Galatian communities. Just as the Spirit is distinct from the Galatians, being the Spirit of God's Son, so the Spirit is also *in* the Galatians as communities, having been sent by God *into* their hearts (4:6). And, as noted above, the Flesh is actively seeking a military base of operations *in* the Galatian communities (5:13). Those communities are not at all distant observers of the apocalyptic war of the end-time. Somehow permeable both to the Flesh and to the Spirit, the Galatian churches are very much in the thick of the battle.

(2) *Passive puppets?* Are the Galatians caught up in this war, however, essentially as puppets, incapable of decisive action? One could think so in the course of reading the whole of 5:17:

For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. Indeed these two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another, *the result being that you do not actually do the very things you wish to do.*

What is one to make of the final, surprising clause? Why should the war between the Spirit and the Flesh lead to a failure to do what one wishes to do?

In the Appendix to the present Comment we will find that, using a plural verb—“you (plural) do not actually do the very things you (plural) wish to do”—Paul speaks here to the Galatians who are trying to direct their allegiance both to Christ and to the Sinaitic Law. The result is that, although these converts of the Teachers earlier received the Spirit, they are now actually being led by the Flesh (cf. 3:3), thus being swept into a failure to avoid behavior they wish to avoid. In short the note of tragic failure in 5:17 is one that Paul directs only to the Galatians who are attempting the impossible, that is to follow both Christ and the Sinaitic Law. Elsewhere, notably in 5:13, Paul issues an exhortation that presupposes active engagement on the part of the Galatians.

(3) *Soldiers.* Indeed in 5:13, identifying the Flesh as a power seeking to establish a base of military operations in the Galatian communities, Paul exhorts the Galatians to resist. They have then an active role in the war. It was given them at their baptism. Just as they are the new communities begotten by the power of the Spirit (4:29), so, given the Spirit’s war against the Flesh, they find themselves to be serving in the Spirit’s army, fully equipped and nourished for that service by the Spirit itself. Is there not the need, however, for yet greater specificity as regards their daily life?¹⁸⁰ In Galatians 5 that is a question Paul answers largely by the lists of 5:19–21a and 5:22–23a and by the statements of vv 21b and 24.

Paul’s Transformation of the Traditional Lists of Vices and Virtues

At least a number of the Galatians will have sensed that Paul draws the lists of vv 19–21 a and vv 22–23a from the widespread philosophic and religious tradition of compiling catalogues of vices and virtues (see Literary Form and Synopsis for 5:13–24). Momentarily, then, they may have thought that, having identified them as soldiers, Paul now lists in vv 19–23 the *vices* soldiers *should avoid* and the *virtues* they *should cultivate*. In fact, however, taking as his basic frame of reference the apocalyptic war between the Spirit and the Flesh, Paul paints a picture far removed from that given in the traditional catalogues. He does not introduce the list in vv 19–21a by identifying “fornication ... the worship of idols ... outbursts of rage,” etc., as vices with which individuals can be charged, and from which, alternatively, they can abstain. On the contrary, for him this first list presents “*the effects of the Flesh,*” deeds accomplished in a significant sense by the Flesh as an apocalyptic power. Similarly, for Paul, the list of vv 22–23a, love, joy, peace, etc., is not a catalogue of virtues, but rather “*the fruit borne by the Spirit,*” communal evidence of the Spirit’s own activity. Thus, none of the things in either list is an autonomous act of a human being that could be correctly called that individual’s vice or virtue.¹⁸¹ On the contrary, Paul lists actions that are without exception

effected by the two warring powers, the Flesh and the Spirit. And all of the actions are communal in nature.

The effects of the Flesh are developments that destroy community—outbursts of rage etc.—and the fruit of the Spirit consists of characteristics that build and support community—love, joy, peace, etc. Thus, in the apocalyptic war of the end-time, vices and virtues attributable to individuals have lost both their individualistic nature and their character as vices and virtues. They have become marks of community character, so that if one speaks of “character formation,” one adds that it is the community’s character that is being formed by the Spirit (cf. 4:19). In the framework of the apocalyptic war a community that has succumbed to the Flesh bears the marks of the Flesh. A community that is led by the Spirit shows in its common life the fruit borne by the Spirit. The profound radicality of Paul’s apocalyptic picture is seriously domesticated when one credits him with speaking of vices and virtues.¹⁸² We return, then, to our earlier question: in what sense are the Galatian soldiers persons who have an active role in the drama?

The Apocalyptic War, the Transformed Lists, and the Galatians’ Acts

After listing communal developments that reflect the powerful effects of the Flesh, Paul does in fact warn the Galatians about *their* acts:

Those who *practice* things of this sort will not inherit the Kingdom of God (5:21b).

And after listing the communal fruit of the Spirit, he adds,

Those who belong to Christ Jesus *have crucified* the Flesh, together with its passions and desires (v 24).

As *combatants*, in whom and through whom the Flesh and the Spirit carry on their war, the Galatians are led into certain *acts* by the one belligerent power or by the other. The Galatians themselves do things as communities. In a significant sense, then, they are responsible actors. And because they are responsible actors, Paul does more than give them a description of the apocalyptic war between the Spirit and the Flesh. He speaks to them in the imperative mood. Even in what we might call Paul’s apocalyptic ethics there is a place for exhortation.

The Nature of the Imperative in Gal 5:16

The nature of Paul’s imperative is, however, a crucial matter. We return briefly to the imperative verb with which he begins the promise in 5:16:

In contradistinction to the Teachers, I, Paul, say to you: *Lead your daily life guided by the Spirit*, and, in this way, you will not end up carrying out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.

Granting that Paul disagrees with the Teachers as to the identity of the Flesh’s opposite—it is the Spirit rather than the Law—a number of commentators think that Paul nevertheless agrees with the Teachers on a truly significant point: Paul is said to see in the opposition between the Spirit and the Flesh a new edition of the doctrine of the Two Ways. Does not the promise of 5:16 show, after all, that Paul thinks of the Flesh and the Spirit as two alternatives placed before a human being who is competent to decide for

the one or for the other? In fact, this interpretation reflects a failure to see the centrality of the metaphor of warfare, analyzed above, and for that reason it presents a false reading of Paul's imperative in Gal 5:16 (and a consequent misreading of the hortatory dimensions of 5:25–6:10).

That is to say, it is easy to misunderstand the thrust of the promissory sentence of 5:16, as though Paul intended it to be the equivalent of a simple condition, focused on the *inception* of a relationship with the Spirit: “If you will *commence* a life with the Spirit, then I can promise you that you will not carry out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.” It is true that the promise of the second clause is predicated on the imperative given in the first. That imperative itself, however, is predicated on three major factors that *precede* it, reflecting Paul's awareness that, in formulating his promise, he is not speaking to humanity in general. On the contrary, he is addressing the Galatian churches that have been created as addressable communities by the invasive Spirit. In a word, the promise presupposes the history of the Galatians' relationship with the Spirit.

(1) Some time ago Paul preached the gospel of Christ to the Galatians. The power of that gospel elicited their faith, and the result of this faith-kindling gospel was that they received the Spirit (3:1–2). In short, the beginning of the Galatians' life as members of the church was not the result of a human act of deciding for the Spirit rather than for the Flesh. At that beginning lay God's act of sending the Spirit into their hearts, begetting them by the power of the Spirit (4:29), and freeing their enslaved wills for obedience to him in the Spirit (4:6). In their baptism the Galatians crucified the Flesh (5:24), but they did that under the direction of the Spirit, just as their cry to God as Father was in fact the deed of the Spirit.

(2) Because God continues to supply the Spirit to the Galatians (3:5), the Spirit itself remains active in their corporate life, continuing to cry out to God through their own mouths, and continuing to bear the fruit of love in the corporate life of their communities (5:22).

(3) Through the invasive Spirit, then, God has created and continues to create the Galatian churches as *addressable communities*, communities that are able to hear God's imperatives *because of* the indwelling Spirit.¹⁸³

In light of this history, two readings of the imperative of 5:16a are excluded.

First, it is a mistake, as noted above, to treat that imperative as the equivalent of an inceptive conditional clause, as though Paul had said, “If you will *commence* a relationship with the Spirit, I can make you a promise.” Knowing the history of the Spirit in the Galatian churches, Paul does not lay the Spirit before the Galatians as a new possibility, a mere alternative to the Flesh. He does not exhort them, therefore, to make a sovereign choice between the two, as though the Spirit and the Flesh were two paths, both of which lay equally open before them. On the contrary, with his imperative Paul calls on the Galatians steadily to be what they already are.¹⁸⁴ Metaphorically speaking, the Spirit is the general who has already affected the Galatians' will itself, inciting them to service in its war against the Flesh.

It is also a mistake to read the promise of 5:16 as though Paul were informing the Galatians of the availability of the Spirit, the Spirit being a *resource* on which they can call for help in *their* struggle against the Flesh. As we have seen, the war against the Flesh is in the first instance the Spirit's war (v 17), the war declared by the Spirit upon its advent, and carried out by the Spirit as it bears its fruit in the daily life of the church.

Thus, the Spirit is and remains the primary actor in the military engagement. The Galatians are soldiers already enrolled in *the Spirit's* army, not contestants in a struggle that is theirs, and in which they are merely free to call on the Spirit for aid. Their deeds are first of all the acts of the Spirit (5:22; cf. 4:6), and secondly the acts of themselves as persons into whose hearts the Spirit has made its entrance (5:24).¹⁸⁵ The imperative element in 5:16 is conceptually equivalent, then, to the hortatory element in 5:25:

If, then, we live in the Spirit—and it is certain that we already do—let us carry out our daily lives under the guidance of the Spirit (5:25).

Similarly, the promise of 5:16 can be fully rendered

Stay consistently in line with the Spirit. For, as you are led by the Spirit—the victorious power already sent into your hearts by God—you will not fall victim to the Spirit's enemy, the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh.

Conclusion

In writing to the Galatians Paul is far from reducing daily life to a matter of morals vis-à-vis an ethical code, however conceived. At its root, behavior in the church of God is a subject Paul takes up in the first instance not by giving a hortatory prescription of “what ought to be,” but rather by providing a description of “what is,” now that, by sending the Son and the Spirit of the Son, God has commenced his invasive—and ultimately victorious—war against the Flesh. “What is” proves therefore to be the result of that invasive action of God, the war in which God is calling into existence his new creation, the church, with a view toward ultimately delivering the whole of humanity—indeed, the whole of the cosmos (Gal 3:22; Rom 8:21)—from the grip of the powers of the present evil age, the curse of the Law, Sin, the elements of the old cosmos, and not least the Flesh.

In this war the church is God's cosmic vanguard, the soldiers who receive their behavioral bearings in the midst of and from the contours of this war. It is therefore by describing the Spirit's victorious war against the Flesh, and by portraying the Galatians' place in this war, that Paul speaks with specificity in 5:13–24 of the behavior for which the church is fully inspired, to which it is summoned, and for which it is responsible.

It is both true and important that, pursuing the motif of responsibility, Paul turns from the essentially descriptive paragraph of 5:13–24 to a series of imperative and hortatory verbs in the next paragraph, 5:25–6:10. He is free to do that, however, only because in 5:13–24 he has descriptively portrayed the activity by which God has graciously created an addressable community, a church that, led by the Spirit, is able to hear the imperative and to be thankful to God for it.

Appendix to Comment #49: A Formula for Communal Discord

Gal 5:17

Interpreters have long been perplexed by the final clause of 5:17:

For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh. Indeed these two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another, *the result being that you do not actually do the very things you wish to do.*

What are we to make of this final, surprising clause? Why should the war between the Spirit and the Flesh lead to a failure to do what one wishes to do? Faced with this unexpected conclusion, one could initially think of looking for help in the seventh chapter of Romans, for there, too, Paul seems to speak of a failure to carry out one's intentions.

Gal 5:17

Rom 7:22–23; 15 (19)

17a. For the Flesh is actively inclined against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh.
17b. Indeed these two powers constitute a pair of opposites at war with one another,

22. I delight in the Law of God in my inmost self, 23. but what I see is a different Law, operative in my members. This different Law is in conflict with the Law of God to which I adhere in my intentions, and in this conflict the different Law keeps me imprisoned to itself, thus being the Law that controls me, the Law that has fallen into the hands of Sin.

17c. the result being that you do not actually do the very things you wish to do.

15. I do not recognize my own actions. For what I wish—the good—is not what I do; on the contrary, what I hate—the evil that I do not want—is what I actually do.¹⁸⁶

The standard reading of Romans 7 credits Paul with centering his attention on two motifs, a split internal to the individual self and the resulting impotence of the self actually to carry out its own will.

From this reading of Romans 7 it would seem a short step back to the earlier passage in Gal 5:17. To be sure, as H. D. Betz points out, Paul does not speak in Galatians of a split in the self. Does he not refer, however, as Betz says, to the human body as a battlefield between two contesting forces (Betz 280)? And does he not identify the result of this state of affairs as the disabling of the human will to carry out its intentions?

Pondering this apparently Romanesque reading of Gal 5:17, we are faced with three questions. (1) In Rom 7:15 (19) Paul says that the self *does not* do what it wishes to do, and does what it does not wish. He could have spoken explicitly of an impotence of the will, saying that the self is *unable* to do what it wishes (*ou gar ho thelô touto dynamai poiêsai*)¹⁸⁷—and is unable to avoid doing what it does not wish. Is it really Paul's intention in Romans 7 to refer to an impotence of the will? (2) Given the absence of an explicit reference to that motif, is the standard interpretation of Romans 7 in need of significant correction? (3) If so, would that corrected interpretation of Romans 7 play a role in leading us to a different reading of Gal 5:17?

A New Interpretation of Romans 7

A phenomenal advance in the interpretation of Romans 7 was made in 1990 by Paul W. Meyer.¹⁸⁸ Agreeing with the dominant view that in Romans 7 Paul describes the human situation apart from Christ, Meyer nevertheless offers an analysis in which both of the motifs that characterize the standard interpretation are laid aside, the supposed split internal to the individual self and the resulting impotence of the self actually to carry out its own will.

First, in Romans 7 “both ‘inmost self’ (v. 22) and ‘members’ (v. 23) are but two aspects of the same self that is ‘sold under sin’ ” (Meyer, “Worm,” 76). The tragic element in Romans 7 does not arise, then, from a divided self, but rather from the self’s enslavement to the power of Sin, precisely as Sin has wrested the Law out of the hands of God. That is to say, rather than speaking of two parts to the self, Paul refers to *two Laws* (7:22–23, 25; 8:2), which prove to be the Mosaic Law functioning as the Law of God and the Mosaic Law as it has fallen into the hands of Sin.¹⁸⁹ The terrifying *fundamentum* to the whole of Paul’s argument is the fact that the Mosaic Law is not only God’s Law but also Sin’s Law, a tool of Sin. One can see, then, that Romans 7 culminates in a cleavage, but that cleavage “is in the *Law* and not in the self” (Meyer, “Worm,” 78).

Second (continuing with Meyer), the result of this terrifying cleavage in the Law—the result of the fact that God’s Law has fallen into the hands of Sin—is far more serious than a mere impotence of the human will. In Rom 7:15 (19) Paul’s major accent lies not on inaction, but rather on action and result. Indeed, in the first clause of 7:15 Paul speaks explicitly of the result of his actions, saying that it is a mystery to him; he himself does not recognize it. Clearly, something much more sinister is involved than an impotence of the will. A menacing actor other than the self is onstage, and that actor uses for its deadly purposes precisely God’s holy and just and good Law. In short, Paul speaks of Sin’s power to deceive him via the Law, the result being that he *accomplishes* the *opposite* of what he intended.

The subject of the discourse in Romans 7, then, “is not simple frustration of good intent, but good intention carried out and then surprised and dumbfounded by the evil it has produced” (Meyer, “Worm,” 76). And the form in which this good intention is carried out is precisely that of observance of the Law. Thinking of the Law as God’s Law, and of his own clearly willed, altogether admirable and blameless observance of it (Rom 7:12; Phil 3:6), Paul takes as his subject the power of Sin to corrupt the highest good. For in Christ he now looks back on the demonic power of Sin “to use the Mosaic Law to effect just the opposite of what its devoted adherents expect, even and especially when it is obeyed ...” (Meyer, “Worm,” 80). In short, Paul’s argument attaches impotence not to the human will, but rather to the Law. The Law itself is the actor who proves to be disabled vis-à-vis the sinister power of Sin. Indeed, it is for that reason that God sent his own Son in behalf of all, “to deal with Sin as the Law could not (Rom 8:3–4)” (ibid.).

The New Interpretation of Romans 7 and a New Reading of Gal 5:17

Does Gal 5:17 read differently when taken in light of Meyer’s interpretation of Romans 7?¹⁹⁰ That is a question we can consider by noting both similarities and differences between these two texts.

The picture of a bifurcated Law in Romans 7 has its earlier form in Galatians, where Paul considers the Law to have two distinct voices, as we have seen. Moreover, in Gal

5:17, as in Rom 7:15, Paul does not speak of an *inability* to do what one wishes to do (*hina mê ha ean thelête touta dynêthête poiêsai*), but rather of a *failure* to do those things. Rom 7:15 and Gal 5:17 are similar in that neither contains an explicit reference to an impotence of the will.

The form of the texts, however, shows them to be in one regard significantly different. Romans 7 is marked by Paul's repeatedly speaking of an "I," whereas in Gal 5:17 he speaks to a "you (*plural*)," the Galatians. In Galatians, then, Paul does not speak anthropologically of a general failure to act on one's intentions. He speaks specifically and pastorally to the Galatian Christians about their failing to do something they corporately wish to do. This simple observation suggests the possibility that Paul intends the Galatians to hear a reference to a development that is to some degree peculiar to *their* corporate life.

But what does Paul mean when he says that this failure to do what they wish is the result of the war between the Flesh and the Spirit? That is a question best approached by recalling Paul's practice of speaking to the Galatian churches as a whole, when in fact he is thinking of the numerous members who are in the process of accepting the nomistic theology of the Teachers (see 1:6; 3:1; etc.). In 5:17, that is to say, Paul is thinking of the fact that many of the Galatians are having themselves circumcised, confident that they can commence Law observance as the route to rectification without abandoning their allegiance to Christ (5:3–4). But how, exactly, does he think that a failure to act on their intentions is characteristic of the Galatians who are commencing observance of the Law? And how can he say that that failure is the result, for them, of the war between the Spirit and the Flesh? Two observations prove to be helpful.

On the one hand, throughout 5:13–26 Paul presupposes a war that has commenced only with the advent of the Spirit, as we have seen. Addressing the Galatians who have experienced the Spirit's advent in baptism, he portrays the situation of the Galatian churches *post Christum*.

On the other hand, the failure to avoid undesired acts, as it is portrayed in 5:17, can be characteristic neither of the Christian freedom Paul has so compellingly pictured in 5:1 and 13, nor of the loving communal life that is the fruit of the Spirit (5:22–23a). We return, then, to the hypothesis that in 5:17 Paul is speaking to the Galatians about the stance being taken on the battlefield by those among them who are trying to direct their allegiance both to Christ and to the Sinaitic Law. They are persons into whose hearts God has sent the Spirit of his Son (4:6). As a result they have indeed been placed on the battlefield on which the Spirit has commenced its war against the Flesh. Convinced by the Teachers, however, that they can be rectified only by observing the Law, they have, as Paul puts it, nothing more to do with Christ, having fallen out of the realm of grace (5:4)! As baptized persons standing in the midst of the battlefield, they are removing themselves from the victorious general, the Spirit of Christ! The result is that they are "double-minded." Claiming to have the Spirit, they are actually led by the Flesh. And the result of their double-mindedness is that the war between the Flesh and the Spirit is sweeping *them* into a radical failure consistently to avoid behavior they wish to avoid (5:15).

Read in this way, 5:17 (with its initial *gar*) offers part of the ground of the promise of 5:16, proving that promise negatively, so to speak. Indeed, with this reading we can now sense the line of thought that runs through the whole of 5:16–18, for in these verses

Paul speaks to the confused and double-minded Galatians—and to others tempted to follow their lead into the same confusion:¹⁹¹

(v 16) But, in contradistinction to the Teachers, I, Paul, say to you: Lead your daily life guided by the Spirit, and, in this way, you will not end up carrying out the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh. (v 17) For on the negative side you can see the truth of this promise even in the moment in which you claim, while on the battlefield itself, to find rectification in the Law. That is to say, having received the perfectly potent Spirit (4:6; 5:16), but claiming now to be led by the Law that is impotent to curb the Flesh (cf. 3:3), you are swept up willy-nilly in the whirlwind of the battle. Lacking active integrity, you find that, when you want to end your dissensions, you succeed only in intensifying them. (v 18) If, however, in the daily life of your communities you are being consistently led by the Spirit, then you are not under the authority of the Law, the weakling that cannot deliver you from the power of the Flesh.¹⁹²

⁶⁴ See also 3:17; 4:1; 5:2, where, emphatically correcting the Teachers, Paul writes *legô de*. BDF F. Blass and A. Debrunner, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (trans. and rev. R. W. Funk; Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1961)

⁶⁵ If the Teachers used this same construction in their form of the promise, they may have had in mind that the verb “to carry out” can take as its object *either* the Law (Acts 13:29) *or* one’s desires (Artemidorus Daldianus 3.22; Achilles Tatius 2.13.3; see BAGD).

⁶⁶ See Porter, “Yecer hara”; Davies, *Paul*, 20–31; Flusser, “Dead Sea Sect.” Crucial steps pertinent to the interpretation of the Inclination (= the Impulsive Desire of the Flesh) in James and in Paul are taken in Marcus, “James”; idem, “Paul.”

⁶⁷ Brandenburger, *Fleisch*, 45. Paul’s picture is in some degree similar to Philo’s portrait of the two contentious wives of the soul (*de Sac.* 20–30), but for Paul the combat between the Spirit and the Flesh takes place in the communal setting of the church, not internally in the individual. lit. literally

⁶⁸ The verb *epithymeô*, “to desire,” was used in various constructions: (a) with the genitive or accusative of the thing desired, (b) with the accusative of a person sexually desired, (c) with an infinitive, and (d) with an accusative and infinitive. lit. literally

⁶⁹ See also 1 Pet 2:11; Marcus, “Paul,” 19 n21.

b. Ber. Berakot

⁷⁰ The construction is *rāgaz* (hiphil) ‘*al*, “cause to be excited against.” Cf. Urbach, *Sages*, 475–476.

b. Ber. Berakot

⁷¹ Urbach, *Sages*, 476; cf. Flusser, “Dead Sea Sect,” 255.

⁷² As we will see in Comment #49, for Paul this war is distinctly apocalyptic in nature. The third mark of the Spirit’s fruit—and thus one of its major weapons—is peace! Cf. Eph 6:10–20.

1QS Rule of the Community

⁷³ See also Brandenburger, *Fleisch*, 46; Jewett, *Terms*, 81, citing K. G. Kuhn.

⁷⁴ Longenecker (245) speaks of this picture as “Paul’s understanding of humanity before God since ‘sin entered into the world’ (cf. Rom 5:12).” As the parenthetical reference suggests, the interpretation is drawn from Romans, not from Galatians.

⁷⁵ See BDF §391.5; ZBG §351; Moule, *Idiom-Book*, 142.

⁷⁶ As Barclay notes (*Obeying*, 113–114, with references), there have been three main readings of the final clause of v 17. Taking it to state consequence, commentators have said that the battle of the Flesh and the Spirit has as its result (a) that the Flesh often frustrates the Spirit-inspired wishes of the believer; (b) that the Flesh and the Spirit frustrate one another, producing a stalemate. Taking it to be a telic clause, others have thought that the purpose of the battle lies in (c) the Spirit’s frustrating the desires of the Flesh. Barclay’s own reading is based on the assumption that in 5:17 Paul intends to warn the Galatians against libertinism. Taking the relative pronoun *ha* to mean “whatever,” Barclay finds just such a warning: the purpose of the Spirit’s battle against the Flesh is to see to it that “the Galatians are not in the dangerous position of being *free* to ‘do *whatever* you want’ ...” (*Obeying*, 115; emphasis added). But this reading imports the motif of dangerous freedom into 5:17. Together with virtually the whole of 5:13–24, the clause *hina mê poiete* is descriptive rather than hortatory. Paul *describes* the result of the warfare: because of it, the Galatians *are not doing* what they wish to do.

⁷⁷ Following the preposition *hypo*, the anarthrous noun *nomos* is definite.

Herm. Man. Hermas Mandates

⁷⁸ See Duff, “Significance.”

⁷⁹ With regard to sexual activity the list of the effects of the Flesh could raise the question of the meaning of the baptismal formula of 3:28. If in Christ there is “neither slave nor free,” how is the Christian slave to respond to the master who instructs her or him to provide sexual favors to an overnight guest (e.g., Petronius *Satyricon* 75.11)? See Barclay, “Philemon.”

⁸⁰ See Nock, *Essays*, 2.893; Vermaseren, *Cybele*, 13–31; H. Koester, *Hellenistic Age*, 191.

⁸¹ On *phthonos* as the deformation of desire into envious rivalry, see Hamerton-Kelly, *Violence*, 113.

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⁸² Cf. 2 Cor 6:6–10; Eph 4:2–3; Col 4:12–15; 2 Pet 1:5–7.

1QS *Rule of the Community*

⁸³ See Hamerton-Kelly, *Violence*. The richness of this reversal (violence/peace) can be compared with the image of Paul the nursing mother as presented in Gaventa, “Mother’s Milk.”

⁸⁴ See K. Barth on God’s ways of loving, as interpreted in Dorothy Martyn, *Yellow Hat*, 145–166.

⁸⁵ In 1 Cor 12:9, listing various manifestations of the Spirit in the life of the church, Paul refers to a faith that works miracles. Cf. the expression “wonders” in Gal 3:5.

1QS *Rule of the Community*

⁸⁶ For rabbinic tradition about the destruction of the Evil Impulse, see *b. Sukk.* 52b; Porter, “Yecer hara,” 128. Marcus finds an anticipation of this tradition in CD 6:32 (“Paul,” 10).

⁸⁷ See Vos, *Pneumatologie*; Cousar, *Cross*, passim; A. R. Brown, *Cross*.

⁸⁸ This picture is thus worlds away from the medieval Christian formulation in which one spoke of the mortification of the flesh, referring to an individual’s killing his bodily desires. Paul speaks here, as earlier, of baptism as a *corporate* victory over a cosmic power. Cf., in a nonapocalyptic frame of reference, Justin *1 Apol.* 61:1–3, 14–17.

⁸⁹ For reasons that will become clear by the close of Comment #49, “daily life,” as I am using the expression, corresponds neither to what is often termed “ethics” nor to what is generally meant by the word “morals.” Both of those terms, and the concerns and literary forms connected with them, were alive and well in Paul’s time (see especially Furnish, *Ethics*; idem, *Moral Teaching*; Schrage, *Ethics*; Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*; Meeks, *Moral World*; idem, *Origins*; Sampley, *Walking*; Hays, *Community*). It is easy to accept Meeks’s definitions: “ ‘Morality’ ... names a dimension of life, a pervasive and, often, only partly conscious set of value-laden dispositions, inclinations, attitudes, and habits.” Ethics is “a reflective, second-order activity: it is morality rendered self-conscious; it asks about the logic of moral discourse and action, about the grounds for judgment, about the anatomy of duty or the roots and structure of virtue” (*Origins*, 4; cf. Keck, “Rethinking”). It is also easy to see, however, that the picture Paul presents in Gal 5:13–24 is so thoroughly permeated by apocalyptic motifs as to be seriously domesticated when it is pressed into the categories usually associated with morals and ethics. For Paul’s picture, rather than being basically hortatory, is in the first instance a description of daily life in the real world, made what it is by the advent of Christ and his Spirit. See Literary Structure and Synopsis for 5:13–24; Comment #49; and Duff, “Significance”; idem, *Humanization*. Cf. Cousar’s reference to “embodying the gospel” (*Letters*, 145–146). Some of the major points of Comment #48 are presented in compact form in J. L. Martyn, *Issues*, 235–249.

⁹⁰ Schrage, for example, finds in Paul an essentially paradoxical view of the Law. “Paul’s battle against legalism is not against observance of the law, but against the perverse interpretation of such observance as a condition of salvation. God ‘justifies without works of the law,’ and the law has ceased to be a way of salvation, a ‘yoke of slavery’ (Gal 5:1) and a curse (Gal 3:10, 13); but this does not mean that Christians are dispensed from obeying the commandments (1 Cor 7:19). Therefore the Old Testament and its law are presupposed and enforced as the criterion of Christian conduct” (*Ethics*, 205). Cf. Räisänen, *Law*, 69–83; E. P. Sanders, *Law*, 97.

⁹¹ Nothing said here implies that it is impossible to keep the whole of this plural Law. On Paul’s positive reference to the commandments of God (1 Cor 7:19), see Appendix B below.

⁹² In the Notes we have observed that the linguistic difference between *holos ho nomos* (5:3) and *ho pas nomos* (5:14) is in itself inconsequential.

⁹³ See again, for example, Schrage, *Ethics*, 205; Räisänen, *Law*, 69–83; E. P. Sanders, *Law*, 97.

⁹⁴ See H. D. Betz, who emphasizes the distinction between “doing” the Law (5:4) and “fulfilling” it (5:14). In the Note on 5:14 we have observed that in common English parlance the expression “to fulfill the Law” has come to mean nothing other than “to meet all of the Law’s requirements.” For that reason alone a different rendering of the verb *peplêrôtai* is called for. See further below.

⁹⁵ For example, Furnish, *Love Command*, 97; E. P. Sanders, *Law*, 95, 97.

⁹⁶ After pursuing the line of interpretation laid out below under “The Law Has Two Voices,” I was glad to see the following comment in Lührmann (German edition, 97): “The new teachers in Galatia may have used the expression ‘the Law of Christ’ to indicate that the Law of Sinai is still valid in the Christian church ... [Paul, however, sees a] splitting of the Law into the Law of Sinai and the Law of Christ, a view that is later completed in the opposition between ‘the Law of the Spirit of life’ and ‘the Law of Sin and death’ in Rom 8:2. The ‘Law of Christ’ is possible only

through liberation from the Law that was given on Sinai” (my translation). See also the perceptive remarks of Meyer about a cleavage in the Law in Romans 7 (“Worm,” 78).

⁹⁷ This hypothesis is different both from the suggestion of Hübner that in Gal 5:14 Paul does not refer to the Torah and from the thesis of Stuhlmacher that Paul draws on a distinction between the “Zion-Torah” and the “Moses-Torah” (Stuhlmacher, “Gesetz,” 273–275; cf. Gese, *Beiträge*, 49–62).

⁹⁸ Contrast Romans, where 8:3 and 13:8–10 are far from being the first positive portraits of the Law (note, e.g., Rom 3:21, 31; 7:16, 22, 24). See Appendix B to the present Comment.

⁹⁹ In the six chapters of Galatians Paul uses the word “promise” ten times (compared with eight in the sixteen chapters of Romans), eight times in the singular—3:14, 17, 18 (twice), 22, 29; 4:23, 28—and twice in the plural, 3:16 and 3:21. In the Note on 3:16 we have suggested that the two instances of the plural may reflect nothing more than Paul’s awareness that God repeated his promise (singular) to Abraham several times. In any case, after the plural in 3:16 and 3:21, Paul returns to the singular in 3:17–18 and in 3:22, 29 (and in 4:23, 28), showing that he has no intention of referring to the linear history of the promises in the patriarchal generations and thence into the history of Israel (cf. Rom 9:9–13).

¹⁰⁰ On 1 Cor 7:19, Paul’s reference to the keeping of the commandments of God, see Appendix B to the present Comment.

¹⁰¹ In the process of further testing this hypothesis, we will find it convenient—without prejudging any of the issues involved—to adopt a tentative nomenclature. We will sometimes refer to the Law of 5:3 as the plural Law, recalling that it consists of many commandments. And we will sometimes speak of the Law of 5:14 as the singular Law, noting that, having been brought to completion, it articulates God’s mind for the church in one sentence.

¹⁰² Having been led to this bifurcated view of the Law in writing to the Galatians, Paul developed it in a modified form in Romans. See Meyer’s analysis of Rom 7:7–25, and especially his reference to “two diametrically opposed laws” that constitute a “‘cleavage’ ... in the *law*.” In Romans both, Meyer says, are the Mosaic Law, but one is that Law as the Law of God (Rom 7:22, 25b), while the other is that Law as it has been used by Sin to produce death (Rom 7:23a, 23c, 25c; 8:2b; “Worm,” 78–79); cf. footnote 96 above.

¹⁰³ The textual basis for employing the expression “the Sinaitic Law” is Paul’s references to Sinai in 4:24–25.

¹⁰⁴ Paul employs four linguistic markers in his references to the plural, Sinaitic Law: (a) *erga nomou*, “observance of the Law,” (b) *poieô ton nomon*, “to keep the Law,” (c) *poieô auta* (3:10, 12), “to keep the commandments,” and (d) *hypo nomon einai*, “to be enslaved under the Law’s power.” Paul’s use of the expression *poieô ton nomon* corresponds to expressions frequently employed in Jewish tradition, such as *’āsâ mišwôt* and *šāmar mišwôt*.

¹⁰⁵ Noting these two voices of *the Law*, we see that, *within* the Law complex, the Sinaitic Law is antinomously related to the Abrahamic promise. We are also reminded that the promise, not the Sinaitic Law, is God’s uttering of *the gospel* to Abraham ahead of time. The simple polarization of gospel and Law, therefore, distorts the complexity of Paul’s understanding of both.

¹⁰⁶ One would think it illogical to speak of a period prior to the existence of a cosmic element. As we have seen in Comment #41, however, for Paul it is the cosmos of religion that has as one of its elements the Law/the Not-Law. And there is clearly a sense in which Paul considers the

cosmos of religion to be later than the cosmos created (in prospect) by God when he spoke his promise to Abraham (Gal 3:17; compare and contrast Rom 5:12–21).

¹⁰⁷ In the second and third centuries the drawing of distinctions within the Law became an important motif among Christian Jews, gnostics, and orthodox. See especially the theory of false pericopes in the *Kerygmata Petrou* (HS 2.118–121 [Strecker]); the *Letter of Ptolemy to Flora* (Foerster, *Gnosis*, 154–161); Irenaeus *Haer.* 4.24–29; and the *Syriac Didascalia* (Connolly, *Didascalia*). In the five books of Moses Ptolemy found (a) the Law of God (itself composed of three subparts), (b) the additions of Moses, and (c) the traditions of the elders. Perhaps influenced both by Galatians itself and by Ptolemy, the author of the *Didascalia* spoke repeatedly of a clean distinction between the eternally valid first Law, which “consists of the Ten Words and the Judgments,” and the *deuterosis*, the punitive Second Legislation with its cursing bonds of circumcision etc. Similarities and differences between these writings and those of Paul warrant more investigation than they have received. *Similarities*: Three motifs in the *Letter of Ptolemy to Flora* and the *Didascalia* can be compared with motifs in Galatians: (a) The distinction(s) internal to the Law have been *revealed by Christ*: “The words of the Saviour teach us that it [the Law] is divided into three parts” (Ptolemy 4:1); “He teaches what is the Law and what is the Second Legislation” (*Didascalia*, p. 218; cf. “If one accepts his [the true prophet’s] doctrine, then will he learn which portions of the Scriptures answer to the truth and which are false,” *Kerygmata Petrou* [HS 2.119]). (b) Christ came in order to destroy the second law, with its injustice, thus *setting us loose from its curse* (Ptolemy 5:7; *Didascalia*, p. 224). (c) In his act of making distinctions in the Law and of liberating us from the second Law, Christ fulfilled, *restored*, and *perfected* the Law of God (Ptolemy 5:3, 9; *Didascalia*, p. 224). Two *differences* are also noteworthy: (a) Over against the second Law, Ptolemy and the author of the *Didascalia* place not the singular, Abrahamic promise, but rather the plural Decalogue, as its commandments were perfected by Christ. (b) For the catholic author of the *Didascalia* God is expressly identified as the author both of the first Law and of the Second Legislation, whereas Ptolemy attributes the law of divorce, for example, to Moses and the law of corban to the elders. In writing Galatians does Paul come closer to preparing the way for Ptolemy? In any case, the apostle is very far from linking God to the genesis of the Sinaitic Law (Gal 2:19; 3:19–20; 4:24–25), and for that reason, as we have seen, he “is not afraid to apply *to scripture* ... the distinguishing of spirits demanded of the prophets in 1 Cor 12:10” (Käsemann, *Romans*, 286; emphasis added).

¹⁰⁸ The Law’s relationship to Christ plays an explicit role both in 5:3 and in 5:14. On the negative side Paul follows the warning of 5:3 by insisting, as he has many times earlier, that rectification comes from Christ, not from the Law (cf. 2:21 etc.). On the positive side, by referring in 5:14 to the Law’s being brought to completion, Paul points forward to 6:2, where he speaks of bringing to completion the Law of Christ, a subject to which we will return below in Comment #50.

¹⁰⁹ As we have just noted, Paul speaks of what the Law did to Christ by using a specific verb: the Law *cursed* Christ. With regard to verbs, Christ’s doing something to the Law is a subject Paul treats in Galatians somewhat indirectly. For to speak of Christ’s activity vis-à-vis the cursing and enslaving voice of the Law, Paul uses verbs that take as their direct object human beings rather than the Law itself: “Christ *redeemed us* from the Law’s curse” (3:13); “God sent his Son ... in order that he might *redeem those* held under the power of the Law” (4:5). One might interpret

this picture, however, by supplying several verbs of which Christ is the subject and the Law the object: At the cross Christ *defeated* the Law in its cursing and enslaving mode of existence, thus setting us free. By the same token, when he came on the scene, Christ *unleashed* the Law's promising voice, thoroughly *differentiating* it from the cursing voice (4:21). To anticipate a bit, this act on Christ's part had the effect of *bringing* the scriptural voice of the Law *to completion*, causing it indeed to become (again) the whole of the Law (5:14). Thus *taking* the Law *in hand*, Christ made it his own Law by *restoring* it to the state it had in the time of Abraham (6:2).

¹¹⁰ To be precise, the era of the Law in its paired existence began 430 years after Abraham and ended with the arrival of Abraham's singular seed (3:17, 19). It is a paradoxical truth that to some extent the Law's cursing voice survived its collision with Christ at the cross. Thus, even though greatly weaker than the promissory voice (3:17, 21), the cursing voice still poses a threat even to the baptized Galatians. For they can lose sight of what time it really is, thus becoming again slaves under the curse of the Law (4:10; 5:3).

¹¹¹ At no point in interpreting Galatians is it more important to avoid reading this document in the light of Romans. In Galatians—contrast Rom 4:9–12—Paul totally and systematically ignores every aspect of God's dealing with Abraham, except the promise. Paul thus suppresses God's giving to Abraham the covenant of circumcision (Gen 17:10–14), and he eclipses Jewish traditions in which God is said to have given the Law itself to Abraham, thus enabling the patriarch to be fully observant prior to Sinai (*Jub.* 16:12–28; *Sir* 44:19–20). In this letter Abraham is the pre-Sinaitic—and thus pre-religious—figure. See Comment #33 and Introduction §17.

¹¹² In his own mind does Paul locate Habakkuk chronologically between Abraham and Christ, even putting him after the genesis of the Sinaitic Law? That is the sort of question to which Paul gives no attention in writing to the Galatians. A major concern in Gal 3:6–18 is the clean distinction between two voices, that of the cursing Law and that of the Abrahamic promise. In developing this distinction Paul hears the voice of God in the scripture of Hab 2:4, without naming or thinking of the individual through whom God spoke the rectifying gospel-word, and without thinking of that individual's date. The same thing is to be said, moreover, of Paul's reading of Leviticus. In Lev 18:5 (Gal 3:12) Paul hears the false promise of the cursing and plural Law ("The one who does the commandments will live by *them*"), whereas in Lev 19:18 (Gal 5:14) he hears the voice of the singular Law in its guiding function ("You shall love your neighbor as yourself"). Does Paul not know that the whole of Leviticus falls after Sinai, being in fact the major collection of the priestly laws? And if so, how can he hear in any part of Leviticus the voice that the Law had in the time of Abraham? Those are questions that can be answered only by noting that Paul's consistent point of departure for reading the Law is the advent of Christ. It is Christ who has distinguished from one another the promising and the cursing voices of the Law. His doing that is of fundamental significance, but the result is a matter that is not related to what we might call the fine points of chronology (beyond what Paul says in 3:17).

¹¹³ It would almost certainly be incorrect to credit Paul, the fundamentally apocalyptic-antinomous thinker (Comments #3 and #51), with the view that the Law has *three* distinct voices, one cursing, one promising, and one guiding. As we will suggest below, in Paul's view the promissory voice and the guiding voice constitute the original Law that Christ has restored to its pre-Sinaitic state.

¹¹⁴ On the *positive* references to the noncursing, plural commandments in Rom 13:9 and 1 Cor 7:19, see Appendix B below.

¹¹⁵ Paul himself certainly knew that Lev 19:18 does not belong literally to the cycle of Abrahamic traditions in Genesis.

¹¹⁶ As one studies two *texts*, the OT scriptures and Paul's letters, one sees that there is much value in Hays's *Echoes*. The image of an echo, however, may be used *first* to indicate that Paul hears echoes of Christ in scripture. See J. L. Martyn, *Issues*, 209–229; cf. Walter, "Problematik."

¹¹⁷ One can ask whether there is a sense in which Paul sees Christ's singularizing effect on the Law to be comparable to the Platonic/Philonian movement from the Many to the One (cf. Goodenough, *Light*, 212). One can even point to the contrast between old (and inferior) multiplicity and new (and superior) unity in the exordium of Hebrews, and repeatedly thereafter (cf. Attridge, *Hebrews*, 209). Paul, however, uses the contrast between the Many and the One in quite a different way. For him Christ's singularizing effect on the Law is the liberating, and thus *noncomparative, restoration* of the Law to the state it had in the time of Abraham.

¹¹⁸ For this formulation I draw on numerous conversations with Paul L. Lehmann. See now Duff, *Humanization*, 61; Lehmann, *Decalogue*. Note also that both in ancient Hebraic theology and in Judaism God's Law is God's gracious and founding election (Werblowsky, "Torah").

¹¹⁹ I have provided hypothetical Greek expressions for illustrative purposes. On the term *agôgê* as the guidance of a law, see, for example, Plato *Laws* 645a. Cf. *agesthe* in Gal 5:18, where, explicating his earlier equation of the promise with the Spirit (3:14; 4:23, 29), Paul moves from the guidance of Lev 19:18 to the guidance of the Spirit.

¹²⁰ One may pose a similar issue with regard to the distinction between plural and singular. Given the interpretation advanced here—in Galatians 5 Paul intends to draw a contrast between a plural Law (5:3) and a singular one (5:14)—we may ask why Paul does not speak in these instances as explicitly of plural and singular as he did in referring to seeds and seed in 3:16? It may be impossible to give a full answer to this question, but one can at least say that numerous passages in Paul's letters attest to the apostle's assumption that clarity can be had without one's being fully explicit! And, in any case, in 5:14 Paul is quite emphatic in his expression *en heni logô*, "in one sentence."

¹²¹ See Appendix B below.

¹²² That this tradition antedates the pertinent references in rabbinic literature is suggested (a) by the reference in the citation below to Hillel, a contemporary of Jesus, (b) by the tradition about Jesus also cited below, especially as it is preserved in Luke 10:25–28, and (c) by two passages in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, unlikely to be Christian interpolations. See *T. Iss.* 5:1–2: "Keep *the Law of God*, my children; achieve integrity: live without malice, not tinkering with God's commands or your neighbor's affairs. *Love the Lord and your neighbor ...*"; and *T. Dan* 5:1–3: "Observe the Lord's commandments, then, my children, and keep *his Law*. Avoid wrath, and hate lying ... Throughout all your life *love the Lord and one another* with a true heart" (*OTP*). Cf. Philo *de Spec. Leg.* 2.63 and Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 879.

b. Shabb. Shabbat

¹²³ The attribution to Shammai and Hillel is a matter discussed by Neusner, *Pharisees*, 1:321–324. See also *Mek.*, Beshallah, Vayissa 1 (Hor. p. 157), and cf. *Tanh.* Sheftim 16b.

¹²⁴ So, correctly, Barclay, *Obeying*, 136.

¹²⁵ It is Paul's negative comment in Gal 5:3 rather than the positive assertion of 5:14 that can be associated with the tradition about Hillel and the whole of the Law. For in 5:3 Paul does speak of circumcision as a point of entry into the whole of the Law, in the sense, as we have seen, that the circumcised entrant is afterward obligated to observe all of the other commandments without exception. Cf. Jas 2:10.

¹²⁶ This is the reading suggested by several commentators and by numerous interpreters who, without giving a detailed argument, credit Paul with speaking of the essence of the Law. H. D. Betz, for example, says that the issue posed by Gal 5:14 is "whether Paul has in mind the total number of prescriptions and prohibitions of the Jewish Torah, or whether he is thinking of a principle (the rabbinic *kll*) which sums up and contains the whole of the Torah" (274). For two reasons, then, Betz concludes that "Paul thinks of a principle rather than the sum-total of individual prescriptions and prohibitions: (1) he gives his explicit formulation in v 14b ['in one word']; (2) the 'whole Law' is not to be done (*poiein*), as individual laws have to be done (cf. 3:10, 12; 5:3), but is rather 'fulfilled.'"

¹²⁷ In addition to *Gen. Rab.* 24:7 cited below, see, for example, *Mek.*, Beshallah, Vayissa 1 (Hor. p. 157; on Exod 15:26); *p. Ned.* 9:4, 41c; and *Sipra*, Kedoshim, Perek 4:12. On the distinction of a principle from the narrower notions and detailed rules that can be arranged under it, see Daube, *New Testament*, 65; E. P. Sanders, *Palestinian Judaism*, 112–114 (with references to Moore); Longenecker 243; Schoeps, *Paul*, 208; Donaldson, "The Law That Hangs," 689–692.

Gen. Rab. Genesis Rabba

¹²⁸ Donaldson is right to emphasize this point, as it has been made by numerous other scholars cited by him: "Nowhere in this [rabbinic] material is the 'fundamental principle' seen replacing or overriding the individual commandments which it sums up ... The operating assumption was that the more detailed regulations could be *derived* from the general statements" ("The Law That Hangs," 692).

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¹²⁹ See Fitzmyer, *Luke*, 879 (and cf. the somewhat different tradition preserved in Mark 12:28–34; Matt 22:34–40; Luke 20:39–40). That the linking of Deut 6:4 with Lev 19:18 is a Jewish tradition antedating Jesus is argued by Burchard, "Liebesgebot," 57; cf. Berger, *Gesetzesauslegung*, 229–230; Marcus, "Authority."

¹³⁰ The use of this Jewish-Christian tradition in the *mixed* communities reflected in the gospels is another matter. See Donaldson's recent analysis of Matt 22:40, as it pertains to the Matthean community that included Gentiles: "The Law That Hangs."

¹³¹ A similar differentiation is made by Philo when he speaks both of particular laws and of heads summarizing the particular laws (*nomôn tôn en merei kephalaia; de Dec.* 19; cf. *de Spec. Leg.* 1.1.1). In Philo, too, there is not the slightest intention of using these distinctions to negate any part of the Law. Indeed, in summary, one can say that none of the traditions pertinent to the expression "the whole of the Law" reflects a pattern of thought that distinguishes essence from quantity, in the sense that part of the Law can be identified as the essence of all of the Law, that part thus serving as a substitute for the rest of the Law (cf. Jas 2:10).

¹³² *Pace*, for example, Räisänen, *Law*, 23–28; E. P. Sanders, *Law*, 95.

¹³³ The point requires emphasis. Paul does not have in mind a reduced version of the Law, arrived at either (a) by subtracting circumcision, food laws, and holy times, thus arriving at a

reduced remainder, or (b) by epitomizing the Law in one commandment (so Furnish, *Love Command*, 97, and many other interpreters). Paul's view is far more radical: After the advent of Christ, one can no longer listen to the Law with the presupposition that it speaks nothing other than the word of God.

¹³⁴ Note Donaldson's suggestion that even Matthew (in his mixed community) uses "a rabbinic formulation in the service of an unrabbinic interpretation of the Torah" ("The Law That Hangs," 696).

¹³⁵ See Pesch, *Markusevangelium*, 1.372–373; Gnllka, *Markus*, 1.282–284.

¹³⁶ The genitive *theou*, "of God," answers the question "Which commandments?" Cf. Winger, *Law*, 44.

¹³⁷ Since he does not hold circumcision to be one of God's commandments, Paul can say to the mixed church in Corinth that one's circumcised or uncircumcised state at the time of one's becoming a Christian is a matter of indifference (1 Cor 7:18).

¹³⁸ For a quite different reading of 1 Cor 7:19, see Schrage, *Ethics*, 205; idem, *Korinther*; idem, "Probleme," 20–21, where there is a pointed reference to *schwärmerisch-spiritualistisch* misreading of Paul's assertion that the Spirit is the norm and criterion of Christian life.

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NEB *New English Bible*

JB *Jerusalem Bible*

¹³⁹ Of the variants in Gal 5:14, both *plêroutai* and *anakephalaioutai* are drawn from Rom 13:9.

¹⁴⁰ The importation of (a certain reading of) Rom 13:9 into Gal 5:14 is widespread in the critical literature. Two examples will suffice: At one point E. P. Sanders comments, "The *summary* [of the Law] which Paul twice gives, to love the neighbor (Gal 5:14; Rom 13:8–10) is ... a quotation of Lev 19:18 and is a *summary* well-known in Judaism" (*Law*, 95; emphasis added). Similarly, Furnish renders Gal 5:14 "For the whole Law has been epitomized in just this one commandment, namely: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" He then remarks, "The ... verb which I have translated 'has been epitomized' (literally, 'has been fulfilled,' cf. RSV) is equivalent to the verb 'summed up' which Paul uses in Rom 13:9 (this is quite properly recognized in both NEB and JB)" (*Love Command*, 97). See Appendix A to the present Comment.

¹⁴¹ Cf. Meyer, "Romans," 1163–1164.

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¹⁴² One notes also that in Rom 8:1–4 Paul links the motif of the Law's being brought to completion with the motif of the singularity of God's absolute demand. There, as in Gal 4:4, Paul refers to God's sending of his Son as the redemptive event that has broken the power of the Law to condemn (Rom 8:1). The Law nevertheless retains—as it does in Galatians—a role after the advent of Christ. For, wresting the condemning and impotent Law out of the hands of its captor (Flesh/Sin), the Spirit of Christ lays hold of *God's holy and just commandment* (Meyer's translation of the singular *to dikaiôma tou nomou*, "Romans," 115), transforming it into "the Law of the Spirit of life," and bringing it to completion (*plêroô*) in the community that orders its daily life under the leading of the Spirit.

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NEB *New English Bible*

¹⁴³ In the Notes on Gal 5:14 and 6:2 reasons are given for not rendering the verb *plêroô* in those texts with the English expression “to fulfill.”

¹⁴⁴ Since it is Paul’s intention in Rom 13:8–10 to speak of the Law and its commandments as a guide for the daily life of the church, as in Gal 5:14, he cites commandments having to do with the violation of one’s fellow human being, numbers 6, 7, 8, and 10 in the Decalogue.

¹⁴⁵ Schlier, “*kephalê*,” 681.

¹⁴⁶ In a word, knowing that Christ has brought *the Law* to completion in the love of neighbor (Gal 5:14), and that, in bearing one another’s burdens, Christians themselves bring *the Law* to completion, as it has been thus taken in hand by Christ (Gal 6:2), Paul can turn in Romans to speak explicitly about the relationship Christians have to *the commandments*.

¹⁴⁷ Here the perfect tense is gnomic; Meyer, “Romans,” 1164.

¹⁴⁸ The noun *plêrôma*, often, as its form suggests, a passive reference to “*that* which makes something full,” can also be used as the equivalent to the active form, *plêrôsis*, thus referring to the *act* that fulfills (e.g., Philo *de Abr.* 268). Rom 13:10 may thus repeat 13:8, speaking of the act of bringing the Law to completion (so BAGD; NRSV).

¹⁴⁹ So rightly Lindemann, “Love does not somehow enable one to do the Torah commandments. On the contrary, love takes the place of the commandments” (“Toragebote,” 262).

¹⁵⁰ The reference is to the so-called *usus legis didacticus*, the educational use of the Mosaic Law in the church. See, for example, E. W. Gritsch and R. W. Jenson, *Lutheranism* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976) 63. Cf. Hofius, “Paul knows nothing of a new, ethical use of the Mosaic Law for the Christian church” (“Gesetz Christi,” 278); Barclay, “Romans 14.1–15.6.” For a quite different analysis, see Hays, “Scripture.”

¹⁵¹ Cf. Käsemann, “Love.”

¹⁵² On Romans 7, see especially Meyer, “Worm.”

¹⁵³ Paul’s interpretation of circumcision in Romans is a subject in itself. Here we note only that, in Rom 13:9, Paul ignores, as he did in Galatians, the testimony of Genesis 17, where, just as God blessed Abraham with an indelible promise, so God gave to Abraham the *commandment* of circumcision.

¹⁵⁴ From Galatians, Romans, and 1 Corinthians it is clear that Paul sees the practice of circumcision, the observance of food laws, and the keeping of holy times neither as interpretations of the sentence about mutual love (Lev 19:18) nor as concrete acts by which the Law of God and the commandments of God are brought to their sum total in that Levitical sentence.

¹⁵⁵ This reading—as the completion of the Law, love of neighbor has taken the place of the commandments—is strongly confirmed when one attends to Paul’s line of argument in Romans 14 (cf. Lindemann, “Toragebote,” 262). As we have seen, in Rom 13:8–10 Paul views that replacement in positive terms: Because love is the indelible guard against violation of the neighbor, it is the replacing sum total of the commandments. But, in effect, Paul can also view that replacement negatively. Specifically, once he has seen the sum total of the commandments, he does not revert to the Law in the making of what is often called ethical decisions. In regard to food, for example, one recalls the strictures of the dietary commandments. Reading Romans 14, then, one sees that Paul is very far indeed from taking his bearings from those commandments.

On the contrary, the ground of his exhortation is nothing other than the mutual love that has taken the place of the commandments, having its origin in Christ's death for all. For a rather different reading of the role of scripture in Paul's "ethics," see Hays, "Scripture."

¹⁵⁶ "Loosed from" does not mean "reduced from."

¹⁵⁷ On the Law as the antidote to vice, see comments below under "The Guidance Provided by the Teachers." The Law as the producer of virtue is a common Jewish motif: for example, Josephus *Ap.* 2.170–171 (*eusebeia* and *aretê*), 291–296.

¹⁵⁸ This reading presupposes the venerable and untenable view that Paul drew a significant distinction between rectification and sanctification. See the following two footnotes.

¹⁵⁹ See, for example, Schrage, *Ethics*, 204–207. In current Pauline research one often encounters references to the similar differentiation E. P. Sanders makes between "getting in" and "staying in": One gets into the church by believing in Christ, and one stays in by keeping the commandments (*Palestinian Judaism*, passim). See, however, Lindemann, "Toragebote."

¹⁶⁰ Note Käsemann, "Neither can support be found ... as has sometimes been thought, for distinguishing between the righteousness of the beginning and the righteousness of the end, between righteousness of faith and righteousness of life" (*Questions*, 171); cf. Way, *Lordship*, 259.

¹⁶¹ The corresponding observation is made about Romans 14 by Lindemann, "Toragebote," 262. Note, for comparison, the role of the Law in James, and cf. the statement of L. T. Johnson: "For James the term *nomos* ... finds its focus in the love of neighbor, but that love is explicated by specific attitudes and actions prescribed by Torah" (*James*, 32).

¹⁶² As we have seen in the Note on 5:16, the Teachers almost certainly speak of the *epithymia sarkos*, lit. "the desire of the flesh," that being their Greek rendering of the Hebrew *yēšer bāsār*. Whether, like Paul, they also use the abbreviation "the Flesh" (Gal 5:13, 17 [twice], 19, 24) we cannot say. In any case, in speaking both of the Teachers and of Paul, I employ interchangeably the expressions "Impulsive Desire of the Flesh," "Impulsive Flesh," "Impulse," "Inclination," and "Flesh."

¹⁶³ In each case I give one or two illustrative citations. For the whole of these texts, for others like them, and for further interpretation, see Marcus, "James"; idem, "Paul."

¹⁶⁴ "For there are two ways of good and evil, and with these are the two inclinations *in our breasts*, distinguishing the one [way] from the other" (*T. Asher* 1:5). "[No member of the community] shall walk in the stubbornness of his heart, so that he strays after his heart, after his eyes, and after the thought of *his* Impulse (*maḥšebet yišrô*). On the contrary, they shall circumcise in the community the foreskin of the Impulse (*ʾorlat yēšer*)" (1QS 5:5). Similarly, referring to an unfortunate state of affairs (and using the word "spirit" to refer to the Inclination), the Jewish-Christian author of James speaks of "the spirit that he [God] has made to dwell *in us*" (Jas 4:5; cf. Sir 15:14–17).

¹⁶⁵ "Hear now, my sons, and I will uncover your eyes so that you may see and understand the works of God ... so that you may walk perfectly in all his ways and not be drawn *by the thoughts of the guilty impulse* (*bēmaḥšēbôt yēšer ʾašmâ*) and by lustful eyes" (CD 2:14–16). See also 1QS 5:5 cited in preceding footnote. At Qumran the OT expression "the inclination of the thoughts" has become "the thoughts of the inclination," suggesting that, in some sense, the Inclination has

its own existence (Marcus, “James,” 612). Essentially, however, it remains internal to the individual.

¹⁶⁶ “If a man does not set bounds to his impulses and bridle them like horses which defy the reins, he is the victim of a well-nigh fatal passion, and that defiance will cause him to be carried away before he knows it” (Philo *de Spec. Leg.* 4.79). “One is tempted by one’s own desire (*epithymia*), being lured and enticed by it; then, when that desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and that sin, when it is fully grown, gives birth to death” (Jas 1:14–15). In Qumran the Inclination of an individual, if not resisted by strict observance of the Law, also presents a danger to the community (1QS 5:3–7).

¹⁶⁷ “For God created man from the beginning ... and gave him into the hand of his inclination (*yēšer*). If you choose, you may keep the commandments ... Death and life are before a man; that which he shall choose shall be given him” (Sir 15:14–17). In the metaphorical language of Qumran the Inclination is a danger until it is circumcised (1QS 5:3–7).

¹⁶⁸ “And each one chose the stubbornness of his heart” (CD 19:20). Note also that the individual’s freedom of choice is accented in the passage from Sirach cited in the preceding footnote. That freedom to choose is a gift of God. For, although God caused the Inclination to dwell in the human being, “he gives all the more grace” (Jas 4:5–6). Thus, the human being can yield to the Inclination, the result being sin and death. Or, by following God’s commandments, he can choose to resist the Inclination, the result being life (Jas 1:2–4, 12–15). This point holds good in the framework of forensic apocalyptic as well as in that of the wisdom tradition of the Two Ways. See de Boer, “Apocalyptic Eschatology,” and “forensic apocalyptic eschatology” in the Glossary.

¹⁶⁹ Note the motif of perfection in CD 2:14–16 and the reference to Abraham in CD 3:2–3: “Abraham did not walk in it [the Inclination] ... he kept the commandments of God and did not choose the will of his own spirit” (cf. Murphy-O’Connor, “Missionary”). Regarding Abraham, see also *Gen. Rab.* 46:1, 4, where circumcision is said to have removed Abraham’s only blemish; thereafter he was perfect (cf. *m. Ned.* 3:11). In Jewish-Christian tradition Abraham’s faith was brought to perfection by his observance of the Law (Jas 2:22).

¹⁷⁰ In Comment #37 we have seen that this transfer has the corporate dimension of joining the people of Israel (truly represented in the church of Jerusalem); but, speaking to Gentiles, the Teachers focus their exhortation on the individual.

¹⁷¹ In their own “home” setting, that of Christian Judaism, the Teachers will doubtless have viewed Law observance as a path made possible by God’s grace in establishing his covenant with Israel (cf. the references to Qumran texts in Comments #27 and #28). Similarly, they will have viewed their mission as the gracious, messianic extension of that covenant to the Gentiles. As far as we can see from Paul’s letter, however—not least from the Teachers’ threat (4:17)—the Galatian Gentiles will have heard in the Teachers’ instruction the demand that they themselves *do* something, namely commence observance of the Law, however clearly the Teachers may have said that one can do this only with the help of God. See Comments #33 and #37.

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¹⁷² In the early Christian church it was Paul who brought the Impulsive Flesh fully into the apocalyptic worldview, by seeing it as the opposite of the Spirit of Christ. See again Marcus, “Paul.” To be sure, the Qumran community speaks of warfare between the spirits of truth and

falsehood, attributing real power to them and noting ways in which their warfare affects the community (1QS 3:22–24). The Covenantors also focus considerable attention, however, on the general picture of humanity, and thus on the individual within whom the spirits act. “The nature of *all the children of men* is ruled by these (two spirits), and during their life all the hosts of men have a portion in their divisions and walk in (both) their ways. And the whole reward for their deeds shall be ... according to whether *each man’s* portion in their two divisions is great or small” (1QS 4:15–16; Vermes). In Gal 5:18–24 Paul does not speak of humanity, but rather consistently and exclusively of the community of those who belong to Christ, those who have received the Spirit of Christ.

¹⁷³ On Gal 5:24, see the Note. See also Marcus, “Paul,” 15–16; de Boer, “Apocalyptic Eschatology,” *passim*.

¹⁷⁴ On Phil 3:12–14, see Gnllka, *Philipperbrief*.

¹⁷⁵ See Comment #3. The picture of a cosmic, dualistic struggle between good and evil is ancient and widespread. As we will see below in discussing the so-called catalogues of virtues and vices, Iranian traditions included mythological lists in which personified spirits of good and evil oppose each other. See Kamlah, *Paränese*; Fitzgerald, “Lists”; *idem*, “Catalogue.”

¹⁷⁶ On the relation between God’s act of rectification and the motif of cosmic war, see Comment #28. The institution of the holy war is the deep soil in which cosmological apocalyptic took root in Israel, and it stands ultimately behind Paul’s battle imagery. Cf. B. B. Hall, “Imagery”; de Boer, “Apocalyptic Eschatology.”

¹⁷⁷ Thus, the antinomy between the Spirit and the Flesh is neither an anthropological dualism (H. D. Betz 278–280), focused on the inner psychic economy of the individual human being, nor an ethical dualism focused on alleged decisions made by the individual.

¹⁷⁸ Recognizing that Stowers is right to note the close relation between letters of exhortation and letters of advice (Stowers, *Letter Writing*, 91–152), Schrage nevertheless comments perceptively, “In letters focused on the giving of advice, the fundamental presupposition is the freedom to make decisions (Stowers 109). One can scarcely say that in the hortatory section of Galatians Paul only gives good advice” (“Probleme,” 12).

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Hamerton-Kelly, *Violence*.

¹⁸⁰ Schrage is certainly correct to say that Paul is concerned with concrete specificity (*Einzelgebote*, 59–70; “Probleme,” 23 n116). Similarly, commenting on Gal 6:10, Bonnard says correctly, “In the NT *ergazomai* never designates a general or interior activity; on the contrary, it refers to immediate acts in which faith applies itself to human situations quite concretely” (127). The question posed by Gal 5:13–24 is the means by which Paul achieves specificity.

¹⁸¹ Cf. Käsemann, “the concept of virtue as used in our morality is fundamentally inapplicable to him [Paul]” (*Questions*, 194). But, just as the lists had originally to do with vices and virtues, so after Paul they lost the apostle’s apocalyptic and corporate frame of reference, becoming again simply vices and virtues. Enjoying wide circulation and embroidering, they became in time “the Seven Virtues” and “the Seven Deadly Sins.” See Meeks, *Origins*, 66–71; Fitzgerald, “Lists.”

¹⁸² Given the structure of the learned book of Meeks, *Origins*, there is an inevitable tendency to read Paul’s letters through the lenses of second- and third-century sources, the latter being very well interpreted. But, to turn to such passages as Gal 5:19–23a, after quoting from the moral lists of Aristides and Pliny the Younger (both second-century)—not to mention certain parts of the

Didache, the *Epistle of Barnabas*, and the *Doctrina XII Apostolorum*—is to run the risk of missing the major surprise of Gal 5:19–23a: the degree to which Paul’s apocalyptic view has transformed the language of the catalogue tradition (*Origins*, 8–9, 15, 66–71). As we have seen, it is the Teachers, not Paul, who view the problem of the Impulsive Flesh in light of the doctrine of the Two Ways, and who therefore accept the ancient pattern in which vices and virtues exemplify precisely that doctrine. True enough, Meeks himself speaks of the Christian development in which “humility,” for example, is transformed by being juxtaposed with “the metaphoric pattern” of Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection (15; cf. 66, 84–90). But, on the whole, Meeks’s willingness to analyze early Christian moral sensibilities as developments reflecting “socialization” and “resocialization” leaves largely out of account the degree to which apocalyptic frames of reference—notably the motif of cosmic warfare—led Paul to a radically new view of the cosmos itself, and thus to an apocalyptic transformation of the language of vices and virtues. Thus, if one were able to imagine a conversation in which one could teach Paul the modern usage of such inelegant terms as “resocialization,” one would also be able to imagine his coining the still more inelegant term “recosmosization,” in order to refer to the deed by which God is bringing about the death of the old and enslaving cosmos and the birth of a community so novel as to be called the new creation, a community in which language itself is transformed. After Paul, the kernel of his apocalyptic vision was mostly lost, and socializing attempts were indeed made to foster patterns of morality, without reference to the radical foundation of God’s recosmosization. But these attempts cannot serve as the key to Paul’s own views.

¹⁸³ Cf. Schrage, “Probleme,” 13–14.

¹⁸⁴ In this Bultmannian formulation one sees a crucial dimension of Paul’s understanding of the will. Were the Galatians to fail to continue the life they are being given in the Spirit (5:22–23a), they would not be exercising freedom of will. On the contrary, they would find that they are again slaves of the Flesh, and thus in the state properly called bondage of the will. For there is only one form of free will, and that is obedience to the leading of the Spirit.

¹⁸⁵ See Duff, *Humanization*, 61.

¹⁸⁶ Basically, this interpretive translation of Rom 7:22–23, 15 (19) is drawn from Meyer, “Worm.”

¹⁸⁷ Both with the negative and without it, the locution *dynamai poiēsai*—and its equivalents—are, of course, very common. In early Christian usage see, for example, Matt 9:28, and in Paul’s letters cf. 1 Cor 15:50.

¹⁸⁸ “Worm.”

¹⁸⁹ In this reading Meyer takes *tês hamartias* to be a genitive of possession, an interpretation supported by Rom 7:8–11 (seizing *the Law*, Sin used it to kill me). For an alternative reading, see Winger, *Law*. There *tês hamartias* and its equivalents are taken as genitives of source, “identifying the power whose control is in turn identified by the term *nomos*” (195). This interpretation is related to Winger’s finding in Rom 7:21—with numerous other interpreters—a metaphorical use of *nomos* (force, rule, controlling power) that then sets the precedent for a metaphorical use of *nomos* in 7:22–23 (*Law*, 186 and 186 n138). Meyer, on the other hand, taking *ton nomon* in 7:21 to be an adverbial accusative of respect, arrives at a paraphrase in which Paul refers in that verse itself to the Mosaic Law: “So then, as far as the (Mosaic) law is

concerned, the outcome (of the above experience) is that for me, the very one who wishes to do the good, evil is what I find at hand” (“Worm,” 79).

¹⁹⁰ Reading the earlier letter, Galatians, in light of the later—a common if usually unconscious procedure—can lead to serious misinterpretation. With caution, however, we can make comparisons, honoring the specifics of the Galatian setting (see below) and noting significant differences between the two letters.

¹⁹¹ Formally, one may compare Epictetus *Diss.* 2.26.1–2, 4–5.

¹⁹² In addition to the force of the contrasting *ei de* in 5:18—“If, however . . .”—note that in 5:24 Paul refers to the victory over the Flesh that characterizes a community that belongs *exclusively* to Christ.

J. Louis Martyn, [*Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*](#), vol. 33A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2008), 491–540.

Tyndale:

16. To Paul, the answer to all such abuses lies in a way of life which is continually Spirit-controlled; then people will cease to act ‘naturally’, and so will cease to ‘fulfil themselves’.²⁴ The use of *peripateite*, *walk*, in a moral sense is too common to need comment. When Paul says *pneumati*, *by the spirit*, or ‘in spirit’, it is not always clear whether he is referring directly to the Holy Spirit or simply means ‘spiritually’, as opposed to ‘carnally’. We may, if we choose, paraphrase as ‘a spiritual walk’ to keep this linguistic ambiguity, although, in the light of what follows, the Holy Spirit seems to be meant here.²⁵

17. Paul’s use of *epithymia*, *desires*, or ‘yearning’, and the kindred verb, is probably connected with Genesis 4:7, and traditional Jewish interpretations of that verse, where sin’s ‘desire’ is stated to be directed to Cain, although Cain must master it. Even if this is so, however, it is only for Paul a verbal similarity, a peg upon which to hang a great theological truth. This is the fact that by nature we do not find the leadings of the Spirit of God to be congenial; indeed, they are utterly repugnant to our own ‘natural’ inclinations (1 Cor. 2:14). Paul himself in Romans 7:5–25 shows that his knowledge of our inability to do what we desire springs from the inner religious experience of the

proud Pharisee. In this sense, *ha ean thelete, what you would*, is only to be understood of moral strivings and yearnings, not baser impulses.

18. This verse seems best taken as a summary of all that has gone before rather than as any fresh advance in the argument. There seems to be a continuous force in the present tense of *agesthe, you are led*, as though Paul wished to say 'As long as you are being thus led'. *Hyponomon*, in accordance with the principle enunciated above, is probably to be taken in the general sense of 'under law as a principle', rather than in the particular sense of 'under the law of Moses'. Of course, the difference is not great, for the one must include the other: if the Galatians (like all Spirit-led Christians) are not under law as a system, they obviously cannot be under any particular law, whether Jewish or Gentile.

Additional note: The meaning of 'pneuma' (5:16)

There is a very valuable article under *pneuma* in BAGD, which helpfully outlines the various meanings of this word. Like *rûah* in the Old Testament, it has travelled far from its original meaning of 'wind, breath'. From being the 'breath of life', the immaterial part that alone gives life to the *sarx*, 'flesh', it comes virtually to mean 'self'.²⁶ BAGD well says 'as the source and seat of insight, feeling, and will, generally as the representative part of the inner life of man'. This is where the above-mentioned ambiguity enters: for *pneumati*, or *en pneumati*, may thus at times mean simply 'inwardly', or, at most, 'spiritually', not 'by the Spirit'. This is especially so when there is a contrast, explicit or implied, with 'body' or 'flesh', while Romans 8:16, 'the Spirit himself bearing witness with our spirit' (or 'to our very spirit', following BAGD), shows the ambiguity. Since 'spirit' essentially means 'very self', or 'very nature', then it may be equally used either of humans or of God.

When so used of God, the noun 'spirit' usually has the definite article in Greek, and often the adjective 'holy' as well. When the word is thus differentiated, it presents no problems. This is God's Holy Spirit, sometimes in the New Testament called 'the Spirit of the Lord', or 'the Spirit of Christ', and even once 'the Spirit of Jesus' (Acts 16:7). In this sense, the Spirit is 'that which differentiates God from everything that is not God ... All those who belong to God possess or receive this Spirit and hence have a share in his life. This Spirit also serves to distinguish the Christians from all unbelievers ...' (BAGD under *pneuma*).

To Paul, possession of the Spirit is therefore at the same time the possession of 'the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. 2:16), which alone makes possible the understanding of spiritual truths. In Galatians, however, Paul is more concerned with the later fruits of the Spirit shown in Christ-like conduct than he is with the initial revelatory work of the Spirit. Christians are to 'walk by the Spirit' (5:16), to be 'led by the Spirit' (5:18), to 'keep in step with the Spirit' (5:25, niv), to 'live by the Spirit' (5:25), to 'sow to the Spirit' (6:8). All these are varied metaphors for what is essentially one and the same thing, a life completely and continuously under the control and the direction of the Holy Spirit. What this means in practical terms of ethical conduct, Paul will now show in detail.

d. The 'natural results' of human nature (5:19–21)

Paul now moves on to a detailed consideration of the differences produced in the human life by the presence of the Spirit. He has already given, in broad outline, the substance of his 'moral argument' which is the main theme of this section of the letter.²⁷ Now, in order to point his argument, he deals with the total contrast between the 'natural' life and the 'spiritual' life and does so in embarrassing detail, no doubt very appropriate to the situation in Galatia, as in any other pagan area. First he gives a list of some of the vices typical of the paganism of his day, as he does elsewhere in his letters (e.g. Rom. 1:29–31). Lest Paul be accused of taking an unduly pessimistic view of life, it is well to remember that pagan moralists were, if anything, more severe in their strictures; indeed, some have felt that Paul is drawing on a pagan philosopher's 'stock list' here. The one difference was that pagan moralists, while they also regarded these things with horror, yet regarded them as contrary to humanity's true nature; Paul however regarded them as 'natural' and inevitable results.²⁸ We can see from Corinthians how hard Paul had to fight against even the grossest of vices in the Gentile Christian churches which he founded. Indeed, it was just because of this floodtide of Gentile immorality that the Judaizers felt the observance of the law to be so necessary, a view which the despairing Galatians may have shared. Jewish Christian churches were not usually as exposed to gross vices of this sort (but see Rom. 2:22). Their typical 'spiritual' sins were subtler: pride, self-righteousness, hypocrisy and the like. It is therefore equally possible that Paul's list of vices comes from a Jewish source, designed to instruct Gentile proselytes in the elements of moral behaviour: Paul the Rabbi must have known such lists well.

"What the human nature produces is plain for all to see—things like unchastity, unnatural vice, sexual excess; idolatry, magic; hostile feelings, contentiousness, jealousy, temper tantrums, canvassing for position, dissensions, factions, envy; alcoholism, wild parties, and all that sort of behaviour. I tell you in advance (as I did before) that those who do things like that will never prove to be heirs of God's kingdom.'

The exact shade of meaning of each word is not easy to establish, although the general sense is that given here: many seem to be almost synonymous or variants on a common theme. Burton discusses them in detail, although his interpretation needs to be supplemented by more recent material, available since his time. The neb, with others, tries to divide the vices into groups. First come three concerned with breaches of sexual law; then two concerned with 'ritual sins', idolatry and sorcery, which are usually linked in the Old Testament, as being so linked in pagan religions; then eight concerned with social life; then two dealing with strong drink. If, as suggested, this does indeed come from some 'Jewish missionary handbook', used in proselytism of Gentiles and familiar to Paul from pre-Christian days, such an orderly presentation is all the more likely. The fact that Paul ends the list with *ta homoia toutois*, 'and such like', shows us that it is by no means considered by him as exhaustive, but merely typical. If we had a complete list, we might well find that it corresponded to the ten commandments, or some other obvious division of the law.

It may be, of course, that what we have is simply the first sign of a Christian 'catalogue', soon to become standard through the catechetical work of the church. But the similarity of the description of pagan vices in various parts of the New Testament reads as though there had been some common original. And though the interpretation (and even the text) of the so-called 'decree of the Council of Jerusalem' is doubtful,

there is a similar division into sections there (Acts 15:29). That this is part of a system of common 'types', no-one doubts; the only question is as to how far they are original with Christianity, and how far borrowed from earlier prototypes, constructed either by Jewish or by Gentile moralists. In any case, the uniqueness of the Christian understanding of sin as covering motivation as much as act (Matt. 5:28) has altered any original list beyond recognition, and made it far more searching.

19. It has been sometimes felt that there is an implied contrast in the text between *ta erga*, *the works* (of the flesh), laboriously produced, and *ho karpos*, 'the fruit' (of the Spirit), which is a spontaneous growth (v. 22), as though, for all its striving after good, this was the best of which natural humanity was capable.²⁹ The true answer may simply be that, while the metaphor of 'fruit-bearing' is still vivid in the case of the *pneuma*, 'Spirit', the original metaphor latent in *erga*, *works*, is so weakened as to be lost in the case of the *sarx*, *flesh*.

The general nature of the vices described will be plain from the paraphrase on p. 213 above where the definitions follow BAGD in the main, although the lines of demarcation between the vices are not always very clear. Indeed, if Paul was using some kind of traditional 'list', whatever its source, it may not always be necessary to look for such distinctions; it may be that the 'piling up' of nouns is largely for rhetorical effect. *Porneia*, for instance, usually translated *fornication*, seems in point of fact to cover most kinds of 'natural' sexual irregularities. Hence the deliberately vague word 'unchastity' used in the paraphrase. It is also used in the Old Testament to denote 'idolatry' in the sense of unfaithfulness to God, but it is not likely to have that metaphorical sense here, especially as *idolatry* appears as a separate item below. The two following words (*akatharsia* and *aselgeia*) probably describe some of the sexual perversions (such as the practice of homosexuality and lesbianism) which, as Paul reminds us in Romans 1:26–27, were common in the pagan world, and indeed often characterize the world of today. They have therefore been translated in the paraphrase as 'unnatural vice' and 'sexual excess', although their reference may well be broader. They seem to be deliberately vague, and are probably used as euphemisms here.

20. *Pharmakeia*, *sorcery*, had a special relevance for inhabitants of Asia Minor, as can be seen from the story in Acts 19:19 of the burning of the books containing 'Ephesian Letters', as such magic spells were called in the ancient world. If the Galatians had become entangled with some star-cult (4:10), the mention would be even more relevant here. The orthodox Jew regarded this sin with peculiar horror, as directly forbidden in the law (Exod. 22:18), and as, like sexual immorality, closely connected with *idolatry*, to which doubtless the Galatians had been enslaved. The word can also mean 'poisoning', from its etymological derivation. Both witchcraft and poisoning were apparently prevalent in the Roman world and severely dealt with by law.

Next come a group of sins which, in view of the reference to quarrels in verse 15, may possibly have had a particular relevance to the Galatian situation at the time. Here again the barriers between the vices are thin and it is not important to distinguish them sharply; it will perhaps be sufficient to single out a few of the important and characteristic words for detailed consideration. Several will recur in other such catalogues of vices elsewhere in the New Testament. For an attempted translation of each word, see the paraphrase on page 213. *Eris*, *strife*, for instance, is clearly something like 'a contentious temper' (so neb). There seems no point to be made of the

fact that the singular is used of this noun while many others in the list are quoted in the plural. By the usual Greek rule, the plural, if used in such cases, should mean ‘acts of contention’, although Paul uses the plural *erides* in 1 Corinthians 1:11 in substantially the same sense as the singular here. It would apply very well to the ‘biting’ and ‘devouring’ taking place in Galatia (v. 15).

It is hard to see the distinction between *zēlos*, *jealousy*, used here, and *phthonoi*, ‘envy’, in the next verse. Both have the same basic meaning. Perhaps Paul’s use of *zēlos* goes back to his use of the cognate verb in 4:17–18, referring to the activity of the Judaizers. Clearly, the sense of *zēlos* is bad here, whatever we may decide about Paul’s usage of it in the earlier context. For *phthonoi*, ‘envy’, some witnesses here read *phonoï*, ‘murders’: but that is less likely, as not being a parallel to *zēlos*. *Phthonoi* should mean ‘acts of envy’ or ‘bursts of envy’, usually aroused by the position or good fortune of others. The concept therefore comes close to covetousness.

Eritheiai, *selfishness*, is well expanded by the neb as ‘selfish ambitions’, although it more properly denotes the unfair ‘canvassing for office’ which is prompted by such ambitions for power (so BAGD). Any linguistic connection with *eris*, *strife*, is very doubtful. Distinct from it is *haireseis*, *party spirit*, which, although giving the English word ‘heresies’, probably means ‘factions’, as in 1 Corinthians 11:19. The neb translation, ‘party intrigues’, may be a little too strong, but conveys the right idea, and would suit the presumed Galatian situation.

21. *Methai* (lit. ‘drunkennesses’)³⁰ and *kōmoi*, ‘carousings’, probably refer primarily to the drunken orgies encouraged at festivals of the pagan gods, and secondarily to the general insobriety of pagan life. Wild parties would be the modern equivalents, not to mention drug abuse of various other kinds. We can see from 1 Corinthians 11:21 how easily such abuses could creep into Gentile churches even at the Lord’s Supper; they were, after all, characteristic of pagan worship, and old religious habits die hard.

When Paul says *as I warned you before*, *proeipon*, we are faced with the same problem as in 1:9 where the perfect tense of the same verb (*proeirēkamen*, ‘as we have said before’) occurred. When had Paul delivered this previous warning? We cannot assume a mere ‘epistolary aorist’, in view of the use in the context of the present tense as well, *I warn you*, in deliberate contrast. In this instance, it is difficult to find an earlier context in the same letter to justify the use; nor can we assume a ‘lost’ earlier letter to the Galatians as we might perhaps in the case of Corinth. The only logical conclusion, therefore, is that Paul, in his initial evangelism of Galatia, was far from restricting himself to the ‘simple gospel’ as sometimes we erroneously suppose. He must also have given strong moral teaching verbally as well: he certainly includes it in writing in all his letters. This in itself gives the lie to the Jewish charge that Paul taught freedom from all moral restraints (Rom. 3:8). Admittedly, if the letter is regarded as being addressed to South Galatia, the narrative in Acts suggests too brief a period on the initial visit to allow much teaching (see Acts 13 and 14); but on the return journey, some such moral instruction is possible and suggested strongly by the *strengthening* and *exhorting* of Acts 14:22.

Inherit the kingdom of God; although Paul is emphatic that we cannot by ‘doing’ the works of the law enter our promised inheritance (3:12, 18), but that entry is by faith alone (3:11), yet he strongly asserts here that by ‘doing’ these very different things we can bar ourselves from the kingdom.³¹ That is not the paradox that it seems to us at first

sight. Paul's whole point is that *those who do such things* thereby show themselves to be without the transforming gift of faith which leads to the gift of the promised Spirit, which, in turn, leads to the fruits of the Spirit, the seal of our inheritance. To all these things the Christian has died already, as Paul will show below; therefore he or she shows the reality of the 'faith that justifies', and the reality of the new 'life in Christ' that is within, by a clear break with all these 'works of darkness', familiar though they may have been in the past. It comes as a shock when Paul, in 1 Corinthians 6:11, after a similar list of loathsome vices, says, 'Some of you were once like that', although he does hasten to reassure the Corinthians of their new standing in Christ. Paul only gives this 'black list' to remind the Galatians of what their past slavery to sin had been before the gospel brought them freedom in Christ.

The reference in what might be translated 'will never prove to be heirs',³² *ou klēronomēsousin*, probably goes back to the discussion about Abraham and his 'offspring' in chapter 3. Paul has shown in 4:7 that, if we are sons, then, by the same token, we are 'heirs', *klēronomoi*, or 'fellow heirs with Christ', as Rom. 8:17 has it. But chapter 4 had ended with the stern warning that the children of the slave-wife, themselves slaves, cannot share in God's promised wealth of glory; indeed, they are specifically excluded. So it is here: those who are 'slaves' to such passions show themselves to be no true-born children of God; such can never inherit the kingdom of God.

Additional note: The 'kingdom of God' (5:21)

Paul's use of *basileian theou*, 'the kingdom of God', is very interesting. The concept of the 'kingdom of God' is dominant in the Synoptic Gospels, especially perhaps in Matthew, who writes in a thoroughly Jewish milieu and as the heir to a long Old Testament tradition. However, the image is also used in the book of Acts. Indeed, Acts 14:22, if we are supporters of the South Galatian theory, shows us Paul teaching to these very Galatians 'that through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God'. Paul himself used the analogy more often than might be supposed; Romans 14:17 and 1 Corinthians 4:20 are two random instances out of some eight in all. Paul therefore seems to have employed the picture fairly consistently through his ministry, whether early or late, Jewish or Gentile. It is however true to say that, although present in Pauline theology, the kingdom of God is never a dominant concept. Paul prefers to speak in terms of 'gospel' and 'church', for instance, rather than 'kingdom'. This is not of course to identify these concepts completely, but merely to say that all three belong to the same realm of ideas, in the sense that they describe the relation of God to us. *Basileia*, 'kingdom', itself would actually be better translated as 'rule of God' rather than 'kingdom' (or, with Moffatt, 'realm of God') which in English suggests a spatial and temporal location.³³ If the recipients of the letter were ethnic Galatians of the north, and remembered the traditions of their own Celtic king Amyntas, before the Roman province was formed, the word might have even more relevance for them.

e. The harvest of the spirit (5:22–26)

Now comes a corresponding list of spiritual qualities. Although such a roll-call exists in other parts of the New Testament (as in 2 Pet. 1:5–7) there is no such close similarity between the lists as there is in the corresponding classification of the vices. The Petrine list of qualities, for instance, is in the reverse order, with *agapē*, ‘love’, as the climax. This suggests that no Hebrew prototype existed here, but that these ‘positive’ lists are a Christian creation. It seems obvious that, while Judaism and Christianity might well agree on what were vices, their concept of spiritual virtues might be different.

‘But, by contrast, the harvest³⁴ that the Spirit brings is love, joy, tranquillity, forbearance with others, kindness, generosity, reliability, humility, self-control in the realm of sex. There is no law against those who act like this. For those who belong to Christ Jesus have put their “flesh” to death, along with all its passionate desires. Now, as surely as we are living by the rule of the Spirit, let us walk by the rule of the Spirit. Let us, for instance, not be boastful, challenging and envying one another’s position.’

For the reasons leading to the choice of these particular terms in translation, BAGD has been taken as a guide. Again, as in the case of the vices, the difficulty is to know where to draw the line of demarcation between one virtue and another. In most cases, the ‘areas of meaning’ overlap considerably. Also, without giving a very expanded paraphrase, it is not easy to cover all the shades of meaning conveyed; so an attempt has been made to select the one word which seems most central to the meaning as well as appropriate to this context and to the presumed actual position in Galatia.

22. The first three aspects of the Spirit’s harvest need little comment; the second and third, *chara*, *joy*, and *eirēnē*, *peace*, are probably suggested by the typically Jewish-Christian greeting of ‘grace and peace’, *charis kai eirēnē*, of 1:3, although *charis* and *chara* are not directly connected. To the Christian, joy is something quite independent of outward circumstances, and its source is the Holy Spirit (see 1 Thess. 1:6 and Rom. 14:17). *Agapē* has been already considered; it is put first on the list as embracing all the others if rightly understood. Whether we are justified in bracketing these three as a ‘triad’ apart from the other virtues is uncertain. The list certainly does not fall into sections as readily as that of the vices did. See 1 Corinthians 13:13 for another but different triad: faith, hope, and love, with ‘love’ as the climax.

The use of *karpos*, *fruit*, as mentioned above, suggests that all these spiritual qualities, and many more, are the spontaneous product of the presence of the Spirit of Christ within the heart of the Christian. The metaphor is a very old one, natural to an agricultural people like Israel. While *karpos* means any kind of fruit, it is most frequently employed of the product of the fruit tree or vine. It was a principle enunciated by the Lord himself that a tree could be recognized by the fruit that it bore (Matt. 7:16); so, by the presence of these ‘fruits’, the presence of the Spirit in the hearts of the Galatians is proved. It is interesting that Paul does not here use the presence of spiritual gifts, equally coming from the Spirit, as a proof of spiritual life, although such gifts seem to have existed among the Galatians (‘works miracles among you’, 3:5). Perhaps it is because fruit of the Spirit cannot be simulated, while gifts of the Spirit can (Matt. 7:22).

Makrothymia, *patience*, is well paraphrased by Bruce by the coined word ‘long tempered’ as opposed to ‘short tempered’; perhaps ‘tolerance’ would give the idea better in modern English. It is the quality of ‘putting up with’ other people, even when one’s patience is sorely tried. It is interesting to speculate why Paul put this quality in such a lofty place in his list. Perhaps it was because in Galatia neither ‘party’ displayed

much of this virtue. *Chrēstotēs*, *kindness*, also has the connotations of ‘goodness’ or ‘generosity’ (so BAGD), but these thoughts are already covered by other words in the list before us. The common slave-name *Chrēstos* comes from this root, so that the word must suggest some quality that was desired in the ideal servant, as indeed do all the other qualities listed here: it has been well said that they are a list of ‘slave virtues’. If these are the qualities of the ‘servant Messiah’, on whom Christians are called to pattern themselves, this is not surprising. Indeed, there may even be a pun based on the similar pronunciation of *Christos*, the Messiah, and *Chrēstos*, the slave name. Did the wits of Antioch intend this pun when they called this ‘reformed sect’ of Judaism ‘Christians’, hinting at ‘the goody-goodies’ (Acts 11:26)? *Agathōsynē* has here probably more of its colloquial meaning of ‘generosity’ than its original meaning of *goodness* although both interpretations are possible: *prautēs*, *gentleness* (v. 23), would then mean something like ‘humility’.

These qualities are basically manward rather than Godward in their aspect, and most, if not all, would be directly relevant to a state of party strife in a church, whether two-sided or three-sided. Most of them are qualities of restraint and humility, to be displayed by the victor to the vanquished. That in itself suggests that Paul may fear over-violent dealing with the erring Judaizers by a victorious ‘orthodox party’ in the Galatian church, should his appeal be successful. The apostle’s exhortation in 6:1 concerning anyone ‘overtaken in any trespass’, bears this out. Once Paul has vanquished an opponent theologically, that person ceases, for Paul, to be an opponent and becomes instead an erring brother or sister in need of pastoral care (2 Cor. 2:5–8). But he knows human nature too well to expect that the Galatian reaction will necessarily be the same. Indeed, the more tempted the Galatians had been to succumb to the attack of the Judaizers, the more likely they would be to lead the ‘heresy hunt’ now, in order to justify themselves for their own past wavering.

Of the two remaining qualities, *pistis*, *faithfulness*, if translated ‘faith’, would be primarily directed to God; Paul does not speak of having ‘faith’ in fellow humans. However, it can equally well be translated, as here, ‘faithfulness’ (neb, ‘fidelity’).³⁵ If this is the correct rendering, it could apply to the Christian’s attitude manwards as well as Godwards. It would then refer to the Galatians’ lack of fidelity towards Paul, of which he had complained in 4:12–20.

23. The last quality, *enkrateia*, *self-control*, is neither Godward nor manward, but more properly ‘selfward’. It is usually employed to describe self-control in sexual matters; if that is its meaning here, then it looks back to the grosser vices of the list above. If there was a ‘libertine’ group at Galatia, boasting of their antinomian ‘freedom’, then they sorely needed this gift. *Tōn toioutōn*, *such*, could be amplified, with neb, as ‘such things as these’, and the sense would be excellent. No law forbids qualities like these; such virtues are in fact the ‘keeping’, or ‘fulfilling’, of the law. But, in view of the personal nature of the reference in verse 21, *hoi toiauta prassontes*, ‘those who habitually behave thus’, it is better to translate personally here too, as ‘such people’, not ‘such things’. The phrase will then become ‘The law was never meant for (or “was never directed against”) people like this’. In either case, the main sense is the same,³⁶ though niv prefers ‘such things’.

24. Paul now gives the reason for the production of this rich spiritual harvest and for the freedom of the Christian from the law. Christians have already *crucified the flesh*,

tēn sarka estaurōsan, 'put the old self to death'. As before, 'original nature' is perhaps a strong enough equivalent for *sarx*: to say 'lower nature' (with *neb*) or 'sinful nature' (with *niv*) is to suggest that unaided humanity is actually capable of 'higher' things, and this Paul will not allow. The point of *estaurōsan, crucified*, is to link this total change in attitude, and therefore change in conduct, with the death of Christ.³⁷ It is another way of expressing 2:20, 'I have been crucified with Christ' (see Commentary on pp. 125f.). There were many other words that Paul could have used, and indeed does use elsewhere, like 'put to death' or 'abolish', which would have conveyed his general meaning, but would not convey this direct connection with Christ's death.

The words *pathēmasin, passions*, and *epithymiais, desires*, are to be taken closely together; so to translate 'passionate longings' is not misleading. Hebrew was chary in the use of adjectives, as were many ancient languages. Often two nouns, juxtaposed, would serve the purpose as well. Either through the Greek translation of the Old Testament, or through the persistence of old speech-habits among Greek speakers whose mother-tongue was not Greek, the same tendency to avoid adjectives appears in the New Testament, though in reduced form. Like *pathos*, the word *pathēma* has a twofold meaning, either 'experience' or 'suffering' (in a neutral sense), or 'passion' (in a bad sense). The *epithymia*, 'longing' (of the flesh), is taken from verse 17 above, where the cognate verb occurs. However, 'passionate longings' should not be restricted to sexual matters: it means anything for which the natural self longs intensely.

25. The use of *pneumati, by the Spirit*, or 'in Spirit', has the same possible ambiguity as before, in that it may have a general or a specific reference. If general, we must translate 'spiritually'; if specific, we may follow the *neb* with: 'If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct our course.' A good colloquial translation of the latter phrase would be 'keep in step with the Spirit' (*niv*). Again, the *ei, if*, does not express any sense of contingency or doubt when it is used with the indicative mood; rather it means 'since', as often in Paul.

26. *No self-conceit*: at first sight this verse might look as though its function was simply to sum up the humble and self-effacing fruits of the Spirit already mentioned. But it is more than that, if it is intended to lead to a particular application to the Galatian situation. *No provoking (or challenging) of one another*: this 'spiritual' way of life, says Paul, utterly forbids all forms of ambitious rivalry and envy. This does sound suspiciously as though there was party strife in the church of Galatia of the type familiar to us from Corinth. It may be, of course, that we need not seek for such a particular application. Paul was well acquainted with human nature, from the pastoral care of so many churches; he knew that this was a danger everywhere, and therefore cautioned them against it. The word *kenodoxoi* in the first part of this verse means either 'conceited' or 'boastful'. Perhaps the danger was that those who had not fallen to the Judaizing error were now boasting of their superior spiritual strength, while those who had given way were *phthonountes*, either 'full of envy' or 'jealous'. Alternatively, the trouble in Galatia may be a simple power struggle within the church; in that case, we may be wrong in looking for deeper motives, or seeing any reference to the Judaizing controversy.

²⁴ This promise of deliverance from the 'flesh' is not automatic or magical. Failure to realize this has caused much disillusionment among young Christians, as perhaps it did also among the

Galatians. Indeed, as suggested, it may have been one of the reasons for their lapse into legalism. As Betz well says, ‘the promise depends upon the previous imperative—and its result’.

²⁵ See Additional Note on p. 211 on the meaning of *pneuma*, *Spirit*: there is always a potential ambiguity.

BAGD *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, ed. by William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, a translation and adaptation of Walter Bauer, *Griechisch-Deutsches Wörterbuch*; second edition revised and augmented by F. Wilbur Gingrich and Frederick W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

²⁶ This meaning, however, is more often expressed by *psychē* in Greek, corresponding to *nepeš* in Hebrew. Abbott-Smith discusses both words and their corresponding Hebrew terms, which may influence the sense in Greek.

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niv The New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984.

²⁷ Paul’s whole argument here is really the same as the proverbial ‘by their fruits you will know them’ (see Matt. 7:16): this is of course equally true of the works of the flesh and of the fruits of the Spirit.

²⁸ Elsewhere, Paul defines these same things as ‘the works of darkness’ (Rom. 13:12, noted by Betz). This may either imply their Satanic origin, or simply be a description of their nature. But here he is concerned to show how ‘naturally’ they arise, not to seek a supernatural cause for them outside of humanity itself.

Burton E. de Witt Burton, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921).
neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

²⁹ Any such contrast seems over-exegesis: Paul’s stress, in either case, is on the inevitable onflowing consequences. But it is true that, to Paul, *ta erga*, ‘the works’, tends to have a pejorative sense, perhaps because the phrase is so often used of ‘the works of the law’ in theological controversy.

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neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

³⁰ By the Greek grammatical rule, the plural normally means ‘instances of drunkenness, or whatever the particular vice may be: it transfers the idea from an abstract notion to practical instances, and so makes the whole more vivid.

³¹ Betz sees the archaic and formal language of the quotation as showing that it was part of formal catechetical instruction. But it may simply indicate the solemnity of the warning.

³² ‘The inheritance’ seems usually associated in Paul with the gift of the Spirit, as here: that in itself marks the difference between the two lists.

Moffatt J. Moffatt, *A New Translation of the Bible*, 1926.

³³ For ‘kingdom’ as an eschatological concept, see especially the so-called ‘parables of the kingdom’ in Matthew 13.

³⁴ Betz, perhaps rightly, sees a contrast between the essential ‘unity’ of ‘the fruit of the Spirit’ and the unstructured list of unrelated vices.

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Bruce F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGNTC (Exeter: Paternoster Press, 1982).

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neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

³⁵ Whenever a word from this root is applied to God elsewhere in the Bible, the meaning is clearly ‘faithfulness’ or ‘constancy’ (Rom. 3:3).

neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

³⁶ See Betz for a discussion of the issues involved: he sees Paul’s motive as being to encourage ethical responsibility, which an external law could never do. This is true, but inadequate.

niv The New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984.

neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

niv The New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984.

³⁷ As Betz well says, Paul is referring to the overwhelming presence of Christ, the crucified and resurrected Lord, living in them by his Spirit.

neb The New English Bible: Old Testament, 1970; New Testament, ²1970).

niv The New International Version, 1973, 1978, 1984.

R. Alan Cole, [*Galatians: An Introduction and Commentary*](#), vol. 9, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1989), 210–224.