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“The Israel of God”: The Narrative Rhetoric of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians

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## Abstract

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By Richard Manly Adams, Jr.

This study applies literary and rhetorical analysis to Paul’s letter to the Galatians, reading the argument through the eyes of the letter’s implied reader. Positioned between prevailing rhetorical and narrative approaches to the letter, the study argues that Galatians functions as a rhetorical construction of the community’s narrative self-identity, an identity Paul labels at the end of the letter as the “Israel of God” (Galatians 6:16), a community defined by the presence and outward manifestation of the Spirit. Competing against alternate interpretations of the meaning of the Galatians’ experience with the Spirit, Paul’s argument is best understood as an emplotment of this experience within an unfolding narrative of the Israel of God, a narrative that began with the promises to Abraham, continued under a period of enslavement under sin for which the law was introduced as a temporary solution, and turned to freedom with the appearance of Christ, the seed of Abraham. Paul identifies the Galatians, unified through baptism, as this seed of Abraham, evidence of the end of the law’s efficacy. This reconstructed narrative identity functions as Paul’s answer to the rhetorical situation that prompts the letter. Using the narrative function explored by Paul Ricoeur, set within the apostle’s Greco-Roman rhetorical milieu identified through elementary rhetorical exercises, formal rhetorical handbooks, and speeches made by Paul’s rough contemporaries, this study identifies the construction of narrative identity through emplotment of the past as Paul’s manner of deliberative rhetoric. After establishing a reading methodology from modern (ch. 2) and ancient (ch. 3) sources, the study consists in three exegetical chapters, tracing how Paul’s construction of past events forms an argument about the Galatians’ future belief and behavior.

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## Table of Contents

<b>CHAPTER 1 NARRATIVE AND RHETORIC IN GALATIANS</b>	<b>1</b>
TIME AND NARRATIVE IN GALATIANS	3
“THE ISRAEL OF GOD”	7
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN GALATIANS	10
NARRATIVE (AND) RHETORIC IN GALATIANS SCHOLARSHIP	14
“NARRATIVE” IN GALATIANS	16
“RHETORIC” IN GALATIANS	27
THE NARRATIVE OF THIS STUDY	40
<b>CHAPTER 2 DEFINING NARRATIVE RHETORIC: AN ANALYTICAL APPROACH</b>	<b>43</b>
READING WITH ARISTOTLE BETWEEN RHETORIC AND POETICS	51
GALATIANS WITHIN PAUL RICOEUR’S MIMETIC SPIRAL	57
RICOEUR’S NARRATIVE FUNCTION AND ARISTOTLE’S POETICS	67
RICOEUR AND THE PARADOX OF Μῦθος AND ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ	73
RICOEUR’S THREE STAGES OF MIMESIS	76
READING THE NARRATIVE RHETORIC OF GALATIANS	90
DEFINING TERMS	92
A “METHOD” FOR READING NARRATIVE RHETORIC	100
CONCLUSION	109
<b>CHAPTER 3 DEFINING NARRATIVE RHETORIC: A PRACTICAL APPROACH</b>	<b>111</b>
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN THE ANCIENT RHETORICAL HANDBOOKS, PART 1	113
A DEMONSTRATION OF THE HANDBOOKS’ LIMITATIONS: DIO CHRYSOSTOM’S FIRST KINGSHIP ORATION	117
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN THE <i>PROGYMNASMATA</i>	122
AN INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGYMNASMATA	124
THE PEDAGOGICAL STRATEGY OF THE PROGYMNASMATA	131
AELIUS THEON ON NARRATIVE	139
THE CRITERION FOR CONSTRUCTION: AUDIENCE IN THE PROGYMNASMATA	146
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN THE ANCIENT RHETORICAL HANDBOOKS, PART 2	152
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN ANCIENT ANALYTIC DISCOURSE	156
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN ANCIENT LITERARY CRITICISM	157
NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN ANCIENT HISTORIOGRAPHY	162
“I MYSELF WOULD NOT TELL ALL THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE SAVIOR”: READING NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN THE <i>SACRED TALES</i> OF AELIUS ARISTIDES	163
“NOW I HAVE NOT TOLD THIS LONG STORY IDLY”: READING NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN THE ORATIONS OF DIO CHRYSOSTOM	177
CONCLUSION	204
<b>CHAPTER 4 THE NARRATIVE RHETORIC OF PAUL’S PAST</b>	<b>207</b>

<b>THE INTRODUCTION OF NARRATIVE RHETORIC INTO GALATIANS</b>	<b>209</b>
<b>THE NATURE OF THE GOSPEL (1:10-12)</b>	<b>212</b>
<b>PAUL'S NARRATIVE OF REVERSAL (1:13-24)</b>	<b>216</b>
THE GALATIANS' READING OF PAUL'S NARRATIVE	236
<b>PAUL'S DEFENSE OF THE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL (2:1-10)</b>	<b>239</b>
MIMETIC AND THEMATIC RESPONSE IN JERUSALEM	251
<b>THE CONTRASTING EXAMPLE OF CEPHAS (2:11-14)</b>	<b>254</b>
<b>O YOU FOOLISH GALATIANS! PAUL'S ARGUMENT "IN FRONT OF EVERYONE" (2:14B-21 AND 3:1-5)</b>	<b>266</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>277</b>
<b><u>CHAPTER 5 CONSTRUCTING ISRAEL'S STORY</u></b>	<b>282</b>
<b>NARRATIVE RHETORIC IN GALATIANS 3-4</b>	<b>283</b>
<b>A JEWISH EMPLOTMENT OF GENTILES</b>	<b>286</b>
<b>PAUL'S APPEAL TO NARRATIVE IDENTITY AT 4:12</b>	<b>288</b>
<b>THE BEGINNING OF ISRAEL'S STORY: GOD'S PROMISES TO ABRAHAM</b>	<b>290</b>
<b>THE LAW AND NARRATIVE</b>	<b>294</b>
<b>THE END OF THE LAW'S EFFICACY I: THE REDEMPTION OF CHRIST</b>	<b>308</b>
<b>THE END OF THE LAW'S EFFICACY II: THE GALATIANS AS THE SEED OF ABRAHAM</b>	<b>314</b>
<b>A LEGAL EXPLANATION OF THE GALATIANS' ROLE IN THE NARRATIVE OF ISRAEL (4:1-7)</b>	<b>322</b>
PAUL'S "LEGAL" CRITIQUE OF THE LAW	334
<b>CONSTRUCTING NARRATIVE THROUGH SARAH AND HAGAR</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>347</b>
<b><u>CHAPTER 6 THE LAW OF CHRIST AND THE ISRAEL OF GOD: EXHORTATION AS EMPLOTMENT</u></b>	<b>349</b>
<b>THE PROBLEM OF THE INDICATIVE AND THE IMPERATIVE IN GALATIANS 5-6</b>	<b>352</b>
A HISTORICAL INTEGRATION OF PAUL'S EXHORTATION	355
A CHRISTOLOGICAL INTEGRATION OF PAUL'S EXHORTATION	361
<b>PAUL'S NARRATIVE MORAL REASONING IN GALATIANS 5-6</b>	<b>368</b>
<b>THE GALATIANS AND CIRCUMCISION (5:1-6)</b>	<b>370</b>
PAUL'S ILLUSTRATION OF FAITH ENERGIZED BY LOVE	380
<b>THE LAW OF CHRIST</b>	<b>383</b>
<b>THE ISRAEL OF GOD: THE NARRATIVE RHETORIC OF PAUL'S ARGUMENT TO THE GALATIANS</b>	<b>399</b>
<b><u>A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF MODERN SOURCES</u></b>	<b>401</b>

## Chapter 1 Narrative and Rhetoric in Galatians

In the fourth chapter of his letter to the Galatians, the apostle Paul pauses to invite “those who want to be under law” to consider a story from Israel’s past (4:21). He recounts the bare details of the story of Sarah and Hagar, found in a prior form in Genesis 15-20, and then applies the details of this story from the past to the present situation and future decision of his Galatian audience, arguing that “such things are allegorized.”<sup>1</sup> By this designation, Paul argues that the events of the past, those that occurred and were reported long ago, have direct bearing on the present crisis he perceives in Galatia. The apostle suggests that the meaning of a story, in this case the tale of two sons born to the same father by different mothers, extends beyond the specific details from the past.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The translation of this phrase is more difficult than most interpreters recognize. The verb (ἀλληγορέω), from which the participle (ἀλληγορούμενα) derives, most properly means “to speak so as to imply something other than what is said” (*LSJ*, s.v.). Most accept that Paul here speaks in the manner typically referred to in modern scholarship as “typology” as opposed to “allegory” (see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* [AB33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997], 436; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992], 217). The distinction made is that Paul, in a typological mode, connects past events with present realities. The distinction, though not in such formal terms, can be seen in the early church. Origen, for example, used Paul’s use of the term as justification for his own allegorical method. Theodore of Mopsuestia, though, argued that because the apostle does not deny the historical veracity of the “original” narrative, his method is quite different from that of exegetes like Origen. For a discussion, see Robert J. Kepple, “An Analysis of Antiochene Exegesis of Galatians 4:24-26,” *Westminster Theological Journal* 39 (1977): 239-49. For a thorough discussion of the distinction in modern scholarship, see Jon Whitman, “From Textual to Temporal: Early Christian ‘Allegory’ and Early Romantic ‘Symbol,’” *New Literary History* 22 (1991): 161-76. For a review of recent approaches to Paul’s reading of Scripture here, see Mark Gignilliat, “Paul, Allegory, and the Plain Sense of Scripture: Galatians 4:21-31,” *JTI* 21 (2008): 135-46.

<sup>2</sup> For a thorough discussion of the term and its use in Paul’s time, see Steven Di Mattei, “Paul’s Allegory of the Two Covenants (Gal 4:21-31) in Light of First-Century Hellenistic Rhetoric and Jewish Hermeneutics,” *NTS* 52 (2006): 104-109. A clear, ancient definition is that of first-century grammarian Tryphon: “Allegory is a phrasing that reveals one thing, but presents the conception of a different thing” (ἀλληγορία ἐστὶ φράσις ἕτερον μὲν τι δηλοῦσα, ἑτέρου ἔννοιαν παριστῶσα) (*De Tropis* 216). The translation here is my own. The text is taken from M. L. West, “Tryphon De Tropis,” *Classical Quarterly, New Series* 15 (1965): 230-48. This passage is also quoted by Di Mattei (“Paul’s Allegory,” 105-106). Di Mattei makes the helpful point that though most modern scholars assume the verb could be used both to mean “to speak allegorically” and “to interpret allegorically,” uses of the latter are quite rare among Paul’s contemporaries.

These events of the past have been “written” (γέγραπται, 4:22) to address the Galatians’ present situation. The story of the past is an argument about the present and future.

The tale of the births of Ishmael and Isaac is not the only story Paul tells in Galatians. Although Galatians is a vigorous example of Pauline rhetoric, often appropriately identified as Paul’s most defined, sustained argument throughout, readers encounter a series of stories, a seemingly continual retelling of the past.<sup>3</sup> Paul relates details of his own past in Judaism (1:13-14), the beginning of his preaching the gospel (1:15-24), his encounter with the apostles in Jerusalem (2:1-10), his encounter with Cephas at Antioch (2:11-21), his time with the Galatians (3:1-5; 4:12-20), the development of God’s promises to Abraham (3:6-29), the Galatians’ previous religious life (4:7-11), and the story of Sarah and Hagar (4:21-31). He also consistently makes explicit references to the story of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection (1:1, 4; 2:16, 19-21; 3:13; 4:4-5; 5:24). Thus, although it is often viewed as an argument and thus interpreted by means of rhetorical canons, Paul’s letter is, in large part, an argument of *stories*. Thus, to appreciate Galatians one must consider both its rhetorical and narrative aspects. For example, to appreciate the narrative mode of Paul’s argument, one must only consider the opening of the letter, where within the first 4 verses Paul evokes 3 different stories: Paul’s becoming an apostle (1:1), God’s raising of Christ (1:1), and Jesus’ giving his life on behalf of humanity’s sins (1:4).<sup>4</sup> Galatians is an argument of stories about the past.

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<sup>3</sup> J. B. Lightfoot notes, “The Epistle to the Galatians is especially distinguished among St. Paul’s letters by its unity of purpose” (J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962 (1865)], 63). As I demonstrate, it is no surprise that Galatians has been at the center of rhetorical approaches to Paul. Regardless of whether one agrees with the results or not, the fact that Hans Dieter Betz can create such a detailed outline of the argument, following the ancient rhetorical handbooks, demonstrates that Galatians, more than any other Pauline letter, is “rhetorical” (for the outline, see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* [*Hermeneia*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979], 16-23).

<sup>4</sup> The opening of Paul’s letter to the Romans is also full of narrative elements, including references to Paul’s call (1:1), God’s promises to Israel (1:2), Christ’s life (1:3-4), and the Romans’ call (1:5-6). As in

## Time and Narrative in Galatians

This narrative character of Paul's argument to the Galatians is odd given the heightened rhetoric of the letter. The passion with which Paul writes betrays deep concern for the Galatians' present and future belief and behavior, reflecting his perception of a dire situation in Galatia wherein the Galatians' potential action conflicts with the gospel. Paul's argument to the Galatians contains some of the harshest language in the extant corpus.<sup>5</sup> In 1:6-9, in lieu of a thanksgiving hymn, Paul immediately rebukes the Galatians, awaking his audience's attention to his perception of the dangerous situation in Galatia.<sup>6</sup> He opens with an expression of "astonishment" that the Galatians are being persuaded by those attempting "to pervert the gospel of Christ" so soon after their experience with the gospel.<sup>7</sup> In 3:1 he calls the Galatians "foolish" and accuses them

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Galatians, many of the narrative fragments in Romans are filled out throughout the letter. Once one begins to see "story" as a category of argumentation, then one realizes how full of stories Paul's letters actually are.

<sup>5</sup> On Paul's anger (and the rhetorical function of it), see Lauri Thurén, *Derhetorizing Paul: A Dynamic Perspective on Pauline Theology and the Law* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), esp. 59-64. The stark contrast between the vitriol in his speech in Galatians and his other letters is evident in early attempts to explain away his harsh language. For example, Chrysostom denies that Paul here violates Jesus' instructions as reported in Mt 5:22, but rather Paul speaks so harshly to protect the Galatians (Chrysostom, *Homily on Galatians* 3.1; see also Theodoret, *Epistle to the Galatians* 3.1).

<sup>6</sup> The seminal work on Pauline thanksgivings is that of Paul Schubert (*The Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings* [Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1939]). Though this work has been the subject of vigorous critique, its basic findings remain important to the study of Paul's letters. For further discussion of the thanksgiving form and its integration into the argument of the letters, see David W. Pao, "Gospel within the Constraints of an Epistolary Form: Pauline Introductory Thanksgivings and Paul's Theology of Thanksgiving," pp. 101-27 in *Paul and the Ancient Letter Form* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Sean A. Adams; Leiden: Brill, 2010); Jack T. Sanders, "The Transition from Opening Epistolary Thanksgivings to Body in the Letters of the Pauline Corpus," *JBL* 81 (1962): 348-62; Peter Arzt, "The 'Epistolary Introductory Thanksgiving' in the Papyri and in Paul," *NovT* 36 (1994): 29-46.

<sup>7</sup> It has become a rather standard view that Paul's omission of a thanksgiving hymn, typically found following the salutation in his letters (see, for example, 1 Cor 1:4-9), is an indication of the hurried rhetoric of the letter (see, for example, Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* [Library of Early Christianity; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1989], 22). The sample size, of course, is quite small, and therefore one must proceed with caution when suggesting Paul intentionally omits a given part of a letter. There is no opening prayer in 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus, and the prayers in the other epistles vary significantly.

of being victim to “bewitching.”<sup>8</sup> He expresses concern that his past work with the Galatians may be useless (4:11). He warns that if they follow on this same course, they will be “cut off from Christ” (5:4), rendering God’s action in Christ without meaning (2:21; 5:2). This intense rhetoric extends to harsh slanders of those teaching another message (5:13; 6:13). Paul’s heightened rhetoric in these direct addresses of the audience has given Galatians the reputation as the letter from the apostle who is “absolutely outraged.”<sup>9</sup>

A question arises, therefore, about the role extended narration of the past plays within an intense argument about the Galatians’ present and future. Amongst all of his letters, in Galatians Paul is the most “furious,” and yet it is also Galatians where he spends the most time telling stories of the past.<sup>10</sup> Galatians has been a primary locus for studies of Pauline rhetoric but also Pauline history. The juxtaposition of retelling the past and writing to change the future has confused Paul’s recent interpreters. The confusion is evident in recent attempts to categorize the letter under one of Aristotle’s three “modes of rhetoric” (εἶδη τῆς ῥητορικῆς): deliberative (συμβουλευτικόν), forensic (δικανικόν), and epideictic (ἐπιδεικτικόν), each of which Aristotle associates with a particular period of

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<sup>8</sup> Only rarely does Paul use “foolish” (ἄνοητος) (see Rom 1:14; 1 Tim 6:9). In Titus he uses this language to describe his (and Titus’) previous life, before “the goodness and love for humanity of God our savior appeared” (Tit 3:3-4). The language itself can be quite insulting (see Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 572). For an examination of Paul’s “witchcraft” language in Gal 1:8; 3:1 within his social context, see Jerome H. Neyrey, *Paul, In Other Words: A Cultural Reading of His Letters* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990), 181-206.

<sup>9</sup> The categorization of Paul as “absolutely outraged” comes from Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition; New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 303. Similar descriptions of the apostle can be found in most introductions to the letter. For example, Carl R. Holladay argues that Paul “presents himself as an exasperated mother at her wits’ end over an adolescent child she is trying to steer toward adulthood” (*A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005], 334).

<sup>10</sup> The label of Paul as “furious” comes from Thurén, who offers a summary of the comments made about Paul’s anguish as constructed from his rhetoric (*Derhetorizing Paul*, 59-64). For other places where Paul recounts details of his past, see Rom 11:1; 1 Cor 9:15-23; 2 Cor 11:21-33; Phil 3:4-11.

time.<sup>11</sup> Aristotle connects deliberative rhetoric with a concern about behavior or belief in the future, forensic rhetoric with the present, and epideictic with praise or blame in the past.<sup>12</sup> Each of the three has at some point been used to characterize the prevailing mode of rhetoric in Galatians, though most interpreters emphasize either deliberative or forensic, reflecting the mix of the future (deliberative) and past (forensic) within the argument of the letter.<sup>13</sup> Analysis that emphasizes Paul's narration of the past—particularly his retelling of how he came to be an apostle in the first two chapters of the

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<sup>11</sup> The common distinction of three genres was made in Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.3 1358a36-1359a29. Aristotle likely simplifies or condenses prior divisions of rhetoric (see Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* [trans. George A. Kennedy; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007], 46; cf. *Rhet. ad Alex.* 1). Quintilian offers a brief discussion of other systems (*Inst. Orat.* 3.4.1-11). Aristotle's three-fold system becomes dominant in the Greek and Roman rhetorical traditions. For those adoptions of Aristotle's threefold division, see Cicero, *de Inv.* 2.4.12; *de Orat.* 2.81; Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 3.4-9; For an introduction to the three genres in Aristotle and beyond, see George A. Kennedy, "The Genres of Rhetoric," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330B.C.-A.D. 400*. For consideration of the threefold system in the study of Paul, see Duane F. Watson, "The Three Species of Rhetoric and the Study of the Pauline Epistles," pp. 25-47 in *Paul and Rhetoric* (ed. Peter Lampe and J. Paul Sampley; T&T Clark Theology; New York: Continuum, 2010), 25-26; James D. Hester, "The Rhetorical Structure of Galatians 1:11-2:14," *JBL* 103 (1984): 223-24.

<sup>12</sup> "Each of these [species] has its own 'time'; for the deliberative speaker, the future (for whether exhorting or dissuading he advises about future event); for the speaker in court [forensic], the past (for he always prosecutes or defends concerning what has been done); in epideictic the present is the most important; for all speakers praise and blame in regard to existing qualities" (*Rhet.* 1.3.4 1358b13-20 [All translations of Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are Kennedy, ed., *On Rhetoric*]). Aristotle presents general connections between modes of rhetoric and time. He himself provides greater nuance to these, as do those who follow him. For example, Quintilian admits that, "The deliberative department of oratory, therefore (also called the advisory department), while it deliberates about the future, also enquires about the past" (*Inst. Orat.* 3.8.6 [Heinemann, LCL]).

<sup>13</sup> The comments of Watson represent the assumptions of many rhetorical critics who seem compelled to choose one mode over the others: "While all the Pauline epistles exhibit all three species of rhetoric, one species predominates in each letter" ("Three Species," 27). See similar comments in Kennedy, "Genres," 45-46. François Vouga recognizes the problem many find with assigning Galatians as forensic ("Die Schwierigkeit der These besteht in der exhortatio (Gal. 5:1-6:10), die nicht zu der dikastischen Gattung gehört") is the same as the problem with reading it as deliberative ("Die Schwierigkeit dieser zweiten These besteht in der breiten Entwicklung narratio (Gal 1:12-2:14), die kaum zu der symbuleutischen Gattung gehört") ("Zur rhetorischen Gattung des Galaterbriefes," *ZNW* 79 [1988]: 291). Characterizations of the letter as epideictic have been more rare. See, for examples, James Hester, "Placing the Blame: The Presence of Epideictic in Galatians 1 and 2," pp. in *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (ed. Duane F. Watson; JSNT Supplement Series 50; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); *idem*, "Epideictic Rhetoric and Persona in Galatians 1 and 2," pp. 181-96 in *The Galatians Debate: Contemporary Issues in Rhetorical and Historical Interpretation* (ed. Mark D. Nanos; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2002). Some have suggested that none of the three fits well and have questioned the value of reading Galatians in light of Aristotle's categories. See, for example, Mark D. Nanos, *The Irony of Galatians: Paul's Letter in First-Century Context* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2002), 16; Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians: Assessing an Approach to Paul's Epistle* (SNTS Monograph Series; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 120-66.

letter—tends to characterize the letter as forensic rhetoric; Paul narrates the past in order to defend himself or his gospel.<sup>14</sup> Others, however, downplay these narrative elements and instead emphasize Paul’s concern with the future, particularly the hortatory edge of the last two chapters of the letter. Such readers label the argument as deliberative rhetoric; Paul’s primary concern is with the future behavior of the community.<sup>15</sup>

The strong presence of narrative at the opening of the letter and exhortation at the end complicates the use of this standard three-part understanding of rhetoric for interpreting Galatians. George A. Kennedy appropriately critiques those who identify Galatians as deliberative rhetoric, arguing such a conclusion “overemphasizes the presence of narrative and underestimates the presence of exhortation.”<sup>16</sup> On the other hand, Kennedy is guilty himself of a similar overemphasis, though on the last part of the letter: “The exhortation of 5:1-6:10 is strong evidence that the epistle is in fact deliberative in intent.”<sup>17</sup> Just as the forensic label has trouble accounting for chs. 5-6 within an understanding of forensic rhetoric, so a deliberative label has trouble accounting for chs. 1-2, since narrative is not a typical part of the rhetorical outlines critics like Kennedy follow. The heavy presence of narrative within an argument aimed at changing behavior makes Galatians difficult to characterize.

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<sup>14</sup> For examples, see Troy Martin, “Apostasy to Paganism: The Rhetorical Stasis of the Galatian Controversy,” *JBL* 114 (1995): 437-61; James D. Hester, “The Use and Influence of Rhetoric in Galatians 2:1-14,” *TZ* 42 (1986): 386-400.

<sup>15</sup> The work of the classicist George A. Kennedy has been especially influential (see particularly George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* [Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984]). For others who read the letter as primarily deliberative, see R. G. Hall, “The Rhetorical Outline for Galatians: A Reconsideration,” *JBL* 106 (1987): 277-87; Joop Smit, “The Letter of Paul to the Galatians: A Deliberative Speech,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 1-26.

<sup>16</sup> *New Testament Interpretation*, 146. Kennedy is offering a specific critique of the work of Hans Dieter Betz.

<sup>17</sup> “The exhortation of 5:1-6:10 is strong evidence that the epistle is in fact deliberative in intent” (*New Testament Interpretation*, 145).

The debate over the mode of rhetoric in Galatians is illustrative of the confusion time presents in Galatians.<sup>18</sup> Paul writes to dissuade the Galatians, as Gentiles, against following Jewish law, specifically against becoming circumcised. He does this though, not merely by apostolic fiat, prescribing or proscribing the Galatians' present or future behavior. Indeed, Paul's argument hardly addresses the Galatians' behavior directly. Rather, Paul spends most of the letter retelling the past, constructing stories of his own time in Judaism, his encounter with other apostles and God's promises to Abraham. Paul appears to address the one specific issue in an indirect manner. As Steven J. Kraftchick has noted, "If the only matter at stake was the future action of the Galatians, then Paul would have been able to move much more quickly to the positive portion of the letter."<sup>19</sup> How does his general focus on the past address the Galatians' behavior in the future?

### **"The Israel of God"**

In the closing comments of his letter, Paul provides a clue for understanding the connection between stories about the past and his argument about the Galatians' future. In the final summary of his argument (6:15-16), Paul contextualizes the specific issue that prompts his writing (circumcision) within a broader appeal to the Galatians' identity: "For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything; rather a new creation. And for as many as set their foundation in this new standard, peace and mercy will be upon them; indeed peace and mercy will be upon the Israel of God." At the end, Paul argues that decisions about future belief and behavior, such as whether or not to be circumcised, are

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<sup>18</sup> I address this mode of rhetorical criticism more substantively below.

<sup>19</sup> Steven J. Kraftchick, "Why Do the Rhetoricians Rage?" pp. 55-79 in *Text and Logos: The Humanistic Interpretation of the New Testament* (ed. Theodore W. Jennings, Jr.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990), 64.

to be made by consideration of the past, through an understanding of the “new creation.” He promises “peace and mercy” for “the Israel of God,” those whose foundation is this “new creation.”<sup>20</sup>

The letter serves to define the term “the Israel of God,” and Paul’s stories about the past are the way in which he does this. Paul’s closing comments in Galatians 6:15-16 suggest that the argument of the letter is not merely about a decision over circumcision, though Paul certainly calls for a particular decision. Rather Paul’s rhetorical focus is the Galatians’ identity within a “new creation,” an identity that he labels “the Israel of God.” The question of whether Gentiles must follow the law is the immediate rhetorical problem to which Paul must respond with a letter. However, Paul offers much more than a simple affirmative or negative response to this question. Rather, Paul reframes the question of circumcision within an understanding of a new creation, inaugurated in Jesus Christ.

The problem, however, is that Paul’s is not the only meaning that can be given to the Galatians’ experience. Paul is not the only one telling stories about the past so as to address the Galatians’ present and future. This potential of constructing multiple plots from the same set of events is expressly what leads to the dire rhetorical situation reflected in Paul’s impassioned arguments. Neither Paul nor the Galatians, nor even the “troublers” in Galatia, question the reality of the Galatians’ past experience with Christ.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> The translation and interpretation of Paul’s phrase καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ θεοῦ is one of the more difficult and debated issues in this letter. The καὶ can be translated either as a copulative (“and”) which would suggest that the “Israel of God” is a separate, limited group, distinct from “you” (pl.), whom Paul addresses in 6:16. Alternatively, it could be explicative (“that is”), renaming as the “Israel of God” those whom Paul addresses, who follow this “canon” of new creation. In this study I argue that Paul’s narrative rhetoric clearly indicates that the latter is the correct interpretation. For a summary of the issues, bibliography of the interpreters, and an argument for the explicative καὶ, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 574-577.

<sup>21</sup> I use the term “troublers” throughout this study to refer to those whom Paul characterizes as causing problems in Galatia (see 1:7-9; 3:1; 4:18-19; 5:7-12; 6:12-13). This is the group to whom many interpreters

The central question in Galatia is not about the event itself, but the meaning of this event. In 3:2-3, Paul asks not *if* the Galatians received the spirit, but rather *how* they received it. Whoever the troublers may be, and whatever their teaching may consist of, Paul suggests the Galatians are accepting an alternative construction of the narrative of Israel and the way in which they, as Gentiles, fit into that narrative. In Paul's terms, they are "turning to" another understanding of their experience (1:6), one that implies that Gentiles must adhere to the Jewish law, that Gentiles must first become Jews.<sup>22</sup> The Galatians have (or at least Paul is concerned that they may have) constructed meaning from their experience in one way, and Paul writes to give meaning to it in another.

With this rhetorical situation in mind, the function of narrating the past so as to influence the future becomes clearer. By reframing the issue about the Galatians' behavior within a broader question of identity, Paul creates the necessity to tell stories, to show the Galatians who they have become. So, while the letter contains small narratives throughout, the aim of this study is to show that Paul's argument is best understood in total as a narrative, not as a generic distinction, but as a rhetorical strategy. Paul works to tell the Galatians' story, so as to show them who they have become. Their future decisions about behavior will follow from their understanding of their past.

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refer with the title "opponents." I take the term "troublers" from Paul's own description of them as "those who trouble who" (οἱ ταρασσοντες ὑμᾶς/ὁ ταρασσων ὑμᾶς) (1:7; 5:10). For a discussion of the problems of labeling them as "opponents," see George A. Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), 79.

<sup>22</sup> The construction of the argument of the troublers has been, of course, the subject of much speculation. Martyn's commentary is an example *par excellence* of the attempt to recreate the troublers' teaching. Such efforts are not to be discounted, as they do help readers understand the situation Paul likely faces as he writes the letter. However, my focus in this study is on how Paul constructs his argument to the Galatian audience implied in the letter.

## Narrative Rhetoric in Galatians

My study illuminates this rhetorical strategy of re-telling the past as an argument about the future. In simple terms, the argument of my study is that the “Israel of God” is the community’s narrative identity that Paul constructs in the letter. In reading the letter, Paul’s audience recognizes its identity within the unfolding narrative of Israel, and this identity becomes the grounds for exhortation about its future belief and behavior.

Galatians is an argument that aims at directing a community’s future belief and behavior. In a strict sense, therefore, Galatians is deliberative rhetoric. Just because Paul’s ultimate concern is with the Galatians’ future, however, does not limit his rhetorical arsenal to arguments specifically about the future. Instead, Paul finds recounting the past to be an effective way of arguing about the future.

Viewing Galatians’ argument as one about the reader’s identity as the “Israel of God” fits, indeed, Jeffrey Walker’s definition of epideictic rhetoric in the second sophistic:

Epideictic appears as that which shapes and cultivates the basic codes of value and belief by which a society or culture lives; it shapes the ideologies and imageries with which, and by which, the individual members of a community identify themselves; and, perhaps most significantly, it shapes the fundamental grounds, the 'deep' commitments and presuppositions, that will underlie and ultimately determine decision and debate in particular pragmatic forums.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Jeffrey Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 9. The use of the epideictic genre, broadly constructed, is also recommended by the “new rhetoric” movement, particularly associated with the work of Chaim Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca. They identify epideictic as argumentation that “sets out to increase the intensity of adherence to certain values, which might not be contested when considered on their own but may nevertheless not prevail against other values

Though the application of a specific label is not important, Walker's definition of epideictic accurately captures the relationship between Paul's argument about the past and his rhetorical goal for the Galatians' future. Paul works to form the "deep commitment" that will shape the Galatians' decisions "in particular pragmatic forums," most immediately the decision to be circumcised or not.

I characterize Paul's distinctive argument about the past so as to direct the future as the "narrative rhetoric" of Galatians.<sup>24</sup> It is Paul's construction of the past, particularly the Galatians' role within that past that prepares for their conclusions about the future. The argument of the letter is best understood as "rhetoric" in that it is an act of persuasion, focused on convincing the Galatians that they should accept and avoid particular forms of behavior. The argument, however, is also "narrative" because Paul's strategy is to show the Galatians the role they play in the unfolding story of God's action. By following the argument of the letter, the Galatians understand themselves to play a particular role in the narrative, one that Paul refers to with the shorthand "the Israel of God." The story of the Israel of God is the linchpin for his argument not only that the Galatians need not be circumcised, but that their circumcision presents a threat to the gospel story. My study shows how Paul constructs that story.

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that might come into conflict with them" (*The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* [trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969], 51). For an argument for using this understanding of epideictic to analyze Galatians, see Kraftchick, "Why Do the Rhetoricians Rage," esp. 67-79.

<sup>24</sup> It should be noted that this emphasis on the past so as to argue about the future is completely consistent with Aristotle's discussion of deliberative rhetoric. In book 3 of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle asks "How can there be the kind of narration they are talking about in epideictic or deliberative?" (*Rhet.* 3.13.3 1414a37-38 [Kennedy]). Aristotle is referring to those who "make ridiculous divisions." He argues at this point that, "Narration [διήγησις] surely belongs only to a judicial speech." A few sections later, Aristotle answers his own question by suggesting that in deliberative rhetoric stories about the past are most appropriate: "If there is narrative [in deliberative rhetoric], it will be of events in the past, in order that by being reminded of those things the audience will take better counsel about what is to come" (*Rhet.* 3.16.11 1417b13-15 [Kennedy]).

I do not argue that Galatians is a narrative in a generic sense. As with many letters from antiquity, including many of Paul's other letters, Galatians consists of sections of argument that, if considered on their own could properly be characterized by genre as narratives. Michael Toolan, for example offers "three chief or defining characteristics" of narrative: "sequence and interrelated events; foregrounded individuals; crisis to resolution progression."<sup>25</sup> Applying such a definition to Galatians, one might identify three distinct narratives in the letter: Paul's autobiography (1:10-2:21), the story of Israel (3:6-4:31), and the story of the Galatians (1:6-9; 3:1-5; 4:6-20). Each contains events that have been related to one another by time and cause, involving a cast of characters, progressing towards a resolution.<sup>26</sup> Paul's autobiography has been well-recognized as a narrative text.<sup>27</sup> The story of Israel has less often been referred to as narrative. Though chapters 3-4 have been labeled as Paul's "elaborate exposition of Scripture"<sup>28</sup> or "the

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<sup>25</sup> Michael Toolan, *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; London: Routledge, 2001 [1988]), 8. Toolan provides a "less minimal definition" of narrative as follows: "A narrative is a perceived sequence of non-randomly connected events, typically involving, as the experiencing agonist, humans or quasi-humans, or other sentient beings, from whose experience we humans can 'learn'" (*Narrative*, 8). There is an enormous and important debate about the definition of the term narrative. In this dissertation, I will spend some time defining this term, primarily in the second chapter. Toolan's is rather standard and minimal. It has been critically well-received and is used frequently in discussions of narrative in Paul (see, for example, Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation," pp. 19-43 in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* [ed. Bruce W. Longenecker; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002]).

<sup>26</sup> These stories in Galatians are far shorter than the stories that literary critics typically analyze, but they each contain the elements Toolan sets forth, and thus could properly be considered narrative, as opposed to discourse material, of which most of Paul's letters consist. Galatians clearly stands apart from the other Pauline letters in two of these criteria: characters and chronological connections. Few letters mention as many characters, both from Israel's history and from the early gospel movement. The prevalence of narrative in Galatians can also easily be seen in the continual reference to time. Paul indicates specific periods of time throughout (see 1:18; 2:1; 3:17; 4:1), and the entire letter continually makes connections and distinctions between "then" and "now" (see, for example, 1:8-9, 10, 13, 15, 18, 21, 23; 2:6, 18, 20; 3:23, 24; 4:8, 9, 13, 19, 25, 29; 5:11).

<sup>27</sup> John M. G. Barclay calls Paul's autobiography "a quintessential narrative" ("Paul's Story: Theology as Testimony," pp. 133-56 in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, 135). See, also Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (SBL Dissertation Series; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 29-30. Even the rhetorical analysis of Betz recognizes that this section of the letter constitutes a story, leading him to label it as the *narratio* section of the defense speech. Lightfoot calls chs. 1-2 "the personal or narrative portion" (*Galatians*, 65).

<sup>28</sup> See James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 159.

argumentative or doctrinal portion,”<sup>29</sup> these chapters actually tell Paul’s version of Israel’s story, running from the promises made to Abraham, through the period of the law, to the coming of faith. The foregrounded individuals include Abraham (3:6ff.), Scripture (3:8, 22), God (3:18), angels (3:19), faith (3:25), and the Galatians (3:26-29). Specific indications of time<sup>30</sup> and causal connections between events<sup>31</sup> carry the argument forward, and the story progresses from promises originally made through the fulfillment of those promises. Though there are certainly “argumentative” and “doctrinal” parts of chs. 3-4, Paul essentially re-tells the story of Israel, organizing the major events in the history of Israel around the coming of Christ. A third story, that of the Galatians’ past, is told throughout the letter. It is also marked by temporal and causal connections, characters, including the Galatians, God, Christ, and Paul, and a progression from a life “being enslaved to those things which are not by nature gods” to “now knowing God, or rather being known by God” (4:8-9).<sup>32</sup> Paul continues to make reference to their progression from paganism, to an experience with the spirit, to their present situation, in which they are tempted by others to deny their progress. Galatians, therefore, does contain narratives, or at least narrative fragments, and one could consider the letter from this perspective.

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<sup>29</sup> See Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 65.

<sup>30</sup> For example, Paul introduces “the law which came after four hundred and thirty years” (3:17) and divides history into the time “before the arrival of faith” and “after faith arrived” (3:23-25). Paul describes the law as being “our pedagogue until Christ” (εἰς Χριστόν) (3:24). The temporal connections in his argument are clear in his example of the slave becoming an heir “until the father’s appointed time” (ἄχρι τῆς προθεσμίας τοῦ πατρός) (4:2).

<sup>31</sup> For example, Paul gives reasons for why the law was introduced.

<sup>32</sup> These narrative elements are most obvious in 4:12-20, which Paul speaks of the time when he was with them, when “because of a weakness of flesh I preached the gospel to you formerly” and contrasts the Galatians’ previous welcoming attitude to their present rejection of him. Throughout the letter, though, Paul returns to tell the Galatians’ story, making reference to his prior preaching to them (1:8-9), their experience with Christ (3:1-2), and their present temptation by “those troubling you” (1:7; 5:7-9).

By characterizing Galatians as “narrative rhetoric” I am making more than a generic distinction. Paul’s final appeal to the “Israel of God” suggests that his argument depends upon the construction the Galatians’ identity. Paul writes to show the Galatians that they have become, through their experience with the spirit, the Israel of God, and future decisions and behavior should grow from that identity. My claim is that this identity is a narrative construction, the telling of a story that shows the Galatians the key role they play in the plot of God’s action. To be sure, the pieces of the argument that exhibit high degrees of “narrativity” play key roles in the broader “narrative rhetorical” strategy of the letter.<sup>33</sup> I characterize Galatians as a whole as narrative rhetoric because the argument functions to construct a narrative identity for the community. This construction is accomplished by Paul’s focus on the past, primarily in the first four chapters of the letter, and this identity serves as the basis for the hortatory edge of his deliberative rhetoric, primarily in the final two chapters.

### **Narrative (and) Rhetoric in Galatians Scholarship**

One benefit of this narrative rhetorical approach is it helps account for the letter as a literary unity. While Galatians is often recognized as Paul’s most singularly-focused letter, interpreters have had great difficulty connecting its various sections into a single,

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<sup>33</sup> The term “narrativity” is common in literary studies, used to characterize “the set of properties characterizing narrative and distinguishing it from nonnarrative” (Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narrativity* [Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987], 64; see also Ann Rigney, “The Point of Stories: On Narrative Communication and its Cognitive Functions,” *Poetics Today* 13 [1992]: 263-83). It is more helpful to consider degrees of narrativity than viewing narrative and nonnarrative discourse as mutually exclusive domains.

unified argument.<sup>34</sup> Galatians has most often been read in three distinct rhetorical units, following F. C. Baur's tri-partite division of the letter: "The Epistle may accordingly be divided into three chief parts, one personal and apologetic, one dogmatic, and one practical."<sup>35</sup> While most interpreters would agree with Baur's continuing comments that "all three are intimately connected," most studies tend to consider the three sections in isolation, assuming each to address a distinct rhetorical situation. This standard approach assumes Paul begins the letter in the first two chapters by answering questions raised about his apostolic legitimacy. Paul recounts the origins and history of his preaching in order to show that he has the authority to teach the Galatians. Having established this authority in response to the questions raised in Galatia, in chs. 3-4 Paul mounts an argument for justification by faith, his primary answer to the question of whether the Galatians should be circumcised. This central section of the letter is often read as the key to the argument: Paul's point is that the Galatians need not be circumcised because God's righteousness has been bestowed through Christ, and therefore the Galatians' faith is sufficient. Many assume this central point is one Paul could make only after establishing in the first two chapters his legitimacy to do so. The final two chapters of the letter are

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<sup>34</sup> Most interpreters read chs. 3-4 as the "core" of the letter and struggle to account for either chs. 1-2 or chs. 5-6. For example, Brian Dodd notes, "The autobiographical passage in Galatians 1-2 and the other 'I' sections (4:11-20; 5:10-11; 6:14) are not as universally understood against the letter's rhetorical situation" (*Paul's Paradigmatic 'I': Personal Example as Literary Strategy* [Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999], 133-134). R. Dean Anderson also separates the autobiography, arguing, "The narrative of 1.11-2.21 appears, therefore, to have a purpose somewhat different to the other sections of the letter. It forms a kind of excursus" (*Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* [rev. ed.; Leuven: Peeters, 1999], 147). Betz notes the challenge of fitting the exhortation of chs. 5-6 into the rhetoric of the rest of the letter (see *Galatians*, 254).

<sup>35</sup> F. C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle: His Life and Words, His Epistles and Teaching* (2 vols. in 1; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003 [1873]), 1.266. Baur's three sections consisted in chs. 1-2, chs. 3-4, and chs. 5-6 (see the discussion in *Paul the Apostle*, 1.263-265). This basic outline has been followed by most since Baur. A primary conversation in scholarship focuses on where to draw the line between sections. Some interpreters include 2:15-21 as part of the personal and apologetic section, as does Baur, while others place it as part of the dogmatic. There are also strong debates about where the hortatory section of the letter begins, with some following Baur and reading ch. 5 as exhortation, and others beginning the formal hortatory section at 5:13. See comments and outlines similar to Baur in Lightfoot (*Galatians*, 65-67) and more recently in Dunn (*Galatians*, 20-22).

read as Paul's anticipation that his message of freedom, one initially preached to the Galatians and reinforced in the argument of chs. 3-4, may lead, or perhaps has led to, inappropriate behavior within the Galatian community, behavior such as that which Paul addresses directly in 1 Corinthians. Therefore, in the final two chapters of the letter, Paul offers moral instruction, an argument for the way in which the Galatians are to behave in Christ.

Oddly, therefore, what is often considered Paul's most singularly-directed argument has proven difficult to consider as a rhetorical unity. Two recent approaches to the letter have made progress in reading Galatians as a single argument. Reading Paul through the lenses of rhetoric and narrative has allowed interpreters to connect sections of the letter together. The reading of Galatians I propose can be located between these two approaches, for it draws on each. It will be helpful, therefore, to introduce each and show how my work benefits from these developing "schools" of reading Galatians.

### *"Narrative" in Galatians*

In the second half of the twentieth century, scholars in a variety of fields began to explore the ways in which humans think in terms of stories and construct reality in terms of narrative.<sup>36</sup> The increasing appreciation of narrative as fundamental to human thought spilled over into Pauline studies, and a burgeoning field of narrative approaches to Paul

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<sup>36</sup> The bibliography of narrative Biblical studies is enormous, and I will not attempt to provide a comprehensive list of sources. A good source for both an introduction to the development of narrative studies and a thorough bibliography is N. T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), esp. 38-46. In the next chapter I look closely at narrative studies outside of Biblical studies.

developed.<sup>37</sup> Though readers have long recognized that Paul tells stories in parts of his letters, this movement is characterized by a focus on the way in which particular stories shape Paul's theological worldview, and how these stories represent a coherent theological vision refracted through the contingent arguments of the letters. The exegetical task of this approach, therefore, is understood as showing or reconstructing these stories, using the letters as the primary source of evidence. This approach to Paul is still developing, though it has advanced enough to produce several edited volumes and even "an early retrospective."<sup>38</sup>

The narrative approach to Paul was most clearly articulated in the Emory University dissertation of Richard B. Hays. In his study of the "narrative substructure" of the central part of Paul's letter to the Galatians, Hays advanced beyond those who had alluded to the importance of the narratives that lie in and behind Paul's letters by arguing that "any attempt to account for the nature and method of Paul's theological language must reckon with the centrality of *narrative* elements in his thought."<sup>39</sup> Hays suggests that the story of Jesus Christ forms the center of Paul's theological vision. Proper interpretation of his letters—and Galatians in particular—depends upon recognizing the importance of the story of Jesus Christ to Paul's gospel and identifying the narrative elements present in the letters as evoking this assumed narrative, one with which Paul's audience would have been familiar. Hays distinguishes between the story of Jesus Christ

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<sup>37</sup> Narrative studies have long been conducted on the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament gospels. However, the narrative approach to Paul is a relatively recent phenomenon. Bruce W. Longenecker points to this 1980 quotation from J. C. Beker as an example of the state of affairs before Hays' work: "Paul is a man of the proposition, the argument and the dialogue, not a man of the parable or story" (*Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980], 353; quoted in Bruce W. Longenecker, "The Narrative Approach to Paul: An Early Retrospective," *CBR* 1 [2002]: 3). Beker continues to argue that, "The Paul of the letters is an apocalyptic thinker, not a storyteller."

<sup>38</sup> See Longenecker, "The Narrative Approach."

<sup>39</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 5 (emphasis is original).

that is the assumption of Paul's argument, which Hays calls *mythos*, following Northrop Frye, and Paul's reflection upon that story (*dianoia*) that comprises the argument to the Galatians. He describes his narrative approach to Paul, therefore, as a two-step process: "We may first identify within the discourse allusions to the story and seek to discern its general outlines; then, in a second phase of inquiry we may ask how this story shapes the logic of argumentation in discourse."<sup>40</sup> Hays characterizes Paul's letter to the Galatians as his "critical re-presentation of the *dianoia* of the story of Jesus Christ."<sup>41</sup>

Hays' work has set off a movement of narrative study of Paul's letters that operates with this same two-step methodology. Much of this narrative analysis has focused on the first step, with many interpreters expanding Hays' recognition of a narrative substructure to include as many as five stories that lie beneath, and provide support for, Paul's arguments.<sup>42</sup> N. T. Wright has taken Hays' narrative approach to Paul further than most. His work is more liberal in recognizing stories behind Paul's letters, primarily the Jesus narrative, and he goes further than Hays in emphasizing the narrative substructure of Paul's theology. His emphasis, though, like Hays', remains on the narrative world of the apostle that stands behind the letters, one Paul assumes at the surface of his rhetoric. Wright's exegetical work focuses on using the letters as sources to reconstruct that narrative world. He works to demonstrate that Paul's thought world was largely shaped by a story of God's interaction with the Jewish people, though changed

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<sup>40</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 28.

<sup>41</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 23.

<sup>42</sup> The best example of this approach is the collection of essays edited by Bruce W. Longenecker (*Narrative Dynamics in Paul*). In this volume, scholars are concerned with 5 stories in Paul, following the proposal of James D. G. Dunn: God and creation, Israel, Jesus, Paul, and "predecessors and inheritors" (see *Narrative Dynamics*, 11-16).

through his “rethinking, in the light of Jesus and the divine spirit, of the fundamental Jewish beliefs.”<sup>43</sup>

The difference between this prevailing narrative approach and the one advanced in this study is adequately summarized in Wright’s own words: “Within all his letters, though particularly in Romans and Galatians, we discover a larger implicit narrative, which stands out clearly as the true referential sequence behind the poetic sequence demanded by the different rhetorical needs of the various letters.”<sup>44</sup> Like Hays, Wright identifies Paul as a narrative thinker who presents a grand narrative of God’s action in history within the specific rhetorical situation he faces. The interest of narrative studies of Paul has been with this “larger implicit narrative,” using the “poetic sequence” only insofar as it can help to illuminate the substructure.

My interest in reading Galatians, though, lies expressly with the “poetic sequence” that Hays, Wright, and others have sought to move beyond. Hays, more so than many who have followed him, appreciates the persuasive nature of narrative, but he has seen the persuasion in Paul’s explanation of the narrative (*dianoia*). The narrative approach subsequent to Hays has focused almost exclusively, though, on constructing narratives that lie beneath Paul’s arguments. I am interested in how the narrative itself is persuasive.

This narrative approach has functioned more as a comment on Paul as a theologian than Paul as a rhetorician: Paul understands God’s action in Christ or in Israel to play an essential role in a continuous narrative of God’s actions, a narrative that Paul’s churches continue. Narrative readers assert consistently that the apostle Paul as a

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<sup>43</sup> Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 407.

<sup>44</sup> Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 405.

theologian operates with a coherent story of God's action, and the letters present fragments of that story, clues that can be used to help the interpreter reconstruct the coherent whole. Consider, for example, the comments of Ian W. Scott: "The continuous narrative structure of Paul's theology need not be denied simply because that story was never performed by Paul as a continuous whole."<sup>45</sup> In this study, I call into question whether such a "continuous whole" could ever be performed. A story is always an abstract concept; it becomes coherent only in the performance of narration. What is of interest is not the database of events, but rather the instantiation of that database in particular rhetorical contexts. Certain segments or pieces of the argument may suggest that a consistent set of events lies in the background to Paul's argument, but these events exist only within particular instances of contingent narrative coherence.<sup>46</sup>

Previous "narrative" readers have moved from what Paul states toward a construction of the story he may have had in mind; the narrative elements and allusions in the letters become the clues leading to a reconstruction of the larger narrative with which Paul may have operated. This is a move from narrative discourse, understood as a specific rhetorical instantiation, back to the story, understood as a set of events. Previous narrative critics are ultimately in search of the mind of Paul, the idea that the apostle had in the first century as he sits to write the letter.

My study moves in the other direction. I am interested in how by reading the discourse a narrative world emerges before its implied reader. In the next chapter I will

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<sup>45</sup> Ian W. *Paul's Way of Knowing: Story, Experience, and the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 118.

<sup>46</sup> I agree with Scott that interpreters cannot simply discount the idea that Paul operated with a coherent narrative. I am not necessarily willing to go along with his suggestion that Paul did have such a narrative, but his argument that the lack of a statement of that narrative does not discount its existence is absolutely right. The hypothetical existence of a singular narrative is less important than the argument that Paul actually presents to his congregations.

introduce the work of Paul Ricoeur, who argues that emplotment is the joint work of author and reader; the audience's participation in or response to a text is an essential part of a text's meaning. An author's move from his own narrative understanding to the emplotment found in discourse is mirrored by a reader's encounter with a text, wherein the emplotment of the text works to reframe the reader's narrative understanding. Narrative discourse is persuasive in its ability to control the reframing of a reader's understanding.

A few recent narrative studies have recognized Paul's construction of story as a means of persuasion. In an essay that highlights Hays' inability to connect Paul's narrative theology to the explicit argument in Galatians, John M. G. Barclay argues that Paul's autobiographical narrative in Gal 1-2 is just as theologically significant as the story of Christ because "he weaves his story into that of his churches."<sup>47</sup> Whereas the integration of the story of Jesus into Paul's argument is difficult to see, Paul's story, presented in Gal 1-2, stands not in isolation, but rather introduces a narrative logic that also shapes the presentation of the Galatians' story in the rest of the letter, and it is this story that is primary focus of Paul's argument. Barclay's exegesis shows that in presenting his autobiography, Paul "expresses the 'canon' [κανών, 6:16] that governs the existence of every person in Christ."<sup>48</sup> Paul tells his own story as a background to his argument to the Galatians about their own story. Barclay shows how the construction of Paul's narrative, as presented in the first two chapters, influences the reading experience of Paul's more direct argument to the Galatians in the rest of the letter. He notes, for example, how the reversal that characterizes Paul's telling of his own life, centered on the

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<sup>47</sup> "Paul's Story," 135.

<sup>48</sup> "Paul's Story," 138.

revelation of Jesus Christ (1:15-16) is revisited in his argument that the Galatians received Paul “as Jesus Christ” (4:14): “Here, then, was *their* ‘revelation of Jesus Christ.’”<sup>49</sup> Barclay identifies Paul’s narrative in Gal 1-2 as a rhetorical device, a part of his overall strategy to show the Galatians the “truth of the gospel.”

The value of Barclay’s work for this study is twofold. First, his exegesis helps guide my own reading of Paul’s story and its role in influencing his argument throughout. I likewise argue that Paul’s story is told not to address a rhetorical situation separate from that addressed by the rest of the letter, but rather Paul presents his story so as to demonstrate the pattern of the gospel, a demonstration of the “truth of the gospel.” Second, Barclay embodies a rhetorical approach to narrative, one focused less on reconstructing what lies behind Paul’s argument and instead asking how his narrative influences the non-narrative discourse in other parts of the letter. Though Barclay’s emphasis is on the theological shape of Paul’s narrative and his argument to the Galatians about God’s grace, his study is effectively a rhetorical study, showing that the telling of stories plays a role in the reading experience of the letter. Barclay redirects Hays’ focus from the story that lies behind the text itself to the way in which Paul constructs narratives at the surface of his argument the rest of the argument. Though Barclay does not use the language of narratology, his approach to Galatians shifts the “narrative” spotlight from story to narrative.

This shift toward the reading experience of narrative is evident also in Norman Petersen’s work on the letter to Philemon.<sup>50</sup> Petersen focuses on “a narratology of letters,

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<sup>49</sup> “Paul’s Story,” 145; emphasis is original.

<sup>50</sup> Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul’s Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).

on viewing letters in light of their narratives.”<sup>51</sup> Petersen describes his work as a cross between sociological and literary approaches to Paul. He acknowledges that the letters of Paul “refer to narrative worlds,” and he seeks to reconstruct these worlds, for the individual letters—Philemon in his case—and for Paul as a whole.<sup>52</sup> Petersen attempts to “transform Paul’s Letter to Philemon into a story” by re-constructing the contextual clues in the letter into a “history” of the relationship between Paul and Philemon, including events that preceded the letter and the likely outcomes resulting from sending it.<sup>53</sup> Key to his analysis is a distinction between the chronological order of events (the “referential sequence”) and the order in which they are presented in the letter (the “poetic sequence”).<sup>54</sup> By constructing this referential sequence and comparing it to the poetic sequence in the letter, an interpreter gains “access to the writer’s formal plot devices and the rhetorical strategies they serve.”<sup>55</sup> Petersen, therefore, emphasizes the rhetorical function of shaping narrative discourse in particular ways. Though his work with Philemon is primarily historical in that he is interested in the events that gave rise to the sending of the letter, the study is important as background for my reading of Galatians because of its identification of the multiple ways in which a set of events can be presented and the different rhetorical effects of each.

Growing out of Peterson’s narrative work on Philemon is Eugene Boring’s recent narratological analysis of 1 Peter.<sup>56</sup> Boring recognizes the rhetorical process of

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<sup>51</sup> *Rediscovering Paul*, 43.

<sup>52</sup> Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul*, 9.

<sup>53</sup> Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul*, 30.

<sup>54</sup> For definitions of the “referential sequence” and “poetic sequence,” see *Rediscovering Paul*, 47-53. For the application of these terms to Philemon, see *Rediscovering Paul*, 65-78.

<sup>55</sup> *Rediscovering Paul*, 48.

<sup>56</sup> M. Eugene Boring, “Narrative Dynamics in First Peter: The Function of Narrative World,” pp. 7-40 in *Reading First Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter* (ed. Robert

constructing a story is completed only in the reading of the letter. He argues that 1 Peter “projects a narrative world composed of all the events it assumes to be real.”<sup>57</sup> He recognizes that 1 Peter is not “narrative-as-discourse,” but argues that narrative analysis is still appropriate because “letters also project a narrative world that is important for their interpretation.”<sup>58</sup> By this “narrative world,” Boring signifies the collection of events that the discourse mentions and implies. In consuming a letter (or any text), a reader encounters a set of events, told in a particular way and in a particular order. Recalling Petersen’s work, Boring argues that a list of events can be constructed from discourse, first on the basis of “poetic order,” the order in which they are recounted in the discourse, and then in “chronological order,” based upon the chronological logic of the events.<sup>59</sup> It is this chronological list of events that Boring defines as the “narrative world” of the discourse. Discourse like a letter is persuasive in part because it projects this narrative world; readers of discourse are offered “an understanding of reality, a world that has a particular narrative shape, that may be different from their own and challenges it.”<sup>60</sup>

Boring applies this basic reading methodology to the discourse of 1 Peter, identifying a single narrative that emerges from reading the letter, one that is divided in two by the Christ event. The argument of 1 Peter, therefore, shows the readers how the Christ event separates “then” and “now,” giving meaning to this event by showing its role in the narrative. This same basic narrative strategy can be seen in Galatians. It is the

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L. Webb and Betsy Bauman-Martin; London: T&T Clark, 2007). Boring acknowledges that his analysis grows out of Peterson’s work (see “Narrative Dynamics,” 16-17).

<sup>57</sup> Boring, “Narrative Dynamics,” 8.

<sup>58</sup> “Narrative Dynamics,” 15.

<sup>59</sup> Boring’s “chronological order” functions the same as Petersen’s “referential order.”

<sup>60</sup> “Narrative Dynamics,” 24.

function of subsequent chapters to detail how Paul's narrative construction accomplishes this.

Boring's analysis is valuable for its emphasis on the narrative world that emerges in the reading of discourse. He moves a step beyond Petersen by focusing less on the history behind the creation of the letter and more on the reader's experience of following the letter. Unlike Hays and those who followed him, Boring is interested in narrative that consists of the events as the reader encounters them at the surface of the argument, seeing individual events unified not merely in the mind of the author who writes, but foremost in the experience of the reader. In Galatians, as in 1 Peter, narrative is a process that the reader, following the clues provided by the author, constructs in the act of reading. In the next chapter I show how Boring's concept of the narrative world aids my reading strategy.

These few studies that focus on the function of Paul's stories within his overall persuasive strategy are the exceptions among narrative approaches to Paul. These few recognize narrative as a rhetorical mode, and therefore they understand a "narrative" analysis of the letter to focus less on the narrative world that the text presupposes and alludes to, and more on the one that emerges in the process of reading of the text. To the contrary, most studies of Paul with "narrative" in the title focus on identifying events that lie beneath or behind Paul's rhetoric, constructing what Hays called the narrative substructure. Foremost among Hays' many contributions to the study of Paul was his showing that "Paul's thought is grounded in a narrative logic, i. e., in patterns of order which are proper to story rather than to discursive reasoning."<sup>61</sup> This is an important insight that drives my analysis. However, in this study I am more interested in the ways

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<sup>61</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 223.

in which this narrative thought shapes the specific argument Paul makes to the Galatians, how in the process of following the argument of the letter an audience constructs a narrative of Israel that functions to persuade the Galatians about their future behavior.<sup>62</sup> Hays identifies Paul as a narrative thinker; I work to show how in Galatians Paul is a narrative rhetorician.

Hays operates on a distinction commonly made in literary studies between “story” and “narrative.”<sup>63</sup> This distinction is a helpful way of understanding the difference in approach pursued here and in previous narrative studies of Paul. Seymour Chatman distinguishes between story as the “content of the narrative expression” and narrative discourse that gives this content a particular form: “In simple terms, the story is the *what* in a narrative that is depicted, discourse the *how*.”<sup>64</sup> Much like an event, story exists only in the abstract; once it is articulated in thought or word, it becomes narrative discourse, for decisions of selection, ordering, and expression have been made by an author. Hays likewise defines narrative as “explicitly articulated narrations (‘performances’) such as the Gospel of Luke or the Philippians hymn.” He continues by showing that his narrative approach is interested in story, which “does not refer to an actual narrated text; it can

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<sup>62</sup> Hays acknowledges that focusing on the story-telling within the letters differs from his approach: “I would concur with Dunn that ‘the concept of “story” . . . is most effective in relation to the background stories of creation, Israel and Jesus’—that is, *not* in relation to the ‘stories’ that Paul tells about himself and his churches” (Richard B. Hays, “Is Paul’s Gospel Narratable?” *JSNT* 27 [2002]: 222 [emphasis original], quoting James D. G. Dunn, “The Narrative Approach to Paul: Whose Story?” pp. 217-230 in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment* [ed. Bruce W. Longenecker; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002], 225).

<sup>63</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 17-18.

<sup>64</sup> The definition of story comes from Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 23. The “simple” distinction between the two is found in *Story and Discourse*, 19. Similar language is used by Prince (*Dictionary*, 91). Gérard Genette discusses a third use of the term “narrative,” to describe the actual act of telling the story (*Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method* [trans. Jane E. Lewin; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980], 25-30). For discussion of Genette’s three-fold understanding of narrative in relation to reading New Testament epistles, see Boring, “Narrative Dynamics,” 8-13. I agree with Boring that, “Of these, only [narrative as what is told] is directly available for textual analysis” (“Narrative Dynamics,” 8).

refer to the ordered series of events which forms the basis for various possible narrations.”<sup>65</sup> For Hays, and many who follow his narrative approach, it is story as the set of events articulated as narrative that is the focus of interpretation, not the narrative itself. The question that drives typical “narrative” analysis is, “What stories did Paul know that are assumed within his argument, that are articulated in the narrative fragments found in the letters?”<sup>66</sup> Indeed, Hays’s study only uses the adjective “narrative” to describe the substructure of the argument because the English language does not have an adjectival form of the noun story.<sup>67</sup>

My work here focuses explicitly on the “narrative” aspect of Galatians, understood in terms of the distinction made by Chatman. I recognize that a “story substructure” likely did exist for Paul, both for his letters and for his theological discourse not recorded. However, Paul is constructing a particular narrative for the Galatians, and my interest is in this rhetorical act.

### *“Rhetoric” in Galatians*

This narrative approach has been characterized as a move beyond the rhetorical criticism that has been prevalent in the study of Galatians since the late 1970s. The

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<sup>65</sup> Hays, *Faith*, 17.

<sup>66</sup> The summary comments of Hays in his response to the Longenecker collection are helpful. Hays differentiates between “Paul as *storyteller* and Paul as *interpreter of stories*,” noting “my own emphasis has always been on the latter: Paul as theological commentator on the stories of Israel and Jesus” (Hays, “Is Paul’s Gospel Narratable?,” 221 [emphasis original]).

<sup>67</sup> The use of terminology is Hays is confusing. Though he speaks of “narrative substructure” he really means “story substructure.” He notes that there is no English adjective correlating to “story,” and therefore he chooses “narrative.” He distinguishes, though, his use of this term from “narrative” as described here, by noting that “Paul’s gospel *is* a story, and it *has* a narrative structure, but it is not *a* narrative except when it is actually narrated, as in Phil 2:6-11” (*Faith*, 17; emphasis original). He finally concludes that “[story] can mean both the report and the thing reported” (*Faith*, 18). Most prior “narrative” approaches are actually “story” approaches, as I have defined the terms, as they are interested less in the rhetorical construction of events in the letter, and more in the set of events behind the rhetoric. Unfortunately, most of these studies are not as careful as Hays in defining terms.

narrative approach has been seen by some as a response to, or correction of, this rhetorical approach: “Whereas Pauline scholarship had for long debated matters pertaining to the content and persuasive strategies within Paul’s letters, or the context in which those letters were written, interest in narrative aspects of Paul’s letters has risen as part of a move to identify pre-textual ingredients that factored into and influenced Paul’s reflections.”<sup>68</sup> My reading of the argument of Galatians as constructing a narrative identity for the Galatians calls into question this dichotomizing between rhetorical and narrative approaches.

To ask how the “narrative aspects” of the letters themselves form the “persuasive strategies within Paul’s letters” I position my work between previous narrative work and the tradition of rhetorical criticism of Paul, particularly Galatians. This study benefits from the recent advances in rhetorical criticism of Galatians, though I work to bring into question what is meant by a “rhetorical” approach to Paul. I work to move rhetorical criticism of Galatians beyond the primary focus on the arrangement of the letter toward consideration of narrative as rhetorical invention, showing how Paul’s emplotment of the Galatians’ experience into a narrative is a dominant rhetorical strategy.<sup>69</sup>

Like “narrative,” the term “rhetoric” has been prominent in the titles of recent studies of Paul, particularly Galatians. The genesis of modern rhetorical work on Paul can be traced to the work of Hans Dieter Betz and his reading of Galatians through the lens of

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<sup>68</sup> Longenecker, “The Narrative Approach to Paul,” 88-89.

<sup>69</sup> The dominance of an “arrangement”-based rhetorical approach is not limited to Galatians, though Galatians does receive more rhetorical attention than other Pauline letters. For an approach to Philippians which similarly overly-emphasizes arrangement, see Duane F. Watson, “Epistolary and Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians,” pp. 398-426 in *The Rhetorical Analysis of Scripture: Essays from the 1995 London Conference* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997). For a summary of the five stages of rhetoric (invention, arrangement, style, memorization, performance), see George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994), 4-6.

the ancient rhetorical handbooks.<sup>70</sup> Betz's work accompanies and plays a large role in the development of "rhetorical criticism" as a major approach to the Bible.<sup>71</sup> Though the rhetorical nature of Galatians had been recognized as early as Origen and Chrysostom and was at times emphasized throughout the Reformation, it is Betz who marks the beginning of modern rhetorical criticism of Galatians through his reading the letter against the formal recommendations of ancient rhetorical handbooks.<sup>72</sup> Through his 1975 programmatic essay and 1979 *Hermeneia* commentary on Galatians, Betz dramatically changed Galatians research in two ways.<sup>73</sup>

First, by drawing on Arnaldo Momigliano's work on Greek biography, Betz identifies Galatians within an ancient genre of the apologetic letter, understood as an apologetic speech cast in the form of a letter.<sup>74</sup> Whereas Momigliano had suggested that this genre is the background to many ancient writers, including "perhaps Paul," Betz removes this "perhaps," identifying Paul's letter to the Galatians as a key example of the

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<sup>70</sup> Betz notes that the relevance of ancient rhetoric in reading Galatians "was apparently not recognized before," though he does mention a few previous interpreters who were moving in that direction (*Galatians*, 14n97).

<sup>71</sup> The beginnings of the "rhetorical critical" approach are often associated with James Muilenberg ("Form Criticism and Beyond," *JBL* 88 [1969]: 1-18), though Muilenberg was calling scholars' attention to language patterns in Hebrew Bible texts. For a helpful discussion of the development of rhetorical criticism, see Wilhelm Wuellner, "Where is Rhetorical Criticism Taking Us?" *CBQ* 49 (1987): 448-463 and C. Clifton Black, *The Rhetoric of the Gospel: Theology Artistry in the Gospels and Acts* (St. Louis: Chalice, 2001), 1-22.

<sup>72</sup> For a concise discussion of "rhetorical criticism" before Betz, see C. J. Classen, "St. Paul's Epistles and Ancient Greek and Roman Rhetoric" pp. 265-291 in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993).

<sup>73</sup> For the essay, see Hans Dieter Betz, "Literary Composition and the Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *NTS* 21 (1975): 353-379.

<sup>74</sup> Plato's Letter VII is identified as the paradigmatic apologetic letter, which stands at the beginning of a history of what Betz sees as the development of this genre. A common question asked of Betz's work is whether such a genre actually existed, as Betz really only cites Plato's Letter VII as an example. For example, Meeks notes that Betz "does not offer us a single instance of the apologetic letter with which we can compare Galatians," suggested "we are therefore asked to interpret Galatians as an example of a genre for which no other example can apparently be cited" (Wayne A. Meeks, "Review of H. D. Betz, *Galatians*," *JBL* 100 [1981]: 306). Betz himself notes, "The subsequent history of the genre is difficult to trace, since most of the pertinent literature did not survive" (*Galatians*, 15). In a footnote he suggests the Cynic Epistles may be another example, "which deserves to be carefully studied with regard to early Christian letters" (*Galatians* 15n111).

genre.<sup>75</sup> Following the long tradition of highlighting the role of “opponents” in Galatia who are making charges against Paul and his gospel, Betz argues that the letter is Paul’s defense of the spirit, or in Paul’s terms, a defense of “the truth of the gospel.”<sup>76</sup> Paul’s thesis comes in his statement in 1:11: “The gospel preached by me is not human in nature.”<sup>77</sup> This statement “does contain the whole basis upon which Paul’s gospel, as well as his own mission, and indeed his defense in the letter, rest.”<sup>78</sup> Paul defends “his version of the gospel” because “Paul’s Jewish-Christian opponents have almost succeeded in winning the Christians over to their side.”<sup>79</sup> Galatians, therefore, is apologetic throughout, a defense of the legitimacy of the Galatians’ experience with the spirit.

This identification of Galatians as apologetic leads to Betz’s second major influence on the study of Galatians. Betz outlines Paul’s argument according to the canons of ancient rhetoric found in the rhetorical handbooks, relying most particularly on Quintilian’s *Institutes* and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*.<sup>80</sup> Because he reads the letter as one of defense, Betz reads Paul’s argument to fit the suggestions for forensic rhetoric provided in the rhetorical handbooks.<sup>81</sup> The result is an impressively detailed

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<sup>75</sup> See Betz, *Galatians*, 15.

<sup>76</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 28. For a concise summary of Betz’s position on Galatians as defense, which largely reflects the position of the commentary, see H. D. Betz, “In Defense of the Spirit: Paul’s Letter to the Galatians as a Document of Early Christian Apologetics,” pages 99-114 in *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity*. ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976).

<sup>77</sup> This is Betz’s translation (see *Galatians*, 44).

<sup>78</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 56.

<sup>79</sup> “In Defense,” 102.

<sup>80</sup> Much of Betz’s argument about Galatians fitting the standards laid out by Quintilian and others are quite convincing. For example, Betz shows that much of Paul’s language in 1:11, 13 fits the recommendations of the handbooks (see *Galatians*, 59-60).

<sup>81</sup> In Book 3 of the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle introduces the outline of a rhetorical address that was widely influential in the tradition that followed him and has perhaps been even more dominant in modern rhetorical studies of Galatians (see *Rhet.* 3.13-19 1414a30-1420ab4). It is important to note that Aristotle’s detailed comments on arrangement are offered with a bit of reluctance. He begins this section by noting that, “There are two parts to a speech” (3.13.1) and says further divisions are “ridiculous” (3.13.3). He then does, though, go on to discuss a more detailed division of speeches. Kennedy argues that the initial simplistic view reflects “an austere, rather Platonic, view of what, in an ideal society, should be adequate,”

outline of the letter, though one that inevitably has a difficult time explaining every part of Paul's argument.<sup>82</sup> Betz elevates the handbooks to a primary place in the analysis of the letter, and at times it is the recommendations of the handbooks, rather than Paul's argument itself, that drives his analysis.

Betz's identification of Galatians as an apologetic letter, conforming to the prescribed outline of forensic rhetoric laid out by rhetorical handbooks, has defined the task of "rhetorical criticism" to involve reading Paul's arguments in light of the handbooks, focusing specifically on an argument's arrangement.<sup>83</sup> The implications of Betz's method move beyond the simple outline of the argument; the recommendations of the handbooks have become the interpretive lens through which the letters are often read. Though Betz does not explicitly say so, the impression is left that Paul attempts to write his arguments in conformity to the handbooks' suggestions; any distinction between the letter and the handbooks is overcome by a close reading of the handbooks. For example, Betz labels 1:12-2:14 as the *narratio* (Gk. διήγησις) of the apologetic speech, since the handbooks recommend a "statement of facts" following the statement of the argument. Because the handbooks suggest the *narratio* should "deal with the facts that have a bearing on the case, in order to make the denial plausible," Betz reads Paul's autobiographical narrative as proof of his statement in 1:12 that his gospel was not from

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but that Aristotle continues on "to consider the actual situation of his time and offers practical advice to his students" (*On Rhetoric*, 229-30).

<sup>82</sup> The difficulty of placing parts of Paul's argument into such a formal outline is the most common critique of Betz's work. See, for example, Meeks, who notes "Betz's determination to discover a tight, sequential outline in the letter leads in places to a fragmentation of the text and a strangely atomistic interpretation" ("Review of Betz," 305).

<sup>83</sup> There exists circularity throughout the commentary to Betz's argument for the apologetic genre of the letter. On the one hand, it is the contents of the letter that lead him to that conclusion. He notes that, "The evidence for this hypothesis [of the letter's genre] must, of course, be derived from an analysis of the composition of the letter" (*Galatians*, 14). However, throughout the commentary it is clear that it is the handbooks' recommendations for the way a forensic speech should be laid out that are driving his conclusions about individual passages.

humans, but from a revelation of Jesus Christ.<sup>84</sup> This story of the gospel origins must be part of his overall defense of the spirit, an argument that the gospel that he is preaching, as opposed to the message of the opponents, is true. The handbooks' recommendations for how a *narratio* is to function in a defense speech controls Betz's exegesis.

By following the handbooks, Betz is able to make astute observations about the structure of the narrative, but his conclusions are pre-determined by his generic decision. For example, he notes that Paul's telling of his prior life in Judaism and his experience with Christ is structured so as to emphasize the great change in his life.<sup>85</sup> Likewise, he notes the parallel, yet opposite, presentations of Paul's standing up to the false brothers and Peter's giving in to the men from James.<sup>86</sup> However, all of this is read to be in service of Paul's establishing that his gospel is divine because the *narratio* of a forensic address should provide the details of the case used to support the thesis statement made prior to the *narratio*. Betz completely ignores how Paul's autobiography in chs. 1-2 addresses the Galatians' present situation. Betz also gives little attention to narrative anywhere else in the letter. Because the outline of the rhetorical handbooks recommend a single place in a defense speech for retelling the facts relevant to the case, Betz only considers narrative in the context of chs. 1-2.

Betz's seminal rhetorical work has launched a stream of rhetorical studies of the letter, many of which accept Betz's basic premise that the letter is best understood by outlining its arrangement in coordination with the handbooks. This rhetorical approach

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<sup>84</sup> The presence of a narrative section in Galatians is one of the major reasons many interpreters insist that Galatians must be an example of forensic rhetoric. Many have argued that the handbooks do not discuss narrative as part of deliberative rhetoric, and therefore Galatians cannot be a deliberative speech (see Anderson, *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 138).

<sup>85</sup> See *Galatians*, 66.

<sup>86</sup> See *Galatians*, 111

has allowed interpreters to read the letter as a single argument, rather than a loose, three-fold argument of defense, theology, and exhortation.<sup>87</sup> However, rhetorical criticism has largely proceeded on the terms set out by Betz, resulting in a consistent focus on the arrangement of the letter and work closely with the rhetorical handbooks. Many arguments focus on the species of rhetoric that best describes Paul's argument,<sup>88</sup> or the verse limits of the given rhetorical sections.<sup>89</sup> Most have rejected Betz's claim that Galatians is an example of apologetic or forensic rhetoric. George A. Kennedy's critique of Betz has influenced many: "It seems unlikely that anyone reading through Galatians at one sitting would conclude that it is an apology rather than an attempt to persuade the Galatians, swayed by other advisers, what they should do."<sup>90</sup>

Though Betz's conclusions about the forensic genre of the letter have been rejected, his methodology continues to dominate the rhetorical approach to Paul. "Rhetorical criticism" of Paul's letters has come to mean reading the letters in conversation with the ancient rhetorical handbooks, with particular interest in asking how the argument conforms to the arrangement recommendations of the handbooks. A primary question in rhetorical studies focuses on the identification of the mode of rhetoric

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<sup>87</sup> However, even those approaching the letter through the lens of rhetorical criticism have a difficult time accounting for chapters 5-6. Anderson, for example, ends his analysis at 5:13 because the rest of the letter does not lend itself to rhetorical analysis (see *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 142).

<sup>88</sup> Aristotle's 3 species of rhetoric dominate rhetorical conversations about Galatians. Aristotle defines epideictic (ἐπιδεικτικός) rhetoric as having "for its subject praise or blame" and as its "special time . . . most appropriately the present, for it is the existing condition of things that all those who praise or blame have in view." Aristotle defines deliberative (συμβουλευτική) rhetoric as "either hortatory or dissuasive," focusing on "the future . . . for the speaker, whether he exhorts or dissuades, always advises about things to come." He defines forensic (δικαζόμενος) as "either accusation or defense," concerned with the past, "for he always prosecutes or defends concerning what has been done" (*Rhet.* 1.3.3-4 1358b6-20). Where Betz saw the argument as forensic, most subsequent interpreters see it as deliberative (e.g., Kennedy), while some see it as epideictic (e.g., Hester).

<sup>89</sup> See, for example, James D. Hester, "Rhetorical Structure," 223-233.

<sup>90</sup> Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 147.

in Galatians, and for many, this question is settled based on how Paul's argument fits the outline of forensic or deliberative arguments prescribed in the handbooks.

If this debate were merely a question of labeling the genre of the letter, it would be a rather benign exercise. However, a determination of a generic designation has become the lens through which interpreters read the letter and interpret its argument.<sup>91</sup> So, for example, if one decides the letter is deliberative rhetoric, then the handbooks' sections on deliberative oratory become essential, to the exclusion of discussions of the other two modes of rhetoric.<sup>92</sup> The recommendations of the handbooks then, become the key for analysis, rather than the structure of the letter itself, and parts of the letter that do not fit a particular mode are de-emphasized or ignored.<sup>93</sup> The method involves more than a bit of circularity, wherein one mode of rhetoric is chosen, and then the handbooks' recommendations for that mode of rhetoric are used to read the argument of the letter.

Beyond the methodological questions associated with an argument that Paul was familiar with such prescriptions of arrangement, the central problem with prevailing

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<sup>91</sup> See, for example, the comments of Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza: "An exploration of rhetorical genre and its function can thus contribute to an understanding of the rhetorical situation insofar as arrangement and style reveal the speaker's perception of the audience and the ways chosen to influence it" ("Rhetorical Situation and Historical Reconstruction in 1 Corinthians," *NTS* 33 [1987]: 391; quoted [with approval] in Watson, "Three Species," 27).

<sup>92</sup> David Aune, in his trenchant critique of Betz's commentary, identifies the problem with Betz and those who have followed his method of narrowly categorizing the mode of rhetoric in Galatians: "Perhaps one of the chief perils of the enterprise is the tacit assumption that all ancient literary compositions worthy of the name were consciously or unconsciously patterned after generic models which, when recognized, can provide the necessary keys for unlocking some of the enigmatic features of such texts" (David E. Aune, "Review of *Galatians* by Hans Dieter Betz" *RSR* 7 [1981]: 324). Aune's critique applies not only to the assignment of a single rhetorical genre, but also the discussion of Galatians as a letter or as an oratorical address. His point is that such distinctions do not match what we find in ancient literature. Aune goes on to suggest, "Paul appears to combine some features of forensic rhetoric with others from deliberative and/or epideictic oratory suggests that he was not schooled in one rhetorical tradition. . . . The letter appears rather to be an eclectic combination of various rhetorical techniques and styles of diverse origin which are nevertheless welded together in a new and distinctive literary creation" ("Review of Betz," 326).

<sup>93</sup> A most glaring example of the use of the handbooks to dictate the reading of the letter is found in the work of Joop Smit, who argues that the 5:13-6:10 is a later addition to the letter, based upon the fact that it does not fit the outline of what he sees to be a deliberative argument (Smit, "The Letter of Paul to the Galatians").

rhetorical approaches to Galatians is that the argument in the letter resists narrow categorization. The argument to the Galatians has elements of all three modes of rhetoric, a conclusion supported by the persuasive nature of individual arguments for each mode of discourse.<sup>94</sup> Interpretation must be driven by the discourse of Galatians itself, though, not by the recommendations for a genre into which Galatians is pre-judged to fit.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, the presence of so much narration of the past in the argument of Galatians explodes the categories of the handbooks, as they have been narrowly applied to Paul's letters, for there is little consideration of narrative within the handbooks' discussion of deliberative rhetoric. In Galatians, Paul's argument about the future is made through narration of the past.

But prior rhetorical studies are also a misreading of the handbooks and their function. The categories introduced by Aristotle and re-examined throughout the rhetorical tradition are fluid enough to render the application of one particular label virtually meaningless, or at least ambiguous. In actual speeches from the ancient world, the clean categories presented in the handbooks begin to blur.<sup>96</sup> As James Murphy has argued, "The concept of the 'three genera of speeches,' introduced by Aristotle and

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<sup>94</sup> Many "rhetorical" studies operate under the assumption that Paul was familiar with the rhetorical tradition. For example, Watson claims, "This analysis assumes that Paul was familiar with rhetorical conventions of his time" ("Three Species," 27). Such an assumption is not necessary. Aristotle's categories are best used as categories for discussing any discourse, regardless of whether the author was familiar with (and thus attempting to adhere to) his work. More will be said about Paul's educational level in the next chapter.

<sup>95</sup> See the helpful critique of this mode of interpretation from Kraftchick: "While classical rhetoric can help uncover the meaning of portions of Galatians, a slavish commitment to one of the three modes of speech leads to misinterpretation" ("Why the Rhetoricians Rage," 60).

<sup>96</sup> Meeks notes, "Betz does not inspire confidence in his thesis, though, by referring almost exclusively to rhetorical and epistolary *theory* rather than specific examples of real apologies and real letters from antiquity" ("Review of Betz," 306; emphasis original).

followed by the Romans, was always more theoretical than practical in terms of speeches made in the real world; any one oration might require elements of all three genera.”<sup>97</sup>

The present study is a rhetorical analysis of the letter, and it draws heavily upon the rhetorical critical tradition inaugurated by Betz’s work. However, this study differs in three significant ways. First, my focus is at the level of rhetorical invention, as opposed to the levels of arrangement and style that Betz uses to construct his outline and that continue to control much rhetorical work in Paul. While following the arrangement of an argument can help clarify an argument, and it does so in Betz’s analysis, arrangement is secondary to the question of how Paul constructs his argument. The analysis of Betz and those who have followed his work is often controlled less by the movement of Paul’s argument and more by the (at-times conflicting) recommendations of Aristotle, Quintilian, Cicero, and others, which the rhetorical critics assume Paul follows closely.<sup>98</sup> While Betz’s work is somewhat successful in showing that many parts of Paul’s argument can be outlined by the standards of these handbooks, in his approach it is the handbooks that dictate the conversation, often overwhelming Paul’s actual argument.<sup>99</sup> Paul’s argument is made to fit Betz’s idea of a consistent rhetorical form, rather than the

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<sup>97</sup> “Roman Writing Instruction,” 57. Vouga offers a similar critique: “Die Dialektik der Theorie der Handbücher und der praktischen Anwendung darf nicht übersehen werden” (“Zur rhetorischen Gattung des Galaterbriefes,” 291). His “solution” is to look at a specific address, Demonsthenes’ ΠΕΡΙ ΤΗΣ ΕΙΡΗΝΗΣ, as a “striking parallel” to Galatians. See also the discussion of Christopher Forbes (“Ancient Rhetoric and Ancient Letters: Models for Reading Paul, and Their Limits,” pp. 143-60 in *Paul and Rhetoric* [ed. J. Paul Sampley and Peter Lampe; New York: Continuum International, 2010], 146-47).

<sup>98</sup> A helpful critique to this view that Paul works closely within the guidelines of the rhetorical handbooks is offered by Kraftchick: “I do not think that someone who was so willing to modify typical Greco-Roman letter forms or reinterpret Jewish Scripture so freely as Paul does in Gal 3 and 4 would suddenly follow rhetorical norms distilled from handbooks” (“Πάθη in Paul: The Emotional Logic of ‘Original Argument,’” pp. 39-68 in *Paul and Pathos*, ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Jerry L. Sumney [SBL Symposium Series; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001], 39).

<sup>99</sup> Consider, for example, Betz’s discussion of the ordering of events in the *narratio*. Quintilian suggests that in recounting, one should follow the order of events as they occur, indicating where one is changing the order. Because Paul does not so indicate, then Betz concludes “he follows the natural order of events in 1:13-2:14” (*Galatians*, 61).

more prudent approach of reading Paul's argument first and allowing the rhetorical handbooks to illuminate what Paul is doing.<sup>100</sup>

This too-strict focus on arrangement is evident in the debate that has emerged about whether rhetorical studies are even appropriate, as scholars question whether Paul had access to such formal rhetorical training.<sup>101</sup> Such debates are important and the outcomes are significant if rhetorical criticism focuses on the question of whether Paul's argument strictly follows the specifics of the handbooks.<sup>102</sup> In order to accept Betz's detailed outline of Galatians, wherein Paul follows the recommendations of the handbooks about how to introduce the *probatio* and how long a *narratio* should be, readers must establish that Paul was familiar with these cultural- (or even author-) specific "rules."<sup>103</sup> On the other hand, if analysis begins at the level of invention, following how Paul structures his arguments, then the analysis of the handbooks is less

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<sup>100</sup> Steven J. Kraftchick notes that much rhetorical critics "have allowed the so-called canons to overwhelm the New Testament texts themselves," arguing "New Testament texts are forced into rhetorical modes, and as a result the particular features of the texts are ignored or mishandled" (Steven J. Kraftchick, "Πάθη in Paul," 40).

<sup>101</sup> For a brief example of each side of this debate, see Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians* and the review by Margaret M. Mitchell ("Review of Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians*," *JR* 80 [2000]: 497-498). There are basically three positions in this debate. The first is that Paul would have been familiar with the formal structures outlined in the handbooks; the second that these ideas were so ubiquitous in the culture that Paul would have had familiarity with them, even without formal training; the third that Paul is not educated and therefore the enterprise of rhetorical criticism is misguided.

<sup>102</sup> Aune's critique of Betz raises the point that many astute classical scholars before Betz did not see Paul as following the arrangement ideals of the handbooks, and many argued that in fact Paul's arrangement and style is rather sloppy. For example, Aune quotes Eduard Norden as follows: "Paul is an author whom I at least can understand only with great difficulty. I can account for this on the basis of two facts: first his manner of argumentation is strange, and second, his style considered as a whole is unhellenic" ("Review of Betz," 324).

<sup>103</sup> Throughout his work, Betz maintains both that Paul follows the formal recommendations of the handbooks and yet strays from them "in conformity with the requirements of Hellenistic rhetoric" (*Galatians*, 129). For example, at the beginning of the *narratio* "Paul announces his *narratio* with the words (v 11): γνωρίζω γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἀδελφοί, thus conforming to Quintilian's advice" (*Galatians*, 59). Elsewhere, where mapping Paul's arguments against the handbooks is more difficult, "one may say that Paul has been very successful—as a skilled rhetorician would be expected to be—in disguising his argumentative strategy" (*Galatians*, 129).

culturally specific and more general about the way argument is made.<sup>104</sup> My analysis moves from Paul's argument to the ancient sources, recognizing that Paul tells stories that address the situation the Galatians face, leading me to question what the role of narrative was in ancient rhetoric.

A second major difference between traditional rhetorical criticism and my project involves the sources used. The ancient rhetorical handbooks have been the primary source of rhetorical analysis. Though there is much debate about the purpose of these handbooks, the differences between them, and the appropriateness of their use, they have proven to be helpful for reading the letter.<sup>105</sup> I will certainly use them in my analysis. However, I am interested in "rhetoric" as a means of persuasion, and thus I will not limit myself to these sources. My sources include actual examples of rhetoric from the ancient world, including speeches and letters,<sup>106</sup> "literary criticism" from the ancient world,<sup>107</sup> and modern discussions of argumentation.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Kennedy notes "Rhetoric is a historical phenomenon and differs somewhat from culture to culture, more in matters of arrangement and style than in basic devices of invention" (*New Testament Interpretation*, 8).

<sup>105</sup> For discussion of the various handbooks and their relevance to Paul, see Smit, "The Letter of Paul to the Galatians," 43; Kraftchick, "Πάθη in Paul," 46-57.

<sup>106</sup> This is appropriately done in the work of George A. Lyons (*Pauline Autobiography*) and Beverly Roberts Gaventa ("Galatians 1 and 2: Autobiography as Paradigm," *NovT* 28 [1986]: 309-26).

<sup>107</sup> David P. Moessner has found much in Dionysius of Halicarnassus' literary criticism to help him interpret Luke/Acts (see, for example, "Dionysius's Narrative 'Arrangement' (οἰκονομία) as the Hermeneutical Key to Luke's Re-Vision of the 'Many,'" pp. 149-164 in *Paul, Luke, and the Graeco-Roman World* [ed. A. Christophersen, et al.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002]).

<sup>108</sup> This was the helpful advance of Paul E. Koptak's work on Gal 1-2, incorporating Kenneth Burke (Paul E. Koptak, "Rhetorical Identification in Paul's Autobiographical Narrative, Galatians 1:13-2:14," *JSNT* 40 [1990]: 97-115). Another helpful source is the work of Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca (*The New Rhetoric*). This "new rhetoric," like Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, is a philosophical approach to rhetoric, less focused on style and more focused on the ways in which argument is constructed. As Anderson summarizes, "On the whole, Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca are not concerned with rhetorical form or genre (structural rhetoric). They are rather concerned with techniques of argumentation and their effectiveness" (*Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 26). For Anderson, this means the "new rhetoric" is less helpful, because it has no historical connection with Paul (see the discussion on *Ancient Rhetorical Theory*, 26-33). However, I am more interested at the level of rhetoric that Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca address, and therefore I find their work helpful for reading Paul.

Third, the work of Betz and those following him has almost exclusively focused on “rational arguments.”<sup>109</sup> Successors to Betz in rhetorical studies of Galatians have taken his point quite seriously that “in its written form such a letter can persuade its addressees only by its rational arguments.”<sup>110</sup> Rhetorical studies, in fact, tend to focus heavily on logical argumentation, overlooking the fact that in Galatians Paul appeals to an experience that cannot be “proven” in strictly rational terms. Ironically, while Betz’s work has led interpreters down the road of reading the argument as logical rhetoric, Betz himself originally understood that Paul’s defense was in a sense incapable of being described as rational, as it was a defense of the spirit. As noted by Kennedy, however, “Even Greek oratory, especially in contexts other than a law court, contains strong subjective elements.” Kennedy notes “it is very commonly the case that logical arguments are introduced into a speech only to support details or to give an appearance of reason or to justify a decision which is in fact made largely on the basis of ethos and pathos.”<sup>111</sup> Some recent rhetorical studies have appreciated these character and emotional appeals in this letter.<sup>112</sup> In this study I argue that Paul uses narrative not solely to make a logical argument, but he attempts to move the Galatians to consider their ineffable experience of the Spirit as the ultimate argument against circumcision. As Kraftchick

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<sup>109</sup> Terms like “rational” and “logical” are of course much debated, difficult to define, and yet important enough that one must be careful with their use. In the dissertation I plan to spend much time defining such terms. For now, it is sufficient to say that few rhetorical approaches have considered how narrative can be persuasive by means other than presenting facts which can be accepted as true or false.

<sup>110</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 24. Betz treats the narrative in the letter as a part of “rational logic”: “As a matter of fact, the body of the letter contains nothing but one strictly rational argument” (*Galatians*, 30).

<sup>111</sup> Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, 17. Kennedy continues to say that though Christian rhetoric is perhaps more dependent on what is ineffable, this is not too inconsistent with speeches about democracy: “The validity of both democracy and Christianity is personal and experiential” (*New Testament Interpretation*, 18). Kennedy also discusses the “rhetoric of religion,” arguing that “those who accept religious teachings generally do so because of their perception of certain qualities in the person who utters them and because of their intuitive response to the message” (*New Testament Interpretation*, 6).

<sup>112</sup> Examples of this focus on invention include studies by Kraftchick (“Πάθη” and “Ethos and Pathos Arguments in Galatians 5 and 6: A Rhetorical Approach” [PhD diss., Emory University, 1985]); Dodd (*Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’*); Lyons (*Pauline Autobiography*).

suggests, “Paul sought this change from the Galatians, not just in mind, but in feeling.”<sup>113</sup> I hope to move rhetorical criticism of Galatians forward by accounting for these non-logical arguments.

Both narrative and rhetorical studies of Galatians have made important advances in the understanding of the letter. My work participates in both of these modes of analysis and draws upon these traditions. The integration of narrative into rhetorical studies, or the perception of narrative as a particular means of persuasion in the argument to the Galatians, is lacking, and it is the work of this study to integrate these approaches.

### **The Narrative of this Study**

This study is a reading of the narrative rhetoric of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. That definition describes the two tasks before me. First, I must define precisely this term “narrative rhetoric” and second I must demonstrate this mode of argumentation in the letter. The first task, the definition of narrative rhetoric, is the function of chapters 2 and 3. I begin, in chapter 2, by looking at the rhetorical function of stories in modern literary theory. Guided by Paul Ricoeur’s reading of Aristotle’s *Poetics*, I show that narrative is a particular form of persuasion, wherein identity can be reshaped by the configuration of events by an author into a narrative whole, what Ricoeur calls the creation of a concordant plot from discordant events.

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<sup>113</sup> “Πάθη,” 44. Kennedy summarizes that, “The whole labored argument essentially rests not on the scriptural passages cited nor on the logical acceptance of Paul’s premises by his opponents—a necessary condition of true dialectic—but on the Galatians’ acceptance of his authority in making these proclamations and their experience of Paul’s teachings” (*New Testament Interpretation*, 147). I agree with the first part of this quote, but I do not agree that the establishment of his authority is key to his argument.

In ch. 3, I take the narrative function highlighted by Ricoeur, and I read it back into sources within Paul's rhetorical milieu. The function of the chapter is in part historical; I demonstrate that it is likely that the author of Galatians would have been familiar with the construction of narrative as a persuasive technique. The chapter, though, also functions to create a set of comparative texts that will guide my reading of Paul's argument. I begin with the ancient rhetorical handbooks, those texts most commonly consulted in rhetorical criticism of Paul, but I expand the comparative database to include the early elementary exercises (*progymnasmata*) of the rhetorical tradition. I demonstrate that an understanding of the construction of narratives as a persuasive technique was a part of the education system in which Paul was likely trained. I then look to the writings of some actual rhetoricians to show how narrative rhetoric functioned.

The second part of this study (chs. 4-6) is exegetical, working to show how the understanding of narrative rhetoric cultivated in chs. 2-3 is the best way of accounting for the argument to the Galatians. I argue that Galatians must be read as a unity by following the narrative as it unfolds through the process of reading. Therefore, I read through the entire letter. My presentation is divided along the natural division of the letter highlighted by many studies, looking first at Paul's autobiographical comments in Gal 1-2, then his retelling of Israel's story in Gal 3-4, and finally his direct argument about the Galatians' future in Gal 5-6. For each I survey the broad construction of the narrative, then look closely at a few key passages to demonstrate the narrative rhetoric of the argument.

This study is an examination of what Paul means when he refers to those who "have their foundation on the new canon" as the "Israel of God." That comment is an

appeal to the narrative identity his argument has constructed. I now to demonstrate how this construction works.

## Chapter 2 Defining Narrative Rhetoric: An Analytical Approach

The terms “narrative” and “rhetoric” in the subtitle of this study are not commonly found together in interpretations of Paul’s letters.<sup>1</sup> One term is generally emphasized to the exclusion of the other, particularly in studies of Galatians. In the previous chapter, I outlined the success and the limitations that have come in treating Galatians in terms of rhetoric and treating it in terms of narrative. Now I claim that a combination of the two is more fruitful for understanding Galatians than applying either technique alone. What does it mean to approach Galatians as “narrative rhetoric”? In what ways can narrative be understood as a persuasive device aimed to convince the Galatians that they are the Israel of God and therefore should act accordingly? This chapter begins to explore how narrative is a form of rhetoric.

Paul’s narrative construction of the Galatians’ identity should not strike readers as surprising. Readers intuitively recognize that stories form a basic element of human communication and understanding.<sup>2</sup> Across cultures, from earliest ages, humans communicate by telling stories. This basic insight, common among modern studies of

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<sup>1</sup> There are some studies that use similar language, though typically the term “narrative rhetoric” occurs in studies of the Hebrew Bible and the gospels. For examples, see T. E. Boomershine, “The Structure of Narrative Rhetoric in Genesis 2-3” *Semeia* 18 (1980): 113-29; W. Wuellner, “Putting Life Back into the Lazarus Story and its Reading: The Narrative Rhetoric of John 11 as the Narration of Faith” *Semeia* 53 (1991): 113-32; E. R. Thibeaux, “‘Known to be a Sinner’: The Narrative Rhetoric of Luke 7:36-50” *BTB* 23 (1993): 151-60; J. David Hester, “Dramatic Inconclusion: Irony and Narrative Rhetoric of the Ending of Mark” *JSNT* 17 (1995): 61-86; Vernon K. Robbins, “Narrative in Ancient Rhetoric and Rhetoric in Ancient Narrative” *SBL Seminar Papers* 35 (1996): 368-84; Paul Danove, “The Narrative Rhetoric of Mark’s Ambiguous Characterization of the Disciples,” *JSNT* 20 (1998): 21-37.

<sup>2</sup> For an appeal to general experience to understand narrative as persuasive, see Walter R. Fisher, *Human Communication as Narration: Toward a Philosophy of Reason, Value and Action* (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1987), esp. 158-179.

narrative, has been formally recognized since at least the time of Aristotle.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, common experience suggests that narration of the past is an effective rhetorical device for altering belief and behavior in the future. Novels, movies, and sermon illustrations all carry persuasive powers far beyond the content they recount. A narrative mode gives an artist the ability to lead his or her audience down the path of an argument in ways non-narrative discourse cannot. In introducing a collection of essays aimed at showing how narrative literature explores some of the most important questions about human life, Martha Nussbaum highlights the essential connection between a text's form and its rhetorical effect: "If the writing is well done, a paraphrase in a very different form and style will not, in general, express the same conception."<sup>4</sup> This understanding of the essential relationship of form and content is captured in Cleanth Brooks' warnings against the "heresy of the paraphrase."<sup>5</sup> Examples of narratives as powerful agents of persuasion can be found everywhere. Dave Eggers' *What is the What?*, for example, has certainly brought more attention and sympathy for the Lost Boys than previous journalistic or scientific descriptions of the conditions of oppression in the Sudan.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> For representative studies of the prevalence of telling stories across human cultures, see Stephen Crites, "The Narrative Quality of Experience" *JAAR* 39 (1971): 291-311; Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987), 1-25; Ann Rigney, "The Point of Stories: On Narrative Communication and Its Cognitive Functions," *Poetics Today* 13 (1992): 263-83; J. Hillis Miller, "Narrative," pp. 66-79 in *Critical Terms in Literary Study* (ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 66-67. Aristotle notes "It is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis" (*Poet.* 4.1-2 1448b4-9 [Innes, LCL]).

<sup>4</sup> Martha C. Nussbaum, *Love's Knowledge: Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 5.

<sup>5</sup> See Cleanth Brooks, "The Heresy of the Paraphrase," pp. 192-214 in *The Well Wrought Urn: Studies in the Structure of Poetry* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1947).

<sup>6</sup> Dave Eggers, *What is the What? The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng: A Novel* (New York: Vintage Books, 2006). For a similar point about the power of novels to persuade in particular situations, see Michael McGuire, "The Rhetoric of Narrative: A Hermeneutic, Critical Theory," pp. 219-36 in *Narrative Thought and Narrative Language* (ed. B. K. Britton and A. D. Pellegrini; Hillsdale, Erlbaum, 1990), 220; Fisher, *Human Communication*, 158.

To understand its persuasive power, though, narrative must be approached as more than a mere distinction of genre, the common understanding of the term in New Testament studies. Scholars across disciplines have accounted for the ubiquity of narrative discourse in human communication by recognizing narrative construction at the core of self-understanding, a scholarly phenomenon James Phelan describes as “the age of the Narrative Turn.” Phelan argues that narrative theory has progressed beyond the mere description of a formal system to characterize literature, and instead narrative has become “an essential component” of work across disciplines.<sup>7</sup> As Wesley A. Kort summarizes, contrary to much Biblical scholarship, other disciplines assume that narrative is a ubiquitous, primary, and necessary phenomenon, and therefore consideration of literature as narrative should not be limited to texts labeled by genre as “narratives.”<sup>8</sup> Narrative is a trans-cultural universal, but it manifests itself in many different, culturally-specific “genres.” In fields ranging from philosophy,<sup>9</sup> to psychology,<sup>10</sup> to historiography,<sup>11</sup> to theology,<sup>12</sup> to rhetoric,<sup>13</sup> to communications,<sup>14</sup> to

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<sup>7</sup> James Phelan, “Narrative Theory, 1966-2006: A Narrative,” pp. 283-336 in *The Nature of Narrative* (40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition; ed. Robert E. Scholes, James Phelan, and Robert Leland Kellogg; New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 282-83.

<sup>8</sup> Wesley A. Kort, *Story, Text, and Scripture: Literary Interests in Biblical Narrative* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1998), 8-13.

<sup>9</sup> Paul Ricoeur’s hermeneutical phenomenology, to be explored in this chapter, is the example *par excellence* of the focus on narrative in philosophical discussions. See also Richard Rorty, *Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989).

<sup>10</sup> See, for example, the development of the field of narrative gerontology, the composition of narrative as a method of improving the life of the elderly. For representative studies, see *Narrative Gerontology: Theory, Research, and Practice* (ed. Gary Kenyon, Phillip Clark, Brian de Vries; New York: Springer, 2001).

<sup>11</sup> For a review of the developments and responses to narrative within historiography, see Hayden White, “Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory,” pp. 26-57 in *The Content of the Form*.

<sup>12</sup> For a brief, helpful summary of the history of narrative theology, see Michael Goldberg, *Theology and Narrative: A Critical Introduction* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982); Gary L. Comstock, “Two Types of Narrative Theology,” *JAAR* 55 (1987): 687-717; George Stroup, “Theology of Narrative or Narrative Theology?: A Response to *Why Narrative*,” *Theology Today* 47 (1991): 424-32.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, the comments of Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca: “Rationality is grounded in the narrative structure of life and the natural capacity people have to recognize coherence and fidelity in the stories they experience and tell one another” (Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca,

ethics,<sup>15</sup> to creative writing,<sup>16</sup> to preaching,<sup>17</sup> to education,<sup>18</sup> to artificial intelligence,<sup>19</sup> to narrative theory itself,<sup>20</sup> recent scholarship emphasizes that humans understand themselves and their world in terms of the narratives created out of events experienced, and therefore the construction and consumption of narrative is necessarily a rhetorical act, one that shifts self-understanding and thereby shifts behavior and belief.<sup>21</sup> These varied disciplines reflect a consistent emphasis on a narrative epistemology, a now-common assumption that individuals and groups understand themselves in terms of the coherent narratives they create out of events.<sup>22</sup> An event becomes meaningful insofar as a subject places it in relation to other events experienced through temporal, causal, or other

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*The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* [trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969], 137).

<sup>14</sup> Foremost on narrative in communication studies is the work of Walter R. Fisher. See, for example, his *Human Communication as Narration*. For a brief summary, see the exchange between Robert C. Rowland and Fisher (Robert C. Rowland, "Narrative: Mode of Discourse or Paradigm?" *Communication Monographs* 54 [1987]: 264-75; Walter R. Fisher, "Clarifying the Narrative Paradigm," *Communication Monographs* 56 [1989]: 55-58).

<sup>15</sup> On narrative ethics, see Stanley Hauerwas, *A Community of Character* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

<sup>16</sup> On creative writing, see, for example, Douglas Hesse, "Persuading as Storying: Essays, Narrative Rhetoric, and the College Writing Course," pp. 106-117 in *Narrative and Argument*, (ed. Richard Andrews; Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1989).

<sup>17</sup> For reviews of the history of narrative preaching, see David S. Reynolds, "From Doctrine to Narrative: The Rise of Pulpit Storytelling in America" *American Quarterly* 32 (1980): 479-98; Thomas G. Long, "What Happened to Narrative Preaching?" *Journal for Preachers* 28 (2005): 9-14.

<sup>18</sup> See, for example, F. Michael Connelly, and D. Jean Clandinin, "Stories of Experience and Narrative Identity," *Educational Researcher* 19 (1990): 2-14.

<sup>19</sup> Roger C. Schank argues that, "Intelligence, for machines as well as for humans, is the telling of the right story at the right time in the right way" (*Tell me a Story: A New Look at Real and Artificial Memory* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1990], 241). See also Michael Mateas and Phoebe Sengers, "Narrative Intelligence," pp. 1-10 in *Narrative Intelligence: Papers from the 1999 Fall Symposium* (ed. Michael Mateas and Phoebe Sengers; Menlo Park, CA: AAAI Press, 1999). For a discussion of the relationship between artificial intelligence and narratology, see Marie-Laure Ryan, *Possible Worlds, Artificial Intelligence, and Narrative Theory* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1992).

<sup>20</sup> For a review of recent developments in narrative theory, see Phelan, "Narrative Theory, 1966-2006: A Narrative," 283-336.

<sup>21</sup> Perhaps all the books in the world could not contain a complete bibliography for this topic. For a review of the recent proliferation of "narrative" studies across disciplines, see Stephen Crites, "The Narrative Quality of Experience"; Ann Rigney, "The Point of Stories"; Robert C. Rowland, "Narrative: Mode of Discourse or Paradigm," *Communication Monographs* 54 (1987): 264-75.

<sup>22</sup> This move in studies of narrative from understanding the "rules" by which narratives are composed or which narratives follow (a quest associated with structuralism or classical narratology) to an attempt to understand narrative as the way in which humans understand reality is often referred to as cognitive narratology. For a brief introduction, see Phelan, "Narrative Theory," 288-289.

connections. Self-identity is constructed through the creation of a narrative out of one's life experiences.

These general comments regarding the rise of appreciation for narrative epistemology may be illuminated by a couple of examples of this “narrative turn” from fields far removed from Biblical studies. Consider, for example, the emphasis on narrative in computer science. In attempting to design more effective interfaces between humans and computers, system developers have recognized the essentially narrative shaping of reality, and therefore they present data in timelines and storylines to reach users more effectively.<sup>23</sup> Further, in artificial intelligence, where the goal is to recreate human thought processes or develop systems that can competently communicate with human users, designers have incorporated narrative intelligence as a way of mimicking human thought, as opposed to a simple rules-based decision-making process.<sup>24</sup> In developing gaming systems, computer scientists have incorporated the work of narratologists, designing systems that account for the expected human response to

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<sup>23</sup> For a concrete example of the recognition of narrative intelligence and the incorporation of narrative into software design, see the work of Per Persson, who argues that the World Wide Web is an interface which does not proceed as a narrative, and therefore it is difficult for users to comprehend and recall web sessions. Users have no coherent experience of surfing the web. He presents a system wherein one's interaction with the web is narrated by two characters observing the user's clicking and the content of the web pages visited. By casting the web experience as a narrative, users are able to recall more effectively what they have seen online (Per Persson, “AGNETA and FRIDA: A Narrative Experience of the Web?” pp. 67-71 in *Narrative Intelligence* [ed. Michael Mateas and Phoebe Sengers; Philadelphia: J. Benjamins Publishers, 2003]). See also John F. Meech, “Narrative Theories as Contextual Constraints for Agent Interaction,” pp. 38-43 in *Narrative Intelligence*; Abbe Don, “Narrative and the Interface,” pp. 383-91 in *The Art of Human-Computer Interface Design* (ed. Brenda Laurel; Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1990). Brenda Laurel has incorporated Aristotle on drama into the design of interfaces (*Computers as Theatre* [Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1991]).

<sup>24</sup> For a brief history of the development of narrative in artificial intelligence, see Mateas and Sengers, “Narrative Intelligence,” pp. 1-10 in *Narrative Intelligence*. For a specific discussion of the need to incorporate narrative intelligence into the design of artificial agents, see Phoebe Sengers, “Schizophrenia and Narrative in Artificial Agents,” *Leonardo* 35 (2002): 427-31. For a discussion of the challenges of a computer's “understanding” a story, see Erik T. Mueller, “Prospects for in-depth Story Understanding by Computer,” arXiv:cs/0003003v1.

narrative.<sup>25</sup> In a field concerned with the recreation of human thought processes, narrative has become a dominant part of the conversation.

Likewise, in studying how humans think and remember, psychologists have explored the connection between the consumption of narrative and action. Neurobiologists have shown that the brain activity involved in reading a story is similar to the brain activity of acting out the actual events described. Neuroimaging has shown, for example, that as a patient reads about a character's interaction with an object, the regions of the brain associated with physically manipulating such an object are stimulated.<sup>26</sup> These preliminary studies provide hard evidence in support of previous hypotheses of "embodied theories of language comprehension," wherein it has been assumed that in processing language, readers or hearers construct mental images of what they read or hear.<sup>27</sup> Indeed in hearing the description of an object, a subject will construct a mental image, one complete with details only implied, but not explicitly stated, in the text read.<sup>28</sup> These more recent studies suggest that while consuming discourse is an active process, wherein images are created, the reader in the consumption of action in narrative

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<sup>25</sup> See Adam Fitzgerald, Gurlal Kahlon, and Mark O. Riedl, "A Computational Model of Emotional Response to Stories," pp. 312-15 in *Interactive Storytelling: Second Joint International Conference on Interactive Digital Storytelling* (ed. Ido A. Iurgel, Nelson Zagalo, Paolo Petta; Heidelberg: Springer, 2009); Mark O. Riedl and R. Michael Young, "Narrative Planning: Balancing Plot and Character," *Journal of Artificial Intelligence Research* 39 (2010): 217-67; Jarmo Laaksolahti and Magnus Boman, "Anticipatory Guidance of Plot," cs.AI/0206041.

<sup>26</sup> See Nicole K. Speer, et al., "Reading Stories Activates Neural Representations of Visual and Motor Experiences," *Psychological Science* 20.8 (2009): 989-99.

<sup>27</sup> For previous work on embodied language comprehension, see Arthur C. Graesser, Keith K. Millis, and Rolf A. Zwaan, "Discourse Comprehension," *Annual Review of Psychology* 48 (1997): 163-89; R. A. Zwaan, R. A. Stanfield, and R. H. Yaxley, "Language Comprehenders Mentally Represent the Shape of Objects," *Psychological Science* 13 (2002): 168-71. The quotation is taken from Speer, "Reading," 997.

<sup>28</sup> See Zwaan, et al., "Language," 170. I show below that such an expansion of narrative in the mind of the reader/hearer was appreciated anecdotally in Paul's cultural milieu. For example, Quintilian discusses his response to Cicero's storytelling in his Verrine orations as follows: "Is there anybody so incapable of forming a mental picture of a scene that when he reads the following passage from the Verrines, he does not seem not merely to see the actors in the scene, the place itself and their very dress, but even to imagine to himself other details that the orator does not describe?" (*Inst. Orat.* 8.3.64 [Butler, LCL]).

form becomes even more active, as the brain simulates physical participation in a narrative consumed.

These diverse examples merely highlight the ubiquity of scholarship that recognizes the importance of narrative as a critical category, not as a generic distinction made only of texts, but rather as a mode of thinking and understanding.<sup>29</sup> Hayden White's comments, written in 1987, are all the more true today: "We have witnessed across the whole spectrum of the human sciences over the course of the last two decades a pervasive interest in the nature of narrative, its epistemic authority, its cultural function, and its general social significance."<sup>30</sup>

This emphasis on the construction of narrative as a mode of interpreting experience has a direct impact on understanding the process of constructing and consuming arguments, a process typically referred to as rhetoric.<sup>31</sup> Humans understand the world around them and their past in terms of stories constructed, and thus humans may be persuaded through the consumption of discourse that creates coherent sequences, or narratives. An author of discourse places events in context with other events, creating a coherent whole out of disparate elements. In the consumption of discourse, a reader's self-understanding, itself a narrative construction, has the potential to change. Discourse offers to a reader a configuration of events consumed that, like actual events experienced, can alter narrative self-understanding. It is in this recognition of narrative as the

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<sup>29</sup> This is the key insight of Crites, who argues "experience is moulded, root and branch, by narrative forms" ("Narrative Quality of Experience," 308). See also Kort, *Story, Text, and Scripture*, 8-13.

<sup>30</sup> *The Content of the Form*, x.

<sup>31</sup> I use the verb "consume" to refer to the process of reading or hearing discourse (and thus I often speak of "consumers" instead of "readers" or "hearers"). The New Testament was likely originally experienced aurally, but now primarily functions as written discourse.

connection between life and discourse that rhetoric, understood as persuasion, and narrative, the construction of plots from disparate elements, come together.

My identification of Paul's letter to the Galatians as narrative rhetoric is a claim that the argument relies upon a rhetorical mode of constructing events into a coherent narrative world, one that emerges through the process of reading the letter. The Galatians' experience with Christ stands as the assumption of Paul's argument, an assumption shared by audience and author.<sup>32</sup> Paul's narrative rhetoric aims to give this experience meaning by constructing a plot from it, by leading the Galatians into a construction of the meaning of such an experience. It is the narrative sequence into which the Galatians' experience is fit, giving rise to the meaning of this event, to which I refer with the Aristotelian term "emplotment."

I earlier argued that much of Paul's deliberative argument to the Galatians, rhetoric aimed at "advising about future events," depends upon telling stories about the past.<sup>33</sup> I also showed that Paul's overall concern in the letter is not merely with dictating the Galatians' future by apostolic fiat, but rather by redefining their identity as the "Israel of God" (6:16). These initial comments about the function of narrative discourse suggest the connection between these two observations about Paul's argument. Paul's narration of the past functions to construct a new narrative identity, which then becomes the grounds upon which he argues the Galatians should make particular decisions in the future.

I now explore in detail how a narrative mode of discourse may function to re-form an individual or group identity. I begin by introducing poetics into the prevailing

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<sup>32</sup> This assumption will be described throughout, but it can be easily seen in a couple of places in the letter. For example, in 1:6 Paul assumes the Galatians agreed that they have experienced a "call." Likewise in 3:1 he assumes they agree they have seen Christ crucified. It is likely the case that "those troubling you" (1:7) likewise agree that the Galatians have had a genuine experience with Christ.

<sup>33</sup> On deliberative rhetoric, see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.3 1358a36-1359a29.

“rhetorical” conversation about Galatians. I argue that the rhetorical function of Galatians is best understood as an exchange between text and audience, and so the realm of poetics, focused on an audience’s response to the text, is a helpful advance beyond—yet building upon—previous rhetorical approaches. I introduce the narrative function outlined by Paul Ricoeur, and particularly Ricoeur’s “mimetic spiral,” as a helpful lens through which to understand the narrative function of Paul’s letter to the Galatians. Finally, I work to construct a basic reading method for the letter, a method that will guide the next stages of this study.

### **Reading with Aristotle Between Rhetoric and Poetics**

I have identified the construction of narrative as a rhetorical process that includes the author’s composition of a text as well as the audience’s consumption of a text. The two sides of the literary process are often distinguished as rhetorical strategy and poetic effect. Many New Testament studies, and particularly those on Galatians, focus on the former, describing the rhetorical strategies of the author’s letter and their relationship to historical events constructed from the letter, other letters, and other early Christian texts. However, the combination of a recognition of the presence of narrative within the argument of the letter and the appreciation for the persuasive function of narrative beyond the content recounted demands a reconsideration of the letter as “rhetorical.” To follow the persuasive power of Paul’s argument, readers must follow his narrative construction, its organization of events. An infusion of “poetics” into the prevailing conversation of Galatians as “rhetoric” is therefore required.

By “poetics” I do not make a generic distinction.<sup>34</sup> Rather, I use the term to identify a particular aspect of all discourse, and therefore a mode of reading discourse, wherein elements of form and style invite the audience to participate in the construction of meaning through the process of reading.<sup>35</sup> Modern readers tend to separate rhetoric and poetics into distinct fields or literary genres. Generally accepted is a distinction between rhetoric as focused on instructing a specific audience with particular ideas, and poetics as focused on engaging an audience’s imagination: “Poetry is for the sake of expression. . . . Rhetoric is for the sake of impression.”<sup>36</sup>

The terms rhetoric and poetics are perhaps most familiar to Pauline scholars through the titles of Aristotle’s two famous works. While recent work on Galatians has frequently drawn upon Aristotle’s *Rhetoric*, rarely do scholars refer to the *Poetics*, though Aristotle wrote the two works at roughly the same point in his career, and the *Poetics* is

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<sup>34</sup> In many literary studies, the term “poetics” is used to describe the writing or criticism of poetry (see, for example, Peter Auger, *The Anthem Dictionary of Literary Terms and Theory* [New York: Anthem Press, 2010], 233-34).

<sup>35</sup> I certainly concur with the opinion of Fisher that, “‘Rhetoric’ and ‘poetic’ are ambiguous terms” (*Human Communication*, 159). He argues that for many authors, ancient and modern, the two terms overlap. For a discussion of the history of the distinction between these two terms, along with an argument to keep them as distinct sets of literature, see Wilbur Samuel Howell, “Rhetoric and Poetics: A Plea for the Recognition of the Two Literatures,” pp. 374-90 in *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan* (ed. Luitpold Wallach; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), esp. 378-79. For a discussion of how the terms differed in antiquity, see Charles Sears Baldwin, *Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic: Interpreted from Representative Works* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), 1-5.

<sup>36</sup> Hoyt H. Hudson, “Rhetoric and Poetry,” *Quarterly Journal of Speech Education* 10 (1924): 146. Hudson admits, though, that there are no pure forms of either, but poetry may have some sense of the rhetorical in it. Hudson’s work largely draws upon the work of John Stuart Mill, who distinguishes between the two based on the author’s conception of a specific audience (rhetoric) or whether the writing stands on its own (poetic). Hudson quotes Mill’s pithy summary of the distinction: “Eloquence [Hudson’s ‘rhetoric’] is written to be heard, poetry to be overheard” (Mill, “What is Poetry,” 1; quoted in Hudson, “Rhetoric and Poetry,” 144). Baldwin argues for this same distinction in antiquity: “Rhetoric meant to the ancient world the art of instructing and moving men in their affairs; poetic the art of sharpening and expanding their vision” (*Ancient Rhetoric and Poetic*, 134). The larger context of this passage is also quoted by Howell (“Rhetoric and Poetics,” 379-80). Baldwin argues the distinction in antiquity was less about composition and more about “typical processes of conceiving” (*Ancient Rhetoric and Poetics*, 3).

closely connected with the *Rhetoric*.<sup>37</sup> Outside of Biblical studies, rhetoric often takes a backseat to poetics, since rhetoric is viewed as the skill of manipulation, a slander as old as the study of rhetoric itself.<sup>38</sup> Indeed Aristotle's *Poetics* is generally the more popular of these two works.<sup>39</sup>

Aristotle's two modes, though, are not mutually exclusive. Indeed, poetics was understood as a specific form of the broader discipline of rhetoric.<sup>40</sup> The distinction once again is not one of genre; in antiquity, poetry written in verse was understood to teach

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<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of the chronological relationship between the *Rhetoric* and the *Poetics*, see March McCall, *Ancient Rhetorical Theories of Simile and Comparison* (Loeb Classical Monographs; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1969), 29-35; Walter Burkert, "Aristoteles im Theater: Zur Datierung des 3. Buchs der 'Rhetorik' und der 'Poetik,'" *Museum Helveticum* 32 (1975): 67-72. Gerald F. Else, *Plato and Aristotle on Poetry* (ed. Peter Burian; Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1986), 67-73. Else suggests that, "Cross-references in the two works run in both directions and virtually assure that they were developed at the same time and in close mutual rapport" (*Plato and Aristotle*, 71; cf. John D. O'Banion, *Reorienting Rhetoric: The Dialectic of List and Story* [University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992], 55-56).

<sup>38</sup> The history of anti-rhetoric rhetoric is long and well-known. Early examples can be seen in Plato (see *Gorgias* 459; *Phaedrus* 260). For review, see Stanley Fish, "Rhetoric," pp. 203-22 in *Critical Terms in Literary Study* (ed. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas McLaughlin; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 203-4; Hudson, "The Field of Rhetoric," 167, 178-79; David C. Bryant, "Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope *Rediviva*," pp. 3-23 in *Rhetorical Dimensions of Criticism* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1973); Howell, "Rhetoric and Poetics," 376-77; Fisher, *Human Communication*, 5-23; Connors, et al., "The Revival of Rhetoric in America," pp. 1-15 in *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse* (ed. Robert J. Connors et al.; Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984). For a brief discussion of the neo-Aristotelian movement in literary studies, drawing upon the *Poetics*, see James Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction: Judgments, Progressions, and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2007), 79-94.

<sup>39</sup> For a review of the diverging fates of rhetoric and poetics, see Douglas D. Hesse, "Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*: Narrative as Rhetoric's Fourth Mode," pp. 19-38 in *Rebirth of Rhetoric: Essays in Language, Culture, and Education* (ed. Richard Andrews; London: Routledge, 1992).

<sup>40</sup> For a discussion of the modern separation between rhetoric and poetics, see Hesse, "Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*," 19-28; Jeffrey Walker, *Rhetoric and Poetics in Antiquity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), esp. 10-16; Howell, "Rhetoric and Poetics." As A. J. Woodman summarizes, "Though we today see poetry, oratory, and historiography as three separate genres, the ancients saw them as three different species of the same genus—rhetoric. All three types of activity aimed to elaborate certain data in such a way as to affect or persuade an audience or readership" (*Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies* [London: Croom Helm, 1988], 100). For a discussion of the history of distinguishing between "modes of discourse," see Robert J. Connors, "The Rise and Fall of the Modes of Discourse," *College Composition and Communication* 32 (1981): 444-55; Richard L. Larson, "Classifying Discourse: Limitations and Alternatives," pp. 203-14 in *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse* (ed. Robert J. Connors; Lisa S. Ede; Andrea A. Lunsford; Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984).

and persuade in the same way as prose.<sup>41</sup> Rather, many ancient authors recognized that all discourse functions to persuade, and that persuasion comes not merely through logical argumentation, but through a variety of “poetic” means; the successful orator does not merely persuade through the construction of a chain of inferences, but also by leading an audience in a particular direction, depending upon the audience to complete the argument. Consider, for example, the distinction between language’s ability to “persuade” and “transport,” made by Longinus at the beginning of *On the Sublime*, likely written in the first century CE: “The effect of genius is not to persuade [οὐ εἰς πειθῶ] the audience but rather to transport them out of themselves [εἰς ἔκστασιν ἄγει]. Invariably what inspires wonder, with its power of amazing us, always prevails over what is merely convincing and pleasing.”<sup>42</sup> It is the inspiration of wonder, in any genre or rhetorical situation, for which discourse is created.

This description from Longinus suggests that actual discourse sits between the poles of rhetoric and poetics and exhibits qualities identified with each. Ancient authors conceived of rhetoric and poetics less as two mutually exclusive domains of discourse and more as the two foci of an ellipse. A given text may exhibit a greater emphasis on

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<sup>41</sup> This point of the similar functions of poetry and prose is made well by D. A. Russell: “Poetry in early ages performed various didactic and persuasive functions which later belonged to prose.” He argues rhetoricians “regarded poets and orators as playing essentially the same game” (“Rhetoric and Criticism,” 142). The argument that the two are not separate domains of discourse is by no means only an ancient one. For a modern discussion, see Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction*, 79-94.

<sup>42</sup> *On the Sublime* 1.4 (Innes, LCL). This quotation is also cited by Fisher as an argument for the incorporation of poetic into what has been primarily a rhetorical approach to language (*Human Communication*, 10). This common understanding of poetry and prose is seen in the oft-repeated ancient definition of poetry as “prose with meter.” For example, see Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen* 8-9: “I both deem and define all poetry as speech with meter” (τὴν ποιήσιν ἅπασαν καὶ νομίζω καὶ ὀνομάζω λόγον ἔχοντα μέτρον) (text from D. A. Russell, “Rhetoric and Criticism,” *Greece and Rome* 14 (1967): 131; translation from R. K. Sprague, ed. *The Older Sophists* [Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1974], 52). The common persuasive function of each can be seen in the use of examples from all genres to demonstrate rhetorical techniques in Aelius Theon’s *Progymnasmata*. For a discussion of the use of prose and poetry as examples in the *Progymnasmata*, see Ruth Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” pp. 289-316 in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (ed. Yun Lee Too; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 307-310.

instructing (rhetoric) than engaging the imagination (poetic), but all discourse has elements of both. All texts are persuasive in their “function of adjusting ideas to people and people to ideas.”<sup>43</sup>

This placement of all discourse, and particularly narrative discourse, between the two poles of persuasion serves as a starting point for modern narrative theory, particularly that of Paul Ricoeur. Reading Aristotle, Ricoeur identifies narrative as the process of emplotment existing in the space between rhetoric, aimed at persuasion, and poetics, aimed at engaging imagination.<sup>44</sup> Though Ricoeur recognizes that, “It may appear difficult to distinguish between [rhetoric and poetics],” he insists that the two be taken theoretically as separate modes, with actual examples of discourse necessarily falling between the two.<sup>45</sup> Rhetoric and poetics “intersect in the region of what is probable,” but the two diverge in their origins and their aims.<sup>46</sup> Rhetoric begins with ideas shared between the rhetor and his specific audience, ideas often referred to as τὰ ἔνδοξα (“those things generally held”).<sup>47</sup> Rhetoric aims to persuade by drawing conclusions from these generally-held principles. The intended result of rhetoric is a judgment, whether a judgment about the past, present, or future. Ricoeur suggests that in the ideal, “Argumentation has little creative function: it transfers the agreement granted to premises

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<sup>43</sup> The quotation is from Bryant (“Rhetoric: Its Functions and Its Scope *Rediviva*,” 242).

<sup>44</sup> Ricoeur also places metaphor within both domains of rhetoric and poetics, following Aristotle (see Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor: Multi-Disciplinary Studies in the Creation of Meaning in Language* [University of Toronto Romance Series; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977], 9-13).

<sup>45</sup> “Rhetoric—Poetics—Hermeneutics,” pp. 60-72 in *Rhetorical and Hermeneutics in Our Time: A Reader* (ed. Walter Jost and Michael J. Hyde; New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 64. For a general discussion of rhetoric and poetics in Ricoeur, see Andreea Deciu Ritivoi, *Paul Ricoeur: Tradition and Innovation in Rhetorical Theory* (SUNY Series, Rhetoric in the Modern Era; Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006), 6-8.

<sup>46</sup> “Rhetoric—Poetics—Hermeneutics,” 64.

<sup>47</sup> For discussion of this term in ancient rhetoric, see Aristotle, *Top.* 1.1 100a-101a; *Rhet.* 2.25 1402a30-1403a16. For a discussion of the distinction between rhetoric and poetics with reference to Aristotle, see Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961), 92-95; Ekkehard Eggs and Dermot McElholm, “Doxa in Poetry: A Study of Aristotle’s Poetics,” *Poetics Today* 23 (2003): 395-426.

onto conclusions.”<sup>48</sup> The classic example is Aristotle’s enthymeme, which takes the form of a syllogism, but rather than beginning with necessary premises, draws conclusions from opinions generally held by a specific audience.<sup>49</sup>

Poetics, on the other hand, begins with the creation of a plot by the author, aimed at engaging the emotions of an audience (pity and fear in Aristotle’s dramatic context) so that the audience may generalize the specifics of the plot into a possible reality. Poetics aims not at a specific judgment or decision, but rather at catharsis, the purging of emotions.<sup>50</sup> Ricoeur argues, therefore, that a “conversion of the *imaginary* is the central aim of poetics.”<sup>51</sup> Whereas the rhetor begins with assumptions shared and draws conclusions, the poet plays a creative role, creating his plot so as to create emotions within the audience. Ricoeur highlights the verbal root (ποιεῖν) of the Aristotle’s discussion of “poetics” (ποιήσις): the poet is a creator of plot.<sup>52</sup> Rhetoric and poetics in their purest forms, therefore, differ in that rhetoric seeks uniform judgment in a given audience, growing out of accepted premises, whereas poetics is the creation of plot so as to “stir up the sedimented universe of conventional ideas which are the premises of rhetorical convention.”<sup>53</sup> As Hesse summarizes Aristotle’s position, “Whereas the poet

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<sup>48</sup> “Rhetoric—Poetics—Hermeneutics,” 62.

<sup>49</sup> See *Rhet.* 2.22-26 1395b20-1403b2. For a discussion of Ricoeur and Aristotle’s enthymeme as well as an interesting argument that the enthymeme, the most “logical” of the rhetorical structures, actually reflects a narrative mode of discourse, see Hesse, “Aristotle’s *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*: Narrative as Rhetoric’s Fourth Mode,” esp. 32-37.

<sup>50</sup> See Harvey D. Goldstein, “Mimesis and Catharsis Reexamined,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 24 (1966): 567-77.

<sup>51</sup> “Rhetoric—Poetics—Hermeneutics,” 66. Emphasis is original.

<sup>52</sup> “The cardinal point in Aristotle’s theory is the concept of the poem as a construct and the poet as a constructor” (Else, *Plato and Aristotle*, 196).

<sup>53</sup> Ricoeur, “Rhetoric—Poetics—Hermeneutics,” 66.

‘creates’ the action, the rhetor merely transcribes it; the poet’s end is the rhetor’s beginning.”<sup>54</sup>

This initial consideration of the relationship of rhetoric to poetics brings us back to Galatians. With its particular strategy of endowing the community’s experience of the Spirit with meaning, Galatians certainly exhibits qualities associated with both rhetoric and poetics. Interpreters should not decide whether Galatians is an example of “rhetoric” or “poetics”; through its construction of a narrative, Galatians participates in both of these modes of discourse. Andreea Deciu Ritivoi suggests, “It is easy to see that the distinction [between rhetoric and poetics] collapses when the rhetor’s goal is no longer to settle a controversial issue, but to generate a radically new conviction.”<sup>55</sup> This describes well the overall rhetorical strategy of Galatians. Paul writes not simply to address a question of circumcision, but rather to endow his audience with a new understanding of life in Christ. To use Ritivoi’s terms, Paul writes “to generate a radically new conviction” of the Galatians’ identity as the Israel of God, a conviction from which a decision on circumcision will easily follow. Though typically considered as “rhetoric,” Galatians must also be recognized as “poetic.” In light of this analysis, Philip Kern’s question asked with regard to Galatians seems particularly pressing: “Why do critics wish to use Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* for analysis but not his *Poetics*?”<sup>56</sup>

### **Galatians within Paul Ricoeur’s Mimetic Spiral**

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<sup>54</sup> “Aristotle’s *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*,” 34.

<sup>55</sup> Ritivoi, *Paul Ricoeur*, 53.

<sup>56</sup> Philip H. *Rhetoric and Galatians: Assessing an Approach to Paul’s Epistle* (SNTS Monograph Series; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998, 68. Kern, however, does not pursue this line of analysis.

Paul Ricoeur's reading of Aristotle's *Poetics*, positioning narrative discourse between the two poles of rhetoric and poetics, serves as a helpful guide for introducing narrative as a lens through which to read Paul's argument in Galatians. Ricoeur's work does not lay forth a specific method for reading. Rather he explores how discourse functions as a means of narrative persuasion. A few preliminary remarks explaining why Ricoeur's work on narrative is particularly helpful are pertinent at this point.

First, Ricoeur focuses on what he calls a "first-order narrative understanding." His interest is in exploring the relationship between life and narrative, and thus, the persuasive power of narrative, rather than simply defining what constitutes a narrative.<sup>57</sup> Ricoeur uses "narrative" not as a generic distinction, but as a rhetorical process. Ricoeur's work on narrative is best seen as one aspect of a philosophical career aiming "to describe the experience of being in the world."<sup>58</sup> Ricoeur did not begin by focusing on narrative, but rather his philosophical career is an attempt to understand human experience. His so-called "hermeneutical turn," within which his work on narrative falls, follows from the insight that human experience is already interpreted by language. For Ricoeur, therefore, understanding narrative is key to understanding the self. His analysis is interested in exploring a prior understanding of narrative:

The efforts of contemporary narratology to construct a genuine science of narrative . . . which are, of course, perfectly legitimate, are themselves justified only to the extent that they *simulate* a narrative understanding that is always prior

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<sup>57</sup> Paul Ricoeur, "Life in Quest of Narrative," pp. 20-33 in *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative Interpretation* (ed. David Wood; London: Routledge, 1991), 24. There are countless narratologies, focused on defining the necessary elements of narrative as a generic distinction. For a summary, see Wallace Martin, *Recent Theories of Narrative* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989); David Darby, "Form and Context: An Essay in the History of Narratology," *Poetics Today* 22 (2001): 829-52.

<sup>58</sup> Ritivoi, *Paul Ricoeur*, 41.

to them. . . . My thesis, therefore, expresses no hostility with respect to narratology; it is limited to saying that narratology is a second order discourse which is always preceded by a narrative understanding stemming from the creative imagination.<sup>59</sup>

Ricoeur's work does not focus primarily on narrative discourse itself, but rather on the process of constructing and consuming narratives, a process for which he adopts the Aristotelian term *mimesis*. He is interested in how "reading" narratives, whether as text or action, shifts the reader's self-understanding. In this sense, Ricoeur's work is ultimately hermeneutical and ontological. In a limited sense, though, it is also rhetorical, focused on narratives as the locus of potential change in an audience's self-understanding.

Second, Ricoeur assumes a connection between narrative and action. The connection exists both at the level of interpretation, what he labels *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, as well as the level of appropriation, labeled *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. Ricoeur argues that making sense of experience, a subject engages in the same process of the construction of plots as an author does in the composition of literature. Likewise, the interpretation of texts prompts action, and thus there is an intimate connection between consuming narratives, whether in the form of reading or witnessing events, and the potential for altered action. Both reading and witnessing events offer the potential to change belief or action for the witness. Therefore, Ricoeur's narrative hermeneutics helps to explain Galatians as deliberative rhetoric, for it is the construction of the plot of an experience of Christ upon which Paul depends in order to alter the Galatians' belief and in turn their behavior. The letter's deliberative argument depends upon reframing the Galatians' narrative self-

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<sup>59</sup> "Life in Quest," 23-24.

understanding. Paul's retelling of the past is intimately connected with his argument about the present and future.

Third, Ricoeur consistently connects his work to authors more closely related to Paul's cultural and rhetorical milieu. Ricoeur's work on metaphor and narrative grows directly out of his reading and critical appropriation of Aristotle. While he recognizes that his conclusions go well beyond those of the ancients, he argues that the groundwork for his analysis was recognized by certain interpreters in the ancient world. Such connections to the ancient world are not required in order to justify the use of Ricoeur's work, but they do help in reading Paul in light of Ricoeur's work. One cannot say, for example, whether Paul was aware of or intended to reshape the identity of the community through a narration of events that created a concordance out of their discordant experience. However, such functions of narrative discourse were not foreign to Paul's cultural compatriots and therefore not foreign to him—as a typical human being. It will be the task of the next chapter to explore in detail how this understanding of narrative rhetoric, formed through Ricoeur's work, was recognized in Paul's cultural milieu.

Fourth, a characteristic of Ricoeur's work that makes it particularly relevant to reading Galatians is his focus on plot. Ricoeur argues that plot is the essential element of narrative, affirming Aristotle's designation of plot as the "soul of tragedy."<sup>60</sup> Even analysts who would prefer not to identify one soul for narrative recognize that the sequencing of events is the *sine qua non* of narrative. The connection of disparate events into a coherent plot is a primary mode of rhetoric in Galatians, and therefore Ricoeur's emphasis on plot is particularly helpful.

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<sup>60</sup> Aristotle, *Poet.* 6.19 1450a (Innes, LCL).

With these initial remarks in place, I now consider Ricoeur's work on narrative in some detail as an introduction to the reading method that I define below. What follows is certainly not a complete summary of Ricoeur's *oeuvre*, which spans the entire last half of the twentieth century.<sup>61</sup> Instead, I hope to highlight elements from his work on narrative in the 1970s and 1980s that clarify how the construction of plot from events in the past functions as deliberative rhetoric in Galatians. It will be the task of the second half of this study to read Galatians in light of this understanding of narrative rhetoric.

Paul Ricoeur's work on narrative is most aptly summarized by the thesis stated on the first page of his three-volume *Time and Narrative*: "Time becomes human time to the extent that it is organized after the manner of a narrative; narrative, in turn, is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal existence."<sup>62</sup> His purpose in *Time and Narrative* and related essays is to connect narrative and life, to explore how following a narrative configuration of events can refigure how a reader or a community understands itself, others, and the world.<sup>63</sup> He calls into question the oft-repeated maxim that, "Stories are recounted and not lived; life is lived and not recounted," by arguing that

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<sup>61</sup> There are many superb summaries of his work upon which I draw. Among the many, those that I have found most helpful include the following: David E. Klemm, *The Hermeneutical Theory of Paul Ricoeur: A Constructive Analysis* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1983); Charles E. Reagan, *Paul Ricoeur: His Life and His Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Dan R. Stiver, *Theology After Ricoeur: New Directions in Hermeneutical Theology* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2001); David M. Kaplan, *Ricoeur's Critical Theory* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2003).

<sup>62</sup> Paul Ricoeur, *Time and Narrative* (3 vols.; trans. Kathleen McLaughlin and David Pellauer; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984-87), 1.3. [TN]. The same quotation is repeated on TN 1.52. Ricoeur's corpus is enormous, spanning the entire last half of the twentieth century, and I here only explore a small part of his later "hermeneutical turn."

<sup>63</sup> Ricoeur's work in the late 1970s and early 1980s was primarily focused on narrative. It is most helpful to understand this work within the larger "narrative" of Ricoeur's developing thought. It is beyond the scope here to introduce this, though there are some very helpful intellectual biographies. See, for example, Charles E. Reagan, "Biographical Essay," pp. 4-51 in *Paul Ricoeur: His Life and His Work* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996); Andreea Deciu Ritivoi, "The Vagrant Scholar," pp. 27-48 in *Paul Ricoeur: Tradition and Innovation in Rhetorical Theory* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2006); Karl Simms, *Paul Ricoeur* (Routledge Critical Thinkers; New York: Routledge, 2002). A few important connections with his other work, particularly his previous work on metaphor and his subsequent work on narrative identity will be highlighted below.

humans make sense of their lives by constructing narratives, and, in turn, readers make sense of narratives by living in the worlds projected by the narratives they consume.<sup>64</sup>

Ricoeur asks, “Do not human lives become more readily intelligible when they are interpreted in the light of the stories that people tell about them? And do not these ‘life stories’ themselves become more intelligible when what one applies to them are the narrative models—plots—borrowed from history or fiction?”<sup>65</sup> Self-understanding is an act of interpretation of the stories of one’s experience, and therefore, hearing other stories, whether fictional or historical, potentially changes self-understanding.

Recognizing that there is no unmediated access to consciousness, but rather that all self-understanding is an act of interpretation, in the late 1970s and early 1980s Ricoeur turned to hermeneutics as a mediating step toward his ultimate goal of self-understanding.<sup>66</sup> His work on narrative is an extension of his previous work on metaphor, in which he had argued that rather than simply substituting the meaning of one word for another, metaphors reflect a tension between the “is” and “is not.”<sup>67</sup> Ricoeur rejects a

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<sup>64</sup> “Life in Quest,” 20.

<sup>65</sup> “Narrative Identity,” pp. 188-200 in *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative Interpretation* (ed. David Wood; London: Routledge, 1991). 188.

<sup>66</sup> In this respect Ricoeur exhibits direct influence from Heidegger and his student Gadamer. Heidegger had moved hermeneutics from a theory of interpretation to a theory of self-understanding, arguing that all understanding is already an interpretation. Consider, for example, the following from Heidegger: “What we ‘first’ hear is never noises or complexes of sounds, but the creaking wagon, the motor-cycle. We hear the column on the march, the north wind, the woodpecker tapping, the fire crackling. It requires a very artificial and complicated frame of mind to ‘hear’ a ‘pure noise’” (Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* [trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson; New York: Harper & Row, 1962], 207; quoted in Stiver, *Theology After Ricoeur*, 39). Ricoeur describes hermeneutics as a part of the process of “mourning the immediate,” the result of recognizing that one cannot directly experience anything, but rather all experience is an act of interpretation (see Reagan, *Paul Ricoeur*, 100).

<sup>67</sup> “The metaphor is the result of the tension between two terms in a metaphorical utterance” (*Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning* [Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University Press, 1976], 50). His work on metaphor builds upon the work of those like Black, Richards, and Beardsley who had moved beyond the view that metaphor was merely an ornamental way of expressing ideas that could otherwise be expressed in less figurative language. In particular Ricoeur ties his argument about metaphor to the work of Richards (see *Rule of Metaphor*, 76-83). The history of scholarship on metaphor is quite complicated. Most (including Ricoeur) point to Aristotle as the first to give prominent treatment to metaphor. Umberto Eco wrote (after Ricoeur’s work on metaphor) that “of the thousands and thousands of

traditional view, one that originated in ancient—primarily Latin—rhetoric, that metaphor is the application of one word’s definition to another, or that metaphor is simply a more elaborate or illustrative way to speak.<sup>68</sup> In these ancient views, meaning transmitted by metaphor could be alternatively explained in non-metaphorical language; a metaphor may be more effective because it represents a more sophisticated style, but the form in no way changes meaning.<sup>69</sup> Ricoeur argues instead that a living metaphor shatters existing language, creating new meaning that emerges in front of the text when the metaphor is consumed.<sup>70</sup> A metaphor is a “semantic innovation,” where the literal absurdity of the designation or connotation of a word being imputed upon another is overcome by new,

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pages written about the metaphor, few add anything of substance to the first two or three fundamental concepts stated by Aristotle” (Umberto Eco, “The Scandal of the Metaphor,” *Poetics Today* 4 [1983]: 217-57, quoted [with approval] in John T. Kirby, “Aristotle on Metaphor,” *American Journal of Philology* 118 [1997]: 520). Aristotle seems to advance the “substitutionary” view of metaphor implied in the term itself, famously defining metaphor in the *Poetics* as “the laying [ἐπιφορά] of the name [ὄνομα] of something [to something else]” (*Poet.* 21.7 1457b6-7). However, elsewhere in the *Poetics* Aristotle offers another comment which Ricoeur reads as opening up the potential of metaphor: “But the greatest thing by far is to be a master of metaphor (πολὺ δὲ μέγιστον τὸ μεταφορικὸν εἶναι), since a good metaphor implies an intuitive perception of the similarity in dissimilars (τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἔστιν)” (*Poet.* 22.17 1459a7-8; the translation is Ricoeur’s [*The Rule of Metaphor*, 23]). For a thorough discussion of Aristotle’s work on metaphor, see Kirby, “Aristotle on Metaphor.”

<sup>68</sup> For an example of this view in Latin rhetoric, see Cicero (*de Orat.* 3.38.155-39.169) and Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 8.6.4-18).

<sup>69</sup> Cicero notes, “Even in cases where there are plenty of specific words available, metaphorical terms give people much more pleasure, if the metaphor is a good one” (*de Orat.* 3.40.159 [Rackham, LCL]). Ricoeur summarizes these positions as follows: “We can translate a metaphor, i.e., replace the literal meaning for which the figurative word is a substitute. In effect, substitution plus restitution equals zero” (*Interpretation Theory*, 49).

<sup>70</sup> For a review of Ricoeur’s position, specifically his understanding of the polysemy of words, the function of the sentence as limiting meaning potential, and the function of the metaphor to expand meaning potential, see *The Rule of Metaphor*, 125-33. For a brief summary of his work on metaphor, see *Interpretation Theory*, 45-69. Essays prior to the publication of this work share similar arguments (see, for example, “Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics,” pp. 165-81 in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* [ed. and trans. John B. Thompson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981]). For a discussion of Ricoeur within the context of developing work on metaphor, see Sallie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 31-42. His work on metaphor from the beginning begins to spill over into a consideration of narrative. Kaplan suggests “*The Rule of Metaphor* is, therefore, best seen as a transitional work between the hermeneutics of texts in the 1970s and the hermeneutics of action of the 1980s” (*Ricoeur’s Critical Theory*, 49). Ricoeur’s work on metaphor and narrative builds upon his previous work on textuality and particularly his notion of distanciation. For a brief summary, see “The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation,” pp. 131-44 in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (ed. and trans. John B. Thompson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

metaphorical meaning. Though individual words have a range of meanings, a living metaphor is a meaning event that goes beyond this “polysemy of lexical entries” for the terms involved.<sup>71</sup> Neither are metaphors simply rhetorical embellishments, substitutes for meaning that could otherwise be conveyed through “an exhaustive paraphrase” of the combination of the two elements.<sup>72</sup> Rather, living metaphors, because they are part of a larger work, are language events within a literary context, wherein the tension between the “is” and “is not” forces the mind of the reader to create meaning out of the seemingly meaningless absurdity of the literal sense. This new meaning exists only in the moment of consuming the metaphor.<sup>73</sup> This semantic innovation is often not recognized because most metaphors are no longer living, but rather have been banalized (killed?) by repetition.<sup>74</sup> The metaphorical meaning has then become a part of the semantic range of the terms involved. Living metaphors, properly understood, create new meaning for both terms involved, meaning that is only accessible in the interpretation of the metaphor. As Ricoeur pithily summarizes, “There are no live metaphors in a dictionary.”<sup>75</sup>

Ricoeur’s work on metaphor provides a helpful introduction to his work on narrative that immediately followed.<sup>76</sup> Whereas semantic innovation in the metaphor arises in the literal absurdity of the confluence of two disparate elements, the central, innovating element of a narrative is plot, a process in which discordant events are

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<sup>71</sup> Paul Ricoeur, “Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics,” 170.

<sup>72</sup> See “Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics,” 172.

<sup>73</sup> “Thus a metaphor does not exist in itself, but in and through an interpretation” (*Interpretation Theory*, 50).

<sup>74</sup> The language of the banalization of metaphors comes from the helpful discussion of metaphor in Sandra M. Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 27-33.

<sup>75</sup> *Interpretation Theory*, 52.

<sup>76</sup> Ricoeur begins the Preface to the English edition of *Time and Narrative* with the following statement: “*The Rule of Metaphor* and *Time and Narrative* form a pair; published one after the other, these works were conceived together” (*TN* 1.ix). For a review of the connection between Ricoeur’s work on metaphor and narrative, see Kaplan, *Ricoeur’s Critical Theory*, 48-50.

constructed into a concordance.<sup>77</sup> Ricoeur equates this process with Aristotle's conception of μῦθος ("plot"), defined in the *Poetics* as "the organization of events."<sup>78</sup> Narrative, like metaphor, is an event, rather than a literary genre. Considering the distinction introduced in the previous chapter between story as a collection events as they occur in actual time and narrative discourse as the re-configuration of events into human time, Ricoeur's interest lies with the latter.<sup>79</sup> A collection of events (story) can be configured in any number of ways (narratives).<sup>80</sup> The power of narrative *qua* narrative lies not in the events that it recounts, but rather in the act of configuring such events into human time and the reader's encounter with such a configuration. Therefore narrative is both a mode of discourse as well as a reading strategy; it is both the act of constructing events into a temporal and causal whole, as well as the act of following such a construction. A narrator creates a sense of concordance by assigning reasons, motives, and temporal connections to previously disconnected events. The simple presence of narration, therefore, implies that reflection and configuration of the events narrated has already occurred at the hand

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<sup>77</sup> "We construct the meaning of a text in a manner similar to the way in which we make sense of all the terms of a metaphorical statement" ("Metaphor and the Central Problem," 174).

<sup>78</sup> *Poet.* 6.8 1450a3-4 (Innes, LCL). Ricoeur distinguishes μῦθος from δῆγησις, which is Aristotle's term for "narration" in the sense of a retelling of the facts of a case (see *Rhet.* 3.16 1416b16-1417b20).

<sup>79</sup> Ricoeur's focus is appropriately captured in the oft-repeated observation that the better translation of Ricoeur's *Temps et Récit* is "Time and Telling" rather than "Time and Narrative." On the distinction between "story" and "narrative," see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 15-42.

<sup>80</sup> Therefore, contrary to so-called narrative approaches to Paul and his letters, Ricoeur's analysis applies to narratives constructed through the act of reading, rather than narratives that might lie below the surface of a text or which inform the text's composition. This distinction is made by Richard B. Hays, who is interested in story (rather than narrative) in/behind Paul's argument: "'Story,' on the other hand, does not necessarily refer to an actual narrated text; it can refer to the ordered series of events which forms the basis for various possible narrations. . . . It points fundamentally to the sequence of events which underlies the recital." Hays argues this understanding of story "is closely related to Aristotle's use of the term μῦθος" (Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* [SBL Dissertation Series; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983], 17). I demonstrate, with the help of Ricoeur, that this is not the case.

of the author. In discourse, events are configured into a literary whole, which is then followed by the reader.

The other side of composition is the act of reading. Emplotment, Ricoeur's term for the configuring act of narrative, is completed not with the composition of narrative, but with the consumption of narrative. This act of reading is a natural occurrence; readers experience the world around them by "reading" the "texts" of action they observe. Ricoeur recognizes that this understanding of prenarrative experience of life is prior to any understanding of how texts influence self-understanding. Ricoeur's analysis of narrative, therefore, is not so much a hermeneutics of texts as a hermeneutics of reading, or perhaps more appropriately a hermeneutics of action as it is reflected, mediated, and prompted by reading. It is texts, or rather plots, that have the power of shifting narrative self-understanding. Self-understanding is built upon the stories one has created out of experience. In following new narratives, therefore, this self-understanding is challenged or reconfigured, and the reader is presented with the opportunity to shift how he or she understands the world. The reader, therefore, after consumption of narrative discourse has a new understanding of himself or herself in relation to the world projected therein.

Ricoeur illustrates this narrative process as an arc, or perhaps better, a spiral.<sup>81</sup> The reader always returns to an understanding of the world that is shaped by narrative, but this understanding is built upon the stories he or she has consumed. Interpretation, therefore, is not merely the process of understanding what a text says, but rather it is seeking to understand how the process of reading affects the reader, and importantly, the

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<sup>81</sup> Ricoeur talks of narrative both in terms of an arc (see *TN* 1.53) and a spiral (see *TN* 1.72). The spiral is the more appropriate image, as the encounter with narrative is a continual, ongoing process, though one in which one never comes back to the exact same place. For a proposed diagram of the narrative arc, see Stiver, *Theology after Ricoeur*, 58.

reader's actions. As Ricoeur summarizes, "It is the task of hermeneutics . . . to reconstruct the set of operations by which a work lifts itself above the opaque depths of living, acting, and suffering, to be given by an author to readers who receive it and thereby change their acting."<sup>82</sup> A narrative analysis of a text focuses on exploring how a world is opened in front of the text that challenges or modifies a reader's self-understanding.

### *Ricoeur's Narrative Function and Aristotle's Poetics*

To explain the narrative function, this connection between life and narrative, and thus the nature of narrative persuasion, Ricoeur explores terminology introduced in Aristotle's analysis of tragedy in the *Poetics*, specifically the terms μῦθος and μίμησις.<sup>83</sup> These two terms, introduced from the very beginning and defined throughout the *Poetics*, form the core of Ricoeur's argument about narrative. Ricoeur takes seriously the verbal sense of the title of Aristotle's *Poetics*; narrative is a creative (ποιεῖν) process, and both μῦθος and μίμησις are likewise understood "as operations, not as structures."<sup>84</sup> The "poet" is not one who creates verse, but rather is one who constructs plots, who creates configuration out of action. μῦθος, commonly translated as "plot," is not simply the "theme" of a work that answers the common question "what happens in this story?"

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<sup>82</sup> *TN* 1.53.

<sup>83</sup> Though much of Ricoeur's work on narrative grows out of Aristotle's *Poetics*, he denies that he is writing a commentary on the *Poetics* (see *TN* 1.32). Instead, he argues that his full discussion of narrative moves well beyond Aristotle's discussion, especially in terms of *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> and *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. He continues to argue, though, that the seeds of his analysis can be found throughout the *Poetics*. At times it becomes difficult to follow where he is expanding beyond Aristotle and where Aristotle's text serves the primary source of his argument. It is not surprising that Ricoeur's previous work on metaphor also began with an interpretation of Aristotle's work on metaphor in the *Poetics* and *Rhetoric* (see *The Rule of Metaphor*, 9-43).

<sup>84</sup> *TN* 1.33.

Rather μῦθος is the process of configuring action into a narrative. Likewise, μίμησις, commonly translated as “imitation,” does not simply mean a re-creation of that which an author observes, but rather the term describes the conditions necessary for the creation and following of a story and the process by which narrative reshapes a reader’s world; naming μίμησις as a quality of narrative is as much a comment on the nature of self-understanding as it is on the nature of stories.

Aristotle begins the *Poetics* by arguing that all forms of art can be understood to be “representations of life” (πᾶσαι τυγχάνουσιν οὕσαι μιμήσεις τὸ σύνολον). Further, Aristotle defines tragedy as the “imitation/representation of action” (μίμησις πράξεως). The translation of this term μίμησις is key for understanding how Aristotle, and thus Ricoeur, argues narrative to function.<sup>85</sup> Aristotle redefines this term from the Platonic tradition, where art as “imitation” was understood as the result of a process wherein the artist makes a copy of an original object or action, which is itself an imperfect copy of an ideal form.<sup>86</sup> For Plato, artwork and stories, therefore, stand at three levels removed from the original form, and therefore they are not as reliable, persuasive, or effective, as logical discourse.<sup>87</sup> Plato’s well-known example is that of three beds, the idea of the bed, the bed made by the carpenter, and the representation of the carpenter’s bed made by the artist, with each representation moving farther and farther away from the ideal or true bed. Plato

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<sup>85</sup> Goldstein says of Aristotle’s introduction of the term *mimesis*, “The precise meaning of imitation is anyone’s guess. And, indeed, it has been quite literally the guess of some two millennia of commentators” (“Mimesis and Catharsis,” 568).

<sup>86</sup> For a thorough discussion of Platonic and Aristotelian *mimesis*, see Matthew Potolsky, *Mimesis* (New York: Routledge, 2006), esp. 1-32. Eric Havelock refers to “*mimesis*” as “that most baffling of all words in [Plato’s] philosophic vocabulary” (*Preface to Plato* [Cambridge: Belknap Press, 1963], 20).

<sup>87</sup> This view is most readily obvious in *Republic* Book 10. For discussion, see Else, *Plato and Aristotle*, 42ff; Havelock, *Preface to Plato*, 3-15. The most succinct discussion of the issue of imitation as a background to the use of the term in Plato and Aristotle can be found in Gerald F. Else, “‘Imitation’ in the Fifth Century,” *CP* 53 (1958): 73-90. See also Gérard Genette, “Boundaries of Narrative,” trans. Ann Levanas; *New Literary History* 8 (1976): 1-5. For a discussion of *mimesis* in Plato and Aristotle, specifically related to the New Testament, see David P. Parris, “Imitating the Parables: Allegory, Narrative, and the Role of Mimesis,” *JSNT* 25 (2002): 33-53.

applies this valuing of imitation to art and poetry, arguing that these forms cannot be relied upon: “So the tragic poet, if his art is representation, is by nature at third remove from the throne of truth; and the same is true of all other representative artists. . . . We seem to be pretty well agreed that the artist knows little or nothing about the subjects he represents and that the art of representation is something that has no serious value; and that this applies above all to all tragic poetry, epic, or dramatic.”<sup>88</sup> For Plato, μίμησις is an imitation of reality that is ultimately derivative and less suitable for education or argument.<sup>89</sup> It is no surprise, therefore, that he circumscribes the function of such work in his ideal *polis*.<sup>90</sup>

By contrast, Aristotelian μίμησις, highlighted by Ricoeur, is “a different kind of imitation, a creative imitation.”<sup>91</sup> The poet “imitates” action not merely by recording what he observes, resulting in a weaker derivative of the original action, but by creating a world consistent with his observation of action around him. The poet is a “creator” (ποίησις), one who takes a particular set of events and places them in a particular order such that the world created “imitates” reality. The connection between individual events may be chronological, but more likely it will be dictated by the rhetorical goals for which the poet creates.

For Aristotle and Ricoeur, art “imitates” life for the consumer in that the process of consuming art functions in the same way as observing action. The process of following

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<sup>88</sup> *Republic* 10.

<sup>89</sup> This summary of Platonic *mimesis* is simplified, but it is sufficient for showing how Aristotle redefines the term. In the *Republic*, the text most often cited for Plato’s views on poetry, Socrates exhibits a consistent concern with the types of tales being taught to children (see, for examples, Book 3) and his guardians (see, for examples, Book 10).

<sup>90</sup> See *Republic* 358B. For a nuanced reading of the function of poetry in Plato’s ideal *polis*, and a correction to the general impression that Plato completely banned poetry, see Susan B. Levin, *The Ancient Quarrel Between Philosophy and Poetry Revisited: Plato and the Greek Literary Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), esp. 127-67.

<sup>91</sup> Ricoeur, “The Narrative Function,” 292.

a story is similar, whether the story is a narrative being heard or a series of events being experienced. Both the consumption of narrative and the experience of action are a process of creating order out of disorder, or in Ricoeur's terms, creating concordance out of discordance. Donald Hesse illuminates this distinction by distinguishing between an Aristotelian "imitation of action" and a Platonic "imitation of actions."<sup>92</sup> The latter assumes a finished product that results from "imitating" what one observes. The former, though, Ricoeur's use of μίμησις, identifies a process wherein the artist's and consumer's observation of how action works becomes the method of poetic creation and consumption.<sup>93</sup> For Aristotle, poetry arises naturally because "from childhood people have an instinct for representation."<sup>94</sup>

Therefore observing an "imitation" or "representation" of reality in artistic form is pleasurable, and it is the way in fact readers actually learn; readers can follow and enjoy narratives when these narratives function in the way readers experience action.<sup>95</sup> Different forms of art are distinguished by the different ways in which they represent life; comedy, for example, is a representation of inferior characters. The poet's power, therefore, lies not in his ability to recreate events that actually happened, but rather in his ability to shape a set of events in particular ways, consistent the experience of reality, and thus to influence an audience by creating emotions and experiences through art that are

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<sup>92</sup> See Hesse, "Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*," 25-26.

<sup>93</sup> Ricoeur's understanding of Aristotelian *mimesis* is certainly not unique. Most interpreters recognize that Aristotle is radically altering the meaning of this term. Else suggests the term in Aristotle "ends up meaning almost exactly the opposite of what Plato had meant by it" (*Plato and Aristotle*, 74). Else suggests that Book 10 of the *Republic* is actually a response to Aristotle's developing ideas of *mimesis* (see *Plato and Aristotle*, 69-73). See also, Elizabeth S. Belfiore, *Tragic Pleasures: Aristotle on Plot and Emotion* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 45-62.

<sup>94</sup> *Poet.* 4.1 1448b4-5 (Innes, LCL); cf. 4.7 1448b20-24.

<sup>95</sup> On the enjoyment of narrative in Aristotle, see Miller, "Narrative," 68-69.

consistent real experience. μίμησις, therefore, is a creative act that endows art with persuasive power. Aristotle labels this process of creative literary imitation μῦθος.<sup>96</sup>

Aristotle places μῦθος, which he defines as “the organization of the events” (ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις), at the center of his analysis of poetry.<sup>97</sup> In discussing tragedy, he enumerates six “constituent parts” (μέρη): plot (μῦθος), character (ἦθος), diction (λέξις), thought (διάνοια), spectacle (ὄψις), and song (μελοποιία).<sup>98</sup> Plot is “the most important of these” (μέγιστον δὲ τούτων ἐστὶν ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις), called elsewhere “the chief principle and soul of tragedy” (ἀρχὴ μὲν οὖν καὶ οἶον ψυχὴ ὁ μῦθος τῆς τραγωδίας).<sup>99</sup> A tragedy can be told without the other parts, but no story can exist without action, of which plot is the organization.<sup>100</sup> An author, therefore, is properly called a “poet” because of his role in organizing events, creating plots defined by their “unity, logical sequence, and determinate size (length).”<sup>101</sup> Gerald F. Else summarizes these three characteristics of plot within one idea: “the unity of action.”<sup>102</sup> The unity of a plot comes not from following a single character, but rather following a single action: “The plot being a representation of a piece of action must represent a single piece of action and the whole of it.”<sup>103</sup> For this reason, for example, the *Odyssey* is a unity not because it follows Odysseus, for much happened to him that is not covered in the epic poem. Rather it is a unity because, “[Homer] constructed his *Odyssey* around a single

<sup>96</sup> “It follows then that it is the plot which represents the action” (ἐστὶν δὲ τῆς μὲν πράξεως ὁ μῦθος ἡ μίμησις) (*Poet.* 6.8 1450a3-4).

<sup>97</sup> The definition of μῦθος can be found at *Poet.* 6.8 1450a3-4.

<sup>98</sup> See *Poet.* 6.8-11 1450a3-15 (Innes, LCL).

<sup>99</sup> *Poet.* 6.19 1450a38-39 (Innes, LCL). He later calls plot “the first and most important thing of tragedy” (τοῦτο καὶ πρῶτον καὶ μέγιστον τῆς τραγωδίας) (*Poet.* 7.1 1450b21-23 [Innes, LCL]).

<sup>100</sup> Many have rejected this notion of plot as the essential element of narrative. Most prominently, E. M. Forster argues for the importance of character over plot, ascribing Aristotle’s emphasis on plot to be the result of his focus on drama, rather than novels, wherein the workings of the mind of a character can be brought to the forefront (see *Aspects of the Novel* [New York: Harcourt, 1955 (1927)], 83-85).

<sup>101</sup> The translation here is that of Else, *Plato and Aristotle*, 106.

<sup>102</sup> See Else, *Plato and Aristotle*, 106-107.

<sup>103</sup> *Poet.* 8.4 1451a30-34 (Innes, LCL).

action.”<sup>104</sup> It is the creative hand of the poet that determines what constitutes a unity. This active hand of the poet is clear when one considers Aristotle’s well-known statement that a plot is whole “if it has a beginning, a middle, and an end.”<sup>105</sup> This seemingly obvious statement reflects a more complex commentary on the nature of constructing plots.<sup>106</sup> For Aristotle defines a “beginning” as not simply the first incident, but rather the event that does not necessarily follow from other events. Likewise, the end is that event after which nothing necessarily follows. There is no sense of “beginning” or “end” in the raw experience of action, but rather these end-points are part of the configuring act called μῦθος. Narrative is the result of a poet’s construction, his determination of where the beginning, middle, and end lie. A given set of events could be constructed into any number of plots based on what the poet determines to constitute the beginning, middle, and end.<sup>107</sup> Narrative, therefore, is a creative act in which logical configuration and order are shown to an audience through a particular telling of a series of events.<sup>108</sup>

This understanding of plot as the creative organization of events leads to Aristotle’s important definition of the poet’s object not as “reporting what happened” (τὰ γενόμενα λέγειν), rather “what could and would happen either probably or inevitably” (ἀλλ’ οἷα ἂν γένοιτο καὶ τὰ δυνατὰ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον).<sup>109</sup> One cannot simply

<sup>104</sup> *Poet.* 8.3 1451a22-25 (Innes, LCL).

<sup>105</sup> *Poet.* 7.3 1450b26-27 (Innes, LCL).

<sup>106</sup> On the composition of narrative “wholes,” see Potolsky, *Mimesis*, 24-25.

<sup>107</sup> See the discussion of the ordering of events in Aelius Theon’s *Progymnasmata* in the next chapter. Theon likewise recognizes the construction of order in events as a rhetorical act, to be decided upon by an author.

<sup>108</sup> “If succession can be subordinated in this way to some logical connection, it is because the ideas of beginning, middle, and end are not taken from experience. They are not features of some real action but the effects of the ordering of the poem” (*TN* 1.39).

<sup>109</sup> *Poet.* 9.1 1451a36-38. Compare this definition to Aelius Theon’s definition of narrative, which is a focus of the next chapter. Theon defines narrative (διήγημα) as “an explanatory account of matters which have occurred or as if they have occurred” (διήγημα ἐστὶ λόγος ἐκθετικὸς πραγμάτων γεγονόντων ἢ ὡς γεγονόντων) (*Progymnasmata* 5.2-3). This distinction between “what happened” and the construction of action is illustrated in the next chapter in the opening of Aelius Aristides’ *Sacred Tales*. He distinguishes

imitate (in Plato's sense) an observation of action, for inevitably choices are made in reporting such an observation. Even the writer who sets out to record what actually happened is still a poet by Aristotle's definition, for he or she selects events and constructs them to have a beginning, middle, and end, choices which may change the effect the text has on its audience. Indeed Aristotle argues that because of the creative role of the poet, poetry is "something more philosophical [φιλοσοφώτερον] and serious [σπουδαιότερον] than history, because poetry tends to give general truths while history provides particular facts."<sup>110</sup> The creative construction of events, even actual events ascribed to historical individuals, is poetic because it teaches its audience lessons behind the events being described. The poet, therefore "must be a 'maker' [ποιητής] not of verses but of narratives in virtue of his 'representation,' and what he represents is action".<sup>111</sup>

### *Ricoeur and the Paradox of μῦθος and μίμησις*

Aristotle's near equation of the terms μῦθος and μίμησις forms a subtle paradox at the heart of his analysis of poetics.<sup>112</sup> The poet is an "imitator of action," but he becomes

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between the *Tales*' presentation of events and a prior record composed in "parchment books" for the god, wherein he recorded events as they happened. Aristides' recognition that the parchment book record would not be intelligible for his audience captures Aristotle's distinction between history and poetry.

<sup>110</sup> *Poet.* 9.3 1451b5-7. Aristotle's distinction between "poetry" and "history" turns not on the truth claim of the events, but rather on whether the particulars of a narrative can be generalized into "universals" (τὰ καθόλου). Though Aristotle distinguishes between the "poet" and historians like Herodotus, noting that even if Herodotus wrote in verse he would still be a historian, he later discusses a poet whose poetry "reports actual events" (γενόμενα ποιεῖν).

<sup>111</sup> *Poet.* 9.9 1451b27-29 (Innes, LCL).

<sup>112</sup> Aristotle actually does equate these two terms: "It follows then that it is the plot which is the representation of action" (ἔστιν δὲ τῆς δὲ μὲν πράξεως ὁ μῦθος ἢ μίμησις) (*Poet.* 6.8 1450a3-4). Ricoeur speaks of a "quasi-identification" between μῦθος and μίμησις (see *TN* 1.34).

so by “creating” plots.<sup>113</sup> It is this tension between imitation and creation that invites Ricoeur’s analysis. Ricoeur embraces the tension in his definition of the poet: “Maker of plots, imitator of action—this is the poet.”<sup>114</sup> To answer the paradox, Ricoeur explores each term involved, and for each, he expands upon Aristotle’s definition.

Ricoeur “solves” Aristotle’s paradox by placing μῦθος within the spiraling process of μίμησις. Ricoeur carefully explores what is entailed in Aristotle’s claim that narrative is an “imitation of action.” The configuration of events assumed in narrative becomes important, and narrative becomes persuasive, because of its mediating function between a pre-narrative and post-narrative understanding of the world. Ricoeur is most interested in the structuring of a narrative, and I emphasize the ambiguity of that genitive. Ricoeur focuses on structure both in the sense of how a given example of narrative discourse is structured, but more significantly in what role following such discourse plays in structuring an individual or group’s self-understanding. The former understanding of structure, traditionally referred to as a narrative’s plot, plays a role in shaping the latter structure, a reader’s narrative understanding of his or her world.

In Aristotle’s understanding of plot, the organizing process of emplotment constructs a concordant configuration of events out of discordant experience. Ricoeur argues for a broader understanding of emplotment that not only organizes disparate events into a coherent whole, but also accounts for the role of the consumer of a plot: “A plot already exercises, within its own textual field, an integrating and, in this sense, a mediating function, which allows it to bring about, beyond this field, a mediation of a larger amplitude between the preunderstanding and, if I may dare to put it this way, the

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<sup>113</sup> Else labels the tension between these terms as “the central paradox in Aristotle’s nest of paradoxes” (*Plato and Aristotle*, 106). See also Miller, “Narrative,” 69.

<sup>114</sup> *TN* 1.42.

postunderstanding of the order of action and its temporal features.”<sup>115</sup> Though Aristotle’s understanding of the creation of narrative differs from Plato’s, his consideration of emplotment still, like Plato, focuses on the author’s role in constructing events, bringing order out of disordered events. Ricoeur’s expanded exploration of μίμησις in the narrative function, though, incorporates the role of the consumer of a plot within a broader mimetic process of narrative.<sup>116</sup>

Recall that Aristotle defines tragedy as the “imitation/representation of action” (μίμησις πράξεως). Ricoeur argues that the noun μίμησις must, like μῦθος and ποιήσις, be understood in an active sense of “representing” rather than as a static result of a process, “an imitation.”<sup>117</sup> It is this process of μίμησις that Ricoeur says “produces the ‘literariness’ of a work of literature.”<sup>118</sup> Ricoeur, following Aristotle, affirms that the mimetic quality of literature does not render it derivative and less effective than the original. Rather its mimetic quality allows a reader to follow it.<sup>119</sup> Ricoeur goes further, though, by arguing that literature can potentially impact its reader expressly because it is mimetic, because it “represents,” “reflects,” or as he goes on to argue, “creates” reality. An audience is able to follow and understand a narrative because its action imitates reality. That is, a narrative works in the way that humans observe non-literary reality. If literature were not mimetic in this sense, it would not be meaningful or even

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<sup>115</sup> *TN* 1.65.

<sup>116</sup> Ricoeur argues the function of emplotment is “the joint work of the text and the reader” (*TN* 1.76). This is not to say that Aristotle pays no attention to the audience. To the contrary, his concern is ultimately with plots that elicit emotions from the audience. However, Ricoeur is more systematic about including the audience in the process called *mimesis*.

<sup>117</sup> “*Mimesis* does not mean the duplication of reality; *mimesis* is not a copy; *mimesis* is *poiesis*, that is, construction, creation” (“Metaphor and the Problem of Hermeneutics,” 180).

<sup>118</sup> *TN* 1.45.

<sup>119</sup> Frank Kermode uses the language of “followability” to refer to a narrative’s relationship to reality (see *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979], 112-23). Ricoeur does not use this specific language, but his concept of *mimesis* is similar.

comprehensible. The fact that it does work “mimetically” though, creates the potential power of narrative. Audiences follow a narrative that then becomes part of their narrative understanding of reality.

### *Ricoeur’s Three Stages of Mimesis*

Much of the first volume of *Time and Narrative* is Ricoeur’s examination of what is actually being stated in Aristotle’s equating tragedy with “a representation of action.” This claim necessarily entails three individual assumptions, which together make up Ricoeur’s three “stages” of *mimesis*. First, the claim assumes that humans understand the world around them by constructing plots from their immediate experience. Tragedy, or Ricoeur’s expanded category of narrative, can only be said to be an “imitation of action” if the way in which one follows a story is also the way in which one follows all events around him or her. Second, such a claim assumes that narratives themselves are plots, or the result of the process of emplotment. Narratives are creatively constructed in the same manner as humans construct plots to make sense of reality. Third, in following a story a reader’s plot-constructed self-understanding has the potential to change. These three claims, and thus three parts of the narrative function, are labeled *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, and *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>, respectively, also labeled by Ricoeur as the prefiguration, configuration, and refiguration of narrative.<sup>120</sup> Of primary significance in Ricoeur’s analysis of these three stages of *mimesis* is the narrative progression between them, progression that Ricoeur labels the act of reading. A brief discussion of each will help as I turn back to explore Galatians in terms of these three stages.

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<sup>120</sup> “We are following therefore the destiny of a prefigured time that becomes a refigured time through the mediation of a configured time” (*TN* 1.54).

A helpful entry point into Ricoeur's analysis of this complex process of reading is his understanding of tradition, for the spiral of tradition is a paradigm of the spiral of narrative.<sup>121</sup> In exploring how narrative functions, Ricoeur frequently returns to his definition of tradition as dialectic between innovation and sedimentation.<sup>122</sup> He denies that tradition is "the inert transmission of a lifeless residue."<sup>123</sup> Rather, traditions begin with accepted, "sedimented" norms, which are then innovated, and which then settle into newly sedimented norms. Ricoeur offers the example of literary genres, wherein readers understand a literary work by placing it into a preunderstood generic category, received from a specific literary culture. Each new work, though, is an innovation of that generic category, and thus in the encounter with a new work the reader's generic category itself is redefined. This process is continual: "The rules change under the pressure of innovation, but they change slowly and even resist change by reason of this process of sedimentation."<sup>124</sup> Traditions, therefore, are always living in the sense that they are always being altered through new innovation that in turn becomes sedimented.<sup>125</sup>

Likewise, Ricoeur argues for the significance of the construction of narrative because of a similar role it plays in innovating a reader's sedimented narrative understanding. The consumption of narrative moves a reader from *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, a narrative preunderstanding of the world, to *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>:

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<sup>121</sup> "It is possible to apply to our self-understanding the play of sedimentation and innovation which we saw at work in every tradition" ("Life in Quest," 32).

<sup>122</sup> "This phenomenon of traditionality is the key to the functioning of narrative models and, consequently, of their identification" ("Life in Quest," 24). For a similar discussion, see *TN* 1.68-70; "The Narrative Function," 286-87. The notion of our inability to escape tradition comes from Gadamer and his concept of "wirkungsgeschichtliches Bewußtsein." For a discussion, see Stiver, *Theology After Ricoeur*, 49-50.

<sup>123</sup> "Life in Quest," 24.

<sup>124</sup> "Life in Quest," 25; *TN* 1.69.

<sup>125</sup> In the next chapter, I explore the fluid notion of tradition operable in the pedagogical strategy of Aelius Theon's *Progymnasmata*. The use of traditional narratives in these elementary exercises matches Ricoeur's notion of tradition. Students were taught to see the classics not as fixed traditions, but rather stories that were continually retold, shaped anew by the author in every retelling.

The very meaning of the configuring operation constitutive of emplotment is a result of its intermediary position between the two operations I am calling *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> and *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>, which constitute the two sides of *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>. By saying this, I propose to show that *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> draws its intelligibility from its faculty of mediation, which is to conduct us from the one side of the text to the other, transfiguring the one side into the other through its power of configuration.<sup>126</sup>

Ricoeur's narrative hermeneutics is an exploration of the process by which emplotment, the construction and consumption of a configured set of events, takes a reader from *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> to *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. Plots are essential to human understanding because they have the potential to change the way a reader understands himself or herself in the world. Self-understanding, a sedimentation of all previous experience, is innovated through an encounter with narrative. This process is better understood by considering each respective stage of the process of *mimesis*.

Ricoeur's *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> is an argument about how humans understand the world around them. In Aristotle's claim that narrative is an imitation of action there is an assumption of a pre-narrative quality to human self-understanding. That is, in order for emplotment to occur at the hand of the author or to be understood by the reader, these two must share a way of understanding the world; experience itself must be constructed as a type of narrative: "Literature would be incomprehensible if it did not give a configuration to what was already a figure in human action."<sup>127</sup> Not only is all experience immediately interpreted, but it is interpreted through the construction of narratives, the

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<sup>126</sup> TN 1.53.

<sup>127</sup> TN 1.64.

creation of a concordant unity out of discordant events.<sup>128</sup> Ricoeur argues that the same process of configuration of discordant events that Aristotle identified as plot, focused on the creative process of an author, functions at the level of human experience in general. Just as an author creates a beginning, middle, and end in the process of writing, individuals or groups experiencing events must place them in context with what led to the event and what follows from it. Each experience of action is a process of emplotment. In order for narrative to be constructed or understood, the world upon which the author draws to construct narratives and the reader draws to understand them must itself be configured as a narrative.

Ricoeur supports this argument by appealing to the narrative construction of everyday experience.<sup>129</sup> Assumed in humans' ability to create or follow narratives is a "preliminary competence" for understanding action. As Dan R. Stiver summarizes, "The prefigured world in which we act as agents, while not written as a text, already contains a protoplot."<sup>130</sup> Ricoeur labels this our "practical understanding." As an example, Ricoeur uses the case of a patient who goes to psychoanalysis with a series of uninterpreted experiences. The work of a therapist is to create a narrative out of these experiences, whereby the patient creates meaning out of his or her life.<sup>131</sup> The sick individual is the one who has lost the ability to see the connection between events in his or her life.<sup>132</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Here the connection between narrative and experience, highlighted earlier across scholarly disciplines, begins to become clear. His position is quite similar to that of Crites ("The Narrative Quality of Experience").

<sup>129</sup> "We talk in everyday life about a life-story. We equate life with the story or stories that we can tell about it" ("Narrative Identity," 194-95).

<sup>130</sup> Stiver, *Theology after Ricoeur*, 67.

<sup>131</sup> See "Life in Quest," 30. As a second example, Ricoeur discusses the judge who makes sense of a case by placing the events recounted into a narrative sequence.

<sup>132</sup> Mental illness is also the comparative paradigm Phoebe Sengers uses to discuss problems with artificial intelligence ("Schizophrenia and Narrative in Artificial Agents"). She suggests that most artificial agents act much like schizophrenics in that they lack a narrative coherence to their thought. The result is that

“Healthy” human self-understanding depends upon the ability to see how a given event connects to what came before it and what will come after it. When experiencing a new event, there is an immediate move to assign connections, be they temporal or causal, to other events. The very elements of narrative, such as character, cause, temporal sequence, are a part of the way humans naturally understand events around them.

*Mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, or the narrative preunderstanding of human action, is what creates potential to be both writers and readers of emplotment, the stage of *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>. Ricoeur’s *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> confirms Aristotle’s position that mimesis comes naturally from childhood, and he shows through *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> how the author’s configuration of events, possible because of his own narrative preunderstanding of action, translates into configuration for the reader. The significance of emplotment comes in its mediating function between *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, narrative preunderstanding of action, and *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>, the refiguration of the understanding of action. Creating and engaging in plot is what changes the way a reader understands the world. The transition from this preunderstanding to *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> is reflected in the configuring act of the author. Using the language of semiotics, Ricoeur defines narrative as a move from the paradigmatic to the syntagmatic.

In exploring *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, Ricoeur likewise expands Aristotle’s discussion of μῦθος. He highlights the active sense of the defining noun σύστασις in Aristotle’s definition of μῦθος as ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων σύστασις. Ricoeur translates μῦθος as the process “emplotment,” his label for the process of narrative, which begins with the author’s organizing events into a narrative but which is completed only with the reader’s

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agents, like schizophrenics, jump erratically from behavior to behavior. As a response to this problematic behavior-based systems, Sengers proposes a socially situated artificial intelligence, where “the reasons or motivations behind actions are just as important as what is done, if not more so” (“Schizophrenia,” 431). In her narrative system, an agent’s behaviors are not independently calculated given an immediate situation, but an agent’s behaviors affect future behaviors over time.

encounter with the narrative. The process of emplotment is an explicit instantiation of the implicit process of narrative preunderstanding explored as *mimesis*.<sup>1</sup> The narrator configures events into a narrative whole in the same way individuals create meaning from observed action. Events become meaningful only when placed in temporal and causal context of other events: “To be historical, I shall say, an event must be more than a singular occurrence: it must be defined in terms of its contribution to the development of a plot.”<sup>133</sup> In everyday experience, humans are constantly interpreting events in light of what lead to them and how they in turn lead to other events. Emplotment is this same process, made conscious through the act of creating art.<sup>134</sup> Meaning that remains implicit in events is made explicit in narrative. The act of narrating a story is an act of configuring events; the composer of narratives “constructs meaningful totalities out of scattered events.”<sup>135</sup> Therefore the presence of narration necessarily implies that the events recounted in the narrative have been reflected upon and a configuring act has occurred in the creation of the narrative at the hand of the author.<sup>136</sup> Appreciation for the creative element of emplotment is what Ricoeur believes narrative analysis is lacking. He argues that both anti-narrativist historians and structuralists overlook the configurational element in a narrative, instead assuming a chronological progression at the surface of narrative.<sup>137</sup>

Even simple annals of historical events, which give no explicit connection between the

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<sup>133</sup> “The Narrative Function,” 277. See a similar remark in *TN* 1.65.

<sup>134</sup> Hayden White summarizes Ricoeur’s connection between the creation of narratives and the experience of action as follows: “The creation of a historical narrative, then, is an action exactly like that by which historical events are created, but in the domain of ‘wording’ rather than that of ‘working’” (*Content of the Form*, 174).

<sup>135</sup> “The Narrative Function,” 278.

<sup>136</sup> Ricoeur explores several examples of configuration in narrative. See *TN* 2.101-52.

<sup>137</sup> See “The Human Experience of Time and Narrative,” pp. 99-116 in *A Ricoeur Reader: Reflection and Imagination* (ed. Mario J. Valdés; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991), 106-7. Ricoeur himself appreciates (and practices) structuralist analysis of narratives, but he argues that any method must come second, after an analysis of what narrative can actually accomplish, especially how it can configure temporal elements in a non-chronological (understood in a one-after-another event sequence) way.

events, represent a configuration, as the author has chosen which events to include, how to organize them, and in which way to present them.<sup>138</sup>

An expanded understanding of the process of emplotment leads to the persuasive power of narrative. The poet constructs an emplotted reality by choosing, ordering, and presenting events in a particular way. This is an author's creative opportunity. He speaks of "a synthesis of heterogeneous elements," the provision of concordance to discordant experienced reality.<sup>139</sup> The function of the plot is to construct meaning. This concordance comes in three ways: Ricoeur, following Aristotle, labels these three "completeness, wholeness, and an appropriate magnitude."<sup>140</sup> First, a plot represents a choice, a selection of events to form a story. A plot is singular, composed of events that are multiple. An event alone has no meaning, but emplotment gives it meaning by placing it in connection with other events. Second, a plot reflects a synthesis of such diverse elements as circumstances, causes, agents, unintended consequences, and motivations. Events are not simply narrated, but they are connected. Third, a narrative configuration reflects a temporal structuring of events. A narrator gives a narrative a beginning, middle, and end. It is here we see what Ricoeur means in his thesis statement that narration creates human time.

Ricoeur highlights the primary importance of Aristotle's distinction between emplotted sequences of events and what Aristotle calls "episodic plots." Aristotle notes, "I call episodic a plot in which the episodes follow one another [μετ' ἀλλήλα]," and contrasts this with those events that follow "because of one another [δι' ἀλλήλα]." The

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<sup>138</sup> For Ricoeur on annals, see *TN* 1.99-106; "The Narrative Function," 275-80. See also Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 75-78. White, *Content of the Form*, 6-25, 175-78; J. David Velleman, "Narrative Explanation," *The Philosophical Review* 112 (2003): 1-25.

<sup>139</sup> "Life in Quest," 21; *TN* 1.66.

<sup>140</sup> *TN* 1.38.

difference between these two summarizes Aristotle's (and thus Ricoeur's) understanding of emplotment. The narrative function is the conversion of human experience from a basic chronological or episodic sequence, meaning the individual events of a narrative happen one after another, to a position within a temporal or causal whole.<sup>141</sup>

Emplotment configures action in both historical and fictional narratives, and in a sense emplotment bridges the gap between these two forms of literature.<sup>142</sup> Ricoeur places history and fiction in a dialectical relationship, calling into question the idea that history is simply a retelling of events "as they actually occurred" as well as the idea that fiction is completely removed from reality. The historian, even the annalist, does not merely recount event after event, in chronological order. Rather he selects, orders, emphasizes, and explains. Therefore, not only do fiction and history share a nature, namely narrative, but they also share a function: "The activity of narrating does not consist simply in adding episodes to one another; it also constructs meaningful totalities out of scattered events."<sup>143</sup> Likewise, fictional narratives are related to reality in the sense that they mimic and recreate it:

This critique of the naïve concept of "reality" applied to the pastness of the past calls for a systematic critique of the no less naïve concept of "unreality" applied to the projections of fiction. The function of standing-for or of taking-the-place-of is paralleled in fiction by the function it possesses, with respect to everyday practice, of being undividedly revealing and transforming. Revealing, in the sense that it brings features to light that were concealed and yet already sketched out at

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<sup>141</sup> Ricoeur summarizes that narrative "extracts a configuration from a succession" (*TN* 1.66).

<sup>142</sup> For a discussion of Ricoeur's work on historical narratives, see Hayden White, "The Metaphysics of Narrativity: Time and Symbol in Ricoeur's Philosophy of History," pp. 169-184 in *The Content of the Form*.

<sup>143</sup> "Narrative Function," 278.

the heart of our experience, our praxis. Transforming, in the sense that a life examined in this way is a changed life, another life.<sup>144</sup>

Therefore, though there is a difference in truth claim behind historical and fictional narratives, both play a persuasive function; history and fiction both reflect the creative process of emplotment and are consumed through the complex process of following a story.<sup>145</sup>

This careful consideration of the narrative process suggests that the author's point of view is a part of any plot, no matter how simple.<sup>146</sup> Plots serve to bring order and meaning to events that may be seemingly disconnected.<sup>147</sup> Aristotle's poet, therefore, has the ability to construct narratives in a particular way for a particular purpose:

The poet should be a maker of plots more than a maker of verse. . . . So even if on occasion he takes real events as the subject of a poem, he is none the less a poet, since nothing prevents some of the things that have actually happened from being the sort that might probably or possibly happen, and it is in accordance with this that he is their poet.<sup>148</sup>

As Ricoeur says, through emplotment poets "invent the as-if."

In consideration of *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, Ricoeur's focus transitions from the composition side of the mimetic spiral of narrative toward the reception of narrative. Ricoeur argues

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<sup>144</sup> TN 3.158.

<sup>145</sup> Ricoeur provides here a helpful model for Biblical studies, which is often conflicted over the relationship between history and literature. This conflict is prominent, for example, in arguments about the role of history in recent literary studies of the fourth gospel. See, for example, Colleen M. Conway, "There and Back Again: Johannine History on the Other Side of Literary Criticism," pp. 77-91 in *Anatomies of Narrative Criticism: The Past, Present, and Futures of The Fourth Gospel as Literature* (ed. Tom Thatcher and Stephen D. Moore; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2008). Ricoeur helpfully demonstrates that one cannot speak of pure literature just as one cannot speak of pure history.

<sup>146</sup> On narrator point of view, see "The Narrative Function," 279-80.

<sup>147</sup> For example, see the use of Ricoeur's concept of emplotment to discuss how stories help in forgiveness and healing in Jonathan Tran, "Emplotting Forgiveness: Narrative, Forgetting, and Memory," *Literature and Theology* 23 (2009): 220-33.

<sup>148</sup> TN 1.41-42.

that emplotment is not completed with the act of composing a narrative, but rather with its consumption, with the reader's participation in the narrative through reading: "It is the act of reading that accompanies the narrative's configuration and actualizes its capacity to be followed. To follow a story is to actualize it by reading it. . . . This act [emplotment] is the joint work of the text and the reader."<sup>149</sup> Again, Ricoeur argues that Aristotle's claim that narrative is an imitation of action is a comment not only on how narratives are constructed, creating a concordant whole out of discordant events, but how humans experience reality. The consistency between the implicit creation of concordance in observing action and the explicit creation of concordance in constructing narratives means humans consume narratives in the way they observe action, and thus reading narratives reshapes an audience's narrative self-understanding in the same manner their interpretation of action does.

The process of reading marks a transition between configuration and a third stage of *mimesis*, refiguration. *Mimesis*<sub>3</sub>, "marks the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the hearer or reader."<sup>150</sup> This "final stage" in the analysis of narrative is in effect an alternate form of the first, *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>. For the third assumption of the statement that narrative is an imitation of action is, as with *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, a comment that all human experience is constructed as a narrative. Self-understanding is a product of the narratives a subject has consumed. Ricoeur's analysis of narrative is therefore circular; the reader before and after consumption understands the world through narrative construction. His position, though, is not viciously circular, for though a subject who consumes a narrative finds himself again with a narrative self-understanding, which was the state at *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>,

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<sup>149</sup> *TN* 1.76.

<sup>150</sup> *TN* 1.71.

this self-understanding is not necessarily identical to the one before the consumption of the narrative. *Mimesis*<sub>3</sub> differs from *mimesis*<sub>1</sub> expressly because the subject has passed through *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>; the subject has consumed another emplotted narrative. Therefore, what is of primary interest to Ricoeur is the process of moving from an emplotted narrative, *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, to a newly formed narrative identity, *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. Ricoeur labels this process the act of reading: “The act of reading thus becomes the critical moment of my entire analysis. On it rests the narrative’s capacity to transfigure the experience of the reader.”<sup>151</sup>

Ricoeur’s analysis of reading is heavily influenced by Hans-Georg Gadamer’s concept of the merging of the horizons of the text and the reader and Gadamer’s notion of play in encountering a work of art.<sup>152</sup> Ricoeur rejects a structuralist assumption that a text is closed in upon itself and meaning is found only within the boundaries of a text.<sup>153</sup> Instead, Ricoeur argues that meaning is an event that occurs between the reader and the text.<sup>154</sup> Ricoeur uses the distinction between sense and reference to explain how the process of reading written texts actually works. The reference of spoken discourse is ostensive, or at least it can be negotiated by the speaker and the interlocutor; the speaker and the interlocutor could agree upon objects or events described in conversation. Once

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<sup>151</sup> “Life in Quest,” 26.

<sup>152</sup> See Francisco J. Gonzalez, “Dialectic and Dialogue in the Hermeneutics of Paul Ricoeur and H. G. Gadamer,” *Continental Philosophy Review* 39 (2006): 313-45; *idem*, “The Conflict of Interpretations: Debate with Hans-Georg Gadamer,” pp. 216-41 in *A Ricoeur Reader* (ed. Mario J. Valdés; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991).

<sup>153</sup> For a thorough critique of structuralism along with comments about how structuralism can be helpful, see Ricoeur, *Interpretation Theory*, 81-88. Ricoeur complains that though structuralism was a helpful development in moving beyond the Romanticist hermeneutics wherein the creative genius of the author was the object of interpretation, in structuralism “the reader was put in brackets along with the author” (“World of the Text, World of the Reader,” in *A Ricoeur Reader* [ed. Mario J. Valdés; Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991], 492).

<sup>154</sup> For the contrast of these two positions, particularly with reference to reading Biblical texts, see Gary Comstock, “Truth or Meaning: Ricoeur versus Frei on Biblical Narrative,” *Journal of Religion* 66 (1986): 117-40. Comstock summarizes Ricoeur’s understanding of the mimetic spiral: “Texts have meaning only to the extent that they have readers for whom they are meaningful. Readers, in turn, come to understand themselves to the extent that they take the detour through the cultural texts of which they are a part” (“Truth or Meaning,” 139).

discourse has been written down, though, it has, in Ricoeur's terms, become distanced.<sup>155</sup> The reference of the text is no longer present to the reader in ostensive form. However, all written texts still have a reference. That is, they are still about something. Ricoeur argues that this "something" is the world that opens up in front of the text. As opposed to most spoken discourse, "texts speak of possible worlds and of possible ways of orienting oneself in these worlds."<sup>156</sup> It is the non-ostensive reference of texts that makes them powerful. A written text is "about" a possible world that it projects in front of it. The reader, therefore, has the potential of living in that world, of seeing himself or herself as part of the text's world.

These non-ostensive references lead Ricoeur to redefine the oft-mentioned "hermeneutical circle," popularized in the Romantic hermeneutics of figures like Schleiermacher and Dilthey. For Romanticists, interpretation involves a constant circle between the pre-understanding of the reader and the meaning of the text. Ricoeur has problems with this picture on both sides. The first problem for Ricoeur is that the "meaning of the text" side of the circle was previously understood to be the subjectivity of the author. Ricoeur argues that the text's pole is not represented by the intention of the author, but rather the world that is projected by the non-ostensive references of the text. It is the world of the text, therefore, and not the intention of an author behind the text, that one encounters in reading.<sup>157</sup> As Ricoeur summarizes, "The emergence of the sense and the reference of a text in language is the coming to language of a world and not the

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<sup>155</sup> See Ricoeur, "The Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation." For a similar discussion, see Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen), 78-79.

<sup>156</sup> "Metaphor and the Problem of Hermeneutics," 177.

<sup>157</sup> The author's intention plays a key role in the configuring act of the text itself, but access to such intention is mediated by the configured text.

recognition of another person.”<sup>158</sup> Ricoeur also alters the Romantic picture of the hermeneutical circle on the side of the reader. The circle does not involve the reader’s explicit projection of his pre-understanding onto the text.<sup>159</sup> Rather, the world of the work projects onto the reader and potentially changes how the reader understands himself or herself: “The circle is between my mode of being—beyond the knowledge that I may have of it—and the mode opened up and disclosed by the text as the world of the work.”<sup>160</sup> Here the true importance of a statement that narrative is an “imitation of action” is clear. Because the narrative world disclosed by a text is of the same type as (or “imitates”) the narrative self-understanding of the reader, reading can effect real change. Narrative is ultimately “mimetic” not in the sense that it copies action as the author observes it. Rather, it is mimetic in that its referent, what it is ultimately about, is a world that the reader can experience just as he experiences the real action.

The potential result of an encounter with a text, therefore, is a re-formed narrative self-understanding, *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. The sedimented narrative self-understanding, *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, is innovated by the consumption of narrative, *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, resulting in a new self-understanding that then becomes the newly-sedimented *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. Recall that the mimetic spiral is two-sided; the move from *mimesis*<sub>1</sub>, a narrative preunderstanding of the world, to *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, emplotment, is the inverse analogue of the move from *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> to *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>.<sup>161</sup> In the former, the process of writing, discordant events are emplotted; the pre-narrative stage of understanding action is made explicit in a particular way by an author. Cause and

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<sup>158</sup> “Metaphor and the Problem of Hermeneutics,” 178.

<sup>159</sup> “To understand is not to project oneself into the text; it is to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds which are the genuine object of interpretation” (“Appropriation,” pp. 182-92 in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, 182-83).

<sup>160</sup> “Metaphor and the Central Problem of Hermeneutics,” 178.

<sup>161</sup> “Appropriation is dialectically linked to the distanciation characteristic of *writing*. Distanciation is not abolished by appropriation, but is rather the counterpart of it” (“The Hermeneutical Function,” 143).

connection are added to disparate events, creating a concordant whole out of a discordant succession of events. On the other side of emplotment, in the process of reading, the concordance explicitly present in the emplotment is consumed in the sense of making the emplotment “one’s own”, and this has the potential to lead to individual action items. Ricoeur labels this process appropriation. Whereas emplotment moves from action to a text, appropriation moves from text to action.

The outcome of this mimetic spiral is a potential change in narrative self-understanding, prompted by the consumption of discourse. The identity of an individual or a group is constructed as a narrative, built upon the narratives consumed, both texts and action: “We equate life with the story or stories that we can tell about it.”<sup>162</sup> Ricoeur’s analysis of emplotment and *mimesis* illuminates his concept of narrative identity, which is the true end toward which *Time and Narrative* argues. It is the project of the narrative construction of identity that Ricoeur pursues in his major work subsequent to *Time and Narrative*, the Gifford Lectures published as *Oneself as Another*. How else, Ricoeur asks, can we answer the question “who?” than to tell the story of a person? That is, Ricoeur uses narrative to identify a continuous identity when everything else about a human being is susceptible to change. Whatever may happen, a person continues to be the stories he or she tells about himself or herself, a sedimented self-identity innovated by consuming new narratives.<sup>163</sup>

This narrative identity applies to communities as well as individuals. A group of individuals has its own communal identity that is formed, in turn, by the narratives the

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<sup>162</sup> “Narrative Identity,” 194-95.

<sup>163</sup> “Narrative constructs the durable properties of a character, what one could call his narrative identity, by constructing the kind of dynamic identity found in the plot which creates the character’s identity” (“Narrative Identity,” 195).

group tells about itself. For example, Ricoeur points to Biblical Israel as a community that continues to revisit the stories of its past so as to solidify its present and future identity.<sup>164</sup> Ricoeur's work on narrative identity, therefore, stands as a conclusion and summary to his work on *mimesis*. An individual or a community understands itself by the stories that it tells and hears. In the consumption of new concordance of events through emplotment, a group's narrative self-identity is challenged and transfigured. Reading, therefore, becomes a way of living within the world that is the reference of discourse: "Following a narrative is reactualizing the configuring act which gives it its form."<sup>165</sup> Ricoeur describes reading as a "dispossession of the *ego*," an experience in which the reader allows himself or herself to live in the world of the "as if" projected by discourse.<sup>166</sup>

### **Reading the Narrative Rhetoric of Galatians**

Paul's letter to the Galatians is his attempt to re-configure the Galatians' narrative identity by constructing a plot of their experience, arguing that they, through their experience in Christ, are already a part of the story of Israel, the Israel of God. Paul configures Israel's past for the Galatians so as to show them how their experience with Christ set them within it. Paul hopes that in experiencing the narrative world that emerges from reading the letter, the Galatians' narrative self-identity is changed, and proper behavior will result from this changed identity or *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>.

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<sup>164</sup> On the use of Biblical Israel, see *TN* 3.247-48.

<sup>165</sup> "Life in Quest," 27.

<sup>166</sup> See "Appropriation," 192-93.

As deliberative rhetoric, Paul's argument to the Galatians can best be understood in terms of Ricoeur's three stages of *mimesis*. The Galatians have a particular understanding of their experience with Christ (*mimesis*<sub>1</sub>). Paul characterizes this understanding as a "perversion" of the gospel, and he seeks to emplot it in a new way, by redefining the "Israel of God" to include the Galatians as Gentiles (*mimesis*<sub>2</sub>). The result of his mimetic argument, therefore, is a re-formed self-understanding, which he assumes will result in new action (*mimesis*<sub>3</sub>).

But Paul is not the only constructor of plots. It seems the troublers have offered their own configuration of events, one that includes the Gentile Galatians becoming like Jews. Ricoeur warns about the possibility of conflicting narrative identities: "Narrative identity is not a stable and seamless identity. Just as it is possible to compose several plots on the subject of the same incidents . . . so it is always possible to weave different, even opposed, plots about our lives."<sup>167</sup> This is the very situation that prompts Paul's writing, and it accounts for his continued appeal to when he was with them (1:8-9; 4:13-20). The Galatians understood who they were when Paul was with them, but by consuming another narrative, that of the troublers, their identity has shifted. Paul offers a new emplotment so as to shift (yet again) the Galatians' identity.

This understanding of the letter as an example of narrative rhetoric suggests the interpreter's role is to follow the ways in which the concordance created through the connection of events in the letter works to reshape the Galatians' identity. To do so entails a shift in focus, a reframing of what is meant by a rhetorical study of the letter. Instead of mapping the letter against rhetorical standards of the ancient world, as has been common in previous studies, a reading of the narrative rhetoric follows the

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<sup>167</sup> TN 3.248.

emplotment of events in the letter and their potential impact upon the identity of the implied audience. That is, I look at how the narrative configuration of events works to address the rhetorical situation in Galatia, as the argument of the letter and its narrative world unfold. Galatians is rhetorical not because it is written in accordance with the standards of the handbooks.<sup>168</sup> Rather the letter is rhetorical in that it depends upon constructing a narrative world, and it is the task of the interpreter to follow that world. The reading of Galatians pursued here is “rhetorical” in the sense defined by Walter Fisher: “A *rhetorical* interpretation of a work arises *whenever* the work is considered relative to an audience's response. Responses are the ways in which people are led to feel or to think or to act in reference to a symbolic experience.”<sup>169</sup> In terms of Ricoeur’s mimetic spiral this study focuses on the transition from *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> to *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>, from Paul’s emplotment to the Galatians’ re-formed identity. This focus entails following the reader’s experience as part of the process of emplotment.

### *Defining Terms*

As I move from this theoretical background into the practical method by which I will read Galatians, it will prove helpful to define a few key terms in my analysis, drawing upon my introduction of Ricoeur’s work. Given the definition of these terms, I will then be prepared to lay forth some guidelines for my reading of the letter.

**Narrative:** I understand this much-disputed term to stand in for Ricoeur’s mimetic spiral, to refer to the rhetorical process of creating concordance out of a

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<sup>168</sup> This is not to deny the value of the handbooks. To the contrary, throughout my analysis I will rely upon them as a guide to understanding Paul’s milieu.

<sup>169</sup> *Human Communication*, 161. Emphasis is original.

discordant set of events.<sup>170</sup> I adopt the rhetorical definition of narrative offered by James Phelan: “Somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened.”<sup>171</sup> This seemingly simplistic definition betrays a complex conception of narrative, not as a set of characteristics of a given text, but rather as a complete rhetorical process, of which a text plays a particular role. The definition focuses on all three parts of the communications triangle, or all three stages of *mimesis*.<sup>172</sup> Narrative refers to a process of interaction between an author (“somebody”), a text (“telling . . . that something happened”), and an audience (“somebody else”), prompted by a particular rhetorical situation (“on some occasion and for some purpose(s)”). The text itself, therefore, is only one part of the rhetorical transaction that is narrative, and the “meaning” of narrative arises when all three points of the triangle interact.

What does this mean, therefore, for the consideration of a given text, such as Galatians, as part of a narrative process? Phelan’s understanding of narrative as a rhetorical process distinguishes between what Seymour Chatman calls the story, the content of narrative, and the discourse, the expression of narrative.<sup>173</sup> A rhetorical analysis

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<sup>170</sup> There is an entire field of study dedicated to the definition of this term. There are countless, well-known definitions of narrative. For some of the most well-know, see the following: Genette, “Boundaries of Narrative,” 1; Hayden White, *The Content of the Form*, x; Gerald Prince; *Dictionary of Narratology*, 58. For a review of definitions of narrative, see Ann Rigney, “Narrativity and Historical Representation,” *Poetics Today* 12 (1991): 591-605.

<sup>171</sup> For discussion, see *Experiencing Fiction*, 3, 86.

<sup>172</sup> The idea of the communications triangle, focusing on author, text and reader, dates at least to Aristotle: “A speech consists of three things: a speaker and a subject on which he speaks and someone addressed” (*Rhet.* 1.3.1 1358a36-1359b2 [All translations of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* are from Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (ed. George A. Kennedy; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)]). These three are more clearly defined in his discussion of the three modes of artistic proof (1.2.3-6 1356a1-20; 2.1.1-4 1377b16-1378a6): logos (see 2.18-26 1391b8-1403b2), ethos (see 2.12-17 1388b31-1391b7), and pathos (see 2.2-11 1378a31-1388b30). The most thorough discussion of the triangle can be found in Kinneavy, *Theory*, esp. 18-32.

<sup>173</sup> The division of narrative into these two is, of course, the subject of his seminal work, which is appropriately titled *Story and Discourse*. Chatman provides a clear graphical presentation of this separation (*Story and Discourse*, 26). For a more detailed presentation of a similar distinction, though using different terminology, see Paul Hernadi, “Literary Theory: A Compass for Critics,” *Critical Inquiry* 3 (1976): 369-86.

of a text is interested not merely in what is reported, the content, but also in how it is reported and the audience's experience with consuming the report. Michael McGuire helpfully distinguishes between "expressive" and "impressive" modes of reading narrative. The former mode, by which he characterizes much literary theory, focuses on "the form's ability to speak for an author," while the latter, a rhetorical view of narrative for which he advocates, focuses on narrative's "ability to speak to an audience."<sup>174</sup> Much previous work on Galatians could be characterized as "expressive," while my attention is on the impressive effects of Paul's narrative rhetoric. Many previous studies of the letter are interested in constructing the "database" of events from which the letter is constructed. For historical readers like James D. G. Dunn, the interest lies with what happened, the historical events that Paul seeks to recount for his audience.<sup>175</sup> For narrative studies like that of Richard B. Hays, the interest lies with what Paul had in mind, the narrative substructure upon which the letter is built.<sup>176</sup> Each of these studies overlooks the transactional nature of "narrative," the interaction between author, text, and audience.

**Event:** Events are the basic building blocks of the narrative transaction.<sup>177</sup> To accept one popular definition, individual events are "changes of state."<sup>178</sup> Events are actions that either happen to or are performed by a given character. Events can lie at the surface of the discourse, or they can be implied in the background. So, for example, in Galatians 1:1, we can identify two surface events: Paul was sent as an apostle through

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<sup>174</sup> Michael McGuire, "The Rhetoric of Narrative: A Hermeneutic Critical Theory," (pp. 219-36 in *Narrative Thought and Narrative Language* [ed. Bruce K. Britton and Anthony D. Pellegrini; Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1990]), 225-26.

<sup>175</sup> See, for example, James D. G. Dunn, "The Incident at Antioch (Gal 2.11-18)," pp. 129-74 in *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1990).

<sup>176</sup> Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*.

<sup>177</sup> The most thorough discussion of events and their role within narrative can be found in Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 43-95. My discussion here is heavily dependent upon his analysis.

<sup>178</sup> Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 44. See also Michael J. Toolan, *Narrative: A Critical Linguistic Introduction* (London: Routledge, 1988), 6; Prince, *Dictionary*, 28.

Jesus Christ and God; God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. These are the only true actions in this verse. However, there are any number of events implied within the discourse. Paul was born; Paul was named; God became the father of Jesus; Jesus died. A string of implied events could theoretically continue forever.<sup>179</sup> And therefore, an infinite number of narratives could be constructed from a set of events.

Events may occur in the past, present, or future with relation to the act of discourse in which they are found. In the above example, Christ's death and God's raising are clearly past events from the standpoint of the argument, but they are no less real at the level of discourse. Likewise, future actions, while they have not occurred, are still events at the level of discourse. So, for example, in Galatians 1:5, Paul's granting of glory to God "forever and ever" is an event within the discourse, though it expresses his hope rather than reality.<sup>180</sup> These future or possible events are part of the narrative world that a given piece of discourse projects in the process of reading.

Defining events as change, though, recognizes that a singular event cannot exist on its own. That is, the definition implies a state before and a state after, between which the event stands as the change. A given event, therefore, is itself a "mini-narrative," since it cannot stand alone, but rather must be told in a particular way and integrated into a particular context.<sup>181</sup> A singular event could be told in countless ways.<sup>182</sup> Further, even

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<sup>179</sup> M. Eugene Boring recognizes the infinite number of events that one might identify, but argues that "the listing of implied events should go as far, but only as far, as is necessary for the rhetoric of the document to work" (M. Eugene Boring, "Narrative Dynamics in First Peter: The Function of Narrative World," pp. 7-40 in *Reading First Peter with New Eyes: Methodological Reassessments of the Letter of First Peter* [ed. Robert L. Webb and Betsy Bauman-Martin; London: T&T Clark, 2007], 18).

<sup>180</sup> The same goes for those events narrated in the subjunctive or imperative mood. For discussion, see Boring, "Narrative Dynamics," 18-19.

<sup>181</sup> I take the term "mini-narrative" from Boring ("Narrative Dynamics," 10).

<sup>182</sup> An entertaining demonstration of this nature of the telling of events is the well-known book *Exercices de Style* by Raymond Queneau. In this work Queneau retells a simple set of events (the narrator's observation of a man's interactions on a city bus and later appearance elsewhere) ninety-nine different

listing out the individual events of a given discourse is itself a rhetorical act, including selection, ordering, and emphasis, and therefore is properly labeled as “narrative.”<sup>183</sup> To return to Galatians 1:1, the core event of Paul’s being sent is told in one particular way. The same event is told in a very different way in Romans 1:1.<sup>184</sup> Rhetorically, therefore, what is of interest is not merely the event recounted, but rather the way in which it is recounted and the way in which it is integrated into the narrative transaction. This distinction between a set of events and a particular telling of events is made in the distinction between story and narrative discourse.

**Story and Narrative Discourse:** An important distinction must be made between story and narrative discourse.<sup>185</sup> The distinction is one of organization or composition. Story is defined as an abstract collection of events, to be articulated in narrative as discourse. One might distinguish story as the “content of the narrative expression,” which becomes narrative discourse when given a particular form.<sup>186</sup> Much like event, therefore, story exists only in the abstract; once it is articulated in thought or word, it becomes narrative discourse, for decisions of selection, ordering, and expression have been made

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ways (for an English translation, see Raymond Queneau, *Exercises in Style* [trans. Barbara Wright; London: John Calder, 1979]).

<sup>183</sup> There is much debate about whether the listing of events, often referred to as annalistic histories, can properly be considered as narrative. For discussion, see White, *The Content of the Form*, 1-25.

<sup>184</sup> The differences between the way Paul describes his “being sent” in Romans and Galatians are quite clear. In Galatians Paul describes his call as “not humans nor through a person.” In Romans Paul’s apostleship entails being “set apart for God’s gospel.”

<sup>185</sup> This distinction has long existed in narrative theory. This distinction of story and narrative is reflected by others as the distinction between story/discourse, *histoire/discours*, *fabula/sjuzhet*. See the clear discussion of narrative in Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 19-31; Toolan, *Narrative*, 15-40; John Pier, “On the Semiotic Parameters of Narrative: A Critique of Story and Discourse,” pp. 73-97 in *What is Narratology?: Questions and Answers Regarding the Status of a Theory* (ed. Tom Kindt and Hans-Herald Müller; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2003); Gerald Prince, *Dictionary of Narratology*, 21, 91; Wallace Martin, *Recent Theories of Narrative* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1986), 107-29. To switch to another field, object-oriented computer programming, one might think of “story” as equivalent to an object class, whereas narrative is the object, an actual instantiation of the class.

<sup>186</sup> Chatman, *Story and Discourse*, 23.

by an author.<sup>187</sup> Narrative discourse is, as Ann Rigney summarizes, “*discourse* through which *a coherent sequence of events* (i.e. a ‘story’) is represented.”<sup>188</sup> Discourse is the articulation, in word or thought, of a story.

I use the term “narrative discourse” to refer to texts that demonstrate some degree of “narrativity,” understood in Phelan’s sense of “somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened.”<sup>189</sup> Discourse in which the author sets about recounting a set of events, constructing order out of events, may be said to exhibit “narrativity,” and thus qualify as “narrative discourse.” One cannot draw a sharp line between narrative and non-narrative discourse; as we have seen, texts that are not typically considered “narratives” by genre still construct events into a coherent whole. “Narrativity” is a designation of the degree to which this construction of order is primary in the rhetoric. In terms of Galatians, there is an unevenness of the narrativity of the discourse. At times, Paul operates in a full narrative discursive mode. For example, the first two chapters of Galatians exhibit a higher degree of narrativity than the last two, for in the first two chapters Paul spends much of his time recounting events that happened in the past, whereas in the last two chapters he is more focused on directly encouraging his congregations’ believe and action in the future. Both sections of the letter, however, can be read through the lens of “narrative rhetoric,” as both attempt to construct meaning out of the Galatians’ experience.

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<sup>187</sup> An alternative distinction is that of the logic of connecting events. E. M. Forster famously argued that “story” reflects a chronological connection, while “plot” reflects a causal connection. He distinguishes between “The king died and then the queen died” and “The king died, and then the queen died of grief” (*Aspects of the Novel*, 83-103).

<sup>188</sup> “The Point of Stories,” 265. The emphasis is original.

<sup>189</sup> The term “narrativity” is common in literary studies (see Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narrativity* [Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987], 64; Rigney, “The Point of Stories”).

Readers of Galatians can imagine that Paul has a near-infinite set of events accessible to him at the time of his composing the letter to the Galatians. This is understood as the set of “stories” in Galatians. There is a story of Christ’s life and death. There is the story of Paul’s life in Judaism. There is the story of Paul’s Damascus Road experience. There is the story of Paul’s preaching the gospel to the Galatians. All of these stories exist in the abstract. Which ones Paul chooses to compose, and how he chooses to connect them, begins the rhetorical process that I refer to as narrative. This process involves Paul’s composition of the letter, but it is ultimately completed only in the consumption of the discourse. A narrative reading of Galatians, therefore, is focused on identifying which events are narrated, how connections between those events are drawn, and the resulting narrative world that emerges in the process of consuming that narrative discourse.

**Narrative World:** In speaking of a narrative world, I incorporate into consideration of narrative rhetoric the third point of the communications triangle, the consumer of narrative. The projected narrative world marks the transition between Ricoeur’s *mimesis*<sub>2</sub> and *mimesis*<sub>3</sub>. Phelan’s rhetorical definition of narrative highlights the need for a more comprehensive view of the process of following narrative discourse, recognizing that a consumer of discourse does not merely gain knowledge of the events recounted, but rather narrative discourse prompts a reader to consider his or her own relation to the world described in and projected by the discourse. That is, narrative discourse creates a new world in front of the text, a symbolic universe that the consumer of narrative is invited to inhabit.<sup>190</sup> So argues Wolfgang Iser: “A literary work is to be considered not as a documentary record of something that exists or has existed, but as a

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<sup>190</sup> Boring also speaks of the projection of a “symbolic universe” (see “Narrative Dynamics,” 12).

reformulation of an already formulated reality, which brings into the world something that did not exist before.”<sup>191</sup>

The narrative world needs to be distinguished from what we might call a “narrated world.” This distinction is easily made with regard to generic narratives. The narrated world of the gospel of Matthew, for example, begins with the birth and baptism of Jesus, and it proceeds to his death, the empty tomb, and his resurrection. This is the story the author tells, the somewhat straightforward, chronological presentation of the events that is rather easy to follow. There is also, though, a narrative world of Matthew’s gospel, which extends much further back in time and proceeds all the way to the future. This narrative world begins with Abraham (Mt 1:2), it extends through the events of the lives of Moses (Mt 8:4; 17:3-4; 19:7-8) and Elijah (Mt 16:14; 17:3-4, 10-12; 27:47-49). It extends beyond Jesus’ ascension, and among its characters are the audience of the gospel in the present and the future.<sup>192</sup>

The same distinction can be made in Galatians, even though it is not a generic narrative. Paul narrates a set of events, which include his own experience with God’s son, his encounter with the apostles in Jerusalem, and his past with the Galatians. A narrative world, though, distinct from this narration of events, emerges in the reading of the entire letter. It is this broader narrative world that is the focus of this study.

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<sup>191</sup> *The Act of Reading*, x.

<sup>192</sup> Though the primary audience of the gospel is not addressed directly in Matthew as in other gospels, particularly the fourth gospel, the narrative’s consideration of the future necessarily invites the gospel’s audience to see itself within the narrative world (see, for example, Mt 24:4-46).

*A “Method” for Reading Narrative Rhetoric*

As I return to Galatians, armed with Ricoeur’s understanding of the narrative function, the argument of the letter, rather than a formal methodology, will guide my reading.<sup>193</sup> Ricoeur’s mimetic spiral lays the groundwork for my approach to Galatians, but now I indicate how my exegesis will proceed. As I indicate, my interest lies in following how the construction of a narrative world guides the decision of the implied audience of the letter. I work to show how the construction of the argument re-shapes the audience’s identity and thereby serve as the grounds for the exhortation that forms the true function of the deliberative rhetoric.

As I turn to Paul’s argument to the Galatians with the lens of following the letter’s narrative rhetoric, outlining some basic principles of the reading strategy I adopt going forward is pertinent. I emphasize the need for an *a posteriori* method, driven by the contents of the argument, in contrast to the *a priori* methods that have been imposed upon the text by previous rhetorical studies.<sup>194</sup> Therefore my reading strategy will be dictated more by the contents of the letter than by a methodological decision beforehand.<sup>195</sup> I offer here not a formal narratology by which I approach Galatians. Rather I offer a few guidelines that determine what I am following in the argument of the letter.<sup>196</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> See the similar comments of Boring: “In the study of living communication . . . it is rarely a helpful procedure to begin with ‘getting clear about one’s methodology’ and only then ‘applying it to the text. One typically becomes aware of one’s actual method in retrospect” (“Narrative Dynamics,” 7; Boring is relying upon and quoting Erich Auerbach, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* [trans. Willard R. Trask; Princeton; Princeton University Press, 1953], 556).

<sup>194</sup> For James Phelan’s emphasis on an *a posteriori* method for reading narrative and the dangers of setting a strong method independent of the details of a given text, see *Experiencing Fiction*, 85-87.

<sup>195</sup> Boring begins his narrative analysis of 1 Peter with a helpful warning—drawing upon Auerbach—against imposing methodological decisions upon a text (see Boring, “Narrative Dynamics,” 7).

<sup>196</sup> Many narratologies have been applied to biblical narrative. For a critical response to this, see David H. Richter, “Genre, Repetition, Temporal Order: Some Aspects of Biblical Narratology,” pp. 285-98 in *A Companion to Narrative Theory* (ed. James Phelan, Peter J. Rabinowitz; Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005).

First, I read alongside an implied or authorial audience of the letter, the audience constructed through the rhetoric of the letter.<sup>197</sup> It is this audience's experience of the narrative rhetoric of the argument that is my interest. Some necessary clarification about audiences has come in the last fifty years of New Testament studies.<sup>198</sup> Most historical critical interpreters, particularly of Paul's letters, have attempted to read alongside the first, "original" audience of the New Testament documents, attempting to construct all of the cultural and historical assumptions that Paul's "original" audience might have had.<sup>199</sup> In this view, interpreters attempt to read like the Galatians would have read, and thus a necessary step is to reconstruct the "story" of Galatians in the sense of what has happened between the Galatians and Paul leading up to the letter, particularly what the Galatians may know that modern readers may not.<sup>200</sup> Important for such a reading is a full picture of who the teachers are and what they are teaching. This interest in the original audience necessarily involves a certain degree of circularity, as the primary information about the Galatian community comes from the letter itself, with occasional assistance from a

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<sup>197</sup> I follow Phelan's construction of the implied or authorial audience, distinguished from the flesh and blood audience and the narrative audience and narratee. His definition for this (much debated) term comes from Rabinowitz. Phelan expands Rabinowitz's four readers to five. For discussion, see *Experiencing Fiction*, 4-5; *Narrative as Rhetoric*, 135-53; *Reading People, Reading Plots: Character, Progression, and the Interpretation of Narrative* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 5-6. Phelan draws heavily upon Peter T. Rabinowitz ("Truth in Fiction," *Critical Inquiry* 4 [1977]: 121-41). For other analyses of the implied or authorial audience followed in my reading of Galatians, see Walter J. Ong, "The Writer's Audience is Always a Fiction," *Proceedings of the Modern Language Association* 90 (1975): 9-21; Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading*, 20-50.

<sup>198</sup> For a helpful discussion of the conversation about audience in recent gospel scholarship, see Donald H. Juel, "Becoming an Audience: Reading and the Constraints of the Particular," pp. 123-46 in *A Master of Surprise: Mark Interpreted* (Minneapolis: Augsburg/Fortress, 1994).

<sup>199</sup> This is the focus of Martyn's commentary, introduced as consistent with the goals of the Anchor Bible series (see *Galatians*, 41-42; *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1997], 209-29). Martyn attributes this focus to influence from Walter Bauer and Ernst Käsemann.

<sup>200</sup> This is what is often meant by the "story" of Paul's letters. See, for example, Charles B. Cousar, *Reading Galatians, Philippians and 1 Thessalonians: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Reading the New Testament; Macon, GA: Smyth and Helwys, 2001), 6-7; Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul's Narrative World* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985).

tendentious Acts narrative.<sup>201</sup> This attempt to recreate a “Galatian” audience leads many to engage in mirror reading, constructing details about the situation in the community based on the arguments Paul makes. This method has long been common in Galatians research, and only recently has it been called into question.<sup>202</sup> Some degree of circular reading is inevitable in engaging the letter, but my focus in this study is less on constructing the specifics of the community to which the letter was originally written, and more on constructing the community (and situation) that the letter itself implies or assumes.

Following Ricoeur’s model of emplotment, I suggest that the persuasive power of narrative discourse exists not behind the text, and not only in the “original” reading of the text. Instead, the text’s rhetoric functions in front of the text, and thus interpretation is not only or primarily a historical act, a reconstruction of the details on the ground in Galatia, but a literary or rhetorical one, following the experience prompted by the discourse.<sup>203</sup> Therefore, I am less interested in uncovering who the historical Galatians were, what exactly happened to them before the letter arrived, what they knew about Paul

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<sup>201</sup> The relationship between Acts and Galatians is a much debated, difficult topic. In some sense Galatians becomes one of the most difficult of the Pauline letters to map to the Acts narrative, given the still-debated question over the North or South Galatian hypotheses. Ironically Galatians provides the most “historical” data regarding Paul’s early mission, and yet it becomes the most difficult to match to the stories of Acts.

<sup>202</sup> George A. Lyons levels a trenchant critique of mirror reading (*Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* [Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985], esp. 75-121). See also the critique of John M. G. Barclay (“Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case,” *JSNT* 31 [1987]: 73-93). In the introduction to his commentary, Richard N. Longenecker cautions against this method (*Galatians* [Word Biblical Commentary 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990], , lxxxix; xcvi), but he employs it heavily throughout the commentary.

<sup>203</sup> Importantly, this does not mean that interpretation is devoid of historical research. Indeed, to understand the rhetoric of a text, one must be well-versed in the culture in which the text was produced. This is most obviously the case in reading the text in its original language. In this sense, New Testament interpretation is a historical enterprise, in that the historical world behind the text is an essential part of the text’s rhetoric. On this point, see Victor Paul Furnish, “On Putting Paul in his Place,” *JBL* 113 (1994): 3-17. The danger of historical research arises when the historical comes to dominate the rhetorical.

and his gospel, and how they might read the letter than in an audience's experience of reading that is constructed by the rhetoric of the letter.

To properly understand the argument, readers must assume the identity of this implied audience, adopting the assumptions that the text makes of its audience.<sup>204</sup> The letter characterizes its implied audience in a number of ways. First, the audience understands Hellenistic Greek. Second, the audience is composed of Gentiles (4:8-10). Third, the audience has had a previous experience with the Spirit, experience which Paul played a role in prompting and which Paul witnessed (1:8-9; 3:1-5; 4:12-20). Fourth, the audience is being tempted by those preaching something different from Paul's message, the result of which is a change in the Galatians' behavior (Gal 1:6-9; 4:9, 17-20). Part of this change in behavior is adherence to Jewish law, in particular being circumcised (5:3-4; 6:12-13). Fifth, the implied audience ascribes authority to the Jewish Scriptures, characters in Judaism such as Abraham, and to Paul as an interpreter of the Jewish Scriptures (3:6-18). Beyond these basic assumptions, though, interpreters move into the world of speculation, some of which is necessary, but all of which is dangerous. My plan is to read with only these basic assumptions in mind, highlighting points in the narrative where the author assumes more in his audience than these assumptions allow.

Second, I follow the literary unfolding of Paul's discourse. The argument of the letter should be followed sequentially, tracing developments, expectations, and judgments set by the early portions of the text itself, and noting how later parts of the argument address them.<sup>205</sup> Previous rhetorical and narrative studies of Galatians have assumed a

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<sup>204</sup> For a discussion of the process of "metamorphosizing" into the reader addressed in discourse, see Ricoeur, "Appropriation," 189-90.

<sup>205</sup> Kennedy makes this observation: "Galatians, like other works intended to be heard, unfolds in a linear manner" (*New Testament Interpretation*, 146).

textual mode, in that they credit the audience with incredible amounts of knowledge, and they seem to operate with an assumption that the audience for which they are reading had the opportunity to pore over Paul's argument, with the relevant background materials, particularly Scripture, at hand for their consideration of his letter.<sup>206</sup> Though historically Paul's letters likely served as foundational texts for communities, and therefore were read and re-read over time, each of the letters assumes an implied audience experiences the letter in an oral/aural encounter. Meaning is constructed through this initial encounter, and therefore interpreters must be very cautious about assuming the audience knows more than the discourse has told them.<sup>207</sup> Paul's arguments do not depend upon careful textual study but upon an audience's first encounter.

Narrative discourse invites particular responses, and it is these responses that I will follow in my analysis. The literary critic James Phelan, whose rhetorical definition of narrative I introduced earlier, has made explicit this audience experience with narrative texts, and his categories of response will be helpful for guiding my reading. Phelan argues that as readers follow the progression of a narrative they develop three types of interests or responses.<sup>208</sup> First, audiences respond to narrative mimetically, understanding

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<sup>206</sup> For an incisive critique of New Testament studies operating on too-textual of a basis, overlooking the oral nature of early Christian discourse, see Werner Kelber, "Biblical Hermeneutics and the Art of Communication," *Semeia* 39 (1987): 97-105.

<sup>207</sup> The preservation and collection of Paul's letters provides the best evidence for this literary and foundational function of the letters. Paul's letter to the Colossians suggests that the lessons of Paul's letters were intended to function beyond the immediate circumstances they addressed (see Col 4:16). Second Peter (3:15-16) also suggests that the early church was reading and studying Paul's letters. There are countless studies of the earliest collections of Paul's letters. For a brief and particularly lucid discussion, see Harry Y. Gamble, *Books and Readers in the Early Church: A History of Early Christian Texts* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 58-66. See also Rensberger, "As the Apostle Teaches: The Development of the Use of Paul's Letters in Second Century Christianity" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1981); David J. Trobisch, *Paul's Collection of Letters: Exploring the Origins* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994).

<sup>208</sup> For the most detailed discussion of these three responses, with clear examples, see *Reading People, Reading Plots*, 1-10. For a more condensed summary, see *Narrative as Rhetoric*, 90-91. He originally introduced these as responses to character progression, but they are later generalized as responses to narrative in general (see *Experiencing Fiction*, 5-6).

the events and characters portrayed as possible realities. A mimetic response to a character is a reaction to him or her as if he or she is a real person. Therefore one responds to a narrative with the judgments and emotions, expectations and desires, that one would normally have interacting with actual individuals. By giving characters real or believable traits, names, or experiences, an author can control reader response, prompting audiences toward sympathy, rejection, disappointment or any number of emotions common when interacting with actual persons.

Phelan identifies as “thematic the audience’s recognition that events or characters portrayed in narratives are not important merely in and of themselves, but rather are designed to represent a broader argument or idea.<sup>209</sup> Using terms like “stands in for” or “represents,” the thematically-responding audience views the elements of a narrative to portray a larger ideological argument from the author for his or her audience. An author can construct a character so as to make clear to an audience that there is a broader lesson to be learned from the action reported.<sup>210</sup> Here Phelan’s analysis reflects Aristotle’s discussion of the poet’s teaching “the universals” (τὰ καθόλου) by means of “the particular” (τὸ καθ’ ἕκαστον).<sup>211</sup>

Third, readers recognize that in a given narrative, characters or events are not real, but rather they are the artificial result of a creative process. This response, which Phelan labels the synthetic, is an audience’s awareness, prompted by signals in the text, of the author’s creative construction of the narrative. A given text can signal for its reader the artificiality of a given element of a narrative by differing the level of verisimilitude of the

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<sup>209</sup> Phelan uses thematic as a rough equivalent to the Neo-Aristotelian term “didactic,” defined in opposition to the mimetic (see his near-equation of the terms in *Experiencing Fiction*, 85).

<sup>210</sup> For example, the name of Bunyan’s protagonist in *Pilgrim’s Progress* leads his audience to understand the character Christian as representative of all Christians.

<sup>211</sup> See *Poet.* 9.3 1451b6-7.

element. Historical narratives, for example, prompt less of a synthetic response than do fantasy novels.

The benefit of Phelan's identification of these three potential responses is his emphasis that all three may be at play in different ways in any given narrative. Indeed, interpreters should think less of these three as mutually exclusive responses, and more as points of a triangle, within which a given audience response may fall. We can easily see how the three relate to one another. For example, the synthetic functions as a fulcrum between the seemingly opposed forces of the mimetic and the thematic. The more realistic an author makes a character, that is the less the synthetic response prompted by a text, the stronger the potential mimetic response. On the other hand, the weaker the mimetic response is, the greater is an audience's tendency to thematize a character. The narrative form of a text, though, can bring out one or more of them at any given time. The task of the rhetorical critic of narrative, therefore, is to follow how elements of narrative are constructed to prompt given responses amongst an authorial audience. The exact nature of these responses with respect to Galatians will emerge in the analysis of Paul's argument.

In terms of Galatians, a synthetic response is less present, in that Paul presents these narratives as based in historical fact, and thus Paul and the audience share an assumption that what he tells is the truth.<sup>212</sup> The mimetic response is the audience's recognition that they are hearing stories about actual people, and to follow such a response is to follow the change in the experience of the narrative, as the audience reacts

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<sup>212</sup> See Phelan's discussion of non-fiction narrative in *Experiencing Fiction*, 216-20. The key difference with nonfiction is the concept of referentiality; the narrative purports to be set in something that actually happened. This introduces the possibility of testing the "truth" of narrative, and it introduces the possibility of the author losing credibility if his narrative is shown to be false.

to individuals as they would to real individuals. In much rhetorical analysis of Galatians, attention to this mimetic response, to the audience's shifting perception of the characters presented in the narrative, has been lacking. As I read through the narrative, my attention falls on how the narrative prompts an response to the events and characters depicted.

Paul's characterization of the rhetorical situation he addresses in the letter, though, also invites a thematic response to these narratives.<sup>213</sup> This is a major difference with the construction of narrative within a specific rhetorical context. Paul introduces this letter as a direct address regarding the choice the Galatians now face in light of "some trying to pervert the gospel." Therefore, regardless of Paul's intention behind narrating stories of his past and Israel's past, the implied audience reads these narratives against this primary rhetorical situation. As I will demonstrate, the mimetic response in following the narrative is joined by a thematic response of the audience recognizing that the meaning of the narrative extends beyond the details provided or the characters portrayed.<sup>214</sup> A key part of the persuasive power of Paul's narratives in Galatians is the way in which the situations and characters Paul narrates connect to the primary situation of the Galatians as Paul has identified it. Following the narrative rhetoric of the argument, therefore, involves following how the events reflect upon the primary exigence of the address, the Galatians' temptation to follow the law.

By following the construction of events from beginning, to middle, to end, what Phelan calls a narrative progression, interpreters can get a sense of how Paul's argument

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<sup>213</sup> Recall that Phelan defines the thematic response as "interest in the ideational function of the characters and in the cultural, ideological, philosophical, or ethical issues being addressed by the narrative" (*Experiencing Fiction*, 5-6).

<sup>214</sup> My use of a "thematic response" differs a bit from how Phelan uses it. His focus is on the broader "ideas" that are shaped by narrative. In the situation of the Galatians, the thematic response is their understanding that the characters and events of the narrative relate to their own situation. So, for example, Paul's being challenged by the false brothers prompts a consideration of the challenge faced in Galatia from the troublers.

addresses the Galatians in their particular situation. Phelan's focus on progression helps my analysis incorporate the insights of Ricoeur into the narrative function. Following these responses (*mimesis*<sub>3</sub>) prompted by the construction of the argument (*mimesis*<sub>2</sub>) will allow for a more properly rhetorical reading of Galatians.

In addition to my attention to an implied audience's experience with the unfolding narrative, this study is also characterized by a focus on emplotment as a way of developing character. Galatians is a deliberative argument, primarily focused on effecting action in its audience.<sup>215</sup> This focus on action, though, is somewhat indirect, as the letter is not primarily one of paraenesis, aimed at merely instructing the Galatians as to what they should do, but also on how they must understand why they should do it.<sup>216</sup> Paul attempts to shape behavior the Galatians' behavior by reshaping their identity. Paul's argument is not simply that they should not be circumcised. Rather, the broader argument of the letter works to show the Galatians who they have become through Christ.<sup>217</sup> Such an argument shows them that circumcision is inconsistent with that identity. Ultimately, therefore, the rhetorical strategy is to build up the Galatians' character to be one that recognizes how one should behave, rather than an argument for or against certain behaviors.

The narrative rhetoric of the letter, therefore, focuses on the construction of the Galatians' character through the construction of other characters. That is, through the

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<sup>215</sup> Here I use the term "deliberative" in its broadest form, meaning rhetoric concerned with affecting the audience's future behavior. As discussed, I do not find the rigid distinctions of these terms to be particularly helpful, but I do argue that the ultimate rhetorical concern of the letter is the Galatians' future behavior.

<sup>216</sup> Martyn is correct in his judgment that Paul's rhetoric is "more revelatory and performative than hortatory and persuasive." However, this ought not lead to his conclusion that "Paul is concerned in letter form to reproach the gospel in place of its counterfeit" (*Galatians*, 23).

<sup>217</sup> This explains why, for example, Paul can make an argument with Cephas over table fellowship relevant to the question of circumcision in Galatia. It is not a question of circumcision in particular, but rather identity in Christ, the correct understanding of which provides one with the answer on a variety of questions such as circumcision or table fellowship.

emplotment of events, particularly in the opening two chapters, Paul leads his reader to see how a character in Christ is built, how he behaves, and what the results of that behavior are. Therefore, I follow the emplotment of events as they construct character, demonstrating how the various characters presented to the Galatians affect the primary question of what the Galatians should do going forward, the central question in any deliberative rhetorical situation.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have begun to define the term “narrative rhetoric,” used in the subtitle of this study. The presence of a narrative mode of discourse throughout the argument to the Galatians prompted consideration of how narratives persuade, and my initial assessment of the abundance of narrative studies outside of the rhetorical study of Paul has suggested the value of this question. By incorporating poetics into the prevailing discussion of rhetoric in the study of Galatians, I have demonstrated that a properly rhetorical approach is one that is focused on the ways in which elements of the argument in the letter prompt the construction of a narrative world in the reader’s consumption of the argument.

A truly rhetorical study of Galatians, therefore, is one in which this process of narrative as *mimesis* is the object of inquiry. That is, the narrative rhetoric of the argument to the Galatians can only be understood by following the progression of narrative responses prompted by the text. The Galatians’ experience with the spirit is at the center of Paul’s appeal in Galatians. No one among the *dramatis personae* of the rhetorical situation, including Paul, the Galatians, nor even the troublers, denies the

reality of an experience with Christ. What is in question, though, is what this event means. For some, this experience may mean that the Galatians have joined the people of Israel, whose identity is characterized by following the law given at Sinai. However, Paul wants to redefine this concept of Israel. It is the function of the narrative rhetoric in Galatians to do just that. The task of the interpreter, therefore, is to follow how Paul constructs events to do that and how an audience who faces the challenge of this “other gospel” is thereby prompted to respond.

My discussion to this point has drawn primarily on modern works of rhetoric and poetics, particularly Paul Ricoeur and James Phelan. Paul’s argument, though, draws upon an older tradition of rhetoric, and therefore it is necessary to situate my discussion of narrative rhetoric within the Greco-Roman rhetorical and educational system of which Paul is a product. In the next chapter, therefore, I will ask how those who shared Paul’s cultural and rhetorical milieu understood narrative as persuasion. After asking how narratives persuade within the ancient rhetorical tradition, I will then return to a reading of the narrative rhetoric of Galatians.

### Chapter 3 Defining Narrative Rhetoric: A Practical Approach

In this chapter I undertake an examination of the rhetorical tradition by which Paul was likely influenced. I argue that the narrative function outlined through Ricoeur's three stages of *mimesis* is consistent with the understanding of narrative in ancient sources. The argument of this chapter advances in a series of steps. I begin where many rhetorical studies of Paul begin, with the ancient rhetorical handbooks. I show that these handbooks provide little explicit discussion of narrative as a persuasive technique, and I conclude that they are not the ideal starting point. Instead, I establish a new understanding of narrative rhetoric, grounded in the elementary exercises (*progymnasmata*) of ancient rhetorical training. In this second section I show that Ricoeur's understanding of narrative as emplotment finds a close parallel at the most basic levels of Greco-Roman education. The understanding of narrative as the creative construction of an author, providing the opportunity to involve the audience within the rhetoric, can be seen throughout ancient rhetorical and literary theory. Finally, I move from this general discussion of narrative rhetoric in the ancient tradition to a practical examination of how narrative rhetoric functions in Paul's context, examining specific instances of narrative as persuasive discourse in the orations of Dio Chrysostom. This final section will provide the space to test my developing reading method.

My goal in this chapter is not simply to present a series of texts that parallel Paul's rhetorical strategy in Galatians. Neither do I hope to paint a general picture of effective persuasion in antiquity against which Paul can be judged. This standard rhetorical approach to Paul is not helpful for a number of reasons. First, as reluctant as

some readers may be to admit it, Paul's rhetoric does not stand up to the "standards" of Aristotle and Quintilian. One need merely to peruse the detailed literary criticism of a careful critic like Dionysius of Halicarnassus to realize how poorly Paul would fare if held under the powerful microscope of ancient literary criticism.

More significantly, though, to summarize these texts as a sort of "portrait of rhetoric" would be to misrepresent both the aims and functions of these ancient rhetorical exercises, handbooks, and orations. The texts introduced in this chapter are the reflection of a rhetorical culture rather than the prescriptions of a standard by which all members of that culture would have been guided. It is important to keep in mind the comments of Ruth Webb with regard the rhetorical handbooks: "The interest of the handbooks does not lie simply in the provision of a schema against which finished compositions can be measured, identified, and judged. Instead, the rhetorical manuals reveal to the modern reader the rich network of ideas and assumptions that underlay the composition and reception of ancient texts."<sup>1</sup> Even in their original contexts, it is unlikely that the handbooks or elementary exercises were used as roadmaps for speechmaking. Certainly this is not the case for Paul, who likely was not familiar with the detailed recommendations of such texts, particularly those that functioned at the upper end of rhetorical education. Rather the texts explored here formed the basis of a system of education wherein recommendations were adapted to specific rhetorical situations. The ancient rhetorical tradition prized above all the ability of an orator to adapt standard practices to the situation faced. Galatians is a unique argument crafted to meet a specific rhetorical situation. To read it in light of "standard" handbooks, allowing the

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<sup>1</sup> *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 4-5.

prescriptions of the handbooks to determine the analysis, as has been the standard approach to Paul's rhetoric, is to fail to appreciate the particular rhetorical effect of the letter.<sup>2</sup> My goal here is simply to show that ancient authors, in analytical works and in actual orations, understood narrative as persuasion in ways similar to those highlighted by Ricoeur.

### **Narrative Rhetoric in the Ancient Rhetorical Handbooks, Part 1**

I have argued that the presence of so much narrative construction in Galatians has been a problem for New Testament rhetorical studies that are based upon the ancient rhetorical handbooks; Galatians resists the narrow categorization of "rhetoric" that it has received. The problem is demonstrated most clearly in the difficulties scholars have had in accounting for all parts of the letter within a single rhetorical outline. A key problem for New Testament rhetorical studies is the selection and use of sources. Given the scant comments about narrative as persuasion in the few handbooks that are typically used for rhetorical studies, New Testament rhetorical criticism has not considered narrative as a form of persuasion. Narrative analysis such as that of Ricoeur is therefore regarded as either out of place or not "rhetorical" since it does not draw upon the canons of ancient rhetoric.

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<sup>2</sup> For this critique of rhetoric, see especially Steven J. Kraftchick, "Παθή in Paul: The Emotional Logic of 'Original Argument,' pp. 39-68 in *Paul and Pathos* (ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Jerry L. Sumney; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), esp. 39-47. Kraftchick draws upon the critique of C. J. Classen, summarizing that "when the text under consideration differs from the 'canons' of rhetoric, it is the canons that must yield" ("Παθή in Paul," 40). See C. J. Classen, "St. Paul's Epistles and Ancient Greek and Roman Rhetoric," *Rhetorica* 10 (1992): 325-32. The warning against an *a priori* method from James Phelan, introduced in the previous chapter, applies equally to using an ancient "roadmap" to reading Paul's rhetoric (see *Experiencing Fiction: Judgments, Progressions, and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative* [Theory and Interpretation of Narrative; Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2007], 85-87).

The problem with the usual approach is twofold. First, it misrepresents how narrative functions in Galatians. The autobiographical narrative in chs. 1-2 does far more than simply defend or clarify Paul's apostolic credentials; it forms part of his argument to the Galatians. As D. Francois Tolmie argues, "The biggest drawback in describing Galatians 1:11-2:14 as *narratio* lies in the fact that this inevitably leads one to a degradation of the argumentative value of this phase."<sup>3</sup> It is this function of narrative in the argument that should dictate a reading strategy, not the external criteria offered by the handbooks.

A second problem is that reading the handbooks as representing Paul's rhetorical tradition misrepresents that very tradition, so that even the brief discussion of narratives in the handbooks are misunderstood. Interpreters have considered *where* in a speech the handbooks recommend retelling the facts of the case, but Pauline scholars have almost completely disregarded the handbooks' recommendations on *how* one is to construct an effective narrative.

Most rhetorical studies of Galatians consider the "necessary qualities" enumerated in ancient rhetorical handbooks for a statement of facts: brevity, clarity, and plausibility.<sup>4</sup> These three qualities become criteria by which Paul's argument is judged. There exists a prevailing, and yet ultimately circular, opinion that if Paul's narrative can be judged to be brief, clear, and plausible, then he is indeed following the recommendations of the handbooks, which are thereby deemed legitimate comparative texts. For example, Betz

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<sup>3</sup> D. Francois Tolmie, *Persuading the Galatians: A Text-Centred Rhetorical Analysis of a Pauline Letter* (WUNT 190; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 46.

<sup>4</sup> See, for example, Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians* (Hermeneia. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 59. For ancient discussions of these three qualities, see Cicero (*De Inv.* 1.20.28), the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (1.8.12-10.16), Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 4.2.2-132) and Theon's *Progymnasmata* (Theon 80-86). Dionysius of Halicarnassus also recognizes these qualities in his critical essays (see *Lysias* 18).

asserts that, “One would have to say that Paul’s *narratio* conforms to [Quintilian’s] requirements.”<sup>5</sup> He suggests that Paul’s narrative is brief because “Paul is able to cover the long history of the problem, saying all that is necessary to know for the case, while leaving out all unrelated material.”<sup>6</sup> But how does Betz understand what is “necessary to know for the case?” Given that Paul begins his retelling of his past by reminding the Galatians that they are already familiar with the story (1:13), could not one argue, on the basis of Betz’s reading of Quintilian’s virtues, that the entire *narratio* is unnecessary? More importantly, Betz’s approach overlooks Quintilian’s recommendation that the virtues of narration be adapted so as to fit the rhetorical situation facing the orator.<sup>7</sup> Consider, for example, Quintilian’s definition for the virtue of brevity: “Personally, when I use the word brevity, I mean not saying less, but not saying more than the occasion demands.”<sup>8</sup> It is the characteristics of the rhetorical situation, not some objective quality, that determines how a narrative should be effectively constructed to persuade an audience.

Quintilian’s comments about the quality of a statement of facts should instead be taken as an indication of a broader understanding of narrative rhetoric that the rhetorical handbooks assume. In listing these three qualities, Quintilian recognizes that stories can be told in different ways so as to produce different effects, and it is the orator’s perception of his audience that should dictate how he adapts the virtues of brevity, clarity, and plausibility within a given narrative. The value of the handbooks, therefore, comes not from the rhetorical outlines they may provide, nor in their recommendations of the

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<sup>5</sup> *Galatians*, 60.

<sup>6</sup> *Galatians*, 61.

<sup>7</sup> “Our delivery must be adapted to our matter, so that the judge will take in which we say with the utmost readiness” (*Inst. Orat.* 4.2.36 [Butler, LCL]).

<sup>8</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.43 (Butler, LCL).

few qualities of effective narrative. Rather, their discussion of more and less effective ways in which a narrative can be constructed so as to persuade an audience reflects a deeper understanding of narrative as persuasion. They participated in a conversation about narrative that I intend to illuminate here. The handbooks build upon an understanding of narrative as rhetoric, one they do not make explicit, and then apply it to particular rhetorical situations, such as the outlining of a statement of facts in a forensic address.

The difficulty of accounting for the narrative elements of Galatians read through the lens of these handbooks demonstrates the problem with the formal methodology. Most critics identify the problem as a category mistake: Paul is not composing the same types of addresses that Aristotle or Quintilian describe; thus the handbooks ought not to function as comparative texts. The point about the original function of the handbooks and Paul's letters is likely true; the handbooks were originally conceived to instruct those arguing in the courtroom or public square and Paul is writing private letters. This distinction leads many to suggest that because Paul did not receive the highest levels of rhetorical training in the ancient world, he would not be familiar with such handbooks, and therefore they are of little value for Pauline studies.<sup>9</sup> However, recognizing such a

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<sup>9</sup> For a critique of the rhetorical approach to Paul along these lines, see Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric in Galatians: Assessing and Approaching to Paul's Letter* (SNTS Monograph Series 101; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), esp. 2-4; The standard response to this charge has been that Paul may not have been educated at the highest levels, but formal rhetoric was so pervasive in his culture that he would have certainly been familiar with it. See, for example, the comments of Kennedy: "Even if he had not studied in a Greek school, there were many handbooks of rhetoric in common circulation which he could have seen. He and the evangelists as well would, indeed, have been hard put to escape an awareness of rhetoric as practiced in the culture around them" (George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* [Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984], 9-10). Kern's critique builds upon the earlier work of Stanley Porter ("The Theoretical Justification for Application of Rhetorical Categories to Pauline Epistolary Literature," pp. 100-22 in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* [ed. S. E. Porter and T. H. Olbricht; JSNTS 90; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993]) and C. J. Classen ("St. Paul's Epistles"), both of whom question the legitimacy of using formal handbooks to read Paul.

distinction between Paul and the handbooks does not render the handbooks without value for understanding Paul's argumentation. The problem is less the selection of sources, as the manner in which these sources are applied to Paul's letters. The handbooks reflect a rhetorical culture, not a standard by which Paul would have made composition decisions.

If we look at actual orations in which narrative figures heavily in the argument, the handbooks' discussion of narrative fails to account for what we find. Instead of sticking to the few comments about a statement of facts or example that we find in the handbooks, rhetorical analysis of speeches benefits from recognizing the power of narrative to evoke responses in its audience. A brief example of narrative within a specific argument demonstrates this point well. I look quickly at the difficulty of analyzing a speech that depends upon narrative before turning to explore this conversation about narrative through the *progymnasmata*.

*A Demonstration of the Handbooks' Limitations: Dio Chrysostom's First Kingship Oration*

Dio Chrysostom is an author whom everyone knows received a full rhetorical training. Yet Dio's speeches demonstrate the complex and interesting ways in which narration can function in a rhetorical address, ways that are not specifically part of the discussion in the ancient rhetorical handbooks. Dio's work will play an important role later in this chapter as a comparative example of narrative rhetoric. I briefly introduce it now, though, to demonstrate more emphatically the limits of the handbook approach to ancient rhetoric.

In his first kingship oration, Dio Chrysostom incorporates a long story as part of his persuasive strategy before the Emperor Trajan on the topic of the good king.<sup>10</sup> In the first half of the speech, Dio enumerates characteristics of the good king, which include regard for the gods and one's fellow man. For these characteristics Dio relies mostly on analogies. For example, he argues for the importance of caring for one's soldiers with the negative example of a shepherd who disregards the dogs who help him care for the sheep. In disregarding the now-hungry dogs, he puts his own sheep in danger.<sup>11</sup> Consistent with Aristotle's discussion of the invented paradigm, Dio uses generic examples to make his deliberative point to Trajan. This first part of the oration is what one might expect from the handbooks' directions. He makes his point directly, offering examples as supplement.

The major part of the address, though, consists in Dio's recounting of an autobiographical story, a tale of his wandering in exile. He narrates his coming upon an old prophetess who predicts that in his future Dio will meet a powerful man, to whom he is to tell a specific story. She tells Dio of the journey of Heracles, guided by Hermes, as he encounters two mountain peaks, Peak Royal and Peak Tyrannous. From the distance at which most people stand, these two appear as one peak. However, guided by Hermes, Heracles is shown the difference between the two. The path to Peak Royal, which in reality towers over Peak Tyrannous, is clear and easy, but the one that leads to Peak Tyrannous is narrow and filled with danger, and it is scattered with signs of those who had attempted to follow it but failed. Hermes then shows Heracles what sits at the top of each peak. On Peak Royal, Hermes is introduced to Lady Royalty, surrounded by figures

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<sup>10</sup> There has been much discussion of whether the kingship orations were ever delivered to Trajan. For a thorough review and an argument against a real setting of the speeches before Trajan, see Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature*, 325-27.

<sup>11</sup> *Or.* 1.28.

named Civic Order, Peace, Law, Right Reason, Counsellor, and Coadjutor. They are all living in an environment of total serenity. On Peak Tyrannous, though, he observes Lady Tyranny, seated in an even finer throne than Lady Royalty. However, with a closer glance, Heracles notices her throne is not stable, and she is surrounded by Cruelty, Insolence, Lawlessness, and Faction. When asked which lady he prefers, Heracles makes the obvious choice of the former, Lady Royalty, though Hermes has shown him that it is this second lady that most leaders seek. Dio then relates that the prophetess told him that Heracles lived the lesson of the story through his kingship, recognizing the difference between royalty and tyranny. Heracles sought to destroy tyranny whenever he encountered it and to give honor to royalty. The woman reports that this action “made him the savior of the earth and humanity.”<sup>12</sup>

The journey has a direct, persuasive function for Heracles. Guided by Hermes to see what others cannot see, Heracles learns what makes a good king. This second-order narrative, though, the tale of Heracles and Hermes, also has an implicit bearing upon the second-order narrative situation of Dio hearing the story from the prophetess. Through the lesson of Heracles, Dio learns what constitutes a good king. This lesson, in turn, is passed to the primary narrative situation, that of Dio addressing Trajan. The primary rhetorical situation of the address gives Dio the role of Hermes, leading Trajan in the role of Heracles. Dio began the address by instructing Trajan on the qualities of a good king, and thus Heracles’ lesson on the same topic functions indirectly to teach Trajan. At the end of the discourse the scene moves briefly from the second-order narrative back to the original address of Trajan by Dio, wherein Dio explains to Trajan that Heracles’ brilliance as a leader comes not from his personal characteristics, but rather results from

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<sup>12</sup> καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τῆς γῆς καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἔφη σωτήρα εἶναι (1.84).

his understanding of the good leader's pursuit of royalty that lies beyond tyranny, the more attainable and more popular path. Only in the very last line of the oration, then, does Dio make reference to what is implicit in the reading of the story; the story of Heracles is important for Trajan to follow as a leader. Dio tells Trajan, "Even to this day Heracles continues this work and you have in him a helper and protector of your government as long as it is vouchsafed you to reign."<sup>13</sup> The first-order narrative, the old woman's instructions to Dio to recount the story to a powerful man, makes this implicit function of the narration clear; the story is an indirect method of persuading Trajan how to be a good king.<sup>14</sup>

The rhetorical function of narrative in the first kingship oration is complex. The speech demonstrates the qualities of good kingship. The connection, though, between the extended narrative and the "thesis" of the argument to Trajan remains implicit. The connection between Heracles' lesson and Trajan's is supplied by the audience, be it Trajan or the reader. The identification of Dio with the old woman, likewise is easily though not necessarily made. The narrative, therefore, is not simply an extended example of Dio's qualities of kingship, which he laid forth in the first half of the discourse. As indicated, when discussing those qualities directly in the first half of the discourse, Dio gives examples of them. Rather, the extended narrative section of the discourse leads Trajan down the path of observing good kingship. The extended narrative shifts Trajan's

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<sup>13</sup> *Or.* 1.84.

<sup>14</sup> The narrative situation becomes further complicated if we consider that this address may have been a declamation to the public, meaning that it was never actually delivered to Trajan, but rather is itself a fictional account of such a delivery. In this case, the story of Heracles and Hermes becomes a fourth-order narration, told by the woman to Dio, as part of Dio's address to Trajan, which is actually a narrative which forms part of Dio's address to a larger audience. The implicit function of the narrative, though, would still exist, regardless of to whom it was originally addressed. For a discussion of the original circumstances of the kingship orations, see Tim Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 325-27.

role from one being instructed to one observing another's discovering effective kingship. The audience's experience of the narrative is heightened by the use of *ekphrasis*; Dio provides countless details in his storytelling that allow the primary audience to actually construct the scene in its mind, enhancing the experience of participating in the narratives.<sup>15</sup> By making this implicit argument through the telling of Heracles' learning and success, Dio is not merely telling Trajan what a good king should do, but rather he has led Trajan toward discovering effective kingship on his own.<sup>16</sup>

Tim Whitmarsh has identified this indirect use of narrative to be a consistent rhetorical device in the discourses of Dio Chrysostom. He has labeled as "metapedagogic" narration a technique wherein the audience finds itself in the place of a character in the story. Whitmarsh notes that the primary audience is addressed through the secondary (or in many cases tertiary) audience's experience.<sup>17</sup> The fact that Dio does not explicitly connect narratives to the audience's situation, though such a connection seems rather clear, suggests the audience's experience of narrative is an integral part of rhetorical strategy. Dio's use of narrative reflects the conception of the narrative world projected by a text that we explored in the previous chapter. Dio's first kingship oration provides its audience an experience that matches Thomas Leitch's description of the

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<sup>15</sup> For example of *ekphrasis* in the 1<sup>st</sup> kingship oration, see his description of the elderly woman ("I saw a woman sitting, strong and tall though rather advanced in years, dressed like a rustic and with some braids of grey hair falling about her shoulders" [*Or.* 1.53]) or his description of Lady Tyranny ("Her raiment was of many colours, purple, scarlet and saffron, with patches of white, too, showing here and there from her skirts, since her cloak was torn in many places" [*Or.* 1.80]).

<sup>16</sup> I draw here on Wayne C. Booth's distinction between "telling" and "showing" (see Wayne C. Booth, *The Rhetoric of Fiction* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961], 3-22).

<sup>17</sup> See T. J. G. Whitmarsh, "Dio Chrysostom" (pp. 451-64 in *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*). A similar phenomenon is referred to as "poetic analogy" by Wilbur Samuel Howell: "The points of similarity between the spectator's sense of the meaning of life and the poet's sense of it as revealed in his story must outweigh the points of difference in order for the poetic analogy to be valid and true for the hearers" ("Rhetoric and Poetics: A Plea for the Recognition of Two Literatures," pp. 374-90 in *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honor of Harry Caplan* [ed. Luitpold Wallach; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966], 386).

rhetorical function of storytelling: “Stories are designed not primarily to provide information but to give their audience a certain kind of experience—the experience of making sense of a world designed precisely to respond to their attempts.”<sup>18</sup> Dio’s strategy involves unfolding before Trajan’s eyes the process by which Heracles learned the qualities of the good king.

I save a full discussion of narrative rhetoric in Dio Chrysostom for later in this chapter. My main point here is that Dio, and I argue Galatians, makes use of narrative in ways the rhetorical handbooks do not prescribe. The handbooks’ prescription of narration as a statement of facts or a rhetorical paradigm, the two uses often cited in Pauline studies, are insufficient to account for the way in which the narration persuades in Dio. The first kingship oration demonstrates the aesthetic proofs operable in the construction of narrative. The story does not function as a basis for deduction, and it is not merely an inductive example. Rather, it is in the experience of the unfolding narrative that the text functions as persuasive. Narrative in this discourse functions as the level of rhetorical invention, not arrangement. It is not a section of the speech, but rather a way in which Dio persuades beyond logical appeals. The narrative rhetoric of the first kingship oration can only be understood by following the effect the construction of narrative has on the oration’s audience. Such is also the case, I will argue, with the narratives in Galatians.

### **Narrative Rhetoric in the *Progymnasmata***

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<sup>18</sup> Thomas M. Leitch, *What Stories Are: Narrative Theory and Interpretation* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986), 199.

A better starting point than the rhetorical handbooks is available, namely texts from earlier levels of Greco-Roman rhetorical training, the elementary-level exercises (*progymnasmata*) that survive from antiquity.<sup>19</sup> The *progymnasmata* display the basic understanding of narrative rhetoric, upon which the handbooks are built.<sup>20</sup> These exercises provide a clear picture of the importance of narration in education and persuasive discourse. They demonstrate how narrative was understood as a persuasive weapon in the orator's arsenal, a creative construction by which an orator or writer could affect the audience's emotions and thereby change the audience's opinions or actions.<sup>21</sup>

The *progymnasmata* offer the added benefit of raising fewer doubts about whether Paul would have been familiar with these types of exercises.<sup>22</sup> The *progymnasmata* are more appropriate texts for understanding Paul's rhetoric.<sup>23</sup> As Todd

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<sup>19</sup> I use the lowercase *progymnasmata* to refer to the genre of literature in general. I will use the capitalized *Progymnasmata* to refer to specific texts, such as the *Progymnasmata* of Aelius Theon.

<sup>20</sup> D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson discuss "two distinct kinds of rhetorical textbooks: the general surveys, from Aristotle to Quintilian, in which epideictic is discussed in the context of the whole subject; and the practical books of preliminary exercises (*progymnasmata*) in which encomium is as regularly treated" (*Menander Rhetor: Edited with Translation and Commentary* [ed. D. A. Russell and N. G. Wilson; Oxford: Clarendon, 1981], xix); see also Thomas D. Frazel, *The Rhetoric of Cicero's "In Verrem,"* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 23-25.

<sup>21</sup> As I demonstrate, the *progymnasmata* address a broader audience of students than do the formal handbooks. I use the terms "orator," "author," "narrator," and "writer" throughout my analysis to speak of the implied student of the *progymnasmata*, recognizing that all are appropriate along with many others.

<sup>22</sup> For example, see the comments of R. Dean Anderson: "It would seem rather unlikely that Paul enjoyed a formal rhetorical training. . . . Paul, at the most, will have become acquainted with certain *progymnasmata*" (*Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* [rev. ed.; Leuven: Peeters, 1999], 277; emphasis original). Stanley E. Porter and Andrew W. Pitts suggest that, "[Paul] would have been able to perform the various requirements of the *progymnasmata*, been introduced to letter writing and style, and even had some basic rhetorical training" ("Paul's Bible, His Education, and His Access to the Scriptures of Israel," *JGRChJ* 5 [2008]: 35). Mikeal C. Parsons argues that a similar assumption is safe for Luke: "It would be fair to conclude also that [Luke] would have cut his rhetoric teeth on the *progymnasmata* tradition" (*Luke: Storyteller, Interpreter, Evangelist* [Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2007], 18).

<sup>23</sup> There has been a similar recent recognition about the education and sophistication level of Luke. Though past scholarship compared Luke with the great masters of Greek historiography, Vernon K. Robbins pithily corrects this comparison: "I am concerned that some who defend the historiographical nature of Luke and Acts leave the impression, whether they mean to or not, that Lukan discourse is virtually equivalent in kind to the writing present in Herodotus, Thucydides, and Polybius. It is not" ("The Claims of the Prologues and Greco-Roman Rhetoric: The Prefaces to Luke and Acts in Light of Greco-Roman Rhetorical Strategies," pp. 63-83 in *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel: Luke's Narrative Claim upon Israel's Legacy* (ed. David P. Moessner; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999), 65-66). This reorientation of the level of the

Penner suggests, Aristotle and Quintilian are the “adult” books, and Pauline interpreters are in need of the “children’s” books, which function as the assumption of these handbooks, speak to a broader context of rhetorical composition, and may more naturally fit the socio-economic and education level of the apostle Paul.<sup>24</sup>

### *An Introduction to the Progymnasmata*

The *progymnasmata* comprise a broad genre of texts, collections of schoolroom exercises dating from antiquity through the middle ages.<sup>25</sup> Though these texts have most often played a role in studies of education in antiquity, scholars across disciplines have begun to appreciate these exercises as aids in understanding ancient rhetorical theory and in interpreting ancient oratory.<sup>26</sup> The exercises formed the beginning of a student’s formal rhetorical training.<sup>27</sup> Quintilian recommends the use of preliminary exercises, similar to

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rhetoric of Luke-Acts began in large part with the work of Loveday Alexander (see “Formal Elements and Genre: Which Greco-Roman Prologues Most Closely Parallel the Lukan Prologues,” pp. 9-26 in *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel*).

<sup>24</sup> “New Testament scholars are so quick to think like adults—to replicate the world of teachers, to reinscribe the patterns of guildish learning—forgetting in fact that our own formative ways of knowing were shaped as children. How might this basic recognition affect our thinking about rhetoric and poetics?” (“Reconfiguring,” 431).

<sup>25</sup> There has been increased scholarly interest in these exercises, though they have always been a part of the standard treatments of education in antiquity. For a thorough introduction, see Ruth Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” pp. 289-316 in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* (ed. Yun Lee Too; Leiden: Brill, 2001).

<sup>26</sup> For treatment of the *progymnasmata* within discussions of ancient education, see Henri Irénée Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (trans. G. Lamb; New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 172-75; Donald Lemen Clark, *Rhetoric in Greco-Roman Education* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1957), 177-212. Recent work on the *progymnasmata* and ancient oratory include the following examples: Webb, “*Progymnasmata* as Practice”; Frazel, *The Rhetoric of Cicero’s “In Verrem,”* esp. 23-70.

<sup>27</sup> For the role of the *progymnasmata* in ancient education, see James L. Kinneavy, *A Theory of Discourse* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1971), 6-8; Ronald F. Hock and Edward N. O’Neill, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* (Writings from the Greco-Roman World; Leiden: Brill, 2002), 81-93; George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), x-xi; Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 41-42. The *progymnasmata* sit at the recently-blurred boundary between the first two levels of the traditionally-described three-tiered education system of antiquity. For a general discussion of education in the Greco-Roman world, focusing on the three-tiered system see Marrou, *History*, esp. pp. 172-75 on the *progymnasmata*; S. F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From the Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* (London: Methuen, 1977). For a more recent discussion

those we find in the extant *progymnasmata*, in the beginning stages of his ideal education for young men.<sup>28</sup> This initial training was assumed for formal rhetorical training.<sup>29</sup>

Ancient orators recognized the benefit of these exercises as providing students the opportunity to compose set-pieces which could then be inserted into later declamations.<sup>30</sup>

More importantly, they trained young students in the techniques of persuasion, techniques to be developed in more advanced rhetorical training, the height of education in the ancient world.<sup>31</sup> The importance of the *progymnasmata*, though, goes beyond their

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of the blurring of the first two levels, including the proposal of two distinct paths based on social class, see Alan Booth, "Elementary and Secondary Education in the Roman Empire," *Florilegium* 1 (1979): 1-14; *idem*, "The Schooling of Slaves in First-Century Rome," *TAPA* 109 (1979): 11-19; Robert A. Kaster, "Notes on 'Primary' and 'Secondary' Schools in Late Antiquity," *TAPA* 113 (1983): 323-46; *idem*, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (The Transformation of the Classical Heritage; Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1988). Booth has argued for a two-track system, wherein lower class students received basic training in common literacy, and there was a second track for the upper class students, who received their basic training in the home. He suggests there was a small opportunity for some to jump from one track to the other. Kaster affirms this two-track system as more likely than the traditional three-tiered system of Marrou, but he is not willing to accept it as typical in all parts of the empire. He suggests the evidence supports the socially-fragmented systems in major urban centers, but that cannot be extrapolated to include all education. Instead he argues for a more diverse picture of educational institutions. Raffaella Criboire recognizes the recent work but notes the old model "is still realistic enough to represent properly the characteristics and functions of the various levels and the tension among the different aims and audiences that each targeted" (*Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001], 2). For a discussion of Paul's education within these proposed systems, see Porter and Pitts, "Paul's Bible," esp. 11-21; Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 20-23; Ronald F. Hock, "Paul and Greco-Roman Education," pp. 198-227 in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook* (ed. J. Paul Sampley; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003).

<sup>28</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 1.9. See also Suetonius, *De grammaticis et rhetoribus* 25.4. Quintilian suggests that in (his) contemporary times, the duty of teaching the *progymnasmata* has fallen almost completely on the *grammaticus*, whereas previously it was split between the *grammaticus* and the rhetor (see *Inst. Orat.* 1.9.6; 2.1.1-3). For a discussion of Quintilian and the *progymnasmata*, see James J. Murphy, "Roman Writing Instruction as Described by Quintilian," pp. 36-74 in *A Short History of Writing Instruction: From Ancient Greece to Contemporary America* (ed. James J. Murphy; Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, 2001), 52-61.

<sup>29</sup> Criboire helpfully highlights the athletic imagery authors used to speak about the education process, imagery present even in the name of these preliminary exercises (*Gymnastics of the Mind*, esp. 221-23).

<sup>30</sup> Webb quotes C. S. Baldwin's colorful comments on the orators using set-pieces composed beforehand: "Apparently a boy could carry this peacock [composed as an example of the exercise of *ekphrasis*] from school to the platform and continue to use it with merely verbal variations" (C. S. Baldwin, *Medieval Rhetoric and Poetic (to 1400) Interpreted from Representative Works* [New York: MacMillan, 1928], 18 [quoted in Webb, "The *Progymnasmata* as Practice," 290n4]).

<sup>31</sup> Webb argues, "The most important thing that students learned by working through the *Progymnasmata* was not rules as such but a set of practices and skills that could be put to use in (or transferred to) the composition of full-scale speeches or other types of composition" (*Ekphrasis*, 17-18).

introducing young aristocrats to the world of rhetoric. If education in the ancient world is understood as a pyramid, with fewer and fewer students reaching the top levels of rhetorical training, the *progymnasmata* are important even for those who “fell off,” who never finished or never went beyond the middle stages of education.<sup>32</sup> Ancient scribes, bankers, farmers, and even common tent-makers would have reaped the benefits of these exercises. As Teresa Morgan argues, “Many elementary rhetorical exercises were used to teach ways of speaking and writing which have little in common with the rhetoric we might associate with oratory, but which had features which might be more widely useful than those of formal oratory.”<sup>33</sup> The exercises also provided students with a broad introduction to the stories and characters of ancient literature that would become standard models of later composition.<sup>34</sup> Ruth Webb helpfully summarizes the importance of the *progymnasmata*: “As the gateway through which every rhetorically educated person passed (and the final stage in the education of those who could not find the time or the money to achieve a full rhetorical training), [the *progymnasmata*] reveal assumptions about the language and ways of reading exemplary classical authors which were inculcated at an early age.”<sup>35</sup>

Consideration of the *progymnasmata* has been an important addition to New Testament studies, primarily in the study of the gospels.<sup>36</sup> This attention mirrors classical

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<sup>32</sup> The image of the pyramid is found throughout treatments of ancient education. For discussion, see Kaster, “Notes on ‘Primary’ and ‘Secondary’ Schools in Late Antiquity”; Criboire, *Gymnastics of the Mind*, 1-12; Murphy, “Roman Writing Instruction,” 39-40.

<sup>33</sup> Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 197.

<sup>34</sup> See Webb, “*Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 289-91

<sup>35</sup> *Ekphrasis*, 17.

<sup>36</sup> See, for example, the review of Kennedy’s edition by Michael W. Martin and Mikeal C. Parsons (*JBL* 123 [2004]: 180-183). See also Mikeal C. Parsons, “Luke and the *Progymnasmata*: A Preliminary Investigation into the Preliminary Exercises” pp. 43-63 in *Contextualizing Acts* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). For use of the *progymnasmata* in study of the gospels, see the following: Philip

scholars' growing interest in the *progymnasmata* for understanding ancient oratory.<sup>37</sup> New Testament scholars have often found helpful the discussion of the elaboration of the *chreia* in the *progymnasmata* for understanding the construction of narrative vignettes in the gospels centered on the sayings of Jesus.<sup>38</sup> Likewise, the exercises in narrative in the *progymnasmata* have been used to study persuasion in Luke-Acts, both in the speeches as well as the narrative sections.<sup>39</sup> These exercises, though, have had a less pronounced impact on rhetorical studies of Paul, where the more advanced handbooks have functioned as the primary comparative texts.<sup>40</sup> But, given the limitations of the handbooks for understanding the type of argumentation in Galatians, the *progymnasmata* are a promising source of comparative material for Pauline studies. D. A. Russell notes, "If we

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L. Shuler, *A Genre for the Gospels: The Biographical Character of Matthew* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982), 47-57; Burton L. Mack and Vernon K. Robbins, *Patterns of Persuasion in the Gospels* (Sonoma, CA: Polebridge Press, 1989), esp. 31-35; Mary Ann Beavis, "Parable and Fable: Synoptic Parables and Greco-Roman Fables Compared," *CBQ* 52 (1990): 473-98; Vernon K. Robbins, "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition and Pre-Gospel Traditions: A New Approach," pp. 111-47 in *The Synoptic Gospels: Source Criticism and the New Literary Criticism* (ed. Camille Focant; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1993); *idem*, "The Claims of the Prologues"; Michael W. Martin, "Progymnastic Topic Lists: A Compositional Template for Luke and Other *Bioi*?" *NTS* 54 (2008): 18-41; *idem*, *Judas and the Rhetoric of Comparison in the Fourth Gospel* (Sheffield: Sheffield University Press, 2010).

<sup>37</sup> See, for example, Burton L. Mack, "Decoding the Scripture: Philo and the Rules of Rhetoric," pp. 81-115 in *Nourished with Peace: Studies in Hellenistic Judaism in Memory of Samuel Sandmel* (ed. F. E. Greenspahn, et al.; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984); Michael W. Martin, "Philo's Use of Synchrisis: An Examination of Philonic Composition in the Light of the Progymnasmata" *PRSt* 30 (2003): 271-97; Arti Mehta, "How Do Fables Teach? Reading the World of the Fable in Greek, Latin and Sanskrit Narratives" (PhD diss.; Indiana University, 2008); Webb, *Ekphrasis*.

<sup>38</sup> See particularly Vernon K. Robbins, "Pronouncement Stories and Jesus' Blessing of the Children: A Rhetorical Approach," *Semeia* 29 (1983): 42-74; Burton L. Mack, "Teaching in Parables: Elaboration in Mark 4:1-34," pp. 81-115 in *Patterns of Persuasion*.

<sup>39</sup> For example, see Parsons, *Luke: Storyteller Interpreter, Evangelist*, esp. 41-47; Todd C. Penner, "Reconfiguring the Rhetorical Study of Acts: Reflections on the Method in and Learning of Progymnastic Poetics," *Perspectives in Religious Studies* 30 (2003): 425-39.

<sup>40</sup> This is not to say that Paul has not been studied through the lens of the *progymnasmata* at all. For examples, see Benjamin J. Fiore, *The Function of Personal Example in the Socratic and the Pastoral Epistles* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1986), 42-44; Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1996), 19-62; Ronald F. Hock, "Paul and Greco-Roman Education," pp. 198-227 in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook* (ed. J. Paul Sampley; Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2003); Matthew E. Gordley, *The Colossian Hymn in Context* (WUNT; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 112-23.

ask ourselves what is more likely to have influenced the future writer, the answer that suggests itself is ‘the exercises rather than the theory.’”<sup>41</sup>

Several collections of preliminary exercises survive, with a degree of literary interdependence among them. My primary focus is on the elementary exercises of Aelius Theon.<sup>42</sup> Probably dating from the first century C.E., this is the earliest extant set of exercises and the only one roughly contemporary with Paul.<sup>43</sup> Theon instructs the teachers of grammar students, offering exercises to be used prior to formal rhetorical

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<sup>41</sup> D. A. Russell, “Rhetoric and Criticism,” *Greece and Rome* 14 (1967): 140. These words are also quoted with approval in an argument for consideration of the *progymnasmata* in studies of Cicero by Thomas D. Frazel (*The Rhetoric of Cicero’s “In Verrem,”* 15).

<sup>42</sup> The standard English translation is George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003). Quotations in this study are taken from Kennedy, with slight changes. For the critical text of Aelius Theon’s *Progymnasmata* used in this study, along with an alternative English translation and commentary, see J. Butts, “The ‘Progymnasmata’ of Theon: A New Text with Translation and Commentary” (Ph.D. diss., The Claremont Graduate School, 1987). For an alternative critical text and French translation, see Theon, *Progymnasmata* (ed. and trans. Michel Patillon and G. Bolognesi; Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1997). Theon’s chapter on the *chreia* is available in Hock and O’Neill, *The Chreia in Ancient Rhetoric*, pp. 61-112. For a review of the various *progymnasmata* and their relation to one another, see Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 43-47. One of the difficulties is the various arrangements of the text of Theon’s *Progymnasmata*. For a review, see Butts, “Progymnasmata,” 8-22. For simplicity, I here refer to the page numbers of volume 2 of Spengel’s *Rhetores Graeci*, which Kennedy also prints (see Leonardus Spengel, ed., *Rhetores Graeci* [3 vols.; Leipzig: Teubner, 1854-56]) (e.g. Theon 87). There is, though, a gap in the Spengel text, which Kennedy fills with the reconstructed text from Patillon and Bolognesi. I follow Kennedy, indicating these pages, as he does, with a notation of P (e.g. Theon 103P). For the other *progymnasmata*, I likewise follow Kennedy’s use of the Spengel pagination for Aphthonius the Sophist (e.g. Aphthonius the Sophist 21; see Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 95-96), the Joseph Felten pagination for Nicolaus the Sophist (e.g. Nicolaus the Sophist 1; see Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 129-31; Joseph Felten, ed., *Nicolai Progymnasmata* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1913]), and the Hugo Rabe pagination for Hermogenes and John of Sardis (e.g. Hermogenes 1; John of Sardis 1; see Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 73-74; Hugo Rabe, ed., *Hermogenes Opera* [Leipzig: Teubner, 1913]).

<sup>43</sup> It is difficult to date this text with precision, though most recent work argues for a first-century C.E. dating (see Butts, “Progymnasmata,” 1-6; Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 1-3; Craig A. Gibson, “Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on Progymnasmata,” *CP* 99 (2004): 104). However some still maintain a fourth- or fifth-century C.E. date (see Malcolm Heath, “Theon and the History of the Progymnasmata,” *GRBS* 43 [2002/2003]: 129-160). Thomas D. Frazel, reading Cicero in light of Theon, argues that the first-century Theon is heavily dependent upon far older traditions (*The Rhetoric of Cicero’s “In Verrem,”* 26-28). Theon cites Dionysius of Halicarnassus (Theon, 69), and therefore the text as we have it can be no earlier than the first century B.C.E.. It is possible that Quintilian knows the work of Aelius Theon, as he cites a certain “Theon the Stoic” in his discussion of stasis theory (see *Inst. Orat.* 3.6.48). If this is the same person, then the exercises can be no later than c. 95 C.E. Regardless of the exact date of composition, Theon’s exercises likely represent an education system in place during Paul’s lifetime. For summary comments on dating, see Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 1-3.

training.<sup>44</sup> His exercises imply that he is reflecting common educational practice, and the scant direct references to *progymnasmata* in antiquity confirm that his exercises were typical.<sup>45</sup> He outlines “what it is necessary to know before undertaking the treatment of hypotheses in order to be properly trained.”<sup>46</sup> Theon introduces his exercises by highlighting their fundamental role in education:

Training in exercises is absolutely useful not only to those who are going to practice rhetoric but also if one wishes to undertake the function of poets or historians or any other writers. These things are, as it were, the foundation of every kind of discourse, and depending on how one instills them in the mind of the young, necessarily the results make themselves felt in the same way later.<sup>47</sup>

Theon organizes his exercises into a “curriculum,” wherein students progress through increasingly complex and original exercises.<sup>48</sup> It is not clear how the exercises

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<sup>44</sup> On the audience of Theon’s *Progymnasmata*, see Butts, “Progymnasmata,” 23.

<sup>45</sup> The implication that he is continuing a common practice can be seen in the preface: “I shall now try to give an account of what it is necessary to know before undertaking the treatment of hypotheses in order to be properly training, not that others have not written about these matters, but hoping that I too can contribute no little benefit to those intending to speak in public. We have not only invented some additions to the exercises (*gymnasmata*) as described by others, but also we have tried to give a definition of each” (Theon, 3-4). As mentioned previously, references to these types of exercises are found in Suetonius (*de Gramm.* 25.4) and Quintilian (*Inst. Orat.* 1.9).

<sup>46</sup> Theon 59.

<sup>47</sup> Theon 70.

<sup>48</sup> On ordering of the exercises, see Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 296-98; Russell, “Rhetoric and Criticism,” 140-41. There has been much discussion, as far back as the medieval commentaries, regarding the ordering of the exercises, but “all the discussions of the *progymnasmata* make clear that the exercises gradually increase in difficulty” (Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 298; cf. Clark, *Rhetoric*, 181). For example, John of Sardis, in his (likely) ninth-century commentary on the *Progymnasmata* of Aphthonius, says “in the progymnasmata one should begin first from the easier ones, and this is the fable” (John of Sardis 1-4). Throughout the commentary, John of Sardis begins each section with acknowledging the debate surrounding the ordering. Aphthonius gives detailed examples of the various exercises, and they grow significantly in length from the shorter fable and narrative to the longer, more complicated exercises, such as *thesis*. Quintilian seems to divide the *progymnasmata* into two sections, one which is ideally taught by the *grammaticus*, one by the rhetor. Exercises in narrative are right at the dividing line. He argues a student should advance to rhetorical training “as soon as the pupil gets to Narratives and short Encomia and Vituperations” (*Inst. Orat.* 2.1.8 [Heinemann, LCL]). In his treatment of

might have functioned, and it is likely that different teachers used these types of exercises in different ways.<sup>49</sup> Progression through the exercises may have taken place within a single level of education or across grammatical and rhetorical training.<sup>50</sup> It is also likely that many students never made it through the entire program.<sup>51</sup> The ordering of the exercises, though, is important, as it reveals a pedagogical strategy inherent in the design of the *progymnasmata*. Theon's and the other *progymnasmata* guide students through exercises in order of increasing complexity; the exercises move the student from simply repeating models to composing original works, a progression Morgan calls "the pupil's transition from passive recipient of education to active user of it."<sup>52</sup>

I approach the *progymnasmata* in three steps to show how narrative rhetoric was understood by and taught to ancient authors. First, I look broadly at the pedagogical strategy of the *progymnasmata* to show how students learned the stories of the classic authors to gain the ability to use and adapt them. My analysis confirms Vernon K. Robbins' argument that students of antiquity were engaged in the "re-performance" of traditions, an indication of the "rhetorical culture" in which the ancient student lived.<sup>53</sup> This insight helps to show how dominant the telling of stories was in early education and how from the beginning students were taught to see tradition as fluid, always being

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the *progymnasmata* in rhetorical education, he begins with narrative, but notes that this overlaps with what the student learns from the *grammaticus* (*Inst. Orat.* 2.4).

<sup>49</sup> Teresa Morgan notes, "We cannot be sure whether a pupil was expected to work systematically through the *progymnasmata*, or whether they acted as a reference work of all possible exercises" (*Literate Education*, 192-93). On the likely diversity of use of the *progymnasmata*, see Webb, "The *Progymnasmata* as Practice," 297. For one presentation of how they are to be implemented, see Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 1.9.

<sup>50</sup> Some have suggested a shift from the time of Quintilian, who assumes that some lessons are taught by the grammarian and some by the rhetor (see *Inst. Orat.* 1.9), to the time of Suetonius, who says that none of the exercises are taught by the rhetor (see *de Grammaticis* 4.4-6; 25.4; see the comments in Kaster, 279-80)

<sup>51</sup> Teresa Morgan uses Egyptian papyri of students' actual exercises to "widen a little what we understand as the aims and effects of learning rhetoric, especially on pupils who may not have reached the end of the *progymnasmata*, the dizzy heights of the Roman senate or lawcourts, or the panegyric delivered to kings and emperors" (*Literate Education*, 197).

<sup>52</sup> Morgan, *Literate Education*, 198.

<sup>53</sup> See Robbins, "Progymnastic Rhetorical Composition," esp. pp. 116-21.

rewritten. It is this mode of “re-performance” that I argue is a major rhetorical strategy in Galatians.

Second, I look specifically at Theon’s exercises in narrative and show how his students learned to view narrative as a complex, creative act, wherein the author plays a key role in constructing narratives out of events. Whereas the more formal rhetorical handbooks had little to say about the composition of narrative, many of Theon’s exercises teach students the skill and art of narrative. Theon’s chapter of specific exercises on narrative (*περὶ διηγήματος*) garners most of my attention, but the student’s exposure to the skills of organizing events into narratives can be found through other exercises, particularly in the chapters on fable.

Third, I look at the persuasive element of these lessons, that is, the dominant function that the writer’s perception of his audience plays in his composition. I show that through the lessons of the *progymnasmata*, ancient students learned how to persuade an audience through the varied construction of narratives.

### *The Pedagogical Strategy of the Progymnasmata*

The student’s initial role was as a recipient. These elementary exercises provide a picture of just how saturated with stories the student in antiquity was. Theon’s *progymnasmata* are typical of the focus in ancient education on the learning and memorization of narratives from ancient poetry and prose, and they mark the point at which the student begins to use those examples for his own composition.<sup>54</sup> In his opening

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<sup>54</sup> See the discussion of “the shaping of identity through the repetition of models or paradigms, usually drawn from the literature of the fifth and fourth centuries” in education in Roman Greece in Whitmarsh, *Greek Literature and the Roman Empire*, 92.

chapter, “On the Education of the Young,” Theon advises that, “The teacher should collect good examples of each exercise from ancient prose works, and assign them to the young to be learned by heart.”<sup>55</sup> He recommends the standard set of classics—Herodotus, Thucydides, Demosthenes, Plato—for use in the classroom.<sup>56</sup> The examples he cites throughout the exercises come from such familiar sources. Theon shows little concern for the literary genre of individual works when citing examples. Instead, he recommends that all genres be mined for the persuasive techniques he is teaching.<sup>57</sup> Poetic verse is used as an example of persuasive narration just as historiography is used as an example of encomium.<sup>58</sup> Theon teaches his students to see all literature as persuasive discourse; as Webb summarizes, the *progymnasmata* “encouraged the reading of classical literature, whether poetry, history or oratory, through a rhetorical lens.”<sup>59</sup>

Theon’s emphasis on knowledge of the classic authors is consistent with a general picture of ancient education; ancient students spent an impressive amount of time reading, memorizing, and rewriting examples of poetry and prose.<sup>60</sup> As H. I. Marrou summarizes, “Education was not so much concerned to develop the reasoning faculty as

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<sup>55</sup> Theon 65-66.

<sup>56</sup> On the standard authors used for imitation in Hellenistic education, see Clark, *Rhetoric*, 150-57; Graham Anderson, *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993), 69-85; Kinneavy, *Theory*, 6. On the “canonization” of the classics, see Marrou, *History*, 163-64. Compare Theon’s list to Quintilian’s recommended reading (*Inst. Orat.* 2.5; 10). Dionysius of Halicarnassus seemingly provided recommendations in Book 2 his now lost *On Imitation* (see Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius, 3). A summary and quotations from that text by the author himself are extant in chapters 3-6 of his Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius, where he describes the relative merits of Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, Philistus, and Theopompus. See also Dio Chrysostom’s recommendations in *Oration 18*.

<sup>57</sup> This point that in the *progymnasmata* genres are “functionally irrelevant” is made particularly clear in Penner, “Reconfiguring,” esp. 436-37.

<sup>58</sup> See, for example, the use of Homer in explaining narrative (Theon 80) and the use of Thucydides in explaining encomium (Theon 110).

<sup>59</sup> Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 307.

<sup>60</sup> For a discussion of the importance of the classics in the formation of writing and morality, and how that model continues with different texts in early Christianity, see Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 51-57.

to hand on its literary heritage of great masterpieces.”<sup>61</sup> Even from the time that the student was learning Greek vocabulary, he learned the names of the characters of the classics, most notably Homer.<sup>62</sup> This immersion in the classics continued up the levels of primary education, as students’ first exposure to sentences came in the form of memorizing and repeating lines from classic narratives.<sup>63</sup> At the time the student could read and write, he moved to the level of grammatical education, where much of his time was spent reading the classics and, based on exercises like the *progymnasmata*, rewriting the classics.

The most thorough ancient discussion of education, Quintilian’s *Institutes*, likewise demonstrates the use of ancient examples of prose and poetry in educating the young.<sup>64</sup> Quintilian’s “handbook” on rhetoric is a significant departure from discussions of oratory that preceded him, as he aims to ground oratory in a program of education, arguing that the best orator is not the one who knows the rules of oratory best, but the one who is best educated.<sup>65</sup> This broadening of oratory is consistent with general changes in

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<sup>61</sup> Marrou, *History*, 162.

<sup>62</sup> Marrou, *History*, 152. Marrou points out that the difficulty of pronouncing proper names was likely the reason. Marrou interestingly notes that one of the first sentences students learned to write was “Homer was not a man but a god” (*History*, 162). On the dominance of Homer’s epics in early education, see also A. A. Long, “Stoic Readings of Homer,” pp. 41-66 in *Homer’s Ancient Readers* (ed. Robert Lamberton and John J. Keaney; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), 44.

<sup>63</sup> “If we turn to any third-century manual we shall find isolated words immediately followed by selected passages from Euripides or Homer” (Marrou, *History*, 153).

<sup>64</sup> See *Inst. Orat.* 1.4.5. John D. O’Banion suggests, “It is hard to overstate the importance of literature in Quintilian’s pedagogical theory” (“Narration and Argumentation: Quintilian on *Narratio* as the Heart of Rhetorical Thinking,” *Rhetorica* 5 [1987]: 325-51). For a clear introduction to Quintilian’s education “program,” see James J. Murphy, *Quintilian on the Teaching of Speaking and Writing: Translations from Books One, Two, and Ten of the Institutio Oratoria* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1987), ix-xliv; Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 77-79.

<sup>65</sup> Quintilian begins his *Institutes* by outlining his task as setting rhetoric within a broader education: “It is impossible to reach the summit in any subject unless we have first passed through all the elementary stages. . . . My aim, then, is the education of the perfect orator” (*Inst. Orat.* 1. Pr. 5, 9 [Butler, LCL]). He criticizes previous “dry textbooks on the art of rhetoric” for their exclusive focus on the “bare bones.” He instead is focusing on everything that is required for the complete education of the orator (see *Inst. Orat.* 1.Pr. 24-25).

Quintilian's contemporary Roman education.<sup>66</sup> In discussing the earliest stages of education under the rhetor, Quintilian admits that reading examples of prose and oratory together "will contribute more to the learners than all the textbooks of all the writers on rhetoric."<sup>67</sup> He recommends the teacher read prose, poetry and oratory with students in both grammatical and rhetorical education.<sup>68</sup>

The classics were read not merely to learn the content of these stories, but also so students could learn proper rhetorical form and moral formation, through "a kind of intelligent osmosis."<sup>69</sup> Quintilian's program reflects what James Murphy has called a "seven-step process of Imitation" in Roman education wherein students progressed from hearing example texts read aloud, to carefully breaking down the grammatical and rhetorical forms in the text, to paraphrasing or recasting these texts as original compositions.<sup>70</sup> Throughout the program of education, this basic process of reading and retelling continued, though the models studied, judged, and imitated increased in complexity. Students spent much time analyzing and paraphrasing example texts, learning the skills of their predecessors as well as developing their own style of narration. Quintilian shows concern for which authors are being read in the students at the earliest stages of rhetorical training, warning that reading authors with bad style will allow

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<sup>66</sup> For the changes in education in the first century BCE and the first century CE, see Murphy, "Roman Writing Instruction," esp. 20-34. A snapshot of this change can be seen in Cicero's two "handbooks" of rhetoric. In his earlier *de Inventione*, he offers a basic outline of the rules of oratory that a would-be orator is to follow. In his later, more mature dialogue on oratory, *de Oratore*, written some thirty years later, emphasizes the role of a general education in forming the proper rhetor: "If one had to choose between them, for my own part I should prefer wisdom lacking power of expression to talkative folly; but if on the contrary we are trying to find the one thing that stands top of the whole list, the prize must go to the orator who possesses learning" (*de Orat.* 3.35.142-43). This influence for this change is often attributed to the Greek system of rhetorical training (see Murphy, "Roman Writing Instruction," 38-39).

<sup>67</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 2.5.14 (Heinemann, LCL).

<sup>68</sup> On reading at the grammatical level, see *Inst. Orat.* 1.8. On reading at the rhetorical level, see *Inst. Orat.* 2.5.

<sup>69</sup> Murphy, "Roman Writing Instruction," 52.

<sup>70</sup> See Murphy, "Roman Writing Instruction," 45-53.

mediocre students to “think themselves on a par with these great men” and reading compositions with indulgent style will lead them “to fall in love with that luscious sweetness which is all the more attractive to boys because it is closer to their natural instincts.”<sup>71</sup> As D. L. Clark notes, “Imitation as a guide to speakers and writers, as a rhetorical exercise, is concerned, not with the speaker’s or writer’s matter, but with his manner of speaking or writing. It is concerned not with what he says, but with how he says it.”<sup>72</sup> It is the structure of the literature that provided the examples the students would need for the production of speeches with new content. As Quintilian notes, “Those who criticize the art of teaching literature as trivial and lacking in substance put themselves out of court. Unless the foundations of oratory are well and truly laid by the teaching of literature, the superstructure will collapse.”<sup>73</sup>

The classic stories not only taught rhetorical technique, but also moral lessons: students learned that all stories have potential to persuade, to determine moral action.<sup>74</sup> The ancients’ concern over the benefits and dangers of literature are well-expressed in Plato’s *Republic*. Plato’s Socrates acknowledges that the telling of true and fictional stories forms the basis of children’s education, and he warns that stories must be censored, lest children learn untoward behavior, suggesting, “We should do our utmost that the first stories that they hear should be so composed as to bring the fairest lessons of

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<sup>71</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 2.5.21-22 (Heinemann, LCL). Quintilian also argues that, “These tender minds, which will be deeply affected by whatever is impressed upon them in their untrained ignorance, should learn not only eloquent passages but, even more, passages which are morally improving” (*Inst. Orat.* 1.8.4 [Heinemann, LCL]).

<sup>72</sup> Clark, *Rhetoric*, 145. Longinus likewise recommends “imitation and emulation of great writers of the past” as a “road to sublimity” (see *On the Sublime* 13.2-14.3).

<sup>73</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 1.4.5 (Butler, LCL).

<sup>74</sup> See the discussion in Strabo, *Geography* 1.2.3-9. He presents his Stoic view as a counter to those who argue poetry is for entertainment purposes.

virtue to their ears.”<sup>75</sup> Plutarch likewise calls a father to vigilance to ensure that the young learn positive lessons from poetry. In using his own example from the classic Homeric narrative, he suggests students cannot avoid the moral implications of reading the classics, but their teachers must control what they read: “Shall we then stop the ears of the young, as those of the Ithacans were stopped, with a hard and unyielding wax?”<sup>76</sup> Plutarch further warns a father that what makes poetry attractive to the young is not its meter and rhyme, but rather the presence of elaborate and alluring narrative.<sup>77</sup> For Plutarch, the critical recognition is that “from the actions themselves the poets supply other lessons.”<sup>78</sup> By reading narratives audiences learn the causes and consequences of action. The depiction of mean or inappropriate action can properly teach about such action “if it also represents as it should the disgrace and injury resulting to the doers thereof.”<sup>79</sup> The most effective poetry is that which imitates action in a plausible way.<sup>80</sup> The ancient student was well familiar with the narratives of the classic authors, and it is from these classics that they learned to compose and to live.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> *Republic* 378e (Shorey, LCL). See also *Protagoras* 325-26.

<sup>76</sup> Plutarch, “How to Study Poetry,” 15 (Babbitt, LCL). Plutarch’s reference to Homer itself demonstrates the prominence of the stories of the classics, as he assumes his audience knows this common story from the *Odyssey* (see Homer, *Odyssey* 12).

<sup>77</sup> “For not metre nor figure of speech nor loftiness of diction nor aptness of metaphor nor unity of composition has so much allurements and charm, as a clever interweaving of a fabulous narrative (διάθεσις μυθολογίας)” (“How to Study Poetry” 16 [Babbitt, LCL]).

<sup>78</sup> “How to Study Poetry” 19 (Babbitt, LCL).

<sup>79</sup> “How to Study Poetry” 20 (Babbitt, LCL).

<sup>80</sup> For example, Plutarch argues that poetry that depicts purely good or purely evil characters will not be effective, as such extremes do not exist in reality.

<sup>81</sup> It may be suggested that if Paul’s familiarity with the elementary exercises can be granted, then it is rather odd that he does not demonstrate knowledge of the Greek classics (with the possible exception of Titus 1:12; cf. Acts 17:28). For Paul it seems that the “Jewish classics” have taken the place of the texts used in Theon’s *Progymnasmata*. Significantly, though, Paul’s exegetical and rhetorical techniques are consistent with the practices of Greco-Roman education. Paul is not unique in this use of Greco-Roman methods on Jewish texts. For discussion of the rise of the Bible as a classic in early Christianity, see Frances Young, *Biblical Exegesis*, 49-116. For the relationship between Jewish reading practices and Greco-Roman rhetoric, see David Daube, “Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 22 (1949): 239-64.

In the *progymnasmata* the canon of classic examples served not as “a static, untouchable monument,” but rather the material from which the student learned to compose his own persuasive discourse.<sup>82</sup> The exercises assume that all literature is read through the lens of rhetoric, and that the student further learned to alter these classic stories in order to produce a variety of rhetorical effects. The classics, therefore, function as a data set with which the student could play. The basic pedagogical strategy of the *progymnasmata* leads students to take a given example from classic literature or one provided by the teacher and to alter it to create different effects within an audience.<sup>83</sup> The student learns, therefore, original composition as a re-writing of existing compositions, a re-telling of classic narratives. The line between one student’s imitation of an example and another’s original creation is continually blurred in these exercises.<sup>84</sup> Penner summarizes well the “mimetic spirit,” perhaps even a “mimetic desire,” engendered in the *progymnasmata*, working to inculcate the student with a “correlation between the replication of culture and the production of speech-acts.”<sup>85</sup>

The implication of this “mimetic spirit” is significant for an understanding of ancient rhetoric, not merely at the higher levels reflected in the handbooks, but across the educational spectrum. In learning to compose, students first learned to reproduce, to paraphrase, and to rewrite past examples. These exercises taught a fluid understanding of tradition, prompting students to recognize an author’s creativity not necessarily in the composing of stories anew, but rather in the reshaping of stories that everyone knows,

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<sup>82</sup> Webb, “The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 314.

<sup>83</sup> Robbins refers to the “re-performance of well-known traditions” as the rhetorical strategy of the *progymnasmata* (“Claims of the Prologues,” 67).

<sup>84</sup> For a similar blurring in second-century Christianity, see David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 127-44.

<sup>85</sup> “Reconfiguring,” 432. Penner applies this insight to Luke-Acts, noting the consistent rewriting of classic stories in those texts.

presenting these stories in different ways to produce different rhetorical effects.<sup>86</sup> An orator narrates events not merely so that the audience will know the facts of the case, but rather so that the audience will know the orator's version of the facts of the case and make a decision thereupon. Even the classics were understood to be part of an ever-evolving sense of tradition.<sup>87</sup>

Examples throughout Theon's *Progymnasmata* demonstrate this pedagogical approach. A basic exercise prompts the student to take a given fable and to inflect it in different grammatical cases.<sup>88</sup> Theon notes, "The original grammatical construction must not always be maintained as though by some necessary law."<sup>89</sup> He gives the example of the myth of Phaedo the Socratic, who first tells a myth as indirect discourse, in the accusative case, and then retells the same myth as direct discourse, in the nominative. The facts of the story remain the same, but the student learns to alter the presentation. As exercises become more complex, this basic mode of rewriting the example remains. For example, Aphthonius the Sophist gives examples first of a confirmation and then of a

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<sup>86</sup> This insight into the fluid view of tradition in Paul's context has important implications for my reading of Galatians, implications that are demonstrated in subsequent chapters. Paul's presentation of Israel's story is a re-telling of Israel's history, organized for the rhetorical situation that he faces. Examples of such retellings can be found in Jewish literature at the time. For examples, see Jubilees, Genesis Apocryphon, Josephus' *Antiquities*, Pseudo-Philo's *Biblical Antiquities*, and the *Assumption of Moses*. For a discussion of this well-documented phenomenon in Hellenistic Judaism, see Geza Vermes, *Scripture and Tradition in Judaism: Haggadic Studies* (Studia Post-Biblica 4; Leiden: Brill, 1961); D. J. Harrington, "Palestinian Adaptations of Biblical Narratives and Prophecies," pp. 239-47 in *Early Judaism and Its Modern Interpreters* (ed. Robert A. Kraft and George W. E. Nickelsburg; SBLBIM 2; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986); P. S. Alexander, "Retelling the Old Testament," pp. 99-121 in *It is Written: Scripture Citing Scripture. Essays in Honour of Barnabas Lindars* (ed. D. A. Carson and H. G. M. Williamson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

<sup>87</sup> This hermenutic of retelling is particularly clear in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, a retelling of Greek mythology from a Roman perspective. This reshaping of the classics for particular rhetorical purposes can be seen in Hellenistic Judaism in Artapanus and Philo and in early Christianity with Clement's interpretation of Homer. For reviews, see Edwin Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas on Christianity* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1957), 50-85; Arthur J. Droge, *Homer or Moses? Early Christian Interpretations of the History of Culture* (Tübingen: JCB Mohr Siebeck, 1989); John J. Collins, *Between Athens and Jerusalem: Jewish Identity in the Hellenistic Diaspora* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2000), 29-63.

<sup>88</sup> See Theon 74.

<sup>89</sup> Theon 74.

refutation of a basic, well-known narrative about Daphne.<sup>90</sup> By focusing on different parts of the narrative a student is shown how to produce alternative arguments based on the same set of events. Because orator and audience are working off a common knowledge of the “original” forms of the traditions, the rhetorical work of the orator would be on display in his reworking the fable, the narrative, or the *chreia*.<sup>91</sup>

Such insight into the pedagogical strategy of Theon’s *progymnasmata* provides an introduction to the role traditional narratives played in ancient education. The educational program was conservative in the sense that the students learned and used traditional stories. The goal of this learning, though, was to recognize tradition as fluid, as a database of content that was continually retold, constantly re-shaped to meet new situations.

### *Aelius Theon on Narrative*

Many of Theon’s exercises teach students how to construct narrative wholes from sets of events.<sup>92</sup> Theon’s student practices narrative as a flexible rhetoric tool, the creative construction of events into distinct narratives that produce different effects. The *progymnasmata* trained students to see narrative as a construction wherein the author has ultimate control over the persuasive nature of the narrative through the details he chooses

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<sup>90</sup> See Aphthonius the Sophist 28-32. The “original” story is found in Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 1.452-567), among other places.

<sup>91</sup> Webb argues, “These types of exercises were often based on a close reading of the source text, where there was one, for the minutest signs which could be used as ammunition for or against a point of view” (*Progymnasmata as Practice*, 302). She argues that the value of these stories were well known and thus what was on display was the orator’s ability to manipulate them.

<sup>92</sup> This understanding of narrative as construction is the focus not only of his formal exercises on narration (διήγημα), but in his sections on fable (μῦθος) and *ekphrasis* (ἔκφρασις). My analysis will focus on exercises in narration, but will necessarily draw on other sections.

to emphasize, the ordering of the events, and the rhetorical form in which he narrates the story.

Theon defines a narrative (διήγημα) as “an explanatory account of matters which have occurred or as if they have occurred.”<sup>93</sup> His exercises on narrative follow closely with his exercises on fables (μῦθοι), making a distinction between the two based on verisimilitude (the fable is a “fictitious story giving an image of truth”<sup>94</sup>), but his recommendations for the two overlap.<sup>95</sup> Programmatic for these exercises is the characterization that “the exercise of narrative is not uniform” (οὐ μονοειδῆς δὲ τοῦ διηγήματος ἢ γυμνασία).<sup>96</sup> It is the flexibility of this “genre” which forms the heart of his *Progymnasmata* on narrative. The exercises in narrative guided students to see how altering the rhetorical shape of narration changes its effect.

The connection between Theon’s exercises in narrative and Ricoeur’s theory of *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, therefore, is obvious from the beginning but will be made even clearer as I move forward.<sup>97</sup> At an early age, ancient students learned that the construction of a

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<sup>93</sup> διήγημα ἐστὶ λόγος ἐκθετικὸς πραγμάτων γεγονόντων ἢ ὡς γεγονόντων (5.2-3). Theon’s definition of narrative recalls Aristotle’s description of the poet’s task, highlighted in the previous chapter, as describing “what could and would happen either probably or inevitably” (*Poet.* 9.1 1451a36-38 [Innes, LCL]). Theon does not distinguish between διήγημα and διήγησις, but he uses the terms interchangeably. A distinction is made between these two in other *progymnasmata*, primarily on the basis of length. For example, Hermogenes notes that “a narrative (*diēgēma*) differs from a narration (*diēgēsis*) as a piece of poetry (*poiēma*) differs from a poetical work (*poiēsis*),” citing the *Iliad* as an example of *poiēsis* and the “Making of the Shield” from *Iliad* 18 as an example of *poiēma*. (Hermogenes 4). See the similar distinction in Aphthonius the Sophist (Aphthonius the Sophist 22). Nicolaus gives a more extended analysis of the distinction, suggesting that some see the distinction as Hermogenes and Aphthonius (and he ultimately agrees), while some see the distinction as labeling “Narration the exposition of true events and narrative that of things as though they happened” (Nicolaus the Sophist 11-12).

<sup>94</sup> Theon 72. Nicolaus the Sophist distinguishes between them by saying fables “are agreed to be false and fictional” (Nicolaus the Sophist 13).

<sup>95</sup> For example, in discussing exercises in which students are to inflect narratives through different grammatical cases, he points the reader back to his discussion of inflecting the fable (Theon 86). This overlap between narrative and fable is clearly seen in Quintilian who discusses three types of narrative: fictitious, realistic, and historical (*Inst. Orat.* 2.4).

<sup>96</sup> Theon 85.

<sup>97</sup> Gibson also connects Theon’s discussion to the idea of emplotment (referring directly to the work of Hayden White, whose work on narrative in historical writing builds upon Ricoeur). See “Learning,” 119;

narrative was a persuasive art, variations of which produce specific, varied results with audiences. As for Ricoeur, so also for Theon, narrative is a process rather than a genre. Students learn to take a given set of events and to retell them in a number of ways, altering both the order of the events and the way in which they are told.<sup>98</sup> Theon does not define the criteria by which a student should choose a given way of emplotting events, but rather his students practice multiple ways in which a given set of events can be constructed into narrative.<sup>99</sup> This practice arms students with techniques upon which they could draw in actual oratorical situations.<sup>100</sup> Theon notes that while it is common to use narration to make a “straightforward statement,” his lessons are designed to teach students to tell the same set of events in different ways, in order to accomplish different results. The lessons teach students three general ways in which to do this: modify the “elements” of narrative, alter the order of presentation, and change the method of expression.

This structuring function of narrative is made clear in Theon’s division of narration into six “elements” (στοιχεῖα): person (τὸ πρόσωπον), action (τὸ πρᾶγμα), place (ὁ τόπος), time (ὁ χρόνος), manner (ὁ τρόπος), and cause (ἡ αἰτία).<sup>101</sup> A complete narration properly has all six, though Theon admits that circumstances may dictate the

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Hayden White, “Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory,” pp. 26-57 in *The Content of Form*, esp. 43-46.

<sup>98</sup> Suetonius’ comment on these types of exercises confirms the way in which they were used: “[Teachers] would vary the grammatical constructions of notable saying in all possible ways; recount fables now one way, now another; present narratives sometimes briefly and concisely, sometimes elaborately and at length” (*de Grammaticis* 25.4; translation from Robert A. Kaster, *De Grammaticis et Rhetoribus: Edited with a Translation, Introduction, and Commentary* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1995]).

<sup>99</sup> Webb notes that the *progymnasmata* “provid[e] a flexible set of skills that prepare the student for the more demanding task of composing and performing epideictic speeches and for the immeasurably more challenging task of mastering the art of declamation” (*Ekphrasis*, 48).

<sup>100</sup> “When the boys grew up, they would be able to draw on their knowledge of old stories for illustrations and allusions in their mature speeches” (Clark, *Rhetoric*, 181).

<sup>101</sup> Theon 78. This same lists appears in the *progymnasmata* of Aphthonius the Sophist (22) and Nicolaus the Sophist (13)

omission of some. Theon also offers qualities that “follow inseparably” (παρακολουθέω) each of these. Because each element has multiple qualities, the student/narrator has a range of choices in constructing plots. In describing a “person,” for example, an author can speak of his “origin, nature, training, disposition, age, fortune, morality, action, speech, manner of death, and what followed death.”<sup>102</sup> The complexity of narrative is evident in the multiple ways in which these six elements can be described. At each stage of the narration, the narrator’s hand is visible. By shifting these qualities for each element, students learn how a single story can be described in different ways to accomplish different ends.

Theon’s students were taught to modify these qualities to conform narration to the three, near-universally prescribed “virtues of narration” (ἀρεταὶ διηγήσεως): clarity, conciseness, and plausibility.<sup>103</sup> Though all three are desired in any narrative, an author must consider the nature of his audience and circumstances so as to determine how best to present the narrative, at times sacrificing one virtue for others. For example, if the audience is unfamiliar with the details of the events, an overly concise narrative may cloud the narrative’s clarity. Likewise an attempt at clarity may result in a narration that is too long, thereby distracting the audience. Students practiced modulating these virtues so as to modify a narrative and its effect on the audience.

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<sup>102</sup> Theon 78.

<sup>103</sup> Theon’s virtues of narration are standard. See, for example, Cicero, *De Inv.*, 1.20.28; *Rhet. ad Herr.*, 1.812; Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.*, 2.5.7; 4.2.2. Aphthonius the Sophist adds “hellenism” to the list (22). Nicolaus the Sophist adds charm and grandeur (14). It has become common in rhetorical studies of Paul to judge his argument based on these three virtues. See, for example, Betz, *Galatians*, 60-62. There is no objective standard for these three, though. Instead, as Theon argues, the situation of the subject matter and the audience dictate how they are to be expressed. The rhetorical critic’s task, therefore, should not be deciding whether a given narrative is brief or clear, but rather how different parts of the narrative are expanded or abbreviated so as to meet the need that the rhetorical situation presents.

Much of Theon's treatment of narrative concerns how an author is to achieve the three stated virtues. He divides the author's control over each into two parts: subject matter and style. For example, in pursuit of clarity the author should focus on only one narrated element at a time and should avoid digressions. There are also stylistic changes he can make for the sake of clarity. For example, he should avoid foreign words (ξένα).<sup>104</sup> My point here is not how he makes the specific recommendations, but rather his assumption that narrative is a flexible art, wherein the author plays an active role in controlling how a narrative will affect its audience.

Theon's extensive lists of qualities demonstrate the ancient student's nuanced understanding of the process of recounting a story and the role the narrator necessarily plays. The student learns, through modifying each of these elements in retelling the same story, how much choice and power a narrator has in constructing events. Furthermore, the qualities of the elements are often subjective. For example, in reporting the "manner" in which an action occurred, the narrator must choose if an action was intentional or unintentional and further whether an unintentional action was the result of ignorance, chance, or necessity, or whether an intentional act occurred by force, in secret, or deceptively.<sup>105</sup> Even in the most "historical" situations, narrative is not a neutral form.<sup>106</sup> Theon's exercises show the student that how one constructs a narrative necessarily changes how the narrative will persuade.

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<sup>104</sup> Theon 81.

<sup>105</sup> Theon 79.

<sup>106</sup> For a modern discussion of neutrality of the form of narrative in historiography, see Hayden White, "The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory."

Different arrangements can also create different effects.<sup>107</sup> Theon, like Aristotle, divides narratives into three parts: beginning, middle, and end, a division that leads to the six possibilities for ordering the events of narrative.<sup>108</sup> Theon labels the chronological order of beginning, middle, and end as the “natural order of the narration” (ἡ κατὰ φύσιν τάξις).<sup>109</sup> The exercises, though, force students to advance beyond this natural order and to reconstruct a given set of events into different narratives.<sup>110</sup> Students practiced rearranging a given set of events, exploring how a single story can produce multiple effects. Thereby they learned that narration wherein the ordering of events is “unnatural” makes more than a straightforward statement.

Not only can the author rearrange the events of a story, but he can also “vary the expression in many ways” (ποικίλους πρόπους ποιεῖσθαι τὴν φράσιν). A narrator not only constructs narratives; he integrates them into non-narrative rhetoric. Even a single order

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<sup>107</sup> “In the statement of [narrative] we alter the order of the headings, and in addition it is possible to keep the same order and to vary the expression in many ways” (Theon 85-86). Butts helpfully compares this to the *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* (30,1438a, 28-31) and the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which both recommend telling the events of a narrative in “the precise order in which they occurred, observing their actual or probable sequence and chronology” (*Rhet. ad Herr.* 1.9.15 [Caplan, LCL]) (see Butts, *Progymnasmata*, 388). These sections, though, are discussing the statement of facts section of a forensic address, and Theon is offering a variety of exercises for students. This nicely captures the difference between the handbooks and the *progymnasmata*. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* reflects a more specialized form of rhetoric, to which Paul’s letter does not fit. The *progymnasmata* discuss the possibilities of nature in general.

<sup>108</sup> On the completeness of a plot consisting in a beginning, middle, and end, see the discussion in the previous chapter, drawing upon Aristotle (*Poet.* 7.3-7 1450b26-34) and Paul Ricoeur (*Time and Narrative*, 1.38-42).

<sup>109</sup> Theon 86. Here we see a possible distinction between ancient and modern literary criticism. For many moderns, and certainly for Ricoeur, experience has no beginning, middle, and end. These place markers are applied to experience, either immediately in perception or in the process of making later sense of experience. For discussion, see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1980), 45-48. The very function of a narrative is to give meaning to the terms beginning, middle, and end.

<sup>110</sup> In leading students to alter the chronology of events, Theon provides an ancient example of the distinction between “referential order” and “poetic order” made by Petersen in his work on Philemon, highlighted in the introduction to this study (see Norman R. Petersen, *Rediscovering Paul: Philemon and the Sociology of Paul’s Narrative* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1985], 47-53). Theon provides examples of different arrangements from the classics. For example, he praises the “elegant arrangement” (οἰκονομία γλαφυρᾶς) of the *Odyssey*, since Homer begins in the middle, with Odysseus in Calypso, then turns his attention to the beginning, with the narration of what led him to Calypso, and then finishes with the end, with Odysseus’ return and his killing of the suitors.

of events can be presented to an audience in a number of ways. The manner of integration of narrative into the larger rhetorical context also affects the rhetorical function of a given narrative. Events may be recounted in the form of simple questions, inquiries, rhetorical questions, commands, wishes, oaths, direct address, suppositions, and dialogue. Theon argues that, “It is possible to produce varied narrations in all these.”<sup>111</sup>

Theon offers an extended example of how students can construct multiple narratives from a single set of events. He recounts Thucydides’ description of the advance of the Thebans (*History* 2.2.1), and then he runs it through his set of exercises. Thucydides gives a “straightforward statement” (ἐκφέρειν τὰ πράγματα ὡς ἀποφαινόμενοι) when he recounts the advance of the force. Theon demonstrates how a student can “suggest something more than a simple statement of facts” by integrating Thucydides’ events, recounted in the same ways and with the same elements of narration, in different ways, so as to change the function of the narrative. For example, one can turn the events into an “inquiry” by asking, “Who were the Theban men, a little more than three hundred in number, who made an armed entry during the first watch into Plataea in Boeotia?”<sup>112</sup> Likewise, one can turn the events into a command by introducing an outside character who instructs the Plateans on how they are to respond to the Thebans’ advance.<sup>113</sup> Through these exercises students practice the alteration of the narrative’s incorporation into a larger discourse to achieve different rhetorical effects.

In the previous chapter I demonstrated Ricoeur highlighting emplotment in Aristotle’s *Poetics* as a constructive, creative process. Theon’s *Progymnasmata* is a practical exemplification of Aristotle’s argument that the poet is a “maker [ποιητής] not

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<sup>111</sup> Theon 87.

<sup>112</sup> Theon 88.

<sup>113</sup> Thon 88.

of verses but of stories [μῦθοι], since he is a poet in virtue of his ‘representation’ [μίμησις], and what he represents is action [πράξις].”<sup>114</sup> Theon’s exercises force students to explore the various ways in which action may be represented.<sup>115</sup> This representation becomes poetic, in Aristotle’s terms, when the author’s construction transforms narrative from a summary of the past (or possible past) to a new representation of reality. In terms of the *Poetics*, Theon’s student creates a narrative as “the sort of thing that would probably or inevitably happen.”<sup>116</sup>

*The Criterion for Construction: Audience in the Progymnasmata*

What reason does Theon give for modifying the order or portrayal of events into different narratives? By what criterion does the storyteller shape his or her story? Theon does not offer a direct answer. He simply presents exercises that show the various ways in which a narrative can be modified and never explicitly discusses criteria by which an author would choose one or the other.<sup>117</sup> Theon’s silence on the reason behind how one constructs narrative is not surprising given the pedagogical function of the *progymnasmata*. Theon is offering exercises for the students to practice the full range of

<sup>114</sup> *Poet.* 9.9 1451b27-29. Recall that Theon likewise uses the verb ποιέω to describe an author’s ability to “vary the expression in many ways” (ποικίλους πρόπους ποιεῖσθαι τὴν φράσιν).

<sup>115</sup> A distinction, therefore, between story and narrative discourse, discussed in the previous chapter and commonly found in modern literary criticism, was at the heart of the earliest stages of ancient rhetorical education. Commenting on the narrative exercise in Theon, Webb notes “effectively, these exercises in reordering a narrative also introduced students to the distinction between a story and its narrative presentation” (“The *Progymnasmata* as Practice,” 299). For a recent discussion of this distinction, see Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse, passim*, esp. 15-42.

<sup>116</sup> *Poet.* 9.10 1451b30-33.

<sup>117</sup> Readers might, for example, like to know why Theon finds it admirable that Herodotus, in Book 3, begins with the final events, moves to the middle, and then ends with the initial conditions of his narrative (see Theon 86-87). However, Theon simply notes that this is contrary to “the natural order” and recommends students practice such a reversal, among many other “unnatural” possible presentations of events. Likewise, Theon gives no reason for why one would choose to present a narrative as an oath versus a command.

possibilities with narrative, assuming a specific rhetorical situation will confront the student and call for a given use of narrative.

This seems to be the single criterion by which the orator should make decisions: the orator's perception of the audience and the rhetorical situation. Theon's emphasis on the construction of narrative to fit a specific rhetorical situation is consistent with James Phelan's definition of narrative, introduced in the previous chapter: "Somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened."<sup>118</sup> Throughout the exercises, Theon emphasizes the third part of the rhetorical triangle, Phelan's "somebody else" and "on some occasion." Recall, for example, that in the discussion of the virtues of narration, Theon recognizes that the three virtues must be sacrificed at times based on the author's perception of the audience's knowledge or disposition.<sup>119</sup> For example, when telling painful stories, one should move quickly, perhaps sacrificing clarity, to avoid upsetting a vulnerable audience.<sup>120</sup> Likewise, stylistic decisions, such as the use of parenthetical comments, are best made based on the expectation of the audience's response.<sup>121</sup>

Theon's focus on the audience is consistent with the often-overlooked dominance of concern for the particularities of an audience throughout ancient rhetorical theory. D. A. Russell summarizes this audience-orientation well: "If a literary work may be said to have three references—to the universe, to the writer, and to the audience—Greek rhetorical theory, like the Renaissance criticism which descends from it, thinks the

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<sup>118</sup> James Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction*, 3, 86.

<sup>119</sup> Theon's discussion is similar to Aristotle's comments on the "appropriateness" of style, which should be consistent with the author, the content, and the audience (see *Rhet.* 3.7 1408a10-1408b20).

<sup>120</sup> Theon gives the classic example of Homer's telling of Patroclus' death (Theon 80; see *Iliad* 18.20).

<sup>121</sup> On parenthetical comments, see Theon 82.

audience-reference by far the most important.”<sup>122</sup> Too often modern critics assume focus on the audience to be a development of the twentieth century. A quick glance at the discussions of literary and rhetorical theory in antiquity corrects this impression. Theon reflects an ancient rhetorical tradition that focused on the audience as the primary consideration in prose and poetical composition, perhaps more so than does modern literary criticism.<sup>123</sup>

Nowhere is this concern with the audience as determining rhetorical strategy clearer than in Aristotle’s rhetorical works. Aristotle distinguishes the art of persuasion from the art of teaching, which he defines as “speech based on knowledge,” by arguing that, “It is necessary for proofs [πίσταις] and speeches to be formed on the basis of common belief [διὰ τῶν κοινῶν].”<sup>124</sup> He further argues that “the persuasive is persuasive to someone” (τὸ πιθανὸν τινὶ πιθανόν ἐστι), and therefore rhetoric is not concerned with determining that which is universally true, but rather “what seems true to people of a

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<sup>122</sup> “Rhetoric and Criticism,” 141-42.

<sup>123</sup> Classical scholars have long recognized the importance of audience in composition. Robert S. Reid begins an essay by noting, “There is little that is remarkable in noting the overwhelming attention given to the consideration of the audience in antiquity, whether by Plato, Aristotle, Demetrius, Horace, Dionysius and Longinus, or their Hebrew counterparts, Amos, Hosea, Micah, and the storytellers of the Pentateuchal tradition.” Reid summarizes the commonly-held distinction between ancient and modern audience-oriented discussions as “the distinction between concern with effect [in the ancients] and concern with meaning, between technique and signification” (“When Words were a Power Loosed: Audience Expectation and ‘Finished’ Narrative Technique in the Gospel of Mark,” *QJS* 80 [1994]: 427; cf. Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 23). The distinction can clearly be seen in Jane P. Tompkins, “The Reader in History: The Changing Shape of Literary Response,” pp. 201-32 in *Reader-Response Criticism: From Formalism to Post-Structuralism* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), esp. 202-206. She argues that ancient critics (Longinus is her primary example) saw language as power, and therefore were most interested in the effects it produced, and the question of meaning of a text is not an issue. Reid calls this distinction into question, especially concerning narrative composition in antiquity.

<sup>124</sup> *Rhet.* 1.1.12 1355a27-29 ([All translations of Aristotle’s *Rhetoric* are from Aristotle, *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse* (ed. George A. Kennedy; 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007)]). This is consistent with Aristotle’s distinction between reasoning and demonstration with which he begins the *Topics*. Reasoning argues from generally accepted principles, rather than those that are necessarily true. On the innovation in rhetorical theory made by Aristotle’s focus on situational rather than universal persuasion, see Nan Johnson, “Ethos and the Aims of Rhetoric,” pp. 98-114 in *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse* (ed. Robert J. Connors, Lisa S. Ede, and Andrea A. Lunsford; Edwardsville, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984).

certain sort.”<sup>125</sup> Aristotle’s focus on the effects of discourse on a given audience is apparent in the amount of space in the *Rhetoric* he devotes to analyzing the emotions of an audience and how a speaker is best able to influence these.<sup>126</sup>

In narrative exercises, a student learns how to involve an audience in the events being recounted. The more advanced *progymnastic* exercises of *ekphrasis* demonstrate the active role played by the audience in narrative discourse.<sup>127</sup> Theon defines *ekphrasis* as “descriptive language, leading before the eyes what is being set forth vividly.”<sup>128</sup> The metaphorical language of “leading” (ἄγων) is helpful for understanding how this exercise works. “Description,” as ἔκφρασις is often translated, does not merely refer to flowery language introduced to heighten the style of a speech.<sup>129</sup> In fact, Theon warns against the use of flowery language in certain contexts of *ekphrasis*.<sup>130</sup> Instead, what distinguishes *ekphrasis* is its effect on an audience, its ability to invite the audience into the narrative. Theon’s students learned *ekphrasis* as a persuasive technique by which the orator transforms the audience from passive observers to active participants in the action of the text.

<sup>125</sup> *Rhet.* 1.2.11 1356b32-34. This emphasis on the audience is also present in Quintilian’s discussion of deliberative oratory. If one is going to persuade a given group of people to pursue an action, one must be familiar with the characteristics of the audience (see *Inst. Orat.* 3.8.35-47).

<sup>126</sup> See Book 2 of the *Rhetoric*. There is substantial scholarship on this topic. See, for example, Fortenbaugh, *Aristotle on Emotion: A Contribution to Philosophical Psychology, Rhetoric, Poetics, Politics, and Ethics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; New York: Barnes and Noble, 2000).

<sup>127</sup> For the most thorough discussion of *ekphrasis* in the *progymnasmata*, see Webb, *Ekphrasis*, esp. 39-59. My work benefits greatly from this persuasive study. See also, Anderson, *The Second Sophistic*, 144-55; D. P. Fowler, “Narrate and Describe: The Problem of Ekphrasis,” *JRS* 81 (1991): 25-35.

<sup>128</sup> ἔκφρασις ἐστὶ λόγος περιηγηματικὸς ἐναργῶς ὑπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων τὸ δηλούμενον. The translation here is my own. The term “descriptive language” does not really capture the active sense of the term λόγος περιηγηματικὸς (lit. “leading around”), a sense which cannot be captured in clear English (see Butts, “Progymnasmata,” 437; Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 51-55). The other *progymnasmata* essentially use the same definition as Theon.

<sup>129</sup> *Ekphrasis* is often referred to as “set-piece description,” a narrative pause wherein the author simply describes a character or object as a part of his narration, but does not advance the narrative. Fowler ascribes the “opposition of ‘narrative’ and ‘description’ to Aristotle and argues it has become the dominant understanding in literary studies (see Fowler, “Narrate,” 25-26). For Theon, *ekphrasis* is a part of narration.

<sup>130</sup> Theon 119-20.

According to Theon, an author can compose *ekphraseis* around any subject, including “persons and events and places and periods of time.”<sup>131</sup> Not surprisingly, these are the very elements by which he identifies narrative. *Ekphrasis* and narration, therefore, are connected, as the elements of the narration are made more persuasive through the exercise of *ekphrasis*.<sup>132</sup> The connection between narrative and *ekphrasis* is clear in the comments of Hermogenes, who notes that, “Some of the more exact teachers do not make *ekphrasis* [*sic*] an exercise, on the ground that it has already been included in fable and narrative and common-place and encomion [*sic*].”<sup>133</sup> An explicit distinction between narration and *ekphrasis* is made by Nicolaus the Sophist, but the way he distinguishes them is instructive: “[*Ekphrasis*] differs from narration in that the latter examines things as a whole, the former in part; for example, it belongs to a narration to say ‘The Athenians and the Peloponnesians fought a war, and to *ekphrasis* [*sic*] to say that each side made this and that preparation and used this manner of arms.” He admits, though, that, “For the most part, this *progymnasma* [*ekphrasis*] functions as part (of a larger whole), but nothing prevents it sometimes being worked out as sufficient in itself.”<sup>134</sup> Here Nicolaus demonstrates that *ekphrasis* is part of narration. *Ekphrasis* is an exercise, applied to narrative, by which students learned to heighten the rhetorical effect of narrative, learning not merely how to construct events into multiple narratives, but how

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<sup>131</sup> Theon 118. Theon gives examples of each. Webb says, “The rhetor’s students would easily have recognized this group as four of what Theon calls ‘elements of narration’ (*stoicheia tēs diēgēseōs*).” She further argues “the reader of the *Progymnasmata* who came to *ekphrasis* well verse in the doctrine of the *peristaseis* [the elements of narration] would therefore immediately recognize ‘persons, places, times and events’ as rhetorician-speak for ‘practically everything’ (*Ekphrasis*, 63).

<sup>132</sup> The connection between narration and *ekphrasis* is further seen in Theon’s recommendation of the exercises on confirming and refuting a narration to practice confirming and refuting *ekphraseis* (see Theon 120).

<sup>133</sup> Hermogenes 23.

<sup>134</sup> Nicolaus the Sophist 70.

the presentation or description of the elements of narration could themselves be constructed so as to involve the audience.

The ancient discussion of *ekphrasis* shows how the ancients recognized narrative's ability to persuade and the understanding of the audience's participation, so often thought to be a modern literary development. Plutarch praises Thucydides for effectively using this technique: "Thucydides is always striving for this vividness in his writing, as he eagerly desires to make the listener a spectator, as it were, and to produce in the minds of his readers the feelings of astonishment and consternation which were experienced by those who witnessed the events."<sup>135</sup> As Webb summarizes, "Where the modern professional reader, the critic, tends to treat his or her subject as an object of analysis, the ancient critic stresses the impact of the text."<sup>136</sup>

With his exercises in *ekphrasis*, therefore, readers get a sense of how Theon, and therefore his students, understood narrative to function. What distinguishes narrative from other discourse is its particular ability to draw in an audience; in following narrative an audience becomes an actor. Consider, for example, Quintilian's discussion of the use of vividness (*ἐνάργεια*) in the statement of facts of a forensic address.<sup>137</sup> He distinguishes it from "mere clearness" by arguing that instead of just showing something, vivid rhetoric "thrusts itself upon our notice."<sup>138</sup> He argues that oratory falls short of its potential "if the judge merely feels that the facts on which he has to give his decision are being narrated to him, and not displayed in their living truth to the eyes of the mind." He offers the

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<sup>135</sup> Plutarch, *Artaxerxes*, 8.1, quoted in Webb, *Ekphrasis*, 20.

<sup>136</sup> *Ekphrasis*, 23.

<sup>137</sup> Quintilian actually leaves the Greek term untranslated. For a brief discussion of *ἐνάργεια* in Quintilian, see Lampe, "Quintilian's Psychological Insights in his *Institutio Oratoria*," pp. 180-99 in *Paul and Rhetoric* (ed. J. Paul Sampley and Peter Lampe; New York: T&T Clark, 2010), esp. 185-87, 191. For a general discussion of *ἐνάργεια*, see G. Zanker, "Enargeia in the Ancient Criticism of Poetry," *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie* 124 (1981): 297-311.

<sup>138</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 8.3.61 (Butler, LCL); cf. 9.1.27.

example of Cicero in his Verrine orations: “Is there anybody so incapable of forming a mental picture of a scene that when he reads the following passage from the Verrines, he does not seem not merely to see the actors in the scene, the place itself and their very dress, but even to imagine to himself other details that the orator does not describe?”<sup>139</sup> For Quintilian, narration can be so effective that the picture in the audience’s mind goes beyond even the details the speaker mentions. Theon’s exercises on narrative taught students to appreciate and exploit the active role of an audience of discourse, a role summarized well by Plutarch: “Even a well-bred guest at dinner has a function to perform, much more a hearer; for he is a participant in the discourse and a fellow-worker with the speaker.”<sup>140</sup>

## **Narrative Rhetoric in the Ancient Rhetorical Handbooks, Part 2**

This analysis of narrative in the *progymnasmata* provides a new lens through which to read the rhetorical handbooks that are so prominent in rhetorical studies of Galatians. I demonstrated previously that the handbooks have not proven helpful in accounting for the narrative rhetoric of Galatians, primarily because they have been applied so rigidly to outline the arrangement of the argument of Galatians. Narrative has not been a category of analysis in these studies because the handbooks have little to say about narrative as a technique of persuasion. However, given the background of the *progymnasmata* and the dynamic understanding of narrative rhetoric taught to ancient

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<sup>139</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 8.3.64 (Butler, LCL). For the use of *ἐναργεῖα* in Quintilian, see Webb, “Ekphrasis,” 87-106.

<sup>140</sup> Plutarch, “On Listening to Lectures,” 45E (Babbitt, LCL). In the same context Plutarch uses the metaphor of playing catch, where both parties (the speaker and the listener) have a role to play. This ancient conversation sounds similar to Ricoeur’s notions of textuality: “Emplotment is the common work of the text and the reader” (*Time and Narrative*, 1.27).

students, we can see that the handbooks have more to say on narrative than such studies have suggested. The handbooks show clear evidence of the influence (or assumption) of the *progymnasmata*, and the picture of narrative in the *progymnasmata* highlights elements of narrative rhetoric in the handbooks that have not been previously explored in Pauline studies.

In the handbooks' description of the "statement of facts," the formal section of a speech most associated with narrative in Galatians, the influence of the *progymnasmata* is clear. The standard translation of *narratio*/διήγησις as "statement of facts," may suggest that in this "statement," there is little room for creativity. However, the formal handbooks argue that the orator is to be just as creative in this section of the speech as in any other. Quintilian argues that as orators, "We state our facts like advocates, not witnesses" (*nequem enim narrandum est tanquam testi sed tanquam patrono*), defining the *narratio* as "persuasive exposition" (*persuadendum expositio*).<sup>141</sup> He instructs orators to "consider what is most advantageous in the circumstances" and to compose the *narratio* accordingly.<sup>142</sup> For this reason he recommends that even if a judge is familiar with the facts of a case, the effective orator insists on retelling these facts in order to influence a judge with his own version.<sup>143</sup> There are a variety of functions that are accomplished depending upon how one constructs a narrative. Narratives can "illustrate the case by some parallel," "heighten the effect of charges," or "stir the emotions of the judges."<sup>144</sup> We likewise see the impact of the *progymnasmata* in the comments on how

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<sup>141</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.31, 109 (Butler, LCL).

<sup>142</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.84 (Butler, LCL).

<sup>143</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.21 (Butler, LCL). This emphasis on the retelling the facts known by an audience so as to present the orator's version of the facts is very important for Paul's retelling of his past in Gal 1:13ff, a story he admits the Galatians have heard.

<sup>144</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.17-19 (Butler, LCL).

one should order a statement of facts. Though it is most common to retell events in the order in which they occurred, Quintilian admits “a preference for adopting the order which I consider most suitable.”<sup>145</sup> Overall, Quintilian’s argues that, “The purpose of the statement of facts is not merely to instruct, but rather to persuade the judge.”<sup>146</sup> Such a statement assumes the rhetorical creativity in creating narrative that is taught in the *progymnasmata*.

As for the types of facts to be recounted, the handbooks do not insist that the facts be historically accurate. The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* reproduces narrative exercises similar to those we find in Theon in its recommendations for the *narratio* of an address. Three different types of statements of fact are listed: legendary, historical, and realistic. Cicero likewise acknowledges that the narrative section of a speech can come from all three types of narrative.<sup>147</sup> Quintilian acknowledges that “false statements of facts” will at times be used in addresses.<sup>148</sup> His only recommendation is that the orator be consistent with himself and only falsify information that the audience itself cannot validate, maintaining verisimilitude as the ultimate criterion for what is recommended.

Likewise, narrative’s role in evoking emotions is also a common refrain in the handbooks. Quintilian notes he is “surprised at those who hold that there should be no appeal to emotions in the statement of facts.”<sup>149</sup> Consistently Quintilian encourages the

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<sup>145</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.83 (Butler, LCL). The *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* instead recommends that one achieve clarity by narrating events in the order in which they occurred (1438a). This is also the recommendation of the *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (1.9.15).

<sup>146</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.21 (Butler, LCL).

<sup>147</sup> *De Inv.* 1.19.27.

<sup>148</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.88 (Butler, LCL).

<sup>149</sup> *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.111 (Butler, LCL).

orator to consider the emotions of the judge throughout his address and to do all he can to sway those emotions in his favor.<sup>150</sup>

Finally, and most importantly for reading Galatians alongside the handbooks, the *progymnasmata* show that narrative is an effective technique of persuasion that should be used at any point in an address, not merely in a “statement of facts” section in the rhetorical outline. Cicero defines the best orator as “the one who by his oratory instructs, pleases and moves the minds of his audience.”<sup>151</sup> Even if we do, however, consider the formal outline recommended in the handbooks, we find that there is no simple recommendation, as rhetorical studies of Paul might suggest. The handbooks do not recommend the placement of the narrative as a single story, in a single location. Quintilian, for example, acknowledges that it is typical to place the statement of facts immediately after the exordium, but he insists that this order must be adapted to specific rhetorical situations.<sup>152</sup>

Read through the lens of the *progymnasmata*, therefore, we find greater value in the handbooks’ discussion of the *narratio* than previous rhetorical studies of Paul have highlighted. The value of the handbooks is not found in their formal recommendations for the placement of a statement of facts within a standard rhetorical outline. Rather, recommendations for the statement of facts reflect an understanding of storytelling as a malleable rhetorical form, wherein the orator has the ability to persuade his audience by involving them in the details of his recounting. Reading the handbooks in light of the

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<sup>150</sup> See, for example, his discussion of how the orator should end his address with concern for the emotional state of his audience (*Inst. Orat.* 6.1). Quintilian argues that in deliberative oratory appeals to emotion are even more important (3.8.12).

<sup>151</sup> *The Best Type of Orator* 3 (translation from *Ancient Literary Criticism: The Principal Texts in New Translations* [ed. D. A. Russell and Michael Winterbottom; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972], 250).

<sup>152</sup> See *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.25-30. He supports this point with several examples from Cicero. See a similar discussion from Cicero, who recommends at times “one must dispense with narrative altogether” (*de Inv.* 1.21.30 [Hubbell, LCL]).

*progymnasmata* confirms the argument of Wilbur Samuel Howell: “The theory of *narratio* in classical rhetoric was not only designed to help the orator pleading a case or arguing the merits of national policy before a parliamentary assembly; it was also designed to help all tellers of imaginary or real tales, and in particular the writers of history.”<sup>153</sup>

We see the importance of first understanding the baseline of narrative understanding reflected in Theon’s *Progymnasmata*. The handbooks reflect the understanding of narrative taught at the earliest levels of rhetorical training. Their value lies not in the provision of a formal outline of a forensic or deliberative address. Rather they are examples of how narrative was understood to function as persuasion. The interpreter of Galatians, therefore, ought to be less focused on determining whether a given part of an argument fits the criteria laid forth for a *narratio*. Instead rhetorical studies of Galatians should focus on how the construction of events in the letter works to persuade an audience. Narratives function persuasively when constructed to fit a particular rhetorical situation.

### **Narrative Rhetoric in Ancient Analytic Discourse**

The rhetorical handbooks are not alone in reflecting this understanding of narrative rhetoric uncovered in the *progymnasmata*. Ancient texts of all genres highlight the ability of an author to affect the response and behavior of an audience by constructing narratives. Because strong distinctions between genres are more common to modern than ancient literary analysis, it is not surprising to find analytical works speaking of narrative

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<sup>153</sup> “Rhetoric and Poetic,” 387.

as persuasive in ways similar to Theon. Rhetoric is the overriding concern of oral and written discourse in antiquity.<sup>154</sup> The opening chapter of Theon's *Progymnasmata* makes clear that his exercises are proper training for all types of composition. Likewise, the range of examples he uses suggests generic distinctions were not what we make them today.<sup>155</sup> A brief examination of some examples in discussions of literary criticism and historiography helps to establish this point and will serve to segue my analysis into a more practical examination of reading ancient narrative rhetoric.

### *Narrative Rhetoric in Ancient Literary Criticism*

If narrative was taught as a mode of persuasive discourse, we should expect to see those commenting on examples of rhetoric to mention the use of narrative. Indeed we do in literary criticism in antiquity.<sup>156</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the best-known Greek

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<sup>154</sup> As James Murphy summarizes, "The oral-ness or written-ness of the language was regarded [in Roman education] as less important than its wholeness in fitting the situation at hand; that is why there is no separate 'art of letter-writing' in Roman antiquity (as there is in the middle ages), no separate 'art of historiography' or separate 'art of poetry-writing'" ("Roman Writing Instruction," 33). The presence of theoretical discussions of historiography or poetry might suggest that Murphy's statement is overly-simplistic, but his point is still valid: rhetoric was a general phenomenon which extends beyond modern genre boundaries.

<sup>155</sup> Russell notes that distinction of genres is not necessarily found in ancient literature: "Historically 'genre-theory' is very much more a Renaissance inheritance than an ancient one; when we come to look for it in the critics of antiquity, as of course we must, it appears a much more patchy and incomplete thing than is commonly supposed" (D. A. Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981], 148-49). For a discussion and response to this, see Thomas G. Rosenmeyer, "Ancient Literary Genres: A Mirage?" pp. 421-39 in *Ancient Literary Criticism* (ed. Andrew Laird; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

<sup>156</sup> Perhaps no term more clearly demonstrates the difficulty of literary genres in antiquity than "literary criticism." For a discussion of the term "literary criticism" and its relationship to rhetoric, see C. J. Classen, "Rhetoric and Literary Criticism: Their Nature and Their Functions in Antiquity," *Mnemosyne* 48 (1995): 513-35. For other discussions of the definition of this terms, see Russell and Winterbottom, *Ancient Literary Criticism*, xiii-xvi; Simon Goldhill, "Literary History without Literature: Reading Practices in the Ancient World," *SubStance* 28 (1999): 57-89. A distinction between "rhetoric" and "literary criticism" is difficult to make, as the rhetorical handbooks often make judgments on literature, and those making judgments on literature almost always approach it through the lens and categories of rhetorical theory. On the relationship between rhetoric and literary criticism, see Russell, *Ancient Literary Criticism*, 114-15.

literary critic from antiquity, demonstrates an appreciation for narrative rhetoric.<sup>157</sup>

Dionysius divides criticism into two parts: analysis of the thought of a speech and

analysis of its style.<sup>158</sup> He devotes his attention to the language and word order of

compositions of all genres.<sup>159</sup> His best-known work of criticism, *On Composition*, argues

that the arrangement of words is foremost “for the achievement of pleasing, persuasive

and powerful effects in discourse.”<sup>160</sup> Though this analysis is not directly germane to my

discussion of the narrative function in Galatians, one should not overlook the

implications of his work on word order.<sup>161</sup> Dionysius argues that different arrangements

of words, such as placing verbs before nouns or rearranging sentences so as to make

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<sup>157</sup> For a broad introduction to Dionysius’ criticism, see G. M. A. Grube, *The Greek and Roman Critics* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), 207-30; Russell, *Criticism in Antiquity*, 52-56. Dionysius has been a recent and helpful addition to the conversation about persuasion within the New Testament, in large part through the work of David Moessner. See David Moessner, “The Appeal and Power of Poetics (Luke 1:1-4): Luke’s Superior Credentials (παρηκολουθηκότι), Narrative Sequence (καθεξῆς), and Firmness of Understanding (ἡ ἀσφάλεια) for the Reader,” pp. 84-123 in *Jesus and the Heritage of Israel* (ed. D. Moessner; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1999); *idem*, “The Lukan Prologues in the Light of Ancient Narrative Hermeneutics: παρηκολουθηκότι and the Credentialed Author,” pp. 399-417 in *The Unity of Luke-Acts* (ed. J. Verheyden; BETL 142; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999); *idem*, “Dionysius’ Narrative ‘Arrangement’ as the Hermeneutical Key to Luke’s Re-Vision of the ‘Many’” pp. 149-64 in *Paul, Luke and the Greco-Roman World: Essays in Honour of Alexander J. M. Wedderburn* (eds. A. Christopherson, et al.; JSNTSup 217; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002). Moessner has argued that Luke’s narrative strategy can best be understood through Dionysius who helps us understand “conventional narrative poetics.” He argues Dionysius and Luke operate with a “commonly shared epistemology of narrative.” He suggests this epistemology can be found in a number of Greek writers, including Polybius and Diodorus of Siculus (see “Dionysius’s Narrative ‘Arrangement,’” 150). Moessner places these authors within a broader “tria-lectic of Hellenistic poetics,” by which he means the three essential components of narrative composition: a) the plot (μῦθος), b) its impact on the audience (κάθαρσις), c) in accordance with the intention of the author (διάνοια) to compose a plot which produces the result in the audience (see “Dionysius’s Narrative ‘Arrangement,’” 152-53). Moessner highlights the importance of the audience in the construction of narrative in Aristotle, and thus Dionysius: “The extent to which this audience impact (cf. modern reader response) is integral to the very *raison d’être* of the poet’s undertaking cannot be overemphasized” (“Dionysius’ Narrative ‘Arrangement,’” 152).

<sup>158</sup> *On the Arrangement of Words* 1. For a clear introduction to the critical method of Dionysius, see G. M. A. Grube, “Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Thucydides,” *Phoenix* 4 (1950): 95-110.

<sup>159</sup> Style was a primary concern for ancient critics. For other examples, see Cicero, *Orator* 23.75-34.121; Demetrius, *On Style*; Longinus, *On the Sublime*, 39-43. Dionysius’ comments on arrangement are quite similar to narrative exercises of the *progymnasmata*. Consider, for example, his work with the opening lines of Herodotus. He retells the same line several times, rearranging the order of the words, showing the different effects created. He even rewrites Herodotus in the style of Thucydides by rearranging the words (see *On Literary Composition*, 325-26).

<sup>160</sup> *On Literary Composition*, 2.

<sup>161</sup> For Dionysius on arrangement, see Grube, *Greek and Roman Critics*, 217-24.

one's prose more rhythmical, can have dramatic effects on the audience's experience of a text. Persuasion comes in ways beyond the specific content of a text; indeed a text's form is as important as the content. The ideal writer or orator, therefore, is the one who takes ultimate care in composing even the slightest details of his work. Overall, he praises a "natural style," wherein word order mimics what one finds in common speech, as opposed to many authors' attempt to change word order to effect different responses in the audience.<sup>162</sup>

Dionysius' literary criticism has a pedagogical function consistent with that in Theon.<sup>163</sup> He summarizes his work *On Imitation* as an attempt "to give good and tested rules for those who propose to be successful writers or orators according to which they could compose their exercises, not by trying to imitate all the characteristics in those writers, but by trying to adopt their virtues and avoid their defects."<sup>164</sup> Dionysius likewise recommends the imitation of the classics, using imitation in much the same way as a reimagining or rewriting.<sup>165</sup>

In his *Critical Essays*, Dionysius explores how narrative functions within oratory addressing a specific audience. He describes the narrative section of the forensic address as "the section requiring the most thought and care."<sup>166</sup> Consider, for example, his comparison of the use of narrative by the forensic orators Lysias and Isaeus. Dionysius praises Lysias, whom he calls the "model and standard of excellence" in the narration of

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<sup>162</sup> The overall emphasis is that the orator's language should be consistent with the language of his audience. For discussion, see Casper Constantijn de Jonge, *Between Grammar and Rhetoric: Dionysius of Halicarnassus on Language, Linguistics and Literature* (Mnemosyne Supplements; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 253-73.

<sup>163</sup> Russell says, "Dionysius is essentially a teacher, and he is a good one" (*Criticism in Antiquity*, 54).

<sup>164</sup> *On Thucydides* 1.

<sup>165</sup> Grube suggests that by μίμησις Dionysius means "emulation." (*Greek and Roman Critics*, 211).

<sup>166</sup> *Lysias* 18 (Usher, LCL).

facts and his ability to find the essential parts of an argument.<sup>167</sup> Lysias is able to reach the ideals of conciseness and clarity, while maintaining persuasion in his narration of facts. Dionysius speaks highly of Lysias' ability to trick his audience, praising Lysias' constructions of narratives to lure the audience into thinking he presents a straightforward account of the events, though they are constructed for persuasion. In his construction of narrative, Lysias' "persuasive powers are such that they smuggle conviction unnoticed past the listener's senses."<sup>168</sup> Dionysius notes that anyone reading the narratives in Lysias' address might assume "they are written in accordance with nature and truth" (ὡς ἡ φύσις καὶ ἡ ἀλήθεια φέρει).<sup>169</sup> On the contrary, though, this is an illusion, the result of a master of the art of narrative, "an art whose greatest achievement was to imitate nature."<sup>170</sup> This he contrasts with the narratives of Isaeus, which do not read naturally, but rather are artificially constructed and designed by the author. For Dionysius, effective narrative maintains a high degree of verisimilitude, but is shaped by the author to meet the rhetorical situation he faces.

Dionysius, like Theon, understands narrative as a way in which authors can involve an audience in an argument. He likewise discusses "vividness" (ἐνάργεια), a quality of *ekphrasis*, and the ability of an orator to persuade through activating the audience within his narration. He praises the statements of facts in the forensic addresses of Lysias, the "best of all orators", for his ability to "describ[e] to the senses of his audience." The one who hears Lysias speak "feels that he can see the actions which are being described going on and that he is meeting face-to-face the characters in the orator's

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<sup>167</sup> *Lysias* 18 (Usher, LCL).

<sup>168</sup> Dionysius praises Lysias's "power to deceive his audience as to whether it is true or fictitious" (18 [Usher, LCL]).

<sup>169</sup> *Isaeus* 16 (Usher, LCL).

<sup>170</sup> ὅτι τὸ μιμήσασθαι τὴν φύσιν αὐτῆς μέγιστον ἔργον ἦν (*Isaeus* 16 [Usher, LCL]).

story.”<sup>171</sup> In describing the orations of Demosthenes, Dionysius’ ideal orator, he praises the use of narrative as “concise, terse, and full of realism.”<sup>172</sup> He contrasts Demosthenes with Isocrates who “cannot stir his audience’s emotions as much as he wishes, and for the most part he does not even wish to do so,” noting that “the most potent weapon for a political speaker or a forensic pleader is to draw his audience into an emotional state of mind.”<sup>173</sup> The importance of narrative construction is clear in his summary statement on Demosthenes as a storyteller: “When I pick up one of Demosthenes’ speeches, I am transported: I am led hither and thither, feeling one emotion after another.”<sup>174</sup> Demosthenes’ gift is not found in his flowery language, an unnecessary use of description for which Dionysius criticizes Plato, but rather his ability to transport his audience into the events being narrated.<sup>175</sup>

Ancient literary criticism, exemplified in Dionysius, operated with an understanding of narrative as a unique means of persuasion, through which an author can transport his audience. The construction of events, therefore, is a primary means of persuasion for which the best orators are well-regarded. It should be no surprise, therefore, that the apostle Paul, interested in persuading his community toward particularly beliefs and behaviors, employs narration, a creative construction of events, to persuade his audience.

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<sup>171</sup> *Lysias* 7 (Usher, LCL). Dionysius labels Lysias the best in *Lysias* 18.

<sup>172</sup> *Demosthenes* 287 (Usher, LCL).

<sup>173</sup> *Demosthenes* 305 (Usher, LCL).

<sup>174</sup> *Demosthenes* 323 (Usher, LCL). Dionysius imagines how powerful the speeches must have been to the original audience if he, so far removed from the actual events narrated, is so affected by them.

<sup>175</sup> For the critique of Plato, see *Demosthenes* 23-30; *Letter to Gnaeus Pompeius* 1-2.

*Narrative Rhetoric in Ancient Historiography*

Focus on the creative form of narrative extends into analytical discussions of historical writing.<sup>176</sup> Writers on history consistently acknowledge that the historian's goal is not to tell events as they happened, but to construct narratives so as to persuade an audience.<sup>177</sup> While praising Thucydides for using eyewitness and factual accounts and thereby demonstrating a "refusal to make his history an instrument for deceiving and captivating the common people, as all his predecessors had done," Dionysius acknowledges the creative role that the author has played in the presentation of this history and the choices he has made in how to construct his narrative.<sup>178</sup> Likewise in Cicero's *de Oratore*, the dialogue participants distinguish between annalists, who simply list events, and historians, who are said to embellish history for persuasive purposes.<sup>179</sup> While it is acknowledged that the historian should tell the truth, Antonius notes that there is always a need for chronological and geographical arrangement, and necessarily "some intimation of what the writer approves" will come forth.<sup>180</sup> In addition, the historian must

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<sup>176</sup> Much recent work has demonstrated that ancient historiography was interested not necessarily in the accurate reporting of facts as they happened, but rather in shaping historical narratives to meet specific rhetorical ends. Much scholarship has shown that the question to ask of ancient historians is not necessarily "do they report actual events?" but rather "how do they adapt events to fit the situations they address?" In speaking of Herodotus and Thucydides, J. L. Moles remarks that it is "difficult to characterize the writings either in terms of 'literature' or 'history'" ("Truth and Untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides," pp. 88-121 in *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World* [ed. C. Gill and T. P. Wiseman; Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993], 91). The bibliography on the relationship between rhetoric and historiography is enormous. For a few examples, see K. J. Dover, "Thucydides 'as History' and 'as Literature,'" *History and Theory* 22 (1983): 54-63; A. J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography* (Portland, OR: Areopagitica, 1988), esp. 197-212; Moles, "Truth and Untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides"; John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), esp. 63-127; Matthew Fox and Niall Livingstone, "Rhetoric and Historiography," pp. 542-61 in *A Companion to Greek Rhetoric* (ed. Ian Worthington; Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2010);

<sup>177</sup> On the emphasis on entertaining and persuasion in Hellenistic historiography, see Ernst Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval, and Modern* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 30-39.

<sup>178</sup> On Thucydides 6. For Dionysius' judgment of historical writing, see Russell, *Criticism*, 116; Emilio Gabba, *Dionysius and the History of Archaic Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 60-90; H. Verdin, "La fonction de l'histoire selon Denys d'Halicarnasse," *Ancient Society* 5 (1974): 289-307.

<sup>179</sup> *de Orat.* 2.51-58.

<sup>180</sup> *de Orat.* 2.15.63 (Rackham, LCL).

always assign causes and consequences to action. Even Lucian, a theorist of history most interested in relating the facts as they happened, reflects a desire for some poetic embellishment where necessary.<sup>181</sup> Interpreters cannot, therefore, hide behind the fact that Paul emplots historical events in Galatians, and therefore the categories of rhetoric are not appropriate. Ancient authors appreciate that even historical narrative was a creative act.<sup>182</sup>

**“I myself would not tell all the achievements of the Savior”: Reading Narrative Rhetoric in the *Sacred Tales* of Aelius Aristides<sup>183</sup>**

These brief examples demonstrate the ancient meta-conversations surrounding the persuasive function of narrative. Like Theon, these writers recognize an author’s ability—indeed charge—to shape the presentation of events so as to effect different responses from an audience. One further example, considered in a bit more detail, will help demonstrate narrative as an effective means of persuasion, addressing the particularities of a rhetorical situation. In Galatians, Paul constructs narrative to give meaning to an ineffable experience with the spirit, one he and the Galatians agree has occurred. To offer a comparative source for this rhetorical use of narrative, I turn to the

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<sup>181</sup> See Lucian, “How to Write History,” 44-48. He distinguishes between the orator and the historian, noting that the latter reports fact that “will speak for itself, for it has already happened” whereas the orator is concerned with “arrangement and exposition.” On the view of rhetoric in Lucian’s comments on historiography, see M. A. Fox, “Dionysius, Lucian and the Prejudice against Rhetoric in History,” *JRS* 91 (2001): 76-93.

<sup>182</sup> For discussion of the difference between modern historiography and the practice of history before Eusebius, see A. Momigliano, “Pagan and Christian Historiography in the Fourth Century AD,” pp. 79-99 in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (ed. A. Momigliano; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).

<sup>183</sup> This quotation is from Aelius Aristides, *Oration* 47.1. The most readily-available translation of Aelius Aristides’ works is C. A. Behr, *P. Aelius Aristides: The Complete Works* (2 vols.; Leiden: Brill, 1981). My quotations are slightly amended from this translation. I also follow Behr’s numbering of the tales. The standard Greek text, also used here, is C. A. Behr, *P. Aelii Aristidis Opera quae exstant omnia* (2 vols.; Lugduni Batavorum: Brill, 1976-1980).

*Sacred Tales* of Aelius Aristides. Though the *Sacred Tales* of Aelius Aristides are perhaps best known for their entertaining retelling of one hypochondriac's search for illusory health and his reliance upon his savior, the god Asclepius, the *Tales* present another clear example of the power of narration to address a rhetorical situation such as the one facing Paul.

There exists a scholarly impression that the *Sacred Tales*, in contrast to Aristides' well-structured orations, are a random collection of Aristides' bouts with illness and rescue from the god Asclepius.<sup>184</sup> The comments of C. A. Behr are typical: "*The Sacred Tales* give the appearance of an exercise in free thought, and in a sense that is what they were. They are the mental processes of a deeply neurotic, deeply superstitious, vainglorious man, and by the act of dictation they were free to follow their own course."<sup>185</sup> Behr's assessment is, in some sense, true. This seeming randomness of the collection is evident, demonstrated by Aristides' consistent use of parenthetical comments to make awkward transitions.<sup>186</sup> He likewise often voices his confusion about how he should proceed in narrating.<sup>187</sup> However, his explicit comments on his narrative technique and the narrative that controls his recounting of his experiences suggest the

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<sup>184</sup> There has been very little consideration of the organization of rhetorical effect of the organization of the *Sacred Tales*. Most works are historical in nature, attempting to determine the actual chronology of the events behind the tales. For the most widely-accepted reconstruction of chronology, see C. A. Behr, *Aelius Aristides and the Sacred Tales* (Amsterdam: A. M. Hakkert, 1968), 121-30.

<sup>185</sup> Behr, *Complete Works*, 2.425; cf. *Aelius Aristides*, 110. For a full discussion of his view of the scattered organization of the tales, see *Aelius Aristides*, 117-121. Aristides' reputation suffers in many classicists' view, due in large part to the impression that his thought is scattered in the *Tales*. See, for example, the comments of Grube: "For all his reputation Aelius Aristides was no thinker, nor was he able to arrange his material clearly or convincingly. He is, on the contrary, incredibly diffuse" (*Greek and Roman Critics*, 333). Peter Brown summarizes general scholarly opinion of Aristides as a view that he is "a hypochondriacal gentleman of indomitable will" (*The Making of Late Antiquity* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978], 41).

<sup>186</sup> For example, Aristides concludes one story with the comment, "So much for this" (50.5). For other examples of abrupt transitions, see 47.61; 49.7; 50.32, 51.25, 42, 53.

<sup>187</sup> See, for example, 48.60: "Perhaps someone would desire to hear the origin of such great troubles." See also 48.11, 45.

*Tales* are not as “free” as Behr suggests. Instead, there is a discernible rhetoric effect in how Aristides shapes his narratives; indeed as Aristides admits there is a “plan and intention” behind the *Sacred Tales*.<sup>188</sup>

I accept the alternative assessment of Simon Swain of the *Sacred Tales* as “remarkable as literary texts, excessively self-conscious not only about their content but also about the writing process.”<sup>189</sup> The writer of the *Sacred Tales* is the same orator who penned the Panathenaic oration, itself a speech that powerfully uses narratives in praise of Athens; it is unlikely that he forgot his art when he penned the *Sacred Tales*. Though the *Sacred Tales* may seem rather haphazard in their presentation, I show below that the narratives are constructed to persuade an audience. Aristides emerges as an example *par excellence* of the narrative rhetoric taught in the *progymnasmata*, and therefore he will serve as a helpful comparative text for reading narrative rhetoric in Galatians.

Swain’s comments point to the unique self-conscious comments of the *Tales*’ narrator. In these comments, spread throughout the *Tales*, readers get a sense of how the construction of narratives functions as a rhetorical device. Aristides begins the *Sacred Tales* by admitting that he is attempting the impossible.<sup>190</sup> His explicit goal is to relate his continued encounter with the god Asclepius in an attempt to convince his anonymous audience of the power of the god. Such a goal, though, is not attainable. He cannot recreate, through the orations, his experience of the God’s power. What we find in the *Sacred Tales*, therefore, is an attempt to do something different. Consider this distinction

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<sup>188</sup> For Aristides’ reference to his “plan and intention,” see 50.27.

<sup>189</sup> *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World AD 50-250* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 260-61. He suggests that “there is clearly much more work to be done” on the organization and structure of the tales” (see *Hellenism and Empire*, 261n29).

<sup>190</sup> On the purpose of the *Sacred Tales*, see John Charles Stephens, “The Religious Experience of Aelius Aristides: An Interdisciplinary Approach” (PhD diss.; University of California Santa Barbara, 1982), esp. 50-82.

made in Aristides' introductory remarks, the most explicitly self-conscious comments on his narrative technique:

It seems to me that I shall speak like Homer's Helen. For she says that she would not tell all "the toils of stout-hearted Odysseus." But she takes, I think, some one deed of his and narrates it to Telemachus and Menelaus. And I myself would not tell all the achievements of the Savior, which I have enjoyed to this very day. Nor at this point shall I add that Homeric phrase, "not if I had ten tongues, ten mouths." For this were too little. Not even if I should surpass all human strength, speech, and wisdom, could I ever do justice to them. I have never been persuaded by any of my friends, whoever have asked or encouraged me to speak or write about these things, and so I have avoided the impossible. For it seemed to me to be the same as if after swimming through the whole sea under water, I should be compelled to produce records of the total number of the waves which I encountered, and how I found the sea at each of them, and what it was that saved me. For each of our days, as well as our nights, has a story, if someone, who was present at them, wished either to record the events or to narrate the providence of the god, wherein he revealed some things openly in his own presence and others by the sending of dreams, as far as it was possible to obtain sleep. But this was rare, due to the tempests of my body. In view of this, I decided to submit to the god, truly as to a doctor, and to do in silence whatever he wishes.<sup>191</sup>

This opening passage demonstrates much about the purpose behind Aristides' *Sacred Tales*, his apparent submission in silence to the god's desires. First, Aristides alerts his readers to the impossibility of what Aristides set out to accomplish, to convince his

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<sup>191</sup> 47.1-4. Aristides quotes from Homer, *Iliad* 2.489.

readers of the god's providence. In Aristides' mind, the god's actions were so great that he is unable to recount all that has been accomplished. It is not simply a matter of a lack of time, resources, or Aristides' abilities; rather that which he wishes to recount is beyond human capability to speak or write. Indeed, the very point is that Aristides' experience came from outside of the human realm, and thus cannot be fully captured by human language. The image of this frustrated orator at the limits of his ability to persuade can be found throughout the *Sacred Tales*. Consider, for example, his attempt, recounted in the second tale, to alert his companions to the presence of Athena as she appears to him in a dream. His companions assume he is delirious in his speaking of the goddess' presence. However, as his health visibly improves, they become convinced that something indeed happened.<sup>192</sup> Aristides' companions cannot see the goddess as he does; they can only experience the results of her visit. Likewise, Aristides knows that his general audience will never understand fully the work of Asclepius in his life, but through his narration, he hopes to convince them of "the achievements of the savior." Narration of his experience is intended to convince the audience of the power of Asclepius over Aristides' life, though his tales can never reproduce that which he has experienced. The audience can only participate indirectly through following his narrative.

This introductory passage also alerts the reader to Aristides' understanding of the complex act of narration. He recognizes, as Theon teaches in his *progymnasmata*, that narration is not a simple recounting of events as they happened. Aristides distinguishes between the task of "recording" (ἀπογράφειν) events and the function of the *Sacred Tales*: "to narrate the providence of the god" (τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ πρόνοιαν διηγείσθαι). The recording of events could continue forever, as there are countless details that a complete

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<sup>192</sup> See 48.37-45.

record would have to maintain.<sup>193</sup> The *Tales*, however, are not a seriatim account of what happened, but rather a reflective narration intended to persuade the audience of the providence of the god.<sup>194</sup> Here again we see the ancient distinction between a set of events and a narrative, taught in the *progymnasmata*. Narrating is distinguished from recording events in that the former is a creation of a given author, constructed through the configuration of a set of events.

This distinction between recording and narrating is made concrete in Aristides' references to an alternative record he wrote at the command of the god Asclepius. Throughout the tales, Aristides tells his audience that he was ordered by the god to compose a complete record of his experiences, and he admits that he wrote some three hundred thousand lines in "parchment books" (αἱ διφθέρα), writing or dictating the complete details of his dreams and experiences.<sup>195</sup> It is to these parchment books that he directs those who "wish to know precisely what has befallen us from the god." He acknowledges that the events in these books are recorded without context, and thus they are difficult to follow for "it is neither very easy to go over them nor to fit them into their proper chronology."<sup>196</sup> To the contrary, in the tales he has decided "to speak in summary fashion [κεφάλαια λέγειν], as I remember different things from different sources."<sup>197</sup> Aristides distinguishes between his narrative in the *Sacred Tales* and the "database" of events from which he draws indirectly through his memory. The gap between recording

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<sup>193</sup> Throughout the *Sacred Tales* Aristides admits to his audience that there is much more detail he could tell, but he is choosing not to (see 49.5, 6, 30; 50.70, 80; 51.35).

<sup>194</sup> On the distinction between "what happened" and Aristides' "secondary elaboration" of the tales, see Stephens, "Religious Experience," 76-82.

<sup>195</sup> The introduction to the book is found in 48.2-3. Such books are referred or alluded to in 47.3; 48.8; 49.26, 30; 50.25.

<sup>196</sup> 48.3.

<sup>197</sup> The phrase κεφάλαια λέγειν translates literally as "to speak the chief matters." For a parallel use of this common phrase, see Plato, *Symp.* 186c.

and narrating consists in the author's construction of chronology; he has made the data in the parchment books comprehensible to the *Tales*' audience by supplying chronological organization. Though much scholarship has been devoted to the analysis of whether these "parchment books" actually existed, what this prior record may have been, and how it relates to what we have in the *Sacred Tales*, the pertinent point is the distinction between that record and the *Sacred Tales*.<sup>198</sup> That is, though a record in the parchment books, written for Asclepius, may have actually existed, it is not what readers find in the *Tales*, which are a retelling of this set of events in a way comprehensible to this particular audience. Aristides suggests that those who want a full account can go and consult it: "If someone wishes to know with the utmost precision what has befallen us from the God, it is time for him to seek out the parchment books and the dreams themselves."<sup>199</sup>

Regardless of whether one could actually find these books, or less likely, find the "dreams themselves," the *Sacred Tales* are the result of an additional layer of reflection, a retelling of the events to address an audience. This explicit acknowledgement of the *Tales*' function thus forms part of the rhetorical effect of the *Sacred Tales*. As Aristides' audience is presented with his narration, the parchment books, a complete record of the events, stands as an alternative that Aristides explicitly did not take, that the audience does not have. As Lee T. Percy notes, the parchment books are a foil to the *Sacred*

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<sup>198</sup> For example, Behr argues that the *Sacred Tales* are composed from memory by way of dictation, and thus discrepancies between the tales and the actual events result from Aristides' imperfect ability to recall what he had previously written about his experiences. He suggests that the randomness of the tales improves as Aristides goes along, adding that after the second tale "Aristides became more adept in handling the difficulties of this technique. (see *Aelius Aristides*, 116-130; quotation from 117).

<sup>199</sup> "If someone wishes to know with the utmost precision what has befallen us from the God, it is time for him to seek out the parchment books and the dreams themselves" (48.8).

*Tales*, hidden in some sense from the reader.<sup>200</sup> Aristides offers his audience a reconstruction of the events into a coherent whole.

The distinction between story and narrative is found in the introduction to Aristides' *Sacred Tales*.<sup>201</sup> Percy is correct in his assertion that, "We do not have to be Formalists, Deconstructionists, or narratologists" to recognize that in Aristides the stories readers hear are the author's creative construction of a prior set of events.<sup>202</sup> The parchment books, even if all three hundred thousand lines did exist, are not suited for an audience, as the events need reflection and organization to accomplish Aristides' stated goals. It is by following this reflection and organization, the creative, necessary steps of any narrator, that the audience can become convinced of the providence of the god Asclepius. The narrator of the *Tales*, therefore, acknowledges that he is already an interpreter of events. He narrates to persuade, not merely to recount: "While I remember these [visions], I do not think that I should reveal them purposelessly."<sup>203</sup>

The narrator's self-conscious comments show that Aristides organizes the *Sacred Tales*, his creative, reflective construction of what happened to him, so as to accomplish a particular rhetorical goal. As with his companions who could not see Athena, the *Tales'* narrator hopes his audience, who cannot experience the dreams themselves, will acknowledge the god's power through Aristides' narration. The complete record, that is the ability to have the audience experience what he experienced, is impossible. As he notes at the end of one episode, "This is a summary of the divine manifestation, and I

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<sup>200</sup> Lee T. Percy, "Theme, Dream, and Narrative: Reading the Sacred Tales of Aelius Aristides," *TAPA* 118 (1988): 383.

<sup>201</sup> This connection between modern discussions of story/narrative and Aristides' self-conscious narration is noted by Whitmarsh ("Aelius Aristides," 444).

<sup>202</sup> Percy, "Theme, Dream," 382.

<sup>203</sup> 47.71.

would place a high premium on being able to recount exactly each particular of it.”<sup>204</sup>

This premium, as Aristides continues to remind his reader, is far too high, and therefore he does not recount “each particular,” but rather constructs the events to persuade the audience of the god’s power. His reluctance to narrate springs not from lack of trying, but from the impossibility of conveying his own experience.

The general scholarly impression is that there is little organization to the tales. But alerted to Aristides’ conscious construction of narrative one can wonder whether this haphazard nature does not itself have some rhetorical effect. There is no doubt that a reader is overwhelmed by the litany of illnesses about which Aristides complains and the seemingly ridiculous remedies he tries.<sup>205</sup> Consider the first tale, wherein he marks time by the number of days since he has bathed—he goes over five years without a bath—and his nightly vomiting sessions, treatments recommended to him by the God. What is also repeated in the *Tales*, though, is a consistent narrative logic that pervades individual stories and forms a part of the tales’ rhetorical effect. Though this presentation is overly-simplified, most of the stories proceed as follows. Aristides becomes ill. He receives instructions for healing from the god. These instructions often come into conflict with human advice offered to cure his disease; it seems the reader is not the only one who finds the god’s remedies somewhat strange.<sup>206</sup> Generally Aristides at some point follows the human solution instead of the god’s. That solution fails, and he then returns to the god is thereby healed.<sup>207</sup> A particularly clear example of this pattern is found in his encounter

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<sup>204</sup> 48.18.

<sup>205</sup> The remedies will seem ridiculous to some in a modern, scientific world, though Aristides suggests his contemporaries also found them ridiculous (see, for example, 49.7-13).

<sup>206</sup> See for example 47.63.

<sup>207</sup> For a few examples of this narrative logic, see 47.57; 47.61-68; 49.16-20; 49.24; 49.26-28; 51.8-10; 51.49-53.

with the physician Satyrus, whom Aristides labels a “sophist,” doubtless a contempt-laden denigration.<sup>208</sup> At this point Aristides has been treating his illness by blood-letting, a treatment he attributes to the instructions of the god. Satyrus, though, recommends against this, and he prescribes a plaster to place over his stomach. Aristides chooses Satyrus’ treatment over that of the god, but his health does not improve. Therefore, he consults an oracle and is convinced in a dream that the god’s original advice is the proper way to healing. By returning to the treatment of blood-letting, Aristides is healed. The return to the god’s treatment heals what the sophist doctor could not. The emphasis of the details of the pattern can change, but this underlying narrative logic is remarkably consistent. For example, in the third tale, in an abbreviated example of this narrative logic, Aristides has a dream in which he ate certain things, which leads him to abandon his previous practice of vomiting in the evening and to begin eating those things he ate in his dream. He is thereby healed.<sup>209</sup> So, while there is no mention in this episode of the origin of his vomiting technique, it is clear that it was not working and the god’s solution did.

Consistently it is such dreams and oracles that provide effective solutions, often contrary to the recommendations of humans. At other times the problem may not be his individual physical ailments, but natural disasters, such as earthquakes. Even then, though, sacred advice given by dreams trumps human attempts to solve the problem.<sup>210</sup> Throughout Aristides’ narration, the *Tales* guide the audience into seeing the superiority of the god’s healing abilities to those of human doctors. The audience is led to affirm

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<sup>208</sup> See this encounter in 49.7-13.

<sup>209</sup> 49.24.

<sup>210</sup> See 49.38-40.

Aristides's own conclusion: "Clearly there was no choice between listening to the doctors or to the god."<sup>211</sup>

Aristides also uses narrative to invite the audience to identify with certain characters. At times the narrative seems prompts identification with those around Aristides. I previously demonstrated this in Aristides' frustrated attempts to convince his companions of Athena's presence. In reading the continued recounting of his diseases and his at-times odd treatment, Aristides' readers may begin to wonder at the logic of his plan. He often then introduces a character who voices the very concerns his reader may have. The words of his friends seem to reflect audience responses to the tales: "Some of my friends marveled at my endurance, others criticized me because I acted too much on account of dreams, and some even blamed me for being cowardly, since I neither permitted surgery nor again suffered any cauterizing drugs."<sup>212</sup> In Aristides' healing, the power of the god comes through, and those who were formally criticizing his treatments become convinced of what has happened: "The doctors stopped their criticisms, expressed extraordinary admiration for the providence of the god in each particular."<sup>213</sup> The "providence of god," which Aristides sets out to narrate, is demonstrated through his healed body.<sup>214</sup> Just as the audience is led to identify with Aristides' friends in their suspicion, the construction of the tales leads the audience to accept the god's power alongside those characters who become convinced of the god's healing power.

The construction of the *Tales* also leads the audience to identify with Aristides as one healed by the god. This is particularly clear in his seemingly-haphazard shifting of

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<sup>211</sup> 47.63.

<sup>212</sup> 47.63.

<sup>213</sup> 47.67.

<sup>214</sup> See 47.3.

address. Recall that Aristides describes the tales as part of his decision to “submit to the god, truly as to a doctor, and to do in silence whatever he wishes.” At times it appears that the true author of the tales is not Aristides, but the god. Though overall the narrator addresses an anonymous second person plural, at times Aristides shifts to address the god, calling upon the god to lead him and make his narrative effective.<sup>215</sup> In his comments directed to Asclepius, he shows that he understands the countless options available to him in how to tell the story, as he consistently seeks the god’s advice in how best to convey to his audience what happened to him. This narrative device of reporting these internal struggles as a narrator in effect places Aristides in the role of the *Tales*’ audience alongside the reader, as they both await narration offered from the god, the true narrator.<sup>216</sup> Therefore whatever narration the reader encounters comes directly from the god, as it is the product of the silent submission of Aristides.

This shifting in the audience’s identification becomes clear in the fourth and fifth tales. As part of his treatment, the god instructs Aristides to return to the practice of oratory, a practice he had given up due to his illness.<sup>217</sup> Aristides recounts how the god appeared to him in dreams, not merely prompting him to speak, but also training him in the art of oratory.<sup>218</sup> Aristides then reports secondary situations in which his speech, given to him directly from the god, begins to heal those around him.<sup>219</sup> Therefore, not only does the act of speaking help to heal Aristides himself, but his speech demonstrates to others

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<sup>215</sup> See 48.24: “But as to what follows it is your task, O Lord, to make clear and to reveal, by saying what and by turning where, we should do what is gratifying to you and would best continue our tale.” For other instances of the address of the god, see 50.50, 69

<sup>216</sup> Aristides at times shifts into the first person plural: “Come now, as if we were ever ascending a ladder, let us recall another of the things before this” (50.100). See also 48.71, 73.

<sup>217</sup> See 50.14.

<sup>218</sup> “The greatest and most valuable part of my training was my access to and communion with these dreams” (50.25). See also 50.29, 38, 95 The god also prompts him to write poetry (50.31).

<sup>219</sup> See, for example, 50.45-46, where the actual words of his dedication to the god are given to him in a dream from the god. See also 51.31.

the power of the god leading to healing. Aristides' speech, for example, prompts a certain Pardalas, whom Aristides describes as "the greatest expert of the Greeks of our time in the science of oratory," to recognize the improvement in Aristides' speech as the work of the god.<sup>220</sup> Aristides recounts how he was appropriately nicknamed by others "Theodorus" because "everything of mine was a gift of the god."<sup>221</sup> The audience of the tales, though, is also witness to Aristides' rhetorical powers. Therefore the voice that the reader experiences in following the tales is no longer merely that of Aristides, who in effect remains silent alongside the audience. Rather the voice is that of Asclepius, the doctor. The *Sacred Tales*, therefore, are no longer only a narrator's recounting of Doctor Asclepius' healing of Aristides, but rather these words are themselves shown to have the power to heal an audience.

Therefore, as Aristides' primary audience learns how his dreams lead to his healing, the audience becomes convinced that hearing this narration can in turn lead to their own healing. Aristides makes clear that narration has benefits far beyond entertainment value. For example, at one point Athena appears to Aristides and she "reminded me of *The Odyssey* and said that these were not idle tales, but that this could be judged even by the present circumstances." Athena's advice to Aristides then becomes advice to the reader; Aristides' words are likewise not just idle tales. The reader alongside Aristides begins to understand likewise: "It was necessary to persevere. I myself was indeed both Odysseus and Telemachus."<sup>222</sup> This identification between

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<sup>220</sup> 50.26. For the connection between Aristides' healing and his return to oratory, see 50.30. Interestingly, the return to oratory also heals Aristides' political problems (see 50.75-76).

<sup>221</sup> 50.53; cf. 50.70.

<sup>222</sup> 48.42.

reading/hearing and healing becomes clear as the god begins to appear to Aristides in the form of literary characters from the past.<sup>223</sup>

Aristides' explicit comments suggest that following the *Tales* as he has constructed them is the only way in which the audience may glimpse the power of the god. Indeed, he admits throughout that he has dreams, "the particulars of which I would not be able to tell."<sup>224</sup> Instead, he has constructed narratives, shaped by his understanding of his audience, to allow them to experience the power of the god through the following of the narrative. He demonstrates a consciousness of the complex act of narration.

In composing the *Sacred Tales*, Aelius Aristides faces rhetorical constraints not unfamiliar to Paul in Galatians. As Paul's argument depends upon appeal to an ineffable experience with the Spirit in the past, so Aristides seeks to convey an experience he cannot recreate for his audience. Like Paul, Aristides turns to narrative in order to lead his audience to an understanding of the wonder of God. Rather than reporting a continuous series of events that happened to him, Aristides in his *Sacred Tales* offers a careful re-telling of past experience, shaped to convince an audience. The *Tales* present a clear example of what the *progymnasmata* teach about narrative: an orator can control an audience through his modification of the narrative form. Narrative is a playful form, wherein the author's adaptation of the elements of narration allow him to move an audience in different directions. This analysis of the *Tales* suggests that understanding how narration persuades depends upon following carefully the way in which the narrative

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<sup>223</sup> See, for example, Plato's appearance to Aristides, who is described to Aristides as "your Hermes" (50.57). Aristides also sees Lysias (50.59) and Sophocles (50.60), who bring healing. Likewise, in a dream Aristides is brought Demosthenes' *On the Crown* (50.97). At another occasion he dreams he is studying Aristophanes' *The Clouds* (51.18). He also reports being inspired in a dream by Homer's *Odyssey* (51.44), Plato (51.61-63) and Musonius Rufus (52.2-3).

<sup>224</sup> 50.80.

is constructed and the audience's interaction with the narrative. Aristides recognizes that the persuasive power of narration exists beyond the events recounted and lies instead with the effect the particular construction of these events has on an audience. This is the power of narrative rhetoric.

**“Now I have not told this long story idly”: Reading Narrative Rhetoric in the Orations of Dio Chrysostom<sup>225</sup>**

Having demonstrated that narrative was accepted, taught, and recognized as a means of persuasion in Paul's ancient rhetorical milieu, I now turn to explore this ancient understanding of narrative through a close reading of the actual narrative rhetoric of an ancient author. New Testament rhetorical critics too wedded to the handbooks rarely look to actual examples of ancient persuasive discourse, overlooking the distinction between theory and practice, an omission frequently cited by those decrying rhetorical criticism.<sup>226</sup> In the previous chapter I began to outline a reading method for narrative rhetoric in Galatians. In the present chapter I have further defined that method by exploring the persuasive function of narrative in the ancient rhetorical tradition. I now use that method to read the orations of Dio Chrysostom.

My intention in introducing Dio is not to set up a direct comparison for Paul's rhetoric. That is, I have little interest in judging whether or not Paul stands up to the oratorical genius exhibited in Dio's orations. The answer to that question is an emphatic “no.” Rather, my intention is to fill out the picture of what the *progymnasmata* have

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<sup>225</sup> Dio Chrysostom, *Orations* 7.81. All translations are from the Loeb Classical Library, with slight amendments.

<sup>226</sup> As mentioned before, this is a consistent critique of rhetorical approaches (see David E. Aune, “Review of *Galatians* by Hans Dieter Betz” *RSR* 7 [1981]: 323-28; François Vouga, “Zur rhetorischen Gattung des Galaterbriefes,” *ZNW* 79 [1988]: 291).

demonstrated, namely that the ancients conceived of narrative as creative discourse that gives the author immediate access to the audience for persuasive purposes. Likewise, through reading Dio I will begin to form a method of analysis that guides my reading of Paul's narrative rhetoric in subsequent chapters.

My argument is that narrative rhetoric is a complex form of discourse, the persuasive strategy of which involves the audience's participation in following the narrative. Whole discourses, therefore, have persuasive powers that exceed the sum of the individual parts.<sup>227</sup> Therefore my examples of narrative rhetoric cannot be quick and simple. That is, I have to follow at times long arguments rather than summarizing. Therefore my reading sacrifices breadth for the sake of depth. I attempt to show where Dio both makes meta-comments on narrative function, similar to what I have shown in more analytical works like Aristides' *Sacred Tales*, but my primary focus is in following how he actually uses narrative as a means of persuasion.

Dio of Prusa, most often referred to by his later (and appropriate) moniker "Chrysostom" ("golden-mouthed"), provides an excellent example of the practice of ancient oratory, with extant orations encompassing all three traditional genres of rhetoric.<sup>228</sup> Known mostly for his kingship orations and speeches to cities, he covers diverse topics, ranging from philosophical issues like freedom and virtue, to political issues like kingship and concord between cities, to more classically sophistic topics, such

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<sup>227</sup> For a discussion of this "surplus of meaning" in Ricoeur's work, particularly in the context of historical narrative, see White, *Content of the Form*, 170-73.

<sup>228</sup> For a discussion of the development of Dio's name and his connection to the historian Cassius Dio, see Alan M. Gowing, "Dio's Name," *CP* 85 (1990): 49-54. The classic work on Dio and his Orations is H. von Arnim, *Leben und Werke des Dio von Prusa* (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1898). For a brief introduction to Dio, his life, and his works, see D. A. Russell, ed., *Dio Chrysostom Orations VII, XII, and XXXVI* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1-25; Grube, *The Greek and Roman Critics*, 327-32.

as his well-known “Encomium on Hair.”<sup>229</sup> His oratory is generally judged to occupy a position on the fine line between philosophy and sophistry. Philostratus includes him as part of the second sophistic, though he admits, “I do not know what one ought to call him.”<sup>230</sup> Following the account of the 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Synesius, many suggest Dio’s career was divided into two parts, one more sophistic, one more philosophical, separated by a dramatic conversion experience, though recent work has called this sharp distinction into question.<sup>231</sup> In his orations he generally pursues a moralizing agenda, focused on convincing his audience to engage in or refrain from certain behaviors.<sup>232</sup> Narrative plays an integral role in this rhetorical strategy. Dio is an entertaining and prolific storyteller. Here too, he presents a diversity of use. Narration is used in short examples to reinforce a point, in descriptions to set the stage for addresses given by characters, and at times narratives comprise most if not all of individual orations. Many of these more narrative orations provide a clear example of the flexible use of narrative as a persuasive device, a use I call narrative rhetoric.

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<sup>229</sup> This last text is only known to us through references in Synesius’ “Encomium on Baldness.”

<sup>230</sup> Philostratus defines the sophist in the introduction (*Lives of the Sophists* 479). His confusion over categorization opens his section on Dio (*Lives of the Sophists* 487). Philostratus highlights the *Euboean Discourse* as a “sophistic composition” that covers “themes of no great importance” (*Lives of the Sophists* 487). For a general discussion of the meaning of the term “sophist,” see G. W. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1969), esp. 12-14.

<sup>231</sup> For an example of the standard position, see Grube, *Greek and Roman Critics*, 327. For a close analysis of the much-discussed exile and conversion of Dio and its impact on his work, see Moles, who concludes, “The conversion of Dio Chrysostom is a fraud” (“Truth and Untruth in Herodotus and Thucydides,” 100). The key oration for determining what happened to him and its impact on his work is Oration 13. The question of whether Dio is properly considered a sophist is most interesting and perplexing. Consider, for example, the 11<sup>th</sup> Oration (*Trojan Discourse*). Here he takes a seemingly absurd topic (refuting the Homeric narrative) and argues vehemently for it, a classic sophist technique. However, in so doing he criticizes sophists who he says will oppose him (see 7.6).

<sup>232</sup> On the general moral focus of the orations, see Whitmarsh, “Dio Chrysostom,” 451;

There has been recent scholarly attention paid to storytelling in Dio's orations.<sup>233</sup> This trend is not surprising given the numerous and entertaining stories Dio tells. Many studies focus on the more extended narratives in the orations, most frequently within the *Euboean Discourse*, where Dio spends over half of the speech recounting an autobiographical narrative. Frequently such studies examine the relationship between Dio's narratives and the development of the Greco-Roman novel. Few studies, though, have looked at how these narratives connect with the occasion of discourse. That is, few have asked what rhetorical effect of telling stories has on Dio's implied audience. It is pertinent to inquire about the integration of these extended narrations into an explicitly persuasive context. This integration is often unclear at the surface of the argument, but careful reading shows that Dio's stories implicitly bear upon the larger rhetorical situation he addresses in his orations. My brief examination of the extended narrative in the first kingship oration earlier in this chapter demonstrated this implicit connection. Dio often uses narrations of the past to move beyond simply telling his audience something, and instead he invites them into the unfolding argument. Graham Anderson is correct in his assessment that Dio is not primarily a storyteller who also has a moralizing agenda, but rather he is a moralizing orator who uses narrative to make his point.<sup>234</sup> That is, narrative does not merely provide support for argument, but narrative itself is a rhetorical device in Dio Chrysostom, aimed at persuasion: "We should not go far wrong to conclude that in Dio stories are being told towards an end rather than for their own

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<sup>233</sup> See, for examples, Richard Hunter, "The *Trojan Oration* of Dio Chrysostom and Ancient Homeric Criticism" pp. 43-61 in *Narratology and Interpretation: The Content of Narrative Form in Ancient Literature* (ed. Jonas Grethlein and Antonios Rengakos; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2009); Graham Anderson, "Some Uses of Storytelling in Dio," pp. 143-60 in *Dio Chrysostom: Politics, Letters, and Philosophy* (ed. Simon Swain; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Niklas Holzberg, "Novel-Like Works of Extended Prose Fiction II," pp. 619-53 in *The Novel in the Ancient World* (ed. Gareth Schmeling; Leiden: Brill, 1996), esp. 640-44.

<sup>234</sup> See Anderson, "Some Uses," 143.

sakes.”<sup>235</sup> As Dio himself says at the beginning of the fifth oration, stories are effective when “turned in the right direction and transformed into a parable of the real and true.”<sup>236</sup>

The most frequent use of narrative in Dio’s orations are the fictive, historical, and literary paradigms with which he reinforces non-narrative arguments. These essentially function consistently with Aristotle’s outline of the paradigm used to support enthymemes, and they are not of primary interest here. In oration 16, “On Pain,” for example, Dio compares the inevitable nature of pain and sorrow to a soldier facing the enemy. No matter how much armor a soldier may wear, he is never completely protected from harm. Likewise, as much as someone may attempt to shield himself from pain in life, it remains inevitable. Here the invented events of a soldier clarify Dio’s description of pain. Dio’s paradigms are not always the invented type; he often draws from historical or literary narratives.<sup>237</sup> The standard authors appear throughout his orations, particularly Homer. At times Dio suggests that paradigms, particularly literary paradigms, have more than a simple explanatory effect. Consider, for example, his oration 13, “In Athens, About his Banishment.” Here in recounting his depression regarding his recent exile, he shows his audience how recalling the narratives of classic literature, including the hero of Homer’s *Odyssey*, helped him to interpret his exile and endure this difficult time. Examples from literature “frightened me and forced me to consider what had happened to me a terrible and onerous thing,” while others prompted Dio to realize “that exile is not altogether injurious or unprofitable.”<sup>238</sup> He suggests to his audience, therefore, that stories

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<sup>235</sup> Anderson, “Some Uses,” 160.

<sup>236</sup> *Or.* 5.1.

<sup>237</sup> For examples of his use of a historical and literary paradigms, see 17.13-15; 20.19; 62.5.

<sup>238</sup> 13.6, 8. For his depression and questioning his future in exile, see 13.1-3.

function in a more implicit way than simply illuminating a point made in non-narrative discourse.

This more implicit understanding of narrative rhetoric can best be seen in the eleventh oration, the well-known *Trojan Discourse*. This oration casts a meta-analysis of narrative rhetoric within a sophistic address, providing a transition from my previous summary of the analysis of narrative in Dionysius and Aelius Aristides to the exploration of actual examples of oratory.<sup>239</sup> Although Dio composes this speech as a critique of Homer's epics, participating in the long line of Homeric criticism in antiquity, the speech exemplifies well his own powers of oratory and narrative rhetoric.<sup>240</sup> Addressing the "men of Ilium," Dio argues to set straight the record about the epics of Homer, particularly the *Illiad's* presentation of the Greeks' victory over Troy.<sup>241</sup> In classic sophistic style, Dio argues the seemingly absurd position that though the tales of Homer have been accepted as history, in fact "there is probably nothing trustworthy in what he said"; most dramatically, Troy was not conquered by the Greeks.<sup>242</sup> Dio walks through the events of

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<sup>239</sup> Robert M. Grant uses the *Trojan Discourse* as an example of the use of ἀνασκευή (refutation), as outlined in Theon's *Progymnasmata (Earliest Lives of Jesus)* [London: SPCK, 1961], 44-47).

<sup>240</sup> The tradition of Homeric criticism is of course as old as Homer himself, and it is far too broad a topic to even summarize here. As Robert Lamberton says, a summary of the history of influence of Homer "would be so enormous that it would require writing a history of Greek and Latin literature from the perspective of Homeric influence" (*Homer's Ancient Readers*, viii1). For some introductory examples, see Rudolf Pfeiffer, *History of Classical Scholarship: From the Beginnings to the End of the Hellenistic Age* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968); Jan Fredrik Kindstrand, *Homer in der zweiten Sophistik: Studien zu der Homerlektüre und dem Homerbild bei Dion von Prusa, Maximus von Tyros und Aelius Aristides* (Uppsala: Akademistisk Avhandling, 1973); Howard W. Clarke, *Homer's Readers: A Historical Introduction to the Iliad and Odyssey* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1981). In Oration 53 ("On Homer"), Dio summarizes ancient criticism on Homer.

<sup>241</sup> For this description of his audience, see 11.4.

<sup>242</sup> 11.16. Dio's denial of any historical accuracy in Homer is no doubt an exaggeration, as throughout his retelling of the events he confirms that at times Homer got it right (see, for example, 11.76, 881, 84, 85, 106). Though Dio speech is for the most part a critique of Homer, whom he calls "the boldest liar in existence," he speaks playfully with an air of admiration for the epic poet's ability to craft his lies (11.23). Grube suggests, "This oration is merely a clever sophistic *jeu d'esprit* on the theme that the story of Troy cannot be true." He argues that the oration is intended to entertain audiences (*Greek and Roman Critics*, 326-27). Dio critiques Homer elsewhere, arguing, "Homer's life deserves praise much more than his verse"

Homer's epics, demonstrating where Homer told the tale inaccurately and offering a more probable account.<sup>243</sup>

Dio's point is not simply to disparage the reputation of Homer; he frequently denies that this is his intention.<sup>244</sup> Instead, the speech exposes the power narratives can exert over their audiences and how the narratives of Homer were not designed to report truth, but to please Homer's Greek audience. Dio's criticism of Homer's audiences falls not on their believing lies, but rather on their having confused the categories of poetics and history: "They give their poets full license to tell any untruth they wish, and they declare that this is the poets' privilege. Yet they trust them in everything they say and even quote them at times as witnesses in matters of dispute."<sup>245</sup> Dio insists that readers should recognize that Homer was writing for Greeks in a particular rhetorical situation, which his narrative was designed to address. Homer's tales originally presented "some advantage . . . for the Greeks of those days, since they saved them from being alarmed in case war, as was expected, arose between them and the people of Asia."<sup>246</sup> Dio here recognizes the power of narrative rhetoric to address a particular group under particular circumstances. Because circumstances have changed and Dio addresses the "men of Ilium," Homer's narrative is not helpful as presently designed. A shift in rhetorical

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(53.9). In the 53<sup>rd</sup> Oration, though, Dio generally praises the poet, admiring his humility in not putting his name all over his work and discussing how "beneficial and practically serviceable" his work is (53.11).

<sup>243</sup> Dio argues that Paris legitimately married Helen (11.53), but Agamemnon used the marriage to stir up a nationalistic anger amongst the Greeks and use them to try to fight Priam and Paris, whose power threatened him (11.62-64). The Greeks therefore attempted to take Troy. They were repeatedly rebuffed by the strong Trojan defense (11.74-80), and eventually a peace treaty between the two was signed, in which the Trojans were the clear victors (11.119-22). There were no hostilities subsequent to this treaty. Dio also rejects some of the key parts of Homer's narrative, including the death of Patroclus. He says the events narrated about Patroclus actually happened to Achilles, namely that he was killed by Hector (11.102-104).

<sup>244</sup> See, for example, 11.11, 16, 18, 23, 147.

<sup>245</sup> 11.42.

<sup>246</sup> 11.147.

situation invites Dio's retelling of the story for his own purposes.<sup>247</sup> Dio argues that his retelling of the events, which he claims is more accurate to what actually happened, will be more helpful to his Trojan audience and even to the Greeks of his day.<sup>248</sup> In fact, though, Dio is no less "guilty" than Homer for constructing his narrative for his particular rhetorical situation.

Dio mounts his argument "against" Homer by retelling what actually happened and showing logical inconsistencies within Homer's narrative. As Dio says, "I shall use no other means of refuting him than his own poetry."<sup>249</sup> He retells the events recounted in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, showing how his presentation of the events makes more sense of the circumstances than does Homer's.<sup>250</sup> For example, he argues that it is more likely that Paris's marriage to Helen was legitimate and the Greeks instigated trouble with the Trojans. Otherwise why would the Trojans be so united in their defense of Paris' immoral act?<sup>251</sup> Likewise, if Paris took Helen against her family's wishes, why did her brothers not go after her in the ten years it took Agamemnon to build his army?<sup>252</sup> In light of his test of the verisimilitude of Homer's narrative, Dio asks, "Does not all this in reality remind one of dreams and wild fiction?"<sup>253</sup> Dio argues that most of the story, including some of the more famous episodes, is without historical basis, though this is difficult for audiences to recognize, having been duped by Homer for so long. In assessing the story of the Trojan

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<sup>247</sup> Dio notes, "The situation has changed and there is no longer any fear of an Asiatic people ever marching against Greece" (11.150).

<sup>248</sup> See 11.151-54.

<sup>249</sup> 11.11.

<sup>250</sup> Dio's argument mostly concerns the events in the *Iliad*, though he does briefly look at the events after the war, including Odysseus' journey home (see 11.130-44). He also discusses the order of the *Odyssey* in 11.34-37.

<sup>251</sup> 11.66-67.

<sup>252</sup> 11.70-71.

<sup>253</sup> He further argues "one might well call Homer's poetry a kind of dream, obscure and vague at that" (11.129).

horse, Dio argues to the audience that they must “rid yourselves of your opinions and prejudices and consider how ridiculous [Homer’s] story is.”<sup>254</sup> Held up to the standard of how Dio and his audience understand things to happen in the real world, Homer’s narrative is not truthful. The more logical solution is that there was in fact no conquering of Troy at all.

The point of the speech, however, is not to show Homer is wrong, but to show that Homer is primarily interested in persuasion; Dio actually characterizes his address as a “defense in behalf of Homer.”<sup>255</sup> The speech reveals to readers more about Dio than simply his views on the historicity of the Trojan War. Among all of these logical inconsistencies that Dio points out, there lies a commentary on the rhetorical function of narrative: Homer is not just lying; he is lying for a purpose. Dio argues that the epics provide clues that the purpose is persuasion, not history. One can see the alternative motives in Homer’s tale in the fact that they are told out of order. Dio affirms what Theon’s *Progymnasmata* taught: controlling the ordering of events in narrative is a means of persuasion. Dio notes, “Homer did not begin his poem in the natural ways” (τοῦ μὴ κατὰ φύσιν ἄρξασθαι), but rather inverted the order, beginning with the end.<sup>256</sup> Likewise, Homer emphasizes certain parts of the narrative, but he skips over others quickly. Dio shows how Homer goes out of his way to praise the actions of the Achaeans, even when logic or evidence suggests otherwise.<sup>257</sup> Homer is not to blame for this, but rather those

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<sup>254</sup> 11.125. He suggests rather humorously that it is rather improbable that an entire army was hidden in a horse and yet no one in the city noticed.

<sup>255</sup> βούλομαι δὲ καὶ περὶ Ὀμήρου ἀπολογήσασθαι (11.147).

<sup>256</sup> 11.25. Compare this with Theon’s exercises on the “reversal of the order” (ἡ ἀναστροφή τῆς τάξεως) of narratives, as opposed to the “natural order” (ἡ κατὰ φύσιν τάξις). Theon cites Homer’s *Odyssey* as an example of a narrator beginning in the middle, proceeding to the beginning, and ending with the end (V.238-84).

<sup>257</sup> See, for example, his discussion of Homer’s plan to “enhance Achilles’ glory” (11.83) and the various places “he is eager to extol [the Achaeans]” (11.87).

who accept the epics as historical truth. The rearrangement of events that constitute a narrative is the standard practice of “all who distort the truth,” especially those who argue in the courts. By “distorting the truth,” Dio means having an interest in persuading an audience.

As further evidence that Homer could not be reporting the facts as they occurred, Dio points to Homer’s omniscient narrator who is able to report the thoughts and private conversations of the gods, to which no writer would have access.<sup>258</sup> This intimate knowledge extends beyond the narrator to characters in the narrative.<sup>259</sup> Furthermore, Dio notes that Homer distinguishes between language of humans and the gods, though Homer himself uses the gods’ language. Indeed, Dio charges Homer with at times abandoning the Aeolic, Doric, or Ionic dialects and speaking with “the Zeus dialect.”<sup>260</sup> In so doing, the narrator boldly claims a position above his audience, strengthening his ability to persuade. However, this cannot be taken as reflecting historical reality. This intimate knowledge of divine action and speech shows that Homer’s narrator is not an objective reporter of events, but rather is an active character in the narrative, a narrative not aimed at reporting facts, but at persuading audiences.

Finally, the ability of narrative to persuade through its engagement of the audience is evident in Dio’s advice for Homer in how he could have made his argument even more persuasive in Homer’s Greek context. Although his stories are designed to persuade an audience, Homer was actually not very good at it! Homer could have garnered “a more sympathetic and interested audience” by starting his tale with “Paris’

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<sup>258</sup> 11.19-21. Dio argues that through this Homer show “utter contempt” for his audience (11.21).

<sup>259</sup> Odysseus, for example, is reported to know how the gods discussed his actions (see 11.20).

<sup>260</sup> 11.22-23. As an example, Dio shows how Homer reports that the gods refer to the river Scamander by the name “Xanthus,” but then Homer proceeds throughout the rest of the story to use the term Xanthus (see 11.23).

wanton crime,” for this beginning would have set the audience against the Trojans, leading them to realize they deserved punishment and therefore looking for the end that Homer eventually delivers: “No one would have pitied the sufferings of the Trojans.”<sup>261</sup> Likewise Homer could have engaged his audience’s emotions further if he had chosen to report more details of the capture of the city, a “more awe-inspiring subject.”<sup>262</sup> He could have introduced countless characters who meet their death in this episode, thus heightening the intensity of the audience’s experience with the story. Dio concludes, therefore, that Homer’s narratives are not an effective use of narrative to persuade, though he attributes this inability to Homer’s lack of a database of historical events upon which to draw: “It must be acknowledged that Homer was either unintelligent and a bad judge of the facts, so that he selected the more unimportant and trivial things and left to others the greatest and most impressive, or else that he was unable, as I have said, to bolster up his falsehoods and show his poetic genius in handling those incidents whose actual nature it was his purpose to conceal.”<sup>263</sup>

Dio’s critique of Homer shows his understanding of narrative, even a narrative purporting to report actual events, as a construction of its author, generally aimed at influencing an audience. The narrative author has devices at his disposal in order to heighten this persuasion. He can tell the events in an “unnatural” order, he can choose certain events upon which to focus and others to quickly bypass, and he can engage his audience through certain forms of description. Stories are a way of persuading, not reporting facts.

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<sup>261</sup> 11.28.

<sup>262</sup> 11.29. See also his similar comments in 11.127.

<sup>263</sup> 11.33.

Dio then begins to “tell the facts as they occurred.”<sup>264</sup> However, readers should not be so easily convinced by Dio’s claim to objectivity. Rather Dio’s readers should suspect that his “historical” retelling of the events is not intended to report facts as they occurred, but rather, in light of how he has explained Homer’s narrative to function, he tells the story in order to persuade likewise his audience. The playful Dio can hardly expect his audience to understand his narrative as history, when he has argued that Homer’s was clearly fabricated. Dio’s own historical narrative further exposes the inherently persuasive nature of narrative. Consider the repeated critique of those who believe Homer that forms the frame for his narrative.<sup>265</sup> Those who accept Homer’s tales as true err by accepting one man’s presentation of the facts without question.

What does Dio offer as an alternative to Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*? He reports the facts as told to him by one man: “I, therefore, shall give the account as I learned it from a certain very aged priest in Onuphis.”<sup>266</sup> There is certainly a strong sense of irony in Dio’s report of the old priest’s criticism of people who “were so thoroughly convinced . . . being completely deceived by one man, that everybody actually swore to its truth.” Dio is himself relying on the report of one man, and he is asking his audience to rely on the report of yet another single witness, admittedly far removed from the events: Dio

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<sup>264</sup> τὰ ὄντα καὶ γινόμενα λέγοντες. The quotation is from 11.4. For Dio’s discussion of his intentions in retelling the story, see 11.11.

<sup>265</sup> This critique is found throughout, though it is particularly strong at the start (11.1-4) and finish (11.144-46) of the oration.

<sup>266</sup> 11.37. Hunter helpfully notes that Dio is not alone in citing old priests as his source of information. He points to Herodotus (2.118.1) and Plato (*Timaeus* 21e-2b) (see Hunter, “Trojan Oration,” 48). Dio’s retelling of narrative is mostly cast as the direct speech of the priest, with occasional appearances and editorial comments from the narrator Dio (see, for example, 11.46-47, 52-53). The last part, though, beginning with the Trojan horse episode, is related directly by the narrator, and the old priest disappears (11.124-144). In the speech the priest and the narrator merge into one, though, as both are interested in debunking the Homeric narrative by showing where it is logically inconsistent. For a clear example of their similar logic, see 11.52-54.

himself!<sup>267</sup> If Dio can argue that Homer should not be accepted as historically accurate because “there were no other poets or authors where one could read the truth, but he was the first who applied himself to the recording of these events, though he composed his poem many generations after the actual occurrences,” then he must likewise admit that his account has an even more tenuous connection to the events “as they happened.”<sup>268</sup>

Readers should notice that Dio addresses the “men of Ilium.” As Homer tries to please the Greeks by telling the tale of their conquering Troy, Dio garners praise amongst his Trojan audience by arguing the opposite, that in fact it was the Trojans who were victorious.<sup>269</sup> He emphasizes the heroic acts of the Trojans and the problems amongst the Greeks. It is the Trojans who were unjustly attacked.<sup>270</sup> It is the Achaeans who fear the Trojans and their reputation.<sup>271</sup> It is the Trojans who have allies flocking to their side.<sup>272</sup> It is the Achaeans who are characterized by in-fighting.<sup>273</sup> It is the Trojan Hector who emerges as the hero of Dio’s narrative just as the Greek Achilles is Homer’s hero. As Dio accuses Homer of quickly passing over the details that are unfavorable to the Achaeans and lingering on those that make the Trojans look bad, so Dio goes out of his way to highlight the positive aspects of the Trojans and brings to the surface the implied negative

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<sup>267</sup> The priest says he learned these tales from the Egyptians, who received it firsthand from Menelaus (11.38). Grant correctly notes that the character of the priest “is simply a literary device; the priest uses the kinds of arguments employed by Dio himself” (*Earliest Lives*, 45).

<sup>268</sup> Dio goes on to note, “when those who had known the facts had passed away along with their descendents, and only an obscure and uncertain tradition survived, as is to be expected in the case of events that have occurred in the distant past” (11.92).

<sup>269</sup> Of course it must be admitted that Dio specifically denies this is what he is doing (see 11.6, 11). However, when Dio compares “[Homer’s] most grievous misstatements against you” with “my present statement of the truth” one begins to wonder what his intentions may be (11.4).

<sup>270</sup> 11.61-64.

<sup>271</sup> 11.75.

<sup>272</sup> 11.79.

<sup>273</sup> 11.79-80.

features of the Achaeans.<sup>274</sup> Because the rhetorical situation that Homer faced no longer exists, Dio changes the events of the narrative to reach *his* Trojan audience.<sup>275</sup> He claims his account is a trustworthy report of historical details. But given the standards to which he suggests orators like Homer should be held, readers must recognize this attempt to persuade through a carefully-constructed narrative.

There is an abundance of persuasive technique in Dio's "historical" narrative. His warning about the deceptively persuasive Homer should alert the reader to Dio's own tricks. Consider, for example, the oration's use of metapedagogic narrative, similar to that in Dio's first kingship oration. A careful reader notices that the historical presentation of Homer's events in the *Trojan Discourse* is not actually Dio's version of the events; for the most part Dio reports his response to the old priest's version. It first convinces Dio, whom the old priest treats as one who has been duped by Homer, just as Dio in turn characterizes his audience.<sup>276</sup> Dio attempts to bring his audience from ignorance into knowledge by showing how he likewise made the journey through the report of the priest. He further instructs his audience to share their experience of learning of the truth by sharing the discourse with others.<sup>277</sup> The oration itself is constructed to lead the audience to Dio's own conclusion about the Trojan War.

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<sup>274</sup> That Dio engages in the exact behavior for which he critiques Homer is most clear in 11.84-88. Here he (or more properly the old priest) accuses Homer of "telling of . . . Hector's mighty deeds . . . with a certain reluctance and a desire to enhance Achilles' glory" (11.84). However, Dio expands Homer's description of the great deeds of Hector, seemingly without giving a reason for why his version is more trustworthy than Homer's (see 11.88).

<sup>275</sup> See his comments on his present rhetorical situation in 11.150.

<sup>276</sup> See the old priest's description of Dio as a believer: "So ludicrous an effect have these men had upon you" (11.40). Compare this with Dio's description of his Trojan audience as a people who believe and retell Homer's account, though it portrays their city badly (11.4). Dio groups his audience in with the Greeks who will resist believing his retelling (11.124).

<sup>277</sup> See 11.6 for Dio's instructions that his speech be shared with other audiences.

In a later oration Dio characterizes Homer's narratives as "beneficial and practically serviceable."<sup>278</sup> Our analysis of his playful use of narrative in the *Trojan Discourse* may explain what he means by this. In the hands of an effective orator, the narratives can be adapted to fit any rhetorical situation, including both an address to Greeks as well as one to Trojans. Both Homer and Dio effectively tell the story of the Trojan War, constructing different narratives to fit their different rhetorical situations. The value of the *Trojan Discourse*, therefore, is that it shows that Dio understood narrative, the emplotment of events, to function rhetorically. Indeed at the end he argues that Homer's "lies" are understandable, as he follows the common practice of using narrative to help his fellow Greeks.<sup>279</sup>

The *Trojan Discourse* provides a meta-discussion of the creative use of narrative such as we find throughout Dio's orations. He is more explicit about narrative as malleable for the persuasion of an audience in his fifth oration (*A Libyan Myth*). Here Dio declares that stories are told and read for the purposes of imitation, and therefore each individual telling of a story must be adapted to the rhetorical situation.<sup>280</sup> He compares the storyteller who alters stories to address a given situation to a farmer grafting cultivated branches onto wild trees: "He changes a useless and unprofitable plant into a useful and profitable one."<sup>281</sup> Every version of a story, including its original telling, is composed for a specific purpose, made profitable "when some useful and edifying moral is engrafted on an unprofitable legend."<sup>282</sup> As an example, Dio retells the classic myth of the Libyan monster women, who allure men with their partial beauty but then devour them. He

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<sup>278</sup> 53.11.

<sup>279</sup> 11.147.

<sup>280</sup> See 5.1.

<sup>281</sup> 5.2.

<sup>282</sup> 5.3.

admits that it is quite easy for someone to see the moral implication of such a tale: the monsters are the various passions in one's life, difficult to completely eradicate.<sup>283</sup> Dio, though, goes beyond the classic version of the tale and asks his audience permission for "giving a brief additional portion of the myth."<sup>284</sup> For this additional portion, wherein one more Libyan monster appears to, and devours, two young men, Dio offers no explanatory moral.<sup>285</sup> However, he has shown that the story itself is properly interpreted allegorically, and thus his presentation of the material anew invites such allegorical interpretation. As with the *Trojan Discourse*, Dio uses narrative to invite the audience into the oration, giving them the groundwork to interpret his narrative, and then leaving the narrative there to be interpreted.

This initial demonstration of Dio's discussion of narrative rhetoric leads me back to the first kingship oration. There I showed that that the narrative which formed the entire second half of that speech plays a part in the persuasive argument of the address by engaging the audience, using what Whitmarsh called metapedagogic narrative. Dio's metapedagogic use of narrative is by no means limited to the *Trojan Discourse* or first kingship oration.<sup>286</sup> Even in discourses that almost completely consist in narrative, an oratorical frame indicates the rhetorical function of the narrative. Consider the fourth kingship oration. Dio's report of how Alexander sought advice from Diogenes on the nature of kingship reads somewhat like a short story. What distinguishes it from a short story, though, is Dio's initial address to the primary audience: "They tell us that once

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<sup>283</sup> "To interpret the rest of the myth in this way would not be a difficult task for a clever man who perhaps has more time at his disposal than he should have" (5.18). He then adds another episode to the story, but he still maintains that "the myth is an allegory" (5.22).

<sup>284</sup> 5.24.

<sup>285</sup> The tale in this oration is basically told in three parts, with explanation following the first two parts, yet noticeably absent from the third. As with his telling of the entire tale, there is quite a bit of *ekphrasis* here in this tale.

<sup>286</sup> Heavy use of narrative is present in all 4 kingship orations.

upon a time” (φασὶ ποτε). This entire address then becomes a narration in a particular context of Alexander’s encounter with Diogenes, an account that Dio tells his audience, “I should like on this occasion to tell what in all likelihood was the nature of their conversation, since it happens too that I have nothing else that demands my attention.”<sup>287</sup> Readers learn much about the impact of Dio’s narratives from this abbreviated statement. First, his reporting of the events is not exact, but rather “in all likelihood” happened, a clear indication that he is rhetorically constructing the narrative. Second, Dio’s narrative, which runs throughout the rest of the address, is aimed at his immediate audience; he relates the story not simply to tell it, but to educate his audience on the role of the king. Everything that demands his attention, namely instructing his audience on the nature of kingship, can be accomplished through telling the story of how Alexander learned the nature of kingship by listening to one of his subjects, Diogenes. Clearly Dio’s audience is to learn alongside Alexander.

Metapedagogic narrations are carefully constructed so that Dio can manipulate his audience; narratives emplotting events about others are integral to the rhetorical strategy of individual orations directed toward a particular audience. Characters in secondary and tertiary stories consistently face situations similar to the situation facing the primary audience of the oration. This is apparent in the numerous times that audiences appear as characters in the orations. In each, persuasion comes not by Dio’s directly connecting the narrative to the larger point of the discourse, but rather by telling the story and allowing the primary narratee to experience the characters’ lessons.<sup>288</sup> This is perhaps easiest to see

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<sup>287</sup> 4.3

<sup>288</sup> For an example see the 19<sup>th</sup> Oration (“On the Author’s Fondness for Listening to Music, the Drama, and Oratory”). The speech begins with Dio’s describing how people wanted to see him perform, a clear

in the Diogenes orations. Dio reports how audiences of the Cynic Diogenes (whose name is, not surprisingly, similar to Dio's) respond to Diogenes' discourses.<sup>289</sup> Consider Oration 8 (On Virtue), where the speaker, Diogenes the Cynic, recounts his battle against pleasure, offering several examples of those who were chastised for a similar struggle, including Heracles, who demonstrates that fighting for virtue often brings humiliation. Diogenes is then overtly praised by the crowd around him, a crowd described as listening "with great pleasure." However, Diogenes surprisingly responds: "Squatting on the ground, [he] performed an indecent act." The primary narrator, Dio, tells the audience that such an act was performed "possibly with this thought of Heracles in his mind."<sup>290</sup> Dio has just recounted how Heracles, in order to assure that his reputation was not merely based on his performing mighty deeds, performed the menial task of cleaning away the manure in the Augean stables. Therefore the meaning of Dio's "indecent act" is fairly clear for his audience. Dio's audience, of course, finds itself in the same position as was Diogenes' audience before this indecent act: witness to a brilliant display (Dio's) of oratorical power as he teaches about virtue. The function of the narrative, therefore, remains implicit, but can be made clear; Dio's audience likewise learns that it should not be carried away with pleasure at hearing this address. Rather than simply telling his audience this, though, he leads them through the process of learning it by way of narration. The narrative crowds that follow Diogenes are a means by which Dio addresses his own audience through a secondary or tertiary narrative, a way of showing rather than simply telling. When Dio comments about Diogenes that, "He knew that men show their

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reflection of the situation to which the speech was likely addressed. In this speech Dio describes the ways in which he responds to speeches as a way of directing how his audience will respond to him.

<sup>289</sup> See Orations 6, 8-10. Diogenes is also the primary character in the fourth kingship oration, where the connection between Dio and Diogenes is also quite thinly veiled.

<sup>290</sup> *Or.* 8.36.

real character most clearly at public festivals and large gatherings,” he does not merely show his audience something about the character Diogenes, but rather he warns them about their own behavior, as they too are gathered at a public festival.<sup>291</sup> Dio uses secondary narratives to lead his primary audience to conclusions.

I now turn to perhaps the most difficult, but most interesting, use of narrative within Dio’s orations, the famous *Euboean or Hunter Discourse*. The name of the speech, derived from the chance encounter with which it begins between Dio and a hunter in the Euboean Hollows, highlights the dominant role of narrative within the address. The function of this long narrative, though, has puzzled interpreters. On one hand the address can be considered a straightforward argument for appreciation of the poor. Dio summarizes the point: “We did set out to discuss poverty and to show that its case is not hopeless as the majority think, who hold it as an evil which should be avoided, but that it affords many opportunities of making a living that are neither unseemly nor injurious to men who are willing to work with their hands.”<sup>292</sup>

On the other hand, the presence of an extensive narrative recounting Dio’s interaction with a hunter complicates the picture of the argument of the speech. Though Dio begins the oration with a brief address to his primary audience, he almost immediately turns to recount a story: “I shall now relate a personal experience of mine.”<sup>293</sup> The story tells of an encounter he had with a hunter, after he was shipwrecked in the “Hollows of Euboea.” What is so striking about this address is the length of the

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<sup>291</sup> 9.1.

<sup>292</sup> 7.125.

<sup>293</sup> 7.1.

narrative, comprising over half of the speech.<sup>294</sup> After this long story, though, Dio suddenly stops narrating and puts forward a logical argument for an appreciation of the poor. In a manner reminiscent of scholarly confusion over narrative in Galatians, some scholars, struggling to understand Dio's storytelling, have suggested the narratives, particularly in the *Euboean Discourse*, address a completely separate rhetorical situation, with some even suggesting that narratives in Dio like this one were not originally a part of his oration.<sup>295</sup> Most scholarship has separated the two sections, generally focusing on the former and comparing it with pastoral novels, almost completely overlooking the rhetorical position of this narration at the front of a discourse on poverty.<sup>296</sup> In light of what we have learned of the persuasive potential of narrative through the work of Ricoeur and a fresh understanding of the Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition, illustrated by Dio's use of narrative as a means of persuasion, though, this text warrants closer scrutiny of the care of the construction of the narrative and an implicit connection to Dio's stated intentions.

From the opening of the narrative, Dio gives very little reason, other than the proclivities of old men, for his extended narration.<sup>297</sup> Indeed he apologizes throughout the second half of the discourse for the length of the initial narrative.<sup>298</sup> From the beginning Dio's primary audience is swept into the world of the shipwrecked Dio, whom the audience finds cast upon the rocks of Euboea, alone. He comes upon a wounded deer in the surf that has been chased off a cliff by hunting dogs. Though the narration is not

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<sup>294</sup> A full 79 of the 152 sections are narration with very little direct reference to the primary audience of the oration. For a brief summary of the narrative, see Highet, "The Huntsman and the Castaway."

<sup>295</sup> Swain summarizes that "the problem of the *Euboicus* concerns the relation of the first half to the second" ("Dio and Lucian," 168).

<sup>296</sup> See Gilbert Arthur Highet, "The Huntsman and the Castaway," *GRBS* 14 (1973): 35-40; Swain, "Some Uses," 145-50.

<sup>297</sup> See his comments in 7.1.

<sup>298</sup> For his apologies or seeming embarrassment at the length of his speech, see 7.81; 7.103; 7.126-32

overly descriptive, instances of *ekphrasis* draw the audience into the narration.<sup>299</sup> Dio encounters the hunter who was tracking this deer, who initiates conversation by addressing him as “Stranger” (ὦ ξένη).<sup>300</sup> The narrative is constructed to draw a stark line between Dio the urban sophisticate and the rural hunter. Dio’s primary audience is constructed to be like Dio, foreigners in a strange land.<sup>301</sup> The hunter collects the dying deer and invites Dio into his home to eat and rest for the night. The walk to his house creates the occasion for the hunter to recount to Dio a bit of history about his family, and so the primary audience becomes witness to a secondary narrative. The hunter recounts to Dio how his family came to own its land and how they became hunters. He tells of one of his only two trips to the city, wherein he describes being a foreigner there, as he recounts the many buildings and large crowds that surprised him. The contrast between the hunter, a stranger in the city, and Dio, a stranger in the country, is highlighted by the hunter’s narrative self-consciousness at his description of his impressions of the city: “Perhaps you are laughing at me for telling you what you know perfectly well.”<sup>302</sup> A further contrast, now between the hunter’s hospitality and the city’s cruelty, is constructed as those in the city seize the hunter and drag him in front of the magistrates in the theatre, accused of making use of land that belonged to the magistrates and paying no taxes on it. What ensues is a public debate regarding whether this is in fact true. As the debate

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<sup>299</sup> For example: “I chanced upon a deer that had just fallen over the cliff and lay in the wash of the breakers, lapped by the waves and still breathing. Soon I thought I heard the barking of dogs above, but not clearly, owing to the roar of the sea” (7.3).

<sup>300</sup> The hunter, who is himself never named, continues to address Dio as such (see 7.10). This is significant as it is hospitality to strangers that is the issue of debate in the “trial” that the hunter narrates to Dio.

<sup>301</sup> For an example of the distinction drawn between the hunter and Dio, see the comments of the hunter: “You look to me like a man from the city, not a sailor or worker on the land” (7.8). On the construction of the audience as city people, in opposition to the rustic hunter, see Whitmarsh, “Dio Chrysostom,” 461-62.

<sup>302</sup> 7.24. The hunter’s lack of familiarity with the city’s culture continues throughout. See, for example, his embarrassing recognition that “in the cities people do not kiss one another” (7.59).

proceeds, the charges made against the hunter become increasingly serious.<sup>303</sup> The hunter is further accused of intentionally causing shipwrecks on the treacherous shores, so as to loot the ships.<sup>304</sup> Others among the magistrates, though, mount a defense for the hunter, arguing that those working the land provide public benefit, regardless of who owns the land, do a favor to all, therefore suggesting the hunter be allowed to work the land, paying only a small rent at the end of ten years.<sup>305</sup>

The hunter also defends himself. He first offers all that he has to the men: “If you want everything, we are willing to give it to you voluntarily.”<sup>306</sup> Second, he addresses the charge of his looting shipwrecks by arguing “many is the time I have pitied shipwrecked travelers who have come to my door, taken them into my hut, given them to eat and to drink, helped them in any other way that I could, and accompanied them until they got out of the wilderness.”<sup>307</sup> In making this defense, he seems to have jogged the memory of another magistrate present, for he stands up and admits that he knows this man, for indeed he was shipwrecked off the coast of the hunter’s land, and he was shown the hospitality with which the hunter defended himself and which Dio himself has been shown, as the reader has observed.<sup>308</sup> As he concludes, “Next to the gods, we owe our lives to this man especially.”<sup>309</sup>

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<sup>303</sup> For example, the hunter’s accuser at first says the hunter “is one of the fellows who have been enjoying the use of our public land for many years . . . without paying rent to anybody for the land or ever having received it from the people as a gift” (7.27). Eventually, though, this same accuser claims, when “angry” and when “giving me a fierce look” claims “I understand that there are two ringleaders of this gang that has seized practically all the land in the mountains” (7.30).

<sup>304</sup> See 7.31-33.

<sup>305</sup> See 7.33-40.

<sup>306</sup> 7.48.

<sup>307</sup> 7.52-53.

<sup>308</sup> Some of the details of the magistrate’s encounter with the hunter mirror those of Dio’s encounter. See, for example, the details of the venison (7.57; cf. 7.5-6) and wine (7.57; cf. 7.65).

<sup>309</sup> 7.58.

At this point in the debate over the fate of the hunter, Dio's primary audience is no longer simply a witness to events. Because of the way Dio has constructed the narrative, the primary audience becomes active in deciding the case. Consider the charges made against the hunter, that first he is illegally using land, and second that he takes advantage of those who are shipwrecked. The primary audience has knowledge relevant to both charges. Through narrative, the audience has learned alongside Dio how the hunter came upon his land, told through his narration of the past. The audience has also witnessed the hospitality of the hunter to those who are shipwrecked, explicitly through Dio's recounted experience of being welcomed into the hunter's home hospitably. Therefore, as charges and defenses are exchanged, the audience plays a role, identifying with those defending the hunter. Dio's primary audience is as shocked as the hunter at hearing the charges, and they are as confident as he in the validity of his defense. By recounting his own experience leading up to the hunter's tale, and by having the hunter include the seemingly-disconnected story of his family's past, Dio has enrolled his primary audience as witnesses for the defense. The audience knows the charges against the hunter are false, not because a given magistrate says so, but rather because the audience itself has experienced this to be the case. The magistrate, therefore, who speaks in defense of the hunter, actually voices the defense of the audience; as does the magistrate, so the audience knows that the hunter is innocent.

The result of the hunter's defense is the acceptance and appreciation for the hunter among the magistrates; they invite him to dine with them and give him new clothes, using his story as an example to others in the city: "Let the city give him a tunic

and a cloak as an inducement to others to be righteous and to help one another.”<sup>310</sup>

Though the man refuses their gifts, they are forced upon him, and he leaves the city, highly praised by those city-dwellers among whom he was a stranger. Thus ends the hunter’s story of his interactions in the city. The primary narrative then continues with the hunter showing further hospitality to Dio, inviting him into his family’s affairs, namely the spontaneous planning of his daughter’s wedding. This narrative closes on the eve of the wedding, with Dio himself beginning the process of considering what he has learned through this experience, as he says, “reflecting on the character of weddings and on things among the rich, on the matchmakers, the scrutinies of property and birth, the dowries, the gifts from the bridegroom, . . . and, finally, the wranglings and enmities that often occur at the wedding itself.”<sup>311</sup> These parenthetical comments provide the transition from the narrative section of the speech into the more discursive argument about poverty in the second half. Dio’s reflections begin the process of integrating the narration into the discourse as a whole. As he then turns to tell his primary audience, he has not “told this long story idly.”<sup>312</sup>

The second part of the oration draws upon this narrative, though indirectly. The second part could itself stand alone as an argument against the idea that wealth provides social benefits not available to the poor. Significantly, though, it does not stand alone. That is, the audience is asked to consider Dio’s argument for the benefits of poverty and the problems of wealth, all with the narrative of the hunter standing in the background. As Dio goes along in his discursive argument for the poor, the narrative of the hunter occasionally bubbles to the surface of the argument to recall to the audience’s mind this

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<sup>310</sup> 7.61.

<sup>311</sup> 7.80.

<sup>312</sup> 7.81.

identification.<sup>313</sup> For example, throughout the address Dio speaks in general of “the poor man.”<sup>314</sup> However, because of the presence of the extended narrative prior to this more discursive argument, this “poor man” has an identity, namely the hospitable hunter, with whom the audience has identified and defended for his hospitality. In his continued argument that the poor are in a better position, without the problems that come from wealth, the hunter and his happy family serve as implicit demonstrations of this, even when they are not explicitly mentioned. The primary audience, in hearing Dio’s argument for the benefits of poverty, plays the role of the judge, deciding whether to accept this argument for the poor man. Once again, the audience’s previous position in the “trial” of the hunter cannot be far from the mind, as Dio reminds his audience: “We shall not permit our poor to become tragic or comic actors or creators of immoderate laughter,” recalling the raucous crowd and the laughter with which the hunter was originally received in the city theatre.<sup>315</sup>

So, what is the point of the long narration? Is it just a simple example of how those who are poor do not suffer socially because of their poverty? It is certainly that, as Dio indicates, but the length, detail, and complex manner in which the narrator has constructed the story so as to involve the audience in the narrative, accomplishes this in a particular way. As indicated above, in witnessing the narration, the audience becomes a participant. The primary audience does not just observe charges and defenses, but because of what the audience has itself witnessed, it too mounts a defense for the hunter. The narrative is not a cold, objective example, but rather an invitation to participate, to get to know the poor, to identify with them. Dio’s argument that the urban wealthy accept

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<sup>313</sup> For example, he refers to the “hunter” in general when talking about the occupations of the poor (7.103).

<sup>314</sup> See 7.93; 7.119.

<sup>315</sup> 7.119; cf. 7.25-26, 33.

the poor among them is made effective by the fact that his audience has already done so. In one particularly interesting connection between the second part of the oration and the narrative, Dio uses a hunter as an analogy for understanding how one is to construct a speech.<sup>316</sup> Though the image is used to make a point about composition, the choice of the hunter as the example cannot be by mistake. In defending the length of his discourse, particularly “that quite lengthy tale at the beginning,” he argues that the audience should have patience because all the details are relevant.<sup>317</sup> He imagines himself as a hunter, following new trails along his way. He even calls upon his audience to likewise imitate the hunter: “If we imitated the hunter in this we should not go far astray” (κατὰ τοῦτο μιμούμενοι τοὺς κυνηγέτας οὐκ ἂν ἀμαρτάνοιμεν).<sup>318</sup> Of course in this context he is speaking of the hunter as a metaphor for using digressions in speaking and writing. As a hunter does not hesitate to follow a new trail, though always keeping his mind on his original trail, so an audience should excuse an orator who provides details which may seem to be superfluous to the primary trail of the speech.<sup>319</sup> By using a hunter as the metaphor, though, a reader is led back to the extended narrative of the hospitable hunter and particularly the warm regard for the hunter engendered through the narration.

Dio uses narrative examples throughout this second part of the oration. For example, he pulls from Homer often to provide examples of the hospitality of the poor.<sup>320</sup> These examples, though, do not function in the same way as the hunter’s tale, for Dio does not lead the audience into the narrative, as he does with the hunter. Through the detail of the narrative and its implicit connection to his oratorical context, Dio allows the

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<sup>316</sup> 7.129-31.

<sup>317</sup> 7.126-27.

<sup>318</sup> 7.129.

<sup>319</sup> See 7.129-30.

<sup>320</sup> See, for example, 7.83-9; 7.95-96.

audience to become involved in the story. The tale is not “idle,” as he says, for it provides a concrete example of the point he is trying to make. What distinguishes this narrative rhetoric from his other examples is that the audience unknowingly has participated in the rhetoric; they have already accepted, in fact, defended, the poor against the charges of those who reject them. Dio’s point that the audience should do this going forward is made easier by the fact that his narrative as already lead them to do it.

The use of narrative rhetoric in the orations of Dio Chrysostom warrants a study all its own. I have briefly demonstrated that narrative uniquely allows Dio to involve his audience within his argument. In the *Trojan Discourse* Dio argues that Homer’s narrative belongs in the realm of persuasive discourse, not an objective reporting of the facts. Indeed the narrator always plays a role in shaping the content of narratives to meet his rhetorical situation. Dio himself demonstrates that even in the most “objective” accounts of events the rhetorical situation is always a consideration for how the narrative will be constructed.<sup>321</sup> Narrative is a rhetorical mode separate from non-narrative discourse, a distinction exemplified best in Dio’s first kingship oration. There his narrative portrayed Heracles’ discovering the qualities of effective kingship, a scenario matching the situation of his primary rhetorical situation. The lack of an explicit connection between the two creates a gap wherein the reader participates through filling in that connection. Narrative, therefore, drew the audience into the action. This was best exemplified in the *Euboean Discourse*, where the extended narrative at the beginning of the speech constructs characters which are used throughout the second half of the speech. The

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<sup>321</sup> In so doing he echoes treatments of historical narrative in both Theon as well as Cicero’s *de Oratore* 2.62-64.

audience' participation in the narrative of the first half affects how they make their decision in the second half of the speech.

Dio Chrysostom's continued use of narrative presents a clear example of what was taught in the *progymnasmata*. An orator can arrange the events of the story so as to create an effect in the audience. The metapedagogic narratives in the orations are examples of Theon's understanding of narrative, expanded through *ekphrasis*, as a way of leading an audience into a story. Dio did not have to tell stories as he did, though his continued return to narrative suggests he believes something would have been lost if he did not. Indeed his explicit comments about narrative, particularly in orations 5 and 11 suggest that he could have simply listed the qualifications of the good king. However, he chooses to lead Trajan and his audience down this path of discovery, engaging the "eyes of the mind" as Quintilian says.

We can see, therefore, that Dio's "moralizing agenda" is accomplished through the use of narrative. Though the content of his stories is often seemingly disconnected from the central argument he is making, by following the audience's role in these stories we see how they function rhetorically.

## **Conclusion**

The ancient world was a narrative rhetorical culture. Much previous work has shown that the ancient world was a rhetorical culture; what I have shown here is that that rhetoric was in part understood to operate through narrative. The Greco-Roman rhetorical tradition was not without a sophisticated understanding of narrative rhetoric. In some sense, I have demonstrated that Donald Hesse was inaccurate when he wrote, "There is

little about narrative as persuasion in the classical rhetorical tradition.”<sup>322</sup> In the *progymnasmata* I demonstrated that narrative was taught as a specific means of persuasion. In the tradition of literary criticism I showed that critics appreciated an author’s ability to control his audience through narrative. In specific examples of oratory I have shown that narrative functioned as persuasive discourse.

I turn from this chapter to my reading of Galatians with two important conclusions in hand. First, narrative is a mode of discourse that accomplishes something that non-narrative discourse does not. This was the key insight of Ricoeur’s work on metaphor and narrative, and I have found confirmation of it in the Greco-Roman tradition. Aelius Aristides understood that he was taking up an impossible task in writing the *Sacred Tales*, but he felt that narrating his encounters with the god, providing a chronological framework to otherwise incomprehensible events, was one way in which this reality might be impressed upon his audience. This has been my working thesis for Galatians. Up for grabs in the letter is the meaning of an ineffable experience with Jesus Christ. Paul’s argument is not simply an answer to the question of whether the Galatians should be circumcised or not. Paul does not want them to be, but he argues this by constructing a new narrative identity for the community. Galatians is not about convincing on a specific issue; it is about showing how that issue relates to the community’s identity. Paul, like Aristides, leads his audience along the path of discovery of what it means to be “in Christ.” By the time Paul comes to his moral exhortation at the end of the letter, the Galatians have already discovered what it means to live in the spirit, and therefore, as Paul says, the works of the flesh and the fruit of the spirit are manifest.

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<sup>322</sup> Douglas Hesse, “Persuading as Storying: Essays, Narrative Rhetoric, and the College Writing Course,” pp. 106-117 in *Narrative and Argument*, (ed. Richard Andrews; Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1989), 112.

Second, the persuasive nature of narrative is due to its ability to transfer an audience from observer to participant. Combining the exercises on narrative and *ekphrasis*, students of the ancient world learned that narratives should be constructed so as to lead an audience into the experience of the story. Dio Chrysostom had a firm grasp on this power of narrative. In his orations his construction of events and characters determines with whom the audience will identify, and he uses that identification to make his point. In reading Galatians, it will be important to constantly consider how the narrative rhetoric of the letter is constructing the audience along with the other characters in the story. My task now is to read the narrative rhetoric of Galatians.

## Chapter 4 The Narrative Rhetoric of Paul's Past

The juxtaposition of Paul's dire concern for the Galatians' present and future and his rhetorical focus on events in the past is felt most strongly in the opening two chapters of the letter. Between expressions of his "astonishment" at the Galatians' recent action (1:6-9) and his confusion at the "foolish Galatians" being "bewitched" (3:1-5), Paul spends almost one-third of the entire letter recounting details of his own past, making only sparse mention of the Galatians in the 40 verses between the harsh vocatives of 1:6 and 3:1.<sup>1</sup> In a situation so dire, with the Galatians on the verge of abandoning the gospel and rendering Christ without value, why should Paul spend so much time telling stories of his past? How can he embark on such a harsh retort of the Galatians' temptation (1:6-9), then retreat into a storytelling mode, only then to resume the opening vitriol in 3:1-5? What function can story play between these two rebukes?<sup>2</sup>

In this chapter I explore how these two rhetorical modes of recounting the past and arguing about the future work together. My argument is that the narration of Paul's past is an argument about the Galatians' present and future. Paul's telling of his own story is not a rhetorical shift away from his concern about the Galatians' present temptation, but rather it is an integral part to his response to the dire situation he

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<sup>1</sup> Paul makes parenthetical reference to the Galatians three times (1:13, 20; 2:5).

<sup>2</sup> Philip Esler appropriately notes, "A question of pressing importance for the interpretation of Galatians is why Paul chose to recount details of his past relationship with the leaders in Jerusalem in the midst of a letter written some time later to his churches in Galatia" ("Making and Breaking an Agreement Mediterranean Style: A New Reading of Galatians 2:1-14," *Biblical Interpretation* 3 [1995]: 285). This is indeed a pressing question, and the one I seek to answer here. Puzzlingly, though, Esler investigates the social conditions of a covenant in Paul's context in an attempt to relate the circumstances in Antioch to those in Jerusalem, concluding that Peter was requiring circumcision in Antioch, and therefore the situation related is relevant. Again, his focus is on the historical conditions behind the narrative, not the effect of telling such a story to the Galatians in their present context.

highlights in 1:6-9. Paul uses the story of his own past to convince the Galatians of who they have become in Christ and therefore how they are to act.

The extended narration of the past in the first two chapters of Galatians has long been read as discordant with Paul's primary rhetorical situation. Because of Paul's shift from concern about the Galatians' present and future to the narration of the past, most interpreters have divided the rhetorical situation of the letter into two, considering the autobiographical narrative of 1:10-2:21 to address a secondary rhetorical situation. Most assume that Paul must first establish his apostolic credentials in response to a challenge in Galatia to his legitimacy. In this view, Paul's actual argument does not begin until ch. 3, after he has answered this initial challenge. This assumption is seen most clearly in commentators' shifts in addressing Paul's argument at 3:1. Consider, for example, James D. G. Dunn's comment on 3:1: "With the *background* clarified by the recital of the most relevant elements of his *cursus vitae*, Paul could now *at last begin to address* the Galatians crisis directly, and thus to *embark* on the main section of his exposition."<sup>3</sup>

Dunn's dismissal of the argument of the first two chapters as "background" cannot be accepted, if for no other reason than the fact that the reader of the "main section" has consumed these two chapters, and this "background" functions as more than an argument for apostolic legitimacy. That is, a reader/hearer is not afforded the convenience of compartmentalizing the first two chapters as an answer to questions of Paul's legitimacy, only then to consume the rest of the argument as addressing another. The implied reader is given no indication of a break at 3:1, and certainly those who heard

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<sup>3</sup> James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Black's New Testament Commentary; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 150 (emphasis added). In his introduction to the commentary, Dunn says that, "It is evidently at that point [3:1] that Paul's previous history ceases to be of positive value in the defence and plea he wishes to make to the Galatians" (*Galatians*, 12).

the letter read for the first time, devoid of any chapter or verse distinctions, would not have done so.<sup>4</sup> Rather, the events of Paul's past remain present with the reader in the encounter with Paul's sharp rhetoric in the third chapter. Therefore, the narrative of the first two chapters has a primary role in determining how the direct argument to the Galatians functions.

### **The Introduction of Narrative Rhetoric into Galatians**

Paul begins the letter in a narrative mode. From the beginning, he frames the Galatians' present temptation as turning "from the one who called you" (ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς) and moving "toward a different gospel" (εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον). The focus of the letter is the community's temptation to follow Jewish law, but Paul begins by contextualizing this temptation in terms of its relationship to their original call in the past. In terms introduced by Paul Ricoeur, Paul identifies the question of circumcision as a broader question of emplotment. The troublemakers, Paul argues, have offered the Galatians one particular way of emplotting an experience with Christ. This teaching is "another gospel" in that it is the creation of a story out of the Galatians' experience: the troublemakers connect the Galatians' experience with the Spirit to the performance of Jewish law. On the other hand, their story is not a gospel, for there is only one true way of emplotting this experience, of telling the story. Paul begins to tell this story to the Galatians through his own experience.

Paul's narration of his past is set within parallel appeals to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit. He begins to tell his story immediately after levying a curse upon

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<sup>4</sup> The lack of a transition is even more pronounced by Paul's harsh rebuke at 3:1. Lulled into passive observation of the scene at Antioch in 2:11-21, the audience is awoken by Paul's direct address.

those who preach contrary to “that which you received [παραλάβετε]” (1:9). He returns to a direct address of the Galatians with a rhetorical question focused on this same experience: “Did you receive [ἐλάβετε] the spirit out of works of law or out of a report of faith? (3:2).”<sup>5</sup> It is the question of the meaning of this “reception” that Paul explores in these opening chapters.<sup>6</sup> The strong arguments of 1:6-9 and 3:1-5, which both center upon direct appeals to the Galatians’ past experience and the importance that experience plays in the consideration of their future, form the boundaries and interpretive context for Paul’s autobiography.

This rhetorical strategy of contextualizing present decisions within narration of the past is clear in Paul’s programmatic statement in 1:9. While much has been made about the search for a thesis of Galatians, readers need to look no further than verse 9, where Paul emphasizes, “As we have said before and now I say again, if someone should preach to you contrary to that which you received, let him be cursed.”<sup>7</sup> Paul affirms that the Galatians’ consideration of the reception of the gospel, a past event that occurred when Paul was with them, holds the key to determining their future. It is the meaning of this event that Paul’s narrative establishes.

But what does Paul mean by this term “gospel” (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον), a term that appears in its cognate forms five times in 1:6-9? The common reading of “gospel” as the message that Paul preached when he was with the Galatians would suggest that Paul tells

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<sup>5</sup> The verbs are identical in P51, which reads ἐλάβετε in 1:9.

<sup>6</sup> Paul uses λαμβάνω language sparingly in Galatians, generally to refer to one’s experience with the spirit. Other than these two instances, he uses it to refer to the ability of all to receive the spirit because of Christ’s curse (3:14) and the receiving of sonship by those under the law (4:5).

<sup>7</sup> Not surprisingly, the manuscript tradition contains a variant reading “As I have said before” (προείρηκα) (ⲕ ar vg<sup>mss</sup> sy<sup>p</sup> sa<sup>ms</sup> bo<sup>pt</sup>). This variant likely reflects an attempt to smooth the grammar with the second part of the verse and therefore is deemed to be later.

his story to defend the claim that *his* version of the gospel is the legitimate one.<sup>8</sup> However, Paul makes clear in v. 9 that it is the reception of the gospel that is more significant than its source. This reading also overlooks Paul's separation of the gospel from the one preaching it. In vv. 8-9 Paul emphasizes that the singular gospel stands on its own, regardless of whether he or an angel of the Lord should deliver it. Paul's argument is not that his gospel is correct because it is his, but rather that his gospel is correct because it is the only gospel; there is no other.<sup>9</sup> The narrative of Paul's past serves to justify *this* claim, not the claim that Paul is a more legitimate preacher of the gospel. The argument of vv. 8-9 is that the Galatians should not act contrary to that which they received, not because Paul was the source of that original experience, but because of the nature of that experience itself. The autobiographical narrative that follows is an argument about the gospel and Paul's response to receiving it, rather than an establishment of his own personal authority to preach.

I therefore now engage in a full narrative analysis of Paul's argument from 1:10-2:21. Though certain sections of the argument receive more attention than others, my strategy is to read through Paul's argument in canonical order, showing how his past relates to the Galatians. The argument in this section functions as metapedagogic narration, introduced in the previous chapter through the orations of Dio Chrysostom.<sup>10</sup> The Galatians are observers as Paul recounts the narrative of his past. However, Paul

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<sup>8</sup> For a full discussion of the meaning of the term "gospel," both in Paul's context and in his letters, see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (AB33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 127-36.

<sup>9</sup> It is a little odd that the history of interpretation has focused on Paul's defending his gospel by retelling the story of his past, when in v. 8 he explicitly denies the relevance of the identity of the preacher of the gospel.

<sup>10</sup> For a working definition of metapedagogic narration, see T. J. G. Whitmarsh, "Dio Chrysostom" (pp. 451-64 in *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature* [Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative Vol. 1; ed. Irene J. F. De Jong, René Nünlist, and Angus Bowie; Leiden: Brill, 2004).

invites them to become active in the narration, as the stories told about Paul's past are structured as a commentary on the Galatians' situation.

I consider this text in several distinct units. While 1:10-2:21 comprises a single rhetorical unit that re-shapes Paul's appeal to the Galatians' past reception of the gospel, the unit can be further divided into four distinct sections, and I consider each as a part of the developing argument. Though Paul's appeal to his past begins at 1:10, I mark the opening of the narration at Paul's reference to the Galatians' previous knowledge of his story at 1:13. What follows from that point exhibits a high degree of narrativity, discourse relating past events from Paul's life.<sup>11</sup> This narrative can be further divided into three parts. The first, 1:13-24, recounts how Paul came to be one who preached the gospel. This section is separated by the parallel references to Paul's former life in Judaism in 1:13 and 1:23-24. The latter two can be distinguished by geography: 2:1-10 reports Paul's interactions with "those of repute" when he "went up to Jerusalem;" 2:11-21 reports Paul's interaction and speech to Peter in Antioch. While these form distinct literary units, they build upon each other, and therefore should not be considered in isolation. I will close my analysis by consider Paul's return to directly addressing the Galatians in 3:1-5.

### **The Nature of The Gospel (1:10-12)**

Identification of the rhetorical function of Paul's autobiographical narrative begins with following the transition between 1:9 and 1:10, formally indicated by the

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<sup>11</sup> As discussed in the second chapter of this study, I speak in terms of degrees of narrativity, rather than using narrative as a generic distinction. For a working definition of this term, see Gerald Prince, *A Dictionary of Narrativity* (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 64. Though I use the term "narrative" as more than a generic distinction, I have introduced a working definition of narrative discourse as a rhetorical act from James Phelan: "Somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened" (*Experiencing Fiction: Judgments, Progressions, and the Rhetorical Theory of Narrative* [Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2007], 3).

causal conjunction γάρ.<sup>12</sup> By this particle Paul shifts his focus from the Galatians' past to his own, but connects his story to theirs; Paul's past in some way supports his claim that one who presents a gospel "contrary to that which you received" is cursed.<sup>13</sup> How does the narrative of the origin of Paul's gospel relate to his focus on the Galatians' receiving theirs?

Paul introduces himself into the argument through a temporal contrast between his past and present (ἄρτι and ἔτι), a contrast that will organize his narrative argument throughout these two chapters.<sup>14</sup> This contrast focuses attention not merely on Paul's past behavior, but on the distinction between his past and present, a distinction characterized by a change from pleasing people to his present identity as a slave of Christ.<sup>15</sup> This

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<sup>12</sup> Versions and commentaries are split upon whether to include v. 10 with what comes before (see NASB; NET; Dunn, *Galatians*, 48-51; UBS4; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979], 54-56) or what follows (see NA27; KJV; Martyn, *Galatians*, 136-41). Most modern English translations indicate a break between 1:9 and 1:10 (e.g., NRSV; ESV), though some place the verses in one paragraph (see, e.g., NET). Most commentators likewise treat 1:6-9 as a separate unit (see Martyn, *Galatians*, 108-36; Betz, *Galatians*, 54-56).

<sup>13</sup> To be sure, γάρ can tie statements together in both directions, being read as either causal (Smyth §2810) or anticipatory (Smyth §2811). The former is far more common, and it is the only one that fits the grammar of 1:10, as each of the subsequent clauses (1:11, 12, 13) begins with a γάρ of its own. The flexibility of the conjunction offers interpreters several options. Some have simply ignored it, reading it as a basic link between sentences that has very little impact on interpretation. Indeed γάρ can indeed have a rather negligible connecting function in a sentence (LSJ s.v. II). This "soft" reading of the γάρ of 1:10 is adopted by Dunn (*Galatians*, 48). Of those who have correctly recognized, however, that the γάρ is used here, as it is most frequently, as a causal particle, most have read this as Paul's turning to his own past as a way of justifying what he said in 1:8; the narrative of Paul's past establishes the origin and validity of the content of his preaching, and therefore it supports his argument that the Galatians should not listen to any preaching contrary to that which they heard from him.

<sup>14</sup> Indeed it is striking to notice the frequency of temporal particles in Galatians 1-2. Within the narrative from 1:10-2:21, Paul uses ἔτι (1:10), ποτέ (1:13, 23), ὅτε (1:15; 2:11, 12, 14), ἔπειτα (1:18, 21; 2:1), νῦν (1:23; 2:20), οὐκέτι (2:20), along with references to specific periods of time (1:18; 2:1), and shifts between present and past verb tenses.

<sup>15</sup> There is some question regarding Paul's expected response to the first, two-part rhetorical question of v. 10. Does Paul intend his audience to recognize that he is now persuading God rather than people, or does he instead mean that he now neither persuades God nor humans? The grammar allows for either reading. For the former, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 137-40; cf. Karl Olav Sandnes, *Paul—One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 54-55. For the latter, see Betz, *Galatians*, 54-55. Both make strong points, but both have significant problems. Martyn fails to explain what Paul might mean in affirming that he is "persuading" God; he simply connects the (quite different) phrase "pleasing God" that Paul embraces in 1 Thess 2 with "persuading God" in Galatians. Betz strips this verse from its literary context and considers it only in light of what "persuading God" means in other Greek texts, not in Galatians. He gives an explanation for what this phrase could mean in Paul's

distinction between people and Christ recalls Paul's extended introduction wherein he denied that his apostleship comes "from people" or "through a person" and instead affirmed it comes "through Jesus Christ and God the father, who raised him from the dead" (1:1).<sup>16</sup> Paul maps this initial division of the world between the domain of people and the domain of God and Christ onto the chronology of his own life.

Attention to this pattern of reversal introduced in 1:10 informs the reading of v. 11, understood by many as the very center of this opening section, if not the entire letter.<sup>17</sup> This verse, though, stands as an argument to support his claim in v. 10 that his behavior has changed. The previous verse has introduced the reversal in his life. Now Paul offers the nature of his gospel, specifically its divine rather than human origins, as the cause of this change. Paul is a slave of Christ expressly because the nature of the gospel is not "according to a person."

The rhetorical function of this distinction is made clear in v. 12, which Paul offers as the explanation (again using the post-positive γάρ) for the claim of v. 11. In his denial of "receiving [my gospel] from a person" (παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον), Paul repeats the language of reception by which he characterized the Galatians' past (1:9; ὅ

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milieu, but fails to show how it connects to Paul's argument. Paul's affirmation of his persuading god instead of humans best fits the context in which he is developing a division between the human and divine. The word order and subsequent focus on denying pleasing humans in v. 10b suggests that the negation of "persuading people" is the focus of the verse. The question still stands as to what "persuading God" means for Paul. This is a phrase he does not use elsewhere; he most frequently uses the verb πείθω to refer to his own convictions (see Rom 8:38; 14:14; 15:14).

<sup>16</sup> Galatians is unique for its initial negative description of the apostle, "an apostle not from people." All the other letters begin with an initial noun describing who Paul is by either labeling him an "apostle," (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1; Col 1:1; 1 Tim 1:1; 2 Tim 1:1) a "slave" (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1; Titus 1:1, or "a chained prisoner" (Phlm 1; cf. Eph 4:1; 2 Tim 1:8). First and 2 Thessalonians are exceptions where there are no descriptions of Paul and his co-senders.

<sup>17</sup> Martyn labels v. 11 the "letter's initial thesis" (*Galatians*, 137). Sandnes, using a construction of ancient *stasis* theory, argues that here Paul "gives his opinion of the basic issues which require his defence" (*Paul*, 53-56).

παρελάβετε).<sup>18</sup> Paul is not denying that he received the gospel; in the second half of v. 12 he affirms that he in fact “received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.”<sup>19</sup> The question he raises is *how* he received the gospel. Paul here denies that he received it “*from a person*.”<sup>20</sup> The argument is not about a particular gospel’s source, but rather about the nature of the singular gospel itself. Paul is arguing for the divine nature of the gospel, received by both the Galatians and by him. He offers the way in which they came about the gospel as proof for that claim. This argument over origins becomes the point that the following narrative works to establish. The gospel is the subject of the argument; it is something that can neither be received from a person nor taught, both in the case of Paul and the Galatians.<sup>21</sup>

We return, therefore to the γάρ in 1:10 that marks the transition between Paul’s direct argument to Galatians’ situation and his narration of his own past. In v. 9 Paul has focused his audience on their reception of the gospel. In 1:10-12, he has argued that his behavior has changed because of the gospel, a gospel that Paul knows is legitimately from God because of the way in which he received it. His reception of the gospel,

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<sup>18</sup> The language of παραλαμβάνω generally functions technically for Paul, referring to one half of the exchange of tradition about Jesus, which is direct revelation from God. See 1 Cor 11:23; 15:1, 3; Phil 4:9; 2 Thess 3:6. It is important to recognize, though, that Paul uses this language to also refer to “receiving Christ Jesus the Lord” (Col 2:6). Paul also uses the language simply means “to receive” an exchange between humans (see 1 Thess 2:13; 4:1).

<sup>19</sup> The language of the second half of the verse is abbreviated (ἀλλὰ δι’ ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ), but both verbs of the first half (παρέλαβον and ἐδιδάχθην) continue as the implied verbs of the second half (see Martyn, *Galatians*, 143-44).

<sup>20</sup> The word order (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐγὼ παρὰ ἀνθρώπου παρέλαβον) emphasizes the prepositional phrase; Paul here contrasts receiving from a person and receiving from God. Neither is Paul contrasting how he received the gospel and how the Galatians received. Consider, for example, the summary of Dunn: “His use of the word ‘received’ so soon after he used it in verse 9 would help make Paul’s point: whereas they had ‘received’ the gospel as a tradition conveyed to them by Paul himself, Paul himself had *not* so received it” (Dunn, *Galatians*, 53; emphasis original).

<sup>21</sup> Paul does not use the verb διδάσκω in reference to the gospel in any of his letters. He does use it to refer to his teaching about Christ in the churches (see Eph 4:21; Col 1:28; 2:7; 2 Thess 2:15), to others’ teaching about him (1 Cor 4:17), and the community’s internal teaching (Col 3:16; 1 Tim 2:12; 4:11; 6:2; 2 Tim 2:2; Titus 1:11). The argument here, again, is about the nature of the gospel, not his method of spreading it.

therefore, is presented as an argument about the nature of the gospel itself, not the nature of his apostleship. As he tells the Galatians, he reveals to them something about “the gospel preached by me,” not the one doing the preaching. This sets the context into which Paul inserts the story of his past.

### **Paul’s Narrative of Reversal (1:13-24)**

The boundaries of the rhetorical unit 1:13-24 are clearly defined by the parallel statements of v. 13 and vv. 23-24. The details with which Paul begins to recount his past to the Galatians in v. 13 mirror the recollection of Paul’s past that placed on the lips of the churches in Judea in vv. 23-24. Just as the Galatians “have heard” (ἠκούσατε) of Paul’s “persecuting” (ἐδιώκων) and “trying to destroy” (ἐπόρθουν) the church (1:13), Paul reports the Judeans’ claim that they “were hearing” (ἀκούοντες ἦσαν) that “the one who was previously persecuting us [ὁ διώκων ἡμᾶς ποτε] is now preaching the faith that he was previously trying to destroy [ἐπόρθει]” (1:23).<sup>22</sup> Paul’s behavior in Judaism, first his report of it and then the Judean church’s recollection of it, forms the beginning and end of a single rhetorical unit.<sup>23</sup>

This parallel between 1:13 and 1:23-24 does more than merely delineate this unit from its surrounding literary context. The matching details between the description of the

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<sup>22</sup> Paul uses the verb ἀκούω also in Galatians 4:21 to refer to those who “hear the law.” Paul frequently uses διώκω for the persecution, both when he was the persecutor (1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:6) and the recipient of persecution (Rom 12:14; Gal 5:11). These two verses reflect Paul’s only use of the verb πορθέω (cf. Acts 9:21).

<sup>23</sup> Within this basic outline, the narrative separates clearly into five sections, based on Paul’s use of temporal particles. He begins by introducing his “behavior formerly [ποτε] in Judaism.” The description of his life is interrupted at the point “when [ὅτε] God . . . decided to reveal his son in me” (1:15). He then “immediately [εὐθέως] did not to seek the counsel of flesh and blood” (1:16). Next he reports “then [ἔπειτα] after three years I went up into Jerusalem” (1:18). Finally, “then [ἔπειτα] I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia” (1:21).

narrative that Paul introduces to the Galatians and what the Judeans report highlights the organization of Paul's narrative and its metapedagogic function. The Judeans highlight for the Galatians a narrative logic of reversal.<sup>24</sup> Amidst all they may know of Paul, that to which the Judeans respond is the reversal of the persecutor of the faith now becoming its preacher. It is the reversal in Paul's behavior that leads them to "glorify God." Paul uses this Judean response to show the letter's primary audience, the Galatians, that the power of the story they now hear is the pattern of reversal for one who receives the gospel and this story's function for those who hear it.<sup>25</sup> By observing the Judeans' response to hearing Paul's story, the Galatians are invited to respond likewise.<sup>26</sup> Paul's particular construction invites a thematic response within his audience to the presentation of his life.<sup>27</sup> The pattern of Paul's life has value beyond the content it records; hearing such a narrative invites the Galatians to likewise glorify God.

This thematic response continues in Paul's invitation to his audience to participate in the narrative's unfolding by insisting that "you have heard of my former behavior."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> The direct quotation of others is rare in Paul, as Ernst Bammel points out ("Galater 1.23," *ZNW* 59 [1968]: 108). However, it should not invite speculation over how Paul obtained this information, but rather analysis of how a direct quotation functions for his audience.

<sup>25</sup> The rhetorical effect of this reversal is certainly heightened by its being reported by the Judean churches, who in the classical reconstruction of the controversy at the heart of Galatians may be more associated with the troublemakers. Paul certainly speaks of Jerusalem and Judea throughout the letter as though they are separate from his mission (see 2:1; 4:25-26). Therefore here Paul shows that even those in Jerusalem were attracted to Paul's gospel, even before he was physically present with them.

<sup>26</sup> This placement of a primary audience into a secondary audience's role was highlighted in the previous chapter, particularly in the Diogenes discourses of Dio Chrysostom.

<sup>27</sup> There is a certain foregrounding of the synthetic element of the Judeans' response encoded in Paul's presentation. Paul emphasizes not being known in Judea, and yet he is still able to directly quote the Judeans! I introduced these narrative responses in the second chapter of this study, drawing upon the work of James Phelan (see *Reading People, Reading Plots: Character, Progression, and the Interpretation of Narrative* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989], 5-6).

<sup>28</sup> Paul also refers to his audience's "hearing" about him in Phil 1:30 and 2:26, though there it refers to their hearing about his present conditions. Typically Paul uses ἀκούω to refer to his audience's knowledge of the gospel or his teaching (see Eph 1:13; Phil 4:9; Col 1:23; 2 Tim 1:13; 2:2; 4:17). He also uses it of his own hearing of reports about the congregations to which he writes (see 1 Cor 5:1; 11:8; Eph 1:15; Phil 1:27; Col 1:4, 6, 9; 2 Thess 3:11; Phlm 5). It is an open question as to how much Paul assumes the Galatians "have

Paul's narrative argument builds upon what his audience already knows, namely that Paul was a persecutor of the church.<sup>29</sup> As he continues to tell the story, though, the narrative does not simply recall and rehearse what the Galatians have heard, but rather presents an emplotted version of those facts to match the rhetorical situation Paul addresses, phrased as a recollection of what the Galatians already know. As the speaker, Paul controls and makes present particular facts about his former life, while suggesting that what he tells them is, in fact, what they have already heard. Therefore, rhetorically Paul's plot becomes the present facts of Paul's life upon which he then draws, presented to the audience as a narrative they have already accepted.<sup>30</sup>

Readers can see, therefore, that in the terms introduced through analysis of Aelius Aristides' *Sacred Tales* in the previous chapter, Paul does not present a "report" of what happened to him, but rather a "narration" of the past, emplotted to invite a particular audience response. The pattern of reversal, highlighted by the Judeans, is the organizing

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heard." The three verbs of 1:13-14 are held together by a series of coordinating *καί* conjunctions, and so it is most likely that the author assumes the Galatians have heard of Paul's advancement beyond others.

<sup>29</sup> That Paul formerly persecuted the church seems to have been well-known in earliest Christianity. At every place Paul refers to it (see 1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:6) he assumes his audience is familiar with his past. Luke also characterizes Paul as a persecutor (see Acts 8:1-3; 9:13). On a hypothetical reconstruction of the function and nature of Paul's persecution of the church, see Arland J. Hultgren, "Paul's Pre-Christian Persecutions of the Church: Their Purpose, Locale, and Nature," *JBL* 95 (1976): 97-111. Not surprisingly, Paul's comment invites speculation about how the Galatians might have known the story. Some suggest the troublemakers have offered their own version of the story (Martyn, *Galatians*, 153), one which Paul seeks to correct, while others assume that Paul's story was part of his original preaching (Dunn, *Galatians*, 55) or generally known throughout Paul's churches (cf. 1:23). The interesting questions about the historical background to Paul's appeal should not distract readers from recognizing its role in inviting the audience into the construction of this narrative by recalling what they have heard.

<sup>30</sup> This rhetorical technique is consistent with Quintilian's advice for an orator to offer his version of the facts of a case even when the case is well-known amongst the members of the court. Paul reminds the Galatians that they may know the story, but they need to hear this particular version to understand his argument. See Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 4.2.21. Quintilian argues that orators "state our facts like advocates, not witnesses" (4.2.31 [Butler, LCL]). The language of the "presence of facts" comes from Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca's *New Rhetoric* (Chaïm Perelman and Lucie Olbrechts-Tyteca, *The New Rhetoric: A Treatise on Argumentation* [trans. John Wilkinson and Purcell Weaver; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1969], 115-20). They argue that a speaker "is to make present, by verbal magic alone, what is actually absent but what he considers important to his argument" (*New Rhetoric*, 117). They label presence as "paramount importance for the technique of argumentation" (*New Rhetoric*, 119).

principle of Paul's presentation. That Paul's narrative is presented to address his audience indirectly is clear from this organization. Paul presents first a report of his "previous behavior in Judaism" (1:13-14) and then his life traveling to preach the son among the Gentiles (1:16b-22). This reversal pivots upon Paul's "call" through a "gift."

For those who read Paul's autobiography as a response to charges of apostolic illegitimacy, the presence of two verses about his past in Judaism is difficult to explain.<sup>31</sup> Most argue along the lines that Paul describes his prior life as a way of "rul[ing] out the assumption that he was in any way prepared for the change or that he had developed gradually towards Christianity."<sup>32</sup> This point is no doubt correct, but it overlooks the more important function these two verses play. Paul does not make reference to his belief system in Judaism, but rather directs attention to what he did, his "behavior" (ἀναστροφή), particularly his persecution of the church and his concomitant advancement in Judaism.<sup>33</sup> Likewise, in vv. 16-24 Paul focuses not on his new belief system, but rather on his sporadic travels around, but not through, Jerusalem, and the result that his face was unknown in Judea. Paul directs his audience's attention to the change in his behavior that happens in light of his experience with Christ. In so doing he begins to sketch out the

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<sup>31</sup> See, for example, the explanation of Sandnes. Adapting the rhetorical outlines of Betz and Hester, he argues, "Vv. 13-14 are not part of *narratio* proper, but serve as a transition to the answering of the charges found in *narratio*" (*Paul*, 52).

<sup>32</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 66-67. There is no indication in this text (or any Pauline text) that this was a charge levied against Paul. As evidence, Betz points to the later tradition (from the *Ascents of James*, quoted by Epiphanius) about Paul's being circumcised in order to marry the daughter of the high priest. When that relationship went bad, Paul began to speak out against circumcision (see Betz, *Galatians*, 68n124).

<sup>33</sup> Dunn correctly notes that, "He focuses on praxis: it was not his beliefs, whether those of Judaism itself or about Jesus which were relevant to the Galatian crisis; it was his conduct" (*Galatians*, 55). The language of behavior (ἀναστροφή) is relatively rare in Paul (Eph 2:3; 4:22; 1 Tim 4:12; cf. Heb 13:7; Jas 3:13; 1 Pet 1:15, 18; 2:12; 3:1, 16; 2 Pet 2:7; 3:11), but the language certainly focuses on action and not beliefs, often used almost literally in the sense of "walking" (see *BDAG s.v.*; G. Bertram, "στρέφω, ἀναστρέφω, κτλ.," *TDNT* 7:714-29). He uses this language in Ephesians to refer to a previous life that should be changed in light of the gospel (Eph 4:22; cf. 2:3). Likewise in 2 Corinthians and 1 Timothy, "behavior" is one of the ways in which one serves as an example for others (2 Cor 1:12; 1 Tim 3:15; 4:12). It should not be overlooked that the primary meaning of the noun and its verbal root ἀναστρέφω is "a turning upside down, upsetting" (*LSJ s.v. ἀναστροφή*).

characteristics of behavior that define not only his life, but rather two domains of existence introduced in the opening line of the letter: the human and the divine.

Paul presents his life first in terms of his negative actions toward the “church of God” (1:13) and second in terms of his positive advancement in Judaism compared to fellow Jews (1:14).<sup>34</sup> The narrative advances from Paul’s behavior to his resulting reputation, indicated in the use of the imperfect tense for all three verbs. The ongoing persecuting and attempts to destroy the church led to his continual advancement in Judaism.<sup>35</sup> Though the correlation between Paul’s persecution of the church and his advancement in Judaism may be questioned on historical grounds, Paul’s construction leads his audience to connect his advancement in Judaism with his strong reaction against the church.<sup>36</sup> Paul’s “intense” persecution of the church (καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ἐδίωκον) leads

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<sup>34</sup> Paul’s characterization of his “enemy” when he was in Judaism as the singular “church of God” suggests not a specific instance of persecution, but rather a general opposition to the movement. The use here is consistent with his reference in 1 Corinthians to his past persecution of the church (1 Cor 15:9). Elsewhere he uses the plural “churches of God” to refer to congregations in general (see 1 Cor 11:16; 1 Thess 2:14; 2 Thess 1:4), but he uses the singular rather sparingly in his other letters, seemingly to refer to the movement as a whole. He refers to the church at Corinth as a subset of the “church of God” (1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1), and elsewhere uses the term when concerned about behavior that might offend or stunt the movement (see 1 Cor 11:22; 1 Tim 3:5, 15). Here he likely refers to a general persecution of the movement, rather than specific persecution of a particular group.

<sup>35</sup> Both verbs in 1:13 should be understood to indicate continual action, though logically the nuance of the two must be distinguished in translation. The former (ἐδίωκον) should be read as an imperfect of continuance (see Smyth §1890). The second (ἐπόρθου) logically must function as a conative imperfect (see Smyth §1895), along with many major translations (ESV; NRSV; see Martyn, “I even had it as my goal to destroy it entirely” [*Galatians*, 152]). The inchoative imperfect (“I was beginning to destroy it”; see Smyth §1900) is an alternative possibility, though the imperfect of continuance (“I was destroying it over and over again”), while not totally logical given that the church still exists, better maintains the ongoing nature of the action that is still present in the use of the imperfect. The scribal change to ἐπολέμου (“I was fighting”) likely reflects a discomfort with suggesting Paul “destroyed” the church to which he later refers.

<sup>36</sup> The two clauses are joined together by a simple καί, most often translated as a simple coordinating “and” (KJV, ESV) or left untranslated (NRSV, NET). Commentators are forced to make sense of the connection between the two. Some suggest that Paul offers v. 14 as an explanation for his persecution of the church. So, for example, Martyn describes the transition from v. 13 to v. 14 as “almost certainly an instance of subordinating parataxis, typical of Semitic syntax” and therefore he translates the καί as “my doing that sprang from the fact” (*Galatians*, 154-55). Though grammatically possible, such a reading stretches the text too far. It is more natural to read his advance as the result of his persecution.

to an “intense” advancement “over many others my age” (ὕπὲρ πολλοὺς συνηλικιώτας).<sup>37</sup> Paul ties this persecution to his “increasing zeal” (περισσοτέρως ζηλωτῆς ὑπάρχων), aimed at the traditions of the fathers.<sup>38</sup> Here his resulting advancement suggests his persecution was a means of this pleasing others, the way in which he characterized his previous life generally (1:10).<sup>39</sup> Paul’s progress in Judaism is inversely proportional to the progress of the gospel, and it results in acclaim for Paul.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The verb προκόπτω was used as a nautical term, indicating forward progress (see G. Stählin, “προκοπή, προκόπτω,” *TDNT* 6.704-719). For Paul, language of “advancement” (προκόπτω/προκοπή) is itself neutral (see Rom 13:12), though often connected with advancement in specific endeavors, both negative (see 2 Tim 3:13) and positive (see Phil 1:12, 25). In philosophical conversations, the term is used to denote intellectual and moral progress (see Epictetus’s tractate *περὶ προκοπῆς*). The term only appears twice in the Septuagint, both in texts heavily influenced by Hellenistic thought (Sir 51:17; 2 Macc 8:8). Philo uses the term in a manner roughly consistent with other Stoics, applying it to Biblical characters. Luke’s use of the term to describe Jesus (2:52) is consistent with Hellenistic usage. The individual usage of the term present in Hellenistic philosophy is adapted to apply to the gospel (Phil 1:25). One should not overlook the violence associated with the root verb κόπτω (“to strike, smite, knock down” [*LSJ s.v.*]). For Paul’s use of the phrase καθ’ ὑπερβολήν, see Rom 7:13; 1 Cor 12:31; 2 Cor 1:8; 4:7; 4:17; 12:7. Many translations read violence in Paul’s use of the phrase (see NRSV; ESV). However, as argued by Arland J. Hultgren, this reflects less the common use of Paul’s language and more the picture of Paul presented in Acts (see, for example, Acts 8:3) (Arland J. Hultgren, “On Translating and Interpreting Galatians 1:13,” *Bible Translator* 26 [1975]: 146-148). Instead of describing the type of persecution, the phrase simply depicts the degree to which he took the persecution (see KJV: “Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God”). The adverb περισσοτέρως not only suggests Paul’s zeal was ever increasing, but it was increasing at a rate greater than that of his fellow Jews. The force of this comparative is missed by many translations (see ESV, NET: “extremely zealous”). Paul also uses this adverb in 2 Corinthians to describe his advancement in comparison with others in Judaism (2 Cor 11:23).

<sup>38</sup> The term “zeal” for Paul is generally positive, especially when attached to particular objects (see 1 Cor 12:31; 14:1, 12; 2 Cor 11:2; Tit 2:14). It can be negative, though, as it seems to be here (see 1 Cor 13:4). This term will become important for Paul’s argument about the troublers in Gal 4:17-18, where he will characterize them negatively as “being zealous for you.” There is no indication in the use of “zeal” language that Paul is suggesting he was a part of a specific movement in Judaism (*pace* J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962 (1865)], 81-82). On the formal “zealot” movement, see Morton Smith, “Zealots and Sicarii: Their Origins and Relations,” *HTR* 64 (1971): 1-19; Matthew Black, “Judas of Galilee and Josephus’ ‘Fourth Philosophy,’” pp. 45-54 in *Josephus Studien* (ed. O. Betz; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1974). The adverb περισσοτέρως not only suggests Paul’s zeal was ever increasing, but it was increasing at a rate greater than that of his fellow Jews. The force of this comparative is missed by many translations (see ESV, NET: “extremely zealous”). Paul also uses this adverb in 2 Corinthians to describe his advancement in comparison with others in Judaism (2 Cor 11:23).

<sup>39</sup> The historical reason for Paul’s persecuting the church is much debated, but significantly goes unmentioned here. Paul’s reasons are only vaguely referred to in Acts as being on account of Christians’ “being of the way” (Acts 9:2; 22:4). It is often assumed that Paul’s persecution was prompted by the offense of the Christian declaration of Christ as Messiah. This assumption has been called into question, though. See, for example, Dunn, “How Controversial was Paul’s Christology?” pp. 148-67 in *From Jesus to Paul: Essays on New Testament Christology in Honour of M. de Jonge* (ed. M. C. DeBoer; JSNTS 84; Sheffield: JSOT, 1993). At the level of the argument this omission foregrounds the connection between his

Paul's characterization of his former life in Judaism prompts a distinct mimetic response from an audience that knows him. Recognizing that they are learning of the past of the apostle who preached the gospel to them creates anticipation in the audience for a change in the narrative, an expectation created by Paul's earlier suggestion of the importance of change between "then" and "now" in his story. Paul's presentation, though, also prompts a thematic response. By casting his former life in terms of "Judaism" as opposed to the "church," Paul suggests a broader conflict at work.<sup>41</sup> That is, he not only sets his individual behavior against the church, but because his persecution of the church leads to advancement in Judaism, Paul suggests advancement in Judaism, particularly that associated with the "traditions of the fathers" and the church are opposed.<sup>42</sup> The opposite of Paul's pattern, therefore, is assumed to be true: one cannot

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persecution and his advancement in Judaism. Paul's concern is not with the specific differences between Judaism and the church, but rather the fact that his opposition to the church led to his success among others. Hultgren may be right that Paul's view of the reasons for his persecution likely changed over time, and therefore what he says in Galatians about the reasons cannot be assumed to be what he believed at the time ("Paul's Pre-Christian Persecutions," 101-2). These historical questions, though, are secondary to the impression his presentation leaves on its audience, that his persecution of the church led his advancement in Judaism.

<sup>40</sup> Such a connection is supported by Paul's offering elsewhere his persecution of the church as evidence for his convictions or accomplishments as a Jew. In Philippians, for example, Paul's persecution of the church is presented as evidence of his zeal, set within a listing of his qualifications as a Jew: "With regard to zeal, one who persecutes the church" (κατὰ ζῆλος διώκων τὴν ἐκκλησίαν) (Phil 3:6). In the same way, in 1 Cor 15:9 he uses his former persecution of the church (ἔδιωξα τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ) to show that he is the least worthy of the apostles. Likewise there are many examples in Judaism roughly contemporary with Paul where praise is offered for those resisting, at times violently, perceived threats to the beliefs or practices of Jews. See, for example, 1 Macc 2:42-48; 2 Macc 2:19-32; Josephus, *Ant.* 18.1.6.

<sup>41</sup> Paul's use of the language of "Judaism" is somewhat surprising here, given that the term is used nowhere else in the New Testament and is quite rare before and even during the first century. Prior to Paul, the term may have emerged as a distinction for Judaism defined over against Hellenism (see 2 Macc 2:21; 8:1; 14:38; 4 Macc 4:26). For discussion of the rarity of the term, see Y. Amir, "The Term *Ioudaismos*: A Study in Jewish-Hellenistic Self-Identification," *Immanuel* 14 (1982): 34-41. For a detailed look at the evolution of this term from an ethnic to a religious designation, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 69-106.

<sup>42</sup> I am not suggesting here that "Judaism" and "Christianity" were considered separate entities at any point in Paul's lifetime. Certainly there was not the strong distinction that becomes clear beginning several generations after Paul (see Ign. *Magn.* 10.3; Ign. *Phil.* 6.1; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho*, esp. chs. 9-12; Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* IV.338; *An Answer to the Jews*). The correction that it is anachronistic to speak of "Judaism" and "Christianity" in the first century CE has been an important one from recent scholarship on Paul and Judaism (see Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 26-27; Alan F. Segal, *Paul the Convert*:

advance with the gospel if one is pursuing success in Judaism. Through this brief description of his past, Paul has begun to characterize a life defined by tradition and human achievement, associated with “Judaism,” to be in opposition to the church.<sup>43</sup>

The audience’s expectation of a shift from Paul’s life in Judaism is met with an abrupt change in the experience of reading the narrative at 1:15. Paul’s description of his continual advancement in Judaism, marked by the three imperfect tense verbs of vv. 13-14, comes to an end with the temporal phrase ὅτε δέ and his first use of the aorist tense:

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*The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990], 72-75; James D. G. Dunn, “Paul’s Conversion—A Light to Twentieth Century Disputes,” pp. 347-65 in *The New Perspective on Paul* [rev. ed.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005], 348-49; *idem*, “The Incident at Antioch (Gal. 2.11-18),” pp. 129-82 in *Jesus Paul, and the Law* [Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1990], 131). On the eventual split, better understood as a slow progress not “complete” until the second, third, or even fourth centuries, see James D. G. Dunn, *The Partings of Ways: Between Christianity and Judaism and Their Significance for the Character of Christianity* (London: SCM, 2006), xviii-xxiv, 310-365; William Horbury, *Jews and Christians in Contact and Controversy* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998). For an alternative perspective, placing the split in the middle of the first century, see Edwin A. Judge, “Judaism and the Rise of Christianity: A Roman Perspective,” *TynB* 45 (1994): 355-68. Paul continues to think of himself as a Jew (see, for example, Rom 9:1-5). The distinction being made here is not between “Judaism” and “Christianity,” but rather between the church and Paul’s construction of Judaism. Indeed rhetorically Paul goes far to separate “Judaism” from the church in the rhetorical context of the letter as a way of distinguishing between two modes of living.

<sup>43</sup> Paul does not associate his former life in Judaism explicitly with the “law,” as readers might expect, but rather “the traditions of my fathers,” language used elsewhere in Jewish writings to refer to traditions beyond those found in the law of Moses. Martyn (*Galatians*, 155) and Betz (*Galatians*, 68) both assume that Paul’s “traditions of my fathers” is a circumlocution for Torah, though neither gives any evidence to support this. Instead, Paul’s phrase “traditions of my fathers” (αἱ τῶν πατρικῶν μου παραδόσεις) could be understood as technical language in Judaism at the time used to refer to traditions *outside* of Torah. Josephus speaks of “some traditions from the fathers” (τίνα παρέδωσαν . . . ἐκ πατέρων) as additional teachings, accepted by the Pharisees, though “not recorded in the laws of Moses” (*Ant.* 13.297; cf. 13.408). Josephus also speaks of the “traditions of the elders” (παραδόσει τῶν πρεσβυτέρων) (*Ant.* 10.51), a phrase that serves as the subject of some dispute in Matthew’s gospel, where Jesus contrasts it to the “commandment of God” (see Matt 15:2-20; cf. Mk 7:5). In 2 Macc, Antiochus sends someone “to force the Jews to turn away from the laws of the fathers and to keep them from living within the laws of God” (ἀναγκάζειν τοὺς Ἰουδαίους μεταβαίνειν ἀπὸ τῶν πατριῶν νόμων καὶ τοῖς τοῦ θεοῦ νόμοις μὴ πολιτεύσθαι) (2 Macc 6:1). Paul’s reference to the “traditions” therefore, refers beyond merely the law, a term Paul does not introduce until 2:16. The specific referent of the “traditions,” though, is not as important as Paul’s tying “zeal” to his advancement in Judaism. Paul typically uses “tradition” language to speak of the story of Christ, though he does not use it as such in Galatians (see Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 11:2, 23; 15:3; 2 Thess 2:15; 3:6). Later in the letter (4:8-10) Paul characterizes the Gentile Galatians’ return to their previous life in terms of “slavery,” a term also used to characterize following the law. Paul’s point is that both represent the same reversion. In light of that argument, therefore, the use of “traditions” here instead of “law” makes sense.

εὐδόκησεν.<sup>44</sup> From this point forward, Paul reports action in the aorist, marked by the repeated use of temporal particles. In contrast to the building progress reported in 1:13-14, the action from v. 15 is quick and the movement is seemingly haphazard, as Paul bounces from location to location with little reported action other than the movement of the apostle.

Timothy Wiarda identifies this shift in reading experience by identifying Paul's account in 1:16b-24 as a "plotless narrative," based on the presence of only temporal connections between events.<sup>45</sup> Wiarda's insight into this shifting reading experience is correct, though what he sees as making the narrative "plotless" is expressly what characterizes its plot.<sup>46</sup> In 1:16b-24, Paul condenses a significant period of time into a few short verbs, describing not what he did in specific locations, but rather only his movement between them. The lack of explicit causality between Paul's various stops is itself a connecting element that moves the narrative forward, as the activity of the newly-called apostle stands in stark contrast to Paul's singularly-directed advancement in Judaism. The absence of an explicit impetus for Paul's erratic movements allows the

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<sup>44</sup> The particle ὅτε is generally followed by the aorist (see *BDF* §382). Paul uses ὅτε to introduce changes in narrative quite frequently in Galatians (2:11, 12, 14; 4:3, 4).

<sup>45</sup> Timothy Wiarda, "Plot and Character in Galatians 1-2," *TynB* 55 (2004): 240. Certainly if one defines plot as events connected by cause, as does Wiarda (see "Plot," 235), this holds true. Wiarda assumes the plot definition of Robert Scholes (see Wiarda, "Plot," 235), who emphasizes causality. This emphasis on causality over temporality to define plot goes back to E. M. Forster who seeks to correct Aristotle's emphasis on action as plot (see E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* [Orlando: Harcourt, 1955 (1927)], 83-103). However, the important point is that there is a rhetorical effect of the connection of events, even by temporal connections (see Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan, *Narrative Fiction: Contemporary Poetics* [London: Methuen, 1983], esp. 18-19). Wiarda recognizes that his "plotless" designation applies only to his particular definition of plot and that others (he cites Chatman) would argue that any structured narrative has a plot ("Plot," 238n30).

<sup>46</sup> Many assign to the term "plot" to even the most straightforward annals of historical events (see, for example, Hayden White, *The Content of the Form: Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1987], 14-15). A specific definition of the term "plot" is less important here than the recognition that even the simplest listing of events entails selection and connection, and so Paul's presentation of his actions after his experience is indeed a narrative, certainly under Phelan's definition of "somebody telling somebody else on some occasion and for some purpose(s) that something happened" (*Experiencing Fiction*, 3). This discussion highlights the significance of Aristotle's (and Ricoeur's) recognition of emplotment as process.

original cause, “God’s decision” (1:15-16a), to serve as the implicit motivation behind the apostle’s travel.

The reading experience of Paul’s narrative after God’s decision is markedly changed from that before. The decision itself, to which Paul alludes obliquely in 1:15-16a, is placed in a clause subordinate to Paul’s travels in light of this decision (1:16b-24).<sup>47</sup> The pace of the narrative increases after this decision. In vv. 16b-21, Paul reports his constant movement in and around Jerusalem with a hurried pace, compressing all time and distance into quick movements between Damascus, Arabia, a return to Damascus, Jerusalem, Syria, and Cilicia. In every case except Jerusalem, Paul shares nothing of what he was doing in these locations, offering the reader only the fact of his visits, not the reason for or content of them.

Paul’s narration of his life after Christ is also marked by a series of negative statements, beginning with his awkward phrase “immediately I did not consult with flesh and blood” (1:16).<sup>48</sup> He further notes that he “did not go up into Jerusalem” (1:17). Even in his report of a visit to Jerusalem, he emphasizes that other than Cephas and James he “did not see another of the apostles” (1:19). Paul emphasizes the narrow focus of this

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<sup>47</sup> Sandnes recognizes the grammatical structure, but he argues that it does not suggest that this makes the content of his experience less important; instead “the subordinate clause was certainly of special importance for Paul.” (see *Paul*, 58-59, 68).

<sup>48</sup> The verb here, *προσανατίθημι*, is much debated, and its interpretation is key for understanding the force of Paul’s sentence. Traditionally this has been read as Paul’s disavowing any influence on his gospel from humans. Chrysostom, for example, reads Paul’s language of “conferring” (*προσανατίθημι*) to mean being taught (*Homilies on Galatians* 13.11-12). However, uses of the verb elsewhere demand that it be read here as Paul describing his own action in the sense of “consulting” or “seeking interpretation.” Johannes Behm notes, “The usual rendering that they added nothing to him is linguistically insecure and hardly fits the context, where there is no question of mere impartation” (J. Behm, “*ἀνατίθημι, προσανατίθημι, κτλ.*,” *TDNT* 1.354). The best example of this use, meaning “to lay out a case in hopes for advice or support,” is from Chrysippus, *De Divinat.* 2.344. Paul here denies that at this point he reported his experience to others, in contrast to his admission later that in Jerusalem he did so (2:2: *ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς*). Dunn’s argument for a technical understanding of this verb in the sense of seeking a professional opinion is quite helpful (James D. G. Dunn, “The Relationship Between Paul and Jerusalem According to Galatians 1 and 2,” pp. 108-26 in *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 109-10).

visit in his parenthetical comment in 1:20: “That which I write to you, I tell you before God that I do not lie.”<sup>49</sup> While most interpreters reverse these repeated negatives to construct charges against which Paul responds by asserting the independence of his gospel from Jerusalem, these negative statements have a more direct rhetorical effect on the reading of the narrative.<sup>50</sup> First, they stand in direct contrast to the “behavior” of Paul in Judaism. The active verbs of vv. 13-14 depict Paul as the persecutor of the church, effecting his own advancement in Judaism. In the second half of the narrative, though, Paul does very little, seemingly without agency in his movement from place to place; indeed Paul explicitly denies his own action.<sup>51</sup> Second, the repeated negative statements of this passage create an instability in the narrative that the audience seeks to resolve. That is, by denying any mixing with Jerusalem, Paul creates in his reader an anticipation

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<sup>49</sup> Many interpreters read this comment as evidence that there was a competing narrative of Paul’s interactions in Jerusalem, perhaps a suggestion that his teachings are derivative of “those who were apostles before me” (see Martinus de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary* [The New Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011], 99-100). There is certainly an attempt to establish Paul’s version of events over the alternative presentation of the troublemakers. I am suggesting, though, that the narrative, as constructed, shows the character of Paul’s life, particularly its reversal, and connects that life to the Galatians’ past. However, the mirror-reading explanation of this as merely an apologetic statement is not as clear as some would suggest. The biggest problem is holding together the charge of Paul’s gospel being derivative, as this verse is read to suggest, as well as a charge that Paul’s gospel is too idiosyncratic, a charge that many read the Jerusalem incident (2:1-10) to answer. How can both charges be made? For a critique of the mirror reading technique along these lines, see George A. Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), esp. 79-95.

<sup>50</sup> Most “mirror read” the repetition of negative verbs as Paul’s response to charges that he is dependent upon the Jerusalem apostles; Paul maintains for his audience that he in fact did not seek advice from Jerusalem to assure them that he is an independent apostle. Martyn even recreates the teachers’ speech to which Paul’s “negative travelogue” responds! (*Galatians*, 178-80).

<sup>51</sup> The effect of God’s decision in this narrative is that Paul has no agency in his subsequent actions; rather God is directing his movements. Many who recognize the contrast between Paul’s life in Judaism and his life after God’s decision to reveal his son miss this important distinction. Beverly Gaventa, for example, argues, “This ‘biography of reversal’ functions to demonstrate that the singular gospel demanded of Paul an extraordinary and unequivocal response” (Beverly Roberts Gaventa, “Galatians 1 and 2: Autobiography as Paradigm,” *NovT* 28 [1986]: 315). This presentation suggests that Paul is given a choice of how to respond to the gospel. However, in Paul’s presentation, the gospel becomes his new reality, driving his decisions, rather than Paul’s individual will. This is the significance of Paul’s use of “slave” language in 1:10 to introduce the reversal in his past. Paul’s actions in 1:16-22 are the actions of the powerless slave being directed by the master.

of his eventual encounter with Jerusalem, an anticipation to be answered by Paul's forthcoming narrative.<sup>52</sup>

This anticipation of a Jerusalem encounter is heightened by Paul's centering his narrative geographically on Jerusalem. Through his denials, he recognizes that Jerusalem is the center he eventually must visit. Further, the mention of the places Paul does visit—the source of much speculation amongst historians of earliest Christianity—has the rhetorical effect of drawing an arc of influence of Paul's ministry around—though explicitly not through—Jerusalem.<sup>53</sup> Paul describes his movement as beginning in Damascus and then moving “immediately” to Arabia, to the extreme south of Jerusalem, but he explicitly mentions that he did not travel there through Jerusalem.<sup>54</sup> He then

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<sup>52</sup> Paul's narrative assumes his audience understands Jerusalem to be the center of early Christianity, an assumption consistent with much historical evidence. On the significance of Jerusalem in earliest Christianity, see Peter Walker, “Jerusalem in the Early Christian Centuries,” pp. 79-97 in *Jerusalem Past and Present in the Purposes of God* (ed. P. W. L. Walker; Cambridge: Tyndale House, 1992). On the importance of Jerusalem before the early Christians, see Joachim Jeremias, *Jerusalem in the Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period* [trans. F. H. and C. H. Cave; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1975], esp. 145-221). Certainly given the prominence of Jerusalem later in the narrative, it is safe to assume that there is a connection between the troublers and Jerusalem (see particularly 4:25).

<sup>53</sup> Almost all commentary is concerned with the exact location of these designations and the purposes for Paul's visit there (see, for example, Dunn, *Galatians*, 69-71; Betz, *Galatians*, 72-74). It should be recognized that the mention of specific locations increases the followability of the narrative. For a discussion of geography and followability, see Frank Kermode, *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), 117-19. Most interpreters properly recognize that through the geographical locations reported Paul emphasizes the great distance between his ministry and Jerusalem (see Johannes Weiss, *Earliest Christianity: A History of the Period A.D. 30-150* [2 vols.; ed. and trans. Frederick C. Grant; New York: Harper, 1959], 1.203).

<sup>54</sup> I assume that Damascus is the origin of his movement because Paul narrates that he “again returned into Damascus” (πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν). The centrality of Damascus for Paul's early ministry is suggested by the Acts narrative (see Acts 9:20-30). There has been much speculation about what Paul means by the difficult geographical designation “Arabia.” For a bibliography of this conversation, see Betz, *Galatians*, 73n175. For a commonly-accepted suggestion of what Paul intended in this term, see Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, “Paul in Arabia,” *CBQ* 55 (1993): 732-37. If Murphy-O'Connor, following Josephus (*War* 5.4.3) is correct, then Arabia designates the Nabataean territory surrounding the Gulf of Aqaba. Despite some disagreement about the exact designation, most agree that “Arabia” is to the south of Jerusalem in Paul's mind. N. T. Wright has proposed an alternative solution to the mystery of Arabia, arguing that by referencing his previous “zeal” Paul “saw himself . . . acting out the model of Phinehas [see Num 25:7-13] and/or Elijah [see 1 Kgs 19:14].” (N. T. Wright, “Paul, Arabia, and Elijah [Galatians 1:17],” *JBL* 115 [1996]: 683-92). This allusion is certainly plausible, though there is hardly enough evidence to make a strong case for it. Regardless of why Paul went to Arabia, the narrative in Galatians stresses his movement around, but not through, Jerusalem.

returns back up to Damascus, to the northeast, and eventually around into Asia Minor, “into the regions of Syria and Cilicia.” In the map painted through Paul’s description, Jerusalem represents the center of the world, but Paul’s activity is on the perimeter.

The chronological connection between events has also shifted. As Jerusalem forms the geographical center of Paul’s presentation, so God’s decision, obliquely referenced in vv. 15-16, becomes the chronological center. Paul begins to mark time from that event, beginning with his “immediate” response (1:16) and continuing through the designation of “three years” before he goes up to Jerusalem. Paul’s travels are described through the frequent use of temporal adverbs and aorist tense verbs. God’s decision to reveal through Paul has become the new chronological baseline from which the narrative proceeds.

The rapid pace of Paul’s travels around Jerusalem is interrupted by the report of his trip to Jerusalem and his “remaining fifteen days” with Cephas (1:18).<sup>55</sup> For this one verse the hectic pace of the narrative slows down and details from the visit are shared, focusing on the relationship developed between Paul and Cephas.<sup>56</sup> Paul finally does what he originally avoided, “going up into Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me” (1:17).<sup>57</sup> The exact content of this meeting or exchange is lost to history, and more

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<sup>55</sup> For Paul’s use of *πρός* + accusative to mean “near” or “by,” see Gal 2:5; 4:18, 20; also 1 Cor 16:7; 1 Thess 3:4; 2 Thess 2:5; 3:10.

<sup>56</sup> Interpretation of Paul’s reference to “fifteen days” demonstrates the divide between a historical and rhetorical reading of the letter. Many interpreters read “fifteen days” as a short period of time (see, for example, Martyn, *Galatians*, 173). Perhaps historically this is not much time, but in the context of a narrative dominated by Paul’s movement around Jerusalem, “fifteen days” reflects a long stop. Martin Hengel and Anna Maria Schwemer make an argument for a lengthy stay on historical grounds (see *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch: The Unknown Years* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997], 149-50). The more pertinent point, though, is that reference to “fifteen days” slows down the pace of a hectic narrative.

<sup>57</sup> Most interpreters suggest that Paul is reluctant to report this visit, speculating that the record known by the Galatians demands he include it in his account. For example, Martyn notes that Paul “somewhat grudgingly admit[s] that during this period he did make one trip to Jerusalem” (*Galatians*, 177). He further suggests “we can easily imagine that when the Teachers gave the Galatians their own comments on Paul’s

importantly does not factor into Paul's argument to the Galatians. The included details that he "remained in his presence for fifteen days" and "did not see another of the apostles" focuses the audience's attention on a lengthy meeting between Paul and Cephas.<sup>58</sup> Paul suggests the purpose of the trip, "to visit Cephas" (NRSV; ιστορησαι Κηφᾶν), was an exchange of equals.<sup>59</sup> Though traditional interpretation, as old as Chrysostom, suggests that the visit is controlled by Cephas, the language Paul uses indicates active exchange between them.<sup>60</sup> The semantic range of the verb ιστορησαι includes "to narrate" or "to tell a story."<sup>61</sup> Likewise the relationship of this infinitive to its noun form, ιστορία, "a narrative," or "a history," which appears somewhat frequently in roughly-contemporary Jewish texts, suggests Paul brings much to the conversation.<sup>62</sup> Paul may go up to "get to know" Cephas, but he also goes up "to tell his story." While Paul

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letter, they cited this visit as one of the occasions on which Paul was sure to have received instruction from Peter" (*Galatians*, 178). Whether or not this is the case (there is, to be sure, no evidence of this), one must account for the reason that the encounter is included here. If this admission of visiting Cephas belies Paul's claim of independence from human influence, why should he mention it at all? Regardless of the plausibility of this hypothetical reconstruction, the incident plays a role in the developing argument of Galatians 1.

<sup>58</sup> On the use of the preposition πρὸς (ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτόν) to mean "in the presence of," see *BDAG* s.v. 3; 1 Cor 16:7; 2 Cor 11:9; Gal 4:18, 20; cf. Jn 1:1-2.

<sup>59</sup> *LSJ* offers three major definitions: "to inquire into a thing, to learn by enquiry"; "to inquire of, ask" (followed by an accusative person); "to narrate what one has learnt." Alternative translations for the infinitive ιστορησαι among prominent English versions include "to see" (KJV), "get information from" (NET), "to get acquainted with" (NIV), "to get to know" (NEB); "to become acquainted" (NASB). Cf. Vulgate (*videre Petrum*); *Die Bibel (um Kephass kennen zu lernen)*. This infinitive, a New Testament hapax and a term sparsely attested to in extant Greek literature of the time, has been the source of much debate. For a thorough discussion of the issue, see Kilpatrick, "Galatians 1:18: ΙΣΤΟΡΗΣΑΙ ΚΗΦΑΝ," pp. 144-49 in *New Testament Essays: Studies in Memory of T. W. Manson (1893-1958)* (ed. A. J. B. Higgins; Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1959). Kilpatrick highlights the scant use of this term in Paul's world: "It does not appear elsewhere in the LXX, the Pseudepigrapha, the New Testament, or the Apostolic Fathers" ("Galatians 1:18," 146).

<sup>60</sup> Chrysostom notes "the only object of this journey was to visit Peter; thus he pays due respect to the Apostles, and esteems himself not only not their better but not their equal. . . . Paul was induced to visit Peter by the same feeling from which many of our brethren sojourn with holy men." Chrysostom likewise makes not that Paul does not use ἰδεῖν, but rather ιστορησαι, "a word which those, who seek to become acquainted with great and splendid cities, apply to themselves" (*Commentary on Galatians 1 [NPNF 13.12-13]*). For an attempt to consider whether the visit "did not in turn have an effect on Peter," see Hengel and Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch*, 147-50.

<sup>61</sup> For example, see 1 Esdras 1:33, 40.

<sup>62</sup> See *LSJ* s.v. See Esther 16:7; 2 Macc 2:24, 30, 32; 4 Macc 3:19; 17:7.

recognizes that Cephas was one of “those who were apostles before me,” the audience is offered the impression that Paul and Cephas were equals exchanging the details of their respective ministries.

Paul’s report of his initial encounter in Jerusalem serves several purposes in the argument to the Galatians.<sup>63</sup> First, it introduces the character Cephas, who will feature prominently in the narrative to follow.<sup>64</sup> At this point, Cephas is a positive character, portrayed as an authority from whom Paul hopes to learn, but also an equal to Paul, indeed someone with whom Paul spent a significant period of time. In this meeting, the two seemingly share an understanding of the gospel. C. H. Dodd may be right that “they did not spend all the time talking about the weather,” but at the level of the argument, the audience is introduced to a Cephas who respects and appreciates Paul’s “story” enough to listen for fifteen days.<sup>65</sup> Second, because of this cooperation, this account contrasts to

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<sup>63</sup> Those concerned with tracing the historical background to this event often connect it with the report in Acts 9:26-30 (see Hengel and Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch*, 133-42).

<sup>64</sup> Throughout Galatians 1-2 Paul refers to the apostle as “Cephas”, as he does everywhere else in his letters (see 1 Cor 1:12; 3:22; 9:5), though he does call him “Peter” in 2:7-8. Naturally the manuscript tradition is split between the two names. I follow most interpreters by assuming that Paul is speaking of the same person throughout, discerning little effect in the changes. Some have argued that Paul refers to two separate people, based upon patristic evidence that Cephas and Peter were two different apostles, a suggestion attested to as early as the second-century *Epistula Apostolorum* (2) and Clement of Alexandria (*Hypotyposes* [cited in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.* 1.12.2]). For this argument in its strongest modern form, see Bart D. Ehrman, “Cephas and Peter,” *JBL* 109 (1990): 463-74. Ehrman follows the earlier suggestion of Kirsopp Lake (“Simon, Cephas, Peter,” *HTR* 14 [1921]: 95-97; see also D. W. Riddell, “The Cephas-Peter Problem and a Possible Solution,” *JBL* 59 [1940]: 169-80). For a review of the argument and a rejection of the Ehrman position, see Dale C. Allison, Jr., “Peter and Cephas: One and the Same,” *JBL* 111 (1992): 489-95. Others have explained the switch to “Peter” in 2:7-8 by suggesting these verses are pre-Pauline, that Paul may be quoting the decree from the Jerusalem council (Erich Dinkler, “Der Brief an die Galater: Zum Kommentar von Heinrich Schlier,” pp. 272-80 in *Signum Crucis: Aufsätze zum Neuen Testament und zur Christlichen Archäologie* [Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1953]) or paraphrasing it (see Bradley H. McLean, “Galatians 2.7-9 and the Recognition of Paul’s Apostolic Status at the Jerusalem Conference: A Critique of G. Luedemann’s Solution” *NTS* 37 [1991]: 67-76). Others have labeled the “Peter” verses as a post-Pauline interpolation (William O. Walker, “Galatians 2:7b-8 as Non-Pauline Interpolation,” *CBQ* 65 [2003]: 568-87). All of these solutions are far too hypothetical to warrant much credence, though reference to a pre-Pauline tradition seems the most likely explanation for the switch. Most importantly, Paul makes the switch between names seamlessly in the letter, suggesting that his Galatian audience, like other early Christians, is familiar with both names for the same apostle (cf. John 1:42).

<sup>65</sup> Commonly Paul’s denial that he saw another apostle is read to suggest an argument for independence; he did not receive teaching from anyone else. However, this denial focuses the audience’s view of an extended

Paul's previous life "in Judaism," which was characterized not only by individual advancement, but advancement above others. Paul's life after God's decision is characterized instead by a recognition of "those who were apostles before me" and collaboration with them. Third, this account continues the building instability between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles. Paul first denied seeking advice from any of the apostles, but now he has reported visiting with Cephas and also seeing James, though denying that he saw any others. The audience, therefore, is invited to understand Paul's encounters with Jerusalem as becoming more substantive, raising an expectation that continues to build in ch. 2 when Paul reports he "went up again" (2:1).<sup>66</sup>

The distinction is clear, therefore, in Paul's presentation of his life "in Judaism" and his travels after God's decision. This stark contrast draws attention to the event that stands as the pivot of this narrative of reversal. However, Paul's construction de-emphasizes the specifics of this event. Galatians 1:15-16a is not a report of the event of God's revelation to or call of Paul.<sup>67</sup> Instead, Paul's presentation focuses on his action in

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period of time in which these two men got to know one another and share stories. This becomes important in the coming encounter at Antioch, wherein Paul argues with Cephas on the grounds of ideas they share in common (see 2:15). Martyn appropriately notes that, "We have to ask, therefore, why in the present verse Paul specifies that his visit was with Peter, rather than with the Jerusalem church as such" (*Galatians*, 173). His suggested reasons, though, overlook that this sets up the scene in Antioch where Cephas and Paul come face to face again and Paul will construct his argument based on knowledge he and Cephas share (2:14-21).<sup>66</sup> As he does with Paul's admission of this visit, Martyn suggests Paul reluctantly mentions seeing James, comparing this to Paul's adding his afterthought in 1 Cor 1:14 (*Galatians*, 174).

<sup>67</sup> This common focus on God's action in this passage is most clear in the headings given to this section. Consider, for example, the headings of the NIV Study Bible ("Paul Called by God"), Martyn ("Paul's Apostolic Call"), and Dunn ("Paul's Calling"). In terms of the rhetoric of the argument, a distinction between whether Paul's experience is best described as a call or conversion is not necessary. Rather focus here falls on the way in which the narrative is shaped to emphasize the change in Paul's behavior, not his internal belief system, which goes remarkably uncommented upon both in his discussion of his life in Judaism and his time preaching the gospel. The debate over conversion or call is an important historical and theological question, though one not relevant to the scope of my argument. The most influential treatment has been that of Krister Stendahl ("Paul Among Jews and Gentiles," pp. 7-23 in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976]). While Stendahl's correction is helpful, and I agree with him that Paul does maintain his standing in Judaism, Stendahl's emphasis on "call" over "conversion" runs the danger of overlooking the dramatic change that characterizes the presentation of the narrative here in Galatians 1. Gaventa uses the more helpful language of "transformation," which fits better because the

light of an experience that remains implicit in the narrative. The “Damascus Road” experience modern readers might expect is merely a subordinate clause that focuses not on Paul and what he sees, but on God and what God decided to do. Paul refers only to God’s decision to use Paul to make his son known, a decision communicated through the debated phrase ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί. The prepositional phrase ἐν ἐμοί is most naturally translated instrumentally “in me,” an indication that Paul is the means of God’s revelation.<sup>68</sup> However, many interpreters have forced the prepositional phrase ἐν ἐμοί to be a simple indirect object of the infinitive ἀποκαλύψαι, translating it “to me.”<sup>69</sup> Others read this comment in light of Paul’s “Damascus Road” experience, as reported in Acts, even as they properly translate the phrase as “in me.”<sup>70</sup> For many, Paul reports that God presented Christ to him, generally assumed (in concert with Acts) to mean a visual

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encounter with Christ is described as a shift in Paul’s worldview, though he maintains his identity as a Jew (Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *From Darkness to Light: Aspects of Conversion in the New Testament*). John Knox correctly reminds readers that Paul never actually refers to his conversion, but rather uses this narrative infrequently, always within an argumentative context (“On the Meaning of Galatians 1:15,” *JBL* 106 [1987]: 301-4).

<sup>68</sup> See *BDAG s.v.*; *BDF* §219(1). Paul uses the preposition in Galatians frequently with this meaning (see 1:6, 24; 2:20; 3:8, 11, 19). He has used it previously in the letter to indicate a state or condition (see 1:14).

<sup>69</sup> The major English versions are split between “to me” (NRSV; ESV) and “in me” (KJV; NIV). For a review of the issue, see Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham’s God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 149-50. Both are possible grammatically (see *BDAG s.v.*). The latter is consistent with Paul’s typical use; the former would be supported by Paul’s use in 1 Cor 14:11.

<sup>70</sup> See, for example, Luther’s note that Paul “states the purpose of the gospel which is the revelation of the Son of God” (*Commentary on Galatians* [trans. Erasmus Middleton; ed. John Prince Fallowes; Grand Rapids: Kriegel, 1979], 37) but then his subsequent reference to the Acts 9 account to explain what Paul is talking about (*Galatians*, 38). Luke’s three reports of Paul’s Damascus Road experience, told in vivid imagery, twice on the lips of Paul himself, have influenced many into reading that here in Galatians Paul recounts his “call” or “conversion” experience. This “confusion” with the Acts narrative is perhaps most apparent in the consistent translation of “violently” for καθ’ ὑπερβολήν (NRSV; ESV). For Paul’s use of the phrase, see Rom 7:13; 1 Cor 12:31; 2 Cor 1:8; 4:7; 4:17; 12:7. As argued by Arland J. Hultgren, the reading of violence into this phrase reflects less the common use of Paul’s language and more the picture of Paul presented in Acts (see, for example, Acts 8:3) (Hultgren, “On Translating ,” 146-148). Instead of describing the type of persecution, the phrase simply depicts the degree to which he took the persecution (see KJV: “Beyond measure I persecuted the church of God”). Violence was likely a part of this historically, as attested by Acts, but it is not part of the argument here.

presentation; Paul saw Christ.<sup>71</sup> Paul is fully capable of reporting Christ's appearance "to me"; he does so in 1 Corinthians 15:9 ("he appeared also to me" [ὤφθη κάμοί]).<sup>72</sup> And the verb ἀποκαλύψαι could imply a visual aspect.<sup>73</sup> Further, Paul's reference to the ἀποκαλύψις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in 1:12, in contrast to being taught or receiving the gospel from people, might suggest that he refers here to a vision or encounter with Christ by which he received his teaching.

However, the phrase ἐν ἐμοί should be read less in the context of other accounts of Paul's visions and more in the context of Paul's argument to the Galatians.<sup>74</sup> Paul's description of God's decision invites his audience to see itself as much a recipient as Paul is. The report of 1:15-16a lacks any content of that which Paul experienced, focusing

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<sup>71</sup> See the comments of Johannes Munck on Galatians 1:15: "Paul saw Christ, but beyond that we learn nothing" (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [Richmond, VA: John Knox, 1959], 34). Dunn reflects the common confusion on this passage. He recognizes that grammatically one should read "in me," and yet oddly argues that Paul "describes it as an act of 'revelation,' as an unveiling of the heavenly reality which is Christ as God's son" (*Galatians*, 64). Elsewhere Dunn confidently asserts, "A Christological revelation is clearly indicated in Gal. 1.16" ("Paul's Conversion," 352).

<sup>72</sup> See also 1 Corinthians 9:1; 2 Corinthians 12:1-10.

<sup>73</sup> The term literally means to "uncover" or "unbury." In the LXX, the term is often used in this literal sense (see Gen 8:13; Ex 20:26; Ps 28:9; Sir 27:7; Hos 7:1) and rarely is it used with reference to the revealing of a vision of/from the divine (see 1Sam 2:27; 3:7). Likewise in the New Testament there are primarily literal uses outside of Paul (see Mt 10:26; Lk 2:35), with occasional reference to God revealing Godself (Mt 11:25, 27; Lk 17:30, 38; 1Pet 5:1). This is Paul's only use of the verb ἀποκαλύψαι. He does, however, use the noun ἀποκαλύψις quite frequently. It is always used of God's action, and generally used to refer either to a future event (Rom 2:5; 8:19; 1 Cor 1:7; 2 Thess 1:7), to Christ's past appearance in a cosmic sense (Rom 16:25), or to a general revealing of knowledge by humans (1 Cor 14:6, 26). Only once (2 Cor 12:1) does Paul use this language to speak of God's past appearance to an individual, and there it is done so in a mocking tone.

<sup>74</sup> There is nothing inconsistent between the Acts accounts and what Paul reports here in Galatians, seemingly a concern for many interpreters. Rather the two texts report two different narratives. The concern to maintain a consistency between Acts and Galatians seems to function as a reason for connecting this account with the more visual descriptions in Acts. See, for example, the comments of Dunn: "This ties in with the records in Acts of Paul's seeing the exalted Christ as a 'heavenly vision' (Acts xxvi.19); that there was an auditory as well as visual identification of the exalted Christ (the most constant element in all three Acts accounts) is not excluded by what Paul says here" (*Galatians*, 64). J. Christiaan Beker correctly distinguishes Paul's "call narrative" in Galatians to the "sending narrative" of Acts 9. He uses this difference to suggest that Paul does not embrace the "visionary characteristics of the apocalyptic 'seers.'" He goes too far, though, in arguing that "Paul's proclamation of the gospel is not based on visionary constructions or apocalyptic revelations" (*Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980], 116). Paul indeed does not base his authority on such things (see the reluctance of the report in 2 Cor 12), but he does suggest that the confirmation of his gospel comes in visions and wonders for those whom God calls (see Gal 3:1-5).

instead on God's decision and how Paul's behavior changed because of this event. In Galatians, Paul uses visual imagery to describe his presentation of Christ to others, not God's presentation of Christ to him.<sup>75</sup> He will use this language of "revelation" to refer to God's continuing work through his ministry (2:2). That Paul's focus is on God's plan for his ministry rather than any vision he might have seen is made clear by the purpose clause (ἵνα) that closely follows.<sup>76</sup> The purpose clause "so that I might preach him among the Gentiles" explains that God's decision was to reveal God's son through Paul, a revelation that continues through Paul's preaching the gospel to the Gentiles.<sup>77</sup> Paul's focus in 1:15-16 falls upon the purpose of God's "decision," namely to make Paul the mode of God's future revelation, and the resulting change in Paul's behavior.<sup>78</sup>

An over-emphasis on the prophetic self-consciousness of Paul in 1:15-16 has blinded many interpreters from the role Paul's characterization of God plays within the argument to his audience.<sup>79</sup> Paul may have thought of God's work through him in terms

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<sup>75</sup> This is most notable in 3:1, where Paul refers to the Galatians, those whom he has evangelized, as "those to whom Jesus Christ was publicly displayed visually as being crucified." Elsewhere in Galatians Paul speaks of his being welcomed "as Jesus Christ" (4:14) and describes himself as bearing the "stigmata of Jesus" (6:17), certainly a visual image of Paul's presenting Christ. What is clear, therefore, is that Paul does understand his congregations' experience with Christ, mediated through Paul, in visual terms.

<sup>76</sup> Though most major translations (see NRSV; ESV) and the NA27 include a comma between ἐν ἐμοί and ἵνα, the grammar of the sentence does not suggest a break.

<sup>77</sup> See Lightfoot, who notes "it does not speak of a revelation made *inwardly to himself*, but of a revelation made *through him to others*" (*Galatians*, 83; emphasis original).

<sup>78</sup> See Lightfoot, who notes "it does not speak of a revelation made *inwardly to himself*, but of a revelation made *through him to others*" (*Galatians*, 83; emphasis original). Chrysostom reflects a middle ground between these two positions. He specifically notes that Paul does not write "to me" as one might expect, but takes "in me" to mean that Paul asserts that "he was richly endowed with the Spirit;—that the revelation had enlightened his whole soul, and that he had Christ speaking within him" (*Homilies on Galatians* 13.11).

<sup>79</sup> See the treatments in Munck (*Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*, 25-33) and Stendahl (*Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*, 7-23). On the prophetic self-consciousness of the apostle, see Sandnes, *Paul*, esp. 5-13; 48-76. Paul's description of God's choosing him clearly reflects the language of the calls reported in deuterio-Isaiah ("He called my name from my mother's womb" [ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου ἐκάλεσεν τὸ ὄνομά μου; Isaiah 49:1]) and Jeremiah ("Before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you came out of your mother I consecrated you" [πρὸ τοῦ με πλάσαι σε ἐν κοιλίᾳ ἐπίσταμαί σε καὶ πρὸ τοῦ σε ἐξελεῖν ἐκ μήτρας ἡγίακά σε, προφήτην εἰς ἔθνη τέθεικά σε; Jer 1:5]). Traugott Holtz, however, argues that Paul could not have been thinking of Jeremiah, for Jeremiah speaks out against the nations ("Zum Selbstverständnis

of God's work through Isaiah or Jeremiah, but his language has more immediate effects on his audience. First, the reference to God as "the one who set me apart from my mother's womb" (ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου) expands the narrative world of Paul's life; Paul places God's action at a time prior to his life in Judaism.<sup>80</sup> Therefore Paul identifies his current life preaching the gospel as a fulfillment of God's original intention for him, and thereby he assigns his previous behavior in Judaism as a negative interlude, opposed to God's original call on his life.<sup>81</sup> Paul's preaching to the Gentiles began at a certain point in his life, but as he has constructed the narrative, that call was a continuation of God's plan for him.<sup>82</sup>

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des Apostels Paulus," *ThLZ* 91 [1966]: 321-30). It is appropriate to recognize these connections, but it is unlikely Paul expected his audience to pick up on such subtle allusions. Historically it is unlikely a Gentile audience would catch his use of prophetic language. More importantly, though, rhetorically his implied audience is not assumed to pick up on this reference. Sandnes appropriately cautions against a psychologizing approach, the attempt by many before his work to suggest how Paul actually understood himself: "The interpretation of Paul's self-understanding has to be opposed to the ability of his addressees to comprehend what he is saying" (*Paul*, 16). His treatment, however, does not give any attention to the audience's experience of Paul's language, and instead focuses on constructing the history and language of call narratives and then applying this to Paul's language. He assumes throughout that "[the Galatians] were already acquainted with what Paul briefly related about his call . . . for it is difficult to imagine that Paul did not tell them his life story at once" (*Paul*, 69). He seems to extend this assumption to the form and function of call narratives elsewhere. This assumption seems untenable, and further it overlooks the experience of Paul's integration of the language of his "call" into an argument about the Galatians' "call." He further denies that, "[1:15-16a is] totally dependent upon the situation in which Paul found himself" (*Paul*, 69).<sup>80</sup> It has been suggested that the verb ἀφορίζω may be a reference to the suggested meaning of "Pharisee" as one who was set apart, translating the Hebrew פָּרַשׁ ("make distinct, separate"), though the LXX never translates the Hebrew verb as such (see the suggestion of J. W. Doeve, "Paulus der Pharisäer und Galater 1:13-15" *NovT* 6 [1963]: 170-81; on the name of the Pharisees, see A. I. Baumgarten, "The Name of the Pharisees," *JBL* 102 [1983]: 411-28; cf. Phil 3:5; Acts 23:6; 26:5). Jeremiah uses פָּרַשׁ in 1:5, translated in the LXX with the Greek verb ἀγιάζω.

<sup>81</sup> There is a question as to whether Paul separates chronologically his being set apart and his being called. Martyn argues the two participles are simply reflecting the parallelism of the Hebrew traditions from Isaiah and Jeremiah from which Paul draws (*Galatians*, 156-57). Betz, however, argues for two separate events (*Galatians*, 70; see also Sandnes, *Paul*, 60-61). Paul's own argument supports such a separation, as he uses the language of "call" to describe the Galatians' encounter with the gospel (see Gal 1:6; 5:8, 13). Generally in the letters he connects the language of "call" with one's experience with Christ while already alive (see especially 1 Cor 7:18-24). Paul's language in Romans 8:29-30 is very similar, wherein he distinguishes chronologically between God's "previous choosing" (προορίζω) and his calling (καλέω). Such a temporal distinction, using the language of προορίζω is also present in 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:5, 11.

<sup>82</sup> Paul's language in Romans 8:29-30 is very similar, wherein he distinguishes chronologically between God's "previous choosing" (προορίζω) and his calling (καλέω). Such a temporal distinction, using the language of προορίζω is also present in 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:5, 11.

Paul connects God's action to the Galatians' past with his description of God as "the one who called me through his gift."<sup>83</sup> In 1:6 Paul refers to God likewise as "the one who called you" (ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς), arguing that the Galatians' call, like Paul's, was made effective "through a gift" (ἐν χάριτι) (1:6). Paul's self-description, therefore, cast in the terms by which he has described the Galatians' experience with God, invites the reader to consider his own experience, and therefore behavior, in light of the reversal in Paul's behavior. Here the implicit nature of Paul's reference to what happened to him takes rhetorical effect. That is, the audience can see its own experience in light of Paul's past expressly because he is not specific about the content of the event. Paul's point is not that the Galatians' experience replicates his own; rather his argument is that anyone who has experienced such a call should likewise experience such a reversal.

### *The Galatians' Reading of Paul's Narrative*

More than a simple report of what the Judeans were hearing about Paul, 1:23-24 is a rhetorical device that focuses Paul's primary audience on the logic of reversal in the presentation of his past, a "biography of reversal" stressing the change in his behavior from his time "in Judaism" to the time after God revealed his son in Paul.<sup>84</sup> Paul constructs a narrative world that fills out the binary division between the human and the

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<sup>83</sup> I do not read ὁ θεός to be a part of the original text, though the interpretation does not differ either way. It is missing from a diverse set of the earliest witnesses (P46 B F G Ireneaus, Ephiphanius) and is more likely a clarifying addition than an omission. Metzger strongly disagrees with the majority of the Committee: "The reading with ὁ θεός has every appearance of being a scribal gloss making explicitly the subject of εὐδόκησεν" (Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994], 521-22). My argument depends upon reading the phrase καί καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ as original. The phrase is missing from these same witnesses. However, there seems to be little explanation for the addition of the phrase, which is certainly Pauline in language. Though this exact description of God is not found elsewhere, Paul does describe God similarly in 5:8 (cf. 5:13).

<sup>84</sup> "Biography of reversal" is John Howard Schütz's appropriate term for Paul's story (*Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* [The New Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007], 133).

divine with which Paul began the letter and by which he characterized his life in 1:10. In 1:13-22, Paul uses his past to describe further the distinction, describing behavior characteristic of these two distinct modes of living. Paul's past "in Judaism" was a life of achievement above others, persecution of the church, and zeal for the traditions of his fathers. On the other side stands his new life as a slave of Christ, characterized by his being led by revelation, speaking as equals with those who were apostles before him, and bringing glory to God apart from personal recognition. Paul's behavior is no longer motivated by an attempt to succeed beyond others, but rather his action is directed only by God's purpose for him, to reveal his son. God's call and the gospel stand as the pivot between life in the human realm and life in the divine. This call, though, is not new, but rather is a fulfillment of the work for which God set Paul apart, before he was born.

The Judeans, like the Galatians, have heard of Paul's behavior in Judaism as a persecutor and destroyer of the church.<sup>85</sup> The Judeans, though, complete this story by noting that Paul "now is preaching the faith" (νῦν εὐαγγελίζεται τὴν πίστιν) (1:23) and by responding through glorifying God because of the reversal in Paul's life. Their focus on the reversal in the story fills out the picture the Galatians have of Paul. In 1:13-22, Paul has narrated how his life changed from the picture of him in Judaism with which they were familiar, to one chosen by God "so that I might preach him among the Gentiles" (ἵνα εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν) (1:16). In the Judean response, therefore, the Galatians are shown the significance of that which they now "have heard."

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<sup>85</sup> Again, the historical tendencies of many critics distract them from recognizing the rhetorical function of Paul's reporting the direct discourse of the churches in Judea. Dunn, for example, suggests possibilities for how this quotation would have reached Paul and what the quote tells us about the Judeans' solidarity (*Galatians*, 83). Such issues, while perhaps interesting, are secondary to the rhetoric of the letter. Paul reports the quotation as he does to match the rhetorical situation he faces, not to accurately reflect what the Judeans are actually saying.

The connection between Paul's narration of the past and the dire situation in Galatia that he addresses is not explicit at this point in the argument. This narrative, though, has provided a basic logic that Paul will build upon going forward. His use of the language of his "call" and the concomitant reversal in his behavior invites his audience's thematic response, a recognition that the details of his employment are more important than the content they provide about Paul. In the next two sections of the argument, wherein Paul applies this narrative logic to specific situations, first in Jerusalem (2:1-10) and then in Antioch (2:11-21), Paul develops this thematic response and shows the Galatians the relevance of his own past for their future.

There is also a mimetic response from this narrative. The details of Paul's past work to construct an image of the apostle going forward. Those who argue for an apologetic motivation behind Paul's comments are at least right in arguing that Paul's argument going forward stands upon the narrative of 1:13-24. While I do not agree this narrative functions only to establish Paul as a legitimate apostle, this section does make present details of Paul's life that affect the way in which his audience hears him going forward. It is now the Paul who has been constructed through the autobiographical comments of 1:13-24 that addresses the Galatians in the rest of the letter. In following the episodes in Jerusalem and Antioch, the Galatians observe the process of applying the pattern of this life in Christ to questions raised about the relationship of Jews and Gentiles. In this way, ch. 2 functions as a hermeneutical key for the Galatians in the unfolding argument throughout the rest of the letter, as Paul explicates how one is to behave when led by revelation.

### Paul's Defense of the Truth of the Gospel (2:1-10)

A first application of Paul's narrative is set in Jerusalem. The audience witnesses the apostle Paul, constructed through the reversal narrative of 1:13-24, encountering a challenge to the truth of the gospel, a challenge that mimics the one that the Galatians face. Paul narrates how his defense of the truth of the gospel against a challenge from false brothers influenced those in Jerusalem, unifying the church around the gospel preached to Jews and to Gentiles. By following this narrative, the audience sees how the pattern of life established in the first chapter leads one to respond to a situation that mimics that which the Galatians are facing.

There are three discrete sections in this narrative argument, distinguished by Paul's use of characters.<sup>86</sup> In the first section (2:1-3), Paul, taking along Barnabas and Titus, goes up to Jerusalem and presents before "those of repute" the gospel he preaches.<sup>87</sup> Paul and these apostles come to an agreement that Titus, though a Greek, need not be circumcised. In the second section (2:4-5), this agreement is interrupted by the entrance of false brothers and their attempts to steal the freedom those in Jerusalem have.

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<sup>86</sup> Establishing an outline of the narrative in 2:1-10 is a notoriously vexing problem. The grammar of the passage is difficult, and the flow of the argument is interrupted at several points. Interpreters debate whether the unstable grammar is itself a rhetorical technique, or rather this is "simply a case of Paul's thought running ahead of his dictation" (Dunn, *Galatians*, 97). Too often interpreters attempt to "fix" Paul's grammar before interpreting his argument. Instead, interpretation should accept these "bumps" in the argument as a part of the experience of following the argument.

<sup>87</sup> I use the phrase "those of repute" throughout to translate Paul's phrase οἱ δοκοῦντες. The phrase is clearly intended to be somewhat sarcastic or insincere by the end of Paul's argument in 2:10. However, there is no indication initially in 2:2 that he intends it as such, and in fact his argument depends in part on the audience recognizing the authority of these apostles. The phrase is commonly used in Greek to refer to those held in high esteem (*LSJ* s.v. II.5; see Plutarch, *Aristides* 1), though it can have a sense of false reputation (see Plato, *Gorgias* 472A; *Apology* 21B). Paul's argument to this point has given no indication that the reputation of those in Jerusalem is unfounded, but the invited response to their reputation will change as the narrative unfolds. For a summary of the range of translations that have been offered, see D. Francois Tolmie, *Persuading the Galatians: A Text-Centered Rhetorical Analysis of a Pauline Letter* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 77-78.

In the third section (2:6-10), Paul narrates the response from “those of repute” to his actions and the agreement reached with them.<sup>88</sup>

In this scene at Jerusalem, the pace of the narrative slows considerably compared to the quick movement in 1:16b-24.<sup>89</sup> This second visit to Jerusalem is introduced by compressing fourteen years into a short transition.<sup>90</sup> This transition gives the reader the impression that the events and description of vv. 21-24 persist.<sup>91</sup> That is, the reader is left to assume that for fourteen years Paul was far from Jerusalem, and yet his reputation was building in Judea and bringing glory to God. Indeed his use of the language of his call in

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<sup>88</sup> See also Frank J. Matera, *Galatians* (Sacra Pagina 9; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 79; Betz, *Galatians*, 83-90. For many, 2:4-5 is a break between what would otherwise be a continuous narrative of Paul’s discussions with the Jerusalem apostles and their decision that circumcision was not necessary. Munck calls it “a break” (*Paul*, 95). Betz calls it a “digression” (*Galatians*, 17). Matera even goes so far as to argue that, “To appreciate the movement of Paul’s thought one should read the text, placing vv. 4-5, 6b, and 8 in parentheses” (*Galatians*, 79). As I demonstrate, the action of 2:4-5 is an essential part of Paul’s argument, both the primary argument to the Galatians and the secondary argument to the Jerusalem apostles.

<sup>89</sup> This observation is made also by Dunn (*Galatians*, 86-87).

<sup>90</sup> On the distinction between narrative and historical time, along with the effects of compression, see Gérard Genette, “Order, Duration, and Frequency,” pp. 25-34 in *Narrative Dynamics: Essays on Time, Plot, Closure, and Frames* (ed. Brian Richardson, et al.; Columbus, OH: Ohio State University Press, 2002). There has been vigorous debate about how this visit aligns with the Acts narrative. Many suggest this is Paul’s account of the so-called “famine visit” reported in Acts 11:29-30 (see Bernard Orchard, “The Problem of Acts and Galatians,” *CBQ* 7 [1945]: 377-97; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992], 43-44, 55-56; Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* [Word Biblical Commentary 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990], lxxvii-lxxxiii; Richard Bauckham, “Barnabas in Galatians,” *JSNT* 2 [1979]: 61). This is recommended because in Acts 11 Paul (Saul) goes up with Barnabas and meets privately with “the elders,” similar to the report in Galatians 2:1-3. Others suggest this is Paul’s account of the Jerusalem council narrated by Luke in Acts 15. This view is recommended by the fact that the issue in Galatians 2 is the same as that in Acts 15, and if Acts 11 were the visit of Galatians 2, then it is unclear how the issue would once again been in question. For those favoring this second view, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 87-89; Betz, *Galatians*, 84-85.

<sup>91</sup> It is difficult to know from where Paul marks these fourteen years. The organizing role that the event of 1:15-16 plays in Paul’s rhetoric suggests that Paul means fourteen years after the event of 1:15-16. For arguments for this position, see George Ogg, *The Chronology of the Life of Paul* (London: Epworth, 1968), 72; P. Klein, “Zum Verständnis von Gal 2:1. Zugleich ein Beitrag zur Chronologie des Urchristentums,” *ZNW* 70:3-4 (1979): 250-51. On the other hand, Paul’s reference that he “again went up” might suggest the previous visit, recounted in 1:18, is the mark, and thus this second visit to Jerusalem is seventeen years after the events of 1:15-16. For arguments for this position, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 102. Dunn, *Galatians*, 87; Hengel and Schwemer, *Paul Between Damascus and Antioch*, 26-27. For a discussion of the implications for Pauline chronology, see John Knox, “Fourteen Years Later’: A Note on the Pauline Chronology,” *JR* 16 (1936): 341-49; *idem*, “The Pauline Chronology,” *JBL* 58 (1939): 15-29; Stanley D. Toussaint, “The Chronological Problem of Galatians 2:1-10,” *BSac* 120 (1963): 334-40. Paul also makes reference to “fourteen years” in 2 Corinthians 12:2, and some have speculated that it is more than a coincidence that the same interval is mentioned here (see Knox, “Fourteen Years Later”).

1:16 to describe his presentation of “the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles,” suggests Paul has been completing the work to which he was called. Paul, however, does not travel alone, but rather goes up with Barnabas and takes along Titus, two characters with whom the text assumes the audience is familiar.<sup>92</sup> Each plays a key role in the unfolding narrative, though their respective functions are initially unclear.

Paul is led to Jerusalem “according to revelation” (κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν), language that highlights a key instability at the beginning of the narrative at 2:1-2.<sup>93</sup> In what manner does Paul approach the reputed apostles? On one hand, the language of revelation connects Paul’s motivation in going to Jerusalem with God’s decision (1:15-16), in contrast to human teaching (1:12).<sup>94</sup> Paul has denied to this point that his gospel depends upon human influences, continuing a distinction between the human and the divine developed from the opening line of the letter. The previous narrative turns upon Paul’s reversal from a world of human achievement to a world of divine revelation. His

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<sup>92</sup> The dearth of any information suggests the implied audience is familiar with these two. Barnabas figures prominently in Acts as a companion to Paul (see Acts 9:27; 13:1, 42; 15:2) and is likewise assumed to be known as a companion in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 9:6; cf. Col 4:10). On Barnabas, see Richard Bauckham, “Barnabas in Galatians.” Titus is not mentioned in Acts, but plays a prominent role in the communication between Paul and the Corinthians (see 2 Cor 2:13; 7:5-16; 8:16-24; 12:18). In his letter to Titus, Paul refers to him as “my loyal child in the faith” (Tit 1:4). On Titus, see C. K. Barrett, “Titus,” pp. 1-14 in *Neotestamentica et Semitica: Studies in Honour of Matthew Black* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1969). Rhetorically the omission of details allows for a thematic response to each. In this narrative, Titus functions thematically as a Greek who was not compelled to be circumcised (2:3) and Barnabas as one led astray by Cephas’ hypocrisy (2:13).

<sup>93</sup> Translations differ on how to render the prepositional phrase κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν. Many read it strongly as “in response to a revelation” (NRSV; NIV; cf. Martyn: “as a result of revelation”) or “because of a revelation” (ESV; NASB). The connection to the infinitive ἀποκαλύπτειν in 1:16 should certainly be reflected in translation. As discussed above, though, that language describes God’s revelation through Paul, not to Paul, and therefore here also the sense is not that Paul was prompted by revelation, but rather that he is going up to Jerusalem as part of his role as revealer.

<sup>94</sup> Dunn’s comment that the lack of an article with ἀποκάλυψιν in 2:2 “almost certainly rules out a reference back to 1:12” is far too rigid (*Galatians*, 91). Paul so rarely uses the language of “revelation” that a reader would not likely miss the close connection between 1:12, 16 and 2:2. However, the lack of an article should not lead to translating this phrase as “in response to a revelation” (see NRSV; ESV; NET). As Paul has used the term, God’s “revelation” is not a vision which Paul sees, but rather God’s ongoing action in the world, in which Paul is playing a part. Therefore Paul goes up to Jerusalem “as part of God’s revelation” (cf. KJV: “by revelation”).

subsequent report offers no causality for his actions other than the implicit influence of God's decision "to reveal" (ἀποκαλύψαι) his son through Paul. Here that influence is made explicit; Paul's actions are under the control of the God who "decided to reveal his son through me." Revelation for Paul in this context, therefore, is not merely the origin of his gospel, but rather is the force behind and reason for his continued action.<sup>95</sup> The very gospel that Paul lays before the Jerusalem apostles is that for which he was set apart by God to preach. Paul approaches Jerusalem boldly, under the control of God's "apocalypse" and no longer seeking human approval (1:10).<sup>96</sup>

On the other hand, Paul approaches Jerusalem in a somewhat humble position, seeking approval for a gospel preached to the Gentiles. Indeed he is the one "unknown by face" in Jerusalem, approaching "those of repute." To this point Paul has acknowledged the authority of "those who were apostles before me" (1:17), constructing a narrative world wherein Jerusalem exhibits strong influence over his reported actions. In 2:2, Paul says he "placed before" (ἀνεθέμην) the reputed apostles his gospel, suggesting that he seeks their approval for the work he has been conducting for fourteen years.<sup>97</sup> He likewise has taken Titus with him (συμπααραλαβὼν καὶ Τίτον), seeking a decision as to whether a Greek must be circumcised in order to follow Christ.<sup>98</sup> Paul expresses concern that his work for these fourteen years may have been "in vain" if those in Jerusalem decide that

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<sup>95</sup> This continued use of the language of "revelation" is a strong argument against reading 1:16 as a reference to Paul's initial vision of Christ. The "revelation" to which he refers in 1:16 is the mode by which he operates as an apostle.

<sup>96</sup> Martyn agrees with Dunn that, "He did not go to the Jerusalem church cap in hand" (Martyn, *Galatians*, 190; Dunn, "Relationship," 109-10). However, Martyn later emphasizes the "anxiety which Paul emphatically personalizes" in 2:2 (*Galatians*, 191-2).

<sup>97</sup> The verb ἀνατίθημι can mean to "lay upon" or "offer." It typically has the meaning of "refer for consideration" (see Festus' appeal to Agrippa in Acts 25:14; cf. Polybius *Histories* 21.46.11).

<sup>98</sup> Grammatically Titus is not as connected to Paul as is Barnabas. A proper rendering of the Greek might read as follows: "I went up to Jerusalem with Barnabas, and I also took Titus with me." This separation becomes significant as Titus' function in the narrative ends in 2:3.

circumcision is necessary, a power of decision that Paul acknowledges.<sup>99</sup> Paul here employs language previously used to deny that he sought counsel (οὐ προσανεθέμην) from “flesh and blood” in Jerusalem (1:16). Now he approaches “those of repute” seeking not only their counsel but also their approval.<sup>100</sup>

As Paul ascends to Jerusalem, therefore, the reader is witness to a drama that explores the relationship between “revelation,” by which Paul is led to Jerusalem and which he offers to Gentiles, and human reputation, which Paul continues to recognize in these apostles.<sup>101</sup> Such a tension between human and divine forces has been at the very center of Paul’s argument from the beginning, from his introduction of himself as “an apostle not from humans nor through a human but through Jesus Christ and God the father” (1:1), to his separation of the gospel from the one preaching it (1:8-9), to his distinction between “pleasing humans” and being a “slave of Christ” (1:10). The drama in Jerusalem is about more than Paul and the apostles; it is also a drama that illustrates the relationship between revelation and human authority.<sup>102</sup>

Recall, though, that this narrative is told to a community that faces the question of the necessity of Gentile circumcision. The setup for this narrative, therefore, leads the audience to see Paul as going up to Jerusalem to answer the question that stands at the center of the letter. Is it acceptable for Gentiles—like the Galatians—to receive the

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<sup>99</sup> Much hinges upon the reading of the phrase μή πως, a phrase that many authors read to mean “genuine anxiety is expressed here” (Dunn, *Galatians*, 93; see also Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 103-4). Paul uses it in Gal 4:11 to express his fear that his work for the Galatians has been in vain. The phrase itself is a “marker of a negative perspective expressing misgiving” (*BDAG s.v. πως* 2; cf. Sir. 28:26). Paul uses it elsewhere to mean “lest” or “in order that it not be” (see 1 Cor 8:9; 2 Cor 2:7).

<sup>100</sup> Many interpreters are uncomfortable with the idea that Paul would recognize authority in Jerusalem. For a review of the suggestions that attempt to explain this another way, with an argument that Paul seeks approval in Jerusalem see Tolmie, *Persuading*, 76-77; Dunn, *Galatians*, 93-94.

<sup>101</sup> Dunn suggests, “Paul was walking a narrow tightrope between affirming the Jerusalem apostles’ authority and disowning it” (*Galatians*, 102). I suggest instead the text leads the audience to recognize their authority. There is no conflict between Paul and those in Jerusalem.

<sup>102</sup> Paul’s label of “those of repute” invites a thematic response from his audience, clearly indicating that these apostles’ role is significant beyond the details of what occurs in Jerusalem.

gospel without being circumcised? Going up to Jerusalem, Paul takes more than Titus the Greek with him; he takes the Galatians along as well.

An initial solution to the problem Paul takes to Jerusalem is offered in Paul's report in v. 3 that "not even Titus, who was with me, though a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised."<sup>103</sup> In Paul's private meeting with the Jerusalem apostles, a decision is made that the gospel can proceed without requiring circumcision of Gentiles. Paul does not report how this agreement is made. He does not say that he submits to the will of these Jerusalem apostles, but rather only that he and they stand in unity; Titus is not "compelled" (ἠναγκάσθη) because the gospel does not require it.<sup>104</sup>

These initial three verses form the background for the true action of this narrative. This agreement in private is upset by the sudden appearance of the false brothers, whose interruption onto the stage provides an opportunity for Paul's defense of the gospel.<sup>105</sup> It is not Paul's concern in this presentation to identify these false brothers, but to show how

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<sup>103</sup> This is the first reference in the letter to circumcision, an issue that will become more prominent as the argument progresses. For specific references to circumcision, see 2:7-9, 12; 5:2, 3, 6, 11; 6:12, 13, 15. See also the implied reference in the comment of 5:12.

<sup>104</sup> The meaning of the verb ἠναγκάσθη is key for Paul's argument throughout the letter. Paul uses the same verb at key points in Galatians, first in condemning Cephas for "compelling the Gentiles to live like Jews" (πᾶς τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν) (2:14) and then to label the troublers as "the ones who are compelling you to be circumcised" (οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι) (6:12). Elsewhere he charges the Corinthians with compelling him to speak like a fool (2 Cor 12:11). The verb itself has the sense of "constrain" as well as "force," (*LSJ s.v.*) and both fit the context here; no one forced Titus into circumcision, an act that Paul speaks of as constraining through his use of the slavery metaphor throughout. In 1 Maccabees the verb is used to refer to Antiochus' compelling the Jews to sacrifice to the pagan gods on the temple's altar (1 Macc 2:25; see similar uses in 2 Macc 6:1, 7, 18; 7:1; 4 Macc 5:2, 27; 8:2, 9; 18:5).

<sup>105</sup> Reading this account to suggest that the false brothers interrupt Paul's presentation of his gospel at the "secret" meeting makes better sense of Paul's description of the brothers as being "brought in secretly" (παρεισάκτους) and "slipping in" (παρεισῆλθον) to spy on their freedom. Perhaps not insignificantly, Paul's only other use of the verb παρεισέρχομαι comes in Rom 5:20 to describe the entry of the law into human history. The actual content of the argument of the "false brothers" is only enigmatically referred to here. Paul uses the language of "freedom" for the first time here, though he will focus on it much more later in the letter when directly discussing the Galatians' situation (see 3:28; 4:22-31; 5:1, 13). Munck uses this connection of the threat to freedom from the false brothers and from the troublers in Galatians (see 5:1) to connect these two groups together (*Paul*, 97-98).

he stands up to them.<sup>106</sup> Paul's pejorative description of these false brothers sets up a sharp contrast between them and himself: they are the "false brothers" (ψευδαδελφοί) in opposition to his defense of "the truth of the gospel" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου).<sup>107</sup> The agreement reached between Paul and the Jerusalem apostles now comes under direct challenge, and Paul and those with him defend the truth of the gospel against the false brothers' attempt to enslave them.<sup>108</sup> The narrative focuses on Paul's strong stance against them: "We did not give in to them in submission for a second."<sup>109</sup>

The lack of detail about the identity of these false brothers invites a thematic response to this narration. As Paul has introduced the situation in Galatia, the community likewise faces a challenge from their own "false brothers." The Galatians, who have lived in freedom because of the gospel brought by Paul, have now been tempted to constrict that freedom through the requirements of the Jewish law. Though Paul does not yet make

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<sup>106</sup> The question of the historical identity of these figures has dominated scholarship. Interpreters generally agree that these are Jewish Christians (see Bruce, *Galatians*, 112; Betz, *Galatians*, 90), though some have suggested that they were non-Christian Jews (see W. Schmitals, *Paul and the Gnostics* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1972], 14). Many connect these false brothers with the Pharisees in Acts 15:5 who argue for circumcision. Some suggest a connection between these false brothers and the troublers in Galatia. Munck even suggests that Paul's language in vv. 4-5 is not a report of a historical encounter in Jerusalem, but rather a direct argument to the troublers in Galatia (*Paul*, 97-98).

<sup>107</sup> Paul also refers to "false brothers" in 2 Cor 11:26; cf. 2 Cor 11:13 (ψευδαπόστολοι). Attempts to trace this term throughout earliest Christianity are not necessary, as the contrast with Paul is the emphasis here.

<sup>108</sup> The reference of the first-person plural of 2:5 (εἴξαμεν) is ambiguous, either meaning Paul, Barnabas, and Titus, or those three plus "those of repute." I read it to include only Paul and those who went with him to Jerusalem, as he will address the Jerusalem apostles' passivity in 2:6, introduced with the contrastive δέ. "Those of repute" have been completely passive in the scene to this point.

<sup>109</sup> I read the phrase οἷς οὐδέ to be original, though a few manuscripts omit this phrase, reading "for a second we did give in to them in submission" (see D\*). The variant reading is also reflected in many of the patristic writers (see, for example, Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* 3.13.3). Marius Victorinus points to Paul's circumcising Timothy in Acts 16:3 as evidence that he would have been willing to submit for the Jews (see *Marius Victorinus' Commentary on Galatians* [trans. Stephen Andrew Cooper; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005], 270-72). This reading would suggest that Paul accommodates his gospel briefly. This would present a very different function for this story. The witnesses are not strong enough to accept the reading as original. In addition, such a reading would stand against the general flow of the argument, wherein Paul shows that his law-free gospel stands up challenges. For reviews of this issue, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 121-23; Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 522-23.

explicit this connection between the false brothers and the troublers, his implied audience recognizes that this story is not merely about Paul's actions in the past.<sup>110</sup>

As quickly as the false brothers appeared onstage in 2:4, they vanish in 2:6, having served their narrative function as foils challenging Paul's law-free gospel and providing opportunity for its defense. In 2:6, Paul refocuses his audience's attention explicitly on the Jerusalem apostles—who have had no active role so far—and their response to his defense of the gospel against the false brothers. In 2:4-5 Paul has highlighted a contrast between the false brothers and his Gentile gospel.<sup>111</sup> In 2:6-10, Paul considers the Jerusalem apostles who have stood by and idly watched his defense.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> An explicit connection between these false brothers and the troublers is not made in the letter, but Paul characterizes the troublers as threatening the Galatians' freedom (5:12-13). Likewise, the troublers "compel you to be circumcised" (6:12; οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι) whereas because of Paul's defense Titus "was not compelled to be circumcised" (2:3; οὐδὲ Τίτος ὁ σὺν ἐμοί, Ἑλλήν ὄν, ἠναγκάσθη περιτμηθῆναι). Bernard Orchard outlines these similarities to make the argument that the false brothers and the troublers are the same people, that Paul's description in 2:4-5 is of the situation that has prompted the writing of the letter (Bernard Orchard, "Ellipsis Between Gal 2:3, 2:4," *Biblica* 54 [1973]: 469-81). While Orchard's thesis does not stand up to the evidence of the text, his description of the similarities between the two sets of "opponents" is accurate. The rhetorical function of this similarity is to show Paul standing up as he wants the Galatians to do likewise.

<sup>111</sup> Paul's remark that he stands up so that truth of the gospel "might remain for you" is a direct reference to the Gentile Galatians, and so the issue between Paul and the false brothers must be Gentile acceptance of the gospel, specifically the issue of circumcision. Indeed the metaphor of freedom and slavery, first introduced by Paul's emphasis that he is a "slave of Christ" (1:10) becomes a dominant way of Paul's speaking about life under the gospel and a central part of his argument directly to the Galatians. See 3:28; 4:1-11; 4:21-5:1; 5:13. On freedom and slavery language in Galatians, see Wayne Coppins, *The Interpretation of Freedom in the Letters of Paul: With Special Reference to the 'German' Tradition* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 87-121.

<sup>112</sup> Pace Dunn, who argues "pressure was exerted on Paul by the Jerusalem 'pillars' as well" (*Galatians*, 97). At no point in this presentation, though, does Paul suggest a conflict between these pillar apostles and him. He begins by acknowledging their authority and ends by reporting an agreement reached. The pattern of events seems to match well with the Acts 15 narrative. There an unnamed "some from the sect of Pharisees" come in from the outside and argue for circumcision of the Gentiles. There it is a unified Peter and Paul that stand up to them (Acts 15:4-11). However, interpreters should not overlook that Paul's labored grammar in 2:4-6 presents a parallel picture of the false brothers and the Jerusalem apostles. The grammar of this section is confused by the two anacolutha that introduce 2:4 and 2:6. Paul's introduction of the false brothers (διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους) stands parallel to the reintroduction of the Jerusalem apostles (ἀπὸ δὲ τῶν δοκούντων εἶναι τι), suggesting 2:4-5 focuses on the false brothers' relationship to Paul (a direct challenge), while 2:6-10 focuses on the Jerusalem apostles' response to his actions. Such anacolutha are not uncommon in Paul's letters (see also 2 Cor 5:6; Eph 2:1-3). For a discussion, see *BDF* §467; Smyth §§3004-3008.

Now that the false brothers have left the stage, the question of the relationship between Paul's "revelation" and recognized human authority returns to the forefront of Paul's rhetoric, though Paul's defense against the false brothers has altered the dynamic from 2:1-2. Paul reintroduces "those reputed to be something" by emphasizing that "they did not contribute in any way" (οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο) to his defense of the gospel.<sup>113</sup> Paul strongly contrasts (ἀλλά τοῦναντίον) his denial of their contribution with their mere "observing" (ιδόντες) his opposition to the false brothers (2:7) and "recognizing" (γνόντες) his gift through his defense. The dynamics of the relationship between Paul and these apostles have changed because of Paul's defense. No longer is Paul the subordinate in this relationship, seeking approval for his gospel. Instead Paul has changed the belief and behavior of "those of repute" through his actions. Paul's defense of the truth of the gospel against the false brothers functions as proof for the Jerusalem apostles of the validity of Paul's gospel.<sup>114</sup>

Through the action of this narrative, Paul's repeated moniker for the apostles in Jerusalem, "those of repute," now in the variant form "those reputed to be something," clearly becomes sarcastic. Paul's explicit reason such a title is sarcastic is that "God does

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<sup>113</sup> Because Paul here uses the language he used in 1:16-17 to deny that he sought counsel from flesh and blood (οὐ προσανεθέμην), many interpreters suggest Paul is here saying that the reputed apostles "added nothing" in the sense that they did not change his gospel at all, but rather his gospel remained free from human influence. See, for example, Lightfoot, who paraphrases as follows: "They imparted no fresh knowledge to me, they saw nothing defective or incorrect in my teaching; but *on the contrary*, they heartily recognized my mission" (*Galatians*, 104; emphasis original). Though the verb προσανατίθημι (rare in extant Greek literature) is the same in these two verses, here in 2:6 Paul uses the verb transitively, likely giving it a meaning of "contribute" or "undertake" rather than "take counsel" (see LSJ, *s.v.*; cf. Xenophon *Memorabilia* 2.1.8). In the context of the argument, Paul's denial of their contribution most naturally means they did nothing to aid him in his defense against the false brothers.

<sup>114</sup> It is somewhat odd that interpreters overlook the episode recounted in 2:4-5 as the object of what the apostles "saw." Asking what the object of the participle may be, Dunn suggests the reports of others, the reports of Paul, and the presence of Titus as possible sources of proof (see Dunn, *Galatians*, 105). However, given the flow of the argument, it makes the most sense that Paul's own actions serve as this proof.

not show preference.”<sup>115</sup> However, Paul’s emplotment prompts his audience to likewise recognize the irrelevance of these apostles’ “repute” by casting them in a role subordinate to Paul in the narrative. The Galatians have now become informed judges on the question of the relationship between “revelation” and human authority because of the scene they have just witnessed.<sup>116</sup> Not only does Paul assert that God does not show preferences, but Paul’s own actions have convinced the apostles of the truth of Paul’s gospel. Ironically, as did “the churches of Judea” who did not know Paul’s face, the Jerusalem “reputed apostles” now respond to Paul’s reputation, witnessed in his defense of the gospel.

These apostles’ recognition, though, is not of Paul as a legitimate preacher of the gospel. Rather, they recognize the gospel that he preaches as legitimate.<sup>117</sup> Three times Paul distinguishes between the apostles’ recognition and his identity. They first see the gospel within him (2:7), then the one working within him (2:8), and then the gift given to him (2:9). Paul is a passive worker; the object of recognition is God’s work within Paul. The question in Jerusalem from the beginning centers not on Paul as a preacher of the gospel, but rather the gospel that Paul preaches as coming from God.

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<sup>115</sup> Paul uses a well-known Jewish idiom to argue that God does not show preference. This is likely a Greek rendering of the Hebrew phrase  $\text{לֹא יִשְׁפָּט בְּפָנִים}$ . See, for example Deut 10:17:  $\text{לֹא יִשְׁפָּט בְּפָנִים}$ . However, this explicit formulation is not found in the Septuagint. The phrase in Deut 10:17 is translated  $\text{o\`u}\ \theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\iota\ \pi\rho\acute{o}\sigma\omega\pi\omicron\nu$  (see also 2 Chr 19:7). Paul uses a similar construction, as a compound noun, in Romans 2:11 (cf. Jas 2:1). For a discussion of this phrase in Paul (most specifically in Romans), see Jouette M. Bassler, *Divine Impartiality: Paul and a Theological Axiom* (Chico, CA: Scholars, 1982). It is important to recognize that Paul’s clarification of the problems of the title given to these apostles does not come until now, when his actions have shown the irrelevance of their reputation.

<sup>116</sup> The enrolling of the audience as witness and judge recalls Dio Chrysostom’s *Euboean Discourse*, where observing the opening narrative of the shipwreck and the hunter’s hospitality positions the audience to judge the man when on trial in the city.

<sup>117</sup> Once again it is important to recall that Paul has distinguished between the gospel and the one who preaches it (1:8-9).

This distinction between the one gospel and the many who can deliver it comes explicitly in Paul's report of the apostles' comparison between Paul and Peter.<sup>118</sup> What links these two together is the outward manifestation of the power that works within them. In v. 8, Paul's language highlights that the visible work of "the one who was 'visibly energizing' Peter for an apostleship" (ὁ γὰρ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολήν) has now become visible also in Paul.<sup>119</sup> Paul's language does not merely suggest that his rhetorical skill has convinced the apostles. Rather, his point is that the divine was manifest through his actions, providing indisputable proof that Paul's gospel was impelled and delivered by "the supernatural spirit" given by God.<sup>120</sup> Paul's actions have demonstrated the same power within him that Peter has demonstrated, and therefore he commands the reputation and acceptance given to Peter.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> Paul switches from speaking of Cephas (1:18; cf. 2:11, 14) to Peter in 2:7-8. See below for discussion of this issue. I maintain Paul's use in my comments.

<sup>119</sup> Paul's use of the verb ἐνεργέω strongly suggests visible action. It is far stronger than the standard translation "to work" (see Betz [*Galatians*, 98n392]; Dunn [*Galatians*, 106-7]; ESV; NRSV; cf. KJV: "wrought effectually"). For a discussion of translating this term in the New Testament, see Kenneth W. Clark, "The Meaning of ἐνεργέω and κατεργέω in the New Testament," *JBL* 54 (1935): 93-101. Paul will use the same language in 3:5 to refer to the "working of powers in you," the experience of power upon which Paul's direct argument to the Galatians will depend. Likewise it is "faith working [ἐνεργουμένη] through love" that is what Paul will identify as all that is important (5:6). Paul uses this language frequently to identify God's manifest action in individuals. Consider, for example, the language of Ephesians 1:19-20: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power [δύναμις] for us who believe in accordance with the working of his strong might [κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ κράτους τῆς ἰσχύος], which he put to work [ἦν ἐνήργησεν] in Christ by raising him from the dead" (see also 1 Cor 12:6, 11; 2 Cor 1:6; 4:12; Phil 2:13; Col 1:29; 1 Thess 2:13; cf. Mt 14:2). The language itself implies "to be in action or activity" (*LSJ s.v.*). Aristotle uses the noun form (ἐνεργεία) in his discussion of language that "brings before the eyes" images being described. An effective metaphor, for example, signifies "activity" (ἐνεργεία) (see *Rhet.* 3.11 1411b-1413b). The language is also used to refer to the "effectiveness" of medicine (Plotinus, *Enneades* 6.1.22) or military action (see *Tactics of Aelian* 14.6). Galen uses ὁ ἐνεργῶν to refer to one doing surgery (see Kühn 18[2].626, 683).

<sup>120</sup> On the supernaturalism inherent in the verb ἐνεργέω, see Clark, "Meaning." Clark translates Gal 2:8 as follows: "For he who infused the supernatural spirit for Peter in order that he might authoritatively preach among the Jews, infused me too with that same spirit" ("Meaning," 94).

<sup>121</sup> The grammar of v. 8 is not as even as English translations often suggest, as Paul literally says "the one being active in Peter for an apostleship of the circumcision was also active in me to the Gentiles" (ὁ ἐνεργήσας Πέτρῳ εἰς ἀποστολήν τῆς περιτομῆς ἐνήργησεν καὶ ἐμοὶ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη). Some interpreters have gone so far as to argue that the uneven grammar means Paul was not given full apostolic status like Peter in this account, and thus this text may be a later interpolation (see William O. Walker, "Galatians 2:8 and the Question of Paul's Apostleship," *JBL* 123 [2004]: 323-27; *idem*, "Galatians 2:7b-8 as Non-Pauline

Paul's direct connection of this scene to the Galatians' situation comes in his restatement of the Jerusalem apostles' motivation for extending fellowship in terms of their "recognizing the gift given to me" (γνόντες τὴν χάριν τῆν δοθεῖσάν μοι).<sup>122</sup> Paul here equates the gospel with which he has been entrusted (2:7) with the gift he has been given. This language of "gift" ties the narrative to Paul's direct argument to the Galatians, as his description of God's call "through his gift" did in 1:15. Paul began the letter with astonishment that the Galatians have "turned so quickly from the one who called you through the gift of Christ" (1:4).<sup>123</sup> God's "gift" was the pivot of Paul's own life (1:15). He will later threaten those seeking to be justified by the law with "forfeiting the gift of God" (5:4). Paul offers the Galatians a demonstration of the power of this gift: it is manifest in one's actions.

After delaying his report of the apostles' active response for several verses, focusing in vv. 7-9 on his action as the motivation behind it, Paul finally reports that the Jerusalem apostles, now called "those reputed to be pillars," extended fellowship (κοινωνία) to Barnabas and him.<sup>124</sup> Paul emphasizes the equality reflected in this

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Interpolation, *CBQ* 65 [2003]: 568-87). Such hypotheses are unnecessary, as Paul's point is clearly that the Jerusalem apostles gave the legitimacy they afforded Peter's mission to Paul's (see Matera, *Galatians*, 77). This parallel between Paul's mission and Peter's sets up the encounter in 2:11-14.

<sup>122</sup> The language of "knowledge" (γινώσκω) is far less present in Galatians than it is in other letters, especially Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, and Colossians. These two motivations behind the Jerusalem apostles' actions of v. 9 should clarify for Paul's readers that he is not presenting a historical narrative but rather a rhetorically-constructed one. Paul takes on the role of an omniscient first-person narrator, able to discern the motivation behind other people's actions. It is important to recognize that Paul has constructed this narrative to lead from his own actions to the Jerusalem apostles' response.

<sup>123</sup> Paul closes his argument with the warning that by seeking to be justified by the law, "you will forfeit the gift of God" (5:4).

<sup>124</sup> On the importance of fellowship as the result at Jerusalem, see Brigitte Kahl, "No Longer Male: Masculinity Struggles behind Galatians 3:28?," *JSNT* 79 (2000): 47. The title "pillar" (στῦλος) was likely assigned to leading apostles by others. This is the word used in the Septuagint to refer to the pillar of cloud and fire that leads Israel through the wilderness (see Exod 13:21-22; 19:9; Neh 9:12; Wis 18:3). The term was used in Judaism at the time to refer to the patriarchs, and thus it may have been used to describe Peter, James, and John as the new patriarchs (see C. K. Barrett, "Paul and the 'Pillar' Apostles," pp. 15-19 in *Studia Paulina* [ed. J. N. Sevenster; Haarlem: Bohn, 1953]). The term is also used to describe the physical supports of the tabernacle (Exod 26:15-37), the ark (Exod 37:1-9), and the temple (see 1 Kgs 7:15-22; 2

agreement, not only in his language of fellowship (κοινωνία), but also through the parallel construction of the abbreviated phrase “we to the Gentiles and they to the circumcision.” This balance completes the reversal that has occurred over these ten verses, and it resolves the instability with which this narrative began. From a position of humility, approaching “those of repute” to seek approval, Paul is now recognized as an equal, charged with taking the gospel to the Gentiles. Paul’s defense of the gospel is what has prompted this fellowship, one enacted by their joint commitment to “remember the poor.”<sup>125</sup> This equality, though, has been achieved through God’s work through Paul, specifically Paul’s standing up for the truth of the gospel.

### *Mimetic and Thematic Response in Jerusalem*

Paul’s second visit to Jerusalem, recounted in Galatians 2:1-10, is often compared to the Jerusalem council narrated in Acts 15, a plausible historical connection given the

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Chr 3:15-17), and thus this title may suggest the foundation of a new or eschatological temple (cf. Ezek 40:49), a view suggested by *1 Clem* 5:2-4, which calls Paul and Peter “the greatest and most righteous pillars” (οἱ μέγιστοι καὶ δικαιοτάτοι στῦλοι). On this view, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 109-10; Martyn, *Galatians*, 205. On the rabbinic and intertestamental use of this term, see Roger D. Aus, “Three Pillars and Three Patriarchs: A Proposal Concerning Gal 2:9,” *ZNW* 70 (1979): 252-61.

<sup>125</sup> Ancient fellowship (κοινωνία) often focused on a particular goal. See, for example the opening of Aristotle’s *Politics*: “Every partnership [πᾶσαν κοινωνίαν] is formed with a view to some good” (*Pol.* 1252a [Rackham, LCL]). Paul uses this language elsewhere to refer to financial support (see Rom 15:25-26; cf. Acts 2:42-44). For use of the language of “memory” (μνημονεύω) to suggest an obligation of financial support, see 1 Macc 12:11-12. There is certainly the suggestion of financial support here, evident in Paul’s mention of the “poor.” The Acts narrative makes several mentions of the apostles’ supporting the poor (see Acts 6:1; 11:29). This was certainly a part of the Judaism in which Paul lived previously (see Deut 24:10-22). In other letters Paul speaks of a collection gathered from his churches for the saints in Jerusalem, though the reference here in Galatians makes no mention of Paul’s raising money for the churches, and thus “the collection” is not likely in view here. For a detailed hypothesis of how this relates to Paul’s later collection, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 222-28. On the collection in general, see Dieter Georgi, *Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul’s Collection for Jerusalem* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992); Keith F. Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul’s Strategy* (London: SCM, 1966); Keck, “The Poor Among the Saints in the New Testament,” *ZNW* 65 (1965): 100-29.

details shared between the two narratives.<sup>126</sup> More important than tracing this historical connection, though, is recognizing the rhetorical purpose behind the presentation of each scene. Luke's rhetorical interests are in depicting a unity among the apostles, working towards an agreement on a difficult issue through the unified opposition Paul, Peter, and James present to a Pharisaic challenge.<sup>127</sup> While his presentation shares the basic details with Luke's, specifically that an agreement was reached over the question of the Gentiles and circumcision, the effects of Paul's emplotment of the story are different. Rather than presenting the active participation of all parties, Paul narrates the complex relationship between revelation and human authority.

This scene opened with a question of the relationship between revelation and Paul's acknowledgement of human authority in Jerusalem. He has invited his audience to recognize the Jerusalem apostles as having the power to approve or disapprove of his gospel, as he returns to Jerusalem to receive assurance that he has not been working these fourteen years in vain. Indeed, to that point Paul had given no indication that the Jerusalem apostles' reputation is unfounded. The events of the narrative alter this picture. Paul's standing up for the truth of the gospel in the face of threats to his freedom serves as evidence that convinces the Jerusalem apostles of the legitimacy of Paul's gospel. Paul, led by revelation, becomes the dominant voice in Jerusalem. His power comes not because of who he is, but because of the power of the gospel he demonstrates in his actions.

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<sup>126</sup> For discussion, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 123-28; Ogg, *Chronology*, 72-88; Longenecker, *Galatians*, lxxvii-lxxxiii. The identification of the Galatians 2 account with Acts 15 began early in the church (Irenaeus, *adv. Haer.* 3.13.3).

<sup>127</sup> For a summary of the literary and rhetorical concerns of the presentation of Acts 15:1-21, see Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Sacra Pagina 5; Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1992), 270-73.

If the function of this story is the establishment of the legitimacy of Paul's gospel, as it is often suggested to be, the first three verses would be sufficient. That is, Paul goes to Jerusalem with some question surrounding his gospel, he makes his case to the authorities, and they recognize that he is correct: Gentiles need not be circumcised. The story validates Paul's apostleship and gospel. This mimetic response to the narrative is legitimate, but incomplete. The agreement of 2:3 is not where Paul ends his construction of the story. Instead, this agreement stands as the background to the challenge Paul faces from the false brothers. The entrance of the false brothers is the crucible introduced to test Paul's gospel. The challenge prompts two responses. Paul defends the truth of the gospel, and the Jerusalem apostles recognize the true gospel working within Paul.

The situation the Galatians face is never far from the unfolding story, and Paul's construction invites a thematic response to Paul's plot. This is the metapedagogical function of the narrative rhetoric.<sup>128</sup> Paul recounts not merely a story of his past defense of the gospel, but rather the pattern of one "called in Christ" standing up to an external threat. In the previous scene, Paul's language invited the Galatians to see their own story in his; they too have been called in Christ and invited to reverse their behavior. The issue Paul brings to Jerusalem is a summary of the very question in Galatia. That is, Paul presents the Galatians as being troubled by questions about the legitimacy of a gospel in which they, being Greeks like Titus, have not been compelled to be circumcised. In some sense, in 2:1-2, Paul presents the Galatians' case before the Jerusalem apostles, and

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<sup>128</sup> Martyn recognizes the metapedagogical function, arguing that, "Paul allows an explicit coalescence between the two levels of the drama" (*Galatians*, 198). However, Martyn pays little attention elsewhere in his presentation of Paul's narration to "the two levels of the drama," reading with a historical rather than literary lens. For Martyn the two levels, most apparent in Paul's address of Cephas at Antioch, are the historical situation being reported and Paul's implicit address to the troublers in Galatia. I argue for a more immediate primary situation: Paul's addressing the Galatians.

indeed as Paul and the Jerusalem apostles agree that Titus need not be circumcised, so they agree that the Galatians do not. Likewise, as Paul is troubled by the false brothers, so the Galatians are being troubled by those “wanting to pervert the gospel of Christ” (1:7). This connection between the situation at Jerusalem and in Galatia is made even more explicit in Paul’s move to the first person plural and present tense in his description of the challenge from the false brothers. The threat is not merely to the freedom of Paul and the apostles in Jerusalem, but to “*our* freedom that *we* have in Christ Jesus” (2:4). In Jerusalem, Paul stands up “so that that truth of the gospel might remain for *you*.” At Antioch, he will show the dangers of not standing up.

### **The Contrasting Example of Cephas (2:11-14)**

Paul’s defense of the truth of the gospel at Jerusalem stands in stark contrast to the actions of Cephas at Antioch. There is no real break between the events at Jerusalem and the events at Antioch, only a change in venue. Whereas Paul transitioned from his narrative of reversal to the events in Jerusalem (2:1) by compressing fourteen years into a single phrase, in 2:11 there is no indication of time elapsed between Jerusalem and Antioch.<sup>129</sup> The problems in Antioch immediately follow the fellowship established in Jerusalem, focusing the audience on the contrast in scene between these two locations.<sup>130</sup>

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<sup>129</sup> *Pace* Bruce, who takes the omission of ἔπειτα (cf. 2:1) as an indication that “there was not the same apologetic need to emphasize the consecutive flow of events on this occasion” (*Galatians*, 128; see also Gaventa, “Autobiography,” 317).

<sup>130</sup> The primary concern of most modern interpreters is the historical relationship between the events at Jerusalem and Antioch (for a broad summary, see Dunn, “The Incident at Antioch,” 130-36). Most assume the episode followed the events in Jerusalem, though some have argued that the Antioch episode came first, generally citing the fact that after Acts 15:39 Barnabas and Paul are not together, and yet in 2:13 Paul suggests that they began the events in Antioch together (see Ogg, *Chronology*, 90-91). Many focus on how this incident fits within the chronology of Paul and Barnabas in Acts (see, for example, Bruce, *Galatians*, 128-29).

Though this transition between Jerusalem and Antioch is quick, the narrator signals that these events in Antioch will function differently from what Paul has just reported.<sup>131</sup>

That Paul's argument in 2:11-21 presents an account alternative to the example of his action in Jerusalem is immediately apparent to the reader. Whereas in the previous narrative Paul traveled into Cephas' Jerusalem, the new scene in 2:11 opens with the phrase, "But when Cephas came into Antioch", certain Gentile territory under Paul's influence.<sup>132</sup> Cephas, charged with going "to the circumcision" in 2:8-9 steps onto Paul's "Gentile" stage.<sup>133</sup> From the opening adverbial phrase, therefore, it is clear that there may be problems in Antioch.

The unit 2:11-21 divides into two sections. In 2:11-14a, Paul summarizes Cephas' actions in Antioch. In 2:14b-21, Paul recounts a speech given to Cephas prompted by these actions. Traditionally interpreters' emphasis has fallen on the speech, since here Paul first discusses justification by faith, a topic he will explore in Gal 3. My focus, however, is on the narrative section that sets the context for that speech. The speech,

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<sup>131</sup> This effect of closure and yet continuation is marked by the phrase ὅτε δέ, also used in 1:15. Because of the contrasting narrative that follows both 1:15 and 2:11, the phrase is best translated adversatively ("But when"; see NRSV, ESV). Paul will also use the phrase in 2:12, also to introduce a change.

<sup>132</sup> This is not to suggest that there were not Jews in Antioch. In fact, it seems most probable that Cephas was in Antioch as part of his mission "to the circumcision." However, as the narrative has constructed the world, "Antioch" is Paul's world, not Cephas'. As described before the narrative of 1:13-24 Paul has established a geographical vision wherein Jerusalem is the center of the world associated with "those who were apostles before me," and Paul's influence exists outside of and around Jerusalem. In 1:21 Paul mentions Syria as one of the places he visited after going to Jerusalem. The Acts narrative seems to suggest that Antioch was an early center of Paul's and Barnabas' preaching (see Acts 11:22-26), a suggestion that has been expanded by many readers to mean that Paul's ministry was centered there (see, for example, Günther Bornkamm, *Paul* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995 (1971)], 29-30). Though the specifics of these geographical locations are difficult to discern, at the level of the narrative they are significant in that they are not in or near Jerusalem, with which Cephas has been associated.

<sup>133</sup> The historical question of why Cephas is going to Antioch (for a review, see Betz, *Galatians*, 105-106) is not as relevant here as the effect of Cephas' going to Antioch in the narrative where Antioch has been described as Paul's territory. It is likely that the Galatians understood the significance of this town, as Paul does not distinguish amongst the many Antiochs of the ancient world. The presence of Jews in Antioch (2:13) suggests a Gentile and Jewish mission in the city. For discussion of the growth of the church in Antioch, see Walter Bauer, *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity* (trans. and ed. Robert A. Kraft and Gerhard Krodel; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971), 63-66. On the presence of Judaism as a background to the church at Antioch, see Carl H. Kraeling, "The Jewish Community at Antioch," *JBL* 51 (1932): 130-60.

narrated as Paul's address to Cephas in Antioch, introduces several important concepts that Paul will expound upon in ch. 3, when he applies the argument of the speech to the Galatians' situation directly. In the speech itself, though, the meaning of these concepts is not explored. Paul and Cephas share assumptions that Paul expounds for his primary audience only later. In the narrative context, the double rhetorical situation of an address delivered to Cephas in a secondary rhetorical situation, within a broader address to the Galatians in the primary rhetorical situation, allows Paul at this point merely to introduce ideas as the shared positions of Cephas and Paul, ideas that he will directly apply to the Galatians later in the letter.<sup>134</sup> My focus here is to demonstrate how Paul's narration of the actions in Antioch addresses the situation in Galatia.

This narrative draws a sharp distinction between the two characters at its center.<sup>135</sup> The narrative opens with the image of the strong character Paul standing up to the condemned Cephas, highlighting Paul's response even before the audience learns the nature of the problem to which he is responding.<sup>136</sup> Paul's active confrontation of the passive Cephas is consistent with Paul's "not submitting even for a second" to the false brothers in Jerusalem (2:5).<sup>137</sup> The consistent image of a strong Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch presents a stark contrast to the shifting characterization of Cephas, evident in

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<sup>134</sup> I draw upon the concept of a doubled rhetorical situation of narrative explored by James Phelan (*Living to Tell About It: A Rhetoric and Ethics of Character Narration* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005], 31-65).

<sup>135</sup> For a similar characterization of the distinction between Paul and Cephas that opens the scene, see Stephen E. Fowl, "Who Can Read Abraham's Story? Allegory and Interpretive Power in Galatians," *JSNT* 55 (1994): 93-94. It is important to recognize that this is the first indication in the letter of a "split" between Cephas and Paul.

<sup>136</sup> The inverted grammatical structure of v. 11, with "to his face" standing well in front of the verb, emphasizes the directness of Paul's response.

<sup>137</sup> Consider the verbs depicting Cephas' action. He "went" into Antioch, "was condemned," "used to eat," and then "withdrew and separated himself, fearing those from the circumcision." This is consistent with the entire narrative of Galatians 1-2, where Paul's active character is made clear through the contrast of the others, all of whom are weak and passive.

Paul's labeling him "condemned."<sup>138</sup> More literally rendered, Paul depicts Cephas' actions as "contrary to knowledge" (κατεγνωσμένος),<sup>139</sup> recalling Cephas' previous "recognizing the gift" (γνόντες τὴν χάριν) that had been given to Paul.<sup>140</sup> Paul remains strong in his continued defense of the gospel, but Cephas has turned from the recognized gift. Cephas, the one whom Paul previously felt obligated to "get to know," with whom he spent fifteen days, to whom he has continually applied the label of "one of repute," has now come to Paul, and Paul "opposed him to his face."<sup>141</sup> The two men stand face to face in both Jerusalem (1:18) and Antioch (2:11), though the tenor of the encounter has dramatically changed.

<sup>138</sup> The potentially negative view of Cephas presented in this narrative has presented problems for many interpreters, particularly amongst early interpreters. For discussion of the various attempts to account for Cephas' actions, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 128-32. For patristic writers who accept Paul's account as it stands in Galatians, see Tertullian, *adv. Marc.* 4.3; Cyprian *Ep.* 70.3. For an alteration of the account to explain it as someone other than Peter the apostle, see Clement of Alexandria, *Hypotyposes* [Eusebius, *Eccl. Hist.* 1.12.2]. Jerome and Augustine famously exchanged letters arguing over the actual events reflected in Gal 2:11-14 (see Augustine's Letters 28, 40, 82 and Jerome's Letter 112). The issue between them was whether Peter was deceitful at Antioch (Augustine's position, taking Paul's account at face value) or whether the apostles had previously arranged this scene to make a point (Jerome's position, assumed to be dependent on Origen's Galatians commentary and *Stromateis*, both of which are not extant). For a discussion of this correspondence, see Carolinne White, *The Correspondence (394-419) Between Jerome and Augustine of Hippo*, 3-5, 43-47; R.W. Kraemer, "Sing us a Palinode: The Controversy between Augustine and Jerome over the Meaning of Galatians 2:11-14," pp. 38-60 in *And Every Tongue Confess: Essays in Honor of Norman Nagel on the Occasion of His Sixty-Fifth Birthday* (eds. Gerald S. Krispin & Jon D. Vieker; Dearborn, MI: Nagel Festschrift Committee, 1990). For a medieval summary of this debate, see Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1.2.103. Bornkamm suggests that the omission of this episode in the Acts narrative can be attributed to the church's general tendency "either to cover up this embarrassing quarrel between the apostles or to represent it as an episode soon tidied over" (*Paul*, 47).

<sup>139</sup> The verb καταγινώσκω (καταγγινώσκω) comes from forensic/courtroom language, meaning to be accused of something (see Plato, *Theaetetus* 206e), to be convicted (see Lysias, *On the Murder of Erasthenes* 1.30), or to be sentenced (see Thucydides, *History* 6.60.4). More generally the term can be used for being disliked or not respected (see Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* 621). The noun κατάγνωσις can likewise be used a technical courtroom language ("condemnation" or "verdict"; see Aristotle *Athenian Constitution* 45.1) or more generally as "bad opinion" or "thinking ill of" (LSJ, s.v.; see Thucydides, *History* 3.16.1). For a similar play between the verb καταγινώσκω and knowledge, see 1 John 3:20.

<sup>140</sup> Going forward in the argument, Paul will appeal to the Galatians' "knowledge" of God as an argument against the Galatians' change in behavior (4:9). The concept of "knowledge of God" is developed much further in other Pauline letters, particularly Romans (see Rom 1:19, 21, 28; 10:3) and 1 Corinthians (see 1 Cor 8:1-3; 13:12) and 2 Corinthians (see 2 Cor 5:6).

<sup>141</sup> Paul uses the verb αντίστημι to imply active resistance to strong forces (see Rom 13:2; Eph 6:13; 2 Tim 3:8; 4:15). Most versions render the phrase κατὰ πρόσωπον literally as "to his face" (see NRSV; ESV; KJV). The phrase can simply mean "in the presence of" or "in person" (see 2 Cor 10:1, 7; cf. Plutarch, *Caes.* 17). At this point, though, the use is more adversative. This phrase stands in opposition to the phrase κατ'ἰδίαν ("privately") that Paul uses to describe his meeting with the apostles in Jerusalem.

The scene's focus on the challenge presented to Cephas likewise recalls Paul in Jerusalem. Just as the arrival of the false brothers challenged Paul's gospel preached to the Gentiles, free of circumcision, a gospel upon which all had agreed (2:3), so the arrival of "some from James" challenges Cephas' continued table fellowship with Gentiles.<sup>142</sup> Again, though, the similar logic reveals the difference in the characters. Whereas Paul stood strong against the "false brothers," defending the "truth of the gospel" (2:5), Cephas backs away, giving in to the very pressure Paul withstood and in so doing acting contrary to the "truth of the gospel" (2:14).

Though this narrative logic connects the events in Jerusalem and Antioch, the specific issue in question has shifted from circumcision in Jerusalem to table fellowship at Antioch.<sup>143</sup> The issue of circumcision remains present through Paul's designation of those from James as "the ones from the circumcision" (οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς).<sup>144</sup> However, Paul's shift in topic expands his criticism of Cephas and heightens the rhetorical effect of

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<sup>142</sup> The challenging party remains anonymous in both episodes, opening the possibility of the generalization of the challenge. At no point does Paul identify the troublers in Galatia.

<sup>143</sup> Many interpreters have questioned how the two episodes may be connected historically. Dunn suggests that with regard to the scene at Antioch the ecclesiastical concerns of interpreters in the early church have given way to historical concerns (see "Incident," 129-30). Many interpreters work hard to explain, on historical grounds, why the episode at Antioch surrounding table fellowship should be connected with the episode in Jerusalem, focused on circumcision. See particularly Esler, "Making and Breaking." The task here is not to explain why in Paul's mind they are connected, but rather to explain the effect of their being connected in a single argument. The consistent narrative logic between the two episodes, a logic that matches the argument to the Galatians, suggests that at least in Paul's mind the two stories argued for the same point. Frank Thielman argues that elsewhere in Hellenistic Judaism there was a distinction between ceremonial and ethical parts of the law, noting that circumcision and food laws were frequently omitted from discussions of the law and its relation to Hellenistic culture: "There did exist in Paul's day, therefore, a precedent at least for expressing verbally the heart of biblical religion without reference to the peculiarly Jewish ideas of circumcision, food laws, and Sabbath observance" (*From Plight to Solution: A Framework for Understanding Paul's View of the Law in Romans and Galatians Against a Jewish Background* [Leiden: Brill, 1989], 58).

<sup>144</sup> Paul uses the same phrase in Rom 4:11-12 as does Luke (Acts 11:2), both to refer to Christians who had previously been Jews. Luke also refers to "the believers from the circumcision" (οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς πιστοί) (Acts 10:45). Martyn argues that in Galatians (and Acts 11:2) the term is used "to refer to a party within that congregation intent on a mission to Gentiles that was at least partly Law-observant" (Martyn, *Galatians*, 239). This may be implied by Paul's construction of the argument here, but there is not enough evidence to support the claim that this term functions technically.

the narrative argument to the Galatians. The effect of the shift is twofold. Both Cephas' habit of eating with Gentiles and Paul's preaching a circumcision-free gospel are violations of Jewish law and practice, and both involve the social separation of Jew from Gentile.<sup>145</sup> By eating with the Gentiles, though, Cephas himself is in direct violation of the law. Paul does not identify those with whom Cephas "was eating" beyond the label "Gentiles," focusing attention solely on Cephas' eating with those who are not Jews, and thereby becoming what Paul will soon call "a sinner from among the Gentiles" through his living in Christ (2:17).<sup>146</sup> In addition, by shifting the specific issue from circumcision to table fellowship, Paul makes clear that his criticism is not of a specific behavior, but rather of Cephas' change in behavior in light of a human challenge.

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<sup>145</sup> Cephas' violation is perhaps twofold, related to both Jewish purity and dietary laws (see Peter Garnsey, *Food and Society in Classical Antiquity* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 91-95; Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 54-55). For a discussion of the issue of table-fellowship in Paul's contemporary Judaism as it relates to Galatians, see Dunn, "Incident," 137-48. The question of eating with Gentiles is discussed through the character Peter in Acts as well (see Acts 10:9-33). There is an interesting parallel between this situation and Paul's argument in 1 Cor 8-9. Dunn has also appropriately pointed out that circumcision and food laws were key elements of identity and Jewish/Gentile problems before and during Paul's time ("Works of the Law," 216-19). In 1 Cor 8, Paul addresses the habit of some who are eating food offered to idols, presumably from pagan festivals. There Paul argues that though it is irrelevant that the food consumed has been offered to idols, but if eating meat confuses those whose conscience is weak and causes them to fall, one should abstain from such meat. Paul's argument, therefore, is largely consistent with his rebuke of Cephas here, for his problem is with Cephas' leading others astray through his actions. In 1 Cor 9, Paul argues that he changed his behavior based on his audience: "To Jews I became like a Jew, so that I might win the Jews; to those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not actually under the law), so that I might win those under the law; to those without the law, I became like one without the law (though I am not without God's law but rather am within Christ's law) so that I might win those without the law; to the weak I became weak, so that I might gain the weak; I became all things to all people, so that I might save some in every way" (1 Cor 9:19-22). One might suggest, therefore, that Cephas' action in withdrawing in the presence of Jews is consistent with what Paul himself says was his practice. This is indeed the argument Tertullian uses to answer Marcion's denigration of Peter through Galatians 2:11-14 (*adv. Marc.* 4.3). Marius Victorinus uses 1 Cor 9 to argue for his reading of Galatians 2:5 that Paul did in fact submit to the Jews for a brief period of time (see Cooper, *Marius Victorinus*, 271-72).

<sup>146</sup> Martyn translates μετὰ τῶν ἔθνῶν as "with the Gentile members of the Antioch church" (see *Galatians*, 232-33; see also Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* [Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994], 125). It is certainly plausible that these were Gentile Christians, for Paul uses τὰ ἔθνη to talk about Gentile Christians (see Rom 11:13), just as he uses οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι to talk about Jewish Christians (see Rom 2:9). For Paul's argument, though, whether they were Christians is not mentioned, as the argument focuses on Cephas' violation of the law by communing with Gentiles. We might imagine that Cephas was living out a similar belief that Paul will articulate in Gal 3:28.

Paul's issue is not with Cephas' eating with Gentiles nor even his separating from Gentiles. The agreement in Jerusalem just narrated affirms that both Paul and Cephas accept a distinction between Jews and Gentiles as legitimate, with Cephas taking the gospel to the circumcision and Paul to the Gentiles.<sup>147</sup> Therefore, Cephas is justified in his eating with Gentiles, and likewise he would be justified in eating only with Jews. Paul's issue, rather, is the change in Cephas' behavior, his "withdrawing," an action Paul labels twice as "hypocrisy."<sup>148</sup> The problem is the reversal of the pattern of a life under the gospel, established through Paul's narrative rhetoric. This becomes clear in Paul's language used to describe what Cephas does when those from James do arrive. Cephas "withdrew" (ὑπέστειλεν) and "separated himself" (ἀφώριζεν ἑαυτόν), actions characterized by the very language Paul used to describe God's action in his life (1:15).

The characterization of Cephas in this episode draws upon the narrative logic that defined the character of Paul in the two previous narratives. Paul divides Cephas' behavior at Antioch into two periods, his behavior "before those from James came" and the change afterwards.<sup>149</sup> Through this binary division Paul casts Cephas' behavior as a

<sup>147</sup> That Paul has no problem with separate gospels to Jews and Gentiles, along with separate norms of behavior for each group, is emphasized in Augustine's argument to Jerome about this passage.

<sup>148</sup> On the distinction between Paul's critique of theology and critique of hypocrisy, see Fowl, "Who Can Read," 93-94. The semantic field of ὑπόκρισις was traditionally used to indicate a stage actor (see Plato, *Republic* 395a). The noun was also used by Aristotle to refer to an orator's delivery of a speech (see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 3.1.3 1403b21-22). By Paul's time, the language was used pejoratively to refer to someone acting contrary to who they actually are (see, for example, 2 Macc 6:24-25; Philo, *Joseph* 67; Mt 23:28; Mk 12:15; 1 Pet 2:1). The connection between the law and hypocrisy can be found in Sirach, for example, where there is a contrast between "the one who seeks the law [who] will be filled by it" (ὁ ζητῶν νόμον ἐμπλησθήσεται αὐτοῦ) and "the hypocrite [who] will be made to stumble by it" (ὁ ὑποκρινόμενος σκανδαλισθήσεται ἐν αὐτῷ) (Sir 32:15 [LXX]).

<sup>149</sup> In 1:15 Paul referred to God as "the one who set me apart" (ὁ ἀφορίσας με). Paul also refers to himself as one "set apart" (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος ἀφορισμένος) in Rom 1:1. The term can mean to establish political boundaries (see Demosthenes, *Against Timotheus* 49.61), to set distinctions between classes (see Plato, *Tim.* 24a; Mt 25:32), or to appoint for a particular purpose (see Aristotle, *Politics* 1322b26; Acts 13:2). Galatians 2:12 is Paul's only use of the verb ὑποστέλλω. The term can mean "to withdraw" in a military sense (see Plutarch, *Crass.* 23.6). The term is also used elsewhere to mean to abstain from food (*LSJ*, s.v. II; see Hippocrates, *Aphorismi* 1.11) or to "hold in undue awe." The verb ὑποστέλλω is also relatively rare in the LXX. In Exodus and Deuteronomy it is used to refer to God's not backing down from the

reversion from the progress that Paul himself made.<sup>150</sup> Whereas Paul “in Judaism,” confronted by God’s action, advanced from a life defined by zealotry for the traditions of the fathers to a life preaching the gospel among the Gentiles, bringing glory to God (1:23), Cephas does the opposite, moving from a habit of table fellowship with Gentiles to behavior characterized by separation and withdrawal based upon the law. Further, Cephas’ re-establishment of Jewish/Gentile distinctions is a product of his “fearing those of the circumcision.” Indeed his actions persuade others, “the remaining Jews” and Paul’s companion Barnabas, to join him in his withdrawing from the Gentiles. Paul, on the other hand, is abandoned by everyone else, even his companion Barnabas, so that he is left defending the truth of the gospel alone. Implicitly, Cephas is motivated by attempts to

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disobedient (Exod 23:21; Deut 1:17; see also Job 13:8; Wis 6:7). Cephas’ actions are reported in the language of Hab 2:4, which Paul will quote in 3:11. Describing someone awaiting a future vision from God, Habakkuk warns through the speech of God, “If he should draw back [ὑποστειλῆται], my heart will not take pleasure in him. But the righteous one will live by faith.” From Paul’s perspective, the allusion makes complete sense in light of the coming argument to Cephas that his actions are inconsistent with the righteousness that he and Cephas agree comes through faith (2:16). Through this allusion, the condemnation of Cephas is not merely Paul’s but divine condemnation for anyone whose actions suggest an assumption that “the vision” has not come. At the level of the rhetoric of the letter, though, it is unlikely that the allusion to Hab 2:4 is intended to be caught by the Gentile audience. Indeed the argument does not assume that the audience makes such a connection. Given Paul’s later quotation of Hab 2:4, though, it is not implausible that he had this text in mind here. Many readers of Paul suggest that Paul’s Gentile audience would have been familiar with the arguments and contexts of his Scriptural citations (see, for example, Thielman, *Paul and the Law*, 126). Others are less clear on the issue, blending attention upon an implied audience and leaving open the question of the Scriptural knowledge of Paul’s historical audience (see Hays, *Echoes*, 28-29, 201n92; Ross Wagner, *Heralds of the Good News: Isaiah and Paul ‘In Concert’ in the Letter to the Romans* [Leiden: Brill, 2002], 36-39). Christopher Stanley distinguishes between an implied and actual audience, and he correctly notes that it is Paul’s understanding of the Scriptures, not the assumed understanding of his audiences, that we see in his letters: “Most of Paul’s allusions and echoes, along with his unmarked citations, would have gone unnoticed by the bulk of his first-century audience. Their presence reveals the literary capabilities not of the audience, but of Paul himself.” (Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture: The Rhetoric of Quotations in the Letters of Paul* [New York: T&T Clark, 2004], 48; see also his full discussion on pp. 38-71). Stanley draws upon the discussion of Joanna Dewey regarding the oral nature of earliest Christianity (“Textuality in an Oral Culture: A Survey of the Pauline Traditions,” *Semeia* 65 [1994]: 37-65). Paul’s implied audience gives authority to the Biblical tradition, but extensive knowledge of that tradition is unnecessary, and at times Paul depends upon relative ignorance of the tradition to make his argument.

<sup>150</sup> The grammatical structure suggests such a connection. Both Paul’s previous life in Judaism (1:13-14) and Cephas behavior “before some from James came” are reported using the customary imperfect tense, interrupted by the temporal phrase ὅτε δέ and the subsequent use of the aorist tense.

persuade and please humans, a motivation by which Paul identified his previous life in contrast to his present as a slave of Christ (1:10).

Paul has so constructed this narrative that even his primary audience recognizes the “condemnation” of Cephas’ actions through Paul’s near caricature of his reversal. Though entrusted with the “gospel of the circumcision,” (2:7) being sent as “an apostle of the circumcision” (2:8) “to the circumcision” (2:9), Cephas now withdraws “because he was afraid of those of the circumcision” (2:12). The Gentile Galatian audience, faced with those who seek to reestablish in their midst divisions based on the law, is invited to identify with Paul in his argument against Cephas’ actions. Therefore rhetorically Paul’s speech to Cephas becomes the Galatians’ own argument against the troublers.<sup>151</sup>

This contrast between Paul at Jerusalem and Cephas at Antioch is completed in Paul’s description of the effects of Cephas’ withdrawal. Paul’s condemnation is not merely a response to Cephas’ attempt to re-establish the divisions of the law in the presence of “those from James.” Rather Paul responds to the effect this action has on those around him: “The rest of the Jews” join Cephas in his hypocrisy.<sup>152</sup> Paul condemns Cephas’ reversal because he tears apart the fellowship established in Jerusalem.<sup>153</sup> Paul’s emphasis falls on the somewhat shocking result: “Even Barnabas was led astray by their

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<sup>151</sup> Traditional interpretation associates the troublers with the church in Jerusalem, and therefore with Cephas, James, and John (see particularly Martyn, *Galatians*, 117-26; 457-66). If such an association were the case historically (though there is very little if any evidence to support this, it seems plausible), then Paul’s leading the Galatians to identify with him in speaking against Cephas would have an additional rhetorical force, as the Galatians find themselves literally arguing against Cephas.

<sup>152</sup> Here οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι must mean Christians who had previously been Jews, presumably who were, like Cephas, communing with Gentiles. It is quite common for Paul to refer to Christians who were formerly Jews as οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι (see Rom 1:16; 2:9-10; 1 Cor 12:13). Paul will play on the συν- language elsewhere in the letter (see especially 2:19; 3:9; 4:25).

<sup>153</sup> Marius Victorinus refers to the fact that “others were also going along with him” as Peter’s “major sin” (*magnum peccatum*) (Cooper, *Marius Victorinus*, 279). Brigitte Kahl likewise notes the problem Antioch with the destruction of the fellowship established previously (“Masculinity,” 47).

hypocrisy.”<sup>154</sup> Here the character Barnabas, originally introduced in 2:1 as a companion of Paul when he went to Jerusalem, mentioned as part of the fellowship agreement established in the previous scene, completes his narrative function.<sup>155</sup> By reporting Cephas’ leading Barnabas astray with him, Paul shows that Cephas’ re-establishment of boundaries between Jews and Gentiles tears apart the fellowship previously established.<sup>156</sup> Whereas Paul’s standing up in Jerusalem brought unity (2:9-10), Cephas’ actions split that unity, leading others astray. These results recall Paul’s life “in Judaism” in opposition to the church. Even Barnabas, who stood with Paul in Jerusalem, is now a passive victim of the condemned action of Cephas.<sup>157</sup>

The events in Jerusalem and Antioch, therefore, are constructed upon the same narrative logic, though the outcomes are quite different. Both Paul and Cephas encounter a challenge to their violation of strict adherence to the law through inclusion of

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<sup>154</sup> Scholars make much of the possible reference here to the split between Paul and Barnabas reported in Acts 15:36-41. Such a connection is possible, and worthy of being pursued, but not relevant to following the argument of Galatians. In this story Barnabas serves to demonstrate the danger of Cephas’ actions (and actions like his).

<sup>155</sup> It is essential to understand Titus and Barnabas as literary characters in Galatians, rather than historical personages. Some interpreters have argued that because Titus goes unmentioned at the end of the narrative, there must have been some problem either between him and Paul or between him and the Jerusalem apostles. However, Titus’ role in the narrative is as the source of the question introduced in 2:1-3. This is made clear in the secondary role he receives grammatically in 2:1. After v. 3, he has performed his narrative function, and therefore it makes sense that the agreement would be made between Paul and Barnabas and the Jerusalem apostles, as Paul has introduced Barnabas as his equal in 2:1. Too often interpreters focus on the historical Barnabas, rather than the literary function he plays here. For an example of such a focus, see Richard Bauckham, “Barnabas in Galatians.”

<sup>156</sup> The connection with 1 Corinthians 8 continues here, as Paul condemns Cephas for tearing apart the community, the very danger associated with eating idol meat. As in 1 Corinthians 8, Paul’s primary concern is not one’s behavior in and of itself but the influence it has on others.

<sup>157</sup> Paul uses the verb συναπάγω in Rom 12:16 to instruct the community that they should “be lead by the humble” (τοῖς ταπεινοῖς συναπαγόμενοι). Betz suggests the verb “has a strong connotation of irrationality” and thus suggests that Barnabas was acting on emotion rather than logic (*Galatians*, 110). Such specificity, though, is hardly present in the text. Here, though, it is significant to consider that the text assumes a familiarity of the audience with Barnabas, as no specific details are provided. Modern reader know much about Barnabas from the Acts narrative, where Paul and Barnabas are closely connected and then separated (see Acts 15:1, 36-39).

Gentiles.<sup>158</sup> Under threat from the false brothers, Paul stands strong in his commitment that Gentiles need not be circumcised. The result of Paul's actions is the extension of fellowship and the advancement of the gospel to both Jews and Gentiles. Cephas, on the other hand, facing a perceived threat to his eating with Gentiles in violation of the law, retreats back to the divisions of the law, and in so doing he destroys the unity previously established.<sup>159</sup> This connection between the stories of Paul at Jerusalem and Cephas at Antioch is made through Paul's reference to "truth of the gospel" that he defends in Jerusalem (2:5) and against which Cephas acts at Antioch (2:14).<sup>160</sup> Through this repeated reference Paul shows that the gospel persists, regardless of the character or actions of those involved in spreading it.

Paul's reference to the "truth of the gospel," both in Jerusalem and Antioch, not only connects the logic of these two scenes, but it brings the Galatian audience directly into the narrative. This reference highlights once again the mimetic and thematic responses to the characters Paul and Cephas at Antioch. These narratives report the

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<sup>158</sup> It is important to recall that the issue of the law has not been raised in the argument of the letter to this point. These episodes, which clearly turn on the interpretation of the role of the law, will provide the background for Paul's argument about the law later in the letter.

<sup>159</sup> The character Barnabas stands as the connection between these different responses. Paul mentions that the "right hand of friendship" was extended to Barnabas and to Paul, and Paul focuses on Barnabas' being led astray by Cephas' actions. At the level of the narrative, Paul does not condemn Barnabas here. Rather Paul uses him to show the effect of Cephas' actions and connect this episode with his standing firm for the gospel in Jerusalem. Compare this episode to the dispute between Paul and Barnabas recounted in 15:36-41. There Luke leads his audience to sympathize with Paul in the dispute, adding that "Paul did not consider it appropriate to take along [συμπαλαμβάνειν] this one, who had departed [τὸν ἀποστάντα] from them Pamphylia and who had not joined with them in the work" (Acts 15:38). In contrast, in this episode in Antioch, Barnabas is a passive victim of Cephas' actions.

<sup>160</sup> The term "truth of the gospel" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ εὐαγγελίου) only appears here in Galatians and in Col 1:5 (ἢν προηκούσατε ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τῆς ἀληθείας τοῦ εὐαγγελίου). In Colossians, however, "the gospel" stands in apposition to "the word of truth," hence the common translation "You have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel" (NRSV; see also ESV). Likewise, in 4:16 Paul speaks of himself as one who "speaks the truth to you" (ἀληθεύων ὑμῖν). The issue from the beginning of the argument has been the preaching and following of the true gospel, which Paul argues is the only one that can properly be called "gospel" (1:6-7). Paul elsewhere modifies truth by referring to the "truth of God" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ θεοῦ) (Rom 1:25; 3:7; 15:8) and "the truth of Christ" (ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (2 Cor 11:10), both of which are most likely genitives of origin.

actions of historical figures, with whom the audience in Galatia is certainly familiar. In these stories, Paul presents himself as a strong defender of the gospel, a defense that benefits the Galatians. Likewise Cephas is presented to be particularly weak, as he gives in to fear of his companions, tears apart the unity of the church, and suffers the strong censure of Paul. In following the narrative, the events emplotted clearly lead an audience to recognize a redefinition of the reputation of these key figures. The narrative in part is an ethos argument for Paul and against Cephas.

The implied audience's situation in Galatia, highlighted in the opening of the letter (1:6-7), however, prompts a thematic response to these characters.<sup>161</sup> Recall that the autobiographical narrative was introduced as an explanation for Paul's opening appeal to the Galatians' past experience receiving the gospel. Presented in this context, therefore, Cephas and Paul cease to be mere characters acting in the past. Instead, they become two options for the Galatians' future. In constructing the narrative context of his address, Paul has placed himself face-to-face with Cephas. This confrontation is not only at Antioch. Rather, Paul and Cephas stand before the Galatians as alternative modes of behavior.<sup>162</sup>

The question of the truth of the gospel has been at issue from the very beginning of the letter. Paul initially labeled the Galatians' present temptation as turning "to another gospel" (1:6). He accused the troublers of "perverting" the gospel, arguing that there is in fact only one gospel that exists independent of the one who preaches it (1:7-9). Therefore,

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<sup>161</sup> Recall that the authorial audience is distinguished from the narrative audience by Phelan in the authorial audience's recognizing the synthetic element of the narrative (*Reading People*, 5).

<sup>162</sup> Marius Victorinus likewise connects Paul's point in telling the story with the situation the Galatians face: "Because the Galatians, disregarding the gospel and even the rule of the gospel, were supposing that additions were to be made to their way of life, to the effect that they should observe the Sabbath and circumcision and live just like Jews. Because the Galatians were doing this, the letter was written to them. When the point is well made that the very thing reprimanded in Peter by Paul was what the congregation reprimanded as well. From there it follows that the Galatians too are sinning" (Cooper, *Marius Victorinus*, 278).

Paul began the letter by framing the very challenge that the Galatians face as a question of their behavior in light of the singular gospel. This framing matches the emplotment of the events in Jerusalem and Antioch. By narrating the past, Paul has built characters around the two alternatives the Galatians now face. The Galatians can, like Paul, stand up to the challenge of those seeking to steal their freedom. Alternatively, like Cephas, they can affirm anew distinctions between Jews and Gentiles; they can withdraw and separate themselves. As Paul constructs the story, the former course of action reflects progress and results in the church's fellowship; the latter is a reversion in behavior and will result in the church's disunity. No longer is this narrative merely about the events that occurred in the past in Jerusalem and Antioch, but now the audience recognizes its own challenge to the truth of the gospel.

**O You Foolish Galatians! Paul's Argument "In Front of Everyone" (2:14b-21 and 3:1-5)**

This thematic response to, or the metapedagogical function of, the narrative of 1:10-2:14a highlights the double rhetorical situation Paul has created for his speech to Cephas in 2:14b-21. The speech is not merely a report of Paul's response to Cephas at Antioch. Rather the speech becomes Paul's argument to the Galatians for following the model of Paul rather than Cephas.<sup>163</sup> When Paul notes that he speaks to Cephas "in front

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<sup>163</sup> Dunn concedes that Paul writes, "Probably not repeating the precise words he used to Peter at Antioch, but probably echoing the line of argument which he tried to develop on that occasion" ("The New Perspective on Paul," pp. 183-106 in *Jesus, Paul, and the Law*, 189). Dunn's analysis largely focuses, though, on how a Jewish Christian audience (at Antioch) would have heard such a speech. As I have demonstrated, this entire report of "history" has been shaped by the rhetorical aims of the letter as a whole. Dunn overemphasizes Paul's attempts to retell the events "as they happened." Even if that were the case, the story is told in the context of a letter to a people who presumably are unfamiliar with the events being recorded, and yet are facing a crisis, and therefore it is more appropriate to read this speech in light of that immediate rhetorical context. Thucydides' famous quotation about his construction of speeches is an

of everyone” (ἔμπροσθεν πάντων), completing the increasingly public forum for his actions, the audience of the letter is included among them.<sup>164</sup> The Galatians are not merely third-person observers of Paul’s redress of Cephas, but Paul speaks directly to them about the function of the law, faith, and Christ.<sup>165</sup>

Paul collapses this double rhetorical situation with his direct address of the Galatians at 3:1 (“O you foolish Galatians”). This address shifts the letter’s implied audience back into a primary position within the rhetorical situation of the argument.<sup>166</sup> Paul’s argument to the Galatians in 3:1-5 considers many of the key terms from Paul’s argument at Antioch, particularly the distinction between “works of law” and “faith.” This collapse of the rhetorical situation and the application of the Cephas speech to the Galatians’ situation suggests that these two sections (2:14b-21 and 3:1-5) should be read together, as rhetorically the two sections comprise a single address directed toward the Galatians. My analysis, therefore, focuses on how Paul’s discussion at Antioch forms the background to his direct address of the Galatians in 3:1-5. In 2:15b-21 Paul enlists Cephas as a Jewish witness to his argument that law was a part of the past of “natural Jews,” something to be overcome before they could be declared righteous. In this

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important correction to readings focused on historical reconstruction: “My principle has been to put down what each [speaker], in my judgment, would most likely have said” (*History* 1.22.1; translation from John Wilson, “What Does Thucydides Claim for His Speeches?,” *Phoenix* 36 [1982]: 95-103).

<sup>164</sup> Paul’s ministry has become increasingly public. Initially he did not consult with anyone with regard to his gospel (1:16-17). After three years, he saw only Cephas and James (1:18-19). Then, after fourteen years, he met “privately” with “those of repute” in Jerusalem (2:2). Here in 2:14, he stands up to speak “in front of everyone.”

<sup>165</sup> An image of this double focus in Paul’s address can be seen in El Greco’s “Saints Peter and Paul.” In the painting, Peter looks to Paul for instruction, but Paul, with his hand in Scripture, seemingly disregards Peter and stares straight at the viewer. In this interpretation the narrative certainly sets a hierarchy of Paul over Peter, but it also invites the viewer to hear Paul’s instructions in Antioch as relevant to his or her decisions.

<sup>166</sup> The language of ἀνόητος is quite harsh in Paul’s context. When describing people, it is most often used in an insulting context (for examples, see Herodotus, *Histories* 1.87; Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* 572). It is often contrasted with those who are thinking rationally (see Plato, *Tim.* 30b; Aristotle *Hist. Anim.* 610b23). Paul uses the language of ἀνόητος to assure the Romans that he is “indebted to both the wise and the foolish” (σοφοῖς τε καὶ ἀνοήτοις ὀφειλέτης εἰμί) (Rom 1:14). He uses the language to describe his former life before God appeared (Titus 3:3).

argument Paul begins to emplot the law as a particular part of the Jews' past, one that is not relevant to Gentiles like the Galatians.

Few verses in the Pauline corpus have been the subject of more analysis than Galatians 2:16, particularly Paul's introduction of "righteousness," "works of law," and "faith." Often overlooked, though, is the fact that from the implied reader's perspective, each of these disputed terms stands as an assumption of the argument between Paul and Cephas, not a theological premise that Paul defines or defends.<sup>167</sup> That is, the meaning of the three key terms, δικαιοῦν, ἔργα νόμου, and πίστις Χριστοῦ, each of which appears for the first time in the letter here, is assumed by Paul to be understood by Cephas.<sup>168</sup>

Paul's address of Cephas builds upon two assumptions that he and Cephas share. First, Paul twice affirms the reality of a division between "natural Jews" and Gentiles, one that Cephas has attempted to re-establish. Paul seems to channel Cephas' own thought in admitting that Cephas "is a Jew" (Ἰουδαῖος ὑπάρχων) and that he and Cephas both "are Jews by nature" (ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι), as opposed to "sinners from among the Gentiles." The attempt to re-establish distinctions based upon the law implies Cephas' acceptance of this distinction.<sup>169</sup> Paul's question of how Cephas can "judaize" the

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<sup>167</sup> Munck likewise recognizes that "Peter and Paul meet at this point" (*Paul*, 125). However, he attempts to determine if and how Peter may have come to such a conclusion. Such a historical question is not primary for understanding the argument; Paul suggests to the Galatians that they agreed on these points.

<sup>168</sup> The term πίστις does appear earlier in the letter. In 1:23 Paul quotes the churches in Judea reporting that Paul "preaches the faith." Likewise in 2:7 Paul says the Jerusalem apostles recognized "that I have been entrusted with the gospel" (ὅτι ἐπίστευμαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). None of the other terms appears before 2:16. Longenecker refers to four "really crucial features of v. 16," adding Paul's understanding of νόμος to my list (*Galatians*, 84-88).

<sup>169</sup> This stark distinction would have been common in Paul's Jewish context, and it is one he assumes his audience is familiar with. His primary audience consists of Gentiles, and so the response would be a bit shocking, perhaps offensive here. Paul's argument depends on this response, as he will upset expectations in his argument to Cephas. For discussion of "sinner" as a violator of Jewish law in Jewish eyes, see Don B. Garlington, "Paul's 'Partisan *ek*' and the Question of Justification in Galatians," *JBL* 127 (2008): 570-71.

Gentiles when he himself is acting like a Gentile depends upon a natural distinction between the two.<sup>170</sup>

Second, Paul and Cephas agree that with regard to natural Jews, righteousness comes not ἐξ ἔργων νόμου unless it is also διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (2:16). Regardless of what these disputed terms mean, a topic I consider below, Paul presents a mutual agreement between two “natural Jews” that in order to be eligible to be declared righteous, πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ must be added to their identity ἐξ ἔργων νόμου.<sup>171</sup>

The key to understanding the relationship between πίστις and νόμος is found in the single finite verb of 2:16: “we believed” (ἐπιστεύσαμεν). The response of Paul and Cephas to the recognition of the insufficiency of being ἐξ ἔργων νόμου was to “believe on the basis of Christ” (εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν).<sup>172</sup> The result of this belief is

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<sup>170</sup> On the verb “to judaize” (ιουδαῖζειν), see Cohen, *Beginnings of Jewishness*, 175-97. I agree with Cohen (*Beginnings of Jewishness*, 182) that here Paul uses the term to indicate following Jewish laws and customs, though here the term seems specifically to mean the establishment of distinctions between Jews and Gentiles.

<sup>171</sup> Many versions translate ἐὰν μὴ in 2:16 as a simple adversative (NRSV: “We know that a person is justified not by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ”; cf. ESV; KJV). Though this is possible grammatically, Paul typically uses the phrase to mean “if not” or “unless,” adding a stipulation to the prior phrase (see Rom 10:15; 1 Cor 9:16; 15:36). Dunn has argued, therefore, that Paul does not draw a sharp contrast between “works of law” and faith, but rather he argues justification by works of law is possible if it is empowered by this faith (“The New Perspective on Paul”). This exceptive reading of the phrase is contrary to the traditional reading of the phrase as adversative, which suggests that Paul is contrasting works of law and Jesus Christ faith. For a review of the issues and a grammatical argument against Dunn’s position, see Debbie Hunn, “Ἐὰν μὴ in Galatians 2:16: A Look at Greek Literature,” *NovT* 49 (2007): 281-90.

<sup>172</sup> I translate Paul’s statement εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν as “we believed on the basis of Christ Jesus,” rather than the common “we believed in Christ Jesus” (see NRSV; ESV). For a similar phrase use of πιστεύω + εἰς, see Phil 1:29. Nowhere in his letters does Paul indicate the object of belief with a prepositional phrase beginning with εἰς. Neither does he ever indicate Christ as the object of belief (see Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 139-91). Paul most often uses the simple dative to indicate the object of the verb πιστεύω, and that object is always God (see Rom 4:3; 2 Tim 1:12; Tit 3:8). Paul does use the preposition ἐπί to indicate the object of belief, but again, it is always God (see Rom 4:5, 24; 9:33; 1 Tim 1:16) as well as ἐν to refer to the object of belief (Eph 1:13). He also uses the genitive as an object of belief (see Rom 4:17). Paul also uses the διά preposition to indicate the way in which one comes to belief (1 Cor 3:5). I understand the preposition εἰς here to function “a marker of a specific point of reference” (*BDAG* s.v. 5). Similar uses of the preposition can be seen in Acts 2:25; 2 Tim 4:11. This determination of the meaning of the prepositional phrase is not essential for my reading of the argument here. Paul’s point is that he and Cephas believed, and this belief is in some way related to Jesus Christ, and the result is the transfer of their identity.

that Paul and Cephas have the potential to receive righteousness (ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν) because they are no longer ἐξ ἔργων νόμου but rather ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ. The two phrases ἐξ ἔργων νόμου and ἐκ πίστεως function, therefore, as identity markers that change through belief in God, on the basis of Christ.<sup>173</sup> By believing in God on the basis of Christ, Paul and Cephas gained the potential for righteousness because they are no longer “from works of law” but rather “from faith.”<sup>174</sup>

Paul’s actual argument begins with his exploration of the implications of these premises. Paul’s rhetorical question in 2:17 further assumes that this shift of identity leads to a violation of the law. The reasoning behind this assumption is not stated, though it has been made concrete in the events at Antioch.<sup>175</sup> Paul introduced Cephas at Antioch as one in violation of the law, “eating with the Gentiles.” Cephas was indeed been “found to be a sinner” by “those from the circumcision,” a response that caused him to re-establish the boundaries created by the law. Therefore, Cephas’ pursuit of righteousness has led him to be a sinner in violation of the law. Paul’s question is particularly relevant, therefore. If Paul and Cephas agree they are not sinners by nature, the result of their being “natural” Jews rather than sinful Gentiles, and yet if their pursuit of righteousness by way

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<sup>173</sup> In 3:6 Paul will connect belief to righteousness in the figure of Abraham. Abraham’s belief was “in God” (ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ). He concludes that “those from faith” (οἱ ἐκ πίστεως) are the sons of Abraham. It must be assumed, therefore, that the belief of 2:16 and 3:6 has the same object (God). The difference between Paul and Abraham is the Christ event, which provides the evidence for belief.

<sup>174</sup> My reading of these two phrases depends upon Don Garlington’s examination of Paul’s use of the ἐκ preposition (Garlington, “Paul’s ‘Partisan *ek*’”). Garlington argues that, “Paul’s Greek is not an abbreviation for something longer but a replete statement that makes perfectly good sense as it stands.” He argues that Paul’s preposition ἐκ “takes on the nuance of belonging: to be ‘from’ a realm means to belong to it—the partisan use” (“Paul’s ‘Partisan *ek*,’” 573). I follow Garlington in translating these phrases as simply as possible: “from works of law” and “from faith.”

<sup>175</sup> Paul will explore this through his examination of the curse of the law in 3:10-12.

of faith should lead them to be marked as sinners, then the question stands whether Christ functions as a “servant of sin,” as one who causes sin.<sup>176</sup>

Paul responds to this dilemma by arguing that the entire system upon which one would answer the question has been destroyed in Christ. From the point of view of the Galatian audience, Paul’s argument is quite simple. As natural Jews, Paul and Cephas have died to the law, and therefore the category of “sinner” no longer has relevance. To make such a judgment would be to re-establish the law, which Paul and Cephas agree they had to destroy “in order to live for God.” Paul connects this end of the law to Christ’s crucifixion, though he offers his audience no explanation for this.<sup>177</sup> It is no longer the law that defines their life. Rather, the crucified Christ lives “in me.” Paul summarizes that the death of Christ had to effect a change; otherwise Christ died in vain.

It is key to recognize that though Paul argues to Cephas about the irrelevance of their past distinctions based on the law, his argument is made before his Galatian audience. It is the readers of the letter, rather than Cephas at Antioch, who interpret Paul’s argument. Paul’s argument makes the assumption that the law was an impediment to “living to God,” and therefore he and Cephas had to “die to the law.” The logic behind Paul’s argument to Cephas is not clear, and Paul does not need to make it clear. For he is arguing to Gentiles about the Jewish situation, one which he will argue is not relevant to the Galatians. Because Cephas does not object to Paul’s argument about the law, he is

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<sup>176</sup> This is Paul’s only use of the term *διάκονος* in Galatians. Elsewhere he uses it to describe himself vis-à-vis the gospel or Christ (see 1 Cor 3:5; 2 Cor 6:4; 11:23; Eph 3:7; Phil 1:1). In Rom 15:8 he speaks of Christ as a “servant of the circumcised” (*διάκονος περιτομῆς*). The term is used primarily in two senses, first to mean “one who serves as an intermediary in a transaction” and second “one who gets something done at the behest of a superior” (*BDAG s.v.*). Paul can use the term in both ways (on the first, see 1 Thess 3:2; on the second, see Col 1:7), and at times his use is ambiguous (see 2 Cor 6:4). In this case the term should be understood in terms of a transaction (the second meaning), as Paul is not asking whether Christ serves sin, but rather whether following Christ results in sin, meaning Christ is “the one who serves up sin” (cf. KJV: “minister of sin”; NET: “one who encourages sin”; *pace* NRSV, ESV: “servant of sin”).

<sup>177</sup> Paul will explore the specifics of crucifixion and the law in 3:13-14.

invoked as a witness to Paul's "Jewish" argument. Paul and Cephas, as natural Jews, make the argument to the Galatians that the law was something to be overcome through being co-crucified with Christ.

The role of Paul's audience as consumers of his autobiographical narrative is made clear in his first-person reference of 2:18-21. Paul recalls his own past, thereby inviting his Galatian audience to use Paul's narrative in understanding his point to Cephas.<sup>178</sup> As it was for the churches in Judea, Paul's reversal functions now as an example for the Galatians. Here the dual function of the narrative rhetoric of Galatians 1-2 becomes particularly clear. Though Paul is relating an argument made before Cephas at Antioch, he draws upon the pattern of his life, a life that he has constructed for the Galatians to this point in the letter. And so, as the reader encounters Paul's appeal to his own past, details of Paul's life narrated in the previous part of the letter inform understanding. When Paul argues to Cephas that he cannot return to the way of life he has destroyed, the reader need not merely assume Paul is talking about a life of divisions between Jews and Gentiles. Rather, the reader has observed that what Paul "has destroyed" is his previous life "in Judaism," a life wherein he excelled beyond others on account of his zeal for the "traditions of my fathers" (1:14).<sup>179</sup> This is Paul's past that was concerned with "pleasing people" (1:10). The reader has already seen how Paul

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<sup>178</sup> That Paul's first-person reference is more than a generalization is recognized by many, but not all (see Munck, *Paul*, 128-29). However, among those who recognize that Paul explicitly speaks of himself in v. 18, most interpreters draw from Paul's other letters to construct what this life may have looked like historically, with the assumption that Paul's historical past is what is operable in an argument to Cephas (see for example, Bruce, *Galatians*, 143-44).

<sup>179</sup> Frequently commentators assume that Paul means "the law" as a distinguishing factor between Jews and Gentiles. Martyn, for example, suggests, "Apparently, he assumes the Galatians will know from the context—vv. 16-17; vv. 19-21—that the edifice [Paul tore down] is the Law" (*Galatians*, 256). The actual context, though, is the narrative of Paul's own biography, wherein he described his change from one "advancing in Judaism" (1:14).

abandoned this life in light of Christ, and how he subsequently preached the gospel to the Gentiles and associated closely with Gentiles, like Titus.

And so, as Paul argues to Cephas that he cannot go back to the life he has abandoned, the Galatian audience recognizes that this is a life of zeal for the traditions of the fathers. To Cephas Paul makes the argument that a natural Jew's life before Christ and in Christ are two mutually exclusive realms. To turn around would be "to be a transgressor."<sup>180</sup>

If reading v. 19 is informed by the image of Paul's "previous behavior in Judaism," narrated in 1:13-14, then v. 20 is informed by the rest of the narrative. Paul now offers the positive side of his rejection of his previous life. Christ now lives in him, and the life in the flesh that he leads is one lived in faith. Paul's readers have already been given a picture of his life in Christ, one which is lead by revelation (2:2), in which he is empowered to stand up to false brothers (2:4-5) and to Cephas who acted contrary to who he has become in Christ. In vv. 19-20, therefore, Paul has enlisted the Galatians, who have heard the narrative of his life, as witnesses in his argument to Cephas at Antioch.<sup>181</sup>

To close the argument in v. 21, Paul returns to the language of "gift" with which he began his narrative. It was the "gift of God" (χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ) by which Paul referred to the Galatians' call (1:6) and his own (1:15), and the gift which stood at the center of

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<sup>180</sup> Paul uses παραβάτης ("transgressor") here and not ἁμαρτωλός ("sinner"), as one might expect (see 2:15), generalizing the statement beyond the specifics of the Jewish law, with which he has associated sin. Paul is using "sin" and "sinner" in a specific sense in this passage (as one who does not follow the law, or a Gentile), and in 2:18 he is introducing a general maxim. Elsewhere he refers to a "transgressor of the law" (παραβάτης νόμου; Rom 2:25, 27; cf. Jas 2:9, 11). Likewise he uses παραβάσις in connection with the law (Rom 2:23; 4:15; 5:14; Gal 3:19; 1 Tim 2:14), but here he refers simply to a transgressor, not specifically of Jewish law.

<sup>181</sup> The situation is quite similar to the role of the audience in Dio Chrysostom's "Hunter's Tale," examined in the previous chapter. In that situation, the audience had witnessed the kindness of the hunter to strangers, which later becomes an issue in his trial.

the agreement reached in Jerusalem (2:9). And now, in his argument to Cephas that he does not “nullify” the gift of God, Paul shows the Galatians that with regard to righteousness, the law and Christ are mutually exclusive. To pursue righteousness “through law” would be to deny any efficacy of Christ’s death. Paul’s argument to Cephas, witnessed by the Galatians, shows that the death of Christ puts an end to the “natural” distinction between Jews and Gentiles.

Paul quickly shifts the Galatians’ role from observers at Antioch to the addressees of his argument with brief transition and harsh vocative at 3:1. In so doing, he brings his argument to Cephas about the end of the law’s efficacy for Jews to bear directly on the Galatians’ situation. The relevance of Paul’s argument for the Galatians is highlighted by Paul’s re-introduction of the Galatians as those “before whose eyes Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.” By addressing them as such, Paul inserts them into the narrative world the letter has projected.<sup>182</sup> The Galatians, like Paul and Cephas, have experienced the crucifixion firsthand, and therefore they, like Paul, live in the reality of such an experience. Just as Paul argued that Christ’s death cannot be without impact for natural Jews, so Paul calls the Galatians to see the effect of Christ’s crucifixion on them.

Though Paul argues that like Paul and Cephas the Galatians have experienced Christ crucified, his direct argument depends upon distinguishing the manner in which

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<sup>182</sup> There has been much speculation about Paul’s enigmatic reference in 3:1 to the Galatians’ witnessing the crucifixion. For a clear summary of proposed interpretations of this language (unique to Galatians), see Basil S. Davis, “The Meaning of προγράφω in the Context of Galatians 3:1,” *NTS* 45 (1999): 194-212. Most interpreters suggest Paul here uses a bit of hyperbole to emphasize the power of his descriptive rhetoric. Betz points to the rhetorical tradition’s emphasis on vivid language in oratory to explain Paul’s language (see Betz, *Galatians*, 131-32; cf. Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 6.1.32). Often overlooked (though see Betz, *Galatians*, 131n36) is the connection between Paul’s language and the ancient rhetorical concept of ἔκφρασις. Indeed Paul’s appeal to the Galatians’ seeing Christ (οἷς κατ’ ὀφθαλμοῦς) is strikingly similar to the language Aristotle uses to describe metaphors that involve the audience’s imagination in the construction of meaning (πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιεῖν; see *Rhet.* 3.11.1 1411b25-26). The ancients certainly had a sense that an effective orator had the ability to construct actual images for his audience. In the context of the argument Paul has made, the effect of this language is to make the crucifixion a personal experience for the Galatians, as it was for Paul (1:15-16) and Cephas (2:19-20).

this happened. Paul narrows his focus to a singular question (“this alone I want to learn from you”): How did you receive the Spirit?<sup>183</sup> Paul offers the Galatians a version of the two choices he offered Cephas when raising the question at Antioch of his experience with Christ: When they received the Spirit, were they ἐξ ἔργων νόμου or ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως?<sup>184</sup>

As witnesses to the events at Antioch, the Galatians have an interpretive lens through which to consider Paul’s distinction between an identity ἐξ ἔργων νόμου and ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως. The former characterizes the “natural” state of Jews and the latter defines the state of Jews who have believed εἰς Χριστόν and died to the law. In order to qualify for righteousness, Jews had to “believe,” and this belief effected a shift in their identity from ἐξ ἔργων νόμου to ἐκ πίστεως. Paul’s rhetorical questions of 3:2 and 3:5 about the Galatians’ identity when they received the spirit, therefore, force the Galatians to place themselves within the narrative pattern Paul has introduced at Antioch. For Paul and Cephas, a move from being ἐξ ἔργων νόμου to being ἐκ πίστεως was necessary in order

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<sup>183</sup> In this question, Paul renames the experience with the crucifixion as the Galatians’ “reception of the Spirit.” One of the more puzzling aspects of this letter is the sudden appearance of “Spirit” language (τὸ πνεῦμα) here at 3:2, language that continues throughout the rest of the letter (see 3:3, 5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25; 6:1, 8, 18). Paul uses the Spirit to characterize those who have experienced Christ, eventually referring to the Galatians as “the Spiritual ones” (οἱ πνευματικοί; 6:1). He will appeal to the language of the Spirit when considering the Galatians’ behavior (see esp. 5:16-18). The language of the Spirit seems to replace the language of gospel (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον) that has dominated the first two chapters but disappears from this point forward (see 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 23; 2:2, 5, 7, 14; cf. 4:13). A clear distinction between receiving the gospel and receiving the spirit cannot be maintained, as Paul uses them to in the same way.

<sup>184</sup> There has been much debate over the construction ἀκοῆ πίστεως, and there are many helpful summaries of the options available to interpreters (see particularly Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, 143-49; Sam K. Williams, “The Hearing of Faith: *akoē pisteōs* in Galatians 3,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 89-93; Martyn, *Galatians*, 286-89). There are several important issues, including the translation of the noun ἀκοῆ, the determination of the genitive relationship, and the identification of the concept of πίστις. A full discussion is beyond my scope. The distinction between “from faith” and “from a report of faith” is omitted in the rest of the letter, where Paul will refer to the Galatians as “those from faith.” The distinction here is likely between the direct experience of Cephas and Paul and the mediated experience of the Galatians. This same distinction is present in Paul’s reference to Cephas and he being “co-crucified with Christ” and the Galatians “seeing Christ crucified.” Paul’s point still stands, though, that the Galatians began with the reception of the Spirit apart from works of law, and therefore they were at a distinct advantage compared with Paul and Cephas.

to be declared righteous. Paul prompts the Galatians to recognize that their experience was not the same; they were never defined ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, but rather they began as defined ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως, and therefore were in the position to which the “natural Jews” had to move. Paul shows the Galatians that his argument to Cephas is not relevant to their experience, for the law was never an issue for them.

By prompting the Galatians to respond to his rhetorical question, recognizing the historical advantage they have over the natural Jews, Paul explains why he calls them foolish. The Galatians are now attempting to perfect (ἐπιτελέω) that which was accomplished by God through the gift of the Spirit.<sup>185</sup> The introduction of a ritual act in the flesh, such as circumcision, is an attempt to complete the reception of the Spirit through the law, when the argument at Antioch has shown the Galatians that the law was deemed irrelevant by Christ’s death.

Paul makes appeal to the Galatians continued “experience,” with the Spirit considered within these same categories (3:4-5).<sup>186</sup> Paul recalls for the Galatians the

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<sup>185</sup> On the attempt to “perfect,” see Luke Timothy Johnson, “Ritual Imprinting and the Politics of Perfection,” pp. 69-103 in *Religious Experience in Earliest Christianity: A Missing Dimension in New Testament Studies* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1998).

<sup>186</sup> Paul’s use of the verb here seems to be in the neutral sense of “experience.” Elsewhere, though, Paul uses the verb πάσχω exclusively to mean “suffer” (see 1 Cor 12:26; 2 Cor 1:6; Phil 1:29; 1 Thess 2:14; 2 Thess 1:5; 2 Tim 1:12). This is consistent with the original use of the verb in Hellenistic (see Homer, *Odyssey* 8.490) and Septuagintal (see Esther 9:26; 2 Macc 6:30; 7:18; 9:28; 4 Macc 4:25; Wisdom 12:27; 18:1; Sirach 38:16; Amos 6:6; Baruch 6:33) Greek. This negative use is also the dominant use throughout the New Testament, often referring to the sufferings of Christ (see Mk 8:31; Lk 22:15; Acts 1:3; 1Pet 3:18) or of the Christian community (Acts 9:16; 1Pet 2:19; Rev 2:10). For a discussion of the development of the term, see W. Michaelis, “πάσχω, παθητός, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 5:904-39. Nowhere else in the New Testament is the verb used in the neutral sense of “experience” (pace Michaelis *TDNT* 5:912, who suggests Lk 13:2 means “to experience” or “to undergo”). Paul’s use, therefore, seems to go against the verb’s primary meaning in Greek (see *LSJ*: “without a limiting word, [πάσχω] always refers to evil” (*LSJ* s.v. 3)). Traditionally interpreters have assumed Paul refers to physical suffering in the Galatian community (see Augustine, Luther). More recently interpreters have assumed, despite admitting the philological difficulty, that Paul must mean the neutral “experience,” referring to the powers worked by the spirit (see, for example, the brief comments of Martyn, *Galatians*, 285), though the traditional position is still alive (see Ernst Baasland, “Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians,” *Studia Theologica* 38 [1984]: 135-50; Bruce, *Galatians*, 150; Michaelis, *TDNT* 5:912). The problem is that though nothing in the immediate or broad context of the letter suggests the presence of suffering in the community, such as we

outward manifestations of the spirit's presence. He speaks of the powers being manifested among them with the same language with which he spoke of his own demonstration at Jerusalem.<sup>187</sup> Just as the pillar apostles recognized “the one visibly working” (ὁ ἐνεργήσας) in Peter and Paul (2:8), so the Galatians can recognize God's work among them in the powers they witness. Paul's point, therefore, is that the Spirit continues to be effective for them, just as it was for Paul and Peter in Jerusalem, apart from the law. Their attempts to follow the law, therefore, are foolish, for they have neither needed the law to receive the Spirit, nor to continue to demonstrate the Spirit's powers.

This consideration of the double rhetorical situation at Antioch clarifies Paul's transition from the construction of his past to the argument about the Galatians' present and future. By showing the Galatians the assumptions that natural Jews share, namely that the law was something to be overcome in their pursuit of righteousness, Paul has made the argument for them that the law is not necessary. He and Cephas have contextualized the law as a relic of their past. This argument then allows Paul to make the point that the Galatians' attempt to “perfect” their experience with the Spirit is indeed “foolish,” for it asserts a use for the law that the natural Jews, those whose very identity was defined by that law, assume is no longer necessary.

## Conclusion

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see in many of Paul's letters (see, for example, 1 Thess 2:14). Instead, Paul's point is to recall the Galatians' witness to the Spirit's power and the way in which they experienced this.

<sup>187</sup> Paul speaks frequently of “powers” (δυνάμεις) with reference to God (see Rom 1:16, 20; 9:17; 1 Cor 1:18, 24; 2 Cor 4:7; Eph 1:19; 2 Tim 1:8), often connected with the spirit (see Rom 1:4; 15:13; Eph 3:16; 1 Thess 1:5). Less frequent is his use to refer to acts among his communities (see 1 Cor 12:10, 29; 2 Cor 12:12). He can also speak of the “powers” of the world (1 Cor 15:24) and Satan (2 Thess 2:9).

My analysis has demonstrated how Paul's narrative forms an argument to the Galatians as it unfolds. Readers must resist the temptation to identify a singular function for the autobiographical remarks. Arguments for the narrative as apologetic or the narrative as paradigmatic present a false set of alternatives. By reading from the perspective of the implied reader, several functions of the narrative can be identified. It will be helpful, before moving to look at how Paul uses the story of Israel to likewise address the urgent situation in Galatia, to summarize the findings to this point.

A major, though not singular, effect of following the narrative is mimetic response. Paul's narrative describes a real person with whom the Galatians are familiar. By consuming the stories of his past, readers construct a new image of the character Paul; the autobiographical narrative functions in part as an ethos argument to the Galatians.<sup>188</sup> Interpreters have frequently read the establishment of Paul's credibility as the function of the narrative, with most assuming that Paul's autobiography is prompted by questions in Galatia surrounding his legitimacy as an apostle.<sup>189</sup> The assumption of such a challenge, however, is not necessary. In these opening chapters, Paul establishes his identity in this narrative, upon which he will draw as the narrative moves forward.<sup>190</sup> A return to the understanding of a speaker's character in the Aristotelian rhetorical tradition may be

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<sup>188</sup> On studies of ethos in Galatians, see Steven J. Kraftchick, "Ethos and Pathos Arguments in Galatians 5 and 6: A Rhetorical Approach" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1985); Stanley D. Tolmie, "Liberty—love—the Spirit: Ethics and Ethos according to the Letter to the Galatians," pp. 241-55 in *Identity, Ethics, and Ethos in the New Testament* (ed. J. G. Van der Watt, F. S. Malan; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006).

<sup>189</sup> For a detailed bibliography of works that operate with this assumption, see Beverly R. Gaventa, "Autobiography," 310.

<sup>190</sup> The claims that Paul presents an ethos argument are often combined with the tendency to mirror read Paul's arguments as charges, reflection an assumption that the troublers are making specific claims against Paul's character, to which he responds. It is important to recognize that Aristotle does not raise ethos as an essential part of a speech in forensic oratory alone, but rather emphasizes its importance in deliberative oratory (see *Rhet.* 2.1.4 1377b29-1378a6).

helpful.<sup>191</sup> Assuming that audiences “believe good people more quickly,” Aristotle argues that a speaker should not depend on assumed perceptions of his character but a speech must work to “make the speaker worthy of belief” (ἀξιόπιστον ποιήσαι τὸν λέγοντα).<sup>192</sup> He argues that in deliberative rhetoric, it is even more the case that a speaker’s character must be properly constructed, laying out three ways in which character can affect an argument’s persuasion. An effective speech works to convince its audience of the speaker’s wisdom (φρόνησις), virtue (ἀρετή), and goodwill (εὐνοία).<sup>193</sup> Each of these corresponds to a perception of Paul as character invited through the employment of the autobiographical narrative.

First, the narrative leads its audience to recognize Paul as an authoritative interpreter of Scripture and tradition, a man of wisdom.<sup>194</sup> The argument to the Galatians in chs. 3-4 will depend upon interpretation of Scripture, and the first two chapters of the argument work toward endowing Paul with the authority to make such exegetical arguments. Paul’s presentation of his life began with his excelling in Judaism, and though he presented this past to contrast it with his present existence, an audience is left with the

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<sup>191</sup> Aristotle identifies “the character of the one speaking” (τὸ ἦθος τοῦ λέγοντος) as one of three “non-technical” (ἄτεχνος) forms of proof, not part of the situation of the speech but constructed through the effort of the speaker (*Rhet.* 1.2.2-3 1355b35-1356a4). On ethos in Aristotle, see S. Michael Halloran, “Aristotle’s Concept of Ethos, or If Not His Somebody Else’s,” *Rhetoric Review* 1 (1982): 58-63; William W. Fortenbaugh, “Aristotle on Persuasion through Character,” *Rhetorica* 10 (1992): 207-44. For ethos in the Greco-Roman tradition before Aristotle, see Fortenbaugh, “Aristotle on Persuasion,” 211-17. For ethos in the tradition continuing from Aristotle, see Kennedy, *New History*, 59-60; Christopher Gill, “The ἔθος/Pathos Distinction in Rhetorical and Literary Criticism,” *The Classical Quarterly* 34 (1984): 149-66. On the wide use of the language of ἦθος in Aristotle’s works, see W. J. Verdenius, “The Meaning of ΗΘΟΣ and ΗΘΟΙΚΟΣ in Aristotle’s ‘Poetics,’” *Mnemosyne* 12 (1945): 241-57.

<sup>192</sup> *Rhetoric* 1.2.4 1356a5-6. Quintilian, in his discussion of the speaker’s character, notes that “nothing must seem fictitious, nor betray anxiety; everything must seem to spring from the case itself rather than the art of the orator” (*Inst. Orat.* 4.2.126 [Butler, LCL]).

<sup>193</sup> See *Rhet.* 2.1.6 1378a.

<sup>194</sup> For this function of the autobiography, see Fowl, “Who Can Read,” esp. 90-95. Fowl identifies Paul’s use of Scripture in chs. 3-4 as allegorical, and therefore is an act of power. The narrative of the first two chapters, therefore, is Paul’s attempt to establish himself as a credible interpreter of the text.

impression that Paul is a legitimate interpreter of “the traditions of the fathers.”<sup>195</sup> Paul likewise introduced his own call using the language of Isaiah and Jeremiah, suggesting a prophetic self-consciousness, but more importantly suggesting that God has specifically selected him for the purpose of teaching the Galatians. Second, the narrative presents Paul as a man of virtue. Paul stands by his principles, he speaks boldly in the face of opposition, and he obeys God and God’s calling on his life. Paul invokes the witness of “those of repute” in Jerusalem as confirming his gospel. His argument about the law is confirmed by the silent assumptions of Cephas. Third, Paul is indeed a man of goodwill with the interests of the Gentile Galatians in his mind. At Jerusalem Paul resists the false brothers “so that the truth of the gospel might remain for you.” The narrative has presented Paul as one defending the gospel for the Gentiles, a trustworthy advocate for the Galatians.

As I have demonstrated, though, the construction of these narratives and their placement within Paul’s address of the Galatians in a particular rhetorical situation solicits a thematic response to the narrative from the Galatian audience. I characterized this thematic response as the metapedagogical function of narrative. Paul’s focus on the dire situation in Galatia focuses the audience’s attention on its own situation as the autobiographical narrative unfolds. As we have seen, the story is constructed so as to serve as a direct commentary on that situation. Each of these characteristics of Paul’s character also functions paradigmatically for the Galatians, for Paul has constructed the events that define his character to match those that the Galatians face. Like Paul, they have been called by God through a gift (1:6; 1:15-16), and like Paul they face a threat to

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<sup>195</sup> This rhetorical “trick” of laying out his qualifications in an attempt to deny their relevance is not unique to Galatians. Paul does likewise by denying the necessity, though offering his qualifications, of boasting in 2 Corinthians (see the “fool’s speech” in 11:18-12:11) and Philippians (see 3:3-11).

their freedom (1:6-7; 2:4-5). Paul's narrative is told not only to relate the details of the past and convince the Galatians that he is a trustworthy character. This narrative is told to convince the Galatians how they should act in light of their experience with Jesus Christ (3:1; 1:15-16). It is this thematic response to the narrative that Paul will explore in the third chapter of the letter.

## Chapter 5 Constructing Israel's Story

My characterization of the narrative of Paul's past as metapedagogic may seem to break down when Paul addresses Cephas in 2:14-21. Paul's argument to Cephas depends upon their mutual acceptance of a distinction between Jews and Gentiles, one that the two of them, as "natural Jews," had to overcome by dying to the law. The narrative pattern established at Antioch, illustrated through Paul's reversal from one excelling in traditions to one preaching the gospel, is that of a Jew becoming like a Gentile in order to live to God. In 3:1-5 Paul reminds the Galatians how their path to the Spirit differed from his. The Galatians received the Spirit not "from works of law" but "from a report of faith." While Paul has called Cephas to live in light of the reversal in his life, from being defined "from works of law" to being defined "from faith," his argument to the Galatians is more conservative. As Gentiles, the Galatians need not change, for they are already at the point to which Paul and Cephas had to advance.

In this chapter I show how in 3:6-4:31 Paul integrates this call for reversal with his more conservative appeal to the Galatians' reception of the Spirit. I argue that Paul constructs a narrative of Israel's past and emplots the Galatians' role within that narrative. This construction of the narrative of Israel has two effects on Paul's deliberative argument to the Galatians. First, it contextualizes the law, defining it as a temporary solution: the law had a function for some in the past, but its efficacy has been terminated in Christ. Jews had to move outside of the limiting protection of the law in order to receive righteousness. Therefore the law is not something that the Gentile Galatians need to follow; otherwise Galatians will be subject to the limitations the law

created for Jews. The second conclusion builds upon and strengthens the first. The Galatians, as Gentiles whose very identity “in Christ” defies the law, play an essential role in the narrative of Israel. As the “seed of Abraham,” the Galatian community functions as evidence of the end of the law’s efficacy.

### **Narrative Rhetoric in Galatians 3-4**

The generic form of the first two chapters of the argument to the Galatians invited narrative analysis. This central section of the argument, however, is not a narrative by genre, as it lacks many of the key elements of narrative that characterize much narrative analysis. The distinction of Richard B. Hays between the “theological prose” of chs. 3-4 and the “narrative portion of the letter” in chs. 1-2 is common.<sup>1</sup> As I demonstrated in the opening of this study, though, I am less interested in narrative as a generic distinction and more as a rhetorical act of emplotment, the construction of a narrative world that emerges in the process of reading.

Narrative in chs. 3-4 does function differently. The narrative rhetoric is not metapedagogic, as I characterized much of the argument of the first two chapters. Rather, in chs. 3-4, Paul identifies the Galatians as characters in a narrative of Israel.<sup>2</sup> The narrative rhetoric of this section is Paul’s act of creating a concordant narrative world from a discordant set of events that includes God’s promises to Abraham, the giving of the law, Jews’ past under the law, God’s gift of Christ, and the reception of the Spirit.

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<sup>1</sup> Richard B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (SBL Dissertation Series; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983), 28-30.

<sup>2</sup> The term “Israel” only appears at the end of the letter (6:16), though I use it throughout this chapter to represent the narrative Paul is constructing. This narrative is characterized by God’s promises to Abraham (3:8), fulfilled in Christ (3:16), and continuing with the Galatians’ current identity (3:29). It is the identity of the community that I represent with the term “Israel.”

Whereas Paul served as the protagonist in the narrative of the first two chapters, in chs. 3-4 a narrative world emerges that concerns the past of two primary characters introduced at Antioch: natural Jews and the Gentile Galatians. The present chapter shows how this world emerges so as to address the Galatians' future decision. This section of the letter is best understood to constitute a continuation of Paul Ricoeur's *mimesis*<sub>2</sub>, telling the story that re-frames the Galatians' narrative identity.

My exegetical approach to reading this section of the argument will also differ. There are two organizing principles for my analysis. First, rather than proceed in canonical order, as I did in the previous chapter, I proceed in narratological order. That is, my analysis is organized by the structure of the narrative that emerges in the process of reading the argument. I organize my comments into two sections, focused on the two movements of the argument. First, Paul constructs the narrative of Israel (3:6-4:11), and then he applies it to the current situation in Galatia (4:13-31). In between these sections appears Paul's imperative in 4:12, a statement that summarizes his argument in this section. I begin with this statement, before considering Paul's construction of narrative in 3:6-4:11.

I consider the narrative itself in three stages. First, I look at where the narrative of Israel begins, identifying this opening with the promises made to Abraham, which Paul considers in Gal 3:6-9. Next, I look at the period between these promises and their fulfillment, specifically the function of the law for the Jews. Then I look at the turning point of the narrative and Paul's identification of the Galatians' role in the narrative.

Second, I argue Paul's narrative rhetoric depends upon a distinction between the past of natural Jews and Gentiles, a distinction first made in Paul's argument to Cephas at

Antioch. To show this distinction, I read Paul's use of the first-person plural throughout to refer to "natural Jews" and the second-person plural to refer to the Gentile Galatians.<sup>3</sup> Throughout chs. 3-4, Paul switches frequently between the first-person and second-person plural, often at a dizzying pace. Interpreters most often resist a strict reading and instead read the switch as incidental, often assuming Paul speaks of a humanity unified by the curse of the law and freed through Christ. Some have even gone so far to suggest that the confusion that arises from the switching is a part of the intended rhetorical effect of the argument. Denying a logical consistency in Paul's use of the pronouns is problematic. First, it denies the effect such changes have on the reading experience for Paul's implied and historical audience. Particularly given the likely oral/aural situation in which this letter functioned, and given its nature as a text before a reader, changes between "we" and "you" cannot go unnoticed or discounted as unimportant. Rather, readers must take seriously the shift in reading experience that a change in pronouns creates, a shift that the very debate about Paul's pronouns would suggest is real.

More significant than this reading effect, though, is the fact that ignoring the change in pronouns leads to misreading how the argument of the first two chapters relates to Paul's overall deliberative argument. Paul argues that Jews and Gentiles have had different paths to being "in Christ." Paul's argument about the law depends upon his limiting its efficacy to the past and to the natural Jews. And so, much of his argument about the law relates directly only to Jews who were subject to the law. When Paul speaks about "our" past under the law, he speaks for himself and his fellow Jews in contrast to the role "you" Galatians played in the narrative of Israel.

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<sup>3</sup> Paul switches to the second-person singular in 4:7, and appropriate comment will be made on the reason why.

## A Jewish Emplotment of Gentiles

T. L. Donaldson identifies Paul's "fundamental concern, viz. the inclusion of the Gentiles" as a revision of contemporary Jewish expectations that Jews would lead Gentiles into righteousness.<sup>4</sup> Building upon the work of E. P. Sanders, Donaldson highlights a prevailing Jewish eschatological scenario wherein Gentiles "forsake their false gods and turn to Yahweh, they join in the eschatological procession to Zion, and they participate in the final banquet."<sup>5</sup> Donaldson traces this narrative relationship of Jews and Gentiles within Paul's argument, arguing that Paul modifies contemporary Jewish thought: "In this [Jewish] eschatological scenario, the inclusion of the Gentiles in salvation is one by-product of Yahweh's final deliverance of Israel."<sup>6</sup> Paul's revision is the identification of Christ as a representative for all of humanity, and therefore "Israel's priority is drastically modified." Instead of the expectation of Gentiles joining the Jews in salvation, Paul argues that, "Jew and Gentile together and on the same terms need to enter the 'in Christ' sphere of existence."<sup>7</sup>

My previous analysis of Paul's argument to Cephas at Antioch suggests a more radical "revision" than Donaldson suggests. In the last chapter, I showed how Paul and Cephas agreed in Antioch that their status as "natural Jews" placed them at a disadvantage, one that they overcame by "dying to the law." The movement in their past

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<sup>4</sup> T. L. Donaldson, "The 'Curse of the Law' and the Inclusion of the Gentiles: Galatians 3:13-14," *NTS* 32 (1986): 94. My difference with Donaldson is clear from the beginning, as I argue that Paul's concern is not the inclusion of the Gentiles, but rather the inclusion of the Jews.

<sup>5</sup> Donaldson, "Curse of the Law," 99. Donaldson cites the work of Sanders (E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977], 206-12) and Lloyd Gaston (*Paul and the Torah* [Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987]).

<sup>6</sup> "The Curse of the Law," 99

<sup>7</sup> "The Curse of the Law," 106.

was from an identity as natural Jews under the law to being like Gentiles, free from the law. This movement is confirmed in Paul's concern that in dying to the law they might now be considered "sinners," a characterization Paul made of the Gentiles (2:15). Though Paul explains to Cephas that such a characterization cannot be made in Christ, his raising the question confirms that he and Cephas have indeed shifted their identity from Jews defined "from works of law," to Gentiles like the Galatians, defined "from faith." Unlike Jewish expectations of Gentiles following Jews to righteousness, the assumptions shared by Paul and Cephas imply that they, as Jews, have followed the Gentiles.

In 3:1-5, Paul confirms this narrative logic through his direct appeal to the Galatians. Paul argues the Galatians stand at a distinct advantage compared to where natural Jews like Paul and Cephas were, for they received the Spirit "from a report of faith," the status to which Paul and Cephas had had to progress. By casting the Galatians into this narrative world, showing them that they began in the state to which he and Cephas had to move, Paul is able to re-phrase the question of the law that prompts the letter. It is no longer a question of whether the Galatians should follow the law. The question Paul asks is why they would move in the opposite direction, moving toward the identity that Paul and Cephas had to overcome. Paul's argument is not a mere revision of prevailing understanding of the relationship between Jew and Gentiles. Rather, his is a radical overturning of this expectation, suggesting that the very thing which defines Judaism, introduced as the zeal for the traditions of the fathers in 1:13-14, is expressly what natural Jews must overcome in order to be declared righteous.

Explication of this reversal is Paul's rhetorical goal in this central section of the letter. As Paul emplots the story of Israel, he shows the Galatians that it is not Jews who

lead Gentiles into salvation. Rather, they as Gentiles are the pattern on which the righteousness of the Jews is based. Paul argues that the Gentiles are the natural sons of God who have received the inheritance promised to Abraham's seed, and the Jews have been incorporated into this narrative through adoption. The Jews follow the Gentiles into righteousness.<sup>8</sup>

### **Paul's Appeal to Narrative Identity at 4:12**

The connection Paul constructs between Jews and Gentiles in the narrative of Israel is most clearly articulated in the summary statement of 4:12. Paul asks the Galatians to, "Become as I am, for I have become as you."<sup>9</sup> This first imperative of the letter, introducing a more explicitly hortatory mode of the argument, assumes a distinction in identity between Paul and the Galatians to whom he writes.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore,

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<sup>8</sup> This pattern of the Gentiles leading the Jews to righteousness may be familiar to readers of Romans. Donaldson recognizes that Romans 11 puts forth a narrative logic similar to the one for which I am making an argument in Galatians. Donaldson labels the argument in Romans 11 merely "a revision" of the pattern he identifies in Judaism, particularly in Tobit ("Curse of the Law," 100). Paul's argument for the Gentiles leading the Jews into righteousness is, however, far more than a revision; it is a complete reversal! In Romans 11, Paul argues it is the Jews' jealousy of Gentiles that provokes their turning toward God. The Gentiles prompt the Jews' turn to righteousness. The Gentiles' coming to righteousness, signified by the receiving of the spirit, precedes the Jews.

<sup>9</sup> Because Paul's attention has been on Israel's past, speaking of himself only with the collective "we," many interpreters group 4:12 as the beginning of a new unit, one that runs from 4:12-20, where Paul's analysis is focused on his relationship as one bringing the gospel to the Galatians. However, the concern of 4:13-20 is to compare Paul's past in Galatia and their reception of him with the recent actions of the troublemakers. The final phrase of 4:12 ("You did me no injustice") is the appropriate opening to this argument. The imperative of 4:12, though, adequately summarizes the argument Paul has just completed, namely that Paul and other natural Jews have become like the Gentiles so that they might receive the inheritance promised to Abraham.

<sup>10</sup> There are two third-person imperatives earlier in the letter. In 1:8-9, Paul uses the imperative to issue his curse upon those preaching contrary to what the Galatians received (*ἀνάθεμα ἔστω*). The imperative in 4:12 is the first time Paul orders particular action from the Galatians. Some versions read 3:7 (*γινώσκετε*) as an imperative (see KJV; ESV), though such a reading is not necessary. The difference between an imperative and indicative in 3:7 is not great. Paul is summarizing the conclusion to be drawn from his quotation of Genesis 15:6 in 3:6. The verb *γίνεσθε* could be read as an imperative or an indicative, though the context makes it clear it is an imperative. Elsewhere in his letters, Paul uses the second-person plural of *γίνομαι* in clear imperative contexts. Likewise, his appeal "I beg of you" (*δέομαι ὑμῶν*) makes clear that this is an appeal, not a statement of fact. An intriguing alternative for reading the second half of the verse has been

it assumes there has been a change in Paul's identity.<sup>11</sup> What is the nature of the distinction Paul makes between himself and his community in 4:12, a distinction that he has overcome in "becoming as you"? Is it a distinction between a leader and his community?<sup>12</sup> Is it a distinction between a more mature Christian and those in an infant state?<sup>13</sup> Though Paul does make such distinction in his letters, here he appeals to the distinction between his past as a "natural Jew" and the Galatians' past as "sinners from among the Gentiles," the same distinction assumed at Antioch (2:15). If we ask what Paul has "become" in this letter, the answer undoubtedly is that Paul, the "natural Jew" who was under law, has become like the Gentiles through his dying to the law (2:20). Paul organized his past into a narrative of reversal, from one excelling "in Judaism," advancing in zeal for the ancestral traditions, to one preaching the gospel among the Gentiles. He argues likewise that he and Cephas, as natural Jews, died to the law in order to receive God's righteousness, shifting their identity from "from works of law" to "from faith."<sup>14</sup> Paul's argument through the first two chapters of the letter has established his change in identity from a natural Jew to one like a Gentile.

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proposed by Troy W. Martin ("The Ambiguities of a 'Baffling Expression,'" *Filologia Neotestamentaria* 12 [1999]: 123-38). Martin proposes an alternative translation, suggesting the οὐδέν ought to be read as the object of the verb δέομαι, and thus Paul's argument for them to "become like I am" is based on Paul's not placing any burdens on them. The proposal is intriguing, and he makes some strong arguments based on Paul's typical syntax. However, he overlooks the contextual argument Paul is making. Paul's very point is that he has indeed become like the Galatians in his death to the law.

<sup>11</sup> The imperative also assumes a change in the Galatians' identity, though this change is more easily identified from the context. Paul has just argued that the Galatians "are returning again" to their old habits of enslavement, and Paul is concerned his work has been in vain (4:8-11).

<sup>12</sup> Certainly Paul frequently distinguishes between his role as an apostle and the community's role. The introductions of each of the letters recognizes such a distinction. For specific examples of Paul's assertion of his authority as an apostle, see 1 Cor 4:14-21; 9:13-23; 2 Cor 8:8-15.

<sup>13</sup> Paul certainly makes distinctions between those more advanced in the faith and those in the beginning stages, though that distinction is not found in Galatians. For example, see 1 Cor 3:2.

<sup>14</sup> Paul's concern that he and Cephas might be "found to be sinners" (2:17) suggests that the death to the law has re-identified these "natural Jews" as being the same as "sinners from among the Gentiles" (2:15).

The statement of 4:12, therefore, suggests that Paul's concern in this section of the letter is not to show that the Galatians have been incorporated into a narrative of Israel.<sup>15</sup> To the contrary, he is arguing that the Galatians' narrative *is* the narrative of Israel, a narrative into which he, as a natural Jew, has been incorporated. Paul has become like them, and he characterizes their temptation to follow the law as a reversal of that narrative pattern, becoming Jews like Paul was. This summary statement suggests that the distinction between natural Jews and Gentiles, made at Antioch to Cephas, is essential to his direct argument to the Galatians.<sup>16</sup> Paul constructs a narrative of Israel in order to show the Galatians the advantage they hold over natural Jews and the danger of their reversing this narrative if they follow the law.

### **The Beginning of Israel's Story: God's Promises to Abraham**

Paul marks the beginning of Israel's story with God's promises made to Abraham.<sup>17</sup> In Gal 3:6 Paul quotes Gen 15:6, which attributes Abraham's righteousness to

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<sup>15</sup> It is often assumed, and plausibly so, that the argument of the troublers is that the Galatians' integration into the story of God's people depends upon their obedience to the law. For a proposed reconstruction of the troublers' argument, see J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (AB33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997), 120-26.

<sup>16</sup> Donaldson notes, "If a distinction between Jewish and Gentile groups is made in the statement of the thesis (2.15-21), we should not be surprised to find such a distinction appearing in the arguments used to support the thesis (3.1-4.7)" ("The Curse," 97). I disagree with his characterization of the "thesis" of the letter, but his point is still correct that this Jew/Gentile distinction is critical for understanding the argument. Donaldson uses the term "Israel" to refer to Jews. This is problematic, as Paul defines the term as those whose foundation is built upon the "canon" of recognition of the irrelevance of circumcision and foreskin and instead the importance of "new creation." The distinction between "Judaism," a term used to characterize Paul's ethnic past, and "Israel," a term used to characterize new creation, is essential to Paul's argument.

<sup>17</sup> In contrast, in Romans the narrative of Israel that emerges begins with Adam (see Rom 5:12-21; cf. 1 Cor 15:21-28). The background to Paul's appeal to Abraham has been the source of much speculation. Martyn argues that Abraham was first introduced by the troublers (see *Galatians*, 125, 302-306; C. K. Barrett, *From First Adam to Last* [New York: Scribner, 1962], 30-31; Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1998], 128-34; J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980], 47-49). This is plausible, though such hypothetical reconstruction is not necessary. Abraham is seemingly important for both sides; the question surrounds how the story of Abraham is reported. Paul

his belief in God (ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ).<sup>18</sup> By ascribing Abraham’s righteousness to an act of belief, Paul draws an initial connection between Abraham and “natural Jews” like Paul and Cephas, those who likewise received the potential of righteousness through an active belief in God.<sup>19</sup> Paul has characterized Cephas and himself (2:16) as οἱ ἐκ πίστεως, and thus they are among those whom he identifies as “sons of Abraham” in 3:7.<sup>20</sup>

Paul expands Abraham’s role from a mere paradigm to the initial point of a narrative through the introduction of chronology in 3:8-9. Scripture “saw in advance” (προϊδοῦσα) and “pre-preached the gospel” (προεσηγγερίσατο) to Abraham; specifically

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assumes his audience is familiar with Abraham as an important figure in Israel’s past, though his presentation of God’s promises to Abraham is limited enough to suggest that the audience is not completely familiar with the details of the story. All that Paul assumes is that a connection to Abraham is important. Abraham plays a major role in Galatians 3 and in Romans 4, but he appears nowhere else in Paul, except for passing mentions of Paul’s identity (see Rom 11:1; 2 Cor 11:2). Abraham is also an important part of the argument in the letter to the Hebrews (see Heb 6-7). The importance of Abraham for many Hellenistic Jews has been well-established (see Jeffrey S. Siker, *Disinheriting the Jews: Abraham in Early Christian Controversy* [Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1991], 17-27).

<sup>18</sup> Paul only uses the active verb “believe” (πιστεύω) with reference to Cephas and himself (2:16) and Abraham (3:6). Note the distinction between ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν and Ἀβραὰμ ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ. At no place in his letters does Paul place Christ as the dative object of faith; only God is the object of faith for Paul (see Rom 4:3; 2 Tim 1:12; Titus 3:8; cf. Rom 10:16; 2 Thess 2:12). The belief of Abraham and the belief of Paul and Cephas, therefore, is the same. The only difference is that for Paul and Cephas, Christ serves as the basis of that belief.

<sup>19</sup> The parallel to Paul’s use of Abraham in Romans 4 is important, but only secondary to the argument to the Galatians. The argument there is fairly consistent with, though far clearer than, Paul’s argument here in Gal 3. There also Paul emphasizes faith as the necessary condition for the granting of righteousness (Rom 4:5). Here Paul cites the tradition as authoritative, assuming his audience will recognize it as such. Most editions indicate that Paul is quoting directly from Gen 15:6. The language Paul uses corresponds exactly to what we find in most modern editions of the LXX. However, readers should not assume that the implied audience would understand this as a direct quotation from Scripture, as Paul does not introduce it with the formulaic “as it has been written” (cf. 3:13). Paul introduces this same language in Rom 4:3 with a reference to Scripture (τί γὰρ ἡ γραφή λέγει). Regardless of whether the audience recognizes it as Scripture or not, the statement is made with no argument and functions as a premise Paul assumes his audience accepts.

<sup>20</sup> The phrase “sons of Abraham” was used in Judaism before Paul (see Philo, *de Virt.* 219). It is also found in other early Christian writers who seem to be independent of Paul’s letters (see σπέρμα Ἀβραάμ in John 8:33, 37). Matthew refers to Jesus as a “son of Abraham” (Mt 1:1). Throughout the New Testament, Jews are said to refer to Abraham as their father (Mt 3:9; Lk 1:55; 3:8; 13:16; 16:24; Jn 8:53; Acts 7:2; 13:26), drawing upon Biblical tradition (see, for example, Isaiah 51:2). There is some indication that the phrase was reserved in Judaism for “natural Jews,” and it was denied to circumcised proselytes. So argues C. K. Barrett (*From First Adam to the Last*, 31-32). Barrett is pulling from Strack-Billerbeck, who cite the *Numbers Rabbah*. See also *Bikkurim* 1.4, where proselytes whose mothers are not Jewish are required to substitute “O God of your fathers” for “O God of our fathers” when praying in the synagogue. For more references confirming that in rabbinic Judaism “Die Teilnahme an Abrahams Verdienst ist bedingt durch die leibliche Abstammung von ihm,” see *S-B* 1.119-20.

Gen 12:3 argues that God's blessing would come through Abraham, and it would be extended to "all the Gentiles."<sup>21</sup> Paul incorporates his Galatian audience into the constructed narrative, indicating that like they did, Abraham received the gospel (1:8-9) and the story explicitly includes those beyond the ethnic boundaries of Judaism. Paul marks this promise to Abraham as the beginning of a narrative that continues with those who receive the gospel and believe in God.<sup>22</sup> A promise to be fulfilled in the future becomes the narrative logic that Paul explores in Gal 3.

Paul's Jewish contemporaries would likely agree with his construction of a narrative of Israel that begins with the promises to Abraham stating that "those from faith [οἱ ἐκ πίστεως] will be blessed alongside the faithful Abraham."<sup>23</sup> Even this extension of the promise to include Gentiles fits within some contemporary Jewish expectations. Jews, perhaps even the troublemakers, would recognize Paul's use of Abraham as "a surplus argument."<sup>24</sup> Paul has shown that the promises made to Abraham depend upon faith, and therefore Gentiles as well as Jews, as faithful followers of the law, are potential recipients

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<sup>21</sup> Paul uses the language of "gospel" in Galatians (εὐαγγέλιον/εὐαγγελίζω) to speak about his message to Gentiles and specifically his time with the Galatians (see 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 23; 2:2, 5, 7, 14; 4:13). Interpreters differ on whether to translate πάντα τὰ ἔθνη as "all the Gentiles" (NRSV) or "all the nations." (ESV). A hard distinction cannot be drawn, though Paul's argument suggests "Gentiles" is the better read. In the Genesis context, "nations" best fits, for the promise is that Israel will be one of the many nations. In 1:15-16, Paul described his call to preach "among the Gentiles" (ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν; 1:16). Likewise he goes up to Jerusalem to report "the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles [ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν]" (2:2). This gospel, he further specifies, does not involve the Greek Titus being circumcised. Therefore, it is likely that Paul's specific gospel is "among the Gentiles." As Paul argues, it will become clear that it is Gentiles who are the natural sons of Abraham. At this point, though, no clear distinction has been made. On Paul's use of the term τὰ ἔθνη, see J. M. Scott, *Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Background of Paul's Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians* (Tübingen: Mohr/Siebeck, 1995).

<sup>22</sup> Though Paul can speak of the gospel existing chronologically prior to Christ (see his reference to Isaiah's preaching the gospel in Rom 10:15), his construction here (προεπηγγελίσατο), in Galatians "gospel" is connected to recent events, specifically the Galatians' experience with Paul. Paul has used "gospel" thus far in the letter to speak about the message that Paul brings (see 1:6-9, 11; 2:2; cf. 1 Cor 1:17; 9:18), though he understands it to be something that exists independent of the specific person preaching it (1:8-9; 2:5, 14).

<sup>23</sup> Indeed it is no surprise that Paul's silence on the law in 3:6-9 is matched by a silence about Christ. Christ's function in the argument to the Galatians is connected with the problems that the law creates.

<sup>24</sup> The language of "surplus" comes from Beker, who characterizes the argument of the "Judaizing opponents" as such (see *Paul the Apostle*, 48-49).

of the promise, alongside the faithful Abraham.<sup>25</sup> The promise of a final inclusion of the Gentiles was a common reading of Gen 12:3 in Paul's day.<sup>26</sup>

In contrast to the narrative Paul will construct, though, within this Jewish "surplus argument" the law played a necessary role: Abraham was one who responded faithfully to God through his actions. As an obedient keeper of law, Abraham served as a paradigm for both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>27</sup> For example, throughout his treatise *On Abraham*, Philo connects Abraham's piety with faith.<sup>28</sup> He introduces Abraham as one "filled with zeal for piety, the highest and greatest of virtues" and says he "was eager to follow God and to be obedient to His commands."<sup>29</sup> It is Abraham's faithful obedience that Philo offers as paradigmatic for those who follow him: "Such was the life of the first member and founder of the people, one who, some might say, obeyed the law, but more importantly,

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<sup>25</sup> If, as many do, I were thinking in terms of what the troublers may have argued to this point they would likely have no problem with Paul's argument, as it is consistent with prevailing Jewish ideas that the law confirmed the covenant made with Abraham. The troublers seemingly do not deny that Gentiles may be included in God's promise through Christ, so long as they adhere to the Mosaic law. Indeed this is how Martyn reconstructs the teachers' sermon (see *Galatians*, 302-306; see also Longenecker, *Triumph*, 129-30). Regardless of whether this is what the troublers were actually preaching, Paul turns in the next section of the argument to offer an alternative version of then narrative of Israel that one that was common in the Judaism of his day.

<sup>26</sup> That the promise to Abraham included the eventual blessing of Gentiles can be seen in texts roughly contemporary with Paul. Jubilees maintains the language of Gen 12:1-3 (Jub 12:22-24), as does Sirach (see Sir 44:19-21). There are those, however, that distinguish between the recipients of the promise to Abraham and Gentiles (see PssSol 9:9). Abraham becomes a prominent figure in early Christianity (see, for example, Heb 6:12-17; 11:9-17; *Barn.* 13:1-7; Justin Martyr, *Dial.* 111.3-6). For discussion, see Siker, *Disinheriting*, 13-27.

<sup>27</sup> Examples of Abraham being praised for his faithful actions include his hospitality (see Philo, *de Abr.* 110; *Test. Abr.* 1.1), his rejection of idols (Jub 21:3), and his willingness to sacrifice Isaac (see Josephus, *Ant.* 1.13). Abraham continues to be praised as a moral exemplar in early Christianity (see Origen, *Homilies on Genesis* 4.3; Caesarius of Arles, *Sermon* 83.5; Ambrose, *On Abraham* 1.5.34) and in rabbinic Judaism (see *Genesis Rabbah* 48.8, 10, 20; *Bava Mesia* 86b37-42).

<sup>28</sup> Philo praises Abraham's "kindness in heart" in showing hospitality to the three visitors (107-113), his obedience in his willingness to sacrifice Isaac (198-99), and his kindness in dealing with his nephew Lot (212-16). Throughout Philo argues along the lines of his closing comment on the narrative of the visitors: "We have described Abraham's hospitality which was but a by-product of a greater virtue. That virtue is piety" (114 [Colson, LCL]). Philo summarizes the detailed narrative of Abraham's life and his demonstration of faith through action as follows: "There is another record of praise attested by words from Moses' prophetic lips. In these it is stated that he 'trusted in God.' Now that is a little thing if measured in words, but a very great thing if made good by action" (262-63 [Colson, LCL]).

<sup>29</sup> Philo, *On Abraham* 60 (Colson, LCL).

as my discourse has shown, was himself a law and an unwritten statute.”<sup>30</sup> As Sirach says, Abraham “preserved the law of the most high and entered into covenant with God.”<sup>31</sup>

Paul’s argument at 4:12, that he has become like the Gentile Galatians, suggests that Paul does not use Abraham to make this “surplus argument.” By marking the beginning of his narrative with the promises made to Abraham, Paul has created a narrative gap between a promise and its fulfillment with “all the Gentiles.” The surplus argument would fill this gap with the Gentiles following the Jews in adherence to the law. In 4:12, however, Paul makes the opposite argument: he as a natural Jew has become like the Gentiles. The undoing of this surplus expectation is the task of Paul’s argument in 3:10-4:11. He does this by retelling Israel’s story from the promises to Abraham to their fulfillment with the Gentile Galatians.

### **The Law and Narrative**

At 3:10, Paul begins to explain to his Gentile audience why it is that movement from Judaism to a life outside of the law characterizes the narrative of Israel. It is the argument to Cephas, wherein he and Paul agreed that no person is declared righteous from works of law” (2:16) that Paul brings back to the surface in his turn in 3:10 to consider “as many as are from works of law.”<sup>32</sup> Paul begins to fill the narrative gap

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<sup>30</sup> *de Abr.* 276. This translation is my own (Τοιοῦτος ὁ βίος τοῦ πρώτου καὶ ἀρχηγέτου τοῦ ἔθνους ἐστίν, ὡς μὲν ἔνιοι φήσουσι, νόμιμος, ὡς δ’ ὁ παρ’ ἐμοῦ λόγος ἔδειξε, νόμος αὐτὸς ὢν καὶ θεσμὸς ἀγραφος).

<sup>31</sup> Sir 44:20. Another example of Abraham’s following the law is found in 2 Bar 57:1-2, where Abraham is said to follow the “unwritten law” and “the works of the commandments were accomplished at that time.” See also Jub 23:10; CD 3:2; *GenR* 49:2; 95:3.

<sup>32</sup> The introductory γάρ suggests that 3:10ff. is an explanation for the central point Paul is trying to establish in 3:9. This continues the pattern throughout the letter wherein Paul’s argument about those “from works of law” serves only to clarify why the Galatians are already where they need to be. On the need to consider 3:10-14 as part of the argument developed in 3:6-9, see Moisés Silva, “Abraham, Faith, and Works: Paul’s Use of Scripture in Galatians 3:6-14,” *WTJ* 63 (2001): 251-52. Paul uses ὅσος often to expand his consideration. In Galatians, it is used frequently to designate a general characterized by a single,

between the promises to Abraham and their fulfillment by showing the problem the law created for natural Jews.

Paul divides the narrative gap between promise and fulfillment into two periods, the time before the law and the time of the law, separating the promises to Abraham and the giving of the law by 430 years (3:17). The time before law is not Paul's focus, but his distinction of 430 years between the promise and the law characterizes the law as temporary, distinct from and secondary to God's promises. Paul's attention in 3:10-4:11 falls on considering Jews under law, before Christ. This period in the narrative receives sustained attention in 3:10-12 and 3:22-25. Paul begins by painting a negative picture of the law as confining the Jews from righteousness (3:10-12). He then offers a positive explanation of the law (3:22-25), prompted by his rhetorical question "Why the law?"

#### *The Curse of the Law (3:10-12)*

Paul begins by exploring the problem the law creates for those who are "from works of law."<sup>33</sup> To this point in the argument, Paul has offered two characterizations of the phrase "from works of law." First, it applied to Paul and Cephas as natural Jews (2:16). Second, it has not applied to the Galatians (3:2, 5).<sup>34</sup> Therefore, in 3:10-12 Paul explains to the Galatians why it was necessary for Cephas and him to "die to the law."

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stated criterion (see 3:27; 6:12, 16). The standard English translation "all" (see NRSV; ESV) does not capture the argument here. Paul is suggesting that regardless of who they are, if they are "from works of law," they are cursed. This is an argument about the function of the law, not about those under law. At no point in his letters does Paul identify a specific group as "those from works of law" (οἱ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου).

<sup>33</sup> Paul's argument in 3:10-14 is perhaps the most difficult section of his letters. Morna D. Hooker labels 3:10-14 as "some of the most obscure verses in the whole New Testament" (*Not Ashamed of the Gospel: New Testament Interpretations of the Death of Christ* [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995], 32). For similar comments on the difficulty of these verses, see Longenecker, *Triumph*, 134; James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), 169-70.

<sup>34</sup> Paul's rhetorical question at 3:5 has prompted the Galatians to see this group as distinct from them. Donaldson recognizes that "the importance of 2.15f., with its Jewish Christian ἡμεῖς, should not be underestimated" ("Curse of the Law," 97).

This section is, in some sense, an explanation of the shared recognition voiced in 2:16: “[We know] that no person is declared righteous from works of law.” In 3:10-12 Paul shows that the law restricted those who were under it from righteousness.

This restricting function of the law is labeled as the law’s “curse.” Paul argues in 3:10-12 that the law created a closed system, wherein those “from works of law” were cursed if they stepped outside of the law. Paul argues through the construction of a syllogism. The identification of the curse upon those from works of law in 3:10a is the conclusion of a syllogism. The quotation of Deut 27:26 is the major premise of the syllogism, levying a curse upon those who begin and then cease to do the law.<sup>35</sup> The problem this verse presents for natural Jews who pursue righteousness, illustrated in the past of Paul and Cephas, is stated as Paul’s minor premise, introduced in 3:11: righteousness is unavailable “in law.” Paul’s support for this claim comes in the tension between Hab 2:4 and Lev 18:5, a tension that establishes a difference between the means to righteousness (faith) and the result of doing the law. Paul connects their common use of the term ζήσεται through the well-known exegetical technique of *gezerah shawah*.<sup>36</sup> Hab 2:4 attributes to the righteous person (ὁ δίκαιος) a life lived “from faith.” This citation repeats the logic of Gen 15:6, quoted in 3:6, and the logic of Paul’s argument in 3:6-9. Righteousness is promised to the one whose identity is defined by faith. There is, though, a competing claim in Lev 18:5: doing the law, which Deut 27:26 requires to

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<sup>35</sup> Readers should note that Moses’ speech in Deuteronomy 27 begins with a blanket instruction to “keep all of these commandments, which I am commanding to you today” (φυλάσσεσθε πάσας τὰς ἐντολὰς ταύτας ὅσας ἐγὼ ἐντέλλομαι ὑμῖν σήμερον) (27:1). The list of curses from 27:15-26 is placed on the lips of the Levites as part of a future warning.

<sup>36</sup> *Gezerah shawah* (“equal category”) is the second of Hillel’s *middot*. The connection between these two verses exists only in the LXX, as the two use different verbs in the MT. Interpreters should be cautioned, though, against drawing too sharp a line between “Jewish” interpretation and Hellenistic modes of reading. For a review of such rabbinic exegetical techniques and an argument that they are based upon Hellenistic modes of reading, see David Daube, “Rabbinic Methods of Interpretation and Hellenistic Rhetoric,” *Hebrew Union College Annual* 22 (1949): 239-64.

avoid the curse, leads to a different type of life, specifically life defined by the law. For Paul, both quotations are true; indeed the tension between them is what causes the problem. Similar to his argument in Rom 10:5-6 that law and faith lead to different types of righteousness, Paul here argues from Scripture that law and faith both lead to life, but these are different types of life: a life defined by law or a life defined by righteousness.<sup>37</sup> If one wants to be declared righteous, as was Abraham, then one must be defined by faith. Such a definition, though, is not consistent with doing the law, for doing the law leads to a life defined by law. The result, therefore, is that viewed from the perspective of the law, the pursuit of righteousness and doing the law are mutually exclusive.<sup>38</sup> The pursuit of righteousness necessarily leads to a violation of law. And to violate the law under which one began is to invite the law's curse. Therefore, anyone who pursues righteousness while defined "from works of law" falls under the law's curse.

Paul's labored exegetical argument clarifies the key assumption made in his speech at Antioch in 2:16-17. Paul argued that he and Cephas agree that being "from works of law" precludes them from righteousness, and thus they will not be declared

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<sup>37</sup>Martyn suggests that 3:11-12 is an example of a "textual contradiction," where two parties assert opposite positions and a writer must mediate between the two ("The Textual Contradiction Between Habakkuk 2:4 and Leviticus 18:5," pp. 183-90 in *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1997]). He associates the argument of Lev 18:5 with the teachers, arguing that Paul introduces the verse within his own argument, a verse which seems to work against his case, as "a pre-emptive strike" to what he assumes the troublers will argue in response to his assertion of 3:10 ("Textual Contradiction," 186). However, such a historical reconstruction distorts the argument Paul is making here. For it is the contradiction between the texts, and Paul's assertion that each is true, that defines the problematic situation faced by those who are "out of works of law." Lev 18:5 does not support a position that following the law leads to the same life that Habakkuk 2:4 argues the one who is righteous by faith has. Instead, Paul argues that the two verses speak of two different types of life. While Martyn must claim that Paul rejects the argument of Lev 18:5 (see "Textual Contradiction," 189), to the contrary Paul affirms it, for it is the affirmation of this point that allows him to argue that the law entraps those who are defined by it. Paul also speaks of a "righteousness that comes from law" in Phil 3:6.

<sup>38</sup> It is important to highlight my phrase "from the perspective of the law." Paul is not arguing at this point (nor does he ever) that doing the law and pursuing righteousness are mutually exclusive when one properly understands what it means to "do the law." Paul will go on to argue that the law is fulfilled in loving the neighbor (5:14). Likewise he will argue that, "Those who are themselves circumcised do not keep the law" (6:13). Paul is arguing for a new understanding of the law.

righteous “unless through Jesus Christ faith” (ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ). Paul recognizes that this “Jesus Christ faith” would result necessarily in a violation of the law, expressed in his concern that they are now “sinners” (2:17), just like Gentiles outside of the law (2:15). Paul has explained this assumption for his Gentile audience by showing that the faith upon which the fulfillment of promised righteousness depends is not the result of doing law, and thus in a system of law, pursuing righteousness by faith necessitates a violation of law, for doing the law leads to a life of law, while faith leads to a life of righteousness. Paul and Cephas exchanged one type of life for the other; they moved away from the law to faith, so as to claim a life of righteousness, rather than a life of law.

*The Function of the Law (3:19-25)*

Paul’s initial consideration of the internal problems the law presents for righteousness (3:10-12) is relevant because of his placement of the law within his chronology initiated by the promises to Abraham. Paul separates the law from the promises to Abraham by suggesting the law was given 430 years after the promises (3:17), introduced through the hands of mediators (3:19). Not only was the law a later addition in the narrative, it was added as a temporary measure, given with a view toward the end of its efficacy at some future point. In 3:19-25, Paul refers to the law in terms of its *telos*, both temporal and effective. In 3:19 the law was added “until the point when the seed to whom the promise was made should come.” In 3:23, in the situation of universal sinfulness the law was given “until the coming revelation of faith” (εἰς τὴν μέλλουσαν πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι). In 3:24, the law is described as a pedagogue “until Christ” (εἰς

Χριστόν). The law, therefore, was a temporary measure, introduced separately from the promises to Abraham, and given with the expectation of its end.

Paul adds one final characteristic of the law: it was introduced for a specific purpose for a specific people. Paul explores this ethnic function of the law in response to his rhetorical question in 3:19, “Why the law?”<sup>39</sup>

Paul argues that understood in its proper narrative context, the law had a positive function, given “because of transgressions” (παραβάσεων χάριν προσετέθη).<sup>40</sup> Paul here recalls the tradition of Moses’ introduction of the law in response to transgression. In

<sup>39</sup> Paul’s question in 3:19 could be read as “What is the law” (see J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962 (1865)], 144-45) or “Why the law?” (see ESV; NRSV). Given that the argument that follows focuses on the giving of the law and its protective function, the “why?” question is the better translation. That Paul even raises the question of 3:19 suggests a bit of discomfort with the negative picture he has painted of the law. Throughout many of his letters, Paul seems concerned to maintain a balance of affirming the law’s origin in God and yet distancing his gospel from the law. Galatians 3 is a clear example of this balancing act.

<sup>40</sup> It is tempting to spend much time debating the purpose behind the law. Strong arguments have been mounted for a positive and a negative assessment of the law in Galatians 3. The answer, though, is not primary in Paul’s argument, and interpreters should keep in mind the sound advice of Richard N. Longenecker: “It may be, in fact, that Paul had no intention of being as precise as commentators would like to make him” (Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* [Word Biblical Commentary 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990], 139). Paul’s identification of the law’s purpose (“because of the transgressions” [τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν]) has been read in several ways. Used as a preposition, the accusative noun χάριν can either indicate a goal (the law was given for the purpose of inciting transgressions) or a reason (the law was given because of pre-existing transgressions) (*BDAG*, s.v.). For an example of the former use (goal), see Titus 1:11; for an example of the latter (reason), see 1 John 3:12. Interpretations of this ambiguous phrase fall into three categories, which Longenecker characterizes alliteratively as “causative”, “cognitive”, and “corrective” (*Triumph*, 122-28). For some, Paul here argues that the law was added to incite transgressions. This meaning is most often associated with Luther’s second use of the law: “Another use of the law is divine and spiritual, which is to increase transgressions, that is to say, to reveal unto a man his sin, his blindness, his mystery, his iniquity” (Martin Luther, *Commentary on Galatians* [ed. John Prince Fallowes; trans. Erasmus Middleton; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979], 189). Many modern commentators follow this interpretation, basing their conclusions upon Paul’s argument in Romans that “I did not know sin except through law” (Rom 7:7; see also Rom 3:20; 4:15; 5:20; 7:13). For this reading, see Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 144-45; Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians (Hermeneia)* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 165; Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law: A Contextual Approach* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 132; Linda L. Belleville, “‘Under Law’: Structural Analysis and the Pauline Concept of Law in Galatians 3:21-4:11,” *JSNT* 26 (1986): 53-78; Martinus C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary* (The New Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 230-31. For a trenchant critique of Luther’s position, see Krister Stendahl, “The Apostle Paul and the Introspective Consciousness of the West,” pp. 78-96 in *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976), esp. 85-88. For others, the law was added to identify transgressions, revealing the problem that already existed. This reading also often depends upon Romans, particularly Paul’s statement that, “Through law comes recognition of sin (Rom 3:20; cf. 5:13; 7:7). For this reading, see Longenecker, *Galatians*, 138-39. For others, the law was added to protect the Jews from transgressions. For this reading, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 188-91. This reading has the benefit of not depending upon the (likely later) argument of Romans.

Exodus 32:8, God condemns the people in their creation of the golden calf: “They have transgressed quickly [παρέβησαν ταχύ] from the way I commanded them.” Only then, after convincing God not to destroy the people, does Moses bring down the tablets of the law (Exod 32:15-16). This law was given, therefore, from God as a protective measure. Paul makes this argument to the Galatians in 3:19-25.

Paul’s emphasis on the positive function for the law (3:19) is made clear by his attempts to distinguish the law from the fulfillment of the promises. He does so by chronology, arguing the law was added 430 years later, and initiated as a temporary measure “until the seed should come.” He also notes that the law was given “through angels in the hand of a mediator,” distinguishing it from the promises made to Abraham and his singular seed.<sup>41</sup>

Paul makes explicit the law’s protective function “on behalf of transgressions” by arguing that the law was necessary because of the universal confinement under sin, a confinement to which Scripture provides witness (3:22).<sup>42</sup> Paul does not offer a particular Scripture reference in his argument, but instead he suggests the universal confinement to sin is apparent throughout Scripture.<sup>43</sup> A similar argument is made in Rom 3:10-18,

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<sup>41</sup> On the background to Paul’s reference to angels and a mediator, see Terrance Callan, “Pauline Midrash: The Exegetical Background of Gal. iii.19b,” *JBL* 99 (1980): 549-67.

<sup>42</sup> Readers should not equate Paul’s identification of the confining force in 3:22 as “scripture” (ἡ γραφή) with his view of the law (for such an equation, see F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* [NIGTC; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992], 180). Belleville offers a helpful argument for why readers should be careful about making such an equation (“Under Law”). Paul does not here (or elsewhere) equate the law with scripture. Paul typically uses the singular ἡ γραφή when referring to particular words of Scripture (see, for example, Rom 4:3; 9:17; 10:11; 11:2; Gal 3:8; 4:30; 1 Tim 5:18). When referring to “scripture” as a whole, the plural αἱ γραφαί is more typical (see, for example, Rom 1:2; 15:4; 16:26; 1 Cor 15:3, 4; 2 Tim 3:16). It is unlikely that Paul identifies “scripture” in general as the means by which everything is confined everything under sin (Betz reads along this line, arguing that Paul sees Scripture to be “an entity working almost like Fate” [*Galatians*, 175]).

<sup>43</sup> One suggestion is that of Burton, who argues that it must be a reference to Deut 27:26, quoted in Gal 3:10, noting that ὑπὸ κατάρων and ὑπὸ ἀμαρτιῶν would be understood to be equivalent (Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921], 195-196). This reading is accepted by Longenecker, (*Galatians*, 144). Lightfoot suggests it

where Paul does gather texts to support a similar claim that, “All, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin.”<sup>44</sup> His point in Galatians is less about the identification of specific texts, and more about the confinement of everything (τὰ πάντα) under sin before Christ.<sup>45</sup> This universal confinement under sin creates the situation for the particularity of the law’s protection of Jews.<sup>46</sup>

In 3:23, Paul introduces the narrow ethnic function the law played prior to Christ in light of this universal confinement: the law separated Jews from Gentiles by offering protection to “us,” by which Paul means natural Jews. The key passage for this section is Paul’s argument in 3:23 that “having been confined, we were protected by law” (ὕπὸ νόμον ἐφροθρούμεθα συγκλειόμενοι).<sup>47</sup> The law’s original efficacy was for a subset of

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must be one of the texts Paul has already quoted, either Ps 143:2 or Deut 27:26. I have argued above that Paul’s argument of the “curse” relates only to those “under law,” and therefore it is unlikely that Deut 27:26 is the reference here. Belleville offers another alternative, suggesting that by ἡ γραφή Paul means simply divine power, as Scripture is “a distinct, authoritative entity that functions as metonymy for God himself” (Belleville, “Under Law,” 56). Belleville’s precise interpretation is not supported by the text (she fails to offer any positive argument for this, other than citing Rom 9:17; Gal 3:8). However, her point is well taken that Paul’s primary argument is that everything has been confined by God; God is the ultimate power and reason behind the world’s being confined: “It is Scripture that is the prevailing power in this passage, not ‘sin’” (Belleville, “Under Law,” 56). This same idea is present in O. Michel, “συγκλείω,” *TDNT* 7:744-47. Given that he is arguing with those who feel obligated to fulfill the law, it seems unlikely that he needs to argue for the point that all are under sin, and therefore he can assume that the premise is accepted without quoting specific texts.

<sup>44</sup> In Rom 3:10-18 Paul quotes (in some form) Ps 14:1-3; 5:10; 139:4; 10:7; Isa 59:7; Ps 35:2.

<sup>45</sup> Note that Paul’s other reference to “sin” comes in his address to Cephas at Antioch, where Paul labels the Gentiles as “sinners” (2:15, 17). He also mentions a universal sin problem solved by Christ is the opening of the letter (1:4). The position of the pervasiveness of sin articulated in Gal 3:22 is not far from Paul’s argument in Rom 1-3 (see especially Rom 3:23).

<sup>46</sup> This “confining” (συγκλείω) in 3:22 has a negative sense, one made clear in the fact that Paul later uses the same root to describe the troublers’ attempts to control the Galatians (4:17). Paul uses this same verb elsewhere only in Romans in a negative sense, arguing, “God confined all to disobedience [συνέκλεισεν γὰρ ὁ θεὸς τοῦ πάντας εἰς ἀπειθειαν] so that he might be merciful to all” (Rom 11:32). The common root κλείω (“to close, shut”) in 3:22-23 and 4:17 makes sense, given that Paul’s argument is that the troublers are taking the Galatians back to the life of slavery which defined Israel under the law. This unification of humanity under sin is referenced again in Galatians 4, where Paul argues that both the Jews (4:3) and the Gentile Galatians (4:9) were both previously “enslaved to the fundamental elements of the world.”

<sup>47</sup> There has been much debate about the Paul’s characterization of the law in 3:19-29, debate fueled by the ambiguity of Paul’s language and the import attached to discovering or constructing a Pauline “view of the law.” Interpreters should recognize, though, that Paul’s interest is not in offering a “theology of the law” or even of passing judgment on the function of the law. Indeed, his emphasis here, in the context of arguing to Gentiles considering adherence to the law, is on the temporary nature of the law in the time before Christ. The thrust of his argument to the Galatians is that they now live in a reality “after Christ,” and therefore his

everything that was confined by sin, distinguishing “natural Jews” from “sinners from among the Gentiles.”<sup>48</sup> The force of Paul’s participle συγκλειόμενοι repeats the statement in 3:22 that “Scripture confined everything under sin” (συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα).<sup>49</sup> His statement of confinement in 3:23, therefore, is not a description of the law’s function, but rather is a restatement of humanity’s universal confinement under sin, the very reason for the giving of the law.<sup>50</sup> Because of the universal power of sin, the law was introduced to protect natural Jews.<sup>51</sup>

Paul characterizes this function for Jews with the main verb ἐφρουρούμεθα.

Because Jews were confined under sin (συγκλειόμενοι)—like everything else—they were

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rhetorical goal is in placing the law into a role in the past, not necessarily on analyzing the reason for its efficacy then.

<sup>48</sup> This language has created a vexing problem for translators, as the two verbs employed have wide semantic ranges, both positive and negative, and translations vary depending upon how one views Paul’s understanding of the law (see NASB: “We were kept in custody under the law, being shut up”; NJB: “We were kept under guard by the Law, locked up”; RSV: “We were confined under the law, kept under restraint”; NRSV: “We were imprisoned and guarded under the law”).

<sup>49</sup> Most commentators, however, do not connect the use in v. 22 with v. 23. Instead they read Paul to be saying that the Jews are also “imprisoned under the law” in v. 23, furthering a negative view of the law in Gal 3. For example, Lightfoot translates the two participles as “were shut up and kept in ward,” ignoring the grammatical difference (*Galatians*, 148). Most recognize the grammatical difference, though read the two to refer to a similar state. For example, Betz translates, “We were kept in custody under the Law, confined until the coming faith was to be revealed” (*Galatians*, 175). Likewise, Martyn translates as follows: “Before faith came, we were confined under the Law’s power, imprisoned during the period that last until, as God intended, faith was invasively revealed” (*Galatians*, 353). Cf. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 136.

<sup>50</sup> Paul does not here portray a cosmic view of the law’s power over humanity, wherein all are trapped under its power, both Jew and Gentile. Martyn, however, argues that “[Paul] draws no consistently neat distinction between the Law and the scripture” (*Galatians*, 360) and “All human beings were caught under the Law’s power” (*Galatians*, 362). To the contrary, Paul’s argument throughout has been that the law was a particular, temporary part of the “natural Jews” story. Paul’s references to sin in Galatians are rare; Paul speaks only of sin as a power (in the singular) here and in 2:17. Elsewhere he speaks of sins in the plural (see 1:4). The argument for all being under the law is often assumed, though rarely argued for. E. P. Sanders moves backwards from Paul’s assertion of Christ’s universal efficacy to assert that there must have been a universal problem, which Paul identifies as sin. He takes the further step that if the law was unable to save, “therefore it is connected with sin, the common condition of everyone, and thus everyone, before Christ, was under the law” (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983], 81-92).

<sup>51</sup> I read the participle causally (see BDF §418.1). Most interpreters take the participle to indicate simultaneous action with the main verb. For example, see Burton, *Galatians*, 199, who labels this “a present participle of identical action.” See also NRSV (“We were imprisoned and guarded under the law”); cf. BDF §418.5). The textual variant συγκεκλείσμενοι (the perfect passive participle) in the Byzantine Majority textual tradition and some other early witnesses (C D), may reflect this understanding, as the perfect participle would indicate a previous event with continuing effects, matching the past “confining” indicated by the aorist συνέκλεισεν of v. 22 (see Smyth §1872d).

“surrounded by law,” “until the revelation of the coming faith.” The law is offered by God as a protective advantage in the situation of universal sinfulness.<sup>52</sup> Paul imagines the law as surrounding the Jews as a protective fortress.<sup>53</sup>

A clarifying parallel to Paul’s argument about the law’s temporary function can be seen in 1 Pet 1:5. In the introduction to that letter, the author describes the congregation to which he writes as “those being protected by the power of God through faith for salvation which is prepared to be revealed in the last time” (τοὺς ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ φρουρουμένους διὰ πίστεως εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐτοιμὴν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι ἐν καιρῷ ἐσχάτῳ). This passage exhibits several parallels with Gal 3:23, the most important of which is the use of the verb φρουρέω with the preposition εἰς, offering a sense of both the temporal nature (“until”) and the purpose (“for”) of the protection of God’s power. First Peter is written to Christians who “for a short time now, if it is necessary, are weeping in all kinds of trials” (1 Pet 1:6), offering the assurance of the “powerful hand of God” who will “exalt you at the appropriate time” (1 Pet 5:6). Likewise in Galatians, Paul argues the Jews were surrounded, literally “enveloped” by the law, evoking the image of the surrounding walls a fortress offering protection to a city’s denizens.<sup>54</sup> “We” Jews, like the

<sup>52</sup> In Romans Paul offers a similar discussion of the temporary advantages offered to Jews: “What is the advantage of the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision? Much in every way. Foremost among these advantages is that they were entrusted with the oracles of God” (Rom 3:1-2).

<sup>53</sup> φρουρέω has a much wider range of meanings than συγκλείω, from the negative “to keep prisoner” to the positive “protect.” Standard translations reflect both the positive and negative interpretations, including “kept in custody” (NASB), “held prisoner” (NIV), and “kept under guard” (NJB). Paul uses the verb elsewhere in its neutral sense, describing King Aretas’ “surrounding” (ἐφρούρει) the city in order to capture Paul (2 Cor 11:32). He can also use it in a more positive sense, describing his hope that the peace of God “will surround the hearts” (φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας) of the Philippians (Phil 4:7). The LXX evidence is also split, as the verb is used to describe the surrounding of a city (1 Esdras 4:56; Judith 3:6) and imprisonment (Wis 7:15).

<sup>54</sup> Josephus uses the verb φρουρέω frequently, almost exclusively in military contexts, often in reference to a city’s or fortress’s protecting people (see *Ant.* 11.345; 13:26, 39; *War* 3.12, 180; *Life* 1.53, 108; see also 2 Sam 8:6, 14; Judith 3:6; 1 Macc 6:50; 2 Macc 10:32). This is the sense of the term in 2 Cor 11:32, where Paul reports Aretas “guarded [ἐφρούρει] the city” to prevent his escape. Paul adopts this military sense

rest of humanity, were confined “under sin,” but “we” were additionally protected and separated “under law” before Christ came.<sup>55</sup>

The exact meaning of ἐφρουρούμεθα is determined, therefore, by the infinitival phrase that follows it. The life under the law is temporally circumscribed by “the revelation of the coming faith.” Paul’s entire discussion of the law in Galatians 3 focuses his audience on the coming of faith that marks the end of the law’s efficacy. Paul’s comments about the function of the law in 3:23 are literally enclosed by “the coming” and “the revelation” of faith.

This temporary function of the law for the Jews is best captured in Paul’s description of the law as a “pedagogue,” a much-debated image.<sup>56</sup> The image of this character in antiquity is ambiguous: at times the pedagogue is a harsh disciplinarian; at

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metaphorically to speak of the peace of God protecting the Philippians’ hearts (Phil 4:7). The term can also have the more neutral sense of “containing” (see *Ep. Diog.* 6.4).

<sup>55</sup> The accompanying prepositional phrase ὑπὸ νόμον is a common one in Galatians (see Gal 4:4, 5, 21; 5:18). Paul uses ὑπό + accusative throughout the letter to define groups and the authorities that rule over them (see 4:2-5). Paul typically uses it throughout his letters to designate authority (see Rom 6:14-15).

<sup>56</sup> There is no dearth of discussion about Paul’s understanding of the function of the παιδαγωγός, an ambiguous character in antiquity. The term is rarely used as an image, as Paul uses it, but παιδαγωγοί are mentioned all over the literature of antiquity. The παιδαγωγός was generally a slave assigned to care for children, often times playing an educational role and often times playing a disciplinary role. This double nature of the παιδαγωγός in antiquity leads interpreters to come to vastly different understandings of Paul’s meaning, generally fitting their previous understanding of Paul’s view of the law. For example, Betz, who sees Paul as painting a completely negative picture of the law in Gal 3, identifies the παιδαγωγός as a negative character in antiquity (see *Galatians*, 177). On the other hand, Dunn, who believes Paul thinks the law is a positive, though misused, highlights the positive function of the character in antiquity (see *Galatians*, 198; see, also, G. Bertram, “παιδεύω, παιδεία, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 5:596-625: “There certainly nothing derogatory in the term pedagogue.”; quotation from *TDNT* 5:620). For a thorough review, see A.V. Yannicopoulos, “The Pedagogue in Antiquity,” *British Journal of Educational Studies* 33 (1985): 173-179; Norman H. Young, “*Paidagogos*: The Social Setting of a Pauline Metaphor,” *NovT* 29 (1987): 150-176. Paul uses the image only one other time in his letters, arguing that though the Corinthians’ may have thousands of παιδαγωγοί, but only Paul is their father, and therefore only Paul is worthy of their imitation (1 Cor 4:15). In that context, Paul is arguing that though there are many who teach or instruct the community, only he the concern of a father for them. Therefore the παιδαγωγός is pictured as someone who gives instruction or protection without genuine interest. There is nothing in the argument of 1 Cor 4 to suggest a negative valence on the term. See Anthony C. Thiselton, *First Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 369-370.

other times he is an endearing father figure, protecting the child.<sup>57</sup> However, three aspects of the παιδαγωγός in ancient literature are important for recognizing Paul's application of this image to the law. First, the παιδαγωγός was a constant presence in the life of the child. As Norman H. Young argues, "The pedagogue went everywhere with the boy in his care . . . attending school, the gymnasium, and the theater."<sup>58</sup> This constant presence fits Paul's description of the Jews as "surrounded" and "enslaved" under the law (3:23; 4:4-5). Second, the παιδαγωγός was inferior in social status to the father, who directs the παιδαγωγός. This point Paul will make clear in his image on inheritance in 4:1-2, where the child's maturity occurs "at the time set by the father" (4:2). Third, and most important, the παιδαγωγός was a temporary part of a child's life, never intended as a permanent "solution." This is precisely the argument Paul is making about the law. The image of the παιδαγωγός is appropriate for Paul, not because he is known as one who harshly disciplines a child, nor because he is known to educate a child.<sup>59</sup> Rather Paul uses

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<sup>57</sup> There can be no definitive answer from comparative texts to the question of what Paul thought of the function of a παιδαγωγός. The sources are too mixed. Consider, for example, the competing views offered in two different works by the 4<sup>th</sup> Century CE teacher Libanius. In one work, Libanius decries the behavior of a pedagogue, arguing "he's harsher than his masters," decrying that he "praises none of [his student's] accomplishments" and "brandishes a staff or whip in his right hand" (Libanius, *Progymnasmata* 3.8; translation from Hock and O'Neil, *The Chreia and Ancient Rhetoric: Classroom Exercises* [Leiden: Brill, 2002], 172-173). In another work, though, Libanius extols pedagogues, commenting that "they are great, for great are those things which come from them to the youth . . . for they are guardians (φρουρέω) of the flowering age" (Libanius, *Orations* 58.7; the Greek text comes from the *Thesaurus Lingua Graeca*; the translation is my own).

<sup>58</sup> Young, "Paidagogos," 164.

<sup>59</sup> This understanding of the παιδαγωγός as an educator, and thus Paul's understanding of the law as an instructor, was popular early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but has fallen out of favor. It is still represented by the NASB's translation of παιδαγωγός as "tutor." This understanding does still find favor with some. See, for example, the comments of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, who does note the temporary nature of the παιδαγωγός, but focuses on his role as instructor ("Paul and the Law," pp. 186-201 in *To Advance the Gospel: New Testament Studies* [New York: Crossroad, 1981], 191-192). For a critique of this position, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 198-199.

the image because the law, like the παιδαγωγός, was a temporary part of Israel's narrative, to be left behind at maturity.<sup>60</sup>

Paul has offered a double description of the law (3:10-12; 3:22-25), an identity that characterizes Paul and his fellow natural Jews before the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham. Paul's picture of the law before Christ can best be understood as a "fortress" an image suggested by Paul's use of the verb φρουρέω. The law surrounded the Jews, setting them apart and protecting them from the universal sinfulness that affected all. This was its positive function, though from the beginning this function was circumscribed temporarily, given until the appearance of the seed of Abraham. However, like any fortress, this protection also resulted in confinement. The law itself precluded those under it to achieve righteousness, a gift associated with faith.

The limitations of the law are captured in Paul's language of "life" in Gal 3. Paul responds to his rhetorical question of whether the law contradicts the promises of God by explaining that the law was incapable of giving life: "If a law was given which was capable of creating life, then righteousness would be from law" (3:21). Paul's contrast between law and the creation of life recalls his discussion of life and the law in 3:10-12. There he highlighted that doing the law leads only to a life of law.<sup>61</sup> So, while the Jews were temporarily protected from sin by the law, they were also temporarily kept from righteousness by the confining system of the law that led either to a life of law, or to a

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<sup>60</sup> For further discussion of the temporary nature of the παιδαγωγός, see T. David Gordon, "A Note on ΠΑΙΔΑΓΩΓΟΣ in Galatians 3:24-25," *NTS* 35 (1989): 150-154. This temporary function of the image is also the conclusion reached by Young ("*Paidagogos*," 168-176).

<sup>61</sup> Paul's Jewish contemporaries often associated the law with life. Baruch, for example, summarizes that, "The law exists forever; everyone who holds on to her comes into life (πάντες οἱ κρατοῦντες αὐτῆς εἰς ζωῆν), and those who forsake her will die" (Baruch 4:1). Ben Sira likewise refers to the "law of life" (νόμος ζωῆς) (Sir 17:11; 45:5). Indeed Paul himself has just quoted Lev 18:5 that "the one doing these things will live in them" (3:12). The point here is the type of life that the law creates. The law does not create new life, for it leads only to a life characterized by law.

course. The appearance of the seed of Abraham, to whom the promises were made (3:16) would mark the end of this protective function of the law and the confinement from righteousness that comes with it.

*Gentile Enslavement Before Christ (4:8-10)*

Most of Paul's argument in the third chapter of Galatians focuses on natural Jews and the function of the law for "us." Paul does consider in 4:8-10, though briefly, the past of the Gentiles before Christ. In this section Paul's characterization of the Gentile Galatians fits common stereotypes of pagans in Paul's contemporary Judaism. Jews frequently referred to pagans in terms of their lack of knowledge of God.<sup>62</sup> Enslavement to the "fundamental elements" was a common slander.<sup>63</sup> Paul does not, however, consider the relationship of the law before Christ to Gentiles like the Galatians. To the contrary, their "enslavement to things which are by nature are not divine" is distinct from his description of the past of Jews, who were under divine law.<sup>64</sup> As Paul constructs the narrative, the Gentiles in their lack of knowledge of God are considered part of humanity universally confined by sin (3:22), but not set apart and protected by the gift of the law. In Israel's narrative before Christ, humanity is divided between "natural Jews" under the law and sinners like the Gentiles (cf. 2:15). It is this distinction that is removed in Christ.

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<sup>62</sup> For the labeling of pagans as those who do not know God, see Jer 10:25; Bar 6: Wisdom 13. In Wisdom 13, those who do not know God (are accused of paying too much attention to the works of the creator, which include fire, wind, air, and water, and overlooking the power of the one who created them. The sin here, therefore, is one of idolatry, praising the created order, the fundamental elements, rather than the creator. Bruce makes the correct point that similar language is used of Jews in Deut 32:17, 21 (*Galatians*, 201).

<sup>63</sup> For a discussion of the pagans' worship of τὰ στοιχεῖα, see also Wisdom 13.

<sup>64</sup> Paul does not label the law as divine in Galatians, though he does deny that it is contrary to God's promises (3:21). In Romans Paul says, "the law is holy and the commandment is holy and righteous and good" (Rom 7:12). He also denies that the law is sin (Rom 7:7).

Paul has identified the law as a temporary measure, introduced with a view towards the eventual end of its efficacy, relevant only to “us” and not the Gentile Galatians. The narrative of Israel that began with promises made to Abraham awaits the appearance of the seed to whom the promise was extended. Paul characterizes this shift in the narrative in a couple of ways.

### **The End of the Law’s Efficacy I: The Redemption of Christ**

Paul first establishes Christ as the solution to the curse the law levies on those from works of law. The solution Paul offered Cephas in his dilemma at Antioch was an appeal to the cross. To address the question of breaking the law in pursuit of righteousness, a question made concrete in Cephas’ fellowship with Gentiles and subsequent withdrawal in fear, Paul argued that the cross has broken them free of the previous system of law. In his being “co-crucified” with Christ, Paul died to the law so that he could live to God. Paul’s response to the rhetorical question of 2:17 clarifies the effect of Christ’s death. After Christ, a question about whether they are sinners or not cannot be answered yes or no. Co-crucifixion with Christ has destroyed the relevance of the categories assumed in such a question.

Paul likewise identifies the cross of Christ as the solution to his exegetical analysis of the curse levied by the law upon all of those from works of law (3:10-12). In 3:13, Paul continues his exegetical argument by connecting yet another verse through *gezerah shawah*. In 3:13, Paul connects Deut 21:23 to Deut 27:26 through their common

reference to a “curse.”<sup>65</sup> As the law levies a general curse upon those who live within the system of law and yet pursue righteousness, so there is a specific curse upon the manner of Christ’s death, hung on a wooden tree. Because Christ himself was cursed by law, Christ redeems (ἐξαγοράζω) those previously under a curse.<sup>66</sup>

The logic of Christ’s lifting the curse is not stated explicitly in Paul’s argument. Paul seems to offer a syllogism lacking a minor premise. He argues that a tension between a specific part of the law and the manner of Christ’s death is more of a commentary on the law than on the identity of Christ. Lacking is the premise that the life and death of Christ is more authoritative than the law, and thus Christ’s violation of the law breaks those who are cursed by the law free from the cycle described in Lev 18:5. Without establishing Christ’s authority over the law, one might argue that Christ is merely like any other Jew who was “hung on a cross,” simply in violation of the law.

In other letters, Paul focuses on Christ’s resurrection as the validation of Jesus’ authority and identity from God.<sup>67</sup> However, though Paul opens the letter with reference to Christ’s resurrection from the dead (1:1), the resurrection does not play a primary role in the argument of Galatians, though it likely stands as an assumption of his argument.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Paul adapts the LXX quotation of Deut 21:23 (so far as extant manuscripts support) to more closely fit his quotation of Deut 27:26. The LXX of 21:23 uses the participle κεκατηραμένος instead of Paul’s quoted adjective ἐπικατάρατος, found in 27:26. In the MT there is also a difference between these verses, as the curse in Deut 21:23 is described with the noun קלל but with the *Qal* passive participle of the verb ארר in Deut 27:26.

<sup>66</sup> Paul’s use of language of “redemption” anticipates his argument in 4:3-5, where again he describes the how Christ as one “born under law” frees those who were “under law.” Paul uses the language of redemption (ἀγοράζω/ἐξαγοράζω) rather sparingly in his letters, especially compared to the gospel writers. In 1 Corinthians he uses ἀγοράζω to refer to Christ’s death for the community (1 Cor 6:20; 7:23). The use of the compound ἐξαγοράζω to refer to God’s action appears only in Galatians 3:13 and 4:5. Diodorus Siculus (15.7.1) presents a parallel use of ἐξαγοράζω to refer to buying a slave’s freedom.

<sup>67</sup> See, most prominently, 1 Cor 15.

<sup>68</sup> Consider, for example, the comments of de Boer: “This resurrection is the hidden reason why Paul can place Christ without explicit justification on the divine side of the human/divine contest” (*Galatians*, 25). This is no doubt true, though readers must recognize that the resurrection is not present at the surface of the

Paul's language in Galatians 3:13 may offer a more immediate explanation of the relationship between Christ and the law. Paul asserts that it is "Christ" who was condemned by the law.<sup>69</sup> It is the fact that the "Messiah" or "God's anointed" was condemned by the law that calls into question the law's function for those who pursue righteousness.<sup>70</sup> The identity of Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, a point assumed in the argument, is what makes his law-violating death more of a commentary on the authority of the law than the identity of Jesus.<sup>71</sup> Because Jesus is the Messiah, and because he violates the law, keeping the law cannot be the path to righteousness.<sup>72</sup>

The specifics of Paul's logic, though, are not essential to the argument, for Paul addresses his Gentile audience by describing the effect Christ has on the function of the law for those were "from works of law," a characterization that does not apply to the

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letter. Neither the resurrection nor the importance of Christ is doubted by Paul, the troublers, or the Galatians.

<sup>69</sup> It is difficult to map Paul's uses of the titles Jesus, Jesus Christ, and Christ in Galatians. The manuscript tradition is particularly fuzzy around the titles used for Jesus in the letter. The use of "Christ" alone as a subject is not rare in Galatians (see 2:20, 21; 3:16; 4:19; 5:1, 2), though readers should recall that "Christ" is not merely a title, but a designation with specific cultural resonances. In 3:13, Paul seems to depend on those resonances.

<sup>70</sup> For a summary of Paul's use of the term "Christ" to designate Jesus, see Dahl, "The Messiahship of Jesus in Paul," pp. 37-47 in *The Crucified Messiah* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1974 [1953]), 37-40. Beker places appropriate emphasis on Paul's added "for us," noting that the verse "does not permit a Marcionite interpretation, as if the phrase 'Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law' simply means an abolition of an outdated law that moreover never conformed to God's intention" (*Paul the Apostle*, 186). Christ's death does not render the law worthless; rather it reveals that the function ascribed to it was incorrect.

<sup>71</sup> Dahl is certainly correct to note that Paul's understanding of Jesus as Messiah likely comes from a Christian interpretation of that title, rather than from his own application of a Jewish concept of Messiah to the human Jesus (see "The Messiahship of Jesus in Paul," 41-42). This is one place in Paul's letters where the concept of Jesus as Messiah does receive some reflective thought. Paul admits here that the ascription of a Jewish concept of Messiah to Jesus, one cursed by the law, creates a cognitive dissonance. It would seem likely that this contradiction between Christ's death and the law was Paul's original problem with the Christian gospel and thus the reason for his persecution of it. What has changed for Paul is his recognition of the identity of Jesus as God's son (1:15-16), an identity that renders his cursed death to be a commentary on the function of the law. As Dahl aptly summarizes, "That the messiahship of Jesus stands in contradiction to the law as the final codification of the God-man relationship is the basic assumption common to Paul the persecutor and Paul the apostle" ("The Messiahship of Jesus in Paul," 46).

<sup>72</sup> Such a reading would make sense of Paul's comment in 1 Cor 1:23 that the cross presents a "scandal" for the Jews, while it presents foolishness for Gentiles. Beker summarizes this position well: "Obedience to kosher laws (cf. the Apostolic Decree) or circumcision or any other 'works of the law' constitutes a denial of Christ, because the law has been judged by God in Christ 'on the tree'" (*Paul the Apostle*, 187).

Galatians. The essential point for Paul's Gentile audience is that the law had confined those who were defined by it, but Christ's death marked the end of that confinement. In Paul's remark that Christ "redeemed us," he speaks about Jews who were originally under the curse of law.<sup>73</sup> Christ's violation of the law creates the potential for those "natural Jews" like Paul to pursue righteousness, a potential previously shut off by the law's curse.<sup>74</sup>

Paul identifies two distinct effects of Christ's lifting of the curse, effects separated by the double *ἵνα* clauses of 3:14.<sup>75</sup> First, Christ's death makes effective the "blessing of Abraham," originally promised to "all the Gentiles" (3:8).<sup>76</sup> Paul now connects Christ to the blessing promised to Abraham; Christ's death as one cursed by the law makes effective this promise. The logic behind this effect is the focus of 3:15-18.<sup>77</sup> Paul reframes this argument by tying his negative description of life under the law back to Abraham's promises, the spine of the narrative he is constructing. Through a legal image, he renames

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<sup>73</sup> As Marytn notes, "the identity of this 'us' continues to be debated" (*Galatians*, 317n106). For a summary of positions on this issue, see Donaldson, "Curse of the Law," 107nn2-3; Jost Eckert, *Die urchristliche Verkündigung im Streit zwischen Paulus und seinen Gegnern nach dem Galaterbrief* (Regensburg: F. Pustet, 1971), 73n3. For strong arguments for this to include all of humanity, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 317; Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and his Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 194-95; Bruce, *Galatians*, 166). For arguments that Paul here refers only to Jews, see Betz, *Galatians*, 148n101; Hays, *Faith*, 128n18; Donaldson, "Curse of the Law")

<sup>74</sup> Paul will call specific attention to Christ being a "natural Jew" in 4:4, where he also makes the point that Christ's death has a particular meaning for those who are "under the law."

<sup>75</sup> Many have read these two clauses as suggesting Paul splits his focus first on the implications of Christ's death for the Gentiles (14a), and then for the Jews (14b). Others, however, have read the parallelism as both related to Jews and Gentiles together, reading the second clause (14b) to restate the universal conclusion of the first (14a). Most prominently, Martyn argues that the two phrases restate the same conclusion (see *Galatians*, 321-22). On Paul's use of such double clauses, see Betz, *Galatians*, 152n138. However, these two present false alternatives. Both, in fact, have a bit of truth when considered in light of the developing argument.

<sup>76</sup> A parallel phrase is used in Gen 28:3-4, where Isaac blesses Jacob, asking "May God bless [εὐλογῆσαι] you and cause you to increase and multiply, and may you be a gathering of nations [συναγωγὰς ἐθνῶν], and may he give to you the blessing of Abraham [τὴν εὐλογίαν Ἀβρααμ]."

<sup>77</sup> It is at this point that my analysis departs from that of Donaldson. He argues that in the double *ἵνα* clause of 3:13, "an intermediate step is assumed: the redemption of Israel as a prerequisite for or condition of the blessing of the Gentiles" ("Curse of the Law," 94). I argue that the intermediate step is for the Jews (the removal of the curse), a step that is not necessary for Gentiles who were never "under law."

the promise to Abraham as a “covenant” (διαθήκη) that cannot be broken, but only fulfilled with Abraham’s offspring.<sup>78</sup> Paul assigns to Christ the role of marking the fulfillment of promises, introducing the seed image, drawing upon the multi-generational promise of blessing to “Abraham’s seed” articulated throughout Genesis.<sup>79</sup> Paul contrasts Christ and the law by arguing that the seed is singular, and the law came through mediators (3:19-20). The law does not signal the fulfillment promises, but only the appearance of the singular seed will do so.

In the immediate argumentative context of 3:14, it is the second ἵνα clause, the effect of Christ’s death on those from works of law (“us”) that Paul emphasizes. Paul turns his attention on the connection of those from works of law to the blessing of Abraham. The “promise” is here identified as the “promise of the Spirit” or the “promise that is the Spirit.”<sup>80</sup> The language of “promise” (ἐπαγγελία) is new to Paul’s argument, but the language of “Spirit” is not.<sup>81</sup> It is the reception of the Spirit with which Paul began

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<sup>78</sup> Paul does introduce a legal image in 3:15. However, it should be recognized that the language of “covenant” he uses comes from the Abraham story itself: “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram [διέθετο κύριος τῷ Ἀβραμ διαθήκην], saying, ‘To your seed [σπέρμα] I will give this land’” (Gen 15:18). The language of covenant continues in the Abraham narrative, particularly in God’s command for circumcision (see Gen 17:4, 7, 9, 13).

<sup>79</sup> The promise to the seed of Abraham can be seen throughout Genesis (12:7; 13:15, 16; 15:5, 13, 18; 16:10; 17:7-10; 21:13; 22:17). Some have suggested that Paul’s specific reference in Galatians 3:16 is to Genesis 17:8 (Martyn, *Galatians*, 339).

<sup>80</sup> On the translation of the genitive, see Betz, *Galatians*, 153n140. I read the τοῦ πνεύματος as a genitive of material or contents, as the spirit is what was originally promised (see Smyth §§1323-24). The idea of a “promise” of the Holy Spirit is common in Luke/Acts (see Lk 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:33), though in Paul it appears only here and Eph 1:13. It is not made clear in Paul’s argument how the Spirit connects to the promise to Abraham. The language of the “Spirit” appears nowhere in connection with Abraham in the LXX. Most frequently spirit (πνεῦμα) is used to refer to the presence of God (see Gen 1:2; 6:3; 8:1). In prophetic texts, the idea of the Spirit of the Lord coming into the people is more common (see Micah 2:28; Isa 11:2; 32:15; 42:1-5; Ezek 3:24). The Spirit is specifically connected with the Lord’s promise in Hag 2:4-5. The closest connection to Paul’s language here comes in Isa 44. There the prophet announces that God says to Israel that God, “will lay my spirit [πνεῦμα] upon your seed [σπέρμα] and my blessings [εὐλογίας] upon your children” (Isa 44:3).

<sup>81</sup> The change in language is “corrected” by several manuscripts and versions, which read εὐλογίαν to match Paul’s use in v. 14a (see P46, D\* F G Marcion Ambrosiaster). This is clearly a later correction, and the distinction between 14a and 14b is essential to the argument Paul here makes (see Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* [Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994], 525). The

his direct argument to the Galatians (3:2, 5). The reality of the Spirit's presence was the assumption upon which the argument was built, a reality made clear among the Galatians through "visible powers" (3:5). Paul's rhetorical questions invited the Galatians to recognize they received the Spirit from a hearing of faith and not from works of law. In terms of the narrative world constructed, therefore, in 3:10-14 Paul has shown that the redemption effected in Christ's death, specifically his death cursed by the law, has afforded natural Jews, those who were from works of law, the ability to experience what the Galatians have already experienced: the reception of the Spirit.<sup>82</sup>

By 3:14, Paul has characterized for the Galatians that the period under the law was one of distinct disadvantage for those who were defined by the law, those whom he speaks of using the first-person plural. The death of Christ, hung on a tree, was necessary in order to break the curse of the law. Only after this are the Jews at the point at which the Galatians already find themselves. The narrative of Israel, projected through the construction of the argument, has radically shifted from what seems to be the Galatians' logic in seeking to follow the law. It is not by the Gentiles becoming Jews through adherence to the law that righteousness can be achieved. To the contrary, Paul has shown through the law itself that the law presented a barrier to righteousness, a barrier removed by Christ's cursed death.

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language of promise is never associated with Abraham in the LXX (where language of promise is quite rare). Paul associates it with Abraham (see Rom 4:13-20; cf. Acts 7:17) and with Israel in general (see Rom 9:4-9; 15:8; cf. Acts 13:32; 26:6). In Hebrews, Abraham is also connected with promise (Heb 6:13-20; 11:17).

<sup>82</sup> Paul's use of the first-person plural in 3:14a is a problem for those who want to read ὅσοι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου as the troublers (see Silva, "Abraham," 263-64). Silva smooths over this problem by noting "the shift to the first person is a problem for almost any interpretation" ("Abraham," 264n37). The biggest problem for his reading is his failure to connect these terms back to Galatians 2, where Paul gave himself and Cephas label ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, describing the time before they "died to the law" (2:16-19).

Readers, therefore, can begin to see the construction of the narrative logic that will prompt Paul to summarize in 4:12 that he “has become like you.” Paul and his fellow natural Jews had to move outside of the law in order to receive the Spirit, the reality in which the Galatians already live. Through the employment of the Jews’ past, Paul has given an initial definition of the law’s function, one limited to those who are defined by works of law and a function that ended in the death of Christ.

### **The End of the Law’s Efficacy II: The Galatians as the Seed of Abraham**

At 3:29, Paul identifies the Galatians as the “seed of Abraham” by nature of their being “one in Christ Jesus.” In so doing, Paul does not only assign to the Galatians the title previously assigned to Christ, but he also assigns to them the narrative function ascribed to that title. In 3:19-29, Paul makes the argument that the Galatians, as Gentiles, serve as the evidence of the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham. It is in this central section that Paul identifies the Galatians’ key role in advancing the narrative of Israel.

The key to this identification of the role of the Galatians comes in 3:26. In 3:22-25, Paul has described the “fortress” function of the law, protecting “us” Jews from universal sinfulness. In 3:26, though, Paul switches from a focus on “us” to a focus on “you (pl).”<sup>83</sup> Paul’s attention in 3:26-29 shifts away from the role the law played in the

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<sup>83</sup> Lightfoot makes the connection to a similar switch in pronouns in 1 Thess 5:5 (*Galatians*, 149). However, there is no connective (such as γάρ here) to suggest that the switch is central to the argument. In 1 Thessalonians there is no discernible pattern to the change, as Paul labels both “you” and “us” as of light and not of darkness. Explaining this shift has proven difficult for many interpreters, and once again Paul’s pronoun change is often assumed to be incidental. See, for example, the comments of Bruce: “Those addressed as ‘you’ in v. 26 are identical with those indicated by the inclusive ‘we’ in vv. 23-25” (*Galatians*, 183). See also Martyn, *Galatians*, 374. This change has a distinct effect in the process of reading the letter, and to read Paul’s use strictly makes better sense of his argument. Again, it is important for readers to keep

Jews' past to focus on his Gentile Galatian audience. Paul presents the Galatians' identity as "sons of God in Christ Jesus" as the evidence supporting (γάρ) his claim in 3:25 that the Jews are no longer under the pedagogue of the law. Because the Galatians are the sons of God in Christ through faith, the Jews recognize the end of the law's efficacy.<sup>84</sup>

By calling the Galatians "sons of God," Paul ascribes to the Gentile Galatians an identity frequently associated in Scripture with Israel.<sup>85</sup> In so doing, he argues that it is the Galatians who play the role often associated with the Jews in common understandings of salvation history. More important than this context in Scripture, though, the term "son of God" has played an important role in Paul's argument to this point: this is the title given to Christ at the turning point of Paul's autobiographical narrative (1:15-16). Now Paul offers the identity of the Galatians as God's sons through faith as the turning point in the narrative of Israel, marking the end of the temporary efficacy of the law. It is the Galatians' faith, a faith that changes their identity to "sons of God," that Paul indicates was the sign that Jews are no longer under the pedagogue of the law. It was the revelation of God's son that functioned as the pivot in his autobiographical narrative, and indeed it plays the same role in the narrative of Israel.

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in mind the aural context in which the text originally function. As with 1:6, the shift here is rather sharp and unexpected, and its effect would not likely be lost on those who heard it.

<sup>84</sup> Paul's syntax is difficult here (πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ), especially his placement of the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ at the end of the sentence. The two phrases must be separated (see RSV: "For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith"; cf. de Boer, *Galatians*, 242n359). Nowhere in his letters does Paul speak about "faith in Christ" (πίστις ἐν Χριστῷ; cf. 2:16: "We believed on the basis of Christ Jesus [εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν]"), and so we should not read this phrase as "sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus" (see also Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 149; *pace* KJV; Martyn, *Galatians*, 375). Instead, the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ is one Paul often uses to describe his communities. This is the point he is making here, that the Galatians have become sons of God through their identity "in Christ," an identity that happened "through faith."

<sup>85</sup> The phrase "sons of God" (υἱοὶ θεοῦ) appears for the first time here in Galatians to refer to the community, though Paul does use it elsewhere to likewise refer to his communities (see Rom 8:14, 19). It is possible that Paul here draws upon an image known to him from Scripture. Commonly in the LXX, the image of "son of God" (generally singular) is used for Israel collectively (see Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9), an image that continues in texts after the LXX (see Jubilees 1:24-25). In 2 Cor 6:18 Paul quotes 2 Samuel 7:14 where God promises, "You will be to me sons and daughters."

Paul explains the Galatians' identity as the "sons of God" by arguing that they have "put on Christ." Paul's image is not merely a metaphorical extension of a relationship between God and the community.<sup>86</sup> Rather, Paul argues the Galatians have literally become Christ, and thus the sons of God. This is an ontological reality for Paul, but more importantly for the purposes of this study, it is a narrative reality for his argument. The Galatians play the role previously assigned to Christ. Paul makes this argument by appealing to the unity created within a diverse community in the act of baptism.

What is most significant about this "putting on Christ" is that it creates a singular identity within a community that is characterized by diversity, particularly with reference to the distinctions made by Jewish law. The Galatians' very identity is a demonstration of the irrelevance of the distinctions made by law, distinctions enumerated in 3:28 to be present in Galatia.<sup>87</sup> The Galatians' unity in the Spirit, despite natural distinctions that the law would condemn, confirms that the law is no longer relevant.

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<sup>86</sup> Most commentators assume Paul's identification of the Galatians as "sons of God" reflects the use of pre-Pauline baptismal tradition, particularly because of Paul's reference to clothing in 3:27 (see de Boer, *Galatians*, 242-43). This may be so, but to stop there does not account for how Paul has defined "son of God" within his argument.

<sup>87</sup> Interpreters must resist the urge of reading the long (and important) history of interpretation of Galatians 3:28 into Paul's argument. Instead, readers must focus on how this verse fits within the developing argument. For similar formulas, see 1 Cor 12:13; Col 3:10-11; See also Eph 6:8; Ign. *Smyr.* 1:2. It is important to recognize, though, that in these other locations where Paul is assumed to be quoting tradition, he does not cite these exact three. In these other texts, the pairs cited are generally related to the argumentative context in which the formula is cited (see Troy W. Martin, "The Covenant of Circumcision [Genesis 17:9-14] and the Situational Antitheses in Galatians 3:28" *JBL* 122 [2003]: 113-14). I do not agree with Martin's historical reconstruction of the situation in Galatia, but I agree with his explanation for Paul's use of the three pairs. Martin argues that the Galatians are tempted by works of the law, but are scared to be circumcised. In asking about the covenant requirement, the Galatians are told by "the Agitators" that there are distinctions as to who is required to be circumcised (Jews not Greeks; free person, not slaves; males not females). Paul responds with these three pairs, but notes that in baptism there are no distinctions as to who can be baptized: "Christian baptism ignores the distinctions required by the covenant of circumcision and provides a basis for unity in the Christian community" ("Covenant," 121). This argument, creative for sure, depends too heavily on a hypothetical reconstruction of the situation in Galatia. Martin overlooks Paul's point that once the Galatians have been baptized, they stand as a unity before God. That unity is itself a sign of the fulfillment of the promise.

The origin of Paul's three pairs of opposites in 3:28 has been the source of much speculation. Most interpreters acknowledge the first (Jew/Greek) to be directly relevant to Paul's argument to the Galatians but struggle to account for Paul's reference to slave/free and male/female. Finding no explanation, many have assumed that Paul quotes a preexisting baptismal saying.<sup>88</sup> These struggles, though, result from the common assumption that Paul is offering a positive argument to the Galatians to convince them that these distinctions have been (or should be) removed within the community. That is, many assume that removal of the three distinctions is what Paul is arguing *for*.<sup>89</sup> However, the existence in the community of these three types of distinctions constitutes the evidence that Paul is arguing *from*. Paul is not writing to establish that these natural distinctions are now or should be removed amongst the Galatians.<sup>90</sup> His very point is that the continued presence of this diversity within a community united in Christ is what identifies the Galatians as the seed of Abraham.

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<sup>88</sup> Martyn notes, "Paul names three of these elemental opposites because he is quoting the formula. In writing to the Galatians, however, he is interested only in the first pair" (*Galatians*, 376; cf. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 151). Troy Martin recalls the 2000 SBL meeting in which the Pauline Epistles section discussed Martyn's commentary. Upon being asked by Beverly Gaventa about the function of the second two pairs within Paul's argument, Martyn replied (according to Martin), "I don't know" ("The Covenant of Circumcision," 111). Martin's own "solution" to the "problem" of the three pairs is to point to Gal 17:9-14, where all three are connected to circumcision. For a similar assumption that only the first pair is relevant, see Wayne A. Meeks, "The Image of the Androgyne: Some Uses of a Symbol in Earliest Christianity," *History of Religion* 13 (1974): esp. 181-82.

<sup>89</sup> The three may indeed be related to tradition with which a congregation may have been familiar, but the specifics of the three must not go overlooked. Paul's particular use of ἄρσεν and θήλυς for "male" and "female," rare in his letters but common in the LXX, suggests he is drawing upon his tradition here. Paul uses the same language only in Rom 1:26-27. The terms appear in the creation narrative (see Gen 1:27; 5:2) and in the institution of circumcision for Abraham and his family (see Gen 17:14, 23). Paul argues that these types of distinctions did not need to be made in the context of baptism. Jews, Greeks, slaves, freed persons, males, and females are all present in the community. Once again, Paul assumes his audience agrees with him on his reference to the Galatian community, and he uses this as the basis for his argument.

<sup>90</sup> Certainly modern ears hear the Jew/Greek and male/female distinctions as more "natural" than the distinction between slave and free. However, in Paul's context slavery and freedom were often understood as natural states. Most frequently quoted is Aristotle's discussion of natural slavery in the *Politics* (1.1254b). For discussion, see Nicholas D. Smith, "Aristotle's Theory of Natural Slavery," *The Phoenix* 37 (1983): 109-22.

The specifics of these three distinctions can best be explained by contrasting Paul's point about the Galatians' baptism with the scriptural instructions about circumcision. Distinctions between Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female are essential in determining who can and who cannot be circumcised.<sup>91</sup> The ritual act of circumcision is not universally available. In contrast, in the case of the initiation rite that the Galatians have shared, these distinctions were irrelevant; Jews and Greeks, slaves and free, males and females have all received the Spirit in baptism.<sup>92</sup> This is not the case with circumcision, an act that distinguishes between Jews and Greeks, is forced upon slaves, and does not apply to females. Paul highlights the common experience of a group marked by such "natural" distinctions. The Galatians became unified "in Christ" despite the continued existence in the community of those called Jews and Greeks, slaves and

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<sup>91</sup> The presence of these three distinctive pairs, found nowhere else in Paul's letters, can be explained by their presence in the original Genesis 17 covenant stipulating circumcision. In Genesis 17:9-14, circumcision is offered as a way of distinguishing between those chosen by God and those not, a distinction between Jew and Gentile. Further, the instruction is offered specifically for males. The instruction also considers the slave/free relationship, twice mentioning that the master is responsible for circumcising those "bought with his money." The instructions to Abraham about circumcision distinguish between male/female, slave/free, Jew/Greek. In Paul's context, the Jew/Greek and slave/free boundaries are permeable, whereas the male/female boundary is not. This distinction may help to explain Paul's shift in language between "there is neither Jew nor Greek" and "there is not male and female" (see Martin, "The Covenant," 121). In making decisions of whether to circumcise or not, making such distinctions are important. Only Jews are circumcised; slaves belonging to a Jewish master are to be circumcised, though freed persons are not; males are to be circumcised, females are not.

<sup>92</sup> It is often asked whether if by focusing so narrowly on the Galatians' baptism, Paul does not suggest that this initiation rite simply replaces the Jewish rite of circumcision, different in act, though holding the same symbolic importance? Does he not merely exchange one criterion of entry into the community for another? (see, for example, Bruce, *Galatians*, 185). How can Paul argue against circumcision as a necessary step to entry if he is going to assume that baptism is such a necessary step? If Paul were making the argument to the Galatians that they have become sons of God, then this would be a legitimate question to ask of Paul's argument at this point. The presence of such an obvious problem in his logic, though, suggests the need to rethink what Paul is arguing here. His point is not to convince the Galatians that they have become unified in Christ, that they have put on Christ. That stands as the assumption of the larger argument Paul here makes. Rather here he is arguing that the Gentiles, by fact that they have become "sons of God" through their putting on of Christ in baptism, function as the evidence for Jews that they are no longer under the pedagogue.

freepersons, males and females. Such distinctions do not go away, but they are subsumed under a new identity in Christ, marked by the reception of the Spirit.<sup>93</sup>

Paul uses this unity despite natural distinctions to identify the Galatians' role within the narrative of Israel. Paul's image of the Galatians "putting on Christ" is not a comment on the internal dynamics of the community.<sup>94</sup> Rather, Paul's clothing image is a comment about the appearance of the Galatian community to those outside of it. Unity in Christ covers natural distinctions. Observers of the community no longer see a collection of Jews and Greeks, of slaves and free, of males and females, though these distinct identities persist within the Galatian community. Rather outsiders, particularly Jews, see that these distinctions have been subsumed under the identity "in Christ" through baptism. The Galatians have become "one in Christ Jesus" through their common reception of the spirit, and they now appear as a unified community to those who observe them.

It is this unity in Christ that prompts Paul's return to the "seed" language, first introduced in 3:16. Whereas Paul previously identified Christ as the "seed of Abraham," he now argues it is the Galatians, "in Christ," who are the seed.<sup>95</sup> This is a stunning development within Paul's argument that cannot be overlooked as merely "relat[ing]"

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<sup>93</sup> Indeed, Paul previously has labeled Cephas a "natural Jew" (2:15) and Titus a "Greek" (2:2). In neither case does Paul suggest the Jewish/Gentile indicator ceases to function. Other parts of Paul's letters suggest the distinctions remain. See, particularly Paul's comments about Jews and Greeks in 1 Cor 9, his instructions to the Corinthians about the many members of a singular body in 1 Cor 12, and his assigning of particular roles in the *Haustafeln* (Col 3:18-4:1; Eph 5:21-6:9). By all indications Paul continued to consider himself a Jew (see Rom 9:1-5).

<sup>94</sup> Paul uses the language of "dressing" elsewhere to exhort his communities to new behavior in light of new identity (see Rom 13:14; Eph 4:24; Col 3:10). It is certainly plausible that Paul's reference to clothing here is related to the physical ritual of disrobement that accompanied the early Christian baptismal ritual. However, in the context of his argument, it is used as an image to explain how the Galatians appear unified as the seed of Abraham.

<sup>95</sup> On the shifting definition of the "seed of Abraham", see Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 49-51.

Gentile Galatians directly to Abraham and God’s covenantal promise.”<sup>96</sup> Such a narrow understanding of Paul’s rhetoric at 3:29 reflects a misreading of the function of Abraham’s seed. The Galatians function as the seed just as Christ does.<sup>97</sup> As constructed, the narrative of God’s promises to Israel has awaited the appearance of Abraham’s seed. Paul was emphatic that God’s promise extended only to Abraham and a singular seed, concluding, rather enigmatically, that this seed is Christ (3:16).<sup>98</sup> The narrative of Israel has been stalled in a period of the law, given because of transgressions “until the seed to whom it was promised should come” (3:19).

This waiting for the singular seed is the reason why the irrelevance of distinctions in baptism is so important to Paul’s argument. The Galatians are “one in Christ” just as the promise was made to the “one seed” (3:16). By identifying the Galatians as the seed of Abraham, therefore, Paul does far more than reassure the Galatians that they are already recipients of the promises made to Abraham, and therefore they need not follow the law. That point has already been established in the letter, primarily through the exegetical work in 3:6-9. This point is certainly part of his argument throughout the letter, but that reading falls far short of grasping how this re-telling of Israel’s narrative shapes

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<sup>96</sup> Longenecker, *Galatians*, 158.

<sup>97</sup> The identification of the Galatians as the seed and as Christ is weakened in most interpretations. The opinion of Donaldson is typical: “All who are ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (vv. 26, 28)—Jew or Gentile—share in his status as ‘seed’ in a derivative way” (“The Curse of the Law,” 100). I argue there is nothing “derivative” about Paul’s description of the Galatians as seed.

<sup>98</sup> There have been a number of suggestions for the origin of this connection between Christ and the seed. One plausible explanation of Paul’s implied argument is an assumed reference to God’s instructions to Nathan in 2 Samuel 7, where the language of “seed” is directly connected to God’s son and resurrection. God tells Nathan to inform David that after he is dead, God will “raise up your seed after you” (ἀναστήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου μετὰ σέ). He goes on to suggest that, “I will be a father to him” (7:14; cf. Gal 1:1), and then says “his unrighteousness may come” (ἐὰν ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀδικία αὐτοῦ), but God “will punish him with the rod of men and with blows inflicted by people, but I will not take my mercy from him.” The early Christians read this text messianically, and it is plausible that Paul is drawing on assumed knowledge that he and the audience share. This text is also likely the referent in Rom 1:2-4. References can also be seen in 2 Cor 6:18; Heb 1:5; Rev 21:7. A similar messianic interpretation can be seen in *4QFlor.* Acts 13:32-33 presents striking similarities to the Qumran reading (see Dale Goldsmith, “Acts 13:33-37: A Peshier on 2 Samuel 7,” *JBL* 87 [1968]: 321-24).

the overall argument of the letter. Paul places the Galatians in the role that Christ, as seed, played in the narrative of Israel. The dormant promise of blessing for “all the Gentiles” has now been fulfilled, and the appearance of the Galatians unified *as* Christ is the sign of this fulfillment. As the seed of Abraham, the Galatians as a community, unified in Christ, mark the end of the era of the law. The Galatians have “put on” Christ, not merely in the sense that they are themselves are now secure because of their membership in the community.<sup>99</sup> Rather, they now take on the appearance of Christ to those outside, and therefore they function as a sign just as Christ did.<sup>100</sup>

As Christ’s death in violation of the law demonstrated the lack of the law’s continued efficacy (3:13), so the unity of the Galatians in Christ, blurring boundaries created by the law, demonstrates that the era of the law has passed, that the age has turned within the narrative of Israel. The empirical reality of a crucified Messiah, cursed by law, demonstrates the inadequacy of the function ascribed to the law in Judaism. Likewise, the reality of the reception of God’s Spirit by a “naturally diverse” community demonstrates the inadequacy of the prior system of initiation. The seed has, as Paul indicated it would in 3:19, marked the end of the law.

As Paul closes his argument in Gal 3 he has contextualized for his Gentile audience the role that the law has played in the narrative of Israel. Introduced well after

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<sup>99</sup> Confusion arises because of the metaphorical use of the language of “putting on” (ἐνδύω). Paul uses this language in a moral sense often (Rom 13:12, 14; Eph 4:24; 6:11, 14; Col 3:12; 1 Thess 5:8). This moral, imperative use of the language is common also in the LXX (see Ps 131:9; Prov 31:25; Wis 5:18). Here, however, Paul uses the phrase in the indicative to argue the Galatians have already become a new being. The use is not metaphorical in the sense that Paul maintains the idea that one is now identified by that which he has “put on” (see Ps 92:1). Albrecht Oepke argues, “There are no parallels for Paul’s indicative usage” (A. Oepke, “δύω, ἐκδύω, κτλ.,” *TDNT* 2.318-21; quotation from *TDNT* 2.320), though I find the use in Col 3:10 to be quite similar (Paul also uses the language in the imperative in Col 3:12).

<sup>100</sup> It is often suggested that the reference here is to the new clothes in baptism. I agree with Lightfoot, though, that, “It is scarcely probably however, that the ceremonial baptism had become so definitely fixed at this early date, that such an allusion would speak for itself” (*Galatians*, 149-50).

the promises made to Abraham, and focused on temporarily protecting natural Jews, the law was always expected to end, when the promises to Abraham were fulfilled with the appearance of the seed. This fulfillment has now happened, a reality attested to by the Galatians' reception of the Spirit.

### **A Legal Explanation of The Galatians' Role in the Narrative of Israel (4:1-7)**

I have highlighted the radical conclusion Paul reaches at 3:29, a conclusion even more radical given the Jewish expectations highlighted by Donaldson. In retelling the narrative of Israel Paul has placed the Galatians in an evidentiary role as Abraham's seed; their identity in Christ signals the end of the law's efficacy for those who were under it. The very identifier of Jewish heritage, the father Abraham, has now been tied to the Gentile community, and the law has been contextualized as a temporary interlude that natural Jews had to overcome. The blessing promised to Abraham has been fulfilled in his seed, and that seed is the Galatian community, unified through their reception of the Spirit. This narrative logic of the Gentile Galatians becoming the seed of Abraham, signaling the end of the law, is consistent with Paul's conclusion in 4:12, to which his argument is working. Paul has "become as you," because the Galatians have shown him the irrelevance of distinctions made based on the law. Paul explains this radical conclusion through a legal image that forms one of the more critical—and yet difficult—passages in the entire letter (4:1-7).<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Many interpreters have recognized the centrality of this image to Paul's overall argument. de Boer says Galatians 4:1-7 is "probably the central theological passage of the letter to the Galatians" ("The Meaning of the Phrase *ta stoicheia tou kosmou* in Galatians," *NTS* 53 [2007]: 204). Martyn also labels 4:3-5 as "nothing less than the theological center of the entire letter" (*Galatians*, 388). I certainly agree about this section's centrality, though I would phrase it in terms of the argument, not necessarily the theological vision of the letter. The division of 4:1-7 as a rhetorical unit is helpful (see, for example, James M. Scott, *Adoption as*

Paul offers this section as a summary of the argument just put forward, introduced with his familiar phrase “let me explain this in another way” (λέγω δέ).<sup>102</sup> Paul begins with an appeal to a cultural convention shared with his audience, wherein a child is not recognized as an heir until the time appointed by the father, when he is actually granted his inheritance.<sup>103</sup> This image (4:1-2) is applied to the past of the Jews first (4:3-7) and then the Gentile Galatians (4:8-11), a distinction marked, yet again, by Paul’s switch in pronouns.<sup>104</sup> The image focuses on recognition, and the didactic function of the analogy seems rather clear. The distinct identities of an heir and a slave become apparent only after the “time decided upon by the father.”<sup>105</sup> Paul’s argument has focused on the

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*Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of υιοθεσία in the Pauline Corpus* [Tübingen: JCB Mohr, 1992], 121), made clear by the presence of “slave” and “heir” language in 4:1 and 4:7 and the adversative ἀλλά with which 4:8 begins.

<sup>102</sup> This phrase is a shorthand version of his prior comment in 3:15: “Let me explain this in common terms” (κατὰ ἄνθρωπον λέγω). Paul uses the phrase λέγω δέ frequently to introduce additional explanation of a point just made (see Rom 11:13; 1 Cor 7:6, 12; Eph 5:32). My translation is similar to Bruce’s appropriate translation of the phrase: “I mean, let me put it this way” (*Galatians*, 192).

<sup>103</sup> Paul’s image is variously referred to as an “analogy” (de Boer, *Galatians*, 251; Bruce, *Galatians*, 192), a “comparison” (Betz, *Galatians* 202), or a “picture” (Martyn, *Galatians*, 385). In accordance with the recommendations of rhetorical handbooks, Paul frequently appeals to cultural norms he assumes are held in common with his audience as the starting point for his analogical reasoning. The analogy of 4:1-2 is not technically a maxim as described by the handbooks, but Paul’s use essentially accords with the recommendations regarding maxims. More proper uses of maxims pulled from his cultural context can be found in Romans 5:6-8; 7:1-3; 14:3-23. For the standard treatment of maxims in the rhetorical tradition, see Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.21 1394a-1395b; Aelius Theon 96-106; Quintilian, *Inst. Orat.* 8.5. For Aristotle and Aelius Theon, the maxim is an integral part of an argument. For the later Latin authors, it is treated more as a stylistic device. For a discussion of Paul’s use of maxims, see Paul A. Holloway, “Paul’s Pointed Prose: The *Sententia* in Roman Rhetoric and Paul,” *NovT* 40 (1988): 32-53; Rollin A. Ramsaran, *Liberating Words: Paul’s Use of Rhetorical Maxims in 1 Corinthians 1-10* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996).

<sup>104</sup> There has been much discussion of how closely the image fits with Paul’s application. There are certainly differences. Primary among them is the assumed death of the father in the image (4:2) and God the father’s sending of his son in Paul’s application. These tensions have led some to suggest that the image and the explanation cannot have originally come together (see particularly J. C. O’Neill, *The Recovery of Paul’s Letter to the Galatians* [London: SPCK, 1972], 56-60). Readers should not, though, demand that the image fits Paul’s argument perfectly. As Lightfoot points out, “All metaphors must cease to apply at some point” (*Galatians*, 165).

<sup>105</sup> Paul is not specific about what this “time” (προθεσμία) actually is, and depending upon the cultural background of his image, it may differ. There is much debate over whether the image assumes this is the father’s death or some pre-ordained time wherein a guardian would cease to have power over a child (for discussion, see John K. Goodrich, “Guardians not Taskmasters: The Cultural Resonances of Paul’s Metaphor in Galatians 4.1-2,” *JSNT* 32 [2010]: 251-84). The death of the father might present a problem for Paul’s equation of God with the father. That the father may not have played a role in this decision under

decisive action by God in Christ and the resulting inheritance that has been claimed by the Galatians.

At closer glance, though, key details of the image are not so clear. Who is the natural heir and who is the slave from whom the heir cannot be distinguished? Many readers have assumed that Paul intends his audience to identify the natural Jews with the children of God, those who were temporarily under the enslavement of the law.<sup>106</sup> Paul's distinction between two chronological periods, separated only by the decision of the father, repeats the logic of the previous argument for the temporary efficacy of the law. Indeed many interpreters equate Paul's reference to the heir "under stewards and trustees" (4:2) with the Jews "under a pedagogue" until faith came (3:24-25).<sup>107</sup> On one reading, therefore, the Jews are the "natural children" of God, those who have endured a period of slavery but are to receive their proper inheritance now that God has acted in Christ. This position is articulated by Linda Belleville's conclusion: "Paul's point, in any event, is clear. While the minor is 'under guardians and stewards' he, like the slave, lacks the capacity of self-representation and self-determination. Similarly, the Jew 'under law' lacks as well this capacity."<sup>108</sup>

A second reading associates both Jews and Gentiles with the natural heir, an identity hidden from both due to their common enslavement. Paul's common reference to

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Roman law (so Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 166) matters very little for Paul's argument. In Paul's example, it is the father that determines when a son ceases to be under the control of others. The imagery is driven more by the point he is trying to establish than any legal norm to which he may be appealing.

<sup>106</sup> This reading often depends upon a focus on Paul's argument in Romans 9-11, particularly his reference to the Jews as "my own people" (Rom 9:3). However, even in Romans 9, Paul says that "not all of Abraham's children are his true descendents" (9:7), arguing that it is those of the promise who are the true children of Abraham (cf. Gal 3:8-9). In Rom 11 Paul asks "has God rejected his people?" In Romans as in Galatians, Paul understands as "Israel" those to whom the promise was made. The law, that which defined "Judaism" is understood as a stumbling block for some (see Rom 9:32-33; 11:7-8).

<sup>107</sup> See, for example, the comments of Dunn: "The situation of the child 'under the *oikonomos*' is closely parallel to the situation of Israel 'under the *paidagōgos*'" (*Galatians*, 211).

<sup>108</sup> Belleville, "Under Law," 63.

enslavement to the fundamental elements (4:3, 9) has prompted many interpreters to argue that Paul uses the image to show that Christ has freed both Jews and Gentiles.<sup>109</sup> All persons now have the opportunity to claim inheritance through faith. In the image, all were enslaved, and thus the “natural son” is anyone who has received the inheritance through faith.

These two readings, though, overlook two important aspects of Paul’s argument. First, these readings do not take into account the distinction between Jews and Gentiles upon which Paul’s argument is built in the central section of Galatians. I have highlighted that Paul has constructed a past of Jews and Gentiles that differs; Jews have had to overcome the curse of the law in order to receive the Spirit (3:14). Therefore, I argue Paul applies the image of 4:1-2 in distinct ways to Jews and Gentiles. This distinction is made most clear in Paul’s shift from the first-person to second-person plural.<sup>110</sup> Paul has not changed from “us” to “you” merely “unconsciously or unavoidably.”<sup>111</sup> Rather, as he has

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<sup>109</sup> The reader is given no indication that there is a connection between the Jews’ and the Gentiles’ past, and in fact reading both Jews and Gentiles into Paul’s first person plural here upsets the impact of his equating Jews and Gentiles in 4:8-11. So, Betz is quite right to say that “what he has to say applies to *all* Christians, whether Jewish or Gentile in origin” (*Galatians*, 204, emphasis original). However, as the argument unfolds, this is not the case. That is, the reader understands Paul to first speak about Christians of Jewish origin, only then to make the same argument about Gentiles like the Galatians. Therefore, indeed the pattern does apply to all Christians, but a reader only recognizes this after the argument, not here at 4:3.

<sup>110</sup> The manuscript tradition reflects a familiar confusion over Paul’s pronouns in this section, though the strongest manuscript evidence suggests that Paul argues it was the Gentile Galatians’ (“you”) identity as “sons” that caused God to send the spirit of his son into “our” (Jews’) heart. The alternate reading “your hearts” (τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν) is attested the *Textus Receptus* and the second hand of Codex Beza, but almost all major manuscripts and quotations reflect the reading “our hearts.” The alternative is clearly a later attempt to correct the confusing point Paul makes here (see Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 526).

<sup>111</sup> The dismissal of the switch quoted here is from Dunn (*Galatians*, 220). It is unclear how a switch in pronouns would be “unavoidable.” Similar dismissals can be found in most sources. See, for example, Martyn (*Galatians*, 391), who suggests that the frequent switching of, and resulting ambiguity from, the pronouns is part of Paul’s rhetorical intention “to demonstrate the erasure of distinctions within the church of God born in that advent.” Interpreters’ inability to explain the origin of the switch should not lead to the conclusion that the switch is unimportant. The very instability of the textual tradition of this verse demonstrates the strong effect Paul’s change in pronouns has on his reader, and thus it cannot be glossed over as “unavoidable.”

throughout ch. 3, Paul speaks in different terms with regard to the past of Jews and Gentiles.

These readings also overlook Paul's emphasis in introducing the image in 4:1-2. This is an image about the recognition of an heir, not the way in which the heir qualifies for inheritance.<sup>112</sup> The image focuses on the inability to distinguish between an heir and a slave before inheritance is granted, and Paul inserts this image as an explanation for his argument that the inheritance of the Spirit has already been granted, and it has been granted to the Gentile Galatians, a reality that runs contrary to prevailing expectations.<sup>113</sup> This is the conclusion Paul has reached in 3:29, that the Gentile Galatians are the "seed of Abraham," and thus are also the heirs according to the promise. The "appointed time" has occurred in God's action at the "fullness of time," and the revelation of the heir's identity

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<sup>112</sup> The dominant scholarly conversation centers on the specific legal background to Paul's image and the rights of a child and the decision-making power of the father. See, for example, the argument of Belleville ("Under Law," esp. 60-63), who spends most of her time establishing what rights a child would have while in the minority. While perhaps interesting, this question is irrelevant to Paul's image. Paul's focus is on an observer's inability to distinguish between the heir and a slave. For a recent treatment of the background to Paul's maxim, see Goodrich, "Guardians." Goodrich summarizes that most recent interpreters follow the "traditional reading" that reads the maxim as reflecting Roman law. For this reading, see Bruce, *Galatians*, 192. Goodrich labels as a "typological reading" that introduced by James M. Scott (*Adoption as Sons of God*), which reads the image against the exodus narrative of Israel's past. Scott's reading has been adopted by some, but not many (see Dunn, *Galatians*, 211). The question of a Roman or Jewish background is not merely a recent one (see, e.g., Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 165), but Goodrich's argument against Scott is convincing. Goodrich's appeal to Peter Garnsey's conclusion on Galatians 4:1-7 is appropriate: "It is striking that Paul has used Roman law as a tool to develop his theology, and has used it accurately" (Peter Garnsey, *Sons, Slaves—And Christians* [Oxford: Clarendon, 1997], 106; quoted in Goodrich, "Guardians," 274). Goodrich's conclusions, though, offer no insight on how understanding the Roman context of Paul's maxim helps readers understand his argument. In fact, his assertion that his "proposal is quite significant for the study of Gal. 4.1-2" is merely a comment on the improbability of the reading of Scott (and those who follow him) ("Guardians," 274). Lightfoot's note that "[Paul] seems to put forward rather the general conception of the office of a guardian, than any definite statute regulating it" seems appropriate (*Galatians*, 165; cf. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 163-64). Paul assumes his audience is familiar with the legal precedent cited, regardless of its background.

<sup>113</sup> There is a bit of a shift in Paul's imagery. The Galatians have been identified as the "seed of Abraham," and thus "heirs according to the promise" in 3:29. By this logic, therefore, Abraham would be their father, whose possessions would then become the inheritance. Here in 4:1-11, though, God is the father, the one who grants inheritance.

is not what was expected.<sup>114</sup> The image, therefore, works to explain why the Gentiles have been indentified as the natural heirs when the expectation was that those within the law were the heirs of the promise to Abraham. Paul uses the image to show that distinctions between the heir and the slave are impossible before the inheritance is granted, and so these expectations were not correct. The image functions, therefore, as a critique of the use of the law to make distinctions between Jews and Gentiles before the inheritance is granted.

In 4:3-5 Paul begins to apply the logic of the legal image to the past of natural Jews like himself, those whom he has described as being “under law.”<sup>115</sup> For natural Jews in enslavement, Paul begins with an emphasis on the Jewish identity of the Messiah. God sent one “born from a woman” and “born under law.”<sup>116</sup> This description of the object of

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<sup>114</sup> The phrase πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου is found only here in Paul’s letters, though a closely related phrase (πλήρωμα τῶν καιρῶν) is used in Eph 1:10 in a similar way. Phrases indicating a fulfilling of a specific, divinely-ordained period of time were frequently used in Jewish literature of the time, well before Paul (Isa 6:20; Jer 25:12), in Jewish apocalyptic literature roughly contemporary with Paul (1 Esdras 1:55), and elsewhere in early Christianity (see Mk 1:15; Jn 7:8)

<sup>115</sup> On Paul’s switching pronouns in 4:1-7, Martyn makes this surprising comment: “Skillfully using sometimes the first person plural—‘we’—and sometimes the second person plural—‘you’ (with the addition once of “they”)—Paul paints a doleful picture of the whole of humanity” (*Galatians*, 385). Martyn seems to suggest that the confusion created by the switching in some way has the effect of unifying humanity: “The mixture of persons, ‘you’ and ‘our,’ serves what we have seen to be one of Paul’s intentions: to affirm the monolithic state of humanity prior to Christ’s advent, and to demonstrate the erasure of distinctions within the church of God born in that advent” (*Galatians*, 391). It seems far more likely that Paul switches in particular places with good reason, rather than switching haphazardly to confuse his reader into seeing “us” and “you” as being the same. Indeed, as I show, Paul’s very point is that there was no such “monolithic state of humanity prior to Christ’s advent,” and thus the pronoun changes are an important part of his argument.

<sup>116</sup> Paul’s identification of “those under the law” was first made in 3:23. There he identified the law as that which surrounded Jews, setting them apart from the rest of humanity at a time before Christ when “Scripture confined everything under sin.” To be “under law,” therefore, was to be set apart as distinct from the rest of humanity. Though many assume the phrase “under law” (ὕπὸ νόμου) is a common designation in Paul, it appears quite infrequently. Paul uses the phrase only in Romans (6:14, 15), 1 Corinthians (9:20) and Galatians (3:23; 4:4-5; 4:21; 5:18). The phrase also appears in Romans 3:21 and James 2:9 (with the definite article), though in these contexts it is within a prepositional phrase indicating impersonal agency. The phrase seems to be relatively rare elsewhere in earliest Christianity, not appearing anywhere else in the New Testament (on this phrase in earliest Christianity, see Belleville, “Under Law”; Donaldson, “Curse”). In 1 Corinthians 9:20, Paul clearly uses the phrase to refer to Jews as opposed to Gentiles. In Romans 6:14-15, the context is less clear, though he denies that his audience is “under law.”

God's action is distinct from the action Paul describes in 4:6: "God sent the spirit of his son" (4:6).<sup>117</sup>

Paul's summary of the particularities of God's action and the resulting change of status for those under law depends upon and re-creates his argument about Jews under the curse of the law, offered in 3:10-14. There Paul argued that Christ's particular mode of death, as a person hung on a tree, was itself a violation of the law. Christ's violation of the law had a particular effect upon those who are "from works of law," namely, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law" (Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξήγγόρασεν ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου). Christ's death was efficacious for those cursed by law because he himself was cursed by the law in the manner of his death. The redemption from the law creates the potential for their reception of the spirit (3:14). This same emphasis on the life and death of Jesus as revealing flaws in the law accounts for Paul's emphasis on God's sending his son in the form a person "born under law."<sup>118</sup> Jesus's life and death was efficacious for those "under law" because of the redemption he offered in demonstrating the problems of law.<sup>119</sup> The enslaving element for Jews, the law, is overcome by God's action. The logic of this connection is Paul's point in 3:13-14.

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<sup>117</sup> Interpreters do not often note this distinction. It is assumed that Paul's comment that Jesus was human is an emphasis that "God's Son came to share the human predicament completely" (de Boer, *Galatians*, 263). His argument throughout has been that the law temporarily applied to a particular people, protecting them from a universal confinement under sin (3:22). It was a Jewish Jesus that the Jews encountered, an identity that led them to recognize the role of the law. Christ's redemptive act is efficacious specifically because he is a Jew, under the power of the law, dying a death condemned by the law (3:13).

<sup>118</sup> The designation of a person as "born from a woman" was common in Judaism (see Job 14:1; Matt 11:11; Lk 7:28; cf. 1 Tim 2:5). Many interpreters explain Paul's language here as a reference back to pre-Pauline, perhaps baptismal, traditions about Jesus, and most suggest the final point that Jesus was "born under law" is the only part directly relevant to Paul's argument, and thus is likely "Paul's contribution" (see Bruce, *Galatians*, 196; Betz, *Galatians*, 207-208).

<sup>119</sup> Those who read Paul to understand all to be "under law," particularly with reference to 3:10, read no reference here to Christ's Jewishness. For example, Martyn translates γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμον as "born under the power of the Law" (*Galatians*, 390). It is certainly true, as Martyn indicates that, "Paul believes . . . that everyone is enslaved by the cosmic elements, the Law being one of them." However, Paul's distinction of the law as one particular "cosmic element" is essential to his argument. His argument throughout has been

With the second ἵνα clause of 4:5, Paul reads the Jews' situation through the inheritance image introduced in 4:1-2. In being redeemed from slavery, the Jews are established as sons of God through adoption.<sup>120</sup> In terms of the image, natural Jews, those who were "under law," are now identified as heirs whose identity was hidden temporarily by slavery. They, now redeemed from law, are God's sons, the identity given to the Gentiles (3:26), by being redeemed out of slavery and adopted by God.

In 3:13-14, Christ's redemption of the Jews from the curse of the law was followed by a potential "that we might receive the promise of the Spirit" (3:14). So also with Paul's argument about redemption here: Christ's redemption opens the potential for the Jews to receive "the Spirit of God's son."<sup>121</sup> The redemption from the law is necessary in order to receive the Spirit.

In 4:6, Paul continues to address the situation of natural Jews, redeemed from the law, but now he introduces the Galatians' identity as a key part of the narrative: "Because

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that the law temporarily applied to a particular people, protecting them from a universal confinement under sin (3:22). Christ's redemptive act is efficacious specifically because he is a Jew, under the power of the law, dying a death condemned by the law (3:13). Those who argue that Paul holds that everyone is "under law" have a difficult time explaining why Paul specifies Christ as "born under law." Martyn argues "this clause is altogether parallel, therefore, to the preceding one" (*Galatians*, 390). However, given that Paul has recently introduced Christ's death in terms of its relationship to the law and its redemptive powers specifically because it was condemned by the law, it makes sense that his reference to Christ being "born under law" is a reference back to his argument in 3:13.

<sup>120</sup> Though literally Paul uses the term "sonship" (υιοθεσίαν), this language was most often used in Paul's time to refer to inclusion of someone as a son who was not so naturally. For example Diodorus Siculus (1C BCE) describes Hera's re-creation of a birth scene to complete her adoption (υιοποιέω) of Heracles, noting that "this ceremony is observed to this day by the barbarians whenever they wish to adopt a son [ὅταν θετὸν υἱὸν ποιῆσθαι βούλωνται]" (Diod. Sic. 4.39.2). Though the term appears neither in the LXX nor in Philo, the concept is common in Hellenistic Judaism. Paul uses this term to refer both to Jews' (see Rom 9:4) and Gentiles' (see Rom 8:15; Eph 1:5) becoming children of God, a status they did not naturally have. The argument, here, is slightly different, for Paul is drawing upon the image wherein someone is a natural child of the father. James Scott has summarized the background of Paul's adoption language, arguing that the term is frequently used in Hellenistic Greek for adoption as a son, but "Paul's religious use of υιοθεσία is unparalleled" (*Adoption as Sons of God*, 55).

<sup>121</sup> The phrase "of his son" is missing from P46, though the overwhelming evidence suggests it is original.

you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his son into our heart.”<sup>122</sup> Jesus’ identity as the Jewish Messiah redeemed Jews from the enslaving power of the law, creating potential for the reception of the Spirit. After that redemption, the Jews then could receive the Spirit, a reality the Galatians knew apart from law (3:2, 5).<sup>123</sup> As Paul argued in 3:26-29, it is the Galatians’ identity as sons of God that moves the narrative forward to include the Jews. While God’s gift of a Jewish Messiah functioned to redeem the Jews from their enslavement to the law, freeing them to receive adoption, the Gentiles’ identity as sons creates the potential of the Jews to receive the Spirit of God’s son. The Galatians’ reception of the Spirit has been the primary assumption upon which Paul’s argument is built (3:2, 5). The Galatians are the heirs, an identity not given them through the gift of the Spirit, but one revealed through that gift.<sup>124</sup> The Galatians, therefore, are sons, not by

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<sup>122</sup> There is ambiguity in Paul’s use of the initial particle ὅτι to transition to speak about the Gentiles. The use could be explanatory (“that”), indicating Paul turns his attention away from the Jews’ experience with Christ to the Gentiles’. Reading it this way entails inserting language to explain Paul’s logic. See, for example, Dunn’s translation: “And in that you are sons” (*Galatians*, 219). Instead, I read the particle as causal (“because”), a use of the particle found frequently in Galatians and Paul’s letters (see Longenecker, *Galatians*, 173).

<sup>123</sup> My reading that the Gentiles’ identity in Christ influences the Jews’ reception of the Spirit can help explain one of the more difficult textual issues in all of Paul’s letters. Most interpreters disregard the most likely original reading (printed in NA27) “into *our* hearts” (εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν). This reading has been understood to be difficult to fit into Paul’s logic, though it is supported by early and diverse witnesses (P46 κ B C D\*). For discussion of the witnesses, see Metzger, *Textual Commentary*, 526. The reading “your hearts” found in the *textus receptus* is clearly an attempt to harmonize the text with the second-person plural verb ἐστὲ found earlier in the verse. The more difficult reading “our hearts” is, therefore, accepted based on internal and external criteria. Though “our hearts” is translated by most major English versions (NRSV, ESV, KJV, NET) and commentators, most commentators simply assume “our hearts” to include both Jews and Gentiles: “ἡμῶν has patently the inclusive force: yours and ours” (Bruce, *Galatians*, 198). Martyn argues that the switch in pronouns “is probably the result of Paul’s drawing the second part of the sentence (excepting ‘of his Son’) from baptismal tradition” (*Galatians*, 391). Such hypothetical reconstructions are unnecessary. My reading of the Galatians’ influence of the Jews’ identity makes best use of the original text “our hearts.”

<sup>124</sup> Paul’s argument takes an odd turn with his switch to the second-person singular in 4:7. The scribal tradition certainly has had trouble with this shift to the second-person singular. A few manuscripts (F G) omit the verb εἶ, though this is best understood as a later change, attempting to account for the odd switch to the second-person singular, which appears nowhere else in the letter, other than in Paul’s report of his speech to Cephas (2:14) or his quotation of Scripture (4:27, 30; 5:14). In 6:1 Paul switches to the second person singular to emphasize that each person must be mindful of his or her own behavior. Regardless of the intention behind the change, the effect of the switch is to keep an individual reader/ hearer focused on his or her own experience with the spirit. For a similar conclusion, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 222. The ancient

adoption, but rather by their natural status. This natural identity has become apparent in their reception of the Spirit.

Paul has applied the image of 4:1-2 to the natural Jews, showing that the redemption from the law, effected by Jesus' identity as one "born under law," was a necessary step before the reception of the inheritance. In 4:8-11, he applies this same logic to the Gentiles, showing that they too were enslaved in the past, but have now been revealed as natural sons.

The key in Paul's application of the image to the Gentiles is his repeated use of "the fundamental elements of the world" (τά στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου) (4:3, 9) to which he says both Jews and Gentiles were enslaved before Christ.<sup>125</sup> As "infants," the Jews were enslaved, and in their pursuit of the law the Gentile Galatians are seeking to be enslaved again.<sup>126</sup>

Paul's Jewish contemporaries often spoke of the law as a "solution" to the problems presented by these fundamental elements, which were powers that affect both

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rhetorical tradition recognized the rhetorical power of using the second-person singular, as a way to "move him more and make him more attentive and full of active interest, because he is roused by the appeals to him in person" (Libanius, *On the Sublime* 26.3). The switch has the effect of keeping the individual reader focused on his or her own baptismal experience, the basis of Paul's appeal, but it also shifts attention away from the Jews' experience, covered in 4:3-6, to the situation of the Gentile Galatians.

<sup>125</sup> The debate over the specific meaning of this term is immense, and to summarize it is well beyond my scope. Paul also uses the phrase in Col 2:8, 20; cf. 2 Peter 3:10-12, though his use in Galatians must remain our focus. The commentary literature provides the best introduction to the possibility of meanings (see G. Delling, "στοιχέω, συστοιχέω, στοιχεῖον," *TDNT* 7.670-87). For a thorough discussion of Paul's use of the term in Galatians see Martyn (*Galatians*, 393-406; cf. *Theological Issues*, 125-40). Martyn begins his analysis by summarizing "four striking motifs" in 4:3-15: a) The elements have the power to enslave; b) God ended enslavement with his son; c) The enslaving elements have some connection with the law; d) The elements enslaved all human beings (see *Galatians*, 393; cf. Eduard Lohse, *Colossians and Philemon* [trans. William R. Poehlmann and Robert J. Karris; Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1971 (1968)], 96-98; De Boer, "The Meaning"; Belleville, "Under Law," 64-69). It is most probable that in Paul's context the term was understood with respect to the "fundamental elements" which comprise the universe, the well-known four elements of earth, wind, air, and fire (Delling, *TDNT* 7.684). The term is most often connected with the composition of the physical world, given negative connotations in Judaism, particularly with reference to pagan worship of the created order, rather than the creator.

<sup>126</sup> Paul elsewhere uses the term νήπιος when quoting general wisdom (see Rom 2:20; 1 Cor 3:1; 13:11; Eph 4:14; 1 Thess 2:7; cf. Heb 5:13). The term used to refer to Gentiles (1 Cor 3:1) as well as Jews (Rom 2:20).

Jew and Gentile.<sup>127</sup> Among the many uses of the term τὰ στοιχεῖα, central to all of them is the idea of being original and foundational. This is the sense in which Paul uses the term. Both the Jews and the Gentiles were, before Christ, under the control of something foundational to human nature. This “primary” sense of τὰ στοιχεῖα in Paul’s argument is made clear in his use of the verb form στοιχέω in his imperative to “let us also set our foundation in the spirit” (πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν) (5:25) and in his closing address to “as many as set their foundation in this new canon” (ὅσοι τῷ κανόνι τούτῳ στοιχήσουσιν) (6:16).<sup>128</sup> The significance of the “fundamental elements” for Paul’s description of the past is the genitive “of the world” (τοῦ κόσμου). It is the world to which Paul will later argue he died (6:14). Both Jews and Gentiles were enslaved in the past, enslavement which masked their identity as the sons of God.

Paul is able to apply the image of 4:1-2, therefore, to the Gentile Galatians by noting that they too were in a period of slavery prior to Christ. Their enslavement was not to the law, but rather to “those things which are by nature not divine” (4:8). There was no freedom for Jew or Gentile before Christ.

This double path of slavery for Jews and Gentiles is made clear in Paul’s characterization of the Galatians as beginning to “keep days and months and seasons and years” (4:10). The question of whether Paul refers to pagan or Jewish rituals is in Paul’s argument irrelevant.<sup>129</sup> The point is not that the Galatians are attempting to incorporate

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<sup>127</sup> For example, in 4 Macc 12:13, the seventh son to be martyred speaks appeals to Antiochus IV Epiphanies’ shame in torturing people who are “born from the elements” (ἐκ τῶν αὐτῶν γεγονότας στοιχείων) as he. Philo uses the term frequently to discuss the common nature of all people (see *Spec. Leg.* 1.264ff).

<sup>128</sup> Paul also uses the compound verb συστοιχέω in 4:25 to talk about the analogy between Hagar and the “present Jerusalem.”

<sup>129</sup> On this debate, see Troy W. Martin, “Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-keeping Schemes,” *NTS* 42 [1996]: 105-19; James A. Kelhoffer, “The Struggle to Define *Heilsgeschichte*: Paul on the Origins of the Christian Tradition,” *Biblical Research* 48 [2003]: 45-67.

pagan elements into their Jewish Christian worship. Rather, it is that following regulations, whether in their Jewish form or in their pagan form, is a return to the period of enslavement. The presence of calendar regulations in both the Galatians' pagan life and in Jewish regulations is the very point. What the Galatians view as a new addition to their life in Christ is, in Paul's terms, a return to their previous enslavement. Paul is not arguing against a particular set of regulations that the Galatians are following. Rather he is arguing against the idea of regulations at all, for it reflects a "foundation" that differs from the Spirit (see 5:25).

In 3:19-25, Paul has given the law a positive, protective role for the Jews who were, like everyone else, trapped under sin (3:22-23). The law is not one of the elements, but rather an attempt to escape control from the elements. Paul has distinguished between the universal problem of sin and the particular, temporary solution of the law (3:22), a pedagogue that lost its efficacy with the coming of faith (3:23-25).<sup>130</sup> Paul now refers to this entrapping power with the enigmatic phrase τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου. As for many of his Jewish contemporaries, τὰ στοιχεῖα is the problem inherent for all of humanity, one that with law was designed to control.

Paul does not argue that the Galatians were formerly under the law. Rather he argues that their behavior in not knowing God was a form of enslavement. This is the key point in the argument. The law functioned for the Jews to protect them from a world confined under sin. The Galatians, in their attempts to follow the law, are reverting to a

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<sup>130</sup> Betz argues that "Being 'under [τὰ στοιχεῖα]' is not different from being 'under the Law'" (*Galatians*, 205). To the contrary, the universal problem is sin. Paul views the law as a positive solution. Betz seems to recognize this distinction in his (quite correct) point that "Paul's position, however, is different from gnostics like Cerinthus, according to whom the world was not created by the supreme God, but by inferior angels which also gave the law" (*Galatians*, 405n35). The law is from God and is not a problem; rather sin is the problem which the law temporarily addresses.

world wherein the law is necessary. This is the meaning of Paul's argument that they are returning to enslavement to the elements. The law's temporary function has ceased with the presence of the seed. Therefore the Galatians' attempts to live as if it is necessary is an attempt to live in the world wherein it was necessary.

Paul closes this section of the argument with his fear that his work, not merely his preaching, but his mental anguish, has been in vain, as the Galatians' attempts to follow the law do not reflect advancement in their narrative, but rather a return to a world before Christ, a return to a life unaffected by the spirit they have received.<sup>131</sup> Paul's statement of concern in 4:11 echoes his concern expressed to Cephas at Antioch that, "If righteousness [is pursued] through law, then Christ died for nothing" (2:21). Just as Cephas' re-establishment of the distinction between Jews and Gentiles by withdrawing from the Gentiles' table in Antioch rendered Christ's death as irrelevant, so the Galatians' attempts to follow the law deny the power of Christ's death.

#### *Paul's "Legal" Critique of the Law*

The legal image of 4:1-2 focuses on the inability to distinguish between an heir and slave before the time appointed by the father. The heir, who will eventually lord over everything, appears no different from a slave until the bestowal of the inheritance, at a time set by the father. Paul introduces this image in support of his argument that it was the Gentiles, rather than the Jews, that unexpectedly received the inheritance. Though the

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<sup>131</sup> The language Paul uses for what most versions translate as "work" (see NRSV) is quite strong (κοπιᾶω). The word originally meant "to tire" or "grow weary" (see *LSJ*, *s.v.*). It is often associated with laboring in agriculture or construction (see Ps 126:1 [LXX]; 2 Tim 2:6). Paul uses it frequently to describe his (1 Cor 15:10; Phil 2:16; Col 1:29) and others' (see Rom 16:6, 12; 1 Cor 16:16; 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 5:17) work amongst his communities.

Jews claim special privilege through the law, the Galatians' reception of God's Spirit confirms their identity as God's sons. Paul argues that prior to God's decision to send Christ, all were enslaved to the fundamental elements of the world, a restatement of his prior claim that everything was confined under sin. In 3:23-24, though, Paul had suggested that the law surrounded, or protected, some, setting "natural Jews" apart from a world universally confined by sin.

And so, Paul's legal image in 4:1-2 is actually a critique of the use of the law by Jews. By dividing Jews from Gentiles, the law was used to identify the "sons" from the "slaves." The gift of the inheritance to the Gentiles, outside of the law, undermines this very idea. Paul's image, wherein the slave/son distinction cannot be made before the inheritance is granted, points out this fatal flaw in the use of the law. The Galatians' identity as sons of God, as recipients of the Spirit apart from law, is an argument against the efficacy of the law itself.

And so I return to the confusion about Paul's use of the image in 4:1-2. Who is the heir and who is the slave from whom the heir is indistinguishable? The Jews understood the law's purpose to be to make such distinctions. Indeed the Jews considered themselves sons of God by nature of their possession of the law. In reality, though, it was impossible to make a true distinction between the son and the slave, for everything was enslaved to sin, to the fundamental elements of the world. The reception of the Spirit by the Galatians, apart from the law, is all the proof one needs of this. Now that the father has acted, all sons can make their proper claim to their inheritance. And once the curtain has been pulled back the identification of "sons" is not what Judaism expected. Indeed the realization comes that the true sons of God are not those marked by the law, but rather

those outside of the law, those who did not know God. It is this recognition of Gentiles as sons of God that causes them to step away from the law, toward faith, and to thereby escape the curse of the law.

Paul's construction of this narrative, and particularly the Galatians' role within it, allows him to turn toward his exhortation for the Galatians' future belief and behavior. By assigning them such a pivotal role in the unfolding narrative of Israel he has shown them how integral their identity as Gentiles is in the unfolding of the narrative of Israel. However they are exhibiting, in their attempts to follow the law, behavior consistent with those who are enslaved. Their attempts to follow the law are a return to slavery, though simply along a different path.

### **Constructing Narrative Through Sarah and Hagar**

As a transition to the hortatory mode of argument that characterizes the final two chapters of the letter, Paul offers an "allegorical" interpretation of the story of Sarah and Hagar, found in Genesis 15-20.<sup>132</sup> In this argument (4:21-31), Paul uses the narrative of Israel that he has constructed in chs. 3-4 to make an argument about the situation in Galatia, in particular about his own identity and that of the troublers.

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<sup>132</sup> On the difficulty of interpreting Paul's use of the verb ἀλληγορέω, see Steven di Mattei, "Paul's Allegory of the Two Covenants (4:21-31) in Light of First-Century Hellenistic Rhetoric and Jewish Hermeneutics," *NTS* 52 (2006): 102-22. It may seem natural for a narrative approach to Gal 3-4 to focus on Paul's "allegorical" appropriation of the story of Sarah and Hagar. After all, the text that Paul interprets is a generic narrative, complete with many of the elements Michael Toolan identifies as constituting a narrative. The story of Sarah and Hagar is indeed a narrative. However, this text is appropriate for my analysis not because it involves a generic narrative, but rather because it advances Paul's narrative construction of the Galatians' identity. Indeed Paul applies the image of Sarah and Hagar to cap his construction of the Galatians' pivotal role in the narrative as Gentiles.

Foremost among the difficulties interpreters face in reading Paul's exegetical argument is its position within the argument.<sup>133</sup> Most read the image as "an illustration or additional documentation of the point already made," assuming Paul offers a summary of his prior argument about the "genetic identity of the Galatian churches."<sup>134</sup> The allegory does indeed draw on Paul's argument to this point. However, to read it as mere summary of Paul's argument about the Galatians' identity is to strip it of its rhetorical context.<sup>135</sup> Paul has completed his argument about the Galatians' identity in 4:12, where he argued that he has become as them, recognizing the advantage of the Gentiles. In the intervening paragraph (4:13-20), Paul has shifted to a separate—though related— argument, a comparison between his past work with the community and the present threat of the troublers.<sup>136</sup> It is into this specific argument comparing Paul and the troublers that Paul inserts the allegory of Sarah and Hagar.<sup>137</sup>

To this point, Paul has argued that the Galatians are the "natural" heirs of the promises of Abraham, an identity masked in the past, but made apparent in the bestowal

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<sup>133</sup> See the comments of Charles Cosgrove: "[The passage's] position after Paul's personal address to the Galatians (4:12-20) has struck certain commentators as a bit odd. As a material argument from Scripture, the paragraph appears to belong with 3:6-18" ("The Law Has Given Sarah No Children," *NovT* 29 [1987]: 219).

<sup>134</sup> The first quotation comes from Dunn, who argues that 4:21-31 "could be regarded not so much as a further or independent argument" (*Galatians*, 243). The second comes from Martyn who labels 4:21-31 as "a literary section focused on the interpretation of scripture, the second unity of that sort in the letter, the first being 3:6-4:7" (*Galatians*, 432).

<sup>135</sup> Rarely do interpreters explore how 4:21 fits with the argument that ends in 4:20, an argument that most interpreters recognize as a complete unit (see Martyn, *Galatians*, 431). A clear example of this disinterest is found in Stephen Fowl's essay on Paul's allegory. Fowl works to show how Paul's reading in 4:21-31 continues an allegorical use of Abraham throughout chs. 3-4. Yet, he almost completely ignores 4:12-20, only mentioning 4:12-14 in a single sentence ("Who Can Read Abraham's Story? Allegory and Interpretive Power in Galatians," *JSNT* 55 [1994]: 77-95; see his reference to 4:12-14 on p. 92).

<sup>136</sup> I read Paul's argument about the Galatians' identity to end with his plea "I beg of you" (δέομαι ὑμῶν) in 4:12c. I read a new paragraph to begin with his statement in 4:12d: "You did me no injustice." On this verse and the possibilities for constructing the grammar, see Martin, "The Ambiguities of a 'Baffling Expression.'"

<sup>137</sup> Note that there is actually no clean break between 4:20 and 4:21. In 4:20 Paul threatens the Galatians that he would change his voice if he were with them, and then he continues in 4:21 with his harsh, almost sarcastic comment that they are so interested in the law, and yet they do not even know what the law says.

of the inheritance, the gift of the Spirit. Paul has argued that natural Jews like himself had to “become as you,” a movement illustrated by Paul’s “dying to the law.” In Paul’s construction of Israel’s story that began with promises made to Abraham, the Galatians are in a primary position, and natural Jews have followed them to the potential of righteousness.

At 4:17, Paul reintroduces the troublers into his argument. In 4:12-16 Paul has described the change in the attitudes of the Galatians toward him. He emphasizes that in the past they “did [him] no injustice,” they welcomed him “as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus” (4:14), they were even willing to tear their own eyes out on his behalf (4:15). Though they had opportunities, the Galatians did not take advantage of his weakness. Now, however, Paul says he is treated as their enemy (4:16) simply because he has told them the truth.

Paul’s feeling as an enemy is tied to the Galatians’ reception of the troublers’ message. He describes them as “zealous” (4:17) recalling the language by which he characterized his own past in Judaism (1:14). In contrast, Paul describes his own efforts in terms of going through birth pangs for the Galatians.<sup>138</sup> Paul argues that the troublers seek “to confine you” (ἐκκλεῖσαι ὑμᾶς), describing their actions with the language by which he described the Scripture’s “confining everything under sin” (συνέκλεισαν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν). He contrasts this with his own work with the Galatians, seeking to form Christ within them, picturing himself as a woman in the throws of labor. Paul recognizes that the troublers are there with the Galatians while he is absent, but he argues that if he were present he would change his tone with them.

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<sup>138</sup> On Paul’s use of feminine and maternal language through this section of the letter, see Brigitte Kahl, “No Longer Male: Masculinity Struggles Behind Galatians 3:28?” *JSNT* 79 (2000): 37-49.

It is this contrast between the troublers and himself that Paul addresses with the Sarah and Hagar allegory. Paul asks “you who want to be under law” to consider a story from Scripture that prefigures the identity of the Galatians, Paul, and the troublers. The argument, though, depends upon the narrative world he has constructed in the letter. And so, 4:21-31 becomes the first instance of an explicitly deliberative argument drawing upon his narrative construction. In this sense, it serves less to summarize the argument in chs. 3-4 and more to introduce the exhortation of chs. 5-6.

In addition to his prior argument connecting the Gentiles to the promises of Abraham, Paul argues that the Abraham story also prefigures another covenant, a divide between those who have inherited and those who have not.<sup>139</sup> The “allegorical” move in Paul’s interpretation is his identification of two covenants made by God with the two women through whom Abraham had children.<sup>140</sup>

Paul’s typology focuses on the two offspring of Abraham. Paul identifies them first by their mothers, one from the free woman and one from the slave woman, but then recasts this distinction in terms of the way in which they are connected to Abraham: one “born according to flesh” and one “born through a promise.” He identifies each woman with a covenant, expanding from the one covenant made with Abraham he considered in

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<sup>139</sup> Stephen Fowl makes the important point that, “Paul’s strategy in interpreting the Abraham story for the Galatians is allegorical throughout and not simply in 4.21-31” (“Who Can Read,” 78). Paul’s argument in 4:21-31 continues his broader argument about connection to the narrative of Israel, which begins with promises to Abraham.

<sup>140</sup> A primary question in contemporary interpretation of this passage has been whether this is true “allegory” or, rather, as it is more typically defined, a “typological” reading of Scripture. For a review, see Fowl, “Who Can Read?,” 79-82. Fowl draws heavily upon David Dawson’s seminal work on ancient allegory (*Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991]). Paul’s use of the term “allegory” has factored prominently in interpretation since Origen used Paul’s use of the verb ἀλληγορέω as justification for his own exegetical method (see *de Princ.* 4.2.6). For a review of the history of this question, see Richard N. Longenecker, *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), esp. 109-113; Anne Davis, “Allegorically Speaking in Galatians 4:21-5:1,” *BBR* 14 (2004): 161-74.

3:15-17.<sup>141</sup> Paul identifies the law, given at Sinai, as a second, separate covenant from God, one that gives birth to slavery.<sup>142</sup> Paul has already characterized the Jews' past "under law" as slavery (4:3), and so his initial argument here is not surprising. The radical move Paul makes is associating this covenant from Sinai with Hagar, who was a slave woman.<sup>143</sup> Paul offers a linguistic connection between Sinai and Hagar, likely drawing upon Jewish tradition about the name "Hagar," though one he does not explain to his audience.<sup>144</sup> Paul brings this connection to the present by arguing that this covenant "shares a foundation with the present Jerusalem" (συστοιχεῖ τῇ νῦν Ἱερουσαλήμ) because both give birth to enslavement.<sup>145</sup> In this reference to the "present Jerusalem" Paul refers to the troublers, those who continue to be enslaved.

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<sup>141</sup> Paul uses "covenants" in the plural in Romans to describe the gifts that belong to "the Israelites," within a list that also includes the "giving of the law" (ἡ νομοθεσία) (Rom 9:4). Paul elsewhere contrasts between an "old covenant" and a "new covenant" (see 2 Cor 3:6, 14), quoting in 1 Corinthians Eucharist tradition wherein Jesus establishes his blood as a new covenant (1 Cor 11:25; cf. Lk 22:20). Though his use in 3:15-17 is through a legal image, it seems likely that Paul expects his reader to catch this association with Abraham and covenant.

<sup>142</sup> Paul does not explicitly identify the second covenant as coming from God, but the use of the "covenant" language and the connection with Hagar implies it is. Paul has denied that the law was "contrary to the promises of God" (3:21) and described its function for Jews.

<sup>143</sup> The difficulty of interpreting this verse likely has led to the myriad textual issues surrounding v. 25. For a summary of the issues involved, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 437-39. I read here the more strongly supported text (τὸ δὲ Ἀγάρ Σινᾶ ὄρος ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ) (P46 and A, printed by NA27). The alternative reading of γάρ for τὸ δὲ Ἀγάρ Σινᾶ is supported by some early witnesses (notably  $\kappa$ ).

<sup>144</sup> Di Mattei makes the point that in Paul's rhetorical tradition allegory was often established based on linguistic play ("Paul's Allegory," 112-13). The linguistic connection between "Hagar" and "Sinai" has been the focus of much debate. For discussion, see Graham I. Davies, "Hagar, el-Heḡra and the location of Mt. Sinai," *VT* 22 (1972): 152-63. A connection is made in the Targumic tradition between the name "Hagar" (הגר) and the mountains in Arabia to which Hagar was expelled (הגרא). For a review of this tradition, see M. G. Steinhauser, "Gal 4,25a: Evidence of Targumic Tradition in Gal 4,21-31?" *Biblica* 70 (1989): 234-40. The word play can be seen in *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* and *Targum Onkelos* on Gen 16:7. Alternatively, some have proposed that the connection comes from the Arabic language, where the term *hajara* can mean "stone" (see Lietzman, *An die Galater*, 31; Betz, *Galatians*, 245). Heinrich Schlier likewise concludes that the actual connection between Sinai and Hagar is lost to history: "So muss m. E. der genaue Sinn des Sätzchens V. 25a und damit die Grund und Anlass, der es Paulus ermöglichte, Hagar mit der Diatheke vom Sinai zu verbinden, dunkel bleiben" (*Der Brief an die Galater* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965], 220).

<sup>145</sup> Martyn translates Paul's use of συστοιχέω as "stands in the same oppositional column with" (*Galatians*, 449-50). He argues that Paul corrects the division initiated by the troublers, wherein Hagar is placed in the column of slavery, opposite from those who do the law. I agree with Martyn's analysis that Paul is dividing the world in two. In my translation, though, I maintain the "foundation" language so as to draw connections

The true allegorical move comes in Paul’s contrast of the “present Jerusalem,” associated with slavery, with an “authentically divine Jerusalem” (ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ), which is “free.”<sup>146</sup> It is this freedom of the divine Jerusalem that connects it with the other mother, who was also free. Paul then puts forth the proposition that he wishes to prove: this free woman is “our mother.” The question that arises, once again, is the identity of Paul’s first-person plural. Paul here argues that he and his fellow natural Jews working for the gospel are, like the Galatians, children of the free woman. This same point he reiterates as a conclusion to the argument in 4:31: “We are children not of the slave woman but of the free woman.” The intervening argument (4:27-30) is offered as his

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with Paul’s use of similar language (στοιχεῖα/στοιχέω) in other parts of the letter (see 4:3, 9; 5:25; 6:16). The question of one’s “foundation” is the key question in Galatians, which I explore throughout this study.<sup>146</sup> The term ἡ ἄνω Ἱερουσαλήμ is most often translated as the “Jerusalem above” (NRSV; KJV), but in my translation “authentically divine Jerusalem” I seek to reflect the broader semantic range of the phrase. The adjective ἄνω is often used to refer to something spatially higher (see, for example, ἡ ἄνω βουλή; Plutarch, *Solon* 19) or in contrast to that which is common (see John 8:23). The term can also be used temporally to refer to something as “ancient” or “classic,” often in the “in the days of old” (ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις; see Demosthenes, *On the Crown* 18.310; Plato *Theatetus* 175b; *Critias* 110b; see *LSJ s.v.*). Given Paul’s contrast with the “present Jerusalem,” this “authentic/classic” meaning is likely in view. A strict distinction between the two meanings cannot be drawn, though. There seems to have been a Jewish apocalyptic notion of an ideal Jerusalem, of which the present Jerusalem is a copy. In Exod 25:9, Moses is told to build the tabernacle “according to everything that I show you on the mountain, the paradigm of the tabernacle and the paradigm of all of its instruments” (κατὰ πάντα ὅσα ἐγὼ σοι δεικνύω ἐν τῷ ὄρει τὸ παράδειγμα τῆς σκηπῆς καὶ τὸ παράδειγμα πάντων τῶν σκευῶν αὐτῆς). This tradition is expanded in Jewish apocalyptic literature as an argument that the actual city of Jerusalem is a simple reflection of the ideal God created before time, and that the ideal Jerusalem will be revealed on earth. See especially 2 Bar 4:2-6, where Baruch is told that the present Jerusalem “will be delivered up for a time,” but that the “building that is in your midst now” is not the city described in Isaiah 49:16 (“On the palms of my hands I have carved you”). Rather, 2 Bar argues that Isaiah refers to “that which will be revealed, with me, that was already prepared from the moment that I decided to create Paradise. And I showed it to Adam before he sinned. . . . I showed it to my servant Abraham in the night between the portions of the victims. And again I showed it also to Moses on Mount Sinai when I showed him the likeness of the tabernacle and all its vessels” (Charlesworth, *OTP*). See also 4 Ezra 7:26. The author of Hebrews uses this same concept in a similar way, specifically citing Exod 25:9 in Heb 8:5, to argue that Christ is the true high priest, ruling over this heavenly Jerusalem. The current priestly system and temple in Jerusalem, therefore, merely “serve an example and shadow of the heavenly Jerusalem” (οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσιν τῶν ἐπουρανίων). Like the author of Hebrews, here in Galatians Paul argues that the “present Jerusalem,” which is understood to include not only the physical city, but also those characterized by following the Jewish law, are part of an imperfect copy of the heavenly reality God created for humanity before time, and which God has promised he will bring to earth.

evidence for this identity, in distinction to the troublemakers, who like Paul are “natural Jews,” but whom Paul wants to connect with the slave woman.

Paul offers the quotation of Isa 54:1 as the first argument (γάρ) for his claim that the free woman is “our mother.” The quotation shows Paul’s narrow focus on the distinction in the manner of producing offspring.<sup>147</sup> In context, Isaiah offers comfort to the post-exilic Jews as they face return to the “barren woman” Jerusalem.<sup>148</sup> For Paul’s implied audience, though, this Isaianic context is not essential. Instead, given Paul’s argument, the “barren woman” is read to be the mother of Isaac, who is offered comfort in her concern over not being able to bear children naturally, but only “through a promise” (4:23).<sup>149</sup> The Isaiah promise is that the number of children born through the promise will exceed those born through flesh.

To continue his argument that the free woman, the one to whom Isaiah offers comfort, is “our mother,” Paul adds the minor premise that the Galatians (“you”) are the

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<sup>147</sup> Di Mattei recognizes appropriately that “the hermeneutical key to unlocking Paul’s allegorical exposition of the narrative of Genesis 16-17 lies in the passage’s *haftarah*, Isa 54:1” (“Paul’s Allegory,” 114). For a review of the conversation about the use of this passage in Galatians, see Alicia D. Myers, “‘For It Has Been Written’: Paul’s Use of Isa 54:1 in Gal 4:27 in Light of Gal 3:1-5:1,” *PRS* 37 (2010): 295-308.

<sup>148</sup> On the exact fit between Paul’s use of the image and the Isaianic context, see Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 118-21.

<sup>149</sup> Hays notes that this passage “is one of the very few passages in this otherwise blunt letter where Paul employs Scripture in an allusive, echo-laden manner,” arguing that “the reader must recover its original scriptural context” (*Echoes*, 119). He looks back to Isaiah 51, where Paul explicitly refers to Abraham and Sarah, arguing that “the citation of Isa. 54:1 metaleptically evokes the whole rippling pool of promise found in the latter chapters of that prophetic book” (*Echoes*, 120). I agree that there is much in the last few chapters of Deutero-Isaiah that echoes the Sarah/Hagar story. Isaiah goes on to challenge the barren Jerusalem to “stretch out to the left and to the right and your seed will inherit nations, and you will establish the deserted cities” (ἔτι εἰς τὰ δεξιά καὶ εἰς τὰ ἄριστερά ἐκπέτασον καὶ τὸ σπέρμα σου ἕνη κληρονομήσει καὶ πόλεις ἡρημωμένας κατοικιεύς). Indeed the entire section of Isaiah 51-54 evokes the Abraham/Sarah story. In 51:2, for example, the exiles are encouraged to “look to Abraham your father and to Sarah.” The connection between this barren Jerusalem and the barren Sarah was established in the Judaism of Paul’s day, and Paul assumes it here in his argument. Di Mattei notes that liturgical traditions in Judaism after the first century connected these two (“Paul’s Allegory,” 114-15). Most commentators assume that Paul’s connection was typical of Judaism at the time (see, for example, Dunn, *Galatians*, 255). Again, it is likely that Paul had the full context of this passage in mind, but his argument does not assume his audience picks up on these allusions.

children of the promise, alongside Isaac.<sup>150</sup> This is not a new argument, but rather the insertion of a premise Paul has already established: the Galatians, as Gentiles, are the children of the promise (3:8, 14, 18). The Galatians were “born” to Abraham not by natural means, but through the Spirit, as was Isaac (κατὰ Ἰσαάκ). It is important to recognize that this is a conclusion about the Gentile Galatians alone. Though 4:28 and 4:31 are similar, each verse makes the connection to the free woman for two different groups.<sup>151</sup> The Galatians’ identity as children of the promise is here offered as evidence that the Isaianic prophecy has been fulfilled. The abundance of Gentiles now connected to Abraham signals the fulfillment of the promise.

In v. 29, Paul offers another present condition to support his claim of the free woman as “our mother.” The Abraham narrative in Scripture prefigured that those connected to Abraham by flesh would persecute “the one born according to Spirit.”<sup>152</sup> Paul continues his typology by arguing that this persecution is also occurring in the present (οὕτως καὶ νῦν). Paul assumes his audience knows the identity of this present persecution, though the letter offers clues to his reference.<sup>153</sup> Paul characterized himself while “in Judaism” as one who “persecuted the church” (ἐδίωκον τὴν ἐκκλησίαν) (1:13; cf. 1:23).<sup>154</sup> He will go on to argue that he himself is being persecuted because he does not

<sup>150</sup> Some manuscripts (κ A C D<sup>2</sup>) read “we are” (ἡμεῖς ἐσμεν) instead of “you” (ὅμοις; P46), though this is likely a later change to fit the argument to Paul’s first-person plurals in 4:26 and 4:31 (see Martyn, *Galatians*, 443).

<sup>151</sup> Cosgrove argues that v. 28, “expresses the same thought as v. 31” (“The Law,” 220). I argue the shift in pronoun is important for Paul’s argument.

<sup>152</sup> Paul here shifts from speaking of “children of promise” to speaking of “the one born according to Spirit.” The promise and the Spirit were connected in 3:14. For a review of the background to the idea of Ishmael’s persecution of Isaac, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 444-45; M. C. Callaway, “The Mistress and the Maid: Midrashic Traditions Behind Galatians 4:21-31,” *Radical Religion* 2 (1975): 94-101. Persecution is not part of the Genesis text, though the text does report that Sarah witnessed Ishmael “mocking” (ἠπείλει/παίζω) his brother (Gen 21:9), a reference that gets expanded in the Jewish tradition.

<sup>153</sup> On persecution in Galatians, see Ernst Baasland, “Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians,” *Studia Theologica* 38 (1984): 135-50.

<sup>154</sup> For Paul as a persecutor, see also 1 Cor 15:9; Phil 3:6.

preach circumcision (5:11).<sup>155</sup> Likewise he will argue that the troublers compel circumcision so as to avoid persecution (6:12). Throughout this letter, persecution is directed by those related to the law against those who argue against following the law. By referring to current persecution (οὕτως καὶ νῦν), therefore, Paul is not referring to the Galatians' being persecuted, for there is no indication in the letter that the Galatians face persecution. Rather, the persecution "now" is that which Paul and his companions face, those who argue the radical case that those "in Christ" no longer need to follow the law. As he will say in 5:11, he is persecuted for preaching a circumcision-free gospel. Just as Ishmael persecuted Isaac, so the "one born according to flesh," the natural Jew still connected with Sinai, persecutes the one born according to the Spirit, who Paul is arguing represents natural Jews like himself who have received the Spirit.<sup>156</sup> Paul argues that persecution is a sign of the one who is the child of the free woman.

Paul transitions from identifying the child of the free woman to his exhortation through the quotation of Gen 21:10 in v. 30.<sup>157</sup> Scripture argues that the child of the slave woman will not receive the same inheritance as the free child. By introducing inheritance, Paul recalls his argument in 4:1-11, wherein he explained how it is that the Gentile Galatians could receive the inheritance. The argument there was that one cannot distinguish the heir before the gift of the inheritance. Here Paul offers a second identifier of the child of the free woman; he is the one who has received the inheritance, which throughout Galatians has been the gift of the Spirit. Here he argues that the one who has

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<sup>155</sup> For other references to Paul's persecution because of his gospel, see 2 Cor 4:7-12; 11:23-29; 2 Tim 3:12

<sup>156</sup> Paul switches from a contrast between the "one born according to flesh" and "the one born according to promise" to a contrast with "the one born according to spirit."

<sup>157</sup> In its MT and LXX context Gen 21:10 is a quotation of Sarah to Abraham: "Cast out this slave woman and her child, for the son of this slave woman will not inherit with my son Isaac." Paul seems to have shifted this text to the narrator's voice, substituting "son of the free woman" for "my son."

not received the inheritance is the child of the slave woman, and therefore the reception of inheritance, which is the reception of the Spirit in Paul's argument, is the child of the free woman.

The quotation does more, though, than simply offer a criterion by which to distinguish between the child of the free and slave women. The quotation is also used to encourage the Galatians to cast the slave woman and her child out of the Galatians' community.<sup>158</sup> In the strict sense of the allegory, the slave woman is the Sinai covenant, the law, and her child is those who follow it. Therefore the quotation encourages the Galatians to get rid of the law and those who follow it. In the Galatians' case, Paul urges the Galatians to throw out the troublemakers.

With the reference to inheritance in quoting Gen 21:10, Paul brings his argument back to Abraham as the spine of the narrative he is constructing. Those who have received the inheritance are those who are the children of the free woman. This argument re-invokes the image Paul introduced in 4:1-2, wherein the gift of inheritance is an identifier of the heir. Once again, Paul draws on this experience, now to show the Galatians that he and his fellow "natural Jews," those who are now "from faith," are, like the Gentiles, children of the free woman for they too have received the inheritance of the promised blessing. Paul argues to make a distinction among "natural Jews." Some are children of the free woman and some are children of the slave woman.

That Paul is arguing for his own identity as a child of the free woman is clear in his conclusion of 4:31-5:1a. Only this understanding of the use of Scripture can make

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<sup>158</sup> Paul's point in quoting this text has been much debated. For an example of reading this imperative as Paul's advocating that the Galatians throw out those who are children of the slave woman, see, Martyn, *Galatians*, 446. Di Mattei reads the allegory strictly and therefore understands Paul to call for the expulsion of the law itself ("Paul's Allegory," 121-22).

sense of Paul's concluding (διό) statement in 4:31.<sup>159</sup> Through his argument he has established that "we," both natural Jews now in Christ and the Gentile Galatians, are not children of the slave woman, but the free woman. Christ set Paul and his fellow natural Jews "free" to a new state of freedom, one that he explores in the next chapter.

The narrative of Sarah and Hagar, interpreted as an allegory, is a first instance of Paul's application of the narrative rhetoric of the letter to the situation in Galatia. Paul uses Scripture to establish his own identity vis-à-vis the troublers, within the narrative of Israel. The necessity of the argument shows the narrative logic Paul has created in this section of the argument. Paul is forced to show that he and his fellow Jews, though born "according to the flesh" to Abraham, have been adopted into sonship. Paul has been freed by Christ into freedom.

The radical nature of Paul's reinterpretation of the narrative of Sarah and Hagar should not be overlooked. Hays refers to this section as "hermeneutical jujitsu," correctly recognizing the overturning of the interpretive tradition.<sup>160</sup> The Abraham/Sarah/Hagar story was recognized by Jews to address the question of Jews and Gentiles, but they had done so in the exact opposite way from the way in which Paul argues. Consider Jubilees 16:17-18 as an example of the traditional reading:<sup>161</sup>

All of the seed of [Abraham's] sons would become Gentiles. And they would be counted with the Gentiles. But from the sons of Isaac one would become a holy seed and he would not be counted among the Gentiles because he would become

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<sup>159</sup> Most have difficulty reading 4:31 as the conclusion. Cosgrove, instead, argues that 4:31 "makes little sense as a logical conclusion" and instead "provides a transition to the exhortative section of the letter to follow" ("The Law," 232).

<sup>160</sup> *Echoes*, 112. Hays gives too much credit to Paul's audience by arguing that Paul's radical reading "leav[es] his audience agape" (*Echoes*, 112). The interpretation of Gen 15-21 is all the more stunning given that the covenant in Gen 17 is explicitly sealed by circumcision. For discussion, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 448.

<sup>161</sup> Hays also quotes Jubilees as a summary of Jewish understandings of this text (see *Echoes*, 111).

the portion of the Most High and all his seed would fall (by lot) into that which God will rule so that he might become a people belonging to the Lord, a special possession from all people, and so that he might become a kingdom of priests and a holy people. And we went our way and we announced to Sarah everything we had told him. And both of them rejoiced very greatly.<sup>162</sup>

The Jubilees quotation assumes that Abraham's offspring through Isaac would be a great nation, distinct from the Gentiles who are otherwise the offspring of Abraham. Paul reverses this tradition, arguing that this "holy seed" is connected to the Gentiles, and it explicitly excludes those who are connected to Abraham "by flesh" through the Sinai covenant. Paul's argument does not merely include Gentiles in this nation; it excludes Jews.

At issue in Galatians 3-4 is the question of how one connects to Abraham. Paul has taken the "natural" connection to Abraham, the fleshly connection, and he has identified that as a disadvantage. True connection to Abraham comes through the promise, rather than through natural means. Paul has established that he and Cephas are "natural Jews," that is they are those who are connected to Abraham through flesh. However, Paul has argued in 4:26 that the free woman, associated with the "heavenly Jerusalem" is "our mother," by which he must mean both his mother and the mother of the Gentile Galatians.

## **Conclusion**

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<sup>162</sup> This translation is adapted from Wintermute (*OTP*).

I have continued to characterize Paul's argument in Galatians as narrative rhetoric, though this term takes on a different form in Galatians 3-4. In the autobiographical narrative of Gal 1-2, Paul's metapedagogic rhetoric led the Galatians to recognize a pattern of life "in Christ" exemplified in Paul's narrative of reversal. In Galatians 3:6-4:31, Paul has broadened his focus, emplotting the Galatians' role within an unfolding narrative of Israel. This story began with God's promises made to Abraham, to be fulfilled with this seed. Between the promise and the appearance of the seed, Israel existed in a time of law, a protective force that defined "natural Jews," and yet confined them from righteousness. In their reception of the Spirit, though, the Galatians have been identified as the seed of Abraham, as the fulfillment of the promises. This experience confirms that the law was not an effective identifier of the sons of Abraham. Rather, in light of the Galatians' reception of the blessing of Abraham, Paul recognizes that the law was a part of the Jews' past, an ethnically-focused, temporary solution to the problem of universal sinfulness. The law was something the Jews had to overcome in order to receive the Spirit, the point in the narrative at which the Galatians began.

I began with the tension between Paul's call for reversal, illustrated in his own past, and his distinction between the past of Jews and Gentiles. By following the emplotment of the narrative of Israel, we see how these two work together. Paul has characterized the law as a part of the Jews' past, an ethnically-focused, temporary solution to the problem of universal sinfulness. Paul calls the Galatians to turn away from that law, for the law was something that Jews overcame in order to receive the Spirit, the point at which the Galatians' began. There is a reversal, but it is a return to the Galatians' natural identity as the children of God.

## Chapter 6 The Law of Christ and the Israel of God: Exhortation as Emplotment

In the second chapter of this study, I highlighted Paul Ricoeur's "narrative turn" as the product of his initial work in phenomenology. The study of narrative was part of Ricoeur's larger project of understanding how individuals and groups see themselves within the world in which they live and construct meaning from the experiences they have had. This hermeneutical understanding of narrative is captured in the title of his essay "Life in Quest of Narrative."<sup>1</sup> The title functions as a summary of Ricoeur's own intellectual quest in search of how narratives, primarily written narratives, function for their readers. But the title also hints at Ricoeur's understanding of the narrative function, namely that life becomes meaningful only as individuals and groups construct plots out of their experiences. Life is, for Ricoeur, a continual quest for the construction of narrative from experience. Making sense out of experience is a process of emplotment.

Ricoeur connects narrative to action in the third stage of *mimesis*. A re-formed narrative self-understanding, the result of the construction and consumption of meaning from narratives, is the basis for potentially altered belief and behavior. Ricoeur's narrative function is a hermeneutical spiral, wherein an individual or group's self-understanding is continually re-shaped by the construction of narratives. The configuring act of composing literature, an act completed by the readers' interaction with a text, reshapes self-identity, and, in turn, potentially alters behavior.<sup>2</sup> All narrative discourse,

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Ricoeur, "Life in Quest of Narrative," pp. 20-33 in *On Paul Ricoeur: Narrative Interpretation* (ed. David Wood; London: Routledge, 1991).

<sup>2</sup> Barbara Hardy's summary of the narrative function aptly characterizes the importance of a constructed narrative identity: "In order really to live, we make up stories about ourselves and others, about the

therefore, is deliberative rhetoric, for it has the potential of altering future behavior through the re-configuration of narrative identity.

In this chapter, I demonstrate the connection between narrative identity and Paul's argument for altered behavior in the final two chapters of Galatians. In Gal 1-4, Paul has constructed a narrative of the past, highlighting the distinct paths of natural Jews and Gentiles to a new shared identity "in Christ," marked by the reception of the Spirit. He concludes this argument with a strong statement of this identity shared by Paul and the Galatian community: "Therefore, brethren, we are not children of the slave woman, but rather children of the free woman" (4:31). Paul appeals to this new identity as the ground, or in his terms, the "fundamental elements" (5:25; 6:16), for determining their future behavior. In chs. 5-6, for the first time in this letter, Paul focuses directly on the behavior of the Galatians, which he builds upon the construction of identity in the first four chapters.

If considered on their own, the final two chapters of Galatians have a different rhetorical texture than the previous four. Not only does Paul shift focus away from narration of the past to exhortation about the future, but the very content of that exhortation may seem to stand in tension with his broader point about behavior, established earlier in the argument, particularly in ch. 3. When Paul's argument in the third chapter is construed as a warning against following the dictates of the Jewish law, the offering of his own dictates becomes problematic. However, I have shown that Paul's argument about the law is not a warning against following it, but rather a contextualizing of its function; Paul has shown that the law was a temporary measure intended to address

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personal as well as the social past and future" ("Towards a Poetics of Fiction: 3) An Approach Through Narrative," *NOVEL: A Forum on Fiction* 2 [1968]: 5).

transgressions for a subset of humanity, a measure whose efficacy ends with the death of Christ. Paul's argument has not been simply that the Galatians should not follow the law. Indeed, he has not to this point made that argument. Rather, he has emplotted the law's function in the narrative of Israel.

My task in reading this final section of the letter is to explain how the argument of these chapters reads in light of the argument Paul has already made. Paul begins the process of drawing upon the Galatians' narrative identity, a process he hopes the Galatians themselves will continue. If we accept Ricoeur's definition of understanding as "to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of proposed worlds which are the genuine object of interpretation," then we might say that Paul begins the process of showing the Galatians how to understand their identity in Christ, an identity he labels at the end of the letter the "Israel of God."<sup>3</sup> Paul's ethical exhortation is his attempt to lead the Galatians to understand how to live in this narrative world he has constructed, how to be the Israel of God.

I begin by summarizing two well-known attempts to solve the problem of integrating the ethical exhortation of chs. 5-6 into the broader argument of Galatians, that of Hans Dieter Betz and Richard B. Hays. The summary and critique of these positions provides a helpful way to introduce Paul's exhortation and set the background to my own reading. Then, I demonstrate Paul's exhortation as emplotment in two brief exegetical essays, covering two key parts of his argument.<sup>4</sup> First, I consider Paul's response to the

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<sup>3</sup> "Appropriation," pp. 182-93 in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (ed. and trans. John B. Thompson; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 182-83.

<sup>4</sup> A complete demonstration of the narrative rhetoric in the final two chapters of Galatians would require a running commentary on Paul's argument, demonstrating how at each point the narrative Paul has constructed in the first four chapters of the letter supports his argument about the Galatians' behavior. Such a commentary is not what I present here.

question of circumcision (5:1-6), the specific question many readers identify as prompting Paul's writing. I show how Paul takes a specific issue and contextualizes it as a question about the Galatians' identity. I also show how Paul's construction of his own past informs his exhortation to the community. Second, I look at Paul's introduction of the "law of Christ" as an ethical principle. In this section I bring my argument for the narrative of Israel into conversation with the position that Jesus' story underlies the exhortation.

### **The Problem of the Indicative and the Imperative in Galatians 5-6**

Paul's argument to the Galatians takes a sharp turn at the beginning of the fifth chapter. Paul's attention shifts away from Israel's past, a narrative mode summarized by his reading of the Biblical story of Sarah and Hagar. In the final two chapters of the letter, Paul's focus is explicitly on the Galatians' present and future, instructing the Galatians on proper belief and behavior.<sup>5</sup> This section of the argument is often labeled "exhortation" or "paraenesis," though no formal generic distinction is necessary to recognize Paul's shift from consideration of the past to imperative for the present and future.<sup>6</sup> At the end of the

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<sup>5</sup> In the first four chapters of the letter, Paul uses the imperative eight times, though only two (4:12, 21) are directed toward the Galatians. Beginning in 5:1, though, he uses twelve imperatives, all instructing the Galatians' behavior (5:1 [x2], 13, 15, 16; 6:1, 2, 4, 6, 7, 11, 17).

<sup>6</sup> The terms exhortation and paraenesis are often used as technical terms to describe the literary genre of this last part of the letter. Galatians 5-6 certainly constitute "paraenesis" by a broad definition of the term, such as that of Abraham J. Malherbe: "Paraenesis is moral exhortation in which someone is advised to pursue or abstain from something. . . . It contains useful rules for conduct in common situations and adopts styles that range from censure to consolation" (*Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* [Library of Early Christianity; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986], 124). I avoid this term, opting instead for the broader category of "exhortation" so as to resist the temptation to see Gal 5-6 as "useful rules for conduct" (see Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation*, 121). I use the term "exhortation" to describe Paul's deliberative rhetorical mode in Galatians as a whole, and particularly in these final two chapters. By this term I simply mean that Paul is encouraging the Galatians to behavior, but not by offering rules, but by recalling their identity. For a consideration of Gal 5-6 in terms of Paul's mode of paraenesis in other letters, see Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2000), 131-39.

argument, Paul engages in a more familiarly deliberative mode of rhetoric, at times prescribing and proscribing actions in specific circumstances.<sup>7</sup>

While a transition to a direct address of his readers' behavior is not uncommon at the end of Paul's letters, this transition in the last part of Galatians presents a particular challenge for reading the letter as a rhetorical unity.<sup>8</sup> With his opening rebuke of the Galatians' temptation (1:6), Paul set an expectation for his readers that he writes to promote a particular form of belief and behavior amongst the Galatians. For much of the argument, this expectation goes unmet, as Paul has responded to this initial concern for the Galatians' future with a reconstruction of the past, emplotting their role in the developing narrative of Israel. Paul's argument about the past is so dominant in the overall letter that many overlook his initial concern for the Galatians' future and read the true goal of Paul's argument to be a demonstration of what God has accomplished in Christ. Paul's presentation of the "allegory" of Sarah and Hagar is often read as the

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<sup>7</sup> By "a more familiarly deliberative mode of rhetoric," I simply mean one where the argument directly addresses the future. It is the future time that most often characterizes definitions of deliberative rhetoric. Consider, for example, the definition offered by Kennedy, drawing upon Aristotle: "If judgment relates to the *future*, the decision is about what is in the best *interest* of the audience and the species is deliberative" (George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994], 58; cf. George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation Through Rhetorical Criticism* [Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1984], 19; Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.3 1358a36-1359a29).

<sup>8</sup> For examples of exhortation at the end of Paul's letters, see Rom 12:1-15:13; Eph 4:1-6:20; Phil 4:2-9; 1 Thess 5:12-22. For an important correction to a standard view that only the end of Paul's letters can be labeled as paraenetic, see Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Library of Early Christianity; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1989), 23-24. The most thorough demonstration of paraenesis in a Pauline letter is found in Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Thessalonians* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987). Frank J. Matera identifies two major questions surrounding the interpretation of chs. 5-6. First is the question of where the hortatory section actually begins (most suggest either 5:1 or 5:13). Second is the question of how the chapters integrate into the argument as a whole ("The Culmination of Paul's Argument: Gal 5:1-6:17," *JSNT* 32 [1988]: 80). I concur with Matera on the first issue; he argues that "the search for a starting point of a *purely* paraenetic section is ill-advised" ("Culmination," 81). There is certainly a shift in the rhetoric at 5:1. For comments on the "odd" transition, see Fee, "Freedom and the Life of Obedience," 201; Richard B. Hays, "Christology and Ethics in Galatians: The Law of Christ," *CBQ* 49 (1987): 268-72. Betz labels this section of the letter the *exhortatio*, though he admits that the presence of such a section is somewhat anomalous among other examples of forensic rhetoric (see Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* [Hermeneia; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979], 253-55). Dunn call the section beginning at 5:1 a "conclusion" (James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* [Black's New Testament Commentary; Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993], 260-61).

summary of his extended theological argument in chs. 3-4, concluding with his statement that, “We are not children of the slave woman, but of the free woman” (4:31).<sup>9</sup>

This reading leaves the final two chapters as a challenge to integrate into a unified argument to the Galatians. If Paul’s point is to establish freedom as the new reality for the Galatians in Christ, what role does a section offering instructions on particular behavior play? The two clauses of 5:1 present the broader challenge of grounding Paul’s “imperative” in these final two chapters within in his “indicative” argument about the Galatians’ identity in Christ.<sup>10</sup> Paul has argued in the first four chapters that, “Christ has set us free.” On what grounds does he then offer the imperative that the Galatians must “stand” in this freedom?

The difficulty of placing Paul’s concern for the Galatians’ behavior within his broader argument is evident in the fact that many major treatments of Pauline ethics pay only passing attention to Galatians. Many categorize Galatians as an outlier wherein the contingencies of the situation in Galatia overwhelm the coherence of Paul’s ethical system.<sup>11</sup> There is certainly good reason to consider Galatians as a special case with

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<sup>9</sup> Setting up his argument that chs. 5-6 represent the core of Paul’s argument, Matera suggests, “It might well seem that Paul has made his theological point” (“Culmination,” 82). It is common to find interpreters reading this as the true end of the argument. Many who read the letter in light of the rhetorical handbooks label the section beginning at 5:1 as the *exhortatio*, and thus separate the last two chapters from the real proof (*probatio*) which is Paul’s primary concern (e.g. Bernard Hungerford Brinsmead, *Galatians—Dialogical Response to Opponents* [SBL Dissertation Series; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1982], 53-54). Even those treatments not bound by an ancient rhetorical outline find Paul’s proper argument to end at 4:31, reading the rest of the letter as secondary in importance to the argument of the first four chapters. Others read 5:1-12 as a concluding summary of Paul’s argument and 5:13ff. as “more general exhortation” (Dunn, *Galatians*, 261; cf. Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* [Word Biblical Commentary 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990], 236).

<sup>10</sup> I concur with Victor Paul Furnish’s statement that, “The relation of indicative and imperative, the relation of ‘theological’ proclamation and ‘moral’ exhortation, is *the* crucial problem in interpreting the Pauline ethic” (*Theology and Ethics in Paul* [Nashville: Abingdon, 1968], 9; emphasis is original). For an extended discussion of the problem, see Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 224-27. The issue was classically formulated by Rudolf Bultmann (*Theology of the New Testament* [trans. Kendrick Grobel; New York: Scribner, 1951], I.332-40).

<sup>11</sup> The language of “contingence” and “coherence” comes from J. Christaan Beker (*Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* [Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980], 23-36). Beker is one example of a

regard to ethical concerns in Paul's letters. The apostle's heightened rhetoric against righteousness "from works of law" suggests that this may not be the best letter for consideration of a positive argument for the specifics of Christian behavior.<sup>12</sup> The concern expressed by Frank J. Matera is pertinent: "If we suppose that Paul was arguing against Judaizers, would not such material play into their hands? That is, in prescribing rules and regulations, is Paul not conceding that there is no moral life apart from the Law?"<sup>13</sup> Recent interpreters often assume that Paul is arguing so strongly against those who seek out a particular ethical system that the letter is of no value for determining what Paul's own system may have been.

There have been, though, attempts to integrate Paul's mode of instruction with his specific argument to the Galatians, and my work here builds upon them. I introduce two such approaches, so as to clarify how I argue that narrative is a way of understanding Paul's argument in these final two chapters.

### *A Historical Integration of Paul's Exhortation*

One common explanation for Paul's rhetorical shift to exhortation is that the situation on the ground in Galatia demanded the shift. Many approach the final two chapters of Galatians by reconstructing the situation Paul faces as he writes the letter and assume the presence of exhortation in the letter suggests the need for exhortation must have existed. In this view, the hortatory section of the letter reflects Paul's concern about a danger of libertinism that might result from his preaching. Paul's message of freedom

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major treatment that omits Galatians from consideration of Paul's "system" of ethics (see especially *Paul the Apostle*, 272-302). Furnish also largely neglects Galatians (see *Theology and Ethics*, 208-41).

<sup>12</sup> For a review of the "problems posed by Gal. 5-6," see Matera, "Culmination," 80-82.

<sup>13</sup> "Culmination," 81.

in Christ may have been misconstrued by the Galatians, taken as an opportunity to act without consideration of proper behavior.<sup>14</sup> In this view, Paul defines freedom in Christ in the first four chapters of the letter, but he must use the last two to show the Galatians that this freedom in Christ is not the same type of freedom that they might think. Paul recognizes the danger of his law-free gospel, and therefore he is forced to offer some guidelines for behavior, lest the Galatians understand his gospel to justify any type of fleshly desire.<sup>15</sup> For these readers, Paul's warning in 5:13b reflects real concern about Galatia: "Do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh" (ESV).

A version of this historical explanation for Paul's exhortation is proposed by Hans Dieter Betz.<sup>16</sup> The final two chapters of Galatians present a serious problem for Betz's broader thesis that Paul's argument is best understood in light of the rhetorical handbooks' recommendations for the arrangement of a forensic address. As Betz himself recognizes, a section of exhortation is not typically found either in the handbooks' consideration of forensic rhetoric or examples of forensic addresses.<sup>17</sup> The presence of

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<sup>14</sup> This position is often associated with the Lütgart and Ropes two-front theory of Galatians, a suggestion that there are two groups in Galatia about which Paul is concerned, those preaching a strict adherence to the law and those preaching complete freedom in behavior. Most readers, though, seem to assume that the second danger, that of an overemphasis of freedom, is one anticipated by Paul on the heels of his strong argument for freedom in Christ in Gal 4.

<sup>15</sup> This idea that Paul is forced into exhortation is not specific to interpretations of Galatians, but rather it is a common explanation for the presence of exhortation in many of Paul's letters. Furnish summarizes it as asking the following question: "Does the [indicative] represent Paul the 'theologian' and the [imperative] Paul the 'pastor' confronted with the hard realities of what Christians are 'actually' like?" (*Theology and Ethics*, 224). Furnish answers with an emphatic "No," arguing that Paul's notion of grace includes obedience, and so the imperative must be part of the indicative: "Obedience is *constitutive* of the new life" (*Theology and Ethics*, 226; emphasis is original).

<sup>16</sup> Betz's argument can be found throughout his commentary on the relevant sections. For a clear summary of his understanding of the impetus behind the letter and the exhortation, see Hans Dieter Betz, "In Defense of the Spirit: Paul's Letter to the Galatians as a Document of Early Christian Apologetics," pp. 99-114 in *Aspects of Religious Propaganda in Judaism and Early Christianity* (ed. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza; Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1976).

<sup>17</sup> Betz labels 5:1-6:10 the *exhortatio*, recognizing that, "Parenthesis plays only a marginal role in the ancient rhetorical handbooks, if not in rhetoric itself" (*Galatians*, 254; cf. Hans Dieter Betz, "Literary Composition and the Function of Paul's Letter to the Galatians," *NTS* 21 [1975]: 375-77). This problem presented by exhortation for Betz's outline has been widely noted by his critics. See, for example, the comments of

exhortation at the end of Galatians forces Betz to argue that Paul expands the typical arrangement of a speech because of practical considerations in Galatia.<sup>18</sup> In these final two chapters, Betz moves away from his analysis that arrangement, derived from the handbooks, should be the focus of rhetorical analysis.

To explain Paul's departure from the recommendations on arrangement, Betz relies on a reconstruction of the historical impetus behind Paul's exhortation.<sup>19</sup> He categorizes Galatians 5-6 as the final, necessary argument in Paul's defense that the Galatians' experience with the spirit is a rational one.<sup>20</sup> Paul's prior preaching with the Galatians has pressed them between two temptations. On the one hand, understanding themselves to be "Spirituals," some of the Galatians have abused their freedom in Christ, claiming to be above "this evil world and its corrupted ways."<sup>21</sup> Some Galatians, though, have grown uncomfortable with the resulting transgressions, doubting whether their possession of the Spirit was indeed sufficient if the result is such behavior. This

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Kennedy: "This exhortation is a problem for Betz's theory, since exhortation, as he recognizes, is not regarded as a part of judicial rhetoric by any of the ancient authorities" (*New Testament Interpretation*, 145).

<sup>18</sup> Betz's explanation is that it was necessary in Paul's argument because "there has to be a positive and viable proposal as to how to deal effectively with misconduct and failure, that is, with the 'flesh'" (*Galatians*, 273). Steven J. Kraftchick appropriately notes the problem for Betz's analysis, concluding that, "Although Betz wishes to depend on *arrangement* for his understanding of the structure of Galatians, in the final analysis it is invention which enables him to include chapters 5 and 6 in his structure" ("Why Do the Rhetoricians Rage?" pp. 55-79 in *Text and Logos: The Humanistic Interpretation of the New Testament* [ed. Theodore W. Jennings, Jr.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990], 59; emphasis original). See also David E. Aune, "Review of *Galatians* by Hans Dieter Betz" *RSR* 7 (1981): 323-28.

<sup>19</sup> Though I continue to refer to Paul's "exhortation," Betz refers to Paul's argument in these final two chapters as "paraenesis," though he uses this term interchangeably with "exhortation" (see *Galatians*, 232-33, 253).

<sup>20</sup> Betz reads Galatians as a document of Christian apologetics. Though the term apologetics is generally reserved for those Christian several generations removed from the earliest Christians, Betz argues "this neat distinction must be given up" ("In Defense," 102). He acknowledges there is a distinction between those later writers and Paul, but he notes that both have the characteristics of apologetic.

<sup>21</sup> "In Defense," 106. Betz draws heavily on his reading of Paul's labeling the Galatians as οἱ πνευματικοί, arguing that "the name was an almost technical self-designation of people who regarded themselves as having more or less reached the final goal of 'salvation' already here on earth" ("In Defense," 106). As I argue, within Paul's argumentative context, οἱ πνευματικοί is best understood as Paul's positive designation of the Galatians, reminding them that they have in fact received the spirit.

discomfort is evident in the community's vulnerability to the arguments of the "anti-Paulinists" who offer the Jewish law as a way to control immorality.<sup>22</sup>

According to Betz, Paul is able to show the Galatians that their identity as "Spirituals" does not free them to immorality because such immorality is contrary to the life led by the Spirit. Paul's central defense of the Spirit as an empowering source of Christian existence becomes the connection between the final two chapters and the rest of the argument. Paul has taken the irrational experience of the Spirit and defended it in rational terms; he has attempted to convince the Galatians of their new reality. All that remains is to show that the life created by living in the Spirit is likewise "rational," a task Paul completes by showing that life in the Spirit is consistent with "the ethical theories prevailing at that time."<sup>23</sup> This need for a rational definition of life in the Spirit explains how it is, as Betz suggests, that the specifics of Paul's exhortation match those found within his cultural and philosophical milieu.<sup>24</sup> Paul does not offer specific instructions that the Galatians are to follow so as to live a Christian life. Rather, Betz argues that, "Ethical' conduct means doing justice to the values of the culture, values which are named here in a very general sense and are only exemplaric."<sup>25</sup> The fact that Paul's moral exhortation is not uniquely Christian is the very point of the argument. Paul is not commanding the Galatians to live in a distinctly Christian manner. Rather, Paul is

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<sup>22</sup> See "In Defense," 107; cf. *Galatians*, 273. Betz's description of the Galatians two temptations (exploiting freedom and following the law) is a condensing of the two-front hypothesis, argued by James Hardy Ropes (*The Singular Problem of the Epistle to the Galatians* [Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929], 25-27). Others have likewise argued that both problems (libertinism and concern over transgressions) existed in one group in Galatia. See, for example, Frederic R. Crownfield, "The Singular Problem of the Dual Galatians," *JBL* 64 (1945): 491-500.

<sup>23</sup> "In Defense," 111. Betz explains further in his commentary: "The Christian is addressed as an educated and responsible person. He is expected to do no more than what would be expected of any other educated person in the Hellenistic culture of the time" (*Galatians*, 292). See also Betz's excursus on vice/virtue lists in Gal 5:19-23 (*Galatians*, 281-83).

<sup>24</sup> The consistency between the content of Paul's exhortation and that of competing philosophical systems has been demonstrated by many. See, for example, Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 44-51.

<sup>25</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 292.

arguing that the Spirit produces a life (a “fruit”) that is consistent with rational ethical systems with which the Galatians are already familiar. In Betz’s view, “The Christian is asked to let the ‘fruit of the Spirit’ happen,” and that “fruit” is consistent with prevailing moral philosophy.<sup>26</sup> The unique element of Paul’s argument is not the content of exhortation but rather the grounding of this cultural, rational behavior in the Galatians’ reception of the Spirit.

In Betz’s construction, Paul’s exhortation is a necessary completion of an argument for the sufficiency of the experience with the Spirit. Paul’s expression of concern in 5:13b that the flesh can exploit freedom offered in the Spirit is key.<sup>27</sup> Paul recognizes that he cannot merely argue in the negative that following the law is unnecessary. Rather, he must offer “a positive and viable proposal as to how to deal effectively with misconduct and failure, that is, with the ‘flesh.’”<sup>28</sup> And so, for Betz, the integration of exhortation into a forensic argument is explained by contingencies of the situation in Galatia. Paul is forced to offer instruction so as to temper the exploitation of freedom that may grow (or has grown) from his law-free gospel: “Paul realizes that mere polemic against accepting circumcision and law . . . does not do justice to the Galatian trouble.”<sup>29</sup> In Betz’s analysis, ideally Paul would end the letter with ch. 4, assuming his re-definition of the Galatians’ identity would be sufficient for their future deliberation over action. Paul’s concern for the Galatians’ behavior in their specific circumstances, though, forces him to offer a positive vision of life in the Spirit.

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<sup>26</sup> *Galatians*, 33.

<sup>27</sup> “Paul has inserted (v 13b) a statement which in all probability is the clue to the concrete problem the Galatians must face” (*Galatians*, 272).

<sup>28</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 273.

<sup>29</sup> *Galatians*, 273.

Betz's analysis offers much that aids my reading of the narrative rhetoric in these final chapters. First, Betz is certainly right that the argument of the first four chapters could lend itself to exploitation. The argument of 1 Corinthians, where Paul believes the community is exhibiting specific behaviors resulting from the exploitation of Paul's message of freedom, reinforces how real this concern may have been for Paul.<sup>30</sup> Paul's exhortation is not offered in addition to his theological argument, but rather is an essential part of it. Second, Betz also correctly emphasizes that Paul's exhortation is not an argument for a set of specific actions or behaviors the Galatians are to adopt. Rather Paul describes the type of action that results from life in the Spirit: "No law can force people to bring [the virtues that are the 'fruit of the Spirit'] about. If they occur it is because people allow them occur voluntarily."<sup>31</sup> Paul's argument is not a series of imperatives, charging the Galatians toward specific behaviors. Rather chs. 5-6 are best read as a description of how the Galatians will live if they allow the Spirit to be the source of their behavior.

Betz's proposal, however, is not without problems. First, Betz's historical reconstruction depends too heavily on his mirror-reading technique. The argument is inherently circular, as he constructs the situation in Galatia from reading the argument, but then uses this reconstruction to interpret specific parts of the same argument. In addition, his construction of the Galatian situation works better for some parts of chs. 5-6 than other parts. Betz's argument is supported by those places where Paul's instructions are generic appeals to identity in the Spirit. Betz's argument, however, that the specific

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<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Longenecker's connection of 1 Corinthians to Gal 5-6 (*Galatians*, 235-237). Betz acknowledges, "The easiest way to solve the problem is to read the situation of 1 Cor into Gal.," but he resists this temptation, arguing that there is no evidence that libertinism was present in Galatia (*Galatians*, 273).

<sup>31</sup> *Galatians*, 33.

content of Paul's exhortation is a reflection of his cultural milieu does not go far enough to explain all of Paul's content. Is there not a specifically Christian element to Paul's emphasis on "love" and enslavement to one another? Betz downplays the imperative mood of these two chapters, suggesting that Paul is arguing from outcomes of life in the Spirit, rather than for specific outcomes.

*A Christological Integration of Paul's Exhortation*

Richard B. Hays begins his argument for the grounding of Paul's ethics within Christology in Galatians with a critique of Betz similar to mine. Hays expresses dissatisfaction with Betz's conclusion that there is nothing distinctly Christian about the specific content of Paul's exhortation: "The bridge that [Betz] constructs between theology and ethics remains tenuous; the concrete ethical directives in Gal 5:13-6:10 are not, in Betz's view, derived directly from the gospel that Paul preached." Hays works to show that, "There are indications within the text of Galatians that the content of Paul's ethical exhortations is rooted in his gospel" and "Paul did have a distinctive vision of the way in which the Christian community ought to be shaped by the activity of the Spirit in its midst."<sup>32</sup> For Hays, therefore, Paul's exhortation is in more of an imperative (rather than Betz's apologetic) mood, and Paul's vision for the Galatians' behavior is distinctly Christian.

Hays' "solution" to the problem of ethics in Galatians depends upon a strong reading of Paul's reference to the "law of Christ" in 6:2. Hays reads this phrase as Paul's explicit appeal to the pattern of faithfulness exhibited in Christ's life and death that was a

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<sup>32</sup> "Christology and Ethics," 270.

central feature of Paul's gospel.<sup>33</sup> This pattern of life is the ground for Paul's exhortation to the Galatians: "Christology supplies not only the presuppositions of the Christian's existential situation but also the pattern for Christian conduct. Paul's ethical directives to the Galatians presuppose a particular understanding of Jesus Christ as a *paradigm* for the life of the Christian believer and—to do justice to the full scope of Paul's vision—for the life of the *community* in Christ."<sup>34</sup> To support his claim that the pattern of Jesus' life and death is the basis for Paul's exhortation, Hays highlights three "indications . . . within the text of Galatians about the 'shape' of the law of Christ:"<sup>35</sup> 1) Paul refers positively to Christ's actions; 2) Paul suggests a correspondence between his own actions and Christ's; 3) Paul suggests the Galatians' behavior should conform to Christ.

Hays' first point is not in dispute. Certainly Paul speaks in a positive way about Christ's death on behalf of others at several points in the letter.<sup>36</sup> Hays second argument, that this pattern of Christ's behavior is determinative for Paul's own action, is supported by a few connections in Galatians between Paul and Christ, connections Hays reads to refer to Paul's behavior. Hays focuses on 2:19b-20 as the "hermeneutical key" for reading the connection between Paul and Jesus in Galatians, arguing that in saying

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<sup>33</sup> Hays defines the law of Christ as follows: "'The law of Christ' is a formulation coined (or employed) by Paul to refer to this paradigmatic self-giving of Jesus Christ" ("Christology and Ethics," 275).

<sup>34</sup> "Christology and Ethics," 272-73. The emphasis is original. The two parts of the opening sentence of this quote well summarize how Hays' essay on Christology and ethics is an extension of his reading of the argument in chs. 3-4 in *The Faith of Jesus Christ: An Investigation of the Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11* (SBL Dissertation Series; Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1983). Identifying Christology as the "presuppositions of the Christian's existential situation" was the work of *The Faith of Christ*. Hays continues to read references to Christ in the letter as indicating a "narrative substructure" that was present in Paul's preaching. He now assumes that substructure was understood by Paul's historical audience as a "pattern for Christian conduct." Therefore references to Christ in these final two chapters (of which there are only a few) can be expanded by Hays to be references to a broader emphasis on the story of Jesus that was part of Paul's original preaching to the Galatians. The quote also distinguishes Hays' reading from that of Betz. Betz would likely agree that Christology provides the ontological basis for proper behavior (Hays' "presuppositions of the Christian's existential situation"), but he would deny that Christ is in any way paradigmatic.

<sup>35</sup> "Christology and Ethics," 276.

<sup>36</sup> Most notably see Galatians 1:3-4; 2:20-21; 4:4-7.

“Christ lives in me,” Paul suggests that he understands his ministry to present Christ.<sup>37</sup> Hays asserts that Paul’s dual statement that “Christ lives in me” and his life is lived “by the faith of Jesus Christ” helps to explain other enigmatic statements, particularly those in 6:17 (that Paul bears the stigmata of Christ) and 4:14 (that the Galatians welcomed Paul as Jesus Christ). Paul not only speaks highly of Christ’s action but identifies his own behavior “in Christ” as an attempt to imitate Christ. Third, Hays argues that Paul calls for the Galatians to become like Christ in their behavior. Hays highlights Paul’s language about the community “putting on Christ” (3:27) and being “crucified with Christ” (2:19; cf. 5:24) as evidence of Paul’s desired connection between Christ’s actions and the behavior of the community.<sup>38</sup> His primary text, though, is 4:19, where Paul explains his own work is motivated by the hope that “Christ be formed among you.” According to Hays, this cannot be read individualistically as a hope that Christ be born in each believer, but rather “that the Galatian *community* be formed in the image of Christ,” which Hays understands to mean behaving as a community in the self-sacrificial manner exhibited by Jesus’ faithful life and death.<sup>39</sup> Hays makes this connection through appeal to 5:13, though he admits that in his explicit call upon the Galatians to “become slaves to one another” Paul omits the reference to Christ.<sup>40</sup> Because Paul calls for the Galatians to love one another (5:13) and because Paul has previously referenced Jesus’ loving and giving himself on behalf of others (1:4; 2:20), Hays argues that Paul offers Christ as “the

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<sup>37</sup> See “Christology and Ethics,” 281.

<sup>38</sup> Hays fails to recognize, though, that these two comments refer to action in the past. Paul’s point is not that the Galatians must become like Christ by adapting their behavior to his, but rather that they have become Christ in their reception of the spirit.

<sup>39</sup> “Christology and Ethics,” 283. Emphasis is original.

<sup>40</sup> Again, Hays makes reference to the Christ hymn of Phil 2, where Christ is described as “taking on the form of a slave” to complete his argument. This gives credence to the idea that the theological underpinnings of Hays’ arguments are correct, but the argument of Galatians proceeds in a very different way than that of Philippians.

fundamental paradigm for Christian ethics.”<sup>41</sup> The content of Paul’s exhortation to the Galatians comes not from his cultural milieu, but rather from his preaching the story of Jesus.<sup>42</sup>

Hays’ analysis provides a helpful starting point for my reading of Galatians 5-6. He is correct to note a specifically Christian characteristic of Paul’s ethic. The behaviors Paul encourages are rooted in his Jewish tradition and while contrast between fruit of the spirit and works of the flesh has parallels in contemporary moral philosophy, the guiding principle of Paul’s exhortation, the attitude of enslaving oneself to others, is without clear parallel.<sup>43</sup> Paul’s emphasis on love and enslavement to the other members of the community would have confused many of the ancient authors whom Betz cites.<sup>44</sup>

Second, Hays helpfully identifies the narrative shape to Paul’s ethic. Hays argues that Paul offers Christ as a paradigm for behavior not in the sense of calling for a wooden reproduction of Jesus’ deeds. Rather Paul offers Christ as a “life-pattern shown forth in Christ” that the Galatians are called to understand as a model.<sup>45</sup> The question for my analysis is the exact nature of this model. Though Hays is not explicit about his notion of imitation, the analysis of *mimesis* in the second chapter of this study is a helpful way to understand my distinction between following rules and living in imitation of a pattern of life, such as Christ’s faithfulness. Following Ricoeur and Aristotle, I understand imitation

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<sup>41</sup> “Christology and Ethics,” 287.

<sup>42</sup> Hays rejects Betz’s suggestion that Paul’s source for exhortation is his Hellenistic milieu. He points to 5:13, where Betz does not cite many parallels, as the key demonstration of this. Hays argues Paul’s call to love through enslavement to one another has no parallel, and it is in fact contrary to much moral philosophy in Paul’s day, citing Epictetus in particular.

<sup>43</sup> As Hays summarizes, “Against this backdrop [of Greco-Roman moral philosophy], the distinctiveness of Paul’s advice to the Galatians stands forth in stark relief” (“Christology and Ethics,” 286).

<sup>44</sup> Hays correctly notes the “radical” nature of Paul’s ethic: “Gal 5:13 provides a clear statement of the way in which Paul’s christologically shaped ethic differs dramatically from the morality current in Hellenistic popular culture. . . . Characteristically, freedom is much extolled in the philosophical literature, and slavery is correspondingly abhorred” (“Christology and Ethics,” 284).

<sup>45</sup> Hays, “Christology and Ethics,” 280. Hays makes reference to Amos Wilder’s emphasis on the “world plot” of Paul’s life that reflects the story of Jesus’ life and death.

as a creative act, wherein the basic pattern is re-created in new situations. Paul calls the Galatians to apply the pattern of existence distilled from observing actions into specific actions in new situations.<sup>46</sup> I will distinguish between Hays' narrative reading and my own in my consideration of the "law of Christ" below, but Hays helpfully advances the understanding of imitation beyond the idea of merely reproducing action.

Third, Hays highlights the significance of Jesus throughout the letter, even though Paul does not make this narrative as explicit as Hays suggests.<sup>47</sup> The story of Jesus is undoubtedly an essential part of Paul's argument in the letter. Paul begins with Christ's self-sacrifice (1:4) and refers to Christ's life and death at several key points in his

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<sup>46</sup> A helpful analysis of this idea of imitation can be found in the arguments about Aristotle's understanding of the rhetorical paradigm, outlined in the *Rhetoric*. The introduction of paradigmatic narrative forms part of Aristotle's argument that persuasion does not come from necessary principles, but rather from principles generally accepted by the speaker and audience. He describes the rhetorical paradigm as an argument from "part to part," from the specifics of a given situation described to the specifics of the situation the audience presently faces: "It is neither the relation of part to whole, nor of whole to part, nor of one whole to another whole, but of part to part" (*Rhet.* 1.2.19 1357b). There has been much discussion in scholarship on Aristotle as to whether "part to part" implies a move through a whole. In other words, does Aristotle suggest that in observing the particulars of a paradigm, the audience forms the idea of the universal principle in the mind, which is then applied to specific situations? Or rather, are we to take seriously the idea that one can move from part to part, from specific example to specific instruction, without grasping the universal principle involved? For an argument for the former (through universal), see William Lyon Benoit, "Aristotle's Example: The Rhetorical Induction," *The Quarterly Journal of Speech* 66 (1980): 189-92. Benoit is responding to Gerard A. Hauser, who has argued frequently for the latter position (see, for example, Gerard A. Hauser, "Aristotle's Example Revisited," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 18 (1985): 171-79).

<sup>47</sup> Paul offers few specifics about Christ's "actions." Hays's argument that, "If Galatians were the only source for our knowledge of Paul's Christology we would still know quite a lot about the story of Jesus" stretches the evidence in the letter significantly ("Christology and Ethics," 277). From Galatians we learn that Christ was a human (4:4), was Jewish (4:4), "gave himself for our sins . . . in accordance with God's will" (1:3), "loved me and gave himself for me" (2:20), was crucified (3:1, 13). An example of Hays' rhetorical method can be seen in his expansion of these few details into a paradigmatic function for Christ in Galatians. He argues that "the prominence of these themes in Paul's greeting indicates that they are to play an important role in the letter which follows" ("Christology and Ethics," 277), citing Schubert's work on the function of Paul's thanksgivings ("Christology and Ethics," 277n28). The presence of the details in the opening of the letter, though, does not necessarily mean that they do play an important role. Schubert's work is persuasive in showing that in many of Paul's letters those issues raised in the opening are essential parts of the argument. The burden falls on Hays to show that this is the case, not to simply use Paul's typical pattern (highlighted by Schubert) as evidence that it is the case. Paul refers to many things in the openings of his letters that are not major topics in the argument. One wonders just how "bold" is Paul's presentation of what Hays calls a "boldly sketched portrayal of what Jesus Christ did and how he did it" ("Christology and Ethics," 276-77).

argument.<sup>48</sup> The question for my analysis will be the role that Jesus plays in Paul's argument. Thus in my consideration of the "law of Christ" I distinguish between Jesus' function in Hays' reading and my own.

Hays' narrative reading of Paul's ethics must be held together with Betz's recognition that Paul does not offer a positive argument *for* specific behavior amongst the Galatians, even if that behavior is understood as a "life-pattern." Betz helpfully identifies Paul's exhortation as an argument for the reality of living in the Spirit. In an attempt to tie the content of Paul's exhortation to his gospel, Hays' constructed pattern of Jesus' life emerges as a new law to follow. Paul's imperative becomes an argument against following the law and an argument for following the pattern of Christ's life and death. Though Hays explicitly rejects the argument of C. H. Dodd and others that Paul invokes Jesus' teachings as a new Torah, Hays comes close to arguing that Paul offers the pattern of Christ's life as the new "law" the Galatians are to follow.<sup>49</sup> Betz identifies a trap into which many treatments like Hays' can be seen to fall: "Paul's ethic is neither a work ethic (doing good deed produces good), nor a call for the realization of ethical ideals. His ethic is of another type. . . . The 'fruit of the Spirit' is an image which describes what happens when man shares in the manifestations of the 'good.'"<sup>50</sup> Hays argues that Christ's pattern

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<sup>48</sup> A problem for Hays' analysis is that references to Christ's faithfulness do not appear in the hortatory section of chs. 5-6, where Hays would most expect them. Hays compares Paul's references to "the pattern of Christ's action" to Phil 2:6-11 ("Christology and Ethics," 278). However, there Paul more clearly lays out the pattern of Christ's movement from glory to humility and back to glory. In addition, there he explicitly tells his addressee to follow the example of Christ (see Phil 2:5). Likewise, the pattern of Christ is more easily seen in the argumentative presentation of Paul (Phil 3:4-11), Timothy (2:19-24), and Epaphroditus (2:25-30). On the use of the pattern of Christ in the argument of Philippians, see Morna D. Hooker, "Philippians 2:6-11," pp. 151-64 in *Jesus und Paulus* (ed. E. E. Ellis and E. Grasser; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1975); Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation* (rev. ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1999), 369-81.

<sup>49</sup> For Hays' refutation of Dodd's position, see "Christology and Ethics," 273-74.

<sup>50</sup> Betz, *Galatians*, 293; cf. *Galatians*, 33-34.

is one the Galatians are called to follow, through particular imitative actions. It will be my focus to explore exactly what imitation means in this context.

Though Paul makes a call for his communities to imitate Christ elsewhere, he does not do so in Galatians. He describes Christ's life and death in particular ways, and he describes life in the Spirit for the Galatians in similar terms, but the connection between the two is not an explicit call for imitation. This is not simply a case of omitting what the Galatians might have implied. Rather, the connection is not made because Paul does not offer Christ as *an example* to be followed. Rather, he offers Christ as a *paradigm* that allows him to describe the Galatians' identity in the Spirit. Stanley Hauerwas' description of examples fits Paul's use well: "Attending to such lives does not mean that we try to imitate others, though certainly imitation may be useful; rather, by letting those lives form our own we learn what our particular way of embodying the story entails."<sup>51</sup> The Galatians share a narrative identity with Christ; this point Paul has established in his identification of them as the "seed of Abraham" through their reception of the Spirit. For this reason, if they live out their true identity, their behavior will look like Christ's. Paul's argument, therefore, is not to imitate Christ, but rather to live in light of the reception of the Spirit, and the resulting behavior will be Christ-like.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Stanley Hauerwas, "Casuistry as a Narrative Art," *Interpretation* 37 (1983): 381. Hauerwas continues: "We cannot learn the story by doing exactly what others did for we cannot do exactly what they did. Rather, we must let their lives imaginatively challenge our own so that we may learn how to embody the virtues which determined not only what they did but how they did it." This accurately describes Paul's use of Christ in Galatians. It also accurately describes one way in which Paul's autobiography functions in Galatians.

<sup>52</sup> In this sense, Paul is also a model for the Galatians to imitate. I do not mean this description of Paul as the object of imitation in the sense that Paul voices it in 1 Corinthians: "Become imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor 11:1; cf. 1 Cor 4:16). Paul's life is one guided by the Spirit, as is the Galatians. Therefore he is a model of behavior.

### **Paul's Narrative Moral Reasoning in Galatians 5-6**

For all of the differences between their conclusions, Betz and Hays take a similar approach to the challenge presented by the shift in Paul's rhetoric in Galatians 5-6. Both work to answer the question, "How does the exhortation of the final two chapters integrate with the argument of Galatians 1-4?" That is, each assumes the interpreter's job is to find a solution to a problem presented by a change in rhetorical mode. For Betz, the solution is found through historical reconstruction; exhortation plays a necessary role in Paul's argument because of the situation in Galatia. For Hays, the solution is found in the character of Paul's gospel, Paul's argument assumes that which he preached when he was present with the Galatians, what Hays calls "the distinctiveness of Paul's theologically determined ethic."<sup>53</sup>

Much of Paul's heavy theological and rhetorical lifting has been completed before ch. 5. That does not mean, though, that these last two chapters are superfluous. Paul is "forced" into the moral argument of his last two chapters by the very rhetorical plan of the letter. Paul addresses the Galatians' behavior because the Galatians' behavior is the rhetorical situation that prompts the letter! Both Betz and Hays have separated the final two chapters of the letter before they have begun their analysis, and they have then imposed external constructions onto the text to explain the presence of Paul's exhortation. Therefore both approaches are synthetic solutions that require the assumption of more knowledge than the implied audience of Galatians actually has. The implied reader of the letter would neither recognize Paul's argument as an insistence on the rational nature of behavior in the Spirit nor understand Paul to be arguing for an imitation of Christ. Instead, Paul's implied reader is confronted with the text as it stands.

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<sup>53</sup> Hays, "Christology and Ethics," 290.

My analysis is driven by the inverse of the question with which Betz and Hays operate. I ask, instead, “What role does the argument of Gal 1-4 play in Paul’s exhortation?” Regardless of the trouble this section presents for formal treatments of ethics or rhetoric in Galatians, the simple fact is that Paul does spend much of the last third of his letter arguing directly about the Galatians’ behavior. These chapters are not separate from the argument Paul has constructed to this point. If the interpreter alters his lens from understanding Paul to be arguing righteousness by faith and instead sees Paul as addressing the behavior of a local community, the challenge is no longer integrating chs. 5-6 into the rest of the letter, but rather integrating the rest of the letter into chs. 5-6. Throughout this study, I have argued that the letter must be read as a unity, if for no other reason than the fact that it is a canonical unity. My interest is not in determining why, or by what logic, Paul decides to begin focusing on the Galatians’ behavior. Rather, my interest is in exploring the experience of reading that section at the end of his foregoing argument.

When exploring the experience of reading Galatians as a single composition, rather than separating the final two chapters as an addendum, readers recognize that the narrative rhetoric of the letter to this point necessarily influences how the exhortation is read. Paul’s instructions for the community depend and build upon the rhetorical work he has done in the first four chapters. As George Kennedy notes, “[Galatians 1:11-5:1] provides the basis for the specific commandments which are the practical purpose of the letter.”<sup>54</sup> Separating chs. 5-6 from the rest of the argument is not merely a violation of the canonical unity of the text, but it is also a violation of its rhetorical unity. To this point, I

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<sup>54</sup> *New Testament Interpretation*, 150. Kennedy does not explore in detail how this it is that the exhortation is built upon this “basis.”

have demonstrated two major forms of narrative rhetoric in the letter: Paul's metapedagogical narrative in the first two chapters and his construction of the narrative of Israel in chs. 3-4. Both of these stand in the background to Paul's exhortation, which is an appeal to the identity that he has constructed for the Galatians. It is my task in this chapter to show how the narrative rhetoric of the first four chapters forms the basis of Paul's exhortation.<sup>55</sup>

### **The Galatians and Circumcision (5:1-6)**

Frank J. Matera observes that if Galatians is an argument about circumcision, as it is often characterized, then Galatians 5:1-6 must be the central part of letter, for only here does Paul deal specifically with the issue.<sup>56</sup> Whether or not Matera's judgment that Galatians is an argument about circumcision is correct, he is correct to argue for the centrality of 5:1-6 within Paul's argument.<sup>57</sup> This section's importance, though, is not a

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<sup>55</sup> Hays phrases the key question surrounding Galatians 5-6 as follows: "How is Paul's ethic grounded in his theology?" ("Christology and Ethics," 268). This question is important, but it is secondary to determining how Paul's ethics are grounded in his argument to the Galatians. Constructing Paul's "theology" in Galatians is a second-order interpretation. For a discussion of Hays' theological question, see Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 272-302.

<sup>56</sup> "[Chapters 5-6] are the climax of Paul's deliberative argument aimed at persuading the Galatians not to be circumcised" ("Culmination," 80). Paul has referred to circumcision several times in the letter to this point. First in 2:3 Paul notes that the Greek Titus had not been circumcised. Paul refers to Cephas' apostleship as "of the circumcision" (2:7-9). He also highlights Cephas' fear in Antioch on account of "those of the circumcision" (2:12). Paul will also refer in 6:12-13 to the Galatians' temptation to be circumcised.

<sup>57</sup> As I noted in the previous chapter, I read the first statement of 5:1 to be the closing of his argument about Sarah and Hagar. Paul turns in 5:1b, with the post-positive οὖν, to explore this identity in freedom. For versions and commentaries that place 5:1 with the argument that precedes, see *The Greek New Testament: SBL Edition*; UBS4; Lightfoot; de Boer; Cousar; Bruce; Martyn. For those that place 5:1 with the argument that follows, see NA27; Dunn; Betz; Longenecker. This confusion reflects the transition role this verse plays between the two arguments. The point established in Paul's use of Sarah and Hagar is that the Galatians' freedom in Christ is not a new freedom, but rather a return to their natural state. The Galatians are children alongside Isaac, while those who continue to be enslaved to the law are children alongside the child of Hagar. The opening point in 5:1, therefore, summarizes the argument that "Christ has freed us into freedom." The connection between 5:1 and 4:31 is essential for understanding Paul's argument. They are "children of the free woman", which suggests that their freedom precedes their period of enslavement. Paul has constructed the narrative logic so that following the law is characterized as "unnatural," contrary to

product of any answer Paul offers to a single issue that prompts the letter. Indeed Paul argues that properly considered, neither circumcision nor a foreskin has any power (5:5; cf. 6:15). Rather this section is important in the argument because it is the first time that Paul applies the narrative identity constructed in the letter to the Galatians' behavior. The specificity of the question addressed here makes it a helpful place to show Paul's narrative moral reasoning in action.

Paul's argument is not simple dissuasion from being circumcised, though Paul certainly does not want the Galatians to be circumcised. Rather, Paul's rhetorical strategy is to offer the Galatians an understanding of what circumcision means in light of who they have become, assuming that an answer of whether this act is necessary will follow. Contextualizing the law has been a primary rhetorical goal of the letter to this point, and therefore it is no surprise to find Paul's argument to build upon his previous construction of the narrative of Israel. This section of the argument offers the first example in the letter of how Paul's deliberative argument grows out of his narrative construction of the Galatians' identity.

The argument of 5:1-6 is a single, defined rhetorical unit, set apart from Paul's summary of the Sarah/Hagar story in 4:31 and his consideration of the threat from the troublers in 5:7-12.<sup>58</sup> Paul begins by stating a general imperative about the implications of

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their free state. Freedom has existed since the promise made to Abraham; enslavement (to the law or to those things which are not divine) was a temporary state. This provides a more natural reading of the dative τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ, which to many interpreters seems superfluous. I do not read the addition of the relative pronoun ἣ in variant forms in many manuscripts (see particularly F G) to be original, but rather likely an addition to explain the phrase "to freedom Christ set us free." For discussion (and a different conclusion), see J. B. Lightfoot, who argues that the omission of ἣ in a majority of manuscripts can easily be explained by the ἡμῶς that follows (*The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1962 (1865)], 200-202).

<sup>58</sup> Paul's comment in 4:31 is clearly a summary, introduced by the concluding δίο. In 5:7 he turns to directly address the Galatians' being led astray.

the Galatians' freedom (5:1b).<sup>59</sup> He then applies his imperative against returning to slavery in the specific case of circumcision in 5:2-6.<sup>60</sup> The core of Paul's argument can be identified as the distinction between circumcision and Christ, raised in 5:2 and 5:6: circumcision renders Christ without benefit (5:2) and in Christ neither circumcision nor a foreskin has any power (5:6).

At first glance, Paul's two statements about circumcision stand in tension with one another. In 5:2, Paul identifies the danger of being circumcised: Christ is rendered ineffective.<sup>61</sup> He concludes in 5:6, though, by arguing for the impotence of the act itself: "Neither circumcision nor a foreskin has any power."<sup>62</sup> How can circumcision be without power when Paul argues that circumcision has the ultimate power of nullifying God's action in Christ? The answer comes in recognizing the narrative Paul has constructed to this point, particularly his employment of the Jewish law.

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<sup>59</sup> Most recognize the centrality of Paul's statement in 5:1. Consider, for example, the comments of Dunn: "In these words Paul sums up the whole argument of iii.1-iv.11" (*Galatians*, 262).

<sup>60</sup> Paul's warning against a return to slavery is clear in light of his argument in ch. 4 about past enslavement. Paul has constructed the narrative of Jews' and Gentiles' so that both were in enslavement before Christ (4:3, 8-9), Jews to the law and Gentiles to "those things which are, by nature, not divine." This logic helps make sense of Paul's warning to not "again" (πάλιν) submit to slavery.

<sup>61</sup> Paul's use of the aorist subjunctive περιτέμνησθε may indicate that the Galatians have not yet become circumcised, though it is the most natural grammatical structure, and therefore one should not make too much out of Paul's choice of tense or mood (*pace* Martinus de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary* [The New Testament Library; Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011], 311).

<sup>62</sup> It is most common to translate Paul's term ἀκροβυστία more broadly than its literal meaning "foreskin," most often as "uncircumcision" (see NRSV; KJV; cf. *LSJ*: "state of having the foreskin"). Outside of Paul, the term only appears in the New Testament once (Acts 11:3) where it is clearly an anatomical reference (ἄνδρες ἀκροβυστίαν ἔχοντες). Betz argues that the term is used "as an abbreviation of 'the heathen'" (*Galatians*, 96). However, it is just as appropriate to read Paul's reference here to the actual anatomical part that is severed in circumcision. Paul does use the term to refer to those who have not been circumcised (see Rom 2:26-27; 4:9). This reading is also likely in Paul's other uses of the term in Rom 2:25. Prior to the New Testament, the term is relatively rare. The more common Greek anatomical term is ἀκροποσθία (see Hippocrates, *Aphorismi* 6.19). In the LXX, ἀκροβυστία is used to refer to the part of the body that is removed in the process of circumcision (see Gen 17:11, 14, 25; 34:14, 24; Exod 4:25; Lev 12:3; 1Sam 18:25, 27; 2 Sam 3:14; Jud 14:10), generally translating the Hebrew ערלה. The term is used to refer to a state of "uncircumcision" in 1Macc 1:15 and Jer 9:24. Likely due to Paul's influence, ἀκροβυστία is used commonly in early Christianity to refer to those who have had their foreskins removed (see Ign. *Phld.* 6.1; Justin Martyr, *Dialogue* 19.3). For a review of the term, see K. L. Schmidt, "ἀκροβυστία," *TDNT* 1.225-26.

Readers will recognize how much language Paul's argument in 5:2-6 shares with his prior report of his past.<sup>63</sup> Paul refers to "freedom" in Christ, freedom that characterized his defense at Jerusalem (2:3-4) and distinguished "us" from the "present Jerusalem" (4:22, 26, 30). For those who begin down the path of law with circumcision, Paul says there is an obligation to "do the law" just as he did in his exegetical argument for the curse for those from works of law (3:10-12). He speaks of "falling away from the gift" when it has been the "gift" that he has placed at the very core of God's work in their lives (1:6), in Paul's reversal (1:15), and in the pillars' recognition of the power of his Gentile mission (2:9). Paul also argued to Cephas that his death to the law helped him to avoid "nullifying the gift of God" (2:21). The language itself suggests the importance of Paul's argument to this point in answering the question of circumcision.

Indeed Paul's argument about circumcision is a re-presentation of his own past. Paul begins his argument about the mutual exclusivity of Christ and circumcision with an invocation of his own identity: "Behold, I, Paul, say you to, that if you are circumcised, Christ will not benefit you at all." Paul's emphatic self-reference (ἐγὼ Παῦλος) draws the implied reader's attention to the apostle's identity as it has been constructed throughout the letter.<sup>64</sup> This is not Paul's mere assertion of authority as an apostle of Christ.<sup>65</sup> Rather Paul here speaks as the natural Jew who died to the law in order that he might live for

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<sup>63</sup> Paul's note that he is explaining this "again" (πάλιν) can only be a reference to his earlier argument. Some witnesses (D\* F G pc it) omit πάλιν, though the overwhelming majority of diverse witnesses include it.

<sup>64</sup> Rarely in his letters, outside of the salutations and closings, does Paul use his own name to emphasize that it is he making a particular argument (see 2 Cor 10:1; 1 Thess 2:18; Phlm 9). Most suggest that Paul "lays stress on the importance and seriousness of what he has to say in what follows" (Longenecker, *Galatians*, 225; cf. Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 203). This is certainly true, but given the function of Paul's narrative in the argument, his self-reference does much more than call attention to what he is about to say.

<sup>65</sup> Most interpreters read Paul's emphasis as an assertion of his apostolic authority (see de Boer, *Galatians*, 311). Certainly there is such an assertion here, but to focus there is to overlook the fact that Paul speaks as one formerly "from works of law," who has experience with the law and the type of life it produces.

God (2:19). This is the Paul who tells the Galatians he “became as you” (4:12), a reference to his existence redeemed from the curse of the law. Who is better suited to instruct the Galatians on the danger of circumcision than one who is himself circumcised, who “excelled in the traditions of the fathers,” and who persecuted the church to the point of death (1:13-14)?<sup>66</sup>

Paul’s argument that becoming circumcised means that “Christ will not benefit you at all” rings true with his description of his life “in Judaism.”<sup>67</sup> Paul’s own past “in Judaism” was characterized as continual advancement in the traditions, advancement that was in part due to his persecution of the church. When “circumcised,” Christ certainly did not benefit Paul. It took God’s decision to reveal his son (1:15-16) to reverse Paul’s life.

In chs. 3-4, Paul has explained to his audience the logic behind this understanding “in Judaism.” Paul’s consideration in 5:3-4 of the implications of being circumcised is a restatement of his argument in 3:10-14, applied in reverse.<sup>68</sup> Paul makes this connection explicitly in 5:3, where he again invokes his own past by “witnessing again” that there is an obligation “to do the entire law” (ὅλον τὸν νόμον ποιῆσαι) for those who enter into the law through circumcision.<sup>69</sup> In 3:10-12, Paul characterized the law as a trap wherein those

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<sup>66</sup> Paul will later contrast his own Jewish authority with that of the troublers, who “themselves do not keep the law” (6:13). Schlier correctly notes that “his authority has all the more weight here because of what he said in 1:13f., so he cannot be suspected of being full of liberal bias” (“Seine Autorität hat hier um so mehr Gewicht als er nach dem, was er 1.13f. sagte, nicht in den Verdacht kommen kann, von ‘liberalen’ Vorurteilen erfüllt zu sein”) (*Der Brief an die Galater* [Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965], 231; translation is my own). For similar comments, see Dunn, *Galatians*, 264; Lightfoot, *Galatians*, 203.

<sup>67</sup> Paul’s point that “Christ will not benefit you at all” (Χριστὸς ὑμᾶς οὐδὲν ὠφελήσει) is similar to his argument in Romans that “circumcision is of benefit if you accomplish the law” (περιτομή μὲν γὰρ ὠφελεῖ ἐὰν νόμον πράσσης (Rom 2:25). The argument there, as here in Galatians is that the law is a world in which one enters, which requires total adherence.

<sup>68</sup> Paul’s rehashing of his previous argument here in 5:3, now directed toward the Galatians “if you are circumcised” is further evidence that his consideration of the law in 3:10-13 was not universally relevant, but rather specifically concerned natural Jews, those “from works of law.”

<sup>69</sup> Consistent with his other letters, Paul uses the language of “witness” to refer to personal experience as the justification behind a stated claim. See Gal 4:15; Rom 10:2; 2 Cor 8:3; Col 4:13. Many early manuscripts lack “again” (ἀλλιν; missing from the original of D and F G), though the strongest witnesses

who seek righteousness “from works of law” are either cursed by violating law or live a life of continuing “to do law,” a point established through the quotation of Lev 18:5 in Gal 3:12. By demonstrating the problem the law created for natural Jews, Paul is able to make the argument that any attempt to follow law, circumcision in this particular case, is not merely a single act. It is, rather, an act that shifts one’s identity to being “from works of law,” and therefore Paul’s argument about Jews in the past becomes relevant to the Galatians, if they are circumcised.

Paul’s argument draws upon his construction of the law’s function in Israel’s past. Before Christ, the law was introduced as a fortress to protect some, but the result was that it was a barrier to righteousness; righteousness is from faith, and the law is not from faith (3:11). By being circumcised the Galatians will embrace the law as normative, and this view has a distinct implication for understanding Christ. This interpretation of the Christ event “from law” is the very reason Paul can make the strong statement of 5:2 that Christ offers no benefit for those who are circumcised. This point was established in Paul’s continued exegesis in 3:13-14. Considered from the standpoint of someone “in Judaism,” that is, someone “under law,” Christ is a violator of the law by nature of his manner of death. This is the new image of Christ for Galatians who choose to be circumcised. Becoming circumcised is not a simple act of removing foreskin; it is the act of going “under law” and thereby living within the law’s worldview. If circumcised, the Galatians’ new identity will be “from works of law,” and from this perspective, Christ is a violator

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include it. This reference could be to Paul’s prior teaching with the Galatians (so Ernest De Witt Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians* [ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921], 195-196) or to Paul’s comment in 5:2 (so J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [AB33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997], 469), but most naturally is a reference to 3:10-12, where Paul speaks of “doing the law.” Paul literally labels the person who is circumcised to be a “debtor” (ὀφειλέτης) to doing the complete law. For the financial use of this term, see Mt 6:12; 18:24; Rom 15:27. Paul uses this same language to label himself as “indebted” to all types of people in the Roman community (Rom 1:14).

of the law, and therefore of no benefit. Being declared righteous with respect to the law is mutually exclusive with Christ.<sup>70</sup>

Paul's point that the Galatians, through circumcision, would reverse the narrative logic he has constructed assumes a distinction that Paul draws between natural Jews, like himself, and the potential Gentiles-turned-Jews, like those Galatians who become circumcised. Paul and his fellow Jews were able to move out from under the curse of the law and the obligation to "do the entire law" because Christ "redeemed" Paul and his fellow Jews from the curse of the law (3:13, 25). Paul's argument here assumes that no such redemption will be available for the Galatians who become circumcised. This is Paul's point in his strong statement that those Galatians who become circumcised "have been cut off from Christ." (κατηργήθητε ἀπο Χριστοῦ). The Galatians began "in Christ," having already received the spirit "from faith" (3:2, 5). The gift was given to them before their attempts to adhere to the Jewish law. This is the meaning of Paul's two harsh statements that those who are circumcised "have been rendered worthless from Christ"<sup>71</sup> and they have "fallen from the gift." For Paul, as a Jew, Christ offered no benefit because he lived within a world of law. For the Galatians, who first are in Christ and then enter the world of the law, they are cut off from Christ, for they step into the narrative that Paul left. As illustrated in Paul's own story, the life "under law" is indeed cut off from Christ.

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<sup>70</sup> This mutual exclusivity is made in reverse in Romans: "Circumcision is of value [ὠφελεῖ] if you should keep the law. But if you are a violator [παραβατῆς νόμου ἧς] your circumcision has become a foreskin" (Rom 2:25).

<sup>71</sup> Paul uses the same language here (καταργέω) as he uses in 3:17 to describe the law's inability to "nullify the promise" (καταργῆσαι τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν). It is also the same language Paul will use in 5:11 to explain that his preaching circumcision would "nullify the scandal of the cross" (κατήργηται τὸ σκάνδαλον τοῦ σταυροῦ). The standard translations of the aorist passive κατηργήθητε (see NRSV: "cut off") miss the nuance Paul is here using. The point Paul is making is that a move toward circumcision makes Christ ineffective.

Anyone who asserts that the law is necessary, an assertion enacted through circumcision, must likewise understand Christ as one cursed by the law.

Paul's argument in 5:2-4 is far stronger, therefore, than the characterization of de Boer: "If the Galatians choose the route of law observance, they will be back where they started."<sup>72</sup> This is true in the sense that the Galatians, if circumcised, will once again be enslaved; this is Paul's point at 5:1b. However, Paul is arguing that circumcision creates a particular form of enslavement that makes Christ problematic. If the Galatians choose the route of law observance, they will be back where Paul and his fellow Jews started, under the curse of law. This is a repeated appeal to the narrative logic he announced in 4:12. Paul has become like the Gentile Galatians by dying to the law, gaining the advantages they had as Gentiles to whom the promise was made. Paul and his fellow Jews were able to receive the Spirit because of they have been redeemed from the law. In being circumcised, though, the Galatians become as natural Jews. In such a case they will be subject to the curse of law under which Paul and his fellow natural Jews fell before Christ.

In v. 5, Paul contrasts this negative image of life in the law to the life of those who live "with Spirit." Paul's first-person plural now includes all those who are in Christ, as he has argued that both those who were "natural Jews" (3:14, 4:6) and those who were Gentiles (3:2, 5) have received the Spirit. Both Jews and Gentiles have received the Spirit "from faith" (ἐκ πίστεως), and therefore they have the potential to be declared righteous.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> *Galatians*, 315.

<sup>73</sup> This potential for righteousness based on faith is the point Paul established in 3:12 through his quotation of Hab 2:4. There is much discussion about how to translate Paul's phrase ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεύματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα. The primary question is the relationship between the spirit and faith. Paul has developed this relationship throughout the argument. He has reminded the Galatians that they are the ones who "received the spirit . . . from a report of faith" (3:2, 5). He has described himself and his fellow Jews as those who, once they were redeemed from the curse of the law, "might receive the promise

Paul offers the explanation for (γάρ) this unified expectation by arguing that “circumcision” or “a foreskin” has no power. Readers might have expected the first point: circumcision is powerless. However, by arguing that both are irrelevant, Paul shifts his focus away from what the Galatians should do and places it on their understanding what the phrase “in Christ Jesus” means. Understood in the context of the letter, Paul’s final statement in this section (5:6) has an indicative/demonstrative force in addition to the hortatory force so often associated with it. Paul is certainly arguing that the Galatians should not be circumcised because neither circumcision nor a foreskin has the power to accomplish anything. But the indicative claim of a lack of power in circumcision or foreskin is also important. Here again Paul appeals to the community’s experience itself as evidence for his claim. The Galatians’ very identity makes the case that circumcision and foreskins are powerless. In 3:26-28, Paul reminded the Galatians’ of their reception of the Spirit in baptism, despite the diversity within the community; their identity “in Christ” was confirmed by their reception of the Spirit despite distinctions based upon the law. Quite literally, in Galatia neither circumcision nor a foreskin had the power to bring the Spirit, for both circumcision and foreskins were present among those who received the Spirit. Paul the circumcised, natural Jew and the Gentile Galatians have all received the Spirit, that which is able to “work powers among you” (3:5). The Galatians are themselves evidence, as those who live “in Christ,” that distinctions based upon law have no power.

The narrative logic of Paul’s argument about circumcision is captured in his use of the antonyms καταργέω (5:4) and ἐνεργέω (5:6) to describe the contrast between those

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that is the spirit through faith” (3:14). Paul’s entire argument has been that one must be defined “from faith” in order to receive the spirit, a reality in which the Galatians already live.

who are declared righteous in law and those who are “in Christ Jesus.”<sup>74</sup> Those who seek righteousness in the law “have been deprived of the efficacious spirit of Christ” (κατηργήθητε ἀπὸ Χριστοῦ).<sup>75</sup> This has been Paul’s concern throughout, that righteousness through law would render Christ’s death without power (2:21; 4:11). Choosing to be circumcised is to enter into the law’s worldview, wherein Christ is a violator of law. From the standpoint of those “from works of law,” Christ has been “made useless.”<sup>76</sup> In contrast, for those who are “in Christ Jesus,” the Spirit has power to effect action: “faith working through love” (NRSV; πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη).<sup>77</sup>

Here for the first time Paul transitions from identity to behavior. Even for those who are “in Christ” there is an imperative to “enact faith through love.” The power the Galatians have “in Christ Jesus” is to enact their faith through love. This command to love is Paul’s focus in the parallel section that begins in 5:13, where Paul once again considers the implications of freedom.

So, Paul’s argument for the impotence of circumcision or foreskin in 5:6 remains consistent with his strong statement in 5:2. For those in Christ, as opposed to those who live “in law,” the issue of circumcision is irrelevant. There is no more power to be gained in removing a foreskin than in keeping one. This was proven by the Galatians’ own reception of the spirit. Paul himself is circumcised, the Galatians are not, and both have

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<sup>74</sup> On these two terms and some discussion of their use in Gal 5, see Kenneth W. Clark, “The Meaning of ἐνεργέω and κατεργέω in the New Testament,” *JBL* 54 [1935]: 93-101.

<sup>75</sup> This is the definition of the use of καταργέω in 5:4 offered by Clark (“The Meaning,” 99).

<sup>76</sup> The verb καταργέω in the active voice means “to leave unemployed” or “to cause to be idle” (*LSJ* s.v.). The passive voice is more rare. In Romans, Paul argues that, “Our old person has been crucified so that the body of sin might be destroyed [καταργηθῆ]” (Rom 6:6). Paul’s use in Gal 5:4 likely carries this image of destruction.

<sup>77</sup> This verb ἐνεργέω has been used elsewhere in Galatians to speak of the outward manifestation of an inward reality. In Jerusalem, the pillar apostles recognized that that which was “working” (ὁ ἐνεργήσας) in Peter was working also in Paul in his defense of the truth of the gospel (2:8). In his direct remarks to the Galatians, Paul cited the outward manifestation of “the one working powers among you” (ὁ ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν) (3:5).

received the Spirit. Indeed the Galatians “welcomed [Paul] as Christ Jesus” (4:14). Their experience, as a diverse community unified through reception of the spirit, is the very evidence for the inefficacy of circumcision and uncircumcision. However, if the Galatians become circumcised to seek righteousness, they therefore fall under the curse of law as Paul and his fellow Jews did.

Should the Galatians be circumcised? Certainly Paul does not think so, but his argument is not one of apostolic fiat against a single act. If they happen to cut off their foreskins, it makes little (soteriological) difference. However, if they do so to pursue righteousness it invalidates the reason for Christ’s death. By understanding the law situated within the narrative of Israel, they recognize that to follow the law after Christ is to reverse the narrative.

#### *Paul’s Illustration of Faith Energized By Love*

Paul’s question in 5:7, wherein he focuses on those presently causing trouble in Galatia, brings the narrative constructed in the first four chapters of the letter directly to bear on Paul’s argument. Paul’s athletic imagery, common in his letters, depicts the Galatians as veering off course, led away by something along the course.<sup>78</sup> Paul’s description of the result of this turn off course is often translated as the Galatians’ being kept “from obeying the truth” (NRSV). But “obedience” does not exactly reflect Paul’s point is here. The issue is not a need for the Galatians to be obedient in the sense of following a command.<sup>79</sup> To the contrary, Paul is concerned about persuasion, in the sense

<sup>78</sup> In keeping with the athletic imagery, Betz translates τίς ὑμῶς ἐνέκοψεν appropriately as “who got in your path?” (see Betz, *Galatians*, 264; see also the discussion in de Boer, *Galatians*, 320).

<sup>79</sup> de Boer also recognizes the shortcomings of the standard translation (*Galatians*, 320).

of the Galatians' recognizing the reality in which they live.<sup>80</sup> The "truth" is not an external command that must be obeyed. Rather, Paul uses "truth" in 5:7 as shorthand for his term "the truth of the gospel" to which he previously referred (2:5, 14).<sup>81</sup> It is this truth Paul defended against the "false brothers" and the one with respect to which Cephas did not act properly. As Paul faced the false brothers, so the Galatians face those who "hinder" the Galatians' ability to be persuaded. Here at the opening of ch. 5 Paul reaps the rhetorical benefits of his metapedagogical construction of narrative. Paul's recounting of his own past provides his reader an illustration of his principle of the power of "faith enacted through love."

As Paul approached the pillar apostles in Jerusalem, alongside Titus, he laid before them the gospel he preaches among Gentiles, showing them that the Greek Titus had not been compelled to circumcision. Paul then defends this freedom he and Titus have in Christ Jesus from the threat of the "false brothers." It is the truth of the gospel that empowers Paul to resist their enslavement.<sup>82</sup> Paul's resistance to the threat to "freedom in Christ" functions as a demonstration of the power of the gospel, such that the pillar apostles recognize "the one who was energizing (ὁ ἐνεργήσας) Peter for an apostleship" was also energizing Paul.<sup>83</sup> Paul's and Titus' actions, standing up for the

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<sup>80</sup> The distinction is a subtle one, and indeed for Paul being persuaded and obeying are closely related. The distinction should be marked here, though, as Paul's argument has not yet turned to considering behavior, and is instead contextualizing behavior within the Galatians new identity.

<sup>81</sup> These are the only three uses of the noun ἀλήθεια in Galatians. He uses the verb form in 4:16 to refer to his "offering the truth to you." The origin of the term as "full or real state of affairs," in the sense of a reality that hides nothing as opposed to appearances, is important for Paul's use in Galatians (see R. Bultmann, "ἀλήθεια, ἀληθής, κτλ," *TDNT*, 1.238-51; *LSJ* s.v. 2). For a discussion of this meaning, see Isocrates, *Antidosis* 15.283. Paul uses this term to refer to the gospel that does not depend upon how it is presented, but rather is a reality that is to be trusted (see Gal 1:6-9). Arguments that contradict the truth that the Galatians have experienced are duplicitous.

<sup>82</sup> Note the confluence of "freedom" (2:4; 5:1) and "slavery" (2:4; 5:1) language in these two sections. Paul resisted the move back into slavery by standing strong for the truth of the gospel, the very thing for which he is exhorting the Galatians.

<sup>83</sup> As noted previously, the unnamed reference of the participle is understood to be the spirit.

truth of the gospel, demonstrated the impotence of a natural distinction between the circumcised Paul and the uncircumcised Titus. The result of this encounter was “fellowship” between Paul, Barnabas, and the pillar apostles. Faith was “manifested” in love at Jerusalem through “fellowship.”

By building his exhortation on the narrative constructed earlier in the letter, Paul shifts the role of his Galatian audience from those observing the action of his past to those receiving the evidence. The power that was “enacted” (ἐνεργέω) for the pillar apostles was Paul’s faith working through love, his defense of the truth that is the gospel. The Galatians’ own past experience with the Spirit, the one that “enacts powers among you” (ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις ἐν ὑμῖν), is what answers their question of whether they should be circumcised. Their power will come not from keeping or removing a foreskin. Paul has shown this by setting the law within the narrative of Israel. Rather their power comes from their faith being enacted through love. The Galatians know the power of the spirit apart from the law; their own “running well” is the only evidence they need.

This brief analysis of Paul’s “answer” to the question of circumcision demonstrates how important his work in Gal 1-4 is for his exhortation in Gal 5-6. Paul is able to argue that the Galatians’ temptation to be circumcised is far more problematic than keeping one single command. Paul’s narrative construction has shown that to keep one part of the law is enter into the world of the law, one that is mutually exclusive from Christ by its very definition. Either the Galatians continue to be the demonstration of God’s fulfillment of promises by nature of their continuing to exist outside of the law, or they render Christ powerless for their own community by entering the law. Paul offers his own behavior, not as a model to be emulated, but as a demonstration of life in the Spirit.

As Paul defended the truth of the gospel against the false brothers, so the Galatians have the “spiritual” power to do so.

### **The Law of Christ**

I have demonstrated how Paul’s construction of narrative in the first four chapters of the letter, including his metapedagogic presentation of his own past and his emplotment of Israel’s story, has served as a foundation to his exhortation against circumcision. Paul’s argument about the past forms the basis for his deliberative rhetoric. To this point, Paul’s exhortation has been rooted in appeals to the Galatians’ reception of the Spirit and illustrated through Paul’s presentation of his own past. His is a call not for following external rules, but rather living out the reality as “Spiritual ones.” This moral reasoning was most evident in his argument that, “If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law” (5:18).

I look now at a section of exhortation that presents a more difficult case for this argument. There is an alternative narrative construction that has been proposed as undergirding Paul’s exhortation, namely the story of Christ, highlighted particularly by Richard B. Hays. Hays argues that Paul uses the life and death of Jesus as a paradigm for the Galatians to follow. Both Hays and Betz agree that Christ functions in Paul’s exhortation ontologically. The question is whether Christ is therefore paradigmatic. Hays’ argument for a paradigmatic Christological function in Paul’s ethics focuses on fulfilling the “law of Christ” in 6:2. To this point, I have argued that Paul’s exhortation is rooted in the reception of the Spirit, not in imitation of Christ. Now, I apply my narrative analysis

to Paul's reference to the law of Christ and the surrounding exhortation so as to relate the narrative of Christ to the narrative of Israel.

At 5:25, Paul turns back from his contrast between works of law and the fruit of the Spirit to offer a general principle. As in the first verses of ch. 5, Paul's argument moves from this general principle to apply it to a specific situation.<sup>84</sup> In his transition statement that, "If we have life in the Spirit, then let us make the Spirit our foundation," Paul appeals to the life created for those who have received the Spirit, the reality by which he has defined the Galatians (3:2, 5). As it has been throughout his exhortation, the Spirit is to be primary determinant of the Galatians' behavior.

The key term in Paul's opening in 5:25 is *στοιχῶμεν*, a hortatory subjunctive typically understood as Paul's encouraging the Galatians toward a particular type of behavior, an encouragement toward an appropriate manifestation of the reality of the Galatians' life in the Spirit.<sup>85</sup> In the context of Paul's argument, though, this imperative is not merely about the Galatians' behavior.<sup>86</sup> Using the same language, Paul has argued that both Jews (4:3) and Gentiles (4:9) were enslaved "under the elemental principles of

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<sup>84</sup> Most commentators recognize that the shift at 5:25 is to a more practical discussion (see Dunn, *Galatians*, 316). At 5:1 Paul stated a general principle of freedom and then applied that freedom to the question of circumcision.

<sup>85</sup> Most modern English versions limit the meaning of the imperative to behavior. See, for example, NET ("let us also behave"), NASB/RSV ("let us also walk"), and NIV ("let us keep in step"). A better rendering is that of the NRSV ("let us also be guided"). de Boer's translation ("let us follow the Spirit") certainly misses the mark (*Galatians*, 370), as does Martyn's ("let us carry out our daily lives"; *Galatians*, 545). The very point is that Paul does not understand the Spirit as something to be followed, but rather a reality that serves as a foundation; behavior follows naturally from an understanding of what it means to receive the Spirit.

<sup>86</sup> The verb can certainly mean "to behave." However, the term was originally used in military contexts, to refer to the ordering of a line of troops (see Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 6.3.34). Metaphorically, the term is used to mean, "to be in line with," the object indicated by a noun in the dative (*LSJ s.v.*). For an example similar to Paul's use here, see Polybius, *Histories* 28.5.6. Paul's uses in Rom 4:12 and Phil 3:16 are also often construed to relate to behavior, though in each instance, as in the use in Galatians, Paul emphasizes the reality that prompts behavior, rather than behavior itself.

the world” (ὕπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου).<sup>87</sup> These “fundamental elements” were the powers that controlled both Jews and Gentiles prior to their reception of the Spirit. Before the granting of inheritance in the form of the Spirit, both Jews and Gentiles were powerless, subject to the dictates of a master that Paul identifies as the “fundamental elements of the world.”

At the end of the letter, Paul will define as the “Israel of God” all those who “have their foundation” (ὅσοι στοιχήσουσιν) in “new creation” (6:15-16). So, Paul’s exhortation in 5:25 is for the Galatians not merely to “walk” in accordance with or “follow” the Spirit that the Galatians have received.<sup>88</sup> Rather, Paul’s argument is that the Galatians must come to understand the Spirit as the “foundational principal” that controls their lives and thus determines their behavior. Paul’s language here is not a mere allusion to his argument about the Galatians’ past, but rather it is a direct reference to the “foundational” change that the Galatians have experienced. The reception of the Spirit is not merely a reason to alter one’s behavior. Rather Paul argues the Spirit is a complete change in the foundations of the Galatians’ existence. Those who have received the Spirit have gone from having their foundation in the elements “of the world,” enslaved to “those things which are by nature not divine” to a “foundation” of the Spirit of God’s son. It is this “foundational principle” that Paul’s narrative argument has established, and he now draws upon this reality as the grounding for the Galatians’ behavior.

Before considering this “foundation” in a practical situation, Paul offers some indication of the nature of being founded in the Spirit. In 5:26 Paul warns, “Let us not

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<sup>87</sup> de Boer suggests that, “There may be an allusion, whether intentional or subconscious, back to the *stoicheia tou kosmou* (‘elements of the world’), which the Galatians had once venerated (4:3, 9)” (*Galatians*, 372).

<sup>88</sup> This text is a significant strengthening of his prior imperative that the Galatians should “walk in Spirit” (πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε) (5:16).

become conceited, provoking one another, being envious of one another.” Regardless of whether these specific instructions relate to a situation in Galatia, these three qualities emphasize the character of those whose foundation is in the Spirit.<sup>89</sup> Paul encourages humility, recognizing the each has the Spirit, and therefore no one is at a position advantageous with regard to another. The positive attributes for which Paul argues in 6:1-5 are the opposite of this behavior; they concern placing the benefit of the other over oneself. Paul offers an initial negative description of what one’s “foundation” in the Spirit would look like, one that accords with the “fruit of the Spirit” he has just enumerated (5:22-23).

In 6:1 Paul introduces a hypothetical situation to demonstrate how the Galatians are to ground their behavior in the fundamental principle of the Spirit.<sup>90</sup> Paul considers the response of the community should they discover someone in the initial stages of a transgression. His generic language emphasizes the need to act on another’s behalf, regardless of the specifics of the situation: “Even if a person should begin to be in any transgression, you, the ones who have received Spirit, should restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Martyn argues that Paul addresses an historical situation: “Convinced that observance of the Law is bringing them to a higher plane of life, the Galatians who have accepted the Teachers’ message are lording it over their fellows, thus exacerbating divisive tendencies (5:15). To them—and to their envious fellows—Paul says, ‘Do not think of yourself as better than others, provoking one another, envying one another’” (*Galatians*, 544).

<sup>90</sup> There has been much discussion of whether Paul is describing a historical situation. Many interpreters suggest that Paul must be referring to a situation in Galatia about which Paul has received word (cf. 1 Cor 1:11; 5:1). For example, Betz argues that Paul “no doubt refers to a concrete instance or instances, not to merely hypothetical possibilities” (*Galatians*, 273). Given that in other letters he does refer to specific situations (see, for example 1 Cor 5-9), this is plausible, though there is no evidence here to support such a suggestion. Paul provides no details of the situation, and given his temporal and physical distance from the Galatians, the situation is best considered hypothetical. The important point is that Paul offers a hypothetical as a way of applying the Galatians’ re-formed narrative identity. For a “maximalist” reading of Paul’s exhortation as reflecting historical situations in Galatia, see Martyn, *Galatians*, 544.

<sup>91</sup> The translation of προλημφοῦν is difficult. The verb’s meaning generally reflects its temporal prefix προ- and thus means something like “anticipate” or “do beforehand” (see *LSJ*, s.v.; cf. 1 Cor 11:21; see Martyn,

Regardless of the reality of this hypothetical situation, it provides Paul an opportunity to demonstrate how “those who have received the Spirit” (οἱ πνευματικοί) are to act with the Spirit as one’s foundation.<sup>92</sup> Paul instructs the community to deal with a specific individual “in a Spirit of humility,” showing concern that they themselves might be led astray. Paul’s reference to the Spirit here should not be understood as a “mood” or “mode.” Rather Paul refers to the Spiritual reality that defines the community. “Humility” was identified as part of the “fruit of the spirit” (5:23), one of the nine characteristics that result from the setting one’s foundation in the Spirit.<sup>93</sup> Here he shows that these characteristics of the Spirit should be exhibited in the Galatians’ behavior.

With this image as the background to his argument, Paul generalizes this restoration of someone back into the community as an example of “bearing the burdens of one another.” It is the concern for the other that has characterized Paul’s exhortation throughout these final two chapters of the letter. Paul argues that “the entire law” is

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*Galatians*, 546). Paul’s emphasis on “any transgression” (ἐν τινι παραπτώματι) suggests his point is that at the first sign of a transgression, the people around someone should act to stop the problem. Recall that for Paul there are two distinct ways of behaving, and Paul’s concern is that when one’s behavior shows evidence of the wrong one, action must be taken immediately.

<sup>92</sup> Paul leaves unstated what defines a transgression. His focus is not on how to identify the transgression, but rather on how to respond to it. Readers should not understand the term to indicate a violation of a specific law, for Paul has argued throughout the letter against following the law as a way of achieving righteousness. In 3:19 Paul argued the law was given “because of transgressions” (τῶν παραβάσεων χάριν) that presumably existed before the law was given. Indeed in Rom 5:20 Paul refers to the result of the gift of the law as “increasing the transgression” (ἵνα πλεονάσῃ τὸ παραπτῶμα). “Transgression” in the context of Rom 5 refers to Adam’s first sin (see Rom 5:18). Paul also uses “transgression” to refer to his fellow Jews’ rejection of Christ (see Rom 11:11-12). In Colossians, Paul refers the Gentile community’s “being dead in transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh” (ὄντας ἐν τοῖς παραπτώμασιν καὶ τῇ ἀκροβυστία τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν) (Col 2:13). A transgression is a violation against God, whether or not it is identified as breaking a specific law. Paul’s very point is that recognition of a “transgression” comes from living in the spiritual reality itself; those who have received the Spirit have the ability to discern transgressions. Paul’s term οἱ πνευματικοί is often translated simple as “the spiritual” (see ESV). In the context of the argument, though, Paul addresses the Galatians as those “who have received the spirit” (NRSV; de Boer, *Galatians*, 374; cf. 3:2, 5). The distinction is important, for Paul is working to demonstrate to the Galatians what this reception means.

<sup>93</sup> Paul uses “humility” πραΰτης frequently in his letters, most often as a characteristic his communities/individuals should exhibit (see Eph 4:2; Col 3:12; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 2:25; Titus 3:2), though also as a characteristic of his own behavior (1 Cor 4:21) and of Jesus (2 Cor 10:1). The language is closely related to the “weak” humility/humiliation by which Paul describes Jesus (Phil 2:8) and that he desires in his communities (see Phil 2:3).

fulfilled in the command to “love your neighbor as yourself” (5:14), expressing concern that the Galatians not “bite and devour one another” (5:16). In contrasting the flesh and the Spirit, Paul’s “fruit of the Spirit” is focused on unity within the community, as opposed to the works of flesh that are primarily behaviors that divide. Paul closes this section of exhortation with encouragement to “do good to everyone, particularly to those who are of the household of faith” (6:10).

The general tenor of his exhortation, therefore, is summarized in the call to “be slaves to one another through love.” The motivation for love is still in question at this point in the argument. In Paul’s renaming this concern for the other as the fulfillment of the “law of Christ” (ὁ νόμος τοῦ Χριστοῦ), some have suggested that Christ’s faithful life and death provides the paradigm for the Galatians’ behavior. Does Paul offer Jesus’ self-sacrificial life and death as the reason the Galatians should “bear the burdens of one another”?

Hays appropriately notes the “breathtaking paradox” this phrase “law of Christ” presents to Paul’s audience.<sup>94</sup> In an argument that has shown the problems with “works of law” (ἔργα τοῦ νόμου) and contextualized the law as a temporary solution which ended with the appearance of Christ, Paul’s phrase “law of Christ” is a shocking play on words, recalling his equally playful language that the only thing that matters is “faith being made manifest [working] through love” (πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη). Paul previously argued that, “The entire law has been fulfilled” (ὁ πᾶς νόμον πεπλήρωται) in the single commandment to love the neighbor as oneself (5:13-14). Now he speaks of “bearing the

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<sup>94</sup> “Christology and Ethics,” 276. Hays’ concerns are more historical, constructing the understand of the law that Paul’s community was likely operating with. From a simple rhetorical standpoint, though, this statement is “breathtaking,” as the reader of the letter has heard the apostle argue that “law” was a temporary solution, ethnically defined.

burdens of another” as the fulfilling the law of Christ” (ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ).

What is the relationship of “law” to Christ? In Paul’s argument, these terms have been mutually exclusive. Paul established that from the perspective of one “from works of law” Christ was a violator of law (3:13; cf. Deut 21:23). Twice Paul has argued that Christ “redeemed” those under law from the law (3:13; 4:5). He has argued that seeking to be declared righteous in law renders one “cut off from Christ” (5:4). What can Paul mean by the “paradox” of a law of Christ?

Three major proposals have carried the conversation about the connection between law and Christ.<sup>95</sup> C. H. Dodd argued that here and in 1 Cor 9:21 Paul identifies specific teachings of Jesus as a “new Torah.”<sup>96</sup> Paul’s encouragement to fulfill the law of Christ is an argument that the teachings of Jesus should dictate Christian behavior. Dodd’s argument has been strongly rejected by many.<sup>97</sup> It is a case more easily made with regard to 1 Corinthians, where Paul does invoke the specific teachings of Jesus. However, there is little indication that here in Galatians Paul refers to Jesus as offering a new law the community should follow.

Alternatively, Victor Paul Furnish has argued that the love command is the best way to understand Paul’s “law of Christ.” He understands Paul’s point as a connection between “living in the Spirit” and “walking in the Spirit” (5:25): “The ‘law of Christ’ is,

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<sup>95</sup> Martyn enumerates five different readings. In addition to mine he adds that some have read this to mean Jewish traditions about the Messiah and others have ascribed the phrase to the teachers as a mandate to complete the law while in Christ (see *Galatians*, 548-49; cf. Betz, *Galatians*, 300-301). For a brief survey of proposals, see John G. Strelan, “Burden-Bearing and the Law of Christ: A Re-examination of Galatians 6:2,” *JBL* 94 (1975): 266-76.

<sup>96</sup> C. H. Dodd, “ENNOMOS CHRISTOU,” pp. 134-48 in *More New Testament Studies* (Manchester: Manchester University, 1968). For a summary of this argument, see Victor Paul Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 59-65.

<sup>97</sup> See particularly Furnish, *Theology and Ethics*, 60-63.

then, the law of love.”<sup>98</sup> God’s gift of Christ was an act of love, demonstrating the core ethical position God’s people should take. All behavior should grow from this attempt to imitate the love of God demonstrated in Christ.

Building upon Furnish, Hays identifies a connection between Paul’s theology and ethics by reading the “law of Christ” as shorthand for the pattern of Christ’s faithful life and death, to which Paul makes oblique reference in several places in Galatians. Hays refers to Paul’s exhortation as a “regulative principle or structure of existence . . . embodied paradigmatically in Jesus Christ.”<sup>99</sup> In exhorting the Galatians to fulfill the “law of Christ,” Paul calls the community to embody Christ’s obedient life and death.

The question to be raised about Hays’ analysis is exactly what he means by “embodied paradigmatically.” That is, what is the motivation provided by Paul for the Galatians to follow this paradigm? Hays’ analysis is somewhat opaque on this question. He argues that “Paul urges the Galatians to participate in a paradoxical self-giving which mirrors the action of Christ who gave himself up.”<sup>100</sup> In Hays’ conception, to follow the “law of Christ” is to assume the pattern of his existence. It is to look to Christ as the model one should follow.

However, Hays’ emphasis on Christ as paradigmatic overlooks the general rhetorical direction of Paul’s argument as I have traced it. Paul has contextualized the law as a temporary solution for transgressions, a fortress surrounding the natural Jews, effective “because of transgressions” until the appearance of the seed. In his exhortation, Paul has emphasized the Galatians’ identity “with Spirit” as the power that controls their

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<sup>98</sup> *Theology and Ethics*, 64. See a similar argument in Jan Lambrecht, “Paul’s Coherent Admonition in Galatians 6,1-6 : Mutual Help and Individual Attentiveness,” *Biblica* 78 (1997): 45.

<sup>99</sup> “Christology and Ethics,” 276.

<sup>100</sup> “Christology and Ethics,” 283.

behavior, calling them to set this Spirit as their foundation. Paul's enumeration of the "fruit of the Spirit" was a description of qualities that result from setting the Spirit as one's foundation, and this result is behavior for the good of the community.

Throughout this argument, Paul not only draws upon this contextualizing of the law in the narrative of Israel, but he also draws upon his own narrative. I have demonstrated in each section of Paul's exhortation how his own narrative stands in the background as an illustration of his exhortation. This is the case here in 5:25-6:5, as Paul once again draws upon his own narrative to reinforce his exhortation.

Readers should recognize once again that Paul reaps the benefits of the metapedagogic rhetoric of his narrative construction earlier in the letter. The hypothetical situation Paul offers in 6:1 mirrors the situation Paul encountered at Antioch, confronting Cephas in the midst of a transgression. Cephas's "transgression" was a violation of the truth of the gospel through withdrawing from the Gentiles in fear of "those of the circumcision," re-establishing the divisions of the law after he had lived in the reality that such divisions are not important. Paul's actions demonstrate his "humble restoration," as Paul argues with Cephas, not to chastise him, but rather to instruct him in the error of his ways.

Paul's language following this reference to the "law of Christ" likewise draws on his encounter at Jerusalem. In 6:3, Paul restates this hypothetical situation: "If someone seems to be something though he is nothing [εἰ γὰρ δοκεῖ τις εἶναι τι μηδὲν ὄν], he deceives himself." This is the same language by which Paul described the pillar apostles in Jerusalem: οἱ δοκοῦντες εἶναι τι (2:2, 6, 9). At Jerusalem, Paul, led by revelation (2:2), approached those who "see themselves as something." He then laid before them his law-

free gospel, stood up for the truth of the gospel, and thereby created “fellowship” (2:9). Paul’s own past demonstrates this pattern of life he hopes the community to exhibit. Likewise, Paul has described his own behavior with the Galatian community in terms of “birth pangs” (4:19). Once again, therefore, it is Paul’s actions that stand in the background of his exhortation to the community to “bear the burdens of one another.”

What impact does this recognition of Paul’s narrative have on understanding the law of Christ? It suggests that while Hays is correct to point to Jesus’ narrative as important in Galatians, in the immediate rhetorical context, it is Paul’s story as much as it is Jesus’ story that exemplifies the exhortation he offers to the Galatians. The point, though, is not to argue that Paul is the paradigm instead of Christ. Rather, the point is that both Paul and Christ are paradigmatic for both are guided by the Spirit. Both Paul and the life of Jesus are instantiations of the same paradigm of life empowered by the Spirit. It is this Spirit that now defines the Galatians (οἱ πνευματικοί), and therefore this Spirit is the single determinant of their behavior.

Therefore, while my reading of Paul’s exhortation to fulfill the law of Christ is not mutually exclusive to Hays’, I understand Christ as a paradigm in very different way. I affirm Hays’ emphasis on the pattern of Christ’s obedient life and death as important as a connection between Paul’s theology and his argument. Paul does indeed believe that the Galatians should live in the same self-sacrificial manner exhibited in Christ’s life and death. The similarity between Paul’s enumerated fruit of the spirit and the scant reference to Christ’s self-sacrificial act is no coincidence; Paul describes life in the Spirit in a manner that looks like his description of Christ. The distinction I draw, though, is one of motivation. Hays argues that Christ is the paradigm that the Galatians must follow

through their actions. To adopt Hays' language, Christ presents the "structure of existence," the paradigm which the Galatians are to embody in specific circumstances.<sup>101</sup>

However, to offer Christ as a paradigm to be followed is to disregard the argument Paul has made to this point. Throughout the letter, Paul has not constructed a narrative of Jesus, as Hays' analysis suggests. Instead, Paul has constructed a narrative of Israel, those in whom God's Spirit lives. In the reception of the Spirit through baptism the Galatians have "put on Christ," they are the "sons of God," they are the "seed of Abraham." This strong connection between Christ and the Galatians, particularly Paul's label of the Galatians as "sons of God" is not metaphorical. Rather, in the reception of the Spirit the Galatians become Christ. Therefore, in their living out the reality of the Spirit through their behavior, they will act Christ-like. Paul's ethical exhortation is a call for an internally-motivated ethic, motivated not by a paradigm to be following, but a Spirit to be made foundational. Paul has used the Spirit throughout the letter as the definition of the community and the source of his ethical teaching. Despite natural distinctions, the universal reception of the spirit is what defines the Galatian community (3:26-29). Following the law leads to division within the community. This was the significant distinction between circumcision and baptism; circumcision makes distinctions, baptism did not.

I disagree with Hays' summary of the connection between Christology and ethics in Galatians: "The loving community, which is the focus of Paul's concern, finds its moral imperative in the story of the cross."<sup>102</sup> I do not find a strong "moral imperative" in Galatians in the sense of an external command or pattern for behavior. Rather, Paul's

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<sup>101</sup> "Christology and Ethics," 289.

<sup>102</sup> "Christology and Ethics," 290.

argument might be better characterized as a “moral indicative,” as Paul is calling the Galatians to recognize the Spirit as the empowering force that should direct their actions. Paul desires for the Galatians to act in particular ways, but the pattern for this action comes not from his command, an external set of laws, or even a paradigm exhibited by Christ. Rather the “pattern” for this action is found within, in the indwelling spirit. Paul’s primary argument is for the Galatians to make the spirit their foundational principle (5:25). From this foundation the pattern of life, found in Christ, will come forth.

Paul’s emphasis on the Spirit as driving his exhortation is evident in his application of this “law of Christ” in 6:6-10. In instructing the Galatians to “share in all good things with the one who teaches,” Paul offers a final exhortation toward life in the Spirit. The placement of this maxim in 6:6 has puzzled commentators.<sup>103</sup> Many interpreters argue that as he does elsewhere, here Paul suggests that those who have learned the gospel have an obligation, understood as a financial obligation, to the person who has taught the gospel.<sup>104</sup> Such an obligation would certainly reflect the reciprocal nature of Paul’s cultural milieu.<sup>105</sup> Reading this as a financial obligation has prompted some to suggest that the “one who teaches” refers to certain leaders Paul has established

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<sup>103</sup> Betz notes, “The final maxim is certainly one of the most puzzling in the whole letter” (*Galatians*, 304). Betz traces the background of the maxim, concluding that it is an adaptation of the well-known Pythagorean saying, “Friends share everything in common” (*Galatians*, 305). Most commentators find this an odd transition in Paul’s argument. De Boer, for example, notes, “v. 6 is but loosely connected to the previous verses and appears to be a short appendix to them” (*Galatians*, 384).

<sup>104</sup> See particularly 1 Cor 9:4-7; 2 Cor 11:7-9; Phil 4:10; 1 Thess 5:12-13. For such a “financial” reading of this passage, see Strelan, “Burden-Bearing.”

<sup>105</sup> As Betz notes, Paul’s logic in the maxim is similar to those known from philosophical schools. Betz quotes the Hippocratic “Covenant”: “To hold him who has taught me this art as equal to my parents and to live my life in partnership to him, and if he is in need of money to give him a share of mine.” See Betz, *Galatians*, 305. The translation is from Ludwig Edelstein, *The Hippocratic Oath: Text, Translation and Interpretation* (Supplements to the Bulletin of the History of Medicine, No. 1; Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1943). The identification of this tradition, though, should not limit interpretation of Paul’s use to that of the philosophical schools. Betz correctly notes that, “It is not an oblique appeal to Paul on his own behalf, nor a complaint that the Galatians have not responded well enough to his financial campaign for Jerusalem” (*Galatians*, 306). However, he does read the reciprocal student/teacher relationship from the philosophical schools into Paul’s letter here.

in his church, local persons whom he instructs the Galatians to care for.<sup>106</sup> For others, it is a reference to Paul himself.<sup>107</sup> For others, this is an oblique reference to Paul's collection for the Jerusalem saints.<sup>108</sup> Arguments for each of these positions are not well-supported, though, as at no point in the letter has Paul referred to envoys teaching in Galatia on his behalf, nor has he asked for support for his own ministry or the saints in Jerusalem.<sup>109</sup> Far more problematic than identifying the one to whom Paul refers, though, is explaining why, at this point in the letter, Paul inserts this one verse to address this practical concern about human leadership in the community, only to return to considering the Galatians' life in the Spirit in 6:7-10.

The solution to this difficulty is to recognize that Paul's instructions in 6:6 continue to focus on life in the Spirit. Reading Paul as appealing to the Galatians to support individuals who have worked with the Galatians overlooks Paul's characterization of the gospel. If we were to ask who is "the one who instructs" in the letter to Galatians, the answer is not the apostle or others he has appointed, but rather it is the Spirit that the Galatians have received. Paul began his argument by insisting that his gospel is not something that he received from humans or something that could be taught (1:12). This is not merely the function of his experience, but rather of the nature of the gospel itself. The gospel is not something that can be taught by a human teacher, and therefore the teacher of the gospel does not need financial support. Instead, from the

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<sup>106</sup> Martyn goes so far as to construct the exact situation in Galatia: "We can assume, then, that, as Paul writes his letter, the Teachers are intent on terminating these Pauline instructors, replacing them with ones loyal to themselves. Under these circumstances Paul would have good reason to reiterate the rule guaranteeing adequate support for the gospel instructor" (*Galatians*, 552).

<sup>107</sup> Strelan, "Burden-Bearing," 275.

<sup>108</sup> See Larry W. Hurtado, "The Jerusalem Collection in Galatians," *JSNT* 5 (1979): 46-62, esp. pp. 53-57.

<sup>109</sup> As de Boer correctly notes, "An answer is possible only by reading between the lines" (*Galatians*, 385). He does a nice job of laying out the proposed solutions, and resists choosing one, noting, "All we know is that Paul regards the welfare of those giving instruction in the gospel as important to the daily life of the Galatians churches" (*Galatians*, 386).

opening of ch. 3 and throughout his direct appeals to the Galatians, Paul has replaced references to the gospel with references to the Spirit.<sup>110</sup> The gospel, for all intents and purposes, for those who are “in Christ,” is the indwelling presence of the Spirit. It is this indwelling Spirit that Paul has offered as the “foundation” for moral reasoning.

Therefore, Paul’s argument here is not that the Galatians owe him or others financial support for ministry. Rather, Paul argues the Galatians are to “have fellowship” (κοινωνεῖτω) with the indwelling Spirit, for it is the Spirit who will continue to teach them.<sup>111</sup>

Paul’s exhortation in Galatians begins with his community’s identity. The Galatians are a community because they are a diverse collection of individuals who have “received the Spirit” and thereby become one in Christ (3:27-29). This reception is what confirms for them their identity in the narrative of Israel, despite the fact that the law itself suggests they cannot be a community. “Natural” divisions persist, but all the Galatians have received the Spirit, shouting “Abba, Father!” from within them. The life in the Spirit leads to ethical action. Paul’s instructions in these final two chapters support Bultmann’s well-known conclusion that, “The *imperative*, ‘walk according to the Spirit,’

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<sup>110</sup> As indicated previously, the linguistic shift is striking. References to the gospel, common in the opening two chapters (see 1:6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 16, 23; 2:2, 5, 7, 14), have been absent since (though see 4:13), whereas references to the spirit, missing in the first two chapters, are common in chs. 3-6 (see 3:2, 3, 5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25; 6:1, 8, 18).

<sup>111</sup> Paul can use the language of fellowship (κοινωνία) to refer to financial matters, particularly his collection for Jerusalem (see Rom 15:28; 2 Cor 8:4; 9:13). He also, however, uses it to refer to his communities’ sharing things in common, with him and with themselves (see 1 Cor 1:9; Gal 2:9; Phlm 6), and he uses it to generally refer to sharing or company (see 1 Cor 10:18; Phil 3:10), particularly with the Spirit (see 2 Cor 13:13; Phil 2:1)

not only does not contradict the *indicative* of justification (the believer is rightwised) but results from it.”<sup>112</sup>

In Paul’s call to make the Spirit the foundation for their lives, Paul encourages the Galatians away from external laws and toward a life lived in community with those who are also recipients of the Spirit. As Albert Schweitzer summarizes, “Paul’s thought is not that the law of the Spirit is substituted for the Law of Moses, but rather that it is only those who are no longer mere natural men who can properly fulfill the ethical demands of this Law.”<sup>113</sup> Hays is absolutely correct that Paul wants his communities to act in the way Christ acted. The important distinction to be made, though, is that imitation of Christ is not the motivation for this behavior. Behavior that results from this “foundation” of the Spirit will look Christ-like, for Christ too lived in light of the Spirit the Galatians have; indeed the Galatians have “put on Christ” (3:27). The motivation for particular behaviors does not come from attempting to discern what Jesus would do, but rather by setting the Spirit as the foundation. What we might call ethics is by no means systematic for the Paul of Galatians, but rather is the outgrowth of one’s new Spiritual existence.

Paul’s “law of Christ,” therefore, is not the paradigm of Christ the Galatians are to follow. Rather the phrase has a double meaning. On one hand, it does relate to the pattern of Christ’s behavior. The Galatians are not called to behave like Christ, but they are called to live out of the foundation of the Spirit, as Christ did, and therefore proper behavior will look like Christ. The difference between this first reading of the “law of

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<sup>112</sup> Bultmann, *Theology*, I.332. Bultmann continues this argument: “The faith-bestowed possibility of ‘living by the Spirit’ must be explicitly laid hold of by ‘walking by the Spirit.’ The indicative is the foundation for the imperative” (*Theology*, I.333)

<sup>113</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (trans. William Montgomery; New York: Macmillan, 1955 [1931]), 303. Elsewhere Schweitzer notes that, “For the mystical doctrine of the being-in-Christ, ethics is nothing else than the Spirit’s working” (*Mysticism*, 294).

Christ” and that of Hays might best be characterized as a distinction in understanding the genitive in the phrase “law of Christ.” For Hays, this phrase is best understood as an objective, or perhaps exegetical genitive. The law that the Galatians are to follow is the pattern of Christ. Christ is not only the ontological power behind ethical behavior, but Christ is also the paradigm to be followed. In Hays’ view, Paul offers the “law that is Christ’s pattern of living” as the key to the Galatians’ behavior. I, on other hand, read the phrase “law of Christ” as a subjective genitive. The pattern of existence that the Galatians are called to follow is the same pattern that Christ himself followed. By bearing the burdens of one another, the Galatians “fulfill the law that Christ fulfilled.” This “law” is not the Torah, but rather the pattern of existence that the indwelling Spirit prompts. It happens to also be a fulfillment of Torah (5:14), but one does not follow it because it is in the law. This reference to the “law of Christ” takes readers back to Paul’s identification of the Galatians as the sons of God (3:26), as the seed of Abraham (3:29). Paul is not arguing for the exchange of one law for another. The law of Christ is not the replacement of Torah by the pattern of Christ’s existence. Rather, it is a calling into question of any external law. As Paul says in Romans, “The righteousness of God has been made manifest apart from law [χωρὶς νόμου]” (Rom 3:21). The Galatians are not called to alter their behavior to look like Christ’s, in whatever circumstances they encounter. Rather, in their reception of the Spirit the Galatians have become Christ, and therefore they have the power to live the life Christ lived.

This focus on the Spirit introduces a second valence to the phrase. The ability to live properly was inaugurated through Christ. The reception of the Spirit was made possible through God’s action in Christ. Therefore, the “law of Christ” is not only a

pattern of behavior that will look Christ like, but it is also a pattern of behavior initiated because of God's action in Christ. The law of Christ, therefore, is Paul's shorthand for the new reality of life "with Spirit" that begins with Christ.

### **The Israel of God: The Narrative Rhetoric of Paul's Argument to the Galatians**

Paul closes the body of his letter to the Galatians with a blessing of peace "upon the Israel of God."<sup>114</sup> This term is used nowhere else in his letters and is, therefore, the subject of much debate.<sup>115</sup> Susan Eastman says analysis of this verse begins "with the obvious question: Why does Paul introduce Israel at this point in the letter?"<sup>116</sup> By following the narrative construction of the argument, though, this question is neither obvious nor necessary. The term "Israel" is new, but Paul has spent the entire letter arguing that the Galatians play a particular role in the unfolding narrative of God's relationship with God's people. The story began with promises made to Abraham, it continued through a period of the law, it developed with the gift of a Jewish man who died on a wooden tree, and it continues with the Gentiles and natural Jews, united in the Spirit. Paul introduces the term here at the end of the argument, but the narrative of Israel has received his attention through the letter.

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<sup>114</sup> Verse 18 is generally discussed as an epistolary closing. Indeed it matches, almost identically, closings in Paul's other letters (see especially Phil 4:23; 2 Thess 4:22; Phlm 25).

<sup>115</sup> Eastman appropriately categorizes modern scholarship on this verse into the two options debated by Schrenk (G. Schrenk, "Was bedeutet 'Israel Gottes'?" *Judaica* 5 [1949]: 81-94) and Dahl (N. A. Dahl, "Der Name Israel," *Judaica* 6 (1950): 161-70). Schrenk read this term as referring to those Jewish Christians who follow Paul's teachings, and Dahl argued in response that the term is applied to everyone in Christ. For a division of more recent arguments into these two camps, see Susan Grove Eastman, "Israel and the Mercy of God: A Re-reading of Galatians 6.16 and Romans 9-11," *NTS* 56 (2010): 396n6. Eastman also does a nice job of summarizing the difficult grammatical decisions that must be made when reading this verse ("Israel and the Mercy of God," 371-73).

<sup>116</sup> "Israel and the Mercy of God," 385.

God's decision to reveal God's son in Paul among the Gentiles has raised the question of who constitutes the "Israel of God."<sup>117</sup> Paul is forced to work backwards, from recognition of God's blessing on those outside of his prior definition of "Israel." Paul's image of the inability to distinguish between the slave and the heir before inheritance (4:1-2) captures his understanding. God has bestowed inheritance on Gentiles, and therefore his definition of "Israel" must change. In Rom 11:25-26, Paul argues the term is open to re-definition. Indeed, as he says in Rom 9:6, "not all of those out of Israel are actually Israel." The letter to the Galatians is best understood as his argument for a new understanding of the term "Israel of God."

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<sup>117</sup> Paul uses the term primarily in his argument about "Israel" in Romans 9-11. The primary Pauline use is for those whose story is told in Scripture (see Rom 9:31; 10:21; 11:2; 1 Cor 10:18; 2 Cor 3:7, 13), and it continues into the present and future. The term is often found in his quotations of Scripture (see Rom 9:27; 10:19; cf. Heb 8:8-10). For consideration of the term "Israel" in general, see W. Gutbrod, "Ἰσραήλ, Ἰσραηλίτης, κτλ.," *TDNT* 3.356-91. The term "Israel" is used frequently in 1 Maccabees, though only 5 times in 2 Maccabees, all with reference to a community (see 2 Macc 1:26: "your people Israel" [ὁ λαός σου Ἰσραηλ]). Martyn argues that "Israel" was a term claimed by the troublers (see *Galatians*, 574-77)

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