

Paul's use of 'Christ Rhetoric' in 1 Corinthians:

A Case study from 1 Corinthians 15:1-34

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is my own work and I have not submitted this to any other degree previously, in whole or in part, for the award of any other academic degree or diploma. Except where otherwise indicated via due references, this thesis is my own original work.

*M Alroy Mascrenge*

15/3/2021

Signature

Date

## Abstract

While many scholars have used classical rhetoric for the interpretation of 1 Corinthians, others have proposed alternate methods for the same purpose. The problem with these methods is that they are not based on a closer reading of Paul, rather they are based on different flavors of the rhetorical system and sociological theories. My own approach to this problem is to look at the text of 1 Corinthians with an eye for methodology. A careful analysis of the 1 Corinthian passages yields Paul's rhetorical methods that are different to the classical rhetoric and modern scholars' attempts to find new rhetorical methods. The rhetoric in 1 Corinthians is unique because in every significant issue Paul addresses, he uses a Christ centered response. As such, it calls for a recognition of a Christ centered rhetoric, thus the name Christ Rhetoric. This rhetoric is used often enough in 1 Corinthians to be formalized into a rhetorical/interpretive methodology with its own structure, topoi, and argumentative methods. This resultant methodology is then applied to 1 Corinthians 15:1-34 as a case study.

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I was fortunate to teach Rhetoric at Don Bosco Institute of Humanities and Philosophy twice during my PhD work. This had a tremendous impact on my thesis. My thanks are due to Fr Susith Milroy, the principal of the institute.

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## Abbreviations

### Ancient Sources

#### Anonymous/Multi Author works

ANF	Ante-Nicene Fathers
Gos. Heb.	Gospel of the Hebrews
Rhet. Her.	Rhetorica ad Herennium
T. Reu	Testament of Reuben
T. Jud	Testament of Judah

#### Ambrosiaster

Com. 1 Cor	Commentarius in I ad Corinthios,
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#### Aristotle's Works

Eth. eud.	Eudemian Ethics
Eth. nic.	Nicomachean Ethics
Metaph.	Metaphysics
Phys.	Physics
Pol.	Politics
Rhet.	Rhetoric

#### Augustine

Conf.	Confessions
Doctr. chr.	Christian Instruction

#### Cicero

De Or.	De Oratore Cicero
Inv.	De inventione rhetorica
Part Or.	Partitiones oratoriae
Top.	Topica

#### Chrysostom

Hom.	Homilies on 1 Corinthians
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#### Epiphanius

Pan.	Refutation of All Heresies
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#### Jerome

Vir. ill.	De viris illustribus
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Justin Martyr	
First Apology	First Apology
Lucian	
Peregr	The Passing of Peregrinus
Origen	
Cels.	Against Celsus
Plutarch	
Mor.	Moralia
Quintilian	
Inst.	Institutes Quintilian
Strabo	
Geogr	Geography
Tertullian	
Marc.	Against Marcion
Res.	The Resurrection of the Flesh

### Modern Literature

AB	Anchor Bible
AcBib	Academia Biblica
ANTC	Abington NT commentaries
AYB	Anchor Yale Bible
AYBD	Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary, Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols. New York: Doubleday, 1992
BDAG	Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
BDF	Blass, Friedrich, Albert Debrunner, and Robert W. Funk. A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1961
BibInt	Biblical Interpretation Series
BSac	Bibliotheca Sacra
CBET	Contributions to Biblical Exegesis and Theology

CBQ	Catholic Biblical Quarterly
CCEL	Christian Classics Ethereal Library (ccel.org)
CEJL	Commentaries on Early Jewish Literature
ConBNT	Coniectanea Neotestamentica or Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series
CR	Christ Rhetoric
CSHJ	Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism
CurBR	Currents in Biblical Research
CurTM	Currents in Theology and Mission
ECL	Early Christianity and Its Literature
EDNT	<i>Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament</i> . Edited by Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider. ET. 3 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990–1993
ESV	English Standard Version
GTA	Gottinger theologischer Arbeiten
HB	Hebrew Bible
HCS	Hellenistic Culture and Society
HS	Hebrew Scriptures
INT	Interpretation
IVBS	International Voices in Biblical Studies
JAL	Journal of Applied Logic
JBL	Journal of Biblical Literature
JETS	Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society
JGRChJ	Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology
JRASupS	Journal of Roman Archaeology Supplement Series
JSNT	Journal for the Study of the NT
JSNTSup	Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series
JSOTSup	Journal for the Study of the OT Supplement
L&N	Louw, Johannes P., and Eugene A. Nida, eds. <i>Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains</i> . 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies

LogAna	Logique & Analyse
LogAna	Logique et Analyse
LXX	Septuagint
NAC	New American Commentary
Neot	Neotestamentica
NIDNTT	New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology. Edited by Colin Brown. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975-1978
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NovT	Novum Testamentum
NovTSup	Supplements to Novum Testamentum
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NTApoc	New Testament Apocrypha. 2 vols. Revised ed. Edited by Wilhelm Schneemelcher. English trans. ed. Robert McL. Wilson. Cambridge: Clarke; Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003
NTL	New Testament Library
OECS	Oxford Early Christian Studies
OT	Old Testament
PNTC	Pillar NT Commentary
QJOS	Quarterly Journal of Speech
RB	Revue Biblique
RhetJourn	Journal for the Study of the Rhetorical Criticism of the NT e journal
RRA	Rhetoric of Religious Antiquity
RSQ	Rhetoric Society Quarterly
SBL	Society of Biblical Literature
SBL SymS	SBL Symposium Series
SBLDS	Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBLMS	SBL Monograph Series
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SBT	Studies in Biblical Theology
SComS	Studies in Communication Sciences
SemeiaSt	Semeia Studies
SIT	Social Identification Theory
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and its world

spMon	Speech Monographs
SR	Studies in Religion
SRI	Sociorhetorical Interpretation
StBibLit	Studies in Biblical Literature
TAPA	Transactions of the American Philological Association
TDNT	Theological Dictionary of the New Testament. Edited by Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich. Translated by Geoffrey W. Bromiley. 10 vols. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976
TynBul	Tyndale Bulletin
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament
ZECNT	Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the NT
ZNW	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</i>

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## A Note to the reader

I could not access the physical books I needed due to the Covid 19 lockdown and had to depend on E-Books after March 2020. Some of the books I to which I refer were in electronic format, e.g., EPUB format, this might cause a slight discrepancy between the printed page numbers and the E-Book page numbers.

To save space I have used the author-date citation form. All Scripture quotations without the name of the book refer to 1 Corinthians.

Some books, for example, Canavan's (2012) *Clothing the Body*, were not available during the Covid lockdown. So, I had to refer to her thesis which was freely available. The readers will find references to both the thesis and her book in my work.

## Introduction

### Statement of the Problem

Classical rhetoric has been used to analyze the NT from the early days of the church, and the interest has been renewed in modern times.<sup>1</sup> Such interest was also met by a realization of the limitations of classical rhetoric as an analytical methodology for the NT documents because of the differences in the audience and the genre of the NT documents. Scholars have noticed the shortcomings of Aristotle's three rhetorical genres, namely, judicial, deliberative, and epideictic genres in relation to classifying the documents of the NT and have made significant methodological advances by proposing new methods for the rhetorical analysis of the NT documents (Kennedy 1984; Olbricht 1990; Wuellner 1986; Betz 1986; Horsley 2000; Hall 1996; Robbins 1996b; Robbins 1996c).

One such important work is by George Kennedy (1984, 6–8), who proposed that the NT documents contained a combination of worldly rhetoric, which was *argued*, and radical rhetoric, which was *proclaimed*.<sup>2</sup> Another significant approach is Sociorhetorical interpretation (SRI) proposed by Vernon Robbins (1996b; 1996a; 2009).

In my own analysis of 1 Corinthians, I have discovered another methodology which I argue was used by Paul. A closer analysis of 1 Corinthians, with a focus on Paul's methodology, betrays another kind of rhetoric. This rhetorical approach relies primarily on Christ as the persuading factor; for this reason, I have called it Christ Rhetoric (CR). Paul employs Christological arguments, which can only make sense if you are a believer in Christ. Paul utilizes CR often enough in 1 Corinthians for it to be codified into a formal rhetorical genre that can possibly be applied to other parts of the NT as CR has its own features, structure, and topoi.

I have strictly focused on 1 Corinthians 15, which I argue is a classic case of CR, demonstrates all of CR's features and fits nicely into its structure.

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<sup>1</sup> While the literature on this is huge, here is a representative sample on 1 Corinthians: (Wuellner 1979), (Bunker 1984), (Standaert 1986), (Wuellner 1987), (Fiorenza 1987), (Watson 1989; 2001), (Mack 1990), (Mitchell 1993), (Johnson Jr 1994), (Saw 1995), (Eriksson 1998), (Given 2001), (Heil 2005), (Reid 2005; 2006) (Ackermann 2006), (Wegener 2006), (Scobie 2011), (Malcolm 2013), (O'Reilly 2016), (von Thaden 2017). For a survey of rhetorical studies see (Watson and Hauser 1994).

<sup>2</sup> In Chapter 1, I review other proposals for a new kind of rhetoric.

## Thesis Statement

In my dissertation, I argue that Paul used a uniquely Christian rhetoric to persuade the Corinthian Christ believers to change their behavior. That rhetoric, as I demonstrate, works by employing Christ as the primary focus of the argument. Paul contends that the sins that the Corinthians commit are primarily committed against Christ himself. Paul also maintains that the sins that they commit are committed against the Christ community (ἐκκλησία). Paul's rhetorical force works by making the Corinthians realize that they are sinning against Christ and his body, that is, the church.

From a methodological perspective, Paul uses what James Fredal (2020, 95) designates as the "mediate enthymeme." Mediate enthymeme is where the author "asks the audience to consider a set of factual propositions not for their own sake but for the sake of a fact that they prove or disprove" (Fredal 2000, 95). To prove something, the author talks about something else. This is a much-neglected feature of rhetoric. Though as I show in the second chapter, it was present in Aristotle's own work. I will show that in 1 Cor 15, to argue that the dead will be raised, Paul argues that Christ was raised from the dead. Thus, he employs the resurrection of Christ as the mediate enthymeme.

I argue that Paul employs a different reasoning method to persuade the Corinthians to believe in the general resurrection of the dead, namely, CR. CR has its argumentative methods, set of topoi, and structure. In argumentative methods, I use the concept of mediate enthymeme/rhetoric and narrative rhetoric. I utilize the influential narrative models proposed by Greimas (1966) and famously taken up by Hays (2002) for the analysis of narrative rhetoric in the New Testament. The topoi that I have discovered are all Christ related: Words of Christ, Humanity of Christ, Works of Christ (death and resurrection), Christ community, Sin as committed against Christ and the rule of Christ, etc. The structure is related to the argumentative method about mediate rhetoric and has discourses. I demonstrate how Paul states the problem and forms his argumentation through mediate rhetoric and then show the connection between the various discourses he deploys.

I have incorporated insights drawn from classical rhetoric and other approaches, like SRI, and Kennedy's (1984) radical and worldly rhetoric in creating CR.

The agreed scope of the project is to define CR as a methodology by surveying 1 Corinthians. This methodology will be defined in terms of its argumentative method, its topoi and its structure. This defined methodology will then be applied to 1 Cor 15:1-34.

## Chapter Summary

In chapter 1, I look at classical rhetoric and its use in NT interpretation. Then I proceed to explore alternate approaches that have been proposed. Importantly among them is Kennedy's (1984) work. The only alternative proposal which has been developed into a fully-fledged interpretive analytic is Vernon Robbins' SRI. I look at SRI in some detail as I draw insights from it for my own interpretation, and as preparation for chapter 2 and as well as for assistance in formulating CR.

In chapter 2, I use SRI to analyze 1 Corinthians 15:1-34 and to demonstrate the Christ centered nature of this passage. This justifies the use of a Christ centered methodology. Though the focus of my thesis is to use CR interpretation, I have used SRI concepts such as rhetoric and rhetoracts in other parts of the thesis as well.

In chapter 3, after a brief introduction to Aristotle's notion of creating a new kind of rhetoric, I move onto survey the Corinthian passages in the next chapter. In the survey of the passages, which consist of texts of interest that include most of the significant issues addressed in 1 Corinthians, I look for the structure of Paul's argument, argumentative method, and the *topoi* he employs. The survey reveals that Paul utilizes what Fredal calls the mediate enthymeme (I use the term mediate *rhetoric* for reasons explained in the third chapter). Paul introduces group rhetoric and uses the Corinthians to show the negative consequences of being rejected by the community. In addition, Paul also deploys narrative rhetoric. I identify four discourses which are present in the text, and which are useful for demonstrating Paul's argumentative strategy, namely, statement discourse, foundation discourse, consequence discourse, and connection discourse. I also survey the *topoi* Paul uses in his arguments. As it will be clear, I have taken an inductive approach rather than arbitrarily coming up with discourses. I also compare CR to SRI and classical rhetoric.

In chapter 4, I analyze 1 Cor 15:1-22 using CR and demonstrate that vv. 1-11 provide the foundation for the rest of the chapter. Paul then takes elements from these verses and applies them in his arguments, either implicitly or explicitly.

I also demonstrate the consequences and connections of vv. 11-22, where Paul discusses mediate rhetoric in relation to the consequences of Christ not being raised in vv. 12-19. In vv. 20-22, Paul shows the connection by answering the question, if Christ is raised, how would it help to believe that the dead will also be raised? He does this by arguing from the metaphor of first fruits and Adam-Christ analogy. Paul shows that since

the believers are in Christ, in the same way death came by one man, the resurrection also comes by one *man* to Christ's followers.

In chapter 5, I analyze vv. 23-34 where Paul employs several mediate rhetorical arguments. I analyze his arguments using the framework of apocalyptic rhetoric. This section has a narrative story line about a cosmic war between Christ and his enemies. By analyzing the narrative using narrative models, I answer the question: how does this narrative help to prove that the dead will indeed be raised?

I also analyze Paul's mediate rhetoric in connection to baptism and mission work in vv. 29-32. The section is about those who baptize and those who receive baptism. I answer the question: what does the fact that some are being baptized and some are struggling for the mission work have to do with the resurrection of the dead? In other words: how do baptism and mission work prove that the dead will indeed be raised? Finally, I also analyze Paul's concluding advice relating to CR.

## Chapter 1:

### Approaches

#### Introduction

This chapter has two main sections, one dealing with the classical rhetoric and the other discussing the approaches that have been proposed as alternatives to the classical rhetoric. In the first section I survey different methodologies and approaches used by scholars for the rhetorical analysis of the NT. This discussion is important to understand the background and the issues involved in applying the Greco-Roman rhetoric to the NT. After discussing the classical rhetoric, I set forth the efforts by modern scholars to replace Aristotle's genres due to their limitations and inability to describe the rhetoric found in NT literature. My own approach, CR, which I explore in chapter three, draws insights from classical rhetoric and the other approaches including Kennedy's radical and worldly rhetoric and Robbins' SRI.

#### Classical Rhetoric

Aristotle defines rhetoric as the "ability, in each [particular] case, to see the available means of persuasion." (*Rhet.* 1:2),<sup>3</sup> and Quintilian defines it as "*bene dicendi scientiam*," the knowledge of speaking well (*Inst.* 2.15.38).<sup>4</sup>

Aristotle famously classified all speeches into three different kinds of universal rhetoric: judicial (courtroom accusation and defense), deliberative (persuasion and dissuasion in civic assemblies), and epideictic (praise and blame on special occasions). He also discussed invention, arrangement, and style of a speech. Aristotle then discussed *topoi* that are common to all genres and the *topoi* that are specific to a particular genre. Enthymemes are formed by using *topoi*.<sup>5</sup> He also discussed arrangement for each of the genres. During the Roman period, rhetoric underwent some changes with notable

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<sup>3</sup> All quotes from Aristotle's *Rhetoric* are from Kennedy's (2007) translation.

<sup>4</sup> We can see the role of politics in shaping the content of rhetoric. When Greece became democratic, rhetoric became very popular. Because in a democracy people make free choices, and they need to be persuaded to make those choices, rather than being forced to do so, especially in the Greek civic assembly (*ekklesia*). However, during the Roman imperial period, there was no democracy; rather a dictatorial emperor existed, so rhetoric was seen simply as the art of speaking well. See Murphy (2014, 230).

<sup>5</sup> A discussion of *topoi* and enthymemes is given in the CR chapter, as it is integrated into CR.

contributions from Cicero and Quintilian, and further categories of memory and style were added.<sup>6</sup>

### Rhetorical Interpretation<sup>7</sup>

The use of classical Greek rhetoric in the interpretation of the NT was pioneered by Hans Dieter Betz,<sup>8</sup> Wilhelm Wuellner, and George A. Kennedy in the modern period (Robbins 2009, 8). Specifically, Hans Dieter Betz's paper and then his commentary on Galatians is said to have started a new era in New Testament interpretation (Classen 1993, 2).<sup>9</sup> However, using rhetoric for the interpretation of Paul's letter is an old idea;<sup>10</sup> church fathers like Origen (AD 185), Gregory of Nyssa (AD 335-395), John Chrysostom (AD 347-407), Jerome (AD 342-420), Theodore of Mopsuestia (AD 350-428), and Augustine (AD 354-430) (Peterson 1998, 7) used rhetoric.<sup>11</sup>

Augustine, in his *De doctrina christiana* (*Christian Instruction*) argues that the church should use Cicero's rhetoric, though his treatise is not written to teach rhetoric as it can be learned "elsewhere" [*Doctr. Chr.* IV.1.2]. In chapter 2, he argues that it is lawful for a Christian to use rhetorical techniques. While he argues that wisdom is more important for a Christian teacher than eloquence (chapter 5), in chapter 6, he argues that the sacred writers unite eloquence and wisdom<sup>12</sup>, and in chapter 7, he demonstrates how

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<sup>6</sup> For a brief and useful survey of the methods and definitions see Habinek (2004); Kennedy (1994); Herrick (2017); Murphy, Katula, and Hoppmann (2014); and Black (1978). More detailed works include Kennedy (1983; 1994; 2008; 2015); Porter (2017); Clarke and Berry (1996).

<sup>7</sup> For an introduction to rhetoric see (Black 1978) For a detailed study of classical rhetoric, the reader is urged to consult works by George A Kennedy. I have interacted with Kennedy (1984) in the sections below. A bibliography on the use of rhetoric as a methodology for the Bible can be found in Watson and Hauser (1994). A survey of scholarship with a discussion about the merit and pitfalls of rhetoric can be found in Classen (2016).

<sup>8</sup> Betz used Roman rhetorical handbooks in his Galatians commentary. Reid (2005; 2006), not only used the concept of "complete argument" from *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, but also argued that Paul consciously made use of it. Olbricht (1990, 221) however, argues that Aristotle would have made a lasting impact on Paul.

<sup>9</sup> Some early works include Betz (1979); MacRae (1985) and Johanson (1987). While crediting Betz with bringing rhetorical analysis to NT interpretation in the modern period, Kennedy (1984, 144ff.) criticizes him for getting the genre of Galatians wrong. Betz classified Galatians as judicial rhetoric, while Kennedy thinks that it is best understood as deliberative rhetoric. However, it must be noted that Aristotle himself warned that the categories would overlap (*Rhet* 1:9). Another criticism against Betz is that while he uses *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Cicero and Quintilian to analyze Paul's rhetoric in Galatians, it is more likely that Paul was influenced to a greater extent by Aristotle as his work *Rhetoric* had a lasting impact on the Greek culture and even influenced the Roman rhetoricians. See Olbricht (1990, 221).

<sup>10</sup> After comparing the NT use of the term persuade in Acts 17:2-4, Kinneavy (1987, 103) demonstrates how the use of "persuaded," which is a Greek rhetorical construct, has the same meaning as the NT concept, "believed."

<sup>11</sup> Kuypers (2009, 2) thinks that Augustine was the reason that rhetoric came to be used in Christian interpretation, though Brian Peterson demonstrates its use by Christians before Augustine's time.

<sup>12</sup> The idea of uniting eloquence and wisdom is largely attributed to Cicero (Herrick 2017, 101). Cicero says: I hold that eloquence is dependent upon the trained skill of highly educated men [*De. Or.* 1.ii.5]

the “sacred writers” used eloquence by drawing examples from Paul and Amos. Augustine himself was a former teacher of rhetoric [*Conf* V.XII] who went to listen to Ambrose to listen to his eloquence [*Conf* V.XIII] and eventually was converted.

Betz (1979, 14 n. 97) also claims that Martin Luther wrote his commentary on Romans using rhetorical analysis. Melanchthon classifies the letter to the Romans as judicial rhetoric and finds the presence of exordium, narratio, and confirmation in the various sections of Romans. Betz (1986, 17) also claims that Calvin used rhetorical analysis for his commentary on Romans. It has also been claimed that, more than any other method, rhetorical criticism brings out (or “brings forth”) the power of the text more clearly (Olbricht 1990, 216). In modern times, rhetorical criticism has been introduced to complement traditional approaches like form, historical and literary criticisms.

The use of rhetoric for NT analysis has gone through 3 different phases in modern times (Eriksson 1998, 8–10; Simons 1990). NT analysis in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was mainly focused on the element of style. For example, Ethelbert Bullinger examined figures of speech in the writings of the NT (Cited in Eriksson (1998, 8–10)). The second phase that emerged in the 1970s was the study of the rhetorical structures in the text. According to Eriksson (1998, 9), Hans Dieter Betz was concerned with the structure of Galatians, and the works that followed tried to “understand the whole documents as rhetorical discourses” by dividing the content into *exordium*, *narration*, *probation*, *exhortation*, *peroration* (Eriksson 1998, 9). The recent trend in rhetorical analyses of the NT is the study of invention (partially due to the influence of Chaim Perelman’s *New Rhetoric* (Perelman and Olbrechts-Tyteca 2006)), that is, the search for the argumentation in the text forming rhetorical proofs.

There is another line of analysis that argues that Paul used Jewish rhetorical styles (Lampe 2010, 19; Watson 2010a, 122; Bailey 2011, 19). Yeo argues that the reason for the lack of studies using Jewish rhetorical ideas could be due to two main reasons: Lack of Jewish handbooks and the perceived animosity between Hellenistic and Jewish

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But in an orator we must demand the subtlety of the logician, the thoughts of the philosopher, a diction almost poetic, a lawyer's memory, a tragedian's voice, and the bearing almost of the consummate actor [De Or. I. xxviii. 128]

And he criticizes the Greek authors Plato and Socrates for separating wisdom and eloquence: and he separated in his discussions the ability of thinking wisely, and speaking gracefully, though they are naturally united; Socrates, I say, whose great genius and varied conversation Plato has in his Dialogues consigned to immortality, he himself having left us nothing in writing. [61] Hence arose that divorce as it were of the tongue from the heart, a division certainly absurd, useless, and reprehensible, that one class of persona should teach us to think, and another to speak, rightly: [De. Or. III.XVI.60-61]

cultures (Yeo 1995, 64). One example of the potential of Jewish rhetoric is Malcolm (2013) who takes up the Jewish theme of reversal to analyze 1 Corinthians.

### Criticism of Rhetoric for NT Interpretation

Not all scholars accepted the relevance of classical rhetoric for understanding the writings of the NT. Among the critics who argue against<sup>13</sup> the use of rhetoric in the interpretation of the NT are Anderson (1999) and Kern (1998). Anderson argues that in using rhetorical theory for analysis, we are using a tool meant to write speeches and not to analyze them (1999, 255–56). However, if someone followed a method in composing a piece of literature, the best way to analyze it would be to understand that method and see how the letter corresponds to the method (or deviates from it) and how the author has used rhetoric.

Despite Betz's rhetorical analysis of Galatians, Kern (1998, 258) sets out to prove that Galatians does not fit the rhetorical structures as given in the handbooks and claims that Paul discarded classical rhetoric and the limitations it brought.

Horsley (2000, 90), while arguing that Paul opposed not only the Roman imperial system but also Greco-Roman rhetoric, provides allowance that Paul may have utilized the "devices" of rhetoric. However, even when he used it, he still opposed the Roman society's value system. For example, Horsley (2000, 90) claims that Paul's ethos consisted of self-deprecation, and was the "antithesis of the epitome of aristocratic virtue and values standard in Greco-Roman rhetoric."

Litfin's (1994; 2015) tries to prove that Paul has taken an anti-rhetoric stance in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5. He argues that the content of Paul's message forced him not to take the rhetorical stance as such Paul's work is to proclaim and not to persuade by using 'πειθοῖς σοφίας [λόγοις]' (1 Cor 2:4). Mihaila (2009, 214–17) also concludes that Paul "rejected the dynamic of the sophistic rhetoric" but utilized its "devices." Winter (2002, 145) also argues that Paul "deliberately" took an "anti-sophistic" approach.

However, Ramsaran (2004, 89–90) warns that it is "not correct to relate 'eloquent wisdom' and 'lofty words or wisdom' [in 1 Cor 2:1-5] in a one-to-one correspondence to 'rhetoric' as a monolithic entity." He further maintains that what Paul contrasts

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<sup>13</sup> See Mihaila (2009, 130–45) for a discussion. For a survey of rhetorical studies see Anderson (1999, 265–76); Watson and Hauser (1994). The extent of the literature has caused scholars like Brown, (2014, 11), who complains that a 'vast amount of literature' has been written about Paul's use of rhetoric, but does not interact with them, and after a half, a page discussion concludes against using a rhetorical analysis for examining 1 Corinthians 15!

“persuasive words based in the educationally, religiously, and politically developed power structures of the Greco-Roman world” with his own “persuasive words based in the apocalyptic intervention of God and God's revealed destiny for ‘set apart’ humanity.” Pogoloff (1992, 7-96) questions whether Paul was referring to content or form in 1 Corinthians 2, that is, whether rhetoric is a mere form or does it involve content as well. Aristotle himself seems to hint that rhetoric deals with the method when he says that “rhetoric, therefore, does not belong to a single defined genus of subject” [*Rhet.* 1.1.14]. It would appear rhetoric is something that can be applied in all subjects.

According to the author of Acts Paul often argued with his audience (Acts 17:2, 17:17, 18:14, 18:19, 19:8,9). If the message was simply proclaimed, then there was nothing to argue about. As Kennedy (1984, 10) concludes, “in addressing a Greek audience, even when he pointedly rejected the ‘wisdom of this world,’ Paul could not expect to be persuasive unless there was some overlap between the content and form of what he said and the expectations of his audience.”

One criticism of the use of the rhetorical analysis for NT interpretation according to Classen (1993) is whether the NT writers, specifically Paul, were educated in rhetoric.<sup>14</sup> Kennedy (1984, 148), Kinneavy (1987, 80–91), Kremmydas (2016) and Winter (2002, 237–41) provide evidence to support the view that Paul did have some education in rhetoric. Rhetoric was part of the secondary school education, and the Roman citizens were associated with *ephebia*.<sup>15</sup> Since Paul was a Roman citizen (Acts 22:25-29) it would be reasonable to expect some rhetorical education.<sup>16</sup>

Classen (2002, 29–44) also notes that Paul, who writes excellent Greek, must have read works of Greek rhetoric and allocates an entire chapter to proving that Paul was familiar with classical rhetoric and that he used technical terms from the classical rhetorical corpus. Oropeza (2016, 20-25) provides evidence from within the text and external proofs to sustain the belief that Paul indeed had some rhetorical education. The Talmud states (which of course has a later date) that half of Gamaliel's students were trained in the wisdom of the Greeks [b. B. Qam. 83a].

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<sup>14</sup> On the other hand, there is a tendency to shift from using rhetoric for analysis of Paul's letters to using Paul's letter to study rhetoric itself. See Kraftchick (1990, 56).

<sup>15</sup> Adams (2012, 123) also employs progymnasmata for his analyses. One of his key reasons for doing so is that it raises fewer objections because the chances of Paul being familiar with it are higher than the traditional rhetorical handbooks. However, this is not an acceptable argument – if Paul was not familiar with the handbooks, the chances are that he was not familiar with progymnasmata either. If he was familiar with progymnasmata, it is more likely that he was familiar with the handbooks as well.

<sup>16</sup> For the question whether Paul used rhetoric consciously, see the discussion in Reid (2005, 66–67) and Classen (1993, 322–23).

The fact that Paul calls himself ἰδιώτης τῷ λόγῳ (2 Cor. 11:6) does not necessarily mean that he was unskilled in rhetoric at all. Oropeza (2016, 20) observes that Chrysostom also calls himself ἰδιώτης (*Ordin.* 42:3) when comparing himself with the Sophists.<sup>17</sup>

Classen (2002, 5) argues that the fact that an author was not aware of a method should not stop us from using that method. I would presume this would also depend on whether one takes a diachronic approach or a synchronic approach. In synchronic approach the interpreter does not consider whether NT writers such as Paul intentionally used rhetoric in their writings but proceeds to use rhetorical analysis to interpret the NT. Examples of scholars who have used this method include Plank (1987), Humphries (1979), Wire (1990), and Crafton (1991). In the other contrasting approach, the diachronic or historical approach, the interpreter argues that the original NT writers were aware of classical rhetoric and used it intentionally in their writings. Margaret Mitchell (1993) is probably the primary example of such an approach. George Kennedy (Kennedy 1984) also takes the same approach. Ben Witherington's (2011) commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians also takes this approach.

The use of rhetoric in the interpretation of NT is also historically justified as Kennedy (1984, 8–10) has demonstrated. After Alexander's conquests, the whole region was Hellenized, and two prominent features of the Greek culture, Koine Greek and rhetoric (Hengel 2003, 69–70) were assimilated into the cultures. These were made part of education and formed the basis of civic life (Kennedy 2015, 14).

During the period of the first-century Jewish culture had already absorbed several centuries of Greek thought. Theodorus of Gadara (1<sup>st</sup> century BC) and Caecilius of Calacte (during the reign of Augustus) are examples of Jewish rhetoricians in antiquity which indicates that Greek rhetoric had reached even Palestine (Kennedy 1984, 9). Since both communicators like Paul, and his audience, lived in a rhetorical culture and would have imbibed rhetorical skills and knowledge, it would have contributed to their own communicative strategies.

### **Epistolography and NT Interpretation**

Another objection to the use of rhetoric in NT interpretation is that classical rhetoric was developed to form oral *speeches* and that the NT letters are *written* documents.<sup>18</sup> Those

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<sup>17</sup> Also see Winter (2002, 213ff).

<sup>18</sup> For a discussion of the rhetoric of Paul's letters, see Thompson (2020, 19–36).

who pursue this line of criticism normally suggest using the manuals of letter writing of antiquity rather than the manuals of rhetoric.<sup>19</sup>

Classen (1993, 288) argues that in antiquity, epistolography and rhetoric were two completely different arts but concludes that both can render service to the interpretation of the NT. His suggestion is to use epistolography in matters of style and comparison and to employ the *inventio, elocutio, dispositio* of rhetoric (with extreme caution he warns!) to analyze arguments.<sup>20</sup> Watson has proposed and used an integrated model: In analyzing Philippians he mixes epistolography and rhetorical insights together (1997; 1988).<sup>21</sup> Weima takes an epistolary approach to Paul's letters (2016, 6).

In support of using rhetoric in the study of the NT, a factor that must be given weight is the presence of significant differences between Paul's letters and the letters of the antiquity of that era.<sup>22</sup> This has opened the possibility for Forbes to conclude that Paul's letters

function as speeches, as rhetoric, every bit as much as they function as conventional letters. They are thoroughly atypical letters, in size, in content, and in style, precisely because they are letters designed to be delivered orally to (thoroughly atypical) groups. On this basis, epistolographic models can be fruitfully applied to some features of his letters; but rhetorical models also very definitely have their place. (Forbes 2019, 159)<sup>23</sup>

Oropeza (2016, 31) also makes a brief comparison between Paul's letters and the letters of Demosthenes but concludes that Paul's letters are what Julius Victor of the 4<sup>th</sup> century calls "*litterae negotiales*, letters that deal with weighty matters and address cities and rulers."

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<sup>19</sup> There are two surviving manuals of antiquity of letter writing: *Typoi Epistolikoi*, and *Epistolimaioi Characters* (referred to as Pseudo-Demetrius and Pseudo-Libanius respectively).

<sup>20</sup> Other critics include Porter and Dyer (2012) and Reed (1993).

<sup>21</sup> For a useful discussion see Oropeza (2016, 26-27).

<sup>22</sup> Raymond Collins (2006, 6) thinks of 1 Corinthians as a 'Hellenistic' letter and cites Michael Bunker's comparison of Paul's letters with the letters of the Stoic philosopher Seneca. Collins (2006, 6-8) identifies syllogisms and enthymemes Paul uses in his letters and compares features used by both authors. He thinks that the unusual length of the letter is because he is addressing different sub-groups in 1 Corinthians.

<sup>23</sup> Forbes (2019, 154) however, recognizes that there are also letters that are similar to Paul's in that they combine epistolary and rhetoric conventions which are to be found in the letters of Plato, Isocrates, and Demosthenes.

While there were schools of rhetoric, there was no school for letter writing. The format went into the handbooks only after the NT times,<sup>24</sup> which helps us conclude that during the NT era, rhetoric was the popular mechanism for persuasion (Witherington 2009, 3).

The fact that the difference between written and spoken words was fragile in antiquity must also be considered. Quintilian himself says that “my own view is that there is absolutely no difference between writing well and speaking well, and that a written speech is merely a record of one that has actually been delivered” [*Inst.* 12.10.51]. The classification between oral and written traditions is artificial because when people wrote, they imitated oral speech in their writing, and when they spoke, they recited written speeches (Robbins 2009, 18). Since the Athenian orator Isocrates had stage fear, he wrote his speeches as open letters for publication (Peterson 1998, 21). Some rhetoricians included poetry and prose in the genre of epideictic speeches [Hermogenes, *On Types of Style*, chap. 12], which further diminished the difference between speeches and other categories of literature. As Collins notes, although Paul *wrote* a letter he was conscious that he was talking to the Corinthians, using three different verbs: “to say” (λέγω) in 1:12; 6:5; 7:6, 8, 12, 35; 10:15, 29; 15:12; “to speak” (λαλέω) in 9:8; 15:34; “to assert” (φημι) in 7:29; 10:15, 19; 15:50 (Collins 2006, 18).<sup>25</sup> Robbins (2009, 18) contends, “It is important, to approach early Christian writings as compositions that emerged in contexts where orality was dynamically at work in practices of writing.” Moreover, as Lucian of Samosata from the second century AD, confirms, “[T]he sacred books of [the Christians] were read aloud” [*Peregr.* 11]. As Robbins notes,

Overall, the NT writings emerged in a context where people knew that writings existed, even if they could neither read nor write and where a majority of people created new compositions by dynamically interrelating oral and written discourse, whether they were speaking or writing. (Robbins 2009, 18)

Kennedy (1984, 30) claims that although the rhetorical theory was used to make students speak well in public, it was also used to teach and analyze written compositions.

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<sup>24</sup> This does not mean that people did not learn about letter writing in the first century. Theon in his *Exercises*, which was written sometime in the first century AD, specifically mentions letter writing as a part of the exercise for prosopopoeia. This suggests that letter writing was part of their education system.

<sup>25</sup> Collins (2006, 20) thinks of 1 Corinthians as a “speech in the framework of a letter.”

Thiselton (2000, 45,41-52) concludes that Paul used epistolography and rhetoric “as complementary aspects of a communicative whole.”

### The Problem with Classical Rhetoric and the Search for other Approaches

The criticisms that were discussed in the previous section resulted in scholars proposing alternate methods for classical rhetoric. While classical rhetoric has its merits, Robbins has argued that using it to analyze early Christian writings is not suitable as the NT does not assume the law court, political assembly, or civil ceremony, the traditional settings associated with the three genres of classical rhetoric (Robbins 2009, 3). These institutions persecuted Christians. Furthermore, as Watson (2010b, 46) notes, “[T]he three genres did not adequately classify all the rhetoric even of their own day.” Stowers too concedes that the letters of the first century AD, cannot be mapped onto the genres of epideictic or deliberative. As such, Robbins finds them too restrictive to be used to analyze the NT as it is confined to a particular location. Watson (2010b, 47) sees the need for a *Christian Rhetoric*: “Studies of Romans illustrate that linking a Pauline epistle to a particular rhetorical species is unwise and looking toward a *Christian rhetoric* may [be] a better solution.”

Seeing the shortcoming of Aristotle’s three genres to represent Biblical literature, many scholars have come up with their own rhetorical approaches. Below is a summary of such attempts to move beyond the limitations of the classical rhetoric.<sup>26</sup>

Scholar	Type1	Type2	Basis
George Kennedy	Worldly	Radical	Presence of enthymeme
Hans Dieter Betz	Rhetoric of persuasion	Rhetoric of demonstration of spirit and power.	Power of the spirit
Wilhelm Wuellner	Convincing discourse	Persuasive discourse	Type of reader – fictional or real
Thomas Olbricht	Church Rhetoric		Sphere of usage

<sup>26</sup> There are a number of other approaches like that of Ramsaran (2005, 284–300) and Given (2001)) which I did not consider here because they were not trying to create/identify replacements for Aristotle’s genres. For example, Given (2001) talks about the deception employed by Paul as a rhetorical strategy. This is an identification of a rhetorical device rather than a proposal for a new kind of rhetoric.

Thomas Hall	Apocalyptic Rhetoric/ Juridical Arguments		Revelation of God's judgments
Richard Horsley	Political Rhetoric		Anti-Roman sentiments
Matthew R Malcolm	Kerygmatic Rhetoric		Proclamation of the dead and risen messiah
Vernon Robbins	Six rhetorolects		Social Situation

Table 1.1: Comparison of alternate rhetorical approaches

### George Kennedy's Contribution

George Kennedy (1984, 5) a pioneer in the field of applying classical rhetoric to the study of the NT<sup>27</sup>, states his goal as a “historical one of reading the Bible as it would be read by an early Christian, by an inhabitant of the Greek-speaking world.” While recognizing that classical rhetoric focused mainly on legal and political settings, Kennedy (1984, 6) recognizes another kind of “religious rhetoric” which used “sacred language,” and the base of which was “authoritative proclamation” or “proclaimed (*kerygma*) message” as opposed to “rational persuasion” or “argued message.” The former appeals to authority, whereas the latter appeals to reason, making formally valid inferences from accepted premises (Kennedy 1984, 6–8). He classifies the former as *radical* rhetoric and the latter as *worldly* rhetoric.<sup>28</sup> In worldly rhetoric, a supporting reason for a statement is provided in the form of an enthymeme. In radical rhetoric, statements/doctrines are proclaimed without enthymemes (Kennedy 1984, 7). Kennedy provides several examples from the NT and the Hebrew Scriptures for the use of radical rhetoric. The first five of the Ten Commandments, for example, come with an enthymeme, whereas the rest do not. The Gospel of Matthew appeals to logical reasoning and genealogies to show evidence from scriptures, whereas the gospel of Mark is “a form of ‘sacred language’ characterized by

<sup>27</sup>Some scholars have criticized Kennedy for treating the genres exclusively, arguing that some books belong to more than one genre and that the genres are not universal (Aune 1989, 203; Johanson 1987, 39; Reed 1993).

<sup>28</sup> There may be some overlap between Kennedy’s classification and Betz’s classification. See the discussion on Betz’s approach above.

assertions and absolute claims of authoritative truth without evidence or logical argument” (Kennedy 1984, 104).<sup>29</sup>

Cameron (1994, 49) shares the same sentiments as Kennedy, though she does not refer to Kennedy.<sup>30</sup> She argues “that it was a natural extension of the conviction that religious truth must be directly presented, not through logical argument, but through proofs signs, like the sign of the cross, or the statements of faith, which the believer must simply accept.” But she accepts that in practice the early NT writers used rhetoric as the medium of argument: “all the writers from Paul onward who argued for the primacy of faith over logic did so through the medium of rhetorical argument.” She recognizes the presence of radical and worldly arguments.

Kennedy’s work is based on Ernesto Grassi’s (1980, 103–4) work around sacred language, the features of which are as follows:

1. It never arises out of the process of inference.
2. Its statements are immediate, formulated without mediation or contemplation.
3. They are metaphorical statements insofar as a sacred language lends the reality of sensory appearances a new meaning.
4. The assertions of sacred language have a claim to urgency. The theoretical or practical view that does not fit with them is outrageous.
5. Its announcements claim to stand outside of time.

Kennedy (1984, 33–38) also provided an influential five-step methodology for rhetorical criticism:<sup>31</sup>

1. Determine the rhetorical unit.
2. Define the rhetorical situation.
3. Determine the stasis or the problem.

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<sup>29</sup> Notwithstanding Kennedy’s point about radical and worldly rhetoric, he agrees with the obvious fact that there are enthymemes in the NT as well (Kennedy 1984, 10).

<sup>30</sup> Cameron’s work focuses more on the methods used in the following centuries.

<sup>31</sup> A different methodology has been proposed by Schüssler-Fiorenza, who proposes four stages in the rhetorical analysis of a text:

1. Identifying rhetorical interests and models of contemporary interpretation
2. Delineating the rhetorical arrangement
3. Establishing the rhetorical situation of the letter
4. Reconstructing the common historical situation (Schüssler-Fiorenza 1987, 393).

4. Analyze the composition of the argument in terms of invention, arrangement, and style.
5. Evaluate how the argument has addressed or not addressed the rhetorical situation.

Kennedy's ideas served as a basis for SRI in many ways including its creation of the rhetorolects.<sup>32</sup> The idea of worldly and radical rhetoric is also used in CR as I demonstrate in the CR chapter.

### Hans Dieter Betz's Approach

In his groundbreaking work on Galatians, Betz classifies it as an apologetic letter under the forensic category. What distinguished Betz's work from the previous rhetorical analysis is that he concentrated more on arrangement, whereas the previous studies concentrated on style (Mitchell 2003, 6).

By citing scriptures like 1 Thess 1:5, 2:1-12, Galatians 1:10, 3:1, and 4:7-8, Betz (1986, 21-24) claimed that Paul rejected rhetoric as an art of mere persuasion and manipulation. Referring to passages like 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, he sees the Corinthian correspondence as an extended discussion of this issue.

Betz argues that the power of Christian kerygma is the power of the spirit. So "what brings this power to the fore is not dialectic but a demonstration, direct display (ἀπόδειξις)." Betz then makes a pregnant point that the term ἀπόδειξις is quite an important one in rhetorical theory (cf. Conzelmann 1975, 55 n 26). The reason for a different kind of rhetoric is because kerygma proclaims the mystery of God, so it must be revealed from God, not merely be persuasive (Betz 1986, 37). While discussing 1 Cor 2:1-16, Betz makes a distinction between the two rhetorical styles in Pauline writings: the rhetoric of persuasion and the rhetoric of demonstration of spirit and power. The first kind is inadequate and inferior for conveying the gospel message (Betz 1986, 36-37). In the chapter on CR, I make use of Betz' analysis as one of the justifications for a new methodology.

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<sup>32</sup> The distinction made by Kennedy (worldly and radical rhetoric) provided a starting point for the socio-rhetorical exploration of rhetorolects (Robbins 2016, 375). Robbins (2016, 371) also sees a parallel between Kennedy's worldly rhetoric and SRI's rhetology, and between radical rhetoric and SRI's rhetography. He claims that Kennedy does not discuss the reconfiguration of the rhetoric in terms of the speaker, speech, and audience. In other words, Robbins argues that Kennedy does not fully explore the consequences of his categorization of worldly rhetoric and radical rhetoric, something which Robbins, (Robbins 2016, 378) seems to have done in developing the rhetorolects.

### Wilhelm Wuellner's Approach

Wuellner (1986, 57–60), another pioneer in applying rhetorical criticism to the NT, used Perelman's new rhetoric to distinguish between “convincing discourse” and “persuasive discourse.” The convincing discourse is addressed to fictional readers, and persuasive discourse to empirical readers. Perhaps not surprisingly he categorized large portions of 1 Corinthians as convincing discourse. He argued that where rhetorical questions are used in 1 Corinthians, it is addressed to a fictive, universal audience.

### Thomas Olbricht's Approach

Olbricht (1990), in his analysis of 1 Thessalonians, proposes a new rhetoric. His reasons are somewhat similar to Robbins'. He argues that since the Christian assembly did not exist at the time of Aristotle, the early Christians created a new genre as the three traditional genres were addressed to different types of audiences. So Olbricht calls this new Christian rhetoric “Church rhetoric,” though he still sees the value of Aristotle's rhetoric as it can be applied to all genres.

Though Olbricht (1990, 226 n. 61) admits that he has developed the characteristics of Church rhetoric elsewhere in an unpublished article, he gives an overview in the present article. Olbricht (1990, 226) proposes that Church rhetoric was based on the acts of God: “In the Christian Rhetoric, in contrast, a recitation of the acts of God in the community of believers plays a major role, affecting proofs, arrangement and style.” He sees Church rhetoric as a distinctive genre with subgenres such as reconfirmational and confrontational rhetoric. He classifies 1 Thessalonians as a “reconfirmational subset” and Galatians as a “confrontational subset.” If we use Olbricht's categories I think we could classify 1 Corinthians as a reconfirmational subset.

While reconfirmational subgenre “has parallels in Greco-Roman exhortation and parenesis” it also has its own distinctive characteristics. “The text's power lies in declaring the action of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit - past, present and future rather than in exhibiting the universal principles and friendship factors of Aristotle's civilization” (Olbricht 1990, 236).

### Richard Horsley's Approach: Political Rhetoric

Horsley (2000, 90) shows that although 1 Corinthians is often classified as deliberative rhetoric, Paul uses it not to create unity, which he argues is the purpose of deliberative rhetoric, but to “create disunity and discord” with the greater Corinthian society. For

example, Paul forbids the Corinthian followers of Christ from having fellowship with the world (7:29-31).

On Paul's use of rhetoric, Horsley comments:

Examination of Paul's arguments in 1 Corinthians in the context of the imperial power relations supported by contemporary public oratory indicates how Paul opposed both the function of standard Greco-Roman rhetoric and the Roman imperial order it served. Although he used its devices, Paul bluntly rejected the high value that the dominant culture placed on rhetorical persuasion (1 Cor 1: 17 - 20; 2: 1, 4; 4:19). He also diametrically opposed Greco-Roman rhetoric substantively even where he utilized its typical techniques and devices in offering himself as an example of the behavior he was advocating. (Horsley 2000, 90)

Horsley (2000, 101) argues that Paul employs "composite" rhetoric, taking standard Greek rhetoric and using the imperial rhetoric in "an anti-imperial way." He (2000, 90) demonstrates how Paul uses typical rhetorical terms in an anti-rhetorical way: For example, for Paul, the *ethos* is a reverse ethos; what he presented "was virtually the antithesis of the epitome of aristocratic virtue and values standard in Greco-Roman rhetoric." Horsley (2000, 92) also shows that while it was the emperors who crucified others, the hero of Paul's gospel was a criminal crucified by the Roman rulers.

Horsley goes on to claim that Jewish apocalyptic literature was focused on the following "components":

1. The oppressive rulers would be judged or destroyed.
2. The people would be delivered and/or restored.
3. Those who had been martyred for their persistence in the traditional way of life and resistance would be vindicated and/or be resurrected in order to join in the finally restored life of the people of God (Horsley 2000, 95; 2004, 341).<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Interestingly Ramsaran (2004, 96-99) avers that each major section of 1 Corinthians, namely, 1-4, 5-14 and 15 correspond to Horsley's three components.

I draw heavily on Horsley's work in the section on Empire Criticism in Chapter 5. Compared to the other proposed alternatives in the table above, Horsley's proposal is not very clear.

### Thomas Hall's Approach: Apocalyptic Rhetoric<sup>34</sup>

Hall (1996, 436) argues, "apocalyptists assume a world that depends on God's decrees. In such a world argument based on the balanced probabilities and judicious distinctions of Greek philosophy and rhetoric are irrelevant, for the world is mysterious - irreducible by human reason." Hall then says that the argument (apocalyptic rhetoric) that is relevant has four elements:

1. A claim to inspiration,
2. A revelation of divine judgment ordering the world into righteous and wicked camps,
3. A call to join the righteous realm God's rules and to repudiate the wicked realm ruled by forces opposed to God,
4. An implication that this choice includes a course of action the author advocates (Hall 1996, 436).

I have classified the method of Hall and Horsley as two more methods that contribute towards methodological advancement. Hall talks about the elements, and Horsley talks about a different method with its own topo. I have used both in my interpretation.

### Matthew R Malcolm: Kerygmatic Rhetoric

Malcolm (2013, 83–93) identifies kerygmatic rhetoric in which the NT writers encourage "adoption of a new mindset and code of conduct by proclaiming the dead-and-risen Messiah." Malcolm demonstrates how the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ help to create a new methodology: "various structures and formulations of New Testament persuasion distinctively arise from the *kerygma* of Messianic death and resurrection." He sees this as a fundamental difference which is enough to form a "broad explanatory category." However, as I demonstrate in the CR chapter, the death and resurrection are

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<sup>34</sup> The term Apocalyptic rhetoric has been used by many. Wilder (1971) was probably one of the important forerunners in the application of the concept of Apocalyptic rhetoric. Bloomquist (1999) demonstrates the value of applying SRI to apocalyptic rhetoric. O'Leary's work is also along these lines (1998). This in many ways is related to the previous category I discussed, namely, Horsley's, political rhetoric.

two of the topoi that Paul uses in his persuasive efforts. They alone are not enough to form an entire methodology. Another main weakness with Malcolm's approach is that he does not apply it to passages to bring out the invention of arguments of *kerygmatic rhetoric*. He uses it more to understand the macro structure of the NT letters.

### Vernon Robbins: Sociorhetorical Interpretation

Robbins (1996a, 9) and others developed SRI as a systematic approach that sets "multiple contexts of interpretation in dialogue with one another." "Socio" refers to the aspects of anthropology and sociology that SRI uses in the interpretation of texts. "Rhetorical" refers to the use of language as a way of communication (Robbins 1996a, 1). One of SRI's significant goals is to bring different interpretive methods together: literary criticism, socio-scientific criticism, rhetoric criticism, postmodern criticism, and theological criticism together into an integrated approach. To achieve this, SRI looks at the text as if it were a "thickly woven tapestry" containing multiple textures (Robbins 1996b, 2). These multiple textures include inner texture, intertexture, social and cultural texture, ideological texture, and sacred texture.<sup>35</sup>

Inner texture is the texture of the language itself and "concerns relationships among word-phrase and narrational patterns that produce argumentative and aesthetic patterns in texts" (Robbins 1996a, 46). Since every text is a rewriting of other texts, intertexture explores the relationship between one text and other texts (Robbins 1996b, 7). Social and cultural texture brings anthropological and sociological theories to explore the text's social and cultural aspects (Robbins 1996a, 144). According to Robbins, ideological texture is

concerned with the particular alliances and conflicts nurtured and evoked by the language of the text and the language of the interpretation as well as the way the text itself and interpreters of the text position themselves in relation to other individuals and groups. (Robbins 2009, 612)

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<sup>35</sup> Though only four textures were presented initially, sacred texture was added later. This was possible as SRI is an adoptive and agile approach rather than a fixed and rigid methodology. There have been attempts to use various other textures. One such example is the Economic Texture introduced by Alex IP (2017, 111-78) using New Institutional Economics (NIE). It deals with economic aspects of the ancient world such as the slave trade (Ip 2017, 113). For the latest developments in textures see Robbins and Jeal (2020).

Sacred texture analyzes how the text communicates the insights about the “relationship between the human and the divine.” (Robbins 2009, 618)

Robbins explains how to progress in the five textures of SRI in the following way:

Sociorhetorical interpretation starts with analysis and interpretation of repetition of words, progression of ideas, and elaboration of topics into arguments, stories, and any writing or speech with a beginning, middle, and end (Inner Texture). From this beginning point, the approach moves to words, phrases, and clauses from other writings that have been brought in to promote a point of view (Inter Texture)...After this analysis, sociorhetorical interpretation explores the social, cultural, and ideological nature of the writer’s approach to the world, other people, groups, and nations. (Robbins forthcoming, 1)

### Rhetorolects

Robbins, having recognized the drawback of Aristotle’s three genres of rhetorical speech, has proposed six<sup>36</sup> major rhetorolects (rhetorical dialects) which were prominent in the invention of early Christian discourse as replacements: wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, precreation, miracle, and priestly discourse.

Robbins (2009, 14) defines a rhetorolect as “a form of language variety or discourse identifiable on the basis of a distinctive configuration of themes, topics, reasonings, and argumentations.”

Latin writer Varro (45 BC) classified three spaces where religious writings worked:

mythical-historical stories about gods, goddesses, and heroes interacting with humans in lyrical poetry and poetic drama in the theaters; philosophical descriptions of the nature of the world in relation to the nature of gods, humans, and the universe; and ritual activities overseen by priests mediating between divine and earthly forces at work in the daily events of human life. (in Robbins forthcoming, 102)

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<sup>36</sup>Robbins (2016, 376) talks about a seventh rhetorolect: “Then by the fourth century, when Christian leaders began to enjoy alliances with Roman emperors, they used the context of the imperially sanctioned city council to produce creedal (doctrinal) rhetoric”

The following table is my attempt to map Varro’s classifications with Robbin’s rhetorolects.

	Cosmic	Earthly
Mythical-historical stories about gods	Apocalyptic	Prophetic
Philosophical descriptions	Precreation	Wisdom
Ritual activities overseen by priests	Sacrificial/priestly	Miracle

Table 1.2: Mapping Rhetorolects to Varro’s Categories (Robbins forthcoming, 102–3)

Robbins notes that NT writers blended radical rhetoric with worldly rhetoric and proposes six different kinds of rhetorolects and their conceptual locations:<sup>37</sup>

1. Wisdom teaching in households and synagogues.
2. Prophetic confrontation in political contexts related to God’s kingdom on earth.
3. Apocalyptic pronouncements related to imperial announcements and military action authorized by emperors.
4. Precreation assertion and reasoning related to the innermost nature of divine forces in the universe.
5. Priestly speech and action related to sacrifice and worship at altars and in temples.
6. Miracles of restoration related to healing sanctuaries and personal encounters with specially empowered healers.

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<sup>37</sup> However, it must be remembered that I am not using SRI as an historical method, i.e., something that Paul consciously used in his writings. I am using it as an analytic to deepen our understanding of the text.

Mapping the rhetorolects to classical rhetoric was also indirectly initiated by Kennedy. (Robbins 2016, 375–76). Kennedy himself identified the three types of classical rhetoric in NT texts and mapped it to NT settings. For example, he mapped the deliberative rhetoric, which was originally meant for speeches in political assemblies, to assemblies where prophets addressed people in the kingdom of God (Robbins 2016, 375–76). Based on this observation, Robbins further mapped the SRI rhetorolects to the genres of classical rhetoric:

Classical rhetoric	Occasion	SRI	Space (first space)
Deliberative	Civic Assemblies	Wisdom	Household, church, and Synagogues
		Prophetic	The Kingdom of God on earth
Epideictic	Civic Assemblies	Miracle	sanctuary
		Precreation	Universe
Judicial	Law Court	Priestly	Temple
		Apocalyptic	Political Empire

Table 1.3: Mapping Classical and SRI Rhetoric (based on Robbins 2016, 375–76)

Regularly the NT writers blended these six rhetorolects to create a more significant persuasive effect. This is often called cognitive blending (Robbins, 2009, 15).

### Critical Spatiality Theory

Another aspect of SRI involves the application of Critical Spatiality Theory. Robbins' work in applying critical spatiality theory to SRI has been influenced by many other writers, including Henri Lefebvre (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith 2011) and Edward Soja (1996; 2011). According to Lefebvre (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith 2011, 11), there are three spaces: physical, mental, and social spaces. Lefebvre also distinguishes represented, conceived, and lived spaces (Lefebvre and Nicholson-Smith 2011, 20). Soja (1996, 86)

takes the work of the Marxist Lefebvre to an Americanized context and refers to three spaces himself:

1. First space (geophysical realities as perceived),
2. Second space (mapped realities as represented) and
3. Third space (lived realities as practiced).

Berquist (2002, 22) quotes the question posed by Gottwald (1979) in his book *The Tribes of Yahweh*, which is one of the pioneering works in applying social scientific theories to Biblical Studies. The question is this: did people live differently based on the heights of mountains and depths of valleys in which they lived.<sup>38</sup> This added the third dimension, elevation, to the maps of Israel.

Each of the rhetorolects contains interaction among first, second, and third spaces. Cognitive blending is the art of blending the rhetorolects and the spaces with which they interact.

I use SRI's rhetorolects, rhetography, and textures in the creation of CR and in my own analysis of 1 Cor 15:1-34. In comparing SRI and CR, perhaps one thing that stands out is that in crafting CR I have taken an inductive approach, that is, I have gone through the entire text of 1 Corinthians and then come up with the topoi, argumentative strategy, and structure. In comparison it is not entirely clear how the textures of SRI were arrived at. In my opinion the relationship between the rhetorolects and the textures are also comparatively underdeveloped.

## Conclusion

Out of the alternate models surveyed above, the only alternative that is developed fully into a system is obviously SRI. SRI as an interpretive approach is quite useful in elucidating the meaning of the text, and as such I have used it in the next chapter to show the Christ centeredness of Paul's arguments. However, the plain reading of 1 Corinthians,

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<sup>38</sup> This idea of people living differently based on the land in which they lived is present in Tamil literature. Tamil literature has a concept of *thinai* poetics, where the romantic poetry was configured based on the land the lovers were living in. The five *thinais*, or the places, were coastal land, agricultural land, mountainous region, desert, and forest. The poetry that describes life on coastal land depicts different scenes involving romantic love than those, for example, in agricultural land. The agricultural land symbolized wealth and as such is associated with problems of harlotry which caused trouble in the family. The poetry in the coastal area often depicts separation as the husbands traveled by sea to amass wealth. See Mascrenge (2020, 173–74).

as I demonstrate in chapter 3, yields another methodology quite different to SRI. In developing this methodology, I have taken an inductive approach, where I analyze the text of 1 Corinthians before arriving at my conclusions.

## Chapter 2

### Christ Centeredness of 1 Cor 15:1-34: a Sociorhetorical Interpretation

#### Introduction

In this chapter I use SRI to demonstrate the Christ centeredness of 1 Cor 15:1-34. While the rest of the dissertation uses the methodology I propose, this chapter uses the analytic of SRI to show the reality of Christ centeredness. This is useful, as even by using another methodology the justification for CR can be demonstrated. I have used SRI and CR in a complementary way, which means that there could be an overlap between the two approaches. I have avoided any duplicatory work. For example, I have not gone into all the argumentative sub textures of inner texture in this chapter as that is one of the focal points of CR covered in other places. While I discuss the narrative texture in SRI, I have used Hays model for narrative analysis in CR analysis. While I brought a few things that are outside of the nomenclature of SRI for the analysis, I largely used the tools and nomenclature already provided by SRI.

I start with the rhetorical situation at Corinth and then move on to the five textures.

#### Justification for the use of SRI

A question can be asked as to why, an interpretive analytic such as SRI should be used whilst going in pursuit of a new method. Should not the new method itself (CR) be used to do what SRI is supposed to do in this chapter? Some might even argue that the use of such an analytic as SRI weakens the argument for CR.

The answer lies in SRI and the purpose of its use. SRI is used here to confirm my conclusion that Paul's rhetoric is Christ centered. CR as methodology is based on Paul's Christ centeredness. If another interpretive approach such as SRI also yields the same results, that is, confirms that Paul's argument is indeed Christ centered, that would strengthen the case for CR rather than weaken it. The interdisciplinary nature of SRI also makes it valuable for looking at the text from different angles.

I have not used SRI to arrive at a general interpretation of the text. This is confirmed by the headings I have given to each texture. For example, with regard to inner texture, I have given the heading "From the resurrection of Christ to the resurrection of

the dead.” I have used SRI textures with a particular purpose in mind and given a heading appropriately.

### **Rhetorical Situation of 1 Cor 15:1-34**

Over against the conclusion of Wright (2008, 316) that the “aim of chapter 15 is to answer the challenge of verse 12,” Eriksson (1998, 235) claims that that the rule of rhetoric is the intentional misrepresentation of the opponent’s views, and Paul may be intentionally misrepresenting the Corinthians or unintentionally expressing his misunderstanding. However, since Paul is concerned not only about winning the argument but correcting the behavior of the Corinthians, this is highly unlikely. Behavior cannot be corrected by appealing to a misconstrued view of the opponent. Paul will also look like a hypocrite if he asks them to stop sinning and writes his letter intentionally misrepresenting them.

Eriksson (1998, 237) then argues that the death of some Corinthian Christians (11:30) and realized eschatology form the background to 1 Corinthians 15. However, there is no way to connect the dead people in 11:30 with the dead in chapter 15. At best, this seems like a guess. Moreover, in chapter 11, Paul expresses his concerns that the divisions they already have among themselves are reflected when they come together for the Lord’s Supper. He claims that an improper adherence to the norms of the Lord’s Supper would result in sickness and death – so that the Corinthians should be careful in coming to the Lord’s Supper. The dead (κοιμῶνται ἄκανοί) in 11:30 are used as a warning for the Corinthians so that they will not come to the Lord’s Table in an unworthy manner. However, if we read this as the background to 1 Cor 15, then it would serve to encourage the Corinthians to partake in the Lord’s Supper in an unworthy manner – Paul would be guilty of implying: ‘although the offenders in chapter 11 are dead, you can take heart that they will be resurrected. Therefore, you can partake in the Lord’s Supper in any way you want.’ Since Paul took the Lord’s Supper as an independent matter to be dealt with in chapter 11, connecting it with the resurrection of the dead would defeat his purposes in chapter 15. In chapter 15, it would defeat his purposes because he is trying to correct wrong behavior by preaching hope in the next life (15:34), but if he implies that those who have died as a punishment for violating the norms of the Lord’s Supper and not living a moral life will also be resurrected, then it will not serve his purpose in encouraging the Corinthians to live a moral life.

In reconstructing the historical situation at Corinth, Eriksson, in line with his thesis, uses the tradition that was received by the Corinthians to reconstruct the audience (Witherington 1995, 241). On the other hand, Schüssler-Fiorenza (1987, 389) makes a distinction between rhetorical situation and historical situation and defines the rhetorical situation as “constituted by the rhetorical occasion or exigency to which 1 Corinthians can be understood as a ‘fitting’ response as well as by the rhetorical problem Paul had to overcome.” She sees the rhetorical situation from the Corinthians’ side instead of looking at Paul’s side only. Schüssler-Fiorenza (1987, 393) also uses the rhetorical situation to determine the genre of the speech.

### What Did the Corinthians Believe?

Some scholars claim that there were Corinthians who did not believe in any kind of “postmortal experience.” Thiselton (2000, 1172) cites G. Estius, Hugo Grotius, and W. M. L. de Wette as having had the same view in the past. In modern times, Schmithals (1971, 156) promoted this: “Paul is of the opinion that the Corinthians were denying any hope of the hereafter. Such beliefs were not strange to his time.” We can see that the Epicureans believed that the soul would cease to exist after death in Acts 17:18-21, 32. Paul’s statements in 1 Cor 15:19 and 32 seem to imply that the Corinthians had no belief in the afterlife.

However, there is no way to prove that some Corinthians believed this theory. All Paul claims is that they refused to believe in the resurrection of the dead. We do not know for sure whether they were influenced by the Greek notion of the immortality of the soul. If that were the case, then they believed in some kind of “post-mortal experience.”

Realized Eschatology,<sup>39</sup> claims that some Corinthians believed that the resurrection had already occurred, and the believer’s spirit had already been raised. At the end of life, the body would be destroyed, and the spiritual nature would continue according to them. Tuckett (1996, 260) summarizes the position as follows: “[R]esurrection is accepted by all, but Paul insists on the fact that it is future, not present.” This view comes from Chrysostom and Luther<sup>40</sup> but revisited in modern times by Hans

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<sup>39</sup> Witherington (1995, 395–98) sees the Roman imperial eschatology as background for a realized eschatology. He claims that it was the rich and influential members of the Corinthians who were denying the resurrection and that they believed in the imperial eschatology which “promulgated special blessings” on those who had social standing. Roman eschatology was part of the “imperial propaganda” aiming to unite the empire, having both “religious and political agendas.”

<sup>40</sup> Chrysostom quoting from 2 Tim 2:17, 18, *1 Cor Horn.*, 38:1; *Luther’s Works*, vol. 28, 59 (Germ. WA 36:482).

von Soden (von Soden, 1951). The Gospel of Philip (73:1-5) declares, “[T]hose who assert ‘One dies first and is then raised’ are wrong. If the resurrection is not received first, while still alive, there is nothing to be received upon death” [73:1-5].<sup>41</sup> This view has had many proponents in modern times, including Bunker (1984, 72); Bruce (1971, 49–50); Barrett (1993, 109); and Wilson (1968, 97).

Thiselton (2004, 524) sees the pointers to a realized eschatology sprinkled in all significant sections of 1 Corinthians and even argues that a false belief in realized eschatology causes the moral issues of 5:1-11.<sup>42</sup> In arguing the case for realized eschatology, Thiselton (2004, 524) notes two points about chapter 15: “the Corinthians must look to the future” and “they must look to God.” He does not, however, prove that it is related to the realized eschatology view held by some of the Corinthians. He admits that “there is simply no evidence for the view that the Corinthians believed that the resurrection had fully and finally taken place” (Thiselton 2004, 523).

Fee (2014, 659) argues that the Corinthians believed that they had come to be “angelic” because they had received the spirit (4:9, 7:1-7, 13:1) so that their bodies would be disposed of at the end. As a result he states that the Corinthians developed an over-realized or spiritual eschatology (Fee 2014, 659). However, if it were that much of an issue to Paul, he would have explicitly stated the issue differently. As Garland (2003, 852) notes in commenting on 15:12, Paul does not say that some of them maintain that “the resurrection has already happened,” but that “there is no resurrection of the dead.” Also, if the confusion was in the way the term resurrection was used (whether spiritually now or physically hereafter), then Paul would not have used the same term, would not have said that they believed that the resurrection does not happen when they actually believed that it did happen in another sense of the word (Wedderburn 1981, 232).

Eriksson (1998, 240) suggests that the resurrection life – united with Christ – is the normal life in the NT and the mention of baptism in chapter 15 points towards a realized eschatology view. However, if this were indeed the case, then we might have expected Paul to say that the resurrection, about which he was talking, is not a spiritual resurrection (where the believer is united with the risen Christ) but rather the physical resurrection which will happen at the parousia of Christ. Paul’s first argument in 15:12-34 is to prove that there is a resurrection of the dead, which implies that the Corinthians

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<sup>41</sup> Garland (2003, 851) considers these Corinthians as “theological forerunners” of the second century Gnostics.

<sup>42</sup> Thiselton, (2004, 515–20).

believed not that the resurrection had already happened but that it was never going to happen at all.

De Boer (1988, 113) aptly comments that “Paul is not combating the slogan ‘resurrection has already occurred’ but the slogan ‘there is no (bodily) resurrection of the (physically) dead.’”

Wright (2008, 279), is correct when he claims that the theory of realized eschatology is “now increasingly abandoned.”

Another view is that the Corinthians did not believe in the *bodily* resurrection (Martin 1999, 105–36; Perkins 1984, 221–27; Sellin 1986, 79–189). Fee argues that the Corinthians and Paul differed on what it meant to be spiritual. Because of the notion of spirituality held by some of the Corinthians, they believed themselves to be in an angelic existence in which the body would eventually be discarded. As a result, bodily resurrection may not have been a possibility for the Corinthians. However, if the Corinthians had believed in this view, the 1 Cor 15:1-34 would be rendered irrelevant.

Another view, held by Garland (2003, 826) and Soards (1999, 315), is that some of the Corinthians believed in a “life after death without the resurrection of the dead.” Garland (2003, 852) further explains that the “Corinthians apparently believed in an afterlife but retained the dualistic anthropology that was the legacy of their Hellenistic environment.” He sees this as an application of the Greek belief in the immortality of the soul. He also comments that the Corinthians’ error was not a “deliberate doctrinal confusion” but an “honest confusion” (Garland 2003, 826). However, if the Corinthians believed in an afterlife without the body, that is, they believed in the immortality of the soul, then Paul fails to show how the soul’s continuity is “not adequate hope” (Wedderburn 1981, 231). If the Corinthians believed in the immortality of the soul, this would have given them some hope for future existence. However, implying from their belief, it appears that Paul addresses an audience who did not have any hope of afterlife (v. 19). If this view assumes that resurrection is bodily and “therefore incompatible with spiritual existence,” then the realized eschatology view assumes spiritualized resurrection (Wedderburn 1981, 231).

Another view holds that since the Corinthians believed that they would attain salvation at the time of the parousia of Christ, those who died before it happened would not experience the resurrection (Wedderburn 1981, 232). Again, there is not enough evidence to prove that this was the problem Paul was addressing here.

Brown (2014, 66–107) suggests the existence of an eschatology that was influenced by “Greco-Roman myths” and that some Corinthians denied the resurrection.<sup>43</sup> Brown explains that just as the heroes of the Greek myths were divine in their birth – born from a god through a mortal woman – the Corinthians would have considered Jesus also as one of those heroes. As such, what applies to Jesus cannot be claimed for everyone. This, according to Brown, is the reason why the Corinthians believed in the resurrection of Jesus but did not believe in the resurrection of the dead (Brown 2014, 94). This view, though creative as it sounds, lacks textual evidence and support.

The data in 1 Corinthians is simply insufficient to come to a conclusive consensus on the Corinthians’ eschatological views. What is clear is that they, or at least some of them, denied the resurrection. There is also not enough evidence to say that the Corinthians believed in a different form of resurrection or whether the resurrection had already happened.

#### [Why did the Corinthians not believe in the resurrection of the dead?](#)

Though there are many suggestions (Fee 2014, 794 note 6; Wilson 1968; A.C. Thiselton 2000, 1172–6) as to why the Corinthians did not believe in the resurrection of the dead, the suggestion that Paul may not have discussed it while at Corinth seems a possible explanation. Fee (2014, 795) argues that a doctrine of the resurrection of the dead may not have belonged to the earliest Christian preaching and though it gave hope for the future, that hope may not have meant resurrection. There is some merit in this view as when Paul refers to the resurrection of Christ, he refers to the preaching that was already delivered (15:2-3). However, when Paul discusses the resurrection of the dead, he does not appeal to what was already preached but appeals to an implied argument from the resurrection of Christ. When countering the claim that the dead will not rise, Paul does not refer to a teaching that he had imparted. But instead, he starts from the gospel, which he claims was proclaimed to the Corinthians. This indicates that while Christ had already been proclaimed as raised from the dead, there may have been no proclamation of the resurrection of the dead.

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<sup>43</sup> He lists the following three things as features of an eschatology informed by Greek myths:

1. There is no hope for life after death for the common people.
2. Heroes were worshipped and given special destiny
3. Afterlife had no impact on ethics (Brown, 84ff.).

## From the Resurrection of Christ to the Resurrection of the Dead: Inner Texture

In this section we analyze 1 Cor 15:1-34 from using the inner texture of the text.

### Sensory Aesthetic Texture

Paul enforces his arguments by using verbs like παρελάβετε, στήκατε, κατέχετε, ἐπιστεύσατε. The gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) has already been preached (εὐηγγελισάμην) by Paul and had been received<sup>44</sup> (παρελάβετε) and believed (ἐπιστεύσατε) by the Corinthians; they stood (ἐστήκατε) on it and were being saved (σώζεσθε) by it (see Fig. 4.1).

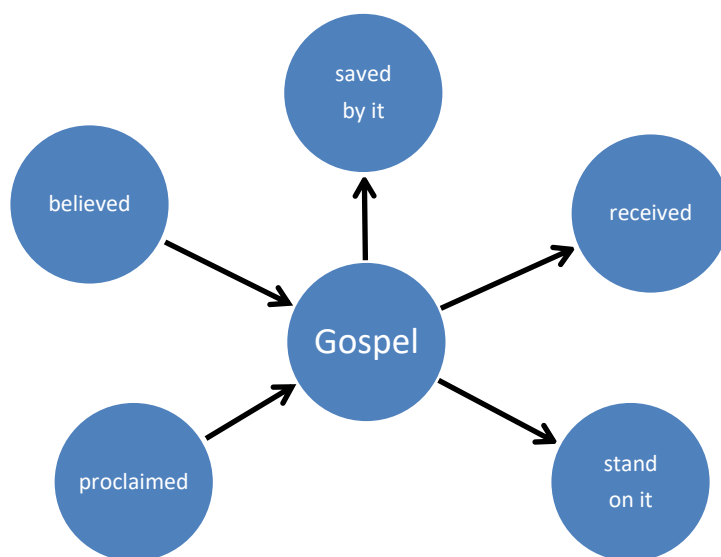


Fig. 2.1: The Centrality of the Gospel

The elements of sensory aesthetic texture, specifically the body zones, can be seen in this section (15:1-2), highlighting the interactions between Paul and the Corinthians. Paul preaches the gospel; the Corinthians metaphorically receive and hold fast with their hands and believe it in their minds; they firmly stand on the gospel with their feet. Paul reminds them that they have to be in the 'zone of purposeful action' (Robbins 1996c, 31). The gospel does not invoke passive belief rather it calls people to action.

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<sup>44</sup> Chrysostom remarks that when Paul uses the word "received," he is saying more than simply "you heard." Paul means for them to return to the gospel which they had "received it not in words alone but in deeds and signs and wonders, and that they must keep it safe" (cited in Kovacs 2005, 244).

## Death as Christ's Enemy: Repetitive Texture

In vv. 12-19 Paul repeats the phrase 'if Christ is not risen' as shown in the text below. This shows that the resurrection of Christ is central to Paul's argument. Paul's central thesis is that it is inconceivable to believe in the resurrection of Christ and still not believe in the resurrection of the dead, as it can be seen in the repetition of Χριστός and νεκρῶν. In chapter 4, I work out the full implication of this statement with a detailed analysis.

Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν<sup>2</sup> ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν  
τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν; 13 εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ  
ἔστιν, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται· 14 εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, κενὸν ἄρα  
°[καὶ] τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν, κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν· 15 εὐρισκόμεθα δὲ καὶ  
ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ, ὅτι ἐμαρτυρήσαμεν κατὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ὅτι ἤγειρεν  
τὸν Χριστόν, ὃν οὐκ ἤγειρεν Ἐίπερ ἄρα νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται· 16 εἰ γὰρ  
νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται· 17 εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ  
ἐγήγερται, ματαία ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν<sup>1</sup>, ἔτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἀμαρτίαις ὑμῶν, 18 ἄρα  
καὶ οἱ κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ ἀπώλοντο. 19 εἰ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ ταύτῃ ἐν Χριστῷ  
ἠλπικότες ἐσμὲν μόνον, ἐλεεινότεροι πάντων ἀνθρώπων ἐσμέν.

The above text shows the repeated use of the resurrection of Christ. It either occurs in the positive or in the negative. It proves my argument that the resurrection of Christ forms the center of Paul's argument, that Paul's rhetoric is CR. The Christ centered nature of Paul's rhetoric can also be seen in the many repetitions of Χριστός in 15:1-34.

## Christ as the Connector: Structure of 15:20-23

Parallel structures can be seen in vv. 20-23:

- A 20 Νυνὶ δὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων<sup>1</sup>.
- B 21 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι' ἀνθρώπου θάνατος, καὶ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν.
- B' 22 ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν, οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται.
- A' 23 Ἅεκάστος δὲ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι· ἀπαρχὴ Χριστός, ἔπειτα οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ,

A-A' is a very coherent unit with phrasal and thematic similarities. Both talk about the resurrection of Christ. Both portray Christ as ἀπαρχή. Verse 23 explains the meaning of Christ being the first fruits, and it adds at his coming those who belong to Christ will also be resurrected. B-B' both talk about death coming through Adam and resurrection coming through Christ.

In both structures Christ takes a central role, in A-A' as the first fruits and B-B' as a contrast to Adam.

### Death as Christ's Enemy: Chiastic Structure of 15:23-28

A chiastic structure can be recognized in vv. 23-28 (cf. Heil 2005, 212-3):<sup>45</sup>

- A        24 εἶτα τὸ τέλος, ὅταν ἱ παραδιδῶ τὴν βασιλείαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πατρί,
- B                ὅταν καταργήσῃ πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν.
- C                                25 δεῖ γὰρ αὐτὸν βασιλεύειν ἄχρι οὗ θῆ πάντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ἵ ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ.
- D    26 ἔσχατος ἐχθρὸς καταργεῖται ὁ θάνατος·
- C'                                27 πάντα γὰρ ὑπέταξεν ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ.
- B'                ὅταν δὲ εἶπῃ ὅτι πάντα ὑποτέτακται,
- A'        δῆλον ὅτι ἐκτὸς τοῦ ὑποτάξαντος αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα. 28 ὅταν δὲ ὑποταγῆ αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, τότε ὁ [καὶ] αὐτὸς ὁ υἱὸς ὑποταγήσεται τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, ἵνα ἦ ὁ θεὸς ὁ<sup>1</sup>[τὰ] πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν.

Unit C-C' has similarity in phrases, words and thought units. The phrase ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ is repeated in both. Both verses talk about the subjugation of all things and all enemies.

Unit B-B' both talk about destruction of all powers (B πᾶσαν, B' πάντα).

<sup>45</sup> My structure is slightly different to that of Heil (2005, 212f). I have added the last part of v 27 into A' section.

In unit A-A' , the father son combination is present in A and A' respectively (Heil 2005, 214). Handing over the kingdom in A (v. 24) is another aspect of the son being subject to the father in A' (v. 28). All things in subjection in A' (v. 28) happens after he has destroyed every ruler and every authority and power in A (V. 24).

D is the central unit which says two things about death: it is an enemy of Christ, and it will be conquered last. In conquering the last enemy, death, Christ reverses the effects of Adam (v. 21), and Christ restores to God everything that was lost through Adam (Oropeza 2017, 124). The scriptural quote about subjugating *all* enemies comes to a completion in v. 26. Since death is the enemy of Christ, if the dead are not raised then Christ would have lost his battle with the enemy; even more so if he himself has not been raised.

This chiasitic analysis brings out the fact that these verses (vv. 23-28) are not a digression but are in line with Paul's argument about the resurrection of the dead. This analysis highlights the fact that death is indeed a personal enemy of Christ, which helps with my CR analysis of the section in chapter 5.

### [From the Resurrection of Christ to the Resurrection of the Dead: Progressive Texture](#)

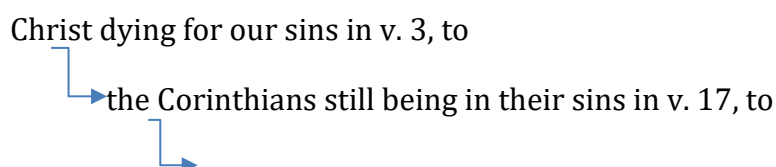
There is progression in the text in multiple levels and points of view as I demonstrate below.

### **Resurrection of the Dead and Resurrection of Christ**

As shown in the discussion of repetitive texture, the negation of the phrase “the resurrection of Christ” (οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·) and the negation of the phrase “resurrection of the dead” (ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν) occurs several times and as in v. 13 Paul switches between the two. The progression switches from the resurrection of Christ to the resurrection of the dead and vice versa. This shows the close association Paul makes between the two. As mentioned earlier, both are connected very closely; one cannot happen without the other; the resurrection of Christ guarantees the resurrection of the dead.

### [Sinning](#)

There is progression from



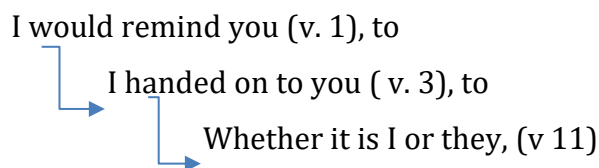
## Paul's exhortation to sin no more in v. 34

This is significant as the whole epistle is about Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians to stop sinning in various aspects of their individual and corporate life. Wrong beliefs breed wrong behavior – this is what the conclusion, v. 34, teaches us. Paul refers to knowledge of God, and the whole argument about resurrection concluded in a practical exhortation in v. 34 and then again in v. 58.

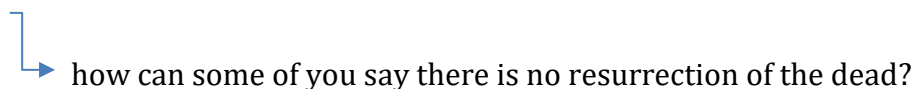
If they do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, they will continue to sin. Their disbelief in the resurrection of the dead could be a major reason why their conduct was inappropriate and sinful (Hays 1997, 267), a point that Paul seems to make in 6:14 where he mentions the resurrection in connection to sin related to the prostitute.

### I and We

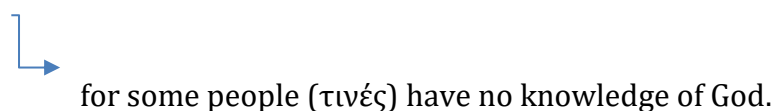
There is progression from



The progressive texture up to this point shows the authoritativeness of the gospel tradition. It was brought to the Corinthians by the *apostle* Paul who had seen the risen Christ. However, it is the same gospel that the other apostles also preached. Continuing the progression in v 12 Paul asks:



Compared to the authoritative “we” of v. 11 (Paul and other apostles), it is the “some” who are arguing that there is no resurrection of the dead. The contrast is strong. Continuing the progression even further in v. 34 Paul states:



It is the τινές of v. 12, those who argue that there is no resurrection of the dead, who have no knowledge of God in v. 34 (ἀγνοσίαν γὰρ θεοῦ τινες ἔχουσιν) according to Thiselton (2000, 1256).

### Christ at the Top of the Hierarchy: Narrational Sub Texture<sup>46</sup>

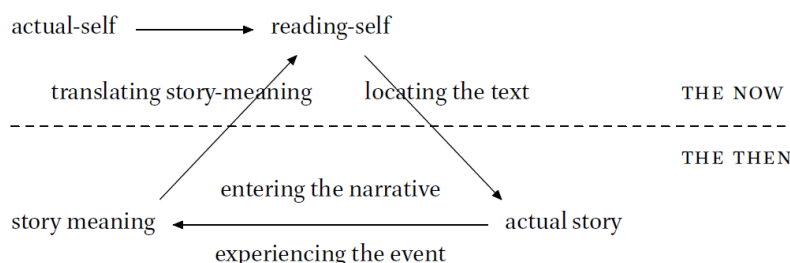


Fig 2.2 Actual vs Reading Self, source: Douglas (2019, 73)<sup>47</sup>

In every narrative there is an implied reader and a real reader (Iser 1980, 67; 1995; Douglas 2019, 73f; cf. Robbins 1996b, 22). When a reader is reading the narrative, she is in the world of the fiction all the while noting that it is an imaginary world. There could also be a resistant reader, an “androcentric protagonist” who does not want to follow the narrative (Douglass 2019, 76). As Paul’s letter is read publicly there would be people who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, who would resist Paul’s narrative of the dead coming back to life at Christ’s parousia.

Paul overcame this issue first by presenting a narrative in vv. 3-5 which everyone knew and had believed. Since there were witnesses of the post resurrection appearances this narrative could be verified as true. Though the Corinthians were not part of the narrative, there were other known people who were part of the narrative and were available as witnesses (15:5-8).

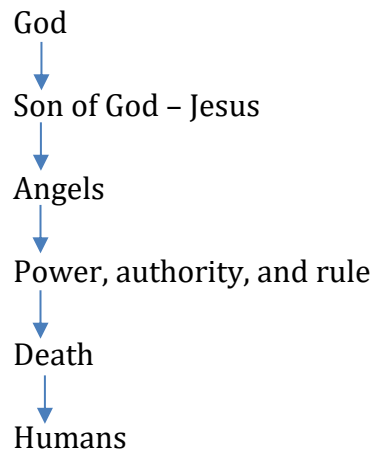
The other grand cosmic narrative that Paul relates in vv. 23-28 is standing on the shoulders of the HB, Psa. 8:6 (LXX 8:7) (v. 27 ὅταν δὲ εἴπη ὅτι) and revelation given to Paul (v. 51). Paul reduces the gap between the two kinds of readers mentioned by Iser and their world by making the reader part of the narrative. Readers, that is the Corinthian

<sup>46</sup> Some of the elements that come here can also come under social and cultural text. But I have used the symbolic mode as another tool for narrative analysis. I do a fuller analysis of the narrative rhetoric in applying the CR using Hays’s and other people’s models in chapters 4 and 5.

<sup>47</sup> This model as developed by Douglas is probably based on the fundamental model of Chatman (2000, 151).

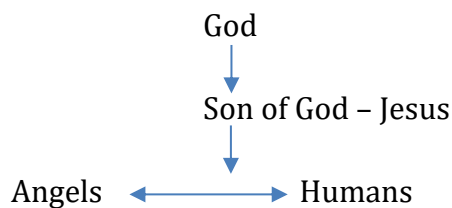
believers, also participate in the victory of Christ. The victory over death and its master, sin, will be experienced by believers (15:57).

In using a symbolic model<sup>48</sup> (Malina 2001, 24) for analysis the first notion to be defined is the symbolic universe. A symbolic universe is “the worldview that assigns meaning to objects and behaviors” (Douglass 2019, 83). The “elements” in this symbolic universe are often placed in a hierarchical structure in a cognitive map based on a different value system. The cognitive map that is created in vv. 23-28 looks like this:



The two “axis” (Douglass 2019, 86-7) on this particular cognitive map are power and authority. Paul claims that God has put everything under Christ’s feet (v. 27), which means that he has been given the authority, and since he will destroy all “ruler and every authority and power” he also has the power over each of those things.

Paul’s rhetoric, however, works by promising to those who are “in Christ” a position higher up in the hierarchy. Since death, power, authority, and rule will also be destroyed (v. 24) that puts humans directly under the angels. Because Paul reveals that the believers will even judge the angels (6:3) that would arguably place humans above the angels (6:3) as shown below.



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<sup>48</sup> I have also realized that the number of models is simply overwhelming. For a survey of some of these models in the context of 1 Corinthians 15, see Lowe (2012, 99-108).

## Opening-Middle-Closing Texture

There is general agreement among scholars on delimiting the units of 1 Corinthians 15 (cf. Mitchell 1993, 284). Below is the working outline I have used for 1 Cor 15:1-34:

15:1-11	Paul establishes the (f)actuality of the resurrection of Christ.
15:12-19	consequences of Christ not being raised
15:19-22	connecting Christ and the dead
15:23-28	order of last things
15:29	proof from baptism
15:30-32	proof from mission
15:33-34	practical exhortation

The opening section is vv. 1-11, the middle vv. 12- 32 and the conclusion vv. 33-34. In vv. 15:1-11, Paul first establishes the fact of Christ's resurrection and, in the following section, uses that as the base to form his argumentation against the Corinthian belief that the dead will not rise (v. 12). As I will demonstrate later, it is noteworthy that all the consequences Paul discusses here (vv. 12-20) are the consequences of Christ not being risen and not the consequences of the dead not being risen. While in vv. 12-19 Paul argues that if the dead are not raised, then Christ cannot have been raised from the dead, in vv. 20-28 Paul positively maintains that since Christ has been raised, the dead will also be raised. Verse 20 positively affirms that Christ has indeed been risen and shows the positive results of his resurrection. Since Christ has been raised, what would that mean for us is the focus of vv. 20-28. He further adds evidence from baptism (v. 29) and mission work (vv. 30-32) to support his argument regarding the resurrection of the dead. Finally, in vv. 33-34 he gives a practical exhortation to stop sinning.

## Argumentative Texture: Christ is the Argumentative Strategy

As shown in the opening, middle and closing section above, Paul's overall strategy is to establish the resurrection of Christ and use it in his arguments throughout.

It is also noteworthy that Paul used inartificial proofs in vv. 3-11 and artificial proofs from 12-32 to achieve his rhetorical goals. The ἀμαρτάνω in v. 34 seems to complete the inclusio started in v. 3.

When considering the overall strategy of discussing topics in 1 Corinthians, right at the beginning of the letter in vv. 1:4-9 Paul talks about the τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. In the last major section of the letter, in chapter 15 he handles the issues involved in the ἀποκάλυψις.

## **The God of the Dead and the God who Raises the Dead: Intertexture**

### **Oral-Scribal Intertexture**

Oral scribal intertexture looks at the ways in which a text reuses another text (Robbins 1996b, 40). In my exploration of oral-scribal intertexture in 1 Cor 15, I start with a comparison of the words of Jesus from the synoptic tradition and any possible influence they may have in 1 Corinthians 15 and then move to explore the tradition in 15:3-5 before looking at the parallels in the HB.

### **The God of the Dead and the God who Raised Christ from the Dead**

In discussing the general resurrection in 1 Corinthians 15, Paul immediately begins with Christ's resurrection that formed part of his initial proclamation. The importance of using Christ as his starting point needs further discussion because it is demonstrative of my thesis.

To bring out the uniqueness in Paul's approach in the section below, I compare Luke's narrative in which Jesus faces a similar challenge with the Sadducees. Jesus refers to the incident at the burning bush in Luke 20:27-40 when the Sadducees ask him about the afterlife. The exact reference is to Exodus 3:6: "And he said, 'I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God."

Jesus argues that the titles "God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" inherently carry within themselves the belief in the resurrection of the dead. If the dead are not raised, then Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are not raised at all. Which makes the God of the HB, a God of the dead. Jesus builds his argument on the common premise that it is impossible for God to be the God of the dead, something with which even the Sadducees would agree.

In his answer, the first thing Jesus does is to distinguish between the two ages and those who belong to those two ages. While being children of this age (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος) is natural, to be a person of the next age (τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκείνου) and resurrection is conditional, people must be considered worthy (καταξιωθέντες) to be part of the next age. Such people neither marry nor are given in marriage (Luke 20:35). Luke explains the reason in the next verse: “Indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection.” They cannot die because they are equal to the angels and are children of God and children of the resurrection.

The difference between these two groups is that one consists of children of this age, and the other of the children of God who are the children of the resurrection according to v. 36:

υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου  
υἱοὶ εἰσὶν θεοῦ τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ ὄντες

Notice that they are not referred to as the children of the *next age*, but they are the children of God and are children of the *resurrection*. Jesus makes the resurrection something that characterizes the next age.

According to Jesus, children of the next age do not get married because they do not die (Luke 20:35-36). This is interesting because Jesus connects marriage with mortality. So, to be immortal is not to marry. Marriage has a place in an age that is characterized by mortality, in an age that is characterized by resurrection and immortality, marriage has no place. Jesus implies that marriage presupposes a mortal body, a body with passions for marriage and childbearing. In saying that God will destroy the stomach (1 Cor 6:13), Paul seems to be applying the same principle as saying there will not be marriages in heaven. Both reproduction and metabolism represent the two core features of earthly life. So, the resurrection body that Paul envisions is a body without food and sex. But it is still a body of some sort.

### Paul and Jesus

After having looked at the words of Jesus we now turn to compare them with the words of Paul. Paul, a trained Pharisee, and a rabbi does not bring any arguments from the HS to answer the Corinthian disbelief in the resurrection of the dead as Jesus did. While we cannot be one hundred percent sure, we can reasonably assume that Paul was familiar with the burning bush incident referred to by Jesus. While we cannot be sure whether

Paul was familiar with the reply given by Jesus to the Sadducees in the Lukan narrative, I maintain that there is some influence, at least at a thematic level between the words of Jesus in the gospel tradition and the words of Paul. I use the well-known model by Hays, which is also suggested by Robins (1996b, 102), to validate the intertextuality in the following sections and to explore the intertextual possibilities of an allusion or echo (Hays 1989, 29–32).<sup>49</sup>

### 1. Availability

It is very difficult to determine whether Paul had access to the synoptic tradition. However, Luke’s apparent close association with Paul makes it possible to build a case for Paul’s awareness of this incident.

### 2. Volume

While Paul does not have any explicit quotations in this passage, 1 Corinthians has many pre synoptic traditions and the ‘sayings’ of Jesus. Fjarstedt (1974, 65–77), for example, has seen parallels between 1Corinthians and Luke 10.

### 3. Recurrence

It must be noted that verbal parallels should not be employed as a criterion to determine or to remove the possibility of intertextuality.<sup>50</sup> That is, the absence of verbal parallels does not mean that there is no intertextuality. Even in the widely agreed direct references of synoptic tradition in Paul, there are only a few verbal parallels. After comparing a few similar stories from the synoptics, Dunn (2011, 29–35)

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<sup>49</sup> The number of models available in any area is simply overwhelming. I have created a model (Mascrenghé 2019, 25–29) for analyzing narrative intertextuality. Hiestermann (2017, 64), analyzing 1 Cor 15:33, comes up with four criteria to identify a usage of another source in Paul:

1. Similar words
2. Precedence of the original quote
3. Usage of words found less frequently in Paul
4. The quotation does not fit the logic of the argument seamlessly.

But I have used Hays’s model as it is a more comprehensive model.

<sup>50</sup> Verbal parallels alone cannot be used as evidence for intertextuality - though Dungan (1971, 46–47) recognizes “a verbatim parallel” in 1 Corinthians 10:27 and Luke 10:8. I do not find his argument convincing. The context in both passages is quite different. In the former Paul is talking about the problem of eating food offered to idols. In the latter Jesus is talking about going on a missionary journey and makes absolutely no reference to idols whatsoever. The question of idol worship is never raised with respect to Jesus. So, if we argue that Paul quoted Jesus it would be a quotation taken out of context.

demonstrates how very few direct quotations are present between them.

As shown in the table below where Paul is explicitly quoting the Synoptic Gospel tradition, there is very little similarity between 1 Corinthians and Mark/Matthew. Paul does not generally use the same words, but even if he employs the same words, he does not offer a verbatim quote.<sup>51</sup>

1Corinthians 7:10	Mark 10:9	Matt 19:6b	Luke 16:18
Τοῖς δὲ γεγαμηκόσιν παραγγέλλω, οὐκ ἐγὼ ἀλλ' ὁ κύριος, γυναῖκα ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς μὴ χωρισθῆναι,	ὁ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν ἄνθρωπος μὴ χωριζέτω.	ὁ οὖν ὁ θεὸς συνέζευξεν ἄνθρωπος μὴ χωριζέτω.	Πᾶς ὁ ἀπολύων τὴν γυναῖκα αὐτοῦ καὶ γαμῶν ἐτέραν μοιχεύει, καὶ ὁ ἀπολελυμένην ἀπὸ ἀνδρὸς γαμῶν μοιχεύει.

Table 2.1 1 Cor 7:10 and the Synoptic Gospels

Even in other verses where there is general agreement among scholars that there are parallels, we still find no or very few verbal parallels:

1 Cor 9:14	Matt 10:10b,	Luke 10:7b
οὕτως καὶ ὁ κύριος διέταξεν τοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγέλλουσιν ἐκ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ζῆν.	ἄξιός γάρ ὁ ἐργάτης τῆς τροφῆς αὐτοῦ.	ἄξιός γάρ ὁ ἐργάτης τοῦ μισθοῦ αὐτοῦ.

<sup>51</sup> However, Hiestermann (2017, 119) demonstrates that Paul's use of the word χωρίζω is significant as it is a rarely used word in the NT and even when Paul uses the word, he does not use it to mean divorce, with one exception, 1 Cor 7:10. The word has been used with the meaning "to divorce" elsewhere in the NT only in Mark 10:9/Matt 19:6.

Table 2.2 1 Cor 9:14 and the Synoptic Gospels

However, the only exception seems to be the words from the institution of the Lord's Supper, which have many verbatim parallels.

1 Corinthians 11:24-25	Luke 22:19-20	Mark 14:22-24	Matt 26:26-28
<p>καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ εἶπεν· τοῦτό μου ἐστὶν τὸ σῶμα τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. ὡσαύτως καὶ τὸ ποτήριον μετὰ τὸ δειπνήσαι λέγων· τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐστὶν ἐν τῷ ἐμῷ αἵματι· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε, ὅσάκις ἐὰν πίνητε, εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν.</p>	<p>Καὶ λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐχαριστήσας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων· τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν διδόμενον· τοῦτο ποιεῖτε εἰς τὴν ἐμὴν ἀνάμνησιν. καὶ τὸ ποτήριον ὡσαύτως μετὰ τὸ δειπνήσαι, λέγων· τοῦτο τὸ ποτήριον ἢ καινὴ διαθήκη ἐν τῷ αἵματί μου τὸ ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν ἐκχυννόμενον.</p>	<p>Καὶ ἐσθιόντων αὐτῶν λαβὼν ἄρτον εὐλόγησας ἔκλασεν καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς καὶ εἶπεν· λάβετε τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔπιον ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες. καὶ εἶπεν αὐτοῖς· τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ ἐκχυννόμενον ὑπὲρ πολλῶν.</p>	<p>Ἐσθιόντων δὲ αὐτῶν λαβὼν ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἄρτον καὶ εὐλόγησας ἔκλασεν καὶ δούς τοῖς μαθηταῖς εἶπεν· λάβετε φάγετε, τοῦτό ἐστιν τὸ σῶμά μου. καὶ λαβὼν ποτήριον καὶ εὐχαριστήσας ἔδωκεν αὐτοῖς λέγων· πείτε ἐξ αὐτοῦ πάντες, τοῦτο γάρ ἐστιν τὸ αἷμά μου τῆς διαθήκης τὸ περὶ πολλῶν ἐκχυννόμενον</p>

			εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.
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Table 2.3 1 Cor 11:24-25 and the Synoptic Gospels

Though there are not many verbal parallels between 1 Corinthians 15 and the Synoptic Gospels, the few similar words can be seen in the table below:

1 Corinthians 15:12	Mark 12:24	Luke 20:35	Matt 22:30-31
Εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται, πῶς λέγουσιν ἐν ὑμῖν τινες ὅτι ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν;	ὅταν γὰρ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναστῶσιν οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ' εἰσὶν ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. περὶ δὲ τῶν νεκρῶν ὅτι ἐγείρονται οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ Μωϋσέως ἐπὶ τοῦ βάρου πῶς εἶπεν αὐτῷ ὁ θεὸς λέγων·	οἱ δὲ καταξιοθέντες τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐκείνου τυχεῖν καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῆς ἐκ νεκρῶν οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται· οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀποθανεῖν ἔτι δύνανται, ἰσάγγελοι γὰρ εἰσὶν καὶ υἱοὶ εἰσὶν θεοῦ τῆς ἀναστάσεως υἱοὶ ὄντες. ὅτι δὲ ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροί, καὶ Μωϋσῆς ἐμήνυσεν ἐπὶ τῆς βάρου, ὡς λέγει	ἐν γὰρ τῇ ἀναστάσει οὔτε γαμοῦσιν οὔτε γαμίζονται, ἀλλ' ὡς ἄγγελοι ἐν τῷ οὐρανῷ εἰσὶν. περὶ δὲ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τῶν νεκρῶν οὐκ ἀνέγνωτε τὸ ῥηθὲν ὑμῖν ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ λέγοντος·

Table 2:4 1 Cor 15:12 and the Synoptic Gospels

#### 4. Thematic Coherence

Moving from verbal recurrence to thematic similarities, we find many of them between the synoptic tradition and 1 Corinthians 15. Paul takes the themes from Jesus' words and elaborates it, (*thematic elaboration*).

Luke 22	1 Corinthians 15
Indeed, they cannot die any more (v. 36),	So is it with the resurrection of the dead. What is sown is perishable; what is raised is imperishable (v. 42)  For this perishable body must put on imperishability, and this mortal body must put on immortality (v. 53).
because they are like angels (v. 36)	There are both heavenly bodies and earthly bodies, but the glory of the heavenly is one thing, and that of the earthly is another (v. 40).
and are children of God (v. 36)	The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is[j] from heaven. As was the man of dust, so are those who are of the dust; and as is the man of heaven, so are those who are of heaven. Just as we have borne the image of the man of dust, we will[k] also bear the image of the man of heaven (vv. 48-49).

Table 2.5 Thematic parallels in Luke 22 and 1 Corinthians 15

1 Cor 15:42 and 53 offer an explanation of Jesus's statement that they cannot die anymore. Paul says something similar to what Jesus is alleged to have said. The resurrection body will be imperishable. Since both were answering different questions, the words are different in the answers. Jesus, in answering the Sadducean question, refers to the resurrected people and says that they cannot die. Paul, speaking about the nature of the resurrection, discusses about the bodies and not particularly about people. Jesus, while not directly dealing with the subject of the

transformation of bodies, hints at it when he says, “indeed they cannot die anymore, because they are like angels and are children of God, being children of the resurrection.” By being resurrected, they become like angels, and they cannot die anymore. It is through the process of resurrection that the transformation happens.

Jesus talks about the resurrected children being like angels; Paul talks about glorified bodies and heavenly bodies. The heavenly body is another way of referring to the angels. Angels in the HB have slain people (2 Samuel 24:15, 2 Kings 19:35), can appear and disappear where they want (Judges 6:21 among many), go into fire unhurt (Judges 13:20, Dan 3:25), and they can intervene with humans (Gen 19:10,16) – so it seems they do have a body but something of a different nature, a heavenly body (Edwards 1995, 3–10).

A comparison can be made of Jesus’ use of the phrase “children of the resurrection” and Paul’s “the first fruits of those who have died.” First fruits<sup>52</sup> is used in the HB for the firstborn son (Gen 49:3, Psa 78:51, Psa 105:36). Paul refers to Christ as the son in 1 Corinthians 15:28. Christ is called the first fruits of those who will be raised from the dead (1 Cor 15:20, 23), and Jesus calls those who will be raised from the dead as sons of the resurrection.

It is also noteworthy that both Paul and Jesus do not endorse a universal resurrection. Jesus qualifies those who will be raised as those who are worthy (οἱ δὲ καταξιωθέντες), and Paul qualifies them as those who belong to Christ (οἱ τοῦ Χριστοῦ) (v. 23).

Another connection can be made between Jesus’s phrase “the children of this age” (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) and Paul’s warning in v. 19: “If for this life only we have hoped in Christ” (εἰ ἐν τῇ ζωῇ ταύτῃ ἐν Χριστῷ ἠλπικότες). Children of this age are the ones who do not believe or will not attain resurrection as they are considered unworthy of the age to come and of resurrection. As Green (1997, 744) comments, the children of this age are concerned with “status honor, relationships of debt and reciprocity, and the like (cf. 16:8-9).” He notes how “the present age is characterized as faithless and wicked — cf., e.g., 7:31; 9:41; 11:29-32; 16:8-9.” The phrase is used

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<sup>52</sup> Thiselton (2000, 1224) sees three features of the words “first fruits”:

1. Prior *temporality*;
2. *Representation* of the same quality or character; and
3. *Promise or pledge of more of the same kind to come.*

only in one other place in the NT, in Luke 16:8, where it is contrasted with the children of light (Morris 2008, 317).

When one believes in Christ only for this life, then they miss the hope and the reality of a resurrected life in the next. As Green (1997, 764) comments, the sons of resurrection are “those considered worthy of a place in the resurrection on account of their adopting the values and behaviors characteristic of the age to come (cf. 16:8-9).” Thus, the sons of this age live according to the values of this age, as if there were no age to come. Thus, Jesus’ words “to be considered worthy” (καταξιωθέντες) can be fleshed out using Paul’s words. One must be *Christ’s* and one must have hope in Christ for the life to come as well.

Commentators opine that Paul connected the two Psalms, 110 and Psalm 8 in vv. 24-27 (Bruce 1971, 147; Thiselton 2000, 1235; Fee 2014, 689). In all the synoptic traditions (Matt 22:41-4, Mark 12:3-37, Luke 20:39-43), the incident with the Sadducees is followed by an incident where Jesus asks a question about ‘whose son is the Christ,’ quoting from Psalm 110. If Paul was familiar with this tradition, it makes sense for him to associate ideas from these two incidents – one about the Sadducees and the other about Christ’s paternity.

Thus, there is some intertextual similarity between Paul and Jesus on this.

##### 5. Historical Plausibility

It is very likely that the later text, Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, made use of the synoptic tradition. Paul makes use of common themes found in Jesus or the gospel tradition (cf. Dunn 2011, 95–115).

We can be reasonably sure that a Pharisee well versed in the HS would be familiar with the story of the burning bush, and we can also be confident that he would be familiar with the phrases God of Abraham, God of Isaac, and God of Jacob. However, what we cannot ascertain is whether Paul was aware of Jesus’s usage of the burning bush episode. A factor in determining Paul’s awareness of Jesus’ teaching on the resurrection can be affirmed from 1 Thess. 4. 15-17: Τοῦτο γὰρ ὑμῖν λέγομεν ἐν λόγῳ κυρίου, ὅτι ἡμεῖς οἱ ζῶντες οἱ περιλειπόμενοι εἰς τὴν παρουσίαν τοῦ Ἰκκυρίου οὐ μὴ φθάσωμεν τοὺς κοιμηθέντας. Notice the reference to the λόγῳ κυρίου in v. 15. Wanamaker notes that while the exact wording may not be Jesus’s, it may originate from an “apocalyptic discourse” by him, and Wanamaker (1990, 201), maintains that Paul “attributed the highest possible authority to the assertion.” Weima (2016, 382)

is also of the same opinion when he comments that Paul “cites a saying of Jesus found in the gospels without exactly quoting it.” Fee agrees that it is a word that “Christ himself spoke” and thinks that it is part of a “Jesus tradition” that Paul inherited (Fee 2009, 3222). It is reasonably safe to assume that Paul was familiar with the so-called parousia teachings of Jesus and may very well be familiar with the Lukan narrative described above.

Paul has a thematic allusion to 1 Thess 4:15-17 in 15:52-53 where he says: σαλπίζει γὰρ καὶ οἱ νεκροὶ ἔγερθήσονται ἀφθαρτοὶ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀλλαγησόμεθα.

Both 1 Thess 4:15-17 and 1 Cor 15:52-53 talk about the order of resurrection and transformation. The dead will be raised with transformed bodies, *imperishable*, after which the living, “we” (ἡμεῖς), will be changed. The καὶ possibly indicates an order though that may not be Paul’s direct intention here, unlike in 1 Thessalonians. The ἡμεῖς refers to Paul and the Corinthians in the immediate context and to all those who are living and who do not belong to the realm of the οἱ νεκροὶ. Paul mentioned in v. 51 that “we will not all die” – so the ‘we’ here refers to those who are alive at the time of Jesus’ return.<sup>53</sup> In both verses, there is a reference to the trumpet (1 Thess 4:17).

Thus, this further adds evidence for a case to be made that whatever the tradition that Paul referred to in 1 Thess 4:15-17 is the same one Paul uses in 1 Cor 15, this time without reference to the tradition. What this still does not prove is whether Paul uses the incident referred to in Luke 20.

## 6. History of Interpretation

Although I have not come across scholars seeing an allusion in 1 Corinthians 15 to the Sadducee narrative tradition from the gospels, scholars have compared the bodies of v. 40 to the bodies of angels and have appealed to the parallels in Matt 22:10 and Luke 20:36 (Findlay 1961, sec. 15:40; Meyer 1892, 2:87). But as Hays (1989 31) points out, this is not a very “reliable guide for interpretation,” and as such I have not placed much weight on this criterion.

## 7. Satisfaction

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<sup>53</sup> This is different to the view of Garland who thinks that the second “we” includes both the dead and the living (Garland 2003, 904). This is unlikely as in Paul’s thinking he never includes the living and the dead in the same group.

It is noteworthy that both Jesus and Paul answer the same question (though the questions were framed differently). Both are addressing situations where there is a denial of the resurrection of the dead. In one case, it is by the Sadducees and the other by the Corinthians.

In 1 Cor 15:3-5, Paul was referring to the gospel tradition, the events from the life of Jesus, that is, his death, burial, and resurrection; in the verses that follow, he uses another tradition, this time from the teachings of Jesus.

Even if Paul was completely unaware of the synoptic tradition about the Sadducean question to Jesus, he was undoubtedly aware of God's HB title as the God of Abraham. However, he starts his answer with the resurrection of Christ and not with the HB. Based on the 1 Thessalonians and 1 Corinthians texts already mentioned above, it is reasonable to assume that Paul was aware that Christ himself believed in the general resurrection as well. His approach is first to establish the factuality of the resurrection of Christ and then to use it as the argument against the Corinthian disbelief in the resurrection of the dead. This shows the Christ centered nature of Paul's thinking.

### **Tradition in 15:3-5**

Scholars believe that this passage contains the "oldest record of the Christian belief in the resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth" (Fitzmyer 2008, 543). Fairbairn and Reeves (2019, 34) see these verses as 'creed-like summaries'<sup>54</sup> based on the events of Christ's life. Kelly (2006, 16–18) sees 1 Cor 15:3ff as a fully developed example of a creedal statement in the NT. Along with it he marshals Rom 1:3, 8:24, 2 Tim 2:8. These "Christological kerygmas" often link events in salvation to the name of Jesus.<sup>55</sup> As Hengel (1986, 225) observes, "[A]long with the resurrection formula θεὸς ἤγειρεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν, the short formula Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν is the most frequent and most important confessional statement in the Pauline epistles and at the same time in the primitive Christian tradition in the Greek language which underlies them."

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<sup>54</sup> Confessions were used for the following purposes:

1. Instruction and baptism of new converts,
2. Regular worship,
3. Healing and exorcism,
4. Resistance to persecutors, and
5. Differentiation between heresy and orthodoxy (Hinson 1979, 6).

<sup>55</sup> In one of his earliest works on early Christian types of discourses, Robbins (1996a) calls 1 Cor 15:3-5 a "death-resurrection discourse."

The discussion of tradition in 15:3-5 nicely fits into the Oral Scribal intertexture as there is a possibility of an oral tradition which was used in early church circles which was later put into written form. Paul is also blending two different aspects of the gospel message. One is the oral tradition, the preaching (εὐηγγελισάμην), and the other one is the written tradition, the scriptures (τὰς γραφάς). Both contribute to a radical CR, persuading the readers to believe in what is being written now regarding the resurrection of the dead. A combination of these two has been seen by Patte (2016, 213, 227) who observes that the kerygma about Christ “itself functioned as a kind of oral scripture for early Christians.”

#### *Received and Delivered*

Paul states that what<sup>56</sup> he delivered to the Corinthians was what he had received. This implies at least four things:

1. What Corinthians received is the same as what Paul had received. He uses “explicit language of oral transmission” (Hagner 2012, 108) in 1 Cor 15:3 to make his point that the gospel was not corrupted in transmission as it is transmitted by an “immutable tradition” (Spicq 1994, παραδίδωμι, 3:16-19) and demonstrated the “continuity of the tradition” (Spicq 1994, παραδίδωμι, 3:16-19; cf. Garland 2003, 833). The words παρέδωκα, and παρέλαβον allude to the Greek philosophers and ancient rabbis, where it was applied in the domain of teaching passed from generation to generation “faithfully and authoritatively” (Collins 2006, 426; Bryan 2011, 261 n17; Spicq 1994, παραδίδωμι, 3:16-19; Koester 1990, 6). Paul’s rabbinic training possibly influenced the choice of his words (Collins 2006, 534). Ellis (1986, 481) also appeals to these words as an indicator of a tradition. As a “good father, Paul had passed the tradition onto his children, the Corinthians” (Collins 2006, 426).<sup>57</sup>
2. The παρέλαβον in 15:3 connects Paul with the Corinthians. In the same way, they *received* (15:1, παρελάβετε) the gospel, Paul too had *received* it. Paul did not create the gospel; it existed even when he persecuted

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<sup>56</sup> What Paul refers to as the ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον is the τίνι λόγῳ in v. 2 (Fitzmyer 2008, 545).

<sup>57</sup> Spicq (1994, παραδίδωμι, 3:16-19) notes that the process involved

1. Revelation.
2. Transmission.
3. The sum of revealed doctrine.

the group of people who preached it (Bryan 2011, 48). Since it was the same gospel that Paul and other apostles preached and the Corinthians and others believed, they would be in the same social group as those who believed it. If they did not believe in the gospel, they would not be in that group. Paul is also giving the responsibility of carefully maintaining the tradition to the Corinthian community as a whole (Bauckham 2017, 295).

3. What he delivered was not *his* because – he himself *received* it. Paul is simply passing on a message that he had received, rather than one that he had created. In vv. 3-5, Paul claims that he preached the tradition that Christ was raised on the third day. This adds authority to Paul's message.
4. What he passed on is not something new to the Corinthians, as they were familiar with the gospel. In 15:3 Paul reminds them of the gospel that he preached when he was in Corinth for the first time. So in contrast to 15:51, where Paul *reveals* a μυστήριον, what is being reminded here in 15:3b-5 is something that the Corinthians had already heard (Witherington 1998, 151). This forms part of his Christ rhetorical strategy to appeal to the apostolic tradition that they already had received and believed. This way Paul turns the general story of salvation into their own story and makes them part of the grand narrative.

#### *Human Tradition or Direct Revelation?*

Paul does not answer the question from whom he received the gospel. However, the same technical word (παρέλαβον) is used in 1 Cor 11:23-25, where he claims that he received the words regarding the Lord's Supper from the Lord himself. The words may imply a direct revelation from the Lord. Conzelmann (1975, 251) concludes that Paul does not refer to the Lord in 15:3 as he does in 11:23, because Paul only refers to the appearance of Christ to him in the following verses. Furnish (1993, 28), however, thinks that "the apostle does not mean that he had received this directly 'from the Lord' as a special revelation. The words 'received' and 'handed on' [in the context of 15:3] can only describe the sharing of a community's traditions. Divine oracles addressed to privileged individuals are described in other ways (see, for example, 2 Cor 12:8-9)." Hays (1997,

255) thinks that Paul could have received it from the list of witnesses he names in vv. 5-7. Garland (2003, 833) thinks that in Gal 1:11-12, Paul is referring not to the "historical facts" (to which he was not an eye witness) but rather to the "theological interpretation" of the facts. There is a certain element of truth in this, as Paul, even when he was persecuting the church as Saul, would have concurred that Jesus died. Paul knew that it was the disciples of Jesus he was persecuting (Gal 1:13). It was the fact that "Jesus the *Messiah* died for our sins," which would have been revealed to Paul.

The solution suggested by Ciampa and Rosner (2010, sec. 17086) that the "basic gospel message" was directly received from the Lord, while his preaching included apostolic traditions, seems reasonable. This does justice to the fact that it was directly received from the Lord as Paul confesses and at same time does justice to the fact that Paul uses tradition language in v. 3a. If Paul had received the gospel from another apostle, that would have put him on a lower pedestal than the other apostles. Paul was concerned to maintain that his authority was independently bestowed on him by Christ and therefore, he was not dependent on any other early Christian leader for his own authority. Thus, the content of his gospel, which is the same in content as that of the other apostles, was received from a direct revelation from the Lord Jesus Christ himself. But the form that he uses in 15:3-5 may have come from other sources. This solution, while maintaining the authority of Paul as a direct apostle of Christ, also connects him with other apostles.

#### *Tradition and 1 Cor 15:3b-5<sup>58</sup>*

In the following discussion I demonstrate that vv. 3b-5 are indeed a pre-Pauline tradition, which out survived Paul and was quoted by the early church fathers. I use three models by Dunn, Fairbairn, and Reeves and Ellis to prove that this is indeed a pre-Pauline formula.

Dunn recognizes Paul's frequent association of a pre-Pauline tradition with the gospel. Such uses of the pre-Pauline tradition can be noted by the consistency in their "form and frequency."

Pre-Pauline tradition usually contains:

1. Resurrection formulae: "God raised him from the dead."
2. "Died for" formulae: "Christ died for us."

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<sup>58</sup> There is no consensus on where the formula begins in vv. 3b-9 and where it ends, i.e., whether it includes the appearance episodes. See Murphy-O'Connor (2009, 230).

3. "Handed over (*paradidomi*)" formulae: "he was handed (or handed himself) over (for our sins)."
4. Combined formulae: "Christ died and was raised."
5. Confessional formulae: "Jesus is Lord."(Dunn 2008, 175)

While the combination of five of these characteristics in the same text is not likely, we find 1 Cor 15:3b- 5 as close to a complete formula as possible. Some of the above formulae can be seen in 1 Cor 15:3-5 (with some variations) where Paul makes 4 major assertions which Gorman ( 2017, 104) calls "articles":

1. Christ died for our sins
2. He was buried
3. He was raised
4. He was seen

The Christ centered nature of the tradition can be seen in the fact that it fails three out of four of Fairbairn and Reeves's test for creedal statements in the NT (They propose a creed should have at least two of the following four elements):

1. A confession of the one God, the Father
2. A confession of Jesus Christ, linked to the Father by calling him "Lord" or "Son"
3. A summary of the events of Christ's earthly life, death, and resurrection
4. An affirmation that the Holy Spirit is linked to the Father and Son<sup>59</sup>

Unlike other creedal statements, 1 Cor 15:3-5 is Christ centered. It does not play a role in forming the early church's doctrine of the trinity. It focuses on the aspects of Christ's life and presents it as an encapsulated, narrative rhetoric. The events of Christ's life which have salvific value are presented as a narrative rhetoric with theological interpretations ("Christ died for our sins"). Christ dying is an event, seeing it as a dying for our sin is Paul's (correct) interpretation based on the HS (Isa 52:13-53:12, possibly Psalm 22).

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<sup>59</sup> This list stresses the formation of the doctrine of trinity and its associated confessions in the early church (Fairbairn and Reeves 2019, 35).

The criteria given by Ellis (1986, 485) can be used to determine the pre-Pauline nature and tradition of 1 Cor 15:3-5:

1. The presence of formulas which indicate that an antecedent tradition is being cited.
2. The self-contained nature of the passage independent of its context.
3. The relative frequency of vocabulary, idiom, style, or theological expression that differ both from the rest of the letter and from the Pauline corpus generally.
4. The presence in another contemporary writing by a different author of a highly similar piece with which no direct literary dependence is probable.

The first item on Ellis's list is present in 15:1-3. There is reference to the traditions previously received and delivered as we saw earlier. The introductory formula παρέδωκα γὰρ ὑμῖν ἐν πρώτοις, ὃ καὶ παρέλαβον signals a pre Pauline formula (Eriksson 1998, 87).

The first part of the formula has four elements each starting with ὅτι.<sup>60</sup> The ὅτι serves as a “marker of narrative or discourse content” (BDAG), it can also serve as the quotation marks in indirect discourse (declarative ὅτι) and is usually translated as *that*.<sup>61</sup>

ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς καὶ  
ὅτι ἐτάφη καὶ  
ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς καὶ  
ὅτι ὤφθη Κηφᾶ

1 Cor 15:3-5 conforms to Ellis's second point also, as it clearly displays a ‘self-contained nature.’ The unit from vv. 3b-7 stand out from the rest of the passage.

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<sup>60</sup> While the presence of ὅτι can help to decide that it's a formula, other scholars have objected to it by pointing out that no confessional formula introduces each line with a ὅτι (Murphy-O'Connor 2009, 230). Fuller (1972, 13–14) is of the opinion that 1 Cor 15:3-5 is an amalgamation of four independent statements. However, Conzelmann (1975, 254 n6), followed by Kramer (2013, 19 n9), thinks that each ὅτι is used to introduce a different component. Murphy-O'Connor (2009, 231–32) strengthens Kramer's position by noting that in 1 Cor 8:4 there are two quotations presumably taken from the same source, which are also introduced by ὅτι in the exact parallel the passage in 15:3-5: ὅτι οὐδὲν εἶδωλον ἐν κόσμῳ καὶ ὅτι οὐδεὶς θεὸς Ἴεὶ μὴ εἶς. Murphy-O'Connor (2009, 231–32) argues that if Paul could “separate to clarify, he could separate to instill.” He thinks that “the creed in vv. 3-5 was received by Paul as a unity. He introduced kai hoti for emphasis” (Murphy-O'Connor 1981, 584).

<sup>61</sup> BDF, 470. cf. Wallace (2008, 456), contrary to Eriksson (1998, 88), who thinks of this as recitativum.

On Ellis's third point, several other factors have been noted as 'un-Pauline' which supports the fact that 15:3-5 is pre-Pauline in origin (Jeremias 1990, 101–3):

1. The plural usage of ἁμαρτία: Jeremias shows how Paul does not use the plural normally (cf. Collins 2006, 534) and the six places where ἁμαρτία is used in the plural or with a genitive or as a personal pronoun all show the influence of the general early Christian linguistic usage (“1 Cor 15.3, the kerygma; 1 Cor 15.17, reminiscence of the kerygma; Gal. 1.4, a Christological formula; Rom. 7.5; Eph. 2.1; Col. 1.14”) it is used in the plural because it has been influenced by “early Christian linguistic usage.”
2. The phrase κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς is very 'un-Pauline'; he normally uses 'as it is written', (καθὼς γέγραπται 2 Cor 9:9).
3. The perfect passive form of ἐγήγερται, which appears only here, and the formulaic τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ is also unique here.
4. The word ὄφθη is found here and again in the confessional formula in 1 Tim 3:16.
5. Paul does not use οἱ δώδεκα elsewhere but ἀπόστολοι (Gal 1:17).”

On Ellis's fourth point, it has been used in many places by different NT authors as I demonstrate in the table under the resurrection section.

Many scholars agree that 1 Cor 15:3b-5 contains a pre-Pauline formula (Conzelmann 1966, 15–25; Kloppenborg 1978, 351–67; Lüdemann 1994, 33–38; Gerhardsson 2003, 75–91; Bryan 2011, 46; Ware 2014, 475).<sup>62</sup> Neufeld (1963, 47) thinks that the phrase Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν is also pre-Pauline. Ciampa and Rosner (2010, sec. 17093) believe that while this summary is Paul's own making, he based it on a pre-Pauline formula familiar to the Corinthians. Bauckham (2017, 293) and Hurtado (2005, 101) also claim that Paul received the tradition from the other apostles.<sup>63</sup> Hengel (1986, 226) also observes that the formula remained intact from the time of the formation of the Corinthian community.

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<sup>62</sup> Dunn gives three reasons for the presence and possibility of such Pre-Pauline formulae:

1. The church can be expected to have such summaries
2. Frequency and regularity in form and content
3. The brevity of some of Paul's argument which center around these formulae. (Dunn 2008, 175–76)

<sup>63</sup> For a different view see Garland (2003, 833) and Lambrecht (1991, 833).

By using these models, we have reasonably confirmed that 1 Cor 15:3-5 is indeed a pre-Pauline tradition. Not only is the tradition pre-Pauline, but it also survived Paul and is found elsewhere in the writings of the early church;<sup>64</sup> which would eventually evolve into creeds and confessions. Irenaeus, for example, quotes 1 Cor 15:3-5 word for word in his *Against Heresies*, (3:18:3):

He was likewise preached by Paul: “For I delivered,” he says, “unto you first of all, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures.” It is plain, then, that Paul knew no other Christ besides Him alone, who both suffered, and was buried, and rose again, who was also born, and whom he speaks of as man.

Also, part of the tradition was used by Polycarp in his letter to the Philippians:

Διὸ ἀναζωσάμενοι τὰς ὀσφύας ὑμῶν δουλεύσατε τῷ θεῷ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἀληθείᾳ ἀπολιπόντες τὴν κενὴν ματαιολογίαν καὶ τὴν τῶν πολλῶν πλάνην, πιστεύσαντες εἰς τὸν ἐγείραντα τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν καὶ δόντα αὐτῷ δόξαν καὶ θρόνον ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ· ᾧ πᾶσα πνοὴ λατρεῖ, ὃς ἔρχεται κριτῆς

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<sup>64</sup> Three possible groups can be named in which the ‘faith developed into a formula’:

1. The Hellenistic Gentile churches
2. Greek speaking Jewish Christian churches
3. The early Aramaic speaking church in Jerusalem (Kramer 2013, 34)

While some scholars maintain that the ‘confessional formula’ was developed in Hellenistic churches, others maintain that it was developed in a Judeo-Palestinian background (Kloppenborg 1978, 352 n5). Collins (2006, 531) arguing for the Palestinian origin, remarks, “[E]very element of the confession derives its meaning from Jewish apocalyptic thought: Christ, sins, scripture, resurrection, and the symbolic “Twelve” (v. 5). An anarthrous “Christ,” the Aramaic “Cephas” (v. 5), and the *parallelismus membrorum* point to its Palestinian origins.” Jeremias provides ‘signs’ though not ‘strict proofs’ for Semitic origin:

- Verses 3-5 looks like a “*parallelismus membrorum*,” as the “first and the third ὅτι clauses “correspond to each other in length, in construction (verb, nearer definition, reference to scripture), in ending with ‘according to the scriptures’...””, Conzelmann (1966, 19), however, disagrees and argues that *parallelismus membrorum* should be attributed to the influence of Hellenistic synagogue.
- The absence of particles other than καί.
- Since ὑπὲρ (Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν) is not found in Isaiah 52:13-53:12, so the reliance could be on the Hebrew text.
- The ‘adversative καί’ on third line.
- ‘The placing of the ordinal number after the noun in τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ, which is the only possible order in a Semitic Language.
- The word ὥφθη is used instead of the ἐφανε.
- The introduction of the logical subject in the dative Κηφᾶ after a passive verb, instead of the expected ὑπὸ with the genitive.’ (Jeremias 1990, 102-3)

See Conzelmann (1966, 19 and 1975, 252-53) for a refutation of these points. He also provides evidence against a Semitic origin; For a Jewish-Hellenistic view see Kloppenborg (1978, 354-57) and McLean (1996, 172).

ζώντων καὶ νεκρῶν, οὗ τὸ αἶμα ἐκζητήσει ὁ θεὸς ἀπὸ τῶν ἀπειθούντων αὐτῶ.<sup>65</sup>  
(Pol. *Phil.* 2:1)

### *Hebrew Bible and 1 Corinthians 15*

In at least two places Paul quotes the HB, in the following section we look at them briefly

#### *Hosea 6 and 13*

In Hosea 13:14:

Shall I ransom them from the power of Sheol?

Shall I redeem them from Death?

O Death, where are your plagues?

O Sheol, where is your destruction?

Compassion is hidden from my eyes.<sup>66</sup>

Paul quotes this in 1 Cor 15:55, using the rabbinic principle of *gezera shawah*, which states that if the same word occurs in two places, one of them can be used to interpret the other. So Paul combines Isa 25:8 and Hos 13:14 based on the “common catchword death” מָוֶת (Collins 2006, 578).

#### *Psalms*

Paul uses Psa 110:1 in 1 Cor 15:15 and Psa 8:6 in 1 Cor 15:27. He uses the rabbinic interpretive principle of *gezera shawah* by combining the two texts from the Psalms by the words they share (Heil 2005, 205–6). Psalm 8 has to do with the general view of man. But Paul applies that to Christ. It is because of these scriptural quotations that Paul is able to come to the conclusion that death as the final enemy will be destroyed (Heil 2005, 218). Clearly this is another example of Paul employing the HB to make his rhetoric effective.

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<sup>65</sup> <https://www.ccel.org/l/lake/fathers/polycarp-philippians.htm>

<sup>66</sup> While there is a question regarding what redeeming from death refers to, Wright (2008, 118) concludes that the original Hebrew does not support the idea that Yahweh will redeem Israel from sheol and death. Stuart (1987, 207) suggests that for Hosea’s audience this would have been a negative message, a reminder that the covenant punishments are about to begin and not something that would kindle hope.

Horsley (2000b, 93) claims that Paul's idea of Jesus, "a figure executed by the imperial rulers" being vindicated through resurrection is actually grounded in "Judean apocalypticism." The anti-imperial idea of Christ ruling and destroying the rulers and powers and authorities in 1 Cor 15:24-28 can be traced back to Jewish backgrounds.

Finkelstein (1938, 145) summarizes the background in which the belief in the resurrection arose in Judaism:

Crushed under the heel of the oppressor and exploiter, the artisan and trader of Jerusalem in the fourth-century B.C.E. sought compensation in an ideal world beyond the grave, where all human inequalities would be leveled down before the overwhelming power of God. The bitterer his lot in this world, the more passionately he clung to his hopes of the next. An abstract immortality might satisfy the philosopher; the hungry slum-dweller of Jerusalem could be comforted by nothing less than the Egyptian and Persian<sup>68</sup> doctrine of physical resurrection and restitution.

In the following sections I look for the idea of resurrection - the dominant theme of 1 Corinthians 15 - in the Jewish literature.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Robbins (1996c, 57) sees 1 Cor 15 as an argumentative elaboration of Mark 15 and 16. Robbins maintains that 1 Cor 15:1-11 has a different "tradition to the chreiai in Mark 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34." However, as already argued in chapter 2, I do not agree that it is an argument from the opposite. The thesis Paul states in 15:3-5 helps him to elaborate the argument in vv. 12-19.

<sup>68</sup> The popular Zoroastrian view of the origins of the idea of the resurrection, which probably has Mary Boyce (1982, 408) as its biggest proponent, has not gone unchallenged. Bremmer (2002, 47-49) challenges the Zoroastrian origin of the belief in the resurrection based on a later date of the material. He suggests that there was Christian influence on the belief within Zoroastrianism, and possibly Jewish as well. Vevaina (2009, 220), while criticizing Bremmer's theory, shares the same "unease" in accepting the influence of Zoroastrianism on the Judean and Christian religions. Wright (2008, 87) sees the Jewish belief as a re-expression of an old worldview. Levenson (2006, xii) argues against the external influences and sees resurrection as something that developed internally within Judaism, and not something that suddenly appeared in second century B.C. Elledge (2017, 46) admitting the question of Zoroastrian origins, claims that most of the major Jewish apocalyptic literature composed during the second temple period contain some reference to resurrection: *1 Enoch* (Book of Watchers; cf. Epistle of Enoch, and the Similitudes), Daniel, 4 Ezra, *2 Baruch* and *Sibyllines* (Fourth *Sibylline Oracle*) (Elledge 2017, 10). Pharisees were a sect who believed in resurrection. However, Vermes (2008, 50-51) has argued that since the Pharisees were only a small fraction of the Jewish population it would be an unjustified "leap of judgment" to conclude that their views represented the majority view. However, Wright (2008, 147) has demonstrated that most Jews believed in resurrection by the beginning of the first century AD and that it was not simply a doctrine of the Pharisees. Elledge (2017, 13) supports Wright's view.

<sup>69</sup> Along with the other books cited here, see Johnston (2002) for a survey of death and afterlife issues in the HB.

## Isaiah passages

One of the strongest pieces of evidence for resurrection belief in the HB<sup>70</sup> is in the following Isaiah passages.

Your dead shall live; their bodies shall rise.<sup>71</sup> You who dwell in the dust, awake and sing for joy!<sup>72</sup> For your dew is a dew of light, and the earth will give birth to the dead (Isa 26:19).

And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death forever (Isa 25:7-8).

The reference to dust in 26:19 may well be an allusion to Gen 3:19. In that case, Isaiah is talking about the reversal of the creational curse, a second creation as the next verse implies, where the earth itself gives birth to the dead (cf. Rev 20:13). This passage has many things in common with 1 Corinthians 15. There are clear allusions to this passage in 1 Corinthians 15:47, 50, 53-54, about bodily resurrection.

In Isa 25:7-8 the prophet claims that Yahweh will swallow up death (Watts 2005, 391). In 1 Cor 15:26 Christ is the one defeating death. What God was said to do in Isa 25:8 is transposed onto Christ. Thus, Paul's CR works by seeking fulfillment of the Hebrew Scriptures in Christ.

## Daniel 12:1-3<sup>73</sup>

By far the strongest evidence for bodily resurrection in the Hebrew Scriptures lies in Dan 12:1-3:

“At that time Michael, the great prince, the protector of your people, shall arise. There shall be a time of anguish, such as has never occurred since nations first came into existence. But at that time your people shall be

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<sup>70</sup> The explicit nature of the statement regarding the resurrection has resulted in some scholars suggesting a late date for this passage. For a counter argument see Motyer (1993, 219–20).

<sup>71</sup> The word *qum* used for arise is the same word used in 2 Kings 13:21, where a man comes to life by touching the bones of Elijah. See Sawyer (1973).

<sup>72</sup> Watts (2015, 399,401) sees this section as a chorus sung between the pilgrims and Yahweh when they travel to Jerusalem. Verse 19 is Yahweh's interlude. A distinction is made between the foreign rulers who are now dead and Israel's own dead. The dead are said to belong to Israel and Yahweh.

<sup>73</sup> Some scholars date the Book of Daniel to the Maccabean revolt period, see Elledge (2017, 21). For a bibliography on Daniel 12:1-3 see Goldingay (2015, 269–71).

delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.<sup>2</sup> Many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.<sup>3</sup> Those who are wise shall shine like the brightness of the sky, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.

The phrase 'sleep in the dust' is a clear biblical way of referring to the dead (Wright 2008, 109ff). The use of 'dust' also makes a strong allusion to the body, as the body is cursed to become dust according to Gen 3:19. The ideas of rising to an everlasting life is present in 1 Cor 15:47, 50, 53-54.

Dan 12:1-3 also talks about an eschatological resurrection, a point in time where the dead will arise, a notion also found in 1 Cor 15:23-24. While the Isaiah passage talks about those whose name is written in the book, 1 Cor 15:23 talks about those who are in Christ. The exclusiveness is clear in both passages.<sup>74</sup>

## Dead Sea Scrolls

The lines in the Dead Sea scrolls known as the *Messianic Apocalypse*, (4Q521 fragments 2 II + 4 lines 11–12) make a reference to the raising of the dead as a sign of the inauguration of the Messianic age. However, the reference is to make a person live again rather than to resurrection in the technical sense of the word. A physical resurrection is promised in *Pseudo Ezekiel* (4Q385 fragments 2, lines 8–9) based on the vision of Ezekiel in 37:1-14 (Elledge 2017, 28). It is noteworthy that the mention of the dead coming to life is associated with the Messiah in these documents. This also reflects in 1 Cor 15 where Paul repeatedly uses Jesus's messianic title, Christ, to say that he has been raised. It will be at his coming that the dead in him will be raised (15:23).

## 2 Maccabees

2 Maccabees is considered to be one of the earliest pieces of evidence for the belief in resurrection (Schwartz 2008, 299). As pointed out above the idea of the resurrection is developed in the backdrop of extreme torture and suffering at the hands of Antiochus Epiphanes. Jews who were killed for refusing to adopt a foreign religion while not giving up their own religious practices are portrayed as martyrs who die proclaiming their belief in the resurrection. 2 Maccabees 7 narrates a story concerning seven brothers and their

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<sup>74</sup> However, the Isaiah passage makes a reference to those who are raised for "everlasting contempt," the idea of which is absent in 1 Corinthians.

mother who are all butchered for refusing to eat sacrificed swine flesh,<sup>75</sup> as swine meat was prohibited by Jewish dietary laws.<sup>76</sup> The third brother willingly stretches out his tongue and hands, readily offering them to be cut off, as he proclaims that he hopes to get his amputated body parts back in heaven (7:11). The fourth brother also dies with a similar proclamation: “One cannot but choose to die at the hands of men and to cherish the hope that God gives of being raised again by him. But for you, there will be no resurrection to life” (7:14).

Doran (2012, 155) has interpreted verses such as, ‘so in this way, he exchanged this life for another’ (2 Macc 6:30–1), to mean an immediate transference to another life at death.

This is a very clear evidence of resurrection being used to support anti Roman sentiments. It was the belief in the resurrection that gave strength to endure the current persecution without giving up hope in God. Read against this background, Christ being raised in itself is a vindication against the rulers of this age who crucified him (1 Cor 2:8).

With this selective survey from HB and second temple literature, we can agree with Horsley’s conclusion that the Jewish apocalyptic literature was focused on the following “components”:

1. Oppressive rulers will be judged and/or destroyed.
2. God’s people will be delivered and/or restored.
3. Those who had been martyred for their persistence in the traditional way of life and for their resistance to oppressors would be vindicated and/or resurrected in order to join in the finally restored life of the people of God (Horsley, 2000, 95; 2004, 341).<sup>77</sup>

The first element is present in 1 Corinthians 15. The rulers of this world will be judged as Paul confirms in v. 24. The second item on the list is present in 15:23 and in those who are alive at Christ’s coming, who will be transformed (15:51). A variant of the third

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<sup>75</sup> Antiochus saw the Torah as the underlying reason for the rebellion of the Jews. Thus, to obey the Torah was considered an act of rebellion. The eating of the flesh of the swine was regarded as a typical sign of willful disobedience to the Torah (Goldstein 2008, 292).

<sup>76</sup> Commentators question the historicity of this narrative and interpret it as a “stylized didactic narrative,” perhaps even a historicization of Jeremiah 15:9 that refers to the mother of seven sons who died on the same day (Schwartz 2008, 299). Though other scholars like Goldstein suggest that this may be a historical narrative (2008, 292). For the purposes of my thesis, it is sufficient to note how the belief in the resurrection was viewed as having a revolutionary power by the writers of the second temple period.

<sup>77</sup> Interestingly Ramsaran ( 2004, 96–99) argues that each major section of 1 Corinthians, namely, 1-4, 5-14 and 15 correspond to Horsley’s three components.

element is present, though Paul does not talk about martyred people. He does talk about those who are 'in Christ' who will be raised in 15:23. They are asked to follow the "traditional way of life." Paul argues that those who do not live by the traditional standards will not inherit the kingdom of God (6:9-10).

### **Social identity through Christ: Social Cultural Textures**

The section 15:23-28 reveals clear signs of an apocalyptic rhetorolect. It shows God bringing judgement against evil, a characteristic of apocalyptic discourse (Robbins 2009, 128; 1996a, 359–60). Paul's ideology seems to be a revolutionist<sup>78</sup> response as he believes that the powers of this world and the social order must be demolished, including death, and he claims that Christ must reign and put his enemies under his feet in a process leading to the final triumph of God (15:28).<sup>79</sup> A utopian response might be another candidate in an apocalyptic rhetorolect (Robbins 2009, 604), as Paul himself is involved in preparing others for the parousia of Christ (15:30-32).

Paul uses the concept of *honor-shame* in v. 34. By invoking a shame feeling, he is trying to challenge them to change their behavior. This also has the effect of shaming these people in the eyes of the community when Paul, their founding apostle, a person in theory possessing high honor status, demeans such people. Corinthians seems to have taken pride in their knowledge (3:19, 4:10, 8:2), but Paul puts them to shame by showing that they have no knowledge of God. Fee (2014, 704) connects the lack of knowledge of God with God's activities mentioned in vv. 23-28. If they refuse to believe in the resurrection of the dead and by implication the resurrection of Christ, then they actually have no knowledge of God despite their claim and pride in knowledge.

I have talked about social identity and other sociological concepts in many places in the thesis. A concentrated discussion takes place in chapter 5.

### **Warren Carter's Model**

Carter (2000, 7–14) reads the gospels as forming identities by focusing on a central figure, offering instruction, providing a model to follow, and intentionally centering on community building. Tucker (2010, 33) applies these four characteristics to 1 Corinthians. He shows how the letter is focused on Christ crucified (1 Cor 2:2); how the

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<sup>78</sup> For a discussion of the revolutionist and utopian responses, see Robbins (1996b, 147; 1996c, 72–74).

<sup>79</sup> Paul confirms that the reign of Christ has started after his resurrection (Rom 1:3,4, Phil 2:6-10). Also see Fee (2014, 686), Garland (2003, 707), Conzelmann (1975, 264–65), and Rosner and Ciampa (2007, 764).

whole letter is full of instructions (e.g., 4:14; 14:37); how Paul offers himself as the visible model<sup>80</sup> and Christ as the invisible model (1 Cor 11:1); and how the letter focuses on building a community (cf. Mitchell 1993).

Carter<sup>81</sup> (2000, 8–11) also provides a secondary set of characteristics<sup>82</sup> which I present below with my discussion and application to 1 Corinthians.<sup>83</sup>

1. “Naming”: Paul gives many names to the group, his favorite being church and brothers. We look at some of these in chapter 5.<sup>84</sup>
2. “Central Focus”: commitment to Jesus is the central focus of the community.
3. “Claims of Exclusive Revelation”: Paul provides “definite interpretation of scripture,” and he claims to expound mysteries (15:51).
4. “Rituals and Association”: the induction ritual of baptism and ritual meals were practiced in the Corinthian community.
5. “Social Organization”: there were people to govern the community. Paul urges them to act. He also talks about the household of Stephanas as the first converts and as servants of the community (16:15).
6. “Invective against opponents”: Paul had enemies who were challenging his apostleship and his eloquence (1 Cor 9:1-3). He answered them by appealing to his authority and to the fact that he had seen the risen Christ.
7. “Apocalyptic Eschatology”: Carter argues that this comprises of “two ages: the present evil age” and “the future glorious age, where God’s purposes will be gloriously established.” This is very much true of 1 Corinthians – and is plainly evident in chapter 15. Paul talks about the future rule of Christ in which God will be all in all. However, this “apocalyptic identity formation” also involves a futuristic element

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<sup>80</sup> Mitchell (1993, 47–50) cites Paul using himself as a positive example to follow.

<sup>81</sup> Carter’s work is in turn based on the works of Sanders, Baumgarten, and Mendelson (1980), Neusner, Frerichs, and McCracken-Flesher (1985), J. J. Collins (2000), Barclay (1999); Saldarini (1994); Burrige (2020). See Carter (2000, 558 n 31 and n43).

<sup>82</sup> Lim (2017, 45–46) adapts Carter’s list for his work on social identity formation in 1 Corinthians.

<sup>83</sup> Tucker (2010, 33) tries to apply the same model; however, he simply uses quotations from Carter. In a different book published in the following year, Tucker (2011, 51–57) proposes his own characteristics of social identity.

<sup>84</sup> Birge (2002) analyses the kinship language of Corinthians, especially chapters 3-6 and 12-14, using rhetorical analysis. She looks at the rhetorical structure as well as invention.

where the present identity will be transformed by a future identity (Tucker 2010, 146). O'Brien (2009, 125) argues that Paul writes of the whole community as waiting for the "revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 1:7).

8. "Community definition by origin, Governance<sup>85</sup> and Practices" – Paul defines the community as the community for which the paschal lamb has been sacrificed; and which was governed by the gospel and its applications and had its own rituals (namely baptism and Lord's Supper) and practices, which were different from the wider secular community. As Wolter (2015, 105,109) notes, "[T]he death of Christ helps to build the Christian community," a community characterized by the rituals celebrated by the community (cf. 1 Cor 5:8). Another such definition is the "in Christ" theme (1 Cor 15:23). (We discuss more about this in chapter 5, under SIT). Paul warns how the Corinthians had become like secular men in their behavior (3:3,5) (Winter 2001, 4), and in some cases worse than secular men (5:1).

#### Meeks: Urban Christians Model

Meeks (2003, 85–107) in his influential book<sup>86</sup> *The First Urban Christians* indicates the way boundaries are set within a community, which is, in my opinion, how an identity is formed or instilled. He argues:

1. "The language of belonging": In 1 Corinthians Paul often uses kinship language.
2. "The language of separation": Paul uses words like outsiders (5:12-13), unrighteous (6:1,9), to describe outsiders and gives "catalogs of vices" (5:10; 6:9-10) which characterize pagans (5:1).
3. "Purity and Boundaries": To maintain social boundaries, Paul puts in place bodily boundaries of what is allowed and what is prohibited in respect to the body. For example, fornication is prohibited in 6:12-20.
4. "Autonomous Institutions": Paul created an "autonomous institution" which could take the place of outside organizations and serve the needs of the members of the believing community. Paul, asking the

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<sup>85</sup> On the aspect of governance see Meeks (2003, 111–39).

<sup>86</sup> See Still and Horrell (2009) and Tucker (2011, 11–28).

Corinthians to solve the conflicts between believers internally in 6:1-6, is one example of this.<sup>87</sup>

5. “Gates in the boundaries”: There is a tension in Paul to ‘be in the world but not of the world’. Meeks quotes 1 Cor 5:9-13 to make his point.

Many of the point in the above two models are discussed in detail in chapter 5 under SIT.

### **A Christ Centered Ideology: Ideological Texture<sup>88</sup>**

Robbins provides three ways to analyze the ideological texture of texts: “analyzing the social and cultural location of the implied author of the text; analyzing the ideology of power in the discourse of the text; and analyzing the ideology in the mode of intellectual discourse both in the text and in the interpretation of the text” (Robbins 1996c, 111).

The implied author of 1 Corinthians is Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, who maintains a Christ centered ideology, his social and cultural outlook would be that of a revolutionist as discussed above.

Paul’s ideology is Christ centered. As Jeal (2015, 198) comments of the letter to Philemon: “Christ Jesus is the ideological center of life.” Canavan (2011, 199) notes, “Christ is the organizing force and integrates all realms of meaning...Christ is the ideology.” As I show in the CR chapter, even Paul’s rhetoric is Christ centered.

Paul sees himself as the apostle of Christ (15:8-10); he sees the preaching of the gospel as his life’s calling (1:17); his message to the Corinthians was Christ and Christ crucified (1:23, 2:2). He speaks of the return of Christ in which Christ will subjugate all other powers and believers will be involved in judging the non-believers and even angels (6:2-3).

The Christ community is bound by the gospel (15:3-5), without which their faith will be futile; he became their father by the gospel (4:15) which implies a horizontal relationship between the Corinthians which he states explicitly using the body metaphor in chapter 12. He sees the Corinthians as members of that body.

What Canavan (2011, 199) says about Colossians is the vision that Paul has for Corinthians: “the prime belief system for the Christ followers at Colossae is their shared belief in being raised with Christ. It is this collective identity in the body of Christ that

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<sup>87</sup> See Wan (2000) and the response of Roetzel (2000).

<sup>88</sup> In addition to the works of Robbins I have also benefitted from Jeal’s (2015, 198) commentary on Philemon. I have crafted the ideological texture similar to his and the ideological texture section in Canavan (2011, 197–201).

structures their relationships with each other and with God.” The belief in the resurrection will not only correct their sinful behavior as Paul directly claims (15:33-34) but will also help them to be better united as a believing community.

In discussing power relations, “the system of differentiations” which Foucault (Dreyfus, Rabinow, and Foucault 1983, 233; Robbins 1996b, 195f) discusses, can be seen here. Paul sees the world as consisting two kinds of people: those who perish and those who are being saved (Robbins 1996b, 197). This differentiation starts right at the beginning (1:18) and runs right throughout the gospel. (Paul’s ultimate differentiation is that of those who are “in Christ” and those who are not. Paul talks about the resurrection of the first category in v. 23, I follow up the full implications of this in chapter 5, when discussing 15:23 under SIT).

It is probable that Paul stated his objectives (Dreyfus, Rabinow, and Foucault 1983, 233) in 1:4-9, “so that you may be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The kind of things that he writes in the letter are the things that he prayed for, for the Corinthians. In each section of 1 Corinthians Paul encourages them to live pure and guiltless lives in some aspect of their life. In chapter 15 he talks about the ἀποκάλυψις for which they are waiting. Paul writes the epistle with this ideology in mind. This ideology as I argue in the following section has not only given birth to a worldview but also an argumentative method.

### “Revelatory Topos” as an Argumentative Method<sup>89</sup>

Since the Corinthians are waiting for the ἀποκάλυψις of Lord Jesus Christ I refer to the proposal of Hall (1996, 436) for a “revelatory topos” which helps form an argumentative method, that is, an argumentation for “the worldview disclosed when God reveals his judgments.”<sup>90</sup> Hall (1996, 436) gives four elements of such juridical arguments which draw conclusions from a revelation of how God’s judgments order the world, and which can be seen in 1 Cor 15:23-28:

1. “A claim to inspiration.”

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<sup>89</sup> Brown’s (2014) work focuses on the following question: how did Paul seek to correct the convictions of the deniers of the resurrection so that they also felt a resulting weight of moral obligation? He explains how the Corinthians would have connected their Greco-Roman heroes to Jesus to whom they gave heroic status. They were, therefore, expected to share his exemplary moral life. In other words, Brown is trying to establish a connection between eschatology and ethics. Paul is combining the Corinthians’ worldview with his own convictions about the gospel that was preached to them, that those who are to be resurrected should live like their hero, Jesus.

<sup>90</sup> Hall says this in the context of second temple literature, which I have applied here.

Paul claims not only the tradition and scriptures (vv. 3-5) but that he has special revelation (“a mystery” v. 51). The claim to this revelation forms part of his radical rhetoric. This makes the appeal that comes in step 4 authoritative.

2. “A revelation of divine judgment ordering the world into righteous and wicked camps.”

Divine judgement is explicit in vv. 24-25, the resurrection is of those who are in Christ. Paul also makes this clear in his exhortation in 15:33. Also as we have seen, this is prevalent in 1 Corinthians right throughout.

3. “A call to join the righteous realm God rules and to repudiate the wicked realm ruled by other forces.”

This point brings out a crucial element: to argue that Christ is not risen is to take the side of the wicked as the resurrection of the dead is part of God’s judgement on the wicked and vindication of the just (in Christ). Paul makes this explicit in v. 33. Disbelief in the resurrection of the dead leads to moral corruption, the realm which is outside the rule of Christ.

4. “An implication that this choice includes a course of action the author advocates.”

The implication Paul advocates is to leave bad company and stop sinning vv. 33-4, 58.

So, Paul uses this as an argumentative method – as one of his *topoi* as I argue in CR to convince the Corinthians to change their behavior and beliefs.

## Sacred Texture

1 Cor 15:1-34 contains important theology about God the father and God’s son.

Christ died as a ransom for the sinners (15:3) and was raised on the third day. He has been appointed as the ruler above all. At his *parousia* he will come and destroy all his enemies. At that point, all those who are his will be raised. After Christ has subjugated all his enemies, he will hand over the kingdom to God and be subject to God. Since Christ is portrayed as the son of God, it makes him subordinate to God while having the closest possible relation with God.

A representative view of Adam and humanity seems to be presented; when Adam sinned all sinned and death entered the world. Because Christ has been raised, all those

who have believed in him are identified with his death and resurrection in baptism. By this means their resurrection is assured by the resurrection of Christ and is indicated symbolically in their baptism.

God the father sent his son to die for humankind. God raised him on the third day and put everything under his rule. Talking about God as father is key Christian conceptual metaphor.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have applied the five textures of SRI to 1 Corinthians 15. I have done it selectively to avoid repeating things that I have said elsewhere. Though my thesis is that Paul used CR in 1 Cor 15, using SRI has exposed many other facets of 1 Cor 15. I have also used SRI for a purpose, namely, to elicit the Christ centered nature of the text. I have not necessarily focused on other aspects here. My observation that Paul's rhetoric is Christ centered is confirmed even by using another approach like SRI. In the next chapter I proceed to search for Christ Rhetoric.

## Chapter 3

### The Search for Christ Rhetoric

#### Introduction

In chapter one, we surveyed efforts by NT scholars to create replacements for Aristotle's three rhetorical genres to assist with NT analysis. A careful analysis of major passages in 1 Corinthians betrays a different rhetoric than what we have looked at so far, namely, the Christ Rhetoric (CR). In this chapter I formalize CR by going through major sections of 1 Corinthians with an eye to Paul's argumentative methodology. CR, which emerges as a result, has its own argumentative method, structure, topoi, and discourses. I start the quest for a new argumentative method (a new kind of rhetoric) from Aristotle himself.

#### Aristotle on New Rhetoric

The attempt to create a new kind of rhetoric different from the previous categories goes right back to Aristotle himself. For he envisioned that when we are based on specifics as opposed to common topics, we would have created a different kind of knowledge, if we are based on the right first principles:<sup>91</sup>

[F]or some [enthymemes] are formed in accord with the method of rhetoric, just as some syllogisms are formed in accord with the method of dialectic, while others accord with [the content of] other arts and capabilities, either those in existence or those not yet understood... [*Rhet* 1.2.20]

This statement means that Aristotle makes provision for some enthymemes to be formed by "other arts and capabilities" even those which have "not yet [been] understood." About such matters he says:

As to the latter [the specifics], to the degree that someone makes better choice of the premises, he will have created knowledge different from *dialectic and rhetoric* without its being recognized; for if he succeeds in

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<sup>91</sup> For Aristotle's use of first principles, see Irwin (2002, Ch. 1 n.1).

hitting on first principles [*arkhai*], the knowledge will no longer be dialectic or rhetoric but the science of which [the speaker] grasps the first principles (*Rhet* 1.2.20-1) (emphasis mine).

So those that are not yet understood and are different from dialectic and rhetoric are created by making better choice of premises and by “hitting on first principles.” Dialectic and rhetoric are two reasoning methods that Aristotle refers to in his *Rhetoric*.<sup>92</sup> To understand the role of first principles we may consult the well-known passage from Aristotle’s *Physics*:

When the objects of an inquiry, in any department, have principles, causes, or elements, it is through acquaintance with these that knowledge and understanding is attained. For we do not think that we know a thing until we are acquainted with its primary causes or first principles and have carried our analysis as far as its elements. Plainly, therefore, in the science of nature too our first task will be to try to determine what relates to its principles. The natural way of doing this is to start from the things which are more knowable and clear to us and proceed towards those which are clearer and more knowable by nature; for the same things are not knowable relatively to us and knowable without qualification. So we must follow this method and advance from what is more obscure by nature, but clearer to us, towards what is more clear and more knowable by nature. (*Phys.* 184a10–21)<sup>93</sup>

Aristotle means to start from beliefs that are well-known to us and to find the underlying truths. Terence Irwin’s comments on Aristotle’s concept of first principles, are not only a reflection but also a commentary on those verses:

First-principles are known unconditionally because they are naturally appropriate for being known. The beliefs we begin with are “prior to us” (i.e., “prior from our point of view”), since they are what we begin from; but the principles we find will be “prior by nature,” and when we have found

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<sup>92</sup> His famous first statement in *Rhetoric* is that “rhetoric is a counterpart to dialectic.”

<sup>93</sup> All works of Aristotle except *Rhetoric* are from the Oxford translation of the Complete Works of Aristotle (1995a).

them they will also be “prior to us”; for then we will recognize that they are more basic and primary than the principles we began from. The first principle we find will include beliefs and propositions. (Irwin 2002, 3)

Aristotle talks about starting from things that are “more knowable;” this is precisely what Paul is doing in 1 Corinthians 15. There is no way to verify that the dead will indeed be raised. But the resurrection of Christ is something that can be verified by scripture and witnesses according to Paul. In dealing with the question of the resurrection of the dead Paul starts with the resurrection of Christ.

Irwin further explains the first principles:

We grasp propositional first principles, and they become ‘known to us’, when our beliefs match the appropriate propositional principles that match the appropriate non-propositional principles. Once we believe a propositional first principle, we certainly connect it to our other beliefs in specific ways; but the beliefs and the connexions do not make it a first principle. It is the first principle because of the facts external to our beliefs, and we have the correct beliefs in the correct connexions only in so far as we describe the relations between facts independent of our beliefs. (Irwin 2002, 4)

This “connexion” is what Paul makes between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. He first starts with the resurrection of Christ, and then he works backward to show the underlying principle that by one man the resurrection of many was brought about. He also seems to be working forward to show its implications. The resurrection of Jesus Christ is a “fact external to our belief,” something which was not dependent on whether the Corinthians believed it or not.

Aristotle further states that there are some arguments, that are ‘deductions’ which are born out of first principles:

Now a deduction is an argument in which, certain things being laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them. It is a demonstration, when the premises from which the deduction starts are true and primitive, or are such that our knowledge of them has originally

come through premises which are primitive and true; and it is a dialectical deduction, if it reasons from reputable opinions. Things are true and primitive which are convincing on the strength not of anything else but of themselves; for in regard to the first principles of science it is improper to ask any further for the why and wherefore of them; each of the first principles should command belief in and by itself. On the other hand, those opinions are reputable which are accepted by everyone or by the majority or by the wise—i.e. by all, or by the majority, or by the most notable and reputable of them. Again, a deduction is contentious if it starts from opinions that seem to be reputable, but are not really such, or again if it merely seems to reason from opinions that are or seem to be reputable.

[*Top* 1.1]

In this passage he talks about three kinds of deductions. First, he mentions the demonstrative proofs that are based on first principles and are “convincing on the strength of ... themselves.” The second type of deductions is formed by appealing to commonly accepted opinions (ἔνδοξα). The third type of deduction is contentious deductions which are not agreed by all. It appears that arguments about Christ form demonstrative deductions in Paul. For example, when Paul reasons that those who partake in the Lord’s Supper sin against Christ, (as in the case of being guilty of the body and blood of Christ in 11:27), a question as to why one should not sin against Christ is simply not entertained, not even dreamt of. Hence, the first principles are from Christ. The arguments of the second kind, based on ἔνδοξα, are to be observed in 1 Cor 15:12-19.

The fact that the some of the Corinthians did not believe in the resurrection of the dead did not make it false, and it is a first principle whether they believed it or not. Paul sees Christ and his deeds, conveyed in the form of narratives regarding his death, burial, and resurrection, as *foundational*, and as Richard Hays (2002, 2662–63) remarks, “[I]n the case of stories that become foundational stories for a community, these patterns may take on a prescriptive-ethical significance.” The stories about Christ become the “foundational stories” on which the Christian community was built and from which all ethical instructions follow.

In my own analysis of 1 Corinthians 15, as I show below, I have realized that Paul uses another kind of argument that is different from those of classical rhetoric and those

that has been outlined by other scholars. Paul uses a mix of worldly and radical rhetoric, a combination of demonstrative and dialectic deductions and frequently employs *logos*. His rhetoric, however, will make sense only to a believer in Christ because the accepted premises are very narrow and specific. As I will demonstrate in the following sections, Paul's rhetoric is based on Christ. As such I will call this type of rhetoric Christ rhetoric (*CR*).

### **Christ Rhetoric<sup>94</sup>**

Notwithstanding the questions of whether Paul was rhetorically educated and whether he intentionally used rhetoric and whether we should use rhetoric in NT analysis, my reading of 1 Corinthians 15 and other passages in 1 Corinthians has led me to another argumentative approach or method, namely, that of *Christ Rhetoric*. The name is derived from the fact that Paul uses Christ in his argumentative method and topoi.

I find Paul, in addressing different doctrinal, ethical, and practical issues usually focusing on something other than the matter at hand. For example, in the primary text addressed by this thesis, 1 Cor 15:1-34, the issue at hand is the resurrection of the dead. However, to address that issue Paul primarily argues from the resurrection of Christ. In vv. 1-11 he first establishes that Christ was raised, and after stating the problem in v.12, he shows the consequences in vv.13-19 (in the form of if-then-else rules): the idea of preaching and faith being futile (v. 15), bearing false witnesses for God (v. 15) and being in one's sins (v. 17). These consequences, as I argue in the following chapters, are the consequences of Christ not being raised and not the consequences of the dead not being raised. A question can be asked as to what possible connection exists between the fact that the dead will be raised in the future and the fact that Christ was raised in the past? Paul then goes on to make the connection between the dead and Christ in vv. 19-22, by arguing that Christ was the first fruits of all those who will be raised and by making a comparison between Adam and Christ. He proceeds to talk about the future reign of Christ in vv. 23-28 and baptism and mission work in vv. 29-32, before giving the concluding ethical advice in vv. 33-34. This too is unrelated to the question at hand, for a question can be asked and quite rightly so, regarding what is the connection between the

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<sup>94</sup> The features of CR were discovered inductively after a detailed analysis of the passages in 1 Corinthians. By analyzing passages, I have come up with the general rules for CR. This section on CR is placed before the survey for greater clarity.

raising of the dead and the rule of Christ? In the following sections I answer these questions using Paul's rhetorical method, namely, CR.

CR can be defined in terms of the argumentative method, the argumentative structure with discourses, and the argumentative *topoi*. The following section looks at each of these in detail by taking the example of 1 Corinthians 15.

## Argumentative Method

### Enthymeme

There is a flood of literature on enthymemes, spanning many disciplines including not only logic and rhetoric, but even modern fields like computers and artificial intelligence (Walton and Macagno 2006).<sup>95</sup>

Aristotle defined an enthymeme as a "rhetorical syllogism": "I call a rhetorical syllogism an enthymeme, a rhetorical induction a paradigm" [*Rhet* 1.2.8].<sup>96</sup> He explains this by making a comparison with dialectic, which has induction and syllogism as its persuasive methods. (dialectic, which Aristotle covers in *Topics*, is the method used by Plato in his writings.) Rhetoric which is the counterpart of dialectic (Aristotle's famous first statement in *Rhetoric*), has examples and enthymemes. Aristotle explains, "[F]or the *paradeigma* ["example"] is an induction, the *enthymema* a syllogism" [*Rhet* 1.2.8].<sup>97</sup> Explaining the difference between an example (paradigm) and enthymeme he comments:

What the difference is between a paradigm and an enthymeme is clear from the *Topics* (for an account was given there earlier of syllogism and induction): to show on the basis of many similar instances that something is so is in dialectic induction, in rhetoric paradigm; but to show that if some premises are true, something else [the conclusion] beyond them results from these because they are true, either universally or for the most part, in dialectic is called syllogism and in rhetoric enthymeme. [*Rhet* 1.2.9]

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<sup>95</sup> For an interdisciplinary bibliography of rhetorical studies see Poster (2000).

<sup>96</sup> This is the famous statement by Aristotle that is hotly debated. Scholars have said that the word *συλλογισμός* should not be translated as syllogisms but simply as reasoning (Fredal 2018, 29) or as deduction (Aune 2003, 302–3). The translation edited by Barnes (1995b, 2:2.2156) has, "For I call a rhetorical *deduction* an enthymeme, and a rhetorical induction an example."

<sup>97</sup> For the idea of enthymeme as a syllogism see (Grimaldi 1972, 87–91). In answering the question how enthymeme fills the gap between argumentation and persuasion Nettel (2011) discusses the role of the enthymeme as an "incomplete syllogism."

Modern scholarship has seen enthymemes as truncated syllogisms (Kennedy 2007, 42 n55). Debanné (2006, 10–12) also argues that Aristotle’s enthymemes were brief and without one premise. Walton (2008, 362) defines an enthymeme as “an incomplete argument found in a text of discourse.”<sup>98</sup> Though this is the majority view, starting perhaps from Sir William Hamilton (1870) a few scholars (McBurney 1974; Bitzer 1974; Ryan 1984; Burnyeat 2015; Fredal 2020) have disagreed with this definition and proposed different definitions for what an enthymeme is.<sup>99</sup>

In the area of applying rhetoric to the NT, Aune (2003) also has disagreed with the ‘truncated syllogism’ view. Aune’s versatile article critiques this view and reviews many approaches by NT scholars who use enthymeme to analyze the NT. He shows how representing the NT writings as truncated syllogisms causes problems in interpretation. Most of the approaches he interacts with use a structure like, major premise, minor premise, and conclusion. Aune marks Hellholm (1995) and Debanné (2006) as having different strategies. Robbins (1998) uses “Rule, Case, Result” instead of major premise, minor premise and conclusion, and this has become the nomenclature for SRI’s argumentative texture’s (Robbins 2009, 128–29).

It is not within the scope of my thesis to contribute to the ongoing discussion of what an enthymeme is or its functions, nor how best it can be used in the analysis of the NT. Instead, my focus is on determining the argumentative method Paul employs by looking at the text of 1 Corinthians. I have used insights from Fredal (2020) on an aspect called “mediate enthymeme,” as discussed below, to understand the major features of CR.

### **Mediate Enthymeme/Rhetoric**

Fredal argues the case for the true meaning of enthymeme, which he calls 1.0 (as it predates all discussions of what an enthymeme is), from the fourth century BC discussion of the Attic orator Isaeus’s speech about the estate of Cleonymus. He claims that “Isaeus’s enthymeme involves a kind of demonstration (apodeixis) showing that something being the case, something else is true (*Rhetoric* 1.1.11, 1.2.9)” (Fredal 2018, 38). It is this type of reasoning that was used by orators in antiquity that Fredal (2020, 95) calls mediate enthymeme. In mediate enthymeme “the speaker describes a thought or tells listeners to think about something so that they will also enthymize [consider] something else,

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<sup>98</sup> Walton (2008, 362) using a formal dialogue system called DBVK proposes a new way to analyze enthymemes.

<sup>99</sup> For a balanced view which retains the traditional definition with caution see Walton and Macagno (2009).

creating or breaking a link between the thing asserted by the speaker and ‘something else’ understood or felt by the listener” (Fredal 2020, 95).

Fredal proceeds to describe the goal of “mediate enthymizing” not simply as

getting the audience to attend to something but getting the audience to connect something with something else... . In traditional Aristotelian terms, inferential reasoning allows orators to connect an easily accepted fact or proposition (*A*), a fact that the audience has no reason to doubt, to another proposition (*B*) that the orator wants the audience to think about, understand, feel strongly about, and accept as true. Once fact *A* is enthymized as a sign or cause of fact *B*, the confidence afforded the former can be transferred to the latter. (Fredal 2020, 99)

The rhetorical effect of the mediate enthymeme is achieved by

so tightly connecting a known fact to a doubtful claim or story element that once the first is uttered, the second alone is immediately enthymized, and with greater confidence than it otherwise could have been... Just as a mechanic will charge a weak battery by connecting it to a strong one, mediate enthymizing transfers confidence to a posited fact (*B*) by connecting it to an accepted fact (*A*).”(Fredal 2020, 98).

This is what Paul does in 1 Corinthians 15 as we shall see later in greater detail. He first establishes the resurrection of Christ in vv. 1-11 and then argues for the resurrection of the dead on the merit of Christ’s resurrection, “transferring the confidence posited” regarding the resurrection of Christ to the resurrection of the dead. In 15:19-22 Paul makes the connection between the resurrection of the dead and the resurrection of Christ. But sometimes the reader is left to make that connection. As Fredal (2020, 98) notes, “[W]hether it [the connection] is stated explicitly or not is of little importance.”

While the credit goes to Fredal for highlighting this aspect of the enthymeme and digging it out from the orators, Aristotle himself mentions this as a feature of syllogism: “Now a deduction is an argument in which, certain things being laid down, something other than these necessarily comes about through them” (*Topics* 1.1 100a25-101a4).

Aristotle also mentions this as a feature of the enthymeme: “[B]ut to show that if some premises are true, something else [the conclusion] beyond them results from these because they are true, either universally or for the most part, in dialectic is called syllogism and in rhetoric enthymeme” [*Rhet* 1.2.9]. Readers will note how the very words of Kennedy’s translation are similar to Fredal’s definition of “mediate enthymeme.”

As we shall see from the other examples in 1 Corinthians in the survey section below, Paul utilizes this strategy constantly and consistently enough in 1 Corinthians for it to be recognized as an argumentative method. This way of arguing, Paul’s mediate enthymeme/rhetoric, forms the core of CR’s argumentative strategy and is a contribution towards a methodological advancement in Pauline studies.

I have replaced the term mediate enthymeme with mediate rhetoric in the rest of the thesis for greater clarity and inclusivity. What I call mediate rhetoric works on thought units rather than on individual statements and as such can be applied to Paul’s arguments about different issues in 1 Corinthians. The brevity of the enthymeme has been noted even by those who reject the truncated syllogism view, for example, Ryan (1984, 96). As Aune (2003, 306) remarks, “Rather than constitute the entire argument, enthymemes are used to encapsulate arguments ... .” Aune bases his statement on the study of Conley (1984, 171) who remarks that “it does not look as though Aristotle means by ‘enthymeme’ the rhetorical argument that constitutes the speech, but rather nicely turned sentences or questions raised at climactic points in the course of the speech.” I use the term mediate rhetoric so that it can be used for the analysis of entire speeches or sections of epistles.

#### *Argument from the Opposites or Mediate Rhetoric?*

Someone can object, and quite rightly so, that Paul is simply using an argument of the opposites<sup>100</sup> [*Rhet* 2.23.2, 2.25.1], that is, to prove something, he talks about the opposite of that thing (Fig 2.1).<sup>101</sup> However, as shown in the Fig 2.2, Paul brings another element into the argument, namely, Christ, as part of his mediate rhetoric. He does not argue with the opposite of “the dead not being raised,” but rather he shows the opposite of Christ not being raised. This difference is what I call mediate rhetoric.

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<sup>100</sup> This the position taken by Robbins (1996b, 57).

<sup>101</sup> This could also be expressed in logical terms as the law of non-contradiction. Aristotle has stated this in three different formats according to Zalta (2019). The first version is that “it is impossible for the same thing to belong and not to belong at the same time to the same thing and in the same respect” (Metaph IV 3 1005b19–20); the second is that “it is impossible to hold (suppose) the same thing to be and not to be” (Metaph IV 3 1005b24 cf.1005b29–30); the third version is that “opposite assertions cannot be true at the same time” (Metaph IV 6 1011b13–20)



Fig 3.1: Argument of the opposites

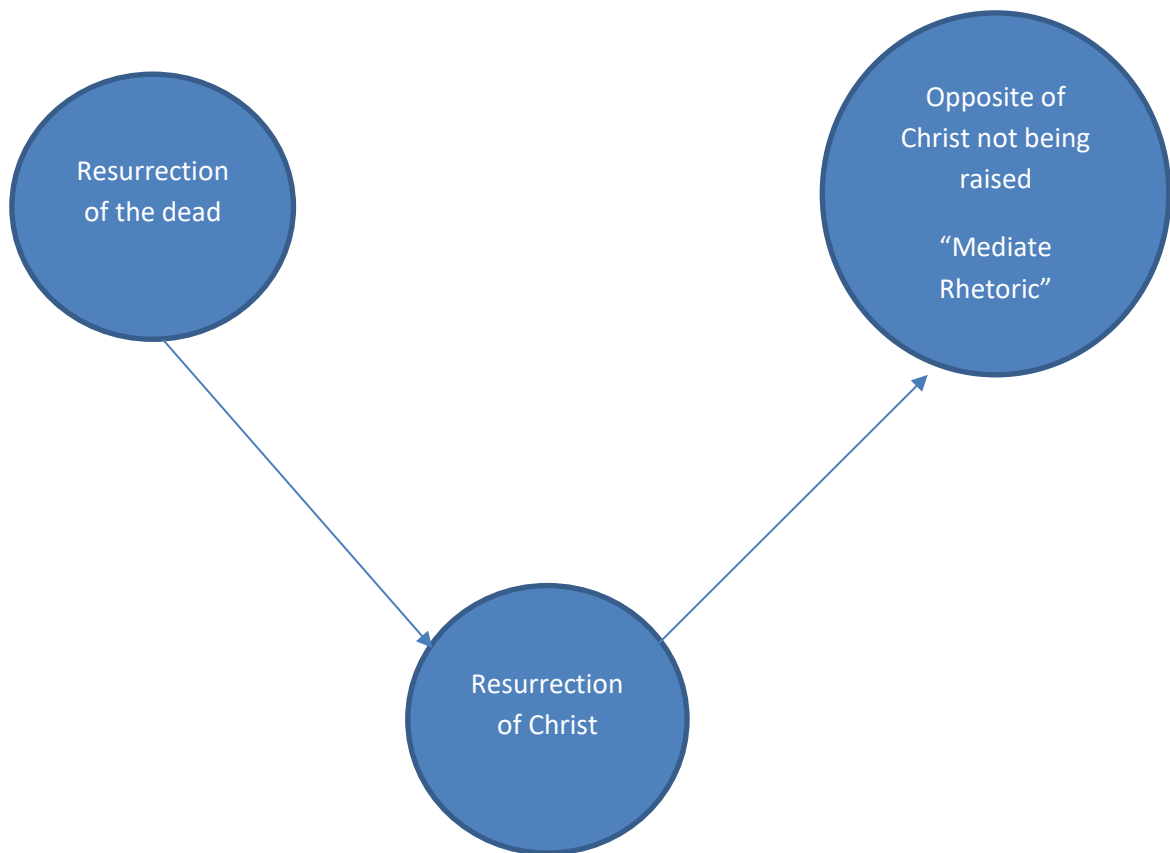


Fig 3.2 Argument of the opposites using Mediate Rhetoric

## Narrative Rhetoric

Fredal (2020, 88) argues that enthymemes primarily have a narrative function:<sup>102</sup> “The Greek rhetorical agon—rhetorical artistry and the rhetorical appeals, including logos—are all organized around storytelling and that the enthymeme is a central feature of rhetorical narrative.”<sup>103</sup>

What Adams remarks about Galatians is equally true about 1 Corinthians: “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*” (Adams, 2012, 2).<sup>104</sup>

As it is evident from 15:3b-9 and 15:23-28, narratives<sup>105</sup> serve a rhetorical purpose in Paul’s argumentation in persuading the Corinthians to believe in the resurrection of the dead.<sup>106</sup> He does this by taking narratives from the life of Christ, or the future rule of Christ, or the intersection of Christ and personnel narratives. In 15:3-9, the narrative is set in the past; it explains what Christ did in the past and how the narrative of Christ intersected with the narratives of Paul and the apostles. The narrative in 15:23-28 is set in the future, and it explains how Christ will destroy the enemies and establish his rule. There too, is an intersection between the narratives of believers and the narrative of Christ.

### *Hays’s Model*

Hays (2002, 22), when discussing the “organic relationship” (as opposed to an artificial one) between the narrative and reflective discourse, contends that certain types of discourses are dependent on a story and would be “unintelligible without the story” and “has meaning only as an unfolding of the meaning of the story.” Paul’s arguments in 1 Corinthians are of this type. The arguments in 1 Cor 15:12-19 would indeed be “unintelligible without the story” of the death, burial, resurrection, and the appearance of Jesus Christ related in 15:3-8.

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<sup>102</sup> Other people like Wuellner (1978, 467) and Robbins (2009, 127-8) (based on Wuellner) have observed the twin aspects of an enthymeme/topos: “argumentative-enthymematic” and “descriptive-narrative.”

<sup>103</sup> Interestingly Fredal’s (2020, 88) method of inquiry is to look at the orator’s speeches themselves. Adams (2012, 38) also follows the same method.

<sup>104</sup> While I certainly agree with this statement and realize that Adams’s purpose is to highlight the use of narratives, it betrays an analysis that looks at rhetoric and narrative as mutually exclusive terms. This is not the case in Fredal or in my CR.

<sup>105</sup> For a survey of “Narrative Dimension in Paul’s Thought” see Hays (2002, chap. 2) and Matlock (2002, 45-6). For a discussion of a narrative rhetoric method see Adams (2012, chaps. 2 and 3).

<sup>106</sup> Using narratology or narrative criticism to analyze Paul is nothing new. However, my contribution is to bring together the insights of Fredal who sees narratives as an important aspect of rhetoric, and, to view narratives, especially the ones that relate to the life of Christ, as central to the rhetoric of Paul, i.e., as part of CR.

Hays (2002, 28) actually argues that in 1 Corinthians 15 Paul relies on a “Christological story” that he had previously related to the Corinthians and bases his “doctrinal position” on that story. Hays talks about *mythos* and *dianoia*. The *mythos* structure of the story appears in vv. 3-8, where Paul repeats the basic story. The real *dianoia*, that is, the interpretation of the story appears in 15:12-19. Hays’s methodology involves first seeking the story and then seeking to understand how the story “shapes the logic of argumentation.” I have listed Hays’s (2002, 887–88) three points with my reflection below:

1. There can be an organic relationship between stories and reflective discourse because stories have an inherent configurational dimension (*dianoia*) which not only permits but also demands restatement and interpretation in non-narrative language.

This can be seen in 1 Corinthians 15. The narrative *mythos* is explained using narrative language in vv. 3-8. The *dianoia* interprets the story to the specific situation in Corinth, using “non-narrative language.”

2. The reflective restatement does not simply repeat the plot (*mythos*) of the story; nonetheless, the story shapes and constrains the reflective process because the *dianoia* can never be entirely abstracted from the story in which it is manifested and apprehended.

The *dianoia* draws logical conclusions from the *mythos* of the story; it does not simply repeat them.

3. Hence, when we encounter this type of reflective discourse, it is legitimate and possible to inquire about the story in which it is rooted.

The story Paul uses in the “reflective discourse” is the story of Christ and is the gospel, which is part of the tradition.

In the discussion regarding narrative rhetoric in Paul I mainly use the work of Hays (2002) whose model in turn relies on the work of Greimas (1966; 1970) as described below.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> For works on narrative structure Hays (2002, chap. 3 Section B, n 36). Hays’s model is highly influential according to Longenecker (2002) and is used by many, including Wright (1994, 204-5).

Each story has a beginning, middle and end (*Aris Poet* 1450b) which Greimas maps to initial, topical and final sequences (1970, 185–230; Hays 2002, 1475). Each of these can have sub elements called “narrative syntagms”:

1. Contract syntagm: in which a task “contract,” is assigned to the central character.
2. Disjunction/conjunction syntagm: in which he/she begins to fulfil the contract.
3. Performance syntagm: in which he/she completes or fails the assigned task (Greimas 1970, 191; Hays 2002, 1480).

Greimas (1966, 192–203; Hays 2002, sec. 1482f) assigns some “canonical functions” to each of these syntagm:

1. In the contract syntagm there are two canonical functions:
  - a. Mandating Acceptance – a call is made to the protagonist.
  - b. Communication/Reception – protagonist receives help to complete her/his “contract.”
2. In the disjunction/conjunction syntagm - Function is manifested whenever a movement is manifested: arrival/departure or departure/return.
3. In the performance syntagm there are three canonical functions:
  - a. Confrontation - Protagonist encounters and adversary.
  - b. Domination/Submission – Protagonist of the adversary triumphs over the other.
  - c. Attribution – Protagonist’s victory allows the contract to be fulfilled and some object of value to be given to a “receiver.”

Greimas (1966, 173–82; 1970, 249–70), followed by Hays (Hays 2002, sec. 1524), uses the “actantial model” which shows the relationship between the agents and objects in the story (“actants”). The actantial model provides six roles:

- 1 Sender is the one who establishes the mandate in contract syntagm.
- 2 Subject is the figure who receives the mandate.
- 3 Object is the thing or quality that the sender wants to communicate to someone.

- 4 Receiver is the person to whom the sender wants to communicate the object.
- 5 Opponent is a figure or force preventing the subject from carrying out the mandate.
- 6 Helper is the figure or force that aids the subject in carrying out the mandate (Hays 2002, 1525).

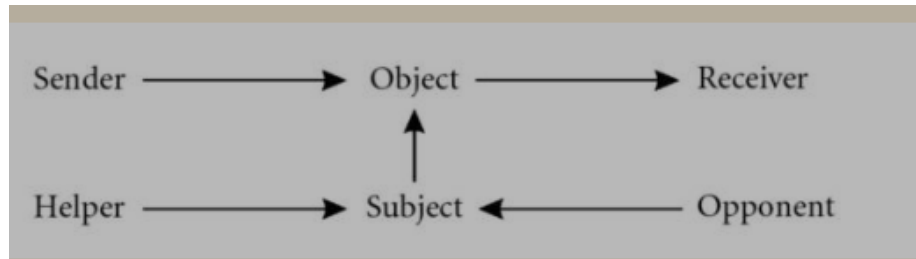


Fig 3.3: Actantial Model, source: Hays (2002, sec. 1533)

The first line is the line of communication and the second line is the line of power (Hays 2002, 1533). I use Hays’s model to analyze the narrative sections in 1 Cor inthians15 as it occurs in the chapters that follow.

### Argumentative Topoi

#### Topos

Topos has been defined as “an ancient set of pedagogical resources designed to help speakers and writers invent arguments for public debate” (Fleming 2003, 93). Cicéron and Reinhardt (2006, 95) point out that topoi “are, traditionally, heuristic devices intended to help students invent and analyze argumentative discourse.” In his introduction to Cicero’s *Topica*, Reinhardt adds that the “idea and common topoi help in devising rhetorical deductions,” that is, enthymemes (Cicéron and Reinhardt 2006, 22). Since τόπος means place in Greek, it has been thought of as the place where the arguments can be found (Fleming 2003, 96). As such “the rhetor is a hunter, the argument his quarry, and the topic a locale in which the argument may be found” (Leff 1983, 24). This is why “those who know all the *loci* [or *topoi*], i.e., the lines of argument to be used, are able . . . to grasp extemporaneously the elements of persuasion in *any* case or question” (Vico 1990, 15).

From this discussion it is obvious that topics are something that serve the purpose of enthymemes. “Now one way of selecting [enthymemes, and] this the first [in

importance], is the ‘topical’” [*Rhet* 2:22:12-13]. Aristotle also makes a classification about common and specific topoi:

I am saying that dialectical and rhetorical syllogisms are those in which we state *topoi*, and these are applicable in common [*koinēi*] to questions of justice and physics and politics and many different species [of knowledge]; for example the *topos* of the more and the less, for to form syllogisms or speak enthymemes from this about justice will be just as possible as about physics or anything else, although these subjects differ in species. But there are “specifics” that come from the premises of each species and genus [of knowledge];... Most enthymemes are derived from these species that are particular and specific, fewer from the common [topics]. [*Rhet* 1.2.21-22]

In this section Aristotle makes a distinction between common and specific topoi.<sup>108</sup> The ones that I have listed under the section *Argumentative Topoi* are specific in the sense they are applicable only to argumentation in Christian discourse.<sup>109</sup> My classification of these as topoi is justified by Paul’s repeated use of them in 1 Corinthians. For example, the topos ‘sinning against the Lord’ is used as an argument in the Lord’s Supper, fornication, eating food sacrificed to idols, divorce, going to law courts, and expelling the immoral brother. Paul uses these topoi to form CR arguments. In Aristotelian terms, enthymemes are formed by applying these topoi to specific problems that the Corinthian church was facing. This is Paul’s method of persuading the Corinthians to change their behavior.

### Christ Centered Topoi

One of my basic arguments is that Paul uses Christ centered topoi in 1 Corinthians. In the sections below I give an *outline* of such Christ related topoi. However, I identified them by going through the 1 Corinthians’ passages in detail as I have demonstrated in the ‘Survey of 1 Corinthians’ section below. What the outline will show is the presence and

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<sup>108</sup> This distinction that Aristotle made is variously understood by his modern interpreters. McBurney (1994) cited in Fleming (2003, 98) argues that there are indeed three classifications: -the general material topics (*koinoi topoi*) 1.3 -the special material topics (*idia*) of 1.4-2.17 - the formal topics (*topoi enthymemaon*) of 2.23. But the majority view is that there are only two categories (Fleming 2003, 98).

<sup>109</sup> While I am arguing for specific Christian topoi, Malherbe (1996) shows how a secular topos has been Christianized in Luke.

identity of those topoi and what the survey will show is the justification for the topoi to be identified as such by their repetitive use in 1 Corinthians.

Paul takes topoi related to Christ and uses them in his arguments. Some of the topoi go down to phrase level also, for example, τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε which is used in 6:10 and 7:23. In 6:20 the issue is fornication, and in 7:23 the issue is slavery. In both Paul uses the same Christ centered idea of being bought for a price. Being bought for a price is a sub topoi under the works of Christ topoi

These topoi are often used as mediate rhetoric as I demonstrate below, that is, Paul, instead of talking about the issue at hand, discusses a topoi (see the list I have given below of some of Paul's topoi), and then (sometimes) he shows the connection between the issue at hand, and the mediate rhetoric. In the section below I outline the topoi that Paul uses in 1 Corinthians.

### **Authority of the Words of Christ, Scriptures and Tradition**

This topoi deals with the intertexture of the words of Christ, Hebrew scripture (HS) and other material within Paul's writings, that is, 1 Corinthians in our case. The words of Christ are not just repeated, but they are made part of Paul's rhetoric to change the Corinthian church's behavior. As Schnabel (2018, 234) observes, "[I]t is only in 1 Corinthians that Paul quotes the words of Jesus as arguments in his exhortation."

It is also an example of Kennedy's radical rhetoric that we explored in a previous chapter. An appeal is made to the words of Christ based on his Lordship. As Schnabel (2018, 236) concludes, "[F]or Paul, the words of Jesus have unquestionable authority. If and when Jesus has spoken on a particular matter, then his words are the end of the discussion." Paul does this quite emphatically in 7:10 in dealing with the issue of divorce.

While the observation that Paul uses the HS in his writings is an obvious one, my focus is on the fact that Paul relates Christ to scripture. As Kruger (2013, 15) remarks, "[A]t its core, early Christianity was a religion concerned with books. From the very beginning, Christians were committed to the books of the Hebrew scriptures and saw them as paradigmatic for understanding the life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth."

This happens in two different frames. In one, Paul attributes scriptural status to the words of Christ ("not I but the Lord," 7:10). In this frame, CR works by appealing to the Lordship of Christ as the messiah and the son of God, which is what gives authority to his words. In the other frame, the arguments are usually formed by looking at Christ or the events of his life as fulfillment of scripture (e.g., 15:3 'according to scripture') or by comparing or contrasting an element from the HB to Jesus Christ (that rock was Christ in

1 Cor 10:4 and the Adam-Christ comparison and first fruits in 1 Cor15:21-22). In this frame, CR works by transferring the already established authority of the HS to Christ.<sup>110</sup>

Paul also attributes the same authority of the HB to the early church's tradition. As I demonstrated in 1 Cor 15:3b-5 Paul cites a pre-Pauline tradition. Paul makes a strong appeal through that, by attaching scriptural authority to the tradition of the apostolic κήρυγμα.

### **The Humanity of Christ**

As firmly as his arguments are based on the divinity of Christ, Paul also bases his arguments on the humanity of Christ. It is the humanity of Christ which helps to build a bridge between the resurrection of dead humans and the resurrection of Christ, who is the second Adam (1 Cor 15:21-22, 45-49). If we are to view Christ as the second Adam, then Christ must indeed be human like Adam.

### **The Salvific Works of Christ**

The death and resurrection of Christ are part and parcel of Paul's CR. He uses it in many places including in 1 Cor15:3-5, to change the belief system and behavior of his Corinthian converts.

While the "authority of the word of Christ and scripture" topos focused on the past events of Israel's history being applied to Christ, this element focuses on Christ's past life being representative of the believer's future. For example, Paul states that Christ is the first fruits of those who will be raised (1 Cor15:20) and that just as Christ was raised from the dead, those who are his will also be raised (1 Cor 15:23). Elsewhere Paul also does it the other way around. He takes events from the lives of believers and identifies them with the events of Christ's life: in the baptism the believer identifies himself with the death and resurrection of Jesus. The power of the gospel comes because it proclaims Christ crucified (1 Cor 2:1).

Paul's advice to ethical issues in 1 Corinthians concentrate on the salvific acts of Christ before coming up with an ethical imperative (Malcolm 2017, 51; Schnabel 2018, 233). This then is applied as a mediate rhetoric.

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<sup>110</sup> Oropeza (2002) takes a similar methodological approach. In answering the question of how Paul persuaded the Corinthians to be united by realizing the times in which they lived, i.e., to maintain the tension between the now and not yet. He describes how Paul used "Israel's traditions" to persuade the Corinthians because he considered them as "the oracles of God" τὰ λόγια τοῦ θεοῦ (Rom 3:1-2) (2002, 91). He demonstrates how Paul identifies Christ as the "Isaianic servant of God" (2002, 96) and also the Corinthians community to be participating in the "new exodus-wilderness journey" (2002, 92).

## Affiliation to the Christ Community as a Binding Force

As is evident from the analysis of the passages below, Paul incorporates the Christ community into his (Christ) rhetoric to persuade the Corinthians to change their behavior. This is also why he was very concerned about the purity of the Christ community.

Paul wants them to distance themselves from the secular community of which they were a part and proposes the church as an alternate community. Horsley (2000a, 91) remarks that Paul “even instructed the alternative *ekklesia* to conduct their own community affairs separate from the dominant society, specifically to deal internally with whatever conflicts emerged and to avoid the civil courts, and in general, when they had to deal with the world, to do so ‘as though they had no dealings with it’ (1 Corinthians 5; 6:1-11 ; 7:29 - 3 1).” Paul also “forbids them participation in the sacrificial temple banquets by which the overlapping networks of social relations that constituted the body politic were ritually constituted” (Horsley 2000b, 74). Mitchell’s (1993a) work shows the unity of the message of 1 Corinthians by showing how it is a rhetoric of reconciliation aimed at creating unity in a divided Christian congregation.

Once such community is formed, the CR works by showing the negative results of being outside of that community. 1 Cor 15: 12 almost sounds like a threat. The question is not simply if Christ has been raised from the dead, but if Christ is *proclaimed* as raised from the dead, how can some of the Corinthians say that there is no resurrection of the dead? Paul implies that to argue that the dead are not raised is to nullify the message of the Gospel held by the ingroup members who believe that Christ has been raised from the dead (v. 11). Consequently, the Christ community gives the Corinthians a strong reason to believe and behave as in-siders. Seen in this light we also note the role of *Christian tradition* in CR since the community is formed as an alternate community to civic society in Corinth. As a result, for members to have beliefs and behaviors contrary to the Christ community is simply unacceptable.

By emphasizing the solidarity of the Christ community at Corinth, Paul “was subverting the unity and concord advocated in public oratory that formed the very basis of the Pax Romana in the Greek cities” (Horsley 2000a, 91). While the Greco-Roman rhetoric tried to create agreement and harmony in the greater civic society, CR tried to create harmony and unity in the Christ community by identifying the community with Christ, as members of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:12-30).

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are both core rituals of the community. Baptism is not merely an initiation rite for the new believer; it signifies so much more in terms of identification with the death and resurrection of Christ. It also makes the believer part of the community and symbolizes them becoming part of Christ's body (12:13). They are being baptized *into* the community. This was an important ritual for the Corinthian converts, so much so that they formed subgroups based on who baptized them (1:14)(Fee 2014, 121).<sup>111</sup>

The Lord's Supper was another key ritual of the community. Paul says that they proclaim the Lord's death until he comes by participating in the ritual (1 Cor 11:26), and, as I discuss below, Paul argues that the Lord's Supper brings them closer to each other and signifies the fact that they are one body (10:17): "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread."

That the Lord's Supper was seen as part of Christian identity is clear from the reference that Pliny the younger (though written probably sixty years after Paul) makes in his letters (10.96.7). He explains how some Christians explained that they would have a meal on a fixed day of the week together. It is also interesting to note that Pliny classifies Christianity as a secret brotherhood (10.96.7) perhaps due to practices like the Lord's Supper.

Part of the reason why there was disunity among the Corinthians is because both these rituals, baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were supposed to bring unity were in disarray. Groups were formed based on who baptized them, and they were creating divisions by the way they participated in the Lord's Supper. These rituals were supposed to serve as socio-psychological reminders to the community that they were indeed one body in Christ.

Scholars agree that the "social and ideological boundaries" of the Corinthian community were "vague and undifferentiated" (Adams 2000, 93; Theissen 2004, 121-43; Trebilco 2017, 213). The absence of any reference to persecution or struggles between

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<sup>111</sup> Best (1980, 9-10) argues to the contrary, that there is no connection between baptism and divisions. Chester (2005, 280,291), however, supports the observation that baptism did cause factions at Corinth. He argues that since it was through baptism that they attained a new level of "pneumatic experience," they viewed the baptizer as possessing some sort of power. Chester connects mystery cults with the initiation rite as part of his reasoning process and cites, cultic rites where the initiate called the initiator, father. He also quotes Tertullian, "for no doubt, when any desire initiation in the mysteries, their custom is first to go to the master or father of the sacred rites" (*Apol 8, Ad Nat. 1.7.23*). Clarke (1993, 93) comes to the same conclusion without referring to the Spirit. He argues that the Corinthians viewed the leaders who baptized them as having special value. Pascuzzi (2009, 823-4) connects the "baptism factor" with the intergroup fights between Paul's faction and Apollo's faction. Richardson (1984, 103) suggests that Paul attacks Apollos and alludes to his baptizing role in calling him a "waterer" in 1 Cor 3:6.

the Christian community and the larger community has also been noticed by scholars (Barclay 1992, 57).<sup>112</sup> This could be due to the fact that they lived more like the secular society of which they were a part than as the set apart community of Christ. Paul highlights the need for the solidarity and uniqueness of the Christian community right throughout the letter. A quick survey (below) of 1 Corinthians shows that Paul wanted the Corinthians to know and live as a separated community in all areas of their life.<sup>113</sup>

In 1 Corinthians 1-2, Paul explains how such communities are formed: while the Jews require a sign and the Greeks require wisdom, the Christ community is formed based on Christ, the power of God and wisdom of God (1:24, 30). Christ crucified is the wisdom that was preached and was accepted, which marks off the community: “For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God” (1:18). What uniquely distinguished the Christ community is its belief in the salvific work of Christ.

In 5:1-2 Paul shows the difference between the two communities. He tells the Corinthians that what they are doing is not even named among gentiles because it is so evil. The Christ community is expected to maintain its purity and its standards.

In 6:9-10 Paul shows the need to maintain the difference between the two communities and reminds them that they were once part of the other community but are now part of the Christ community. The believers are advised not to go to courts because they will judge the world, so the group of those who belong to Christ will judge those who do not belong to Christ. The Christ community is to guard their witness and their holiness in front of the other community (6:6).

In chapter 7 Paul talks about the conflicts that could arise by special cases where the two communities confront one another when a believing wife is married to an unbelieving husband (7:10).

In chapter 10 Paul identifies the Christ community as the one that participates in the rituals instituted by Christ, whereas the pagans sacrifice to demons (10:20). The solidarity of the community is to be maintained by being considerate about others

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<sup>112</sup> Barclay (1992, 57) notes how Paul compares his hardships with the Corinthians’ “painless experience” in 4:9-10.

<sup>113</sup> Trebilco (2017, 215–19 and throughout) compares the terms Paul uses in 1 Corinthians and Romans to designate outsiders and arrives at five terms that are unique to Corinthians. The five unique terms are οἱ ἀπολλυμένοι, οἱ ἄδικοι, οἱ ἄπιστοι, οἱ ἔξω and ἰδιώται. Trebilco argues that these words are significant, and Paul’s use is purposeful since he wants to emphasize their “set-apart nature” in the face of their failure to maintain their uniqueness.

especially about the weak brothers (1 Cor 8:9-13, and 10:29). By participating in the Lord's Supper, they become *one* community (10:17).<sup>114</sup>

The instruction about the Lord's Supper in 1 Corinthians 11 seeks to overcome factionalism in the community. Paul's final advice to them is that they are to wait for each other (11.33). Trebilco (2017, 213) thinks that the issues surrounding the Lord's Supper were caused by the failure of the Corinthians to distinguish between the Lord's Supper and their own cultural dinner parties.

The body of Christ is formed by those who, with the help of the Holy Spirit, call Jesus as Lord (12:4). Paul uses exclusivist language regarding the various parts of the one body of Christ. Since there are members of the one body it becomes clear that there are non-members as well. The body metaphor itself allows Paul to drive home the solidarity of the Christ community to the Corinthians.

In the section on gifts in 1 Corinthians 14, Paul talks about tongues being a sign for non-believers and prophecy being a sign for believers (14:22), again differentiating between the two groups.

1 Cor 15:23 provides the ultimate group differentiation: those who are Christ's will be resurrected. This differentiation between those who belong to Christ and those who do not, forms an ultimate division in Paul's thinking. This will be dealt with at length in the SIT section.

In addition to the above verses, Lim (2017), reading the Pauline Corinthian metaphors through the lens of SIT, demonstrates how Paul's use of phrases like "my brothers and sisters," "in Christ I became your father," "you are God's temple," "you are the body of Christ," contributes to identity formation. His reading focuses on the words Paul uses to designate the Corinthians, as the insiders. Trebilco (2017), on the other hand, analyses the phrases that Paul uses to designate the outsiders.

In the chapters that follow I use SIT and other models like Carter's (2000) to analyze how Paul's rhetoric works by forming identities and communities.

### **Union with Christ**

Paul claims that the believers are the body of Christ and are united to Christ corporately in 1 Corinthians 12). However, he also claims that the believer is connected to Christ individually and uses that to persuade the Corinthians to change their behavior (cf.

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<sup>114</sup> Fee (2014, 452) argues that the order of body and blood, bread and cup has been reversed to suit the discussion about one body in v. 17.

Campbell 2012, sec. 7.2). In case of fornication, he talks about the union in 1 Cor 6:15,17.<sup>115</sup> It is because of this union that the Corinthians are to refrain from going to prostitutes. In countering idolatry, he argues that one cannot take part in the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, implying a union, between the deity and the devotee in the act of worship (1 Cor 10:21). In 1 Cor 15:22, appealing to their union with Christ, Paul makes it clear that those who are in Christ will be raised from the dead.

### **Authenticity of the Experience of Christ**

Based on the work of Sharifian and Palmer (2007), Malcolm (2013, 89) notes how the NT writers were transformed by the “Christ event and its experiential reception.” This most certainly is the case for Paul, who was not only transformed by the “Christ event” but would employ it in his rhetoric to transform others. Paul uses arguments from his own personal experience of the risen Christ (15:8) and the calling of Christ to be his apostle. Thus, the Paul’s authority does not reside in his personal experience per se but in the intersection of his life and the works of Christ. He also appeals to the revelation that he had received, which was a mystery, not known to the Corinthians but revealed to him (15:51).

### **Sin against the Member of Christ’s Body - Individual Sin**

Paul portrays the individual as a member of the body of Christ and as a temple of the Holy Spirit (6:19). Sin at the primary level is something that is done against the individual and his body (1 Cor 6:15, 18).<sup>116</sup>

### **Sin against the Christ Community and the Role of the Christ Community**

Paul portrays the church as the body of Christ (12:12-30) and portrays (some) sin as committed against the body of Christ, against the Christ community. Indirectly it becomes a sin against Christ himself as Paul explains in 8:11 (see next section). So, sin is not only committed against the individual who is a member of the body, but also against the body itself, the community. It finds its fullest expression in 11:17-22.

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<sup>115</sup> Paul’s use of the phrase οὐκ οἶδατε has led Macaskill (2013, 156) to conclude that Paul appeals to theology that is “inherited and shared and not innovated.” This is again a use of the ‘words of Christ/tradition’ topos.

<sup>116</sup> However, this topos is not something that is prevalent throughout the letter but only in some places. As such I have not developed it further.

## Sin against Christ

One of Paul's major rhetorical ploys attacks the Corinthians' misbehavior as sinning against the Lord himself.<sup>117</sup> This was outrageous in Paul's mind and hopefully in the Corinthians' minds. Since this is widely prevalent, I look at it in some detail in the section below.

Paul talks about sinning against the Lord (cf. Malcolm 2017, 51) so much so that the whole of 1 Corinthians can be read as a topos regarding not sinning against the Lord.

Jesus is the exclusive subject of Paul's preaching (1 Cor 1:23, 2:2), and is the wisdom of God (1:24) who came from God (1:30). By implication, for Paul to preach anything other than Christ crucified would be an offence against Christ. Since the Passover lamb (5:7) has been sacrificed, keeping old leaven desecrates the sacrifice of the lamb, as the sacrifice demands purity; so, to keep the old leaven is to refuse the reality and power of the sacrifice. Going to the law courts (6:1-11) is also to a sin against the Lord by implication, as a sin against family members is a sin against Christ (8:12). If after being sanctified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Corinthians are still doing the things listed in 1 Cor 6:9-10, then it will be to make his death meaningless for them, much like keeping the old leaven after the sacrifice of the Paschal lamb. It can be considered a sin against Christ (cf. Heb. 10:29). The believer who fornicates becomes one body with the prostitute; he commits sin against Christ, as he makes the member of Christ's body a member of the prostitute (6:17) thereby profaning the body of Christ.

Regarding the issue of marriage and divorce, the command of the Lord discourages women from separating from their husbands and believing men from divorcing their wives (7:10-11); to divorce one's wife would mean disobedience to the command of the Lord and disrespect to the one who issued the command. Thus, to divorce is to sin against the Lord.

Eating food sacrificed to idols is explicitly marked as a sin against Christ (8:11-12). Also, the one who puts a stumbling block against the weak brother sins against the Lord, who died for the weak brother (8:12). Cheung (1999) confirms my point when he remarks that Paul did not look at idol food "indifferently," but rather he viewed it as a "denial of the Christians' allegiance to Christ."

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<sup>117</sup> While my focus is very strictly on 1 Corinthians, the topos of sinning against Christ can be seen in Heb 10:26-31. For example, the writer of Hebrews says that to go on sinning deliberately is to trample the son of God underfoot.

The Corinthians are warned against lusting for evil things or committing sexual immorality (10:9) because to do so would be to put Christ<sup>118</sup> to the test. The language used here echoes the Israelites who constantly tested Yahweh in the wilderness (Exod 17:7)(Collins 2006, 365).

Drinking the the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons, is to provoke Lord to jealousy; it is an insult to Christ and a sin against Christ (10:21-22).

Christ is the head of every man, and men should not cover their (physical) heads when praying or prophesizing. If they, do it, it would dishonor their heads (11:4). Just as women praying and prophesizing with their heads uncovered dishonors their own heads (11:5).

To partake in the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner is marked explicitly as a sin against the Lord, making one guilty of the body and blood of the Lord and answerable for them (11:27).

In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul brings the resurrection of Christ as the argument against the Corinthian claim that the dead will not be raised. To argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue that Christ was not raised. Because those who are in Christ form the body of Christ as such when Christ is resurrected the members of his body will certainly be resurrected. This would be to disrespect and sin against Christ himself, and make Paul and others false witnesses of God (15:13-18).

Paul not only claims that “no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says ‘let Jesus be cursed!’<sup>119</sup> and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit” (12:3), but he also pronounces an *ἀνάθεμα*<sup>120</sup> on those who do not love the Lord in 16:22.<sup>121</sup> Fee (2013, 121) argues that since in 12:3 the *ἀνάθεμα* is contrasted with those for whom Jesus is Lord, the use of the *ἀνάθεμα* in 16:22 is also connected to the confession of Jesus as Lord.

So, the notion of someone sinning against the Lord is “outrageous.” This is Paul's ultimate argument and the pinnacle of his CR.

### **The Triumphant Rule of Christ**

Some of Paul's discourses fall under the umbrella of Apocalyptic rhetorolect as does 1 Cor15:23-28, where he talks about the future reign of Christ. My observation is that Paul portrays every rule and every authority and power as a personal enemy of Christ. By

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<sup>118</sup> Manuscripts A and 81 have “God” in place of Christ.

<sup>119</sup> A similar curse is pronounced on those who preach a different gospel in Gal 1:8-9.

<sup>120</sup> See the helpful discussion in Eriksson (1998, 279–98).

<sup>121</sup> Weima (1994, 202) thinks that this phrase is also part of an early church tradition.

connecting this to the resurrection of the dead, I argue that Paul's CR works by portraying death as a personal enemy of Christ.

In our current passage, since death is also portrayed as a personal enemy of Christ (v. 25), to argue that death will have the final victory over Christ, which would be the case if Christ was not raised, would be outrageous and equate to blasphemy. To argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue that Christ is not risen, and if Christ is not risen, then death has overpowered him and is the victor. In that sense to argue that the dead will not be resurrected is to sin against Christ.

Related to the rule of Christ, Paul also uses the concept of the day of the Lord as a topos in many of the arguments he presents to convince the Corinthians to change their thinking or behavior (3:13, 5:5 and 6:2).

### **Hope in Christ as other worldly**

Related to the previous topos, Paul portrays the hope of the Christian life as otherworldly. The statement he makes in 15:17, that "if for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied" makes this clear. Since Christian hope is predominantly otherworldly, any behavior that is not in line with that belief is discouraged. He brings it as an argument in 5:5 to persuade the Corinthians to handover the immoral person to Satan so that his soul will be saved on the day of the Lord. So even if he is put out of the community temporarily, he will be saved in the next world. In 6:2-3 Paul uses the same concept as a rhetoric against a believer going to court against another believer – they will judge the angels in the next world. The Corinthians are to refrain from going to prostitutes because the body will be raised (6:14) – another otherworldly theme. Even the Lord's Supper is to be celebrated until Christ comes again (11:26), which is a reminder about the reality of another world to come.

### **The Lordship of Christ as a Threat**

In a few places Paul uses the Lordship of Christ as a rhetoric of threat, to evoke emotional (pathos) fear to change the behavior of the Corinthians. In 1 Cor 10:10 in the context of sexual immorality (10:8-9), he warns them not to tempt Christ and attaches the risk of being destroyed if the warning is not heeded. While they indulge in sexual immorality to satisfy their bodily needs Paul warns that if they tempt Christ the very bodies which they are trying to satisfy will be destroyed.

A few verses later in 10:23 Paul uses the same topos in the context of idolatry. The reference to jealousy alludes to the HB concept of God being a jealous God (Exod 34:14).

The idea was to give God undivided allegiance and devotion. You cannot partake in the cup of the Lord and the cup of the demons. You cannot worship Christ and worship demons. Paul also asks a question to follow this up: “are we stronger than he?” This appeals to the divinity of Christ. That Paul is having the divinity of Christ in mind is confirmed by the fact that in the context he refers to the earth being the Lord’s (v. 25).

In 11:31 there is a threat of illness and even death for those who participate in the Lord’s Supper in an unworthy manner, as they will be guilty of the body and blood of the *Lord*.

In 1 Cor 16:22 there is a *ἀνάθεμα* on those who do not love the Lord. This is a reversal of 1 Cor 12:3 where people try to pronounce an *ἀνάθεμα* on Jesus, possibly based on Deut 21:23. Paul claims that if someone does not love the Lord he is cursed, a curse that has a bearing not only on this life (1 Cor 15:19) but also on the life to come as it is those who belong to Christ who will be raised (15:23).

The fact that Paul has used the Lordship of Christ as a threat in multiple contexts in his argumentation confirms my observation that it is indeed a topos.

It must be noted that this topos works in contrast to 2 Co 5:14–15 which makes use of love as a topos. Because Christ has died for his people, they must live for him. Whereas in the love topos, the response provoked comes from love and gratitude for what Christ has done, in the threat topos the response is evoked by fear of punishment from Christ. The threat topos is probably employed in 1 Corinthians so frequently because of the issues that are being dealt with. The situation could be that love might not work in a situation where the Corinthians are complacent and are having serious moral issues. This is what provoked Paul to ask whether he should come with a stick (4:21).

The second Corinthian passage also serves as an example of CR outside of 1 Corinthians. Christ is being used in Paul’s rhetoric to get the Corinthians to act on something though the topos.

### Argumentative Structure

I have discovered four different kinds of discourses in 1 Corinthians. I define a discourse as a unique configuration of an argumentative method, and an argumentative topos. The idea of different discourses being a configuration of topoi and argumentative methods is at least partly rooted in SRI and the work of Robbins (1996a; 1996b; 2009; 2016). Robbins (2009, 81-88) talks about “inventing a new discourse” and also the role of topoi in defining a discourse.

## Discourses

Analysis of 1 Corinthians has also revealed the following discourses which Paul uses for specific purposes when dealing with issues in the Corinthian church community. By detailing these discourses, I am not in any way arguing that every written sentence in 1 Corinthians should fall into one of these. Such attempts would turn any analyses into a mechanical one. Any new work must take into account that while the methods and arguments we propose do fit the scriptural passages, there will always be parts of scripture which do not fit into the models that we propose. Failure to recognize this will either restrict new work on methodological advancement or will make such methodology mechanical.

### *Foundation Discourse*

Foundational discourse lays the foundation for the main argument. In the foundation discourse one or more Christ centered topoi are set forth in detail. The foundational truths about Christ are referred to or detailed here. Consequence discourse usually draws from the foundation discourse. Foundation discourse usually has narratives in one form or another. In 15:1-11 Paul narrates the story of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. In later sections of chapter 15 Paul draws on elements from the foundation discourse and uses them in his arguments.

It is in the foundation discourse that Paul usually introduces the mediate rhetoric as in 15:1-11. The resurrection of Christ is introduced as the mediate rhetoric for the resurrection of the dead.

### *Statement Discourse*

Statement discourse is where Paul states the real problem at hand. A good example is 1 Cor 15:12 where Paul clearly states the issue he is addressing. This discourse acts like a bridge between the foundation discourse and the consequence discourse that follows.

The proposed solutions also form part of the statement discourse. For example, in 5:1-5 after stating the issue about the immoral person, Paul directs the Corinthians to eject the sinful man from their community.

### *Consequence Discourse*

Consequence discourse works by showing the consequence of the mediate rhetoric introduced in the foundational discourse. For example, 1 Cor 15:13-19 shows the consequence of the foundation discourse in vv. 1-11. The consequence discourse also establishes the connection between the foundation discourse in vv. 3-11 and the statement discourse in v. 12. Consequence discourse will usually take up themes from

and make references to the foundation discourse. In other words, vv. 13-19 demonstrates the logical conclusions of Christ not being raised.

### *Connection Discourse*

Connection discourse shows the reader the connection between the different discourses used in the argument. For example, in 1 Corinthians 15, the connection discourse in vv. 20-22 shows the connection between foundation discourse in vv. 3-11 and the consequence discourse in vv. 13-19; it also shows the connection between the statement discourse in v. 12 and the consequence discourse in vv.13-19; in other words, in this instance it answers the question: if Christ has been raised, why should the dead also not be raised?

In the table below I summarize the discourses, argumentative methods, and topoi for 15:1-34.

Discourse	Argumentative Method	Topoi	Verses
Statement Discourse		Authenticity of Christ experience	1-2
Foundation Discourse	Narrative	Work of Christ, tradition, Calling of Christ, and personal experience of Christ	3-11
Statement Discourse	Mediate Rhetoric	Work of Christ, Tradition, Personal Experience	12
Consequence Discourse	Mediate Rhetoric	Work of Christ	13-19
Connection Discourse	Mediate Rhetoric	Humanity of Christ, Authority of the HB	20-22
Consequence Discourse	Narrative	Rule of Christ	23-28
Consequence Discourse	Mediate Rhetoric	Personal experience reflecting the work of Christ	29-32
Statement Discourse		Ethical considerations	33-34

Table 3:1: Discourse-Topoi Matrix

I have found the use of these discourses extremely helpful for analyzing the rhetorology of 1 Cor 15:1-34 because they clearly bring out Paul's argumentation in the passage as I demonstrate in the next two chapters.

Generalizing a structure from the above, I have arrived at the following general structure by going through the other passages in 1 Corinthians in the survey below. The structure given below is fluid as my survey shows. While most of the elements are present, the order is not always the same and not all elements are present in every passage.<sup>122</sup>

The connection element, where Paul makes the connection between the problem at hand and the seemingly unrelated mediate rhetoric, is also optional. Sometimes the reader is left to make the connection.

- A: Foundation discourse
- B: Statement discourse
- C: Consequence discourse - mediate rhetoric
- D: Connection discourse
- E: Conclusion

### Using CR as a Methodology

Here is a four-step method for an effective use of CR.

1. Undertake a discourse analysis: structure the text according to the four discourse types, namely foundation, statement, consequence, and connection discourses, that were discussed above.
2. Identify the mediate rhetoric: Identify which sections work as the mediate rhetoric and what has been discussed as the mediate rhetoric.
3. Identify and apply narrative rhetoric: Identify whether there are any parts which use narrative rhetoric and do an analysis accordingly.
4. Identify the topoi under each discourse and apply the topoi from the list of topoi.

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<sup>122</sup> This should not pose a problem as even in fitting the Aristotelian genres certain adjustments have to be made. For example, some scholars have seen two narratio sections in chapter 15 one in 1-11 and the other 39-44 (Standaert 1986).

Steps two and three are optional, as there could be sections which are strictly not part of mediate rhetoric, or which do not use narrative rhetoric. I follow this methodology in the chapters that follow. Early in each chapter dealing with 1 Cor 15:1-34, in the “Christ rhetoric of” section, I identify the *topoi* and narrative and mediate rhetoric which are then discussed in detail as my chapters unfold.

### SRI and Christ Rhetoric

In the survey of passages below I have used the concept of rhetorolects as having a core function and a base function. What I mean by a core rhetorolect is the issue that Paul is addressing, sometimes it is the question that Corinthians have asked. The base rhetorolect is the one that Paul uses to give his solution or his answer to their question. For example, in the case of the immoral brother, the reason they must hand him over to Satan is ultimately because “Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed” (5:7). The discourse about the man having his father’s wife is wisdom rhetorolect, which is the core rhetorolect. There is a very clear tradition of wisdom sayings from the wisdom literature in the HS, which talks about adultery and prostitution (cf. Proverbs 7 and 9). However, from the wisdom discourse Paul switches to priestly rhetorolect in talking about the sacrifice of Christ. The answer Paul proposes lies at the point where these rhetorolects meet.

Robbins (2009, 81-88) talks about the “pictorial-narrative function” and the “argumentative-enthymematic function” of the *topoi*, which might correspond to the mediate enthymematic and narrative rhetoric function that we have discussed in CR. However, Robbins does not discuss the concept of mediate rhetoric.

Robbins (2009, 86) also discusses Christology which is “argumentative-enthymematic realm of belief that Jesus is the Messiah” and Christography which is the “the pictorial-narrative realm of belief that Jesus is the Messiah.” The narrative rhetoric which we discuss in my thesis works is in the domain of Christography.

Generally, as Robbins observes, the gospels contain rhetography and epistles contain rhetology. However, in the discourse of 1 Corinthians 15, there is a blend of both rhetology and rhetography – Christology and Christography.

It must be observed that Paul uses a mix of logical arguments and radical arguments in CR. As Robbins (2016, 375) also claims “[E]very form of Christian rhetoric contains a radical dimension, namely, sacred rhetoric of authority, but every form also contains a worldly dimension, namely, a kind of rational argumentation.”

## Ernesto Grassi and Christ Rhetoric

As we saw, Kennedy based his concept of radical rhetoric on Grassi's ideas. In this section I have tried to interact with Grassi and show how CR fits (or does not fit) with his definition of sacred rhetoric.

1. CR *does* arise out of a process of inference as is evident in the 1 Corinthians 15 passage we have briefly examined above.
2. The statements are "not immediate or without contemplation." There is also a reference to earlier Christian tradition, as in 15:3-5. There is some form of mediate logic employed by Paul.
3. In some sense it gives the "reality of sensory appearances a new meaning," as Paul forbids sexually immoral living because of a hope in the future.
4. CR pronounces anything that does not fit with its assertions as "outrageous." Some of Paul's words can indeed be considered as outrageous:

"Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead" (15:12)? "We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified that he raised Christ—whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised" (15:15); "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins." (15:17); "If for this life only we have hoped in Christ, we are of all people most to be pitied." (15:19)

5. CR's pronouncements could be said to be outside of time - but only in the sense of its appeal to all three tenses (Grassi 1980, 103-4).

## Aristotle's Three Genres and Christ Rhetoric

In this section I have tried to define CR in terms of the characteristics of Aristotle's three genres (Murphy and Katula 2003, 70) and [*Rhet* 1.3.1-6, 1358b]:

1. Audience: CR is always addressed to those who profess their belief in Christ and who believe in the gospel. This is because the CR will not make sense to someone who does not believe in the deeds of Christ, and more specifically the death and resurrection of Christ. The role of the audience is to judge or to act against others in the church, or to correct themselves.

2. Place and Purpose: CR is meant to be used in a church context and the purpose generally is to change the behavior or the belief system (or both) of a Christ believing community.
3. Topoi: Paul uses a combination of topoi to configure the CR. The topoi are primarily based on Christ.
4. Time: CR takes arguments from the past and even the future to the present. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul uses arguments from the past involving Christ's death, burial, and resurrection (vv. 12-19). He also appeals to the future reign of Christ (vv. 23-28) to convince the Corinthians to lead pure lives in the present (v. 33-34).
5. Structure: notwithstanding the structures for each of Aristotle's three genres, CR has its own structure. The structure is fluid at times, but a recognizable structure is present.

Another feature of CR as discussed in the initial pages of this chapter is that Paul mixes demonstrative arguments and dialectic arguments.

### Survey of 1 Corinthians

In the section below I analyze the passages in 1 Corinthians in search of CR. This survey reveals the topoi, argumentative strategy and importantly the Christ centered nature of Paul's arguments.

#### Οὐκ ἐν Σοφίᾳ Λόγου

In 1:17 Paul claims that he was sent to, "proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power." Instead of ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου Paul presented the σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ. Paul claims in v. 18 that Ὁ λόγος γὰρ ὁ τοῦ σταυροῦ<sup>123</sup> is the power of God.<sup>124</sup> Although the meaning of ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου is contested,<sup>125</sup> I have tried to read 1:24 in the light of 2:13. Paul's claim in 2:13, "and we

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<sup>123</sup> Litfin (2015, 197) argues that this is a non-rhetorical approach that Paul is referring to here. He further adds (2015, 177) that, "confidence in divine power rather than persuasion to bring about the desired results distinguished Paul from the rhetorician."

<sup>124</sup> This however is not to argue that Paul did not use the devices of rhetoric. But rather he did not place his trust in the power of the eloquence of rhetoric to convince people but in the power of the gospel and in the Holy Spirit.

<sup>125</sup> For different views about wisdom see Mihaila (2009, 69–83) Pogoloff (1992, 109ff) and Kwon (2010). Pogoloff (1992, 110) the opinion that it is "sophisticated speech" and connects it with rhetoric. However, Pogoloff does not reject rhetoric fully but only the associated social status. A similar view is taken by Wanamaker (2003, 128). Litfin (1994, 188–92) thinks it is rhetorical skill; Witherington (1995, 103–4)

speak of these things in words not taught by human wisdom (ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις) but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual things to those who are spiritual.” That means even the *words*, that is, the method was spirit given. This is what led Betz (1986, 36–37) to come up with the idea of the “rhetoric of demonstration of spirit and power.”

This verse shows that Paul was not only using a radical message but was also using *radical words* to convey the message. The method is largely determined by the words that are used. What is characteristic of these words is that they are διδακτοῖς πνεύματος<sup>†</sup> and that they are accompanied by ἐν ἱεροδεδειγμένῳ πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως (2:4).<sup>126</sup>

Commentators agree the reference here is not just to the content of the message but also to the method. For example, Thiselton (2000, 265) agrees that “Paul turns to issues of a *mode* of discourse as well as its *content*;” Collins (2006, 135) remarks, “[A]nother result is the highlighting of the phrase *anthropines sophias logos*, ‘words of human wisdom,’ an emphasis consistent with Paul’s emphatic denial that the power of the proclamation depends on the force of his rhetoric.” As Garland (2003, 146) explains, “[S]piritual subjects—namely, the things that God has graciously given, such as Christ’s sacrificial death on the cross—require spiritual expression, ‘words taught by the Spirit.’ The mode of his teaching matches the nature of the subject matter, like by like.” While I do not want to conclude that Paul took an anti-rhetorical stance here,<sup>127</sup> it justifies my claim that Paul may have used a different kind of logic by using different words, words taught by the Spirit. Paul uses the same phrase here (σοφίας λόγοις) as in 1:17 (σοφία ἱεροδεδειγμένου). This suggests that in both verses Paul is talking about the same subject.

Thus, the justification for CR starts from Paul himself. If Paul choose to preach Christ crucified using words taught by the spirit to the Corinthians while they were still unbelievers, it is very unlikely that he would preach/write something else after they have

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argues that it is not about content but rather about “winning arguments and impressing an audience by rhetorical display rather than content”; Garland (2003, 57) thinks that it is “rhetorical eloquence” – popularized by Aristotle and Cicero. Though many scholars have interpreted ἐν σοφία λόγου as a reference to rhetoric, “the scarcity of σοφία within ancient rhetorical sources counts as a significant weakness to this approach” (Pitts 2016, 56). Though Pitts might have a point here, it must be noted that the sophists were called σοφιστής.

<sup>126</sup> If Fee’s (2014, 147) reading of this phrase is correct, then Paul argues that his rhetoric was stronger than the wisdom of the world, ἐν σοφία λόγου, as his method was accompanied with signs of the spirit. This, however, is not important to my line of argument; what is essential to the discussion is that Paul explicitly makes a reference to a different kind of method, something different to the ἐν σοφία λόγου. See Thiselton (2000, 216–23) for a discussion of a different view.

<sup>127</sup> Commenting on 2:4-5 Thiselton (2000, 221) observes, “Paul probably shares with the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions a *concern for truth* which stands over against the *instrumental* or *manipulative* use of language and opinions which marked sophist or popular rhetoric.”

become believers. This means that there is a case to search for a different rhetoric, something that is taught by the spirit even in his letters.

As Litfin (1994, 176) notes, in this section Paul contrasts “God’s perspective with the perspective of τοῦ κόσμου.” In 2:4 Paul contrasts σοφία ἀνθρώπων not with θεοῦ σοφίαν but with δυνάμει θεοῦ. This contrast is also to be seen in 4:20, where Paul asserts, “οὐ γὰρ ἐν λόγῳ ἢ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ ἀλλ’ ἐν δυνάμει.”<sup>128</sup> So one segment works on eloquence and λογος, whereas the other segment works on δυνάμει (θεοῦ). The contrast continues in 2:6-7, where Paul makes a contrast between the θεοῦ σοφίαν and the σοφία λόγος. This wisdom has been a secret and has been hidden and has to do with the crucified Christ (2:7). By bringing it back to the crucified Christ, Paul connects it to his earlier statement that he proclaims Christ crucified in 1:23.

Though we cannot use the later Gospel writers’ usage to determine a word’s meaning in Paul, it must be noted that the gospel writers use λαλέω (which is found in 1 Corinthians 2:13), in relation not only to what is being said but also in relation to the method being used. For example, Mark and Matthew use the word λαλέω in relation to Jesus’s use of parables. This will help us to determine its semantic range in the NT.

Matt 13:3 καὶ ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς πολλὰ ἐν παραβολαῖς λέγων.

Matt 13:10 Καὶ προσελθόντες οἱ μαθηταὶ εἶπαν αὐτῷ· Διὰ τί ἐν παραβολαῖς λαλεῖς αὐτοῖς.

Matt 13:13 διὰ τοῦτο ἐν παραβολαῖς ‘αὐτοῖς λαλῶ’, ‘ὅτι βλέποντες οὐ βλέπουσιν καὶ ἀκούοντες οὐκ ἀκούουσιν οὐδὲ συνίουσιν.

Matt 13:33 Ἄλλην παραβολὴν ‘ἐλάλησεν αὐτοῖς’· Ὁμοία ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ζύμη, ἣν λαβοῦσα γυνὴ ἐνέκρυψεν εἰς ἀλεύρου σάτα τρία ἕως οὗ ἐζυμώθη ὅλον.

Mark 4:33 Καὶ τοιαύταις παραβολαῖς πολλαῖς ἐλάλει αὐτοῖς τὸν λόγον καθὼς ἠδύνατο ἀκούειν·

The phrase Christ crucified starts the discussion about Paul’s use of narrative with rhetorical effect. Paul did not just say that he preached Christ, but *Christ crucified*. While

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<sup>128</sup> Wanamaker (2006, 348) notes that “in 4:19 λόγος and δύναμις function as contraries,” though he does not connect it with 2:4.

accepting that was highlighting the foolishness of the crucified messiah,<sup>129</sup> the rhetography of Christ crucified alludes to the narratives around the death of Christ, creating an animated picture. A more complete discussion of this follows later.

### Factions and Christ (3:5, 11, 23)

Disunity was a problem in the Corinthian community to such an extent that Mitchell (1993) argues the whole letter is written around the theme of reconciliation. When dealing with factions Paul answers the Corinthians in 3:23 by finally saying that all of us belong to Christ. The point of this passage is that while the Corinthians say that they belong to Paul or Apollos, actually they and everything else belongs to the Corinthians (Fee 2014, 197). Their relationship with God is mediated through Christ. We notice a case of CR here, where Paul brings Christ as an answer to their practical issues, although the CR is not as well developed as in the other sections as we will see below.

We also notice the beginning of the use of the topos, “affiliation to the Christ Community.” In 3:23 Paul explains the basis of the community, “You belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God”: the community is formed by Christ. In opposition to the Corinthian factions, based on identification with human leaders, Paul advises them to belong to Christ.<sup>130</sup> Paul uses this as a major rhetorical force to attack the “outrageous” divisive behavior in the Corinthian Christ community.

The topos of the salvific works of Christ is also at work here. As Schnabel (2018, 247) observes: “to pledge loyalty to different Christian leaders is to negate the significance of Jesus’s death on the cross: followers of Jesus who owe their salvation to Jesus’s death owe loyalty to Jesus, exclusively, the only Messiah and Lord.” Paul brings the death of Christ as part of his rhetoric to persuade the Corinthians to change their behavior.

The topos of the Christian life as other worldly is also prominent here. Paul argues that the work each one does is given its ultimate meaning on the day of the Lord (1 Cor 3:12-15). The Christ centric nature of this passage is made even more prominent by Paul’s reference to Christ as the foundation (3:12).

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<sup>129</sup> The well-known objection of Celsus in Origen (Cels 1:30,31) that Christ’s death cannot contain soteriological value as the death was so shameful, shows the attitude of the non-Christian people in antiquity towards the death of Christ by crucifixion.

<sup>130</sup> Litfin (1994, 187) sees the group formation in Corinth as resulting from Paul’s lack of rhetorical skills. The Corinthians divided themselves into those who were on Paul’s side and those who were against Paul and on Apollos’s side (Litfin 1994, 184).

## Sexual Immorality (5:1-8) <sup>131</sup>

A man among the Corinthians was living with his father's wife.<sup>132</sup> Paul instructs them to expel the man from their community by handing him over to Satan (5:3-5).<sup>133</sup> The reason<sup>134</sup> (5:6-8) why the Corinthians are to get rid of the immoral man is that Christ the Passover lamb<sup>135</sup> has been sacrificed.<sup>136</sup> A casual reader might ask a question, a legitimate one at that, what has the sacrifice of Christ as the paschal lamb to do with expelling an immoral brother?

Sometimes Paul explains the connection quite clearly (as we shall see in 1 Corinthians 15) but other times he does not make the connection explicitly. In this case Paul does explain the connection, by creating a metaphor in which the source of the metaphor is the Passover lamb and the target, to which meaning from the source is transferred, is Christ (Wanamaker 2005). Though Paul does not cite any scriptures directly here, his intertextual reference to the HS is evident in his reference to the Passover lamb. The Passover was instituted in Egypt when the Israelites' God, Yahweh, passed over their houses and killed the firstborn of the Egyptians (Exod 12:21-2). Yahweh passed over the Israelites because he saw the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorpost of the Israelites.

Paul makes use of this religious heritage of the Jewish people and their celebration of Passover (and the feast of the unleavened bread) in which they are directed by God to purge their households of the old leaven. Paul compares the immoral "brother" to the little yeast that leavens a whole batch of dough, and he wants the Corinthian community to be like a new batch of unleavened dough, uncorrupted by the old yeast of malice and

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<sup>131</sup> Wanamaker (2006, 353f) analyses this passage as a set of enthymemes consisting of "Case," "Rule," and "Result" trios. The second enthymeme based on v.1 he argues is an argument from contraries; the purpose of which is to put the Corinthians to shame.

<sup>132</sup> There is some confusion as to the exact nature of the relationship between this man and the woman. If the man was keeping his father's former wife that would be illegal by Roman law (Clarke 1993, 77-80), though De Vos (1998, 106-8) argues that it was his the father's concubine. Winter (2001, 49) argues that the father was alive and that the "Gentiles" attached punishment for both parties involved here.

<sup>133</sup> Malina (1996, 353) suggests that the church tolerated him because of the benefits he brought to the Corinthian church.

<sup>134</sup> Wanamaker (2006: 356-7) also agrees that Paul is giving the reason, but it is not entirely clear whether he considers v. 6 or 7 as the reason.

<sup>135</sup> Paul gives the reason for them to expel the immoral person by creating a metaphor in which the source of the metaphor is the Passover lamb and the target, to which meaning from the source is transferred, is Christ (Wanamaker 2005).

<sup>136</sup> Wanamaker (2006, 357) argues that the part about the yeast in v. 6 is wisdom rhetorolect as it takes an example from God's creation. He also argues that in v. 7b, Paul "recontextualizes the enthymeme" about the yeast to a priestly rhetorolect to be interpreted in the light of the Passover. While this is correct, I see the reference to the yeast in v 6b as part of v. 7. In other words, I see vv. 6-8 as one unified whole talking about the Passover and the feast of the unleavened bread. Because if we ask a question why they should get rid of the unleavened bread the reason Paul gives is that our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed v. 7b.

evil (v. 8). As Conzelmann (1975, 98) comments, “[T]he leaven becomes the symbol of that which is unclean and indeed actively polluting.” He compares qualities such as malice and evil also to the old yeast as well as the people who have such qualities. The purpose of expelling the brother then is to protect the community. What makes the community holy is the sacrifice of Christ as the paschal lamb.<sup>137</sup> It is because of Christ’s sacrifice that unholy things must be purged.<sup>138</sup> Paul introduces the Paschal lamb as the mediate rhetoric, his ultimate reason for the Corinthian community to expel the immoral brother. The argument about the paschal lamb is the mediate rhetoric as there is no direct connection. He talks about something else to establish something different. The structure seems to be as follows:

Statement discourse: The presence of the immoral brother among the  
community 5:1-5

Foundation Discourse/Mediate rhetoric: Christ the Paschal lamb has been  
sacrificed 5:7b

Connection Discourse: Clean out the old yeast 5:7a

The statement discourse conveys the issue and Paul’s proposed solution. The connection discourse shows the connection between the statement discourse and foundation discourse: it is because of the paschal lamb has been sacrificed that the yeast of leavening must be thrown out. Leavened bread is a metaphor falling within the frame of the paschal lamb metaphor.

It must be noted, however, that Paul does not explain in what ways that Christ can be compared to the Passover lamb or more importantly why he should be compared to the Passover lamb (Siker 2011, 68). This could be because he considers certain things to be first principles. Since the sacrifice, atonement and Passover lamb are used thoroughly in Paul, it could be a conceptual metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson 2003, 3–8, and throughout).

According to 5:3-5, the community is to hand over the immoral brother to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his soul may be saved, that is for his benefit. In vv. 6-8 Paul gives yet another reason to expel the immoral brother. This time it is for the

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<sup>137</sup> McLean (1996, 27) has argued that this singular reference in Paul to the Paschal lamb does not carry the idea of an atoning sacrifice. However, what interests us in this passage is Paul’s methodology. The debate about the nature of Christ’s sacrifice is beyond the scope of this thesis.

<sup>138</sup> Siker (2011, 67) argues for the cleansing character of the death of Christ.

protection of the community. This is in contrary to Aristotle, who said adultery is committed against the individual [Rhet 1.13.3].<sup>139</sup> Having the immoral brother in the Christ community will defile the community like a little yeast leavening a batch of dough. The purity of the Christ community must be protected at all costs, a concern Paul addresses in vv. 9-13 as well. He advises them not to associate with an immoral brother, not even to eat with him. Not eating with him would certainly imply that he must be removed from the community or denied the privilege of participating in the Lord's Supper, a subject Paul addresses in chapter 11. In 1 Corinthians 11 he instructs all the participants to judge themselves before partaking in the Lord's Supper (see the discussion below). Hence expelling the immoral brother is for his own benefit and the benefit of the community of which he is a part. Contrary to Aristotle's classification of all unjust actions as the ones affecting the individual or the community [Rhet 1.13.3], Paul is making the point that what affects the individual will affect the whole community.

The topos of the affiliation to the Christ community is evident here. Paul turns the Corinthian community to one that celebrates the Passover lamb (Wolter 2015, 105). This aspect becomes very clear in 5:9-11. He is not worried about such practices among the heathen, but it cannot be tolerated in the Christ community because it will spoil others. Since the Passover lamb has been sacrificed, there is also the need to be holy. May (2004, 43-57) argues that the identity of the Christ community was in terms of sexual ethics. The "ethical dichotomy" leads to a sense of belonging and to group identity that separates the insider from the outsider.<sup>140</sup> I think May (2004, 59) is correct when he comments, "[M]ost obviously Paul raises this subject because his conception of the church as a moral community is threatened by the existence of a notoriously immoral man in its midst." The "social category" (from SIT) of the Corinthian ekklesia is threatened by having this immoral person in their midst. When they do a "social comparison" they are worse than the outgroup, the pagans (5:1). Paul encourages them to think of their identity as a Christ community celebrating the death of Christ. May (2004, 62) explains that "in 1 Corinthians its use [ἔθνη] always implies that the church now stands (with, or in the place of Israel) opposed to the outgroup ἔθνη."

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<sup>139</sup> Aristotle also attributed adultery to "lack of self-control" [Rhet 2.17.4]. He said that it is unlikely for ugly men to be suspected of adultery [Rhet 1.12.5]. He also said that the motive for adultery should be classified: if someone does it for gain, it is injustice, and if someone does it out of lust, it is self-indulgence [Eth. Nic V.2 1130a17-1130b5]. He also considered adultery to be disgraceful [Pol VII.16 1335b38-1336a3].

<sup>140</sup> While there is a communal aspect to Paul's imperatives, what I say must be distinguished from Mitchell who argues that this immoral man has become a "source of division" (Mitchell 1993b, 112).

We repeatedly see in Paul that his rhetoric lies at least partly in making appeals to the Christ community, in treating the group of believers as a people transformed by the death and resurrection of Christ whose identity is formed by Christ. Paul condemned them for their boasting of the immoral brother (5:2,6). He tells them not to think of themselves as a community that identifies itself by an immoral association, but rather to identify themselves as community which celebrates the death of Christ, the Passover lamb who has been sacrificed, and cleans the impure elements among themselves.

The rhetography of the phrase Paschal lamb would evoke corporate and scriptural memories of the community that was delivered from Egypt thereby setting a narrative wheel in motion. These phrases would evoke images and narrative in the mind of the readers who were familiar with the exodus story and with the festivals of the Jews. The story of the paschal lamb and its blood saving the Israelites from destruction, from the wrath of God would have conveyed pictures about the death of Christ. This is another topos of CR: Paul takes an image from the HS and transposes it onto Christ, finding Christ as the fulfillment of the HS sacrificial system.

The Corinthians had not only ignored the immorality of the wayward brother, but they were proud of him and continued to worship as a Christ community with him. How do you get such stubborn people to change their ways? Paul uses several rhetorical devices to convince them to act:

1. He starts with a report “ὅλως ἀκούεται” (5:1) – that would imply that what the Corinthians were doing was being reported widely, and they were becoming notorious as a community because they had failed to address this issue.
2. He *labels* what the immoral person was doing as πορνεία (5:1). He takes something about which the Corinthians were proud, namely, a man keeping his father’s wife, and reframes it as something that must be mourned. Aristotle said with wisdom that people often accept that they have done something but will not accept the label used by the prosecutor. They will accept that they are sleeping with a woman but that is not adultery [*Rhet* 1.13.9, *Eth. eud.* 2.3, 1221b18-1221b27]. Paul is letting them see what they have been tolerating, for what it is, πορνεία.

3. Paul also says that Ὅλως ἀκούεται ἐν ὑμῖν πορνεία (5:1). The word ὑμῖν makes the community responsible for this man's actions for tolerating it, being proud of it and not taking action.
4. He reports that they are arrogant about it, instead of being in mourning (5:2). It is very important to note that in this issue and the issue of fornication that follows, Paul is not using shame as a rhetorical device, unlike the issue of going to Law courts in 6:5. As Kennedy (2007, 134) notes, going to prostitutes was not considered a shameful thing in antiquity.<sup>141</sup>
5. He appeals to the authority of Lord Jesus (5:4-5), a feature of radical CR. Since Christ is Lord, anything coming from him must be accepted as authoritative.
6. He appeals to his own apostolic and fatherly authority (5:3-5). His authority in turn comes from Jesus Christ, the one who made him his apostle.
7. Members of the community had fondness for this person, which is why they were arrogant and proud about him (5:2,6), probably because of his high social status in civil society. For this reason, Paul expresses the motive for the immoral man's exclusion in terms of his wellbeing, that his spirit may be saved (5:5). Expelling him would be in the interest of the person himself.
8. Paul then gives the reason from the perspective of their self-interest: expelling him would be in the best interest of the community (5:6-8). Therefore, either out of the person's own best interest or the interest of the community, they must expel this person.

It must also be noted that Paul uses a mix of rhetorolects in his arguments. The core rhetorolect is the wisdom rhetorolect as the passage deals with unacceptable moral behavior. To address this issue and persuade the Corinthians to expel the immoral brother, Paul also uses priestly rhetorolect by talking about the sacrificial death of Christ as the Paschal lamb. The answer to the issue lies at the point where both rhetorolects meet and blend.

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<sup>141</sup> Though Paul says that this is not found even among the gentiles (ἔθνεσιν) a similar incident is recorded in the HB. Reuben took one of his father's concubines. It is also called πορνεία in *T.Reu.* 1:6 and *T. Jud.* 13:3.

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect – Layer 1
Handover the Immoral brother	Paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed
Wisdom	Priestly

Table 3.2 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 5:1-8

Wanamaker (2006, 354) observes how in vv. 1-2 Paul moves from wisdom rhetorolect to a prophetic rhetorolect as he talks about judging the immoral brother and expelling him. This movement, usually from wisdom rhetorolect to another rhetorolect is also characteristic of Pauline arguments in 1 Corinthians.

#### Lawsuits against Fellow Believers (6:1-11)

In section 6:1-11 Paul deals with the issue of lawsuits among believers and he forbids them to go to law courts (ironically the place where Aristotle’s judicial rhetoric would be practiced!) and encourages them to deal with such matters within the church.<sup>142</sup> His final reason is that “you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (v. 11). Again, a question can be asked as to what “being washed, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ” has to do with not going to court?

The first reason Paul gives for believers not taking one another to court is that the saints will judge the earth and even the angels. This is a device that Aristotle discusses:

‘If something is not the fact where it would be more [expected], it is clear that it is not a fact where it would be less.’ Also, [the argument] that ‘a person who had beaten his father has also beaten his neighbors’ follows from [the proposition that] if the lesser thing is true, the greater

<sup>142</sup> Bernard (1917) and Deming (1996) both see the lawsuits as related to the immoral person issue in 5:1-8. Bernard claimed that the father sued the son for taking his wife; and Deming claimed that a faction within the church had brought the case.

is also; for people strike their father less than their neighbors. [*Rhet.*  
2.23.4]

Thus if the believers are going to judge the world and even the angels of the heavenly world, which is the harder thing to do, they can indeed judge the cases of this world, the ordinary cases, the βιωτικὰ κριτήρια (6:2-3).<sup>143</sup> Fee (2014, 262) summarizes the issue as follows: “The absurdity of the Corinthian position is that God’s newly formed people will someday judge the very world before whom they are now appearing and asking for a judgment. Not only does such an action give the lie to who they are as the people of God, but it is done in the presence of unbelievers, the very people for whom the church is to exist as God’s alternative.”

He uses ἐντροπή, a powerful rhetorical tool, to make the Corinthians realize that not only are they washing their dirty clothes in public, but they are not doing what they are very capable of doing themselves, namely, judging those within the community. Kaster (1997, 4) defined shame as, “displeasure with oneself caused by vulnerability to just criticism of a socially diminishing sort.” Thus, in this case Paul was trying to cause “displeasure” by posing “just criticism” concerning the Corinthians.

Then he makes his second point which is, if there are κρίμα among them that itself shows that they are already ἥττημα (6:7). Taking the case to the courts is to determine the winner, but Paul implies that even before they take it to the court they are defeated and have lost.

Then he brings up the reason why there are lawsuits among them: the fact that even among believers there are wrongdoers. Then he argues that the ἄδικος, will not inherit the kingdom of God. Though they were like this they were changed by being washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (6:8-11).

Again, we see Paul using mediate rhetoric, primarily through a statement about Christ. Because they are washed<sup>144</sup> in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ they should not be wrongdoers, and if they cease to be wrongdoers there will not be lawsuits among them in the first place. The structure of his thought unit seems to be as follows:

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<sup>143</sup> Winter (2001, chap. 4; 1991) argues that it was because of unjust judges that Paul asked them to sort out the matters internally within the church. See May (2004, 83) for a critique of this view.

<sup>144</sup> The meaning of washed is contested, while many commentators argue that it refers to baptism, Dunn (1970, 121), followed by Thiselton (2000, 453), argues that “Paul is not talking about baptism at all – he speaks rather of the great spiritual transformation of conversion.”

Statement discourse: Believers going to courts against each other  
(6:1-6)

Foundation discourse/Mediate rhetoric: washed, sanctified, and  
justified in the name of the Lord (6:11)

Connection discourse: the fights are caused because there are  
wrongdoers among them, and they are behaving like  
those who will not inherit the kingdom (6:9-10). But  
they have been cleaned of all this by being washed in the  
name of the Lord.

The connection could also be made implicitly if 6:9-10 is meant to remind them that they were once wrongdoers who were forgiven and *washed* in the name of the Lord (6:11). Because they have been forgiven, without any debt, they too need to do the same: forgive each other instead of taking one another to court. However, even if that were the case, Christ would still be the reason why they need to forgive the wrongdoing of their fellow believers. If this reading is correct this section would have intertextual similarities with the parable of Jesus about the unforgiving servant (Matt 18:21-35).<sup>145</sup>

We also see the Christ community formation in this section. Paul wants the ἐκκλησία to be a replacement for the Corinthian civil society, with its own dispute resolution. The fact that Paul uses ἐκκλησία, a term for a Greek “legislative body” (BDAG), for the Christian church also points in the same direction. The ἐκκλησία is as a last resort to function as a law court for believers since Paul prohibits them from going outside the ἐκκλησία. As Horsley (2000b, 100) aptly remarks, “[T]hey are to conduct their own community affairs as an alternative society independent of the larger society, having no dealings with institutions such as the civil courts. Meanwhile, the assembly itself has authority under the Lordship of Christ to deal with its own conflicts and other affairs.” This was already acknowledged in the case of the immoral brother in chapter 5.

The issue of fights between believers forms the wisdom rhetorolect which is the core rhetorolect, and the reference to being washed in the name of the Lord is priestly rhetorolect.

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<sup>145</sup> This reading, though not central to my thesis, is not unlikely as there are thematic parallels between what Paul says and the synoptic tradition of what Jesus says in Matt 18:15-17. Jesus also says to take the issue with the brother to the church.

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect
Going to Law courts	you were washed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ
Wisdom	Priestly

Table 3.3 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 6:1-11

### Prostitutes and Christ (6:12-20)

The city of Corinth was famous for prostitutes. Strabo records how the courtesans were dedicated by devotees as a tribute to Aphrodite in her temple [*Geogr.* 8.6.20].<sup>146</sup> Visiting prostitutes was also considered an acceptable practice in antiquity as illustrated in the famous advice of Plutarch to wives:

Similarly, if a private individual, lustful and dissolute, goes astray with a courtesan or maid-servant, the wife should not be vexed or impatient, but consider that it is out of respect to her that he bestows upon another all his wanton depravity.<sup>147</sup> [*Plutarch Mor.* § xvi]

In 1 Cor 6:12-20 Paul deals with the issue of sexual immorality which was perhaps not uncommon among some of the believers in Corinth. Whereas 5:1-8 focused on one person, this section focuses on a sin to which the whole community was vulnerable.<sup>148</sup>

As in the previous section Paul makes statements which are not directly related to the issue at hand, the issue of prostitution. The rhetoric categorically is based on Christ:<sup>149</sup> “The body is meant for the Lord” (v. 13); “your bodies are members of Christ” (v. 15); “you cannot take a member of Christ and make it a member of a prostitute”<sup>150</sup> (v. 15);

<sup>146</sup> According to Rosner (1998, 347) this refers to the old Corinth that was destroyed in 146 BC not to the new Corinth that was refounded in 44 BC by Julius Caesar.

<sup>147</sup> <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/23639/23639-h/23639-h.htm>

<sup>148</sup> Von Thaden (2017, 206) argues that Paul is making a general statement “against πορνεία [rather] than responding to any one instance of Corinthians’ misbehavior.”

<sup>149</sup> Rosner (1998, 342) has seen the argument as theocentric which could be a fitting response to sacred prostitution.

<sup>150</sup> In antiquity there were two kinds of prostitutes: the lower class ones found in brothels and the upper class ones who had some skill like dancing (Hauck and Schulz 1964). Perhaps the cultic or temple prostitutes may have belonged to another category. In classical Greek πόρνη referred to the professional low-class prostitute. The word ἑταίρα referred to high class courtesans and ιερόδουλος referred to the religious prostitute (cf. Rosner 1998, 341).

“you were bought with a price” (v. 20); “God raised the Lord” (v. 14); and “you are one with the Lord in spirit” (v. 17). As Von Thaden (2017, 234) rightly comments, Paul makes his argument “rhetorically effective” by giving the Corinthians a choice “between Christ and the πόρνη.” However, taken at face value, a question can be asked as to what being bought with a price has to do with not visiting to a prostitute? I argue below that “bought with a price” is the mediate Christ centered rhetoric.

My argument is strengthened by the fact that Paul does not bring being unfaithful to one’s wife as an argument since some members who visited prostitutes were undoubtedly married (cf. Rosner 1998, 342).

Paul starts the section by making a statement that all things are lawful to me<sup>151</sup> and then giving the example about food and the stomach. Paul does not start the section by talking about the issue at hand, fornication, but by talking about food. This mediate nature of his reasoning, though not about Christ here, is a characteristic of CR. Sandnes (2002, 196) summarizes the progression from food to fornication: “Certainly Paul knew all too well that if Christian freedom in food-matters was interpreted to imply freedom to attend all kinds of banquets, sex would naturally follow in its wake.”<sup>152</sup> Paul tries to argue that although the stomach will be destroyed, the body will be raised up. Sirach also seems to compare the stomach to a woman:

The stomach will take any food, yet one food is better than another. As the palate tastes the kinds of game, so an intelligent mind detects false words. A perverse mind will cause grief, but a person with experience will pay him back. A woman will accept any man as a husband, but one girl is preferable to another. A woman’s beauty lights up a man’s face, and there is nothing he desires more. If kindness and humility mark her speech, her husband is more fortunate than other men. (Sir 36:23-28)

Sandnes (2002, 193, 196) argues that the “major difference” between Paul’s argument and the Corinthian view is the final destination of the body – will it be destroyed or will it be raised: “Sexual misbehavior is to Paul a sin against the body which is to be

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<sup>151</sup> Collins (2006, 243), followed by Thiselton (2000, 461), sees this as a Corinthian slogan; the same view is taken by Sandnes (2002, 192f) and Murphy-O’Connor (1978, 394). Garland (2003, 225–28) does not believe that this was a Corinthian slogan because Paul introduces the Corinthians’ slogans with a phrase like “as some of you say” 1:12. He also gives reasons why the Corinthians did not use this to theologically justify visiting prostitutes. Von Thaden (2017, 211) also holds a similar view based on different reasons.

<sup>152</sup> Sandnes (Chapter 5) has a whole chapter on banquets. Also see von Thaden (2017, 226).

raised from the dead. ... Hence believers are not free to define for themselves what to do with the body, neither in matters of the stomach nor the genitals.” As Byrne (1983, 611) comments the Corinthian outlook “renders bodily action here and now of no moral significance (cf. v. 13a). For Paul, on the other hand, the sphere or ambience of the risen Lord extends ‘back’ into the present existence – so that body is ... for the Lord and the Lord for the body.”

Winter (2001, 82–96), however, connects the food and the issue of prostitutes by showing how Corinthian dinner parties were followed by sex orgies, with prostitutes present at these parties to offer their services.<sup>153</sup>

Paul uses three CR type arguments in response, as I discuss below.

### Argument 1

Statement Discourse: Fornication, the body is not meant for sexual immorality  
(6:13b)

Foundation Discourse:

Mediate Rhetoric 1: Body is meant for the Lord, and the Lord for the body (v.13b).

Mediate Rhetoric 2: And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power (v. 14).

Mediate Rhetoric 3: Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? (v. 15a)

Connection Discourse: Should I, therefore, take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Do you not know that whoever is united to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For it is said, “The two shall be one flesh.” But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him (vv. 15b-17).

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<sup>153</sup> Rosner (1998, 348 and throughout) also argues on similar lines, viewing temples as restaurants offering meals with prostitutes. However, I find it hard to connect this section with any kind of sacred or temple prostitution. While there is mention of food, there is no mention of idolatry in the immediate context. The word used πόρνη also does not normally denote a sacred prostitute.

Although there are three mediate rhetoric instances, only the third one is connected explicitly in the connection discourse. The first one is shown by implicit connection.

In this section Paul uses three mediate arguments about the body. The body is meant for the Lord; God who raised the Lord will also raise the body; and the body is a member of Christ. The connection of the first mediate rhetoric is quite clear. The body is not meant for sexual immorality but is meant for the Lord, and the body will be raised. Paul, as Sandnes (2002, 193, 196) notes, is commenting on the destination of the body. The connection between mediate rhetoric 1 and the problem is self-evident (as such it is much less of a “mediate” rhetoric as the connection is straight forward). In the same way food is meant for the belly; the body is meant for the Lord. As Schnabel (2018, 242) maintains, food and the stomach have a mutual relationship that is clearly defined; hence, the human body fulfills its particular role only when it acts in relation to the Lord which means that as Jesus is Lord, so he is the Lord of the body (6:13). Because the body is meant for the Lord, you cannot use it for illicit sexual purposes: the body is the realm where the Lord Jesus exercises his authority. Believers do not belong to themselves but to the Lord; they do not freely decide what they can and cannot do since they are subject to the authority of the Lord (Schnabel 2018, 242). However, Schnabel’s statement that believers belong to the Lord, will only make sense after Paul has stated that they have been bought at a price. As such mediate rhetoric 1 still retains its quality as “mediate.”

The second mediate rhetoric is not so self-evident. Paul will explain the connection fully in chapter 15, where he makes the connection between the resurrection of the body and ethical living explicit, as we will see later. But in this piece of mediate rhetoric the readers are left to make the connection on their own. Because the body will be raised by God’s power (6:14), there is a need to maintain it in purity. This understanding is justified by what follows in 6:15-19.

The third mediate rhetoric could also explain the first mediate rhetoric by explaining how the body is meant for the Lord, that is, by being members of Christ. Because the body is meant for the Lord, it is a member of Christ and vice versa.

Paul states the connection after the conclusion, which is in the form of a rhetorical question. When a person has sex with a prostitute that person becomes one flesh with the prostitute. And Paul already established that “your” bodies are members of Christ. My reading is also supported by the two οὐκ οἶδατε ὅτι clauses that Paul uses to make the Corinthians realize the reality of the situation. To prove that anyone having sex with the

prostitute will be one flesh, Paul uses the LXX of Gen 2:24, δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν. In the same way he goes on to explain how we are members of Christ: But anyone united to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. While the connection between the believer and the prostitute is physical, the connection between the believer and Christ is spiritual. Because the two are one flesh, whoever is united (κολλώμενος) to the prostitute becomes ἐν σῶμα with her, and whoever unites (κολλώμενος) with the Lord becomes ἐν πνεῦμα with him. While the first union happens naturally when one has sex with the prostitute, becoming one with the Lord happens in the spirit and happens *miraculously*.

The rhetography produced by the conclusion is shocking. Paul is indirectly claiming that if a believer has sex with a prostitute, it is like physically connecting the prostitute to the Lord Jesus Christ himself. Because the believer's body is a member of Christ (6:15), to connect the member to a prostitute is like connecting Christ himself to the prostitute. Because the believer is connected to Christ, he has become a member of Christ through the spirit. It would be outrageous for the Corinthians to think of making a prostitute one with the Lord himself, the son of God who died for them. Paul evokes the topos of sinning against the Lord. This makes his rhetoric very powerful because it is intended to change not only beliefs but also potential behavior. This is more serious than just not loving the Lord (16:22) to which Paul attached a curse. The consequential argument that Paul brings would progress from not loving the Lord (16:22), to not saying that Jesus is cursed (12:3) to fitting the body of the prostitute with Christ himself. A sense of overwhelming shame should have surrounded the Corinthian assembly when this was read for the first time and visualized through rhetography. Paul's language appears to be shaming them. Paul might as well have added, "I say this to your shame," as he did in 6:5.

Thus, two contrasting positions emerge: you cannot be a member of Christ and be a member of the prostitute. This division is something that Paul starts from chapter 1 by categorizing people as those who are perishing and those who believe. This division can be seen, as I demonstrate later, right throughout the epistle. Paul utilizes the same kind of argument later in the letter in 10:21: You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. Paul sees Christ and the prostitute as polar opposites and applies what Aristotle calls the *argument of the opposites* [Rhet 2.23.1].

Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect
Fornication	Bodies are members of Christ
Wisdom	Miracle

Table 3.4 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 6:12-20

As shown in the table above the argument for the core rhetorolect, wisdom rhetorolect, is brought about by a blend with the miracle rhetorolect. The miracle rhetorolect asserts that the body of the believer has become a member of Christ (Robbins 2009, 143). Christ is presented as a cosmic Christ who can attach the believers to him.

In his second argument Paul does not state the problem as it is a continuation of what he had already started in 6:13b. The structure runs as follows:

#### Argument 2

##### Foundation Discourse:

Mediate rhetoric 1: Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, (v. 19)

Mediate rhetoric 2: You were bought with a price (v. 20)

Connection Discourse: Therefore, glorify God in your body (v. 20b)

The underlying premise of these three arguments is stated in v. 19 in terms of the priestly rhetorolect: "You were bought with a price."<sup>154</sup> It is because of the sacrificial death of Christ that they have been bought with a price. It is because of this, that the believers have the Holy Spirit of God, and it is because the Holy Spirit is present in the body that it becomes a temple of God. Rosner (1998, 345) paraphrases it quite succinctly: "don't go to the temple (to use prostitutes) [because] you are the temple!"

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<sup>154</sup> Nasrallah (2014, 59) reads this phrase as Paul's disapproval of the "Corinthian slogan" all things are permitted to me in 6:12.

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect
Fornication	Priestly
Wisdom	Bought with a price -this is a mediate rhetoric or reasoning. Paul does not directly talk about the death of Jesus, but an indirect reference is made.

Table 3.5 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 6:12-20

These arguments would only make sense to someone who believes the three underlying assumptions:

1. Our bodies are members of Christ.
2. The person united with the Lord becomes one in spirit with him.
3. We have been bought with a price.<sup>155</sup>

We can also see how Paul has conceptually blended several of the early Christian rhetorolects. Talking about their behavior regarding lust for food and sex, initiates the wisdom rhetorolect. Believers are to produce fruitful behavior in their bodies – the goal of wisdom rhetorolect – which means that the negative behavior must be curbed (Robbins 2009, 147). The term body contains a special connotation in this case as Paul claims that whoever commits sexual sins, sins against their own body. Sexual sin is not only something done in the space of one’s body but also against it. In the wisdom rhetorolect Paul quotes Gen. 2:24 (1 Cor 6:16) about a man and a woman becoming one body, a quote which was applied to Adam and Eve, the first couple. The effect of the CR is brought about by conceptually blending the wisdom, priestly and miracle rhetorolects.

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<sup>155</sup> Sandness (2002, 193) demonstrates that visiting the prostitutes is “incompatible with

- belief in the resurrection
- being united with Christ as a member of his body
- the Scriptures
- the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer
- the liberation brought about by Christ’s death
- the body which is a means to glorify God”

We also note that CR works mainly in the atmosphere of the wisdom rhetorolect and uses the priestly rhetorolect as the mediate rhetoric.

### The Issue of Marriage (7:10-11)

In chapter 7 Paul discusses the issue of marriage. In taking up the issue of divorce he advises the Corinthians not to divorce. Here is a classic example of Kennedy's radical rhetoric: Paul appeals to the command of the Lord (Thiselton 2000, 518) and tells the Corinthians not to divorce when he says that "the wife should not separate from her husband (but if she does separate, let her remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband), and that the husband should not divorce his wife" (1 Cor 7:10-11).

Aristotle uses the appeal to authority as a topos:

Another [topos] is from a [previous] judgment [*ek kriseōs*] about the same or a similar or opposite matter, especially if all always [make this judgment]—but if not, at least most people, or the wise (either all of them or most) or the good. Or [another example is] if the judges themselves [have so decided] or those whom the judges approve or those whose judgment cannot be opposed, for example, those with legal authority to make it or whose judgment cannot be honorably opposed, for example, a father's, or teachers .... Or [another example is] as Sappho said, that it is bad to die; for the gods have so judged; for otherwise they would die. [*Rhet* 2.23.12]

Thiselton (2000, 520), followed by Collins (2006, 264), notes Paul's use of a command of the Lord as opposed to a saying of Jesus. The word of the Lord was authoritative and, therefore, acted as a kind of verbal scripture for Paul. Paul is attaching the same status as he would for the HS when he introduces a command of the Lord.<sup>156</sup> The command to tell a person not to divorce is quite a demanding one. You are telling someone to make drastic changes in their life and endure what they would otherwise want to escape and as such it requires considerable rhetorical force. There is no reasoning here, however, not even a mediate rhetoric. This force works by appealing to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.

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<sup>156</sup> Patte (2016, 213, 227) notes how the Kerygma served as scriptures.

## The Issue of Slaves (7:17-24)<sup>157</sup>

In 1 Cor 7:17-24 Paul encourages everyone, especially slaves<sup>158</sup> “to lead the life that the Lord has assigned, to which God called you.”<sup>159</sup> The rhetoric he uses here is also CR:

The slave is free (ἀπελεύθερος) in Christ, while belonging to the Lord (7:22a).

The free person (ἐλεύθερος) is a slave to Christ (7:22b).

Paul argues that both slaves and freed people are not slaves to others. Instead they are slaves to Christ. Paul refers to the death of Christ yet again: “You were bought with a price” (7:23). Though Deissmann’s (1927, 323–24) attempt to read this phrase in the light of Delphi inscriptions is contested<sup>160</sup> the following is aptly expressed by him: “By nature, we are *slaves* of sin, of men, of death; the Jew is furthermore a *slave* of the law, the heathen a *slave* of his gods. We become *free men* by the fact that Christ *buys* us.”

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<sup>157</sup> There is a flood of literature on the topic of slavery and the NT use of the metaphor. See Martin (1990) Combes (1998).

<sup>158</sup> De Wet (2018, 8f) calls the discourse around slavery doulology. One expression of doulology is the metaphor of being “slaves to God.”

<sup>159</sup> The meaning of 1 Cor 7:20, and this section, has been contested even from the time of Chrysostom:

Now we are not ignorant *that some say*, the words, “use it rather,” are spoken with regard to liberty: interpreting it, “if thou canst become free, become free.” But the expression would be very contrary to Paul’s manner if he intended this. [Hom 19.5] Vol 12 p. 108 emphasis mine.

<sup>160</sup> Starting from Deissmann (1927, 323–24) scholars have read the phrases “bought with a price” in the light of Delphi manumission inscriptions. Conzelman (1975, 128), however, disagrees. While the Delphi inscriptions may add a relevant context and background to the phrase “bought with a price,” the sale is “fictive” in that the slave is free to do what they want after the sale, as they are given the right to do whatever they want and go wherever they want. This is in contrast to being a slave of God’s, which puts severe restrictions on the actions of the “slave.” However, this may very well be the point that Paul is trying to make especially in chapter 6. All things are lawful for me (6:12), i.e., like the freed slave I am free to do whatever I want. However, since I am also a slave to Christ, I will not be dominated by other things (6:12). I will not become a slave to others (cf. 1 Cor 7.23). The following is an inscription detailing the release of a female slave called Ladika:

ἄρχοντος Ἐμμενίδα τοῦ Καλλία μηνὸς Δαιδαφορίου, ἀπέδοτο Τελεσῶ Μνασικράτεος Δελφίς, συνευδο-κέοντος καὶ τοῦ υἱοῦ Κλέωνος, τῶι Ἀπόλλωνι τῶι Πυθίῳ σώμα γυναικῆιον ἃ ὄνομα Λαδίκᾳ τὸ γένος Σύραν, τιμᾶς ἀργυρίου μνᾶν τριῶν, καὶ τὰν τιμὰν ἔχει, καθὼς ἐπίστευσε Λαδίκᾳ τῶι θεῶι τὰν ὠνάν, τῶν συλέοντες ὡς ἐλευθέραν οὔσαν ἀζάμιοι ἔοντες καὶ ἀνυπόδικοι πάσας δίκας καὶ ζαμίας μάρτυρες· τοὶ ἱερεῖς τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος Ταραντῖνος, Ἀμύντας καὶ τοὶ ἄρχοντες Ἀριστίων, Ἄσαν-δρος, Ἀριστόμαχος, ἰδιῶται Πατρέας, Εὐκράτης, Ἀστόξενος, Κλέων, Ἀρτεμίδωρος, Χαρίξενος. SGDI 1735 (Text from <https://inscriptions.packhum.org/>)

Notice the word τιμᾶς which is the same word used in 1 Cor 6:20 and 7:23. As Kamen (2014, 285) remarks, “These slaves then became the nominal property of the god, with the understanding that Apollo would make no use of his right of ownership. As a result, the right of ownership was transferred, by default, to the slaves themselves, who were then in possession of themselves—that is, free.” Kamen (2014, 28 n25), in her refreshing study, compares the “sacred fictive sales” with that of “secular fictive sales.” The former is the category that Deissmann was referring to. The difference with the latter is that the buyer is a human, though the slave still goes free.

The phrase τιμῆς ἠγοράσθητε also connects readily with Christ, as Fee (2014, 355) notes: “The slave is free and the free person a slave because both have been purchased by Christ through the blood of the cross.”<sup>161</sup> Paul has used the same phrase twice within a span of 12 verses, first in 6:20 and now in 7:23. This clearly signals that he is using the concept as a topos. The same concept, applied to two different problems, confirms that my identification of it as a topos is correct.

That Paul calls freed people slaves of Christ is not surprising as he uses similar language about himself (Rom 1:1, Phil 1:1, Gal 1:10). The reason Paul gives for them not to become slaves of human masters is that they already have been bought with a price by Christ.

A connection must be established between being bought with a price and not being a slave to human masters. The bought with the price is drawn from priestly rhetorolect and supports the wisdom rhetorolect “do not become slaves to human masters” (7:23). The mediate rhetoric was intended to be powerful enough to encourage the Corinthian readers to adopt a different lifestyle.

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect
Slavery	Bought with a price  -this is a mediate rhetoric or reasoning. Paul does not directly talk about the death of Jesus, but an indirect reference is made.
Wisdom	Priestly

Table 3.6 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 7:17-24

### Food Offered to Idols (1 Cor 8 and 10)

For Paul and the early Christians food sacrificed to idols, a standard practice in the culture of his day, posed a serious problem. Paul seeks to address this problem in some detail in 1 Corinthians 8<sup>162</sup> and 10. One of the arguments Paul brings against eating food offered

<sup>161</sup> For the idea of Christ’s death being the ransom for our deliverance see Morris (1987, 11-2).

<sup>162</sup> 1 Cor 8:6 contains one of the foundational statements leading to Trinitarian monotheism:

ἀλλ’ ἡμῖν εἷς θεὸς ὁ πατὴρ  
ἐξ οὗ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς αὐτόν,  
καὶ εἷς κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς

to idols<sup>163</sup> in a temple is that it will be a stumbling block to a weaker believer for whom Christ died.<sup>164</sup> What has Christ's dying for the weak believer to do with not eating food sacrificed to idols? And how is eating food a sin committed against Christ (8:12)?

Problem Discourse: eating in the temple of an idol (8:10)<sup>165</sup>

Foundation Discourse:

Mediate Rhetoric 1: "And so, by your knowledge this weak believer is destroyed, the believer for whom Christ died (8:11).

Mediate Rhetoric 2: But when you thus sin against members of your family, and wound their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ (8:12).

Connection Discourse: "Therefore, if food makes my fellow believers stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make them stumble" (8:13).

In the foundation discourse Paul employs mediate rhetoric twice evoking the *topoi*, the salvific works of Christ (mediate rhetoric 1) and sinning against the Lord (mediate rhetoric 2). The connection discourse works by showing the connection that because Christ died for the weak brother or sister and if they stumble because of eating meat, then the person causing them to do so would sin against Christ. Since that is a serious breach of Christian behavior, the stronger person should not eat meat.

The ultimate argument against eating food sacrificed to idols is that Christ died for the weak believer for whom it could be a stumbling block. If someone is a stumbling block

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δι' ἑοῦ τὰ πάντα καὶ ἡμεῖς δι' αὐτοῦ<sup>†</sup>

Paul uses the same phrase for God and Lord Jesus Christ. Hurtado (2015, 97–99) thinks of this phrase as a "mutation in [the] Jewish Monotheistic tradition." He sees this as an allusion and a modification of the *Shema*.

<sup>163</sup> Winter (2001, 82–96) concedes that there was connection between dinner and sexual immorality that followed, and those prostitutes were present at these parties to offer their services. I discuss this in the section on 15:29–34.

<sup>164</sup> The temples in Corinth were used not only for cultic sacrificial meals but also to celebrate birthdays, marriages and cures (Collins 2006, 322). For useful background information on this section, see Winter (2001, 269–86). Cheung on the other hand surveys many Jewish sources to show the anti-idol food attitude that was prevalent (1999, 39–80), and he also demonstrates that the anti-idol mentality in Paul had its origin in Hebrew Scriptures (1999, 299).

<sup>165</sup> Collins (2006, 313) sees the argument in this section as a "form of reasoning akin to the syllogism" and reads v. 4 as the major premise, v. 5 the minor premise, and v.6 the conclusion.

to a weak believer then they sin against Christ. How is sinning against the weak believer equal to sinning against Christ? It is because Christ has died for them. Because Christ has given his very life for the weak believer's deliverance and spiritual well-being, causing that person to stumble is to make Christ's sacrifice meaningless, and as such it will be a sin against him. As J. A. T. Robinson (1952, 58) observed long ago, according to the author of Acts, Paul's own Damascus road experience contributed to his view that sin against the Christian community was sin against Christ: "'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' He asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' The reply came, 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting'" (Acts 9:4-5). Wolter (2015, 110) observes that "the rhetorical function of a warning belongs to the statement of the salvific death—anyone who destroys the Christian identity of a fellow Christian commits an offense against Christ himself."

We also see the social element in this. Paul does not want some elitist Corinthian believers to destroy a weak fellow believer and thereby, destroy the Christ family. The familial character of Christianity is one reason why the Corinthians should not eat the meat offered to idols. Offending someone in the family is not acceptable and, therefore, enough reason to change the Corinthian believers' behavior. If fornication is a sin against one's own physical body, eating food sacrificed to idols in a pagan temple is a sin against one's Christian family, the body of Christ to which all Corinthian believers belonged according to Paul's thought. This is yet another way of sinning against the weak believer which is sinning against Christ because the weak believer is a member of Christ. Paul's rhetoric shows the Corinthians that neither fornication nor eating idol food was in their best interest.

Wolter (2015, 109) argues that within the Christian community the death of Christ establishes the believer's social identity since Paul refers to the fellow believer as someone for whom Christ died. The effects of salvation are passed onto believers through the community.

We can also see the narrative rhetoric at work here. To see the fellow believer as someone for whom Christ died is an invitation to see the narrative in 1 Cor 8:11 and 15:3-5 in action. The believer is placed inside the narrative – the death Christ died, he died for the weak believer. As Adams (2012, 46–47) notes, " [H]umans 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."

Even in this section we see the use of mediate rhetoric in which Paul uses the priestly rhetorolect regarding the death of Christ as the base for rhetorolect in the use of wisdom rhetorolect. In this case Paul uses two rhetorolects. One to show the communal aspect, and the other from Christ. Base rhetorolect 1 works on the communal aspect – which ultimately has its reference point as Christ. As the community is the body of Christ, the weak believer became a family member because believers have a common father through whose eldest son we were adopted into the family of God. Base Rhetorolect 2 works on the priestly aspect of Christ’s death.

CR		
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect 1	Base Rhetorolect 2
Eating idol food	Fellow believer will be destroyed	Christ died for them
Wisdom	Wisdom	Priestly

Table 3.7 Rhetorolects in 1 Corinthians 8

### Cup of the Lord (10:14)

In 10:14 where Paul advises the Corinthians to flee idolatry, we can see a clear pattern of usage where Paul brings elements from CR to correct the Corinthian believers. This section clearly displays the use of mediate rhetoric. Immediately after the admonishment to flee idolatry, Paul introduces the Eucharist, which is a celebration of Christ’s death. This raises the question: What is the connection between Eucharist and not eating food sacrificed to idols?

Paul’s argument goes like this:

Statement Discourse: “Therefore, my dear friends, flee from the worship of idols” (10:14).

Foundation Discourse:

Mediate rhetoric 1: “The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a sharing in the blood of Christ?” (10:16)

Mediate Rhetoric 2: “The bread that we break, is it not a sharing in the body of Christ?” (10:17)

Mediate Rhetoric 3: “Consider the people of Israel; are not those who eat the sacrifices partners in the altar? What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God” (10:18-19).<sup>166</sup>

Consequence Discourse1: “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (10:15).

Consequence Discourse2: “I do not want you to be partners with demons” (10:20).

Connection Discourse: “You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Or are we provoking the Lord to jealousy?<sup>167</sup> Are we stronger than he?” (10:21-22).

After stating the problem – to flee from idolatry Paul immediately brings up the topic of the Eucharist in the mediate rhetoric 1 in the foundation discourse. This I argue is the vertical aspect of the Lord’s Supper, the topos of the salvific works of Christ. In mediate rhetoric 2 Paul talks about the horizontal aspect of the Lord’s Supper, the topos of the affiliation to the Christ community. In mediate rhetoric 3 Paul evokes the HB topos. Consequence discourse 1, shows the consequence of mediate rhetoric 2. Because there is one bread, the breaking of which is a participation in the body of Christ, the many are brought into union with one another.

Consequence discourse 2, shows the consequence of mediate rhetoric 3. Because the food sacrificed to idols is actually sacrificed to demons, Paul does not want them to be partners with demons.

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<sup>166</sup> Commentators see this as a quote from Deut 32:17 (Thiselton 2000, 778).

<sup>167</sup> The Hebrew Bible usually attributes jealousy to Yahweh, but clearly it is added here as an attribute of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is another instance of how Paul transfers the characteristics of God of the HB, to Jesus Christ. See Bell (1994, 251–55).

Connection discourse connects mediate rhetoric 1, 2 and the statement discourse. But the different rituals, the Lord's Supper and idol worship, involve eating and drinking with their respective deities, one with the Lord and the other with demons. Believers cannot engage in both.

In mediate rhetoric 3 Paul explains two things: that those who eat the sacrifices are actually partaking in the worship of the relevant deity,<sup>168</sup> and that there is no other God than what he expressed in 8:6. Paul goes onto explain that when the pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons.

The force of the conclusion is very strong (10:21-22). It would have the same effect as Paul's statement that I cannot take a member of Christ and make it a member of a prostitute. It would be counted as outrageous to drink both the cup of the Lord and the cup of the demons. Paul's rhetoric works by showing the contrast in that they cannot drink from the cup of demons and the cup of the Lord. If they do so, they will provoke the Lord because they are giving the same status to the demons as they give to their Lord. This would be to sin against the Lord. If they are to provoke the Lord, they must be stronger than him, which of course they cannot possibly be in Paul's mind. The topos of the Lordship of Christ as a threat is at work here directly and the topos of sinning against the Lord is at work indirectly.

Commentators generally see 10:17 as supporting the communal nature of the Eucharist. That is why the usual order the body and blood is reversed here, so that the note about the "we who are many are one body" can connect to the statement about "sharing in the body of Christ?" (cf. Thiselton 2000, 767-8; Fee 2014, 453). Thus, Paul brings the fact that there is a Christ worshipping community which is characterized by the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Since they are part of such a community, they cannot worship demons in their temple with their devotees. Not only the two deities (one true God and demons) are mutually exclusive, but their communities are also mutually exclusive in their worship.

Paul emphasizes the affiliation to the Christ community topos in another two areas when he is talking about idol food. When eating, you have to be considerate regarding a fellow (weak) member of the community. If it will be a stumbling block to them you must refrain from eating the food sacrificed to idols. Also by prohibiting them from eating food

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<sup>168</sup> Fee (2014, 454) though he sees the communal aspect primarily, he agrees that they "worship Yahweh." Collins (2006, 380) concedes that "by eating sacrificial food Israelite priests were associated with the altar of sacrifice (*koinonoi tou thysiasteriou*) and its Lord (cf. Lev 7:5-8; Deut 18:1-5)." My interpretation is in line with Paul's argument – to say that those who eat at the temple are actually partaking in the worship and that those who partake in the Lord's Supper are sharing in the body and blood of Christ.

sacrificed to idols Paul stops them from accessing a major source of social connections (Horsley 2000b, 74). Paul stops their participation in the “fundamental forms of social relations”(Horsley 1997, 247) as religion was not separable from societal values, political and economic life (Horsley 1997, 247). Paul presents the Christ community, the ἐκκλησία, as an alternate community in which they should participate (Horsley 1997).

The wisdom rhetorolect is supported by the priestly rhetorolect and the second instance of wisdom rhetorolect which talks about the community as shown below:

CR		
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect 1	Base Rhetorolect 2
Eating idol food	Pagans sacrifice to Demons. You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons.	We who are many are one body.
Wisdom	Priestly	wisdom

Table 3.8 Rhetorolects in 1 Corinthians 10

In 10:25 the Corinthians are encouraged to eat anything that is sold in the market because the earth and its fullness belong to the Lord. Because the earth is the Lord’s, it does not make everything hygienically clean, but it makes it ritually clean.

In summary the three scenarios depicted under idol food are all addressed through a mediate rhetoric which is based on Christ:

	Eatable?	Reason/Justification
Food sold in the market	Yes	Earth and its fullness are the Lord’s <sup>169</sup>
Food at home	Situational	Cannot be stumbling block to a weak fellow believer for whom Christ died  To sin against such a one is to sin against Christ

<sup>169</sup> This is concept could be placed in the “Rule of Christ” topos.

Food in the temple	Prohibited	You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of the demons
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Table 3.9 Summary of actions for Idol food

### The issue of Lord's Supper (Chapter 11:17-22)

In chapter 11 Paul introduces the issue of Lord's Supper again. It was yet another instance where their disunity was expressed.<sup>170</sup> While one person goes hungry another becomes drunk (11:21).<sup>171</sup> Paul using the mediate rhetoric argues that to do this is to be guilty of the blood and body of Christ, that is, to sin against Christ (a topos of CR). The question that needs to be answered is: how is not waiting for the poor a sin against Christ?

As part of his CR Paul introduces the tradition that he claims to have received from the Lord regarding the institution of the Lord's Supper. 1 Cor 11:17-19 raises the issue of divisions in the church once again. What is the connection between the factions and the Lord's Supper being the proclamation of the Lord's death?

Statement Discourse: when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you (11:17-22).

Foundation Discourse:

Mediate Rhetoric: The Institution of the Lord's Supper (11:23-26).

The Eucharist is a remembrance of the death of Christ.<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>170</sup> This section and the previous section about idol food have similarities, not only in the fact that both are about food. In the Lord's Supper they create division by bringing their own food and eating without sharing or waiting for others. In the idol food section, they eat the idol food and create division in the community – by being a problem for the weak as well as by denying the solidarity of Christ community by partaking in the demon community.

<sup>171</sup> Different attempts have been made to reconstruct the exact situation at Corinth. Theissen (2004, 148) argues for "peer benefaction," where the rich members provided food for the banquet. Klauck (1982) argues for a "Eranistic model" where all members were supposed to bring food to the banquet. Largely basing his evidence on Greco-Roman data, Kloppenborg (2016, 184-5.) argues for either the "practice of rotating liturgies or member contributions, or a combination of both," where the members contributed money to buy food.

<sup>172</sup> As Collins (2006, 429) explains, "In the biblical tradition reminiscence and proclamation are often associated with one another. In remembering one proclaims; in proclaiming one remembers."

Connection Discourse: For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment<sup>173</sup> against themselves (11:29).

Conclusion: wait for each other (11:33).

In the Statement of the Problem, Paul takes up the issue of factions in the church again.<sup>174</sup> However, he brings the Lord's Supper as the mediate rhetoric. He says that those who eat in an unworthy manner are subject to punishment because they are not discerning the Lord's body. Many scholars ( Witherington 1995, 252; Horrell 1996, 153; Hays 1997, 200; Collins 2006, 436; Fee 2014, 564) argue that the term body here represents the body of Christ, which is the church. The strongest indicators towards this interpretation are the absence of the blood element and the context. Since the context is about the divisions in the church community, it would suit Paul's purposes to say that those who have not determined the nature of the body, that is, the church, will be punished.<sup>175</sup> Context would also demand that we read partaking in the Lord's Supper in an "unworthy" manner as including "eating without waiting for others." Since Paul had already established that one definite role of the Lord's Supper is to proclaim the unity of the church in 10:17, "we who are many are one body." It is noteworthy that Paul views such people, who do not wait for the poor,<sup>176</sup> who create divisions, who act without discerning the body of the Lord, as being "guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord" (ESV). The topos continues: to sin against a member of the body is to sin against Christ himself.

There is also another way that the connection can be shown between the mediate rhetoric and the problem statement. Christ died for everyone, including the poor,<sup>177</sup> who go hungry during the community worship. Ignoring them is a sin committed against them.

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<sup>173</sup> The use of language from judicial domain has been noted by Collins (2006, 436): "Unworthily' (*anaxios*, v. 27; cf. 6:2), 'answerable' (*enochos*, v. 27), 'scrutinize' (*dokimazo*, v. 28), 'judgment' (*krima*, vv. 29, 34; cf. 6:7), 'judge' (*diakrino*, vv. 29, 31; *krino*, vv. 31, 32), 'chastise' (*paideuo*, v. 32), and 'condemn' (*katakrino*, v. 32)." He thinks that Paul is using the "literary device of paronomasia, that is, the repetition of the same word stem in close proximity" to enhance "the judicial atmosphere."

<sup>174</sup> Theissen (2004, 147) argues that "individualism" was not the cause of the strife but that there were groups.

<sup>175</sup> See Thiselton (2000, 893) for a different view.

<sup>176</sup> One possible explanation suggested is that the poor arrived late for these banquets because they were slaves who were required by their masters to work long hours. See Coutsoumpos (2005, 106) and Lampe (1994, 39).

<sup>177</sup> Deismann's (1927, 144) research, including his analysis of the quality of the Greek in the papyri material, led him to conclude that the early church consisted predominantly of poor Christians. Judge (1960, 30–38) disagreed and argued for a mixed group. Theissen (2004, 69) accepting both the views of Deismann and Judge, has argued for the majority of the Corinthians being poor with some influential rich members.

If a sin committed against the *weaker* member of the community is a sin committed against Christ himself (8:12), a sin committed against the *poorer* members is also a sin committed against Christ. As I discussed earlier what made them into a community and what gave them an identity in the community is the death of Christ. To produce disunity in the celebration of the very thing which was supposed to bring unity (the death of Christ), is a real sin for which the Corinthians were already being punished (11:30). As Thiselton (2000, 890) claims, the Corinthian's sin was "*claiming identification with him while using the celebration of the meal as an occasion for social enjoyment or status enhancement without regard to what sharing in what the Lord's Supper proclaims*" (Thiselton's italics).

Paul uses the rhetorolects as shown below:

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect
Participation in the Lord's Supper	Participating in the Lord's supper is guilty of the Lord's body and blood
Priestly	Priestly

Table 3.10 Rhetorolects in 1 Cor 11:17-22

### The Issue of Spiritual Gifts (Chapter 12)

In Chapter 12 Paul fully expounds the body metaphor,<sup>178</sup> which he introduced in 6:15, to "combat factionalism" (Mitchell 1993b, 161; Martin 1999, 39). Verse 12 shows that Paul brings the body metaphor up to address the division in the church.

The Corinthians were discriminating against their fellow members based on knowledge and wisdom (4:10; 8:8) (Deluz 1963, 180–81), social status (6:4), wealth (11:21-2) and now gifts since the ones with "superior" gifts were valued more than the ones with "simpler" gifts. Paul talking about divisions brings up the metaphor of the body.

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<sup>178</sup> The discussion around body has evolved from being a mystical extension of Christ's body to a metaphor. See the discussion in Thiselton (2000, 990-1).

What possible connection can exist between divisions in the church and body parts having different functions?

The structure of Paul's argument is as follows:

Statement Discourse: Divisions based on the difference in gifts (12:4-11, 12).

Foundation Discourse

Mediate Rhetoric: Body parts have different roles (12:14-26).

Connection Discourse: You are the body of Christ (12:27).

Consequence Discourse: All gifts are valuable, and each member has a role to play (12:28-30).

The foundation discourse was based on the body of Christ having different roles. Then in the connection discourse Paul states that the Corinthians are that body. Because of that, each member is valuable, playing a different role.

Paul's topos of the affiliation to the Christ community finds its fullest expression in this chapter: "If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honored, all rejoice together with it" (12:26). The rhetoric against disunity finds its greatest expression in the body metaphor when Paul makes the connective statement that "you are the body of Christ and individually members of it" (v. 27).

Paul uses a mediate rhetoric, this time a metaphor. Using the body as a metaphor for community was common in ancient literature (Mitchell 1993a, 157). Mitchell (1993a, 159-60) gives examples for the use of even body parts like hands, feet, eyes and ears and to the appeal to work for the common good of the body in ancient literature. Paul explains how each body part has a different and indispensable role. There is no part which can be despised based on its role. After the lengthy body discussion in 12:14-26, Paul makes the connection in v. 27: "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it." The community being the body of Christ, and the individual people being members of the community adds to communal characteristic of CR.

Since they were all in the same body, to despise a member based on gifts was to sin against them which is equal to sinning against Christ.

Paul's presentation of CR consists of designating the church as the body of Christ. He uses a combination of rhetoricals to achieve his desired effect through CR.

CR	
Core Rhetorolect	Base Rhetorolect 1
Gifts of the Spirit.	You are the body of Christ.
Miracle	Priestly

Table 3.11 Rhetorolects in 1 Corinthians<sup>12</sup>

### Summary

In the table below I summarize my arguments and findings from the survey. When seen together in a table it becomes clear that Paul consistently has used Christ rhetoric in his arguments.

<b>Statement Discourse /Problem</b>	<b>Mediate Rhetoric</b>	<b>Connection Discourse</b>
Factions	All belong to Christ.	But a believer goes to court against a believer—and before unbelievers at that? (3:21-23)  Paraphrase: You cannot belong to Christ and still belong to human leaders (to create factions).
Immorality	Paschal Lamb	Clean out the old yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed (5:7).

		Paraphrase: You cannot have the old yeast and the sacrifice of the Paschal Lamb.
Lawsuits	Washed in the name of the Lord	<p>You cannot be washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord and still go to courts against a fellow believer.</p> <p>But a believer goes to court against a believer—and before unbelievers at that (6:6).</p> <p>But you yourselves wrong and defraud—and believers at that (6:8).</p> <p>But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God (6:11).</p>
Prostitution	Member of Christ	Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute (6:15)?
Slavery	Bought with a price	<p>...just as whoever was free when called is a slave of Christ. You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of human masters (7:23).</p> <p>Paraphrase: You cannot be a slave to Christ (because you have been bought with a price) and be a slave to humans.</p>
Idolatry	Cup of the Lord	You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons (10:21).

Lord's Supper	You proclaim the death of Christ	Paraphrase: You cannot be part of the body and not wait for the poorer members (11:17-34).
Spiritual Gifts	Members of the body of Christ	For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ (12:12).  Paraphrase: You cannot be member of Christ's body and despise a fellow member.
Resurrection of the dead	Resurrection of Christ	If there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised (15:13)  Paraphrase: You cannot believe in the resurrection of Christ and not believe in the resurrection of the dead.

Table 3.12 Summary of the survey

### **Justification for the Selection of 1 Corinthians 15 as an Example of CR**

As it will be clear from the discussion above 1 Cor 15:1-34 stands as a classic example of CR. It displays all the discourses as shown in Table 2.1 above. And perhaps most importantly, the notion of mediate rhetoric is preset quite significantly in the text. In vv. 3-11 the resurrection of Christ is presented as the mediate rhetoric which Paul uses in vv. 12-19. Most of the topoi identified in the above survey are present in 1 Cor 15:1-34. So, all the elements of CR, enthymeme, topoi, and structure are present in 1 Corinthians 15 in a significant way.

The survey above also shows that there is no other passage in 1 Corinthians about which the above statements can be said with confidence.

## A Note on Creation of a Methodology

It should be noted that I took an inductive approach in creating CR. I first went through the passages in 1 Corinthians with an eye for Paul's argumentative methods and then came up with the topoi, method, and discourses of CR that were present in the text. I did not create the categories first on the basis of assumptions or a hypothesis and then try to fit the text into those categories (deductive approach) (Bauer and Traina 2011, 30-1). The inductive approach was useful in making sure that my categories were from the text and that they can be applied to other texts as well. For practical reasons though, to make the reading easier and more understandable, the survey is presented after the listing of the methodology.

In my own analysis of 1 Corinthians, I have come up with a set of topoi. By no means do I claim that list to be exhaustive. There could be other topoi in other parts of the Pauline corpus or NT or for that matter within 1 Corinthians itself. The topoi I have used were discovered after careful analysis of the passages that I have selected. For this reason, the number and the list of topoi are not static. Equally I have found mediate rhetoric as a useful analytical tool for 1 Corinthians. It is highly likely that it is used in other parts of the NT as well. However, I leave room for the possibility of other argumentative methods. Although I have used SIT in my own analysis, I have not defined SIT as an integral part of CR. Other people might use different models for communal rhetoric. CR is an argumentative method used by Paul, and possibly others, which uses elements connected with the Lord Jesus Christ to persuade people to change their behavior and belief. This definition will remain valid even if the list of topoi or the argumentative strategy changes in other writings of the NT.

It is not certain whether Paul used the method consciously. What can be said with some certainty is that he used the topoi from CR consciously. No matter what the issue is Paul uses Christ as his argument and answer. This seems to signal that this was done consciously, especially given the Christ centeredness of the opening chapters of 1 Corinthians. It is also not certain whether Paul used the idea of discourses consciously, though the repeated use of it coupled with its frequent and dominant topoi might suggest otherwise, it would be safer to leave the question unanswered at present given available data that I have utilized.

## Conclusion

In this chapter, we surveyed major passages from 1 Corinthians to arrive at CR, a unique argumentative method/approach used by Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians. CR is the way Paul sought to persuade the Corinthians to believe or behave in ways that he found acceptable. This rhetoric is different to other methods we surveyed in a previous chapter. This rhetoric has its own topoi, timelines, structure, and argumentative method. In the next chapters I will begin applying this argumentative strategy to 1 Corinthians 15.

## Chapter 4

### Foundation, Consequences and Connections 15:1 -22

#### Introduction

In vv. 12-19, Paul talks about the consequences of Christ not being raised to prove the resurrection of the dead. In this chapter I demonstrate how the story in vv. 3-11 is used in Paul's argumentation. In vv. 20-22, he answers an obvious question, how does the resurrection of Christ guarantee the resurrection of the dead?

In this chapter we start by looking at vv. 1-11 which forms the foundation (discourse) for all the arguments in the rest of the section (vv. 12-34). I do a Christ rhetorical analysis which identifies the different discourses and then proceed to do a narrative analysis. After the narrative analysis I explore each of the identified topoi in detail.

#### Christ Rhetoric of 15:1-11

In 1 Corinthians 15 the problem is that some Corinthians refused to believe in the resurrection of the dead (15:12). However, Paul using the resurrection of Christ in 1 Cor 15:1-11 as the mediate rhetoric, tries to prove the resurrection of the dead by talking about "something else," namely, the resurrection of Christ. I argue that vv. 1-11 constitute a foundation discourse of CR as Paul uses the resurrection of Christ as the basis from which he will launch the arguments against those rejecting the resurrection of the dead. Thiselton (2000, 1214) notes how Paul has established the resurrection of Christ in 15:1-11 as "*a shared presupposition* to be utilized for further argument." The goal of the following analyses is to see how Paul applies the elements of CR, which we saw in chapter 3, to prepare the reader for the major argumentation in 15:12-19 and beyond. Paul does not attempt to prove the resurrection of Christ using a logical argument. Instead, he uses some of the radical topoi of CR:

1. Apostolic Tradition (v. 3a) – Paul uses the tradition to emphasize that the resurrection of Christ is endorsed by the tradition of the church.
2. Authority of Scripture (vv. 3a, 4) – Paul demonstrates that the death and resurrection of Christ was according to the scriptures, thereby

attaching the authority of the HB to his claim that Christ rose from the dead.

3. Authenticity of Experience (vv. 5-8) – Paul uses himself and others as witnesses whose experience of the risen Christ provides a genuine argument in favor of the resurrection of the Christ.
4. Affiliation to the Christ Community (v. 11) – Paul shows that because they are formed into a community of believers they cannot afford to go against its beliefs. The force this rhetoric borrows its power from the tradition which is believed by the community.

This also supports my claim that Paul uses the resurrection of Christ as mediate rhetoric since all four of the above *topoi* are used as evidence for the resurrection of Christ and not for the resurrection of the dead. Each of the above *topoi* are discussed in detail below. As is typical of the foundation discourse, narrative rhetoric is heavily employed here.

### Narrative Rhetoric<sup>179</sup>

The beginning point of Paul's narrative is not merely a few decades earlier when the death and resurrection of Christ took place, but it goes right back to the beginning of human history as he compares Christ with Adam, the first created human. In the verses that follow 1 Cor 15:9-11, especially 15:23-28, Paul extends the narrative to the end of the world. So, the story of Paul's narrative spans from the beginning of human history to its end of the age at the parousia of Christ.

In 15:3-5 Paul maintains that the narrative about Christ's resurrection is central to the Christian kerygma and in vv. 8-9 he claims that the same narrative is important to him personally in forming his identity and his life's calling. As discussed in chapter 3, Hays's (2002, 887–88) methodology involves first seeking the story and then seeking to understand how the story "shapes the logic of argumentation" (see chapter 3). This section, 15:1-11, details the *mythos* of Paul's argument. Paul is simply stating the Christ narrative and his own role in that narrative. The *dianoia*, Paul's own reflection of the story and how he embeds the story inside his argument, is to follow in vv. 12-19.

The role of narrative in Paul's letters is well noted by scholars. Adams observes, "[A]lthough it is often viewed as an argument and thus interpreted by means of rhetorical

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<sup>179</sup> The term narrative rhetoric has been used by Adams (2012) in his dissertation, and the term rhetorical narrative is used by Lucaites and Celeste Michelle (1985, 94). It also occurs in Fredal (2020, esp. Part III).

canons, Paul's letter is, in large part, an argument of *stories*" (Adams, 2012, 2).<sup>180</sup> This story, however, is not "Paul's personal story" but is the "structure of the gospel story" (Hays 2002, sec. 908). And "to follow the persuasive power of Paul's argument, readers must follow his narrative construction, its organization of events" (Adams, 2012, 51), which is what I have attempted to do in this chapter: to analyze Paul's "narrative construction" using different models.

Different scholars have assigned different roles to the narratives in Paul's letters. Adams (2012, 46–47) understands it as "cognitive narratology," where,

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 ... that individuals and groups understand themselves in terms of the coherent narratives they create out of events.... Self-identity is constructed through the creation of a narrative out of one's life experiences.

This certainly is the case for Paul, whose experience on the Damascus road (according to Luke's account) changed his life forever. His identity became that of an apostle of Christ from that of a Pharisee (Phil 3:5). Even in the present passage he refers to the appearance of Christ. As I demonstrate in chapter 6, Paul uses the cosmic narrative of Christ's rule to change the Corinthian behavior.

Barclay (2002, 137) applies Schütz's (1975, 114–58) proposal that Paul's personal narrative characterizes the gospel and argues that "in his [Paul's] individuality and uniqueness is played out a common story of grace." He further states, "[I]t is of course, with this new, grace-accorded identity that Paul here tells 'his' story....The change Paul experiences is an epistemological revolution that transforms his understanding of himself from before birth onwards"(Barclay 2002, 139). Lorenzen (2004, 838) though affirming the dissimilarities between Christ's post resurrection appearances and HB theophanies, remarks that the appearance was always a mandate, a call to a divinely appointed task. For Paul "the Christophany was also his conversion, vocation and sending"(Lambrecht 1991, 664). This is relevant to our study as ἀποστέλλειν is often

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<sup>180</sup> Adams uses the terms "arguments" and "narratives" as mutually exclusive. As I demonstrated in chapter two, this is not the case in Fredal (2020).

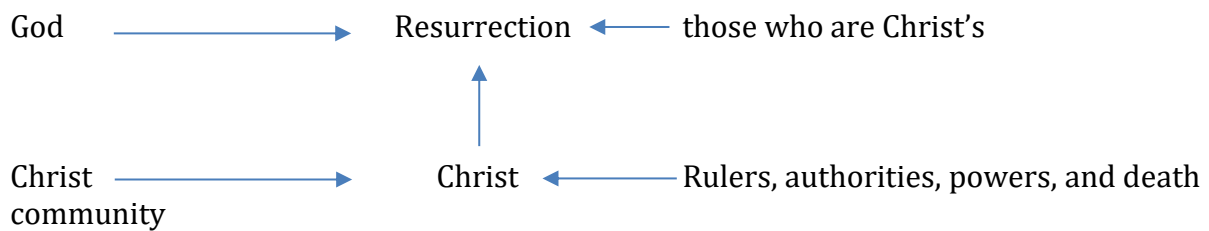
used with the idea of a commission associated with it (Rengstorf 1964, 1:404). Thus, by recalling the appearance of Christ in vv.5-8, Paul is reaffirming his call to apostleship, something that was challenged at Corinth (1 Cor 9:1-2, 2 Cor 10-12). Adams (2012, 216) calls Paul’s mention of his persecution of the church a “narrative of reversal.” Paul first says that he persecuted the church and then he mentions that he works harder than any other apostle (v. 10). This “reversal” is made possible by the “call” of God through the “gift” which is the grace of God (Adams, 2012, 219). Paul implies that his change in behavior happens because of his conversion experience on the road to Damascus.

### Hays’s Model

In the table below I have applied Hays’s model (based on Greimas]), which I previously discussed in chapter three, to the narrative in vv. 3-8.

Syntagm	Canonical Function	Application to vv. 3-8	
Contract	Mandate	Christ becomes human to deliver people from sin.	Sender: God Subject: Christ
	Communication	Christ is empowered and has his followers to help him.	Object: Resurrection
Disjunction		Crucifixion	Receivers: Humans – because Christ died for them
Performance	Confrontation	Death of Christ and burial	Opponent: Rulers of this world
	Domination	Resurrection of Christ	
	Attribution	Kingdom is restored to God.	

Table 4.1 Application of Hays Model to 1 Cor 15:3-8



By applying Hays’s model, it becomes clear that the whole point of Jesus’s death, burial, resurrection, and appearances is to ensure the resurrection of those who are his. Therefore, Paul portrays him as the first fruits (1 Cor 15:23). This is the “object” that God the father wants to “communicate” to humankind. God is the “sender” who gives the mandate to Christ, the “subject.” Those who were with him in this world and those who had seen him, help Christ by being witnesses to his resurrection.

### Fredal and other models

James Fredal lists four ways in which the narrative rhetoric works:

- (1) Narrative rhetoric asserts and invites the audience to attend to or “take to heart” a credible fact, a fact that listeners can be relied upon to accept as true because it fits within and is supported by the surrounding narrative and its characteristic movement because it is commonly known and believed, because the opponent has not disputed it or because the opponent has explicitly admitted it.

The “credible fact” is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. There is no evidence to think that anyone among the believing community in Corinth disputed it, and Paul claims that they have already believed it (15:11).

- (2) This fact is linked to other facts to form a narrative and, ultimately, a story. It acquires most of its significance and effect from this context. The inferential threads do not stretch from a few premises to their conclusion but across the story to the laws, the case, and the *nomos* in which they are situated. Inferences can also lead from this story to other similar stories that clarify and support it.

The story of Christ's death and resurrection is related to the stories of appearances to others and to Paul. In the intersection of the two stories, Paul's story of persecuting the church and the story of the resurrection of Christ, lies the calling of Paul to be an apostle of Christ.

- (3) The fact is shown to be central to the narrative's plot and theme as it helps frame and answer the legal question at issue.

In the verses that follow Paul would go on to show the importance of this narrative to the "question at issue," the resurrection of Christ.

- (4) At the same time (because there can only be one such nexus), it shows the opponent's argument (perhaps even based on his own words or actions or drawn from his own narrative) to be irrelevant, incredible, shameful, unjust, or impossible. In this way, the enthymized fact resolves an ambiguous situation in favor of one reading of the events and the law over against the other (Fredal 2020, 112).

Paul would apply the argument of the opposite to show that the Corinthians' refusal to believe in the resurrection of the dead is not consistent with the fact of Christ's own resurrection.

Toolan (2001, 8), offers "three chief or defining characteristics" of narrative: "sequence and interrelated events; foregrounded individuals; crisis to resolution progression." We see all of this in vv. 3b-5: there is natural sequence in the death, burial, resurrection, and appearance in vv. 3b-5. There is also sequence in the appearances as indicated by εἶτα and ἔπειτα and finally by ἔσχατον. As far as the scriptures are concerned Paul was the last of the apostle to whom Jesus appeared. Paul names many individuals in 1 Cor 15:3-9. In citing the death, burial, resurrection and appearance, Paul shows how the faith of the early Christians and importantly the events that shaped it moved from "crisis to resolution."

### Narratio or Mediate Rhetoric?

A question may be asked, and quite rightly so, namely, why should 15:1-11 not simply be classified as a *narratio* as many have done.<sup>181</sup> The answer lies in the fact that Paul's "*narratio*" section is not directed to the question at hand, the resurrection of the dead. It would appear to the casual reader that Paul is engaging in a digression in the "narration"

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<sup>181</sup> To name but a few: Thiselton (2000, 1167) Collins (2006, 526) and Gardner (2018, 645).

section by talking about the resurrection of Christ. This is better explained by reading this as a mediate rhetoric where Paul talks about “something to prove something else” (Fredal 2018, 38).

It would also appear that contrary to the advice given in *Rhetorica ad Herennium* [1.14],<sup>182</sup> Paul has an unusually long *narratio*. A look at two speeches from antiquity shows that the narration section is usually quite short. In Gorgias’ encomium of Helen<sup>183</sup> the *narratio* section is much shorter in comparison to the “*narratio*” section of chapter 15.<sup>184</sup> In the speech, the section on narration covers the very basic details about Helen, does not even detail how Helen ended up in Troy. Gorgias strictly is talking about Helen, her birth, and her romances, and in the proof section he justifies the behavior of Helen, giving various reasons for her elopement with Paris. What would interest us is that the *narratio* is completely about Helen. Gorgias does not talk about anything else. The *narratio* of Lysias’s speech against grain dealers also talks about the issues at hand; it justifies the hearing of the case in which the speaker accuses the grain dealers of the crime they have committed but insists that they be given a fair trial. This is yet another proof that vv. 1-11 cannot be classified as *narratio*.

## Topoi Analysis

In this section we analyze the topoi that have been identified in vv. 1-11.

## Apostolic Tradition and the Gospel Kerygma

In this subsection I explore Paul’s use of a topos of CR: his appeal to the apostolic *tradition*. The argumentative power of the tradition when wielded against the resurrection averse members of the Corinthians’ community can only be seen later in 15:12, where Paul asks, “Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead? The proclamation forbids any deviation. Paul’s whole argument in this chapter will be based on the gospel which also forms the core of the apostolic tradition.

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<sup>182</sup> It also gives brevity, clarity, and plausibility as marks of narration (*Rhet. Her.* 1:14; *Rhet.* 3.16.4).

<sup>183</sup> Texts of all Lysias’ speech from: Diels and Sprague (2001, 50); text of Gorgias’s speech from: Kennedy (2007, sec. Appendix).

<sup>184</sup> I have only considered the length of the first 34 verses as Paul does not directly relate the death or resurrection of Christ in the next verses of the chapter.

Paul would have believed<sup>185</sup> in the resurrection as a Pharisee. But what makes his views different in 1 Corinthians 15 is his application of that belief to Jesus Christ as the risen messiah who was declared to be the son of God (cf. Rom 1:4). While the Pharisees believed in a future resurrection, Paul believed in realized eschatology in the case of Jesus Christ: the resurrection had happened but at this stage, only for Christ (Novakovic 2014, 114). As Witherington (1998a, 147) remarks, "What Paul believes about Christ causes him to alter the eschatological framework he inherited from his Pharisaic days."

## Gospel

Paul tries to remind them of the gospel that he preached in 1 Cor 15:1. The word Paul utilizes here is εὐηγγελισάμην which is a significant word for him. In 1:17 he claims regarding his apostolic mission: οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλέν με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν ἀλλ' εὐαγγελίζεσθαι. The words εὐαγγέλιον and εὐαγγελίζω appear three times in the first two verses of chapter 15. This indicates that the subject matter of what is to follow is central to Paul's preaching. Paul's preaching of the gospel (εὐαγγέλιον) is not just a matter of words; it is the power of God (1 Cor 1:18).<sup>186</sup>

Paul sees the gospel as the gospel of Christ as much as the gospel of God (1 Cor 9:12; Rom 1:9) (Dunn 2008, 166). The proclamation of the gospel, especially among the Corinthians, was centered purely on Christ (1 Cor 2:2). In places where Paul terms it the gospel of Christ or of the Lord Jesus, or of God's son (1 Thess 3:2; Gal 1:7; Phil 1:27; 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Cor 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Rom 15:19; 2 Thess 1:8; Rom 1:9), we can sense "the nuance of Christ as the originator of the gospel" (Fitzmyer 1998, 220). As Dunn (2008, 181) aptly comments, "Paul's gospel, the divine response to the divine indictment, was centered wholly on Jesus Christ. It was the encounter with Christ on the Damascus road which revolutionized Paul's whole faith and life. Christ became the key to understanding God's purpose for humankind, and indeed God himself."

The death and resurrection of Christ form the core of Paul's theology and therefore, form the core of his gospel message (Dunn 2008, 208). Both are related concepts, as what makes the belief in resurrection meaningful is the interpretation of

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<sup>185</sup> Paul confessed this before the council in Acts 23:6 according to Luke.

<sup>186</sup> Gospel is very much a Pauline word as he uses sixty out of seventy six occurrences in the NT. Fitzmyer (1998, 149) notes that the term is hardly used in the gospels themselves or outside of the Pauline writings. Dunn (2008, 168) thinks that Paul could probably have coined the term based on the LXX usage of the verb (εὐαγγελίζω) in passages like Isa 52 and concludes that "Paul was certainly the first, so far as we know, to sum up, the Christian message as the 'gospel'." The gospel has become part of Paul's post-conversion identity as he sees himself as someone set apart for the gospel (Rom 1:1),(Dunn 2008, 165).

Jesus's death (Hengel and Barrett 1999, 45). Christ crucified was central in Paul's rhetoric, or rather as Mitchell (2012, 4) calls it, his "anti-rhetoric rhetoric": "it was inescapably a verbal proclamation, a *logos* and a *kerygma*, that he brought, a one man verbal, visual and biographical re-presentation of Jesus Christ crucified."

What provoked hostility from the Jews was not so much the fact that Jesus was crucified and risen from the dead, but the picture of Jesus that Paul presented: *Jesus as the crucified Messiah* (Dunn 2008, 209). The crucified savior did not make any sense to the gentiles (1:23). Despite this, Paul's and the apostles' proclamation consistently focused on "Christ crucified" (1 Cor 1:23; 2:2).

In 15:1-2, Paul claims that the Corinthians are standing firm (ἐστήκατε) in the gospel (perfect indicative), and they are being saved (σώζεσθε)<sup>187</sup> by it (present indicative), if they hold fast to it κατέχετε (present indicative). In 1 Cor 1:18 Paul indicates that the Corinthians are being saved (σωζομένοις) by the message regarding the cross (which Paul used as a metonym for the gospel), which he identifies as the power of God to bring about salvation. He closely associates σώζω with the cross in 1 Cor 1:18 and uses that term to characterize the believers. Again in 1:21, he states that those who believe in the foolishness of his proclamation (that is, the message of what is being proclaimed<sup>188</sup>) are being saved. Since Paul has already established that one vital characteristic of the believing community is that they are being saved, he now says in 15:2 that the very act of their being saved is happening because of the gospel. In 15:2 Paul poses an implied threat by suggesting that if they forsake their belief in the gospel that he preached to them, they risk jeopardizing their salvation (Oropeza 2017, 197).

Rom 10:9<sup>189</sup> sheds more light on 1 Cor 15:2. In Romans, Paul has two conditions for salvation; one is an outward expression and the other an inward belief. The believer must confess that Jesus is Lord and believe God raised him from the dead. The belief in the resurrection, therefore, is part and parcel of the core gospel message that saves the believer.<sup>190</sup> If we apply this to 1 Cor 15:1-2, it will mean that the Corinthians will be saved only if they continue to believe that God raised Jesus from the dead. This is crucial to Paul

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<sup>187</sup> The verb in its present tense σώζεσθε in 1 Cor 15:2 has led Achtemeier (1983, 236) to comment that salvation seems to be "in process." While σώζεσθε is in the passive voice, implying that the saving act happens through the gospel, it only happens if they hold fast to the word. The active verb κατέχετε compliments the passive σώζεσθε.

<sup>188</sup> Paul uses the phrase "message of the cross" in 1:18 as a metonym for the gospel.

<sup>189</sup> This verse is thought to be an 'allusion' to the baptismal confession (Kelly 2006, 15).

<sup>190</sup> In Acts 17:18, resurrection is the direct object of preaching itself τὴν ἀνάστασιν εὐηγγελίζετο.

as the arguments that follow are built on it. Paul's rhetoric applies an active threat in his use of pathos.

The threat also works by using communal rhetoric. As we saw in the CR chapter, in 1 Cor 1:18 Paul classifies humanity into two groups by their destiny: those who are perishing and those who are being saved (he does the same in 2 Cor 2:15). In 1 Cor 15:2 Paul threatens his readers: if they do not believe in the gospel that he once preached to them, they will lose their membership in the community of the "saved." Since Paul is going to connect the core of the gospel, namely, the resurrection of Christ to the resurrection of the dead in Christ, it would soon dawn on them that if they do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, it is tantamount to not believing in the gospel. Thus, this would also mean losing their membership in the community of the saved, as one of the core things that distinguishes the community, is its belief in the gospel. Faith (πιστεύω) in the ancient world is more than mental assent. It has a social aspect and is the "social glue that binds one person to another" (Malina 1993, 67).

Paul remarks that the very purpose of Christ's coming is to save sinners (Rom 5:6-10). For Paul, the word σώζω, has everything to do with Christ. Since Paul will base all his arguments on the gospel, he makes sure that the Corinthians understand that there is already a strong relationship established between them and the gospel. The argument of the resurrection of the dead is based on the resurrection of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ is very much part of the gospel.

As the following diagram illustrates, v. 2 brings about a blend of two worlds - Paul's apostolic world and the world of the Corinthians. It is the gospel that serves as the bridge in connecting them.

Paul's apostolic world

Corinthian World

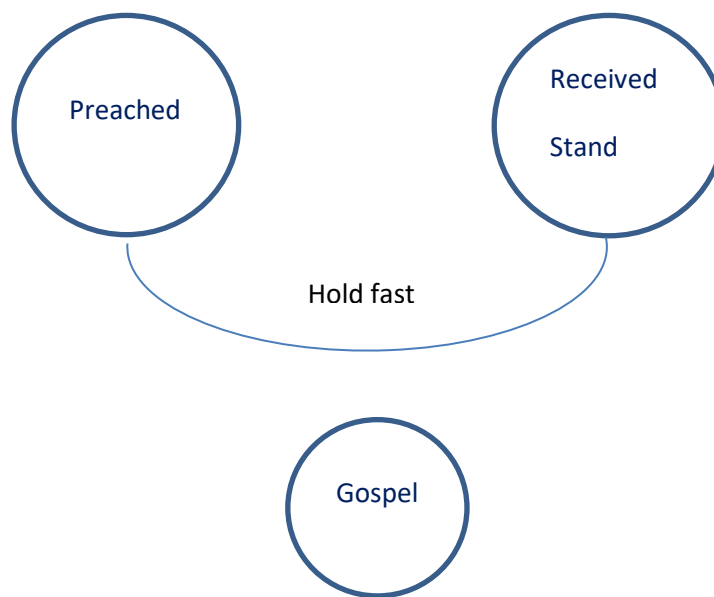


Fig. 4.1 Two Worlds

Paul suggests that if they do not believe the gospel and its implications, namely, the resurrection of the dead, they would soon jeopardize the link between the two worlds. They would isolate themselves from Paul and from their fellow Corinthian converts.

### Confession

We have already established in chapter 2 that 1 Cor 15:3b onwards is indeed a tradition. We will now look at its individual elements to see how each of these plays a role in CR.

ὅτι Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς καὶ

ὅτι ἐτάφη καὶ

ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς καὶ

ὅτι ὤφθη

Κηφᾶ Ἰεῖτα τοῖς ἑδώδεκα

There is significant parallelism in these verses with the first verse corresponding to the third in the number of words and the reference to the κατὰ τὰς γραφὰς. Commenting on Pauline confessions, Neufeld (1963, 45) identifies bipartiteness, which appears as contrasts, as a feature of the formula. This can be applied to vv. 3-5, where death and burial are contrasted with resurrection and appearance.

As Ciampa and Rosner (2010, sec. 17067) point out, Christ is the subject of all the verbs from 15:3b to 8 with the exception of the explanation in v. 6. This passage (vv. 3-5) is built on four such verbs: ἀπέθανεν, ἐτάφη, ἐγήγερται and ὤφθη (Talbert 2002, 122).

Conzelmann (1975, 252) views the verbs ἀπέθανεν and ἐγήγερται as “foundational” and having to do with the saving work of Christ. The verbs ἐτάφη and ὤφθη are provided as “verifications” of the other two statements (cf. Collins 2006, 531; Ciampa and Rosner 2010, sec. 17104).

### **Died for our Sin**

The word ἀμαρτιῶν in 15:3 forms a nice inclusio with the ἀμαρτάνετε in 15:34. This is confirmed by the fact that none of the other usages of “Christ died” (Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν) have “for our sin” ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν as their object.

The combination of ἀποθνήσκω and ἀμαρτία is unique in relation to Christ in this passage. Though this syntactic usage is unique to the Corinthians correspondence, the concept is repeated in different words in other places (Morris 1999, 217): Rom 4:25; Gal 1:4; Rom 8:4(3); Rom 6:10 (also see Rom 5:6,8; Rom 6:10; 8:32,34; 1 Cor 8:11; 2 Cor 5:14, Gal 2:20-1; 1 Thess 5:10).

Hengel (1986, 224–5) notes that the addition of for “our sins” makes it a longer version of the usual shorter formula which is “died for us” or something similar. For example, in 1 Cor 8:11, Paul claims that Christ died for the weak believer. He sees the importance of 1 Cor 15:3 because the two formulae about death and being raised are expanded.

The fact that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor 15:3-5)<sup>191</sup> is very crucial to Paul’s CR. He refers to sin again in v. 17: “If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins.” It is noteworthy that although Paul claims in v. 3 b that Christ died for our sins, in v. 17 he claims that without the resurrection the Corinthians would still be in their sins. The fact that Christ died for our sins (v. 3) did not help the believers to come out of their sin. It is the resurrection of Christ which completes their deliverance from sin. It is the future resurrection of Christ’s followers which brings about the complete effects of Christ’s own resurrection for believers. Christian theological tradition has seen the resurrection of Christ as evidence that Christ’s sacrifice has been accepted as a satisfaction with respect to divine justice (Hodge 1871, 3:601 and Calvin 1849, 2:5) aptly said:

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<sup>191</sup> Barclay (2017, 566) notes how Paul interprets the phrase “for our sins” using his understanding of “gift.”

For as sin was done away through the death of Christ, so righteousness is procured through his resurrection....When, however, the Scripture in other places makes mention only of his death, let us understand that in those cases his *resurrection* is included in his death, but when they are mentioned separately, the commencement of our salvation is (as we see) in the one, and the consummation of it in the other.

Paul's use of the phrase *Christ* died as opposed to Jesus died must also be noted.<sup>192</sup> The particular tendency is to use the title "Christ" when referring to salvific acts (Conzelmann 1969, 73). Kramer (2013, 27) claims that except in John 11:51, the word Christ is used in salvific references. Robbins (2009, 497) notes that "the word Messiah is the special name for Jesus, and this name establishes a special relation between 'believers' and God's Messiah that creates a context for Christians to participate in apocalyptic formulations of 'salvation.'"

As Hengel (1986, 228) remarks, the idea that the messiah died must have been an "unprecedented novelty" to a Jewish audience. The well-known objection of Celsus (in Origen *Cels* 1:30,31) that Christ's death cannot contain soteriological value as the death on the cross was so shameful, shows the attitude of the people in antiquity towards the death of Christ. Hengel opines that perhaps the Jewish leaders wanted Jesus to be crucified because the Messiah of Israel cannot be accursed by God and anyone hanged on a tree is accursed (Deut 21:23; Gal 3:13). Killing him by crucifying him, was the "most obvious way to refute his messianic claim" (Hengel 1986, 231).

The use of the word "*our*" makes the Corinthians partakers in the narrative that Paul relates. In a sense it plays the role of what Whitmarsh (2004) calls metapedagogic. Readers are to learn that in the same way that Christ was risen they will also rise. Paul will follow up this short narrative/tradition with a fully blown explanation and consequences.

## Buried

In 15:4, *ἐτάφη* and *ἐγήγεραται* make a stark contrast. In one Christ is intombed to become dust, in the other he is raised from dead. One is the realm of the dead, not of living humans.

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<sup>192</sup> Wright (1992a, 320–21) thinks that since it is an early formula the term "Christ" could not have been used as a proper name. He also connects this usage with the messianic rule in 1 Cor 15:20-28.

The other is the realm of the risen, not merely the realm of the living human beings. One is below the level of the living and the other is beyond or transcends the realm of the living. Thus in 15:3-4 Paul talks about the transition of spaces that Christ has gone through. Christ died for our sins and was buried – and enters the world of the dead. He was raised and comes back to the realm of the living. This is important as from v. 12 onwards Paul starts to compare the risen Christ and resurrection of the dead. Hence the point that Christ ceased to exist in the realm of the living and joined the realm of the dead will help to make the connection between Christ and the dead.

The reference to the burial helps to make three points as shown in the following points:

1. Buried would confirm that Christ suffered and died, and thus was resurrected as opposed to being revived.
2. Burial could help to build a reference to the empty tomb. Here as Neufield (1963, 48) argues, the aspect of “death and burial are contrasted with those of resurrection and appearance.” As to the question why Paul does not make a reference to the empty tomb, recently Cook (2017, 56) has argued that “Paul could not have conceived of a resurrection of Jesus unless he believed his tomb was empty.” He argues from the semantics of ἀνίστημι and ἐγείρω that it means a physical resurrection, and concludes that the reference to the burial and resurrection “presupposed an empty tomb” (Cook 2017, 57). Cook (2017, 62-74) argues from Greco Roman literature to show that the resurrection was bodily. He notes how in Greek myths when the spirit comes to life after the body is buried a different verb ἀναβιώω, which is avoided by the NT, is used (Cook 2017, 74). Bryan (2011, 50) argues that the two expressions taken together (“buried” and “appeared”) “naturally imply that after Jesus had been raised, his body was no longer in the grave.” Pannenberg (1991, v 2. 359) concludes that in 1 Corinthians 15:3-5 “the empty tomb was a self-evident implication of what was said about the resurrection of Jesus.”
3. It might also serve a theological purpose in identifying the believer with the experience of Christ. Paul extends his usual identification of the believer with the death and resurrection of Christ by adding the burial element to it in Rom 6:4:

Therefore, we have been buried (συνθάπτω) with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

Also, the author of Colossians says:

When you were buried (συνθάπτω) with him in baptism, you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead (Col 2:12)

Paul uses the term baptism rather metaphorically to signify the symbolic death and resurrection of the believer in the experience of baptism because the believer's baptism is symbolically like being buried (and of course being resurrected) with Christ. This interpretation is especially attractive as Paul urges the Corinthians to stop sinning in v. 34, which parallels the thought in Romans 6:4 to walk in the newness of life. This would also make a lot of sense if this confessions were repeated at baptism (as some scholars claim, for example, see Collins (2006, 531)), as the burial of Christ alludes to baptism.

## Rose Again

The next part of the formula in 15:4 is that Christ was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures,<sup>193</sup> which is the next event in the sequence and the culmination of Jesus's death and burial. This phrase is the actual reason why Paul refers to the tradition here and adds to his CR. This statement is what is going to help Paul form his major arguments in the rest of the chapter, especially from 15:12-34. It is this aspect of the formula that Paul employs in v. 12. As noted by others (e.g., Barrett 2013, 340; Garland 2003, 836), Paul moves from the aorist tense with ἀπέθανεν and ἐτάφη to the perfect tense with ἐγήγερται implying the force of resurrection of Christ persists in the

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<sup>193</sup> There are different views about which scripture is alluded to in this phrase, whether it is scripture as a whole or a specific portion of scripture. Since Paul does not explicitly quote any particular scripture passages here – as this is from the creedal formula – an approach like that of Heil (2005, 205–60) is not feasible here. Heil identifies each of the explicit quotations from the HS and uses Jewish exegetical devices such as the *gezera shava* for analysis. Some scholars (Seeley 1990, 44; Conzelmann 1966, 253–55) claim that “it is widely believed” that Paul had Isaiah 52-3 in mind,<sup>193</sup> though others claim that he is referring to the HS as whole. Rosner and Ciampa (2007, sec. 1406), for example, think that since the word for scripture, γραφάς, is in the plural the reference is to the general scriptures as a whole and not to any particular text when a particular text is quoted Paul uses the singular term. However, as Mitchell (2012, 9) concludes, “Paul refers to the text in such shorthand fashion, where we can only speculate the exact sources.” Also see Novakovic (2014, 116-7) for a discussion of the third day motif and HS and its rabbinic interpretation.

present. Whereas the crucifixion and death of Christ brought “shame and scandal,” the resurrection brought “honor and glory” (Finney 2012, 217).

*The usage of ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται*<sup>194</sup>

Looking at the number of occurrences in the NT, it would appear that the phrase “raised from the dead,” is a prime candidate for a confessional formula. Paul uses the phrase ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ in 1 Cor 15:4 as opposed to Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται ἐκ νεκρῶν. It would make sense for Paul to use the latter phrase as his whole argument is intended to demonstrate the untenability of the position of some Corinthians that ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν (v. 12). But the fact that he refers to τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ makes it quite certain that he is quoting a confessional formula, which was familiar even to the Corinthians.

Paul’s reference to the tradition in 15:3-5 plays an intertextual role as the notion that the Lord God resurrects the dead was used by devout Jews who prayed the *Shemoneh Esreh* three time a day:

You are mighty forever, my L-rd; You resurrect the dead; You are powerful to save.

He causes the wind to blow and the rain to fall.

He sustains the living with loving kindness, resurrects the dead with great mercy, supports the falling, heals the sick, releases the bound, and fulfills His trust to those who sleep in the dust. Who is like You, mighty One! And who can be compared to You, King, who brings death and restores life, and causes deliverance to spring forth!

You are trustworthy to revive the dead. Blessed are You L-rd, who revives the dead.<sup>195</sup>

According to this and other biblical and extra biblical sources we survey in chapter 6 we can notice how the God of the HS is said to resurrect people from the dead. We can see NT writers use a “two article formula” to establish a relationship between the God of Judaism and Jesus Christ. The apostolic claim according to the author of Acts, was that

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<sup>194</sup> For a fuller treatment of the evolution of creeds from NT writers to the early common Christian creeds see Kelly (2006, 16–29) and von Campenhausen (1972, 210–53).

<sup>195</sup> Text from <https://www.sefaria.org/sheets/7166.11?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>

“the God of our ancestors raised up Jesus” (Acts 5:30). This may very well be the point that this construction is trying to make by using a phrase which was familiar to the Jews, thus, making a connection between Jesus and the God of Judaism. The usage of making God the one who raised Jesus is so emphatic that it is “used almost as a title, to identify God the father” (Michaels 2015, 69).

In Paul’s theology of resurrection, Jesus was declared to be the son of God by his resurrection from the dead according to Rom 1:4.<sup>196</sup> The phrase “raised from the dead” appears to have been used in the early Christian church so much that in Romans, Paul makes this a condition for salvation on two separate occasions:

τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησοῦν τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν ἐκ νεκρῶν, (Rom 4:24)

καὶ πιστεύσης ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου ὅτι ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸν ἤγειρεν ἐκ νεκρῶν, σωθήσῃ. (Rom 10:9)

Another noticeable feature of this construction is that it is often used with a reference to God because it is God who raised Jesus from the dead. According to Rom 4:24 the imperative is to believe in the one who raised Jesus from the dead (cf. Rom 6:4; 8:11; 10:9; 1 Cor 6:14; 2 Cor 4:14; Gal 1:1; Col 2:12; 1 Thess 1:10; Heb 11:19). Though it is only implied in 1 Cor 15:3, Paul identifies God as the author of Jesus’s resurrection in 15:15. As it can be seen from NT usage in the table below the term resurrected is almost entirely in the passive. Whenever it occurs in the active voice, God is the subject (Dahl 1962, 96–97). The table below offers an analysis of the use of the term “raised Jesus” in four different ways. The first category is where a reference is made to God and the dead; the second is without any reference to God but with a reference to dead; the third is where a reference is made to God but no reference to the dead is present; and the fourth is where there is no reference to God or the dead.

With reference to God and the dead	No reference to God, reference to the dead	Reference to God,	No reference to God,
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<sup>196</sup> Though “declare” is one possible meaning for ὀρίζω (BDAG), it is hardly used in that sense in the NT. Since Paul says τοῦ ὀρισθέντος υἱοῦ θεοῦ ἐν δυνάμει it is possible that he means that Christ was elevated to a higher level at his resurrection. This view can be maintained without an adoptionist view of Christology (Dunn 1988, 14; Schreiner 1998, 60).

		No reference to the dead,	No reference to the dead
Rom 4:24; 6:4; 8:11; 10:9; 2 Cor 1:9; Gal 1:1; Eph 1:20; Col 2:12; 1 Thess 1:10; 1 Pet 1:21; Heb 11:19 (not about Christ)	1 Tim 2:8; 1 Cor 15:12; 29, 32, 35, 42, 52; Rom 6:9; 7:4	Acts 5:30; 10:40 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> day, 13:37; 1 Cor 6:14; 2 Cor 4:14	Rom 4:25; 8:34; 1 Cor 15:4 (3 <sup>rd</sup> day); 1 Cor 15:14,15,16, 17,20, 43, 44; 2 Cor 5:15 – there is a reference to death; Eph 5:14 (metaphorical usage)
	Luke 7:22; Matt 16:21; Matt 17:9; Matt 27:64; Matt 28:7; Mark 6:14,16; Luke 7:22; Luke 9:7		Matt 16:21; Matt 17:23 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> day; Mark 9:31; Luke 18:33; Mark 10:34; Luke 24:6-7; Matt 20:19 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> day; Matt 27:63 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> day; Matt 28:6;

			Matt 27:52 (not about Jesus Christ)
Acts 3:15; 4:10; 13:30; Acts 10:40 (3 <sup>rd</sup> day); Acts 26:8	John 2:22; John 12:9,17 (Lazarus);  Acts 21:14; Acts 26:23		Mark 16:6, 14
John 5:21 (not about Christ);  John 12:1 (Jesus raised Lazarus)	John 21:14		Mark 16:14
Heb 11:19 (Not about Christ – but about Isaac)	Matt 14:2 (not about Jesus Christ)		Luke 9:22 – 3 <sup>rd</sup> day;  Luke 24:5;  Luke 24:6-7 (3 <sup>rd</sup> day);  Luke 24:34 (Jesus is the subject, still it is a passive verb)

Table 4.2 Verses about the resurrection of Christ

As it can be seen in the above analysis,<sup>197</sup> Paul's reference here to the third day, ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ, is closer to the synoptic tradition which links resurrection

<sup>197</sup> A table based on the Greek usage has been crafted by Dahl (1962, 98–100), the purpose of my own table above is to show the frequency of different phrases.

to the third day. The above table also shows and strengthens the fact that this is indeed a pre-Pauline tradition as it is used in “several apostolic circles” (Ellis 1986, 482).<sup>198</sup> By appealing to a well-known gospel tradition, Paul strengthens his use of CR. If they do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, consequentially they do not believe in the resurrection of Christ, which is attested by the gospel tradition. Paul would take elements from this foundation discourse and use it in the consequence discourse in 15:17 arguing that if Christ has not been raised, believers would still be in their sins.

### According to the scriptures

The early church believed that the story of Israel had reached its climax in Jesus (Wright 1992b, 401). Reference to the scriptures in 15:3-5 makes Jesus the culmination of the HB and adds force and power to CR. As Mitchell (2012, 5) comments, though Paul claims that metaphorically he laid Jesus Christ crucified for the foundation of the church, “as the letter [1 Corinthians] proceeds we learn that the foundation itself is set in words; it lies on a scriptural subfloor without which Jesus Christ crucified would be an unmarked grave under an underdeveloped plot.” Paul sees the gospel of Christ as something prophesied and predicted in the scriptures (e.g., Rom 1:2; 3:20; 1 Cor 15:3-4).

Lindars (1973, 13) has argued that the main purpose of the references to HB quotations is apologetic, that is, it is employed to counter argue against the objections to the proclamation of Jesus as the messiah.<sup>199</sup> Paul was making a point that Jesus is the promised messiah of the HB. This was Paul’s “rhetoric of reversal”<sup>200</sup> in which he was reversing the Jewish expectations of a messiah from that of a ruler to that of a suffering servant.

Barrett (2013, 338–39) observes two uses of the reference to the scriptures in 1 Cor 15:3-5:

#### 1) Looking at Christ as the fulfilment of the HB.

Paul transfers the power and authority of the HS to Christ as he claims that Christ is the fulfilment of the HS. The practice of looking at the death of Christ in terms of the HS goes right back to Jesus himself (Luke 24:25-27, 44-46) according (Taylor 2014, 477). Since Judaism neither expected nor accepted a

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<sup>198</sup> The earliest reference occurs in Aristides’s *Apology* II, and in Justin, *Dial.* 51, 76, 97, 100, 107.

<sup>199</sup> For a critique of Lindars see Carson (2008, 8) and Juel (1988, 60f). For different views about the use of the HB in the new, see Moyise (2001, 131–37), Berding and Lunde (2009) and Kaiser (2001).

<sup>200</sup> The phrase was used by Malcolm (2013).

suffering messiah (Hengel 1986, 228) and since Judaism did not interpret the suffering servant passages messianically,<sup>201</sup> Fee (2014, 665) maintains that the connection between Christ and the HS was made by Jesus himself.

- 2) Interpreting the work of Christ by means of “OT categories — for example, of sacrifice ... atonement ... sufferings ... the good time to come” (Barrett 2013, 338–39)

This is very much the case in 1 Corinthians as Paul presents Christ as ‘our Passover lamb’ (καὶ γὰρ τὸ πάσχα ἡμῶν<sup>τ</sup> ἐτύθη Χριστός) (1 Cor 5:7).<sup>202</sup> The idea of an atoning death could be present in 15:3b, Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν (Erickson 2013, 515). Kramer (2013, 27) also concurs: “for our sins’ clearly interprets the death as an atoning sacrifice.” As Pannenberg (1991, v. 2:418) claims, “[I]f Christ died for our sins, as in the traditional formula in Paul (1 Cor 15:3), then that undoubtedly means that he made expiation for our sins.”<sup>203</sup>

In both 1 Cor 5:7 and 15:3 Paul seems to be alluding to the same idea of an atoning death, as well as in many other places in one Corinthians: Paul speaks about Christ being our ἀπολύτρωσις (1:30); he claims that one should not be a stumbling block to a weak brother or sister because Christ died for that person (8:11); he indicates that Christ has bought believers with a price (6:20, 7:23); and in the words of institution of the Lord’s Supper, Paul quotes Christ as saying, “This is my body, which is *for you*” (11:23-24).

The voluntariness of Christ’s atoning death is emphasized by the use of the word Christ *died* as opposed to being killed or crucified as in 1 Cor 1:22-3; 2:8; 1 Thess 2:15; Acts 2:23. Paul uses the terms killed or crucified in other places, but the fact that he uses ‘died’ could be due to the fact that this is coming from a tradition in which the emphasis is laid on the voluntariness of Christ’s death.

There is a very delicate balance which needs to be maintained in Paul’s reference to the HS. One is that the death of Christ as the Passover lamb for our sins happens according to the HS. However, his death also signals a major break from the HS (and the temple sacrificial system endorsed in those scriptures). The scriptures are fulfilled but the sacrificial system endorsed in them is rendered useless because they are fulfilled in

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<sup>201</sup> Neubauer (2005) cited in Fee (2014, 665).

<sup>202</sup> Hengel (1986, 234) thinks that this verse assumes that Christ is the Passover lamb and is based on Jesus’ last supper.

<sup>203</sup> Pannenburg (1991, 2:418) thinks of Rom 4:25 as the “developed formula.”

Christ. So in making reference to the HS not only is Paul providing inartificial proofs (Oropeza 2017, 197)<sup>204</sup> for the resurrection of Christ, but he also strengthens the CR because he is seeing Christ as the fulfillment of the sacrificial system.<sup>205</sup>

Read in the light of HS the death of Christ makes sense and is interpreted as “*for our sins.*” Not only is Paul claiming that the death of Christ happened according to the HS but that his death was a fulfillment of HB atoning sacrifices. All this adds power to the resurrection of Christ

### Affiliation to the Christ Community

In this section I analyze the topoi of the Christ community Paul employs in 15:1-11, using three elements: Paul’s use of the word ἀδελφοί, the death of Christ as the distinguishing factor of the Christ community, and the experience of having seen the risen Christ as another distinguishing factor.<sup>206</sup>

### Brethren

Paul’s favorite<sup>207</sup> word for addressing the Corinthians is ἀδελφοί<sup>208</sup> which the NRSV translates as brothers and sisters (cf. L&N)<sup>209</sup> and which literally refers to a family of siblings, who has come from the same womb.<sup>210</sup> Trebilco (2012, 16) demonstrates how the word comes from the “sphere of family” as it was the “primary group to which people belonged.” Paul’s usage is in line with his other metaphors from the family, where he projects “God as Father, Jesus as Son, Christians as sons and daughters, children of God, and brothers and sisters, and Paul as father and nursing mother” (Trebilco 2012, 21).<sup>211</sup>

In 1 Cor 5:11 where Paul writes, *ἐάν τις ἀδελφὸς ὀνομαζόμενος*, he uses the term ἀδελφός as a group identity marker, to mark insiders and to differentiate them from

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<sup>204</sup> *Quin Inst.* 5.1; *Aris. Rhet* 1.15

<sup>205</sup> The writer of Hebrews consistently deals with this theme.

<sup>206</sup> I have used SIT to analyze the same communal aspect in the next chapter. I have not used it here as it is covered in the section dealing with the resurrected community. Since the notion that resurrection forms the core of Christian identity is important to the thesis, SIT analysis is better reserved for the next chapter.

<sup>207</sup> This is by far the most frequently used form of address (Trebilco 2012, 16) and of all the Pauline letters it is used in Corinthians the most (Trebilco 2012, 28).

<sup>208</sup> For a detailed analysis of Paul’s use of the term see Lim (2017), Horrell (2001), Birge (2002), Aasgaard (2004), and Trebilco (2012).

<sup>209</sup> On the question of gender inclusivity of the word see Trebilco (2012, 24–25).

<sup>210</sup> However, it must be remembered the usage of the word ‘brothers’ precedes Paul. It was one of the first ‘self-designation’ of the faith community according to Luke (Acts 1:15, 16; 6:3) (Wilkins 2008).

<sup>211</sup> Paul uses ἀδελφοί for different purposes. In 1 Corinthians 15:1 Paul wants to remind them of something that they already knew, other such uses include 1 Cor 16:15; Gal 1:11; 1 Thess 1:4; 2:1, 9; 5:1, 1 Cor 15:50; 2 Cor 8:1. The word ἀδελφοί is also used with an emotional appeal, a call for action, and with a final greeting (Trebilco 2012, 25–28).

outsiders. In 6:6 Paul used ἄπιστος in contrast to ἀδελφός, which shows how faith also functions as the binding factor of the Christ community. The contrast continues in 7:12-15 (Trebilco 2012, 37). The word ἀδελφοί is “a central boundary marker in instances of internal conflict” (Aasgaard 2004, 303). Paul uses the term to denote the insiders and to demarcate boundaries that must not be crossed.

Their common belief, or loyalty to the gospel (1 Cor 15:11), constituted the “social glue that binds one person to another” (Malina 1993, 67). By this belief they also became part of the global brotherhood who believed in the same gospel and of those who preach that gospel.

Paul often talks about the singularity of this gospel (Gal 1:8-9), and any deviations from that gospel are simply not tolerated by Paul. Anything that does not fit with this gospel is treated as “outrageous.” In Paul’s hyperbolic language, not even an angel is given provision to preach against it. As Adams (2012, 211) asserts, “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.”

The CR in this section works by evoking group rhetoric and reminding the Corinthians that they believe and are committed to the same gospel that was preached to them, the core of which is the belief in resurrection. If they do not believe in the resurrection of the dead, they will jeopardize their membership in this community.

### Those Who Have Seen Christ and Those Who Have Not

Paul divides the early Christian community into two – those who have seen the risen Christ and those who have not. While the gospel proclamation is coming from Paul and the other apostles who have seen the risen Christ, it is going to people who have not seen the risen Christ. This adds strength to Paul’s ethos and adds credibility to their message.

As given below, the diagram that was already used earlier can now be modified in the following way:

Paul’s apostolic world	the Corinthians’s World
characterized by people who	characterized by those who
have not	
have seen the risen Christ	seen the risen Christ

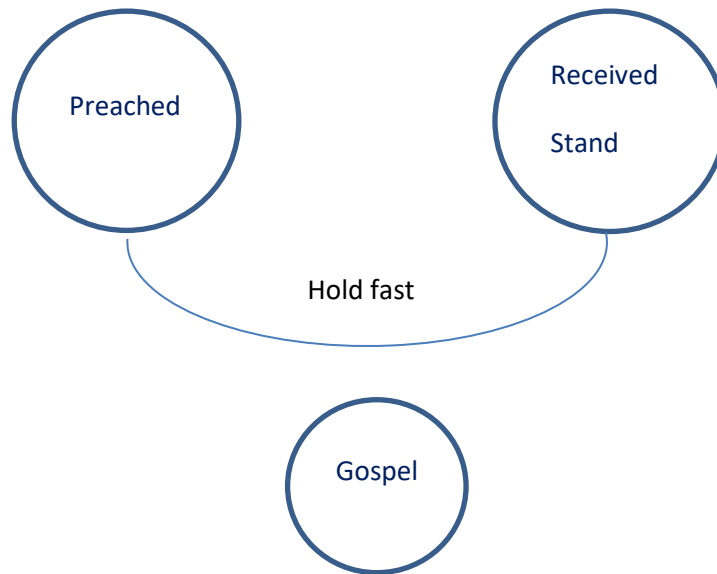


Fig 4.2 Characterization of the two worlds

The experience of seeing the risen Christ puts Paul and the other apostles on a higher pedestal than the Corinthian believers. So the “we” of 15:11 makes a stark contrast with the “some of you” in v. 12. The gospel tradition was transmitted by those who had seen the risen Christ to those who had not seen him.

### Death of Christ

One aspect of the death of Christ that we have not explore so far is the fact that it helps form the corporate identity of the Corinthian believing community. The diverse community is united by the fact that all members are those “for whom Christ died” (Thompson 2020, 129). As Wolter (2015, 105,109) notes, “[T]he death of Christ helps to build the Christian community,” a community characterized by the rituals celebrated by the community (cf. 1 Cor 5:8). The two rituals of the community, baptism at admission to the community (Wolter 2015, 132f) and the Lord’s Supper at regular meetings, emphasize the salvific effects brought about by the death and resurrection of Christ.<sup>212</sup>

In 15:1-3 first person singular verbs occur five times and second person plural

<sup>212</sup> In chapter 6 while exploring vv. 23-28 we will see how Paul complements this idea with the resurrection of Christ as a basis for the bond that unites the community together.

verbs and pronouns occur nine times. From using “I” and “you” (ὁμῖν) Paul switches to “our” (ἡμῶν) in v 3: “Christ died for *our* (ἡμῶν) sins,” and Paul is justified in adding himself also to the group as he was a chief sinner. In the following verses he admits that he persecuted the church and was not worthy to be called an apostle (v. 9). So, the bond that unites all believers together is Christ as he died for all of them and for all their sins.

Since the brotherhood of Christ is based on the death of Christ, it is a lasting bond. To believe anything contrary to the beliefs of that community would be to risk losing membership in that community.

### **Authenticity of Experience: Seeing the Risen Christ**

In 15:5-8 Paul brings inartificial proof from experience to add to his Christ rhetorical force.<sup>213</sup> He lists a number of people, including himself, who have seen the risen Christ. After appearing to Κηφᾶ, Christ appeared to the δώδεκα and then to more than πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς and then to Ἰακώβω,<sup>214</sup> then to all the ἀποστόλοις finally to Paul himself. The leaders of the church, the next level, the δώδεκα, ἀποστόλοις and the πεντακοσίοις ἀδελφοῖς all had seen Christ. The one thing that characterizes these people is that they are witnesses to Christ’s resurrection.<sup>215</sup> The Corinthians are invited to see the resurrection of Christ from the perspective of those who have seen him firsthand after

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<sup>213</sup> Marxsen (2013, 81) argue that all the people named in 1 Cor 15:5-8 are not the “witnesses of the resurrection itself,” but they are “witnesses of the post resurrection appearances.” Paul cites these witnesses as part of his claim that Christ has been raised from the dead, which he used in 1 Cor 15:12, as his main argument.

<sup>214</sup> Since James son of Zebedee was martyred early in the church’s history according to Acts 12:2, commentators agree that the James mentioned in 1 Cor 15:7 is the same person as James, brother of the Lord, mentioned in Gal 1:19 (Bernheim 1997, 4; Thiselton 2000, 1207). The problem with having many people with the name “James” has been identified by Hegesippus, from the second century, who wrote a five-volume commentary on the Acts of the Apostles. He attests to the presence of James, the Lord’s brother: JAMES, the Lord’s brother, succeeds to the government of the Church, in conjunction with the apostles. He has been universally called the Just, from the days of the Lord down to the present time. For many bore the name of James; but this one was holy from his mother’s womb (ANF 8:762)

The appearance to James, the brother of Jesus, mentioned here by Paul is not mentioned by any of the canonical gospel writers. This is probably not out of ignorance but due to choice according to Bernheim (1997, 96). The appearance is described in a non-canonical Gospel of the Hebrews (Fragment 7):

And when the Lord had given the linen cloth to the servant of the priest, he went to James and appeared to him. For James had sworn that he would not eat bread from that hour in which he had drunk the cup of the Lord until he should see him risen from among them that sleep. And shortly thereafter the Lord said: Bring a table and bread! And immediately it is added: he took the bread, blessed it and brake it and gave it to James the Just and said to him: My brother, eat the bread, for the Son of man is risen from among them that sleep. (NTApoc Vol 1, 178)

<sup>215</sup> Witherington (1998b, 197 n252) gives 3 reasons why Paul does not name any women witnesses:

1. Paul's main concern is to mention the apostolic witnesses commissioned by the risen Lord.
2. Paul may be quoting a traditional list of official witnesses.
3. The omission of the appearances to women may be for apologetic reasons.

his resurrection.

The verb ὤφθη appears in LXX (Gen 12.7; 17.1) and other NT passages ( Luke 1:11; 22:43; Acts 7:2,26) and refers to the manifestation of God or angels to humans (De Boer 1988, 106).<sup>216</sup> Bartsch (1980) notes how the LXX uses the same word with the dative to refer to God's appearances in different periods of the HB history. He points out how in Psalms and the Prophets a promise is given for the appearance of God with eschatological glory (Bartsch 1980, 189–92). In this line of analysis the appearance of Christ is seen as the fulfilment of that promise; as Thiselton (2000, 1199) remarks that the term “**appearing** marks the claim of the end of the time of waiting for eschatological and transcendent glory. Christ's risen presence serves as God's eschatological self-manifestation” (cf. Bartsch 1980, 192f). The appearance is seen as the inauguration of a “new era of salvation” (Collins 2006, 532; cf. Holleman 1996, 56; Novakovic 2014, 114; Oropeza 2017, 199). While the fuller revelation is yet to come, the risen Christ's appearance not only marks the beginning of that revelatory era, but also is an assurance that such an era will indeed come. This is quite connective as Paul makes waiting for the final revelation of Christ (ἀπεκδεχομένους τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ·) an important characteristic of the Corinthians right at the beginning of the letter (1 Cor 1:7, cf. Gal 1:1, ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί). Paul could be indicating that the appearance of the risen Christ is an assurance that what they are waiting for will indeed be given to them.

Because more than 500 people confessed to having seen the risen Lord at one time, it seems doubtful that every one of them was lying, especially since most of them were still alive according to Paul. Thus, this was a verifiable claim in Paul's day, though in 15:6 Paul acknowledges that some of them ἐκοιμήθησαν.

As Paul's argument takes shape, he will argue that Christ was the first fruits, the very guarantee that the dead in him will be raised (v. 20). So the very purpose of the appearances, the visual proof of Christ's resurrection is not only to make the disciples believe that Christ has been raised (Ashwin-Siejkowski 2009, 68) but to assure that all those who believe in him will also be raised.

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<sup>216</sup> In a recent study, Whitaker (2019, 125–212) compares the post-resurrection stories of Jesus with that of Greco-Roman literature. He recognizes three kinds of appearance stories. In the first one the hero of the story appears in disguise after a long time or after he was assumed to be dead; in the second kind of stories the gods come in disguise to assist the hero of the story. In the third class of “metamorphosis stories,” instead of mere disguise the hero changes his body form. Whitaker then compares the stories with the NT accounts and concludes that in the places where Jesus is presented as the main character in the story, he comes as a disguised hero, and in the places where someone else (an apostle, for example) is presented as the main character, Jesus comes disguised as God.

## Untimely Birth through Grace

Paul recounts that finally the risen Lord appeared to him. This is important to him, as the biggest argument that can be brought against his apostleship was that he had not seen the earthly Christ. This account of Christ's appearance is part of his rhetoric, ensuring his acceptance as an apostle (Lehtipuu 2015, 43). In 1 Cor 9:1 Paul connects the two issues that he is bringing out here: seeing the risen Lord and being an apostle. As McLean (1996, 173–74) suggests,

[T]hose who came forward as leaders in the emerging churches validated their authority by claiming a Christophany, a personal vision of the resurrected Lord.... Paul's insertion of himself in the witness tradition was undoubtedly part of Paul's defense of his apostleship....

Paul's comment that he persecuted the church (15:9) is not necessarily a confession, but rather another implied argument strengthening the CR of experience. Because, unlike the others to whom Christ had appeared (vv. 5-7), Paul was not a follower of Christ when he appeared to him. Paul was an enemy and was persecuting the church. This is what produces an "I" and "they" (ἐγὼ εἶτε ἐκεῖνοι in v. 11). Paul could not be lying about this, as he would not have become a believer, albeit an apostle, if the risen Christ had not appeared to him when he was an enemy of the church and of Christ. If he claims that Jesus is the son of God and has been raised from the dead and attributes his conversion to the appearance of the risen Christ, then it must really have been true. This would add strength to Paul's argument and serve as proof for the resurrection because he was not part of the initial team. In fact, he was on the opposite side.

Paul goes onto say that the grace was not in vain (κενός – a word which he uses in 15:13 and 14 subsequently) even though he was in a state not worthy to be called an apostle. After receiving God's grace, he purports to have worked harder, presumably than any of the other apostles. Paul implies here that the hard work he had put in would be in vain if Christ had not been raised from the dead. He later refers to the arduous character of his labor for the Lord in 15:30-2. This is one of the ways in which vv. 1-11 serve as a foundation from which Paul draws arguments in the latter parts of the chapter. Since the κήρυγμα in v. 14 is part of Paul's κοπιᾶω in v. 10, he implies that his labor would be rendered pointless, if Christ had not been raised from the dead. The same is true of his

calling to preach the gospel because he preached the risen Christ and above all, it was because he had seen the risen Christ that he found his calling to preach the gospel.

Paul attributes his calling and his hard work to the *χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ* in vv. 10-11. In Paul's case grace "is actually identical with his gospel, since his calling and his reception of the gospel were one and the same" (Berger 1994, 3:459). This is also true in Rom 1:5 where Paul connects grace<sup>217</sup> and apostleship.

Paul saw *χάρις* as something that undid everything he had done before his conversion, when he persecuted the church of God. The force of the *δὲ* in *χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ εἰμι ὃ εἰμι* shows the shame and embarrassment that is evident in his words in 15:8-10 when Paul narrates, "[L]ast of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." The shame is erased by this one word, *grace* because grace was exhibited in the cross of Christ when he died for *our* sins (15:3). When Paul said that Christ died for *our sins*, he probably included his persecution of the church, and when Paul said that Christ died for *our* sins, he included himself as someone for whom Christ had died.

The phrases *ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ* and *χάριτι δὲ θεοῦ* show a continuity. It was against the church of God that Paul was working before his conversion, and it was the grace of the very God, whose church he was persecuting, that made him to be an apostle. Although Paul now knows that it is *τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ*, he did not know it when he was persecuting the church.

Paul seldom thinks of grace apart from Christ. Grace is something that Paul received through Christ (Rom 5:2). Grace carries within itself the idea of underserved favor, "Grace frequently denotes God's giving of himself in Christ in order to effect salvation for the undeserving" (Shogren 2008, 2:1087). Often Paul attributes grace to Christ, as in his favorite greeting: "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (Rom 16:20; 1 Cor 16:23; Gal 6:18, 1; Phil 4:23; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; 2 Tit 2:1). As Barclay (2017, 566) comments: "The life, death, and resurrection of Jesus are thus, for Paul, the focal point of divine beneficence: the witness of Scripture and the history and identity of Israel are interpreted in this light. Grace is discovered in an event, not in the general benevolence of God, and its focal expression lies not in creation nor in any other divine gift, but in the gift of Christ, which constitutes for Paul the Gift."

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<sup>217</sup> As Barclay (2002, 154) aptly remarks, "[T]he grace of God is not, for Paul an idea or even primarily an attribute of God, but the action of God in history. God's grace is always and inevitably, 'storied', working in history ... to bring life out of death, power out weakness, salvation out of sin."

Paul's concept of grace, which is worked out through Christ, is also part of his CR. Paul would never have known God's grace except from and through Jesus Christ. Different images have transformative power for different people. In Paul's case the image of the risen Christ had transformed him. It was through the appearance of Jesus Christ that Paul experienced grace.

Paul's use of ἐκτρόματι,<sup>218</sup> has been interpreted in many ways including as a reference to the abruptness, even as a reference to the abusive words used against Paul by his enemies, a dead, miscarried fetus (Munck 1959, 180–93).<sup>219</sup> Witherington (1998a, 157) suggests that Paul uses ἐκτρόματι “because he was rushed into apostleship.” This seems probable as this forms the difference between him and the other apostles who were with Christ during his earthly life for a few years.

As we can see it is the use of the words like ἐκτρόματι that makes Paul's account a rhetorical narrative rather than a simple report. In contrast to the classical rhetoric where the speaker is expected to convey things that will build his ethos, Paul tells things about himself that demean him. This is one way in which CR differs from classical rhetoric. In CR the main thrust of the argument comes from Christ and his credibility rather than the speaker's credibility.

### **Consequences and Connection 15:12-22**

The purpose of 15:1-11 is to remind the Corinthians of the reality of the resurrection based on the number and nature of the witnesses to it, including Paul himself. The resurrection was something that they had not witnessed, but had believed to have happened, and the purpose of the rest of the verses is to convince them of the resurrection of the dead, again something they not only had not witness, but had no way of verifying except by logical arguments.

The resurrection of Christ can be attested by witnesses (inartificial proofs), but the general resurrection of the dead obviously cannot be. For this reason, Paul had to *invent* strong rhetorical arguments as I demonstrate below. This section contains the main part of CR invention and contains his most creative artificial proofs in the chapter. His arguments as I show are based on something that the audience can verify and have already believed, namely, the resurrection of Christ. The whole summary of Paul's argument is that they were holding onto two contradictory truths. In Paul's mind

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<sup>218</sup> While Paul talks about his ἐκτρόματι birth in v. 8, he talks about his death in v. 31.

<sup>219</sup> See Thiselton (2000, 1208–9) for other views.

believing in the resurrection of Christ and not believing in the general resurrection of the dead is impossible.

1 Cor 15:12-22 is about the disadvantages, that is, the harmful effects of there being no resurrection (Eriksson 1998, 118–19). It must be noted that vv. 12-19 consist of a series of unreal, conditional sentences. They are unreal because they propose an unreal situation that in this case Paul clearly rejects and wants his auditors to reject. In vv. 12-19 Paul is moving away from a set of negative, unreal, conditional sentences where he tries to indicate what one might call the catastrophic consequences for believers if the resurrection of Christ did not happen. From v. 20 onwards he shows the positive consequences of the resurrection of Christ for believers, who previously suffered from the disadvantage imposed on them through descent from Adam. The advantage for the Corinthians is that because Christ was raised from the dead, they will overcome the death inherent in Adam by being made alive at the general resurrection (15:22-23).

As discussed before in chapter 3, 1 Cor 15:1-11 contains Paul's *mythos*, the basic story, and 15:12-22 contains his *dianoia*, his interpretation, his reflection upon the story. Hays's (2002, 885) narrative approach to Paul is a two-step process: "[W]e 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." Now that Paul has established the narrative regarding the death and resurrection of Christ in 15:1-11, he proceeds to use it in his logic. In this section I have tried to show how Paul's "story shapes the logic of argumentation."

In the section below I do a Christ rhetorical analysis of vv. 12-22. I analyze 15:12-19 as a consequence discourse by identifying the mediate rhetoric and its consequence sets. After this, I explore the CR topoi that are evident in these vv. 12-22, namely the appeal to tradition, affiliation to the Christ community, authenticity of experience and hope as other worldly. Then in 15:20-22 I analyze the connection that Paul makes between the resurrection of the dead and the resurrection of Christ.

### [Christ Rhetoric of 1 Cor 15:12-22](#)

After narrating the events on the death, burial, resurrection, and appearance of Christ in 15:1-11, Paul makes a very unexpected turn in 15:12 and takes up the real problem that he wants to address, namely, how some of the Corinthians can deny the bodily resurrection. To prove the resurrection of the dead, Paul talks about the resurrection of

Christ. What possible connection can exist between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead? Paul will go onto answer this question in vv. 20-23.<sup>220</sup>

The resurrection of Christ, as I argue, forms Paul's core of mediate rhetoric. In this section Paul builds upon the foundation he has laid in vv. 1-11. The structure of these verse are as follows:

Verses 12-19 consequence discourse

Verses 20-22 connection discourse.

Consequence discourse, as we defined it in chapter 3, works by showing the consequence of the mediate rhetoric introduced in the foundation discourse. As I demonstrate in analyzing the consequence sets, the consequence discourse makes frequent reference to the foundation discourse. Connection discourse shows the reader the connection between the different discourses used in the argument. In this case it shows the connection between the foundation discourse and the consequence discourse, that is, the connection between vv. 1-11 and vv. 12-19.

### Mediate Rhetoric

In this section Paul uses mediate rhetoric "in which the speaker describes a thought or tells listeners to think about something so that they will also enthymize something else, creating or breaking a link between the thing asserted by the speaker and 'something else' understood or felt by the listener" (Fredal 2020, 95). To convince the Corinthians of the general resurrection of the dead, Paul is talking about something else, namely, the resurrection of Christ. "The power of indirect enthymizing comes rather from so tightly connecting a known fact to a doubtful claim or story element that once the first is uttered, the second alone is immediately enthymized, and with greater confidence than it otherwise could have been" (Fredal 2020, 98). The resurrection of Christ is the "known fact" which Paul connects with the "doubtful claim" of some among the Corinthian Christians that the dead will not be raised. "Just as a mechanic will charge a weak battery by connecting it to a strong one, mediate enthymizing transfers confidence to a posited

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<sup>220</sup> This is the reason that I find it hard to agree with commentators who usually see this section as a *refutation* (cf. Thiselton 2000, 1214). Paul is not refuting the Corinthian disbelief in the resurrection of the dead, but rather arguing the hypothetical consequences if Christ was not raised from the dead.

fact (*B*) by connecting it to an accepted fact (*A*)” (Fredal 2020, 99). The confidence and the credibility of the resurrection of Christ is transferred to the general resurrection of the dead.

Fredal (2020, 99) explains the concept quite explicitly:

“Mediate enthymizing is of special interest because in many cases, the goal is not simply getting the audience to attend to something but getting the audience to connect something with something else.... In traditional Aristotelian terms, inferential reasoning allows orators to connect an easily accepted fact or proposition (*A*), a fact that the audience has no reason to doubt, to another proposition (*B*) that the orator wants the audience to think about, understand, feel strongly about, and accept as true. Once fact *A* is enthymized as a sign or cause of fact *B*, the confidence afforded the former can be transferred to the latter....”

While I have mostly used Fredal’s definition of enthymemes, even if we present the argument as a syllogism, the one belief leads to the other: <sup>221</sup>

Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead - (major premise)  
and since Christ was a *man* who was among the dead - (minor premise)  
how can some of you say that there is no general resurrection of the dead? - (conclusion)

In other words, Paul’s is demonstrating how the fact that Christ rose will affect their own resurrection from the dead and their belief in it. The missing minor premise is what Paul explains in vv. 20-23. <sup>222</sup> Paul very clearly summarizes his whole argument in the very first question itself in v12.

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<sup>221</sup> Debanne (2006, 225) takes the view that 1 Cor 15:15 is a non-religious theme and uses a the “Syllogism involving conditional statements” approach.

{M                    If the dead are not raised, whoever says that God raised Christ is bearing false testimony for God}

m                    We/Paul testified that God raised Christ

=>                    If the dead are not raised, we/Paul bore false testimony for God

<sup>222</sup> Eriksson (1998, 258–59) comments that “Christ is one of the dead” as the missing minor premise must be supplied.

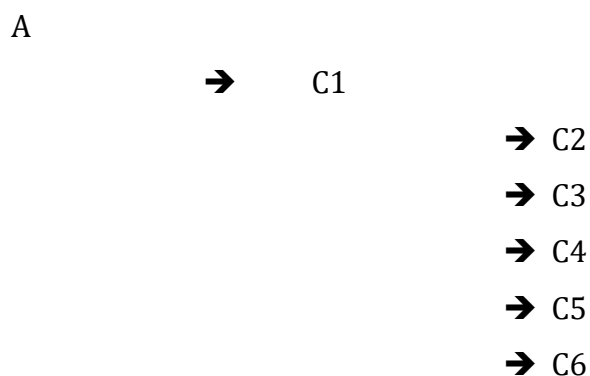
However, it must be noted that Paul’s argument is complicated and cannot be represented fully as a syllogism as above. A simple syllogistic logic would lead to the conclusion that all dead people would be raised. Whereas Paul is very careful to qualify who would be raised. Paul presents three connecting factors: Christ as the first fruits, Christ as second Adam, and the “in Christ” union the believer enjoys with Christ. Which is why we cannot be content with a simple syllogism to represent all three of these as a ‘missing minor premise’.

Watson (2001, 239) in his rhetorical analysis of 1 Corinthians 15, identifies this section as an argument from consequence.<sup>223</sup> Paul uses the word ἄρα three times in vv. 14, 15 and 18. He remarks, “[I]n his refutation, Paul momentarily agrees with the proposition and then shows that its natural consequences include conclusions the Corinthians are not willing to grant” (Watson 2001, 239). While that is certainly correct from a general point of view, on a closer analysis that view has issues.

Let’s analyze the argument as follows:

- A: If the dead are not risen,
- C(onsequence)1: Christ is not risen.
- C2: Our preaching is in vain.
- C3: Your faith is futile.
- C4: We are false witnesses about God.
- C5: You are still in your sins.
- C6: Those who have died in Christ have perished.

When we map this structure in a diagram, as I have done below, we notice an important pattern.




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<sup>223</sup> Watson (2001, 239 n. 31) cites sources from ancient rhetoric handbooks for the argument from consequence. In Aristotle’s rhetoric he calls the argument from consequence the art of Callippus [*Rhet* 2.23.14]

C1 is a consequence of A. However, C2-6 are not consequences of A; rather they are the consequences of C1, and the main focus of vv. 12-19 is C1. My argument is that C1 constitutes the mediate rhetoric. While Watson is very correct in identifying it as an argument from consequence, I maintain that the argument of consequence works by showing the consequence of C1 and not of A, the primary issue at hand. The resurrection of Christ serves as the mediate rhetoric and the center of Paul's argument.

### Analysis<sup>224</sup>

In v. 11 Paul reminds his auditors that they have already believed in the resurrection of Christ, and in v. 12 he says, Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται. This connects with Paul's previous argument that he *preached* Christ as risen (v. 3, v. 11). Paul's initial reaction and question might seem to appeal to authority, to a "radical rhetoric." However, he soon goes on to reason with them in the following verses.

The first thing to notice is that the way in which Paul words the resurrection of Christ. In v. 4 he says that Christ was raised on the third day (καὶ ὅτι ἐγήγερται τῇ ἡμέρᾳ τῇ τρίτῃ); but here in v. 12, Paul adds an important phrase that Christ is proclaimed as risen *from the dead* (ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν). This is very important to Paul's argument as he is going to address the problem, ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν. Therefore, he starts the chapter with a reminder regarding the fundamental aspects of the gospel in vv. 3-5. The phrase in v. 12b first identifies Christ with the dead. He was part of the dead; from which he was raised. This is crucial for the connection discourse in vv. 20-23 and for the consequence discourse in vv. 29-32. It is because Christ can be identified with the dead, that the resurrection of Christ can in some meaningful way be connected to the resurrection of the dead.<sup>225</sup> For the connection to be meaningful, Christ must be dead, must be raised from the dead, must be of the same kind as the dead, that is, a human being ("humanity of Christ," another topos of CR).

In v. 13 Paul lets them see the natural consequence of their own argument. If as

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<sup>224</sup> For highly logical, almost mathematical analysis of Paul's arguments in 1 Cor 15 esp. 12-19 see Mayordomo (2005, 95-123). Mayordomo uses Modus Tollens in his analysis. Another earlier work by Bucher (1974) also uses Modus Tollens for the analysis of 1 Cor 15:12-20.

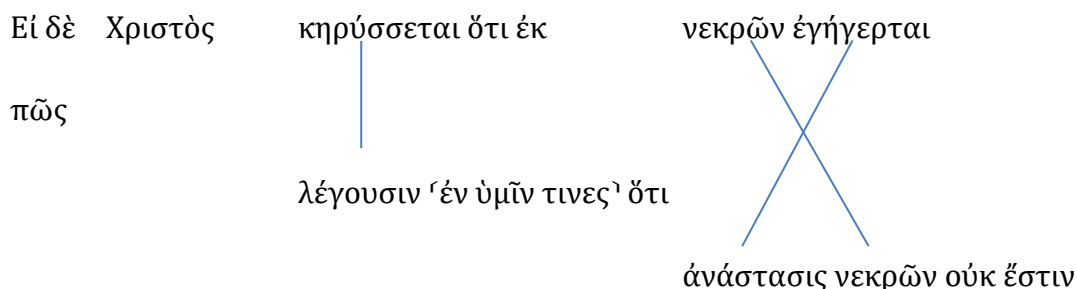
<sup>225</sup> Somehow in the Corinthians' mind Christ can be risen but the dead cannot be raised. There could be several reasons for this apparent contradictory belief. One of them could be that the Corinthian followers of Christ would have simply failed to see the connection. Another is the more sophisticated theory of Brown (2014, 66-107), which was discussed earlier, about Jesus being reckoned as a Greek super hero by the Corinthians. He lists the following three things as features of an eschatology informed by Greek myths: 1. There is no hope or life after death for the common people; 2. special destiny and worship of heroes; and 3. afterlife had no impact on ethics (84ff).

some of them were saying, there is no resurrection of the dead, then even Christ has not been raised from the dead. What Paul does in this verse is similar to what Fredal (2020, 102) describes about “contradictory enthymizing:”

The power of contradictory enthymizing derives from the elimination of alternatives. When only two opposed alternatives are available, you need not demonstrate the truth of your case; you merely need to show the inconsistency or implausibility of the other.

The only difference, however, and quite an important one at that, which we have highlighted already, is that Paul does not discuss the opposite of the resurrection of the dead but the opposite of the resurrection of Christ.

Since Paul tightly coupled Christ and the dead together, he could argue that if the dead are not raised it would mean that Christ had also not been raised from the dead. Verse 16 is a virtual repetition of v. 13, though the part about Christ comes last.



In vv. 13-17 Paul several times repeats the phrase “if Christ has not been raised” and the phrase, “if the dead have not been raised.”

Verse 13 is a reversal of v. 12:

v. 12	Χριστὸς κηρύσσεται ὅτι ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγήγερται	A
	ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν	B
Reversal →		
v. 13	ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν	B
	οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται	A

In v. 16 Paul again summarizes his CR in favor of the resurrection of the dead with v. 16 being virtually the same as v. 13.

Εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται v. 13

εἰ γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται, οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται v. 16

From v. 14 Paul lists the consequences if Christ has not been raised. In the section below we look at the consequences Paul lists to support his argument.

### **Consequence 1: Proclamation is in vain, and faith is in vain (15:14)**

The first consequence of Christ not being raised is that

“our” preaching (κήρυγμα) is in vain (κενός)  
and your faith (πίστις) is also in vain(κενός) (v. 14)

Verse 14 connects to v. 11 in the foundation discourse where Paul concludes that whether then it was him or someone else, Christ was proclaimed to the Corinthian believers and so they have come to believe, by the reference to the proclamation.

κήρυγμα ἡμῶν, ἡ κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν (v. 14)

A

B

οὕτως κηρύσσομεν καὶ οὕτως ἐπίστεύσατε (v. 11)

A'

B'

If Christ has not been raised their fundamental existence as Christians would be in vain. The resurrection of Christ was part of the tradition that was preached and handed over to the Corinthians (vv. 3-5).

One important aspect of faith “is acceptance of the kerygma” (Bultmann 1964, v. 6 p. 176). Since their beliefs are indirectly contradicting the very gospel that Paul preached, the intellectual aspect of faith is also rendered valueless. It will also render Paul’s efforts and the hardships that he suffered (vv. 30-32), useless. So, their disbelief has an impact

on Paul too. Because of what ἐν ὑμῖν τινες (among the Corinthians) are saying, the κήρυγμα of *all* the apostles (Paul and the others) have been rendered valueless.

### Consequence 2: Lying before God

Paul argues that if the dead are not raised then he and the other apostles<sup>226</sup> would be guilty of bearing false witness in God's name (ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ) (1Cor 15:15).<sup>227</sup> Being a witness implies a personal knowledge of the event. Since Paul had personally witnessed the resurrected Christ, he is qualified to be a witness for the resurrection. Paul also brings the strength of other witnesses, in the "we" in v. 15, which connects with v. 11, and the witnesses named in vv. 5-8 in the foundation discourse. Thus, the consequence discourse draws elements from the foundation discourse.

Lying about God is an oxymoron. False witnessing is something that the Decalogue of Moses forbids explicitly, Οὐ ψευδομαρτυρήσεις ἅ κατὰ τοῦ πλησίον σου μαρτυρίαν ψευδῆ (Ex 20:16 LXX). The same word μαρτυρία is used for witnessing in the LXX. Hence for a pious Jew false witnessing itself is prohibited, but doing it about God would almost be reckoned as blasphemy.<sup>228</sup>

The experience of seeing the risen Christ was prestigious. Paul lists the leaders of the church who were privileged to see the risen Christ. According to the author of Acts it was one of the criteria for being an apostle (Acts 1:22). It is inconceivable for Paul and the other apostles to lie about something of which they were proud. Paul considers everything else garbage compared to the opportunity of knowing Christ (Phil 3:8-11), and he endeavors to know the power of Christ's resurrection. If Christ has not been raised, and if Paul had not personally seen the risen Christ, all this would be pointless.

If Christ is not risen, then it would also appear that not only Paul, but the scriptures are also lying, as they claim that Christ died for our sins and was resurrected (15:3-5).

Paul also attributes the transformation of his own life to the vision of the risen Christ (1 Cor 15:8-10; Gal 1:15-17). It is not logical for Paul to change his ways and travel in the opposite direction in his life as Christ' apostle when, and if, he had not seen the

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<sup>226</sup> Paul uses the exclusive "we" in 15:15 ψευδομάρτυρες τοῦ θεοῦ. He does not include the Corinthians in the first person plural (Wallace 2008, 398).

<sup>227</sup> Thiselton (2000, 1219) suggests an objective reading of the genitive based on context and suggests as a translation, "[W]e gave testimony against God." Fee (2014, 680) comes to the same conclusion. Brookins and Longenecker (2016, 149), come to the same conclusion as Thiselton based on the fact that "κατὰ with the genitive indicates opposition."

<sup>228</sup> One other usage of ψευδομάρτυρες is in Matt 26:60 where false witnesses came to testify about Jesus.

risen Christ. Paul is making use of his own experience and that of others (vv. 3-8) here. The consequence discourse uses elements from the foundation discourse.

If God the father did not raise Jesus, his own son from the dead, it would pose very serious theological issues. Then there is no assurance that those who are Christ's will also be raised.

Lying, bending the truth, and not having any regard for truth were accusations brought against the sophists (Plato *Gorg.* 459.a, b; 472). So, if Paul is lying or misrepresenting the resurrection that would also mean he is using the persuasive techniques of the pagan world rather than that of Christ (2:2).

Also in 1 Cor 5:8, Paul exhorts the Corinthians to have sincerity and truth. So, Paul would really be a hypocrite if he asks the Corinthians to be truthful and honest and yet he himself is a false witness.

### **Consequence 3: Faith is Futile and You are still in your Sins**

Verse 17 follows up on another aspect of the resurrection of Christ and connects to the foundation discourse by making references to the notion of faith in v. 11 and to the fact that Christ died for our sins in v. 3.

Based on 15:3, ἀπέθανεν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, Paul argues that without the resurrection of Christ the death of Christ is valueless in dealing with sin. As discussed earlier without the resurrection of Christ, the death of Christ is powerless to redeem anyone from sin. As Wright (2008, 332) has observed, "If God has overcome death in the resurrection of Jesus, then the power of sin is broken; but if he hasn't it isn't."

The other topos is the sin against Christ. To claim that the members of the believing Christian community are still in their sins would mean that the atoning sacrifice of Christ is meaningless. This would be considered outrageous, and an insult to Christ. As such it would be the equivalent of sinning against Christ.

### **Consequence 4: The Dead in Christ have Perished**

Though this appears as a direct consequence of the dead not being raised, Paul is actually listing it as a consequence of Christ not being raised; because in 15:17 he begins with the qualifying phrase, εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται v. 18 connects to that with the ἄρα. The only thing that gives hope to those who have died is Christ.

If the dead in Christ have perished, it would imply that all those who placed their hope in Christ have believed him only for this life. This situation is pitiable. Thiselton (2000, 1221–22) says that "what would make Christians pitiable if there is no

resurrection is the whole chain of consequences in vv. 13-18 which follow the counteraxiom of v. 12.”

The disbelief in the resurrection of the dead implies disbelief in the resurrection of Christ. If Christ is not raised, then the living are still in their sins, and sin brings death, and the dead are also without hope. If Christ is not risen, there is no hope for the living or the dead.

With these four consequences Paul attempts to persuade the Corinthians to believe in the resurrection of the dead by engaging in reproof for their rejection of the dead by making the claim that nothing meaningful is left, if the resurrection did not happen.

Paul again provokes pathos to drive his point home in v. 19. If the Corinthians believed in Christ only for the benefits they hoped to receive in this life, they were to be pitied above all people.

From the scriptures it became experience. From experience it became part of the proclamation. From proclamation it became tradition. From tradition it became part of the Christian hope.

## Topoi Analysis

In this section we analyze the topoi that has been identified in vv. 12-22.

### Appeal to the Tradition and Affiliation to the Christ Community

Paul’s question in 1 Cor 15:12 brings out the outrageousness of the Corinthian claim that the dead will not be raised: “Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?” Paul very clearly indicates that to argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue against the core of the kerygmatic proclamation.

The communal aspect of Paul’s CR is evident as he does not ask: “Now if Christ has been raised from the dead, how can some<sup>229</sup> of you say there is no resurrection of the dead?” Rather, Paul says: “Now if Christ is *proclaimed* as raised from the dead.” The κηρύσσεται brings the authority of the apostles and authenticity of the experience of seeing the risen Christ, (the foundation which Paul laid in vv. 1-11) against the Corinthian’s claim. To say that there is no resurrection of the dead is simply to go against

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<sup>229</sup> Though Mitchell (1993, 287–88) argues that the “some” indicates the divisions in the Corinthians church, Fee (2014, 678) maintains that it is the “some” who have influenced the “many.”

the force of everything Paul narrated in vv. 3-11 regarding the resurrection of Christ. The passive κηρύσσεται combines the force of the “I” and “them” in v. 11 because from v. 12 onwards he speaks for both of them.

Paul is also singling out the ἐν ὑμῖν τινες from the Corinthian community and making a contrast with the “we” in v. 11; while all the apostles, Paul, and the others, proclaim Christ as risen, it is only a sub-segment of the Corinthians who did not believe in the resurrection. However, as in the case of the immoral believer in chapter 5, the Corinthians share a corporate responsibility for the moral and doctrinal well-being of their community. There is also a contrast between the authoritative κηρύσσεται and the word λέγουσιν. While the apostolic preaching is a proclamation with authority and reasoning, the statements denying the resurrection by some of the Corinthian community are not authoritative and neither are they logical as Paul’s is about to demonstrate.

The “some” in v. 12 might be the reason why Paul is talking about bad company corrupting good morals in v. 33: φθείρουσιν ἦθη χρηστὰ ὁμιλίας κακαί. Paul may be reminding them that the “some” who do not believe in the resurrection of the dead are the ones who are the bad company. Paul, in line with asking the immoral brother to be expelled from the church, is implying something along similar lines here. By singling them out Paul also makes the readers feel ashamed for their denial and works on pathos (Oropeza 2017, 202).

### Authenticity of the experience of Christ

The use of this topos in this section is slightly varied from the foundation section. In the foundation section Paul appealed to the experience of the apostles and others. In this section Paul appeals to the experience of the Corinthians themselves when he twice says that their faith will be futile (see v.14 and v. 17). Faith has many meanings in the NT, one possible meaning is “faith as a Personal Relation to Christ” (Bultmann 1964). This meaning is also included here because in vv. 1-2, Paul connects ἐπιστεύσατε with παρελάβετε, ἐστήκατε, σώζεσθε, κατέχετε. The act of believing includes the other four items. These four items involve more than a mental assent. It involves the act of being saved and holding firm. Schnabel (2014, 874) who connects the term faith with everyday living, understands ἐστήκατε to include not worshiping in the idol temple (2014, 872). So the term faith includes mental assent and their experience of that faith in everyday life. What Paul argues is that if Christ has not been raised not only their mental assent, but also their experience as believers is also rendered invalid. Their very existence as Christians becomes questionable.

## Hope as other Worldly

Paul uses the topos of the other worldliness of Christian hope as an argument here. It is striking how much Rom 8:22-25 has in common with 1 Corinthians 15. In both places there is a discussion about redemption or transformation of bodies, about the promise of the glory that will be revealed, and about hope.

The hope with which we were saved (v. 24) includes the redemption of our bodies in v. 23. The redemption of our bodies is the thing that we wait for. In Romans 8:24 the redemption of our bodies was one of the hopes with which we were saved (cf. Moo 2018, 522). In other word the very act of salvation was associated with the other worldly hope right from the beginning (ἐσώθημεν). So, for the Corinthians to argue that the dead will not rise from the dead means that they have believed in Christ only for this life – something which stands against the very promise of the gospel and the purpose of hope, which is predominantly other worldly.

## The Connection in 1 Cor 15:20-22<sup>230</sup>: If Christ be Raised why should the Dead also be Raised

This section forms the connection discourse where Paul answers an obvious question: how does the resurrection of Christ in 15:1-11, guarantee the resurrection of the dead (15:12-19)? This section serves as the bridge between vv. 1-11 and 12-19. It must be noted that Paul first lists the consequences in vv. 12-19 and then only in vv. 20-22, he establishes the connection.

In mediate rhetoric, “[S]peakers do sometimes state explicitly both the established fact and the linked conclusion and sometimes one or more (but rarely all) elements of the situation governing the interpretation of the stated fact” (Fredal 2020, 98). In this case Paul explicitly makes the connection in vv. 20-23.

We also note the topos of the authority of the scriptures of CR being used here. He uses two elements from the HB and projects it onto Christ. One is the concept of first fruits, and the other is the contrast with Adam.<sup>231</sup>

We see the elements of CR working in all three, past, present and future tenses of

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<sup>230</sup> Verse 20 marks the beginning of a new section. The use of *Νυνὶ δὲ* also points to this; as Paul is “introducing the real situation after an unreal conditional clause or sentence *but, as a matter of fact* 1 Cor 5:11 v.l.; 12:18; 15:20; Hb 8:6; 9:26; 11:16 v.l.” (BDAG). From listing the consequences of no resurrection, Paul is now articulating the connections between Christ who rose from the dead and those who are dead.

<sup>231</sup> Hultgren (2003, 366) while agreeing that the Rabbinic writings are the “closest intellectual framework” to Paul’s doctrine of the two Adams, argues that finally it was his own conversion experience which could explain the origin of the doctrine.

both Christ and those who belong to Christ. While in vv. 12-19 Paul argued that the past events of Christ's resurrection have present significance for the believer's life, in vv. 20-28 he argues that the past events of Christ's resurrection will guarantee the future events (the resurrection) of the believer from the dead.

The connection discourse functions by presenting three arguments: Christ as first fruits (v. 20), Christ as second Adam (vv. 21-2) and the unity of the believers with Christ (v. 23). We look at each of them in the section below.

### Christ as First Fruits

The rhetography of the first fruits<sup>232</sup> invokes an image that is coming from the HB. The first fruits is the first portion guaranteeing a complete harvest (De Boer 1988, 109; R. F. Collins 2006, 548; Thiessen 2012, 387). As such, the resurrection of Christ being the first fruit, guarantees the resurrection of the others who are in him. The concept of first fruits involves two ideas; one, it marks the resurrection of Christ as the beginning of "eschatological resurrection" (v. 23); two, it guarantees the resurrection of those who are "in Christ" by a participation in the resurrection of Christ (Holleman 1996, 49,51). This idea is important, as in the same way first fruit guarantees the full harvest, the resurrection of Christ guarantees the resurrection of all those who are his.

### Christ as second Adam

Paul connects dead humans and Christ by comparing and contrasting Adam and Christ. Paul proclaims two contrasting realms of existence/belonging – one in Christ and the other in Adam (v. 22) (Legarreta-Castillo 2014, 165). Adam was the first fruit of those who die and Christ is the first fruit<sup>233</sup> of those who are about to be raised.

The contrast between Adam and Christ can clearly be seen in the Greek text:

ἀνθρώπου ἰθανάτος, καὶ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν?

ὥσπερ γὰρ ἐν τῷ Ἀδάμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκουσιν,

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<sup>232</sup> First fruits is a term used "for the first sheaf of the grain harvest (Lev. 23:10–11). In the LXX, the concept of first fruits applies to "offerings" (Exod. 23:16; 34:22), "taxes" (Exod. 25:2–3; Num. 18:8, 11; Ezek. 45:13), and "children" (Gen. 49:3)" (Garland 2003, 858).

<sup>233</sup> All those resurrection miracles recorded in the Bible except in the case of Jesus Christ, are resuscitations where people were brought back to their normal human life, but who eventually would die again. But Christ rose never to die again and was given an immortal, transformed body.

So, if death can come through one man, life can also come through one man. Adam here plays a representative role. Adam “was what his Hebrew name signifies - ‘mankind’. The whole of mankind is viewed as originally existing in Adam” (Bruce 1971, 145–46). “Jesus is the representative of those who will be raised” (Holleman 1996, 49).

The Adam–Christ comparison is “one of contrast and reversal” (Thiselton 2000, 1228). “Adam is the source of death for human beings (cf. Rom 5:14, 15, 17); Christ is the source of life” (cf. Rom 5:17–18)(Collins 2006, 548).<sup>235</sup> By paralleling Adam and Christ Paul emphasizes that Christ is of the same essence as Adam, that is, human. Thus, it is only right that whatever has happened to Christ should happen to other humans also. Christ inaugurated the era of hope in the resurrection. “Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all” (Rom 5:18).<sup>236</sup> Paul’s comparison of Adam and Christ clearly proves his belief in the humanity of Jesus Christ (which is another topos of CR) (Thiselton 2000, 1228). In that sense, to refuse to believe in the resurrection of the dead is to refuse to believe in the humanity of Christ. If in the previous sections Paul appealed to the Lordship and authority in his rhetoric, here in this section he appeals to the humanity of Christ in his CR. Death came through Adam and life came through Christ. Thus, they inaugurate different dispensations.

In the same way that Adam was the first in the initial created order, Christ is the first in the second created order. The idea that sin came through one man “presupposes” the fall (Conzelmann 1975, 288). It is because of one man’s disobedience sin came to the world and consequentially death. It is because of one man’s obedience that the resurrection came about. Paul thinks of the era of Christ as the beginning of the creation of the new world. So that is why Paul designates the resurrection of Christ as the first fruit, not in the sense of chronological precedence, but in terms of the beginning of the end of the current world and the beginning of the new world (Garland 2003, 858).

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<sup>234</sup> The opposite of death is not life, but rather resurrection according to v. 21 (ἐπειδὴ γὰρ δι’ ἀνθρώπου θάνατος, καὶ δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν). Because resurrection is the opposite of death, everything that death undid, the resurrection corrects.

<sup>235</sup> In addition to the biblical references, sin coming through Adam into the world was an established fact in Jewish sources see *4 Ezra* 7:118; *2 Baruch* 48:42; 54:19. For a survey of these sources see Macaskill (2013, 129–41).

<sup>236</sup> Paul does not talk about resurrection in the Romans passage, but the focus of the passage is righteousness that comes through faith in Christ. But in 1 Cor 15:22 the focus is on resurrection.

Holleman (1996, 131–64) sees the resurrection of Christ as the “beginning of the eschatological resurrection.”

The use of the plural adjective πάντες in v. 22 has prompted many to claim that Paul is promoting universalism.<sup>237</sup> However, Paul quickly qualifies those who will be resurrected in the next verse. Christ has been raised from the dead, and then at his coming those who belong to him will also be raised from the dead. By limiting the availability of resurrection only to those who belong to Christ, Paul is restricting any form of universalism. Although οὕτως καὶ ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιηθήσονται (v. 22) might imply that all will be raised, as Wilson (2016, 807–8) correctly argues from the general context of the chapter, only those who have trusted in Christ and died in him, that is, belonging to him, are in mind. The immediate context in v.23 also demands that we read and apply v. 22 only to those who are Χριστοῦ (Thiselton 2000, 1229). Paul does not state here the fate of those who do not believe in Christ.<sup>238</sup>

### In Christ<sup>239</sup>

The expression “in Christ” is one of the important ways that Paul makes the connection between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. Paul clearly qualifies who will be resurrected and when. Those who are Christ’s will be raised at his coming just as Christ has been raised now (v. 22). Christ’s resurrection marks the beginning of the eschatological resurrection (v. 23), and Christ’s followers will be raised through participation in Jesus’ resurrection (vv. 21-22). This participation happens because of the unity of the believer and Christ in contrast to the “unity between Adam and humanity” (Holleman 1996, 56). Paul uses the topos of the “union with Christ” in this connection discourse.

A concept Paul uses to show the relationship between Christ and the believers is the metaphor of the body of Christ (6:15; 10:16,17; 12:27).<sup>240</sup> Believers form the body of Christ. This has become a “conceptual metaphor” (Lakoff and Johnson 2003), something that has become part and parcel of Paul’s thinking.<sup>241</sup> As already noted he uses that in the

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<sup>237</sup> See Wilson (2016) for a counter argument.

<sup>238</sup> See Holleman (1996, 52-3) for a discussion about the resurrection of unbelievers.

<sup>239</sup> Paul uses the term “in Christ” in a wide variety of ways (Campbell 2012, sec. 2.18.2). The discussion around the meaning of the term has taken different shifts in scholarly literature. See Horton (2007) Campbell (2012, esp. Ch. 2), Macaskill (2013), and Campbell, Thate, and Vanhoozer (2014) amongst others.

<sup>240</sup> I am grateful to Matthew R Malcolm for this insight shared in a personal meeting.

<sup>241</sup> Campbell (2012, sec 7:2) based on 6:15, argues that “membership in Christ’s body refers to an actual spiritual reality. While it may be difficult to disentangle metaphor from reality ... it is at least evident there is a spiritual reality in view; Paul’s body language is not merely illustrative.”

issue of fornication (6:13, 15-16), idolatry (10:17), Lord's Supper (11:24) and spiritual gifts (chapter 12). Hence it is inconceivable for Paul to think of Christ being raised and the members of his body not being raised. If Christ is risen, the members of his body will also rise.<sup>242</sup>

Best (1955, 18) sees the phrases "in Christ', 'body of Christ', 'dying and rising with Christ' as different facets of the same fact of the union of the believer with Christ." As Campbell (2012, sec. 7.2) argues, "If the Church is Christ's body of which he is the head the metaphor must convey connotations of union." This, then, is the same idea conveyed by the "in Christ" language.

## Conclusion

In 1 Cor 15:1-11 Paul lays the foundation for what he is going to be discussing in the rest of the chapter. He says that Christ died for our sins (v. 3), later he goes on to demonstrate that if Christ is not risen, they would still be in their sins (v. 17). Since Paul claims that he and other apostles have seen the risen Christ (v. 5-8) he goes on to claim that if Christ is not risen, he along with other missionaries, would be guilty of misrepresenting God (v. 15). He establishes the resurrection of Christ and the Corinthians' belief in it, and this constitutes his major mediate rhetoric upon which his whole argument is based.

We saw how Paul employs, tradition, scriptures, experience, and the affiliation to the Christ community as part of his CR topoi. From a methodological perspective he uses narrative rhetoric in the foundation discourse section of vv. 1-11.

In vv. 12-22 Paul shows the consequences of Christ not being raised. This is Paul's major argumentation against the Corinthians' refusal to believe in the resurrection of the dead. After listing the negative consequences in a series of unreal conditional sentences in 15:12-19, Paul goes on to show the connection between Christ and the dead in vv. 20-22, answering the question how the resurrection of Christ ensures the resurrection of the dead. To argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue that Christ has not been raised, and this is to sin against Christ.

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<sup>242</sup> The validity of this argument can be questioned. As the body of Christ is a metaphor, but the resurrection involves a physical act. However, we find Paul applying the same metaphor against attaching the body to a prostitute in 6:12. Attaching the body of a believer to a prostitute is a physical act, the argument that Paul uses is a metaphor. It would then appear that the union that the believer enjoys with Christ is more than a metaphor.

## Chapter 5

### The Christ Rhetoric of Christ's Reign (1 Cor 15:23-28)

#### Introduction

After showing the consequences of denying the resurrection of Christ (1 Cor 15: 12-19) and showing the connection between the resurrection of Christ and the general resurrection of the dead (vv. 20-22), Paul now proceeds to talk about the future reign of Christ. I argue that this again is used as a mediate rhetoric. This might seem like a digression at the beginning as some scholars, for example, Collins (2006, 547) have claimed. However, as I demonstrate below, this is integral to Paul's argument. I show the relevance of this section by maintaining that since death is portrayed as an enemy of Christ, arguing that Christ has not been raised, would be equivalent to saying that Christ has been defeated by his enemy. Paul argues from Christ's past activities in vv. 12-19, and then argues from his future activities in vv. 23-28. Both passages support the same idea that the resurrection of Christ implies the resurrection of the dead. I also argue that as part of CR, through its topos of the rule of Christ, Paul tries to replace images of Caesar with that of Christ.

In 1 Cor 15:29-32 Paul is bringing further arguments from baptism and Christian mission, before he concludes with a practical exhortation in vv. 33-34.

In this chapter after a brief analysis of the verses, I delve into Christ rhetorical analysis and then proceed to look at narrative rhetoric and the topos specific to vv. 23-28. After which I look at the concluding section of 1 Cor 15:1-34.

#### An Analysis of 1 Cor 15:23-28

1 Cor 15:12-19 talks about the effects of Christ not being raised on believers at an individual level and vv. 23-28 talk about the effects of Christ not being raised at a cosmic level. This apocalyptic reading that sees two levels of reality has been noted by other scholars. Wright (2008, 320) based on Gal 1:4 notes that dealing with sins is the "focal point of" the eschatological resurrection. Holleman (1996, 77) asserts that this passage combines two "eschatological expectations": the eschatological resurrection and coming of Jesus at the parousia (1996, 103,123).<sup>243</sup> As Neil Elliott (1997, 174) has observed, the

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<sup>243</sup> Holleman (1996, 203) argues that both have their origins in Judaism. In the second case the expectation of the son of man was adopted in Christianity.

“language in 1 Corinthians 2 and 15, [has] the characteristic apocalyptic tendency ‘to’ view reality on two levels: behind the events of human history lies the cosmic struggle of God with the forces of evil.”

Early in 1 Corinthians Paul identifies the rulers of the present age (τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου) as καταργουμένων· (1 Cor 2:6). In 1 Cor 15:24-28 he takes up that theme in relation to the resurrection of the dead and explains it further.

1 Cor 15:19 serves as an introduction to the afterlife, the order of which Paul explains in vv. 20-28. Paul articulates the implications of v. 19 in vv. 23-28. There is indeed an afterlife, a life of the other world,<sup>244</sup> a world where evil powers will not be present. In vv. 24 to 28 Paul expounds what will happen in the last days. These verses may seem like a digression at first sight. However, in v. 26 he makes the connection to the resurrection when he says that the last enemy (ἔσχατος ἐχθρός) is death. So, if there is no resurrection of the dead, as I explain later in this chapter, death would not have been defeated, and Christ would have failed in his mission to subjugate all his enemies (v. 25), which includes death. This interpretation of the verse sees the whole section not as a digression but as part of Paul’s CR.

In 15:24-28 Paul also instructs the Corinthians regarding the order of the resurrection as a legitimate question can be posed as to why the dead in Christ are not raised almost immediately, like Christ who was raised on the third day, whose example Paul has been using from 15:3 onwards. That is why Paul claims that there is an order in the way in which the resurrection takes place, ἕκαστος δὲ ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ τάγματι, first Christ and then at his coming (παρουσία) those who belong to Christ (15:23). Thiselton (2000, 1229) believes that τάγμα is the underlying thought in God’s action here. He may well be correct as Paul explains the order of events that are going to happen at the παρουσία.<sup>245</sup>

Christ will first subjugate everything, other than God. God as creator of everything, has power over everything and has put everything under Christ’s feet. Consequently, it follows that Christ has been given authority over death too and his authority has been further demonstrated by his resurrection. It must also be noted that NT writers see the resurrection of Christ not as demonstrating Christ’s own power but the power God (cf. Eph 1:20). This notion is reflected in Paul in 15:15, where he maintains that if Christ has

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<sup>244</sup> Scholars debated whether the rule of Christ will be in this world on earth or in the divine realm. See Hill (1998).

<sup>245</sup> Paul has an obsession with order. He talks about an order (τάγμα) of resurrection of the dead (v. 23), an order of subjugation (vv. 24-27), and there was an order of how Christ appeared to the apostles in vv. 5-7, and in 14:40 Paul directs the Corinthians to do everything in “order” (τάξις) with respect to their worship service.

not been raised, then Christ's followers would be false witnesses with respect to God (15:15) and not to Christ. Hence, in denying the resurrection of the dead, the Corinthians were in fact denying the power of God. Therefore, Paul concluded the section in v. 34 by saying regarding the Corinthian followers of Christ, ἀγνωσίαν γὰρ θεοῦ τινες ἔχουσιν. And everything will be in subjugation to Christ: Christ will be subject to God the father: so indirectly all creation will be subject to God.

Paul talks about a reign of Christ in which all his enemies are subjected to him and destroyed in a step-by-step process, as v. 25 talks about an age where Christ will be ruling, but where there will still be enemies. The order of events that Paul advocates in vv. 23-28 are as follows:

1. Resurrection of Christ.
2. Rule of Christ.<sup>246</sup>
3. His coming to earth.
4. Resurrection of those who belong to Christ.
5. Subjugation of every rule and authority.
6. Destruction of every rule and authority.
7. Destruction of death.
8. The kingdom is delivered to God the father.
9. The son himself is subjected to God.

Verse 25 makes the following points clear:

1. There are enemies to Christ.
2. The purpose of the reign is to subjugate Christ's enemies.
3. The subjugation of enemies does not happen all at once. The last enemy to be subjugated is death.

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<sup>246</sup> As to the time period of the reign mentioned here, see Lucas (1997). Barrett (2013, 358) translates βασιλεύειν as "continue to reign," implying that the resurrection of Christ inaugurated the reign of Christ. This view is in line with Phil 2:9-11. The same view is expressed by Elliott (1997, 174):

"[R]eferences to 'the rulers of this age' or to 'rulers, authorities, powers' reveal that *Paul experiences the present time as under the dominion of evil rulers*. That Paul describes the rulers as 'being destroyed' (*katargoumenon*, 2:6) shows that Paul sees in the cross the beginning of the destruction of the evil powers — but only its beginning."

However, he rightly marks the resurrection as revealing the "imminent defeat of the Powers, pointing forward to the final triumph of God" (Elliott 1997, 181).

## The Christ Rhetoric of 15:23-28

Casual readers may ask themselves, what possible connection exists between the reign of Christ in the future and the resurrection of the dead? In other words, how does the fact that Christ will rule in the future support the resurrection of the dead?

To find the answer to this question we classify the passage according to the discourses of CR:

vv. 23 – 25	Consequence discourse
v. 26	Connection discourse <sup>247</sup>
vv. 27 – 28	Consequence discourse

Verses 23-25 talks about something else, something other than the resurrection of the dead. It talks about the consequences of the resurrection of Christ, about his enemies whom he will rule and subjugate. But what has that to do with the resurrection of the dead, the matter Paul is discussing in chapter 15? Because the last enemy to be destroyed is death itself, Paul views death as a personal enemy of Christ. Because death, the arch enemy of Christ, will be destroyed by him, it would be wrong to argue that the dead will not be raised, since it would imply that Christ is not able to conquer *all* his enemies.

The connection discourse in v. 26 is quite pivotal since after that Paul makes “positive assertions about ‘subjection’” and things are placed in their created order (Heil 2005, 215). This is further supported by the chiasmic structure recognized and discussed in the SRI chapter.

In 1 Cor 15:27-28 Paul emphasizes that God will not be subjugated to Christ. Again, a question can be asked: what does this have to do with the resurrection of the dead? Verses 27-28 act as the consequence discourse showing the consequence of the resurrection of Christ. Since Christ is raised from the dead, God has put all things under his feet. When it says that all things are put under his feet, the only exception Paul acknowledges is God: only God has not been put under Christ. Therefore, if Christ has not been raised, and consequentially the dead are also not raised, it would mean that death will not be subjected by Christ. In the end this would imply that death is not subject to God since God has subjected all things to Christ, including death (vv. 27-28). Holding this

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<sup>247</sup> The key role of v. 26 has also been noted by Heil (2005, 212f) who sees that it is the central unit in the chiasm in vv. 23-28.

view would be blasphemous and would equate to sinning not only against Christ but also against God.

In 1 Cor 15:23-28 the following topoi of CR can be identified and will be discussed in detail later:

1. The CR of Christ's rule: I use empire criticism and iconographical analysis to understand Paul's CR in 1 Cor 15:23-28. I demonstrate how Paul constantly shows Christ as someone superior to Caesar.<sup>248</sup>
2. Affiliation to the resurrection community: I apply SIT and other models to see how resurrection faith helps to form communities and identities. Paul's rhetoric works by invoking pathos to the dangers of falling out of that community. I also demonstrate how iconography was used to form identities.

As part of CR, I analyze the narrative rhetoric of Christ's rule by applying the models developed by Greimas and used by Hays to show that Paul's rhetoric works by portraying death as a personal enemy of Christ.

### **The Narrative Rhetoric of Christ's Rule**

In 15:23-28 Paul narrates the story of Christ's rule. Although he employs only a few lines, the narrative has all the elements of a typical story. There is a hero (Christ); there are villains (rulers and every authority and power); there are groups for the hero and the villain; there is a climax and a (happy) conclusion. There is plot and progression in the story. The story can be reconstructed in the following manner by taking the elements from the previous sections in 1 Corinthians.

The prequel to this story was described in 15:3-5 where Christ was crucified by the rulers of this world, and the sequel (or rather the elaboration of vv. 23-28) is described in vv. 51-54.<sup>249</sup> He was buried and when all hope was lost, he was raised from the dead and has started his rule (Phil 2:9-11). He will come in glory in his παρουσία

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<sup>248</sup> Lowe (2012, 120-60) has re-read and reapplied 1 Cor 15: 20-25 in the light of Roman imperial ideology. He works to show how Paul adopts Roman theopolitics to illustrate God's saving activities, and he claims that Paul redeploys significant imperial titles (e.g., κύριος), actions (βασιλεύειν), and events (παρουσία) to frame the gospel narrative that connects Christ's resurrection, arrival, and rule (15:20-28) to his final subjugation of death (vv. 50-58). In the discussion below, I use a different set of tools to show Christ's superiority.

<sup>249</sup> More than a sequel it explains how the story in vv. 23-28 will be carried out in greater detail.

when those who have died in him will be raised from the dead. In the sequel to this story in vv. 51-52 Paul goes on to explain how the bodies of those who are alive will be transformed at the sound of the trumpet. At that point, all Christ's enemies will be destroyed, including what is said to be the last enemy, death itself. After that Christ will hand over the kingdom to God and be subject to him (15:24-28). Somewhere, presumably within the sequence of events in vv. 24-28, the world and angels themselves will be judged by those who belong to Christ (1 Cor 6:1-3). Victory will be secured through the Lord Jesus Christ (15:57).

With this narrative Paul is trying to replace what he apparently considered to be the false narrative of the Corinthians. Their narrative (though we do not know the exact form of the narrative, whether they believed in the Greco-Roman myths or whether they believed in the immortality of the soul) stopped with this world. In Paul's narrative the Corinthian believers had a part to play, not only would they receive their dead back, but they would also take part in judging the world. To use the language of Adams (2012, 218), it is this aspect that makes Paul's story a narrative and not merely a report.

Paul's narrative world ultimately spans from Adam to Christ's crucifixion, burial, resurrection, and appearances and then moves beyond this world to the heavenly world. He talks about the events that will happen at the parousia.

### Toolan's Model

According to Toolan (2001, 8) there are "three chief or defining characteristics" of narrative:

1. Sequence and interrelated events:

Paul talks about the order of events and explains it. Paul starts the section by talking about the  $\tau\acute{\alpha}\gamma\mu\alpha$  in 1 Cor 15:23. Paul goes on to detail what will happen to each character as the plot develops in the story. The dead will rise, the living will be transformed, enemies will be subjugated, victorious Christ will hand over the kingdom to God, and God will be all in all.

2. Foregrounded individuals:

There is Christ; there are people who are Christ's; and there are his enemies who oppose his rule and who need to be subjugated.

3. Crisis to resolution progression:

There is an ongoing battle between Christ and his enemies. The enemies of Christ have won one battle when they crucified him, but Christ was raised

from the dead as the first fruits of the resurrection (v. 23). He is now in the process of subjugating and destroying all his enemies, and he will finally destroy the last enemy, death (vv. 24-26), giving his people their final victory over death through the resurrection and transformation of the living at the parousia (vv.54-57).

In the previous section (15:12-19) Paul's CR worked by demonstrating how Christ had been raised and applying that to those who are in Christ. In this section Paul's CR works by supporting the general resurrection of the dead by demonstrating that Christ will destroy all his enemies, "every ruler and every authority and power" (15:24). In the previous episode Christ was destroyed by his enemies (1 Cor 2:6), but he was raised from the dead; in this episode he will overcome all his enemies and will eventually destroy them. In the previous section death momentarily had victory over him (Lowe 2012, 210), he was killed and buried; but he rose up and won over death as an individual (of course not withstanding the fact that his resurrection is the first fruits of those who will be raised). In this episode his enemies, of whom death is the primary enemy, continue to achieve their victory over those who belong to Christ. But at Christ's parousia he will defeat death not for himself (as he is already risen) but for those who are his. In each episode there is a climax, a momentary defeat and then a final victory (Toolan's "crisis to resolution progression") as illustrated in the table below.

Narrative Stage	1 Cor 15:3-5	1 Cor 15:23-28
Climax - Momentary defeat	Death of Christ	Death of Believers
Final Conclusion - Victory	Resurrection of Christ	Resurrection and transformation of all believers
Beginning of the new saga	Beginning of his rule (Phil 2:9-11)	Subjugation of all enemies and final victory, kingdom restored to God

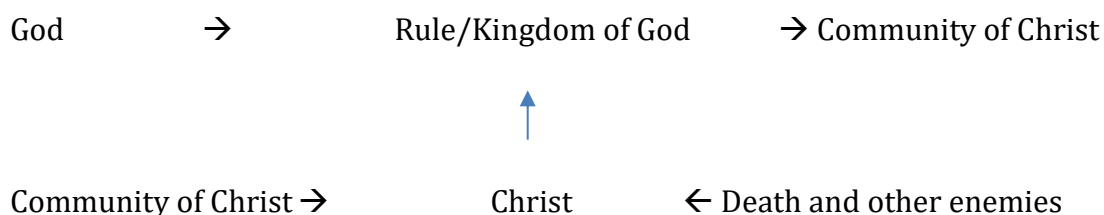
Table 5.1 Application of Toolan's model to 1 Cor 15:3-28

## Hays's Model

In the table below I have applied Greimas' Model (1966, 192–203) that has been used by Hays (2002).

<b>Syntagm</b>	<b>Canonical Function</b>	<b>Application to 1 Cor 15:23-28</b>	
Contract	Mandate	Christ is mandated to subjugate all his enemies.	Sender: God Subject: Christ
	Communication	The kingdom of Christ is expanded in the world by those who belong to him.	Object: The establishing of the kingdom of God
Disjunction		Christ sets out to enact his reign.	Receiver: Humans
Performance	Confrontation	Community of Christ struggles with every ruler, authority, and power in the period in which people die.	Opponents: every ruler, bearer of ruling authority, source of transcendent power including death itself (excluding God)
	Domination	Defeat of other enemies and death.	Helper: Community of Christ
	Attribution	Kingdom is restored to God.	

Table 5.2 Application of Hays's model to 1 Cor 15:23-28



One of the things that this narrative analysis brings out is the fact that death can be seen as the enemy of Christ as explained below. Once death is seen as the enemy of Christ the place of 1 Cor 15:23-28 can be understood within the context of 15:1-34.

### *Death as a Personal Enemy of Christ*

The last enemy to be defeated, according to Paul, is death itself (15:26). The destruction of death is not just a “metaphor for the resurrection of the dead” as Plevnik (1997, 126) suggests because destroying death has a dual character. It involves undoing the damage death has already caused by raising the dead, and it also encompasses stopping death’s damage by making sure that there is no death in the future. As De Boer suggests, “Paul implies that death is not merely a medical or empirical fact but the dualistic antithesis of the eschatological Zoa promised in the gospel”( 1988, 114). The text does not explain how the future effects of death will be undone. In 15:50-53, however, Paul explains how the living will also be transformed and will put on an imperishable body. This combination of raising those who have died and transforming those who are living may complete the cycle of destroying death. However, for death to be destroyed fully, those agents who bring death through the temptation of sin (as in the first fall of man cf. Genesis 3) must also be destroyed. This is why Garland’s (2003, 712) observation is incomplete: “[T]he process began with Jesus’ resurrection; it will be completed with the resurrection of Christians at the end. Robbed of its victims, death’s threatening menace is neutralized.” For death to be stripped of its power, its past victims must be resurrected; its future victims must be transformed; and death’s future power must be broken by destroying the other enemies of God.

As several scholars have indicated (Conzelman 1975, 273; Thiselton 2000, 1233-4; and Fee 2014, 689–90) Christ is the subject in 15:25. Fee (2014, 689–90) remarks that “almost certainly we must go with the grammar here and see Christ as the subject. Thus, he must reign (as he is now doing by virtue of his being Lord) until he places all his enemies [especially death, as v. 26 makes clear] under his feet.” The fact that Paul is quoting Psa 8:6 and 110:1 might go against this conclusion as Christ is clearly not the

subject there. Scholars, however, see the reference to the Psalms as an allusion or adaptation rather than a direct quotation (Thiselton 2000, 1233-4; Garland 2003, 711; and Plevnik 1997, 131–32). Garland (2003, 714) shows the difference between the Psalms and the citation here and argues that Paul may have deliberately replaced  $\theta\omega$  with  $\theta\eta$  to allow provision for Christ to be the subject (Garland 2003, 711). Contextually also it is likely that Christ is the subject since in all the sentences in the immediate context Christ is the subject: “his parousia,” “he hands over the kingdom,” “he has destroyed” (Garland 2003, 711).

In the Pauline tradition the trio of terms,  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ ,  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ , and  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$  are terms used to portray the enemies of Christ or those who are his followers. In 1 Cor 2:6-8 Paul speaks of “ $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\omicron}\nu\tau\omega\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\iota\omega\nu\omicron\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\tau\omicron\upsilon$ ,” who crucified him (2:8). Neither rulers nor powers ( $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ ,  $\delta\acute{\upsilon}\nu\alpha\mu\iota\varsigma$ ) will be able to separate believers from the love of Christ according to Rom 8:38. Col 2:15 talks about victory over rulers and authorities ( $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ ,  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ ), while Eph 1: 21 says that Christ is above  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ ,  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ ,  $\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\rho$ ,  $\kappa\upsilon\rho\iota\acute{\omicron}\tau\eta\varsigma$ , adding one more to the list. Eph 6:12 talks about the struggle the followers of Christ will have with  $\acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\eta$ ,  $\acute{\epsilon}\xi\upsilon\sigma\iota\acute{\alpha}$ ,  $\kappa\omicron\sigma\mu\omicron\kappa\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\omega\rho$ . This means that the hostility between Christ and his enemies are now taken up by those who are Christ’s (“Helpers” in Hays’s model) and his enemies (“opponents” in Hays’s model). By fighting against the “helpers” the enemies of Christ are fighting against the rule of Christ or the coming kingdom of God, which is the objective (“object” in Hays’s model) of Christ’s activity.

It is very important to note that Paul actually sees death as a personal enemy of Christ. Death is personified (cf. Conzelmann 1975, 273; De Boer 1988, 121; Holleman 1996, 65; Garland 2003, 712; Heil 2005, 215; and Lowe 2012, 209-10)<sup>250</sup> and belongs in the same list as ruler, authority and power. My observation is also strengthened by the fact that Paul speaks to death as if it were a person in 1 Cor 15:55. Death will be subordinated under the feet of Christ by God, a fact that is affirmed by the resurrection of Christ (De Boer 1988, 123). If we view Christ as the subject of 1 Cor 15:25, as I argued earlier, then it is only proper that we see the enemies as also his.

Thus, to argue that death has its final say and has tied its slaves to their graves is to argue that Christ as supreme ruler under whose feet God has put everything in subjection (15:27), has failed in his “mandate” (as Hays’s model, discussed above, shows us) to conquer his enemies and destroy them (see Hays’s model above). Hence, to argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue against the Lordship of Jesus Christ, as death

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<sup>250</sup> Conzelmann (1975, 273) views the conceptualization of death as a person, as apocalyptic (Rev 6:8).

is not under him, an enemy which is on the loose. If Christ is not risen, he is not Lord, and certainly not able to subjugate death. Paul tries to convince the Corinthians to agree that the dead will be raised by using CR once again through employing the topos of the Lordship of Christ and his ensuing rule (15:24-28).

To claim that there is no resurrection of the dead is to argue that Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised, death has the final say. In that way, death comes into the list of things that have not been subjugated to Christ. As a matter of fact, death has conquered Christ, if he is not risen. Therefore, Paul shows that the only thing that is not subjugated to Christ, is God. If the dead are not raised, not everything has been subjugated as Psa 8:6 claims; in which case the authority of the HB is also challenged since it claims that “God has put all things in subjection under his feet” (Psa 8:6), when indeed death has not been subjected.

Hence to argue that the dead are not raised is to demean Christ, to dethrone him from where God has placed him as the ruler under whom everything is subjugated. To argue that the dead will not be raised, therefore, is to sin against Christ.

## Topoi Analysis

In this section we analyze the topoi that have been identified in 1 Cor 15:23-28.

### The Rule of Christ over his enemies

There is no consensus among scholars as to whether the phrase *πᾶσαν ἀρχὴν καὶ πᾶσαν ἐξουσίαν καὶ δύναμιν* refers to human agents, demonic powers, or both. Carr (2005, 91) and Horsley (1998, 205) read this as human agents. Horsley (1997a, 244) takes a political view and argues that the rulers Christ will destroy are the “Romans and their imperial system” that crucified him.<sup>251</sup> Elliott (1997, 173), though, looking at the cross as a political event, broadens the scope for rulers and claims that every rule and authority and power “that remains hostile to God” must be included in the definition. Garland (2003, 710), on

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<sup>251</sup> This is not unlikely as Paul says that it was the rulers of this world who crucified Christ in 2:8 and uses the same root word *ἀρχή* in both places. Also see Kim (2008, 24-5).

the other hand, reads it as inclusive of demonic powers.<sup>252</sup> Thiselton (2000, 1232) and Goodrich (2016, 429) also hold that it includes both human and demonic powers.<sup>253</sup>

I am inclined to think that Paul includes both human and suprahuman powers here. The repeated use of  $\pi\alpha\sigma\alpha\nu$  (Goodrich 2016, 429) suggests the inclusion of demonic powers who are part of the anti-God group. Without the subjugation of the anti-God, demonic powers, Paul can never claim that *all* his enemies have been subjected to Christ (1 Cor 15:25, 27). This is also supported by the fact that Paul claims the goal of  $\Sigma\alpha\tau\alpha\nu\tilde{\alpha}\varsigma$  is to tempt the Christian community to disobey God in 1 Cor 7:5. Though there is ambiguity in Satan's role in 1 Cor 5:5, what is clear is his destructive role.<sup>254</sup> Another reason to include demons in the enemies list is that since the last enemy is death, the other enemies may well be of the same kind. Since death is seen as a transition between this world and the next it is better to understand the other enemies as also belonging to the other world.<sup>255</sup>

This, however, does not mean that Paul does not have human agents in mind. The other worldly evil powers work through their human counterparts. As Paul claims in 1 Cor 2:8 it was the rulers of this age who crucified the Lord of glory. Paul considers the rulers of this world to be the enemies of Christ and asserts that they are doomed to perish in 1 Cor 2:6, where he uses  $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\rho\gamma\eta\sigma\eta$  as he does in 1 Cor 15:24. Thus, Paul proclaims the destruction of all rule, authority and power that stands in opposition to God in 15:24; it was his purpose to show that the risen Christ will destroy every rule to become the

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<sup>252</sup> Wasserman (2017) maintains that the epic divine battles in the Enuma Elish and the Epic of Anzu have less to contribute towards understanding Paul's "principalities and powers" in 15:23-28 and that Paul was influenced by biblical and Hellenistic Jewish traditions. She understands "principalities and powers" as a "subordinate host of gentile gods" or "intermediary deities." She argues that the principalities and powers that will ultimately be defeated include the heathen deities as well the human rulers. Conzelmann (1975, 271-72), however, takes it to mean demons in a "nonmythological" sense.

<sup>253</sup> For a list of all those who take the demonic view see Goodrich (2016, 427 n35).

<sup>254</sup> Although Conzelmann interprets this as death, many commentators have argued that handing over to Satan simply means to excommunicate him and  $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\lambda\epsilon\theta\rho\nu\ \tau\eta\varsigma\ \sigma\alpha\rho\kappa\acute{\omicron}\varsigma$  means the destruction of fleshly desires (cf. South 1992, 38-71; Thiselton 2000, 398-400; Rosner and Ciampa 2007, sec. 5901). I see a logical problem in this view: how will handing over to Satan, excommunicating him from the church have this salvific effect? In other situations, the embarrassment of being put outside the Christ community might have had an impact. But this man's actions are already outrageous; his practices were not common even among the heathens. And his actions are already known among the church members, some of whom reported it to Paul. So if he does not care about what others think about his action in living with his father's wife, it is very unlikely he would care about being put outside the church. If edification is what is meant the chances are more that it will happen within the church than outside of it. See Smith's (2005) thesis which argues for the curse view and interprets handing over to Satan as destruction and suffering of his body.

<sup>255</sup> In 1 Cor 15:24, Paul is using the language of apocalyptic rhetoric, the wording matches the wording in the (disputed Pauline epistle) Eph 6:12  $\tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \acute{\alpha}\rho\chi\acute{\alpha}\varsigma,\ \tau\acute{\alpha}\varsigma\ \acute{\epsilon}\xi\theta\upsilon\sigma\acute{\iota}\alpha\varsigma$ , where the passage clearly talks about other worldly powers.

supreme ruler over all that exists, whether human or transcendent. My interpretation of 1 Cor 15:24-28 using empire criticism makes use of Paul's inclusion of human agents.

### Empire Criticism and Beyond

Empire Criticism seeks to understand the Rome-critical implications of Paul's theology and practice. It looks to see how NT writers "evaluate and engage in Rome's empire in different ways" (Carter 2006, 2). It answers questions like "did Paul and other preachers of the gospel in the first century A.D. formulate their message in conscious reaction to the imperial cult and ideology of Rome? Did they present Christ as an antithesis to Caesar?" (Kim 2008, xiv).<sup>256</sup>

In my own use of empire criticism, I argue that 1 Cor 15:23-28 reveals a strongly anti-imperial ideological character. In asserting that Christ will subjugate every ruler and every authority and power, Paul includes the present institution of Roman imperialism (though not to the exclusion of supra-human powers as I argued above), which will be subjugated by Christ. This will not only comfort the Christ community to which the Roman government remained largely indifferent and at times, hostile (2 Cor 11:21b-33), but will also give a reason for the Corinthian Christians to believe in the resurrection of Christ and, by consequential logic, believe in the resurrection of the dead. They believed that their Lord would subjugate the greatest earthly power of their day, the Roman Caesars. And as we saw in chapter 2 the whole idea of resurrection rose to prominence in Judaism in the background of persecution by the Romans.

When Paul talks about subjugating every rule and authority to Christ, the Corinthians would almost certainly have thought about Roman imperial rule and authority. The father metaphor that Paul applies to God (1 Cor 1:3; 8:6; 15:24), would be familiar to everyone (cf. Lassen 1991, 127). Therefore, when Paul refers to God as father, there was already a frame of reference in the auditor's mind which would have invoked a set of images. In the same way, when Paul refers to subjugation, rulers, authority and powers, and Christ putting them under his feet, the rhetography of the text would have invoked a frame of reference within which these images would work for the recipients of the text.

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<sup>256</sup> For an introduction to empire criticism see, Horsley (1997a; 2000a; 2004a), Carter (2006), Porter and Westfall (2011). Portier-Young (2014a; 2014b) argues the extent of the function of apocalyptic literature as resistance literature.

Witherington (1995, 402) sees this passage as anti-Roman imperial eschatology. Based on the work of Lassen (1966)<sup>257</sup> and inscriptions found on a coin in Corinth (Kent 1966, no. 77), he argues that the emperor was positioned not only as divine but also as a father. By saying that everything will finally be subjugated to God the father, Paul replaces the figure of Caesar with God, the ultimate father. Paul is indirectly arguing for “Corinth to disengage from previous commitments to imperial eschatology” (Witherington 1995, 402).

Anti-Roman sentiments were prevalent in Jewish Literature. Wright (2008, 138–9), citing examples from the Book of Watchers in 1 Enoch, Daniel and 2 Maccabees, sees the resurrection as a “revolutionary doctrine” that would even inspire ideologies which would cause the Jewish “revolt against Rome.” The story of the seven martyred brothers in 2 Maccabees encouraged hope in the future resurrection that helped the Jewish people stand up against the Antiochian persecution in the second century B.C.

Horsley (2000, 91–92) argues that Paul’s use of the word εὐαγγέλιον (see 1 Cor 15:1) is also anti-Roman rhetoric. While the Caesars employed violent means to crucify those who opposed their rule, Paul preached a leader who allowed himself to be crucified. As Horsley (2000, 92) comments,

The imperial savior had brought “salvation” and “peace and security” precisely by terrorizing means of “forceful suasion” such as crucifying subjects who had the audacity to resist Roman rule. This *gospel* was proclaimed on coins and inscriptions and celebrated in imperial city festivals in honor of the emperor. (Italics mine)

Whereas the Roman Caesars demanded sacrosanctity, the son of God (15:28) offered himself to be defiled by inferior human beings. In 1 Cor 15:28, the reference to Jesus’s handing over the kingdom to God could also be looked at as an anti-imperial polemic. Whereas the Roman princes fought for the imperial throne, Jesus surrendered his kingdom to God (Tucker 2010, 150).

Paul uses the CR topos of Christ’s triumphant rule here. The fact that Christ will rule at the parousia is being set forth as a reason for the Corinthians to believe in the resurrection of the dead. Since Christ is a superior ruler to the Caesars, and because he will subjugate all his enemies (1 Cor 15:25), it is inconceivable that Christ has not been

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<sup>257</sup> See also Walbank (2010, 155 n10).

resurrected from the dead. If Christ has not been raised, all rule, power and authorities would prove to be the final enemies of God both in this world and the next. However, since Christ has been raised, he will not only be the first fruits of his people who will be raised, but he will also destroy his enemies. For this reason, to argue that the dead will not be raised is to argue that Christ has not been raised. If Christ has not been raised then he cannot destroy his enemies, especially death, as he would have been defeated by death.

### **Roman Iconography<sup>258</sup>**

Foucault (1994, 37) proposed the idea that when interpreting ancient texts the relationship between image and text must be analyzed critically. Canavan (2012, 34) claims that in ancient times images were the popular mode of communication, rather than written text, and that “art and iconography” were considered the dynamic “means of communication.” Canavan (2012, 5–64) conceptualizes the “visual construction of identity” and sees visual imagery as a tool to construct social identity. This, she argues, is done by making the metaphors of the text into conversations with the visual images drawn from the world of the audience (Canavan 2012, 24–30).

The Roman emperors strategically positioned “visual imagery” at the center of urban, public life: in “market places, bathhouses, gymnasias and theaters” and in trade centers to assist in the formation of identity and power structures (Canavan 2012, 35). Visual imagery helped the Romans to incorporate conquered nations into the empire, while also helping maintain a common imperial culture that facilitated the communication of imperial ideology to the uneducated (Lopez 2010, 28).

City and army were two of the important tools in the Roman propaganda machine.<sup>259</sup> Romans created an “imaginary reality” through city and army (Lopez 2010, 27, based on Whittaker 1997, 144). Papageorgiadou-Bani (2004, 38–39) remarks that “in the colonies founded for veterans of the Roman army, the images on the coins addressed their military allegiance and showed the emblems of their legions.”

### **Christ and Caesar**

One main purpose of the Roman iconography was to make Caesar a god in the minds of the people (Canavan 2012, 123). Canavan (2012, 179–90) develops three correlations between the Christ and Caesar:

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<sup>258</sup> For a discussion regarding the use of visual imagery in the use of interpretive methodology see Lopez (2012, chap. 5).

<sup>259</sup> However, there are scholars who think otherwise and would not use the word propaganda. Howgego (1995, 70–72), for example, prefers to think of “political themes” used maybe to “honor,” rather than as propaganda targeted at certain groups of the community to “persuade.”

1. Focus identity: instead of Caesar as god, Christ is the head of every ruler and authority, including the Roman emperor.
2. Clothing imagery: Caesar was portrayed in specific styles of clothing to portray his divine authority; Christ followers in Colossae were to put off all vices and clothe themselves with virtue and love in Christ.
3. The body as representative of a group: Caesar was the personification of Rome and representative of the body of Rome, while Christ is the head of the body which is the church (Canavan 2012, 179-90).

In many ways, during the first century, the early church tried to do the same for Christ as the Roman imperialism had done for Caesar. The early church obviously did not have the same tools as the empire did. Instead, they resorted to utilizing what they had to replace the image of the imperial ruler, Caesar, with that of the cosmic ruler, the Lord Jesus Christ. I demonstrate this in the nine headings below.

### *Creating a Christ Colony*

Paul claims that believers are citizens of heaven, where there is a ruler who will subjugate everything (Phil 3:20-21). This is clearly anti-imperial thinking. Paul asks the Philippians, who were Roman citizens in a Roman colony, to change their citizenship to heaven and their allegiance to the savior from heaven, the Lord Jesus Christ. In the same way that the images in a colony reminded the residents of the founders of that colony, this imagery reminded them of their founder, the Lord Jesus Christ. The earth, according to Paul, belongs to the Lord (1 Cor 10:25).

This colony has its own law court, the church (1 Cor 6:2-4). The citizens of heaven are discouraged from participating in civic temple dinners but are encouraged to participate in the Lord's Supper in a worthy way (1 Cor 10:14-22 and 11:17-34); there must be order in their own worship gatherings (1 Cor 14:26-40).

Paul collected money for the mother church in Jerusalem from the followers of Christ in Roman Corinth (16:1-3).<sup>260</sup> This is a reversal of the Roman tax system where the conquering empire collected tax from their Jewish subjects. It also creates a new

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<sup>260</sup> The word used here is *λογεία* which is used for collections made for religious purposes (BDAG).

community with its own economic principles where one community supports the other despite their Jewish-Gentile differences (cf. Wan 2000, 196).

For the administration of the Colony and cities Caesars appointed officers each serving a different role. Paul claims that in the body of Christ there are members who are appointed to play different roles (1 Cor 12:27-31). To do their roles effectively the members of Christ's body are given gifts.

### *Allegiance and Value System*

Since they were citizens of heaven, and they are "in Christ," their allegiance is primarily to Christ. Their value system was also based on the commands of Christ and Christian values. Paul promotes a counterculture in the Corinthian church to that of the civic society. Tucker (2010, 2) avers that the reason for the problems in the Corinthian church was that they were continuing to identify primarily with the Roman society, rather than find their identity "in Christ." As a solution Paul tried to produce "an alternative community with a distinct ethos."

What was allowed by Roman law (going to prostitutes, for example) was forbidden for a Christ centered reason as discussed in chapter 3 (1 Cor 6:12-20); what was forbidden by Roman law (adultery for example) was forbidden for a different, Christ centered reason.

Whereas other citizens could divorce, Christians were to remain faithful to their partners because of the command of the Lord (1 Cor 7:10). Thus, the commands that needed to be heeded were coming from the Lord: his commands took priority over the commands of Caesar and the Roman legal system.

### *Punishment for disloyalty*

The Caesars regularly punished traitors and disloyal citizens, often by death. As discussed in chapter 2, under the topos, "the Lordship of Christ as a threat," warnings are given in 1 Cor 10:10; 11:31; 16:22, about possible punishments including death. Allegiance to Christ is also ensured by putting a curse on those who are not faithful to Christ and even those who do not love the Lord (1 Cor 16:22).

### *Stories and role models*

Instead of the stories of the victories of Caesar, Paul proclaims the victories of Christ. The tradition received by Paul and passed on to his Corinthian converts (1 Cor 15:3-5) highlighted the salvific work of Christ and as shown in chapter four, his divine, sonship, and victory confirmed through resurrection. In 1 Cor 15:24-28 Paul produces another

story in which all rulers, including the Caesars will be subjugated by Christ. Hence, the Caesar narratives are replaced by Christ narratives.

Paul sets Christ as the role model to be followed (1 Cor 11:1). In other passages such as in Phil 2:5-11 it is even more evident that Christ is set as the example to be followed.

### *Communications and Greetings*

The name of Christ was emphasized in the greetings and beginning sections of epistles by Paul and other writers (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Col 1:2; 1 Pet 1:1-3). Many images such as portraying Christ as the supreme ruler (1 Cor 15:24-28) also tend to magnify Christ.

While we do not have access to the hymns that were sung in worship services (1 Cor 14:26, Col 3:16) many scholars believe that Phil 2:5-11 was an early Christian hymn (Hawthorne and Martin 2015; O'Brien 1991).<sup>261</sup> Instead of praising the glories of the Caesars, the glories of Christ were sung as example for others to follow.<sup>262</sup>

The letter of Pliny the Younger, though written in the early second century, highlights the fact that Christians sang hymns 'to Christ as God' (*carmenque Christo quasi deo*, 10.96.7).<sup>263</sup>

Pliny's letter also shows the perceived conflict between the worship of Christ and the worship of Caesar. Pliny confesses that to get people to denounce Christianity he required the alleged "Christians" to worship Caesar. This highlights the ideology behind my point of replacing Caesar with Christ.

Pliny got the Christians to do three things as part of their formal denouncing of their Christian faith (10.96.5):

1. Call on the other gods.
2. Worship Caesar.
3. Curse Christ.

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<sup>261</sup> After the influential work of Lohmeyer (1928) many scholars took this position. Lohmeyer followed Weiss (1897).

<sup>262</sup> In this line of interpretation, something that was attributed to the human kings has been transposed to the divine. This phenomenon can be seen in Tamil *Bhakthi* (devotional) literature in the 8<sup>th</sup> century AD. A particular genre of hymns, *thirupalliyelluchhi*, originated as songs written to wake up the kings. Later it evolved as poems to wake up the divine kings, the Hindu gods of mythology (Mascrenghe 2020, 173).

<sup>263</sup> English text from Walsh (2006)

True Christians, as Pliny had been told, would not do any of these things. So, it was well known that the allegiance and devotion to Christ as opposed to Caesar was a hallmark of Christians and part of the Christian identity. It is important to note how the worship of Caesar was seen as part of denouncing Christianity. Christian identity consisted of undivided allegiance to Christ.

We cannot ascertain for sure whether Paul's letters, written probably about 60 years earlier, had reached Pliny's districts in Bithynia in Asia Minor. Paul says that no one who is speaking by the spirit of God will curse Christ (1 Cor 12:3). Cursing Christ is to denounce all allegiance to and connection with Christ.

As I demonstrated in chapter 3, 1 Corinthians is full of Christ centered teaching.

### *Rituals and festivals*

The followers of Jesus met on the first day of the week, (Rev 1:10, 1 Cor 16:2, Acts 20:7) the day their Lord was raised from the dead and had begun to appear to them (Cullmann 1956, 10–11), thus the term the *Lord's day* (Rev 1:10). Cullmann comments, "[T]he Lord's Day of the first Christians was therefore a celebration of Christ's resurrection." He makes an interesting connection between the Lord's Day worship and the events of Christ's rule when commenting about John's vision in Revelation:

"[I]t is not without significance that the Seer mentions that he saw his visions on a 'Lord's Day' (1:10)... Thus he sees the whole drama of the last days in the context of the early Christian service of worship which, so to speak, has its counterpart and at the same time its fulfillment in the coming aeon, so that all that takes place in the gatherings of the early Christian community, seen from this side, appears as an anticipation of that which in the last day takes place from God's side" (1956, 7).

As argued earlier Baptism and the Lord's Supper offer direct coordination to the experience of Christ's death, burial and resurrection and an invitation for believers to be part of that narrative. They were baptized "into the name of the Lord" (Hartman 1997, 37–50). The Lord's Supper was to remember the Lord and proclaim his death until he returns (1 Cor 11:24-26).

Rome was famous for its games.<sup>264</sup> In 1 Cor 9:24 Paul uses the languages of running in games and winning wreaths. Thiselton (2000, 710) and Murphy-O'Connor (1983, 15–17) both maintain that Paul was aware of the Isthmian games held in Corinth

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<sup>264</sup> Rome's chariot races and dramas originated as acts of thanks giving to the gods (Kyle 2015, 247).

and makes an allusion to the games in this passage. So here again, Paul is creating a counterculture and a parallel society. Instead of running in the Isthmian games Paul tells the Corinthians to run in the spiritual race with self-control.

### *Rhetoric for Persuasion*

Importantly, as I have argued in this work, even the early Church's rhetoric was Christ centered. Instead of words of wisdom what is being used is Jesus Christ (1 Cor 2:1-2). Much of this was discussed in chapter 3.

### *Victory Parades*

Cicero (*Verr.* 2.5.77) says that the triumphant generals brought their prisoners as spectacles often in the public procession which was held for victorious generals called the *triumph* (Kyle 2015, 249–50). The procession of captured enemy leaders assured the masses that their own leaders were capable of protecting them and destroying their enemies (Kyle 2015, 251).

In 1 Cor 15:25 the phrase about putting Christ's enemies under his feet is a form of display, equivalent to a Roman triumph, showing the superiority of the person above and the inferiority of the subjugated one below. Col 2:15 is even more explicit: "He disarmed the rulers and authorities and made a public example of them, triumphing over them in it." This is kind of a "rhetoric of reversal," as Paul turns possibly the most disgraceful death into a public spectacle of victory (cf. Dunn 2014, 170). However, even a reading coming from an ideology of power and subjugation is also possible as I show below.

### *"Under his Feet"*

Reading texts in the light of visual sources and interpreting them in the light of their socio political situation, Lopez (2010, 21) concludes that "images may speak louder the words of dominant ideology than texts and may more obviously suggest points of resistance." After surveying different images Lopez sees a consistency and concludes that the "predominant message" is that peace comes through Roman conquests and that "all 'marginalized knees (and heads) should bow to the centralized single (male) victor'" (Lopez 2010, 50). It seems clear that the Roman imperial domination was ubiquitous in the urban centers of the Roman empire through iconography and coinage.

In Roman iconography, enemies were depicted as lying on the ground (subjugated by the emperor) and sometimes as uncivilized barbarians, following the practice of their Greek predecessors (Lopez 2010, 50). Romans depicted the conquered nations as

women, usually mourning or women who were subdued by men,<sup>265</sup> such as in the Judea Capta coin in Figure 5.1 below. The lonely mourning lady is recognized as a lonely Jewish woman. The coin portrays the concepts of “dominant and subordinate, active and passive” nations. Rome is dominant and active, and Judea, the captured Jewish homeland is subordinate and passive (Lopez 2010, 37).



Fig 5.1 Roman coin depicting a captured Jewish slave woman

Image Source: <https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/36/1/27>



Fig 5.2 Female figure representing the defeated Germania by Domitian

Source: (Lopez 2012, Fig 9, 109)

With this background in mind, I move onto one of the most important applications of empire criticism and iconography for my analysis of 1 Cor 15:23-28, specifically, with regard to the rhetography of the phrase ἄχρι οὗ θῆ πάντας τοὺς ἐχθροὺς ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας

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<sup>265</sup> This is crucial to Lopez (2010, 54) who engages in a gender critical reading. Though I use her insights, my reading is significantly different to hers as my thesis is not in gender criticism.

αὐτοῦ in reference to Caesar crushing the conquered nations (Figure 5.3). Lopez<sup>266</sup> (2010, 1–2) relates the story of one of Nero's nightmares where the "images of the nations surrounded him and kept him from moving" (Suetonius, Nero 46.1). She connects Nero's nightmare about the 'images of nations' chasing him with the image of Claudius crushing Lady Britannia in Figure 5.3 (2010, 1–4). It was as if the lady Britannia from this image and ladies from other images had come to life and started chasing Nero. Lopez connects this and other nightmares to his decline from the throne.



Fig 5.3 Claudius conquering lady Britannia

Source: (Lopez 2012, Fig 1, 2)

Paul, who was a Roman and a Jew and a frequent traveler in the eastern empire, may have known these or similar images, which were available in public places, and clearly, he would have seen Roman coins. The possibility of Paul having seen an image like Figure 5.3 is even more likely since Josephus (*Ant* 15.267-79) mentions that trophies of the conquered nations were displayed in Herod's amphitheater in Jerusalem. Thus, it is highly likely that these things may have been in Paul's mind when he wrote this section

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<sup>266</sup> Lopez's main idea is an off shoot of the new perspective on Paul (NPP), and she reinterprets Paul by arguing that the term "gentiles" means non-Roman rather than non-Jewish. She then calls Paul an apostle to the conquered. She makes a "gender critical reinterpretation" of Paul. While the ideas seem original there have been critical reviews about her work. Turner (2009) calls her methods more "imagined than interpreted." Sechrest (2009) takes a pro NPP approach to maintain that Paul viewed both Jew and gentile as a third race. She believes that Paul fashioned a third race for Christians so that Christian identity replaced both Jewish and gentile identity for those in Christ.

of 1 Corinthians. Paul's phrase ἄχρι οὗ θῆ πάντα τοὺς ἐχθρούς ἑ ὑπὸ τοὺς πόδας αὐτοῦ creates a rhetographic image for his auditors that references real images of Caesar crushing the conquered nations (as in Figure 5.3).

This discussion strengthens the reading of 1 Cor 15:23-28 in the background of Roman imperialism. It is also further strengthened by the fact that Paul includes Roman rulers who crucified Christ (1 Cor 2:8), in the list of "every ruler and every authority and power" that will be subject to Christ, as discussed above.

In 1 Cor 15:27 Paul takes a reverse imperial view of Roman imperial power since imperial rule, authority, and power, along with transcendent powers will be crushed under Christ. But the one who is crushing them is not Caesar but the risen Christ. Paul's imagery substitutes "Caesar with Christ and Jupiter with God the father" (Oropeza 2017, sec. 15:28). Paul's CR works by replacing imperial images with Christ's apocalyptic images. The resurrected Christ is the supreme ruler, even greater than the powers who crucified him, as it is evident by his resurrection. If Christ is not raised from the dead, it would mean that these rulers are greater than the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul would consider this as blasphemy and would equate it to sinning against Christ. Paul directly invokes the topos of the triumphant rule of Christ and indirectly the sinning against Christ topos.

By constant repetition of all these tools in church circles, Christ was given the center stage, just as Caesar occupied the center stage in Roman propaganda.

### **Affiliation to the resurrection community**

I argue in this section that Paul uses the topos of affiliation to the Christ community in 1 Cor 15:23-28. Paul does this by giving them a social identity. What Canavan (2012, 193) says of Col 3:1-17 can equally be said of 1 Cor 15:23-28, that is, it provides a way to "critique the current power structures and to give the Christ followers a recognizable means of living their identity in Christ." I demonstrate how the unique Christian identity is created by using Social Identity Theory (SIT).

In 1 Cor 15:20-28 Paul creates a new social identity for the Corinthians. Paul divides humanity into those who are in the Adam and those who are in Christ. This division, which starts in v 21, runs right throughout 1 Corinthians 15. As Adam was the forerunner of the human race who brought death into the world (15:21-22), Christ is the forerunner of all those who will be raised in him (15:21-22). Christ is the head of the new human community that will be transformed into his likeness (15:49).

Because the Corinthians were failing to distinguish themselves from the secular society, Paul is trying to create “an alternate community” (Tucker 2010, 2). He tries to do this by showing that they belong to Christ and this implies that they belong to the Christ community (1 Cor 3:23) (cf. Tucker 2010, 160). Paul would go onto draw the full implications of this in introducing the body metaphor and arguing that they are all parts of the same body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12).

### **Social Identification Theory (SIT)<sup>267</sup>**

One way of changing people’s behavior is to give them a group to belong to and ask them to conform their behavior to the norms of the group. This is part of the process of constructing group identity. Another part of the process can be the creation of a figurehead who is the leader of the group for others to follow. As we have already seen, in the new community of Christ, individuals bear the image of the man from heaven and consists of people who are citizens of heaven. Paul’s point is that the character of the representative head is shared with those they represent (Brown 2014, 216–17) and helps create a social identity for the group. Social identity is formed by belonging to a group and is a psychological state that is distinct from being a unique individual (Lim 2017, 31).<sup>268</sup> SIT is “that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group/s together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership” (Tajfel 1978, 63). SIT claims that social identity is a person’s feeling of who they are based on the group to which they belong to. This gives them a “sense of belonging” to the social world. So, each group will create a “binary opposition”: an “in-group and out-group,” an “us and them.” SIT has three parts<sup>269</sup> (Tajfel and Turner 1979, 33–47; Tajfel and Turner 1986, 7–24; Lim 2017, 32–34) which I apply to 1 Corinthians below.<sup>270</sup>

#### 1. Social categorization: “[P]eople are placed into various categories...

When people are categorized into groups they will begin to cultivate the

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<sup>267</sup> SIT has been applied by May (2004) for the analysis of 1 Corinthians 5-7 and also by Lim (2017) for 1 Corinthians as a whole.

<sup>268</sup> Esler (1994) pioneered the use of SIT in NT studies. For a survey of different approaches see Tucker (2010, 61–88).

<sup>269</sup> Other applications of SIT include McNeel (2014). Drawing from Cognitive metaphor theory and SIT, McNeel focuses on the use of infant and nursing mother metaphors in 1 Thess 2:5-8. Canavan (2011, 61) also uses SIT, but since she applies visual imagery in social identification, she calls her modified approach as “visual construction of identity.”

<sup>270</sup> Lim (2017, 31) justifies the use of SIT to analyze Pauline texts as

1. Paul was dealing with shift from Roman civic identity to one that was in Christ
2. Paul was dealing with group related issues

same interests, ideas and behaviors...” (Lim 2017, 32–34). Paul places people into two groups: those who bear the image of the man of dust and those who bear the image of the man from heaven, that is, those who are in Christ (1 Cor 15:48-49) and by implication those who are not. Those belonging to the former category will be resurrected. The fact that Paul tells his readers that bad company ruins good morals, and by implication he urges them to refrain from keeping bad company (15:33) also strengthens this point. Paul tells them to behave in certain ways and to avoid social interaction with the other group as it corrupts good morals (15:33-34, 58).

Careful examination of 1 Corinthians 15 reveals various bases for social categorization, and different ways to group people. For example, those who have *seen* Christ and those who have not seen Christ; the “I,” and “they” (v. 10). But the “in Christ” category seems to have overarching implications for this life and the next; and this is the categorization most important for Paul as he seems to have signaled this categorization right from the beginning of the letter. In 1:18 Paul suggests that there are two kinds of people: those who are being saved and those who are perishing.<sup>271</sup> The differentiator is Christ and how people view the message about the cross. He continues his contrast in 1:20-21 by referring to “this age” and “the world.” Those of this age are persuaded by the words of human wisdom, but those who believe in Christ are persuaded by the proclamation “with a demonstration of the Spirit and of power” according to 1 Cor 2:4 (this was Betz’s point which I discussed in chapter 1). In 2:10-14 Paul marks people as “spiritual” who understand the things of God and others as “unspiritual” who cannot understand the things of God (v. 14). In 1 Cor 5:1 Paul talks about ingroup and outgroup, believers, and pagans. The behavior of the Corinthians is worse than that of pagans, who form the outgroup. In 6:1 Paul names the groups as the unrighteous (τῶν ἀδίκων) and the saints (τῶν ἁγίων). He addresses the letter to the saints (ἁγίοις, 1:2); now his question is why are they going outside the community of the saints to solve internal problems? Why are they going to those who are in the outgroup, τῶν ἀδίκων.

In 1 Cor 8:5-6 Paul identifies a core differentiator based on the notion of “one God.” This is a core differentiating factor that helps Paul to categorize believers by their belief

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<sup>271</sup> Trebilco (2017, 215–19) notes how the terms Paul uses to indicate the outsiders, οἱ ἀπολλυμένοι, οἱ ἄδικοι, οἱ ἄπιστοι, οἱ ἔξω and ἰδιῶται are meant to make the difference between the communities sharp.

in the monotheistic God of the Jewish tradition. In polytheistic pagan Corinth, the Christ community with its core monotheistic beliefs would have stood out. He continues this kind of discussion in chapter 10, where to stop the Corinthians from partaking in pagan temple worship, Paul shows how *they* sacrifice to demons and not to God, but that in the Lord's Supper they partake in the cup of the Lord (1 Cor 10:20-22).

Thus, we see that Paul starts the categorization right at the beginning of the letter and carries it right throughout. This categorization finds its culmination in the "in Christ" category which will be resurrected and of whose importance will be beyond this world in chapter 15.

One important way of understanding categorization is to see the markers used by Paul (Trebilco 2017, 12). Early in the letter Paul calls the Corinthians οἱ ἅγιοι. This is significant as it highlights something the Corinthians failed to do and which probably caused most of the issues Paul addresses in the letter: to be set apart or be consecrated for God (Trebilco 2012, 133). What proceeds in the letter from further on, is Paul's rhetoric to persuade the Corinthians to be saints, to be set apart, to show the difference in all aspects of their corporate and individual life as members of the in group.

2. Social identification: Members identify with groups to which they belong and establish the ethos, roles, values, and statuses that help form boundaries for the group. Social identification is concerned about how individuals separate themselves from different groups by creating ingroups (us) and outgroups (them). As Canavan (2012, 41) remarks, "identity is about how we belong, and who is included and who is excluded how we describe ourselves and how we are described by others."

Once Paul established the groups at the beginning of his letter (as we saw above), the rest of the letter focuses on directing believers to behave properly within the ingroup as the following short survey shows.

As Tucker (2010, 131f) claims, "God's calling is the foundation of a salient 'in Christ' social identity." Paul's first description of the church is that it is "called to be holy" (1 Cor 1:2) and called into the fellowship of God's son (1:9). In 1 Cor 3:3 Paul claims the Corinthian believers are "still of the flesh" because their behavior is not appropriate for those who are in Christ. In 5:1, Paul notes how the ingroup Corinthian

believers are worse than the outgroup Corinthian civil society. In 5:6-8 Paul again notes the need to maintain the purity of the community.

Paul also reminds the Corinthian believers that they belong to the same family by addressing them as brothers (already discussed in the previous chapter). Paul's intention perhaps was to dissuade the factions amongst them.

We already have seen how Paul seeks to dissuade them by shaming them to not go to civic courts (6:1-8) and instructing them to avoid temple dinners (Ch 10) while encouraging them to fellowship peacefully in the Lord's Supper (Ch 11). He replaces common aspects of the Corinthian civic life with those of the Christ community.

Two of the notable rituals<sup>272</sup> of the Christian community are baptism<sup>273</sup> and Eucharist, both of which are discussed in 1 Corinthians. It is also noteworthy that the Corinthian community was using them both in an inappropriate manner. As Tucker (2010, 163) contends, the Corinthians were creating an identity based on who baptized them rather than an identity based on the undivided Christ in whose name they were being baptized. In the Lord's Supper too, the old worldly identity was used as opposed to the in Christ identity. The *rich* were not waiting for the *poor* (11:17-22); in this way, they were still holding to the social classes and basing their identity on them even within the Christian community. Paul advises them to base their identity in Christ to be a community that proclaims the Lord's death by their actions (11:26) (Wolter 2015, 105,109). The Corinthians are asked to stop sinning (1 Cor 15:34), to be steadfast, immovable, and always abounding in the work of the Lord (15:58). Paul highlights the difference that those who are *in Christ* will be raised (15:23,51-54).

Paul not only promotes unique behavior, but he also promotes unique beliefs about the resurrection (Ch 15) to the Corinthians as the way to differentiate themselves from others.

Yet another way to categorize groups involves the concept of clothing. Canavan (2012, 33) argues that Paul drew on images available to the community in Colossae in their daily life and used it in the formation of social identity.<sup>274</sup> Hence, identity is formed by what each group is wearing and (as I argue) whose image they are bearing. The "in Christ" group will wear (ἐνδύω) what is imperishable according to 1 Cor 15:53. Their

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<sup>272</sup> See the discussion of both of these rituals in Meeks (2003, 150–61).

<sup>273</sup> See Tucker (2010, 162) for the role of baptism in forming identity.

<sup>274</sup> The presence of studies which employ "visual imagery" to construct social identity has been noted by Lim (2017, 41)

bodies will be different as they will be imperishable, glorious, filled with power, heavenly in origin and spiritual in nature (1 Cor 15:42-44). And once the imperishable body is worn then they will bear the image of the man of heaven (1 Cor 15:47-49). Since the body has an eternal value as the base from which the imperishable body will be given birth, they must presently live holy lives; not only as worthy of the imperishable body they are going to inherit, but also as worthy of the community. It is very important to note that Paul does not talk of this as an individual experience as though the body is transformed as soon each individual believer dies, but rather as a corporate experience, something that happens to all at the parousia, that forges a corporate identity for the group. The Corinthians are urged to live as a community of individuals worthy to be transformed into a community of the resurrected.

Canavan (2012, 123) contends that the portraits and carvings representing the emperors gave them a presence throughout the Roman Empire. Paul insists to his converts that they bear (ἐφορέσαμεν 1Co 15:49) the image of the man of heaven since the followers of Christ will be his representation throughout the new empire. They are his victory stelae.<sup>275</sup> Thus while they are in this life, they are to be the image of the son of God, thereby representing his presence (Rom 8:29). Paul asks the believers to imitate Christ so whilst on earth they resemble Christ in character. Nowhere is this clearer than in 2 Cor 3:18 (cf. 1 Cor 11:1; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 2:5; 1 Thess 1:6) where he claims that the believers are being transformed into the image of Christ. The word image in 2 Cor 3:18 refers back to the image implied when we are beholding the “glory of the Lord” (Lambrecht 1999, 56). Lambrecht (1999, 56) thinks that the image might refer both to “Christ as image of God, and the Christ-image seen by the Christians as in a mirror.” For this reason, it is in line with Pauline thought to argue that the members of the Christ community are already image bearers with respect to his character. Once resurrected they will become like the resurrected Christ in their body as well (15:49). Paul marks the Christ community as image bearers of Christ in this double sense. In this way Christ will truly be the first fruit and the firstborn of the resurrected community.

Paul states that so far Christ’s followers have been bearing the image of the man of dust, but once resurrected they will bear the image of the man of heaven (1 Cor 15:47-49). Brown (2014, 218–19) claims that the word image, εἰκών, in a Greco-Roman context would mean a portrait or statue of virtuous men with inscriptions that honored them.

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<sup>275</sup> Curtis (1984) maintains that the HB concept of man being created in the image of God is to be understood against its near eastern background and demonstrates that man is God’s victory stelae.

The portrait or statue was created for the public to encourage them to follow their examples. Brown argues that when Paul says Christ's followers will bear the image of the man from heaven (vv. 48-49), it is a call to change the Corinthian's behavior. Though this call is implicit here, Brown's reading is justified since throughout the letter Paul calls on the Corinthians to change their behavior in various ways, as we have seen. Elsewhere Paul sees Christ as the savior from heaven (1 Thess 1:10; 4:16), and sees the believers as citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20). This gives them a corporate identity. The resurrected community will be filled with citizens of heaven who are transformed into the image of the man from heaven. Since believers will be part of the resurrected community bearing the image of the man from heaven, they must now live worthy of that man and of that community.

O'Reilly (2016) has reiterated this point by arguing that since the Corinthians will have a resurrected body they will belong to a new community, and thus they need to live lives worthy of that body. This argument makes sense, as even when Paul was persuading them to give up the habit of going to prostitutes, he was referring to the resurrected body (1 Cor 6:13,14,15, 20).

This is significant for CR in 1 Corinthians. Since Christian identity is that of image bearers of Christ, they are to change their behavior in line with Christ's. Paul's methodology for persuasion is his CR, using Christ as his major topos is also justified, as they are his image, Paul can always ask them to change their lives in relation to Christ.

3. Social Comparison: Distinguishing "us" also involves distinguishing "them" (Lim 2017, 32-34). As Hogg (2007, 56) observes, "[G]roups exist by virtue of there being outgroups. For a collection of people to be a group there must, logically, be other people who are not in the group.... a social category acquires its meaning by contrast with other categories." Boundaries are created by groups to demarcate their identity against the identities of outsiders. The difference between "us" and "them" is stressed to create an exclusive group self-identity.

The terms that Paul uses to characterize the outgroup are marked as "outsider designations" (Trebilco 2017). We find that Paul's terms for outsiders are "high boundary" markers which "strongly exclude" them by presenting rather a negative picture of the outgroup (Trebilco 2017, 26). He is not indifferent to outsiders since their

conversion to Christ faith was at the core of his apostolic mission. Describing outsiders as ἄδικοι, he characterizes them as: “Fornicators, idolaters, adulterers, male prostitutes, sodomites, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, revilers, robbers” and declares that “none of these will inherit the kingdom of God” (6:9).

The label ἀπολλυμένοι (1:18) is a significant boundary marker, the implications of which can be seen in 1 Corinthians 15. The same word is used in 15:18 to show that if Christ has not been raised there will not be a difference between the outside group, who are designated as ἀπολλυμένοι and the inside-group who are κοιμηθέντες ἐν Χριστῷ. The “in Christ” designation, which is the real boundary marker as I have argued, is of no value, if Christ has not been raised by God. In short if Christ has not been raised there is no difference between the ingroup and outgroups.

In contrast to the οἱ ἀπολλύμενοι the resurrection gives belief, hope and identity. If the outgroup is designated as οἱ ἀπολλύμενοι, the ingroup is designated as those who will be resurrected and will put on ἀφθαρσία (15:53). This is a core identity maker.

A comparison of the terms used in Romans and 1 Corinthians for outsider reveals significant insights (Trebilco 2017, 209f). The ones that are unique to 1 Corinthians are ἀπολλύμενοι (1:18), ἄδικοι (6:1, 9), ἄπιστοι (6:6; 7:12, 13, 14, 15; 10:27; 14:22, 23, 24), εἰδωλολάτραι, ἔξω (5:12, 13) and ἰδιῶται (14:16, 23, 24). These are high boundary markers. Even when dealing with the same issues such as idolatry (1 Cor 5:10, 11; 6:9; 10:7; Rom 1:21-28; 2:22), Paul uses the label εἰδωλολάτραι only in 1 Corinthians. This is because the community at Corinth had lost its identity, uniqueness, and separateness (Trebilco 2017, 211). So, Paul’s rhetoric to persuade the Corinthians to be different to the world in behavior and belief was to create a unique group with clearly defined boundaries, using high boundary markers.

In 1 Corinthians, as we saw earlier the outgroup does not believe in the gospel of Christ’s resurrection and thus is doomed. In 6:1 Paul says that “we” will judge them, making the ingroup very powerful in relation to the outgroup. The idea of judging the outgroup would certainly have made it very favorable from the point of view of the Corinthian Christ community to be in the community and would have added to their power dimension and even self-worth. Paul makes a comparison along similar lines in 11:31-32, where he seeks to protect the community from future embarrassment on the judgement day.

Paul clearly shows the boundaries of the ingroup and the outgroup based on Christ. The groups markers are not only for this life, but also for the next. By applying the SIT,

we have analyzed how he promotes the “in Christ” identity as the core differentiator between the Christ community and the secular community.

### Concluding Section 1 Cor 15:29-34

In the concluding section, 1 Cor 15:29-34,<sup>276</sup> Paul introduces two instances of mediate rhetoric by asking two questions about baptism and two about Paul’s mission work and hardships (Oropeza 2017, sec. 15:29-34). I maintain that these two items are also part of the ‘in vain’ list of Paul, as he had already mentioned that if Christ is not risen, the Corinthians’ faith is futile, and preaching is futile (v. 17). Now he argues that baptism will also be in vain and as well as his mission work.

#### Mediate Rhetoric no 1: Baptism of the Dead

After the discussion about Christ’s rule, Paul talks about the baptism of the dead in 1 Cor 15:29 as another argument for the resurrection of the dead. What possible connection can exist between the resurrection of the dead and the baptism that Paul is talking about here? This constitutes an example of mediate rhetoric as I will show and functions as the consequence discourse. In the section that follows I will show how the mediate argument works by demonstrating how Christians identify themselves with Christ in baptism.

In my view this is yet another way of asking the same question that Paul had already asked in 1 Cor 15:13, 14 and 16: “if the dead are not raised” what is the consequence? He continues the idea of κενός and μάταιος. First, he asserts that his own preaching is futile (v. 14b) and Corinthian believers’ faith is futile (v. 14c) now he says baptism will also be futile. I see the same parallel structures in 15:13, 14, 16, 17, and 29.

13 εἰ δὲ ἀνάστασις νεκρῶν οὐκ ἔστιν, a<sup>1</sup>

οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται· b<sup>1</sup>

14 εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται, b<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>276</sup> Collins (2006, 558) demonstrates that this is a “carefully crafted rhetorical unit” as it has diatribe, questions, a climax (1 Cor 15: 30-31) and contrast (v. 33), popular quotations and metaphor vv. 32, 34). Malherbe (1968, 80–82) points out that 1 Cor 15: 29–34 contains rhetorical questions (1 Cor 15:29–30, 32), strong imperatival verbal forms (1 Cor 15: 33, 34), the hortatory subjunctive (1 Cor 15:32), an oath (1 Cor 15:31), hardships of the wise man (1 Cor 15:30–32), a proverbial quotation from Menander (1 Cor 15:33), and ad hominem arguments.

κενὸν ἄρα °[καὶ] τὸ κήρυγμα ἡμῶν,	c <sup>1</sup>
κενὴ καὶ ἡ πίστις ἱμῶν·	c <sup>2</sup>
16 εἰ γὰρ νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται,	a <sup>2</sup>
οὐδὲ Χριστὸς ἐγήγερται·	b <sup>3</sup>
17 εἰ δὲ Χριστὸς οὐκ ἐγήγερται,	b <sup>4</sup>
ματαίᾳ ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν <sup>†</sup> ,	c <sup>3</sup>
ἔτι ἐστὲ ἐν ταῖς ἁμαρτίαις ὑμῶν,	d <sup>1</sup>
29 Ἐπεὶ τί ποιήσουσιν οἱ βαπτιζόμενοι ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν;	c <sup>4</sup>
εἰ ὅλως νεκροὶ οὐκ ἐγείρονται,	a <sup>3</sup>
τί καὶ βαπτίζονται ὑπὲρ ἑαυτῶν;	c <sup>4</sup>

The different variations of “a” are all talking about the resurrection of the dead, the variations of “b” deal with the resurrection of Christ, and the variations of “c” introduce the various factors of futility. In the same way the preaching will be futile, and faith will be futile, and baptism will also be futile, if God has not raised Christ from the dead. One problem with this way of interpretation, which is also becoming obvious in the above analysis, is that while verses which indicate the futility of preaching and faith start with “a,” this verse about baptism starts with a “b” clause regarding the resurrection of the dead. However, it must be noted that vv. 12-13 clearly indicates that Christ was raised from the *dead* and in v. 16 Christ and the dead are closely associated. Therefore, when Paul starts v. 29 with a question referring to the dead, that clearly includes Christ.

1 Cor 15:29 is one of the most cryptic and debated verses of the NT (Thiselton 2000, 1240; Hull 2005, 1) and as a result it has provoked several quite different interpretations. It is beyond the scope of my thesis to look at all those views or even to attempt an interpretation of 15:29, which in itself would be a dissertation in itself. However, by reading 15:29 as a reference to ordinary baptism, I argue that it is connected to CR.

Whatever the interpretation one accepts, the followings things are clear:

1. Since Paul brings the argument of the baptism also as part of his major rhetoric in persuading the Corinthians to believe in the resurrection of the dead, the act of baptism must help in this cause; in other words, the very act of baptism implies that the dead are raised.
2. The two questions Paul asks are rhetorical questions. When Paul asks, “What will those people do,” he is not expecting an answer. He is simply wanting them to realize that baptism is pointless if the dead are not raised.
3. As explained before, Christ was included in the realm of the dead. Paul closely connects νεκρός and Χριστός as demonstrated above.

### 1 Cor 15:29 as Ordinary Baptism

It must be agreed that the majority view on 15:29 is that of proxy or vicarious baptism (Hull 2005, 10)<sup>277</sup> which suggests that the Corinthian believers were baptized usually for their dead family members. Ambrosiaster is credited with suggesting the vicarious baptism view (*Com. 1 Cor*) in the fourth century. However, this proxy baptism and those who practiced it, Marcionites and Cerentians, were considered as heretical according to Tertullian (*Marc. 5.10, Res. 48*) and Epiphanius (*Pan. 28.6*). Chrysostom (*Hom. 1 Cor 40.1*) refers to the Marcionites practicing this rite in the second century. Epiphanius (*Panarion, Refutation of All Heresies, 28.6*) refers to a similar practice among the Cerentians, and Philaster (*Heresies 49*) refers to the Montanists. The third Council of Carthage banned the practice of baptizing dead bodies in AD 397.

There is a significant number of modern scholars who argue that Paul is talking about normal baptism, though they differ in details as to the motive of those who underwent the baptism Paul is discussing.<sup>278</sup> The difficulty lies in interpreting, what according to Hull (2005, 29) is the “most disputed word in 15:29: ὑπὲρ.” Raeder (1955) translates ὑπὲρ as “with a view towards” or “for the purpose of” and argues that those who received the baptism did so to gain eternal life rather than with a genuine faith in Jesus Christ. She also cites Jeremias for suggesting this idea (Raeder 1955, 259). Jeremias (1956, 155) endorsed this view before it appeared in print and expanded on her views. Both argue that Paul denoted the Christian dead with an article and the general dead without an article (v. 29a τῶν νεκρῶν). Jeremias lists the following verses as referring to the non-Christian dead: vv. 12, 13, 15, 16, 20,21, 29 b, 32; and vv. 29a, 35, 42, 52 as

<sup>277</sup> See Hull (2005, 11 n14) for a list of commentators who hold this view.

<sup>278</sup> See Reaume (1995, 462-63) for alternatives to the ordinary Christian baptism view.

denoting the Christian dead (Jeremias 1956, 155).<sup>279</sup> Both of them also argue that the purpose of the baptism is to be united with the dead. Raeder and Jeremias are followed by Howard (1965) in taking 1:29 as ordinary baptism.

Reaume (1995, 475) argues that 15:29 talks about the new believers who are baptized because of the “influence” and “testimony” of the dead Christians.

White (1997, 494) interestingly reads 15:29 in the light of v.32. He argues that the Corinthians were converted and baptized because of the effort and hardships faced by the apostles, especially by Paul and Apollos. His interpretation is based on Murphy O'Connor's (1981, 53-4) ideas of reading 15:29 in light of Paul's sufferings that is mentioned in vv. 30-32. White (1997, 494) considers Paul to be the dead. “If ‘truly dead’ persons are not raised, what sense does it make for the Corinthians to be baptized on account of those who are ‘dying all the time,’ namely, the apostles?”(White 1997, 498). This line of interpretation is not completely impossible. Paul uses the third person plural in an exclusive sense in vv. 29 as he had done in v. 11. If v. 29 is about those who receive baptism, vv. 30-32 is about those who administer baptism. So, it may refer to all the apostles and all those who proclaim the gospel message, who face hardships. Though Paul claims that he was not sent to baptize people (1:16), baptism was part of the mission work, and he did indeed baptize some of his Corinthian converts (1 Cor 1:14, 16). If we read 15:29 in the light of vv. 30-32 then we can conclude that in v. 29 Paul is talking about the baptism that is being administered by those who put themselves in danger every hour (v. 30).

Hull (2005, 230) along with White and Reaume takes the rare causal reading of ὑπὲρ and translates it as “on account of.” He argues that those who are baptized in v. 29 are baptismal candidates. Hull (2005, 29-30) also concludes that this refers to the common Christian baptism where “only the living receive baptism and only for their own sake.”

Garland (2003, 872-3) argues that the term ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν means the dead bodies of those who receive the baptism and as such reads it as a normal Christian baptism. He reads 15:29 in the light of Rom 8:10, where Paul claims that “body is dead because of sin.” Thus, the dead could mean either the “pre-baptismal state” or the “soon to be dead body.”

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<sup>279</sup> While this is not impossible it must be noted that Paul does not discuss the fate of the non-Christian dead in 1 Corinthians. Also, Jeremias argues that “v. 29 is speaking of pagans who take baptism upon themselves ὑπὲρ τῶν νεκρῶν with the purpose of becoming united with their deceased Christian relatives at the resurrection.” However, if that is true Paul would be guilty of endorsing that practice as he is using it as an argument to prove that the dead are raised.

My own argument against proxy baptism comes from Paul's line of argumentation, something that my thesis is interested in. Paul uses this positively in his argument. As shown above it is structurally similar to vv. 13-14 and 16-17. Whatever the meaning of that baptism is, it helps Paul to build his case for the resurrection of the dead. If it were a proxy baptism, a practice which is not found elsewhere in the NT, a practice which was eventually condemned as heretical, would Paul have used it in his arguments?

If it was a vicarious baptism, then it certainly would have become one of the issues that Paul would address in the letter, not something that he would use in his arguments. Because if it were proxy baptism, and if Paul used it in his argument to make the Corinthians believe in the resurrection of the dead, then it would mean that he was endorsing proxy baptism. It is unthinkable that Paul was aware of such a (mal)practice, used it in his arguments and then left it unaddressed in his letters, especially if it were something that was practiced among the Corinthians.

As Schnabel (2014, 943) (who also takes an ordinary baptism view), points out, if Paul endorsed proxy baptism, he would contradict what he wrote about baptism in 1:14-17; 6:9-10; 10:1-22, especially 6:9-10, where Paul mentions baptism in the context of sanctification. And as Schnabel quite rightly notes, Paul's idea of salvation is more individualistic than modern scholars would care to admit. For Paul there is no forgiveness of sins without individual faith in Jesus Christ. For this reason, he would not conceive of a proxy baptism since it would not allow for the intended beneficiary's faith in Christ.

If we understand 15:29 as referring to normal Christian baptism, then it makes sense for Paul to use it in his argument. As Hull (2005, 236) remarks, "[B]aptism is incorporation into Christ in this life, an incorporation that follows into the next life." In this line of argument, where the living receive baptism for themselves, baptism becomes a symbol for the resurrection since baptism is a way of identifying with the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; Col 2:12). If the dead are not raised at all, then why are people baptized on their behalf? Because if Christ has not been raised baptism will not make any sense. If the Lord's Supper proclaimed the Lord's death till he comes, baptism proclaims the Lord's death and resurrection. Paul attaches "theological and ethical" meaning to baptism (cf. Winter 2001, 104).

Paul tells us very little about the theology of baptism in 1 Corinthians. In Romans 6, however, Paul offers a nuanced explication of baptism presumably similar to what he

would have taught the Corinthians.<sup>280</sup> Paul views baptism<sup>281</sup> as an identification with Christ's death and resurrection according to Rom 6:1-4.<sup>282</sup> Paul argues that the believer metaphorically partakes in the death of Christ in baptism (Rom 6:3), "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" Then he proceeds to show that they are united in Christ's resurrection through baptism: "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his" (Rom 6:5).<sup>283</sup> Since Paul views baptism as a symbolic way of identifying with the death and resurrection of Christ, to deny the resurrection of the dead, which as Paul has demonstrated in 1 Cor 15:12-19, amounts to denying the resurrection of Christ, making baptism pointless. For Paul baptism is not only confession of the Lordship of Christ, but it is also a symbolic participation in the death and resurrection of Christ. Since in baptism the new convert confesses Jesus as Lord and begins his life with him symbolically (cf. Schnabel 2014, 944), if Christ is not risen, baptism would have not meaning. There could be no union with a messiah who is not risen from the dead. If the act of immersion symbolized the believer's participation in Christ's death, the coming out of the immersion meant participation in the resurrection of Christ (Rom 6:1-5, esp. v. 4). Hence if Christ had not been raised, it would mean that the act of coming out of immersion does not have any theological significance.

This reading is also confirmed by the fact that in Romans 6, Paul brings out the argument in the context of not sinning anymore, which forms the context of 1 Corinthians 15 and especially the immediate context of 15:34.

Thus, we may conclude that the reference to the baptism of the dead is also part of Paul's CR as it appeals to the salvific events in Christ's life.

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<sup>280</sup> It is of interest to note that Betz (1995, 104–7) argues that Paul developed his theology of baptism from the situation at Corinth. Many undeveloped themes in 1 Corinthians, including baptism, are developed into a fully expressed theology in Romans.

<sup>281</sup> The word baptize is not used in a metaphoric sense but means water baptism by immersion. As Moo (2018, 384) demonstrates it had become a technical term for the Christian practice of water baptism.

<sup>282</sup> Tannehill (1966, 15-6) reads Romans 6 in the light of two dominions under two lords. When they are under the dominion of sin, they are slaves to it; and when they are delivered, they change their master to God, to whom they are now slaves. Romans 6 talks about the transfer from one dominion to the other, a "realm transfer" in the words of Moo (2018, 379).

<sup>283</sup> Some scholars point to the futurity of this verse to argue that the resurrection of the believer happens in the future (cf. Dunn 1988, 330). However, Paul exhorts the believers to walk in the newness of life in the present. For Paul's comparison to work properly the believer must have participated in the resurrection of Christ in the past also.

## Mediate Rhetoric no 2: The Proof of Mission (1 Cor 15:30-32)

In 1 Cor 15:30-32 Paul talks about his own hardships. I argue that this is yet another instance of mediate rhetoric where Paul talks about something else to prove the resurrection of the dead. A question can be asked, what do his own hardships have to do with the resurrection of the dead?

In 1 Cor 15:30-32 Paul's CR works by bringing his own experience, the hardships he suffered and still suffers as an apostle of Christ, who proclaims the gospel to others (cf. 4:11-13) (Hays 1997, 268). In v. 30 Paul is simply recounting his experience that he related in 15:8-10. Winter<sup>284</sup> (2001, 97) contrasts this section with 15:1-11 and avers that Paul tried to show "how costly it was to bring the gospel to the Corinthians."

Paul claims that he dies every day. For example, he fought the "wild beasts" (ἐθηριομάχῃσα) in Ephesus hoping that even if he died, he would be resurrected. If there is no resurrection of the dead, then there is no point in suffering to the point of dying for the gospel of Christ. The gospel is the attempt to proclaim the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Paul talks about all things being subjected to Christ (15:27-28). This argument is further supported by the fact that in v. 31 Paul uses the full title of Jesus, Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν, when referring to the Corinthians. Paul suffers hardships to proclaim that Jesus is Lord, something that was attributed to Jesus through the resurrection (Phil 2:5-11; Rom 1:3-4).

Paul who identified himself as the apostle of Christ, whose calling was to preach the gospel according to 1 Cor 1:17, risked his life every day. That only makes sense if there were a resurrection of the dead. If not for the hope of resurrection, Paul too could have eaten and drunk and lived a life with hedonistic values (v. 32).

Paul already referred to Corinthians as his pride, but if there were no resurrection then Paul would not have come to Corinth in the first place as there would have been no gospel to proclaim. In 1 Cor 15:3-5 Paul reminded his audience that the core of his gospel concerned Christ's resurrection. Hence, if Christ had not been raised then the whole existence of the Corinthian Christ community would have been called into question.

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<sup>284</sup> Winter (2001, 102), along with Malherbe (1968, 74), interprets wild beasts at Ephesus as strong passions. Winter provides evidence from Dio Chrysostom (*Or. 5.16*) to support this claim. However, even if passions are referred to as wild beasts in other places, the context does not suit this interpretation very well. Paul claims that he dies daily. Winter thinks that this is metaphorical and refers to dying to passions daily. Paul claims that he is putting himself in danger. This does not seem to fit very well with the notion that he is simply fighting with his own passions daily. Also, Paul would have had to fight such passions everywhere not only in Ephesus.

If the dead are not raised, then Paul gains nothing by being a missionary and constantly putting himself in danger. This has a twofold application. Paul risks his life because he knows that even if he were to die in his work for Christ, he would be resurrected in Christ. And because there is a resurrection of the dead, which is the entry point into the next life, Paul wants to help the pagans get there and not just eat and drink and live for today. If the gospel was only about this life, it would not be worth Paul risking his life.

Malcolm, taking the Jewish motif of reversal, claims that the choice for the Corinthians involved whether they would take the side of the rulers of this age, who killed the Lord of glory, or whether they would join with those who die every day for Christ. If they take the side of those who die every day, they will be raised to life in Christ. But if they take the side of the rulers of this age, who were responsible for Christ's crucifixion (1 Cor 2:6-8) and prefer to be with them rather than be part of the Christ community, then they would forfeit the benefits of being in Christ. The fate of the now powerful rulers, will be reversed (Malcolm 2013, 38,233f).

#### Conclusion: Ethical Advice (1 Cor 15:33-34)

After this whole journey through narratives, mediate rhetorical arguments, and many appeals through communal rhetoric and apocalyptic rhetoric, Paul finally makes his point about his theory of the centrality of the resurrection, when he gives ethical advice.

The words, Φθείρουσιν ἥθη χρηστὰ ὀμύλια κακαί in 1 Cor 15:33, are generally accepted to be a quotation from Menander's *Thais* (*Thais* frag. 187[218]; cf. Plutarch *Lib.* ed. 12D; Philo, *Det.* 38). Winter (2001, 100) demonstrates that Menander is actually talking about a high class prostitute and how "she loves none, but ever makes pretense." In addition to the context of *Thais*, Winter reminds us that ὀμύλια "belongs to the semantic field of sexuality" (LSJ, ὀμύλια).<sup>285</sup> Arguing on these lines Winter sees the reference to eating and drinking in v. 32b as referring to the kind of dinner parties which were followed by sexual orgies. Hence when Paul says stop sinning, he could be having a particular sin in mind, namely, fornication. This is not unlikely as this was a notorious issue which Paul already addressed in 1 Corinthians 5 and 6. It is also noteworthy, as already discussed, that when talking about fornication Paul referred to the resurrection of the body briefly in 6:14. The Corinthians probably believed that whatever they did in

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<sup>285</sup> Though Lattke (1990) commenting on the NT usage suggests that "ὀμύλια can be a substitute for κοινωνία."

this body would not affect their afterlife, if they even believed in an afterlife. This is possibly the reason why Paul argues that the resurrection is physical.

Some of the Corinthians kept on sinning because they were having a drunken stupor. The word “drunken” should be taken metaphorically, though Paul Brown (2014, 172) sees a possible reference to 1 Cor 11:21, which speaks of being drunk at the Lord’s table.

Paul’s conclusion, that some have no knowledge of God,<sup>286</sup> shows that to conclude that there is no resurrection of the dead is to be ignorant (ἀγνωσίαν) of God. Fee (2014, 704) particularly connects this verse with 15:20-27, that they were ignorant of the God who will be all in all through the events set in motion by the resurrection of Christ. Because to deny the resurrection is to deny God’s power, the greatest act in history where God demonstrated his great power occurred with the unprecedented raising of God’s own son as the first fruits of the resurrection. Paul constantly and consistently uses the passive for ἐγείρω, making God the subject and Christ the object of ἐγείρω. Christ as the son of God is subject to the father (15:28), according to Paul. This is consistent with Paul’s theology that God may be all in all (15:28). It must be noted that while the appeal of CR is Christ centered Paul always goes back to God.

Paul shows the close connection between knowledge and moral behavior. It is the lack of knowledge of God that causes people to sin. For Paul knowledge of God should influence people’s behavior in a positive manner.

It is probable that the “some” (τινές) in v. 34 could be referring to the τινές in 15:12 (Thiselton 2000, 1256). In other words, those who have no knowledge of God are the ones who are denying the resurrection and are sinning and, in some way, causing others to sin. Paul argues that the refusal to believe in the resurrection of the dead is what has led the Corinthians to sin (Hays 1997, 267).

It also must be noted that 1 Corinthians 15:34 and 15:58 are connected, as in v. 34 Paul exhorts the Corinthians to wake up from their stupor, and v. 58 he asks them to be steadfast. Both are conclusions in the form of moral exhortations to the discussions about resurrection.

Again, Paul’s CR brings out the communal aspect by asking them to avoid bad company by renouncing sinful behavior which has its origins in wrong belief (that the dead will not be raised) which in turn was caused by an ignorance of God.

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<sup>286</sup> Thiselton (2000, 1256) thinks that the knowledge of God is the linchpin of Paul’s argument.

## Conclusion

I started the analysis by using Hays's model for narrative analysis. I argued that 1 Cor 15:23-28 is not a digression, but its importance lies in the fact that death is seen as the personal enemy of Christ. After that I took the topoi of CR from chapter 3 of this thesis and applied them to 15:23-28.

Using Empire criticism to analyze the topoi of the triumphant rule of Christ, I argued that Caesar was replaced by Christ; I showed how in nine different categories that the early church tried to replace the image of Caesar with Christ. Using SIT to analyze the topoi of the affiliation to the Christ community (affiliation to the resurrection community) I argued that Paul uses Christ to create the ingroup and outgroup and to build the Corinthian identity "in Christ." It makes sense for Paul to include this section about the future in which Christ would defeat his arch enemy, death. If the dead do not rise, it would mean that Christ has not destroyed his enemy and has failed in his mission. I also demonstrated that baptism of the dead works as a mediate rhetoric by showing that baptism is where the believer identifies himself with the death and resurrection of Christ. The hardships that Paul endures for the gospel of Christ only makes sense if Christ has been raised and consequentially if the dead in Christ are also to be raised. Paul concludes the whole discussion in this section to stop sinning by concluding the inclusio in v. 3.

## Chapter 6

### Conclusion

In this dissertation I have demonstrated that Paul uses a peculiarly Christian rhetoric called the Christ Rhetoric (CR). CR uses arguments based on Christ and has a set of unique Christ centered topoi which Paul uses as mediate rhetoric in the four discourses that make up the structure of CR.

We started our journey with classical rhetoric. While some major NT works use rhetoric in their analysis (including Thiselton's (2000) 1 Corinthians commentary), some scholars have objected to using rhetoric in studying Paul's letters based on factors such as Paul's lack of awareness regarding rhetoric, Paul's seemingly anti-rhetorical approach in 1 Corinthians 2-4, and the suitability of rhetoric as a method for analyzing letters in general. Counter arguments for each these arguments were discussed: Paul's awareness of rhetoric can reasonably be proved with some certainty; Paul may not be anti-rhetorical in his approach; and the boundary between letters and speech was very thin in antiquity. Those who take a synchronic approach agree to use rhetoric even if Paul was not aware of such a method or did not intentionally use it in his writings. We looked at an overview of this discussion in chapter 1.

Although not resistant to the use of classical rhetoric in their own works, many scholars have come to recognize a different kind of rhetoric being used in the writings of the NT. Different people have proposed different models as a replacement for classical rhetoric. Perhaps the most important one of them is given by Kennedy (1984), who presented a new categorization of rhetoric in Christian writings, namely, worldly and radical rhetoric. If a message is argued based on enthymemic reasoning, then Kennedy calls it worldly rhetoric; if it is simply proclaimed to be believed then Kennedy calls it radical rhetoric. His work is based on the work Grassi (1980) who spoke about "sacred language."

Another equally important contribution comes from Robbins (1996a; 1996b; 2009) who developed the idea of Sociorhetorical interpretation (SRI). SRI is based on the idea of looking at a text from different angles or textures as Robbins (1996a, 1996b) calls them. The five textures that he identifies are inner texture, intertexture, ideological texture, social cultural texture, and sacred texture. Each texture focuses on a particular aspect of the text. Robbins also examined the origins of Christian discourse and found

that early Christian written discourse was characterized by the use of six major rhetorical discourses or rhetorolects, as he came to call them, identifiable by their characteristic features such as their themes, topoi, and reasonings. The six rhetorolects were blended creating “new configurations of speech, belief, thought, and action” and a unique Christian discourse emerged. The six rhetorolects are: “wisdom, prophetic, apocalyptic, precreation, priestly, and miracle discourses” (Robbins 2009, xxviii).

I have done an SRI analysis on 1 Cor 15:1-34 in chapter 2 to demonstrate the Christ centered nature of Paul’s argumentation. I have not done an SRI commentary on 1 Cor 15:1-34; rather I have used SRI with a purpose; and as such I have given headings for each of the textures which shows the predominant analytic result that the texture yields. SRI concepts such as rhetography and rhetorolects, which are associated with inner texture, are used in other parts of the thesis as well.

Christ and the resurrection of Christ form the repetitive texture of 1 Cor 15:1-34. Based on the chiasmic structure of vv. 24-28, I have argued that v.26 is the key verse in that section. It helps in building the argument that this whole section is framed by the concept that death is the personal enemy of Christ. I have used this concept in chapter five in the Christ rhetorical analysis of vv. 23-29. I also have explored the evidence that 1 Cor 15:3-5 is part of a pre-Pauline tradition. An analysis of the narrational sub texture has shown Christ to be at the top of the power hierarchy.

Following in the path of those who propose new models without being averse to the use of classical rhetoric, I have also proposed a new methodology, CR which is Paul’s methodology for centering his theological argumentation and moral reasoning on Christ. His CR has its own set of topoi, its own form of reasoning and argumentation. I came to recognize the features of CR after analyzing 1 Corinthians. This methodology consistently deploys Christ in Paul’s argumentation and reasoning. His argumentation and reasoning are based on the life, words, salvific works, and the future reign of Christ etc. I defined the methodology in terms of the argumentative strategy, topoi, structure, and discourses.

Mediate rhetoric, based on the work of Fredal (2020), and narrative rhetoric were identified as a key part of Paul’s argumentative strategy. Mediate rhetoric is where the author resorts to one thing to prove something different. My main argument is that Paul used the resurrection of Christ as the mediate rhetoric in 1 Cor 15:1-34 to prove the resurrection of the dead.

I identified a set of Christ centered topoi which Paul uses frequently to persuade the Corinthians to change their behavior and/or their beliefs. These topoi are used in the

four discourses: statement discourse, foundation discourse, connection discourse and consequence discourse. The issue at hand is stated in the statement discourse. Foundation discourse lays the groundwork for Paul's argument by usually narrating something about Christ. Connection discourse shows the connection between the statement discourse and the foundation discourse and mediates the facts that the readers do not accept via facts that readers do accept. Consequence discourse shows the consequences of the mediate rhetoric laid out in the foundation discourse. The structure of the text can be defined in terms of the order of the discourses that are present in that section of the text.

After defining the CR as a methodology, I surveyed different parts of 1 Corinthians to show that CR is present. Though the survey was done before arriving at the definition of CR, the survey was moved after the definition for purposes of clarity.

In the next two chapters I applied CR to 1 Cor 15:1-34. Verses 1-11 (esp. vv. 3-8) serve as the foundation discourse on which Paul's whole argument is built. I demonstrated how Paul uses the *topoi* of apostolic tradition, authority of scripture, authenticity of experience, and affiliation to the Christ community to establish the resurrection of Christ. From vv. 12-19 the consequence discourse lays the negative consequences of Christ not being raised. In vv. 20-22 Paul shows the connection between the resurrection of Christ and the resurrection of the dead. By using the *topos* of the authority of scripture, Paul applies the image of first fruits to Christ; in a contrast he claims that Christ is the second Adam who brings life. Using the *topos* of the union with Christ, Paul states that those who are "in Christ" will be resurrected. The union that believers enjoy with Christ is one more argument that they too will be raised with Christ. It is inconceivable for Christ to be raised, but the members of his body not to be raised.

In analyzing vv. 24-28 I use three *topoi*, namely the rule of Christ, affiliation to the resurrection community and the authority of scriptures. In arguing the rule of Christ, I used empire criticism, and demonstrated how the early church tried to replace the image of Caesar with that of Christ. In the same way Caesar is portrayed as crushing the lady Britannia underfoot, Christ is portrayed as crushing his enemies underfoot. In the same way imperial propaganda was communicated in victory arches, coins, inscriptions, statues etc. to imprint the image of Caesar, I argued that the church used the available tools like hymns, letters, traditions, and greetings.

I also demonstrated by using Hays's model that death is viewed as a personal enemy of Christ (this conclusion was also arrived at through the SRI analysis). For this

reason, the whole of vv. 23-28 is viewed not as a digression but as an integral part of Paul's argument. Since death is an enemy of Christ, if he had not conquered death, he would not have conquered all his enemies. The only thing that Christ has not subjected to himself is God. To argue that death is not subjugated by Christ is to put death and God on an equal footing. It would not only be a sin against Christ but would also constitute blasphemy to do so.

I used social identity theory (SIT) in the 'affiliation to the resurrection community' section. I showed how Paul categorized people as those who are going to perish and those who are in Christ. I argued that "in Christ" is the primary boundary marker and identity formation for the Christ community. One distinctive feature of those "in Christ" is that they will be part of the resurrection community who already (in some incomplete sense) bear the image of Christ and in the parousia will bear the (physical) image of the man from heaven.

In v. 29, I demonstrated that by taking an ordinary view of baptism that baptism identifies the believer with the death and resurrection of Christ and would be meaningless if Christ has not been raised. The labor Paul talks about in vv. 30-32 will also be meaningless if Christ has not been raised from the dead, because if Christ has not been raised from the dead, the dead will also not be raised. Therefore, Paul's argument is that if the gospel of Christ does not give any hope beyond the grave, then believers might just as well eat, drink and be merry (v. 32), rather than toil for the gospel.

At the end of his discussion in 1 Cor 15:1-34, Paul gives ethical advice to stop sinning. This is the effect of the fact that Christ has died for the Corinthian believers' sins (v. 3) and that he has risen, which has delivered them from their sins according to v. 17.

### **Evaluation and Future Work**

The quantum of work in any project is limited by the given time and space. This project is no exception. However, in terms of what I set out to do within the scope of the thesis, it is fair to say that I have achieved the initial objectives. The objective was not to write a commentary evaluating all possible views on each verse. In terms of the formal objectives set at the beginning, I have identified the methodology employed by Paul in his reasoning and argumentation in 1 Corinthians as CR, and successfully demonstrated its application in 1 Cor 15. The structure, topoi and argumentative strategies of CR have been identified and discussed. I have also applied the five textures of SRI to 1 Corinthians 15 with the purpose of showing the Christ centeredness of 1 Cor 15:1-34.

CR as Paul's methodology for his theological reasoning and argumentation and his moral reasoning, with its specific application to 1 Corinthians 15 is this thesis's major contribution to the body of knowledge concerning Paul's argumentative strategy within 1 Corinthians. In addition to the methodology the results that were yielded also make up part of the contribution made by this thesis, such as, (amongst others): viewing sin as done against Christ, seeing how the church replaced Caesar with Christ in its own domain, Christ crushing all rulers and authorities underfoot just like Caesar crushed lady Britannia in imperial iconography. The early church portrayed Christ as taking center stage in greetings, hymns, rituals and festivals, stories, and role models, in determining the day of worship and creating a Christ colony with a unique Christ based value system.

In addition to creating CR as an argumentative and reasoning methodology and applying it to the text, I have used a wide range of other models in the analysis of the text. Ranging from Greco-Roman rhetoric, to SIT, I have engaged with the work of others in my thesis.

I have shown the Christ centered nature of Paul's rhetoric in 1 Corinthians. It remains a future work to be explored whether CR and its attendant categories and topoi are used in other letters of Paul, or indeed in other early Christian writings, including those of the NT.

Christ remained the center of Paul's life. I have demonstrated that Christ also forms his argumentative strategy, at least in 1 Corinthians.

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