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EDITOR'S PREFACE

Enrico C. Eusebio, Jr., S.J. ("The First Four Hundred Years of Catechesis") traces the development of catechesis in Ancient Christianity. The early Christians gathered together for religious instruction, prayers, and "the breaking of the bread" (Acts 2:42). In their missionary journeys, Paul and the apostles proclaimed the life and teachings of Jesus Christ with the aim of converting Jews and Gentiles to be the Lord's disciples. During the Patristic period, a more organized religious instruction developed. The candidates (catechumens or "hearers") underwent 1) an initial scrutiny, followed by two or three years of formation in doctrine and morality under the tutelage of a *doctor audientium*, 2) a second scrutiny for admission to the *electi* or *competentes*, 3) pre-baptismal preparation during Lent consisting of *protocatechesis* by the bishop, *traditio*, and *redditio Symboli*, and, finally, 4) reception of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist during the Easter vigil. When Christianity became the official religion of Constantine's empire, the catechumenate declined due to various reasons: insincere conversions to Christianity, many opting to delay their baptism to avoid harsh penance for sins they committed, and an increase in the number of infant baptisms. The shortening of the period of the catechumenate resulted in it becoming less a school of Christian life and more a preparation for the rituals of the Sacraments of Initiation.

James McTavish, F.M.V.D. ("The Lion Roars: Opposing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide in the Spirit of Cardinal von Galen") recalls the heroic stance of Cardinal Clemens August von Galen, Bishop of Münster, against the Nazi regime's extermination of people they

considered genetically compromised, unproductive, or terminally ill. Von Galen's courageous speeches and writings denouncing the Nazi program of eugenics should inspire Christians today to confront the evil of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Indeed, some countries have already legalized these abominable practices, and some groups even promote them under the guise of compassion and freedom of choice. McTavish concludes his essay by inviting all to value their God-given life and be "ministers of life" like the Good Samaritan.

Marcos Louis D. Catalan, Jr., S.J. ("Human Sentient Intelligence in the Philosophy of Xavier Zubiri") writes an essay on Xavier Zubiri's concept of sentient intelligence (*inteligencia sentiente*). For Zubiri, what differentiates humans from animals is sentient intelligence. Its formation is tied to the genetic growth of nerve cells and increasing centralization of the nervous system—an organic process that makes up the faculty of sensibility. The production of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons causes a further structuring of the faculty of sensibility with intelligence which already exists in potency in the embryo. The result of this psycho-organic process is sentient intelligence, which is the capacity of the human person to apprehend things as realities. Zubiri, whose writings have wide currency with and influence on Spanish-speaking intellectuals, has endeavored to reformulate classical metaphysics (rational psychology) in a language that is consistent with science in his time. Thanks to Catalan's essay, our readers can have some glimpse of Zubiri's originality.

Renato R. Repole, S.J. ("Eschatology and Ethics in Paul's Letter to the Galatians") discusses the problem of the Galatians sliding back into slavery under the law, i.e., requiring Gentile converts to submit to the requirements of the Torah such as circumcision. Paul addresses this issue by motivating the churches he founded in Galatia to live righteously and to work "for the good of all" (Gal. 6:10). He inspires them to live moral lives by reminding them of important eschatological realities such as the freedom which Christ has won for believers (Gal. 2:4; 5:1, 13), the presence and power of the Spirit they have received "by the hearing of faith" (Gal. 3:2), the justice which God metes out to

those who "live in the flesh" (Gal. 6:12), the eternal life they will reap "at harvest time" (Gal. 6:8–9), and the "new creation" (καινὴ κτίσις) which has made the issue of circumcision or uncircumcision mute (Gal. 6:15; cf. 2 Cor. 5:17). Such an issue which divided the churches of Galatia and for which Paul wrote the letter no longer matters, "for in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything; the only thing that counts is faith working through love" (Gal. 5:6).

Renato Taib Oliveros ("A Catholic-Muslim Mariology") presents various points of similarities between Muslim and Catholic veneration of Mary, e.g., both regard her as pure, i.e., sinless and undefiled (*immaculata*); both depict her life to be fully devoted to the service of God; both regard the conception of her child Jesus to be miraculous, caused not by human agency but by the Spirit sent by God; both honor her above all women because she is the mother of the Messiah. Thus, there is a common ground on which to build a Catholic-Muslim Mariology. However, Oliveros points out the crucial difference between the two. Catholics go further than Muslims in linking the veneration of Mary to their faith in Jesus Christ as Son of God. Mary is not only the mother of the Messiah but also the mother of God (Θεοτόκος). ❧

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

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THE FIRST FOUR HUNDRED YEARS OF CATECHESIS

Enrico C. Eusebio, Jr., S.J.

The Church's long catechetical history has been an evangelizing history of bringing the Word of God into the hearts of people, their culture, and their history. As such, the catechetical formation of the Christian people in every age and situation has always had its own character, style, and stress. Despite changes in pastoral approaches across the ebb and flow of time, the Church has always striven nevertheless to be faithful in proclaiming the Gospel message, handing it on, and forming Christians in it. Catechesis has always occupied a pride of place throughout the history of the Church in this endeavor.

Sources of Catechetical Legislation

From its very beginnings, the Church has developed institutions and laws—especially regarding organization, liturgy, and moral life—that regulated the life of the community. During the first centuries, these norms were found in sources like the *Apostolic Tradition*, the *Didaché*, the *Didascalia Apostolorum*, the *Apostolic Constitutions*, etc. However, one obviously cannot claim the existence of a precise juridical science at

that early point in time.[1] Such a development culminated only later, around the mid-twelfth century, with the *Concordia discordantium canonum*[2] in which Gratian organized norms that existed during the early period of the Church down to his day.

With the peace of Constantine and the granting of religious freedom to Christians beginning in the fourth century, legislations of councils and popes became sources of laws in response to new situations and new problems concerning doctrine, discipline, and organization, including catechesis. Bishops of the empire convened synods and councils and issued norms for their local Churches. Popes wrote decretals in response to concrete questions regarding matters of discipline and law.[3] Over the course of the fifth century, popes no longer limited themselves to the resolution of concrete difficulties but issued, on their own initiative, general norms for entire regions. This trend continued during the Middle Ages and down to the present day.[4]

After the conciliar canons and papal decretals, the texts of the Fathers and other Church writers occupy a third but important place. In addition to being considered as the most complete and reliable transmitters and interpreters of apostolic teaching, they also established

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[1]B. Ferme makes an insightful observation that

> è anche importante vedere che questo genere letterario delle collezioni canoniche era un modo di fare teologia. Le varie istituzioni, la disciplina liturgica e le norme etiche rispecchiano anche una teologia e un'ecclesiologia che vengono comprese anche attraverso le fonti stesse. (B. Ferme, *Introduzione alla storia delle fonti del diritto canonico. Il diritto antico fino al Decretum di Graziano* [Roma: Pontificia Università Lateranese, 1998], 41–42)

[2]Cf. E. Friedberg & E. Richter, *Corpus Iuris Canonici*, Pars prior: *Decretum Magistri Gratiani*, Editio Lipsiensis, reprint (Graz: Akademische Druck, 1959).

[3]Cf. Ferme, *Introduzione*, 43.

[4]Cf. C. Van de Wiel, *History of Canon Law* (Louvain: Peeters, 1992), 16.

liturgical and moral rules on the basis of apostolic teaching.[5] In this sense, their writings formed an authoritative source of canon law although not as constitutive or legislative sources. This means that although the Western Church has never granted the force of law even to positions held unanimously by the Fathers, they were a source of inspiration nonetheless for the legislators of the time, i.e., the bishops and the popes. They were important witnesses of the discipline and of the law in force, both universal and particular. Nevertheless, the writings of the Fathers were recognized in the East as having the force of law from the sixth century onwards.[6] The fact that Gratian utilized and included the writings of the Fathers in his *Decretum* attests to their unique value.[7]

Catechesis in the Apostolic Age

The first four hundred years of Christianity saw the beginnings of catechesis and its more formal organization in the catechumenate, which generally consisted of four phases: the missionary phase, the

[5]For the West, the four great Church fathers and doctors are Ambrose (†397), Jerome (†420), Augustine (†430), and Gregory the Great (†604). For the East, they are Athanasius (†373), Basil (†379), Gregory Nazianzen (†390), and John Chrysostom (†407). Cf. G. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," in J. Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica* (Leumann: Ed. Elle di Ci, 1986), 133–136.

[6]Cf. Van de Wiel, *History of Canon Law*, 21.

[7]The *Decretum Gratiani* (early 12th century), being a compilation made by private initiative, had no legal character. Each document included in it retained its own individual value. Van de Wiel writes:

> In spite of the renown and the great authority of the *Decretum Gratiani*, it remained a private collection with no universal force of law.… Nevertheless, some of the texts, even the *dicta*, acquired the force of universally applicable law.… The *Decretum* was publicly and generally taught in the schools, enriched with glosses, summaries and commentaries, and used by popes and tribunals in the drafting and application of laws. This universal and manifold use, however, did not change its private character. (Van de Wiel, *History of Canon Law*, 102)

catechumenate proper, the reception of the sacraments of initiation, and, finally, post-baptismal mystagogical catechesis. This primordial educational institution in the early Church, however, later fell into disuse. Eventually, a new form of catechetical formation emerged in the Church—catechetical preaching.

Origin of the Term "Catechesis"

The term catechesis is derived from a rarely used Greek verb (κατηχέω) that is translated literally as "to sound towards," "to sound down upon," or "to resound." Its noun form does not occur in the New Testament; only its verbal form is found there, although not in the technical sense it would acquire later on within the context of the catechumenate. The New Testament authors give it the meaning "to inform by word of mouth" or "to teach orally, to instruct." For example, James informs Paul in Acts 21:21[8] that there is a rumor concerning him circulating among the Judeo-Christians in Jerusalem. The text reads: "They have been informed (κατηχήθησαν) that you are teaching all the Jews who live among the Gentiles to abandon Moses and that you are telling them not to circumcise their children.…"[9]

In other contexts, the verb takes on a religious coloring.[10] Paul often employed the term in the sense of giving instructions or information concerning the content of the faith. For example, he used the verb κατηχέω to refer to the instruction of the Jews in the Law (cf. Rom. 2:17–21) and of the Christians in the inspired word (cf.

[8]All Scriptural citations and abbreviations of the Biblical books are taken from Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, *The New American Bible*, trans. Catholic Biblical Association of America (New Jersey: 1970).

[9]Cf. M. Bryce, "Catechesis," in I. Cully & K. Cully, eds., *Harper's Encyclopedia of Religious Education* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1990), 98. Cf. J. Audinet, "Catechesis," in K. Rahner, ed., *Sacramentum Mundi: An Encyclopedia of Theology*, Vol. I (New York/London: Herder and Herder, 1968), 263.

[10]Cf. Audinet, "Catechesis," 264. Cf. F. Murphy, "Catechesis I: Early Christian," in W. McDonald, ed., *The New Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol. III (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967), 208.

Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 14:19). Nevertheless, the term has always emphasized its oral nature and especially its being a handing on of the word that has been received.

The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles

The *Acts of the Apostles* is a witness to the core experience of the first Christians as a community: "They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers" (Acts 2:42). In this passage, one sees the image of the Church as feeding on the Word of God through the teaching of the apostles, celebrating that Word in the Eucharist, and bearing witness to it before others by the charity they share as a community.

The twelve apostles were witnesses to everything Jesus taught and did (cf. Acts 1:1). They taught and preached to others especially about the salvific meaning of the Lord's death and resurrection (cf. Acts 2:22–36). The apostles eventually transmitted to their successors the task of teaching the early Christian community. They entrusted it also to the deacons (cf. Acts 6:8; 8:26) and to many others whom they enjoined to join them in preaching the Word (cf. Acts 15:35).

The preaching of St. Paul from Antioch to Rome, including his numerous letters, and the letters of Peter, John, James, and Jude are evidence of catechesis in the apostolic age; moreover, and perhaps more importantly, is the use of the Gospels as primary avenues of catechizing. Before being written down, they were passed on to others as oral teaching even as they displayed some catechetical structure and elements, although with varying degrees of clarity.[11]

The Early Church's Identity and Mission

During the first two hundred years of the Church's existence, the Christian community was concerned with its own separate identity in

[11]According to Pope John Paul II in *Catechesi tradendae*, St. Matthew's account has been called the catechist's gospel and St. Mark's the catechumen's gospel. Cf. Ioannes Paulus PP. II, *Catechesi tradendae* (October 16, 1979), in *AAS* 71 (1979): 1277–1340 (cited hereafter as *CT*). Cf. *CT* 10–11, 22.

relation to the synagogue and the pagan world. Gathering in houses, the community concerned itself with catechesis, the liturgy, other aspects of their life in common, and the proclamation of the Gospel. Upon the rock of this self-understanding as followers of the Risen Christ, this early generation of believers built a missionary enterprise that had a profound charismatic character owing to their overpowering baptismal experience.[12] In fact, the early Christian community lived on the basis of its missionary mandate (cf. Mt. 28:20; Mk. 16:20), which the early Christians expressed through the preaching of the apostles, itinerant missionaries, catechists, and simple Christians, and also through their personal contact with others and witness of faith and charity, especially the witness of the martyrs. Hence, missionary action during this early period of Christianity was aimed at bringing new disciples to Christ and initiating them into the Christian faith. This action, however, was characterized by flexibility and a variety of personal initiatives; one cannot yet speak of a programmed initiation process.[13]

The early Church directed her missionary action toward adults: "They were invited to make a personal and responsible decision: to believe, express sorrow for their sins, desire to be baptized. Therefore, to choose to be Christians."[14] After an initial attraction to the faith of Christians, they were assisted in a process of maturation in the faith and Christian behavior. Their response in terms of their acceptance of the Word of God and their conversion was the core of that experience (cf. Acts 2:37–41). It is in this perspective that one situates the Church's

[12]Cf. L. Meddi, *Catechesi: Proposta e formazione della vita cristiana* (Padova, 2004), 20. Cf. U. Gianetto, "La catechesi nella storia: Dagli inizi fino al rinnovamento conciliare," in E. Alberich & U. Gianetto, eds., *Andate e insegnate: Manuale di catechetica* (Leumann: Elledici, 2002), 60.

[13]Cf. G. Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico: Diventare cristiani secondo i padri* (Bologna: EDB, 1996), 30–31.

[14]"Coloro che si orientano a Cristo sono persone adulte, chiamate a una personale e responsabile decisione: credere, pentirsi dei peccati, desiderare di essere battezzati. Dunque scegliere di essere cristiani" (Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 30 [English translation is author's own]).

eventual organization of the catechumenate and its object: conversion to Jesus Christ through the proclamation of the Gospel message. For all the new disciples of the Lord, the key event in their itinerary of faith was their process of conversion, assisted normally by the preaching of the Word and the witness of Christians.[15]

Authors distinguish two principal moments in the proclamation of the Good News that developed in primitive Christianity. The first was missionary preaching to the Jews and the pagans, announcing the great event of the resurrection of Christ with a view toward their conversion. Then, around the second century, the kerygma or the message of the proclamation developed into evangelical narrations and instructions of a moral and doctrinal character. Called the *Didache*,[16] this form of teaching evolved eventually into other types: the homily or liturgical preaching, catechesis imparted to catechumens prior to baptism, and mystagogical catechesis imparted to neophytes. Nevertheless, one still cannot speak of a true organization of the instructions that were given to new converts to prepare them for baptism by the second half of the second century. That developed later with the organization of the catechumenate toward the end of the century.[17]

The Catechumenate

The late second century marked an important phase in the history of the Church and of catechesis in particular with the organization of the catechumenate as a pastoral-liturgical institution. By the end of the third century to the beginning of the fourth, the Christian community organized in a more structured way whatever they had been doing in preparing converts to receive the sacraments, thereby giving birth to

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[15]Cf. Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 29–30.

[16]Cf. P. Schaff, ed., *The Oldest Church Manual Called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1885).

[17]Cf. G. Groppo, "Patristica (Catechesi)," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 482–484. Also cf. Meddi, *Catechesi*, 22–23.

a process of intense preparation and testing before admission into the Church. The catechumenal practice spread rapidly as a formally organized institution in all the early Churches during the third century and the first half of the fourth. It remained in practice until the fifth century, then underwent decline until its disappearance in the sixth and seventh centuries.[18]

The catechumenate was a period of formation directed at the maturation of the conversion of candidates on the level of doctrinal faith and especially of Christian life. An effective conversion was required, one that entailed a true change of behavior: putting an end to sinful actions, developing the cardinal virtues in one's life, abandoning bad attitudes, growing in honesty and in solidarity with the weak. The process of formation culminated in the catechumens' reception of the sacraments of Christian initiation. The means involved in attaining the goal of effective conversion were a series of structured curricula called catechesis and a system of cultural and liturgical practices (imposition of hands, exorcisms, etc.) situated within a whole process of apprenticeship in Christian life.[19]

The oldest, most noted, and most systematic among the principal sources for a reconstruction of the different phases of the catechumenate as it was practiced in the third and fourth centuries was the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus of Rome.[20] It described the

[18]Cf. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," 134. Cf. Gianetto, "La catechesi nella storia," 61.

[19]Cf. Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 73. Cf. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," 134.

[20]St. Hippolytus of Rome must have been born in the second half of the second century. He became a presbyter of the Church of Rome and died later as a martyr, probably around 325. While his original work, the *Apostolic Tradition*, has now been lost, fragments of the text can be found in Book VIII of *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, a collection of eight books containing rules of Christian life and attributed to Clement I of Rome. Cf. Clemens Romanus, *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, lib. VIII, caput XXXII, in J. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Graeca*, Book I (Paris: Garnier, 1886), 1127–1134. English translations of the original Latin text are taken from P. Bradshaw, M. Johnson, & L. Phillips, in H. Attridge,

experience of the Roman Church, although it most probably also had some influence, directly or indirectly, on the other local Churches. Hippolytus used the word "catechesis" in its precise sense, referring to the teaching given to someone preparing for baptism—in other words, to a catechumen, as the candidate came to be termed: "Qui erit catechumenus, per tres annos catechesi informetur."[21]

The third and fourth centuries produced a voluminous collection of pre-baptismal and mystagogical catechesis. These were the works of St. Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose of Milan, St. John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia, and St. Augustine of Hippo.[22] St. Augustine's *De catechizandis rudibus* is considered today to be the first manual of catechetical pedagogy.[23] The fundamental themes of these works, and

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ed. *The Apostolic Tradition: A Commentary* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002), cited hereafter as Attridge, ed., *The Apostolic Tradition.* Cf. M. Simonetti, "Ippolito," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 359.

[21]The original text is found in Clemens Romanus, *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, 1131, 1134. "Let the one coming to be catechized be instructed for three years" (Attridge, ed., *The Apostolic Tradition*, 97).

[22]St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, was born around 315 and died around 386. St. Ambrose, bishop of Milan, was born probably in 340 and died in 397. St. John Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople, was born probably between 340–350 and died around 407. Theodore of Mopsuestia was ordained a priest in 383 and became bishop of Mopsuestia in Cilicia near Tarsus. A friend and contemporary of St. John Chrysostom, he died around 428. Examples of their works relevant to this study will be noted in the process of the discussion in this chapter. Cf. F. Bergamelli, "Cirillo di Gerusalemme," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 155–156. Cf. F. Bergamelli, "Ambrogio di Milano," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 29–30. Cf. O. Pasquato, "Crisostomo Giovanni," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 185–186. Cf. O. Pasquato, "Teodoro di Mopsuestia," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 629–631.

[23]St. Augustine, bishop of Hippo, was born in 354 and died in 430. He is surely one of the most important figures in the history of Western Christianity. Cf. Augustinus Aurelius, *De catechizandis rudibus*, ed. I. Bauer, in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, Aurelii Augustini Opera Pars XIII, 2, Book XLVI (Turnhout, Belgium: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontifici, 1969), 115–178. Augustine wrote *De catechizandis rudibus* as a response to a deacon in Carthage who had implored

of catechesis in general, were the Symbol of Faith, the Our Father, and the sacraments of Christian initiation, and they offered both doctrinal and moral teaching. Another source was the journal of the pilgrim Egeria or Etheria, called the *Itinerarium Egeriae*.[24] Egeria is usually described as a Spanish nun who visited Jerusalem on a pilgrimage in the late fourth century (ca. 380).

Throughout the third to fifth centuries, the catechumenate system in the early Church developed into slightly different forms in the different churches of the East and West. Nevertheless, the phases of formation can be delineated as follows: the missionary phase, the catechumenate proper, the reception of the sacraments of initiation, and the period of Easter mystagogy.

Missionary Phase

A time of direct proclamation of the Gospel while in personal contact with pagans preceded the formal period of the catechumenate. In addition to those engaged directly in missionary preaching, there was also the mass of Christians who announced the Good News in an informal way to those around them. They did this spontaneously in their daily lives on the basis of their relationships with their relatives, friends, and co-workers.[25] Centered on the basic tenets of

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him to write some guidelines for instructing candidates for the catechumenate. It presents an introductory instruction for inquirers which is, in fact, a survey of salvation history. It is not catechesis itself but only the opening instruction, which aimed to encourage candidates to begin the course of instruction in preparation for Baptism. Cf. O. Pasquato, "Agostino," in Gevaert, ed., *Dizionario di Catechetica*, 23–25. Cf. B. Marthaler, *The Catechism Yesterday and Today: The Evolution of a Genre* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1995), 10.

[24]Cf. A. Franceschini & R. Weber, eds., *Itinerarium Egeriae*, *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, Itineraria et alia geographia, Book CLXXV (Turnhout, Belgium: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontifici, 1965), 87–88. For the English translation of the text, see J. Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels* (London: SPCK, 1971).

[25]Cf. C. Schönborn, "Iniziazione cristiana e catechesi," in T. Stenico, ed., *Evangelizzazione, catechesi, catechisti: Una nuova tappa per la Chiesa del Terzo Millennio*

the faith, the initial proclamation of the Good News of Christ was oriented primarily toward awakening personal faith and leading to conversion. Those who expressed interest were examined concerning their manner of life. Those known today as sponsors or godparents were the Christians who established initial contact with these pagans, accompanied them to the Church, and served as witnesses to their aptitude to become catechumens.[26]

Even the early period of admission to the catechumenate was already a selective process based heavily on the quality of the candidates' lives and how they concorded with Christian values. To illustrate, the elders of the Christian community conducted initial inquiries concerning the trades and professions of prospective candidates. Those engaged in occupations considered unsuitable for Christians were advised to renounce such; examples of these were those occupations considered immoral or which involved any sort of participation in formal pagan worship, such as the making of statues of the pagan gods or even the teaching of classical literature.[27] Upon positive evaluation of their

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(Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999), 143. M. Dujarier rightly observed that the term "pre-catechumenate" used today referred precisely to this sort of living contact of the early Christians with the pagans. Cf. M. Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate: The First Six Centuries*, trans. E. Haasl (New York: Sadlier, 1979), 60–61.

[26]Hippolytus wrote: "Qui primo ad mysterium pietatis accedunt, episcopo vel presbyteris per diaconos adducantur; et causas exquirantur quare se ad verbum Domini adiunxerint: quique obtulerunt, testimonium eis praebeant, diligenter exploratis que ad eos spectant. Examinentur autem eorum mores ac vita…" (Clemens Romanus, *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, 1127). The English translation reads:

> Those, that first come to the mystery of godliness, let them be brought to the bishop or to the presbyters by the deacons, and let them be examined as to the causes wherefore they come to the word of the Lord; and let those that bring them exactly inquire about their character, and give them their testimony. Let their manners and their life be inquired into.… (Attridge, ed., *The Apostolic Tradition*, 83)

[27]Cf. L. Mitchell, "The Development of Catechesis in the Third and Fourth Centuries: From Hippolytus to Augustine," in J. Westerhoff & O. Edwards, eds.,

motivations and personal disposition, candidates were admitted to the catechumenate and called "catechumens" in the East and "hearers" in the West.[28]

Only adults were allowed as participants in the catechumenate; there was no official catechesis for children. Nevertheless, children were guided within the family, with the parents taking a central role by presiding over the process of initial introduction into the basics of the faith and the living out of Christian life.[29]

Catechumenate Proper

The catechumenate proper lasted for about three years. Hippolytus wrote that the duration was contingent upon the progress of the catechumen: "Qui erit catechumenus, per tres annos catechesi informetur: quod si studiose se gerit, et rei desiderio tenetur, admittatur: quia non tempus, sed vitae institutum perpenditur."[30] The Council of Elvira, in its canon 42,[31] required two years of formation except for urgent cases arising from illness. While this was a little less than the prescriptions of Hippolytus, grave faults could prolong the catechumenal period up to three or five years or even to the moment of death.[32]

A Faithful Church: Issues in the History of Catechesis (Wilton: Morehouse-Barlow, 1981), 50. For a detailed list, cf. Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate*, 60–61.

[28]Cf. Gianetto, "La catechesi nella storia," 61.

[29]Cf. Schönborn, "Iniziazione cristiana e catechesi," 143.

[30]The original text is found in Clemens Romanus, *Constitutiones Apostolicae*, 1131, 1134. "Let the one coming to be catechized be instructed for three years. But if anyone is eager and has zeal for the task, let [them] be received, for it is not the time but the way that is judged" (Attridge, ed., *The Apostolic Tradition*, 97).

[31]Cf. Concilium Eliberitanum (Elvira), cap. 42, in J. Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio* (Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1961), 12–13.

[32]Cf. Concilium Eliberitanum, 12–13, 17. Dissenting from the mainstream opinion with regard to the standard period of the catechumenate, Johnson maintains the position that the exact length of the pre-baptismal catechumenate

The catechumenate was a period of formation under the guidance of a competent person whom the community had prepared and delegated for this ministry. Called the *doctor audientium* or teacher of the hearers, this person could also have been the layperson who served as the official catechist of the community.[33] The catechumens, who were undergoing formation in doctrine and apprenticeship in Christian life, were allowed to participate in the liturgy of the Word during the celebration of the Eucharist together with the community of the faithful.

At the end of this period, a new scrutiny was held to evaluate the fruits of the dual approaches to catechumenal formation: the catechumen's knowledge of basic Christian truths and a life conformed to it. The decision is then made concerning the candidate's admission into the next phase. Later Latin authors called this group of *electi* (chosen) the *competentes* (seekers) in contrast to the simple *audientes* (hearers); in Greek, they were called φοτίζομενοι (*photizomenoi*—those being enlightened). During this whole process, the witness of the sponsors was required to attest to the candidates' conversion.[34]

The Sacraments of Initiation

The third phase took place during the time of Lent and was the preparation immediately before the reception of the sacraments of initiation. During a special liturgical celebration at the beginning of Lent, the bishop listed the names of the candidates and then delivered a homily called the πρωτοκατηχησις (*protocatechesis*). From that point onward, this immediate preparation began, which consisted of three means of formation.

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in pre-Nicene Christianity is not known with any degree of certainty. For his argumentation, see M. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation: Their Evolution and Interpretation* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 90–91.

[33]Cf. Schönborn, "Iniziazione cristiana e catechesi," 143. Cf. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," 135. Also cf. Dujarier, *A History of the Catechumenate*, 51.

[34]Cf. Groppo, "Patristica," 484. Cf. Mitchell, "The Development of Catechesis," 51.

The first was teaching or instruction. The bishop met with the candidates on a daily basis during the initial weeks of Lent and explained the Scriptures to them. Beginning on the fourth week of Lent (the sixth in the East), formal doctrinal catechesis was provided, beginning with the *traditio Symboli* (the teaching of the Symbol of the Faith or the Creed) done as an act of handing over, a kind of official transmission of the faith of the Church to the candidate. The Creed,[35] which was explained with many Scriptural references, was the real core of the instruction for baptism. It had to be memorized because it was a summary of Scriptural teaching, embracing in a few phrases much of the religious knowledge contained in the Old and New Testaments, a guarantee of fidelity to the Gospel. Outstanding examples of instruction on the Creed were Augustine of Hippo's *Sermo de Symbolo ad catechumenos*[36] and Ambrose of Milan's *Explanatio Symboli ad initiandos*.[37] The importance of the Creed can be seen in the letter of Pope Leo I[38]

[35]Various local communities of Christians adopted their own creeds during the period of the early Church. Denzinger gathers more than forty of these formulations from the second to the ninth centuries. Cf. H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum*, ed. P. Hünermann (Bologna: EDB Edizioni Dehoniane, 1995), nn. 1–76 (pp. 1–47). For a description of these creeds, cf. C. Cortéz, L. Outes, & J. Calvo, "Símbolo de la fe (El Credo)," in V. Arés, M. Puerto, R. Recalde, & J. Garcia, eds., *Nuevo Diccionario de Catequética*, Vol. II (Madrid: San Pablo, 1999), 2086–2097. Cf. R. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, *c.1215–c.1515* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 15–18.

[36]Cf. Augustinus Aurelius, *Sermo de Simbolo*, ed. R. Plaetse, in *Corpus Christianorum Series Latina*, Aurelii Augustini Opera Pars XIII, 2, Book XLVI, 179–199.

[37]Cf. Ambrosius Aurelius, *Explanatio Symboli ad initiandos*, in J. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Latina*, Book XVII (Paris: 1862), 1193–1197.

[38]Concilium Chalcedonense, *Epistula Papae Leonis ad Flavianum ep. Constantinopolitanum de Eutyche*, in G. Alberigo et al., eds., *Conciliorum Oecumenicorum Decreta* (Bologna: Edizione Dehoniane Bologna, 1991), 77.

> [One] who has not the most elementary understanding even of the Creed itself can have learnt nothing from the sacred texts of the New and Old Testaments. This old man has not yet taken to heart what is pronounced by every baptismal candidate the world over.

to Flavian, Patriarch of Constantinople, concerning the monk Eutyches who was a proponent of an extreme form of Monophysitism:

> Quam enim eruditionem de sacris novi et veteris testamenti paginis adquisivit qui ne ipsius quidam symboli initia comprehendit et quod per totum mundum omnium regenerandorum voce depromitur, istius adhuc senis corde non capitur?

As the outline of the whole instruction, the repetition and memorization of the Creed called to mind the entire content of the instruction given about it.[39] In a later period, the giving and explanation of the Our Father were added either to the catechesis for those about to be baptized or as part of the post-baptismal mystagogy, and not only as a prayer to be memorized and recited but also as a model for the candidates' own life of prayer.[40] The process of instruction concluded with the ceremony called the *redditio Symboli* or the recitation of the Creed by the candidates for baptism. Canon 46 of the Council of Laodicea (363) attests to this practice of the fourth-century catechumenate. The catechumens about to be baptized learned the Creed and recited it before the bishop or the priests on Thursday of Holy Week.[41] For her part, Egeria observed in her *Itinerarium* that in the practice of the Jerusalem Church, the ceremony of the *redditio Symboli* took place on the Saturday before the beginning of Holy Week. The candidates went up one by one to the bishop and recited the Creed,

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The English version of the text is found in Council of Chalcedon, *Letter of Pope Leo to Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, about Eutyches*, in N. Tanner, ed., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils* Vol. I (London/Washington DC: Sheed and Ward/ Georgetown University Press, 1990), 77.

[39]Cf. Mitchell, "The Development of Catechesis," 61.

[40]Cf. Gianetto, "La catechesi nella storia," 61. Cf. Meddi, *Catechesi*, 25. For an in-depth study on the use and interpretation of the prayer from the primitive Church to the contemporary period, see K. Stevenson, *The Lord's Prayer: A Text in Tradition* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2004).

[41]Cf. Concilium Laodicenum, sub Silvestro, *Canones SS. Beatorum Patrum, qui Laodiceae Phrygiae convenerunt anno Domini 363*, in Mansi, ed., *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, 571 (can. 46).

after which the bishop reminded them about what they had learned about the faith and the content of the Creed.[42]

Another important element of formation during this period of Lent was spiritual formation, which connected closely with the third aspect of formation: the living of an upright life. The candidates were exhorted to live a life of penance and intensive prayer as means of struggling against sin and living up to the Christian truths in which they were instructed. Since this period was a time of spiritual struggle, i.e., of renouncing Satan and adhering to Christ, the catechumens were assisted in the liturgical life of the community through various rites, exorcisms, and scrutinies. In Rome, these were held on the third, fourth, and fifth Sundays of Lent.[43]

Easter Mystagogy

The Lenten preparations of catechumens culminated in the Easter vigil with the celebration of the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist. During the week of Easter, mystagogical catechesis was imparted to the neophytes. The symbolism of the rites, the Scriptures and sacraments, and practical morality were explained to them, and they were exhorted to live in accordance with their Christian beliefs. For example, in *In catecheses primam et secundam ad illuminandos*,[44] St. John Chrysostom exhorted neophytes to a deep resolution to live as true Christians should, explaining that the power and love of the Master were great enough to make the sinner shine more brightly than the rays of the sun. Other examples of this mystagogical catechesis were

[42]Cf. *Itinerarium Egeriae*, 87–88. Cf. Wilkinson, *Egeria's Travels*, 145.

[43]Cf. Schönborn, "Iniziazione cristiana e catechesi," 144–145.

[44]Cf. Joannes Chrysostomus, *In catecheses primam et secundam ad illuminandos*, in Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Latina*, Book XLIX, 226.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem's *Catechesis Mystagogiae Quinque*[45] and St. Ambrose of Milan's *De Mysteriis*[46] and *De Sacramentis*.[47]

On account of the intensive process of formation that the catechumenate provided during this period, Cavallotto writes that

> one understands why, according to Origen, this is a period of "combat" (*Hom* III on *Jer* 3) and according to Tertullian, an "apprenticeship of the hearers", during which, using the expression of Cyprian, whoever is disposed to learn the truths of the Church "learns in order to live" (*Ep* 73,22,3).[48]

The catechumenate, however, was not the only pastoral and catechetical means for the formation of Christians during this period of the Church's life. The rise of Christian buildings destined for communal worship, especially after the peace of Constantine in 313, paved the way for more frequent liturgical and Eucharistic gatherings of catechumens and the faithful, with the priests being able to offer catechesis to Christians in a liturgical setting. These instructions came to be known as the homily, i.e., comments on Biblical texts read in a systematic order to the liturgical assembly wherein both catechumens and the baptized faithful were gathered together.[49] With the decline of the catechumenate, the homily took its place progressively as the primary means of catechesis.

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[45]Cf. Cyrillus Hierosolymitanus, *Catecheses Mystagogiae Quinque*, in Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Graeca*, Book XXXIII, 1059–1127.

[46]Cf. Ambrosius Aurelius, *De mysteriis*, in Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Latina*, Book XVI, 403–426.

[47]Cf. Ambrosius Aurelius, *De sacramentis*, in Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus*, *Series Latina*, Book XVI, 427–482.

[48]"Si comprende, allora, perché, secondo Origine, questo è un tempo di 'combattimento' (*Om.* III su *Ger.* 3) e secondo Tertulliano un 'tirocinio degli uditori', durante il quale, usando l'espressione di Cipriano, chi si dispone ad apprendere la verità della Chiesa, 'impara per vivere' (*Ep.* 73,22,3)." (Cf. Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 73–74). The English translation is the author's own.

[49]Cf. Groppo, "Patristica," 484.

The Decline of the Catechumenate

The peace of Constantine in 313 marked an important turning point in the history of the Church. From being an illegal religion, Christianity was not only legalized but even became the official religion of the Roman Empire. From being a persecuted Church, it eventually took on a privileged position. This change brought with it new pastoral problems.[50]

It was certainly true that large numbers of people wanted to join the Church after the conversion of Constantine, and not always for the right reasons. This increased the number of those who enrolled in the catechumenate. At the same time, many began to opt for an indefinite postponement of baptism,[51] even up until the point of death. Since, according to the thought and practice of the period, a person could obtain the forgiveness of sins that baptism conveyed only once, i.e., through the rigorous one-time post-baptismal canonical penance, many delayed their baptism to avoid this sort of penance. Many were content to be catechumens even without the true desire for baptism since catechumens were almost considered to be equals with baptized Christians.[52]

This era also saw the shortening of the period of the catechumenate from one that presumably involved years of general preparation to a

[50]L. Meddi analyzes the difficulties brought about by this new situation.

> Essa crea una situazione pastorale nuova segnata dalla libertà per il vangelo. Ma questo portò a un cristianesimo non più caratterizzato dalla libera vocazione e scelta del singolo perché si costruì presto un'equivalenza tra l'identità sociale e quella religiosa. La chiesa si trova a vivere situazioni pastorali nuove che chiedevano non tanto la formazione dei catecumeni, quanto la gestione di un'appartenenza ufficiale ma non convinta che creava una difficile identificazione comunitaria. (Meddi, *Catechesi*, 21).

[51]Cf. Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 202.

[52]Cf. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 89–90.

limited period of one Lent. Johnson writes: "So it has been thought, the Church now had to accomplish in a short period of time what previous centuries had taken several years to do."[53] By this time, intensive doctrinal initiation and moral apprenticeship in the Christian life were no longer required. The gradual process of maturity from the time of the initial option of faith was substituted instead by a liturgical-pastoral institution that was inadequate, in fact, as a pastoral and pedagogical approach.[54] Thus, "the catechumenate has become less a school of formation and Christian life, giving way to a ritual catechumenate."[55] For Knowles,

> the conversion of Constantine brought about the swift transformation of the Church from a persecuted and fervent sect into a ruling and rapidly increasing body, favored and directed by the emperor, the membership of which was a material advantage. In the sequel, the standards of life and the level of austerity were lowered, and the Christian Church became what it has in large measure remained ever since, a large body in which a few are exceptionally devout, while many are sincere believers without any pretension to fervor, and a sizeable number, perhaps even a majority, are either on their way to losing the faith or retain it in spite of a life which neither obeys in all respects the commands of Christ nor shares in the devotional and sacramental life of the Church with regularity.[56]

In such a context, a more organized and massive arrangement of a pre-baptismal catechumenate would have been the most logical and effective response to a situation of rapid growth. Besides, given the privileged position of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the Church had at its disposal the means necessary to carry out such an organization. Nevertheless, whatever might have been the efforts of the Church to address the situation, the catechumenal process soon disappeared with the growing number of infant baptisms.

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[53]Cf. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 91.

[54]Cf. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," 136.

[55]Cavallotto, *Catecumenato antico*, 238.

[56]D. Knowles, *Christian Monasticism* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969), 12.

The Emergence of Catechetical Preaching

In the context of a new situation, the Church continued to pursue its mission of gathering new members and forming those already baptized. The Christian community was and remained the key player in winning over to the faith the non-Christians living with them in the area and in confirming them in the new faith after their reception into the ecclesial community. In this sense, the total life of the community *ad intra* had a missionary orientation *ad extra*. The community's liturgy, piety, and charitable activity had a missionary function.[57]

If the participants of catechumenal formation during the period of the flowering of the catechumenate were adults preparing for baptism, now the recipients of catechetical preaching were adults who had been baptized as infants yet never had an intensive preparation for baptism as provided by the catechumenate of yesteryears. In the case of adult converts, an official of the Church catechized them over an abbreviated period with instructions on the Symbol of Faith and on the moral demands that ought to characterize their new life as Christians.[58]

There was clearly no special catechesis for children before the end of the sixth century, although the practice of infant baptism was steadily growing. Consequently, the formative efforts of the Church had to focus now on the needs and concerns of two general groups of people: those baptized as infants who had grown to be adults and adult converts. They became the focus of preaching, which retained to a certain extent the missionary character of the pre-baptismal catechumenate of the past. Preaching had to focus itself on freeing the new Christians from the stubborn grip of pagan beliefs and customs, which were obviously not easily rooted out from Christian communities due to a short period of baptismal preparation for adult converts and the lack of a systematic catechesis for children and adults. The homily

[57]Cf. H. Jedin & J. Dolan, eds., *History of the Church* Vol. II (London: Burns and Oates, 1980), 213.

[58]Cf. Jedin & Dolan, eds., *History of the Church* II, 213.

thus took on a marked exhortatory character as it needed to address burning issues regarding Christian morals and behavior.[59]

Summary Observations

Primitive Christianity exercised its ministry of the Word through two complementary moments of one pastoral action, i.e., the initial proclamation of the Gospel or missionary preaching and the formation of converts and those already baptized through catechesis. In this one pastoral action, the Church endeavored to achieve her *goal and purpose* of proclaiming the Good News of Christ to non-believers with the goal of their conversion to Christ. Moreover, the Church taught the new converts not just the doctrine they needed to know but also the life they promised to live as Christians, again with the goal of strengthening these neophytes in their newly chosen Christian state of life.

The Church utilized the catechumenate as her primordial *means* of Christian formation. While maintaining the *traditio* or passing on of the deposit of the faith, catechesis never consisted purely in teaching. The catechumenate was an itinerary of continual conversion to Christ and thus of "giving birth" to women and men in the newness of Christ, an educative process with its double goals of maturity in the faith and initiation into the Christian life. It must be noted, however, that while pertaining to *ad intra* concerns, the process of initiation into the Christian community was also decisively *ad extra* in its overall intent. Driven by a strong missionary spirit, the early Christians proclaimed the Gospel to others, fully conscious that they were a community of faith.

The way of the catechumenate was indispensable for the Church's mission because producing behavioral and cultural change in those who converted in increasing numbers from paganism demanded more than just an intellectual exposition. It required a *privileged setting* and *pastoral agents* to facilitate the continuous and oftentimes difficult process of conversion and growth of new members in Christ. The setting and

[59]Cf. Jedin & Dolan, eds., *History of the Church* II, 308–311. Cf. Swanson, *Religion and Devotion in Europe*, 313–314.

active agents involved were precisely the members of the Christian community, led by the bishop who was assisted especially by the sponsors. This community support was a crucial element in formation.

Yet the catechumenate was not the consummate institution that manufactured, as it were, perfect Christians. The Fathers of the Church always had to address the problems connected with Christian initiation among their ranks: delayed baptisms, the *lapsi* during the time of the persecutions, vestiges of pagan practices after baptism. This only means that even the most valid pastoral institution of the past always had to take into account the reality of sin and human freedom.[60]

After the decline of the catechumenate, the Church sought to ensure that her process of Christian initiation still would have some kind of integrity even though the candidates could no longer easily assume her catechetical goal of authentic conversion and faith.[61] To achieve this, the Church devised an abbreviated form of baptismal preparation and intensified her liturgical preaching. During this period, the Fathers produced some of the most outstanding baptismal and mystagogical homilies which served not only as catechetical *tools* for their own use. These homilies survived their authors and were used once again later by preachers and catechists for their own congregations in some other place and time.

[60]Cf. Groppo, "Catecumenato antico," 136.

[61]Cf. Johnson, *The Rites of Christian Initiation*, 91.

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THE LION ROARS

Opposing Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide in the Spirit of Cardinal von Galen

James McTavish, F.M.V.D.

Part 1 of this essay begins with a snapshot of the life and preaching of Cardinal Clemens August von Galen, a man of courage who actively resisted the programmatic termination of the elderly, infirm, and disabled—the so-called "unproductive"—by the Nazis in Germany during World War 2.

Time has moved on, yet in Part 2 we will be disturbed to see, once again, the growing trend of eliminating "unworthy" lives through euthanasia and assisted suicide in our modern, throwaway culture. An overview of Church teaching in these areas will be given, including the new Vatican charter on healthcare and *Samaritanus Bonus* (Good Samaritan), a 2020 document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) "on the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life."

Part 1: The Lion Who Roared

Von Galen was known as the "Lion of Münster." Standing over six feet and six inches tall (around 2 meters), he was a German bishop—and later elected Cardinal—who roared against the Nazis during World War 2, particularly in his opposition to their euthanasia program.

In his homilies and pastoral letters, von Galen criticized the Gestapo for their abuses against human rights. His motto was "Nec laudibus, nec timore" (commonly paraphrased: Neither praise nor threats will distance me from God) and he lived it to the full. He was unfazed upon receiving intimidating letters from Hermann Göring, the Reich Marshall of the Greater German Reich. Göring accused von Galen of sabotaging "the strength of resistance of the German people in the midst of a war,"[1] to which von Galen replied that he felt himself

> obliged to do so because of the actions of certain circles that, behind the back of the German troops, carry on a battle against the Christian religion and the Catholic Church and against reverence for the inalienable fundamental rights of the human person, and endanger the inner unity and power of resistance of the German people.[2]

Other opponents of von Galen included the notorious Joseph Goebbels, the Minister of Propaganda for the Nazis, who was hesitant to attack von Galen (other Nazis had suggested that von Galen should be hanged) as he feared the backlash from the bishop's supporters in his diocese, although he did state that "revenge should be enjoyed, not hot, but cold." In a conversation over dinner in July 1942, even Hitler told his companions that after Germany wins the war, he would reckon with von Galen "down to the last penny."[3]

The "Unproductive"

The Lion of Münster really roared upon hearing of the introduction of a euthanasia program organized by the Nazis. He preached three famous sermons in 1941 where he condemned the atrocities of the Third Reich, particularly their introduction of a program for killing those deemed mentally ill and "unproductive." The excerpts below are from von Galen's sermon on Sunday, August 3, 1941,

[1]D. Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster: The Bishop Who Roared Against the Nazis* (Charlotte, NC: TAN Books, 2016), 258.

[2]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 259.

[3]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 260.

in St. Lambert's Church, Münster, Germany. The Sunday Gospel was taken from chapter 19 of St. Luke, where Jesus, surveying the happenings, weeps (Lk. 19:42ff).[4]

> These numerous unexpected deaths of the mentally ill are not the result of natural causes, but are deliberately brought about; that in these cases that doctrine is being followed, that one can put an end to so-called "worthless life," that is, can kill innocent persons, if one believes that their life is of no more value to the people and the state; a horrible doctrine, that would justify the murder of the innocent, that gives a fundamental license for the violent killing of those invalids, cripples, incurable sick, and weak old persons who are no longer able to work![5]

The bishop, ever attentive to the "signs of the times," gave concrete details of the events that were taking place.[6]

> Already on the 26th of July I had made a most earnest appeal to the Provincial Administration of the Province of Westphalia, which is responsible for these institutions, to which the sick are sent for *care* and *healing*. It was no use! The first transport of innocent victims condemned to death has gone from Marienthal! And I have heard that 800 patients have been transported from the Institute for Care and Healing of Warstein.
>
> So we must assume that these poor, defenseless sick people will sooner or later be killed. Why? Not because they have committed a capital crime; not because they have attacked their caregivers in such wise that these were left with no recourse to save their own lives in self-defence other than the use of violence against their attackers. These would be cases in which, in addition to the killing of armed enemies in a just war, use of force even to the extent of killing is allowed and, not rarely, required. No, not for such reasons do these unfortunate sick people have to die, but rather because, according to the judgment of some official, according

[4]There is no other way to do justice to such inspired sermons than to read them in full. The translation here comes from the excellent book by Fr. Daniel Utrecht (see footnote 1). Online English translations of the homilies can also be found in "Three Sermons in Defiance of the Nazis by Bishop von Galen" (available at http://www.churchinhistory.org/pages/booklets/vongalen(n).htm).

[5]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 238.

[6]See Matthew 16:3.

> to the opinion of some commission, they have become "unworthy of life"; because according to this opinion they belong to the category of "unproductive" fellow countrymen. It is judged that they can no longer produce goods; they are like an old machine that does not work anymore; they are like an old horse that has become incurably lame; they are like a cow that no longer gives milk. What does one do with such old machines? They are scrapped. What does one do with a lame horse or an unproductive cow?
>
> No. I will not continue this comparison to the end, so frightful is its appropriateness and its illuminating power!
>
> We are not dealing with machines, or horses or cows, which are created in order to serve [human persons], to produce goods for [them]! One may destroy or kill such beings when they no longer fulfill this purpose. No, here we are dealing with people, our fellow human beings, our brothers and sisters! Poor people, sick people, unproductive people, granted! But does that mean they have lost the right to life? Do you, do I, have the right to life only so long as we are productive, only so long as others acknowledge that we are productive?[7]

Speaking from the heart, with such frankness and courage, his preaching had a powerful impact. He continued:

> If that principle is accepted and made use of, that one can kill "unproductive" people, then woe to us all, when we become old and weak! If one can kill unproductive people, then woe to the disabled who have sacrificed their health or their limbs in the process of production! If unproductive people can be disposed of by violent means, then woe to our brave soldiers who return to their homeland severely wounded, as cripples, as invalids! Once it is granted that people have the right to kill "unproductive" fellow human beings—even if at the moment it affects only the poor defenceless mentally ill—then *in principle* the right has been given to *murder* all unproductive people: the incurably ill, the cripples who are unable to work, those who have become incapacitated because of work or war; then the right has been given to murder all of us, once we become weak with age and therefore unproductive.[8]

[7]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 240–241.

[8]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 241–242.

The appalling image of wounded soldiers having survived battle and returning from conflict and yet potentially being put to death in their own land through euthanasia sent shockwaves through the German people and infuriated the Nazis. Von Galen continued his homily:

> All that will be required is for some secret order to come down, that the process which has been tested on the mentally ill should now be extended to other "unproductive" people, to those with incurable lung disease, to the infirm elderly, to the severely wounded soldiers. Then the life of none of us is safe. Some commission can put [anyone] on the list of the "unproductive" who are, according to its judgment, "unworthy of life." And no policemen will protect [them], and no court will take notice of [their] murder and subject the murderers to the prescribed punishment![9]

Copies of the homilies were made and distributed far and wide. Even the Allied powers were said to have used these as propaganda against the Germans! Von Galen also asks a very pointed question, one that makes us shirk in horror when we consider the travesty against life committed by many healthcare professionals and Christians today in their support for and lack of defiance against assisted suicide and euthanasia.

> Who will then be able to trust [their] doctor? Perhaps [the doctor] will report the patient as "unproductive" and receive the order to kill [them]. It is unthinkable what degeneration of morals, what universal mistrust will find its way even into the family, if this frightening doctrine is tolerated, taken up, and followed. Woe to humanity, woe to our German people, if the holy commandment of God, "Thou shalt not kill," which the Lord gave on Sinai amid thunder and lightning, which God the Creator wrote into the conscience of [humankind] from the beginning, is not only broken, but if this breach is tolerated and taken up as a regular practice without punishment![10]

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[9]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 242.

[10]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 242.

Part 2: The Situation We Now Face

Von Galen's homilies have much relevance for the situation today where various persons in society and the medical profession itself are campaigning for programs of euthanasia and assisted suicide. Von Galen mentioned that those targeted were the "unproductive"; this is echoed today, where

> the current socio-cultural context is gradually eroding the awareness of what makes human life precious. In fact, it is increasingly valued on the basis of its efficiency and utility, to the point of considering as "discarded lives" or "unworthy lives" those who do not meet this criterion.[11]

Pope Francis frequently laments the throwaway culture that we are living in as "human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a 'throw away' culture which is now spreading."[12] Lives deemed not worthy of living are increasingly being ended through euthanasia and assisted suicide.[13]

Euthanasia is currently legal in an ever-growing list of countries, including The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Canada, Colombia, Spain, and New Zealand. Assisted suicide is also permitted in Canada (Medical Assistance in Dying—MAiD), the United States (in California, Colorado, the District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington), and Australia (Voluntary

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[11]Francis, address to the participants of the Plenary Session of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (January 30, 2020), *L'Osservatore Romano* (January 31, 2020): 7.

[12]Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, n. 53.

[13]Cultural factors that erroneously support euthanasia and assisted suicide include the notion that if a life does not have a sufficient quality then it is not worth living. A false compassion may also judge that it is better to die (or be killed) than to suffer. A third contributing factor is growing individualism where the other is viewed as a threat to one's freedom. Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [CDF], *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part IV: "The Cultural Obstacles that Obscure the Sacred Value of Every Human Life" (available at https://bit.ly/2ZkpLUc).

Assisted Dying [VAD] is allowed in Victoria, Western Australia, and, most recently, in Tasmania).

We can be sure that none of this legislation would have succeeded without some support from the healthcare sector. Such "legitimation of assisted suicide and euthanasia is a sign of the degradation of legal systems."[14]

Quality of Life

Discussions surrounding euthanasia or assisted suicide are founded at times on the premise of "quality of life."[15] In a recent article titled "The 'Quality of Life' Error," Fr. T. Pacholczyk, director of education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center, writes:

> The clearest rebuttal of the "Quality of Life" error I've come across was from a 64-year-old retired Boeing computer programmer named John Peyton (1945–2009). He lived in Kent, Washington, and had an unusually aggressive form of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease. The disease made him totally dependent on Patricia, his wife of 40 years. She dressed him, fed him,

[14]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part V: "The Teaching of the Magisterium," Section 1: "The prohibition of euthanasia and assisted suicide."

[15]Cf. CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part IV, which also gives a helpful explanation of some aspects surrounding "quality of life" judgments:

> Among the obstacles that diminish our sense of the profound intrinsic value of every human life, the first lies in the notion of "dignified death" as measured by the standard of the "quality of life," which a utilitarian anthropological perspective sees in terms "primarily related to economic means, to 'well-being,' to the beauty and enjoyment of physical life, forgetting the other, more profound, interpersonal, spiritual and religious dimensions of existence". In this perspective, life is viewed as worthwhile only if it has, in the judgment of the individual or of third parties, an acceptable degree of quality as measured by the possession or lack of particular psychological or physical functions, or sometimes simply by the presence of psychological discomfort. According to this view, a life whose quality seems poor does not deserve to continue. Human life is thus no longer recognized as a value in itself.

and regularly shifted his body position in the living room recliner where he spent his declining months.

When he was interviewed by Laura Ingraham of Fox News, he said, "I'm one of those people who is somewhat of a target of the initiative and I don't know how we as a society could really consider making doctors into killers."

Laura countered: "John, I think a lot of people who are for this type of assisted suicide would say, 'Look, what about the quality of life?' 'Look, you know, people suffering like you—what kind of quality of life do you really have?' What do you say to those people?"

His reply was as brilliant as it was simple:

I have a marvelous quality of life! Right now I am totally dependent. I can do nothing for myself. I'm effectively paralyzed. But I have a family. I have friends. I have my church community. I have loving support all around me. I don't understand how anyone could deny that I have a very high quality of life, and it gets me to understand and be compassionate toward those without the support that I have. Rather than giving them the temptation to kill themselves, we should be trying to figure out how to help them to have the quality of life I enjoy.[16]

A Not So Pain-Free Death

Bernadette Flood, a pharmacist in Dublin, wrote a fascinating, if slightly gruesome, letter to the British Medical Journal in response to the news that Spain would become the sixth country worldwide to allow euthanasia and assisted suicide.[17] Her letter begins thus:

Dear Editor, many healthcare professionals, politicians and members of the general public who support the introduction of assisted suicide and/or euthanasia may be under the impression that the method of

[16]T. Pacholczyk, "The 'Quality of Life' Error," *Making Sense of Bioethics* (January 2021), available at https://bit.ly/3pzMfvd.

[17]A. Rada, "Spain will become the sixth country worldwide to allow euthanasia and assisted suicide," *British Medical Journal* 372:147 (2021).

> dying they support would be achieved by the administration of "a pill". This is not the case.[18]

She then goes on to cite some reported complications of assisted suicide and/or euthanasia:

- The dying process can take up to 30 hours or more.
- Reports exist of people re-emerging from a coma and sitting up during the dying process.
- Family members have reported having to scrape powder from 100 plus capsules with toothpicks to produce bitter powder to be mixed with sugar syrup.
- A number of medicines used in assisted suicide and/or euthanasia were previously used in executions.

For many supporters of such a death by medication, her conclusion is eye-opening: "The process of assisted suicide and/or euthanasia cannot guarantee a peaceful, pain free, dignified death."

Church Teaching

Here we will take a brief overview of some pertinent points from relevant Church teaching.

> With her mission to transmit to the faithful the grace of the Redeemer and the holy law of God already discernible in the precepts of the natural moral law, the Church is obliged to intervene in order to exclude once again all ambiguity in the teaching of the Magisterium concerning euthanasia and assisted suicide, even where these practices have been legalized.[19]

The Second Vatican Council taught that euthanasia and willful self-destruction (such as occurs through assisted suicide) "poison human society" and are, moreover, "a supreme dishonor to the

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[18]B. Flood, "Assisted Dying Debate Should Include Discussion of Possible Complications," *British Medical Journal* 375:2498 (2021).

[19]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part V.

Creator."[20] In the Catechism of the Catholic Church [CCC], we find the following teaching:

> Those whose lives are diminished or weakened deserve special respect. Sick or handicapped persons should be helped to lead lives as normal as possible. (CCC 2276)

> Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick, or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable. Thus, an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, [their] Creator. The error of judgment into which one can fall in good faith does not change the nature of this murderous act, which must always be forbidden and excluded. (CCC 2277)

The 1980 *Declaration on Euthanasia* from the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith states:

> By euthanasia is understood an action or an omission which of itself or by intention causes death, in order that all suffering may in this way be eliminated. Euthanasia's terms of reference, therefore, are to be found in the intention of the will and in the methods used. It is necessary to state firmly once more that nothing and no one can in any way permit the killing of an innocent human being, whether a fetus or an embryo, an infant or an adult, an old person, or one suffering from an incurable disease, or a person who is dying.[21]

When a sick and suffering person seems to be requesting assisted suicide, beneath this plea there is an underlying garbled cry for help, for love, and for life. The *Declaration* incisively teaches:

> The pleas of gravely ill people who sometimes ask for death are not to be understood as implying a true desire for euthanasia; in fact, it is almost always a case of an anguished plea for help and love. What a sick person needs, besides medical care, is love, the human and super-natural

[20]Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, 27.

[21]CDF, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part II: "Euthanasia" (May 5, 1980), available at https://bit.ly/2XEhE4a.

> warmth with which the sick person can and ought to be surrounded by all those close to him or her, parents and children, doctors and nurses.[22]

The same *Declaration* explains that even though a person may not be fully aware of their erroneous choice of euthanasia, it is still an objective wrong.

> It may happen that, by reason of prolonged and barely tolerable pain, for deeply personal or other reasons, people may be led to believe that they can legitimately ask for death or obtain it for others. Although in these cases the guilt of the individual may be reduced or completely absent, nevertheless the error of judgment into which the conscience falls, perhaps in good faith, does not change the nature of this act of killing, which will always be in itself something to be rejected.[23]

The 2017 Vatican charter for healthcare workers strongly denounces euthanasia as a defeat, a crime, a backward step, and a homicidal act which no end can justify.[24] It teaches further that "one's attitude toward the sick person in the terminal stage of [their] illness is a test of the professionalism and ethical responsibilities of health care workers."[25] The new charter also stresses the importance of good palliative care:

> A sick person in the terminal stage of [their] illness should receive all forms of care that allow for alleviation of the painfulness of the dying process. These correspond to so-called palliative care which[,] together with care for [their] physical, psychological, and spiritual needs, tends to create a loving presence around the dying person and [their] family members.[26]

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[22]CDF, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part II.

[23]CDF, *Declaration on Euthanasia*, Part II.

[24]See Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, *New Charter for Health Care Workers* (Philadelphia, PA: National Catholic Bioethics Center, 2017), available at https://bit.ly/3vECJYO.

[25]Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, *New Charter for Health Care Workers*, no. 145.

[26]Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, *New Charter for Health Care Workers*, no. 147.

The charter also underlines that euthanasia and assisted suicide are always a wrong choice.

> [Medical] personnel and other health care workers—faithful to their task of "always being at the service of life and assisting it to the end"—cannot lend themselves to any act of euthanasia, not even at the request of the interested party, much less of [their] relatives. Indeed, there is no right to dispose arbitrarily of one's own life, and for this reason no health care worker can become the executor of a nonexistent right.[27]

For this reason, "euthanasia and assisted suicide are a defeat for those who theorize about them, who decide upon them, or who practice them."[28]

Samaritanus Bonus (Good Samaritan) is a recent document "on the care of persons in the critical and terminal phases of life" arising from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Here we will summarize some interesting points. The introduction to the letter points out that "every technical advance in healthcare calls for growth in moral discernment to avoid an unbalanced and dehumanizing use of the technologies especially in the critical or terminal stages of human life."[29] Discussing care for one's neighbor in the spirit of the good Samaritan who takes responsibility for the wounded patient, the document states that

> every individual who cares for the sick (physician, nurse, relative, volunteer, pastor) has the moral responsibility to apprehend the fundamental and inalienable good that is the human person. They should

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[27]Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, *New Charter for Health Care Workers*, no. 169.

[28]Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, *New Charter for Health Care Workers*, no. 170.

[29]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Introduction. Cf. Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, no. 22: "If technical progress is not matched by corresponding progress in [the human person's] ethical formation, in [her or his] inner growth (cf. Eph 3:16; 2 Cor 4:16), then it is not progress at all, but a threat for [humanity] and for the world."

> adhere to the highest standards of self-respect and respect for others by embracing, safeguarding and promoting human life until natural death.[30]

The document points out that the cross of Christ provides a point of reference for the sick person. Many were at the cross—functionaries of the Roman state, soldiers, mockers, those distracted/indifferent/resentful. They are at the cross but do not "remain" with the suffering one. "In intensive care units or centers for chronic illness care, one can be present merely as a functionary, or as someone who 'remains' with the sick."[31] This is an important part of Christian witness—not to abandon the sick at their most vulnerable but to be with them.

> Those who assist persons with chronic illnesses or in the terminal stages of life must be able to "know how to stay", to keep vigil, with those who suffer the anguish of death, "to console" them, to be with them in their loneliness, to be an *abiding with* that can instill hope. By means of the faith and charity expressed in the intimacy of the soul, the caregiver can experience the pain of another, can be open to a personal relationship with the weak that expands the horizons of life beyond death, and thus can become a presence full of hope.[32]

Working Hard for the Grim Reaper

Many groups are working hard for the grim reaper. Compassion & Choices, a U.S.-based dignity-in-dying group, proudly boasts of its achievements in campaigning hard in its mission to legalize assisted suicide: "We [have] organized hearings … and inspired strong and robust grassroots efforts. Volunteer advocates shared their stories and support through emails, phone calls, lobby days, social media and videos."[33]

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[30]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part I: "Care for One's Neighbor."

[31]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part II: "The Living Experience of the Suffering Christ and the Proclamation of Hope."

[32]CDF, *Samaritanus Bonus*, Part V.

[33]Anonymous, "New Mexico Makes History Passing Innovative Bill," *Companion & Choices Magazine* (Summer 2021): 4.

In front of such convinced, if slightly deranged, campaigns, the Christian response is often one of apathy, indifference, commodity, silence, or mediocrity. Von Galen, recalling a statement in a homily by Cardinal Pacelli (who later became Pope Pius XII), said,

> I thank God every day that He has allowed me to live in these times. Good and evil are ranged against each other in a gigantic struggle. We can be proud to take part in this battle. Now no one has a right to mediocrity.[34]

Conclusion

We are all called to do our part, to go out of our way to write, to read more, to arm ourselves, to speak out about the beauty of life and the inhumanity of intentionally killing others. Healthcare professionals, in particular, are called to be ministers of life and never agents of death.[35] We have to be like the Good Samaritan who goes over to the wounded man, pouring oil and wine on his wounds. As Pope St. John Paul II reminded us, "the person who is 'a neighbor' cannot indifferently pass by the suffering of another."[36] Von Galen did not, could not, pass by the suffering of others. What gave him such courage to speak out?

Pope Benedict XVI, in the Eucharistic celebration for the beatification of Bishop von Galen, explains.

> Where did this insight come from in a period when intelligent people seemed as if they were blind? And where did he find the strength to oppose it at a time in which even the strong proved weak and cowardly? He drew insight and courage from the faith that showed him the truth and opened his heart and his eyes.

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[34]Utrecht, *The Lion of Münster*, 327.

[35]John Paul II, address to the Association of Italian Catholic Physicians (December 28, 1978), *Insegnamenti* I (1978): 438.

[36]John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris* (February 11, 1984), no. 29, available at https://bit.ly/3CdUd0z.

> He feared God more than [human persons], and it was God who granted him the courage to do and say what others did not dare to say and do. Thus, he gives us courage, he urges us to live the faith anew today, and he also shows us how this is possible in things that are simple and humble, yet great and profound.
>
> Let us remember that he often used to make pilgrimages on foot to the Mother of God in Telgte, that he introduced perpetual adoration at St. Servatius and that he frequently asked for the grace of forgiveness in the Sacrament of Penance and obtained it.
>
> He therefore shows us this simple Catholicity in which the Lord meets us, in which he opens our hearts and gives us spiritual discernment, the courage of faith and the joy of being saved. Let us give thanks to God for this great witness of faith and pray to him that he will enlighten and guide us.
>
> Blessed Cardinal von Galen, at this very moment, pray for us.… Amen.[37]

We pray, too, for the intercession of Blessed Cardinal von Galen, the Lion of Münster. Perhaps we cannot roar quite like him, but collectively we can all raise our voices even slightly: "The lion has roared—who will not fear? The Sovereign Lord has spoken—who can but speak out?" (Amos 3:8).

[37]Benedict XVI, greeting of his holiness Benedict XVI at the end of the Eucharistic concelebration for the beatification of the Servant of God Cardinal Clemens August Graf von Galen (St. Peter's Basilica: October 9, 2005), available at https://bit.ly/3vF8Is3.

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HUMAN SENTIENT INTELLIGENCE IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF XAVIER ZUBIRI

Marcos Louis D. Catalan, Jr., S.J.

Introduction

From the perspective of evolution, comparative studies between human beings and apes (gorillas, chimpanzees, and orangutans) reveal a number of similarities.[1] Biologically, human beings inherited some of their fundamental characteristics, such as color vision, frontal eyes, development of the neo-cortex, and high manual dexterity, from members of the ape family. Behaviorally, human beings share with them the capacity to utilize tools for a variety of tasks, the use of vision and hearing to interact with the environment, a well-structured social life, sexual and reproductive behavior, and complex forms of intra-specific intercommunication. Genetically, 98 percent of the chimpanzee's genome is identical to the human genome. Due to these similarities, human beings have often been called the "naked ape," following the title of the successful book by the English biologist Desmond Morris.

Yet, in comparison to other mammals, human beings are extremely vulnerable. They do not have sharp claws or fangs, their skin is not as thick, and they have few hairs that protect their bodies. They are

[1]S. Shettleworth, *Cognition, Evolution, and Behavior* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1998), 497–511.

extremely handicapped as far as their abilities to run, jump, and swim are concerned. Unlike other mammals, then, they do not have the physiological resources that they need to shield themselves from the hostilities of their environment. But amazingly, they have managed to survive the harshest of conditions and have been able to conquer all kinds of environments, including outer space. What has made human survival possible?

The answer to the preceding question is usually the traditional Aristotelian definition of the human being as a "rational animal": Human beings alone are endowed with the capacity for abstract thought and reflection by which they have been able to survive the various vicissitudes of their environment. However, for Xavier Zubiri, it is not rationality but intelligence that defines what a human being essentially is:

> [The human being] is not a rational animal, but an intelligent animal, that is, an animal of realities. They are two completely different things, because reason is just a special and specialized type of intelligence: and intelligence does not consist formally in the capacity for abstract thought and for full conscious reflection, but simply in the capacity to apprehend things as realities. Intelligent animal and rational animal are thus different things; the latter is only a type of the former.[2]

Zubiri does not agree with the traditional definition of the human being as a rational animal; for him, the human being is an intelligent animal. Intelligence is not rationality but consists simply in apprehending reality; rationality itself is founded on this basic apprehension of reality. And this apprehension of things as real is the act of the human faculty that Zubiri refers to as *sentient intelligence*.

This essay is an exposition of Zubiri's understanding of the human faculty of sentient intelligence and its development in relation to the nervous system. In explaining what this faculty is, he contrasts it with the non-human animal's faculty of sensibility (or pure sensing). He emphasizes that there exists an *essential* difference between sentient

[2]X. Zubiri, "El origen del hombre," in G. Argote, ed., *Siete Ensayos de Antropología Filosófica* (Bogotá: Universidad Santo Tomás, Centro de Enseñanza Desescolarizada, 1982), 40. All translations of quotations taken from Zubiri's works are by this essay's author.

intelligence and sensibility. The essay begins with Zubiri's discussion about the difference between the psyche and its faculties, and about the importance of the psyche's formation and not just that of its faculties.

Part One: Morphogenesis of the Psyche and Its Faculties

1.1. Cell Differentiation in the Germinal Plasma

Zubiri describes the morphogenesis of the psyche and its faculties within the context of the genetic processes that take place in the human embryo. Zubiri does not always use the word *embryo*; he prefers instead to use the phrase *germinal plasma* because he thinks that the latter is able to express better what he considers as the two essential moments that constitute the human embryo: the cell, which is the organic moment, and the psyche.[3] Part of the genetic process that the germinal plasma goes through is *cell differentiation*, which leads to the development of the germinal plasma's different organs.

Zubiri maintains that the process of cell differentiation does not have an organic aspect only, i.e., it is not only about the formation of various physiological structures. Cell differentiation also has a psychic aspect because

> in this formation are being formed "at the same time" in the psyche some capacities of a distinct character…: a psyche that is sickly, robust, healthy, rich, infirm, etc. But, also, and this is what is decisive, the psyche goes on acquiring in the morphogenetic process what [are] usually called "faculties."[4]

Strictly speaking, then, the morphogenesis of the psyche refers not only to the formation of a psyche, which will eventually possess a particular

[3]X. Zubiri, *Sobre el Hombre* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998), 50. Cited henceforth as SH.

[4]SH, 496.

character, but also to the formation of the faculties in the psyche. Two observations are in order regarding the preceding quotation.

1.2. Psyche and its Faculties

The first observation is that Zubiri distinguishes between the *psyche* and its *faculties*. The latter are *activities of the psyche*, and Zubiri uses the word *psychism* to refer to the faculties in order to contrast them with the psyche.[5] As activities of the psyche, these faculties include sensibility, intelligence, feeling, volition (will), etc. and are in the psyche. Zubiri insists that the psyche is something distinct from, and more radical than, its faculties. He gives the following example to emphasize the difference:

> not to see things well because of not knowing how to look at them is not the same as to have badly-formed eyes. The good or bad formation of the eyes is "prior" to the exercise of vision. This latter corresponds to psychism; the former corresponds to the psyche itself.[6]

For Zubiri, the quality of the exercise of a faculty depends on the character of the psyche that will be formed. For example, the quality of intelligence will depend on whether the psyche, which exercises the intellective activity, is weak, robust, healthy, etc. For this reason, the formation of the psyche is distinct from the formation of its faculties. Thus, for Zubiri, "there is then a strict *morphogenesis of the psyche*. As I see it, this idea of a *morphe* is essential, of a form of the psyche itself and not only of psychism."[7]

1.3. Psycho-Organic Morphogenesis of the Human Person

The second observation is that the psyche and its various faculties are developed *in* the genetic development of the germinal plasma—as

[5]SH, 488.

[6]SH, 488.

[7]SH, 489.

it acquires its various organs and parts, so too does the psyche acquire its different faculties. This means, then, that "in this initial moment [that is, the germinal plasma], there is only one and the same integral psycho-organic activity."[8] There are no two separate and parallel activities, only two constitutive moments of a single morphogenesis of the human being: one moment is organic; the other moment, psychic. Although these two moments are not identical, their respective developments transpire within the single morphogenetic process present in the germinal plasma. This morphogenesis is not organic *and* psychic, as asserting so would give rise to the erroneous understanding that there exist two independent processes; rather, there is only one process which is unitarily psycho-organic. The development of the psyche and its faculties is only one of the two constitutive moments of the one morphogenesis of the human being.

How does the formation of the psyche and its faculties take place? The cell differentiation process and the other genetic processes that the germinal plasma goes through from the moment of fertilization and even after birth are purely biochemical in nature. While there is solid scientific basis for the assertion that these biochemical processes serve as support for the psyche's exercise of its faculties, it must be emphasized nonetheless that, unlike these processes, the faculties themselves are not biochemical. How, then, are the psyche and its faculties formed concretely in and through these exclusively biochemical processes?

1.4. Dominance: Passivity and Actionality

Zubiri's response lies in his concept of *dominance*, the manner by which the moments of an activity contribute to the entire activity itself; it is the mode of operation by the different moments within the single activity to which they all belong. The terms that express concretely the concept of dominance are *passivity* and *actionality*. These are moments present in every type of activity: "A moment of passivity belongs

[8]SH, 486.

essentially to every activity. And passivity is *passive activity*—passive, but activity. Action, however, is *actional activity*, in a manner of speaking."[9]

With regard, then, to the one psycho-organic morphogenetic activity in the germinal plasma, the organic moment of the activity is actional because the biochemical processes are what dominate in the germinal plasma; the psyche, on the other hand, is in passivity. To highlight the passivity of the psyche, Zubiri asserts that the psyche not only does nothing but also that it cannot do anything, i.e., the psyche does not and cannot exercise its faculties. In the germinal plasma, then, the psyche does not think, sense, will, feel, etc.[10]

However, despite its passivity, the psyche is also in activity. Zubiri explains that these same biochemical processes also shape the character of the psyche as well as the psyche's different faculties. In this sense, then, the psyche is active, although it is a passive activity: the psyche and its faculties are formed not by means of the acts that the psyche exercises—since it cannot perform such—but in and through the action of the biochemical cellular processes. This action will culminate in the configuration of a psyche that is healthy, weak, strong, etc. As these processes shape the character of the psyche, they also begin to form the faculties of intelligence, feeling, volition, etc. that are in the psyche and which the psyche will exercise at a designated moment in the psycho-organic development of the human being.

The succeeding parts of this essay will present the manner by which sensibility and sentient intelligence are formed *in* the organic processes that develop the physiological structures in the germinal plasma. Part Two deals with the formation of the faculty of sensibility. In the case of the human being, the faculty of sensibility will be structurally united with the intellective potency, leading to the formation of the faculty of sentient intelligence. The formation of this faculty will be discussed in Part Four.

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[9]SH, 486.

[10]SH, 486–487.

Part Two: Faculty of Sensibility

2.1. Biological Liberation of Stimulation

Immediately after the sperm fertilizes the egg, a rapid succession of divisions occurs the result of which is the formation of certain sections in the human embryo. These sections contain specific cells that will eventually differentiate, leading to the formation of different organs and body parts. There is a stage in this cell differentiation process that Zubiri describes as the "moment in which the embryo makes of stimulation a specialized function."[11]

For Zubiri, the capacity to be stimulated is an essential character of all living beings: "The capacity to be affected by stimuli is a character that belongs essentially to every living being insofar as it is alive."[12] Zubiri refers to this essential character as *susceptibility*. The scientific equivalent of susceptibility is *irritability*, which is a natural property of *all* cells. However, while all cells are naturally irritable or susceptible to stimulation, there is a particular class of cells the specific function of which is to facilitate the rapid transmission of electro-chemical impulses—generated by the stimulation of a sense organ—to that part of the body that will be used in responding to stimulation. This particular class of cells is comprised of none other than the *nerve cells*. The formation of these nerve cells is precisely what Zubiri refers to as the moment when the embryo makes of stimulation a specialized function.[13]

The embryo not only makes of stimulation a specialized function; it also makes autonomous the natural property of susceptibility possessed by all cells. Zubiri here refers to the development of the various structures of the nervous system in which will be centralized

[11]SH, 498.

[12]SH, 497.

[13]SH, 498.

the activities of apprehending and responding to stimulation.[14] The nervous system itself will become specialized in the reception of stimulation and in the transmission thereof to the pertinent parts of the body, making possible the production of a response to stimulation. For Zubiri, the development of, and specialization by, the nervous system is constitutive of the faculty of sensibility: "sensibility is the biological liberation of stimulation."[15]

It will be noted that Zubiri uses the word *liberation* in his description of the faculty of sensibility. In making stimulation its specialization, the nervous system simply disengages the property of irritability or susceptibility that is natural to all living cells. For this reason, the nervous system is *not* the creator of the faculty of sensibility.[16] The nervous system only appropriates as its specific and exclusive task the reception and transmission of stimulation, although other cells are also naturally capable of the same reception and transmission due to the character of susceptibility that they naturally possess.

2.2. From Sentiscence to Sensibility

This liberation of stimulation has three differential grades, thereby showing that the faculty of sensibility undergoes a gradual process of development over the course of evolution. The first grade is susceptibility. Below are the other grades related to the development of sensibility:

> In primitive animals, it was a kind of diffused sensibility that I would call *sentiscence*. In animals already more developed, we find a nervous system more or less centralized, but always in increasing centralization: the *sensibility* properly speaking. Susceptibility, sentiscence, [and] sensibility are the three differential grades of stimulation.[17]

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[14]X. Zubiri, *Inteligencia sentiente: inteligencia y realidad* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998), 96. Cited henceforth as IS.

[15]SH, 498.

[16]SH, 498.

[17]X. Zubiri, "El hombre, realidad personal," in Argote, ed., *Siete Ensayos de Antropología Filosófica*, 63. Cited henceforth as HRP.

The grade of sensibility that an animal possesses depends on the degree of development that its nervous system has attained. Biology recognizes two general types of nervous system that have developed over the course of evolution: diffused and centralized types. In the diffused type of nervous system, which is found in lower invertebrate animals, there is no brain and the nerve cells are distributed throughout the body. In the centralized type of nervous system, which is found in higher invertebrates and vertebrate animals, some parts of the nervous system have a dominant role in coordinating information and directing responses. This centralization culminates in vertebrates, which have a well-developed brain and a spinal cord.[18]

The relationship between the formation of the faculty of sensibility and the development of the nervous system emphasizes Zubiri's position about the morphogenesis of the psyche's faculties—that the formation of these faculties takes place not independently of but *in* the biochemical processes that develop the germinal plasma's physiological structures. In the case of the faculty of sensibility, its formation occurs in the development of the animal's nervous system; if not for the cellular processes that lead to the development of the nervous system, the faculty of sensibility would not be formed. Thus, Zubiri writes:

> It is not that the psyche had by nature the "visual potency" and that it needed eyes in order to exercise its acts, but that the psyche not only does not execute "acts" of vision without eyes, but that without eyes, it does not have the "visual faculty."[19]

2.3. Specification and Formalization

As the development of the nervous system progresses, leading to the formation of various receptors or sense organs, so, too, are formed in the psyche the corresponding *sensitive* faculties such as the sense of sight, hearing, taste, touch, etc. Zubiri refers to this stage in the formation of the faculty of sensibility as the dimension of *specification*. There is a second dimension that is also strictly related to

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[18]T. Lentz & S. Erulkar, "Evolution and Development of the Nervous System," *Britannica*, available at https://bit.ly/3GEuf9n (accessed October 17, 2021).

[19]SH, 498.

the development of the structures of the nervous system; Zubiri refers to this dimension as *formalization*.[20]

Briefly described, formalization is a function of the nervous system that enables the animal to apprehend a stimulus as a unity or as a whole and respond to it also as a unity.[21] Zubiri always discusses formalization in relation to the animal's exercise of its faculty of sensibility, i.e., to its capacity to sense. For Zubiri, sensing is a unitary process composed of three constitutive moments individually affected by formalization. For a better understanding of how formalization concretely affects these moments, the next section will discuss the sensing process; this will be followed by the section on formalization.

2.4. Constitutive Moments of the Process of Sensing

For Zubiri, all living beings possess a measure of independence with respect to their environment and exercise some degree of control over it.[22] Independence means that the animal is able to function well and execute vital operations—within the limits of the possibilities offered by its physiological structures—in view of its survival and for the overall maintenance of its well-being. Control over the environment is a logical corollary of possessing independence. The animal manifests such control in its response to whatever its environment presents to it. In the face of a threat, for example, the animal may respond by facing the aggressor or fleeing away from it; on other occasions, the animal may adapt to changes in the living conditions of its environment. It can be said that the animal, to the extent that it is able to respond adequately to the vicissitudes of its environment, exercises some degree of control over it.

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[20]SH, 500.

[21]I. Ellacuría, "La idea de estructura en la filosofía de Zubiri," in *Realitas: Seminario Xavier Zubiri Trabajos I 1972–1973* (Madrid: Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1974), 73–77. In this article, the author discusses Zubiri's concept of formalization and the structural characteristics of the stimulus as formalized in the apprehension of the organism.

[22]HRP, 56–57.

The animal exhibits its independence from, and control of, the environment within which it is situated through the exercise of its faculty of sensibility. As already mentioned in the preceding section, Zubiri understands sensing as a unitary process. The sensing process is composed of three constitutive moments: arousal, tonic modification, and response.

Moment of Arousal and Sensible Apprehension. This is the moment when the animal is awakened, in a manner of speaking, by the stimulus apprehended by one or more of its sensory organs. Since what this apprehension sets in motion is the sensing process itself, determining consequently the succeeding moments of the process, Zubiri qualifies this apprehension as *sensible apprehension*. To be aroused is to apprehend sensibly the stimulus that causes the arousal. Now apprehending sensibly is apprehending *impressively*, i.e., by means of impression. For Zubiri, "sensible apprehension consists formally in being impressive apprehension."[23] To sense impressively, or to have an impressive apprehension, constitutes the faculty of sensibility.

Structure of Impressive (Sensible) Apprehension. Impression has a structure comprised of three constitutive moments.[24] The first moment is when the animal's senses are affected by a stimulus; this is the moment of *affection*. The second is the moment of *otherness*—the stimulus that affects the senses presents itself as other than, or distinct from, the animal so that the latter does not confuse itself with the former or with other stimuli that may have also caused the arousal. The final moment is the *force of imposition*; this is the moment when a stimulus impinges itself on the animal's senses, triggering the moment of arousal and consequently setting in motion the sensing process.

Affection, otherness, and force of imposition are the three essential moments of impression; as such, they form an indispensable unity. To understand the nature of impression is to take seriously the unity of these three moments. For Zubiri, failure to do so is precisely the

[23]IS, 31.

[24]IS, 32–34.

grave error of ancient and modern philosophy as these limit the understanding of impression to the moment of affection only. For this reason, Zubiri undertakes to explain further the moments of otherness and force of imposition.[25]

Note and Formality in the Moment of Otherness. With regard to the moment of otherness, the stimulus presents itself to the animal as an *other* under two aspects.[26] The first is in the form of a *note*; by this, Zubiri refers in general to the various qualities or properties of the stimulus that impress themselves on the animal's sensory organs. The first moment of the sensing process, the moment of arousal, happens precisely when these various notes impinge themselves on the animal's senses, thereby making it possible for the animal to have an impression of the stimulus affecting it. These notes have their respective specific content, such as color, weight, temperature, and the like; these are what the animal immediately notes or observes about the stimulus the moment it impresses itself on the senses. Because of the specificity of a particular note's content, it will not be possible for the animal to confuse this note with the other notes of the stimulus that may have also impressed themselves on the animal's other sense organs.

The second aspect concerns what Zubiri calls *formality*. Since each note has its own specific content, each note makes itself present as distinct from the animal. Formality refers to the independence that each note possesses relative to other notes and to the animal. For this reason, the animal cannot confuse one note with another note because each note has its own specific content. The animal also cannot confuse itself with a particular note precisely because of the autonomy that the note enjoys with respect to the animal.[27] Formality refers to the independent manner by which the stimulus and its notes present themselves to the animal.

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[25]This essay will focus on "otherness" since it will be relevant to the succeeding discussions.

[26]IS, 34–35.

[27]IS, 35.

Moment of Tonic Modification. Every animal possesses a vital tone at every moment of its life. This vital tone refers to the animal's internal state of equilibrium which it seeks to maintain to ensure the normal functioning of its vital processes. Now it is the animal's vital tone that is altered by the moment of arousal; more precisely, the animal's internal state of equilibrium is disturbed when the animal is "awakened" by the stimulus. For Zubiri, the moment of tonic modification results in the animal's experience of tension,[28] moving or bringing the animal to determine and execute a response to the stimulation that has disturbed its internal state of equilibrium.

Moment of Response. What is the purpose of the animal's response? Since the maintenance of the internal state of equilibrium is essential for the sustained functioning of the animal's vital processes, "the response to an arousal is the restoration of the equilibrium lost because of the arousal."[29] A variety of responses are available to the animal which are "made possible and assured by its own biological structures."[30] Thus, the response in the form of fleeing away from, or confronting, the source of stimulation will depend on the resources made available to the animal by its own physiological structures. Nonetheless, whatever form the animal's response takes, it will be judged adequate if the response is able to restore the animal's previous state of internal equilibrium or vital tone that was altered by the moment of arousal.

Sensing, then, is a process. More importantly, Zubiri asserts that "it is *strictly unitary*: it consists in the intrinsic and radical unity, in the indissoluble unity of its three moments, of arousal, tonic modification, and response."[31] Zubiri insists that it is a grave error not to understand sensing as a unitary process by limiting it to the moment of arousal only, and by considering the moments of tonic modification and response

[28]HRP, 58.

[29]X. Zubiri, *Estructura dinamica de la realidad* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1989), 171. Cited henceforth as EDR.

[30]HRP, 59.

[31]IS, 30.

merely as consequences of the first moment. On the contrary, the three moments in their indissoluble unity strictly constitute the sensing process. Sensing does not take place if one of its essential moments is absent.

2.5. Formalization

Since sensing is a unitary process composed of three constitutive moments, formalization affects all three moments: "formalization does not concern only the moment of apprehension [that is, the moment of arousal], but the entire sensing process as such."[32] The manner by which the function of formalization affects each of the three constitutive moments of the sensing process is as follows:

Formalization and the Moment of Arousal. It will be recalled that this is the moment when the notes of the stimulus awaken the animal by impressing themselves on its senses. According to Zubiri, "in this order, formalization is that function because of which the impressions and stimuli that reach the animal from its external and internal environment, are organized forming in a certain manner outlines of autonomous unities.…"[33] Formalization, then, makes it possible for the animal to apprehend the stimulus as a whole composed of its various notes. A concrete example will serve to elucidate this point.

When a dog sees its master coming toward it, what do its senses apprehend? The dog apprehends its master's height, sound and quality of voice, color of clothes, distinctive smell, and the like. In other words, the dog apprehends impressively the various notes pertaining to its master. Zubiri calls these *elemental notes* and refers to the apprehension of such notes as *sensation*. However, it will also be recalled that every note has not only a specific content but also a formality, i.e., every note possesses independence relative to other notes. Now the function of formalization is "the modulation of formality, that is, the modulation

[32]IS, 40.

[33]HRP, 64.

of [the note's] independence, the modulation of autonomy."[34] How does this modulation affect the independence of the various notes apprehended by the animal?

For Zubiri, "formalization constitutes precisely the 'unity' of the sensed content."[35] Formalization effectively enables the animal to apprehend the different notes not as scattered and isolated from each another but as forming a whole. This whole "can have an outline, a kind of a closure … which can have the character of autonomous unities."[36] Zubiri refers to these unities as *autonomous constellations*. He calls the apprehension of such constellations of notes *perception* in order to contrast it with sensation, which is the apprehension of elemental notes.

Because of formalization, the various notes no longer possess independence individually; rather, it is the constellation of organized notes itself that now possesses formality or independence with respect to the animal.[37] Thus, in the example of the dog seeing its approaching master, the dog not only *senses* the individual notes pertaining to its master but, more importantly, and because of the function of formalization, also apprehends these same notes as constituting an autonomous unity, making it possible for the animal to *perceive* the totality of its master.

Formalization and the Moment of Tonic Modification. According to Zubiri, "the general feeling of well-being or malaise acquires nuances because of mere formalization: a mode of feeling spiritless or full of life, spiritless in one direction but not in others, a tonality of happiness, etc."[38] In other words, an animal's capacity for formalization enables

[34]IS, 36.

[35]IS, 37.

[36]IS, 37.

[37]IS, 38.

[38]IS, 40–41.

it to experience a variety of feelings such as anger, satisfaction, and the like.

Formalization and the Moment of Response. In the moment of arousal, the animal perceives an organized autonomous constellation of notes pertaining to the stimulus. Whatever the form of response that the animal chooses to restore its internal state of equilibrium or vital tone, the animal always responds as a unity in the presence of a stimulus that it perceives also as a unity. For Zubiri, "the capacity to coordinate movements is formalization."[39] Formalization, then, makes possible a unitary response to stimulation. In the previous example concerning the dog, it may respond by jumping or running to meet its master. Such actions are not possible if the dog does not have the capacity to formalize or coordinate its different muscles and the other parts of its body.

Such, then, is the manner by which formalization affects individually each of the three constitutive moments of the sensing process. For Zubiri, it is formalization that opens up the richness of the life of an animal as it

> organizes the same sensations in various perceptions, modulates in different manners the mere vital tone differentiating it in diverse states (anger, satisfaction, etc.), and opens up a multitude of the most various responses; the same stimulus can thus determine a great variety of responses.[40]

There is one final point that needs to be emphasized regarding Zubiri's concept of formalization—that it is the exclusive function of the animal's nervous system and therefore depends on the degree of its development.

2.6. Brain as Organ of Formalization

From the preceding description of the manner by which formalization affects the sensing process, it is clear that formalization

[39]IS, 40.

[40]SH, 511.

is not a *mental* function, i.e., it is not an operation proper to the mind.[41] For Zubiri, formalization is a purely anatomico-physiological function: "This function of formalization depends on the structures of the nervous system. That is why I have always thought that it is about a physiological function, as physiological as the specification of the receptors can be."[42] To underscore formalization as an exclusive function of the nervous system, he gives two examples, the first of which is taken from David Katz's experiment involving a crab's perception of prey resting on a rock.[43]

In the crab's impressive apprehension, the rock and the prey constitute only one constellation of notes, not two. The crab perceives only the constellation "rock-prey" and would be unable to perceive if the prey were suspended from a string instead of resting on a rock; the prey, then, does not constitute a constellation of organized notes that is independent of the constellation of notes belonging to the rock. However, in the impressive apprehension of a dog which possesses a more developed nervous system, for example, there exist two different and autonomous constellations of organized notes: that of the rock and that of the prey. The same difference in formalization capacity also manifests itself on the level of response—when falling from a certain height, a cat is able to coordinate its muscles in a manner not possible for a dog such that the former is able to land on the ground unharmed.[44]

As an exclusive function of the nervous system, formalization depends on the most important structure of the nervous system—the brain. While there are animals that exhibit a capacity for formalization despite the fact that their nervous systems do not include a brain, such a capacity may not be as developed compared to that of other animals whose nervous systems have reached a degree of centralization

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[41]I. Ellacuría, "Biología e inteligencia," in *Trabajos del Seminario Xavier Zubiri: Realitas III–IV 1976–1979* (Madrid: Sociedad de Estudios y Publicaciones, 1979), 302.

[42]HRP, 64.

[43]IS, 38.

[44]SH, 28.

culminating in the formation of a brain. Now there have been a number of opinions about the main function of the brain. For Zubiri, "the essential function of the brain does not lie in being an organ of mere 'integration' (Sherrington), nor in being an organ of 'signification' (Brinkner), but in being the organ par excellénce of 'formalization.'"[45]

Specialized and Non-Specialized Neurons. Zubiri gives a basis for his hypothesis about the brain as the organ of formalization.[46] The neurons of the cerebral cortex have a functional organization that shows two types of activities: first, there are neurons whose specific activity is to be specialized in reception, association, and response with regard to a stimulus—Zubiri refers to these neurons with such *specific* activity as the *specialized neurons*; second, there is another class of neurons whose activity Zubiri describes as *non-specific*.

The neurons in this second class are not specialized in reception, association, or response; rather, their function is to produce and maintain the activity of the cortex. In addition, they also maintain the brain in a state of vigilance or alertness and regulate some of its activities, including the cortex itself. The cortex also has a non-specific functional organization where neurons with shorts axons play an important role. Zubiri refers to the neurons in this second class as *non-specialized neurons*. He maintains that "in one way or another, it is in the coordination of the specific and non-specific [activities of the specialized and non-specialized neurons, respectively,] where formalization is inscribed."[47] What is the manner of coordination between these two classes of neurons?

Coordination of Specialized and Non-Specialized Neurons. The specific activity of the specialized neurons activates the non-specific activity of the non-specialized neurons. The stimulation of the brain, which is generated by the specialized neurons, sets in motion the activity of the non-specialized neurons. This means that the non-specific activity

[45]HRP, 65.

[46]SH, 523–525.

[47]SH, 524–525.

of the non-specialized neurons can be produced only in and through the specific activity of the specialized neurons. Once activated, the non-specialized neurons not only maintain and modulate the activity of the cortex; more importantly, these also orient, organize, and modulate the specific activities of the cortex's various centers so that the animal will be able to give a specific response to stimulation. It is the non-specialized neurons, therefore, that modulate and synchronize the various processes of the cortex into a single specific response.

Given this coordination between the activities of the two types of neurons, Zubiri sees the specific activity of the specialized neurons as being at the service of the non-specific activity of the non-specialized neurons, particularly as the latter make possible the response to stimulation: "Given a stimulating situation, the animal avails of its possible multiple responses because of the non-specific activity of its brain."[48] For this reason, Zubiri says that the richness of the life of the animal depends on the non-specific activity of these neurons.[49] He will highlight later the significant role of these non-specialized neurons in his discussion regarding the faculty of sentient intelligence.

It will be recalled that it is through the exercise of its faculty of sensibility that the animal manifests its independence from and control of its environment. Given how formalization affects individually each of the three essential moments of the unitary sensing process, it therefore influences significantly the animal's degree of independence and control—the more advanced the animal's capacity for formalization, the greater the degree of its independence and control.[50] Ultimately, this implies that an animal with a more advanced capacity for formalization has greater chances of survival within a hostile environment since its physiological structures—on which the capacity for formalization depends—assure that it will be able to respond adequately to the vicissitudes of its environment. However,

[48]SH, 524.

[49]SH, 524.

[50]HRP, 66.

as will be explained in Part Three, this implication does not apply in the case of the human animal.

Part Three: Biological Non-Specialization of Human Beings

3.1. Biological Specialization of Non-Human Animals

For Zubiri, the evolution of life is a progression in formalization.[51] Since formalization is a purely anatomical function, this progression means concretely the complexification of the physiological structures that make possible the animal's capacity for formalization. In the case of human beings, this complexification culminates in the formation of a highly developed cerebral cortex. Zubiri maintains, however, that "the functional organization of [the human being] is such that the multitude of possible responses adequate to arousal [stimulation] does not always remain assured by [the person's] functional organization."[52]

Despite their highly developed nature, the physiological structures of human beings are unable, paradoxically, to provide them with the resources that they need to survive within their environment. How is this situation to be explained? One theory that may help in clarifying this paradox is Arnold Gehlen's theory of biological non-specialization. According to D. Gracia, Gehlen's theory may have influenced Zubiri's ideas regarding this matter and, ultimately, Zubiri's own understanding concerning the primary function of the human faculty of intelligence.[53]

The following is a summary of the theory.[54] According to Gehlen, every non-human animal is equipped with a particular biological

[51]EDR, 205.

[52]SH, 28.

[53]D. Gracia, *Voluntad de verdad: para leer a Zubiri* (Madrid: Editorial Labor, 1986).

[54]J. Monserrat, *Epistemología evolutiva y teoría de la ciencia* (Madrid: Publicaciones de la Universidad Pontificia Comillas de Madrid, 1984), 237–239.

specialization that enables it to survive within its environment. Such specialization is made possible by the degree of development that the animal's biological structures have reached. A concrete example of such biological specialization is in the case of a lion as evident in the sharpness of its fangs and speed with which it moves when capturing prey or warding off any aggression. Due to the advanced degree of development of its physiological structures, the lion possesses the resources that it needs to survive within, and adapt itself to, its environment.

3.2. Survival Function of Human Intelligence

In the case of human beings, there is no evident biological specialization that will enable them to survive in and adapt to the environment within which they are situated. The human being is the only animal over the course of evolution that has not developed any form of biological specialization. Without such specialization, human beings should have been at the mercy of the hostile elements present in their environment given that their physiological structures are unable—despite the superior degree of development these have—to provide the resources needed to cope with the demands of their environment.

However, humans have survived despite their biological non-specialization by making use of their faculty of intelligence. Given that their physiological structures cannot assure them of being able to give an adequate response, they have to rely on their intellective faculty; the exercise of this faculty was—and continues to be—demanded by their survival. This faculty thus compensates for their biological non-specialization. It may even be concluded that it is precisely the human being's biological non-specialization that made the emergence of the faculty of intelligence possible.

These same ideas by Gehlen are also found in Zubiri. Despite the complexity of the human nervous system, Zubiri says that "it is not always capable in and by itself of giving an adequate response."[55]

[55]SH, 96.

The human nervous system, then, is deficient in itself as it is not able to guarantee human survival. Given the deficient character of their nervous system, Zubiri says that humans make use of an elemental operation that adults usually refer to as "taking charge of the situation," i.e., analyzing the stimulation and the situation it creates in view of choosing a form of response adequate to it. This elemental operation of taking charge of the situation is none other than the exercise of the faculty of intelligence: "The mere animal structures are not sufficient for [the human being] to respond: It is the dawning of intellection."[56]

Like Gehlen, then, Zubiri maintains that "the primary function of intelligence is strictly biological: To take charge of the situation in order to excogitate an adequate response."[57] Given their biological non-specialization, humans need to exercise their faculty of intelligence in order to survive. For Zubiri, "intelligence is a biological factor in the stabilization of the species, as it is a biological factor [in providing] an adequate response in each of the individuals."[58]

Gehlen does not explain the process by which the faculty of intelligence is formed as a result of the human being's biological non-specialization. In contrast to Gehlen, Zubiri explains this process, referring to it as *hyperformalization*. As will be discussed in Part Four, the human brain will have certain structures over the course of its development that will make possible the execution of the elemental operation of "taking charge of the situation" or the exercise of the faculty of intelligence. Hyperformalization is ultimately the development of this uniquely human faculty.[59]

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[56]SH, 478.

[57]HRP, 67.

[58]EDR, 213.

[59]Monserrat, *Epistemología evolutiva y teoría de la ciencia*, 223–227. The author interprets Zubiri's concept of hyperformalization within the context of the hominization of knowledge and gives the essential characteristics of human knowledge resulting from hyperformalization.

Part Four: Faculty of Sentient Intelligence

4.1. Hyperformalization of the Brain

For Zubiri, hyperformalization is a result of the morphogenetic process.[60] As the process of cell differentiation in the human embryo takes place, the nervous system produces what Zubiri refers to as an *excess*, something more than what is needed for the vital activity of the nervous system.[61] This excess pertains to the number of neurons with short axons that are produced in the course of the genetic development of the human nervous system: "In the case of [the human being], the enormous richness of neurons with short axons distinguishes our species from the rest."[62] For this reason, Zubiri asks: "Would it be possible to think that a brain thus structured is precisely a hyperformalized brain?"[63]

4.2. Dynamic Subtension: Structuring of Intelligence with Sensibility

The production of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons causes the structuring of the faculty of sensibility with the intellective potency. This structuring takes place through a process that Zubiri refers to as *dynamic subtension*.[64] This structuring process consists of three moments.

Zubiri describes the first moment using the concept of *exigency*. Exigency means that one function cannot continue unless it depends on another (or second) function; the first function thus exigentially

[60]Monserrat, *Epistemología evolutiva y teoría de la ciencia*, 223–227.

[61]SH, 504.

[62]SH, 525.

[63]IS, 73.

[64]X. Zubiri, *Sobre la esencia* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1998), 363–365.

demands the second function for its own sake. Now it will be recalled that the human nervous system is incapable by itself of assuring that the human being can provide an adequate response to stimulation. In order, then, to enable the human being to respond adequately, the nervous system needs the agency of another function distinct from itself; this function is the intellective function.

The intellective function, then, is an exigential demand of the human being—of the human nervous system, specifically—because the intellective function assures the normal functioning of the nervous system. Without the agency of the intellective function, it will not be possible for the nervous system to comply with its task of enabling the human being to respond adequately to stimulation.[65] For Zubiri, it is precisely the production of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons over the course of the development of the human brain that makes possible the entrance in action of the intellective function that the nervous system needs for the sake of its own normal functioning.

The second moment in the dynamic subtension consists in the following: although the purpose of the second function is to ensure the normalcy of the first function, the latter is maintained in the core of the second function, formally and intrinsically sustaining it. In human beings, brain activity sustains intellective activity as it is brain activity that keeps human beings in a state of vigilance or alertness, placing them in a situation that forces them to exercise their intellective activity as well as other activities of the psyche to enable them to respond to stimulation. The brain is the organ that facilitates the adjustment of human responses according to the stimulation itself.[66]

As for the third moment, the first function formally and intrinsically modulates, in variable measure, the qualities that the second function is going to exhibit. In the human being, brain processes modulate the exercise of intellective activity by conferring on it certain qualities, such as a greater or lesser amplitude, a greater or lesser clarity, etc. They

[65]SH, 96.

[66]SH, 510.

also modulate the rhythm of intellective activity, which is adversely affected in cases of a pathological disease. In other words, the quality of the exercise of the intellective activity depends on the quality of brain activity that sustains it.[67]

4.3. Intelligence Not Created by the Brain

Brain hyperformalization, understood in reference to the excess in the number of neurons with short axons, thus causes the structuring of sensibility with intelligence through the process of dynamic subtension. Zubiri clarifies, however, that the hyperformalization of the brain should *not* be understood to mean that the brain is the organ that produces the intellective faculty. It does not follow necessarily that there is no intelligence without the brain. Such an understanding would mean that intelligence is attached to the brain itself.

For Zubiri, intelligence is attached *not* to the brain but ultimately to the germinal plasma: "the psyche is in the [germinal] plasma in passive activity, and intelligence is in the psyche as a moment of this passive activity."[68] Recall that a) the psyche is a constitutive moment of the germinal plasma, b) there is a morphogenesis of the psyche and its faculties, and c) the morphogenesis transpires *in* the biochemical processes that develop the various physiological structures of the germinal plasma.

In the case of the intellective faculty, its formation takes place *in* the course of the development of the brain. This is why, for Zubiri, just as the development of nerve cells and of the structures of the nervous system is the moment of the liberation of stimulation, which is a constitutive moment in the formation of the faculty of sensibility, so too is the hyperformalization of the brain the moment of the *liberation* of intelligence that is attached primarily to the germinal plasma.[69] Like

[67]SH, 512.

[68]SH, 502.

[69]SH, 501.

in the case of the faculty of sensibility, the nervous system is *not* the creator, therefore, of the faculty of intelligence.

Zubiri underscores the attachment of intelligence to the germinal plasma by maintaining that it is already present in the germinal plasma as *potency* and not as a faculty. Contrary to Aristotle's position that potency and faculty are the same, Zubiri maintains that there is a difference between them. Unlike a faculty, potency is incapable of producing its own acts. It will be capable of such production only when it becomes a faculty. Thus, all faculties are potencies but the reverse cannot be maintained. Sensibility is an example of a potency that is also a faculty.[70]

In the case of human intelligence, it is present in the germinal plasma as potency; it will be capable of producing its own acts once it becomes a faculty. And intelligence becomes a faculty only at that moment when it is structurally united with sensibility.[71] For Zubiri, this structuring moment occurs precisely in the development of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons that are produced over the course of the human nervous system's genetic development, specifically that of the brain.

The brain, then, is not the organ that produces the faculty of intelligence; rather, it is the organ which, because of its hyperformalization, makes possible the entrance in action of intelligence that already exists as potency in the germinal plasma. The genetic development of the brain, specifically the production of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons, makes possible the liberation of intelligence that is undergoing its own formation *in* the developmental process of the brain. And when intelligence finally emerges, it does so no longer as potency but as faculty because of its structural unity with sensibility. And the result of said structuring is precisely the faculty of sentient intelligence.

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[70]IS, 90–91.

[71]SH, 503–504.

4.4. Contrast Between Pure Sensing (Sensibility) and Sentient Intelligence

How should the faculty of sentient intelligence be understood? Generally speaking, human sensibility, in contrast to animal sensibility, is intellective; human intelligence is a mode of sensibility that is essentially distinct from that of the animal.[72] To explain better the faculty of sentient intelligence, Zubiri compares it with the animal's faculty of pure sensing (sensibility). The comparison that Zubiri makes between pure sensing and sentient intelligence shows that the essential difference between the two faculties lies ultimately in the difference between the formalities proper to animals and to human beings.

Pure Sensing and the Formality of Stimulus. Under the formality of stimulus specific to the animal, the stimulus presents itself as an *other*, i.e., as something independent of the animal. Such independence is what Zubiri refers to as *objectivity*. However, this objectivity is only in relation to the animal's sensing process. This means that the animal apprehends the stimulus only as a stimulus or as merely stimulating and nothing else; the stimulus is apprehended only as a sign for the animal to respond to stimulation. Herein lies what Zubiri calls the *signitivity* of the stimulus.[73]

Once the animal gives its response, the stimulus ceases to be a stimulus. The objective character of the stimulus as merely stimulating is exhausted once the animal responds to stimulation. This shows that the objectivity of the stimulus forms a constitutive part of the animal's sensing process. Zubiri thus writes:

> Had there been no stimulation, there would not have been objective independence; the stimulus is exhausted in the stimulation. To apprehend something as mere stimulus is to apprehend it as an objective aspect of sensing, that is, as something independent, only, in sensing.[74]

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[72]IS, 84.

[73]IS, 49.

[74]SH, 459.

Given that the animal apprehends something under the formality of stimulus, i.e., merely as a sign directing it to make a response, Zubiri says that the animal has *pure sensing*.[75] Since what constitutes sensing is the apprehension of something by way of impression, the animal, then, has an *impression of the stimulus*.[76] To apprehend something under the formality of stimulus means to have this type of impression. For Zubiri, what constitutes the animal's pure sensing is this impression of the stimulus.

Zubiri's description of the animal's pure sensing and of the formality of stimulus helps in explaining the automatism or the instinctive nature of the animal's behavior in the presence of a stimulus. Although it is true that the degree of automatism may be less in some animals as evident in their capacity to learn new forms of behavior—a dog being trained to perform some tricks, for example—it is still an undeniable fact that animals in general are governed by, and act according to, their instincts. Due to the formality of stimulus proper to animals, the stimulus that is apprehended merely as stimulus triggers automatically the animal's instinct to give a response to stimulation. Thus, it is the stimulation itself which is, in a manner of speaking, "in charge" of the animal, determining it to respond automatically.

Animal of Distancing. Despite the fact that human beings have instincts like animals, their response to a stimulus is not usually automatic. Unlike in the case of the animal, there is a *distance* between the human being and the stimulus, and it is this distance that explains the non-automatism of human behavior in the presence of a stimulus. This is why the human being, for Zubiri, is the *animal of distancing*. This means that human beings apprehend the stimulus as so independent that they experience it as completely detached from them. This total and complete detachment of the stimulus from the human being is the meaning that Zubiri gives to the "hyper" in hyperformalization.[77]

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[75]IS, 52.

[76]IS, 53.

[77]IS, 70.

According to Zubiri, the complete detachment of the stimulus means that the stimulus is apprehended as more than just a sign of response; he refers to this as the *rupture in the stimulus's signitivity*. The stimulus continues to stimulate but the human being apprehends the stimulus as more than merely stimulating, i.e., as more than just a sign directed to the immediate production of a response. It is this rupture in signitivity that gives rise to the distance between the human being and the stimulus that is apprehended. This rupture enables the human being to plan and choose the response adequate to stimulation instead of merely responding to it instinctively or automatically. Unlike in the case of an animal, then, it is the human being who is *in charge* of the stimulus and the situation that it creates. For Zubiri, this distance between the human being and the stimulus caused by the rupture in the stimulus's signitivity means that the stimulus no longer presents itself under the formality of stimulus but under a new formality—the formality of reality.[78]

Sentient Intelligence and the Formality of Reality. The human being apprehends the notes of the stimulus as properly belonging to the stimulus (*en propio*) or as its own (*de suyo*). The stimulus does not cease to stimulate and therefore is something to which the human being should give a response. Unlike an animal, however, the human being apprehends the stimulus as being more than a mere stimulus, i.e., as being more than just a sign that elicits an immediate response. Instead of apprehending the stimulus merely as stimulus, the human being apprehends it in its character as reality, as something *de suyo*. And, for Zubiri, "reality is formally the 'de suyo' of what is sensed.…"[79] To contrast it with the formality of stimulus under which animals apprehend a stimulus merely as stimulus, Zubiri calls the *formality of reality* this new formality under which the human being apprehends the same stimulus as real.

Zubiri explains that the character of reality is not exhausted in the apprehension of the stimulus and, therefore, is not a constitutive part

[78]IS, 71.

[79]IS, 57.

of the human sensing process. For an animal, the stimulus ceases to be a stimulus once the animal has given its response precisely because it apprehends the stimulus merely as a sign for response. Now, granting that no human being was present to apprehend the stimulus, there would still be reality, i.e., the stimulus would remain being real.[80] Zubiri explains this point by saying that the stimulus is already what it is *de suyo* even prior (*prius*) to its apprehension by the human being.[81]

Given that human beings apprehend stimuli as being real, Zubiri says that they have an *impression of reality* in contrast to the impression of stimulus that animals have:

> When what is apprehended is reality, then the sensible impression is precisely and formally what I have called *impression of reality*. The impression of the animal is *impression of the stimulus*. [The human being] apprehends in impression the formality itself of reality.[82]

According to Zubiri, to apprehend something as real in impression is formally constitutive of intelligence. Apprehending reality is the exclusive, elemental, and radical act of intelligence; all its other acts, such as judging, conceiving, etc., are merely modes of apprehending reality and are therefore founded essentially on the act of apprehending something as real.[83] Now to have an impression is an act of the faculty of sensibility; to sense is to apprehend impressively. Since what is apprehended in impression is reality itself, the impression of reality, then, is an act *simultaneously* of sensibility and of intelligence. There are not two acts but two moments of only one and the same act: the sentient (sensible) moment is "impression" while the intellective moment is "of reality."[84] And this single act composed constitutively of the sentient and intellective moments is the act of the human faculty of sentient intelligence.

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[80]SH, 460.

[81]IS, 62.

[82]IS, 63.

[83]IS, 77–78.

[84]IS, 81.

To understand further why the impression of reality is only a single act but with two moments, it will be recalled that every stimulus has a content and a formality. For Zubiri, content and formality are not the same. Content is always specific while formality is non-specific.[85] For example, a book, a stone, a house, a person, etc. each has a different content. Yet, despite differences in their content, their formality is the same—they are all real since their properties pertain to them *en propio*. Therefore, in apprehending a content, one also apprehends its formality of reality and vice-versa. Thus, instead of two, there is only one impressive apprehension—that of a stimulus with a specific content under the formality of reality, which is non-specific.[86]

Unlike animals, then, human beings have an impression of reality. There is no difference in the content of the stimulus that a human being and an animal apprehend; rather, the difference lies in the formality under which the stimulus is apprehended. In animals, the stimulus is apprehended under the formality of stimulus; in human beings, the stimulus is apprehended under the formality of reality. It will be recalled that such an impression of reality is made possible because of the hyperformalization of the human brain, i.e., because of the formation of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons, which are non-specialized neurons with a non-specific activity. For Zubiri, "this is equivalent to admitting that if our activity has a richness incomparable to that of the rest of the animals, this is because our non-specific neurofunctional activity is much richer than in the rest of the species."[87] Now, Zubiri maintains that there is a correlation between these neurons and the human being's impression of reality. What this correlation consists in is the content of the next section.

[85]IS, 113–114.

[86]IS, 63–64.

[87]SH, 525.

4.5. Correlation Between the Impression of Reality and Non-Specialized Neurons

Before explaining the correlation that Zubiri maintains between the neurons with short axons and the human being's impression of reality, it will be helpful to recall some points discussed previously regarding the two classes of neurons in the cerebral cortex and the coordination that obtains between their respective activities.

First, neurons with short axons are not specialized for reception, association, and response; their activity is non-specific in this regard, like that of other neurons whose activity is the maintenance of the brain in a state of alertness or vigilance and the organization and modulation of the centers of the cortex and its various activities. These neurons are responsible for the production of a response to stimulation. Zubiri refers to this class of neurons as *non-specialized neurons* whose activity is *non-specific*. There is another class of neurons, referred to by Zubiri as *specialized neurons*, whose *specific* activity involves reception, association, and response with regard to stimulation.

Second, there is close coordination between the activities of these two classes of neurons. The specific activity of the specialized neurons is indispensable for the non-specific activity of the non-specialized neurons since the latter's activity is produced only in and through the former's. And without the activity of the non-specialized neurons, the animal will be unable to provide a response to stimulation. The specific activity of the specialized neurons, then, is at the service of the non-specific activity of the non-specialized neurons. This coordination between the two classes of neurons exists in both humans and animals.

How does Zubiri explain the correlation between the human being's impression of reality and the excess in the number of neurons with short axons? Although Zubiri himself says that the non-specific activity of neurons with short axons is *not* the impression of reality itself, he thinks that the impression of reality is made possible perhaps by the non-specific activity of neurons with short axons. This activity may be the reason why humans apprehend something not under the formality of stimulus—as is the case with animals—but under the

formality of reality. Since the same coordination between specialized and non-specialized neurons exists in both humans and animals, and since the difference between the brain of the human being and that of the most superior of animals is due to the excess, present only in the human brain, in the number of neurons with short axons, then perhaps it is because of these neurons that the human being has an opening to reality. This is why the human being, for Zubiri, has a *cerebral* aperture to reality in the non-specific activity of these neurons with short axons. For this reason, he maintains that brain activity is a constitutive moment of human intellective activity.[88]

The intellective activity, however, is also a constitutive moment of the activity of the brain. Recall that for Zubiri, the radical act of intelligence is apprehension (of reality) and that apprehension leads to arousal, which is the first moment of the sensing process. There is arousal only when there is stimulation. Now the reception of stimulation is the specific activity of the specialized neurons. As already mentioned, this specific activity sets in motion the non-specific activity of the non-specialized neurons that are in charge not only of maintaining the brain in a state of alertness but also, and more importantly, of coordinating the activities of the cortex so that the animal will be able to make a response to stimulation. Without stimulation, then, none of the vital activities of the brain will be set in motion. For this reason, and given that the radical act of intelligence is the apprehension of stimulus (as reality), Zubiri says that the intellective activity determines *intellectively* the processes of the brain.[89]

It is clear, then, that Zubiri correlates the human brain's advanced degree of development with the impression of reality and with the faculty of sentient intelligence. Without the formation of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons, human beings would have had no access to reality. Without the hyperformalization of the human brain, the intellective potency would not have been liberated from its attachment to the germinal plasma. And had the intellective

[88]SH, 525.

[89]SH, 525.

potency not been liberated from the germinal plasma, the faculty of sentient intelligence would not have emerged as it was the structural unity of sensibility with the intellective potency that gave rise to this human faculty.

4.6. Misconceptions about the Intellective Activity and Brain Activity

Zubiri, however, is aware that the correlation that he establishes between the genetic development of the brain and the formation of the faculty of sentient intelligence might lead to certain misconceptions about the relationship that obtains between the intellective faculty and the brain. What follows are three possible erroneous interpretations that Zubiri himself anticipates and the clarifications that he makes in response to each error.

First Error: Intellective Activity as a Brain Function. Intellection depends on the functions or processes of the brain and such dependence of the intellective activity on the brain results from the dynamic subtension structuring process. This dependence is such that intellection is not possible without the brain, although it does not follow necessarily that the intellective activity is itself a brain function because of this dependence: "Intellection is something that depends on the brain, but it is not formally a brain function, which are two different things."[90]

Second Error: The Brain as Organ of Intellection. Brain processes do not think, make decisions, feel, etc. and no organic process of the brain is capable of coming up with a creative idea. For Zubiri, "the electroencephalograms of a genius and of an 'ordinary' [human being] are in principle the same."[91] Moreover, to say that the brain is the organ of intellection is to say that intelligence is attached primarily to the brain. As previously explained, Zubiri maintains that the faculty of intelligence is attached to the germinal plasma and that the formation of this faculty takes place *in* the course of the development of the brain.

[90]SH, 527.

[91]SH, 493.

Third Error: Intellection as Merely the Most Complex Brain Process. To make such an affirmation is to admit that there is no difference between the intellective activity and the processes of the brain such that the former is ultimately reducible to the latter. For Zubiri, there is an *essential* difference between them which lies in the difference between the formality of stimulus and the formality of reality. The faculty of sensibility makes it possible for animals to apprehend only the specific dimension of the stimulus. In the case of human beings, they apprehend not just the specific dimension of the stimulus but also its non-specific dimension, i.e., the stimulus's character as real, because of their faculty of sentient intelligence. The difference between the two formalities is not merely gradual but *essential* because "there is no complexification of stimuli that produces by itself the sensing of these stimuli as realities, because the impression of reality is constitutively non-specific in contrast to the impression of the stimulus that is always specifically determined."[92] For this reason, the intellective activity cannot be merely the most complicated of brain processes and is therefore not reducible to the latter.

The intellective activity, then, is not a brain function or the most complex of brain functions; neither is the brain the organ of intellection. For Zubiri, rather, the brain is the organ that makes possible, because of its hyperformalization, the entrance in action of intelligence which already exists as potency in the germinal plasma. The unitary psycho-organic activity of the germinal plasma produces *simultaneously* the organic shaping of the brain and the entrance in action, or at least the possibility of the entrance in action, of the faculty of sentient intelligence.[93] And because of the dynamic subtension process that structures sensibility with the intellective potency, intellective activity is a constitutive moment of brain activity and brain activity is a constitutive moment of intellective activity.

[92]SH, 515.

[93]SH, 510.

Conclusion

As stated in the Introduction, Zubiri does not agree with the Aristotelian definition of the human being as a rational animal. For him, it is not rationality but intelligence that essentially defines the human being. Human intelligence, however, is sentient. Zubiri relates the formation of the faculty of sentient intelligence to the genetic development of the nervous system. The first stage begins with the development of nerve cells and the progressive centralization of the nervous system, all of which are constitutive of the faculty of sensibility.

The next stage is the production of an excess in the number of neurons with short axons, which causes the structuring of the faculty of sensibility with intelligence already existing as potency in the germinal plasma. The result of these two stages is precisely the faculty of sentient intelligence. Thus, without the development of the nervous system, this human faculty would not have been formed. For this reason, Zubiri says that the formation of sentient intelligence should be understood as the genetic product of the unitary psycho-organic activity present in the germinal plasma.[94]

The animal apprehends the stimulus under the formality of stimulus, i.e., as merely stimulating the animal to provide a response automatically or instinctively. In the case of the animal, the production of an adequate response to stimulation is assured by its physiological structures. In the case of human beings, however, they do not have such an assurance because their nervous system is deficient, despite the superior degree of development it has reached, in providing an adequate response to stimulation.

This deficiency is why human beings need to exercise their faculty of sentient intelligence in order to survive. By means of this faculty, the human being apprehends a stimulus under the formality of reality. To apprehend a stimulus as real is the primary biological function of

[94]SH, 505.

sentient intelligence because it enables the human being to plan and choose the form of response appropriate to the stimulation instead of merely responding automatically to it. For this reason, Zubiri says that although the formality of reality is irreducible to the formality of stimulus, there is no break in the course of evolution from the animal to the human species.[95]

Finally, Zubiri says that just as the faculty of sentient intelligence is a genetic product of the psycho-organic activity of the germinal plasma, so too are the human faculties of feeling and volition (will). These faculties correspond to the moments of tonic modification and response, respectively, of the animal's sensing process. In the human being, "feeling is the sentient affect of the real; volition is a determining tendency in the real."[96] And the essential difference between the animal's tonic modification and response and the human being's feeling and volition is due to the impression of reality: "Only because there is sentient apprehension of the real, that is, only because there is impression of reality is there feeling and volition."[97] Zubiri says that because of the impression of reality, the human being is essentially the *animal of realities*. This access to reality, made possible by an intelligence that is sentient, ultimately distinguishes the human animal from the rest of the animal species.

[95]HRP, 68.

[96]IS, 283.

[97]IS, 283.

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ESCHATOLOGY AND ETHICS IN PAUL'S LETTER TO THE GALATIANS*

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This author's whole dissertation, of which this paper is a part, explores the role of eschatology in the ethical arguments or teachings of St. Paul. Now it is widely acknowledged that Paul generally issues an imperative based on a given indicative or, in the language of this work, motivation. This indicative or motivation may be either a "warrant" or a "sanction"—categories that we have borrowed from L. Keck.[1] Accordingly, for every moral appeal that Paul issues in the letter to the Galatians, we explore its motivations or "indicatives" that are eschatological in nature, that is, realities that pertain formally to the end-times or end-time realities that have already impinged on the present, and show how they inform or ground Paul's moral appeals.

Before we jump into our main task, it may be helpful to begin with some introductory observations concerning the nature and structure of this letter.

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[1]L. Keck, "Re-thinking 'New Testament Ethics'," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 115:1 (1996): 3–16.

The Doctrinal and the Paraenetic Sections

We have seen in Paul's letters to the Corinthians how the doctrinal and the hortatory parts, the "indicative" and the "imperative," are rather interspersed such that one cannot really distinguish a theological section and a paraenetical section. This is not the case, however, with the Apostle's letter to the Galatians, for in this correspondence one can clearly single out the doctrinal part and the hortatory part. Despite the difference in opinion as to where the hortatory section begins,[2] one cannot deny the fact that it is in chapter 5 that Paul draws out the conclusion (οὐ) and implications of the freedom that the Christian has attained by accepting Christ in faith. Longenecker sees that addressing the issue of practical lifestyle is necessary "if Paul's case concerning Christian freedom from the law is ultimately to have force.… Without a demonstration of how his gospel provides a framework out of which moral and social responsibility emerges, the concerns of the Galatians would not have been fully addressed."[3] Thus, the two sections should not be seen as unrelated to each other, or that the hortatory section is merely an addition to the doctrinal section[4] or independent of it: it "*develops out of and concludes his earlier arguments*."[5] Matera even argues

[2]For a detailed discussion on this question, see O. Merk, "Der Beginn der Paränese im Galaterbrief," *Zeitschrift für neutestamentliche Wissenschaft* 60 (1969): 83–104. See also F. Matera, "The Culmination of Paul's Argument to the Galatians: Gal. 1.1–6.17," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 32 (1988): 80–81. To cite just a couple of opinions, Ebeling fixes the beginning at 5:1, Barclay at 5:13, and Duncan at 5:26.

[3]R. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC 41 (Dallas: Word Books), 80–81.

[4]Matera, "The Culmination," 85, cites this opinion of J. Smit, "Redactie in de brief aan galaten: Retorische analyse van Gal. 4.12–6.18," *Tidjschrift voor Theologie* 26 (1986): 113–144.

[5]J. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 79–80.

that the paraenetical section actually serves as the culmination of Paul's argument in this letter.[6]

The Link between the Doctrinal and Paraenetic Sections

Tracing the connection between the doctrinal and the paraenetical sections in broad strokes, one notes that up to chapter 5 Paul has been trying to show the Galatians how they have allowed themselves to slip back into their condition of slavery or un-freedom by listening to those who are disturbing them, forcing them to put the law, with all its accompanying ritual observances, instead of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ back into the center of their lives. In various terms, Paul describes this as a "slipping back" into a condition of slavery. He speaks, first of all, of their deserting him who called them in the grace of Christ and of their turning to a different gospel. In other words, Paul had already introduced them into the realm of the Spirit (3:3) but their present turning away from the Gospel amounted to "ending in the flesh." Before they began in the life of the Spirit, Paul reminded them of how they lacked knowledge of God and were serving those who by nature are not gods. Then, through Paul's preaching, they had come to know God (or God had come to know them). But no sooner had they attained the knowledge of God did they turn back to the weak and beggarly elements which they wished to serve once again (5:9). All these manifestations of wanting to become "slaves" again are then reformulated and summed up by Paul as their "desire to be under the law" (4:21). Yet Paul declares by the allegory of Sarah and Tamar that as Christian believers they are not "children of the slave but of the free woman" (4:31). In short, they have become free by their faith in Jesus Christ. What this freedom entails or implies Paul will expound upon in the next remaining chapters.

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[6]Specifically, Matera argues that the chapters containing moral exhortation "should not be viewed exclusively as paraenesis. They are the climax of Paul's deliberative argument aimed at persuading the Galatians not to be circumcised" (Matera, "The Culmination," 80).

1. Standing Fast to the Freedom Won by Christ (5:1)

The first text that is relevant to our study comes right at the beginning of the paraenetic section. While the first explicit imperative in this letter is given in 4:12, it is in 5:1 that we find the first one that is grounded in an eschatological idea. Let us now examine this relevant verse.

In what appears to be a conclusion to all that he has said so far, Paul says:

> 5:1 Τῇ ἐλευθερίᾳ ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν· στήκετε οὖν καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῷ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε.
>
> [For freedom Christ has set us free; stand fast, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery.]

The first part of the statement contains the reason or motivation, the content of which is that Christ has brought us to freedom. The second part is the consequent (οὖν) appeal to "stand fast" and "not submit again to a yoke of slavery." Thus, we have the usual Pauline formulation of an "indicative" followed by an "imperative."

1.1 The exhortation

What Paul is asking the Galatian community in this verse is expressed in both positive and negative terms. Positively, he calls on them to "stand firm" (στήκετε), that is, hold fast to the freedom that Christ has won for them. Negatively, he asks them "not to submit again to a yoke of slavery" (καὶ μὴ πάλιν ζυγῷ δουλείας ἐνέχεσθε). Paul is asking the Galatians not to go back to their old life and to stand fast to the present one. This appeal may be best understood by reviewing what occurred in the Galatian community after Paul had evangelized them. As the letter itself says, some outsiders came to Galatia and troubled the community by introducing a "different gospel" (ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον [1:6]). Whereas for Paul, there can be no gospel other than

that which he has preached to them; thus, he did not spare condemning words against those who claimed to preach another one.

On the other hand, Paul confronts and rebukes the community for easily giving in to the trouble-makers, "quickly deserting him who called (them) in the grace of Christ" (1:6). Somebody must have bewitched (ἐβάσκανεν) them, making them completely forget that it was before their very eyes that Jesus Christ was portrayed as crucified (3:1). Paul expected them to have grown in their faith, but by "turning to a different gospel" they who have begun with the Spirit are now ending with the flesh (3:3). Moreover, Paul rebukes them for turning back to observing "days, and months, and seasons, and years"—an observance which recalls their former state when they did not yet know God and were subject to beings that were not really gods (4:8–10). Paul sees this slipping back to their former condition as going back again into "slavery" (5:1). Whereas, as Paul reminds them now, the law, once their παιδαγωγὸς (3:24) or ἐπιτρόπους or οἰκονόμους (4:2), has been superseded with the coming of Christ and faith (cf. 3:23ff). In Christ, they are no longer "slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe" (4:3) but have become children and heirs (4:6–7), and free men and women being children not of the slave but of the free woman (4:31).

Thus, Paul wants the Galatians to leave behind their past which was characterized by enslavement. Instead, they are to embrace this new life of freedom Christ has won for them. Specifically, Paul's appeal appears to be oriented toward resisting occasions or temptations to go back to that old life. While Christ has definitively won their freedom, they are still subject to the influences of sin in the world where they live. Thus, Paul says στήκετε: "hold or stand firm; do not be moved by any form of persuasion especially towards that old life." And this means primarily, as we have seen, holding on to the gospel Paul had preached to them rather than turning to a different one. Negatively, they are not to allow themselves to be subjected again (πάλιν) to a "yoke of slavery" (ζυγῷ δουλείας), that is, not to allow themselves to be burdened again by pursuing the "works of the law" and circumcision and also by being subject to the στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου which included the observance of certain calendars.

1.2 The eschatological motivation

As the text shows, Paul grounds his appeal to the Galatian believers on the fact that Christ has already won for them their freedom. Paul refers, of course, to what Christ has done for humanity, that is, given his life for them by his death on the cross. It is not by the work of someone else or by means of something else that they have attained their freedom; it is only by the sacrifice of Christ. Paul also underlines the liberating aspect of Christ's sacrifice. His death has loosened all bonds, especially the bond of sin and death.

Thus, it is by the liberating act of Christ that Paul reinforces his appeal to the Galatians. Yet this act is not merely some this-worldly phenomenon or event. It takes on an eschatological character, and this eschatological quality can be seen from at least four angles. First of all, it is eschatological in that it is won for believers by Christ whose coming marks the beginning of the eschatological age. Paul proclaims this truth in a number of ways in this letter. This is expressed in 4:4–5, when Paul says, "But when the time had fully come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law" (4:4–5). God's sending of his son as a human being ushers in the dawning of redemption. In the words of Vollenweider,[7] this "fullness of time" (4:4) "schlägt die Selbstverschliessung in der Vergangenheit zur Öffnung in die Zukunft, schlägt die Stabilisierung eigener Identität sur Participation an der eschatologischen Dynamik des Geistes um."

Another aspect of Christ's life which Paul emphasizes as the means by which Christian freedom is won is precisely his death on the cross. By saying that "if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (2:21), Paul implicitly asserts that it is through the death of Christ that justification is effected. And justification means that former sinners and enemies of God are put right and achieve reconciliation with God, thus marking a new, eschatological life. The

[7] S. Vollenweider, *Freiheit als neue Schöpfung. Eine Untersuchung zur Eleutheria bei Paulus und in seiner Umwelt*, FRLANT 147 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1989), 310–311.

eschatological character of Christ's death on the cross is also hinted at in Paul's resolve and wish not to boast in anything (such as "glorying in the flesh," in the case of those who impose circumcision) "except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (6:14). What the Jews considered a supreme example of disgrace (death on the cross) became for Paul the source of boasting and of bringing him into a new relationship with the world: it is "crucified" to him as he is "crucified" to it. Thus, "the new freedom does not exist apart from Christ, not even for the Jews."[8] As Kertelge expresses it, "Die von Paulus verteidigte Freiheit der Christen hat ihren 'Ort' und ihren Bestand 'in Christus', und dies deswegen, weil sie ihren Grund in der *Tat* Christi hat."[9] And the same author rightly identifies the freedom won for believers by Christ as "das eschatologische Heilsgut, das in einem *konsequenten* Glauben an Jesus Christus Gegenwart wird."[10]

Secondly, the liberating act of Christ is also eschatological in that *it signals a break from the law and circumcision as means of being justified before God*. The law has always been for the Jews a source of blessing (cf., for instance, Ps. 119). It was what bound them to God. Equally valued was the mark of circumcision: it was not only the sign of God's covenant with God's people (Gen. 17:11) but also the content of that covenant itself (Gen. 17:10). However, Paul declares that with the coming of Christ, and thus faith, the law and circumcision have ceased to be the "custodian" of God's people. For the coming of Christ signals the maturation of the relationship between God and God's people; that is to say, in Christ they are no longer children, "slaves to the elemental spirits of the universe" (4:3), but adopted sons and daughters and hence heirs (4:5–7). Cosgrove has articulated well what for Paul is the significance of the coming of Christ—particularly his death—for

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[8]B. Gerhardsson, "*Eleutheria* (Freedom) in the Bible," in B. Thompson, ed., *Scripture: Meaning and Method* (Hull, England: Hull University Press, 1987), 14.

[9]L. Kertelge, "Freiheitsbotschaft und Liebesgebot in Galaterbrief," in H. Merklein, ed., *Neues Testament und Ethik* (Freiburg: Herder, 1989), 329.

[10]Kertelge, "Freiheitsbotschaft und Liebesgebot in Galaterbrief," 337.

the law and, indeed, for the cosmos. He says that for the Apostle, the death of Christ marks the radical break "between life in Christ and life 'in this present evil age' (1:4),"[11] that is, Christ's death is death to the law (cf. 2:19) as it is death to the cosmos.[12] Consequently, "the rules that promote life in the present cosmic order," "the rules ordained by the Torah ('the works of the law')" "do not promote life in Christ."[13] Indeed, as Cosgrove further affirms, "Paul attends to the symbol of death (more than the resurrection) in making his case against the theory that works of the law promote eschatological life."[14]

As for circumcision, Paul declares that to impose it means to nullify what Christ has done (5:2; cf. 2:21) because receiving circumcision means binding oneself to the law which means, in turn, wanting to be justified by it. Thus, to receive circumcision means to be cut off from Christ and to "have fallen away from grace" (5:4). The freedom that the death of Christ brings is therefore eschatological in that his death means death to the cosmos and death to the law and its requirements; positively, it ushers in eschatological life.

Thirdly, the freedom that Christ's sacrifice brings to believers is eschatological in its *orientation and purpose*. For, as Paul qualifies, this freedom is not to be used "as an opportunity for the flesh" (ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί [5:13]). Now, the "flesh" (σάρξ), as Paul will elaborate in a couple of verses further on, is the power that competes with the Spirit (πνεῦμα) in soliciting the obedience of human beings. In this context, Paul presents it as a negative force, obedience to which brings forth "works" such as fornication, impurity, licentiousness, and other vices (cf. 5:19–21a). Thus, Paul appeals, Christian freedom is not to be used to promote these forms of wickedness. Instead, as Paul continues, this freedom is to be used in the service of one another through love

[11]C. Cosgrove, *The Cross and the Spirit: A Study in the Argument and Theology of Galatians* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1988), 183.

[12]Cosgrove, *The Cross and the Spirit*, 183.

[13]Cosgrove, *The Cross and the Spirit*, 183.

[14]Cosgrove, *The Cross and the Spirit*, 183.

(διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις [5:13b]). This is because, as Paul adds right away, "the whole Law is fulfilled in one word: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (5:14). Thus, the new freedom of believers has a paradoxical character: it is freedom from bondage to the law and circumcision, yet it is also entering into servanthood with one another (cf. δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις). Such a conception of freedom departs from that of the philosophers of Paul's day who held rather that a free person "exists for [himself or herself] and not for another."[15] This new "slavery," however, is of a different kind since it is to be practised διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης. Christian "servitude" is "servitude" in love. Thus, love is the appropriate form and expression of Christian freedom.[16] Now, as the summary and fulfillment of the law, and as "the greatest" of the three cardinal virtues[17] (cf. 1 Cor. 13), ἀγάπη assumes an eschatological character. This is also affirmed by S. Pedersen when, in the light of 1 Cor. 13, he proclaims love as "den eschatologischen Hauptbegriff des Paulus."[18] If this is so, then Christian freedom, which finds its appropriate concretization in love, also acquires an eschatological character.

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[15]Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 2, as quoted by V. Furnish, "Paul: Faith Active in Love," in *The Love Command in the New Testament* (London: SCM Press, 1973), 98 (also quoted by G. Friedrich, "Freiheit und Liebe im ersten Korintherbrief," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 26 [1970]: 85). Furnish also cites a similar conception of freedom in Epictetus, *Discourses* IV, vii, l6–17: "I have been set free by God. I know His commands, no one has power any longer to make a slave of me…" (also quoted by J. Moffatt, *Love in the New Testament* [London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1932], 190).

[16]For a more detailed treatment of the relationship between freedom and the love-commandment in this letter, see Kertelge, "Freiheitsbotschaft und Liebesgebot in Galaterbrief," 326–337.

[17]That is, faith, hope, and love (cf. 1 Cor. 13).

[18]Quoted by Kertelge, "Freiheitsbotschaft und Liebesgebot in Galaterbrief,", 337, from S. Pedersen, "Agape – der escathologische Hauptbegriff bei Paulus," in *Die paulinische Literatur und Theologie*, Skandinavische Beiträge, Theologiske Studier 7 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 159–186.

Fourthly and lastly, Christ's liberating act (or the freedom that it brings) is eschatological in that *it is closely linked to the Spirit*, the eschatological gift *par excellence*. Particularly for Paul, Christian freedom is to place oneself under the guidance of the Spirit (πνεῦμα). This is the reverse side of using one's freedom "as an opportunity for the flesh." At the same time, it is also true that "the Spirit of the Lord creates freedom";[19] as God's creative dynamism, it empowers believers to obedience and enables the "fruit" of the Spirit to be born in them. That Christian freedom is to be exercised under the lead of the Spirit is expressed by Paul in his appeals in 5:16 and 5:25. In these verses, Paul calls for "walking in the Spirit" (πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε) and "living in harmony with the Spirit" (πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν), respectively. Negatively, "walking in the Spirit" entails "not gratify(ing) the desires of the flesh" (5:16). When it is the Spirit that controls the lives of believers, it bears "fruit" in them with manifold expressions—"love, joy, peace, patience" (5:22–23)—realities which, in the words of Furnish, "may be regarded as social manifestations of the believer's radically new (eschatological) life in Christ, 'sustained' by his love."[20] Thus, the close connection of Christian freedom with the power of the Spirit, God's primary eschatological gift, attests to the eschatological character of this freedom itself.

1.3 The reason for holding on to eschatological freedom

While Christ has already won for believers their freedom, this freedom can be lost again. And Paul in vv. 2–12 shows how this is possible. Paul's discussion focuses on the issue that has caused the major concern—that of circumcision. Specifically, Paul says that insisting on receiving circumcision is tantamount to being "enslaved" again and nullifying what Christ has done for them. Paul says that if they desire to receive circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to them (5:2). It also means they are bound to keep the whole law (5:3)

[19]Gerhardsson, "*Eleutheria*," 21.

[20]Furnish, *The Love Command*, 98.

which, as Paul says, no one has ever done perfectly (3:10; 6:13). Indeed, Paul tells them that by wanting to be justified by the law, "[they] are severed from Christ … [they] have fallen away from grace" (5:4). Secondly, having declared that receiving circumcision and being under the law does not bring about justification, Paul declares instead what does justify: the hope of righteousness that is through the Spirit by faith (5:5). At the same time, Paul declares why this is so: "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision or uncircumcision is of any avail, but faith working through love" (5:6). Thirdly, Paul alerts them to the fact that whereas they have been running well, someone is now trying to hinder them from obeying the truth. This thinking cannot be coming from him who has called them (5:7, 8). He also warns that whoever has misled them will not escape God's judgment (5:10b). Lastly, he argues from his personal example. He said that he himself has stopped preaching circumcision and that this is why he is still being persecuted (5:11a). But he says that to preach circumcision still is to remove the stumbling block of the cross (5:11b), the very thing that his enemies have been wanting to do (6:12) but which for Paul is the only source of glory (6:14).

Through all this argumentation Paul tries to use persuasion—appealing to his readers' minds by offering explanation— rather than simply resorting to sanctions of threat of punishment or the promise of reward. While Paul mentions the fact that those who insist on receiving circumcision are severed from Christ and have fallen away from grace, reference to this sanction is not made the expressed motivation for the appeal not to slip back to the condition of slavery. On the contrary, Paul lets the Galatian believers see how that freedom which Christ has won for them is too precious to be passed over or disregarded. And how incompatible old enslaving ways are to this fresh freedom in Christ.

1.4 Summary and conclusion

In 5:1, Paul invokes the freedom Christ has won for believers to ground his appeal to the Galatian Christians that they hold fast—precisely to this freedom and to the gospel they have received—and not

submit again to a life of "slavery." Christ won this freedom through his cross. Through this sacrifice, Christ liberated them from the "elemental spirits of the universe," from "bondage to beings that are by nature no gods" (4:8). Through it, he also liberated them from the "curse" which those who rely on the works of the law are under (3:10, 14). However, this newfound eschatological freedom is not a license to do anything; it has a definite form and character. It is to be exercised not as an instrument of the flesh but of the Spirit. The extraordinary source and character of this freedom, therefore, ought to motivate believers to remain in it and guard it. The use of the eschatological idea of Christian freedom in this text also shows the Apostle's concern to base his appeals on warrants rather than on sanctions.

5:13–6:10: Life in the Spirit

In 5:1–12, Paul asks the Galatian believers to hold fast to the freedom Christ has won for them by not submitting again to the "slavery" of circumcision. At the same time, however, this newfound freedom should be used properly, for it can be used either for good or for bad. Specifically, Paul says it can be used to further the interests either of the flesh (σάρξ) or of the Spirit (πνεῦμα)—the two opposing forces vying for supremacy in the lives of people in the world. Naturally, Paul wants the Galatians to use their newfound freedom to further their life in the Spirit. This is what he will constantly urge them to do from 5:13 through to 6:10 by means of both general and particular appeals.

The first general way by which the Galatians are to use their newfound freedom properly is by not using it "as an opportunity for the flesh" (εἰς ἀφορμὴν τῇ σαρκί [5:13a]). What Paul precisely means by this is illumined by the opposite behavior he wants the community to exhibit. That is, they are to promote mutual service through love (cf. ἀλλὰ διὰ τῆς ἀγάπης δουλεύετε ἀλλήλοις [5:13b]). Implicitly, then, using one's freedom "as an opportunity for the flesh" means to live in selfishness and desire evil for one's neighbor, to live contrary to love. Paul highlights the importance of ἀγάπη by reminding the Galatians that the whole law is fulfilled in the command to love the neighbor (5:14). Love of the neighbor is to be promoted instead of its exact

opposite which is desiring evil for the neighbor. This is confirmed by Paul's warning to the community against "biting," "devouring," and "consuming" one another (cf. v. 15)—behavior associated with fighting among ferocious animals. Instead of such "animalistic" behavior, the Galatians are to "walk by the Spirit" (cf. v. 16: πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε) or to "live in harmony with the Spirit" (cf. v. 25: πνεύματι … στοιχῶμεν). These general appeals are backed up by motivations some of which are eschatological. Let us now look closely at the relevant texts.

2. Walking by the Spirit (5:16–24)

2.1 The moral appeal

The call to proper use of freedom receives another specification in v. 16 when Paul calls on the Galatians: Λέγω δέ, πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε καὶ ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε. By introducing his appeal with Λέγω δέ, Paul seems to underline the importance of his call by pointing to the fact that it is he, their spiritual founder, who is calling on them. Paul's imperative is that the Galatians walk by the Spirit (cf. πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε). This most likely means to live a life which is guided by the Spirit, or a life in which the primary dynamism is the Spirit, a life controlled or propelled by the Spirit. Negatively, the call to "walk by the Spirit" means that they are not to "gratify the desires of the flesh" (cf. ἐπιθυμίαν σαρκὸς οὐ μὴ τελέσητε). That is to say, they are not to feed on the desires of the flesh and bring to completion or fulfillment (cf. τελέσητε) its various cravings.

A closer look at the imperatives in vv. 13 and 16 reveals that there is a reversal in their formulations. Verse 13 begins with a negative imperative (=prohibition) followed by a positive command. Whereas v. 16 begins with a positive command followed by a prohibition. Paul's basic imperative in both verses is that the Galatians employ their freedom in the service of the good (the Spirit) and not of evil (the flesh).

2.2 Eschatological warrants and sanctions

Looking at the imperatives we have just seen in vv. 13 and 16, we also find their accompanying motivations. The appeal to the Galatians not to use their freedom as an occasion for the flesh but as a means for loving service is grounded on the idea that love fulfills what the law commands (cf. v. 14). On the other hand, the appeal in v. 16 to walk by the Spirit and not gratify the desires of the flesh is grounded on what Paul would elaborate in vv. 17–24. In these verses, Paul essentially points to how the opposing forces—flesh and Spirit—work and what they have to offer to those who "serve" them. By considering how each works and what each has to offer, Paul hopes that it will not be difficult for the Galatians to see which of the two they should follow. However, given that serving or following either force or realm determines one's ultimate destiny, the motivations that are involved here do have an eschatological character. Let us now determine the configuration of the eschatological motivations involved.

That the elaboration in vv. 17–24 constitutes an explanation for the appeal in v. 16 is marked by γὰρ (v. 17). In these verses (17–24), Paul establishes the stark contrast and opposition between the flesh and the Spirit. Paul develops this contrast in three moments. First, he says that the flesh and the Spirit act or work contrary to each other (cf. v. 17: ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται…). Second, he declares that being led by the Spirit means not being under the law (v. 18). Third, he shows the contrasting influence each realm has in people's lives in referring to the "works of the flesh" (vv. 19–21a) and the "fruit of the Spirit" (vv. 22–23a). On this point, Paul adds that doing the "works of the flesh" will result in the forfeiting of the kingdom of God (v. 21b) whereas allowing the "fruit of the Spirit" to bear infringes no law (cf. v. 23b). In each of these parts, Paul shows why the Galatians have to reject the flesh and embrace the Spirit as the guiding force in their lives.

2.2.1. Eschatological sanction: the threat of forfeiting the Kingdom. After enumerating "the works of the flesh" (v. 19), Paul adds this warning: "I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God." This warning of an eschatological

sanction contains an implied appeal not to engage precisely in the enumerated wicked deeds. The list of vices or wicked deeds is certainly not exhaustive yet is representative of the wicked deeds that any person can do. Now, whereas for the moral philosophies existing at the time (such as Stoicism) such a catalogue of vices might have been seen as nothing more than being contrary to good character, it has a more serious and eschatological repercussion in the Christian perspective: it leads to the forfeiting of the inheritance of the Kingdom of God.[21] This is a clear affirmation that engaging in the "works of the flesh" even on the part of believers results in the forfeiting of the inheritance of the kingdom. Hansen explains why this is so by saying that those who do such works really do not show that they have the Spirit in them, for the presence of the Spirit results in moral transformation.[22] At the same time, he argues that one cannot claim to have the Spirit without such moral transformation, and if one does not have the Spirit then one has not really been justified, and that one who is not justified cannot inherit the kingdom of God.[23]

Paul's declaration that those who engage in the works of the flesh shall not inherit the kingdom of God is significant in a number of ways. Some see in this Paul's desire "to vindicate his gospel from even the suspicion of antinomianism."[24] "By doing so he is refuting his opponents' claim that his gospel ignores the whole issue of correct behavior since it dismissed the Law."[25] While this observation is true, it must also be insisted upon that Paul's urging to proper behavior is not by means of observance of the law but by means of the use of

[21]Cf. F. Matera, *Galatians*, Sacra Pagina 9 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1992), 210.

[22]Cf. G. Hansen, *Galatians*, IVPNTC (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 177.

[23]Hansen, *Galatians*, 177.

[24]G. Duncan, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1934), 172.

[25]P. Tarazi, *Galatians: A Commentary* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1994), 296.

Christian freedom concretized in living or "walking" by the Spirit. Another significance given to Paul's warning is that it appears to run counter to Paul's doctrine of justification by faith in its giving importance to individual human effort. However, this seeming contradiction is rightly explained by saying that although avoiding these vices is the believer's task, it is her or his "work"; she or he does not "earn" the Kingdom of God by doing so. For the Kingdom is an *inheritance* and thus a gift.[26] As such, it is given to children or heirs—the believers who are children of God—who do not need to work for it. As long as they remain God's children, they have a claim to it, or, rather, God bestows it upon them as a Father. The right to inherit it is abolished when they cease to act as God's children, that is, when they follow the lead of the flesh rather than of the Spirit.[27]

Thus, Paul's mention of the eschatological threat is fitting and called for in this context. It is not superfluous or given merely for the sake of evoking fear and thus commanding obedience. Paul is concerned that believers, especially those who think that they have been freed from the law or those who think they can take refuge in their being circumcised, do not exhibit overconfidence and neglect their moral tasks. At the same time, lest they underestimate God's reaction to such evildoing, Paul insists that it is not just some light thing that they will miss but the Kingdom of God altogether. The Galatian believers (or all believers, for that matter) cannot remain God's children and still keep their inheritance while engaging in evil behavior. For the reference to the Kingdom as an "inheritance" implies the idea that only sons and daughters merit the benefit. Believers are adopted sons and daughters of God (4:5–7) and are promised the inheritance of the Kingdom. However, once they no longer live as such, they lose their privilege.[28]

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[26]Cf. L. Morris, *Galatians: Paul's Charter of Christian Freedom* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 172.

[27]Cf. Duncan, *Galatians*, 173.

[28]We do not say "right" because God's kingdom is intended for us not as a "right" but as a privilege or grace.

2.2.2. Eschatological warrant: the superiority of life in the Spirit over life in the flesh. The seriousness of Paul's warning in 5:21b may lead to overemphasis on the eschatological threat contained therein. However, as one notes in other parts of vv. 17–25, the Apostle tries to ground his exhortation in v. 16 by other means, leading to the ultimate eschatological motivation he gives in v. 25. The result is that the Apostle, in trying to dialogue with this community and convince them to "walk by the Spirit," is motivated not only by eschatological sanctions but more importantly by eschatological warrants. Let us now illustrate how this is so.

One notes that after Paul has expressed his exhortation in v. 16, he takes pains to provide an explanation for it. That is, he does not resort immediately to sanctions (of reward or punishment) but tries to convince his audience that what he is asking of them is reasonable and fits their status as believers. Accordingly, he begins by presenting the believers with the context of their moral lives by introducing the two forces that compete for their loyalty—the flesh and the Spirit. As we have said earlier, Paul presents various aspects of their opposition. First, he describes them in terms of their opposite actions: ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα κατὰ τῆς σαρκός, ταῦτα γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἀντίκειται, ἵνα μὴ ἃ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε (v. 17). While there is no problem understanding the first parts of this statement, the concluding *hina*-clause has proved to be an exegetical challenge. The common reading is that the resultant condition whereby believers cannot do what they want flows from the fact that the flesh and the Spirit are opposed to each other. However, if this is so, then a person who wants to do either good or bad always ends up being frustrated because each force exerts its influence to frustrate the desired action. Also, if this is the case, then what is the meaning of Paul's exhortation to "walk by the Spirit"? Thus, the common reading should be rejected. Among the plausible alternatives that have been suggested, that of Kilgallen[29] seems preferable. Examining the syntax of the verse more closely, Kilgallen surmises that Paul is making an

[29]J. Kilgallen, "The Strivings of the Flesh … (Galatians 5,17)," *Biblica* 80 (1999): 113–114.

affirmation about the action of the flesh (ἡ γὰρ σὰρξ ἐπιθυμεῖ κατὰ τοῦ πνεύματος), the intended purpose of which is given in the final *hina*-clause (ἵνα μὴ ἃ ἐὰν θέλητε ταῦτα ποιῆτε). Accordingly, he reads the clauses in between as a parenthetical explanation for the initial affirmation. Thus, the whole verse should be read as: "For the flesh desires against the Spirit (and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other), so that (or in order that) you cannot do what you want." When read this way, Kilgallen says, the fact that a person cannot do (the good)[30] that they want to do is the result not of the natural opposition of the flesh and the Spirit but of the fact that the flesh tries to frustrate it.[31]

Thus, Paul unravels the character of the flesh—how it is opposed to the Spirit and tries to frustrate the good that the Galatian believers would want to do. On the contrary, he says, "if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law" (εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστὲ ὑπὸ νόμον [5:18]). The re-introduction of the idea of the "law" (νόμος; cf. 2:16ff) appears abrupt and uncalled for. But this is not really so, since at the beginning of this chapter (5) Paul speaks of the law again when he says that if the Galatians insist on being circumcised, they are bound to keep the whole law (v. 3). In this light, the statement in v. 18 makes sense. Paul is declaring that to be led by the Spirit is not to be under the "yoke" of the law. To be guided by the Spirit means to be freed from the control of the law. Thus, the Spirit reinforces or promotes the freedom that Christ has won for believers.

A third way by which Paul establishes the contrast between the flesh and the Spirit (and thus underlining why believers should let

[30]This is to be assumed from the thrust of Paul's argument. Since it is the flesh which is the principal focus, then, what it tries to frustrate is the "good" that a person wants to do.

[31]As to alternative solutions, Kilgallen recommends as "the best solution" from an exegetical perspective that of J. Lambrecht ("The Right Things You Want to Do: A Note on Galatians 5,17d," *Biblica* 79 [1998]: 515–524). See also the suggestion of Barclay (*Obeying the Truth*, 115) which Matera (*Galatians*, 207) finds helpful.

themselves be guided by the Spirit) is by presenting their respective manifestations or effects. First, Paul presents "the works" (ἔργα) of the flesh. These are easily recognizable in the form of fornication, impurity, licentiousness, and other shameful behavior (vv. 19–21a). In contrast, Paul points to "the fruit" (ὁ καρπὸς) of the Spirit which is manifested in terms of love, joy, peace, patience, and other spiritual qualities (vv. 22–23a). The contrast between "the works of the flesh" and "the fruit of the Spirit" has a number of implications. First of all, by speaking of "fruit," Paul implies that where believers walk by the Spirit, "Christian character and conduct develop naturally.…"[32] These grow spontaneously as the fruit of a tree does. At the same time, this expression implies a positive dynamic of growth, whereas the "works of the flesh" show a negative dynamic of decadence or of dying.[33]

Secondly, by describing what the Spirit produces not in terms of "works" but rather of "fruit," the Apostle shifts the emphasis away from human endeavor. This idea is also implied in Paul's reference to this "fruit" as that *of the Spirit* (τοῦ πνεύματός). While these spiritual qualities are to be manifested by the believer on the one hand, their ultimate source is Spirit. Believers cooperate by obeying the prompting of the Spirit, although they cannot by themselves make these virtues bear fruit.

Thirdly, Paul speaks of the "fruit" (καρπὸς) of the Spirit (singular) and not "fruits" of the Spirit (plural). Thus, Paul imagines these virtues (as they are often called in moral philosophy) not as many individual, separate manifestations of the outworking of the Spirit but as one entity. While one is able to distinguish the particular manifestations of each, these often go together such that where there is love, for instance, there is also joy, peace, goodness, etc. In contrast to the many and varied "works" of the flesh, "the life of the Spirit is a harmonious whole, and is in essence the same wherever it is found."[34]

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[32]Duncan, *Galatians*, 173.

[33]Cf. D. Guthrie, *Galatians*, NCBC (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1973), 139.

[34]Duncan, *Galatians*, 174.

Fourthly, some scholars also point out that Paul speaks here of the "fruit" of the Spirit as distinct from its so-called "gifts" (χαρίσματα).[35] The "gifts" are powers or capacities with which the Spirit of God endows believers for special service, and they naturally differ in different persons. The "fruit" or the "harvest" of the Spirit, on the other hand, refers to "the natural expression in character of the divine life which is within."[36]

Thus, by showing clearly what each of the two forces (flesh and Spirit) produces, or how each manifests itself, Paul hopes to convince the Galatians that they ought indeed to walk by the Spirit.

After listing the various manifestations of the "fruit" of the Spirit, Paul adds other comments which also serve to highlight the desirability of being led by the Spirit. One of these additional notes is in v. 23b. Following the list of the "fruit" of the Spirit, Paul adds that "against such there is no law (κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος)." Earlier, in v. 18, Paul remarks that if one is led by the Spirit she or he is not under the law. Thus, there seems to be an intended parallelism in these two verses:

v. 18: εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστὲ ὑπὸ νόμον.

v. 23b: κατὰ τῶν τοιούτων οὐκ ἔστιν νόμος.

Accordingly, in v. 18, Paul declares that if one is led by the Spirit, the law ceases to be the guiding factor. And Paul seems to be suggesting that to be led by the Spirit is to be in the ideal situation. For to be under the law is to be constantly under attack by the flesh. And Paul had already declared that the law cannot be the means for justification because no one is able to fulfill it perfectly (3:10). Whereas if one is guided by the Spirit, there is guarantee that what the law requires will

[35]Cf. 1 Cor. 12:4ff.

[36]Duncan, *Galatians*, 173. E. Burton (*A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC [Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1921], 313) also follows the same line of thought, although contends that while the "fruits" of the Spirit were not popularly thought of as evidences of the Spirit's presence, in the mind of Paul these were of far greater import than the so-called χαρίσματα.

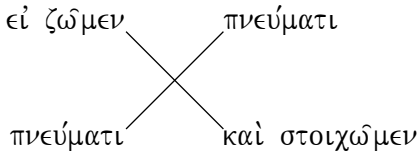
be fulfilled. Analogously, Paul declares what is obvious by his statement in v. 23b: there can be no law against manifestations of love, joy, peace, etc. As a matter of fact, these are what the law intends to bring about.

Aside from saying that there is no law against the "fruit" of the Spirit, Paul also adds (δὲ) another comment with a Christological content. He says, "Those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passion and desires." What Paul has just said pneumatologically he now restates Christologically, that is, allowing the fruit of the Spirit to manifest in one's life also means, at the same time, having crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. For it is not possible to serve two masters at the same time: the "fruit" of the Spirit cannot co-exist with the "works" of the flesh (5:17). It is worth noting that Paul does not say that those who belong to Christ "are crucifying" or "(do) crucify" (present tense) but, rather, that they "have crucified" (ἐσταύρωσαν [present perfect tense]), the flesh. This implies that to have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires is a prerequisite for belonging to Christ and being able to produce the fruit of the Spirit. Any vestige of the flesh should be removed before the fruit of the Spirit can emerge.

By adding these comments, Paul wants to motivate the community to walk by the Spirit and allow its fruit to be born in their lives. Paul's statement that against the fruit of the Spirit there is no law is meant to encourage the community to follow the Spirit. And by mentioning that those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires, he also aims at providing the ideal which the Galatians ought to imitate. For they themselves, too, belong to Christ. Thus, they also ought to crucify the flesh with its passions and desires. If their other brothers and sisters in Christ (those who belong to Christ) have done so, so also they ought to do. What Paul has done, in other words, is to appeal to the Galatians' privileged status. They belong to Christ, and are not like those who have crucified Christ. What they are to "crucify" instead is the flesh with its passions and desires, so that the Spirit alone will take control of their lives.

3. Living in Harmony with the Spirit (5:25)

After Paul has presented how the realms of the flesh and the Spirit work or what their manifestations are, he wraps up his discourse. He says, "εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι, πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν." The statement is composed of a condition (protasis) and a consequent exhortation (apodosis), of an "indicative" followed by an "imperative." As one notes, this statement exhibits a chiastic structure:



The *protasis* contains the warrant or reason for the exhortation in the *apodosis*. However, while the form is conditional, some interpreters take this statement as stating a real fact rather than a conditional one. Thus, the statement may be translated as "*Since* we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."[37] For certainly Paul is not questioning the fact that believers have received the Spirit and, therefore, now live in its realm. Paul's intention is merely to challenge the Galatian believers to live out this given status in concrete day-to-day behavior, knowing well that even believers can choose to obey the flesh instead. "Life in the Spirit carries with it unavoidable responsibilities."[38]

This statement is a classic example of the "indicative-imperative" pattern that is characteristic of Paul.[39] The indicative, on the one hand, describes the situation that believers are in: they live in the realm of the Spirit; thus, they are under its influence. They received the Spirit as

[37]Thus, e.g., B. Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 412–413; Guthrie, *Galatians*, 141. Duncan (*Galatians*, 177) has "As we live by the Spirit, let us be guided by the Spirit."

[38]Guthrie, *Galatians*, 141.

[39]See also 1 Cor. 5:7; 12:20.

a gift[40] when God sent His Son that they might become His adopted daughters and sons. And being daughters and sons, they received the Spirit which God poured into their hearts (4:4–7). The Spirit, therefore, is the source of their life in Christ and the power to realize this life in day-to-day behavior. The imperative, on the other hand, expresses the challenge for believers to manifest the signs that they are indeed under the realm of the Spirit. It "expresses our responsibility: to protect our freedom from slavery under the law, to use our freedom to serve one another in love and to keep in step with the Spirit."[41] The indicative has no meaning if it is not expressed into what the imperative requires. As a matter of fact, one cannot claim to have or be what the indicative expresses if the conduct or behavior called for by the imperative is absent. Paul, however, firmly believes that the Galatian believers live by the Spirit, and so he exhorts them: πνεύματι στοιχῶμεν.

3.1 The exhortation

In v. 16, we have seen Paul appealing to the Galatians: πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε. Now, in this verse (v. 25), he asks them, "πνεύματι στοιχῶμεν?" Most translations do not reflect the difference in the verbs used, rendering them both by "walk,"[42] and some scholars treat them as synonymous.[43] While the basic meanings of the two verbs

[40]Thus, too, Hansen, *Galatians*, 181.

[41]Hansen, *Galatians*, 181.

[42]E.g., RSV, KJV, etc.

[43]Indeed, F. Bruce (*The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC [Exeter: Paternoster, 1982], 257) says that

> there is little material difference between πνεύματι στοιχεῖν here, πνεύματι περιπατεῖν (v. 16) and πνεύματι ἄγεσθαι (v. 18). Walking by the Spirit is the outward manifestation, in action and speech, of living by the Spirit. Living by the Spirit is the root; walking by the Spirit is the fruit, and that fruit is nothing less than the practical reproduction of the character (and therefore the conduct) of Christ in the lives of his people.

are not really the same, they do have common nuances.[44] It is possible, however, that by employing a different verb in v. 25, Paul wants to highlight a particular behavioral manifestation. The verb στοιχέω has the basic meaning of "(to) be drawn in line," and thus, figuratively, to "be in line with," "agree with," or "follow."[45] Thus, it has often been compared to the military formation of walking in a row or marching in line.[46] From a moral perspective, it means to conduct oneself or live according to a rule or principle,[47] or according to the example set by a leader.[48] Applied to our text, this means that the Spirit, rather than someone else, is to be the guide or the leader of believers in their actions. It means to let the Spirit direct the course of our lives,[49] "to marshal us in our corporate relationships."[50] Thus, Paul's earlier call to "walk" (περιπατέω [v. 16]) becomes more specific and pointed in the call to let the actions of believers be "in line with," or "in harmony with," the Spirit. And to be "in harmony with the Spirit" means, as v. 26 has it, avoiding self-conceit, provocation, and envy of one another. These particular appeals give flesh to the general appeals to "walk by

[44]The basic meaning of "walk" or "go about" in περιπατέω finds resonances in the idea of "being in line with," "follow," or "keeping in step with" in στοιχέω. See W. Bauer et al., "στοιχέω," *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1979), 769; cf. G. Delling, "στοιχέω," in G. Kittel & G. Friedrich, eds., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Vol. 7 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1977), 666–669 (cited hereafter as TDNT).

[45]See Bauer et al., "στοιχέω," 769. The cognate, στοιχεῖα (cf. Gal. 4:3, 9), refers to "fundamental principles" or "elemental substances" (cf. Bauer, "στοιχεῖον," 768–769); in the RSV, it refers to "elemental spirits."

[46]Cf. Duncan, *Galatians*, 178; Bruce, *Galatians*, 257.

[47]As expressed by the same verb in Gal. 6:16.

[48]As in Rom. 4:1.

[49]Cf. Bruce, *Galatians*, 257.

[50]Duncan, *Galatians*, 178.

the Spirit" (v. 16) and "to be in harmony with the Spirit" (v. 25). Other particular appeals will follow in chapter 6.

3.2 The eschatological motivation

Paul's call to be "in harmony with the Spirit" is grounded in the fact that believers "live by the Spirit" (εἰ ζῶμεν πνεύματι). As we have said, Paul is not doubting that believers now live in the realm of the Holy Spirit; he is simply affirming this very fact and wants them to concretize it by being "in harmony with the Spirit." Let us now examine the force of this reality as a motivation, although first, a word on the eschatological character of the Spirit or life in the Spirit.

3.2.1. *The Spirit as an eschatological reality.* In the introductory part of this research, we have shown that "eschatology" in Paul involves not only the events or ideas associated with the end time (final judgment, resurrection, the parousia, etc.) but also ideas or realities which are already present in the here and now and signal the breaking-in of the Kingdom of God. One of these signs is that of the Spirit.[51]

Paul describes in various ways the "eschatological" character of the Spirit. He uses it to indicate the new principle by which we serve, in contrast to that of the old written code (cf. Rom. 7:6). He also speaks of it in terms of the law and calls it "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus" as opposed to the "law of sin and death" (Rom. 8:2). Moreover, he speaks of it as the "Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead" (Rom. 8:11) and through which believers become adopted children of God (Rom. 8:14, 15, 16, 23). Moreover, as the "Spirit of God," it is the means by which we understand the gifts bestowed on us by God (1 Cor. 2:12) and interpret spiritual truths (1 Cor. 2:13–14), not the "spirit of the world." Furthermore, it is "in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11) that Paul says the work of sanctification and justification of believers is achieved. In establishing the legitimacy of his (and his companions') ministry, Paul asserts that it is God who has established and commissioned

[51]Others include "love" (ἀγάπη), "new creation" (καινὴ κτίσις), etc.

them in Christ; it was God who has put his seal upon them and has poured his Spirit in their hearts as a guarantee (ἀρραβών).[52] And the future "home," that is, the glorious body with which believers will be clothed, is prepared by God himself, who has given them his Spirit as ἀρραβών (2 Cor. 5:5).[53] The Spirit is not only the "guarantee" of God's promises but also the "firstfruits" (ἀπαρχή) of the coming "harvest" by which believers receive adoption as children and the redemption of their bodies (cf. Rom. 8:23). Thus, in every respect, the gift of the Spirit is "eschatological," already breaking into the present and thereby bridging the present life and the next one, and making it possible to live as the "new creation."

3.2.2. *Life in the Spirit as motivation.* As is clear from the text, Paul's call to walk by the Spirit is grounded on his conviction that believers "live in the Spirit" (ζῶμεν πνεύματι). As we said, the statement is expressed in conditional form, but, as many authors assert, Paul is not questioning or doubting the fact that believers have the Spirit. Their faith and baptism in Christ guarantee that they have received the Spirit (Cf. 3:2, 5; also 1 Cor. 2:12; 2 Cor. 5:5, etc.). Thus, the statement may be understood thus: "Since we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."[54] Paul's appeal to the Galatian believers, therefore, is that since they possess the Spirit in their lives, they should also follow its prompting and allow it to direct their lives. The Spirit is the realm in which believers live; thus, it would be betraying this fact if they followed the lead of another entity or principle.

It is worth noting that Paul makes no mention here of the danger of forfeiting the Kingdom of God as in 5:21b. His exhortations in 5:26 which may be seen as the concretization of his call to "walk by the Spirit" are motivated solely by the warrant that believers "live by the Spirit." Such a listing of things to avoid (self-conceit, provocation, envy) could have been motivated by the prospect of disinheriting the Kingdom of God as punishment, yet Paul leaves it to be motivated in

[52]Cf. 2 Cor. 1:21–22.

[53]Cf., too, Eph. 1:14.

[54]And in the NIV, for instance.

this context by the truth that believers live by the Spirit. This shows how Paul does not consider sanctions as some "summary instrument" for commanding obedience.

3.3 Summary and conclusion

We have seen how in this letter Paul develops the theme of the Spirit as the primary driving force in the ethical lives of believers. The Spirit directs their newfound freedom in Christ. As the interior law of the new covenant,[55] it replaces the Mosaic Law as the means by which believers fulfill God's will. As God's eschatological power bestowed on believers, it makes possible a life of obedience in a world still touched by the power of sin. Through the power of the Spirit, believers are able to resist the solicitations of the flesh and, instead, manifest the "fruit" of the Spirit in their lives. This is the condition of believers (the "indicative"): they live in the realm of the Spirit. And Paul invokes this truth in exhorting the Galatian community to continue to *follow the lead of, or conduct themselves in harmony with,* the Spirit.

4. Testing One's Own Work (6:4–5)

The general appeals to "walk by the Spirit" (5:16) and to "live in harmony with the Spirit" (5:25) give way to concrete appeals in chapter 6. Some of these appeals are more specific (cf. vv. 1–6) while others are more general (cf. vv. 7–10). In these appeals, we find eschatological motivations employed by the Apostle to reinforce his imperatives. One text which appears relevant to our theme is 6:4–5.

4.1 The text

6:4 τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος, καὶ τότε εἰς ἑαυτὸν μόνον τὸ καύχημα ἕξει καὶ οὐκ εἰς τὸν ἕτερον·

6:5 ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει.

[55]B. Ramazzotti, "Etica cristiana e peccati nelle lettere ai Romani e ai Galati," *Scoula Cattolica* 3–4 (maggio-agosto 1978): 296.

4.2 The meaning of the exhortation in context

These two verses form part of the series of imperatives that dominate the sixth chapter. What exactly Paul is asking the Galatians to do is best determined from its immediate context. In v. 1, Paul calls the πνευματικοὶ of the community to set right (καταρτίζετε) a brother or sister in a spirit of gentleness (ἐν πνεύματι πραΰτητος) when overtaken by a trespass (προλημφθῇ ἔν τινι παραπτώματι). Somehow, this echoes the appeal in 5:26 not to become self-conceited, provoke one another, or envy one another. Although Paul calls for setting aright someone in trespass, this is not to put him down, and it is not to be done in a severe manner but in a spirit of gentleness. At the same time, Paul alerts each[56] of the πνευματικοὶ to watch out lest any of them be tempted (σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῇς). One can see this shift to the singular as Paul's way of personalizing his warning, thus calling for personal responsibility. At the same time, it expresses Paul's conviction that even the spiritually mature can fall if they do not watch out. Now, even Paul allows for the possibility that the spiritually mature can be severe in their dealing with the erring brother or sister—this is why he asks them to do so in a gentle manner. Paul does not seem to be sarcastic or ironic, as some scholars hold, in referring to such people as πνευματικοὶ. If Paul already had a negative valuation of these people, he certainly would not appeal to them regarding such an important matter. Besides, as we have noted, Paul begins this section with a positive tone, addressing the Galatian believers intimately as ἀδελφοί, an address which is never sarcastic or ironical in Paul's letters.

Propelled by his point that anyone—even the spiritually mature—may fall into temptation, Paul exhorts in v. 2: "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." The appeal is now addressed to all, in the assumption that all have burdens (βάρη) which can be shared with one another. It is a call against individualism and lack of concern for others which is often a sign of self-sufficiency or pride. This, again, is in line with Paul's earlier references against strife and

[56]Note the shift to the singular (σεαυτὸν μὴ καὶ σὺ πειρασθῇς).

envy (cf. 5:15, 26). When each one considers others as competitors, no sharing can be had, and, therefore, no manifestation of love for one another which is one of Christ's two principal commandments. By their mutual sharing of life's loads, they fulfill the "law of Christ" (cf. ἀναπληρώσετε τὸν νόμον τοῦ Χριστοῦ [6:2]), which, given the various interpretations,[57] most likely refers to the Lord's commandment to love one another[58] (cf. Gal. 5:13; Rom. 12:10; 13:8; Jn. 13:34, 35; 15:12, 17).

Yet even as Paul exhorts against individualism and rivalry, he makes it clear in v. 4 that there is such a thing as a properly individual and personal task—that of examining one's own work: τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος. Paul often sounds this call for personal scrutiny of one's work or achievement (ἔργον)[59] in his letters. This is something that one cannot expect others to share in. Next to God, who knows even the secrets of each individual (cf. 1 Cor. 4:5), only the person herself or himself knows best about her or his own life and work.

Paul then expresses the value (and consequence) of such individual or personal examination of one's work. And it is, in terms of finding ground for boasting, that it will come only from oneself and not from another. If the person finds anything worthy of what they have done, the joy or pride that they derive therefrom they owe only to themselves. Paul is not saying that it is for the purpose of finding a ground for boasting that each one is to probe or test their own work. In fact, Paul rejects in principle any act of boasting over one's own status or achievement;[60] the idea is simply that pride over one's work can only come from a person's own proper performance and testing and not

[57]For instance, as the Messianic Law (C. Dodd, W. Davies) or the "Zion Torah" (Stuhlmacher), or Christ's example of self-giving (Hays, Schürmann), or the law redefined by Christ (Barclay). For a more detailed presentation of the various interpretations, see Matera, *Galatians*, 219–220.

[58]Thus, Hansen, Bruce, Aquinas.

[59]Cf. 1 Cor. 11:28; 2 Cor. 13:5, 7; Phil. 1:10; 1 Thess. 5:21.

[60]Cf., for instance, Rom. 3:27; 1 Cor. 1:29; 5:6; 2 Cor. 11:16.

from another. Thus, it is personal responsibility that Paul encourages at this point.

We have thus tried to show that Paul's exhortation in 6:4 does not seem to be a separate call but that it does in fact flow from Paul's initial exhortation in 6:1. At the same time, we have tried to ascertain what precisely Paul is asking from the Galatians by this appeal. It is this: although one may expect the support of others in bearing life's burdens, in the end this does not eliminate one's personal responsibility for one's own life, especially in bearing burdens which cannot be shared with others. Paul appeals for mutual burden-sharing and not self-sufficiency. Rather than looking at oneself as better than others, or considering one's task or achievement to be better than that of others, Paul calls for a serious testing or proving of the real worth of oneself and one's work. For one may become so preoccupied with examining how others are doing and detecting faults in what they are doing as to forget that one's own work has been left unexamined and untested. This has to be done, for each one will have to answer not for another's life, another's load, but for one's own.

4.3 The motivation

Paul's appeal to a personal testing of one's work is grounded on the following statement in v. 5: ἕκαστος γὰρ τὸ ἴδιον φορτίον βαστάσει. That this indeed functions as a ground or motivation is indicated by γὰρ.[61] But what is the meaning of this statement? Does it express an eschatological idea?

In terms of form, this statement has been considered a maxim or a gnomic saying.[62] Its resemblance to the appeal in v. 2 leads many to interpret it in the light of that verse. The most obvious point of difference which leads many to conclude that the two statements are

[61]Although H.-D. Betz (*Galatians*, Hermeneia [Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979], 303) thinks this is a simple connective and not necessarily causal in function.

[62]This view is championed by Betz. Others who also view it as a maxim include Bruce and Tarazi.

contradictory (at least at first glance) is that while v. 2 calls for mutual assistance in the bearing of burdens, v. 5 states a principle: "each one is to bear [their] own load." This apparent contradiction has since been resolved or reconciled in various ways. The most common way has been to point out the fact that Paul is using two different terms in these verses. That is, while in v. 2 he calls for the mutual carrying of one another's βάρη (often rendered as "burdens"), in v. 5 he speaks of bearing one's own φορτίον (normally rendered as "load"). Authors have tried to distinguish between the two. For instance, Hendriksen speaks plainly of βάρη as burdens that should be carried jointly while referring to φορτίον as the load of responsibility that varies from individual to individual.[63] Betz speaks of φορτίον as "the daily struggle of life and is little different from βάρος ('burden') in Gal. 6,2."[64] Fung understands βάρη as "heavy loads that one finds unbearable and requires assistance in carrying" and φορτίον as the person's "own proper burden," like the traveler's own pack.[65] Accordingly, Fung says, "the reference is probably to the ineluctable duties of life that fall to each person, including answerability to God for one's own conduct and performance."[66]

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[63]Cf. W. Hendriksen, *A Commentary on Galatians* (London: Banner of Truth Trust, 1968), 234–235.

[64]Betz, *Galatians*, 304.

[65]R. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1988), 291.

[66]Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 291. Fung then cites other interpretations of φορτίον in this context: C. Ellicott, *St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians* (London: Longmans, Green, 1867), 127: "the particular *load* of sin and infirmities"; F. Rendall, "The Epistle to the Galatians," in W. Nicoll, ed., *The Expositor's Greek Testament*, 5 vols. 1897–1910 (repr. Grand Rapids, MI: Erdmans, 1961), 189: "conscious guilt and shame"; Burton, *Galatians*, 334: "weakness and sin"; G. Schrenk, "φορτίον," *TDNT*, Vol. 1, 555, n. 6: of "personal responsibility, i.e., of the decisions which have to be taken in the fight against temptations." In Fung's view, however, all these interpretations unduly restrict the meaning of the word (*The Epistle to the Galatians*, 291).

Looking at these terms one at a time, on the one hand, βάρη (plural form of βάρος) appears only once in the whole Bible, although the singular form appears four times[67] and the cognates a few times in various forms.[68] Its distinctive nuance is almost totally negative,[69] expressing the idea of something as being "heavy," "oppressive," or "burdensome." This is reflected precisely in Paul's call to help one another in the carrying of such burdens. In our text in Galatians, it is not quite clear what these "burdens" are supposed to refer to. The singular form, however, is used to refer to a number of things in a clear way. In Mt. 20:12, βάρος refers clearly to the "burden of the day and the scorching heat," or, in Acts 15:28, to specific demands like abstaining from food offered to idols and from blood and what is strangled, and from unchastity (Acts 15:29).[70] The cognate adjectives qualify things like "commandments or laws" (e.g., Mt. 23:4),[71] "accusations" (e.g., Acts 25:7), and "wolves" (Acts 20:29; thus, "fierce wolves"). In our text, where the reference is not clear, βάρη most likely refers to grave problems or difficulties—psycho-emotional, spiritual, social, and even economic. Given the fact that βάρη (plural) occurs only within this text in the whole Bible, and that it is practically absent in its attested forms in other early Christian literature,[72] it may not be too farfetched to suppose that the Apostle's use of it here is another example of his creativity in coining words (or at least employing uncommon ones) to

[67]That is, Mt. 20:12; Acts 15:28; 2 Cor. 4:17; Rev. 2:24.

[68]In the New Testament, for example, as an adverb: βαρέως (Mt. 13:15; Acts 28:27); as an adjective: βαρέα (Mt. 23:4; Acts 25:7), βαρεῖαι (2 Cor. 10:10; 1 Jn. 5:3), βαρεῖς (Acts 20:29); as a verb: βαρείσθω (1 Tim. 5:16), βαρηθῶσιν (Lk. 21:34); as a noun in another form: βάρει (1 Thess. 2:7).

[69]With the exception of 2 Cor. 4:17 where it refers respectively to the "weight" (RSV) of glory that awaits believers.

[70]The other two occurrences of the singular noun refer to the "weight of glory" (2 Cor. 4:17) and "teaching" (Rev. 2:24).

[71]These commandments or laws are referred to by Matthew as φορτία βαρέα.

[72]Cf. Bauer, "βάρος," 133–134.

get his message across—in this case, to underline the idea that ordinary or common "loads" (φορτία) can at times grow into "burdens" (βάρη) which are too much to bear alone such that one needs others to help carry them.

On the other hand, the other term, φορτίον, occurs, with its various forms, more frequently[73] than βάρη and its meaning ranges from material things like "cargo" (e.g., Acts 27:10) to "commandments or rules" (e.g., Lk. 11:46). The specific quality of this term seems to be that it is something "personal," one that cannot be passed on to another. Thus, it is the common term for referring to a person's "load" of responsibilities, duties, and roles which she or he has to carry out or fulfill. But, like βάρος, it can refer to things imposed upon a person from the outside or from other people as in the case of rules, commandments, or laws to observe. In short, our analysis and comparison of the two similar verses (v. 2 and v. 5) and of the corresponding related terms (βάρη and φορτίον) do not allow us to conclude whether or not Paul's statement in v. 5 has an eschatological reference. It seems expedient, therefore, to present and weigh the opinions of various scholars to shed further light on the matter.

There are two opinions on the matter. One holds that the meaning of the statement is non-eschatological; another, that the meaning is eschatological. For the first opinion, Betz is the most representative. As regards the interpretation of this verse, he says:

> There can be no doubt that Paul's maxim must be interpreted from within the context of gnomic literature. In these terms, "the load" would refer to the daily struggle of life and is little different from βάρος ("burden") in Gal. 6,2. The future tense is gnomic ("one must bear"), not eschatological. It does not point to the final judgment, but to the inevitable pressures of life: everybody has [their] load to bear, and [they] had better learn to bear it.[74]

[73]Five times: Mt. 23:4; Lk. 11:46 (2x); Mt. 11:30; Acts 27:10.

[74]Betz, *Galatians*, 304.

In this connection, Betz reads the γὰρ that connects v. 4 and v. 5 as simply marking the addition of a similar statement.[75] "The form of the maxim presupposes that it can stand on its own, and sometimes γὰρ ('for') occurs in such maxims without any connection to a context."[76] Thus, rejecting the eschatological view, Betz holds, rather, that what Paul is espousing here is *autarkeia* or self-sufficiency, which, in this context, he says, means "bearing what one only can bear" or avoiding "taking on more than [what] one can handle."[77] Dunn, however, sees Betz's view as unsatisfactory, asserting that

> the complementary character of 6,2 indicates that the thought is not simply that of the philosophical ideal of *autarkeia*.… If, alternatively, the two words denoting "burden" are synonyms, and if there is thought of the burden of sin in the former … [then] part of the point here is that one should take responsibility for one's own sins, but be willing to interpret the failings of others in a generous spirit.[78]

Apart from this qualification, however, Dunn shares Betz's conclusion when he says that "it is less likely that the future tense looks to the final judgment, despite the parallel of Rom 14,12." Lagrange, for his part, rejects the view that sees a contradiction between v. 2 and v. 5 and the ensuing attempt to reconcile the two by positing the final judgment. For him, this judgment does not figure in the perspective, and the supposed contradiction is none other than "a cutting and paradoxical aspect about the matters which are presented. For it is precisely that each one has something to carry that they have to help one another."[79]

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[75]For which position he invokes Bauer, "γὰρ," 151.

[76]Betz, *Galatians*, 303.

[77]Betz, *Galatians*, 304. This principle, Betz adds, is the mark of the wise person. In this regard, he says further that "while the philosopher is made self-sufficient by philosophy, the Christian, according to Paul's theology, is made self-sufficient through the Christian faith and the guidance of the Spirit" (*Galatians*, 304).

[78]J. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrikson, 1993), 326.

[79]M.-J. Lagrange, *Saint Paul: Épître aux Galates* (Paris: J. Gabalda, 1926),158.

While the opinion of the first group has some validity, it seems preferable to go with those who opt for an eschatological reading. Accordingly, the "load" that each one is to bear is the load of facing the final personal reckoning before God. Matera holds that it is necessary to posit a reference to the final judgment here, otherwise the opposition (that he sees) between vv. 2 and 5 cannot be reconciled.[80] So, while noting Betz's construal that the future tense (βαστάσει) in v. 5 is gnomic,[81] he insists, rather, that

> the broader context of Paul's moral exhortation to the Galatians (see 5,21; 6,8–10) favors an eschatological interpretation. Understood in an eschatological sense, this final verse provides the Galatians with yet another reason for bearing one another's burdens. They should support the weaknesses and frailties of others because everyone has weaknesses and failures that will be brought to the judgment seat of God.[82]

Duncan, who sees the focus of this verse on the "load" of personal responsibility that each one has to carry, says that "nothing brings home to a [woman or man] the sense of individual responsibility more than the knowledge that the God who is [their] Saviour is also [their] Judge."[83] In the same vein, Aquinas holds that Paul is alluding here to the reward or punishment that will be rendered to each one upon judgment, making it function as the reason for avoiding pride which he censures in v. 3.[84] Bruce holds that what is in view here is one's responsibility before God, especially with reference to the account that each one must give before God's tribunal.[85]

Aside from the above arguments, we suppose that two other arguments can be added. The first is the fact that the appeal in v. 4 is

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[80]Matera, *Galatians*, 222.

[81]That is, equivalent to "one must bear."

[82]Matera, *Galatians*, 222.

[83]Duncan, *Galatians*, 182.

[84]Cf. Aquinas, *Commentary*, 192.

[85]Cf. Bruce, *Galatians*, 263.

to a testing of one's own work (cf. τὸ δὲ ἔργον ἑαυτοῦ δοκιμαζέτω ἕκαστος). We recall how in 1 Corinthians 3 Paul calls on those who build God's structure to take care how they build (v. 10b), for there is an assigned day for the testing of one's works (v. 13). While the Corinthian text speaks of the task of testing not as the individual's responsibility but as that of the fire, the advice to build carefully does echo the need to test one's own work. And the need is precisely in view of the eschatological judgment that awaits each one's work. In our opinion, it is in this eschatological context that Paul's appeal in 6:4 is to be read. For why should each one ultimately test their own work if not in view of the fact that each person is answerable to some authority? And since there is no other authority that is expressed or implied in this context to whom the person is answerable, it can, ultimately, only be God (or Christ) who is the Judge. Thus, the one being addressed is to test her or his own work precisely because each one will have to bear the "load" of appearing before the judgment seat of God.

We believe that the second additional reason for an eschatological reading is hinted at by the future tense of the verb "to bear" (thus, βαστάσει). While Betz and Dunn do not see a particular significance to the future tense (see above), in our opinion Paul uses the future tense precisely to bring out the point that the testing he asks of each of the Galatian believers is in view of the final reckoning. The future tense is paired with the present tense of the third-person imperative (δοκιμαζέτω) to express the idea that a person needs to look at her or his present work in view of a future reckoning. A "gnomic" reading of the future tense does not quite explain why a person needs to test their own work. If Paul's point is merely to underline that each one has their own load to bear in this world, why would one need to test their work? Whereas it makes more sense to say that a person needs to test their own work in view of the "load" of the final judgment that they alone will have to bear. While φορτίον may not have been used elsewhere to refer to the final judgment, it is not impossible that a person such as Paul, who has a tendency for word-play and uses unusual terms[86] when called for, would have used the term in this sense.

[86]The presence of *hapax legomena* in Paul is not rare.

Thus, it is more likely that Paul grounds his appeal in v. 4 to a personal testing of one's work on the idea that each person will have to be answerable for their own life (=they will have to bear their own load) before God on the day of final judgment. But Paul's purpose is not so much to instill or use fear to command obedience. He mentions it to remind the Galatians that there is a final reckoning that awaits each one; thus, while they can rely on others to help them carry life's burdens, there is the "load" of the final judgment which each one will have to "carry" on their own. And the best way to prepare for this now is precisely to test one's own work, for it is precisely one's own work (deeds) which will be tested (cf. 1 Cor. 3; Rom 2:5–6).

5. One Reaps What One Sows (6:7–8)

Following his appeal to a personal testing of one's own work (v. 4) on the ground that each one will have to bear her or his own load (v. 5), Paul issues another appeal in v. 6. Addressing anyone who is receiving instruction "in the word," he says, "Κοινωνείτω δὲ ὁ κατηχούμενος τὸν λόγον τῷ κατηχοῦντι ἐν πᾶσιν ἀγαθοῖς." In essence, it calls for reciprocity—a simple case of promoting social justice: they who receive instruction ought to share in turn "all the good things" with their instructor. This appeal to mutuality is then followed by a warning and an explanation (vv. 7–8). Paul says, "Μὴ πλανᾶσθε, θεὸς οὐ μυκτηρίζεται" (v. 7a). The warning alerts the audience against being lulled (cf. πλανᾶσθε) into the idea that they can make a fool (cf. μυκτηρίζεται) out of God. In what particular area they are being warned is not specified by the Apostle. In light of the motivation given—"for what one sows one reaps" (see below)—one can attempt a general formulation of the object of the warning: "Do not be lured into thinking that you can make a fool out of God by expecting to reap good things from evil deeds." However, many scholars see the warning here as connected to Paul's previous thought (see below).

Then, in the second part of the verse (v. 7b), Paul gives the explanation as to why the audience should not think they can mock

God. It comes in the form of an agricultural proverb:[87] "what one sows one reaps." He then illustrates the truth of the message contained in the saying by giving an example employing the contrast of the flesh and the Spirit which he developed earlier (cf. 5:16–25): "For one who sows to one's own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life" (v. 8).

5.1 The meaning of the warning in context

Thus, we have in these verses a general warning (negative imperative) and a motivation. The motivation couched in the agricultural proverb points to the unmistakable justice of God who sees to it that what one "sows" is what one also "reaps." But Paul's warning has been seen not only as a general call but also as a caveat to a particular or concrete misdeed. Let us now present the various opinions as to what Paul's warning really points to in particular.

The most common view has been that vv. 7–8 continue the thought of v. 6.[88] The connection is then formulated in various ways. Burton, for instance, holds that v. 7 "serves primarily to enforce the exhortation of v. 6 by bringing the specific matter referred to under a great general law."[89] Burton thinks that the attitude of the Galatian believers toward their teachers mirrors their attitude toward life in general. That is to say, those of them who may be reluctant to learn from and support their teachers, and who prefer to spend the money for themselves, are sowing to their own flesh and will thereby reap corruption. On the other hand, those who are docile to the instruction provided and are willing to support their teachers are sowing to the Spirit, and in this way they reap eternal life.[90] Lightfoot sees vv. 7–8 as a warning against niggardly giving or withholding support from teachers by those taught:

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[87]Thus, Betz, *Galatians*, 307.

[88]Among those who think so are Aquinas, Erasmus, Calvin, Burton, Matera, Lightfoot, Perkins, and Hendriksen.

[89]Burton, *Galatians*, 339.

[90]Burton, *Galatians*, 339.

"Your niggardliness will find you out. You cannot cheat God by your fair professions. You cannot mock Him."[91] Along the same line, but less severe, is Aquinas's view that these verses serve "to forestall an excuse." Those who are taught may be doing evil but rationalize it by saying that they are only following the precept that they are to share with their teachers in everything. Since they can only imitate that which their teachers do, they end up copying them in doing their evil deeds. Another way they may rationalize their behavior is by feigning poverty: that they have nothing to share with their teachers.[92]

While vv. 7–8 may indeed be connected to v. 6, this connection may be a looser one than is supposed. Thus, Guthrie seems right in noting that the idea that those who refuse to support their teachers are comparable to those who mock God is too severe.[93] Paul's tone in v. 6 is more an appeal than a demand. Also, vv. 7–8 seem to relate to other statements aside from v. 6. Matera holds that "the eschatological coloring of Gal. 6,7–8 ('corruption,' 'eternal life') … [suggests] that these verses have more than v. 6 in view."[94] He then formulates their connection with the main theological point of the Apostle: "If the Galatians sow to their own flesh, that is, rely upon the mark of circumcision, they will reap corruption. But if they sow to the Spirit by relying upon Christ, they will reap eternal life."[95] The connection may even be more general: "God is not mocked. He does not permit anyone to make light of his gospel or of the exhortations that are

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[91]J. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1976), 218.

[92]Similarly, W. Perkins (*A Commentary on Galatians* [New York: Pilgrim Press, 1989], 480–481), who says that the ones instructed may use as an excuse the fact that they have a big family to support and argue that ministers are not members of the Levites, and are covetous and insatiable, anyway. Even Paul himself had to work.

[93]Cf. Guthrie, *Galatians*, 146.

[94]Matera, *Galatians*, 223.

[95]Matera, *Galatians*, 223.

implied in it."[96] Or in the formulation of Tarazi: "Paul warns of dire consequences if anyone ignores his recommendations on how to implement the rule of love."[97]

Indeed, it seems best to take vv. 7–8 as flowing from all the preceding statements of the Apostle that pertain especially to the moral life of believers rather than from v. 6 alone. In v. 6, the appeal is made to a particular individual ("the one who is taught") regarding a specific thing ("to have fellowship with the instructor in all good things"). Whereas in vv. 7–8 we have a general formulaic warning,[98] in second person plural, with a general message (about God's conduct and about a general truth or law observable in nature). The dominant negative tone ("Do not be deceived; God is not mocked…") is intended to thwart any sense of false confidence or laxity so as to disregard or minimize Paul's appeals, be they the particular exhortations in vv. 1–6 or Paul's general call to "walk by the Spirit" and not "gratify the desires of the flesh" (5:16). Thus, the warning in v. 7 may be construed as relating to v. 6. The warning can also be seen as a general call to pay attention to one's manner of living—whether one is "walking according to the Spirit" or "walking according to the flesh." The reason is that one "reaps" exactly what one "sows." Let us now elaborate on this and see how it is an eschatological motivation.

5.2 The motivation

As we said, Paul's warning not to be lured into thinking that one can make a fool out of God is grounded on the proverbial truth that "one reaps what one sows." The regularity or the certainty of the functioning of this truth is not merely a law of nature. It is determined by God; as Paul asserts: "God is not mocked." Now the functioning of this truth can certainly be verified in this life, for throughout human history the

[96]Hendriksen, *A Commentary on Galatians*, 236.

[97]Tarazi, *Galatians*, 316.

[98]Occurring also in 1 Cor. 6:9; 15:33. The third person warning is rendered by Paul as Μηδεὶς ἑαυτὸν ἐξαπατάτω (1 Cor. 3:18).

principle has always been at work: good deeds reap good fruits; bad deeds reap disastrous results. However, it seems that Paul focuses on the eschatological orientation of this saying when he employs it as a motivation in this context. That is to say, he may be referring more to an eschatological "harvest" that results from what people "sow" in this life. Verse 8 supports this reading, for it speaks of "corruption" (φθορά) as the harvest of "one sowing to one's own flesh" (ὁ σπείρων εἰς τὴν σάρκα ἑαυτοῦ) and of "eternal life" (ζωή αἰώνιον) as the harvest of "one sowing to the Spirit" (ὁ δὲ σπείρων εἰς τὸ πνεῦμα). By "corruption," Paul is not only referring to material decay or worldly destruction; as the opposite of eternal life, it is the forfeiting of this blessed life-without-end with God himself. God's Spirit, as we shall demonstrate later, is an eschatological gift, the guarantee and first fruits of the fullness of the eschatological harvest. Moreover, the idea of "harvest" has an eschatological sense here: either as the time of God's final judgment or as the result of that judgment. Tarazi expresses certainty that God's judgment is alluded to here. Taking Paul's warning as alerting to the "dire consequences" of ignoring the call to love, he adds, "At the last judgment, God himself will determine whether or not one has obeyed the dictates of love, and He will act accordingly."[99]

Thus, Paul's warning in v. 7 is grounded on the certain and unfailing outworking of God's retribution. No one can make a fool out of him. "Sowing to the flesh" (or "walking by the flesh") will reap "corruption" and "sowing to the Spirit" (or "walking by the Spirit") will reap "eternal life."

6. Perseverance in Well-Doing in View of the "Harvest" (6:9–10)

Having sounded the general warning of how divine retribution works (6:7–8), Paul ends with a general exhortation and a motivation in vv. 9–10. Continuing his previous appeal to "sowing to the Spirit" (cf. v. 8), he says,

[99]Tarazi, *Galatians*, 316.

6:9 τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν, καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι.

Paul calls for persistence or not growing weary (cf. μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν) in doing what is worthwhile or praiseworthy (cf. τὸ καλόν).[100] What should motivate (γὰρ) the Galatian audience is that, in due season, they shall reap if they do not give up (καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι). This firm conviction is based not on chance or the working of nature but on God's action (cf. v. 7). Paul assures the community that God will not let their perseverance in doing good prove unfruitful. Based on this firm conviction, Paul reiterates his call in a still wider perspective in v. 10:

6:10 Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.

If sincere efforts at perseverance in doing good will not go wasted, then (ἄρα οὖν) every opportunity to do so that presents itself (cf. ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν) must be taken advantage of. The good (τὸ ἀγαθὸν) must be pursued (cf. ἐργαζώμεθα) and in a manner which includes everyone (πρὸς πάντας), although it goes without saying that it must begin with those whom believers share their faith with (cf. μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως). See below for elaboration.

6.1 The link with other appeals

Since v. 9 is linked to the preceding verse by δε and since the appeals in these two verses seem to wrap up the paraenetic section, it may be helpful to establish the connection they have with the rest of the appeals in this chapter. In this way, we will be able to understand better what the Apostle is really asking of the community through the appeals in vv. 9–10. In what follows, we shall try to relate these two verses first with the immediately preceding ones and then with the rest of the appeals.

[100]See Bauer, "καλός," 400, no. 2b.

The link between vv. 9–10 and those immediately preceding them is provided by the agricultural proverb that is introduced in v. 7. The common thread lies particularly in the idea of "reaping" (a harvest) that is present in these verses. In the first place, Paul wants, by this agricultural proverb, to reinforce his warning in v. 7a against those who may think they can outsmart God.[101] They cannot fool God, Paul says, "for what one sows one reaps" (v. 7b). This is then reinforced in Paul's illustration—re-introducing the opposing ideas of the flesh and the Spirit—that sowing to the flesh reaps corruption while sowing to the Spirit reaps eternal life (v. 8). But while vv. 7–8 emphasize the certain correspondence between what one sows and what one reaps, Paul seems content to pick up the mere idea of "reaping from what one sows" and employ it as motivation for his ensuing appeal. As he says in v. 9, "Let us not grow weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap.…" Thus, it is the certainty of "reaping a harvest" (from what one "sows") that links vv. 9–10 with vv. 7–8.

On the other hand, vv. 9–10 can also be linked with the rest of the moral appeals. One way of establishing the connection is by taking Paul's appeal "to do good" as a summary of his particular exhortations. Thus, it sums up his appeal for fraternal correction (6:1), mutual burden-sharing (6:2), and the sharing of one's goods with one's instructor in the faith (6:6). Another way to establish the connection is to see Paul's call to "doing good" as a reformulation of his appeal to "walk by the Spirit" (5:16: πνεύματι περιπατεῖτε), be "led by the Spirit" (5:18: πνεύματι ἄγεσθε), or be "in harmony with the Spirit" (5:25: πνεύματι στοιχῶμεν). This means, in turn, that "to do good" is to allow the "fruit" of the Spirit to manifest in one's life. Lastly, the call "to do good" can also be seen as equivalent to Paul's call to be servants to one another through love (5:13). In all of this, what appears to be a call to pursue the philosophical ideal of doing what is right (τὸ καλόν) or what is good (τὸ ἀγαθόν) acquires a specific Christian character.

[101]The background for this warning or its precise target is not so clear. Some claim it is directed at those who refuse to support their instructors—what Paul purports to be asking in v. 6.

6.2 The exhortation

Looking closely now at Paul's exhortation in v. 9, he asks the Galatian believers, along with himself, not to grow weary in doing good (τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν). The call is not simply that the Galatians "do good"[102] but "not to lose heart" (cf. μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν)[103] in their pursuit of the good.[104] A similar call is also sounded in 1 Thess. 5:21, where Paul asks the Thessalonians to "hold fast to what is good" (τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε).[105] The latter does not imply a "weariness" on the part of the community, for it simply asks the community to "pursue" or "hold fast [to]"[106] (thus, not to let go of) what is good rather than pursue or hold fast to what is evil.

Occasioned by this particular appeal to the Galatians not to grow weary in well-doing, the question has been asked whether Paul's exhortation does not reflect some actual issue among the Galatians. That is to say, whether Paul's appeal is given precisely to inspire a community that has grown tired and discouraged in what they have been doing as Christians. Some scholars suppose that this is the case.[107] A number of suggestions have been offered as to the cause of the community's discouragement. For instance, J. Bligh supposes that it was the promotion of the collection project for Jerusalem that the Galatians had grown tired of.[108] Hendriksen thinks that the "weariness"

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[102]Cf. Rom. 13:3c.

[103]Cf. 2 Cor. 4:1, 16. In Rom. 2:7, Paul speaks of "patience in well-doing."

[104]The same call is expressed by the author of 2 Thessalonians in 3:13. Cf., too, 1 Thess. 5:15.

[105]Cf. Rom. 12:9, although a different verb form, κολλώμενοι ("to hold on to"), is used.

[106]Or "keep pursuing," "keep holding fast," if we are to give the present tense (κατέχετε) the valence of "continuing in a certain action."

[107]For instance, Hendriksen, Bligh.

[108]Cf. J. Bligh, *Galatians: A Discussion of Paul's Epistle*, Householder Commentaries (London: St. Paul Publications, 1970), 485.

might have come from the delay of the parousia which the Galatians were awaiting, or from not seeing concrete positive results in their task.[109] The general character of Paul's appeal, however, does not quite support the idea that he is referring in particular to finishing the collection for Jerusalem. Besides, Paul could have been more specific (as in Corinthians or Romans) if he indeed meant the collection, and especially if he saw that the community had grown tired of promoting it. Hendriksen's suggestion seems more probable, although there is no hint in this letter of a concern over the delay of the parousia or that the Galatians have grown weary from not seeing positive results in what they have been doing. It seems most likely, therefore, that Paul's exhortation is a general one, urging the community, as a leader normally does, to perseverance in whatever good they had been doing.

Having lifted up the spirits of his audience to well-doing by pointing to the bright prospect that awaits their perseverance, Paul concludes (ἄρα οὖν) his appeals by reiterating his general appeal in v. 10: Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως. Pitta[110] classifies this statement in the light of classical epistolary typology as being equivalent to the closing of a correspondence by wishing the good and the beautiful toward relatives and friends. Once again, a closer look at these verses reveals that they form a kind of *ABB'A'* pattern:

v. 9	τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν,	*A*
	καιρῷ γὰρ ἰδίῳ θερίσομεν μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι.	*B*
v. 10	Ἄρα οὖν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν,	*B'*
	ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν πρὸς πάντας,	*A'*
	μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως.	

As one notes, the exhortations share common elements. First, there is a reference to "doing good," although the Greek expressions are different (v. 9: τὸ … καλὸν ποιοῦντες; v. 10: ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν). Then, there is the time element expressed by the same Greek word

[109]Cf. Hendriksen, *A Commentary on Galatians*, 238.

[110]A. Pitta, *Lettera ai Galati* (Bologna: EDB, 1996), 388.

καιρός. Lastly, there are conditions or circumstances that accompany both demanded tasks.

On the other hand, there are differences between the two exhortations. First of all, in v. 10 there is no longer the concern that the community is "losing heart" (cf. μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν). Paul simply exhorts them to "doing good." Secondly, whereas in v. 9 the time element points to the eschatological harvest that is certain to come, in v. 10 it refers to (or implies) a period of "planting" or "sowing." Lastly, whereas in the former the condition for the "harvest" is the community not "growing weary" or "losing heart," the requisite for the "planting" (their doing good) is that they do it to "everyone," although there is a particular call to do it toward their fellow believers.

Looking closely now at Paul's exhortation in v. 10, one finds, first of all, the time element connected with the appeal: ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν. Bligh says, "This may be a relic of the eschatological motive, which is also used in a rather perfunctory way, in Rom. 13,11–12.…"[111] But he adds right away that a phrase like that need not refer to the parousia and can "simply [be] a reminder that life is soon over (cf. Job 14,1), and [that] our few opportunities of doing good must be seized before they slip away."[112] Indeed, since this expression refers to the period of "sowing" (the time for doing good), it does not refer to the parousia. Of course, the parousia is its eschatological horizon, for "sowing" normally leads to the period of the "harvest." And since it does not deal with the parousia, it goes without saying that there is no question here of the nearness or remoteness of the parousia.[113] Moreover, Paul may be thinking of the more general period before the Lord's return rather than the period of one's lifetime as the time within which the good

[111]Bligh, *Galatians*, 486.

[112]Bligh, *Galatians*, 487.

[113]Lagrange, *Épître aux Galates*, 161. Whereas in Phil. 4:5, for instance, Paul clearly speaks of the nearness of the Lord's return: "The Lord is at hand."

is to be done.[114] Besides, Paul may have meant that during this period before the Lord's return there are not just a "few opportunities for doing good" but countless occasions, each moment "an ever-present kairos."[115] Thus, while "the time for doing good … is limited by the eschatological horizon of the coming harvest,"[116] believers do have ample opportunities and ought therefore to take advantage of them.

Secondly, we find Paul's appeal to do good (ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν). As we have noted, this is parallel to Paul's exhortation in v. 9 (τὸ δὲ καλὸν ποιοῦντες), although the focus of the appeal there is on not growing weary (μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν). Nonetheless, it may be asked if there is any significance in Paul's use of different expressions for each. A closer look at the occurrences of καλός and ἀγαθός (in their various forms) in Paul yields the observation that καλός is often the preferred term for expressing that which is "proper," "expedient," or "right"[117] while ἀγαθός is used for describing the nature of something as "good" as opposed to "evil." However, this does not seem to be an absolute mark of distinction as demonstrated by these two verses where the two terms virtually have the same meaning. Neither can one argue that a difference should exist because while Paul uses the verb ποιέω in v. 9, he has ἐργάζομαι in v. 10. Romans 7:19 and 13:3 show Paul using ποιέω with ἀγαθός. Thus, if there is any difference that one can find, it is in the specific action or deed that Paul asks for in each of the verses and not in the object. That is, while in v. 9 Paul asks the community (with himself) "not to grow weary" (μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν) in doing good, in v. 10 he unqualifiedly calls for the doing itself of "what is good" (ἐργαζώμεθα τὸ ἀγαθὸν). If one may look for another point

[114]Of course, individually, one can only do the good while one is still alive. But since Paul is addressing a general audience here and he believes that some of them may still be alive during the Lord's return, the temporal reference could be to the Lord's coming and not just to an individual's death.

[115]R. Lenski, *The Interpretation of St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, and to the Philippians* (Columbus, OH: Wartburg Press, 1946), 310.

[116]Matera, *Galatians*, 223.

[117]Cf., for instance, 1 Cor. 7:1, 26; 2 Cor. 13:7; Rom. 14:21.

of difference, it is in the idea that there are universal and particular beneficiaries or recipients ("all" and "especially the members of the household of the faith") of the good to be done as expressed in v. 10.

Thirdly, one finds the scope or extent of the recipients of the community's doing good. On the one hand, Paul says it is to be done πρὸς πάντας. In this regard, Dunn remarks:

> For all his sense of imminent eschatological denouement, Paul did not seek to encourage his churches to turn in upon themselves or to hide away from the world. On the contrary, his sense of mission to the wider community necessarily involved a considerable degree of interaction with that wider community.…[118]

This universal orientation is consonant with the principal theological message of the letter, namely, the universal offer of God's justification—that is, not only to those who observe the Mosaic law and practice circumcision but to everyone who believes in Jesus Christ (cf. 2:16; 3:11).

On the other hand, there is a special added call to do good μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως ("especially to the members of the household of faith"). There have been many ways of interpreting Paul's added appeal that the good to be done by the Galatian community should be directed "especially" (μάλιστα) to one's fellow believers. Some see it as a matter of course. That is to say, the needs of the brothers and sisters in the faith are the ones we feel and see in the most immediate way; thus, "they have a first call upon us and our energy."[119] Others explain it as Paul's style and sense of realism. Betz, for example, says it is "a typical Pauline paradox. It is not intended to revoke the preceding high-flung universalism, but to direct the attention of the readers to the concrete historical reality of the Christian community."[120] Guthrie holds that by this "the Apostle wishes to press home a specific application of this principle (i.e., the

[118]Dunn, *Galatians*, 332.

[119]Lenski, *The Interpretation*, 311.

[120]Betz, *Galatians*, 311.

universal principle). Responsibility towards other Christians is greater than those towards other people generally."[121] Along the same line, Ebeling says the specific provision "does not exclude the universality of being available [to] others. But instead of stopping at a wide range of vague possibilities, one must respond to the demands where one's life has its concrete locus."[122]

While the above suggestions illumine Paul's statement, they do not quite address the particular Galatian situation. Two attempts at an explanation along this line can be mentioned. One is an explanation from a social-historical perspective. Some think that by this preferential clause Paul was alluding to the collection project for the poor brethren in Jerusalem.[123] However, Bruce seems right in saying that while "this principle is illustrated in the Jerusalem relief fund … it is outrunning the evidence to see a specific reference to that fund in this paragraph."[124] Others, on the other hand, seek to explain the provision from a wider socialhistorical perspective. Morris, for instance, says that showing particular preference for the members of the household of the faith

> had a great significance in the first-century Roman empire. Christians were often poor and they could not expect help from the non-Christian state. Rather the opposite. The state did not want people to be Christians and it placed all sorts of obstacles in the way of believers. Helping the poor was a duty taken very seriously in the early church.[125]

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[121]Guthrie, *Galatians*, 148.

[122]G. Ebeling, *The Truth of the Gospel: An Exposition of Galatians*, trans. D. Green (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 261.

[123]Cf. L. Hurtado, "The Jerusalem Collection and the Book of Galatians," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 5 (1979): 46–62.

[124]Bruce, *Galatians*, 266. Also Dunn (*Galatians*, 333), who, while allowing for the possibility of a reference to the collection as espoused by Hurtado, says that "it is hardly evident from the text."

[125]Morris, *Galatians*, 184. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 298–299. Also Hendriksen, *A Commentary on Galatians*, 239.

In the same vein, Burton holds that the preferential treatment was necessary because in cases of famine or distress, former pagans who had become Christians could not count on the help of their unconverted pagan neighbors. As such, if they were not helped by their fellow Christians, they would be worse off than their pagan neighbors. Besides, he adds, non-Christian members of the community would naturally expect the Christians to show their love to one another. "If, therefore, a Christian were left in distress this would be even more to the discredit of the new religion than if a non-Christian went hungry."[126] Duncan, however, deems unnecessary Burton's limitation to merely physical needs the general "good" that Paul wanted shown to all.[127] He then offers his own construal of the special provision: "One is not likely to do good to all others if one does not do it in the first place to those of one's own household."[128]

The other attempt at explaining the "preferential clause" is espoused by Tarazi who focuses on the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians in the Galatian community. Maintaining that Paul had the specific situation of the Galatian community in mind, Tarazi first notes how Paul's precept from the universal to the particular (scope) is the reverse of the sequence found in l Thess. 5:15. In the Thessalonian text, Paul asks the community to "always seek to do good to one another and to all." Tarazi then explains that the Galatian sequence

> can only be understood against the actual background of the divisions in the Galatian communities.… Because of that situation, Paul first stated the general principle of loving all people, and then applied it "especially" to the situation at hand which was his major concern at the time of writing.[129]

In this connection, he also views Paul's reference to the "members of the household of faith" as an effort "to stress once again the truth

[126]Burton, *Galatians*, 346–347.

[127]Duncan, *Galatians*, 187.

[128]Duncan, *Galatians*, 187.

[129]Duncan, *Galatians*, 187.

he has been fighting for throughout regarding the oneness of the messianic community."[130] In other words, he says that "by using this expression, Paul is again appealing … for full and perfect unity through love between Gentile Christians and Jewish Christians, especially those quarrelling about circumcision and the Law."[131] In the words of another writer,

> That [the Galatians] should behave towards one another as members of the one family is the central feature of an identity which is characterized earlier in the letter, as far as outsiders were concerned, as rooted in kinship with God and Abraham.[132]

Tarazi's view seems more to the point than the previous one. Paul's main concern in this letter is not the collection or socio-economic problems but Jewish and Gentile Christian relations exemplified in the efforts of the Judaizers to impose circumcision on the Gentile group.

6.3 The eschatological motivation

Paul's call in v. 9 to perseverance in doing good or right is motivated by the prospect of a "harvest" (cf. θερίσομεν) "in due season" (καιρῷ ἰδίῳ). By referring to a "harvest" or "reaping," Paul expresses his conviction that God rewards those who are faithful to their tasks. But Paul insists that the condition for "reaping the harvest of their labors" is their "not giving up" or "not growing faint" (μὴ ἐκλυόμενοι), which reiterates or corresponds to the idea of "not growing weary" (μὴ ἐγκακῶμεν) expressed in Paul's exhortation in v. 9.

If we are to grant the supposition that Paul's appeal reflects an actual condition of discouragement or weariness on the part of the Galatians, then we can see some analogy between their case and the Corinthians as reflected in 1 Corinthians 15. In the face of the claim of some that there is no resurrection of the dead, the Corinthians

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[130]Duncan, *Galatians*, 187.

[131]Duncan, *Galatians*, 187.

[132]P. Esler, *Galatians* (London/New York: Routledge, 1998), 233–234.

seemed to have been drawn to the loose lifestyle of those who negate the resurrection,[133] for which Paul warns and exhorts: "Do not be deceived: 'Bad company ruins good morals.' Come to your right mind and sin no more" (1 Cor. 15:33–34). However, since the root cause of this moral laxity seems to be their yielding to the persuasion of those who negate the resurrection, Paul argues in great detail how their belief in the resurrection rests on solid ground and how his own life is nourished by this truth and belief. Accordingly, he exhorts the community at the end of the chapter: "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain." Thus, while the contexts are different, the appeals are analogous in their call to perseverance and determination in the pursuit of the communities' Christian task, nourished by the hope and certainty that their labor will yield "fruit" which, in the case of the Galatians, is expressed earlier in v. 8 as eternal life and, for the Corinthians, as the resurrection to a glorified body. Thus, as Paul presents the hope of resurrection as motivation for the Corinthians to be steadfast and to progress in the work of the Lord, so here in Galatians he presents the prospect of "reaping in due season" to motivate a community that has perhaps grown tired.

Thus, in v. 9, there is a clear use of the prospect of the "harvest" of eternal life as the motivation for perseverance in well-doing. The ensuing appeal in v. 10 to "do good to all but especially to the members of the household of the faith" may also be seen as motivated by the same.[134]

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[133]Who, as a consequence of their belief that the dead are not raised, might have promoted the hedonistic principle associated with the "unwise": "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."

[134]Hansen (*Galatians*, 196–197) sees in Paul's reference to the family of believers an added motivation:

> Paul motivates perseverance in service to one another by reminding us that we are part of a great family.… These great truths about the family of believers should motivate us to keep on doing good to our

> Because of the certainty of the result of their efforts (v. 9b), therefore (ἄρα οὖν), the Galatians are exhorted, whenever they have opportunity, to do good to their fellow [neighbors] in general, but with special care for the welfare of their fellow-Christians.[135]

It may be asked, however, why Paul still has to point to the coming harvest to motivate the community. Is not "the good" itself enough motivation for doing it?[136] Does this imply that Paul thinks the idea of "reward" would be more convincing? This may be answered, first of all, by the fact that Paul does exhort believers now and then to pursue the philosophical ideals of his day—the good, the beautiful, the true, etc.—as if they were goals in themselves (cf. Phil. 1:10; esp. 4:8). Of course, these are to be pursued not only as philosophical ideals but also as God's will and their Christian task. In the Galatian context, however, Paul had to deal with what was most likely an actual issue, namely, signs of growing fatigue in the community's pursuit of what is good or right. The community may have expected some result or reward for their labor but which they could not see coming. Thus, Paul reminds them that performance of their Christian tasks, no matter how tiring and devoid of rewards these may seem to be at present, will eventually yield fruit "in its proper time" (καιρῷ ἰδίῳ). In other words, Paul speaks of a "harvest" or "reward" not as an invented tactic that would motivate the community to persevere in their tasks. He wanted to correct a misconception which was gaining hold in the community that perhaps there is no reward for one's labors. Instead, Paul reassures them here that there is a time indeed for gathering the fruits of their

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> brothers and sisters in Christ. We belong to one another in one family, since we belong to Christ.

While this is indeed a good motivation Christians ought to have and may be extrapolated from Paul's statement, it is not formally (grammatically) used as such in his appeal, for Paul only says "Let us do good to all, and especially to the members of the household of the faith" without adding any explanation along the lines of *precisely because they are our brothers and sisters in faith*.

[135]Burton, *Galatians*, 345.

[136]As Lenski himself wonders (*The Interpretation*, 309–310).

endurance in well-doing. However, since only God knows when this will happen (that is, when the final reckoning is), Paul says simply, but honestly, that it will come "in its own time."

That Paul uses the motivation of the "eschatological harvest" as part of his conviction of how God responds to human initiative and not as a manipulation using the ideas of reward or punishment as coercive weapons finds support in context. On the one hand, there is no elaboration on the "harvest" at all. Paul could have made his statement more forceful by painting a very attractive picture of what this harvest would be, say, in terms of eternal life, but he does not do so. On the other hand, although the setting or occasion of this eschatological harvest is the final judgment, there is no explicit mention of this event. There is no mention of a punishment for failing to persevere in doing good. This is because Paul's concern is simply to encourage the Galatian community to persevere in the good that they are doing, and to remind them, in case they do grow weary, that they will reap a harvest in due time. This is rooted in his conviction and knowledge of how God acts toward his faithful ones.

7. Living in the "New Creation" (6:15)

While the practical appeals in this letter (which are succinct and mostly proverbial) formally end in 6:10, Paul hints at another important concept which, as we shall demonstrate, has something to do with our theme. This important concept is that of the "new creation," the καινὴ κτίσις in 6:15.[137]

[137]The idea or theme of the "new creation" in Paul requires a separate and more thorough study. For studies done on this theme in Paul, see, for instance, C. Bouyer, "KAINH KITΣIΣ (2 Cor. 5,17; Gal. 6,15)," in *Studium Paulinorum Congressus Internationalis Catholicus 1961*, Vol. 1, Analecta Biblica 17–18 (Rome: Pontificio Istituto Biblico, 1963), 487–490; Vollenweider, *Freiheit als neue Schöpfung*, 310–311; U. Mell, *Neue Schöpfung: Eine traditionsgeschichtliche und exegetische Studie zu einem soteriologischen Grundsatz paulinischer Theologie* (Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 1989), esp. 284, 298ff; G. Schneider, *Neuschöpfung oder Wiederkehr? Eine Untersuchung zum Geschichtsbild der Bibel* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1961), esp. 74–76; P. Stuhlmacher,

7.1 The implied appeal

As we have just said, Paul's concrete appeals end in 6:10. In v. 11, Paul begins the conclusion of this letter. In this concluding section (vv. 11ff), Paul reasserts his main argument. But even as he does this, one cannot miss the hortatory intent implied in his discourse. For Paul has been effectively appealing to the Galatians all along not to submit again to slavery by receiving circumcision (cf. 5:lff). Paul insists that the Galatians not allow themselves to be lured back into thinking that they need to do the works of the law and be circumcised to be put right with God. The theme, then, is more properly soteriological than moral. Nonetheless, this soteriological issue has moral implications. This is shown, for instance, in Paul's criticizing those who practice circumcision because they themselves do not keep the law (cf. v. 13). What they are after is "glorying in the flesh," that is, finding a reason for boasting in the circumcision that they demand on the Gentiles. Whereas Paul reminds the Galatians that in nothing else can one glory but the cross of Christ. And this means for them embracing the same cross or suffering persecution for its sake—something these "Judaizers" are avoiding (cf. v. 12). It is in this light that Paul declares in v. 15: "Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but a new creation."

Thus, while there is no formal imperative in this section (6:11–16),[138] Paul's explanatory statements in vv. 12–14 clearly imply the appeal: "Do not allow yourselves to be compelled to be circumcised with the mentality of those who are forcing you." That there is indeed a hortatory intent in these final verses is also hinted at by the prayer-wish in v. 16: "Peace and mercy be upon all who walk by this rule, upon

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"Erwägungen zum ontologischen Charakter der kainê ktisis bei Paulus," *Evangelische Theologie* 27 (1967): 1–35; A. Vögtle, *Das Neue Testament und die Zukunft des Kosmos* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1970), 178–183; B. Chilton, "Galatians 6:15: A Call to Freedom before God," *Expository Times* 89 (1977–78): 311–313.

[138]Except if one fixes the sub-unit up to v. 17, as Matera does (cf. Matera, "The Culmination," 79–91), where Paul makes a final appeal to be left at peace: "Henceforth let no one trouble me; for I bear on my body the marks of Jesus."

the Israel of God." The Galatians are urged to be guided by this rule in their actions. The "rule" according to which the "Israel of God" is to "walk" (that is, to conduct themselves) is that what matters is not the presence nor the absence of the physical mark of circurncision but a "new creation." Let us now examine this concept in more detail.

7.2 The motivation

The implied appeal in these last verses ("Do not submit to circumcision.") may be seen as ultimately grounded on Paul's statement that οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. One can mention as motivation the fact that those who practice circumcision only want to make a show of it or only to avoid being persecuted for the cross of Christ, or the fact that the promoters do not themselves keep the law (vv. 12–13). But all this is summed up in Paul's solemn declaration (v. 15): οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις. For the Apostle, having or not having the physical mark of circumcision is not what is of ultimate value but καινὴ κτίσις. By setting aside the usual boundary markers of circumcision or uncircumcision—markers separating Jews and Gentiles, those considered the people of God and those who are not—and replacing these with the idea of the "new creation," Paul is affirming at the same time that this concept has an eschatological character. And it is on this concept that Paul grounds his implied appeal against submitting to circumcision. In what follows, we shall tackle what Paul could have meant by this expression in this context, how it is an eschatological concept, and how it functions as motivation in this case.

7.2.1. *The meaning of* καινὴ κτίσις *in 6:15*. Paul introduces the concept of καινὴ κτίσις in 6:15 abruptly or without any previous reference. And he does not elaborate on its meaning. Yet one cannot doubt the importance of the concept for him. If such an indispensable and distinctive mark as circumcision (at least for the Jews) is declared to be of no value in relation to the "new creation," then this latter idea is of utmost significance. Indeed, Paul's affirmation in 6:15 is of utmost significance in this letter. Pitta is right in affirming that "through this antithetical affirmation, Paul seems to be synthesizing his (own) gospel

in Galatians."[139] Or Longenecker, who says that in this verse one finds "the nub of Paul's purpose in writing Galatians and the focal point of his subscription.…"[140] Holding this verse to be a maxim used by Paul, he says further that "we may assume that Paul uses it to climax all of his arguments and exhortations in 1:6–5:12 with respect to the Judaizing threat."[141] At the same time, Longenecker also holds that this statement "serves to reinforce the parallel passage (Gal. 5:6) in which Paul summarizes his early Christian teaching."[142]

There are a number of ways in which the idea of the "new creation" in this letter has been understood. Some relate its meaning to the new life in the Spirit.[143] And rightly so, for in this letter Paul describes the life of freedom in Christ in terms of life in the Spirit. It is "through the Spirit, by faith, (that) we wait for the hope of righteousness" (5:5). Walking by the Spirit means to be freed from the clutches of the flesh (5:16–17), being led by it means not to be under the law (5:18), and living in its power effects the production of its "fruit" in various manifestations (5:22–23). Thus, as Longenecker puts it, the Spirit is the context in which "life now 'in Christ' is to be lived … not in the context of laws."[144] Bruce says that the "new creation" is "life in Christ,"

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[139]Pitta, *Lettera ai Galati*, 401: "Paul seems to synthesize his own gospel in Galatians through this antithetical affirmation." Pitta further says:

> This represents … the epiphomena or the concluding fundamental sentence of the Letter to the Galatians: the accent does not fall on justification by faith put in opposition to works nor on circumcision or uncircumcision but on sonship in Christ through which one belongs to the new creation (*Lettera ai Galati*, 401).

[140]Longenecker, *Galatians*, 295.

[141]Longenecker, *Galatians*, 296.

[142]Cf. Longenecker, *Galatians*, 296.

[143]For example, Ridderbos, Betz, Bruce.

[144]Longenecker, *Galatians*, 296.

the fullness of which "belongs to the future, but to those in Christ it is already realized through the Spirit."[145]

Still others speak of the "new creation" in terms of a new relationship with God. Hansen, who sees "the reality of life in this new creation … [as] a theme of the entire letter," speaks of believers as having a

> new relationship with God: we are no longer slaves; we are his children and are free to address him by the Spirit as Father, Abba (4,6). We have a new relationship with one another: we are no longer imprisoned and divided by racial, social or gender barriers; we are now free and one in Christ (3,28).[146]

The above suggestions illumine the meaning of the "new creation" idea. However, for a more thorough understanding of what Paul could have meant by this idea, let us look at the various parts of the letter. The idea that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is of value and that what counts is a new creation summarizes Paul's message in this letter. We can gather its various explicitations from the letter itself. We would then have an idea of what Paul means by the expression "new creation" and why it is that Paul attaches such value to it. The best way to start is by considering the immediate context where this expression is employed, that is, vv. 12ff. Since these verses, as we said, summarize Paul's main points, these give the clue as to what ideas are pertinent to Paul's statement on the "new creation." Looking at the immediate context of 6:12ff, one notes that Paul puts the idea of "new creation" in opposition to what his opponents in Galatia (that is, those who want to force the Galatians to be circumcised) hold as valuable or to how they are behaving. Paul does not want the Galatians to embrace what his opponents hold as important or follow their inappropriate behavior. Instead, he points out to them that what is of value is a "new creation."

The first thing that Paul says of his opponents is that they "want to make a good showing in the flesh" (θέλουσιν εὐπροσωπῆσαι ἐν σαρκί [v. 12]).

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[145]Bruce, *Galatians*, 273.

[146]Hansen, *Galatians*, 200.

That is, they want people to be circumcised and take pride in having them accept this external mark. However, Paul reveals that their lone (μόνον) purpose for compelling the Galatians to be circumcised is to avoid being "persecuted for the cross of Christ" (τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μὴ διώκωνται). Secondly, while these people are circumcised and force others to receive the mark, they themselves do not keep the law (v. 13a). This is a gross show of inconsistency since for the Jew to be circumcised also implies observance of the law. This just goes to show, indeed, that the only purpose why they want the Galatians circumcised is "that they may glory in (their) flesh" (ἵνα ἐν τῇ ὑμετέρᾳ σαρκὶ καυχήσωνται [v. 13b]). Against this outlook, Paul declares what for him is his only source of glory: the cross of Christ, by which he says, ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται κἀγὼ κόσμῳ (v. 14b). But it is not as if Paul condemns those who push for circumcision in order to support uncircumcision. For him, the presence or absence of the external sign is not what determines what is of importance. As he expresses it in v. 15, only a καινὴ κτίσις matters.

Thus, Paul destroys any position that extols either the presence or absence of the physical mark of circumcision. Of course, it is primarily against those who push for circumcision that he addresses himself. He condemns them for making circumcision the source of their glorying instead of the cross of Christ, for wanting to avoid persecutions instead of being willing to embrace them. Their attitude and behavior reveal that they have not yet become a "new creation."

Now, where in the body of the letter itself do we find expressions describing what it is to be a "new creation"? We can find them in at least two affirmations of Paul: a) that in Christ Jesus we are no longer under a custodian or slaves but all daughters and sons of God and heirs (3:23–26, 29; 4:1–7); thus, differences in ethnic affiliation, social-economic status, and gender no longer hold as criteria for regarding people; and b) that what is of value is not circumcision nor uncircumcision but πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη (5:6).

The first affirmation declares that to have faith in God or in Christ Jesus is to be liberated from the clutches of the law as the means of justification and salvation. Abraham was justified through his faith in

God (3:6ff). Through faith in Christ, believers also receive justification (cf. 3:24). Whereas before Christ came they were practically slaves and the law served as their custodian (παιδαγωγὸς [3:24–25]), now that Christ has come, faith in him has made them daughters and sons of God and, therefore, heirs (3:26, 29); indeed, they put on Christ when they were baptized into him (3:27). All, therefore, who believe in Christ and are baptized into him are one in Christ Jesus (3:28). For Paul, being one in Christ means no longer considering ethnic affiliations (Jew or Greek), social or economic status (slave or free), or gender (male or female). By this, Paul means not so much that these distinctions no longer exist but that they can no longer be used to discriminate against people or to determine the value or worth of human beings. In Christ Jesus, each one is of equal dignity, the dignity of a daughter or son of God. This is the new status of believers whatever their background may be. This outlook that Paul wants the Galatians to appropriate for themselves echoes that of 2 Cor. 5:16ff, where Paul declares that to be a "new creation" is to have a new outlook, a new way of seeing things. It is to regard things and persons no longer from a human point of view but, by implication, from God's point of view. This all-inclusive, non-discriminating attitude and outlook is contrary to that of the proponents of circumcision who used the external mark of circumcision as a boundary marker and a criterion for evaluating the status of a person before God.

The second affirmation which illumines what Paul means by "new creation" is found in 5:6. Here Paul says, ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ οὔτε περιτομή τι ἰσχύει οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη. The first thing that one notes in this statement is, of course, its similarity with the verse we are presently studying (6:15). As in 6:15, Paul dismisses any claim to value as regards circumcision or uncircumcision. Again, while the formulation rejects both boundary statuses (circumcision and uncircumcision), the context shows that it is, in fact, primarily the proponents of circumcision that Paul is addressing. Now, rejecting circumcision or uncircumcision as being "of any avail," Paul extols instead the value of πίστις δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη. All throughout this letter Paul argues for the role of faith in Jesus Christ as the means by which one is justified before God (2:16; cf. 2:21; 3:24).

As Paul says in 5:5, "For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait for the hope of righteousness." The external mark of circumcision does not guarantee being justified before God; it is one's faith in Christ Jesus that does so. This is what is of real value. Now, Paul adds that the faith that justifies is one that δι' ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη. While Paul is not engaged primarily in a polemic against those who promote faith against or without love, his qualification is important for understanding what he means by faith in Christ. By such a qualification, Paul asserts that faith is not just something theoretical, a passive mental assent to some truth, but active and operative in ἀγάπη. In a couple of verses later, he reiterates this by saying that the freedom the Galatians have attained in Christ should be used not as an occasion for the flesh but for loving service to one another (cf. 5:13–14). And in the light of Paul's warnings in 5:15 and his exhortation in 5:26, this faith active in love means the cessation of all fighting and jealousy that seem to have been present among the Galatian believers. To exhibit such faith which is shown concretely in love is to be a "new creation" for Paul. Thus, against those who push for circumcision (and also those who are for uncircumcision), Paul declares that what is of real value is "faith working itself through love." What is of real worth is not the possession or non-possession of the external mark of circumcision but a faith that is active in love.

Thus, we have tried to put flesh on Paul's solemn declaration in 6:15 that what counts for anything is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision but a new creation. A "new creation" in the context of this letter means having one's glory not in the physical mark of circumcision but in the cross of Christ; not in avoiding persecutions but in being crucified with Christ; not in using the standards of this world (ethnic affiliation, socio-economic status, or gender) to evaluate people but in treating everyone as a daugher or son of God; and in relying not on circumcision as the source of righteousness but on faith in Jesus Christ, a faith which is active in love.

7.2.2. *The "new creation" as eschatological motivation*. From what we have gathered about the aspects of the new creation idea, it is clear that it is an eschatological concept. Even the very expression itself tells us so: a new creation signifies the passing away of that which is *old*, that

is, of that which has been touched by sin and the flesh, of something that is this-worldly. In its place, a new reality emerges: something that has been renewed by the Spirit of God, one that is no longer subject to the forces of sin and the flesh and, thus, a reality that belongs to the life to come. In terms of this letter, one can see that the aspects of the "new creation" we have identified represent realities of the next life, for they are opposed to the values of this world. This world values external manifestations and glories in external appearance (e.g., circumcision or uncircumcision). It exalts a life of pleasure or a life devoid of persecutions. It evaluates people according to human standards of ethnic affiliation, socio-economic status, gender, and so on. It relies on its own forces as a means of salvation, and promotes self-interests rather than the interests of others.

It is on this eschatological reality of the new creation, then, that Paul grounds his final implied appeal in the closing verses of the letter. He urges the Galatian believers not to allow themselves to be forced into receiving circumcision. In the first place, they should see that even those who promote circumcision have questionable motives and are not good examples of moral behavior. But most of all, they are to resist the temptation to receive circumcision because in the end it is not circumcision (or uncircumcision) that matters but, as Paul says, καινὴ κτίσις, a reality (a "creation" or "creature") that is grounded in the person of Jesus Christ through faith in him, a reality that is transformed by the Spirit of God.

Yet who manifests or embodies "new creation" more immediately but the Galatians themselves? They have become a "new creation" and this is what Paul has been trying to tell them all along. They have received this privileged eschatological status for they have listened to the only Gospel brought to them by Paul and have come to believe in Jesus Christ. They have been freed from the "elemental spirits of the universe" and have come to know God (4:9). By their faith in Jesus Christ, they have passed from being under the custody of the law or from being practically slaves to being daughters and sons of God and heirs according to promise (3:26, 29). In Christ, they have become free

(cf. 5:1a). Paul, then, points to this privileged status as he urges them not to go back again to the yoke of slavery (cf. 5:1b).

8. Summary-Conclusion: Eschatological Motivations in Galatians

While Paul does not deal extensively with day-to-day moral issues in this letter—focusing as he was on a particular religious concern—his exposition on the "truth of the gospel" (2:5, 14) has revealed important ethical implications. Particularly, we have seen some of the most important eschatological ideas which Paul employs to motivate the Galatian community to moral life. One of these is the eschatological freedom that Christ has won for believers. Paul appeals to this freedom to exhort the community to hold fast to it and never allow themselves again to submit to a "yoke of slavery" (5:1). This means to stop considering circumcision and observance of the law as the means for their justification. This also means no longer turning back "to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits…" (4:9). Instead, they are to embrace only Christ and have faith in him.

Another eschatological idea that Paul employs as motivation is the action of the (Holy) Spirit. Paul reminds the Galatian believers how they received the Spirit "by hearing with faith" (3:2). Thus, they are now living in its power. It is the source of their spiritual strength; it is what nourishes their Christian faith in the midst of a world still touched by sin and working in the flesh. Accordingly, Paul says that since we live by the Spirit, let us also follow the lead of the Spirit. It one thing to have the Spirit as our source of life, or to be living in its realm; it is another to (decide to) conform to the manner of life expected of those who live in that realm. And Paul asks the Galatian believers precisely to live in harmony with who they are—those who are living by the Spirit. If they do so, then the "fruit" of the Spirit will manifest in their lives, that is, the power of the Spirit will allow them to manifest love, joy, peace, and other eschatological virtues.

Moreover, we also find that Paul recalls the justice of God against those who live according to the flesh and think that they can get away with it (i.e., reap good fruit out of it). A person reaps what they sow and there is no way one can reverse this divine law. At the final judgment, everyone will receive that which they have worked for in this life.

Still another eschatological motivation that we find in this letter is the reference to the eschatological harvest. Paul, wrapping up his particular appeals in the last chapter (6), exhorts the community not to grow weary in doing good. The Apostle either observed signs of discouragement on the part of the community who expected an earlier return of the Lord or was simply encouraging them to continue in the good they were doing. In either case, he points to the prospect of "reaping a harvest in due season," which in the previous verse he identified as "eternal life." The context makes it clear, however, that this "harvest" is not a right they can demand as a reward for their labor. As it is God who makes possible the "harvest" from what is "sown," so it is God who decides to give the "harvest" to those who persevere in doing good. But the Christian knows that God will do so, and so she or he waits in hope and confidence. So the motivation, ultimately, is not the reward *per se*, since this is only to be awaited in hope, but the knowledge that God is trustworthy and that he does not fail those who are faithful to him.

Lastly, we have seen the use of the eschatological idea of καινὴ κτίσις as motivation. In his last attempt to persuade the Galatians not to be compelled to receive circumcision, Paul appeals to the maxim-principle that "neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but a new creation." This involves, on the one hand, rejecting the proponents of circumcision and what they stood for. For while they are themselves circumcised, they do not live out what it means since Paul says that they do not themselves obey the law. They merely want to glory in the flesh. Moreover, Paul reveals that their keeping to circumcision (and rejecting Christ) betrays their unwillingness to suffer persecution and to be crucified with Christ.

On the other hand, to be a new creation involves changing the way people are to be regarded. In Christ Jesus all are one; thus, there is no

more discriminating against people in terms of their ethnic affiliation, socio-economic status, or gender. All are daughters and sons of God and heirs according to the Abrahamic promise. Moreover, to be a new creation is not to rely on circumcision and observance of the law as the means for attaining righteousness but to submit oneself to God through faith in Jesus Christ, a faith which works through love. All these aspects of the new creation are already among the Galatians since they have come to believe in Jesus Christ. All they need to do is to continue to walk according to the "rule" of the "new creation."

Looking at the eschatological motivations in this letter as a whole, one notes the primacy of warrants over sanctions. Specifically, Paul grounds his appeals firmly on the eschatological status of the Galatian believers—the eschatological freedom which Christ has won for them, the fact that they have the Spirit and are living in its realm, and the fact that they are a "new creation." It is true that Paul warns of the danger of forfeiting the Kingdom on the part of those who live according to the flesh and do its "works" (5:21b), but this is not used as a formal motivation in this letter. Paul mentions it to remind those who may persist in "walking according to the flesh." In the same way, the warning against making a fool out of God, motivated by the fact that one reaps what one sows, is not only a means to sow fear and thus command obedience but also a reminder of how God deals with human actions (cf. 6:7–8). On the other hand, it is also true that Paul points to the prospect of an eschatological harvest in order to exhort the community not to grow weary in doing good (6:9), but this is not a device used by the Apostle merely to "buy" the obedience of the community. It expresses the Apostle's conviction of how God responds to human initiative. And the eschatological harvest that awaits the persevering believer is not presented as a compensation for her or his efforts. It is God's show of generosity and approval toward those who persevere in well-doing.

The fact that Paul employs eschatological warrants more than sanctions (as he does in other letters) also shows that it is through dialogue and reasoned arguments that he wants the community to obey his appeals and not through threats of punishments nor through cheap

promises of eternal rewards. Paul helps to remind them who they are and, therefore, how to act in accord with this status. He appeals to the community on the basis of the "indicatives" of what God has done in their lives: the freedom that Christ has won for them, the fact that they have the Spirit and are now living under its realm, and the fact that they are now a "new creation."

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A CATHOLIC-MUSLIM MARIOLOGY*

Renato Taib Oliveros

In 1989, a mosque in Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates (UAE), was named *Masjid Maryam Umm ʿEisā* (Mary, Mother of Jesus Mosque [مسجد مريم أم عيسى]). The initiative to name it after Maryam is to exemplify the value of co-existence among religions in the UAE. Maryam is the most prominent female figure in the Qur'ān as she is the only one identified by name in Chapter 19 as Surah Maryam. The name Maryam is mentioned in the Qur'ān more than it is in the New Testament. Overall, there are 70 verses that refer to her and she is named specifically in 34 verses. It is through Mary that Muslims and Catholics are sisters and brothers in the spirit of Pope Francis's *Fratelli Tutti* (*Lahat Magkapatid/Mag-Igsoon Tanan*). She is the bridge that strengthens their bond of kinship.

A Mariology fits well in Muslim-Catholic relations as Maryam is accepted with great respect in both traditions. For instance, while Muslims accept and wholeheartedly embrace the same immaculate nature of Mary, non-Catholic Christians outrightly reject the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, although early Protestant theologians like Martin Luther embraced it. The following Maryam

*For the use of Catholic missionaries in dialogue with Muslims in the Muslim world.

theological convergences in this paper serve as bases for a shared Muslim-Catholic Mariology.

I. The Qur'ān as Extra-Biblical Source

The Qur'ān was revealed in a milieu where Christianity faced heresies and excesses in religious practices such as that of Collyridianism, a Christian heretical movement in pre-Islamic Arabia whose adherents worshipped Mary as a goddess (Surah 5:116). Even though there may be differences in revealed Scriptures, close readings of specific Qur'ānic passages can still be interpreted in the light of Judeo-Christian tradition.

T. O'Shaughnessy, S.J., writes that

> truths found also in Christ's teaching can arise outside the Church (*Nostra Aetate*, 2–3).… If this is true of world religions in general, it is even more valid for Islam, which arose in surroundings already influenced for centuries by Judaism and Christianity … [thus] the Qur'ān does not set itself in opposition to any Biblical teaching.[1]

As a Catholic reading the Qur'ān, this author will allow the Qur'ān to speak for Himself (Allāh) without interpreters disrupting Qur'ānic revelation. It is notable that the Qur'ān was revealed more than 600 years after the Annunciation and Incarnation events as documented in the Gospels, thereby making the Qur'ān itself to be the most authoritative source of interpretation. Employing other Qur'ānic references to explain other verses is reliable because of the close interrelatedness of the verses with one another. Except in some legal matters, the Qur'ān does not contradict Himself.

The Qur'ān confirms in general what is found in the Gospels. However, what the Qur'ān has are mostly brief reminiscences of the Gospel stories. The style of the Qur'ān is to reveal again what has already been revealed six to seven centuries earlier in the Gospels.

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[1]T. O'Shaughnessy, *Word of God in the Qur'ān*, 2nd ed. (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1984), foreword.

Allāh alludes to earlier revelations which the audience is apparently familiar with or knows about. Compared to the Gospels, Qur'ānic revelation has less details but uses familiar Gospel accounts to teach. Yet, there are revelations that are unique to the Qur'ān and entirely new to a Christian listener, such as, e.g., the infant Jesus speaking to the religious leaders in defense of his mother.

The good thing about the Qur'ān as an extra-Biblical source is that it gives clarity to Gospel accounts. A case in point is the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception. The Qur'ān highlights that Allāh has made Maryam pure and immaculate, stating with clarity and certitude that Mary, indeed, is the immaculate one. As Catholics, one of the best ways to change one's attitude toward Muslims is to appreciate how the Qur'ān narrates the story of Maryam, which for some reason is downplayed by early Muslim interpreters (*mufassirun*/ exegetes) whose body of work only appeared a century or two after the Qur'ān was canonized as one single *kitab* (book).

II. The Annunciation is "Virgin Birth" for Muslims

Hail Mary, full of grace. The first part of the Catholic prayer "Hail Mary" encapsulates Islamic Mariology. The prayer is based on the angel Gabriel's greeting to Mary: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you" (Lk. 1:28); the greeting of Elizabeth (*Ilisabat*), the mother of John (*Yahya*), to Mary: "Blessed are you among women" (Lk. 1:42b); and Mary's song, the Magnificat: "For behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed" (Lk. 1:48b).[2] Six centuries later, the same narrative revealed again to the Arabs in the Qur'ān is known to Muslims as the "Virgin Birth."

The narratives of the Annunciation in Luke 1:26–38 and Qur'ān 3:42–47 are identical in affirming God's choice of Mary and her

[2]The scriptural citations are taken from the Revised Standard Version (1971).

elevation "above all women." In Q. 3:42–47, Gabriel (*Jibril*)[3] is not mentioned; instead, the angels (plural) announce the good news to Mary: "O Mary, Allāh has chosen you and made you pure, and chosen you above all women of the world" (Q. 3:42). In Luke, Mary's election and elevation are expressed in Elisabeth's greeting to her: "Blessed are you among women…" (Lk. 1:42) and in Mary's Magnificat: "For behold, henceforth on all generations will call me blessed" (Lk. 1:48b).

Maryam's being made pure by Allāh corresponds to the Catholic teaching that Mary was immaculately conceived and exalted among all women to be the mother of Jesus (*Eisa* who is "Word from God" and Messiah in Q. 3:45, 19:19). This is consistent with what Gabriel said to Mary: "Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you" (Lk. 1:28). According to Christian tradition, Mary enjoys the fullness of God's grace (*gratia plena*).

III. The Immaculate Conception: Made Pure and Chosen (Q. 3:42)

Mary as immaculate is a shared belief of Muslims and Catholics. In the Qur'ān, the angels greeted Maryam: "*Yaa-Maryamu inn Allāhas-tafaaki wa tahharaki wastafaaki 'alaa nisaaa-'il-'aalamiin*" (O Mary, God has chosen you and *made you pure*, and chosen you above all women of the world) (Q. 3:42, emphasis added). The Catholic Church based its dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Luke 1 and tradition. The Qur'ān helps elucidate the dogma. The Qur'ān says: "'The angels said, 'O Mary! Allāh has chosen you and made you pure—chosen you above the women of all nations'" (Q. 3:42–43; see also Q. 66:12).

[3]The angel Gabriel (*Jibril*), the bearer of Allāh's revelation to the prophets (including Muhammad), is mentioned by name in the Qur'ān only a few times (Q. 2:97, 98; 66:4). He is often referred to only as "the angel." He is also commonly identified with the spirit (*rūh*) mentioned in Q. 19:17. However, this identification is disputed by some. Although Q. 3:42 refers to "the angels" (plural), Muslims take this to mean Gabriel or that one of them is Gabriel.

In Qur'ān 19:16–26, the spirit/angel (Gabriel), as agent of Allāh's revelation, announced the message to Maryam that she had been chosen to be the mother of Eisa. One of the titles given to Maryam is *Tāhirah*, which means "she who was made pure." Integral to God's act of choosing Maryam is the act of making her pure (made pure). They are not two separate acts but instantaneous, not one act preceding the other. *Mustafia* means "she who was chosen" and *Tāhirah* means "she who was made pure." Qurtubī's[4] exegesis (*tafsir*) explains that God elected (chose) Mary twice. He says, "The word '*chosen*' is repeated because the first time it means chosen for worship and the second chosen to bear 'Īsā."[5] This was seconded by Zamakhsharī who interprets Mary's election as thus:

> God chose you first when He accepted you from your mother (*Hannah*), nurtured you, and bestowed upon you great favors.… [Secondly,] God chose you finally in that He granted you Jesus without a father. This favor was not attained by any other woman.[6]

Like Zamakhsharī, Razi interprets the second election thus: "that God granted her Jesus without a father."[7] One can observe that the early Muslim commentators were consistent in their interpretation that the miracle of the "Virgin Birth" rests in Maryam being chosen to be the mother of Eisa—a privilege granted unto her, raising her above all women of all nations of the world.

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[4]Abu 'Abdullah Muhammad ibn Ahmad ibn Abu Bakr al-Ansari al-Qurtubi is a renowned medieval Islamic scholar and *muhaddith* from Cordoba, Andalusia. After Cordoba fell to the Christians in 1236, he left for Alexandria, Egypt where he studied *hadith* and *tafshir*. He then went to Cairo and settled in Munya Abi'l-Khusavb where he spent the rest of his life. He died in 1273.

[5]Qurtubī, *Tafshīr al-Qurtubi*, Vol. 3, trans. A. Bewley (Bradford, UK: Diwan Press, 2019), 299.

[6]Abu al-Qasim Jar Allāh Mahmud ibn 'Umar al-Zamakhsharī, *Al Kashaf 'an Haqa'iq al-Tanzil wa 'Uyun al-Aqawil fi Wujuhb al-Tawil*, Vol. 1 (Cairo, 1966), 361–362.

[7]M. Ayoub, *The Qur'an and Its Interpreters*, Vol. 2: *The House of 'Imran* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1992), 126.

Maryam's election was exemplified by her purity from the time she was conceived by her mother Hannah. Tabari[8] attributes Allāh's choice of Maryam to Hannah's vow to dedicate the child in her womb to the service of God. Maryam's purity was there from the very moment of her conception in the womb of her mother Hannah, who prayed,

> "My Lord, I have dedicated what is in my womb entirely to You; so accept this from me. For You are the One who hears and knows all." When she gave birth, she said, "My Lord! I have given birth to a girl." God knew best whom she had given birth to: "the male is not like the female. And I have named her Mary, and I commend her and her offspring to Your protection from the rejected Satan." Her Lord graciously accepted her and made her grow in goodness, and made her grow up beautifully.… (Q. 3:35–37a)

Maryam was then entrusted to the care of Zechariah who protected her from the stain of sin and kept her undefiled.

The Qur'ān is clear that Allāh made Maryam pure, immaculate (*mutahhar*), without sin. Her purity and fullness of grace made her will perfectly aligned with the will of God. In this regard, Maryam must be sinless and immaculate (Latin *immaculata*, i.e., "unstained or spotless") because she will be the mother of the child that the Qur'ān calls *Kalimatullah*—"a Word (*kalima*) from Allāh" (Q. 3:45). Maryam is "made pure" by Allāh (Q. 3:42) to be the perfect receptacle of the "Word" who is Jesus, the Christ. "*Yaa Maryamu inn Allahas-tafaaki wa taharaki*" (Mary, God has chosen you, and made you pure) (Q. 3:42).

The reference to Allāh making Maryam pure and choosing her above all women encapsulates the Catholic dogma that Maryam was immaculately conceived—*tahara* means clean, pure, chaste, unblemished, blameless; she was chosen amongst all women to be the mother of Eisa (Jesus عِيسَى), the Word and the Messiah (Q. 3:45; 19:19), just as the angel Gabriel announced in the Gospel of Luke. Maryam must be sinless and immaculate to be the perfect receptacle as mother

[8]Abū Jaʿfar Muḥammad ibn Jarīr ibn Yazīd al-Tabarī, also known as Al-Tabari or Tabari (839–923 CE), is an influential commentator of the Qur'ān and Islamic historiographer from Tabaristan, Iran.

of *Eisa al-Masih* whom the Qur'ān also calls *Kalimatullah*—"Word from Allāh" (Q. 3:45).[9]

IV. Maryam as *Mathal* (Model): Her Purity is Her Perfect Submission to Allāh's Will

The word Islam ٱلْإِسْلَامُ (*al-silm*) means "submission". It is derived from the verbal root سلم (*slm*): "to submit or surrender." In a religious context, it means "total surrender to God's will."

God's act of making Mary pure (made pure) entails submission to his will. Thus, the angels command her: "O Mary, be devoutly obedient to your Lord" (Q. 3:43a): "*Ya Maryamu uq-nutii li-Rabbiki* (يَـٰمَرْيَمُ ٱقْنُتِى لِرَبِّكِ)." In Islam, Maryam's purity reflects her obedience. It is the effect of her being made pure. Mary is called *Qānitah* which means "devoutly obedient" (Q. 66:12). This Arabic term implies not only constant submission to God but also absorption in prayer. This is consistent with Islamic tradition that Maryam spent her childhood in the temple where she grew in a contemplative prayer life.

According to the 12th-century scholar Tabarsi (1073–1153),[10] God purified Mary "with faith from rejection of faith and with obedience from disobedience, as related on the authority of Hasan al-Basri and Sa'id ibn Jubayr."[11] This is supported by Razi (1150–1210), the Sultan of Theologians, who wrote, "The first is that God purified her from the rejection of faith and disobedience."[12] Tabari interprets the meaning "and purified you" as "He (Allāh) purified your faith from all doubts

[9]H. Gibb & J. Kramers, eds., *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1991), 173.

[10]Abu Ali Fadhl ibn Hasan Tabresi, popularly called Shaykh Tabarsi, was a 12th-century Persian Shia scholar from the region of Tabaristan, Iran. His *tafsir* of the Qur'ān enjoys wide acceptance even among non-Shi'ite theologians.

[11]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 128.

[12]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 126.

and impurities which are in the faith of all women.…" Tabari reports this tradition on the authority of ʻAli.[13]

The Qur'ān aligns purity with submission to Allāh's will. Integral to Mary's call to be the mother of *Eisa al-Masih* was her *purity*. That was the purpose and meaning why Allāh made her pure (Q. 3:42)—so she could be the perfect receptacle of the Word (*Kalima*) from God. In Catholicism, Mary's pure submission to God's will is reflected in her *fiat* in Luke: "Let it be with me according to your word" (Lk. 1:38). These words of submission are an ideal and define who is a Muslim. This is reminiscent of the prayer of Jesus: "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done" (see Mt. 6:10). However, there is no Mary's "fiat" in the Qur'ān. Islamic interpreters assert that there is no need for one since Maryam is seen as *mathal*, a model of submission, as one exemplary Muslim who even as a child was predisposed to surrender to the will of God.

In a Hadith, Abu Huraira reported that the Prophet Muhammad said, "No babe is born but upon *fitrah*. It is [the child's] parents who make [the child] a Jew or a Christian or a polytheist."[14] The Arabic word *fitrah* (فطرة) means "primordial human nature" or "original state of innocence." Muhammad's saying is interpreted to mean that all children born into the world, regardless of their religion, have a predisposition to submit to God, and hence all of them are "muslims" (the Arabic word *muslim* [مُسْلِم] literally means "someone who submits"). "Muslim" here does not mean belonging to a particular religion. It is the family background or the socio-cultural upbringing of the children that makes them Jews or Christians or polytheists (i.e., "socializes" them into various religions).

[13]Ayoub, *The House of ʻImran*, 123.

[14]Sahih Muslim, *The Book of Destiny* - كتاب القدر, Book 033, Number 2643–2664 (available at https://sunnah.com/muslim/46).

V. *Rūḥ al-qudus* (روح القدس "Holy Spirit") in the Annunciation

Most revealing is in Surah 19, where the Holy Spirit appears as a Person and dialogues with Maryam, which leads to her submission to Allāh's will in Luke 1:38. The Holy Spirit blows instantaneously into her generative part and the "Word" named Messiah becomes flesh. A dialogue between Him and Mary ensues, leading to the Spirit breathing into Maryam's womb (Q. 66:12 and 21:91) to conceive the eternal Word named Christ (Q. 3:45).

1. *Rūḥ al-qudus* (روح القدس "Holy Spirit") is not the Angel Gabriel

> And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'" (Jn. 1:32–33)

In the baptism of Jesus as narrated in the four Gospels, the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, appears as a dove. In the Qur'ān, on the other hand, the Spirit appears as a perfect man—"We sent to [Maryam] Our spirit and it assumed for her the likeness of a perfect man" (Q. 19:17). He speaks to her and she in turn responds.

Muslim scholar F. Rahman argues that the term "angel," strictly speaking, is not quite accurate for the Spirit. For him, the Spirit is not an angel (i.e., Gabriel) as traditionally understood by Muslims.[15] The Spirit is never an angel but is the Spirit of Revelation who revealed the Qur'ān directly to Muhammad without the need for an intermediary. "Those Hadīth stories, then, where the angel Gabriel is depicted as

[15]F. Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis, MN: Biblioteca Islamica, 1980), 97. This book is a systematic theology of the Qur'ān. The author arranged it into eight major themes in eight chapters: God, Man (Individual and in Society), Nature, Prophethood and Revelation, Eschatology, Satan and Evil, and Emergence of the Muslim Community.

a public figure conversing with the Prophet whose companions saw him, must be regarded as later fictions."[16]

F. Rahman reiterates that the Spirit is a person for the Qur'ān describes the Spirit's physical appearance as

> one of mighty powers (who) has taught him (Muhammad), one vigorous; and he grew clear to view when he was on the uppermost horizon. Then he drew near and came down till he was (distant) two bows' length or even nearer. (Q. 53:5–9)

Rahman paraphrases the above as "The one of powerful *sinews and strong muscles* [the agent of Revelation] taught him [Muhammad]." Muhammad closely observed the Spirit established on the highest horizon. The Spirit then "drew near and descended so that he was at [most only] two bow-lengths [from the Prophet]." Rahman describes the Spirit as one who is muscular and possesses "extraordinary, almost suppressive strength."[17]

The use of the "We" in Q. 21:91 and 66:12 manifests that God Himself breathed of His Spirit into Mary.[18] The role of Gabriel is to announce (Q. 3:42, 45–46) the conception of the Word by the Spirit of Holiness.[19] It is solely God who acts, without intermediaries, as it was ordained that the Holy Spirit shall grant her the pure son when He said, "I am only a messenger of your Lord (*Rasuulu Rabbiki*) that I may give you a pure son" (Q. 19:19). For Catholics, He is the Holy Spirit who came down from heaven after Gabriel announced to Mary the good news: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Lk. 1:35).

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[16]Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 67.

[17]Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 64 (emphasis added).

[18]Q. 21:91—"We breathed into her of Our spirit, and made her and her son a Sign to the whole world." / Q. 66:12—"And she who guarded well her chastity [lit. generative organ], and thus We breathed into her of our Spirit.…"

[19]T. O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran* (Rome: Pont. Institutum Orientalium Studiorum, 1953), 54.

A dialogue between Him and Mary ensues, leading to the Spirit breathing into Maryam's womb (Q. 66:12 and 21:91) to conceive the eternal Word named the Messiah (Q. 3:45). Upon realizing that the Spirit is of God, Mary repeated the question "How can this be, for I have not been with any man?" (Q. 3:47). She stressed a virtue she held so dear to her, which is her chastity, for she said: "I have not been unchaste" (Q. 19:20b). Yet, she was willing to give it up in submission to God's will and design.

Mary's dialogue with the Holy Spirit in Surah 19 is akin to Moses arguing with *Yahweh*—how could he be the one to convince Pharaoh to free the Israelites from Egypt, for he was not eloquent? For Mary, it is that she has not been with any man. Like Yahweh of old, the Spirit in the Qur'ān speaks to Mary with authority and intervenes into her being—"And she who guarded well her chastity [lit. generative organ], and thus We breathed into her of our Spirit" (Q. 66:12; 21:91), and in Surah 19:21: "[The Holy Spirit] said: 'So shall it be.… Your Lord says, it is easy for Me.… And it is a matter [already] decided' (Q. 19:21) and [thus] Maryam conceived Jesus, the eternal Word."[20]

2. "And We Breathed Our Spirit into Her Womb" (Q. 66:12, 21:91)

Christians believe that "by the Holy Spirit [Jesus Christ] was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man" (4th-century Nicene Creed). This is confirmed in the Qur'ān which says, "We [Allāh] breathed into her [Mary] from [of] Our Spirit [*min Ruhina*]" (Q. 21:91; also 66:12). However, some Muslim commentators, in order to avoid downright anthropomorphism, make Gabriel instead of the Spirit, who is part of Allāh, breathe into Mary (Q. 21:91; 66:12). The true teaching of the Qur'ān is that the creative inbreathing came directly from Allāh.[21] The Spirit breathed out by Allāh is part of Allāh or is Allāh Himself. The statement "We sent to her 'Our Spirit…'" in Q. 19:17 also implies

[20]Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 66.

[21]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 63.

that the Spirit is part of God as God Himself. The commentators who insist that the Spirit is Gabriel end up assigning to Gabriel the authority of giving Maryam a "pure boy" (Q. 19:19).[22]

The Spirit is called holy—*Ruh al-Qudus* (Spirit of Holiness or Holy Spirit)—four times in the Qur'ān, three of which (Q. 2:87, 2:253, and 5:110) describe Allāh strengthening Jesus Christ through the Spirit and once (16:102) strengthening faithful Muslims.[23] The Spirit has His own essence distinct from Eisa's (Jesus) who is also eternal as the Word of God.

The Qur'ān depiction of Allah's Spirit (*Ruh*) blowing into Maryam's womb (*ahsanat farjahaa fanafakhna fihi min ruhinaa* [Q. 21:91]) is consistent with the angel's explanation in Luke: "The Holy Spirit will come upon you [Mary], and the power of the Most High will overshadow you" (Lk. 1:35a). Mary's obedience to the will of God (Lk. 1:38) instantaneously inaugurated God's divine plan of salvation when she conceived Jesus Christ. Thus, in both Islam and Christian faiths, the Spirit is the creative agent or power of God. Moreover, the angels' announcement—"O Maryam! Allāh gives you glad tidings of a 'Word (*kalima*) from Him'; his name will be Jesus" (Q. 3:45; also 4:171)—resonates with the Johannine prologue: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (Jn. 1:1) … "the Word became flesh" (Jn. 1:14). Like Christians, Muslims believe that the Word of God has always existed in heaven. While they argue that all prophets received the Word of God, only Jesus is called "Word of Allāh" (*kalimatullah*) and "Spirit of Allāh" (Q. 4:171).

3. The Spirit in Mainstream Islam

The identity of the Spirit in Surah 19, according to Rahman and O'Shaughnessy, is contrary to what is taught in mainstream Islam,

[22]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 64.

[23]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 44; Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'ān*, 96.

namely, that the Spirit and the angel Gabriel are one and the same. Angels are created beings but not the Spirit who proceeds directly from Allāh, is the breath of Allāh, and is eternal and inseparable from Allāh. In both the Gospel and the Qur'ān, it is God, not an angel, who manifests His power directly in the conception and birth of Jesus. Allāh intervenes directly in the conception of the Word as the Messiah by blowing His Spirit into Mary's generative organ.

The Prophet Muhammad is aware that the Spirit is not of the same category as the angels. All seven verses (*ayatun*) cited here are revealed in Mecca at the beginning of the Prophet Muhammad's preaching and reception of Qur'ānic revelation. The Spirit, however, has a distinct personality from angels. Here are four Qur'ānic verses that dispel the "Spirit = Gabriel" claim; they clearly distinguish the Spirit as different in category from angels, and that includes Gabriel: 1) 70:4 (angels and the Spirit, 1st Meccan period); 2) 78:38 (angels and the Spirit, 1st Meccan period); 3) 97:4 (angels and the Spirit, 1st Meccan period); and 4) 16:2 (angels with the Spirit, 3rd Meccan period). In verses 16:2 and 97:4, the Spirit and the angels are ascending and descending. In five verses (16:2; 97:4; 7:85-Mecca; 40:5-Mecca; 42:52-Mecca), the Spirit is mentioned as descending or bringing something down. In these verses, "the Spirit is a definite person and plays, with the angels, an active part, 'standing', 'descending', and 'ascending'."[24] They are all revealed in Mecca in the early period of Muhammad's preaching.

During this early Meccan period, the first four years of Muhammad's preaching, it is improbable that Muhammad identified the Spirit with Gabriel. Accordingly, this identification was not made even as late as the third Meccan period, which is the seventh year up to Hijra.[25] The Spirit as Gabriel evolved through the Prophet or was taught to him in connection with the Annunciation story that was heard from Christians. According to O'Shaughnessy, the Prophet Muhammad learned of the angel Gabriel from Christians only after Surah 3 was

[24]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 17.

[25]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 23, footnote 48.

revealed in Medina.[26] Only after hearing the details of the Annunciation story at Medina would the Prophet have made the connection between Gabriel and the Spirit. This confused association brought to him by his ill-instructed informants led Muhammad to link together Gabriel, the Spirit, and Jesus. By then, the commentators were unanimous in seeing Gabriel as a synonym for the Spirit.[27]

These interpretations were eventually integrated by the early commentators despite Surah 3:42, 45 clearly stating that it was the *malaaaikatu* (pl. angels) who spoke to Maryam. It does not even mention the name Gabriel. Muhammad makes no explicit mention of Gabriel in both Surahs 3 and 19. Even though Gabriel's name is not mentioned in Surah 3, Muhammad alludes to him by shifting from a plurality of angels to a singular angel (Q. 3:40). Indeed, the six *ruh* verses revealed in Medina make it impossible to substitute Gabriel for the Spirit, e.g., "we breathed into them [generative parts] some of our Spirit (66:12, 21:91)."[28]

The Prophet Muhammad could have settled the issue of the identity of the Spirit once and for all when he was questioned by disbelievers (Quraish as incited by the Jews) in Mecca. Muhammad bluntly rebuked the disbelievers from such inquiry for they knew little. He said, "They asked you concerning the Spirit. Say, *ar-Ruh* [the Spirit] is of the command [domain] of my Lord; so desist from probing for you have been given little knowledge about it" (Q. 17:85, 3rd Meccan period). Does this imply that Muhammad, too, has no knowledge of the identity of the Spirit? But if he knew, it would have been the opportune time to end all doubts about the identity of the Spirit by stating once and for all that the Spirit is Gabriel. Yet Muhammad did not. Muhammad himself does not know the identity of the Spirit. So, for any Muslim to claim with certitude that the Spirit is Gabriel is to

[26]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 53 and 62.

[27]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 54 and 57.

[28]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 53.

imply that they know more than their Prophet who clearly said that we do not know much of the Spirit.

A further problem is the argument that the angel Gabriel is the Spirit who "impregnated"[29] Maryam—an assertion that makes Gabriel a creative agent. If Gabriel is not the Spirit, who, then, is the Spirit? It is a dilemma for Muslims, but for Christians, it is easy for them to believe that the Spirit in Q. 19:17 is the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity. However, this would not be easy for Muslims because it compromises the Tawhid, the Unity and Oneness of God. For them, it is blasphemous or *shirk*, a grave sin in Islam, to worship gods or anything else other than Allāh. O'Shaughnessy puts the blame on the early commentators who were behind the push to equate the Spirit with Gabriel.

VI. The Word from Allāh Whose Name is Messiah (Q. 3:45)

> The angels said, "O Mary verily Allāh announces to you of a Word '*Bi-kalimat-in min-hu*' (of a Word from Him [Allāh])—*ismu-hul Masiihu 'Eisa-ibnu-Maryama* (whose name is the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary)." (Q. 3:45)

This Qur'ānic verse that says Jesus is the "Word from Allāh" (*Kalimatulla*) affirms somehow the Christian teaching that the Word (*Logos*) who was with God in the beginning became flesh and dwelt among us (Jn. 1:1, 14). He is Jesus Christ, the Son of Mary. This shared affirmation that Jesus is God's Eternal Word is also in the preface of the Holy Mass: "Jesus Christ, your Word through whom you made all things."[30] However, on

> the meaning of the designation of Jesus as "a word" from God, Tabari reports … on the authority of Qatādah: The word to which God refers

[29]Rahman, *Major Themes of the Qur'an*, 66.

[30]Preface of Eucharistic Prayer II. See also Jn. 1:10; 1 Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:15–17; Heb. 1:2.

> as "a word from Him" is His word "Be." God thus called Jesus His word because he came into being through God's word.[31]

Muslim commentators interpret the "word" (*kalima*) in "a word from Him" (Q. 3:45 *bi-kalimat-in min-hu*) as Allāh's creative command "Be!" (*kun*) in Q. 3:47—the command to create Jesus. But if Jesus Himself is the "Word from Allāh" (*Kalimatullah*), how can the Word create Himself? The Coptic priest Abu 'al-Barakat al-Ri'āsa Ibn Kabar mentions Muslim repugnance to the idea that the Word of God is found in the womb of a woman. They disliked the notion of Jesus being created in the womb.[32] But when informants of the Prophet suggested that the Word of God penetrated into Mary by her ears, they misconstrued St. Ephraem's metaphor "he entered the womb through the ear"[33] as if God's Word were a seed that was planted into Mary's ears. They took the metaphor literally, and they believed in this erroneous interpretation.[34]

A Muslim interpretation aligned with Christian theology is that of Tabarsi following the authority of Qatādah. He designates Jesus as "a Word from Him [Allāh]" (Q. 3:45). He is part of Allāh—inseparable. This is seconded by Ibn Abbas who declares that "Jesus is the Word of God," implying that Jesus did not come into being through God's *kun*.[35] The word *kun* was used in response to Maryam's question: "My Lord, how will I have a child when no man has touched me?"

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[31]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 131.

[32]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 60; "Livre de la lampe des ténèbres et de l'exposition (lumineuse) du service (de l'église)," par Abû`l-Barakât connu sous le nom d'Ibn Kabar; texte arabe édité et traduit L. Villecourt, Mgr Tisserant, G. Wiet; *Patrologia Orientalis* 20 (1929): 663.

[33]A poem attributed to St. Ephraem: "Just as the bush on Horeb bore God in the flame, so did Mary bear Christ in her virginity. Perfectly God, he entered the womb through the ear; in all purity the God-Man came forth from the womb into Creation" (*Harp of the Spirit*).

[34]O'Shaughnessy, *The Development of the Meaning of Spirit in the Koran*, 61.

[35]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 131.

He said, "Such is Allah; He creates what He wills. When He decrees a matter, He only says to it, 'Be!' (*kun*), and it is" (Q. 3:47).[36] Muslim commentators have invested in the word *kun* a mystical creative power. In the Genesis creation story, God says "Let there be…" (*yehî*…) and things are created (Gen. 1:3, 6, 14). But the *Logos* in John 1:1 was with God from the very beginning. Hence, it is uncreated.

Irenaeus of Lyon (ca. 130–202), a student of the Apostle John's disciple Polycarp, identifies the Logos incarnate with Jesus by whom all things were made. He based it on John's Prologue:

> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. (Jn. 1:1–3)
>
> *And the Word became flesh* and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (Jn. 1:14; emphasis added)

"In the beginning" in John 1:1 is an allusion to Genesis 1:1 as John wants to show that Jesus, the Logos, is truly the creative Word of God who was already existing at the beginning of time.[37] The Word conceals His Glory in becoming flesh. John has definitely reached the climax of his introduction in speaking of the Word become flesh in Jesus Christ. The Word who was there from the very beginning is made finite and human in Jesus. Christ is not created since He is the incarnate Word who is with God in the beginning.

As the Word of God, the Logos is co-eternal with God. The Logos is uncreated in the same way that Muslims believe that the Qur'ān is uncreated. Likewise, the Qur'ān places Jesus as Allāh's Word on a similar status as the Qur'ān as *Kalimatullah*, Word of Allāh. Muslims believe that

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[36]Q. 36:82: "Surely His Command, when He wills a thing, is only to say to it: Be! [*kun*] and it is!" See also Q. 2:117.

[37]P. Perkins, "The Gospel According to John," in R. Brown, J. Fitzmyer, & R. Murphy, eds., *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1990), 951.

the Qur'ān is uncreated and has always existed in heaven. Allāh then sent it down to Muhammad as a revelation. The eternal *Kalimatullah* from heaven became the Arabic Qur'ān on earth for humankind. For Christians, the eternal Logos did not become a book but it became flesh, i.e., a human person: Jesus Christ, whom the Qur'ān also calls Messiah. The Word becoming flesh in the Messiah is that tremendous mystery of the Incarnation.

Irenaeus writes that there is one Almighty God who made all things, both visible and invisible, by His Word, showing, at the same time, that it is by the Word through whom God made the creation.[38] Card. J. Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI) elucidates the Logos as the Creator Spirit. It is the "Creator Spiritus" from whom proceeds everything that exists.[39] This is the reason why Benedict XVI referred to Christianity in 2005 as the religion of the Logos.[40]

Yahya (John the Baptist) as witness to the Word. From within the same pericope of Surah 3 Al Imran (a Medinan surah), the angels who greeted Maryam—"Allāh gives you the good news of a Word from Him [Allāh] whose name is Messiah" (Q. 3:45)—also revealed to Zechariah—"Allāh gives you the good news of Yahya [John the Baptist] as a Witness of a Word [Jesus] of Allāh" (Q. 3:39). It is noteworthy that the Johannine Prologue also reveals that John the Baptist "came as a witness to testify to the light [Jesus]…" (Jn. 1:6f). See also Jn. 1:15–34; Mt. 3:11–12; Mk. 1:7; Lk. 3:15–18.

The role of Jesus as savior may differ from that in Islam, but Surah 3's depiction of the Word, conceived in Maryam and witnessed by *Yahya* (John), has a strong parallelism with the Gospel according to

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[38]Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, 3.11.1, available at https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103311.htm.

[39]Benedict XVI, general audience (Rome: February 6, 2013), available at https://bit.ly/3pKCUA9 (accessed January 5, 2019).

[40]J. Ratzinger, "On Europe's Crisis of Culture" [lecture], Catholic Education Resource Center (Subiaco, Italy: April 1, 2005), available at https://bit.ly/3ClKSF9 (accessed January 5, 2019).

John, Chapter 1, which reveals the incarnation of the Word becoming flesh. "Tabari interprets the phrase 'confirming a word of God' to refer to Jesus, the son of Mary. He reports that al-Dahhak said, 'John was the first to assent to Jesus and to bear witness that he was a word of God.'"[41] It first happened, as Ibn Kathir reports on the authority of Ibn Abbas, when "John's mother (Elisabat) used to say to Mary, 'I feel the child in my womb bowing down in reverence to the child in your womb.' This was the manner in which John confirmed Jesus while still in the womb."[42] "Tabarsi argues that John was obligated by God to be a witness to the fact that Jesus was in truth the word of God and His spirit."[43] John had credibility and integrity such that people believed John's word because of his veracity and asceticism. Instead of testifying that Jesus is the Lamb of God (Jn. 1:29, 36), the Qur'ān says that Yahya testified that the Word of God is Jesus the Messiah.

VII. Our Mother of Perpetual Help: *Eisa ibn Maryam*

The popular icon of Our Mother of Perpetual Help portrays a close bond between Mary and her child. Likewise, the Qur'ān depicts Maryam inseparably united with her son—a relationship expressed by the title *Eisa ibn Maryam*. Yet there is a tendency among some Catholics and Muslims to focus solely on Mary and deemphasize Jesus. Early Muslim exegetes, for example, regard *Eisa ibn Maryam* as an honorific title given to Jesus because of the high status that the Qur'ān ascribes to Mary.[44] But should it not be the other way around? A Muslim-Catholic Mariology that does not point to or culminate in her son, Jesus (*Eisa al-Masih*), is deficient. An adequate Mariology is possible

[41]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 108.

[42]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 108.

[43]Ayoub, *The House of 'Imran*, 109.

[44]N. Robinson, "Jesus," in J. McAuliffe, ed., *Encyclopedia of the Qur'ān*, Vol. 3 (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 11.

only if Muslims and Catholics give a higher status to Jesus, for Mary herself says, "Do whatever he [Jesus] tells you" (Jn. 2:5).

It is about Jesus, not Mary. The Qur'ān is clear that Allāh made Maryam pure and without sin not just for her own sake but for someone greater than herself. She was made pure because she was chosen by Allāh to be the mother of Eisa, a great prophet for Muslims and Son of the living God for Christians (Mt. 16:16).

In this regard, Maryam must be kept sinless and immaculate because she will be the mother of the child whom the Qur'ān calls *Kalimatullah*—"a Word from Allāh" (Q. 3:45).[45] Allāh kept her undefiled (Q. 3:42) to make her a worthy receptacle of the "Word" who is Jesus (Q. 3:42). The angel Gabriel further announced that Mary shall be the mother of Eisa the Messiah (Q. 3:45; 19:19). This is consistent with the Christian tradition of the Annunciation of Gabriel to Mary in the Gospel according to Luke (Lk. 1:26–38).

The title *Eisa ibn Maryam* is the perfect expression of the intimacy between the mother and her child. Such intimacy is the ideal relationship that Mary's devotees—whether Christians or Muslims—must develop with Jesus, her son. Catholics are reminded that devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary must lead to Christ. By adapting the Catholic dictum "to Jesus through Mary," Muslims and Catholics will eventually converge in her son.

VIII. Deliver Us from the Evil One

As a mother, Mary is there to defend her children from the evil one through her son Jesus (Eisa). "Then the dragon was angry with the woman, and went off to make war on the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus" (Rev. 12:17). In the end, "she will crush your [the serpent's] head" proclaims the Benedictus antiphon sang on the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. The Rosary, which Pope Francis requested

[45]Gibb & Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 173.

all Catholics pray each day, is "to protect the church from the devil, who is always looking to divide us from God and from one another."[46]

Likewise, the Qur'ān exhorts the faithful to wage a spiritual warfare against Satan: "Say, 'I take refuge with the Lord of humankind … from the evil of the whispering tempter who whispers in people's hearts…'" (Q. 114:1–5). It is one of the earliest Meccan surahs that commentators agree on is not a revelation like most surahs but a prayer similar to Surahs 1 and 113. It is a prayer to Allāh for deliverance (*a'udhu bi llah*) from the snares of the Devil or *Shaytan* (Satan).

Classical interpreters (*mufassirun*), however, misrepresented the "whisperer" as the ego-self (*nafs*), thus putting the blame on humanity's pride, envy, and other faults.[47] But the "the evil" or "insidious suggestion" (Q. 114:4 *al waswaas*) comes from outside of the human person, from someone who whispers, who tempts. The whisperer is the personification of the Shaytan, the evil one. He works with his demons (*jinn*) and evil persons (Q. 114:6).[48] In Islam, the Evil One is identified with *ash-Shaitan* ("the Devil"), often known by the epithet *ar-Rajim* ("the Accursed"). Shaytān incites humans to sin by whispering (*yuwaswisu*) to the hearts or breasts (*sudoorin*) of humankind. Qur'ān 114:6 reveals that there is a whisperer who insinuates to the hearts of human persons, tempting them to sin and do evil. If humankind is weak spiritually, they will easily succumb to temptation. So, when humankind prays to Allāh for deliverance from the Evil One, it is not to be saved from oneself but to be saved from the cunning whisperer.

Catholic tradition teaches that each of the faithful has a guardian angel to guide and defend them from the tempter. Ironically, there is a tradition in Islam that teaches that every Muslim has an assigned

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[46]G. O'Connell, "Pope calls on Catholics to pray 'to protect the church from the devil'," *America* (September 29, 2018), available at https://bit.ly/3i8Yryr.

[47]M. Sells, *Approaching the Qur'án: The Early Revelations* (Ashland, OR: White Cloud Press, 1999), 141.

[48]T. Cleary, *The Essential Koran* (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 202.

demon to test his/her faith and steadfastness.[49] The Qur'ānic prayer "I take refuge in the Lord of humankind … from the evil of the whispering slinker [cunning secretive devil] who whispers in the hearts of [humankind]…" mirrors the prayer taught by Jesus Christ: "rescue us from the Evil One" (Mt. 6:13b).

Conclusion

Gabriel greeted Maryam with God's strange plan that baffled the young virgin from Nazareth. The virgin birth certainly changed the life of the lowly maiden. Yet it was not a passive submission—it was an act of faith, a deed of courage to cooperate actively with God's plan. One must take into account the valor of the young maiden, her audacity to say "yes" to Allāh's will despite the risk of being judged as an adulteress which was punishable by stoning. She asked Allāh's messenger Gabriel: "How can I have a son when no man has ever touched me? I have not been unchaste" (Q. 19:21). Her total submission to God's will was exemplified in the Gospel of Luke when she said, "Let it be with me according to your word" (Lk. 1:38). Mary accepted wholeheartedly God's plan.

Maryam inaugurated Allāh's divine plan when she was chosen to be the mother of the child whom the Qur'ān refers to as the "Word from Allāh" (Q. 3:45) and "Allāh's Word" (Q. 4:171).[50] According to Muslim interpreters, Mary was chosen twice in Q. 3:42 ("O Mary, indeed Allāh *has chosen you* [*stafaaki*] and purified you *and chosen you* [*wastakaaki*] above the women of the worlds" [emphasis added]). The first election was intrinsic, i.e., Allāh chose the virgin in herself and for herself. She was chosen and made pure in view of her consecration to serve Allāh (Q. 3:35–37). For the second election, Allāh chose her with regard to the *divine plan*. She was chosen and raised above other women to be the mother of the Messiah (Q. 3:42–47; see also Q. 19:16–27).

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[49]M. Ayoub, *The Awesome News: Interpretation of Juz 'Amma, the last part of the Qur'ān* (Iowa, 1997), 166.

[50]Gibb & Kramers, *Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 173.

The Qur'ān states that Maryam is to be the mother of the Word and that both the child and the mother will be a sign (*ayatun*) from Allāh (Q. 21:91; also Q. 19:21). Accordingly, Muslim commentators say that Maryam was chosen for a divine plan. Yet they did not specify what Allāh's divine plan is.

If one reflects on God's unique intervention in human history, the question one might ask should be "Why did God choose Mary and for what purpose?" It was not just that Maryam was chosen by Allāh but that she was chosen for something bigger than herself.

The tendency of classical Muslim exegetes was to "praise" Maryam and then stop there, remaining silent about the mission of Eisa that would explain Allāh's divine plan. After all, Allāh's plan was dramatically inaugurated with the virgin birth and subsequent entry of Eisa (Jesus) into human history. There is not much in the current Qur'ān, however, that elaborates what happened to the child who became an adult and realized Allāh's divine plan.

The task in developing a Mariology in Islam is not just to point to her but also to her son—*Eisa ibn Maryam*. It is because of Jesus that Allāh chose Mary and made her pure (Q. 3:42). The honored status of Mary is her being chosen by Allāh to be the mother of Eisa as affirmed by Tabarsi.[51] But who is Eisa that his mother was given such a high privilege?

Muslims and Christians may disagree on the role and identity of Eisa (Jesus) but they converge in agreement that Maryam is Allāh's chosen above all women from all nations and generations. Given Allāh's unique intervention in human history, the call of Maryam is a miracle *par excellence*. Maryam is identified inseparably with her son, thus the title *Eisa ibn Maryam*. In the icon of Mary and the child Jesus, we hear the voice of the mother: "Do whatever he [Jesus] tells you" (Jn. 2:5). Maryam is the *mother* not only of Jesus but of all humanity. ❧

[51]Abu 'Ali al-Fadl b. al-Hasan al-Tabarsi, *Majma' al Bayan fir Tafsir al-Qur'an*, 6 vols. (Beirut: 1961).

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