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Authority and Persuasion:

Self-Presentation in Paul's Letters

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

in History

by

Kevin Ronald Scull

2012

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Authority and Persuasion:

Self-Presentation in Paul's Letters

by

Kevin Ronald Scull

Doctor of Philosophy in History

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor S. Scott Bartchy, Co-chair

Professor Ronald J. Mellor, Co-chair

This study examines Paul's self-presentation in Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians
in order to determine the purpose of each letter and Paul's relationship to each community. A
fundamental premise of this study is that Paul did not provide communities with
autobiographical information so that they might possess a more robust portrait of Paul. Rather,
the information he provided was carefully selected in order to fit the needs of each audience and
to increase the chance of success for each letter.

I begin by identifying and examining Paul's four primary categories of self-presentation:
deeds, personal suffering, self-effacing language, and agent of God. Then, I examine the Greco-
Roman rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters, and I note that they all contain similar
categories and techniques for self-presentation, including the four categories outlined by this

study. From this examination I demonstrate that awareness of the proper methods of self-presentation was not restricted to those who received a formal rhetorical training but that all educated individuals such as Paul of Tarsus would have been aware of the categories and techniques outlined in the handbooks because were "in the air."

Next, I examine Galatians, Philippians and 1 Corinthians by focusing on Paul's self-in order to determine his purpose for writing each letter and his relationship with each audience. Using this approach I am able to confirm the scholarly consensus concerning Paul's relationship with the Galatians and Philippians. Moreover, I confirm the scholarly consensus concerning the purpose of Paul's letter to the Galatians, concluding that the letter serves as a self-defense.

However, this approach also provides new insights regarding Paul's purpose for writing to the Philippians and the interpretation of many difficult passages. For instance, I am able to conclude that a primary purpose for writing to the Philippians is to address their recent gift, and I note that Paul prepares the community throughout the letter to accept his potentially insulting claim that God would reciprocate on his behalf. Moreover, by identifying the importance of Paul's self-presentation throughout the letter for the success of his handling of the Philippians gift, I provide further evidence for the unity of the letter.

The dissertation of Kevin Ronald Scull is approved.

Robert A. Gurval

S. Scott Bartchy, Committee Co-chair

Ronald J. Mellor, Committee Co-chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2012

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Curriculum Vitae

Education

C.Phil., History, UCLA, 2008

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M.A., Religious Studies, California State University, Long Beach, 2004

B.S., Psychology, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana, 1996

Publications

"James, the brother of Jesus" in *The Dictionary of the Bible and Western Culture: A Handbook for Students*. Santa Barbara: Baylor University Press, 2011.

"Tiberius" in *The Dictionary of the Bible and Western Culture: A Handbook for Students*. Santa Barbara: Baylor University Press, 2011.

"Early Christian Anti-War Responses" in *World History Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011.

"The Roman Legion" in *World History Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011.

"Marius and His Mules" in *World History Encyclopedia*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, 2011.

Select Presentations

"Paul's Self-Presentation in Philippians: Providing a Model for Enduring Suffering," presented for the Rhetoric and the New Testament program unit at the 2011 Annual Meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, San Francisco, CA, November 11, 2011.

"Paul and the Philippians' Gift: Self-Presentation as a Tool for Avoiding Reciprocity," presented for the Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament program unit at the 2010 Annual

Meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 23, 2010.

"Paul's Use of Self-Presentation as a Defense of His Oratorical Abilities in 1 Corinthians 1:10-4:21," presented for the Pauline Epistles program unit at the 2010 Annual Meeting for the Society of Biblical Literature Annual Meeting, Atlanta, GA, November 22, 2010.

"Paul, Self-Presentation and the Philippians' Gift," Presented at the Enoch Graduate Seminar, Budapest, Hungary, July 22, 2010.

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Teaching Assistantships

History 1B: World Civilization: 843 - 1715, UCLA, Spring, 2008

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Introduction

Paul's use of self-presentation as a persuasive tool is a prevalent and critical aspect of his letters; however, not many studies have addressed this issue. While there are a number of works which have examined one aspect of Paul's self-presentation or focused on one of his letters, there has not been a work which examines Paul's self-presentation over multiple letters. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining Paul's self-presentation in order to pursue two primary goals.

1. Situating Paul's self-presentation within the Greco-Roman world. This entails comparing Paul's self-presentation to the established Greco-Roman norms for presenting oneself, which are preserved in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks. This assumption is confirmed through an analysis of the *progymnasmata*, speeches, and letters, which all reflect the advice found in the handbooks.

2. Examining Paul's self-presentation in his letters to the Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians in order to determine the purpose of each letter and Paul's relationship with each audience.

I. Previous Studies

While there are a number of works which address some aspect of Paul's self-presentation, few examine it as a persuasive tool.[1] For example, the 2011 work *Documents and Images for the Study of Paul* dedicates an entire fifty page chapter to Paul's self-presentation; however, it

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[1] Neil Elliot, "The Apostle Paul's Self-Presentation as Anti-Imperial Performance," *in Paul and the Roman Imperial Order* (ed. Richard A. Horsley: Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 2004); Steven J. Kraftchick, "Self-Presentation and Community Construction in Philippians," in *Scripture and Traditions* (ed. Patrick Gray and Gail R. O'Day: Leiden: Brill, 2008). These works specifically state their intention of examining Paul's self-presentation, but they do not examine its persuasive impact. There are many works that indirectly engage an aspect of Paul's self-presentation such as topics addressing Paul's status as an apostle, his use of metaphors, references to athletics and running, and similarities to the Greco-Roman philosophers.

focuses on providing contemporary parallels, rather than addressing its persuasive nature.[2]

Despite the small number of relevant works, there have been excellent studies focusing on Paul's

self-presentation as a persuasive tool, which have provided valuable contributions to this study.[3]

However, each of these works focuses on only one aspect of Paul's self-presentation, or only one

letter. Thus, despite the valuable contribution of each, none of them comprehensively applies

Paul's self-presentation as a means for interpreting his letters.

Christopher Forbes demonstrates the usefulness of examining Paul's boasting by

comparing it to the Greco-Roman norms, contained in the handbooks, speeches, and Plutarch's

"On Inoffensive Self-Praise."[4] Forbes provides numerous examples from Greco-Roman sources,

which discuss boasting and the use of self-deprecating language, and he uses this data as a lens to

examine Paul's boasting in 2 Corinthians 10-12. However, Forbes reaches the questionable

conclusion that "For Paul self-praise is never legitimate"[5] This statement highlights the limitation

of Forbes' study as it does not account for Paul's boasting in other letters. For instance, while it

could be argued that Paul's boasting in 2 Corinthians 10-12 is ironic, it does not seem possible to

describe Paul's boasting to the Galatians as anything other than legitimate boasting for the sake

of persuasion.

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[2] Neil Elliott and Mark Reasoner, *Documents and Images for the Study of Paul* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2011).

[3] Hans Deiter Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); E.A. Judge, "Paul's Boasting in Relation to Contemporary Professional Practice," *ABR* 16 (1968): 37-50; Paul A. Holloway, *Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995); Jerry L. Sumney. "The Function of Ethos in Colossians," in *Rhetoric, Ethic, and Moral Persuasion in Biblical Discourse* (ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Anders Eriksson: New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 301-315; Johan S. Vos, "Philippians 1:12-26 and the Rhetoric of Success," in *Rhetoric, Ethic, and Moral Persuasion in Biblical Discourse* (ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Anders Eriksson: New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 274-283; Duane F. Watson, "Paul and Boasting," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World* (ed. J. Paul Sampley: Harrisburg, Pa: Trinity Press International, 2004), 77-100.

[4] Christopher Forbes, "Comparison, Self-Praise and Irony: Paul's Boasting and the Conventions of Hellenistic Rhetoric," *NTS* 32 (1986): 1-30.

[5] Forbes, 20.

Jennifer Glancy's article, "Boasting of Beatings," also focuses on boasting and rightly highlights Paul's unusual boasting in 2 Corinthians 10-13.[6] Glancy outlines the Greco-Roman norms for honorable boasting and notes that in 2 Corinthians Paul violates these norms by boasting about dishonorable achievements such as the whippings he received on his back. Her work is foundational for this study because it provides extensive background material concerning the Greco-Roman standards for honorable and dishonorable methods for presenting one's wounds, and she rightly demonstrates that Paul does not always follow these norms. While the present study categorizes Paul's presentation of his past beatings and lashings as suffering, rather than boasting, Glancy is certainly correct in noting that Paul violates the Greco-Roman norms. Thus, while Glancy's work is restricted to 2 Corinthians, she provides critical background material which allows the present study to be more aware of Paul's willingness to flout the social norms for proper self-presentation.

Not many studies have focused on the persuasive element of Paul's presentation of his suffering. The most notable is Gregory Bloomquist's, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians*, in which he examines Paul's suffering through the lens of its epistolary and rhetorical function. He concludes that while Paul's suffering has theological ramifications, it has a persuasive element as well. Bloomquist identifies Paul's suffering in the *exordium* as a *captatio benevolentiae*; that is, as an attempt to "endear them to him."[7] Bloomquist concludes that Paul's use of self-presentation is consistent with the advice of the rhetorical handbooks for building a positive ethos with a community. However, while Bloomquist rightly notes that Paul does not

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[6] Jennifer Glancy, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23-25)," *JBL* 123 (2004): 99-135.

[7] Gregory L. Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 146, 193.

provide the details of his suffering, he does not indicate that this approach is different from the advice contained in the handbooks.[8]

The handbooks advise that one present the details of one's suffering, and both Quintilian and Cicero recall the case against Manius Aquilius in which he exposed the scars on his chest to persuade his audience.[9] Thus, although in many letters Paul's self-presentation of his suffering was intended to build a positive relationship with his audience, chapter three of the present study focuses on Paul's deviation from the accepted standards in his letter to the Philippians. That is, I conclude that Paul intentionally omitted the details of his suffering when writing to the Philippians because his goal was to demonstrate that one can succeed despite suffering. Therefore, while Bloomquist is correct in his assertion that Paul often presents his suffering to build a positive relationship with a community, he seems to overlook Paul's unusual self-presentation of his suffering in his letter to the Philippians.

In John Marshall's essay, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians," he examines Paul's self-presentation in his letter to the Philippians in light of the rhetorical concept of *ethos*.[10] Marshall notes that Paul's presentation of himself in many roles is "an important part of his persuasive ethos" intended to build authority with his audience.[11] Critical for this study is Marshall's recognition of Paul's claim to be an agent of God, a status which he presents to the community in order to reinforce his authority. In fact, Marshall states that Paul presents himself as "on God's team."[12] Thus, Marshall's work is informative because it attempts to situate Paul's self-presentation, as an agent of God, within the context of rhetorical criticism.

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[8] Bloomquist, 148.
[9] Cicero, *De or.* 2.195; Quintillian, *Inst.* 2.15.7.
[10] John W. Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians," in *Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht: Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 357-374.
[11] Marshall, 366.
[12] Marshall, 364.

In George Lyons', *Pauline Autobiography*, he examines the autobiographical passages of Paul and attempts to demonstrate that Paul's self-presentation is not always apologetic and conforms to the standards of Greco-Roman autobiography.[13] He correctly concludes that rhetoric was critical in the formation of Greco-Roman autobiographies by examining biographical statements from four ancient authors: Demosthenes, Isocrates, Cicero, and Josephus. Lyons then examines Paul's use of self-presentation in light of these authors and concludes that "Paul's self-praise and self deprecation conform to the conventions of his time ... and are completely inoffensive when measured by ancient standards."[14] Especially critical, for this study, is Lyons' extensive discussion of Paul's self-presentation as an agent of God, in which he concludes that Paul employs this language as a means of persuasion in order to "attempt to dissuade the Galatians from following the troublemakers"[15]

While Lyons' contributions to Pauline autobiography, and this study, are important, there are two problems issues with his work. First, as others have noted, Paul does not always follow the ancient standards for boasting and self-deprecation.[16] In fact, Paul's occasional blatant disregard for these standards serves as part of the impetus for this study. Second, Lyons' conclusion that Paul's self-presentation to the Galatians is not defensive is incorrect.[17] While Lyons is certainly correct that Paul's self-presentation is a means of persuasion, it is also defensive in nature. For instance, in presenting himself to the Galatians as God's agent, Paul not

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[13] George Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* (SBLDS 73: Atlanta: Scholars Press), 1985.

[14] Lyons, 72.

[15] Lyons, 156.

[16] Glancy; Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians*, (WUNT 2/23: Tubingen: J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987), 357-364. Glancy has convincingly demonstrated that Paul does not follow the Greco-Roman standards when boasting of his wounds in 2 Corinthians 10-13. Peter Marshall concludes that Paul deviates from the Greco-Roman standards outlined by Quintilian when using self-derisive language in 2 Corinthians 10-12.

[17] Lyons, 79-105. Lyons mounts an extensive attack on the use of mirror-reading as a means for examining Paul's autobiographical statements. He concludes that scholars have incorrectly labeled Paul's statements as defensive because they have relied too much on a flawed technique.

only attempts to persuade the Galatians to disregard the arguments of interlopers, but he also presents a defense of his authority, which is clearly in question.

In *Portraits of Paul,* Bruce Malina and Jerome Neyrey examine Paul's self-presentation through the lens of *encomia*, speeches of praise.[18] They examine Paul's autobiographical statements in Galatians 1-2 and Philippians 3:2-11 and note similarities to the standard biographical information contained in *encomia*, as outlined in the rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata*.[19] In fact, their work on Philippians 3:2-11 demonstrates that Paul's self-presentation is so similar to the information contained in *encomia* that he must have had direct knowledge of the proper material to include in *encomia*.[20] Therefore, their work proves either that Paul had access to the *progymnasmata* during his education or that knowledge of the proper information to include in *encomia* was widely available. Moreover, Malina and Neyrey examine Paul's presentation of his status as an agent of God through the lens of rhetorical criticism and persuasion, and they rightly conclude that these statements are part of his persuasive agenda.[21] Moreover, they provide this study a means for situating Paul's status as an agent of God within the context of rhetorical criticism, classifying his statements as examples of the material expected in an encomium, especially material pertaining to one's manner of life, education, fortune, and piety.[22]

In Margaret Mitchell's seminal work, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, she convincingly demonstrates that the primary purpose of 1 Corinthians was to quell factionalism within the Corinthian community. It is arguably the most rigorous example of rhetorical criticism

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[18] Bruce J. Malina and Jerome H. Neyrey, *Portraits of Paul: an Archaeology of Ancient Personality* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1996).
[19] Malina and Neyrey, 34-60.
[20] Malina and Neyrey, 51-55.
[21] Malina and Neyrey, 41-46.
[22] Malina, 41-51.

applied to a Pauline letter, and two of her points are foundational for this study. First, and of the utmost importance, is her assertion that "actual speeches and letters from antiquity must be consulted along with the rhetorical handbooks throughout the investigation."[23] Second, this study agrees with her conclusion that the purpose of 1 Corinthians 1:10 – 4:21 is to resolve the factionalism which developed within the Corinthian community. While the entirety of her work is influential, her focus on Paul's self-presentation as an exemplar for the community is most critical for this study.[24] She notes that one of the most persuasive elements of a deliberative work is using examples, and she notes that Paul's self-presentation "… is the single most pervasive example employed throughout the letter …"[25] Moreover, she demonstrates the importance of the credentials which Paul lays out for the community in presenting himself as an example worthy of imitation. She notes passages in which Paul presents himself as God's agent, as one who is a servant of Christ, steward of the mysteries of God, and founder of the community.[26] Mitchell's work clearly demonstrates that Paul's status as an agent of God can be situated within a rhetorical framework.

Peter Marshall examines Paul's relationship with the Corinthians through the lens of friendship and enmity in light of Paul's "literary, cultural and social environment."[27]
In his examination, Marshall focuses on many subjects relevant to this study, such as Paul's relationship with the Corinthians and the social norms for reciprocity concerning gift giving.[28] Moreover, Marshall notes that Paul responds to the Corinthians using a number of rhetorical

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[23] Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991), 6.
[24] Mitchell, 49-60.
[25] Mitchell, 42-46, 49.
[26] Mitchell, 54.
[27] Peter Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul's Relations with the Corinthians* (WUNT 2/23: Tubingen: J C B Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1987), vii.
[28] Marshall's work on gift giving is plays an integral role in my analysis of Paul's letter to the Philippians concerning Paul's claim that God will reciprocate the Philippians' gift on Paul's behalf.

techniques such as boasting, comparison (σύγκρισις), and self-derision. Most critical for this

study is his work on self-derision in which he notes that self-deprecating language was

discouraged in the rhetorical handbooks. For instance, he cites Quintilian who describes self-

derision as the most "perverted form of self-praise."[29] While Marshall does note that self-

effacing language can be useful in moderation, he asserts that "the magnitude of Paul's self-

dispraise" deviates from the accepted social norms.[30] Therefore, while Marshall's conclusions are

informative, his work focuses exclusively on Paul's use of self-effacing language in his

correspondence with the Corinthians and does not examine letters in which Paul uses self-

effacing language in moderation.

Elizabeth Castelli's work is important for this study because it provides an alternative

approach to Paul's self-presentation as persuasion.[31] Rather than using the Greco-Roman

handbooks as her lens, she examines Paul's self-presentation through a lens based on the work of

Michael Foucault, focusing on authority and power. She rightly indicates that Paul's self-

presentation, and call for imitation in Galatians and 1 Corinthians, is used as a means of re-

establishing his authority over these communities. However, by examining Paul's self-

presentation exclusively though a lens based on power and authority, Castelli places too much

emphasis on Paul's attempts to solidify his authority over his communities. Castelli's approach

also conflicts with the work of Margaret Mitchell who rightly notes that the primary purpose of 1

Corinthians 1:11 - 4:21 is to address factionalism within the Corinthian community.[32] That is,

while it is necessary for Paul to re-establish his authority with the community, so that they are

more willing to accept his advice, his goal is to quell factionalism rather than to re-assert his own

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[29] Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria* 11.1.21-22.
[30] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 356.
[31] Elizabeth A. Castelli, *Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991).
[32] Margaret M. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991).

authority. Moreover, Castelli's lens appears overly narrow when applied to Paul's call for imitation in his letter to the Philippians, a community with whom Paul has a friendly relationship.[33]

Therefore, the present study concludes that the model which Paul provides the Philippians was intended to serve as a tool to help the community endure their own suffering, rather than an attempt to assert his "privileged position within the hierarchy as the mediating figure through whom the community might gain access to salvation."[34] Thus, while Castelli's contributions are valuable in bringing attention to Paul's need to re-establish his authority in certain letters, by viewing his self-presentation solely through a power lens, she is unable to recognize that Paul's purpose in presenting himself as a model is dependent on the different needs of each community.

II. Methodology

Rhetorical criticism is a fundamental tool for this study. The Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks provide extensive information regarding the proper methods of self-presentation available to one crafting a persuasive work. Since there are multiple ways in which rhetorical criticism has been used, it is necessary to outline the scholarly debate concerning Paul's education, which focuses on his rhetorical abilities and his knowledge of the handbooks. Moreover, since Paul was a letter writer, it is necessary to briefly examine the validity of

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[33] Castelli, 95-97; Loveday Alexander, "Hellenistic Letter-Forms and the Structure of Philippians," *JSNT* 37 (1989): 87-101; John T. Fitzgerald, "Philippians," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary* vol. 5 (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 320; Pheme Perkins, "Christology, Friendship and Status: The Rhetoric of Philippians," *SBL Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 509-20; L. Michael White, "Morality Between Two Worlds: A Paradigm of Friendship in Philippians," in *Greeks, Romans, and Christians. Essays in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe* (Minneapolis: Fortress 1990), 201-15. Some such as White and Fitzgerald have applied the technical term friendship to Philippians. However, others, including Alexander, have used different labels, such as "family letter," to describe Paul's friendly relationship with the community.

[34] Castelli, 96.

applying to letters the information gleaned from the rhetorical handbooks.

Rhetorical criticism is generally applied to Paul's letters in one of two ways.[35] The majority of works employ rhetorical criticism in a formal sense. These works examine Paul's letters as if they were rhetorical speeches and assume that Paul had a formal rhetorical education.[36] However, other works examine Paul's use of rhetoric through a functional lens. These works assume that, while Paul may have employed some rhetorical devices, especially those concerning style, it is not productive to examine Paul's letters as if they were rhetorical speeches.[37]

II. 1. Formal Rhetorical Criticism

Those who employ rhetorical criticism, using formal categories of Greco-Roman rhetoric, often assert that Paul, as one composing persuasive works, was trained in, or heavily influenced by, Greco-Roman rhetoric and he thus intended to compose rhetorical works. For instance, Watson states, "In fact, rhetorical analysis shows that Philippians is carefully constructed, being organized and written according to the principles of Greco-Roman rhetoric."[38] Moreover, these works often use rhetorical criticism to identify the species of Paul's letters. However, the

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[35] Many, following the influential work of Perelman and Olbricht-Tyteca, examine Paul's letters through the lens of "New Rhetoric," which applies modern rhetorical theory to Paul's letters. While these studies have made useful contributions, they are not grounded in the Greco-Roman handbooks, speeches, and letters. Therefore, since the goal of this study is too examine Paul's use of self-representation in its historical context, this study focuses on approaches which examine self-representation in its Greco-Roman context.

[36] Duane F. Watson, *The Rhetoric of the New Testament: A Bibliographic Survey*, (Blandford Forum: Deo Publishing, 2006). Watson provides an extensive bibliography of studies which examine Paul's letters using rhetorical criticism.

[37] Stanley E. Porter, "The Theoretical Justification for Application of Rhetorical Categories to Pauline Epistolary Literature," *in Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht: Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 100-122; Jeffrey T. Reed, "Using Ancient Rhetorical Categories to Interpret Paul's Letters: a Question of Genre," *in Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht: Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 292-324.

[38] Duane F. Watson, "A Rhetorical Analysis of Philippians and Its Implications for the Unity Question," *NovT* 30 (1988): 57.

shortcomings of this approach have been especially illustrated by attempts to classify the species

of Galatians, which has been identified either as judicial, or deliberative, or epideictic in different

studies.[39] In addition, to identifying the species of the entire letter, works have attempted to

isolate rhetorical units within the letter, which are then examined individually.[40] For example,

Smit identifies 1 Corinthians 12-14 as a deliberative unit, and Bünker classifies 1 Corinthians 15

as a judicial unit.[41]

Other works, using rhetorical criticism in a formal sense, analyze the arrangement of

Paul's letters as if they were rhetorical speeches.[42] That is, they identify the necessary parts of a

speech, *exordium* (introduction), *narratio*, *partitio*, *probatio*, and *peroratio* (conclusion). It has

proven difficult to apply this aspect of rhetorical criticism to Paul's letters, and there is little

agreement on where each section begins and ends. Porter's brief summary of the many attempts

to label the elements of Galatians highlights this problem and demonstrates that at least six

scholars have divided Galatians in six different ways.[43]

II. 2. Paul's Education

A fundamental issue with applying rhetorical criticism in a formal manner to Paul's

letters is that it assumes that Paul possessed a great deal of rhetorical knowledge. The majority of

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[39] Stanley E. Porter, "Paul of Tarsus and His Letters," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period: 330 B.C. - A.D. 400* (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 533-586.

[40] Michael Bünker, *Briefformular und Rhetorische Disposition im 1. Korintherbrief* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983); Joop Smit, "Argument and Genre of 1 Corinthians 12-14," *in Rhetoric and the New Testament: Essays from the 1992 Heidelberg Conference* (ed. Stanley E. Porter and Thomas H. Olbricht: Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1993), 211-230.

[41] Bünker, 59-71; Smit, 211-230.

[42] Betz; Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007); Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990); John H. Reumann, *Philippians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Ben Witherington, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998). In fact, this approach has become so common that the structure of many commentaries reflects the rhetorical arrangement of the letter, and nearly all commentaries contain a section dedicated to the arrangement of the letter.

[43] Porter, "Paul of Tarsus and His Letters," 541-7.

scholars, using this approach conclude that Paul had formal rhetorical training. For instance,

Forbes states,

> What we have seen of Paul's rhetoric suggests a mastery and an assurance
> unlikely to have been gained without long practice, and possibly long study as
> well. Any decent amateur rhetor could follow text-book rules, but it would take
> more than mere competence to weave them into an eloquent and compelling
> whole.[44]

Unfortunately, Paul does not provide any information concerning his education in his letters, and

therefore, Acts 22:3 is the only "direct" evidence for his education: "I am a Jew, born in Tarsus

in Cilicia, but brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, educated strictly according to our

ancestral law." There has been much debate concerning the meaning of this passage, focusing on

when Paul would have left Tarsus and the passage's historicity.[45] For those concluding that the

passage is historically accurate, there is no consensus regarding the timing of Paul's departure

from Tarsus, a potential source for his rhetorical training.[46]

If one rejects Acts 22:3 as a historical source, then there is no evidence regarding Paul's

education other than the implied education necessary to compose letters in Greek. Thus, without

solid information regarding his education, it is difficult to conclude that Paul had formal

rhetorical training. As Marrou, Cribiore, and others have demonstrated, the Greco-Roman

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[44] Forbes, 23.

[45] Ernst Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1971), 625; Philip H. Kern, *Rhetoric and Galatians: Assessing an Approach to Paul's Epistle*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 213-215; Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1981), 32-34; Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: a Critical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 46-7; W. C. van Unnik, *Tarsus or Jerusalem: the City of Paul's Youth* (trans. G. Ogg; London: Epworth, 1962). Scholars are divided over the historicity of this passage. For instance, Haenchen concludes that Paul could not have studied under Gamaliel, since Galatians 1:22 explicitly states that he was unknown by the Christian communities in Judea. Additionally, Murphy-O'Connor concludes that Paul completed his education in Tarsus citing Strabo as evidence of the established custom of leaving Tarsus only after completing one's education. However, others such as Van Unnik, Kim, and Kern conclude that the passage has historical value, and they conclude that Paul completed his education in Jerusalem under Gamaliel.

[46] However, many scholars such as Forbes have concluded that even if Paul was educated primarily in Jerusalem, and not in a Greco-Roman rhetorical center such as Tarsus, he still could have had access to rhetorical training. Therefore, the interpretation of this passage is not critical, since wherever Paul was educated, he could have received some degree of rhetorical training.

educational system had three tiers, each more exclusive than the last.[47] Rhetorical training was

only reached at the third tier which was reserved for the elites, and a scant few were ever able to

reach this level. Although it is possible that Paul had formal rhetorical training, without direct

evidence, it is a risky assumption. Considering the amount of rhetorical education Paul would

have needed, it is difficult to conclude that Paul used rhetoric in a formal manner and had the

knowledge to compose formal rhetorical letters.

Kennedy and Longenecker avoid the issue of Paul's education by claiming that he would

not have needed extensive rhetorical training in order to employ rhetoric in his letters, asserting

that Paul could have consulted the rhetorical handbooks or been exposed to rhetorical techniques

that were "in the air."[48] For instance, Kennedy is often cited as stating,

> Even if he had not studied in a Greek school, there were many handbooks of
> rhetoric in common circulation which he could have seen. He and the evangelists
> as well would, indeed, have been hard put to escape an awareness of rhetoric as
> practiced in the culture around them, for the rhetorical theory of the schools found
> its immediate application in almost every form of oral and written
> communication[49]

While Kennedy's statement is true, a rudimentary knowledge of a few rhetorical

techniques is not enough to validate the many studies which apply rhetorical criticism in a formal

sense to Paul's letters. As Forbes points out, the amount of training that Paul would have needed

in order to validate many of the modern rhetorical studies would require that he had more

familiarity with rhetoric than he could have gained from the culture around him or by reading

rhetorical handbooks.[50] Thus, Porter's criticism is apt in stating that

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[47] Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2001); Henri Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956).
[48] George Alexander Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984); Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians* (Dallas, TX: Word Books, 1990).
[49] Kennedy, 10.
[50] Forbes, 23.

There may well be elements of ancient rhetoric to be found in Paul or other letter writers of the time, even young Theon. But it is difficult to establish what and how much Paul could have known on a conscious or formal basis.[51]

Therefore, attempts to apply rhetorical criticism in a formal manner to Paul's letters make assumptions concerning Paul's knowledge which are difficult to prove.

II. 3. Functional Rhetorical Criticism

While rhetorical criticism applied in a formal manner is problematic, others have adopted a "functional" approach.[52] A minority of works have examined Paul's letters through the lens of Greco-Roman rhetoric, but in a more limited manner, emphasizing that Paul wrote letters and not rhetorical speeches. For instance, Reed states,

Regarding the stasis of quality (*quale sit*), if rhetorical elements do appear in Paul's letters, one must allow for the possibility that Paul's usage may be functionally related to, but not formally (and consciously) based upon, the ancient rhetorical practices.[53]

That is, certain elements of rhetoric would have been applicable to letter writing but "Paul probably did not incorporate a system of ancient rhetoric into the epistolary genre."[54] Additionally, these scholars are either hesitant, or unwilling, to claim that Paul had the intense rhetorical education, only available to the elites, required to compose rhetorical speeches. Furthermore, they are not persuaded by the argument that Paul could have learned the proper techniques for composing a rhetorical work by simply reading rhetorical handbooks. However, despite these limitations, both Reed and Porter conclude that rhetorical criticism used within a more limited scope can yield useful results. As Porter states, "Nevertheless, so long as one is

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[51] Porter, "Rhetorical Categories in Pauline Literature," 105.
[52] Porter, "Rhetorical Categories in Pauline Literature"; Reed.
[53] Reed, 324.
[54] Reed, 323.

aware of the limits of claims made for Pauline rhetoric, rhetorical categories can be profitably

used to interpret Paul's letters."[55]

When applying rhetorical criticism in a functional manner, "each supposed parallel

requires explicit formal and functional definition."[56] For instance, Porter provides a list of

rhetorical tropes and figures that appear in Paul's letters, which include hyperbole, *litotes*, irony

and many others.[57] Moreover, especially important for this study is the conclusion, by both Reed

and Porter, that Paul's attempts to establish a positive ethos, or goodwill, with his audience are

comparable to the methods outlined in the rhetorical handbooks. Reed states that,

> In the same way that epistolary openings function to expose the general nature of
> the relationship between the sender and the recipient (be it positive or negative),
> so also the exordium serves to generate a positive relationship of trust and
> compliance between the speaker and listener, that is, to build ethos.[58]

Thus, although the results obtained from this approach are more limited, the information gleaned

from these studies is more reliable.

III. Rhetorical Criticism and Epistolography

Since letters belong to the field of epistolography and are not speeches, there is debate

over whether rhetorical criticism should be applied to Paul's letters in any form. The crux of the

debate centers on the absence of material regarding letter writing in the rhetorical handbooks. On

one side of the debate are those who assume that authors with rhetorical training would have

employed rhetoric in their letters since it was an effective means of persuasion. This position is

best summarized by Aune who states that,

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[55] Porter, "Paul of Tarsus and His Letters," 585.
[56] Reed, 324.
[57] Porter, "Paul of Tarsus and His Letters," 578-583.
[58] Reed, 307.

By the first century B.C., rhetoric had come to exert a strong influence on the composition of letters, particularly among the educated. Their letters functioned not only as means of communication but also as sophisticated instruments of persuasion and media for displaying literary skill.[59]

Many scholars have attempted to demonstrate the similarities between rhetoric and epistolography. For instance, Stowers notes the similarities between the twenty-one letter types outlined by Pseudo-Demetrius and the three species of rhetoric stating, "there are types of letters which belong to each of the three species."[60] For example, he highlights the similarity between letters of advice and deliberative rhetoric, both defined as works providing advice to an audience.[61] Hughes presents Demosthenes' Epistle 1 as proof that the rhetoricians did, in fact, employ rhetoric in their letters.[62] These studies have convinced many scholars that despite the lack of direct references to letter writing in the rhetorical handbooks, rhetorical criticism can be applied in a formal sense to Paul's letters.

However, those who advocate the use of rhetorical criticism in a functional manner often emphasize the differences between rhetoric and epistolary theory, stressing that they are, fundamentally, different genres; they conclude that rhetorical theory cannot be used to examine letters. For instance, Porter claims that there is a fundamental conflict between rhetoric and epistolography. He notes that the work "Epistolary Types," attributed to Pseudo-Demetrius, states that letters should be written in a simple, and plain, style, and this simple style is fundamentally different from the elaborate style of the rhetors. In fact, Porter states,

One can be certain from the evidence of the ancient rhetorical handbooks themselves of only one thing: with regard to epistles only matters of style were discussed in any significant way, virtually always with epistles mentioned in contrast to oratory. There is, therefore, little if any theoretical justification in the

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[59] David Edward Aune, *The New Testament in Its Literary Environment* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1987).
[60] Stanley K. Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press. 1986), 51.
[61] Stowers, 52.
[62] Frank W. Hughes, "The Rhetoric of Letters" in *The Thessalonians Debate* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 194-240.

ancient handbooks for application of the formal categories of the species and organization of rhetoric to analysis of the Pauline epistles.[63]

Thus, for Porter, rhetorical theory and epistolary theory are simply too different to allow rhetorical criticism to be applied formally to Paul's letters.

IV. Rhetorical Criticism in This Study

This study, agreeing with many of the claims and concerns of Porter and Reed, applies rhetorical criticism functionally, rather than formally, to Paul's letters. That is, I conclude that Paul was aware of many of the socially accepted methods for self-presentation available to those composing persuasive works, but he need not have known rhetoric in a formal sense. While it is possible that Paul had formal rhetorical training, this study adopts a more cautious approach, concluding that, as an educated individual, Paul had access to a limited amount of persuasive techniques outlined in the rhetorical handbooks which were "in the air." Additionally, although epistolography and rhetoric are clearly different genres, Hughes has demonstrated that the rhetoricians used their persuasive skills when writing letters.[64] Thus, this study assumes that Paul would have used whatever persuasive techniques were available to him when writing his letters.

In claiming that Paul was aware of persuasive techniques that were "in the air," this study is particularly mindful of the sage advice of Margaret Mitchell who states: "The directions which the rhetorical handbooks provide must always be tempered and compared with actual speeches and other rhetorical compositions from the Greco-Roman world"[65] Therefore, while this study treats the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks as repositories of information concerning the socially accepted methods of self-presentation, it confirms that these techniques were in the air by verifying their existence in the *progymnasmata*, speeches, and letters. That is, in order to

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[63] Porter, "Rhetorical Categories in Pauline Literature," 115-116.
[64] Hughes, "The Rhetoric of Letters."
[65] Mitchell, 9.

assume that Paul was aware of a rhetorical technique, it must be demonstrated that it was accessible to those outside of the educated elite. This is a step not often taken in studies which assume that Paul had a rhetorical education. Therefore, chapter one focuses on the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, *progymnasmata*, speeches, and letters in an attempt to confirm the wider usage of the categories defined by this study.

V. Paul's Self-presentation

In Paul's letters, four primary categories of self-presentation are most common: boasting of deeds, self-effacing language, personal suffering, and agent of God. An examination of the handbooks, speeches, *progymnasmata*, and letters confirms that these categories are described in the rhetorical handbooks and employed in persuasive works. However, the prevalence of each category in Greco-Roman works and the similarity to Paul's use of the categories varies widely. For example, boasting of one's deeds is a common method of self-presentation for Greco-Roman authors, and Paul's use of the category often closely resembles the methods outlined in the rhetorical handbooks. However, fewer Greco-Roman authors emphasize the importance of presenting oneself as an agent of the divine, the category employed most often by Paul.

Paul frequently emphasizes his past deeds when writing to communities, and his use of this category is similar to that of other Greco-Roman authors. Adhering to the societal norms for boasting was critical for all Greco-Roman authors, as boasting was considered an odious enterprise. Since boasting of one's past deeds was persuasive, yet potentially irritating to one's audience, the rhetorical handbooks and Plutarch provide extensive advice concerning how to boast in an acceptable manner. These sources outline the appropriate situations for boasting and provide methods to mitigate negative reactions to one's boasting. For example, Plutarch's essay

"On Inoffensive Self-Praise" is especially useful as it outlines many scenarios in which boasting is appropriate, such as defending one's good name or answering a charge.[66] Additionally, he suggests including one's shortcomings alongside one's self praise and attributing a portion of one's success to chance, or the gods, in order to temper any negative reaction caused by boasting.[67]

While Paul does present his past deeds in each letter, the amount of boasting he presents varies, often based on his relationship with his audience. For instance, in his letter to the Galatians, a letter in which his authority is in question, he boasts extensively, highlighting both past and current deeds. For example, Paul emphasizes his past deeds within Judaism stating, "I advanced in Judaism beyond many among my people of the same age, for I was far more zealous for the traditions of my ancestors."[68] Additionally, Paul presents more recent deeds to the Galatians recalling the praise bestowed on him by those in Jerusalem and the recognition he received from the leaders in the Jewish Christian community.[69] Thus, Paul's boasting to the Galatians reflects the advice of Plutarch, who identifies self-defense as an acceptable occasion for boasting.

Malina and Neyrey have rightly noted that Paul's highlighting of his deeds in his letters to the Galatians and the Philippians resembles an encomium, a speech of praise focusing on the life and deeds of an individual.[70] The rhetorical handbooks and *progymnasmata* contain instructions for composing these works, and many extant speeches demonstrate this advice. Encomia contain information about one's birth, tribe, education, and reputation; the handbooks note that these traits should be further demonstrated by recounting one's past deeds, especially those

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[66] Plutarch, *Mor.* 540C.
[67] Plutarch, *Mor.* 542E.
[68] Gal 1:14.
[69] Gal 1:24, 2:9.
[70] Malina and Neyrey, 19-63.

accomplished on behalf of others, despite hardship and adversity, or despite great danger.[71]

Malina and Neyrey demonstrate that Paul's self-description in Philippians 3:4-6 contains the

same information as an encomium. Paul describes his birth and upbringing as honorable,

circumcision on the 8th day, status as a member of the tribe of Benjamin, and Hebrew parents.

Moreover, Paul's training and education are impeccable, as he is not only a Pharisee, but one

who is blameless before the law. Furthermore, Paul demonstrates these traits through deeds he

accomplished by describing himself as one who rigorously upheld the Pharisaic tradition and

even zealously persecuted those not obeying that tradition. Moreover, Paul reminds the

community that "for the sake of Christ" he repudiates these past achievements.[72]

While Paul's self-presentation of his deeds generally reflects the advice of the rhetorical

handbooks, Paul occasionally disregards the social norms for boasting. As Glancy rightly notes,

Paul's boasting in 2 Corinthians 10-13 does not conform to the standards outlined by Plutarch

and the rhetorical handbooks. Although the handbooks do recommend that shortcomings and

suffering should be included alongside one's boasting, she correctly concludes that the suffering

which Paul presents was not the honorable suffering which the handbooks suggest. Moreover,

although Philippians 3:4-6 is an example of Paul clearly demonstrating knowledge of the proper

type of information one should include in an encomium, in 3:7 he eschews the advice of the

handbooks by repudiating the significance of these achievements. Thus, Paul's manner of

referring to his past deeds is dependent upon the purpose of the letter, and he crafts his self-

presentation to fit his relationship with, and the needs of, each audience.

While Paul's use of self-effacing language is less prevalent, it is especially critical as it

has an extensive influence on later Christian authors, beginning with Ignatius. As Lighfoot notes,

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[71] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.9.1-41; Cicero, *De or*. 2.346-7.
[72] Phil 3:7.

by the middle of the third century one of Paul's self-derisive descriptors, περίψημα, "became a common expression of formal compliment"[73] However, the contemporary reception of his self-effacing language is less clear, as both the ancient sources and the secondary literature are divided over the acceptable use of the category. Martin, Collins, and Pogoloff stress the usefulness of self-effacing language, and Collins notes that "ancient rhetors such as Isocrates and Dio Chrysostom often voiced a kind of mock humility so as to win the good will of their audience."[74] Quintilian suggests that one can "derive some silent support from representing that we are weak, unprepared, and no match for the powerful talents arrayed against us, a frequent trick in the *exordia* of Messala."[75] Aristotle also notes that self-effacing language used in moderation can be effective and attractive to an audience.[76] Additionally, many rhetors such as Isocrates, Dio Chrysostom, and Cicero use the technique in their speeches, seemingly demonstrating the accepted nature of the technique.[77]

However, others such as Peter Marshall focus on the offensive nature of self-derision stating that "self-derision, in varying degrees, was regarded as the worst form of praising oneself."[78] Additionally, this conclusion is supported by Quintilian who writes that "I am not sure that open boasting is not more tolerable, owing to its sheer straightforwardness, than that perverted form of self-praise"[79]

Marshall rightfully indicates that the crux of the issue seems to be based on the degree of self-effacement which would have been acceptable to an audience. He concludes "I have not been able to find anything which resembles Paul's sustained self-derision in Greek or Roman

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[73] J. B. Lightfoot, *Ignatius and Polycarp* in *The Apostolic Fathers* 2, 2, (Hendrickson: Olms, 1989), 51.
[74] Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999), 116; Martin, 48; Stephen M. Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia: the Rhetorical Situation of 1 Corinthians*, (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 136.
[75] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.8-10 (Butler, LCL).
[76] Aristotle, Eth. nic., 4.7.13-16.
[77] Cicero, *Quinct.* 1.2; Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.39; Isocrates, *De Pace.*
[78] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 356.
[79] Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.21-22.

authors." That is, self-effacement seems to have been a category of self-presentation which was used and even encouraged in small doses, and Quintilian's contradictory statements regarding self-effacing language seem to reflect this reality. Therefore, the divided nature of the sources indicates that small amounts of self-effacing language would have been acceptable; however, determining the precise amount of self-effacing language an audience would deem acceptable would have been quite difficult.

Paul's use of self-effacing language is intriguing because in his letters to the Philippians and Galatians he does not employ this difficult technique, whereas in his correspondence with the Corinthians he not only uses self-effacing language, but he clearly violates the accepted norm of using self-effacing language in small doses. In 1 Corinthians alone, he describes himself as lacking rhetorical ability, weak, a fool, the least of all the apostles, refuse of the world, and an ἔκτρωμα.[80] Thus, Paul's unusual use of self-effacement seems to indicate that he considered his authority with the community to be solid enough to flout the societal conventions for using self-effacing language.

Paul's personal suffering is also a prevalent aspect of his self-presentation, and the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks provide extensive advice concerning the proper methods for presenting one's suffering. The advice of the handbooks focuses on two opportunities to present one's suffering: as a means of garnering pity and for soothing the animosity which boasting can arouse in one's audience. The latter method is less common, and the handbooks suggest that presenting toils and suffering along with one's deeds can temper the negative reaction of an audience to one's boasting.[81] For instance, Cicero suggests that blending "one's labour and

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[80] 1 Corinthians 2:1-4, 4:10, 4:13, 15:8, 15:9. The literal translation of ἔκτρωμα, in 1 Corinthians 15:8, is an aborted fetus or miscarriage. However, most translators do not render this word literally. The NRSV translates ἔκτρωμα as "one untimely born," while the NIV translates it as "one abnormally born."
[81] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.22; *Rhet. Her.* 1.8.

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sorrow" is a useful tool for reducing any jealousy incurred from boasting; Plutarch confirms this advice, stating that people do not envy those who have acquired their status via "much hardship and peril."[82]

The handbooks dedicate much more space to providing advice for presenting one's suffering as a means of eliciting pity from an audience, and a wide range of possibilities are suggested such as hunger, disease, and wounds.[83] Moreover, Quintilian advises that one's suffering should be made palpable through visual examples such as: presenting fragments of bone, bloody garments, and even open wounds.[84] In fact, both Quintilian and Cicero recall the trial against Manius Aquilius in which he successfully garnered pity from his audience by exposing the scars on his chest.[85]

However, while presenting one's suffering was a valuable persuasion device, there were limitations to its use. For example, Plutarch states that it is ridiculous to "mitigate … bragging by a confession of cowardice and unmanliness."[86] That is, the type of suffering presented should be manly or honorable. Jennifer Glancy confirms the limitations of presenting one's suffering in her extensive discussion of the distinction between honorable and dishonorable wounds in the context of 2 Corinthians; she rightly concludes that Paul's boasting in 10-13 of the beatings, shipwrecks, and other humiliations that he endured stands in stark contrast to the accepted methods for presenting one's suffering.[87] That is, Paul violated the social norms by boasting about dishonorable suffering, which most writers and speakers would have attempted to conceal.

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[82] Cicero, *De or*. 2.210; Plutarch, *Mor.* 544 D.
[83] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 2.8.8-10.
[84] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.30.
[85] Cicero, *De or*. 2.195; Quintilian, *Inst*. 2.15.7.
[86] Plutarch, *Mor*. 544A.
[87] Glancy, 134-5.

Paul's presentation of his suffering is especially important for this study because he is not consistent in his use of the category. In some letters, such as Galatians, he operates within the confines of the socially accepted norms for presenting suffering. For instance, Paul attempts to elicit pity from the Galatians by reminding them that his initial visit was due to an illness he suffered.[88] Moreover, in Galatians 5:11, Paul tempers his accomplishments by recounting the persecution he endured while preaching the gospel. Finally, in 6:17 he reminds the community of the marks he bears on his body as a result of his labors.[89] However, in 2 Corinthians 11:23-25, Paul recounts the dishonorable beatings he received. Additionally, in his letter to the Philippians, Paul refers to his current imprisonment, yet provides no details of the horrors he almost certainly endured. Thus, Paul's presentation of his suffering is situational and dependent upon his purpose and audience.

Paul's most prevalent form of self-presentation is his status as an agent of God, which he makes clear at the beginning of nearly every letter with a statement describing himself as either an apostle or servant of God (or Christ). This category is nearly non-existent in the rhetorical handbooks and may be derived from Paul's experience in Judaism. For instance, nearly every commentator has highlighted the similarity between Paul's statement in Galatians 1:15 that God "set me apart before I was born" and the self-presentation of the Hebrew prophets.[90] Both Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" and Isaiah 49:1 "the Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me" could have influenced Paul's decision to employ this category.

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[88] Gal 4:13.

[89] Glancy, 121. While Glancy rightly notes that the marks on Paul's back would have been considered dishonorable, in Gal 6:17 Paul does not focus on their location or how he received them. Instead, he attempts to try to present his suffering in a more honorable light, choosing not to highlight the dishonorable aspect of it.

[90] Longenecker, 30.

However, although the rhetorical handbooks do not emphasize the importance of establishing one's relationship to the divine, it is a concept which is not entirely absent from Greco-Roman works. In fact, Plutarch states that one can lessen the irritation of one's self praise by attributing a portion of one's accomplishments to chance or the gods.[91] Moreover, he provides examples of individuals claiming to be agents of God. He recounts a quote from Python of Aenos, who after killing Cotys, proclaims that "This, men of Athens, was the doing of some God; I did but lend my arm."[92]

Additionally, other Greco-Roman writers, such as Dio Chrysostom, claimed to be agents of God. In Dio Chrysostom's thirty-second discourse "To the People of Alexandria," he presents himself as one bringing advice not of his own volition but by the will of some deity.[93] Moreover, he claims that "if one hears words of wisdom, we must believe that they too were sent by God," and as the one bringing this wisdom Dio Chrysostom positions himself as God's agent.[94] His statements are strikingly similar to those of Paul in his letter the Galatians. Both authors claim their wisdom stems from a deity, and both did not choose to be agents of God, but were instead chosen by the divine.

While presenting oneself as an agent of God was clearly not unknown to Greco-Roman authors, it is less clear where this category fits into a rhetorical lens. One solution is to identify it as a subcategory of boasting, as comparing oneself with important past figures such as Moses and the prophets could certainly be viewed as boasting. Moreover, many of Paul's statements concerning his status as God's agent occur in sections in which he defends his authority. For example, in Galatians 1:11-15 he boasts of his pedigree, which includes assertions about his

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[91] Plutarch, *Mor.* 542 F.
[92] Plutarch, *Mor.* 542F.
[93] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.12.
[94] Dio Chrysostom, *Ep.* 32.14.

status as God's agent, claiming that the Gospel was taught to him by Christ, and that God chose him while he was still in the womb.

Another viable solution is proposed by John Marshall, who examines Paul's statements as an attempt to build ethos with his communities.[95] Marshall asserts that by presenting himself as being "on God's team," Paul indicates to his audience "that he and God are working towards the same ends."[96] Thus, by demonstrating that he is God's agent, Paul is able to establish a positive relationship with his communities. This explanation is attractive since it explains why Paul employs this category of self-presentation more frequently in his letters to communities in which his authority is in question. For, presenting himself as working towards the same goals as God and operating as his agent is certainly an effective method for rebuilding his relationship with, and re-establishing his authority over, a community.

Malina and Neyrey have examined Paul's status as an agent of God within the framework of the *encomia*, and this is another viable option for situating Paul's status as an agent of God within rhetorical criticism. By focusing on the *encomia* they conclude that Paul's claims concerning his status are best described as examples of the cardinal virtue of justice, and its subcategory, piety. They note that in Menander Rhetor's *progymnasmata*, he suggests that one demonstrates a subject's piety by emphasizing his status as having a friendly relationship with God, as one who is both God-loved and God-loving. Malina and Neyrey, citing Menander Rhetor as evidence, assert that Paul's remarks in Galatians 1:12, 15 "should surely be taken to mean that he is god-loved or *theophilotês*."[97]

Thus, while Paul's status as an agent of God is more difficult to incorporate into a rhetorical framework than the other categories, there are numerous examples of individuals

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[95] Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians."
[96] Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians," 364.
[97] Malina and Neyrey, 45.

claiming to have divine favor and acting as the agent of the divine. Moreover, as outlined above, there a number of studies have already attempted to situate this category in the context of rhetorical criticism. The most promising of these attempts is Marshall's work, in which he concludes that Paul presented himself as an agent of God as a means of developing *ethos* with communities. As noted above, it is certainly noteworthy that when addressing communities such as the Galatians, in which his authority was in question, Paul emphasizes this category above all others. However, in letters to communities with whom he already had a friendly relationship, Paul does not emphasize his status as God's agent as frequently.

VI. Moving forward

Having outlined a new approach, which focuses on Paul's self-presentation, the remainder of this study attempts to apply this approach to three of Paul's letters: Galatians, Philippians and 1 Corinthians. The goal of this study is to demonstrate that, by focusing on Paul's self-presentation, new interpretations of his letters are possible. While this approach could be applied to answer many questions, this study focuses primarily on examining the purpose of Paul's letters, and in the process I examine his relationship with each community.

In chapter one, I examine the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, *progymnasmata*, speeches, and ancient letters in order to demonstrate that the categories of self-presentation employed by Paul were available to those without formal rhetorical education. This is accomplished by examining the advice of the rhetorical handbooks concerning the four categories of self-presentation outlined by this study. The wider availability of this advice is then confirmed by identifying persuasive speeches and letters which employ these categories and reflect the advice of the handbooks.

In chapters two through four, I identify and analyze the forms of self-presentation in three of Paul's letters: Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians. I have selected these letters because they each reflect a different historical situation. In chapter two, I examine Paul's letter to the Galatians, a letter written to a community that seems to be questioning Paul's authority. Chapter three focuses on Paul's letter to the Philippians, a friendly letter written to a community which accepts Paul's leadership. In chapter four, I analyze the forms of self-presentation used by Paul in 1 Corinthians, a letter containing extensive advice and written to a fractured community, in which some members seem to be questioning Paul's authority.

In chapter five, I conclude this study with a summary of my findings. I note that Paul's use of self-presentation is consistent with the advice found in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks and the established social norms, which are verified by extant speeches and letters. I also provide a summary of the results I obtained by applying this approach to Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians. Specifically, I provide a summary of the purpose of each letter, Paul's relationship with each community, and a number of difficult passages for which this approach provides a new interpretation.

In appendix 1, I examine Ignatius' use of extensive self-effacing language in light of the established social norms and Paul's use of the category. I focus on the many similar words and phrases found in 1 Corinthians and the letters of Ignatius. I then question the scholarly consensus that Ignatius' use of self-effacing language reflects the psychological of a man truly humbled by events that occurred in Antioch.

Chapter 1

Greco-Roman Self-Presentation

This chapter highlights the similar techniques and categories of self-presentation in the rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters by focusing on the four categories outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, self-effacement, and agent of God. This research demonstrates that the methods of self-presentation outlined in the rhetorical handbooks were not isolated to the educated elite, but were available to most educated individuals. That is, the rhetorical handbooks serve as repositories of the accepted social norms for self-presentation, rather than texts preserving techniques known only by a select few. This chapter begins by examining the rhetorical handbooks, which contain extensive advice concerning self-presentation. Next, the advice of the *progymnasmata* and Plutarch's "On Inoffensive Self-Praise" is outlined, and both focus on presenting one's deeds. The *progymnasmata* are especially critical for this study because they contain the same advice outlined in the rhetorical handbooks, but were used to educate a wider audience. The self-presentation of many speeches is examined, and not surprisingly, rhetorical speeches follow the advice of the handbooks. Moreover, speeches from Homer's *Iliad* also reflect the advice outlined in the handbooks. Finally, this chapter closes with an examination of ancient letters, in which authors employ the same techniques and categories for self-presentation as those found in the rhetorical handbooks. This data is critical because it demonstrates that Paul of Tarsus was not alone in employing the advice of the rhetorical handbooks regarding self-presentation when crafting his letters.

I. Rhetorical Handbooks

The Greco-Roman handbooks contain extensive advice concerning the most effective means for employing self-presentation. While clearly these works were intended for the educated elite, as noted above, the information they contain represents the standards for self-presentation for all educated individuals who used persuasion in the Greco-Roman world. Therefore, since the rhetorical handbooks contain such a vast amount of material concerning self-presentation, they are especially critical for this study and are the foundation of this chapter. Although there are many handbooks which could be examined, this study focuses on Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, Cicero's *Inventione* and *De Oratore*, and Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*. These works have been chosen because of their probable influence on and/or proximity to the letters of Paul of Tarsus.

In these handbooks, there is ample material on self-presentation, and they provide advice concerning the four categories of self-presentation employed by Paul of Tarsus: self-effacement, deeds, personal suffering, and occasional references to attributing success to the divine. Most often the rhetorical handbooks focus their treatments of self-presentation on the presentation of one's client, garnering goodwill (*ethos*), and manipulating the emotions (*pathos*) of an audience. Self-presentation is addressed most often in examinations of the introduction, conclusion, and speeches of praise and blame. Speeches of praise and blame are particularly informative as they focus on providing techniques for the proper praising of an individual's past deeds. Self-presentation is also covered in a wide range of other areas such as: the different parts of a rhetorical work, the different species of a rhetorical work, examples of successful trials, and pre-constructed arguments (*topoi*). Before examining each handbook's treatment of self-presentation,

I will provide an overall summary of the handbooks advice regarding: deeds, personal suffering, and the use of self-effacing language.[98]

The handbooks are consistent in their advice concerning the presentation of one's deeds, recommending the presentation of one's past deeds as a means of establishing the character of an individual in order to create a positive relationship with an audience. For example, Cicero writes, "We shall win good will from our own person if we refer to our own acts and services without arrogance"[99] Moreover, both Quintilian and Aristotle suggest that outlining one's deeds is an effective means for demonstrating a "person's habitual character."[100] The handbooks also outline the type of deeds which are most impressive, and these bear a striking resemblance to those presented by Paul of Tarsus. Most impressive are deeds accomplished despite suffering, for the sake of others, or by no one else.

The rhetorical handbooks also recommend presenting one's personal suffering as a means of establishing a positive relationship with an audience. The handbooks consistently suggest presenting one's misfortune as a means for garnering pity with an audience, and the type of suffering they recommend mirrors the suffering presented by Paul. They advise highlighting one's sickness, weakness, hardships, and wounds. Moreover, they note that one's suffering can be made more palpable through detailed examples. In fact, both Cicero and Quintilian recount the trial in which the tunic of Manius Aquillius was ripped open during his trial in order to display his battle scars. The handbooks also suggest presenting one's suffering, along with one's deeds, in

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[98] As noted in the introduction, the rhetorical handbooks contain very little advice concerning the fourth category outlined by this study, agent of God.

[99] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.22 (Hubbell, LCL).

[100] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.9.33 (Kennedy); Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.7.15.

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order to quell any jealousy aroused in an audience. For instance, Cicero advises that one present deeds that were accomplished through "labor and sorrow." [101]

While the advice provided by the rhetorical handbooks concerning the presentation of one's deeds and suffering is consistent, the information provided concerning the use of self-effacing language is more complicated. Cicero advises the use of self-effacing language as one of his strategies for eliciting pity from an audience suggesting the presentation of one's "helplessness and weakness"[102] Moreover, Cicero employs this technique extensively in his own speeches and letters. Quintilian's advice concerning self-effacement is more ambiguous. In his treatment of the *exordium*, Quintilian suggests that presenting oneself as "weak, unprepared, and no match for the powerful talents" of one's opponent can help establish a positive relationship with an audience.[103] However, while discussing boasting, Quintilian asserts that self-effacement is the most "perverted form of self-praise"[104] Thus, the rhetorical handbooks suggest that using self-effacing language can be both useful for establishing goodwill with an audience and a dangerous tool which can be interpreted as a form of boasting sure to anger an audience.

Aristotle's handbook, *On Rhetoric*, is the oldest extant Greco-Roman rhetorical handbook, and it has influenced later writers such as Cicero and Quintilian. Therefore, it is appropriate to start by examining its advice which includes two of the categories of self-presentation outlined by this study: deeds and personal suffering. Aristotle provides advice concerning self-presentation in his treatment of ethos, *pathos*, and *encomia*, and he emphasizes the importance of employing self-presentation throughout a speech stating that "character is

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[101] Cicero, *De or.* 2.210-211 (Sutton, LCL).
[102] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.109 (Hubbell, LCL).
[103] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.8 (Butler, LCL).
[104] Quintilian, *Inst.* 11.1.21-22 (Butler, LCL).

almost, so to speak, the most authoritative form of persuasion"[105] *On Rhetoric* is also important

for this study because Aristotle does not restrict his advice concerning self-presentation to the

introduction and conclusion of a speech; since Athenian courts focused on representing oneself,

Aristotle's advice focuses on self-presentation rather than the presentation of a client.

In Aristotle's multiple discussions of ethos, he does not provide specific instructions for

self-presentation; however, he emphasizes its importance for persuasion. In his initial treatment

of ethos, Aristotle states that persuasion through presenting one's character is "the most

authoritative form of persuasion."[106] Moreover, he asserts that presenting one's character makes a

" speaker worthy of credence; for we believe fair-minded people"[107] Aristotle addresses ethos for

a second time in book two and states that speakers "are persuasive ... for three things ... other

than logical demonstration."[108] The "three things" to which Aristotle refers are the qualities:

wisdom, virtue, and goodwill; he states that "a person seeming to have all these qualities is

necessarily persuasive to the hearers."[109] He provides details concerning these qualities and

techniques for self-presentation in his treatment of *encomia*, which is outlined below.

In his examination of *encomia*, speeches of praise and blame, Aristotle outlines the

proper traits to be presented to an audience, and he notes that deeds should be presented as proof

of a person's character.[110] Aristotle begins by highlighting the traits which are honorable and

"which shall be able to make both ourselves and any other person worthy of credence"[111] He

focuses on virtue and suggests that it can be demonstrated by recounting deeds performed: for

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[105] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.2.4 (Kennedy).
[106] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.2.4 (Kennedy).
[107] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.2.4 (Kennedy).
[108] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.1.5 (Kennedy).
[109] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.1.5-7 (Kennedy).
[110] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.9.33
[111] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1.9.1 (Kennedy).

one's country, while overlooking one's own interest, and for the sake of others.[112] Furthermore,

he isolates ten elements of virtue and notes that performing deeds is a defining characteristic of

four of these elements: liberality, magnanimity, magnificence, and manly courage.[113] After

examining the deeds associated with virtue, Aristotle outlines the deeds most persuasive to an

audience. He suggests presenting those which are worthy of the praise of one's ancestors such as:

magnanimity in adversity and unprecedented deeds.[114] Aristotle's advice concerning the

presentation of one's deeds is especially useful for this study because he notes that his advice is

applicable to multiple genres including deliberative speeches.[115]

In addition to persuading an audience through one's character, Aristotle asserts that

presenting one's suffering provokes pity in an audience because "they are led to feel emotion

[*pathos*] by the speech"[116] Moreover, Aristotle states that, "emotions are those things through

which, by undergoing change, people come to differ in their judgments"[117] In book two, he

provides a lengthy examination of different emotions which can be aroused in an audience, and

most useful for this study is his discussion of pity. In this section, Aristotle outlines the primary

causes of pity, and he provides techniques for eliciting this response from an audience. He begins

with the general statement that "all things are pitiable that are destructive, consisting of grief and

pains"[118] Aristotle then provides an extensive list of pitiable situations and most applicable for

this study are: death, disease, sickness, old age, lack of food, weakness, and mutilation.[119] He

also offers advice for making suffering appear even more pitiable, asserting that more recent

suffering elicits more pity from an audience. Therefore, he suggests "gestures and cries and

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[112] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.9.16-17.
[113] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.9.5-13.
[114] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.9.31.
[115] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.9.36.
[116] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 1.2.5 (Kennedy).
[117] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 2.1.8 (Kennedy).
[118] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 2.8.8 (Kennedy).
[119] Aristotle, *Rhet*. 2.8.9-10.

display[s] of feelings" to make events seem more recent.[120] Moreover, he advises that one present clothes of the sufferer in order to make their suffering even more palpable.

Therefore, Aristotle's *On Rhetoric* is critical for this study because, as the earliest extant handbook, it provides advice concerning two of the categories of self-presentation isolated by this study: deeds and personal suffering. While Aristotle does not provide as many practical strategies as the later handbooks of Cicero and Quintilian, he repeatedly indicates the importance of self-presentation for persuasion. Moreover, as Wisse notes, Aristotle does not suggest that self-presentation should be confined to the beginning and end of a speech, but he implies that it can be employed in all parts of a speech.[121]

Cicero's *Inventione*, the earlier of his two rhetorical handbooks, contains ample material concerning self-presentation, including three of the categories outlined by this study: personal suffering, deeds, and the use of self-effacing language. Cicero provides advice concerning self-presentation in his examination of a wide range of topics such as: the *exordium*, *peroration*, *topoi* (pre-made arguments), and deliberative rhetoric. Moreover, like Aristotle's *On Rhetoric*, Cicero provides advice on how to defend oneself, rather than a client, as "early Roman rhetoric was directly descended from Greek rhetoric" which was used in trials for self-defense as one did not use an advocate during a trial.[122]

In his treatment of the *exordium* Cicero advises the presentation of one's deeds and suffering in order to build goodwill with an audience. He states,

> We shall win good will from our own person if we refer to our own acts and services without arrogance; if we weaken the effect of charges that have been preferred or of some suspicion of less honorable dealing which has been cast upon us; if we dilate on the misfortunes which have befallen us or the difficulties which

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[120] Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.8.14 (Kennedy).
[121] Jakob Wisse, *Ethos and Pathos: From Aristotle to Cicero* (Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1989), 15.
[122] Wisse, 101.

still beset us; if we use prayers and entreaties with a humble and submissive spirit.[123]

That is, Cicero suggests that one can build good will with an audience by presenting one's deeds or personal suffering. While Cicero's statement in this section serves as a general overview of his views on self-presentation, he provides more specific instructions for implementing these suggestions in other sections.

Cicero provides sixteen strategies for eliciting pity from an audience in his treatment of the *conquestio*, which is part of the conclusion (*peroration*) of a speech. [124] Nine of these strategies are relevant for this study; eight of them focus on presenting one's suffering, and one advocates the use of self-effacing language. The first strategy suggests contrasting one's former position, or prosperity, with one's current suffering.[125] The second and third strategies focus on demonstrating how one's misfortune has permeated the past, present, and future. [126] The fourth technique suggests presenting suffering which is unworthy of one's current wealth and status.[127] Cicero's fifth technique focuses on making one's suffering palpable by presenting one's troubles "one by one, so that the auditor may seem to see them"[128] The sixth strategy highlights the intense suffering caused when one expects a great reward, only to receive suffering instead.[129] Cicero's tenth technique advises employing self-effacing language such as highlighting one's helplessness, weakness, and loneliness.[130] Finally, the thirteenth strategy addresses the

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[123] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.22 (Hubbell, LCL).
[124] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.106-109.
[125] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.107.
[126] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.107.
[127] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.107.
[128] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.107 (Hubbell, LCL).
[129] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.108.
[130] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.109.

devastating effects of suffering caused by those whom we expect to help us such as friends and relatives.[131]

In his treatment of *topoi*, stock arguments that can be employed in many situations, Cicero provides two examples which focus on presenting one's deeds.[132] In the first example, he suggests focusing on the attributes of a person.[133] That is, a prosecutor could discredit a defendant's manner of life and character by presenting his past actions in order to demonstrate his current guilt.[134] Moreover, a defendant should present his past deeds as an indication of his current innocence. Cicero states that one should present deeds that were performed for one's family, out of a sense of duty, rather than from compulsion, for the good of the state, or despite great danger and difficulty.[135] The second relevant *topos* is to plead for pardon (*deprecatio*) based on one's past deeds. Cicero states this approach requires one to demonstrate that his good deeds were greater than his current mistakes.[136] He does not provide any direct advice concerning the types of deeds that should be presented; however, he states that the deeds of one's ancestors can be presented alongside one's own.[137] In other words, for a *deprecatio* to be successful the presentation of one's deeds is critical.

In Cicero's brief treatment of deliberative rhetoric, he suggests presenting one's courage by recounting one's deeds and suffering. When discussing deliberative rhetoric, Cicero advises that honorable characteristics should be presented including the virtues: wisdom, justice, courage, and temperance.[138] Most relevant for this study is his summary of courage which he

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[131] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.109.
[132] Wisse, 93.
[133] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.33.
[134] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.34.
[135] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.35.
[136] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.106.
[137] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.106.
[138] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.159.

describes as "the quality by which one undertakes dangerous tasks and endures hardships."[139]

That is, Cicero suggests that courage can be displayed by highlighting one's deeds and suffering.

In his *Inventione*, Cicero provides extensive advice concerning three of the categories outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and the use of self-effacing language. Furthermore, the importance that he attaches to self-presentation is emphasized by his treatment of it in multiple sections including: *exordium*, *peroration*, *topoi* (pre-made arguments), and deliberative rhetoric. Moreover, in his later work, *De Oratore*, the importance of the role of self-presentation is even prominent.

Cicero's *De Oratore* was written approximately thirty years after *Inventione*, and is often referred to as his more mature work, a fact which Cicero himself confirms.[140] *De Oratore* differs from other rhetorical handbooks as it is presented as a dialogue between two famous orators, Antonius and Crassus, taking place in 91 BCE.[141] Cicero provides advice concerning two of the categories of self-presentation identified by this study: deeds and personal suffering. He mentions these categories in three sections: arrangement, *pisteis*, and panegyrics, which includes two discussions of *ethos* and *pathos*. Cicero also includes numerous examples of speeches which illustrate this advice.

While the importance of self-presentation can be inferred in Cicero's *Inventione*, in *De Oratore*, Cicero repeatedly states its importance. For instance, in the introductory words to his brother, Cicero states that,

> it is in the calming or kindling of the feelings of the audience that the full power and science of oratory are to be brought into play.[142]

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[139] Cicero, *Inv.* 2.163 (Hubbell, LCL).
[140] Cicero, *De or.* 1.5. Cicero refers to his earlier "crude essays" as "hardly worthy of my present time and of my experience gained from the numerous and grave causes in which I have been engaged"
[141] J. Hall, "Persuasive Design in Cicero's De Oratore," *Phoenix* 48 (1994) 211. While most scholars conclude that Cicero's own views are represented by Crassus, the positions outlined by both Antonius and Crassus are helpful as they represent accepted methods of self-presentation.
[142] Cicero, *De or.* 1.17 (Sutton, LCL).

Additionally, Cicero has Antonius state,

> Now nothing in oratory, Catulus, is more important than to win for the orator the favor of his hearer, and to have the latter so affected as to be swayed by something resembling a mental impulse or emotion, rather then by judgment or deliberation.[143]

Moreover, Cicero amplifies the importance of self-presentation by having Antonius state that it should not be limited to the introduction and conclusion but "should be interfused throughout the whole of the structure of our speeches like the blood in our bodies."[144] Additionally, unlike his earlier work, *De Oratore* is written with the Roman court in mind, in which one is represented by an advocate; Cicero provides advice concerning the presentation of both the speaker and the client.[145]

Cicero provides extensive material concerning self-presentation in his treatment of the three *pisteis*, types of persuasion, which includes a discussion of *ethos*, *pathos*, and examples from cases against Norbanus and Manius Aquilius.[146] When discussing *ethos*, Cicero has Antonius emphasize the importance of self-presentation by stating that it is necessary for both the advocate and the client to win goodwill from one's audience and when properly employed this approach is "worth more than the merits of the case."[147] He suggests that goodwill can be won by presenting one's character, habits, deeds, and suffering.[148]

After briefly stating that one can gain goodwill from an audience through *ethos*, Cicero provides two examples. First, he has Antonius recall the trial against Manius Aquilius in which Antonius presented his client's suffering, in order to gain favor with the audience by ripping open

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[143] Cicero, *De or.* 2.178 (Sutton, LCL).
[144] Cicero, *De or.* 2.310.
[145] Wisse, 233.
[146] Cicero, *De or.* 2.115-116. Cicero does not actually use the terms *ethos* and *pathos*. Instead he refers to the three *pisteis* as "the proof of our allegations, the winning of our hearer's favor, and the rousing of their feeling to whatever impulse our case may require."
[147] Cicero, *De or.* 2.184 (Sutton, LCL).
[148] Cicero, *De or.* 2.182, 184.

the tunic of his Manius Aquilius and displaying his scars.[149] Second, Antonius reminds Sulpicius of the trial of Norbanus in which he defeated Sulpicius despite Sulpicius having a distinct advantage.[150] Antonius recounts his defense of Norbanus, which involved extensive self-presentation of himself and his deeds. Antonius states that since it appeared that he was acting "not quite honorably in bearing to defend a factious citizen," he was able to present his defense as a risky deed, and one he performed on behalf of another.[151] Antonius also presented many of his prior deeds including those from his career as an official. Antonius concludes this example by reminding Sulpicius that "it was rather by working upon, than by informing, the minds of the tribunal, that I beat your prosecution on that occasion."[152]

After outlining specific examples and demonstrating the value of influencing the mind of an audience, Cicero provides general rules concerning nine emotions (*pathos*) which can sway an audience, and most relevant for this study is his examination of jealousy and compassion.[153] He has Antonius note that jealousy is a powerful emotion which can be avoided by carefully presenting one's deeds and highlighting any suffering which occurred while accomplishing these deeds. Antonius notes additional methods for avoiding jealousy such as presenting one's deeds as the result of "great exertion and great risks"[154] Moreover, he suggests that any negative reaction to one's deeds can be lessened by presenting them as accomplished for the good of others, rather than oneself, and despite "labor and sorrow."[155]

Cicero also examines the emotion, compassion, and suggests that it can be used to arouse pity in an audience by presenting one's suffering. He states that highlighting the "dejection and

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[149] Cicero, *De or.* 2.196.
[150] Cicero, *De or.* 2.197.
[151] Cicero, *De or.* 2.198 (Sutton, LCL).
[152] Cicero, *De or.* 2.201 (Sutton, LCL).
[153] Cicero, *De or.* 2.206. Antonius states that nine emotions are most effective for exiting the minds of an audience: love, hate, wrath, jealousy, compassion, hope, joy, fear, and vexation.
[154] Cicero, *De or.* 2.210 (Sutton, LCL).
[155] Cicero, *De or.* 2.210-211 (Sutton, LCL).

ruin of the righteous" can be especially effective.[156] Moreover, pity can be generated most effectively when the a situation is "describe[d] in moving terms"[157]

In Cicero's brief treatment of the *exordium* (introduction), he notes that presenting one's deeds and suffering can be useful for establishing a positive relationship with an audience. Although he does not provide many details concerning the appropriate types of deeds and suffering that can be included in the *exordium*, he does state that one can present a client's high character and emphasize their misfortune.[158] Moreover, he notes that generating good will with an audience should not be restricted to the introduction, but that it should permeate the entire speech, as mentioned above.[159]

Cicero also provides advice concerning self-presentation in his treatment of panegyrics, noting the effectiveness of presenting one's deeds, suffering, and attributing some success to the divine. Cicero emphasizes the importance of presenting deeds in a panegyric, especially those "performed by brave men without profit or reward."[160] He suggests that the most impressive deeds are arduous ones accomplished despite great danger and those which are unprecedented.[161] Cicero also advises highlighting one's ability to endure suffering, adversity, and misfortune.[162] Moreover, while he does not suggest presenting oneself as an agent of God, he states that it is important to attribute one's "good fortune to the verdict of divine wisdom."[163]

Cicero's *De Oratore* is critical for this study because he provides extensive advice concerning the presentation of one's deeds and personal suffering. Moreover, he even suggests attributing some success to the Gods. Furthermore, Cicero indicates the importance of employing

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[156] Cicero, *De or.* 2.211 (Sutton, LCL).
[157] Cicero, *De or.* 2.211 (Sutton, LCL).
[158] Cicero, *De or.* 2.321.
[159] Cicero, *De or.* 2.310.
[160] Cicero, *De or.* 2.346 (Sutton, LCL).
[161] Cicero, *De or.* 2.346-7.
[162] Cicero, *De or.* 2.346.
[163] Cicero, *De or.* 2.346 (Sutton, LCL).

self-presentation by stating that "nothing in oratory ... is more important than to win for the orator the favor of his hearer"[164] Additionally, his advice that one employ self-presentation throughout a persuasive work is reflected in Paul's use of self-presentation.

In Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria*, he emphasizes the importance of self-presentation and provides advice concerning three of the categories isolated by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and self-effacement. He states that "If I can secure good-will, attention and readiness to learn on the part of my judge, I cannot see what else I ought to require"[165] Moreover, Quintilian asserts that self-presentation should not be confined to the *exordium* and *peroration*, but "may be employed in other portions of the speech as well"[166] Additionally, he states that "In other portions of the speech we must appeal to the emotions as occasion may arise."[167] Like Cicero's *De Oratore*, Quintilian most directly addresses self-presentation in his treatment of the *exordium*, *peroration*, panegyrics, and style. However, it is important to acknowledge that much of Quintilian's advice reflects the realities of a Roman court system in which a defendant is represented by an advocate. Thus, Quintilian provides advice concerning the self-presentation of both the speaker and the client.

Quintilian highlights the value of self-presentation in his treatment of the *exordium,* suggesting the presentation of one's deeds, personal suffering, and the use of self-effacing language. He considers self-presentation an important aspect of developing good will with an audience, which he asserts is critical to the success of a persuasive work.[168] In this section, Quintilian provides advice concerning the presentation of both the speaker and the client. He

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[164] Cicero, *De or.* 2.178 (Sutton, LCL).
[165] Quintilian, *Inst.*, 4.1.51 (Butler, LCL).
[166] Quintilian, *Inst.* 6.1.51 (Butler, LCL).
[167] Quintilian, *Inst.*, 6.1.53.
[168] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.16, 4.1.26, 4.1.33, 4.1.51, 4.1.59. In fact, Quintilian states the importance of establishing goodwill with one's audience five times in this section.

states that the speaker should present himself with self-effacing language, as "weak, unprepared, and no match for the powerful talents" of his opponent.[169] When describing the client, Quintilian suggests emphasizing his character, weakness, and suffering.[170] While Quintilian's advice regarding each of these categories is brief, and contains no examples, he expands upon this advice in his treatment of the *peroration* and panegyrics.

In his treatment of the *peroration*, Quintilian recommends presenting one's deeds and suffering. He asserts that one can build good will with an audience by presenting a client's deeds such as: "his worth, his manly pursuits, the scars from wounds received in battle, his rank and the services rendered by his ancestors"[171] Moreover, Quintilian advises that one elicit pity from an audience by presenting one's suffering. In fact, he states that the goal should be to bring the judge to tears because when an audience "begin[s] to take a personal interest in the case" it is more likely to agree with the speaker.[172] Quintilian suggests that this can be accomplished by presenting both past and current suffering.[173] He recommends one's suffering be made as clear as possible through visual examples such as presenting fragments of bone, bloody garments, and even open wounds.[174]

In Quintilian's treatment of panegyrics, he suggests praising an individual's character through his deeds by focusing on the virtues: fortitude, justice, and self-control.[175] He states that it is often most effective to trace one's deeds chronologically, starting with childhood, and

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[169] Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.1.8 (Butler, LCL).
[170] Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.1.13.
[171] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.21 (Butler, LCL).
[172] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.23, 6.2.6 (Butler, LCL).
[173] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.23.
[174] Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.1.30.
[175] Quintilian, *Inst*., 3.7.15.

focusing on the most impressive deeds such as those which are unprecedented, performed for the sake of others, or accomplished despite limited resources.[176]

Quintilian provides advice concerning an advocate's use of boasting and self-effacement in his treatment of style. He states that it is normally a mistake for the orator to boast because it "disgusts the audience."[177] However, Quintilian notes that boasting is acceptable when used as a defense against an opponent's attacks and notes that Cicero often boasted of his deeds in response to such attacks.[178] When describing Cicero's boasting, Quintilian seems to praise Cicero for referring to his own rhetorical skills with self-effacing language.[179] Quintilian also seems to advise the use of self-effacing language by stating that audiences enjoy the feeling of "raising the humble and submissive to their feet"[180] However, he provides a curious reversal of his previous advice by stating that self-derision is the most "perverted form of self-praise"[181]

Thus, raising the question, what is Quintilian's position regarding the use of self-effacing language? One possible answer is that Quintilian only advocates the presentation of actual weaknesses. That is, by stating that one should commend one's weaknesses to the court and that audiences like to raise up the humble, Quintilian is only suggesting that one should be presented as humble and weak if one actually is humble and weak. However, this answer seems to be refuted by Quintilian's praise of Cicero's use of self-effacing language concerning his rhetorical skills. Therefore, a more plausible solution is to examine Quintilian's advice regarding self-effacing language in light of the ironic man (εἰ'ρων), who presents himself as the opposite of what he is.

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176 Quintilian, *Inst*. 3.7.13, 15-16.
177 Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.15 (Butler, LCL).
178 Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.17-18.
179 Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.19.
180 Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.16 (Butler, LCL).
181 Quintilian, *Inst*. 11.1.21 (Butler, LCL).

The ironic man was often viewed negatively in Greco-Roman literature and Quintilian's remarks concerning self-derision seem to reflect this attitude.[182] However, if the Greco-Roman distaste for the ironic man has influenced his advice, it is somewhat curious that he approves of Cicero's use of self-effacing language.[183] One might ask whether or not Cicero's self-description should be classified as self-derision. The answer offered by this study is that Quintilian's divergent statements concerning self-effacement are rooted in the degree of self-effacing language used. That is, the ironic man presents himself as a pauper despite having extravagant wealth, while Cicero merely downplays his rhetorical prowess. Cicero does not claim to have no training or skill. Rather, he describes his skill, and experience, as unimpressive when compared to that of his opponents. Thus, Quintilian does not endorse behaving like the ironic man, but does encourage the use of small amounts of self-effacing language, especially when true.

Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* is critical for this study because he repeatedly emphasizes the importance of using self-presentation to establish good will with one's audience.[184] Moreover, he provides advice concerning three of the categories outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and self-effacement. Additionally, his advice that one should include self-presentation throughout a persuasive work mirrors the approach of Paul of Tarsus.

After examining four Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, it is clear that they provide extensive advice concerning the categories of self-presentation identified by this study, and employed by Paul of Tarsus. The handbooks contain ample suggestions regarding the presentation of one's deeds and the appropriate manner for presenting them to an audience.

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[182] Zoja Pavlovskis, "Aristotle, Horace, and the Ironic Man," *CP* 63 (1968): 22-41; Donald Dale Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency* (2 Cor 10:1): *Populist Ideology and Rhetoric in a Pauline Letter Fragment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 287. Walker states that while Socrates was respected, after Aristotle the ironic person was viewed negatively as a "flatterer, an unreliable man who always puts on a false front."
[183] Donald Dale Walker, *Paul's Offer of Leniency*, 289. Walker claims that Quintilian praises Cicero's use of self-effacing language in order to "exculpate his hero, Cicero, from blame for bragging."
[184] Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.1.16, 4.1.26, 4.1.33, 4.1.51, 4.1.59.

Moreover, each handbook contains guidance concerning the importance of displaying one's suffering in order to influence the emotions of an audience. Additionally, two handbooks advise using self-effacement in order to temper any jealousy one's self-presentation may arouse in an audience. Finally, on a more limited scale, the handbooks note the value in attributing a portion of one's success to the divine. However, this study does not claim that Paul actually read this advice, but, rather, that these handbooks serve as an example of the manner in which educated individuals crafted persuasive works. Thus, the remainder of the chapter focuses on the *progymnasmata*, Plutarch, speeches, and letters to confirm that the methods of self-presentation outlined in the rhetorical handbooks were indeed available, and used by, those without formal rhetorical training.

II. The *Progymnasmata* and Plutarch

The *progymnasmata* and Plutarch's essay "On Inoffensive Self-Praise" are sources which, like the rhetorical handbooks, offer extensive advice on the proper use of self-presentation in a persuasive work, and the advice they provide is consistent with the rhetorical handbooks. The *progymnasmata* are especially useful for this study because they provide confirmation that the methods of self-presentation outlined in the rhetorical handbooks were taught by grammarians, and therefore, they were taught to a wide swath of Greco-Roman society. Plutarch's essay is also informative as it contains extensive information, and countless examples, concerning the proper techniques for boasting.

II. 1. The *Progymnasmata*

The *progymnasmata* are exercises intended to assist grammarians when teaching composition.[185] They are integral for this study because they contain advice concerning many of the same methods of self-presentation outlined in the rhetorical handbooks, and they were used to educate many who did not receive formal rhetorical training.[186] This study focuses on the exercises of Aelius Theon because his text is the earliest, and the other *progymnasmata* are either substantially later or share much of the same information as Theon's work.[187] Two sections contain information concerning self-presentation: *encomia* and *syncrisis* (comparison), and both emphasize the presentation of one's deeds.

Like the rhetorical handbooks, Theon's treatment of *encomia* focuses on the presentation of a subject's character and deeds. Theon advises that one expand on each virtue being praised by illustrating deeds that exemplify it.[188] Especially praiseworthy are deeds which were accomplished by no one else, on behalf of others, or despite suffering.[189]

Deeds are also the focus of Theon's treatment of *syncrisis*. When comparing two individuals, Theon advises that deeds accomplished by few others, at a crucial time, and despite adversity should be emphasized.[190] Moreover, he suggests highlighting deeds which brought great benefit and were accomplished by choice, rather than chance.[191]

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[185] George A. Kennedy, *Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 2.

[186] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, x. Kennedy states that these exercises would have been used by grammarians teaching students between the age of twelve and fifteen, who had learned to read and write. That is, the progymnasmata would have been used by educators teaching students in the second of the three tiers of education.

[187] Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, 1. Kennedy highlights evidence that indicate Aelius Theon composed his work sometime in the first century CE. However, he notes that a broader scholarly consensus exists which more conservatively dates the work to sometime between Augustus and the second sophistic.

[188] Aelius Theon, 112.

[189] Aelius Theon, 110.

[190] Aelius Theon, 113.

[191] Aelius Theon, 113.

Therefore, like the rhetorical handbooks, Aelius Theon's exercises emphasize the importance of presenting one's deeds in a persuasive work. Furthermore, since his primary audience was grammarians and their students, this work provides evidence that the proper methods for presenting one's deeds were available to those unable to acquire a rhetorical education.

II. 2. Plutarch - "On Inoffensive Self-Praise"

Plutarch's essay "On Inoffensive Self-Praise" is informative because it provides extensive advice concerning the presentation of one's deeds.[192] Plutarch's aim is to offer guidance on the appropriate manner for boasting, as "it is agreed that to speak to others of one's own importance or power is offensive, but in practice not many of those who condemn such conduct avoid the odium of it."[193] That is, since boasting is a necessary, but odious, enterprise, Plutarch outlines the circumstances in which boasting is appropriate and recommends techniques for minimizing its negative impact on an audience. This resource is especially useful for this study because many of the techniques for boasting suggested by Plutarch are similar to those employed by Paul of Tarsus.[194]

Four of the situations which Plutarch outlines as appropriate for boasting are found in Paul's letters: defending oneself against a charge, exhorting one's audience to emulation, offering oneself as a worthy leader in a time of despair, and restraining an audience.[195] Plutarch states that it is acceptable to boast in order to defend oneself against a charge, and Paul is forced to defend

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[192] Although Plutarch's essay was written too late to have directly influenced Paul, his essay offers the same advice contained in the rhetorical handbooks. Therefore, this study considers Plutarch's essay a repository of the accepted norms for boasting and concludes that it would have been known earlier than the composition of this particular work.

[193] Plutarch, *Mor.* 539 A-B (de Lacy and Einarson).

[194] Forbes, 8-10; Watson, "Paul and Boasting," 79-81.

[195] Plutarch, *Mor.* 540 C, 544 D-E, 544 F, 545 C-D.

his authority in both Galatians and 1 Corinthians.[196] Plutarch also approves of boasting in order

to inspire one's audience to emulation as it "not only awakens his ardour and fixes his purpose,

but affords him hope that the end can be attained and is not impossible."[197] This advice is

especially applicable to Paul as he calls his audience to imitate him in Philippians, Galatians, and

1 Corinthians.[198] Plutarch suggests that boasting is acceptable when used to offer oneself as a

leader in times of distress because "a successful outcome may depend largely on the regard and

confidence that are placed in some man who possesses the experience and talents of a leader."[199]

Paul's boasting in Philippians 1:12-30 seems to reflect this situation as it helps establish Paul as a

leader who is able to persevere, and even succeed, despite his imprisonment. Plutarch also

advises that one boast to restrain one's audience.[200] Paul seems to follow this advice in his letter

to the Galatians in which he boasts of his own accomplishments within Judaism in order to

restrain members of the community who are tempted to follow the teachings of those preaching a

law-based gospel.

In addition to outlining the appropriate situations for boasting, Plutarch provides

suggestions for minimizing the negative impact of one's boasting; Paul employs two of these

techniques in his letters. Plutarch advises that one employ self-effacing language along with

one's boasting in order to temper the negative reaction of an audience.[201] He states that "some do

not present their own praise in all its brilliance and undimmed, but throw in certain minor

shortcomings, failures, or faults, thus obviating any effect of displeasure or disapproval."[202]

However, Plutarch adds that it is unacceptable to include "a confession of cowardice and

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[196] Plutarch, *Mor.* 540C.
[197] Plutarch, *Mor.* 544 E (de Lacy and Einarson).
[198] 1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1; Galatians 4:12; Philippians 3:17.
[199] Plutarch, *Mor.* 545 C (de Lacy and Einarson).
[200] Plutarch, *Mor.* 544 F.
[201] Plutarch, *Mor.* 543 F - 544 C.
[202] Plutarch, *Mor.* 543 F (de Lacy and Einarson).

unmanliness."[203] Plutarch also suggests that attributing success to chance, or God, can be an effective means of tempering any negative reactions an audience may have to boasting, and Paul certainly attributes much of his success to God and Jesus.[204] Thus, although Plutarch's essay "On Inoffensive Self-Praise" did not directly influence Paul, it is an important resource because it provides advice concerning the presentation of one's deeds which is similar to that contained in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks.

III. Speeches

Speeches are prime examples of the advice of the rhetorical handbooks put into action, and many of them feature an extensive amount of self-presentation. The speeches examined in this study rely heavily on self-presentation and use the four categories outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, self-effacement, and agent of God. This study begins by examining Nestor's speech to Patrocles because the *Iliad* was the primary text of the Greco-Roman education system. As such, it can be expected that all educated individuals, such as Paul of Tarsus, would have been influenced by its speeches. Demosthenes' *On the Crown* is examined because it is perhaps the most well-known speech which employs extensive self-presentation. Cicero's speeches are critical for this study because, like Paul, they are the product of an author choosing to use different categories of self-presentation based on his relationship with his audience. For example, in the early period of Cicero's career, he employs self-effacing language in order to establish goodwill with his audience. However, after rising to a position of great power and renown, Cicero shifts the focus of his self-presentation to his own deeds. Finally, Dio

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[203] Plutarch, *Mor.* 544 A (de Lacy and Einarson).
[204] Plutarch, *Mor.* 542 E - 543 A.

Chrysostom's thirty-second oration is examined because he is a contemporary of Paul of Tarsus, who employs all four of the categories outlined by this study.

There are many speeches in the *Iliad* which contain self-presentation, and these speeches reflect the advice outlined in the Greco-Roman handbooks. Education specialists, such as Marrou and Cribiore, note that the *Iliad* was the subject of intense scrutiny during one's training with a grammarian.[205] Therefore, it is a critical document for this study because it contains speeches, which, more than likely, Paul of Tarsus, and others lacking formal rhetorical training, would have encountered. In fact, Nestor's speech to Patrocles was so well known that Plutarch uses it as an example in his essay "On Inoffensive Self-Praise."[206]

Nestor's speech to Patrocles is especially informative because Nestor employs three of the categories of self-presentation outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and self-effacement.[207] He attempts to persuade Patrocles to either convince Achilles to rejoin the battle or to lead the Myrmidons into battle himself wearing Achilles' armor. Homer makes clear the persuasive nature of the speech through Patrocles' insistence that Nestor will not be able to persuade him.[208] Nestor ignores Patrocles' statement and proceeds with his speech. First, Nestor appeals to Patrocles' sense of pity and focuses on the suffering of the Achaeans. He describes the suffering of the army in general terms, stating that many have been wounded.[209] Then he describes the individual suffering of many of the great heroes including: Tydeus, Diomedes, and Odysseus.[210]

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[205] Cribiore, 140; Marrou, 162-163. Marrou stresses the prominent role Homer played in Greco-Roman education stating that "In the forefront, of course, and dominating all the rest, stands Homer."
[206] Plutarch, *Mor.* 544D.
[207] *Iliad*, 11:655-804.
[208] Homer, *Iliad* 11.646-648.
[209] Homer*, Iliad* 11.656-657.
[210] Homer, *Iliad* 11.660-661.

Nestor's account of their suffering reflects the advice of the rhetorical handbooks by presenting a vivid portrait of the suffering of Eurypylus, describing him as being struck with an arrow in the thigh.[211] After making this emotional appeal, Nestor recounts his own deeds in a war with the Epeians in an attempt to persuade Patrocles to emulate his past actions. Nestor begins with the self-effacing statement that "my strength is not such as it once was," and this statement seems to be an attempt to establish goodwill with Patrocles, which follows the advice of the rhetorical handbooks.[212] Nestor highlights his role in different battles in which he slays many foes. He recounts achievements, such as killing Itymoneus the mighty, being the first to kill his opponent despite being on foot, and capturing fifty manned chariots.[213] Thus, Nestor presents his deeds as evidence that he was a brave warrior and that his "heroic performance in battle, even in the dim past, validates his counsel."[214] Nestor's speech is successful, and his extensive self-presentation persuades Patrocles to don the armor of Achilles and lead the Myrmidons into battle.

Demosthenes' speech, *On the Crown*, is a fundamental work for any study examining the use of biographical statements in speeches.[215] In this speech, Demosthenes defends Ctesiphon, who proposed that Demosthenes should receive a golden crown for his services to Athens, against Aeschines whose goal was to humiliate Demosthenes.[216] While Aeschines brought three charges, Demosthenes defends most vigorously the charge that he did not always act in the best interest of the Athenians.[217] In focusing on this charge, Demosthenes is able to rely almost

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[211] Homer, *Iliad* 11.660-662.
[212] Homer, *Iliad* 11.668-669 (Murray, LCL).
[213] Homer, *Iliad* 11.672-73, 11.737-38, 11.747-49
[214] Victoria Pedrick, "The Paradigmatic Nature of Nestor's Speech in Iliad 11," *TAPA* 113 (1983): 66.
[215] Lyons, 40-42; Georg Misch, *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity* (London: Routledge & Paul, 1950), 157-158. In fact, *On the Crown* contains so much biographical information that many studies examining ancient biographies identify the speech as an early example of a biography.
[216] George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1994), 76.
[217] Milton W. Humphreys, *Demosthenes On the Crown* (New York: American Book Company, 1913), 18.

exclusively on self-presentation by boasting extensively about the deeds he performed on behalf

of Athens. Additionally, Demosthenes attempts to garner pity with his audience by presenting

himself as one who has endured personal suffering at the hands of his enemies, most often in the

form of lawsuits.[218]

The majority of Demosthenes' defense consists of presenting the deeds he accomplished

for the city and detailing the critical role he played in the war against the Macedonians. The latter

aspect of his defense is more difficult since the advice he provided resulted in defeat for the

Athenians. [219] However, despite their defeat, Demosthenes presents himself as tirelessly

defending the city and as the only person willing to offer advice in a difficult situation.

Demosthenes boasts about his entire career, which includes a comparison of his upbringing to

that of his opponent Aeschines, in an attempt to illustrate his consistently good character and the

negative character of his opponent.[220] He details his many accomplishments independent of the

Macedonian war including donating to the theatrical fund from his own resources, providing

dowries for those in need, and other acts of charity.[221]

Concerning the war, Demosthenes' fundamental assertion is that he was willing to step

forward for the defense of Athens and describes himself as the "most vigilant in defence of his

country and most vigorous in his opposition of treason"[222] He presents many deeds related to the

war such as: acquiring the funds to quickly build a navy, catching a man attempting to burn the

dockyard, and his many encounters with Phillip in which he consistently opposed him.[223] At the

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[218] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 122, 249, 322-23.
[219] George A. Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 77.
[220] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 257-58, 265-66.
[221] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 113, 268-69.
[222] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* (Vince and Vince, LCL).
[223] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 93, 100-109, 136, 230.

beginning of the *peroration*, Demosthenes summarizes the impressive nature of his past

accomplishments with the statement that

> With a soul upright, honest and incorruptible, appointed to the control of more
> momentous transactions than any statesman of my time, I have administered them
> throughout in all purity and righteousness.[224]

Thus, lest anyone be tempted to dwell on the disastrous results of his advice, he reminds his

audience, more than twenty five times, that he accomplished great deeds and always on behalf of

Athens.

Cicero's speeches contain extensive self-presentation, which reflects the advice of the

rhetorical handbooks. James May notes that the type of self-presentation Cicero employs differs

based on his status and accomplishments; May divides these speeches into four categories: pre-

consular, consular, *post reditum*, and final years. Cicero's decision to choose categories of self-

presentation based on his relationship to his audience is especially noteworthy for this study as

this approach is also reflected in the letters of Paul of Tarsus. In the pre-consular speeches,

Cicero employs extensive self-effacement in an attempt to offset the experience of his rivals.

May states that

> Cicero's first speeches display a persona quite unlike the boasting consular ethos
> of later orations. Here is an ethos struggling against the weight of influence and
> authority, a challenge that Cicero's later opponents must have faced.[225]

However, in Cicero's consular speeches, May notes that there is more emphasis on Cicero's

deeds, consulship, and his own *auctoritas*.[226]

Cicero's speech, *Pro P. Quinctio*, occurred early in his career, before his consulship and

fame had developed. In this speech, Cicero presents himself, and his client, as overmatched by

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[224] Demosthenes, *de Cor.* 298 (Vince and Vince, LCL).
[225] James M. May, *Trials of Character: The Eloquence of Ciceronian Ethos* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, 1988), 18.
[226] May, 86.

superior talent, wealth, and influence. Cicero employs extensive self-presentation focusing on the categories of self-effacement and personal suffering. From the beginning of the speech, Cicero portrays himself as awed, and overwhelmed, by the vast experience of his opponents and laments his own lack of experience and ability.[227] When presenting his client, he repeatedly emphasizes the suffering his opponents have caused Quinctius.[228] May notes that Cicero portrays Quinctius as a "poor, nearly destitute, but innocent and upright victim"[229] Moreover, Cicero presents Quinctius as one accomplishing many deeds by embracing his duty.[230] Therefore, since Cicero did not yet possess the *auctoritas* of a consul, he chose to win goodwill with his audience by focusing on the suffering of his client and his own lack of ability.

Cicero's first *causa publica*, and one of his earliest speeches, *Pro Sexto Roscio Amerino*, is another example of a speech in which Cicero is not able to rely on his status and past deeds in order to persuade his audience. Instead, Cicero employs self-effacing language when referring to himself and focuses on his client's suffering. Cicero begins the speech by referring to his own lack of ability, and influence, in comparison to his adversaries.[231] Moreover, he states that he was not chosen to defend Roscius because of his ability. Rather, Cicero asserts that he is defending Roscius because otherwise this poor, suffering, man would be completely abandoned.[232] When describing Roscius, Cicero attempts to elicit pity from his audience by focusing on Roscius' suffering, which includes enduring poverty, mourning of his father's murder, and fearing for his own life. Cicero elaborates on Roscius' poverty by stating that it was caused by his accusers, he has been reduced to living on the charity of others, and his own house is unavailable to him.[233]

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[227] Cicero, *Quinct.* 2.
[228] Cicero, *Quinct.* 59.
[229] May, 16.
[230] Cicero, *Quinct.* 93.
[231] Cicero, *Rosc. Amer.* 1.
[232] Cicero, *Rosc. Amer.* 2.
[233] Cicero, *Rosc. Amer.* 145.

Cicero also highlights Roscius' grief over the death of his father, asserting that while he was still grieving, Roscius' land was taken from him.[234] Perhaps most effective, Cicero paints a vivid portrait of a messenger delivering the bloody knife that killed Roscius' father to his enemies shortly after his death. Thus, by presenting himself with self-effacing language and the suffering of Roscius, Cicero presents Roscius as the "the weak, resourceless Sextus [Roscius], who is supported only by Cicero"[235]

Cicero delivers his defense of the consul-elect Lucius Murena during his consulship in 63 BCE, and his position as a consul allows him to present himself in a different manner than in his earlier speeches. Rather than employing self-effacing language, Cicero relies heavily on his deeds and status as a consul. He presents himself as the vigilant defender of the republic, who devotes all of his thoughts, night and day, to protecting the republic from its enemies.[236] In fact, he even refers to himself with military language, emphasizing the breastplate that he wore during his confrontation with Catiline's armed supporters and his willingness to endure great danger on behalf of the republic.[237] Moreover, Cicero recounts the suffering and endless danger he endures for the sake of the republic as its protector.[238] Especially informative for this study is Cicero's assertion that his actions against Catiline were a deed he accomplished for the good of the city and against his own nature and desires.[239] That is, Cicero presents himself as willing to subjugate his own desires and merciful nature in order to rescue the city from great peril.

When presenting his client, Lucius Murena, Cicero chooses to highlight his deeds and suffering as well. Cicero describes at great lengths the military exploits of Murena focusing on

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[234] Cicero, *Rosc. Amer.* 23.
[235] May, 22.
[236] Cicero, *Mur.* 78, 79, 80, 82, 84. In fact, in 78 Cicero claims that on his watch the republic will never be surprised while sleeping by a Trojan Horse.
[237] Cicero, *Mur.* 52.
[238] Cicero, *Mur.* 52, 82.
[239] Cicero, *Mur.* 6. This is comparable to Paul's claim in Philippians 1:24-26 that he chooses life over his own desire for death for the good of the Philippian community.

his bravery, the cities he took, and the armies he commanded.[240] Moreover, Cicero asserts that as consul Murena will accomplish even more deeds for the city such as: protecting it against sedition, displaying bravery in war, and combating any conspiracy which would undermine the republic.[241] In addition to his deeds, Cicero focuses on Murena's suffering, especially near the conclusion of the speech. He presents Murena as suffering both in body and mind stating that he is in mourning, "debilitated by sickness" and "worn out with tears and grief"[242] In fact, Cicero even presents Murena's mother and the entire population of Lanuvium as grieving over his trial.[243] Thus, as a consul, Cicero does not need to employ self-effacing language and instead chooses to focus on the extensive deeds he performed for the republic and on the military career of Murena in order to persuade his audience.

Dio Chrysostom's thirty-second oration, *To the People of Alexandria*, is informative because, as a contemporary of Paul of Tarsus, he employs all four of the categories outlined by this study. In this speech, Dio chastises the community for their frivolous behavior, laughter, and mocking; therefore, since his speech is so corrective, it is not surprising that Dio employs many of the techniques outlined by the rhetorical handbooks for establishing goodwill with one's audience. [244] He presents himself as an agent of God by stating that "I have chosen that role, not of my own volition, but by the will of some deity."[245] Moreover he asserts that "gods provide, not only good counselors who need no urging, but also words that are appropriate and profitable to the listener."[246] Additionally, Dio claims it was a God that gave him the courage to deliver this

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[240] Cicero, *Mur.* 11, 12, 20, 22, 33-34, 38.
[241] Cicero, *Mur.* 90.
[242] Cicero, *Mur.* 86 (Yonge)
[243] Cicero, *Mur.* 89, 90.
[244] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.1.
[245] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.12 (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).
[246] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.12.

speech.[247] He also employs self-effacing language, describing himself as a "mere mortal, a nobody from nowhere, clad in a mean cloak, with no sweetness of song and a voice no louder than common"[248]

Moreover, Dio compares himself to the orators and states that "they are clever ... but I am quite ordinary and prosaic in my utterance."[249] Furthermore, he states that "For though the words that I speak are not great in themselves, they treat of topics of the greatest possible moment."[250] Dio also repeatedly describes his presence before the community as a deed he performs on their behalf. Additionally, he highlights his willingness to risk enduring personal suffering in order to deliver this speech by stating that some might call him crazy for exposing himself "to the mob and its hubbub."[251] Thus, Dio seems to be aware that a speech so focused on instruction and chastising requires him to build goodwill with his audience in order to make them more receptive to his instruction, and he builds this goodwill by presenting himself with the four categories of self-presentation outlined in this study.

IV. Letters

Not only is the advice of the rhetorical handbooks concerning self-presentation put into action in speeches, it is also used extensively in letters. The letters examined in this chapter employ three of the categories of self-presentation identified by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and self-effacement. These letters demonstrate that the same techniques, and categories, of self-presentation outlined in the rhetorical handbooks were employed by Greco-Roman letter writers, many of whom did not receive formal rhetorical training. This evidence is

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[247] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.21.
[248] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.22 (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).
[249] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.39 (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).
[250] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.29 (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).
[251] Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32.24 (Cohoon and Crosby, LCL).

critical because it provides further proof that Paul of Tarsus was not alone in his use of self-presentation in letters, and that he would not have needed a rhetorical education to have been aware of the standard methods and categories of self-presentation.

Demosthenes' letters are important for this study because they demonstrate that trained rhetors employed the same techniques, and categories, for self-presentation in their letters as those outlined in the rhetorical handbooks. Although there is some doubt over the authenticity of the first four letters of Demosthenes, most accept Goldstein's conclusion that they were written by Demosthenes.[252] His second letter is particularly useful as, like Paul's letters, it is written to a community, the people of Athens. Moreover, like Paul's letter to the Galatians, it is written to a community questioning his status. Demosthenes writes to the Athenian people in order to persuade them to exonerate him for his role in the Harpalus affair, as they have acquitted others facing similar charges.[253] In his letter, Demosthenes attempts to elicit pity from the Athenians by presenting the suffering which his conviction and exile have caused him. Moreover, he attempts to establish goodwill with his audience by reminding them of the numerous deeds he performed on behalf of the city. In fact, he presents himself as such a staunch supporter of Athens that "the young, should give their admiration."[254] Goldstein notes Demosthenes' use of these two categories of self-presentation stating that "In some passages Demosthenes appears as a weakling

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[252] Jonathan A. Goldstein, *The Letters of Demosthenes* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1968), 4. While there is debate over the authenticity of Demosthenes' first four letters, most cite Goldstein's work which demonstrates that they the letters are authentic.

[253] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.2. Goldstein, 37-63. Goldstein provides a detailed analysis of the historical situation of Demosthenes' letters and their relationship to the Harpalus affair, in which three hundred fifty talents disappeared overnight. Demosthenes was accused of taking a bribe of twenty talents and was subsequently convicted, jailed, and fined fifty talents.

[254] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.11 (Goldstein).

... In others, he is arrogant"[255] Furthermore, Goldstein concludes that Demosthenes was unable to employ self-effacing language because his "persuasive power was so universally recognized"[256]

Demosthenes attempts to elicit sympathy from his audience from the opening remarks of the letter. In his brief *proemium*, Demosthenes states that he should be spared from his current suffering, which stems from a false charge and being deprived of "country, property, and the company of his nearest and dearest."[257] Throughout the remainder of the letter, Demosthenes continues to appeal to his audience's sense of pity by presenting himself as one suffering due to unjust treatment. In fact, in 13-15 he asserts that his suffering is especially outrageous because of his innocence. Demosthenes recounts his extensive personal suffering, citing his dangerous exile, dashed hopes, and constant fear of danger.[258] Moreover, he recasts his escape from prison as necessary due his inability "to endure the maltreatment, on account of my age."[259]

Demosthenes also repeatedly emphasizes his deeds in order to establish good will with his audience by asserting that he has always acted in the best interest of Athens. Demosthenes reminds his audience that he has used his abilities for the good of the city in order to "bring you glory and pride."[260] Moreover, Demosthenes highlights his past generosity stating that he used his own resources for the benefit of Athens "paying for the equipment of choruses and triremes and donations of money to the state in every crisis."[261] Furthermore, he asserts that his munificence inspired others to emulate him.[262] Finally, near the end of the letter, Demosthenes makes the bold claim that "you will find me to be a man who, among those living today, has

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[255] Goldstein, 172.
[256] Goldstein, 162.
[257] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.1-2 (Goldstein).
[258] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.13, 20.
[259] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.17 (Goldstein).
[260] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.3, 5, 10, 11 (Goldstein).
[261] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.12 (Goldstein).
[262] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.12.

accomplished most on your behalf" and "can present the greatest tokens of his good will toward you."[263]

Thus, as Hughes has stressed, Demosthenes, a trained rhetor, employs all of the rhetorical tools at his disposal when crafting a persuasive letter.[264] Moreover, Demosthenes' extensive focus on self-presentation, in order to elicit pity and re-establish himself as a respected figure in the eyes of his audience, closely resembles Paul's letter to the Galatians. In both letters, the authors were once considered trustworthy figures by their audiences, but are now rejected and trying to re-establish the influential position they once maintained. Therefore, Demosthenes' second letter provides invaluable data concerning the categories and techniques of self-presentation employed by a trained rhetor when crafting a persuasive letter.

The letters of Cicero are critical for this study because they provide further evidence of an individual trained in rhetoric and employing extensive self-presentation in his letters. In 62 B.C.E, Celer initiated a correspondence with Cicero accusing him of not properly honoring their friendship.[265] In this correspondence, both parties use self-presentation as a fundamental tool. Celer presents himself as the wronged victim, while Cicero presents himself as honoring their friendship. Celer begins the correspondence by accusing Cicero of ridiculing him in his absence and attacking his brother. Celer reminds Cicero of his status by highlighting his numerous deeds, his loyalty to both Cicero and the state, and the position of his family. Furthermore, he emphasizes his current role, leading an army in war. In addition to presenting his deeds, Celer follows the advice of the rhetorical handbooks and makes a *pathos* appeal by presenting his

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[263] Demosthenes, *Ep.* 2.24 (Goldstein).
[264] Hughes, 236-7.
[265] Jon C. R. Hall, *Politeness and Politics in Cicero's Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 153-4; Elizabeth A. Meyer, "Epistolary Ethos: A Rhetorical Analysis of Cicero's Letters" (Ph.D. diss., Boston University, 2000), 16-47.

suffering and emphasizing his sorrow over Cicero's actions towards him and his brother, stating that he is "wearing a mourning dress."[266]

Cicero's response contains extensive self-presentation as he disputes Celer's portrayal of his behavior. Cicero presents himself as accomplishing many deeds, for both Celer and the state, and suffering at the hands of Celer's brother Nepos. Additionally, Cicero employs self-effacing language in order to allay Celer's fear that he ridiculed him before the senate. Contrary to Celer's assertion that Cicero's behavior demonstrates that he has abandoned, and mistreated him, Cicero presents himself as one who has continually supported Celer. Cicero reminds Celer of the many deeds he performed on his behalf, such as securing him a province, which entailed him quickly convening the senate over the issue and delivering a speech containing effusive praise of Celer.[267] Cicero also claims that his positive deeds for Celer continued after Celer left the city including "my motions in the senate, my speeches in public meetings, [and] my letters to yourself."[268] Cicero addresses Celer's accusation that he ridiculed him before the senate by presenting himself with self-effacing language, stating that those in the senate laughed at Cicero's mistake, and "naive" behavior, rather than at Celer.[269]

Next, Cicero turns to his treatment of Celer's brother, Nepos. Not only does Cicero present his actions as justified, he was defending the state, but Cicero claims that, out of respect for Celer, he actually protected Nepos from "penalties by a decree of the senate."[270] That is, even though Nepos caused Cicero suffering by publicly attacking him and preventing him from addressing the people upon leaving office, Cicero did not attack Nepos out of his friendship for

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[266] Cicero, *Fam*. 5.1.2; Meyer, 20.
[267] Cicero, *Fam.* 5.2.3.
[268] Cicero, *Fam.* 5.2.4.
[269] Cicero, *Fam.* 5.2.2.
[270] Cicero, *Fam.* 5.2.9.

Celer. Therefore, by employing extensive self-presentation, Cicero attempts to correct and reshape Celer's negative portrait of his behavior.

The letter collection of Pliny the Younger provides further examples of letters written by one with a rhetorical education; in many of his letters, Pliny employs self-presentation as a means of persuasion. In letter 3.11, Pliny writes to Julius Genitor what appears to be an *encomium* of Artemidorus. However, while describing Artemidorus, Pliny employs extensive self-presentation focusing on his own deeds and virtues. In fact, Pliny presents so much material about himself that Shelton concludes that Pliny crafted this letter with an eye towards future publication in order "to leave for posterity a flattering account of Pliny's activities during the final years of Domitian's reign."[271]

Pliny begins the letter by praising the generosity of Artemidorus. However, this praise quickly morphs into self-praise as the primary evidence of Artemidorus' generosity is the excessive praise which he bestows upon Pliny, praise which Pliny describes as " not untrue, but more than I deserve."[272] Therefore, Pliny begins his letter with a self-effacing statement in order to temper any ill will which his boasting might provoke. Next, Pliny provides the specifics of Artemidorus' praise, which highlights the deeds he performed for Artemidorus including: risking danger to visit him upon his expulsion from Rome and loaning him money without interest when others would not.[273] Pliny follows the advice of the rhetorical handbooks and vividly illustrates the danger he faced, boasting that he "stood amidst the flames of thunderbolts dropping all round me, and there were certain clear indications to make me suppose a like end was awaiting me."[274]

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[271] Eleanor Winsor Leach, "The Politics of Self-Presentation: Pliny's Letters and Roman Portrait Sculpture," *CA* Vol. 9, No. 1 (1990), 14-39; Jo-Ann Shelton, "Pliny's Letter 3.11: Rhetoric and Autobiography" *C&M* 38 (1987): 129. The consensus is that all of Pliny's letters were crafted for wider publication.
[272] Pliny, *Ep*. 3.11.1 (Radice, LCL).
[273] Pliny, *Ep*. 3.11.2.
[274] Pliny, *Ep*. 3.11.3-4 (Radice, LCL).

Thus, in a brief letter, written in praise of another, Pliny employs two of the categories of self-presentation identified by this study.

In addition to the letter collections of trained rhetors, there are many other extant letters which contain self-presentation. Although often brief, these letters are critical for this study as they demonstrate that writers outside of the educated elite employed the same methods, and categories, of self-presentation as those outlined in the rhetorical handbooks. That is, these letters demonstrate that the proper methods of self-presentation were widespread among the educated in Greco-Roman society. This study focuses on three brief letters which rely heavily on self-presentation.

Two letters addressed to Hephaistion rely upon presenting the suffering that his absence caused his wife and child in order to convince him to return home. In SelPap I 97, his wife Isias emphasizes the suffering that Hephaistion's absence has caused her by not returning home with the others. She reminds him that the price of grain made life difficult, and that the relief she was expecting from her husband's return never came.[275] Additionally, Isias presents Hephaistion's mother as grieving over his absence.

In UPZ I 60, Dionysios continues the attempt to persuade Hephaistion to come home, by describing the suffering of Isias with more dramatic language. Dionysios writes that Isias and their child "had passed through the most extreme circumstances" and "patiently endured such crises"[276] Moreover, Dionysios states that seeing Hephaistion would provide them relief.[277] Therefore, both Isias and Dionysios present the suffering of Isias and her child as the primary persuasive tool for encouraging Hephaistion to return home.

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[275] P.Select.I 97. 16-24 (White §34).
[276] P.UPZ.I 60. 11-13 (White §35).
[277] P.UPZ.I 60. 14-15 (White §35).

Pmich VIII 476 is another persuasive letter in which self-presentation plays a pivotal role. In the letter, Terentianus attempts to persuade his father to allow him to marry a woman. White rightly notes the "overloaded phrases" and concludes that Terentianus probably expected his father to resist his request.[278] Therefore, in order to persuade his father, Terentianus presents himself as accomplishing many deeds on behalf of his father; he presents his marriage as an opportunity for him to perform further deeds for his father. Terentianus presents himself as the ever dutiful and obedient son, claiming that in the past he has obeyed his father. In fact, he asserts that even though he wanted to marry, he did not dare do so without his father's approval.[279] Moreover, Terentianus reminds his father that "I have driven away your difficulties"[280] Furthermore, he claims that if his father declines his request, he will obey his father's decision.[281] In addition to recounting his own deeds, Terentianus asserts that he will actually be doing his father a favor by marrying this woman, as she will act even kinder to him than to Terentianus.[282] Thus, Terentianus employs extensive self-presentation in a brief letter in order to establish a positive ethos with his father and make him more likely to allow Terentianus to take a wife.

V. Conclusion

By examining numerous sources containing self-presentation, this chapter has demonstrated that the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters all employ similar categories and techniques for self-presentation including the four outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, self-effacing language, and agent of God. That is, the ample advice

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[278] John L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), 173.
[279] P.Mich.VIII 476. 10-11 (White §110).
[280] P.Mich.VIII 476. 17 (White §110).
[281] P.Mich.VIII 476. 12 (White §110).
[282] P.Mich.VIII 476. 13-5 (White §110).

concerning self-presentation outlined in the handbooks was employed in persuasive works. Moreover, the proper methods of self-presentation were known and used by those with, and without, formal rhetorical training. Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that the information contained in the handbooks serves as a repository of the accepted social norms for self-presentation, rather than techniques only used by the educated elite. As such, it is further possible to conclude that authors such as Paul of Tarsus would employ the techniques outlined in the handbooks, regardless of their level of rhetorical training. The remaining chapters focus on Paul's use of self-presentation in his letters to the Galatians, Philippians, and Corinthians.

Chapter 2

Paul's Self-Presentation in Galatians

Paul's letter to the Galatians contains an extensive amount of self-presentation including three of the categories isolated by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and agent of God. In fact, Paul includes large chunks of autobiographical information which are used as critical data points for many studies focusing on Paul's life and chronology.[1] However, like all of Paul's letters, this autobiographical information is not intended to provide his communities with biographical details about his life. Rather, this information is an integral part of his attempt to persuade his audience that he bears a Gospel untainted by human authorities, and that the Gospel he preaches is the only legitimate Gospel.[2] Moreover, Paul's self-presentation is shaped by his contentious relationship with the Galatians. This troubled relationship requires Paul to re-establish his position within the community, as a trusted agent of God who preaches and defends a Gospel untainted by human authorities, before fully addressing issues concerning the law and circumcision.

While nearly all scholars have noted that Paul's self-defense is an important aspect of the letter, most studies rely on "mirror reading" in order to assess Paul's relationship with his audience and the position of his opponents.[3] Although, "mirror reading" can be an effective tool, it bears the most fruitful results when used in combination with other approaches. Therefore, by

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[1] Robert Jewett, *A Chronology of Paul's Life* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); Jerome Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul a Critical Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press: 1996). Nearly every chronology is built on Galatians 1:18 and 2:1, in which Paul states that he did not visit Jerusalem for three years after his conversion, and that he did not return again for another fourteen years.

[2] Gal 2:7-9. Paul explicitly states that his Gospel is the only true Gospel. In fact, he includes the somewhat outrageous statement that even if an angel from heaven should bring a different Gospel, that angel should be accursed.

[3] John Barclay, "Mirror-Reading: A Polemical Letter," *in The Galatians Debate* (ed. Mark D. Nanos: Peabody, Ma: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 367-82; J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, (Toronto: Doubleday, 1997); Walter Schmithals, *Paul and the Gnostics*, (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972); Joseph B. Tyson, "Paul's Opponents in Galatia," *NovT* 10 (1968): 243-50.

focusing on Paul's self-presentation, I am able to provide a more comprehensive understanding of Paul's self-defense than previous studies by providing new interpretations for difficult passages. For instance, many conclude that Paul included his confrontation with Peter at Antioch as a response to accusations from his opponents. However, by focusing on Paul's self-presentation, I am able to conclude that Paul included this confrontation and placed it immediately after the agreement reached in 2:7-9 because it allowed him to present himself as acting in accordance with the agreement just reached, while portraying Peter and the Jerusalem authorities as acting inconsistently. Moreover, Paul is able to present a situation that is analogous to the current problems in Galatia: teachers disregarding the previous agreement and acting inconsistently when attempting to force a law-based gospel on the gentile community.

This study also provides a new approach for examining Paul's often misunderstood confession in 2:2 that he sought to confirm that his work had not been in vain. By focusing on Paul's self-presentation it becomes clear that this remark is part of his attempt to reframe the purpose of his visit to Jerusalem, rather than a "remarkably unguarded" statement demonstrating anxiety over his evaluation by the Jewish leaders.[4] That is, Paul presents himself as travelling to Jerusalem in response to a revelation and allowing the leaders there to examine his Gospel so that his communities might be spared from strife by law-based interlopers. In fact, this may be a radical reframing of the events in question, as it is likely that Paul's opponents asserted that he was summoned to Jerusalem so that the leaders could inspect his work.

I. Self-Presentation

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[4] George Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, 84.

Paul employs extensive self-presentation in his letter to the Galatians, including three of the four categories outlined in this study: agent of God, deeds, and personal suffering. Moreover, Paul's use of self-presentation is consistent with the established social norms as outlined in the rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters. In fact, Paul's decision to rigorously obey the social norms differentiates this letter from his other letters, in which Paul often deviates from the established norms when using at least one of the categories of self-presentation outlined by this study. Paul's decision to follow the social norms seems to be based on his problematic relationship with the Galatians. Since the community was questioning Paul's authority, it is not surprising that he would follow the Greco-Roman norms when presenting himself in order to avoid alienating his audience even further.

His troubled relationship with the Galatians also influenced his decision to refrain from using self-effacing language. While self-effacement was a viable technique, as noted in chapter one, it was often associated with the ironic man and classified as the most offensive type of boasting.[5] Although using self-effacing language could be effective when used in moderation, it was a risky technique that had to be used with precision. Therefore, since Paul's relationship with the Galatians was in such jeopardy, he probably decided it was not worth employing such a risky technique.

Paul's most prevalent category of self-presentation in this letter is his status as an agent of God. Beginning in the first line of the letter, and continuing throughout 1:1-2:14, Paul focuses on his status as an agent of God, chosen to preach the Gospel to the gentiles. This emphasis is most apparent in Paul's unusual greeting in which he modifies his standard self-designation as an

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[5] Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.1.8; 11.1.21. Quintilian demonstrates the debated nature of this technique by describing the usefulness of self-effacing language for building a positive ethos with one's audience in 4.1.8, but then describing it as the most perverted form of self-praise in 11.1.21.

apostle with the claim that he was commissioned by Jesus Christ. He reinforces this emphasis by

his bold statement in 1:15 that he was chosen by God while still in the womb.

Paul's presentation of his deeds is also a critical aspect of 1:1-2:14; these deeds indicate

his status as God's agent, as one who preaches and vigorously defends the Gospel against all

opponents, even those from Jerusalem. He presents himself as opposing the inconsistent Peter in

Antioch and the interlopers seeking to circumcise Titus.[6] Moreover, he allows the leaders in

Jerusalem to inspect his Gospel in order to spare the communities, which he founded, any

suffering that might come from outsiders questioning their circumcision-free Gospel.[7]

Paul demonstrates his awareness of his problematic relationship with the Galatians by

attempting to establish a positive ethos with the community by presenting his personal suffering.

That is, he follows the advice of the rhetorical handbooks and attempts to make the Galatians

more receptive to his letter by appealing to their emotions. He reminds the community that they

witnessed the suffering which initially brought him to them.[8] Moreover, he states that he is still

enduring persecution; he concludes the letter by stating that he bears the marks of Jesus on his

body, a well placed and powerful emotional plea.[9]

II. Relationship to Audience

From the beginning of the letter, it is clear that Paul's relationship with the Galatians is

troubled. After the greeting, instead of including his normal statement of thanksgiving, Paul

rebukes the community by stating that "I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one

who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel"[10] Moreover, the

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[6] Gal 2:3, 2:11-14.
[7] Gal 2:2.
[8] Gal 4:13.
[9] Gal 5:11; 6:17.
[10] Gal 1:6.

remainder of the first two chapters contains a lengthy self-defense in which Paul employs extensive self-presentation in an attempt to repair this relationship. In fact, this problematic relationship with the Galatians seems to be the impetus for the letter as Paul focuses on re-establishing his status within the community as a trusted agent of God, who preaches the true Gospel, before focusing on issues concerning the law and circumcision in chapters three through six.

The majority of scholars attempt to determine the Galatians' attitude towards Paul by employing "mirror reading," and they conclude that Paul's statements reflect the accusations of the teachers who have brought a different Gospel to the community.[11] That is, those employing mirror-reading conclude that Paul's letter to the Galatians is a self-defense against the accusations of his opponents and their influence on the Galatians. For instance, John Barclay examines Galatians using "mirror reading," and he concludes that the Galatians were responding favorably to a circumcision-based Gospel brought by teachers who questioned Paul's gospel and his status as an apostle.[12] While "mirror reading" can be a useful technique, George Lyons has cautioned against its use, noting that there is no consensus reached from using "mirror reading" and that "it gives too much weight to extra-textual assumptions."[13] While I do not reject the use of "mirror reading," I conclude a more reliable portrait of Paul's self-defense can be painted by focusing on Paul's statements about himself rather than his statements concerning his opponents. While Paul certainly shapes his own portrait by choosing which details to present to the Galatians, I assert that it is more accurate to reconstruct Paul's self-defense via his self-presentation than analyzing his polemical statements concerning his opponents.

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[11] See footnote 3.
[12] Barclay, "Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter," 380.
[13] George Howard, *Paul: Crisis in Galatia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 7-9; Lyons, 96. Howard also notes the lack of consensus concerning the charges levied against Paul, and he concludes that "it is not really clear that actual charges were brought against Paul."

III. Purpose of the Letter

There are two primary purposes for Paul's letter to the Galatians. First, and most importantly, Paul writes to the community in order to rebuke them for accepting a gospel which differs from the one Paul presented to them.[14] Paul chastises the community for turning to a different gospel and focuses extensively on the role of the Jewish law and his negative assessment of circumcision in chapters three through six. Therefore, there is no disputing that correcting the Galatians and explaining the role of the law is a critical aspect of the letter.

However, in order for Paul's message to be positively received by the Galatians, Paul first had to re-establish his role within the community. That is, before Paul could address the critical issues facing the Galatians, he had to re-assert himself as one whom the community should trust as possessing the most accurate knowledge regarding the Gospel. Therefore, while correcting the Galatians misconceptions about the Gospel could be classified as the primary motive of the letter, Paul's attempt to re-establish himself as a trusted source of knowledge is critical and the focus of this chapter. In fact, Paul understands his status within the community to be so critical for the success of the letter, that throughout the first two chapters he repeatedly presents himself as an agent of God bearing the authentic Gospel. Moreover, Paul, reflecting the advice of the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, attempts to garner pity with his audience by reminding the community of his personal suffering in three separate sections.

Much of Paul's focus on reasserting his status as a trusted representative of the Gospel occurs in chapters one and two, in which Paul presents himself as the bearer of a Gospel untainted by human authorities. Paul does this by focusing on the deeds he accomplished for the

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[14] Gal 1:6. Paul indicates the importance of his rebuke and instruction by chastising the community for turning away from his Gospel in 1:6. The location of this rebuke is especially indicative of its importance as it replaces the thanksgiving found in Paul's other letters.

Gospel and by including numerous references to his status as an agent of God. These chapters can be divided into four sections, each of which demonstrates that Paul is a trusted agent of God and the only consistent representative of the Gospel. In Paul's greeting, in 1:1-5, Paul asserts his status as an agent of God by stating that he is an apostle commissioned by both Jesus and God. In 1:6-10, Paul rebukes the Galatians, outlines the primary message of the letter, and asserts his status as God's agent by referring to himself as a servant (δοῦλος) of Christ. Paul then recounts the years immediately following his commission in 1:11-24, in which he describes his independence from the leaders in Jerusalem. In 2:1-10, Paul recalls a critical meeting with the human authorities in Jerusalem, in which he emphasizes his status as an agent of God and claims that the Jerusalem leaders recognized him as such by bestowing upon him a status equal to that of Peter. Finally, Paul concludes his self-defense by describing a confrontation in Antioch with Peter over table fellowship with Gentiles, in which Paul describes Peter as inconsistent and hypocritical.[15]

Paul begins his letter to the Galatians as he does the majority of his letters, by emphasizing his status as an agent of God in the opening line of the letter. He states that he is "an apostle – sent neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father."[16] Although Paul often refers to himself in his letters as an apostle of Jesus, here he places special emphasis on his divine commission, noting that he was not commissioned by human authorities. Almost certainly this additional self-description is included in order to alleviate the concerns of the Galatians and help repair his relationship with the community. Agreeing with this interpretation, Kennedy states that this passage "lays the basis for Paul's ethos"; Kraftchick concludes that Paul "sets himself apart from the other apostles because

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[15] Gal 2:11-14.
[16] Gal 1:1

he is divinely authorized as the apostle to the gentiles."[17] Therefore, Paul's emphasis on his

divine commission, from the opening statement of the letter, lays the foundation for his claim

that as God's agent he is the bearer of the authentic Gospel.

After rebuking the Galatians for abandoning his Gospel, in 1:10, Paul again stresses his

status as God's agent and asserts that he does not behave as a mere rhetor preaching empty

words: "Am I now seeking human approval, or God's approval? Or am I trying to please people?

If I were still pleasing people, I would not be a servant of Christ." As many have noted, Paul's

assertion that he does not seek to please people seems to be connected to the negative perception

often associated with rhetoric, that it consisted of empty words intended for flattery and

persuasion.[18] While it is possible that Paul may be refuting an accusation that he is too focused

on persuasion like a rhetor, this passage may instead be intended as a pre-emptive strike against

any future accusations. That is, this passage seems to reflect Paul's awareness that he will be

employing an extensive amount of self-presentation and persuasion as he attempts to re-assert his

position within the community. Therefore, Paul may have decided it was necessary to state that

his words are not like those of a rhetor, whose only intention is persuasion, but, rather, as God's

agent, his methods of persuasion are for the benefit of God and the Gospel.

Additionally, by referring to himself as God's servant in 1:10, Paul presents himself as

God's agent. As many have noted, δοῦλος (servant) is used to describe important figures in

Judaism such as: Moses, Joshua, David, Jonah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zechariah, and

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[17] Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism*, 148; Steven J. Kraftchick, "Ethos and Pathos Appeals in Galatians Five and Six: A Rhetorical Analysis" (Ph.D. diss., Emory University, 1985), 218-219.
[18] Betz, 54-55; Martyn, 138-140; Johan S. Vos, "Paul's Argumentation in Galatians 1-2," *in The Galatians Debate* (ed. Mark D. Nanos: Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), 175. Vos concludes that this is a circular argument in which Paul establishes his character by claiming that the gospel is true if proclaimed by a true servant of God, and since Paul is not a flatterer, the gospel must be true.

Isaiah.[19] Moreover, others have claimed that Paul was appealing to the typical understanding of a Greco-Roman slave who was closely associated with his or her owner, and this trope would indicate to the Galatians Paul's close association with Jesus.[20] Therefore, by describing himself as a δοῦλος (servant) of Christ, Paul is able to draw upon both interpretations of the word δοῦλος in order to demonstrate his close association with Christ.

Having prepared the community for an extensive amount of persuasion, Paul launches into a full scale defense of his status as God's trusted agent. In the first section, 1:11-24, Paul demonstrates his knowledge of the Jewish Law by presenting his past deeds within Judaism, and he emphasizes the divine origin of the Gospel he now preaches by highlighting his status as God's agent and downplaying any guidance he received from human authorities.

In 1:11-12, Paul begins by stating that "the gospel that was proclaimed to me is not of human origin; for I did not receive it from a human source, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ."[21] Using "mirror reading," many scholars have concluded that Paul is responding to a critique leveled at him by opponents who question the content of his teaching and its source.[22] Therefore, most conclude that Paul defends the nature of his Gospel against these accusations by claiming that his knowledge was not derived from human

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[19] S. Scott Bartchy, "Slavery (NT)" *ABD* 6:65-73; Gerhard Sass, "Zur Bedeutung von δοῦλος bei Paulus," *ZNW* 40 (1941): 24-32. Amos 3:7; Ezek 38:17; Isa 53:11; Neh 10:29; Jer 25:4; Josh 24:29; 2 Kgs 14:25; Ps 88:21; Zech 1:6. Sass claims that the word δοῦλος was a title for Paul and notes its prevalent use in the Old Testament as a descriptor of Hebrew leaders and prophets.

[20] Martyn, 141; Ben Witherington, *Friendship and Finances in Philippi: the Letter of Paul to the Philippians,* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1994), 31.

[21] Martyn, 136-144. Martyn emphasizes the importance of this passage by referring to it as Paul's first thesis.

[22] Martyn, 143. For instance, Martyn concludes that Paul uses the technical expression, "to receive tradition from someone" in order to deny that he received a tradition from human authorities. Martyn notes examples from the Mishna and the tradition of the law being passed from Moses to Ezra, and he claims that even if the Galatians would not have been aware of this tradition, they would have understood the idea of passing on tradition. Martyn claims that Paul uses this expression to imply that he did not receive his Gospel from a tradition but directly from the source, Jesus.

authorities, as his opponents assert, but from a revelation from Jesus.[23] While this interpretation

may be accurate, I propose a more reserved conclusion, that Paul defends the source of his

Gospel in order to address any concerns that the Galatians may have regarding this issue. That is,

I conclude that Paul need not have been answering a specific accusation, but that he may have

been aware of general concerns that the Galatians had over the source of his Gospel.

In 1:13-14, Paul positions himself as possessing vast knowledge concerning Judaism and

defends himself against any accusations that he is misrepresenting the Jewish tradition by

boasting of his past achievements within Judaism. Paul claims that he was more advanced in

Judaism than many of his peers and that he was "zealous for the traditions of my ancestors."[24]

Longenecker rightly notes that Paul is asserting that "his credentials are impeccable" and that he

had no reason to leave Judaism behind.[25] Additionally, Paul implies that it was actually this zeal

for the law which led to his persecution of the Jesus community. Thus, Paul presents himself as

an expert concerning the issues facing the community, namely the role of the law, and he

simultaneously denigrates the law by claiming that it caused him to persecute members of the

Jesus community.

In 1:15, Paul again stresses his status as God's agent with the bold claim that God "set me

apart before I was born and called me through his grace."[26] That is, Paul presents himself as

chosen for this role while still in the womb! Many commentators have noticed the striking

resemblance of Paul's pre-birth claim to the tradition of the Jewish prophets, who were called by

God, often noting the similarity to both Jeremiah 1:5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew

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[23] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans 1982), 26; Longenecker, xcvi; Martyn, 142; Tyson, 246.
[24] Gal 1:14.
[25] Betz, 68; Longenecker, 30.
[26] Gal 1:15

you, and before you were born I consecrated you" and Isaiah 49:1 "the Lord called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me."[27]

Malina and Neyrey examine 1:15 and Paul's insistence that his status as an agent of God is not a new development in light of Greco-Roman expectations that an individual's character should remain consistent throughout his lifetime. [28] That is, the qualities an individual possesses as an adult should have been present throughout one's life. If one did undergo radical changes, that individual usually generated mistrust for his chameleon-like behavior. Based on these expectations, Malina and Neyrey claim that in order to cement his status as a trusted agent of God, it was necessary for Paul to demonstrate that this status was not a recent development but that he had always been God's agent.[29]

Paul further solidifies himself as an agent of God by demonstrating his independence from human authorities in 1:16-24, especially those in Jerusalem. Paul asserts that after his revelation he "did not confer with any human being" nor did he meet with those in Jerusalem, as one would expect from a new convert.[30] Additionally, Paul stresses that he did not visit Jerusalem until three years later and then stayed for a mere fifteen days.[31] Paul states that when he did finally go to Jerusalem, he did not meet with many individuals during his stay, only interacting with Cephas and James, the Lord's brother. Most commentators examine this section with "mirror reading" and conclude that Paul's statements serve as a self-defense against his opponents' accusations that he is subordinate to the authorities in Jerusalem.[32] While this

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[27] Betz, 69; Bruce, 92; Longenecker, 30; Martyn, 157. Martyn states that "Paul is thus conscious of standing in continuity with the prophetic traditions."
[28] Malina and Neyrey, 27-28.
[29] Malina and Neyrey, 40-41.
[30] Gal 1:16-17
[31] Gal 1:18-19
[32] Bruce, 95; Longenecker, 35. In fact, Bruce postulates that this self-defense was necessary because soon after his conversion, Paul went to Jerusalem for further instruction, but later cast aside their training to present his own circumcision-free Gospel.

conclusion may be correct, a more minimalist conclusion is almost certainly accurate: Paul presents himself to the Galatians as God's agent, bearing a Gospel free from the influence of human authorities, in order to quell any concerns that the Galatians had concerning Paul's subordination to any human authorities.

While Paul adamantly insists that he and his Gospel were not influenced by human authorities, in 2:1-10, he recounts his meeting with the pillars in Jerusalem, fourteen years later, at which human authorities recognized his status and the truth of his Gospel. This is a critical section for Paul, and many have claimed that Paul's purpose for presenting this meeting is to respond to a charge that he is subordinate to the authorities in Jerusalem.[33] Within this brief section, Paul employs extensive self-presentation in order to present himself as God's agent, who is independent from, though approved by, human authorities. In 2:1 Paul begins describing this meeting by first reminding the Galatians that it was fourteen years after his initial, brief, meeting in Jerusalem. That is, Paul stresses that by the time this meeting occurred, he and his Gospel were well established and independent of any human authority.

After establishing that he did not consult with human authorities upon receiving his initial revelation, Paul states the purpose for his visit to Jerusalem: "I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them ... the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain."[34] George Lyons interprets this passage as an indication of Paul's anxiety concerning the acceptance of his Gospel and describes Paul's words as "remarkably unguarded."[35] Moreover, Lyons asserts that Paul's anxiety indicates that 2:1-10 is not a self-defense because if Paul was defending himself against accusations of independence he "would have expressed himself differently, or said nothing about his

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[33] Barclay, 379-380; Longenecker, xcvi; Tyson, 246-247.
[34] Gal 2:2.
[35] Lyons, 84.

apprehension."[36] However, for Lyons to be correct, this passage would stand in stark contrast to the rest of 1:1-2:14, in which Paul carefully selects details to present to the Galatians in order to demonstrate his independence from human authorities and his status as God's agent. Moreover, Lyons' interpretation seems to imply that Paul was truly worried that the Jerusalem leaders would reject his Gospel and that he would be forced to alter his Gospel or abandon his mission to the Gentiles. However, Paul makes it clear that he has no intention of altering his Gospel by repeatedly stating his unwillingness to accept any human intervention.[37]

Therefore, when examined in the broader context of 2:1-10, it becomes clear that Paul's concern over his work having been done in vain is not an expression of anxiety concerning the reaction of the Jewish leaders, but is actually part of Paul's attempt to reframe the purpose of his visit. That is, Paul asserts that he did not visit Jerusalem at the behest of those in Antioch or as a response to a summons from the authorities in Jerusalem. Rather, Paul claims that his journey is the result of a revelation and that he did not lay his Gospel before the leaders in Jerusalem as a capitulation to their demand that they approve his Gospel. Instead, Paul presents himself as allowing the Jerusalem authorities to examine his Gospel. Thus, Paul's visit and the examination of his work were not due to his submission to human authorities. Rather his visit was the result of a revelation and his own decision. This conclusion is supported by Tyson and Martyn who have rightly concluded that Paul's phrase "I was not running, or had not run, in vain" is at least in part a concern over Paul reaching his own goals.[38] That is, Paul was aware that if the Jerusalem

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[36] Lyons, 85.

[37] Gal 2:5, 6, Paul states that he did not submit to those attempting to circumcise Titus and that the leaders contributed nothing to him.

[38] Martyn, 193; Tyson, 246-247. Martyn focuses on the negative impact that a rejection of Paul's Gospel by the Jerusalem leaders would have had on the Antioch church. He asserts that had they condemned Paul's circumcision-free Gospel, the Antioch community would have abided by their decision; however, Paul would not have. This would have caused a rift in the early Jesus communities which would have made it so that "his work was not bearing fruit as a branch of the one vine." Tyson also stresses the lack of unity which would have occurred if the leaders had

leaders did not agree with his interpretation of the Gospel, they could make his mission difficult and cause his communities strife and suffering.

Therefore, Paul presents himself as performing a valuable deed and demonstrating concern for the Galatians and all of the communities he founded. Since, if the authorities in Jerusalem approved of Paul's Gospel, it would insure that there would be no issues concerning unity within the Jesus movement. Moreover, Paul immediately demonstrates in 2:3-10 that his decision to allow the authorities to examine his work bore fruitful results. The human authorities did recognize the authenticity of his Gospel, and, in fact, they bestowed upon him a status equal to that of Peter. Thus, Paul's expression in 2:2 should not be described as an "unguarded" moment; rather, it was an integral part of Paul's carefully crafted defense. It was critical in reframing the purpose of his visit from one in which human authorities made demands upon him to a situation in which Paul performed a valuable deed in order to spare his communities from later strife and suffering.

Having allowed the authority figures in Jerusalem to examine his Gospel, in 2:2-10, Paul details their unequivocal acceptance of him and his message. Paul begins by recalling a situation caused by "false believers" within the Jerusalem Jesus community. These individuals attempted to force circumcision and a law-based version of the Gospel, upon Titus. However, Paul does not merely report that their request was denied, but, rather, he presents himself as defending his Gospel against the taint of human authority as he states that he did not submit to these individuals "for even a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you."[39]

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rejected Paul's gospel. He concludes that Paul felt the need "to try to come to some agreement with the earlier apostles" so that "they should not be working at cross purposes."

[39] T.W. Manson, *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1962), 175-176. Morton Smith, "Pauline Problems: Apropos of J. Munck, 'Paulus und die Heilsgeschichte'," *HTR* 50 (1957): 118. A few scholars such as Morton Smith have concluded that Paul's inelegant grammar in 2:3-5 is an indication that Titus was indeed circumcised, but that it was not done out of compulsion but voluntarily. However, Manson refutes this

That is, while there may have been some in the community who were not convinced by his circumcision-free Gospel, Paul did not acquiesce to their demands. While this incident allows Paul to present himself as accomplishing an important deed, defending the Gospel, it also allows Paul to imply that disputes that arise in the future may be the result of false believers rather than caused by the leaders in Jerusalem. In fact, in 2:6-10 Paul notes that the leaders did not side with these "false believers," but rather lent lending their full support to Paul's Gospel.

In 2:6-10 Paul recounts his meeting with the leaders in Jerusalem and asserts that they fully recognized the authenticity of his Gospel, added nothing to his Gospel, recognized his status as an agent of God, and bestowed upon him a status equal to that of Peter. Paul begins his account of this meeting not with specifics, but with a general claim that the leaders "contributed nothing to me." Longenecker concludes that Paul's use of γὰρ is intended to link this passage to the material in 2:3-4 and that Paul's claim that the Jewish leaders "contributed nothing to me" refers to their lack of influence over his Gospel regarding the law and circumcision.[40] While Longenecker is almost certainly correct, regardless of the precise nature of the contributions of the Jewish leaders, Paul makes it clear that he and his Gospel remain unmolested by human authority figures.

Paul's description of the leaders' reaction to his mission in 2:7-9 demonstrates that he is independent from the authorities in Jerusalem and recognized as legitimate by them. In their meeting, Paul highlights the Jerusalem leaders' recognition of his status as God's agent, noting that they "recognized the grace that had been given to me" and "saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised." Moreover, Paul states that the Jerusalem leaders acknowledged that Paul had "been entrusted with the gospel to the circumcised, just as Peter had

claim by concluding that if Titus was circumcised it would be well known to the Galatians and Paul's inelegant grammar would be "useless as camouflage for that nasty fact."
[40] Longenecker, 54.

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been entrusted with the gospel for the circumcised" and that "he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles." That is, Paul presents the Jewish leaders as recognizing that Paul and his Gospel were chosen and sanctioned by God. After highlighting the Jerusalem leaders' recognition of his God given status, Paul recounts their decision to give "Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised." Thus, Paul presents the Jewish leaders as both acknowledging God's role in Paul's mission to the uncircumcised and bestowing upon it a status equal to the mission to the circumcised.

Finally, in 2:10, Paul addresses any concerns regarding his submission to the Jewish leaders. Paul admits that he received one request from them: that he "remember the poor," but he asserts that it "was actually what I was eager to do." That is, while Paul admits the Jewish leaders did in fact attempt to alter his Gospel, their attempt is insignificant because their request that he remember the poor was already a part of his Gospel. Therefore, Paul is able to maintain that the leaders in Jerusalem added nothing to his Gospel and that it remains a message uninfluenced by human authorities. Therefore, Paul frames this critical meeting in a manner which allows him to assert the independence of his Gospel from human authorities and to demonstrate that even the Jewish leaders recognized Paul's status as an agent of God, bestowing upon his mission a status equal to that of the mission to the circumcised.

Having recounted his meeting with the Jerusalem leaders and presented it as a vindication of himself and his Gospel, in 2:11-14 Paul describes a confrontation between himself and Peter regarding table fellowship between gentile and Jewish Christians. As Paul recounts the situation, Peter initially ate with gentile Jesus followers; however, after "certain people came from James," he stopped eating with the gentiles. This incident appears to be a repudiation of Paul's gospel as

it questions the equal status which was bestowed upon Paul by the Jerusalem leaders. Moreover, even Barnabas acquiesced to the demands of the Jerusalem representatives and refrained from eating with the gentiles. Paul presents his response to Peter's actions as a deed he performed for his community by "oppos[ing] him to his face." Additionally, Paul describes Peter as a hypocrite who was "not acting consistently with the truth of the Gospel." Therefore, in Paul's presentation of this confrontation, as God's agent, he protected his Gospel and communities from hypocrites whose behavior was dictated by their fear of human authorities.

Since the confrontation in Antioch seems to undermine the agreement just described in 2:7-9, deciphering Paul's purpose for including it has proven difficult and yielded a variety of unsatisfying theories.[41] However, by focusing on Paul's decision to describe the encounter immediately after the meeting in which the Jerusalem leaders acknowledged his status as an agent of God and granted him the right hand of fellowship, I am able to conclude that Paul includes this confrontation because it demonstrates that Peter and those from James are acting inconsistently. Moreover, by portraying Peter, James, and anyone attempting to impose a law-based gospel on Paul's communities as hypocrites who are disregarding the decision just reached, Paul describes to the Galatians a situation analogous to the current state of their community. That is, the interlopers who are disturbing the community and bringing a law-based gospel are behaving inconsistently and not acting in accordance with the decision reached in Jerusalem. Therefore, Paul is able to demonstrate that the current situation in Galatia is not the result of deficiencies with Paul's Gospel but with the inconsistent and hypocritical nature of those who oppose it. Thus, Paul concludes the defense of his Gospel with this powerful reminder that while

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[41] Longenecker, 65; Martyn, 230; Tyson, 247-8. Longenecker concludes that Paul's purpose is to demonstrate his lack of dependence on the leaders in Jerusalem "while at the same time affirming his essential agreement with them." Like this study, Martyn concludes that Paul is connecting the incident in Antioch with the current situation in Galatia, describing it as a two-level drama. However, he claims that Paul addresses it to the interlopers in Galatia. Tyson states that the incident may be intended to "clarify his relationship with" the pillars.

Paul's commitment to the Gospel is steadfast, those bringing a different Gospel to the Galatians represent an inconsistent group that has previously recognized Paul's status as God's agent and validated the authenticity of his Gospel.

After, dedicating much of 1:1-2:14 towards re-asserting his status within the community, Paul continues to build a positive relationship with the community throughout the remainder of the letter. Although the rest of the letter focuses on the Galatians and their interest in a law-based Gospel, Paul seems to be aware that an extended period of instruction and rebuke may undo his attempt to re-establish his authority with the community. Therefore, he presents three examples of the suffering he endured for the Gospel, which he spreads out among the remaining material. Paul reminds the Galatians that they witnessed firsthand the suffering which initially brought him to them, he endures persecution, and he bears the marks of Jesus upon his body.[42] The latter example is especially noteworthy, as it is the penultimate line of the letter.

In 4:13, Paul reminds the Galatians that his initial visit to them was due to a physical illness and that while they could have heaped scorn upon him, they recognized his status as God's agent and "did not scorn or despise (ἐξεπτύσατε) me, but welcomed me as an angel of God."[43] That is, Paul asserts that while the Galatians may currently be questioning his apostleship, when he first visited them, they accurately perceived his status as God's agent. Longenecker notes the magical connotation of ἐξεπτύσατε and translates it as spitting out, which was used "as a means of protection against the evil eye or demons."[44] Martyn also notes the magical associations of ἐξεπτύσατε and concludes that Paul, here, reminds the Galatians that they could have viewed him as "an evil magician momentarily overcome by the malignant

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[42] Gal 4:12-15, 5:11, 6:17.
[43] Gal 4:14.
[44] James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1993), 253-254; Longenecker, 192; Martyn 421.

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powers he normally used to control others," but instead they received him as an agent of God.[45]

Therefore, this reminder of Paul's suffering, which the Galatians witnessed first hand, is both an

attempt to garner goodwill with the community through a pathos appeal and a reminder that they

once accepted his status as God's agent despite evidence that may have indicated the contrary.[46]

In 5:11 Paul again highlights his own personal suffering by asking "why am I still being

persecuted if I am still preaching circumcision?" Interpreting this passage has been particularly

difficult, and it has provoked a myriad of unsatisfying conclusions.[47] In fact, Betz concludes that

it is "puzzling ... that Paul, after bringing up the matter so suddenly, drops it instantly without

further comment."[48] Moreover, Betz rightfully concludes that "We will probably never know

whether Paul denies simple "slander" or an allegation which in part was true."[49] While it may not

be possible to determine the precise accusation levied against Paul, it is clear that this passage is

included as another example of his consistency and that it reflects the advice outlined by the

rhetorical handbooks for establishing a positive relationship with an audience via a pathos

appeal.[50] Kraftchick rightly notes that Paul calls "on the readers' sympathy for him as one who

suffers for the gospel"[51]

Finally, in the penultimate sentence of the letter, 6:17, Paul includes the cryptic remark "I

carry the marks of Jesus branded on my body." While many have noted the practice of religious

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[45] Martyn, 421.

[46] It is noteworthy that this passage follows immediately after his call for the Galatians to imitate him in 4:12. Therefore, while Paul calls the Galatians to imitate him now, he reminds them that they chose to imitate him in the past when they had reason to doubt him.

[47] Longenecker, 232; Martyn, 477; H. J. Schoeps, *Paul: The Theology of the Apostle in the Light of Jewish Religious History* (trans. H. Knight; Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1959), 219. Most scholars have concluded that Paul is reacting to an accusation that he is either still circumcising members of his communities or did in the past. Martyn proposes that Paul's opponents may have heard that he circumcised a Gentile. Longenecker concludes that his opponents were referring to a "garbled version of the Titus episode" in Galatians 2:1-5, and that this accusation may even demonstrate some awareness of Acts 16:1-3 in which Paul is portrayed as circumcising Timothy. Schoeps suggests that the passage may be referring to pre-conversion activities.

[48] Betz, 268.

[49] Betz, 269.

[50] Kraftchick, 246.

[51] Kraftchick, 246.

tattooing and the branding of slaves, most scholars have concluded that Paul refers to the wounds he suffered on behalf of the Gospel.[52] That is, in order to build goodwill with the community, Paul concludes the letter with a final reminder of the suffering he has endured for the Gospel.

Kraftchick provides another interpretation of this passage noting that, in the *Institutio Oratoria*, Quintilian advises highlighting the wounds one received in battle as an effective method for gaining goodwill with one's audience.[53] Citing this source, Kraftchick concludes that "verse 17 is an appeal to the readers to consider Paul as the warrior of Christ."[54] Although the shameful wounds Paul describes in 2 Corinthians are not analogous to the wounds received in battle, Paul does omit the details of his wounds when writing to the Galatians. While Paul's lack of detail concerning his wounds may lend support to Kraftchick's conclusion, receiving lashes on the back was considered dishonorable, and thus, it is no surprise that Paul omits the details of his wounds in a letter to a community that is already questioning his authority.[55] Therefore, while it is likely that his statement is intended to serve as further evidence that Paul, as an agent of God, is willing to endure wounds and suffering in defense of the true Gospel, it is unclear if he intended to portray the wounds he suffers for the Gospel as honorable wounds inflicted upon a warrior in battle.

Having examined Paul's extensive use of self-presentation in 1:1-2:14 and noting the examples of his personal suffering scattered throughout the remainder of the letter, it is clear that a critical purpose of the letter is to re-establish Paul's position as a trusted representative of the

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[52] Otto Betz, "στίγμα," *TDNT*, 7:663-664; Longenecker, 299; Martyn, 568; Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 454. Witherington states that the marks might be meant to indicate that he was dedicated to and protected by God and includes Greco-Roman parallels. Betz, Martyn, and Longenecker conclude that he is referring to physical wounds and scars.

[53] Quintilian, *Inst.* 6.1.21-22.

[54] Kraftchick, 261. Kraftchick also rightly states that this verse "serves to mark him as one who has suffered injury so that the freedom of the gospel could be available for others."

[55] Jennifer Glancy, "Boasting of Beatings (2 Corinthians 11:23-25)"," *JBL* 123 (2004): 99-135. Jennifer Glancy has emphasized the dishonorable nature of Paul's personal suffering in 2 Corinthians.

Gospel. Paul emphasizes his status as God's agent, focusing on the deeds he accomplished to defend the Gospel from the influence of human authorities and the suffering he was willing to endure on behalf of this mission. Moreover, Paul presents himself as the lone consistent agent of God, preaching the true Gospel. In fact, Paul's consistency caused him to oppose one of the Jewish Christian leaders, Peter, when Peter behaved inconsistently. Thus, Paul's consistency and protection of the Gospel from the influence of human authorities are presented as evidence that the Galatians should once again acknowledge Paul's status as God's trusted agent, bearing the untainted and true Gospel.

IV. Conclusions and Ramifications

By focusing on Paul's self-presentation I have reached the following conclusions. First, Paul's tenuous relationship with the Galatians shaped the composition of his letter. This problematic relationship influenced Paul to follow more rigorously the established social norms for self-presentation. That is, Paul's decision to emphasize his status as God's agent, the deeds he accomplished for the Gospel, and the personal suffering he endured, while omitting any self-effacing language, is a result of his tenuous relationship with the Galatians.

Second, by noting that Paul employs an extensive amount of self-presentation in 1:1-2:10, before fully addressing circumcision and the law, I am able to confirm the work of many others who have described this section as a self-defense. Moreover, this defense was necessary in order for Paul to expect the Galatians to accept his rebuke and teaching which follow in chapters three through six. However, while I conclude that this section is a self-defense, I am hesitant to make conclusions about the specific accusations levied against Paul; rather I focus on what his statements can tell us about the general concerns of the Galatians. By noting Paul's extensive

emphasis on his authority as an agent of God, who is independent of human authority, I have shown that the Galatians were concerned about Paul's relationship with the leaders in Jerusalem and the legitimacy of his Gospel. Moreover, while I am hesitant to identify the specific accusations raised by his opponents regarding the meeting described in 2:1-10 and the incident in Antioch, it has become clear to me that Paul certainly addresses the concerns of the Galatians regarding his authority by presenting himself and the Gospel as untainted and uninfluenced by human authorities. Therefore, Paul's self-defense is intended to demonstrate that he is an agent of God, independent of human authority and bearing the true gospel.

Third, I am able to provide a convincing interpretation of Paul's statement in 2:2, that he sought to confirm that his work had not been in vain. By focusing on Paul's self-presentation, it becomes clear that this remark is part of his attempt to reframe the purpose of his visit to Jerusalem rather than a "remarkably unguarded" statement demonstrating anxiety over his evaluation by the Jerusalem leaders. That is, Paul presents himself as choosing to perform a deed for his communities, in order to ensure for them an existence free of strife and suffering, rather than submitting to human authorities. In fact, interpreting this statement as a reflection of Paul's anxiety seems to imply that he would have been willing to allow his gospel to be altered by the Jerusalem leaders, and Paul repeatedly states that this is not the case.

Fourth, I am able to convincingly answer the question "why did Paul include the Antioch incident?" I conclude that Paul recounts this incident in order to demonstrate that Peter and the Jerusalem leaders have not been consistent in their interaction with Paul's gentile mission. This conclusion is especially apparent since the Antioch incident is presented immediately after Paul's description of the agreement reached in Jerusalem. That is, Paul portrays the Jerusalem leaders as recognizing Paul's status as God's agent and confirming his leadership by bestowing upon him a

status equal to Peter and then immediately behaving hypocritically in Antioch by ignoring their previous decision. Thus, Paul's portrayal of the Antioch incident implies that the current situation in Galatia is a similar one in which the Jerusalem leaders, not Paul, are behaving inconsistently.

Chapter 3

Paul's Self-Presentation in Philippians

Paul employs an extensive amount of self-presentation in his letter to the Philippians including three of the categories identified by this study: agent of God, personal suffering, and deeds. However, unlike his letters to the Galatians and Corinthians, Paul's authority and relationship with the Philippian community was not in question, and this positive relationship with the community influenced his self-presentation. For example, Paul does not need to employ self-effacing language in order establish a positive relationship with the Philippians. Instead, he focuses on presenting his status as an agent of God, his deeds, and his imprisonment in order to accomplish two primary purposes: providing the Philippians with a model for enduring their own suffering and acknowledging the Philippians' recent gift.

By focusing on self-presentation, I am able to provide a new interpretation for Paul's potentially insulting response to the Philippians' recent gift. While most commentators have struggled to understand Paul's "thankless thanks" of the Philippians' gift, leading many to question the unity of the letter, I conclude that Paul's use of self-presentation was intended to prepare the Philippians throughout the letter to accept his bold claim that God would reciprocate on Paul's behalf. Moreover, by proposing that Paul's self-presentation of himself as an agent of God throughout the letter is critical to the Philippians' acceptance of his status, the unity of the letter is confirmed. Therefore, as I outline below, it is unlikely that Paul would have claimed that God would reciprocate on Paul's behalf without preparing the community to accept this bold statement.

Additionally, by focusing on Paul's decision to present the deeds he accomplished while in prison instead of the details of his suffering, I am able to conclude that in 3:17 Paul's call to emulation was intended to provide the Philippians with a model to help the community endure their own suffering, rather than an attempt to solidify his own authority and re-inscribe "Paul's privileged position within the hierarchy as the mediating figure through whom the community might gain access to salvation."[1] That is, this approach makes clear that Paul's intention was to help the community endure their own difficulties, rather than reassert his authority over the community.

I. Self-Presentation

Paul employs three of the categories of self-presentation outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, and agent of God. Paul's primary category of self-presentation in his letter to the Philippians is his status as God's agent. In fact, this theme is so prominent that Marshall describes Paul as a member of God's team.[2] Paul employs this category from the outset of the letter to its conclusion, with many reminders of his status in between. For example, he asserts that he is a δοῦλος of Christ, ἐν Χριστῷ, appointed (κεῖμαι) by God to defend the Gospel, and chosen by Christ.[3] Furthermore, he presents himself as protected from shame by Christ and delivered into salvation by Christ.[4] Moreover, in 4:18-19 Paul's repeated self-presentation as an agent of God is particularly critical for validating his claim that God will reciprocate the Philippians' gift on behalf of Paul.

Paul's self-presentation of his suffering in Philippians differs from both the established social norms and his other letters. While in 2 Corinthians Paul presents the details of his suffering, in

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[1] *Contra* Castelli, 96.
[2] Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians," 364.
[3] Phil 1:1, 1:13, 1:16, 3:12.
[4] Phil. 1:18-19, 1:20.

the description of his imprisonment in Philippians 1:7-30 he does not. Instead, Paul focuses on the deeds he was able to accomplish despite his imprisonment and reassures the community that both he and the gospel are flourishing despite his imprisonment. This unusual presentation of his suffering provides the foundation of the model which he calls the Philippians to emulate, perseverance despite suffering. Moreover, it indicates a positive relationship with the Philippian community, as the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks suggest presenting the details of one's suffering in order to garn pity from an audience.

Paul presents many deeds to the Philippians in order to demonstrate the model which in 3:17 he calls the community to imitate. In 1:7-30, Paul outlines three deeds he has performed during his imprisonment: spreading awareness of his Christ throughout the Praetorian guard, inspiring others "to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear," and stating his intention to "remain in the flesh," despite his desire to join Christ, because it is more necessary for the Philippians. Moreover, in Philippians 3:4-6 Paul highlights his many impressive accomplishments within Judaism, such as his lineage and zeal for the law as a Pharisee. However, he breaks from the social norms and rejects these impressive past accomplishments as rubbish. Finally, in 4:11-12, Paul boasts that he is αὐτάρκης (self-sufficient). Therefore, while his boasting follows the established norms, the goal of his boasting differs greatly. Whereas in his letter to the Galatians he boasts to augment his authority, in his letter to the Philippians Paul's boasting serves as a model for the type of behavior he expects the community to emulate: persevering and accomplishing deeds despite imprisonment and setting aside one's own achievements for the good of the community.

II. Relationship to His Audience

It has long been noted that Paul's letter to the Philippians is a friendly one; however, there is debate concerning the proper terminology for describing the letter. It has been described as a letter of friendship (a technical term), a family letter, and a letter with a friendly tone.[5] While this study does not provide a method for determining which terminology is best suited to describe the friendly relationship between Paul and the Philippians, it does provide support to the consensus that Paul's correspondence with the Philippians is a friendly one.

This friendly relationship is made clear from the beginning of the letter by Paul's unusual self-description, δοῦλος, in his salutation.[6] Since Paul normally begins his letters by describing himself as an ἀπόστολος, his use of an apparently less authoritative self-designation seems to be a reflection of a positive relationship with the Philippian community. That is, since Paul and the Philippians already had a positive relationship, he did not need to re-establish his apostolic status by referring to himself as an ἀπόστολος.[7] Instead, he could use his greeting to lay the foundation for the model which he presents to the community, one willing to set aside his achievements for the benefit of the community.

Moreover, as I explore in detail below, in 1:12-18 Paul, as a prisoner, had the opportunity to build ethos with the community by recounting the details of his imprisonment. However, he forgoes this opportunity to garner pity with the Philippians and instead chooses to highlight the deeds he was able to accomplish despite his imprisonment. Thus, Paul's self-presentation to the

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[5] Loveday Alexander, "Hellenistic Letter-Forms and the Structure of Philippians," JSNT 37 (1989): 87-101. Phreme Perkins, "Christology, Friendship and Status: The Rhetoric of Philippians," *SBL Seminar Papers* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 509-520. Scholars such as White and Fitzgerald conclude that Philippians should be classified as a letter of friendship. However, Reumann has questioned this conclusion and other scholars describe the letter with different friendly terms. For instance, Alexander describes Philippians as a family letter, while Perkins highlights Paul's friendship language.

[6] Phil 1:1.

[7] Peter Thomas O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians: a Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 44-45.

Philippians reflects a more positive relationship than he had with other communities such as the Galatians and Corinthians, and confirms the current consensus that Paul and the Philippians had a friendly relationship.

III. Purpose of the Letter

There is no shortage of proposed purposes for Paul's letter to the Philippians. In fact, in his recent commentary, Reumann isolates eight possible purposes behind the letter.[8] However, by focusing on Paul's use of self-presentation, it is possible to isolate two purposes which are emphasized above the others: acknowledging the Philippians' recent gift and calling the Philippians to imitate the model which Paul provides the community.[9] The manner in which Paul acknowledges the Philippians' recent gift is critical, as it will determine the future of his relationship with the community. Therefore, in 4:1-20 Paul prepares the Philippians to accept his unusual acknowledgement of their letter with extensive self-presentation throughout the letter. Additionally, the amount of material which Paul dedicates to providing the Philippians with a model for enduring their own suffering and forgoing their own desires indicates the importance of his second purpose. For example, Paul provides many examples of individuals who exhibit the appropriate behavior such as himself, Jesus, Timothy, and Epaphroditus.

III. 1. Purpose #1: Addressing the Philippians' Gift

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[8] Ralph P. Martin, *Philippians* (Nashville: Nelson Reference, 2004), lvi-lviii; Reumann, 77. Martin and Reumann both list eight potential purposes for the letter. Martin states that Paul may have written to the Philippians: out of his desire to write the Philippians a letter, to provide the community with news about Paul, to provide instruction concerning false teachings, to share news about the health of Epaphroditus, to provide instruction concerning any suffering the Philippians may be undergoing, to call for unity among the Philippians, as an exhortation to rejoice, and as a thank you for their recent gift.

[9] Reumann, 675-678. Acknowledging the Philippians gift in 4:10-20 is such an important part of the letter that many, most recently Reumann, have concluded that Paul would not have left such an important topic to the end of the letter. Thus, Reumann concludes that this section is actually part of a separate letter which focused more directly on this topic.

Paul's primary purpose in writing to the Philippians is addressing and confirming their recent gift to him. However, instead of thanking the community directly with the expected εὐχαριστῶ response, Paul concludes his letter to the Philippians with the potentially insulting assertion that God, rather than Paul, will reciprocate the Philippians' recent gift. He states,

> I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will fully satisfy every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus[10]

Interpreting this statement has been particularly difficult, and many have focused on the absence of the expected εὐχαριστῶ in Paul's response, a standard term for acknowledging gifts.[11] Furthermore, Paul's statement is particularly troubling in light of the Greco-Roman system of reciprocation and patronage. It was expected that one reciprocate any gift with an equal or larger gift, and the refusal or inability to do so was accompanied by consequences such as recognizing the giver of a gift as one's patron or the termination of a friendship.[12] However, Paul was unable to reciprocate the Philippians' gift, and he was also unwilling to accept a broken friendship or recognize the Philippian community as his patron. Therefore, Paul's assertion that God would reciprocate on behalf of Paul is his attempt to maintain a friendly relationship with the Philippians without reciprocating their gift. Moreover, by focusing on Paul's extensive presentation of himself throughout the letter as an agent of God, it becomes clear that he was aware that the Philippians might have taken offense to his bold claim that he was worthy of accepting gifts on God's behalf.

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[10] Phil 4:18-19.
[11] See footnote 13.
[12] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 9-12, 160. Nearly every scholar since Marshall had cited his seminal work on gift-giving in which he summarizes the works of Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca, Thucydides, and Homers and concludes that gift-giving was an agonistic affair. That is, "the recipient was morally bound to return the equivalent or more than he had received."

Paul's unusual response to the Philippians' has caused most scholars to take note of his hesitation when thanking the Philippians for their gift. In fact, some have labeled Paul's omission of the standard inclusion of εὐχαριστῶ as a "thankless thanks."[13] However, while it is true that Paul does not directly thank the Philippians for their gift with the expected εὐχαριστῶ, many have rightly noted that Paul does express appreciation for the Philippians' contribution throughout his letter.[14] For instance, Holloway notes that Paul demonstrates his appreciation of the Philippians' gift in both 4:10 "I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me" and 4:14 "In any case, it was kind of you to share my distress."[15] Furthermore, Peterson presents numerous examples of responses to gifts which did not contain the standard εὐχαριστῶ response.[16] Thus, while it is worth noting that Paul did not directly thank the community with the standard response, describing Paul's response as thankless is hardly an accurate description.

Although Paul does express his gratitude to the Philippians for their gift, it is certainly correct to note that Paul qualifies his appreciation. In fact, in 4:11-13, Paul states that he does not need the Philippians' contribution as he has learned to be αὐτάρκης (self-sufficient), a term

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[13] Martin Dibelius, *An die Thessalonicher I-II, an die Philipper* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (P. Siebeck)), 95; Joachim Gnilka, Der *Philipperbrief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1987), 173; Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians* (Waco, Tex: Word Books, 1983), 195; Peterman, "Thankless thanks" : the Epistolary Social Convention in Philippians 4:10-20," TynBul 42 (1991): 261-270; Marvin R. Vincent, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistles to the Philippians and to Philemon* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1897), 146. Vincent coined the phrase "thankless thanks" in response to earlier scholarship. However, Vincent disagrees with the notion that Paul was not thankful and describes such interpretations as "… perverted and shallow exegesis …" Moreover, Peterman asserts that one should not expect a direct thanks based on his analysis of contemporary documents.

[14] Phil 1:4-5, 4:10, 4:14, 4.18; Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's letter to the Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 451; Paul A. Holloway, *Consolation in Philippians: Philosophical Sources and Rhetorical Strategy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 157; Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi: Conventions of Gift Exchange and Christian Giving* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 9-15; Peterman, "Thankless Thanks," 261-270. Peterman provides a summary of the different positions scholars have taken concerning this issue. Additionally, Peterman provides evidence from contemporary papyri documents that demonstrates that in correspondence between friendly parties a formal thank you is not necessary.

[15] Holloway, 157.

[16] Peterman, "Thankless Thanks," 261-270.

which is often examined through the lens of Stoic philosophy[17] Moreover, others have concluded

that in 4:15 Paul demonstrates further hesitancy to accept the Philippians' gift by describing it

with commercial terminology.[18]

However, the most informative lens for examining Paul's hesitation in thanking the

Philippians' for their gift is that of the financial obligations associated with gift-giving and the

Greco-Roman system of patronage. This lens is critical because, as Marshall notes, gift-giving in

the Greco-Roman world was an agonistic affair in which the goal was to outdo one another with

gifts.[19] Thus, Paul's statement that God, rather than Paul, would reciprocate the Philippians' gift

is especially shocking when viewed through this lens. Rather than providing the Philippians with

an equal or even greater gift, Paul attempted to circumvent the system of giving and receiving

with his bold claim. Therefore, when viewed through the lens of reciprocation, it is apparent that

Paul's claim could have offended the Philippians, who would have expected him to reciprocate

their gift. For example, Peterman rightly states,

> In the Greco-Roman world social reciprocity played an integral part in the
> conventions that dominated inter-personal relationships. Gifts and favours were
> not to be taken for granted and carried serious obligations.[20]

Additionally, while it is true that Roman writers such as Cicero and Seneca stressed the ideal of

giving without the expectation of receiving even greater gifts,[21] these same writers also stressed

the importance of reciprocation stating that "no duty is more imperative than that of proving

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[17] Malherbe, "Paul's Self-Sufficiency (Philippians 4:11)," in *Friendship, Flattery, and Frankness of Speech: Studies on Friendship in the New Testament World* (ed. John T. Fitzgerald: Leiden: E J Brill, 1996), 125-139; Reumann, 703. Most scholars note the similarity to Stoic language, and Reumann and Malherbe are especially informative. See footnote 57.

[18] Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, 10-15,146-151. Peterman contains an comprehensive survey of the various approaches to this passage and the impact of using commercial terminology.

[19] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 2.

[20] Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, 88.

[21] Cicero, *de Off.*; Seneca, *Ben.*

one's gratitude"[22] Thus, declining to reciprocate a gift was simply not a viable option and was accompanied by serious repercussions.

Therefore, since Paul was unable to reciprocate the Philippians' gift he had to provide a legitimate reason for his decision or risk serious consequences. Therefore, by examining Paul's self-presentation it becomes clear that Paul prepares the Philippians for his claim that God will reciprocate the Philippians' gift by presenting himself as an agent of God throughout the letter. That is, by repeatedly emphasizing his status as God's agent, Paul is able to prepare the Philippians for what might otherwise have been a rather startling and insulting claim that God will reciprocate on behalf of Paul. Paul employs this strategy throughout the letter with statements such as: Paul and Timothy are δοῦλοι (slaves) of Christ, Christ will be honored in my body, and Christ Jesus has made me his own.[23] In fact, Paul refers to his status as God's agent so often that Peter Marshall labels Paul as a member of God's team.[24]

Paul reminds the community of his status as God's agent from the first sentence of the letter by referring to himself as a δοῦλος (slave) in his salutation.[25] This is no surprise, as Paul describes himself as an agent of God in every salutation aside from First and Second Thessalonians. However, Paul normally emphasizes his role as an ἀπόστολος. Therefore, Paul's atypical self-description has caused commentators to offer a variety of theories explaining Paul's use of δοῦλος instead of ἀπόστολος, with most concluding that Paul is referencing his status as God's agent.[26]

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[22] Cicero, *de Off.* 1.15.47.
[23] Phil 1:20, 3:12.
[24] Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians,", 364.
[25] Phil 1:1.
[26] Ernst Best, "Bishops and Deacons: Philippians 1,1," *SE* 4 (1968): 371-376; Reumann, 55- 57; Gerhard Sass, "Zur Bedeutung von δοῦλος bei Paulus," *ZNW* 40 (1941): 24-32. Reumann's Philippians commentary contains an exhaustive list of the studies which focus on Paul's use of δοῦλος . He divides these studies into five categories which he describes as servile imagery, slaves to a king or deity, Biblical theology, δοῦλος as a title of honor, and revisionist social history.

Bloomquist and Marshall focus on the rhetorical implications of beginning the letter with δοῦλος, and both emphasize Paul's closeness to Christ and God.[27] Bloomquist concludes that the inclusion of δοῦλος follows the standard rhetorical practice of making oneself "worthy of belief" for their audience.[28]

Other commentators such as Bartchy, Gnilka, Sass, and Schenk conclude that δοῦλος was a title that imparted authority to Paul.[29] That is, rather than δοῦλος reflecting a lesser status than ἀπόστολος, because δοῦλος was often used to refer to many important Jewish leaders in the LXX such as Moses, Joshua, David, and Jonah, it actually reflected a position of authority as God's agent.[30] Additionally, the prophets Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos, Zechariah, and Isaiah employed this term in reference to themselves as slaves of Yahweh.[31] Thus, for these commentators δοῦλος clearly reflects Paul's self-presentation as an agent of God.

While it is possible that Paul's use of δοῦλος was influenced by LXX examples of δοῦλοι, Witherington focuses on Paul's audience and notes that the Philippian community, a gentile audience, may have interpreted δοῦλος through their understanding of slavery as one belonging to someone else.[32] That is, the Philippians may have interpreted Paul's use of the word δοῦλος as claiming that Paul belonged to Christ. O'Brien also notes this interpretation and states that "in a letter that gives prominence to humility it is more likely that Paul is focusing on the word's reference to lowly service than its nuance of privileged position."[33] Furthermore, O'Brien notes

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[27] Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians,* 144-145; Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians," 363-366.
[28] Bloomquist, 144.
[29] S. Scott Bartchy, "Slavery (NT)" *ABD* 6:65-73; Gnilka, 30; Sass, 24-32; Wolfgang Schenk, *Die Philipperbriefe des Paulus* (Stuttgart: W Kohlhammer, 1984), 77.
[30] Neh 10:29; Josh 24:29; Ps 88:21; 2 Kgs 14:25.
[31] Jer 25:4; Ezek 38:17; Amos 3:7; Zech 1:6; Isa 53:11.
[32] Ben Witherington, *Friendship and Finances in Philippi: the Letter of Paul to the Philippians,* (Valley Forge, Pa: Trinity Press International, 1994), 31.
[33] O'Brien, 45.

that in the Christ hymn, Christ is also described as a δοῦλος (in 2:7) and is presented as the ultimate example of this humility.

Rather than choose one interpretation of δοῦλος over the other, the proper solution is to conflate these approaches. Paul may indeed have intended his use of the word δοῦλος to hearken back to important figures in the LXX. This is especially plausible in light of his description of the Philippians gift in 4:19 with cultic language stemming from the LXX.[34] However, writing to a gentile community, Paul may have been aware that many of the Philippians would interpret the title more literally as one who belongs to Christ. Thus, in 1:1 Paul' use of δοῦλος is an indication of his status as God's agent whether viewed through the tradition of LXX leaders and prophets or as one belonging to God.

In 1:12-30 Paul also presents himself as an agent of God during the explanation of his current situation. In 1:12-18a Paul begins by describing the results of his imprisonment and asserts that although he is in prison, rather than hurt the progress of the gospel, his imprisonment has helped spread his message. In fact, the entire praetorian guard is aware that his imprisonment is ἐν Χριστῷ. Though the translation of this passage has been debated, ἐν Χριστῷ seems to modify δεσμούς (chains) resulting in similar translations in both the NIV (I am in chains for Christ) and NRSV (my imprisonment is for Christ).[35] Fee expands this translation in order to provide even more clarity, "it has become clear that I am in chains because I am a man in Christ and that my chains are in part a manifestation of my discipleship as one who is thereby participating in the sufferings of Christ himself."[36] Furthermore, Silva focuses on the importance of Paul's use of ἐν rather than ὑπὲρ and claims that Paul's use of ἐν is critical because rather than

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[34] See footnote 59.
[35] O'Brien, 91-92. O'Brien summarizes the key alternate translations and concludes that the best translation is "it has become clear … that I am in chains for Christ."
[36] Fee, 113.

claiming that Paul's imprisonment is for or on behalf of (ὑπὲρ) Christ, "the use of *en Christō* here reflects in a notable way Paul's solidarity with Christ."[37] Holloway adds that Paul's imprisonment may have "enhanced his reputation as a servant of Christ"[38] Thus, by claiming to be ἐν Χριστῷ Paul asserts that he is God's agent.

Paul continues to emphasize his status as an agent of God by describing the success his imprisonment has had on motivating others to preach the gospel. He states that, in addition to motivating some to preach the gospel "out of love," others were preaching the gospel with the goal of creating difficulties for him. Moreover, Paul expresses joy over both groups, since Christ is proclaimed, due to Paul, regardless of the motivation of those preaching.[39] Marshall notes that "When Paul asserts that what happens to him is for the advancement of the gospel, he is claiming an identification of himself with God."[40] Therefore, as God's agent Paul is able to inspire others to preach regardless of their motives.

In 1:12-18a Paul further identifies himself as Christ's agent by stating that "I have been put [κεῖμαι] here for the defense of the gospel,"[41] and many have noted that Paul's use of κεῖμαι seems to denote divine approval.[42] For example, Silva claims that κεῖμαι could be reasonably translated as either appointed or destined instead of the standard translation "put here." Martin notes the parallel uses of κεῖμαι in 1 Thessalonians 3:3 and Luke 2:34, which are both translated as destined, and translates κεῖμαι as "that the apostle had been commissioned."[43] Furthermore, O'Brien demonstrates that κεῖμαι is a military term and that the term "indicates that Paul is under

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[37] Moisés Silva, *Philippians,* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2005), 62.

[38] Holloway, 102, 106. Holloway notes that other figures such as Diogenes of Sinope enhanced their reputation during imprisonment or exile.

[39] Phil 1:18.

[40] Marshall, "Paul's Ethical Appeal in Philippians,"*,* 365.

[41] Phil 1:16.

[42] Martin, 46; Silva, 64; James P. Ware, *The Mission of the Church in Paul's Letter to the Philippians in the Context of Ancient Judaism,* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 193.

[43] Martin, 46.

orders, issued by God."[44] Martin supports this claim by stating that such a military term would have been easily understood by those in a Roman colony.[45] Therefore, a better translation of this passage may be "I have been appointed [by God] for the defense of the gospel," and this translation clearly indicates Paul's status as God's agent.

Paul use of δι᾽ εὐδοκίαν (from goodwill) in 1:15 is yet another example of his self-presentation as one chosen or appointed by God. O'Brien states that this phrase indicates that those looking to spread the gospel in order to help Paul are "appreciative of the 'divine approval' that attested his ministry."[46] Thus, Paul repeatedly presents himself as an agent of God while describing his imprisonment in 1:12-18a by claiming that his imprisonment is for Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ), by using terminology that the Philippians might have recognized such as κεῖμαι, and by claiming that as God's agent he inspired many to preach despite their motives.

The majority of commentators note that 1:18b begins a new section extending from 1:18b-1:26 in which, after discussing the effect his imprisonment had on others preaching the gospel, Paul turns now to his own situation. In 1:18b-20, Paul includes three more references to his status as God's agent, as he asserts his confidence that he will be "ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν" by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. That is, he will not be ashamed and Christ will be honored in his body.

Scholars are divided over the proper translation and implication of "ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν."[47] Commentators such as O'Brien emphasize the eternal and heavenly nature of Paul's salvation by stating that Paul will be "vindicated by God in the heavenly court"[48] This position is

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[44] O'Brien, 101.
[45] Martin, 46.
[46] O'Brien, 99.
[47] Phil, 1:19. Reumann, 209-211. Reumann provides a thorough list of scholars which can be divided into two camps. Some assert a future and heavenly eschatological salvation, while others focus on an earthly salvation and Paul's release from prison.
[48] O'Brien 108-110; Silva, 70.

normally supported by the parallel passage found in Job 13:16 (LXX), in which Job responds to those around him with the identical phrase "ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν." Others such as Martin focus on an earthly salvation and interpret this phrase as Paul's confidence that he will indeed be released from prison and be able to return to his pastoral duties.[49] For this study, choosing one interpretation over the other is not critical, as either interpretation augments Paul's status as an agent of God. Regardless of the type of vindication Paul expected, it was made possible by the spirit of Jesus Christ. In other words, because of his status as an agent of God, Paul expected that the spirit of Jesus would either help him win his trial and eventually secure his release from prison, or allow him to achieve eternal vindication.

In addition to anticipating σωτηρίαν by the spirit of Jesus, Paul asserts in 1:20 that he will not be shamed. Martin and others note the parallel between Paul's use of this term and its appearance in the psalms, prophets, and Dead Sea Scrolls.[50] Martin states that,

> These texts describe the humble pious ones, who, in the proper relationship of trust in God, count on him not to let them be disgraced, disappointed, disillusioned, or brought by him into judgment and thus be covered with shame before their enemies.[51]

For instance, Psalms 24:3 requests that God "not let me be put to shame." O'Brien notes these parallels, as well as the parallel in 2 Cor 10:18, and concludes that "his authority, which is real, derives not from his capacity to control his environment but from a divine message and commission."[52] Therefore, by employing language similar to past agents of God, who were spared from shame by God, Paul's statement that he will not be shamed seems to be an attempt to connect himself to this tradition and to present himself as an agent of God.

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[49] Jean-François Collange, *The Epistle of Saint Paul to the Philippians* (London: Epworth Press, 1979), 8-10; Holloway, 108-109; Martin, 49.
[50] Martin, 52; O'Brien 114. Martin notes the following parallels: Ps 24:3; 34:26-27; 39:15-17; 68:7; 118:80; Isa 1:29; 45:17; 49:23; 50:7; Jer 12:13; Zeph 3:11; 1QH IV, 23-24; V, 35; IX, 20, 22; 1QS IV, 23; Odes Sol. 29:1, 11.
[51] Martin, 52.
[52] O'Brien, 114.

Paul concludes 1:18b-26 with the statement "Christ will be exalted now as always in my body, whether by life or by death."[53] By stating that Christ will be honored regardless of the outcome, Paul further asserts his status as Christ's agent. In fact, noting Paul's shift to the third person, "Christ will be honored," O'Brien states that "Christ becomes the subject and Paul is simply the instrument by which the greatness of Christ shines out … the instrument in the divine hands."[54] As the "instrument" of Christ, if the σωτηρίαν envisioned by Paul is an earthly one, Paul can continue his pastoral work in life. However, if the σωτηρίαν mentioned in 1:19 is a heavenly vindication, then even his public trial will result in the exaltation of Christ.[55] In either case Paul presents himself as an instrument of Christ.

Paul also presents himself as an agent of God in 3:12 with the statement "because Christ Jesus has made me his own." Most commentators have rightly interpreted 3:12 through the lens of Paul's conversion experience. For example, O'Brien states that with "words that recall his conversion on the Damascus road Paul asserts that the risen and exalted Lord Jesus had mightily arrested him and set his life an a new direction."[56] Additionally, Martin rightly notes the parallel to Gal 1:15-16 and states that both passages indicate that Paul was "chosen by Christ for a specific task."[57]

Having presented himself as God's agent throughout the letter, Paul finally reaches the conclusion and primary purpose of the letter in 4:10-20, acknowledging the Philippians' gift. Moreover, the importance of this purpose is demonstrated by Paul's use of all three types of self-

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[53] Phil 1:20.
[54] O'Brien, 115.
[55] Collange 60-61; Fee 137-8. Both Collange and Fee note that Paul emphasizes the public nature of his trial with the phrase "in my body."
[56] O'Brien, 425.
[57] Martin, 208.

presentation in this brief section. Paul presents himself as God's agent in 4:18-19, boasts about

his self-sufficiency in 4:11-13, and reminds the community of his past suffering in 4:12.

In 4:11-12, Paul qualifies his appreciation for the Philippians' gift by stating that,

> Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content
> (αὐτάρκης)58 with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little
> (ταπεινοῦσθαι), and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances
> I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty
> and of being in need.[59]

That is, Paul informs the community that while he appreciates their gift, it is not needed as he is

capable of self-sufficiency.

Finally, after extensively preparing the Philippians throughout the letter, Paul turns to his

primary purpose in 4:18-19 and once again reasserts his status as God's agent. He states that

> I have been paid in full and have more than enough; I am fully satisfied, now that
> I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a
> sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. And my God will fully satisfy every
> need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus.

By asserting that the Philippians' gift is a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to

God), and that God, rather than Paul, will repay the Philippians' for their generosity, Paul once

again presents himself as God's agent. In fact, nearly all commentators note that the phrase

ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας (fragrant offering) is used in the LXX in reference to cultic sacrifices and that

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[58] F. F. Bruce, *Philippians* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), 125; Fee, 431; Malherbe, 138; O'Brien, 521;
Reumann, 651-654, 703. Nearly every commentator notes the philosophical nature of αὐτάρκης and its importance
for the Stoics and their goal of self-sufficiency. Fee puts it best with his statement that the word αὐτάρκης "… looks
like a meteor fallen from the Stoic sky into his epistle …" However, he notes that αὐτάρκης had a different meaning
in the different philosophical schools. Furthermore, others such as O'Brien have noted that by the first century the
use of αὐτάρκης had become more widespread, and it is was no longer limited to the philosophical schools. It is
difficult to argue with Reumann's statement that, "Paul and the Philippian Christians knew the term αὐτάρκης, if not
all the philosophical views." However, others such as O'Brien are correct in asserting that Paul altered the term for
his own use. In fact, many commentators cite Bruce's apt statement that Paul was less self-sufficient than he was
God-sufficient.
[59] Philippians 4:11-12.

Paul's use of this language is reminiscent of sacrifices presented to God.[60] Thus, by employing cultic language and presenting himself as accepting the Philippians' gift on behalf of God, Paul attempts to avoid the system of gift giving outlined above. In fact, Fee describes Paul's maneuver in 4:18-19 as a "master stroke" in which Paul is able to claim that God will reciprocate on behalf of Paul.[61]

By focusing on Paul's self-presentation, it is possible to answer the critical question: why did Paul expect the Philippians to accept his radical claim that God would reciprocate on his behalf? It is surely a bold claim to accept a gift, describe it with sacrificial cult language, claim that the gift actually belongs to God and assure the community that God will reciprocate their gift. While Fee may describe Paul's strategy as a "master stroke," the Philippians would have been quite justified in rejecting Paul's handling of their gift according to the Greco-Roman standards of gift-giving. Therefore, in order to prepare the Philippians for his outrageous claim, Paul presents himself as an agent of God throughout the letter. This study demonstrates that this was a conscious strategy on the part of Paul who was aware of the possibility that the Philippians might reject his attempt to avoid reciprocating their gift. Paul carefully presents himself to the Philippians in a manner that would have been familiar to them, with the goal of persuading them to view his claim that God would reciprocate their gift, not as an abrogation of their friendship, but rather as a legitimate claim of one who was authorized to accept gifts on God's behalf.[62]

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[60] Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 60-70; O'Brien, 541; Reumann, 667-668. Reumann and O'Brien supply an extensive list of parallels between Paul's use of cultic language and the LXX. However, the evidence does not support the claim that Paul presents himself as a cultic priest operating on behalf of the Philippians as postulated by Newton.

[61] Fee, 452.

[62] Additionally, although Reumann is correct in emphasizing the importance of recognizing this gift, there is no need to conclude that 4:10-20 is a separate letter. In order for the Philippians to accept Paul's potentially insulting claim, he needed to prepare the community to accept his claim throughout the letter. Had Paul begun the letter with a discussion of the Philippians' gift, there was a substantial risked that the Philippians would have rejected his claim.

III. 2. Purpose #2: Paul's Presentation as a Model Worth Imitating

The second primary purpose of Paul's letter to the Philippians is his presentation of

himself as a model for the community; he states in 3:17 "Brothers and sisters, join in imitating

me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us." In 2:1-4 Paul outlines

the behaviors which he calls the community to imitate: perseverance, and even success, despite

suffering and disregarding one's past accomplishments and desires, for the good of the

community. The importance of this model is demonstrated by Paul's extensive self-presentation

in 1:7-30 and 3:2-8, in which he provides the community with an example of one living out the

behaviors he outlines. However, Paul does not present himself as a model to the community as a

means for bolstering his authority, but rather he attempts to provide the Philippians with a means

for enduring their own suffering and for healing any divisions which have occurred in the

community.[63] Paul also presents three examples of individuals worthy of emulation: Jesus,

Timothy, and Epaphroditus. Finally, Paul notes that the rewards for those who choose to exhibit

the behavior which he models are becoming citizens of heaven and having one's humiliation

transformed into glory.[64]

The first trait of the model, which Paul presents to the community, is that of one who is

able to persevere, and even succeed, despite suffering. The importance of this characteristic is

emphasized by Paul's unusual presentation of his suffering. While the rhetorical handbooks

suggest that highlighting one's misfortune is a useful tool for garnering good will or ethos with

one's audience, Paul disregards this advice and chooses not to highlight the suffering he surely

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[63] Fee, 29; Peter Oakes, *Philippians: From People to Letter* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001),96; Reumann, 282-283. While there is debate over the historical situation of the Philippian community, I accept the majority position: the Philippians were enduring actual suffering. Although most conclude that the Philippians were suffering, there is disagreement as to the details of their suffering. Moreover, I agree with Reumann's conclusion that the Philippians may not have endured the same type of suffering as Paul.
[64] Phil 3:20-21.

endured during his imprisonment.[65] Bloomquist also notes that one would expect to find more details of Paul's imprisonment and states that "Paul appears to have suppressed the facts surrounding his sufferings and to have stressed the meaning of those sufferings, specifically the meaning for the progress of the gospel."[66] Silva adds "far from trying to evoke sympathy from his readers by expressing resignation, the apostle went out of his way to make sure that the Philippians did not grow overly concerned about him"[67]

Paul's reluctance to present his suffering to the Philippians contrasts with not only the advice of the rhetorical handbooks but also the manner in which he presents his suffering in other letters such as Galatians and 2 Corinthians, in which he provides lists of the suffering he endured.[68] Instead of focusing on the details of his suffering, in Philippians 1:7-30 Paul presents two deeds he accomplished during his imprisonment in order to demonstrate to the Philippians that both he and the gospel were flourishing despite what might appear to the Philippians as a setback.[69] Specifically, Paul claims that he spread awareness that his imprisonment is for Christ and that he encouraged others to spread the gospel.

In 1:12-13, Paul begins to describe not the details of his imprisonment, but rather the deeds he was able to accomplish because of his imprisonment. That is, rather than hinder the progress of the Gospel, as some in Philippi may have feared, Paul claims that his imprisonment

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[65] Cicero, *Inv.* 1.6.22; *Rhet. Her.* 1.5.1.
[66] Bloomquist, 148.
[67] Silva, 62.
[68] For instance in 2 Corinthians 11:23-27 Paul outlines many sufferings that he endured such as floggings, beatings, and shipwrecks.
[69] John S. Vos, "Philippians 1:12-26 and the Rhetoric of Success," in *Rhetoric, Ethic, and Moral Persuasion in Biblical Discourse* (ed. Thomas H. Olbricht and Anders Eriksson: New York: T & T Clark International, 2005), 280-281. Paul's presentation of his suffering as success is especially emphasized by Vos who interprets this passage as part of Paul's "… strategy of interpreting any negative fact in a positive way." Drawing from "… rhetorical strategy recommended in classical military literature …" Moreover, he concludes that Paul employed a "… military rhetoric of success."

has actually helped spread awareness of Christ.[70] First, Paul claims that because of his imprisonment the "whole praetorium" and everyone else know "that my imprisonment is for Christ."[71] Determining what precisely Paul is claiming here is a difficult. If the letter was written from a prison in Rome, then presumably Paul is referring to the praetorian guard. However, O'Brien rightly asserts that Paul did not actually become known to all 9,000 guards.[72] Additionally, Reumann, who proposes that Paul was imprisoned in Ephesus, states that Paul was not claiming that his plight was known to all the guards, but rather that this statement is hyperbole and that "Paul seems to have in mind a 'ripple effect': his current imprisonment for the gospel is becoming apparent to wider circles of non-Christians in Ephesus"[73] Although it is unclear precisely what Paul intends by the phrase "the whole praetorium and everyone else," he was certainly attempting to portray his imprisonment as a successful deed rather than a disastrous situation rife with suffering and failure**.**

Paul describes a second deed accomplished during his imprisonment in 1:14-18, stating that he has inspired others "to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear."[74] Of those Paul has inspired, he identifies two groups of people proclaiming Christ, those who preach out of goodwill (δι᾽ εὐδοκίαν) and those who preach out of selfish ambition, intending to increase Paul's suffering during his imprisonment. Paul describes the former as preaching "Christ out of love, knowing that I have been put here for the defense of the gospel."[75] Normally δι᾽ εὐδοκίαν is translated as "goodwill;" however, O'Brien expands on this translation and rightly asserts that

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[70] O'Brien, 36; Silva, 62-63.
[71] Phil 1:13
[72] O'Brien, 93.
[73] Reumann, 196.
[74] Holloway, 106. Holloway, citing Epictetus, Socrates, and Seneca, compares Paul's inspiration of his followers to claims made by the philosophers who state that one's misfortune provides an example for others.
[75] Phil 1:16.

this term also implies divine favor.[76] Therefore, it is appropriate to conclude that those preaching out of goodwill and love recognize and accept Paul's claim of divine favor.

However, Paul informs the Philippians that a second group is preaching Christ out of envy and rivalry with the intention of causing him more suffering. Paul's reaction to this latter group, based on his other letters, and even Philippians 3:1, seems easy to predict, outrage and condemnation. However, Paul responds in quite a different manner in this instance. Instead of condemning this group, he rejoices over the fact that Christ is preached regardless of the motives of those preaching. This response is uncharacteristic for Paul, who normally describes his opponents with harsh words, and, in fact, in this very letter refers to his opponents in 3:2 as dogs and evil workers. This unusual reaction on the part of Paul has caused much confusion among scholars and has led to a myriad of proposals concerning the identity of these preachers.[77] Since identifying these opponents is not critical for this study I will merely provide some general conclusions about this group. Since Paul rejoices over his opponents' preaching of the gospel, it is probable that this group is not preaching a completely different gospel than that of Paul's, for instance a law-based gospel.[78] Additionally, I conclude that those opposing Paul are probably not "opponents" in the same manner which Paul describes in other letters but perhaps represent another faction within the community.[79] Thus, regardless of the motive of these "opponents,"

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[76] Markus Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 79; O'Brien, 99.

[77] Reumann, 203. Reumann provides a list of eleven different proposals, which classify these opponents as: pagan agitators, Jews, Jewish Christians, zealot Christians, and Christians jealous of Paul.

[78] Bockmuehl, 78; Fee, 120-123, O'Brien, 103. Bockmuehl seems to agree with this assertion in stating that it is "… not so much the particular content of their preaching but their selfish ambition along with the desire to rub salt in his wounds …" Fee disagrees with this conclusion and claims that this situation is probably related to the one in Romans 14-15. Fee concludes that Paul's opponents are Jewish Christians, but claims that Paul does not treat them as harshly because they are not "sheep stealers."

[79] Collange, 9-10, 53; Reumann, 238-239. The dispute between Euodia and Syntyche in Phil 4:2 implies that there may have been multiple factions within the community. However, while the evidence does not provide a clear portrait of the situation, the conclusion of Collange and Reumann that Paul's claim to be a Roman citizen caused factions to develop within the community is not supported by the evidence.

Paul is willing to rejoice and present their "boldness" as evidence of his own success, despite his imprisonment. Therefore, by focusing on the deeds he is able to accomplish during his imprisonment, rather than the suffering he endures, Paul deviates from his standard practice of presenting the details of his suffering in order to gain favor with his audience.

Moreover, Paul's acceptance of preachers who oppose him illustrates the second trait which Paul models for the community, namely setting aside one's own needs and achievements for the good of the group.[80] While Paul reflects the advice of the rhetorical handbooks in other letters and presents his deeds as a means for establishing his authority within the community, in his letter to the Philippians he disregards his past deeds and presents himself as one subjugating his own desires for the good of the community. Paul introduces this trait by discussing his choice between life and death in 1:20-26. Next, in 2:1-5, Paul outlines the behavior he expects the community to emulate. Then he provides the Philippians with examples of three individuals placing the needs of others before their own: Jesus, Timothy, and Epaphroditus. Paul provides another example of his own behavior in 3:2-8, in which he highlights his past achievements within Judaism and disregards them as rubbish. Finally, in 3:17 he calls the community to imitate the model he has provided, and in 3:20-21 he outlines the rewards for those who choose to live out this model.

Paul presents a compelling example of setting aside his own interests for the good of others in his discussion of his choice between life and death in 1:20-26. O'Brien rightly notes that "for Paul it is no mere weighing of academic possibilities but a choice between what is better for him personally and what is more necessary for the congregation."[81] In this section, Paul presents three statements which demonstrate the model he provides for the community,

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[80] O'Brien, 128. O'Brien rightly notes that "… the paragraph serves to show how Paul can and does submit his own personal interests to those of the wider horizon of the gospel."
[81] O'Brien, 128.

setting aside his own desires for the good of others. He states that "dying is gain,"[82] " to depart and be with Christ ... is far better,"[83] and that he is "hard pressed between the two."[84] After these statements, Paul notes that the Philippians are in need of his presence and that "to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you."[85] Finally, by concluding in 1:26 that "I know I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress," Paul demonstrates the appropriate behavior by choosing what is better for the community regardless of his own desire.

Paul begins to engage the question of whether he will choose to live or die in 1:21 by stating that "for to me living is Christ and dying is gain."[86] Many commentators have noticed the parallel between this quote and Greek literature, in which death is often preferred over a life of suffering.[87] However, nearly all agree with O'Brien who rightly states that Paul's thoughts on death should be "distinguished from pagans ... who have only the gloomy consolation of being freed from the vicissitudes of life by death."[88] That is, for Paul, in contrast to the Greek writers, death is only preferable because he will be united with Christ. However, as O'Brien rightly states, choosing between life and death is difficult because Paul does in fact value "the significance of his life in service for Christ and his people."[89] While O'Brien is certainly correct, it is possible that Paul expected his audience to recognize the standard Greco-Roman interpretation of the phrase "dying is gain" and interpret Paul's rejection of the more "gainful" choice of death as subjugating his own his desires for the good of the community.[90]

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[82] Phil 1:21.
[83] Phil 1:23.
[84] Phil 1:23-24.
[85] Phil 1:24.
[86] Phil 1:21.
[87] Bockmuehl, 88; Martin, 56; O'Brien, 123; D. W. Palmer, "To Die is Gain (Philippians 1:21)," *NovT* 17 (1975): 217-8. Palmer has an extensive list and discussion of these parallels.
[88] O'Brien, 123.
[89] O'Brien, 123.
[90] Palmer, 217-218. Palmer, citing many examples from Greco-Roman literature, claims that death was generally portrayed as a release from a difficult life. After citing a number of instances in which Paul mentions his own

Having stated that death would be gain, Paul addresses his difficult decision between choosing continued life, in order to remain with the Philippians, and death, being with Christ.[91] There has been intense debate over whether Paul actually had a choice over his own death and many agree with O'Brien's assertion that "it is unnecessary here to interpret αἱρήσομαι in this very concrete or realistic way. Paul is turning over in his mind the possibilities"[92] Thus, for O'Brien, this "choice" is more of a theoretical discussion, one in which Paul concludes that if he had a choice he would choose life for the good of the community.

However, Wansink has proposed the possibility that Paul was presenting himself as actually choosing between life and death, as he was contemplating suicide.[93] Wansink outlines the horrors of Roman prisons and states that "writing from prison, Paul may well have been exploiting his readers' familiarity with this phenomenon. Because suicide occurred frequently in ancient prisons, the imprisoned clearly had a choice.'"[94] However, unlike many who propose that Paul is contemplating suicide in 1:22, Wansink claims that he is merely employing the theme as a rhetorical tool.[95] In other words, Paul presents himself as a model to the Philippians as one who, though experiencing the horrors of prison, suppressed his own desire to end his pain and join Christ in order to help the community.[96]

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difficulties, Palmer concludes that Paul's statement that dying is gain should be examined in the context of Greco-Roman literature. However, Palmer does note one major difference, Paul "… rejects the 'gain' of death for the sake of the Philippians …" Therefore, while Palmer does not discuss Paul's rejection of this gain as a deed he performs for the community, his conclusions seem to support this assertion.

[91] Phil 1:22. While there is some debate over the proper translation of "τί αἱρήσομαι οὐ γνωρίζω," most conclude that the phrase indicates that Paul is not sure which he will choose (αἱρήσομαι), life or death.

[92] O'Brien, 127.

[93] Arthur J. Droge, "*Mori Lucrum*: Paul and Ancient Theories of Suicide," *NovT* 30 (1988): 263-286; Craig S. Wansink, *Chained in Christ: The Experience and Rhetoric of Paul's Imprisonments* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996)**.**

[94] Wansink, 120.

[95] QFr. 1.3; Wansink, 107-112. Wansink notes the parallel with Cicero's letter to his brother Quintus, in which Cicero discusses the possibility of suicide because he is such a burden on his brother.

[96] Collange, 9, 63-64; O'Brien, 105, 126; Reumann, 204-206, 238-239; Wansink, 112-118. It is unclear if the Philippians would have recognized the theme of suicide as Wansink claims, but if they did, Paul's rejection of suicide for the good of the Philippians would have been a powerful means of self-representation. Reumann and

Paul concludes his discussion of life and death by stating that although he would prefer to "depart this life and be with Christ, for that is far better," he chooses "to remain in the flesh (because it) is more necessary for your benefit."[97] That is, Paul chooses to "remain and continue in the service of all of you for your progress and joy in the faith."[98] In making this choice, Paul presents himself as willing to perform future deeds for the Philippians at the expense of his own desire. Agreeing with this interpretation, Bloomquist rightly states that Paul "opts for continued personal suffering … as opposed to his own desire" for the benefit of the Philippian community, and he presents to them "a credible example that demands their respect."[99] Therefore, Paul concludes his discussion of his choice between life and death, by presenting himself as choosing what is best for the community. Moreover, he provides a compelling example of the behavior which he will call the Philippians to emulate in 3:17, choosing the good of the community over his own desire.

Upon providing himself as an example of one willing to subjugate his own desires for the good of the community, Paul explicitly outlines the behavior he expects the community to emulate in 2:1-4, stating "do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility (ταπεινοφροσύνη) regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others." Therefore, having presented his own difficult decision to choose the interests of others over his own, he implores the community to follow his example. While there has been debate over the role of the word ταπεινοφροσύνη (humility) in this

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Collange propose an interesting theory which lacks convincing evidence. They conclude that Paul's choice was whether or not he should assert his Roman citizenship and by doing so ensure his release from prison. This proposal is important because rather than interpreting Paul's decision between life and death as a deed he performed for the Philippians, Reumann and Collange interpret Paul's statements as a defense of the decision he has already made, asserting his citizenship and freedom. Collange postulates that Paul's decision to assert his citizenship may have caused friction with some who "… may have accused him of cowardice and made it clear that the true vocation for a disciple of Christ and an apostle of the Cross was martyrdom."
[97] Phil 1:23-24.
[98] Phil 1:25.
[99] Bloomquist, 156.

passage, many have correctly noted that despite any positive connotations the term may have had for Paul, for the Philippians, living in a Roman colony and accustomed to pursuing social status at all costs, the passage would have been an especially difficult request to fulfill.[100]

Having outlined the behavior which Paul expects the Philippians to emulate, Paul provides three examples of individuals who demonstrate this behavior: Christ, Timothy, and Epaphroditus.[101] Paul begins with Christ, the most influential model, and describes him as the ultimate example of one placing the interests of others ahead of his own in Philippians 2:6-11.[102] Paul portrays Jesus as placing the needs of the community above his own desires by stating that Jesus "though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness."[103] Moreover, Paul reminds the Philippians that Christ was willing to be humbled "to the point of death - even death on a cross."[104] Thus, Paul presents Christ as willing to put the interests of others so far beyond his own that he was willing to disregard his status and endure death for the sake of others. Additionally, Paul reminds the community that Jesus' behavior was rewarded by God who raised him to an even higher status than he had previously known, as one whom "every knee should bend [before]" and "every tongue should confess" the name of Jesus.[105] Therefore,

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[100] Bockmuehl, 110; O'Brien, 180; Reumann, 309-314; Klaus K. Wengst, *Humility: Solidarity of the Humiliated: The Transformation of an Attitude and Its Social Relevance in Graeco-Roman, Old Testament-Jewish, and Early Christian Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1998), 16-35. Many such as O'Brien note that Paul's use of the word ταπεινοφροσύνη (humility) is a somewhat rare term in Greco-Roman sources and has a negative connotation of "servility, weakness, or a shameful lowliness." Others such as Wengst have noted that in the Hebrew Bible, humility was often a positive trait as it is attributed to Moses (Num 12:3) and humility before God is encouraged.
[101] It is noteworthy that these individuals are listed both in order of status and personal relationship to the community.
[102] While this section is usually referred to as the Christ Hymn and the consensus position is that Paul did not compose this material, my assertion is that Paul chose to include the hymn, and in its current location, because it describes Jesus as the ultimate example of one demonstrating the behavior Paul outlines in 2:1-4.
[103] Phil 2:6-7.
[104] Phil 2:8. Paul uses the same word group to describe how Christ humbled himself, ἐταπείνωσεν, as he uses in 2:3 when listing the proper behavior for members of the community.
[105] Phil 2:10-11.

Paul presents Jesus' behavior as an example of one demonstrating the model outlined in 2:1-4

and also as an example of the rewards available to those who emulate the model.

Paul also describes Timothy as exhibiting the desired behavior by stating that "I have no

one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. All of them are seeking their

own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."[106] That is, he presents Timothy as an especially

qualified representative of Paul because Timothy places the interests of others ahead of his own.

It is noteworthy that Paul says that he "hopes" to send Timothy to Philippi rather than stating that

he will send him.[107] While most commentators have taken this statement to mean that Paul will

be sending Timothy soon, it is possible that Timothy is mentioned because he represents an

outstanding human example of the model which Paul presents to the Philippians, a person whom

they already know. That is, while Paul may intend to send Timothy at a later date, Paul mentions

Timothy in this passage because Timothy represents one willing to place the interest of others

above his own.

Instead of sending Timothy, Paul states that he will be sending someone whom the

community knows quite well, Epaphroditus. Moreover, Epaphroditus exemplifies half of the

model described above as one able to persevere and even succeed despite suffering. Paul states

that Epaphroditus became "so ill that he nearly died."[108] However, rather than focus on his

suffering, Paul demonstrates that despite his illness Epaphroditus was able to accomplish

important deeds such as doing the work of Christ, helping Paul, and providing the services which

the Philippians could not. Moreover, Paul seems to imply that Epaphroditus was rewarded for his

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[106] Phil 2:19.
[107] Martin, 153. Martin notes that Paul's use of "hope" in this passage is quite different than when stating that he is "confident" that he will be able to visit the community in 2:24.
[108] Phil 2:27.

perseverance by God having mercy upon him.[109] Therefore, Epaphroditus, a representative of the

Philippian community, is presented as yet another example of one living out the model which

Paul will call the community to emulate in 3:17.

After presenting three other models, Paul returns to presenting himself as an example of

one willing to forego his own deeds and desires for the good of the community. In Philippians

3:4-8, Paul recounts his past deeds within Judaism and then disregards them as rubbish. This

section is especially critical as it closely precedes his call for imitation in 3:17. As many have

noted, the deeds which Paul presents to the Philippians are rather impressive and can be divided

into two sections.[110] In the first section, Paul highlights his ascribed achievements, those received

through birth and lineage.[111] Paul claims that he was circumcised on the eighth day, comes from

the tribe of Benjamin, and was a Hebrew born from Hebrews. The last claim is especially

noteworthy as many scholars have interpreted Paul's statement that he is a Hebrew born of

Hebrew parents as a claim concerning the rigorous nature of his background. Commentators note

that Paul is most likely asserting a more rigorous upbringing than might be expected of the

typical Jew living in the Diaspora.[112] O'Brien states that Paul is probably claiming that he comes

from a family which spoke Aramaic rather than Greek and attended a Hebrew-speaking

synagogue.[113] Additionally, O'Brien states that, "Paul may be adding a further dimension,

namely that his parents, who had brought him up to speak Hebrew and Aramaic, also avoided as

far as possible any assimilation to Gentile customs and culture in their Tarsus environment."[114]

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[109] Phil 2:27.
[110] Schenk, 250. Schenk's division has been adopted by this study and nearly all others.
[111] Malina and Neyrey, 51-55. Malina and Neyrey examine Paul's boasting, in 3:2-11, through the lens of the Greco-Roman encomium.
[112] O'Brien, 371, Reumann, 483. Reumann provides an comprehensive summary of the many different interpretations of this passage, most of which stress Paul's Hebrew upbringing and education.
[113] O'Brien, 371.
[114] O'Brien, 371-372.

Thus, Paul's presentation of his ascribed achievements sets him apart as an especially observant Jew in the Diaspora.

In the second section, Paul boasts about the deeds which he accomplished as an adult. First, Paul states that he was a Pharisee. While the role of the Pharisees in the first century is not entirely clear, scholars agree that the Pharisees strictly adhered to the Mosaic and oral law. For instance, Josephus claims "that the cities give great attestations to them on account of their entire virtuous conduct, both in the actions of their lives and their discourses also."[115] Fee adds that by mentioning his former status as a Pharisee, Paul "defines his relationship to the Law in a very specific way, as belonging to the Jewish sect who had given themselves to its study and codification."[116] Moreover, Paul does not present himself as a "run-of-the-mill Pharisee," rather his intense zeal for the law led to his persecution of the early Christian communities (ἐκκλησία).[117] O'Brien rightly asserts that while Paul does not explicitly claim that his persecution of the ἐκκλησία is proof that he was zealous for the law, the connection is made clearer by "his parallel testimony in Gal. 1:13-14 [which] makes plain that he persecuted the church beyond all measure and that this was evidence of his zeal for the law and the ancestral traditions."[118]

Finally, Paul's boasting culminates with his most impressive claim, that under the law he was blameless. While this statement has caused many to view Paul's statements as ironic or interpret the passage as, "I thought myself blameless," Paul's claim to be blameless according to the law should be taken literally.[119] That is, Paul is asserting that he was indeed blameless with

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[115] *Ant*. 18:15.
[116] Fee, 308.
[117] Fee, 308.
[118] Bockmuehl 199; Martin, 186; O'Brien, 375; Num 25:6-13. Many have rightly noted a similar instance of such zeal in the story of Phinehas who demonstrated his zeal by killing an Israelite man and his Midianite woman.
[119] Bockmuehl, 202; Fee, 309-310; O'Brien, 380; Reumann, 487.

regard to the law. However, Paul is not claiming that he never made any mistakes, or that he was perfect; rather, his claim is that within the Pharisaic system he upheld the requirements of the law.[120]

After outlining these impressive accomplishments, in 3:7-8 Paul demonstrates the behavior, which he calls the Philippians to imitate, by dismissing his achievements as rubbish (σκύβαλα) so that he may gain Christ and demonstrate solidarity with other gentile Christians who are not able to rely upon their achievements within Judaism. "rubbish" or "refuse," as some translate, is actually not vulgar enough to properly represent the Greek word, and Fee rightly states: "it is hard to imagine a more pejorative epithet than this one now hurled at what the Judaizers would promote as advantages."[121] Additionally, Paul makes it clear that he is referring to more than the achievements listed in 3:4-6 by stating that he casts aside everything (πάντα) and regards all his advantages as σκύβαλα.[122] Fee suggests that πάντα refers to a broad list including "religious advantages, status, material benefits, honor, comforts"[123] Therefore, Paul's rejection of everything was probably both wide ranging (πάντα) and provocative (σκύβαλα). In fact, Hellerman correct notes that, "For Paul to dismiss his indisputably impressive Jewish *cursus* as "rubbish" (σκύβαλα, v. 8) would have profoundly challenged the social sensibilities of those steeped in the values of the dominant culture of Roman Philippi."[124] Thus, Paul's dismissal of his

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[120] Fee, 309; E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977). This claim is especially relevant if one accepts Sanders concept of covenantal nomism or any of the many permutations of the New Perspective. Moreover, Fee rightly states that "Paul has no "blemishes" on his record, as far as Torah observance is concerned …"

[121] Fee, 319.

[122] Fee, 317; O'Brien, 387; Reumann, 518; Silva, 157. While there is a division among scholarship, the majority correctly assert that for Paul, πάντα referred to anything "… on which Paul might place his fleshly confidence." (O'Brien)

[123] Fee, 317.

[124] Joseph H. Hellerman, *Reconstructing Honor in Roman Philippi: Carmen Christi As Cursus Pudorum* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 127.

past achievements was both an impressive and provocative deed which demonstrates the model which he calls the community to imitate in 3:17.

Finally, having directly stated the behavior which Paul expects of the community and having presented himself and three others, as models of the desired behavior which he has described, Paul directly calls the community to imitation in 3:17 stating, "Brothers and sisters, join in imitating me, and observe those who live according to the example you have in us." Moreover, he provides incentive to the community for following the model by implying that those who exhibit this behavior will become citizens of heaven and that Jesus will transform their current humiliation into glory.[125]

Thus, Paul provides the community with a list of proper behavior, provides examples of others exhibiting this behavior, and calls the community to imitate Paul in 3:17 in order to provide the community a means for enduring their own suffering and quelling any factionalism which may have developed. Moreover, if the Philippians adopt the behaviors outlined by Paul, they will become citizens of heaven and the current humiliation which they may suffer will be transformed by Jesus into glory.

IV. Conclusions and Ramifications

By focusing on Paul's self-presentation, three observations become clear. First, Paul's use of suffering is different from both his other letters and from the advice contained in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks. Second, Paul repeatedly presents his status as God's agent throughout the letter. While Paul emphasizes his status as God's agent in other letters, it is not as prominent in letters to communities with whom he already has a positive relationship. Third,

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[125] Phil 3:20-21. As he did when outlining the model in 2:1-4 Paul uses the same word group for humiliation here, ταπεινώσεως, as he does in 2:3.

Paul employs an extensive amount of self-presentation, including three of the categories identified by this study in a brief section, 4:1-20; thus, emphasizing its importance.

These three observations lead to the following conclusions. First, Paul's acknowledgement of the Philippians gift in 4:1-20 is a key purpose of the letter, and its importance is confirmed by Paul's extensive use of self-presentation in this brief section. Moreover, the importance of 4:19-20 is emphasized by Paul's attempt to prepare the community to accept his claim that God will reciprocate on his behalf by presenting himself as an agent of God throughout the letter. Therefore, by emphasizing Paul's need to prepare the Philippians to accept his potentially insulting claim throughout the letter, the unity of Philippians is confirmed. In other words, if 4:1-20 were an independent letter, missing only a proper introduction, the Philippians might have rejected Paul's claim that God would reciprocate on his behalf, and his relationship with the community would have been jeopardized.

Second, Paul's self-presentation of the deeds he accomplished while in prison, rather than the suffering he endured, differs sharply from the advice contained in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks and the detailed presentation of his suffering in other letters such as 2 Corinthians. Instead of presenting the details of his suffering in order to garner pity and goodwill from his audience, he presents himself as enduring and even succeeding despite his imprisonment. Therefore, this unusual approach to his suffering, when combined with the presentation of himself and others as models exhibiting the ideal behavior he outlines in 2:1-4, indicates the importance of Paul's call for emulation in 3:17. Moreover, Paul's self-presentation of his success and willingness to disregard his own achievements as rubbish indicates that Paul provides the Philippians with a model to help the community endure their own suffering. That is, Paul calls the Philippians to emulation so that they might endure their own suffering, perhaps

succeeding despite it, and to set aside their own individual desires for the good of the community. Therefore, by focusing on Paul's self-presentation it is clear that the model which Paul calls the Philippians to emulate is intended to assist the community in their time of need rather than re-assert his "privileged position within the hierarchy as the mediating figure through whom the community might gain access to salvation."[126]

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[126] *Contra* Castelli, 96.

Chapter 4

Paul's Self-Presentation in 1 Corinthians

Paul employs an extensive amount of self-presentation in 1 Corinthians, including all four of the categories identified by this study: agent of God, personal suffering, deeds, and self-effacement. While Paul uses self-presentation throughout the letter, it is most prevalent in 1:1-4:21, the self-defense of his position as a trusted representative of the Gospel, and my analysis of this section comprises the bulk of this chapter. As in each of his letters, Paul's self-presentation to the Corinthians is shaped by his relationship with the community. Throughout his self-defense in 1:1-4:21 it becomes clear that some members of the community have rejected Paul's influence and that the community has splintered into factions claiming affiliation with authority-figures such as Paul, Cephas, Apollos, and Christ. This factionalism within the community makes it necessary for Paul to attempt to unify the Corinthians before addressing issues such as idols, lawsuits, and table fellowship in chapters five through sixteen. In order to achieve this unity, Paul presents himself as a trusted representative of the Gospel and calls the community to emulate his behavior as one willing to suffer and set aside his own status and skill for the good of the community.

By focusing on Paul's self-presentation I am able to confirm the consensus established by Margaret Mitchell that 1 Cor 1:1-4:21 is intended to unify the community. However, I am also able to conclude that a more foundational purpose of the section is Paul's self-defense of his position as a trusted representative of the Gospel. Paul hoped that by re-asserting his position within the community, the Corinthians would be more willing to accept his attempts to unify them and the instructions he provides to them in chapters five through sixteen. Moreover, by

focusing on Paul's extensive defense of his oratorical skills and the type of wisdom he brought

the community, I conclude that his self-defense was primarily concerned with responding to

members of the community who elevated a teacher over Paul because of that teacher's impressive

oratorical abilities. Therefore, while there are many important purposes within the letter, I am

able to isolate Paul's self-defense of his oratorical skills and reestablish his authority within the

community as the foundational purpose of the letter.

Additionally, by noting that Paul's use of self-effacing language does not comply with the

established Greco-Roman norms I am able to conclude that Paul thought he had a large base of

support within the community. Paul blatantly violates these norms by referring to himself as the

least of the apostles, an ἐκτρώματι, rubbish, and the dregs of all things and in doing so he

presents himself in a manner which could have rightly been associated with the ironic man,

whose false boasting was considered the most offensive type of boasting. Therefore, I conclude

that in order for Paul to have been willing to take such a risk, he must have thought that a large

percentage of the community would respond favorably to his words. Moreover, I conclude that

since Paul's relationship with the community deteriorated after this letter, as evidenced by 2

Corinthians 10-13, it is quite likely that Paul was incorrect in his assessment of his relationship

with the community.[1] In fact, it seems likely that Paul lost the support of some members of the

community due to his use of self-effacing language.

I also conclude that Paul's use of a progenitor metaphor in 4:14-15 should be regarded as

one final deed which Paul presents to the Corinthians immediately before calling for their

emulation in order to build goodwill with the community. By translating Paul's statement ἐγὼ

ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα with the more accurate and less misleading "I begat you" rather than "I became

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[1] It is also possible that the detoriation of Paul's relationship with the Corinthian community was exacerabated by the arrival of the "super-apostles" (2 Cor 11:5) and their influence on the community.

your father" (the prevailing translation), I am able to conclude that here Paul emphasizes the important deed he performed for the community as its founder. Moreover this conclusion stands in stark contrast to Elizabeth Castelli who focuses on the domineering nature of the Greco-Roman patriarch and concludes that by presenting himself as the father of the community Paul is assuming the role of the domineering father in order to assert his authority over the community and deny outsiders access to salvation.[2]

I. Self-Presentation

Paul employs all four of the categories of self-presentation outlined by this study: deeds, personal suffering, agent of God, and self-effacement. Paul repeatedly refers to himself as an agent of God throughout the letter. This category is especially prevalent and crucial to Paul's self-defense in 1:1- 4:21 in which he attempts to re-assert his position in the community as a trustworthy representative of the gospel. Throughout this defense he consistently reminds the community that he is God's agent, beginning with the opening line of the letter in which he refers to himself as an "apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God." Much of Paul's defense focuses on the Corinthians' evaluation of his preaching style, and therefore, Paul emphasizes that as God's agent the message he brings them is from God. He asserts that he is privy to the secret wisdom of God stating that he speaks "the mystery of God,"[3] "God's wisdom, secret and hidden,"[4] and "words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit"[5] Moreover, when comparing himself to Apollos he asserts his status as God's agent, claiming that he founded the community "according to the grace of God given to me."[6] In 4:1, as Paul nears the conclusion of his self-

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[2] Castelli, 99.
[3] 1 Cor 2:1.
[4] 1 Cor 2:7.
[5] 1 Cor 2:13.
[6] 1 Cor 3:10.

defense, he outlines the role of the apostles and describes himself as a servant of Christ and a steward "of God's mysteries."

After his initial defense, Paul continues to highlight his role as God's agent throughout the letter. When defending his decision to forgo his rights as an apostle, he reminds the community that Jesus appeared before him.[7] When discussing community meals, he asserts that the instructions he provides were given to him by the Lord.[8] When describing the resurrection of Jesus, he reminds the Corinthians that Jesus appeared to him, that "by the grace of God I am what I am," and that God is with him during his missionary work.[9] As Paul concludes the letter, he provides a final reminder that he is God's agent by asserting that his return to the community is dependent on the Lord and that both he and Timothy do "the work of the Lord."[10]

Paul also stresses the deeds he performed for the community, and this category is most prevalent during his two self-defenses. In 1:1-4:10 he reminds the Corinthians that he, not Apollos, founded the community by referring to himself as the planter, master builder, and progenitor. In chapter nine Paul reminds the Corinthians that the work he performed for them is an indication of his apostleship. Moreover, in 9:19-23 Paul asserts that he does whatever is necessary "so that I might win more of them," stating that he became a Jew to the Jews, a gentile to the gentiles, and weak for the sake of the weak. Therefore, Paul presents himself as performing a valuable deed, bringing the gospel to a broad range of people. Finally, in 15:10 Paul claims that he has worked harder than the other apostles.

In 4:11-13 Paul briefly describes his suffering when comparing the life and status of the apostles to the Corinthians, and he disregards the advice found/given in the rhetorical handbooks

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[7] 1 Cor 15:8.
[8] 1 Cor 11:23
[9] 1 Cor 15:10.
[10] 1 Cor 16:10.

which suggest recounting the details of one's suffering in order to establish a positive relationship with an audience. Although in 4:11-13 Paul mentions the general suffering of the apostles as hungry, thirsty, poorly clothed, beaten, homeless, and weary, he does not provide any detail concerning his own suffering. This decision to forgo the details of his suffering seems to indicate that he thought he already had a positive relationship with his audience and that his message would be favorably received. Moreover, Paul's decision to omit these details stands in sharp contrast to his approach in 2 Corinthians 11:1-30, in which he provides extensive detail about his suffering, including floggings, beatings, and shipwrecks. The difference in the presentation of his suffering between the two letters seems to be an indication that Paul incorrectly assessed his relationship with the Corinthians in his first letter.

Paul uses more self-effacing language in his letters to the Corinthians then in any others. As noted in chapter one, using self-derisive language could be a useful tool when used in moderation and with precision. However, in 1 Corinthians Paul does not adhere to the social standards for using self-effacement, and he employs it extensively in multiple sections. In 4:9-13 when describing the role of the apostles, he describes them as last of all, fools, weak, held in disrepute, rubbish, and "the dregs of all things." Moreover, in 15:8-9 when describing Jesus' appearance before him, Paul refers to himself as least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, and an ἐκτρώματι.[11] The amount and degree of Paul's self-derisive language is staggering and has caused Peter Marshall to rightly conclude that "I have not been able to find anything which resembles Paul's sustained self-derision in Greek or Roman authors."[12] Additionally, Marshall concludes that Paul's use of self-derision "would hardly have impressed

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[11] While the literal translation of ἐκτρώματι is an aborted fetus, the NRSV translates it as one born out of time.
[12] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth*, 360.

the Corinthians."[13] I conclude that Marshall may be correct and that Paul may have miscalculated the nature of the relationship with the community. That is, if Paul thought he already had a good relationship with a large segment of the community, he may have felt he could disregard social conventions concerning self-derision to address the small segment of the community that did not support him. However, it seems likely that he either miscalculated the number of individuals who supported him or that his use of self-derisive language was so offensive that he alienated a number of his previous supporters.

II. Relationship to Audience

Paul's relationship with the Corinthians is a complicated one. On the one hand, there are three indications that some members of the community consider Paul to be a trusted representative of the Gospel. First, in 1:11 Paul informs the community that "it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there are quarrels among you." This passage seems to indicate that individuals within the community have requested Paul's guidance in this matter. Second, when describing the factionalism within the community Paul notes that one of the groups claim that they belong to Paul.[14] Finally, nearly all scholars have concluded that at least some of the advice Paul provides the Corinthians in chapters five through fifteen is a response to questions brought to him by members of the community.[15] However, while some members of the community respect Paul enough to seek guidance from him, others in the community seem to have placed their trust in other authority-figures. For instance, Paul describes four factions which have

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[13] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth,* 357.
[14] 1 Cor 1:12.
[15] Margaret M. Mitchell, "Concerning *peri de* in 1 Corinthians," *NovT* 31 (1989): 229-56. Paul states that he is addressing a question posed to him in 7:1 writing Περὶ δὲ ὧν ἐγράψατε (Now concerning the matters about which you wrote). Moreover, he begins four other sections (7:25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1) with Περὶ δὲ, and this phrase has often been interpreted as an indication of three other questions posed to Paul by individuals within the Corinthian community. However, Mitchell questions this consensus, concluding that Paul may be use Περὶ δὲ to introduce new topics.

developed in the community with members asserting that they belong to Paul, Apollos, Cephas, or Christ.[16] While it is difficult to ascertain the position of each of these factions, it is clear that some individuals do not support Paul as the primary authority regarding the Gospel.[17]

Paul's use of self-presentation is also more complicated in 1 Corinthians than in his letters to the Philippians and the Galatians. Throughout his self-defense in 1:1-4:21, Paul presents himself extensively as God's agent. Moreover, reflecting the advice of the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks he presents his suffering and his past deeds in an attempt to build a positive relationship with the community. However, he rejects the established social norms of using self-effacing language in moderation. Instead, Paul employs so much self-derisive language that many of Corinthians may have considered it the work of an ironic man and regarded his mock-modesty as the most offensive type of boasting. Therefore, Paul's self-presentation to the Corinthians seems to reflect a fractured community in which Paul thinks he has enough support to disregard the social conventions regarding self-effacing language but also feels compelled build goodwill with his opponents through the presentation of his deeds, suffering, and his status as God's agent.

III. Purpose of the Letter

It is possible to assert that Paul's primary purpose for 1 Corinthians is to provide instruction on a wide variety of topics such as community meals, idols, marriage, incest, and lawsuits. However, in order for Paul's instructions to be received favorably by the entire community, Paul first had to re-establish his position as a trusted representative of the Gospel

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[16] 1 Cor 1:12.

[17] Anthony C. Thiselton, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 123-33. Due to the lack of data there are many reconstructions of the four groups, and Thiselton provides a comprehensive list of these studies. However, despite the great variety of theories, nearly every study concludes that the focus of each group differs from Paul's teachings.

and unify a splintered community. Therefore, I conclude that in 1:1-4:21 Paul's most fundamental purpose for the letter is to provide a self-defense of his oratorical abilities which he hopes will unify the community, and this defense serves as the focus of the remainder of this chapter.

Since the foundational work of Margaret Mitchell, most scholars have rightly noted that in 1 Corinthians 1:1-4:21 Paul's primary focus is on re-establishing the unity of the Corinthian community. However, in order to achieve this unity, Paul must first re-establish his influence as a trusted representative of the Gospel, as a segment of the community has questioned his influence, or his call for unity will be disregarded. By focusing on Paul's extensive defense of his oratorical skills, I conclude that some in the community have been impressed with the oratorical abilities of another teacher. That is, some members of the community were critical of Paul's teaching style, which led them to question Paul's authority. Therefore, in order to reassert his position as the trusted representative of the Gospel, Paul presents himself as an agent of God, recounts his past deeds, defends his oratorical skills, recounts the suffering he has endured for his communities, and describes himself with self-effacing language. In presenting this self-defense, Paul also outlines a model for behavior of one willing to suffer for the good of the community and set aside his own skills and status, which in 4:16 he calls the Corinthians to emulate. Therefore, Paul calls the community to imitate the model which he presents to them throughout his self-defense as a means of unifying the community. That is, if everyone behaves in the manner in which Paul presents, there will be no more strife within the community.

Paul begins his defense in the opening line of the letter in which he refers to himself as "called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God." While this self-description is not unique to this letter, it is noteworthy that when describing himself to the Philippians, a

community with whom he has a friendly relationship, Paul refers to himself as a servant of Christ

Jesus. Therefore, while asserting his role as an apostle may not be surprising, it is the beginning

of his defense in which he reminds the community that despite the manner of his teaching, he

came to them as an agent of God.

After addressing the divisions in the community, in 1:17-2:5 Paul begins his full scale

self-defense. In this section he defends himself against individuals in the community who seem

to have gravitated towards an apostle with superior oratorical abilities.[18] Paul attempts to re-

establish his position with these individuals by claiming that he intentionally chose to teach in a

manner devoid of rhetorical skill.[19] In asserting this defense Paul presents himself as an agent of

God, as one performing a deed on their behalf, and describes himself with self-effacing

language.

In 1:17 Paul begins by asserting his status as God's agent by claiming that Christ sent him

to preach οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου. Nearly all scholars have noted the connection of this phrase with

rhetoric. In fact, Thiselton states that the best translation of this passage may be "not by

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[18] Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2006), 116; Gordon D Fee. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987); Duane Litfin, *St. Paul's Theology of Proclamation: 1 Corinthians 1-4 and Greco-Roman Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Collins, Fee, and Litfin all conclude that Paul's statements concerning rhetoric were a response to accusations leveled at him by members of the community in Corinth. Litfin even postulates that the factions in Corinth were caused by individuals questioning Paul's rhetorical abilities. Collins states that in a metropolitan city such as Corinth, there were many orators and eloquent speech was a crucial element of a successful speaker. Therefore, it is not surprising that some members in the community would have gravitated towards a more rhetorically gifted speaker.

[19] Stephen M. Pogoloff, *Logos and Sophia: The Rhetorical Situation of 1 Corinthians* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 119, 136. Pogoloff proposes that Paul's statements are not defensive and a response to concerns by the community rather they are offensive and an attempt to correct the Corinthians' behavior. Pogoloff concludes that the primary issue behind the factions was not simply oratorical skill but the status associated with rhetorical training. Since Paul does not support the Paul faction, Pogoloff concludes that Paul was not defending himself against a group of Corinthians who directly opposed him theologically but that he was trying to correct the Corinthians misguided concern with status and eloquence.

manipulative rhetoric."[20] By stating that Christ sent him to preach in this manner, Paul is both able to defend his preaching style and remind the community of his status as God's agent.

Next, in 2:1-3 Paul states that when he taught the community he "did not come proclaiming the mystery of God ... in lofty words or wisdom" but in "weakness and in fear and in much trembling." Moreover in 2:4-5 he states that "my speech and my proclamation were not with plausible words of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the spirit and of power, so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom, but on the power of God." That is, Paul defends his preaching style by asserting that as God's agent, he is privy to and preaches God's mystery. Moreover, Paul claims that his chosen method of teaching is a deed he performed for the community so that their faith would not be founded on the empty words of rhetoric but on the power of God.

Collins and Martin rightfully conclude that in 1:17-2:5 Paul's statements concerning rhetoric should be viewed as rhetoric in action, and Collins states that "Paul's self-deprecation is part of his rhetorical appeal."[21] That is, for Collins, Paul's statements about his lack of rhetorical ability are an attempt to establish a positive relationship with the Corinthians by employing self-effacing language, and he notes the common use of this technique among rhetors.[22]

Pogoloff notes the connection between Paul's defense of his rhetorical abilities and his attempts to provide a model for the community. He concludes that Paul's statements concerning rhetoric were not defensive but an attempt to correct the Corinthians' behavior. That is, Pogoloff concludes that the while Paul's rhetorical skill was a factor behind the factionalism in Corinth, it was merely a symptom of a larger issue regarding status in the community.[23] Thus, Paul's

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[20] Thiselton, 143.
[21] Collins, 116.
[22] Collins, 116; Martin, *The Corinthian Body,* 48.
[23] Pogoloff, 119.

discussion of his rhetorical abilities is a critical component of his self-defense and demonstrates one aspect of the model which he outlines for the community, setting aside one's status and skill for the benefit of others.

Others such as Marshall and Litfin have concluded that Paul's statements concerning his rejection of rhetoric should be taken literally, and they assert that Paul consciously set aside his oratorical abilities while visiting the Corinthian community.[24] For instance, Marshall states that "The ideas expressed by Paul and the terms he uses must lead us to the conclusion that Paul deliberately rejects Greek rhetoric in his preaching of the gospel."[25] While Marshall acknowledges that Paul employs rhetorical skill in his letters, he proposes that Paul somehow set aside this skill when preaching. Although Marshall's conclusion is intriguing, I am left wondering, what was Paul's preaching style and how does one turn off their rhetorical abilities? Marshall begins to address this question by noting that in 2:3 Paul's statements regarding his shame and weakness are "are the instruments of God's power," but he does not address the remaining question of how Paul was able to completely separate these two styles without any of the rhetorical skills he demonstrates in his letters bleeding over into his oral teaching method.[26]

Litfin also concludes that Paul had "two persuasive dynamics – that of the rhetor and that of the cross" which were contradictory.[27] Litfin claims that while Paul demonstrates rhetorical skill in his letters, his preaching is governed by the dynamic of the cross which is fundamentally different from the approach of the rhetor. Litfin asserts that "no self-respecting orator" could have employed "the verbs Paul uses to describe his public speaking such as εὐαγγελίζω,

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[24] Litfin, 192-5; Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth,* 389.

[25] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth,* 389.

[26] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth,* 389; Pogoloff, 121. Pogoloff also questions Marshall's conclusions stating that it "makes little sense" because Paul "is at least as artful in the very sections in which re "rejects" rhetoric as elsewhere." Moreover, Pogoloff notes that "variations in style according to situation were standard rhetorical techniques and would only enhance Paul's rhetorical effectiveness."

[27] Litfin, 192.

κηρύσσω, [and] καταγγέλλω"[28] Additionally, Litfin claims that the most fundamental difference between the style of the rhetors and Paul is the rhetors' focus on success. While Litfin rightly notes that success was the primary goal for a rhetor, he errs in his assessment of Paul stating that "unlike the rhetor, Paul disavowed the task of inducing belief in his listeners." Litfin asserts that the task of convincing an audience was God's role in the process. I would argue that Paul's letters demonstrate the opposite. That is, I conclude that Paul was quite concerned with the success of his preaching, and as this study demonstrates, he chose to emphasize different categories of self-presentation based on his relationship with each audience in order to increase the chance for a successful reception of the letter.[29]

Having directly stated that he did not employ rhetorical skill when preaching to the Corinthians, in 2:6-16 Paul provides a further defense by providing more detail concerning the nature of his teaching.[30] In this section Paul asserts that while he may not have preached with a wisdom recognizable by worldly leaders, as God's agent, he does preach a secret wisdom from God. Additionally, having addressed and defended his apparent lack of rhetorical skill in 1:17-2:5, his self-defense now becomes more focused on unifying the community.

In 2:6-16 Paul continues his self-defense by repeatedly asserting his status as an agent of God, who is privy to the secret wisdom of God, and employing the language of his opponents. In 2:6 Paul begins by stating that he does impart wisdom among the mature and as 3:1-2 makes clear, the Corinthians' incorrect evaluation of his oratorical abilities is closely connected to their lack of maturity. He emphasizes that the Corinthians have incorrectly assessed his message and

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[28] Litfin, 195.

[29] Gal 5:12 Paul's call for those who are pestering the Galatians regarding circumcision to castrate themselves certainly seems to be an example of Paul demonstrating concern over the success of his argument.

[30] Fee, 101. Fee is correct in noting that this section is a continuation of Paul's self-defense, and he concludes that in 2:6-16 "… an unmistakable note of personal apologetic lies just below the surface, if not right in the open."

preaching style by stating that "we speak God's wisdom, secret and hidden."[31] Moreover he

asserts that God revealed his wisdom to Paul through the spirit, that he "received not the Spirit of

the world, but the Spirit that is from God,"[32] and that he speaks the "words not taught by human

wisdom but taught by the spirit."[33] He concludes the section by asserting that "we have the mind

of Christ."[34]

In 2:6-16 Paul's use of many uncharacteristic words such as τελείοις, ἀποκεκρυμμένην,

μυστηρίῳ is another indication that this section serves as a self-defense. That is, Paul attempts to

be more persuasive by engaging with the language of those questioning his influence. Collins

agrees with this conclusion stating that Paul's use of these words reflects "the claims of some

members of the community and [Paul] has adopted their language in order to confront them."[35]

Therefore, by noting Paul's extensive presentation of himself as God's agent and his attempt to

engage his opponents on their terms, it is clear that 2:6-16 functions as a continuation of Paul's

self-defense.

In 2:6-16 Paul's use of "we" also indicates an attempt to unify the Corinthian community.

By using "we" to include all the apostles, Paul is able to imply that unity exists among the

teachers which he hopes will address the factionalism in the community. That is, by presenting

all of the teachers as possessing the same secret wisdom of God, Paul provides the community

with one less reason for the community to splinter and claim an affiliation with a specific

teacher. Moreover, if Collins and Schrage are correct, Paul's use of "we" extends to the entire

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[31] 1 Cor 2:7.
[32] 1 Cor 2:12.
[33] 1 Cor 2:13.
[34] 1 Cor 2:16.
[35] Collins, 124.

community as well, which has received the wisdom and spirit of God from the apostles. [36] While

I am uncertain that Paul's use of "we" includes the Corinthian community, it at a minimum

implies that if the community accepts the teachings of any of the preachers, they will possess the

secret wisdom of God.

In 3:1-23 Paul continues the defense of his rhetorical abilities by emphasizing his status

as God's agent and the deeds he performed for the community. In 3:1-4 he begins the section by

asserting that the preaching style he adopted while in Corinth was chosen because of the

Corinthians' immaturity. In a scathing critique of the community, he writes

> I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as
> infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for
> solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh. For as
> long as there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not of the flesh, and
> behaving according to human inclinations.[37]

In this statement Paul redirects the Corinthians' criticism of him back onto the community. Paul

asserts that their lack of maturity and factionalism dictated his preaching style and forced him to

address the community in a simpler style than he might have wanted. While there is debate over

whether Paul's statement implies that he has two levels of knowledge which he imparts to

communities, I agree with most commentators who find it unlikely that Paul was holding back

more advanced teachings.[38] Instead, I conclude that this passage is part of Paul's attempt to

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[36] Collins, 122; Wolfgang Schrage, *Der Erste Brief an Die Korinther* (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Benziger-Verlag and Neukirchen-Verlag, 1991), 1:248. The majority of commentators such as Collins and Schrage conclude that Paul's use of we indicates that his comments refer to the entire community.
[37] 1 Cor 3:1-3.
[38] Fee, 125; James Francis, "As Babes in Christ - Some Proposals Regarding 1 Cor 3:1-3," *JSNT* 7 (1980): 50; Morna Hooker, "Hard Sayings: 1 Cor 3:2," *Theology* 69 (1966): 19-22; Thiselton, 291-2. The debate focuses on whether Paul's claim that the Corinthians "were not ready for solid food" implies that Paul held back the more advanced wisdom (solid food) from the community. Most such as Fee, Francis, Hooker, and Thiselton have concluded that Paul does not have different teachings based on the intellect of each community. For instance, Francis concludes that it is "not so much in the readers' intellectual progress" rather the passage concerns "the ability of the Corinthians to accept the implications of what he had already imparted to them."

defend his oratorical ability.[39] That is, Paul presents himself as one who has the ability to present his teachings in a more polished form; however, due to the limitations of his audience, he was forced to present his Gospel in a simpler manner. Thus, the Corinthians' infantile and fleshly behavior is what dictated Paul's decision to feed them with γάλα (milk) rather than βρῶμα (solid food).[40]

In 3:5-10 Paul continues his self-defense by highlighting his past deeds and his status as God's agent by comparing himself to Apollos. While Paul stresses the unity between the two, as will be addressed below, in his comparison, Paul asserts his own superiority over Apollos. Although Paul recounts the impressive deeds of both he and Apollos, Paul's deeds are presented as more impressive, as the founder of the community. In 3:6 Paul states that he planted the community and Apollos watered it. Additionally, in 3:10 Paul describes himself as the master builder who founded the community according to the grace given to Paul by God.[41] Therefore, Paul reminds the community that while Apollos had a critical role in helping nurture the community, Paul was the founder. Moreover, he reminds the community of his status as God's agent by emphasizing that he founded the community "according to the grace of God given to me" and that he is God's servant.[42] Therefore, although others may have contributed to the growth of the community, whose oratorical abilities may be viewed as superior, Paul is still the original founder of the community. In fact, Barnett may be correct in asserting that Paul's presentation of his superior position is also an attempt to lessen the influence of Apollos over the

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[39] Francis, 53;Thiselton, 291.
[40] 1 Cor 3:2.
[41] Collins, 149. Collins emphasizes the importance of Paul's mention only of himself as having the grace of God and claims this is part of his ethos appeal to the community.
[42] 1 Cor 3:9-10.

community, whose impressive oratorical skill may have caused or exacerbated the factionalism.[43]

In addition to presenting a self-defense, this section also serves as an attempt to bring unity to the community as Paul describes Apollos with favorable language. [44] In fact, much of Paul's presentation of himself and Apollos emphasizes their equality as he describes them both as servants of the Lord in 3:5 and as God's servants working together in 3:9. Therefore, by describing both himself and Apollos as agents of God working together, Paul is able to target the factionalism in Corinth by stressing their unity and highlight "the utter inappropriateness of their [the Corinthians'] worldly evaluations."[45]

Paul continues his self-defense in 4:1-7 by stressing his status as God's agent. In 4:1-2 Paul states that the apostles should be thought of as "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God."[46] Fee asserts that Paul's use of the term steward is important because it implies that not only is Paul an agent of God, but as God's servant, he is accountable to God alone and not the Corinthians. Fee states "Not eloquence, nor wisdom ... but faithfulness to the trust, is what God requires of his servants."[47] Thus, Fee rightly concludes that Paul is asserting that since he is God's steward, the Corinthians have no right to judge him as he is accountable only to God, a fact which Paul addresses in detail in 4:3-5. Fee's insights are especially noteworthy because they imply that Paul's use of the term steward could have been employed by

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[43] Paul Barnett, "Paul, Apologist to the Corinthians," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict* (ed. Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliot; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 316-19. This conclusion is especially noteworthy if Barnett's assertion that the division in the community was focused on Apollos' superior oratorical abilities.

[44] Litfin, 224; Mitchell, 98-99; Thiselton, 303. Mitchell analyzes the noun συνεργοί and concludes that it was a term often used in Greco-Roman documents to indicate concord or partisanship. Furthermore, she states that, "If Apollos and Paul are συνεργοί, then so must be the Corinthians who claim allegiance to one or the other."

[45] Litfin, 224.

[46] Paul's use of the plural "servants" and "stewards" also indicates his attempt to resolve factional issues by including other teachers such as Apollos within this description.

[47] Fee, 160.

Paul in order to assert that the manner in which he taught the community was not his decision alone but was influenced by the will of his master, God. That is, although Paul could have employed a more polished style of preaching, the choice was not his to make. However, even if this interpretation is rejected, at a minimum, Paul presents himself as God's agent who can be judged by God alone.

In 4:8-13 Paul continues his self-defense by contrasting the status of apostles and the Corinthian community, and in this comparison, Paul employs self-effacing language and recounts the suffering endured by the apostles. He states:

> For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals. We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day.[48]

This passage has two important functions, building goodwill with his audience by reflecting the advice of the rhetorical handbooks and attempting to re-establish unity within the community by providing a model of behavior for the Corinthians to emulate.

Paul's description of the suffering he and the other apostles endure reflects the advice of the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks which suggest that one can build a positive relationship with one's audience by presenting one's "disabilities, need, loneliness, and misfortune."[49] That is, by describing the apostles as hungry, thirsty, beaten, reviled, persecuted, and slandered, Paul attempts to evoke pity from his audience. Moreover, while more difficult, the handbooks also suggest that using self-effacing language can be an effective technique for building goodwill. Therefore, by describing the apostles as fools, weak, held in disrepute, rubbish, and the dregs of

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[48] 1 Cor 4:9-13.
[49] Rhet. Her. 1.8.

all things, Paul may be attempting to build goodwill with his audience. However, as outlined in chapter one, the use of self-effacing required moderation and precision, and it was often viewed as the most offensive type of boasting. Therefore, Marshall is probably correct in concluding that in 4:8-13 Paul's self-derisive language "would hardly have impressed the Corinthians" and his "sustained self-derision" in this section exceeds other Greco-Roman authors.[50]

In addition to serving as a means for establishing goodwill with his audience, this section also serves as an attempt to establish unity within the community by first demonstrating the foolish behavior of the Corinthians and then providing a model of behavior for the community to follow. Fitzgerald notes that Paul's statements reflect the standard tribulation lists; however, they are not empty words adopted by Paul rather "the catalogue both specifies some of the ways of Paul that the Corinthians are to imitate (4:16-17) and illustrates the life that receives praise from God (4:5)."[51] That is, for Fitzgerald, "the catalogue presents the suffering apostolic existence as the praiseworthy paradigm for Christian existence"[52] and is intended to cause the community to "make a radical reassessment of their present status."[53]

Garland also stresses the importance of this section for unifying the community and notes that Paul purposefully employs the first person plural "we" in these statements because he was not merely referring to himself and "his idiosyncratic way of living out his Christian calling but presenting the way of the cross as modeled by the apostles."[54] That is Paul's statements are worthy of imitation because "the true apostles of Christ follow the example of Christ, since everything he says about the apostles' degradation applies also to Christ."[55]

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[50] Marshall, *Enmity in Corinth,* 357, 360.
[51] John T. Fitzgerald, *Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 122.
[52] Fitzgerald, 122.
[53] Fitzgerald, 148.
[54] David E. Garland, *1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 139.
[55] Garland, 139.

Before calling for the community to imitate him in 4:16, in 4:14-15 Paul again attempts

to re-establish his position within the community by presenting himself as an agent of God who

performed a valuable deed for the community. He employs a progenitor metaphor stating

> I am not writing this to make you ashamed, but to admonish you as my beloved children. For though you might have ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers. Indeed, in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel.[56]

With this statement Paul reminds the community that he founded the community "in Christ

Jesus." Moreover, a more accurate translation of ἐγὼ ὑμᾶς ἐγέννησα is "I begat you" rather than

"I became your father." This is an important difference as my translation is more reflective of the

Greek text and emphasizes the great deed which Paul performed for the community, bringing

them into existence. While this study highlights the role of Paul as the progenitor who founded

the community, other commentators have adopted the more common translation "I became your

father" and have examined Paul's metaphor in the context of the Greco-Roman patriarch and the

authority possessed by these fathers.

Elizabeth Castelli focuses on the domineering nature of the patriarch in Greco-Roman

society and claims that by using this metaphor, Paul attempts to assert his authority over the

community. Moreover, she claims that Paul's statement "'Become imitators of me' is a call to

sameness which erases differences and, at the same time, reinforces the authoritative status of the

model."[57] Thus, Castelli claims that Paul's call for unity is an attempt to exert control over the

community and that his call for emulation was an attempt to label anyone who did not accept

Paul's message as an outsider without access to salvation.[58] While many of Castelli's claims are

correct to a degree, she exaggerates the extent to which Paul could have and did coerce the

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[56] 1 Cor 4:14-15.
[57] Castelli, 103.
[58] Castelli, 99.

Corinthian community. For example, it is accurate to describe Paul's maneuver as "a clever rhetorical gesture, because it paradoxically ascribes … a privileged status vis-à-vis the gospel, bestowing upon Paul a special authority to speak"[59] Agreeing with Castelli I conclude that Paul is attempting to remind the community, via a rhetorical gesture, that he founded the community, and as such, he hopes that the community will recall his former deeds and receive his words positively. However, Castelli envisions a more coercive Paul, who is able to make demands on the community as a domineering father would to a child. Thiselton has highlighted many flaws with Castelli's argument, but his most salient point is that if Paul did intend his words in such a coercive manner it would have undermined his entire mission and contradicted aspects of his life such as "Paul's choice of low social status as an artisan [which] turns power on its head."[60]

In contrast to Castelli there are also a number of scholars who highlight the caring and affectionate description of fathers in the Greco-Roman world. For instance, although Burke does highlight the authority fathers had in Greco-Roman society, he also highlights their affection as described in sources such as Philo and Seneca. Furthermore, Burke concludes that Paul had an "undoubted affection … for his spiritual offspring."[61] Thiselton also expounds on the "unpleasant task of correction for the good of the child" which he notes is the sign of "concern, care, and responsible love."[62] Thus, in stark contrast to Castelli, who emphasizes Paul's assertion of his dominance via his use of the father/child metaphor, these authors emphasize the caring nature of such a metaphor.

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[59] Castelli, 103.
[60] S. Scott Bartchy, "Who Should be Called Father? Paul of Tarsus between the Jesus Tradition and Patria Potestas," *BTB* 33 (2003): 135-47; Thiselton, 373.
[61] Trevor J. Burke, "Paul's Role as 'Father' to his Corinthian 'Children' in Socio-Historical Context (1 Cor. 4:14-21)," in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall* (eds. Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 113.
[62] Thiselton, 369.

As noted above, in contrast to the majority of scholars who highlight the authoritative or caring nature of the father figure, this study concludes that Paul employs this metaphor in order to highlight his deed as the one who founded the community. By presenting this progenitor metaphor directly before his call for imitation, this passage should be viewed as a final attempt to establish goodwill with the community by reminding them of his past deeds and his status as an agent of God. Although the metaphor could be described as a rhetorical tool employed to re-inscribe his status within the community, it should not be viewed as an attempt to assert his dominance over the Corinthians as this would certainly undermine the purpose of his call for imitation. If Paul were to present himself as a domineering father directly before calling the community to imitate him, it would stand in sharp contrast to the rest of 1:1-4:16 in which Paul presents a model for imitation of one willing to endure suffering and set aside his own skills and status for the good of the community. Thus, I conclude that Paul employed a progenitor metaphor as a final attempt to build goodwill with his audience before exhorting them to imitate him by reminding them that as God's agent he founded the community.

Therefore, while Paul provides extensive instruction to the Corinthians concerning a wide variety of issues in chapters five through fifteen, he first had to re-establish his position within the community as a trusted representative of the Gospel. Throughout 1:1-4:21 Paul presents an extensive self defense of his oratorical skills and attempts to unify a fractured community by presenting his behavior as a model worthy of imitation. Paul asserts that for the good of the community, due to their immaturity, he purposely set aside his oratorical skills in order to present the Gospel to the Corinthians in a simpler manner which emphasized the spirit and power of God, so that their faith might not be grounded upon the empty words of rhetoric. Moreover, in

defending his position within the community he emphasizes his status as an agent of God, the deeds he performed for the community, and the suffering he endured.

IV. Conclusions and Ramifications

By focusing on Paul's self-presentation, I have reached the following conclusions. First, I conclude that 1 Cor 1:1-4:21 serves as a self-defense against accusations concerning his oratorical skills. He asserts that the manner in which he taught the community was a conscious decision shaped by their immaturity rather than his own lack of skill. Moreover, throughout this section he asserts that as an agent of God he is privy to God's secret wisdom and as a servant of God, the community has no authority to judge his oratorical abilities. Additionally, this self-defense is intended to unify the community and make them more willing to accept Paul's instructions in chapters five through sixteen.

Second, by noting that Paul's use of self-effacing language does not comply with the established Greco-Roman norms, I conclude that Paul incorrectly assessed his relationship with the Corinthians. In order for Paul to have blatantly disregarded these norms and referred to himself as the least of the apostles, an ἐκτρώματι, rubbish, and the dregs of all things he must have thought that he had the full support of a large percentage of the community because the use of self-derisive language was often considered the work of the ironic man, whose false boasting was considered the most offensive type of boasting. Therefore, I conclude that in order for Paul to have been willing to risk a negative reaction to his boasting, he must have thought that a large percentage of the community would respond favorably to his words. Moreover, it seems likely that since Paul's relationship with the community deteriorated after this letter, as evidenced by 2 Corinthians 10-13, Paul was incorrect in his assessment of his relationship with the community.

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In fact, it seems likely that Paul lost the support of some members of the community due to his use of self-effacing language.

Third, I conclude that Paul employs a progenitor metaphor in 4:14-15 in order to present an important deed which he performed for the Corinthians, founding the community. Moreover, this interpretation is validated by its location immediately before Paul's request that the community emulate him. Therefore, I conclude that Paul included a progenitor metaphor in order to establish goodwill with the Corinthians rather than to assert his authority over the community as a domineering patriarch.

Conclusions

This is the first study to provide a comprehensive examination of Paul's self-presentation. From a careful examination of the seven undisputed letters of Paul, I have isolated four primary categories of his self-presentation: deeds, personal suffering, self-effacing language, and agent of God. From these categories I have created a new approach for examining Paul's letters by comparing Paul's use of these categories across three of his letters and to the established Greco-Roman social norms. This information allows me to provide new answers to many difficult questions such as Paul's purpose for each letter and his relationship to each audience. Moreover, I am able to provide new interpretations for many difficult passages.

The most fundamental conclusion of this study is that Paul did not provide communities with autobiographical information so that they might possess a more robust portrait of Paul. Rather the information he provides is carefully selected in order to fit the needs of each audience and to increase the chance of success for each letter. As such, this study stresses the occasional nature of Paul's letters, emphasizing that each was written to a different community with different needs.

The second foundational conclusion for this study is that Paul is not unique in his use of self-presentation as a persuasive tool. By examining numerous sources containing self-presentation, I am able to demonstrate that the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters all contain similar categories and techniques for self-presentation including the four categories outlined by this study. Moreover, I demonstrate that the awareness of the proper methods of self-presentation was not restricted to those who had received a formal rhetorical training. Rather the information contained in the rhetorical handbooks serves as a repository of

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the accepted social norms for self-presentation. As such, I am able to conclude that regardless of their level of rhetorical training educated individuals such as Paul of Tarsus would have been aware of the categories and techniques outlined in the handbooks because were "in the air."

Having established a new approach for examining Paul's letters, I then applied this approach to three letters (Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians) in order to determine Paul's purpose for writing each letter and his relationship with each community. I began with Paul's letter to the Galatians in which he employs three of the categories outlined by this study: agent of God, deeds, and personal suffering. By noting Paul's rigorous adherence to the social norms of self-presentation and the absence of self-effacing language, I am able to confirm the scholarly consensus, that Paul had a contentious relationship with the Galatians. Moreover, I am able to confirm the current consensus that Paul's primary purpose for the letter was to provide a self-defense, which was necessary in order for the Galatians to accept Paul's instructions regarding circumcision and the Jewish Law in chapters three through six. While I am unwilling to make conclusions about the specific accusations levied against Paul, it is clear that the Galatians were concerned with his relationship to the leaders in Jerusalem and the legitimacy of his Gospel.

By applying this approach to Galatians, I am also able to provide convincing answers to two difficult questions. First, I conclude that in 2:2, Paul's statement that he sought to confirm that his work had not been in vain should not be viewed as a "remarkably unguarded" statement demonstrating anxiety over his evaluation by the Jerusalem leaders. Rather the passage serves as an attempt to reframe the purpose of Paul's visit to Jerusalem from one in which he submitted to the demands of human authorities to a visit in which Paul performed an important deed for his communities, ensuring for them an existence free of strife and suffering.

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Second, I am able to provide a new answer to the question "why did Paul include the Antioch incident?" I conclude that Paul recounts this incident because it allows him to demonstrate that the Jerusalem leaders have behaved inconsistently in the past and that the current problems in Galatia are the fault of these inconsistent leaders and not Paul. By recounting the incident immediately after Paul's description of the agreement reached in Jerusalem, he is able to portray Peter and the Jerusalem leaders as accepting his mission to the Gentiles and then immediately disregarding this decision in Antioch. Moreover, by asserting that he "opposed him [Peter] to his face," Paul is able to demonstrate that he vigorously defends the Gospel which he brought to the Galatians.

Next I examined Paul's letter to the Philippians; by noting Paul's unusual greeting and decision to omit the details of the suffering he endured while in prison, I am able to confirm the scholarly consensus that Paul had a friendly relationship with this community. Moreover, by noting that he deviates from the advice contained in the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, I am able to conclude that a primary purpose for Paul's letter to the Philippians was to present his own deeds and success during his imprisonment as a model to help the Philippians endure their own suffering. Therefore, in contrast to Castelli who asserts that Paul's call to emulation was an attempt to re-assert his "privileged position within the hierarchy as the mediating figure through whom the community might gain access to salvation," I conclude that Paul's call to imitate him was an attempt to assist the community in their time of crisis.[1]

Additionally, by focusing on Paul's extensive self-presentation in 4:1-20, I conclude that a second primary purpose of the letter is providing an acknowledgement of the Philippians' gift. However, Paul does not respond with the standard expression of thanks (εὐχαριστῶ); rather subverting the Greco-Roman system of reciprocity, he claims that God will reciprocate on his

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[1] *Contra* Castelli, 96.

behalf. By noting Paul's extensive presentation of himself as an agent of God throughout the letter, I have shown that Paul was concerned that the Philippians might reject this bold claim. Therefore, in contrast to scholars who assert that 4:1-20 was an independent letter, missing only a proper introduction, this study defends the unity of Philippians by demonstrating the importance of chapters one through three for preparing the Philippians to accept Paul's potentially insulting claim that God would reciprocate on his behalf.

Finally, I examined 1 Corinthians, a letter written to a fractured community in which some members questioned Paul's position as a trusted representative of the Gospel. By focusing on Paul's self-presentation, I conclude that 1 Cor 1:1-4:21 serves as a self-defense against individuals questioning his oratorical skills and that it is a fundamental purpose of the letter. The importance of this defense is highlighted by Paul's assertion that the manner in which he taught the community was a conscious decision shaped by their immaturity rather than his own lack of skill. Additionally, he defends himself by repeatedly asserting that as an agent of God, Paul is privy to God's secret wisdom. Moreover, Paul intends his self-defense to unify the community by presenting to them a model of one willing to suffer and set aside his own status for the good of the community.

By noting Paul's disregard for the social norms concerning self-effacing language, I conclude that Paul thought that he had a large base of support within the fractured community. Although he demonstrates an awareness that some of the Corinthians oppose him, by blatantly disregarding the social norms concerning the use of self-derisive language and referring to himself as the least of the apostles, an ἐκτρώματι, rubbish, and the dregs of all things, Paul demonstrates that he thought that he had the full support of a large percentage of the community. However, in light of the defensive nature of 2 Corinthians 10-13, I assert that Paul incorrectly

assessed his relationship with the community and that many Corinthians interpreted his use of self-derisive language as the work of an ironic man, whose false boasting was considered the most offensive type of boasting.

Additionally, by recognizing that Paul presents himself as the progenitor of the community, directly before calling them to emulation, I conclude that in using this metaphor Paul was highlighting his role as the founder of the community. That is, rather than attempting to assert his dominance over the community as a Greco-Roman patriarch would over his family, Paul's goal was to remind them of the most important deed he accomplished for the Corinthians as a final attempt to build goodwill at the conclusion of his self-defense.

After examining Galatians, Philippians, and 1 Corinthians, I am able to make two general conclusions about Paul's self-presentation. First, Paul follows the established social norms when presenting his deeds. In each of the three letters examined, Paul presents his deeds as a means for building goodwill with communities. Second, Paul's use of self-presentation is greatly influenced by his relationship with his audience. For example, Paul adjusts his self-presentation to the Philippians in order to offer himself as a model of one able to persevere and even succeed despite his suffering. That is, Paul disregards the social norms for presenting one's suffering in order to fit the needs of the suffering Philippian community.

It is my hope that other scholars will employ this approach in their examination of the letters of Paul and other early Christian writers, as my research has persuaded me that this approach can provide new answers to many difficult questions. For example, in appendix 1, I examined Ignatius' use of self-effacement and concluded that it was not a reaction to a humbling experience in Antioch but that it was a persuasive device. Future studies could certainly examine

the entirety of Ignatius' self-presentation in order to determine his relationship with each audience and the purpose of his letters.

Another important avenue for future research is examining the use of self-presentation in the disputed and Pastoral letters attributed to Paul. Since it is likely that Paul did not write the Pastorals, it would be valuable to determine how the Pastoral authors employ self-presentation. Moreover, since Paul is not consistent in his use of self-presentation, it will be informative to determine which of Paul's letters the Pastorals most closely resemble. Do the Pastorals reflect Paul's strict adherence to the social norms as in his letter to the Galatians or do they present Paul as one willing to violate the norms of one or more category of self-presentation?

Appendix 1

Ignatius and Self-Effacement

Ignatius of Antioch extensively employed self-effacing language in his letters by describing himself with phrases such as: the least of, not worthy, and an abortion. However, scholars are divided over whether the humility he displayed was genuine or a rhetorical device. The majority position has been to accept Ignatius' statements as an accurate reflection of his mindset and create a psychological profile of a man who was humbled by the problems he encountered at Antioch, which culminated with his arrest. However, an analysis of the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks, speeches, and letters demonstrates that describing oneself with self-effacing language in order to establish a positive relationship with one's audience was a standard rhetorical technique used in persuasive works. Thus, I conclude that Ignatius deliberately chose to present himself with self-effacing language, a standard persuasive device, rather than felt compelled to do so as a result of humbling experiences. Moreover, it is probable that Ignatius was inspired to use this approach by the letters of Paul, especially 1 Corinthians, in which he too employs self-effacement in order to establish a positive relationship with his audience.

I. Ignatius and Self-Effacement

Ignatius employs an extensive amount of self-effacing language in his letters. Three times he uses the phrase "the least of" in comparison with those in Antioch.[1] Additionally, Ignatius repeatedly refers to his unworthiness in relationship to those in Antioch and even questions

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[1] *Ign. Trall.* 13.1; *Ign. Eph*. 21.2; *Ign. Smyrn*. 11.1.

whether he is worthy in comparison to the community to which he writes in Ephesus.[2] For

example, Ignatius places himself on the same level as his Ephesian audience by stating, "For

now I am only beginning to be a disciple, and I speak to you as my fellow students. For I need to

be trained by you in faith, instruction, endurance, and patience."[3] Ignatius also uses the Greek

words περίψημα and αντίψυχον which although they are literally translated dirt and ransom,

scholars emphasize the lowly nature of the words.[4] Finally, perhaps most striking is Ignatius' use

of εκτρωμα, an unusual and powerful Greek word, literally translated as abortion or miscarriage.

Clearly, as the bishop of Antioch, Ignatius was not untrained in the faith, not the least of those in

Antioch and words such as περίψημα and αντίψυχον were not accurate descriptions of Ignatius.

Thus, it is necessary to determine why Ignatius chose to describe himself with such humbling

language.

The standard response to Ignatius' use of self effacing language is to seek an answer from

the historical situation in Antioch. That is, many attempt to directly link Ignatius' humble

language to a humbling historical event. The older consensus was that Ignatius was arrested and

humbled due to an external persecution in Antioch. However, more recently, a consensus has

developed that rather than external persecution, Antioch suffered from internal strife. Although

scholars may differ on the specific events surrounding Ignatius' arrest, the new consensus

position is that Ignatius was arrested and removed from Antioch due to internal issues rather than

external persecution. Furthermore, it is generally presumed that this removal and subsequent

arrest humbled him and is the direct cause for his self-effacing language. For example, Schoedel

concludes that Ignatius' leadership was questioned in Antioch, his authority was diminished, and

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[2] *Ign. Eph*. 21.2; Magnesians 12.1; 14.1; *Ign. Trall*. 4.2; 13.1; Romans 9.2; *Ign. Smyrn*. 11.1.
[3] *Ign. Eph*. 3.1.
[4] William R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 13. Schoedel concludes that Ignatius here implies that he is an offering for the community

he "had in fact experienced a blow to his self-esteem and that this is reflected in his dealings with the churches."[5]

Although Schoedel and others present a compelling portrait of Ignatius humbled by the events in Antioch, there are four problems with the assertion that Ignatius' use of self-effacing language is best explained by these events. The first problem with the consensus position is that it is not possible to confidently reconstruct the historical situation in Antioch from the evidence available, and it is even more difficult to reconstruct the psychological state of Ignatius. Ignatius simply does not provide many details concerning the situation in Antioch.

The second problem with the assumption that Ignatius used self-effacing language because he was humbled by the problems in Antioch is the assumption itself. That is, just because one has been humbled, does not mean that one must choose self-effacement as one's means of self presentation. Rather, a more natural reaction may be a defensive one, in which one asserts one's authority all the more strongly when in a position of weakness. Thus, it must be stressed that Ignatius made a conscious decision to describe himself with self-effacing language and this was a standard rhetorical device for building a positive relationship with one's audience.

The third problem is Ignatius' continued use of self-effacing language even after the resolution of the problems in Antioch. By examining internal clues, it becomes possible to determine which letters were written before and which were written after the situation in Antioch was resolved. Scholars have concluded that Ignatius wrote to the Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, and Romans while in Smyrna before the situation was resolved.[6] However, the letters to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Polycarp were written from Troas after the resolution of the problems in Antioch. From this data, Mikael Isacson concludes that if Ignatius employed self-

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[5] Ibid., 13.
[6] Schoedel, 11.

effacement because of an issue in Antioch, he would not have used humble language in his letters to Philadelphia, Smyrna, and Polycarp because the situation would have already been resolved. However, Isacson rightly demonstrates that Ignatius does use self-effacement in letters written after the resolution of the problems in Antioch. For instance, in Smyrnaeans 11:1 Ignatius describes himself as "not being worthy to be from there, being the least of them." Additionally, Ignatius uses self-effacement in his letter to the Philadelphians, "though I am bound, I fear all the more, since I am still imperfect"[7] Schoedel acknowledges that Ignatius does use self-effacing language in letters written after the resolution of the problems in Antioch, but he claims that this language is less self-effacing in these letters.[8] While Ignatius' phrases in these letters may indeed be less prevalent and less self-effacing than in others, the phrases "not being worthy" and "the least of" are certainly among Ignatius' favorite phrases for expressing his humility. Thus, Ignatius' continued use of self-effacing language in two letters after the situation in Antioch had been resolved seems to indicate that his use of self-effacement was not entirely connected to the problems he faced there.

The fourth problem with assuming that Ignatius employed self-effacing language due to a humbling experience in Antioch is that he is rather demanding in his letters. If Ignatius were truly humbled, it seems likely that he would have made requests to the community in a humble and tempered manner rather than the bold commands that he issues to the communities. Ignatius is quite forceful in pursuing the goal of his letters, promoting unity within the churches and strengthening the authority of their leaders. For instance Ignatius states quite forcefully to the Smyrnaeans:

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[7] Philadelphians 5.1.
[8] Schoedel, 249. For instance, Schoedel notes that in Smyrnaeans 11:1, Ignatius "balances a statement of Ignatius' unworthiness with one of his worthiness."

You must all follow the bishop, as Jesus Christ followed the Father, and follow the presbytery as you would the apostles; respect the deacons as the commandments of God. Let no one do anything that has to do with the church without the bishop.[9]

The most interesting passages are those in which Ignatius' self-effacing statements are immediately followed by forceful commands such as Ephesians 3:1-4:1 in which he writes:

I am not commanding you, as though I were somebody important. For even though I am in chains for the sake of the Name, I have not yet been perfected in Jesus Christ. For now I am only beginning to be a disciple, and I speak to you as my fellow students. For I need to be trained by you in faith, instruction, endurance, and patience. But since love does not allow me to be silent concerning you, I have therefore taken the initiative to encourage you, so that you may run together in harmony with the mind of God. For Jesus Christ … is the mind of the Father, just as the bishops appointed throughout the world are in the mind of Christ. Thus it is proper for you to act together in harmony with the mind of the bishop as you are in fact doing.[10]

Ignatius augments these statements with further commands that the Ephesians should be in harmony with the bishop and these elaborations make it clear that he is issuing a command to obey the bishop. "Let us therefore, be careful not to oppose the bishop, in order that we may be obedient to God."[11] And "It is obvious, therefore, that we must regard the bishop as the Lord himself."[12] Thus, although Ignatius begins his request with self-effacing language, his commands make it quite clear that this is no request of a humbled man providing the Ephesians with optional advice from the lips of a mere "beginner." Rather Ignatius issues a command that he expects to be followed, obey the bishop or be disobedient in the eyes of God!

Since the situation in Antioch does not adequately explain Ignatius' use of self-effacement in his letters, I propose that a better explanation is that Ignatius was using a standard

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[9] *Ign. Smyrn*. 8.1.
[10] *Ign. Eph*. 3.1-4.1. This connection is also found in Magnesians 12-13 Philadelphians 5-7, and Trallians 13. Additionally, in Trallians 1-7, Ignatius includes self-effacing language between two sets of commands. He begins with an exhortation to obey the bishops which is immediately followed by self-effacing language. This language is then immediately followed by an exhortation to avoid heresies.
[11] *Ign. Eph*. 5.3.
[12] *Ign. Eph*. 6.1.

rhetorical device. I agree with Isacson's proposal that Ignatius used self-effacement to establish

an ethos, or a positive relationship, with these communities. Other scholars have come to similar

conclusions such as Matthew Mitchell who states, "Like Paul, much of his self-proclaimed

unworthiness likely serves a rhetorical function rather than merely reflecting a profound sense of

humility."[13]

II. Rhetoric and Self-Effacement

Rhetoric played a critical role in communication and persuasion in the Greco-Roman

world and was especially important and effective in speeches, court cases and persuasive letters.

In addition to extant speeches and letters, the proper use of rhetoric is preserved in the rhetorical

handbooks such as Cicero's *De Inventione*, the anonymous *Rhetorica Ad Herrenium,* and

Quintilian's *Institutio Oratoria* and these handbooks note the importance of using self-effacing

language in order to establish good will with one's audience. For instance Cicero writes, "We

shall win good-will for our own person if we refer to our own acts and services without

arrogance … if we focus on the misfortunes which have befallen us or the difficulties which still

beset us … if we use prayers and entreaties with a humble and submissive spirit."[14] Similarly, the

Rhetorica Ad Herrenium advises "we shall secure goodwill by praising our services without

arrogance … likewise by setting forth our disabilities, need, loneliness, and misfortune, and

pleading for our hearer's aid"

Thus, the rhetorical handbooks provide a useful lens for examining Ignatius' use of self-

effacing language. Ignatian phrases such as "I am not worthy" and "I am the least of those in

Antioch" seem to reflect the advice of the rhetorical handbooks for establishing good will with

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[13] Matthew W. Mitchell, "In the Footsteps of Paul: Scriptural and Apostolic Authority in Ignatius of Antioch." *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 14 (2006): 27-45, 41 footnote 38.
[14] Cicero, Inv. 1.6.22.

ones' audience. For instance, Ignatius requests that the Trallians "Remember in your prayers the church in Syria, of which I am not worthy to be considered a member, being as I am the very least of them. Farewell in Jesus Christ. Be subject to the bishop as to the commandment and likewise to the presbytery."[15] In this example, Ignatius seems to follow quite closely the advice of the rhetorical handbooks. By using humble language and stressing his misfortune as the least of the community in Antioch, he continues to build good will with the Trallians as he had throughout the letter.

Moreover, Ignatius includes statements that seem to follow the advice of the rhetorical handbooks which recommend that one highlights the misfortunes and difficulties that one has encountered by describing himself as in chains, a convict, rubbish, and an abortion. While these phrases would probably best be described as examples of suffering, rather than self-effacement, they reflect the same advice: demonstrate some degree of weakness in order to build good will and thus, persuade one's audience more effectively.

Additionally, an examination of Ignatius' self-effacing language through the lens of rhetoric provides solutions to the problems which remain when assuming that Ignatius felt compelled to use humble language as a man who was humbled due to his negative experiences in Antioch. First, this lens removes the necessity of building a psychological profile for Ignatius which is built on limited evidence. Instead, it is possible to assert that Ignatius made a conscious choice to present himself with self-effacing language in order to make the communities more receptive to his advice. Even if Ignatius was indeed humbled by his arrest, he was not forced to present himself with humble language.

Second, a rhetorical examination explains the combination of Ignatius' self-effacing language and his bold commands. In order to have the communities accept his instructions,

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[15] *Ign. Trall.* 13:1-3

Ignatius needed to first establish a positive relationship with his audience. Thus, by deliberately including self-effacing language throughout his letters, Ignatius prepared his audiences to be more receptive to his instructions. This is especially apparent in Ephesians 3:1-4, as outlined above, in which Ignatius begins by stressing his chains and his status as a beginner before making demands on the community such as: obeying their bishop and even regarding the bishop as the Lord himself.

Finally, the advice of the rhetorical handbooks explains Ignatius' continued use of self-effacing language even after the situation in Antioch had been resolved**.** Isaacson proposes that Ignatius used more self-effacing language when addressing communities he had not yet met because it would have been even more necessary to build a positive relationship in order to make demands on a community with which he had not yet visited.[16] Isaacson notes that Ignatius used extensive self-effacement in letters written from Troas to communities which he had not yet visited in Ephesia, Magnesia and Trallia. However, when writing to communities he had already visited such as Philadelphia and Smyrna, Ignatius did not include nearly as much self-effacing language because he already had established a positive relationship with the community.

Thus, Ignatius's use of self-effacing language is best explained as a deliberate decision used in order to help establish a positive relationship with his audience. While he may or may not have learned this rhetorical device in his education, as noted in chapter one, he certainly would have encountered it in speeches and other persuasive works. Moreover, it is probable that he was inspired to use this technique by Paul who used self-effacing language extensively in his first letter to the Corinthians.

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[16] Mikael Isacson, *To Each Their Own Letter: Structure, Themes, and Rhetorical Strategies in the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2004), 200-201.

III. Ignatius, Self-Effacement, and Paul

While Ignatius was probably aware of the usefulness of employing self-effacing language because it was a standard technique for improving goodwill with an audience, it is likely that his use of the category was inspired by Paul. First, as noted in chapter one, the established social norms dictated that self-effacing language be used in moderation, lest one be labeled an ironic man. However, like Paul, Ignatius disregards these norms and presents himself with excessive self-effacing language. Therefore, Ignatius was either directly influenced by Paul's own use of excessive self-effacing language or this technique had become the norm in Christian communities by the time Ignatius wrote his letters. A second indicator that Ignatius' use of self-effacing language was influenced by Paul's use of the category is that Ignatius uses the same words and phrases as Paul such as "I am not worthy," "I am the very least of them," περιψημα, and εκτρωμα.

In order to claim that Ignatius used Paul's phrases and words it is necessary to establish which of Paul' letters Ignatius read. Ignatius supplies some evidence in his letter to the Ephesians in which he states that he is walking in Paul's footsteps and reminds the community that Paul, "in every letter remembers you in Christ Jesus." This statement has rightfully been interpreted as an indication that Ignatius was aware of more than one of Paul's letters. While, determining which of Paul's letters were read by Ignatius has proven difficult, scholars are in agreement that Ignatius had at a minimum read 1 Corinthians. In fact, most scholars have isolated between 3 and 5 direct quotations from 1 Corinthians.[17] Since 1 Corinthians is the only Pauline letter that all

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[17] *Ign. Eph..* 18.1 = 1Cor. 1:18-23; *Ign. Eph*. 16.1 = 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Rom. 5.1 = 1 Cor. 4:4; Mag. 10.3 = 1 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 9.2 = 1 Cor. 15:8-10.

scholars agree that Ignatius had access to, I will focus on the impact this letter had on his use of self-effacing language.

1 Corinthians contains the three most important passages for establishing that Ignatius was influenced by Paul's use of self-effacement. First, in 1 Corinthians 15:9 Paul states, "For I am the least of the apostles." As outlined above, Ignatius used the phrase "the least of" three times. For instance, in Trallians 13:1, Ignatius states that, "I am not worthy to be considered a member, being as I am the very least of them."

A second and perhaps more convincing example of Paul's influence on Ignatius is found in 1 Corinthians 15:8 where Paul refers to himself as an εκτρωμα. As stated above the primary definition of εκτρωμα is an abortion or miscarriage and it is an unusual way to describe oneself which occurs only once in the New Testament. Ignatius uses this striking word to describe himself in his letter to the Romans in 9:2 and this is the only occurrence of εκτρωμα in the Apostolic Fathers. Therefore, it is a near certainty that if Ignatius read 1 Corinthians, he borrowed this term from Paul and applied it to himself for the purpose of self-effacement.[18]

The third word which Ignatius borrows from Paul is περιψημα from 1 Cor 4:13 a word which Ignatius uses twice in his letter to the Ephesians. There are multiple definitions available for περιψημα and for Ignatius, in Ephesians 8:1 and 18:1, περιψημα seems to indicate that he is a scapegoat or offering for the community.[19] Although Ignatius may have had a slightly different definition in mind for περιψημα than Paul, who uses the term to describe himself as the dregs or scum of the world, Schoedel rightly notes that "What remains of sacrificial overtones is the

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[18] Harm W. Hollander, and Gijsbert E. Van Der Hout, "The Apostle Paul Calling Himself an Abortion: 1 Cor. 15:8 within the Context of 1 Cor. 15:8-10." *NovT* 38 (1996): 233. Hollander and Van Der Hout propose that Ignatius is imitating Paul's humility.

[19] Bart D. Ehrman, *The Apostolic Fathers,* vol. 1,(Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 227; Schoedel, 63-64.

presumption of the low and despised character of the victim."[20] In other words, Ignatius retains the notion of lowliness and self-effacement associated with the word. Additionally, J. B. Lightfoot notes the connection between Ignatius' and Paul' use of περιψημα and further adds that by the 3rd century CE, it had become a common compliment indicating that an individual was humble.[21]

Thus, Ignatius' use of Pauline words and phrases, especially εκτρωμα, seems to indicate that he was influenced by Paul's use of self-effacing language and scholars such as Schoedel and Mitchell have made similar connections. Schoedel states that it is "Pauline terminology being put to new use."[22] Additionally, Mitchell states that, "Ignatius' pattern of using language filled with humility and near self-denigration, while yet giving directions and commands, bears a strong resemblance to Paul's writings"[23] Thus, it appears, even in his use of self-effacing language, Ignatius was indeed walking in the footsteps of Paul.[24]

IV. Conclusions

Contrary to most scholars, I conclude that Ignatius employed self-effacing language in his letters not as one compelled to do so a result of his recent troubles but that he deliberately used this language as a technique to establish a positive relationship with his audience. Furthermore, Ignatius's use of self-effacing language resembles the advice provided by the Greco-Roman rhetorical handbooks. Finally, while it is unclear how Ignatius learned this technique, whether from his education or elsewhere, I conclude that based on Ignatius' use of Pauline words and phrases such as "the least of." περιψημα, and the striking word εκτρωμα, that

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[20] Schoedel, 64.
[21] J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers, Part II: S. Ignatius. S. Polycarp*, vol. 1, (London: Macmillan, 1889), 51.
[22] Schoedel, 13.
[23] Mitchell, 36.
[24] *Ign. Eph*. 12.2.

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Ignatius' use of self effacing language was inspired by Paul's use of this rhetorical technique which is especially prevalent in 1 Corinthians.

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