This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.
The Soteriology of Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s Thought

Cho Suen Ip

Doctor of Philosophy
New Testament and Christian Origins
The University of Edinburgh
2023
For Po Yan
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract .............................................................................................................................................. ix

Lay Summary ....................................................................................................................................... xii

Acknowledgments ................................................................................................................................. xiii

1  INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 OBJECTIVE ................................................................................................................................. 1
   1.2 BACKGROUND ............................................................................................................................ 1
   1.3 CURRENT STATE OF SCHOLARSHIP ......................................................................................... 3
   1.4 RESEARCH QUESTION ............................................................................................................... 9
   1.5 SELECTION OF SCHOLARS ...................................................................................................... 13
   1.6 METHOD .................................................................................................................................... 16
   1.7 DIFFERENTIATION .................................................................................................................... 18
   1.8 THE POSITION OF THE THESIS .............................................................................................. 20

2  CHAPTER 1: GALATIANS .............................................................................................................. 22
   2.1 ‘WRITE TO’ OR ‘WRITE ABOUT’? ............................................................................................. 23
      2.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience ...................................................................................................... 23
      2.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Gentile Christ Believers ............................................................ 26
      2.1.3 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers? ............................................................. 26
   2.2 PAUL’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRIST EVENT .............................................................. 29
      2.2.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy? ........................................................ 29
      2.2.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively? .............................................. 33
      2.2.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity? ....................................................... 35
   2.3 ULTIMATE AUTHORITY FOR PAUL ....................................................................................... 39
      2.3.1 The Role of Torah .............................................................................................................. 40
      2.3.2 Christ or Torah? ................................................................................................................. 43
   2.4 ULTIMATE AUTHORITY FOR JEWISH CHRIST BELIEVERS ............................................ 52
      2.4.1 The Role of Torah .............................................................................................................. 52
      2.4.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ ................................................................................................ 53
   2.5 ULTIMATE AUTHORITY FOR GENTILE CHRIST BELIEVERS ......................................... 54
      2.5.1 The Role of Torah .............................................................................................................. 54
      2.5.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ ................................................................................................ 56
2.6 UNCIRCUMCISION AND CIRCUMCISION .......................................................... 58
  2.6.1 Effective Circumcision ............................................................................. 59
  2.6.2 Ineffective Circumcision ......................................................................... 60
  2.6.3 Paul’s View on Uncircumcision and Circumcision ............................... 62
2.7 PAUL’S USAGE OF “WE” ......................................................................... 66
  2.7.1 Rhetorical Identification ........................................................................ 66
  2.7.2 The Christ Event ..................................................................................... 67
2.8 ABRAHAM AND CHRIST ......................................................................... 69
  2.8.1 Abraham Frames Christ ........................................................................ 70
  2.8.2 Re-evaluates Abraham ........................................................................... 72
  2.8.3 Faith in God Model ................................................................................. 74
2.9 PAUL’S SALVATION MECHANISM .......................................................... 77
  2.9.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ ....................................... 77
  2.9.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance? ............................... 80
  2.9.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ .............................................. 85
2.10 CONCLUSION ......................................................................................... 91

3 CHAPTER 2: 1 & 2 CORINTHIANS ............................................................ 93
  3.1 ‘WRITE ABOUT’ OR ‘WRITE TO’? .......................................................... 94
    3.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience ....................................................................... 95
    3.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Gentile Christ Believers .......................... 100
    3.1.3 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers? ....................... 101
    3.1.4 Paul’s Actual Audience ...................................................................... 118
    3.1.5 Ethnic Scope ....................................................................................... 120
  3.2 PAUL’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRIST EVENT ............................ 122
    3.2.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy? ...................... 122
    3.2.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively? .......... 127
    3.2.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity? ................... 130
  3.3 THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY ............................................................... 135
    3.3.1 The Role of Torah ............................................................................... 136
    3.3.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ ................................................................. 139
    3.3.3 Ultimate Authority for Christ Believers ......................................... 145
  3.4 UNCIRCUMCISION AND CIRCUMCISION .......................................... 148
    3.4.1 Effective Circumcision ....................................................................... 149
    3.4.2 Ineffective Circumcision .................................................................... 150
3.4.3 Paul’s View on Uncircumcision and Circumcision ......................................... 152
3.5 PAUL’S SALVATION MECHANISM .................................................................. 156
  3.5.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ .................................................. 157
  3.5.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance? ............................................. 159
  3.5.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ ......................................................... 160
3.6 CONCLUSION ................................................................................................. 167
4 CHAPTER 3: ROMANS (1) .................................................................................. 168
  4.1 ‘WRITE ABOUT’ OR ‘WRITE TO’? ................................................................. 168
    4.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience ............................................................................. 169
    4.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers? ................................. 175
  4.2 PAUL’S NOTION OF SIN: UNIVERSAL OR GENTILES? .............................. 188
    4.2.1 Paul’s Notion of Sin: Solely Gentiles ......................................................... 188
    4.2.2 Paul’s Notion of Sin: Universal ................................................................. 192
  4.3 PAUL’S UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHRIST EVENT ..................................... 202
    4.3.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy? ............................ 203
    4.3.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively? ....................... 208
    4.3.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity? ............................ 212
  4.4 CONCLUSION ................................................................................................. 217
5 CHAPTER 4: ROMANS (2) .................................................................................. 218
  5.1 THE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY ........................................................................... 218
    5.1.1 The Role of Torah ..................................................................................... 219
    5.1.2 Christ or Torah? ........................................................................................ 221
    5.1.3 Ultimate Authority for Paul: Torah ............................................................ 228
    5.1.4 Ultimate Authority for Paul: Christ ........................................................... 230
  5.2 CIRCUMCISION AND UNCIRCUMCISION ................................................... 232
    5.2.1 Effective Circumcision ............................................................................. 232
    5.2.2 Ineffective Circumcision ......................................................................... 233
    5.2.3 Paul’s view on Circumcision ................................................................... 235
  5.3 THE IDENTITY OF ALL CHRIST BELIEVERS ................................................... 239
    5.3.1 The Role of Ethnicity ................................................................................ 239
    5.3.2 Divine Identity ........................................................................................ 241
  5.4 ABRAHAM AND CHRIST ................................................................................... 255
    5.4.1 Abraham Frames Christ ........................................................................... 255

vii
5.4.2 Re-evaluates Abraham ................................................................. 256
5.4.3 Faith in God model ................................................................. 259
5.5 PAUL’S SALVATION MECHANISM ............................................. 262
  5.5.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ ............................ 263
  5.5.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance? .................... 264
  5.5.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ ................................. 265
5.6 CONCLUSION ............................................................................. 272

6 CONCLUSION .................................................................................. 273
  6.1 EXEGESIS ................................................................................ 273
    6.1.1 The Exegesis of Gal 2:15-21 ................................................ 273
    6.1.2 The Exegesis of 1 Cor 9:19-23 ............................................ 276
    6.1.3 The Exegesis of 2 Cor 3:1-18 ............................................ 279
    6.1.4 The Exegesis of Rom 3:20 ................................................ 283
  6.2 CONCLUSION ............................................................................. 287
Abstract

Since E. P. Sanders’ *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* was published in 1977, there has been a paradigm shift in Pauline scholarship, consequently much research has been published and focused on the New Perspective on Paul. In recent years, another stream of Pauline Studies has emerged, which goes beyond the New Perspective on Paul, which is called the Radical Perspective on Paul (RPP). This area of Pauline scholarship is also sometimes known as Paul within Judaism.

Since this new trend of Pauline scholarship has emerged, this thesis aims to dialogue with this group of scholars, Paula Fredriksen, Matthew Thiessen and Mark Nanos in particular, and seeks to explore Paul’s soteriological understanding in regard to Jews and non-Jews. RPP scholars emphasize that the Gentile audience of Paul’s congregations and letters is vital to understand them. In their view, the fundamental issue of the early Jesus movement is Paul’s accommodation of the non-Jews when Paul meets Jews and non-Jews in synagogues. In terms of terminology, RPP advocates highlight that Paul divides people into two groups based on ethnicity, namely Jews and non-Jews. While the Paul within Judaism school scholars classify people based on ethnicity as Jews and non-Jews (sometimes called Gentiles), and focus on the issue of Paul’s accommodation of non-Jews, the questions to be asked are:

1. Did Paul address his letters exclusively to ethnic Gentiles?
2. What did Paul think about the salvation of Jews and non-Jews in classifying people as Jews and non-Jews (e.g. 1 Cor 1:22-24), when he encountered people with different ethnicities in different places (e.g. Corinth, Galatia)?
3. What was the rationale behind Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews?

4. Did Paul believe that Jews were already in a covenantal relationship with God and that they needed to maintain that covenant relationship by observing the law, while non-Jews were saved by Christ?

5. Did Paul perceive that both Jews and non-Jews were saved by Christ in the same way?

In order to answer these questions, this project examines Paul’s four authentic letters, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans, to determine the mechanism of salvation for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s thought. These four letters are selected partly because they are considered as the *Hauptbriefe*, the principal letters of Paul, and partly because the RPP scholars concentrate on these letters in their research. Therefore, investigating these letters enables a more in-depth dialogue with RPP scholars.

This thesis will argue that Paul understands that salvation through Christ applies equally to Jews and non-Jews. Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is the same regardless of ethnicity, which means that after the first coming of Christ, both Jews and non-Jews are being saved through faith in Christ up to the second coming of Christ (Chapters 1-4). Since Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) is a key issue for the Paul within Judaism scholars, each chapter will first discuss this and then it will examine Paul’s salvific thought concerning Jews and Gentiles. By going through Galatians (Chapter 1), 1 and 2 Corinthians (Chapter 2) and Romans (Chapters 3-4), this thesis will argue that after the Christ event, Paul believed that salvation for Jews and non-Jews up until the second coming of Christ was possible exclusively
through faith in Christ without distinction.
Lay Summary

Concerning soteriology, there is a current debate in Pauline studies over whether Paul himself, as an apostle to the Gentiles, believes that Jews were already in a covenental relationship with God and needed to continue obeying the law in order to be saved, whereas non-Jews were saved by Christ. Or, according to Paul, Jews and non-Jews were saved differently through the agency of Christ. In any case, these perspectives diverge from the traditional interpretation on Paul, according to which Jews and non-Jews were saved in the same way through faith in Christ.

This thesis aims to examine Paul’s soteriological understanding of Jews and non-Jews in light of this context. This research project examines Paul’s four undisputed authentic letters, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans, to investigate the mechanism of salvation for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s thought. This thesis will contend that after the Christ event, Paul believed that salvation for Jews and non-Jews up until the second coming of Christ was exclusively and unequivocally available through faith in Christ. Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is identical in terms of ethnicity, indicating that both Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ (Chapters 1-4). Through Galatians (Chapter 1), 1 and 2 Corinthians (Chapters 2), and Romans (Chapters 3-4), this thesis will argue that in Paul’s thought, salvation for Jews and non-Jews is viewed as coming solely and equally through faith in Christ.
Acknowledgments

In 2023, I submitted my thesis to the University of Edinburgh for my doctoral degree. It was supervised by Prof. Paul Foster (secondary supervisor Dr. Matthew Novenson). My Doktorvater, Prof. Paul Foster, deserves special mention. His penetrating questions, consistent patience, and devoted supervision (particularly during the two-year pandemic lockdown) were exceptional. I am also grateful to my secondary supervisor, Prof. Matthew Novenson, whose suggestions enriched this endeavor, particularly in its final stages. The examiners of my thesis, Dr. Andrew Boakye and Dr. Philippa Townsend, are also deserving of my gratitude. Their comments significantly improved my work. Despite my mentioning of these scholars, I am solely responsible for any deficiencies in the thesis. In addition, Prof. Timothy Lim, Dr. Alex Chow, Prof. Brian Stanley, and Prof. John Barclay deserve my sincere appreciation as well.

I am indebted greatly to the Ming Yee Theological Scholarship for their support. Alliance Bible Seminary’s Mr. Wan Hoi Cheung, Dr. Wai Yi Tse, and Hong Kong Baptist University’s Dr. Wai Luen Kwok also deserve my gratitude. As I was growing up, the Kowloon Tong Alliance Church Foklam Church provided me with an enormous deal of support. Thanks are also extended to Rev. Dr. John Tran and the brothers and sisters of E. F. C. C. Jachin Church, who provided me with tremendous support and prayers throughout my studies. The student grants provided by the Chinese Evangelical Church in Edinburgh have also been greatly appreciated. Thanks are also extended to Margaret Acton, Alex Muir, and Matt Baines, who proofread my work with diligence and provided invaluable suggestions for enhancement. The
support of Dr. Tular and Prof. Hon is acknowledged. I also cherished my friendships with Chao Ma, Chun Tse, Edmund Leung, and the Charlotte Chapel’s brothers and sisters. Though I may not be able to enumerate every name, I would like to thank everyone who has supported me financially or through prayer over the years.

This thesis is a dedication to my spouse, Po Yan. Throughout these years, I have travelled to ‘Galatia,’ ‘Corinth,’ and ‘Rome’; thank you so much for bringing me back home safely. Without her love, patience, and support, this endeavor could never prosper. She alone is privy to and intimately aware of the price of supporting me. Together with you and our son Enoch, your encouragement and company have taught me the meaning of Jesus’ love. Thanks Yan. You are always in my mind!

Lord, the triumph of your grace is amazing!
1 Introduction

1.1 Objective

This thesis seeks to explore Paul’s soteriological understanding in regard to Jews and non-Jews. This will be accomplished through conversation with scholars who ascribe to the Paul within Judaism school, otherwise called the Radical Perspective on Paul (RPP). This research examines Paul’s four uncontested authentic letters, namely Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans, in order to investigate the salvation mechanism for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s thinking. This thesis will argue that Paul recognizes that salvation through Christ applies equally to Jews and non-Jews.

1.2 Background

Since E. P. Sanders’ Paul and Palestinian Judaism was published in 1977, there has been a paradigm shift in Pauline scholarship, consequently much research has been published and focused on the New Perspective on Paul. In recent years, another stream of Pauline Studies has emerged, which goes beyond the New Perspective on Paul, which is called the Radical Perspective on Paul (RPP). This area of Pauline scholarship is also sometimes known as Paul within Judaism.

1 The terms non-Jews and Gentiles will be used interchangeably in this thesis.
2 Since this new trend of Pauline scholarship has emerged recently, this thesis aims to dialogue with this group of scholars, this will be explained in more detail below. The terms Radical Perspective on Paul (RPP) and Paul within Judaism will be used interchangeably in this thesis.
3 The terms soteriology and salvation mechanism will be used interchangeably with the same meaning in this thesis.
4 For instance, see Frantisek Abel, The Message of Paul the Apostle within Second Temple Judaism (Lanham: Fortress Academic, 2020); Gabriele Boccaccini, Carlos A. Segovia, and Cameron J. Doody, Paul the Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016); Mark Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm, Paul within Judaism Restoring the First-Century
The Paul within Judaism scholars assert that their interpretation of Paul is historically correct, refuting any charges of anti-Semitism made by early Christianity. In their view, it is necessary to replace conventional ideas on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity with an understanding that is more historically accurate. This interpretation of Paul questions the notion that the apostle Paul serves as one of the notable pioneers of “Christianity” which is erroneous and anachronistic. According to the Radical Perspective on Paul, Paul never left Judaism in the middle of the first century to establish a new religion (e.g. Christianity), and as a result, Christianity has come to be seen as superior to and distinct from Judaism ever since.

By locating Paul inside Judaism, highlighting the continuity between Paul and Judaism in the first century, and underlining that Paul was a Torah observant Jew, the RPP reading sets the stage to challenge both the New Perspective on Paul and the Traditional Perspective on Paul. In contrast to the Traditional and New Perspective on Paul, Paul is not opposed to the Law and ethnocentrism according to the RPP reading. The Paul within Judaism school argues that this perspective contextualizes Paul most thoroughly and seems to be the most complete explanation of the evidence.

According to the RPP historians, Paul’s accommodation of the non-Jews when

8 Nanos, Introduction, 14.
9 Zetterholm, “Paul within Judaism,” 36-37.
10 Nanos, Introduction, 10-11.
he encountered Jews and non-Jews in synagogues forms the fundamental basis of the early Jesus movement.\textsuperscript{11} In the post-Holocaust era, the consideration of the meaning of Paul’s use of ἐκκλησία (between church and synagogue) is the critique point of this reading.\textsuperscript{12} The RPP reading is that in synagogues the apostle Paul sought “not only to find ways of socializing safely with non-Jews, but how to include non-Jews in the eschatological people of God.”\textsuperscript{13}

### 1.3 Current State of Scholarship

Given that Paul never left Judaism and welcomed non-Jews into Jewish communities including synagogues throughout the early Jesus movement, the following is a summary of the Radical Perspective on Paul. Paul served as a Jewish envoy to proclaim the gospel of Christ to the Gentiles and assisted them in being rescued via the agency of Christ. Paul felt compelled to immediately proclaim the gospel to the Gentiles because Christ’s resurrection inaugurates an apocalyptic eschatological age.\textsuperscript{14} Paul’s mission was to preach the gospel solely to Gentiles and not to Jews.\textsuperscript{15}

In this sense, Christ’s resurrection opened a door and inaugurated a new Gentile redemption program. Paul acknowledged that his Gentile converts “should remain non-Jewish, and that they should not observe the Torah, which possibly meant that

\textsuperscript{11} Zetterholm, “Paul within Judaism,” 39.
\textsuperscript{13} Zetterholm, “Paul within Judaism,” 39.
\textsuperscript{15} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 34.
they should not base their relation to the God of Israel on the Torah, but on Jesus-the-Messiah.”¹⁶ For Paul’s Gentile converts, a new salvific kinship was constructed by the ideology of patrilineal descent.¹⁷ Gentiles who believe in Christ therefore do not need to be circumcised in order to be saved and grafted into Israelite society.¹⁸

Regarding the people to whom the letters are addressed or those to whom Paul preached, the scholars of Paul within Judaism assert that the message of Paul is exclusively for non-Jews.¹⁹ The question of Paul’s audience has been a significant focus of debate in Pauline scholarship.²⁰ Since one of the key arguments of RPP is that Paul writes to Gentiles only, this thesis will first demonstrate this with key quotations from RPP scholars. For instance, Lloyd Gaston emphasizes that the communities of Paul are exclusively Gentile, not Jewish. Gaston argues,

Paul writes to Gentile Christians, dealing with Gentile-Christian problems…without adopting the Torah of Israel…It is remarkable that in the endless discussion of Paul’s understanding of the Law, few have asked what a first-century Jew would have thought of the Law as it relates to Gentiles.²¹

John Gager contends that Paul’s gospel is a message for Gentiles while confirming the legitimacy of the Law for Jews. Gager argues,

---

¹⁸ Fredriksen, Paul, 9.
¹⁹ Zetterholm, “Paul within Judaism,” 38.
²⁰ For example, regarding Paul’s audience, Das argues for Gentiles, see A. Andrew Das, Solving the Romans Debate (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), but Malina and Pilch argue for Jews, see Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006).
There is wide agreement that the Gentiles stand at the center of Paul’s thought and activity. He calls himself the “apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom 11:13) and “Christ’s servant to the Gentiles” (Rom 15:16); he describes the preaching of the gospel as taking place “among the Gentiles” (Gal 2:2); when he speaks of his conversion experience, it is in terms of a mission to Gentiles (Gal 1:16); and in his account of his meeting in Jerusalem with those whom he calls “the leaders” he reports, “they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the Gentiles and gave the right hand of fellowship that we should go among the Gentiles” (Gal 2:7-9). Nor is there any indication that his own congregations consisted of any but converted Gentiles. Certainly, the audience addressed in the letters is always Gentile.\(^{22}\)

Caroline Johnson Hodge argues that Paul writes his letters to Gentiles only,

There is ample evidence that Paul writes to Gentiles: he sees himself as called to the Gentiles (Gal 1:16, 2:7–9; Rom 11:13, 15:1–6) and addresses Gentiles directly in his letters (Rom 1:5–6, 13; 11:13; 15:6). Indeed, few dispute that the Gentiles were central to Paul’s work and were intended as recipients of his letters. But we do not have the same evidence for a Jewish audience. Indeed, Paul never claims to be speaking to Ioudaioi in his letters, nor does he connect his own teaching activity with Ioudaioi.\(^{23}\)

Matthew Thiessen argues that Paul writes exclusively to Gentiles because Paul is an apostle to the Gentiles,

Any attempt to understand Paul’s letters, consequently, must begin with his oft-repeated assertions that God called him and set him apart as his agent to preach the gospel of Christ

---


\(^{23}\) Hodge, *If Sons, Then Heirs*, 9.
to the Gentiles (e.g., Rom 1:5; 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 2; cf. Eph 3:6–8). These claims to having divine authority to preach to Gentiles suggest that he wrote primarily, perhaps even exclusively, for Gentiles-in-Christ. Therefore, when Paul quotes Jewish scriptures or comments on the Jewish law, he does so in relation to his mission to non-Jews.24

Laura Salah Nasrallah also argues that Paul writes to Gentiles,

It is important to articulate that those to whom he writes are most often Gentiles who wish to affiliate with Judaism and with the particular form of Judaism in Christ that we glimpse in the letters of Paul and his co-writers…Yet Paul’s letters, among other evidence, demonstrate Gentile interest in affiliating with Judaism. Reading Paul’s letters as evidence of and within the diverse Judaism of the first century CE allows us to put the brakes on Christian supersessionism.25

Nanos also emphasizes that the audience of Paul is Gentile Christ believers.

Nanos contends that,

Paul’s letters address specific concerns he has for the non-Jews in these communities. They are the encoded/implied reader, the target reader of Paul’s instructions, regardless of the fact that there are (probably) Jewish Christ-followers in the assemblies receiving the letters, and that non-Christ-followers also might read them. In order to keep this distinction front and center when interpreting what Paul means and does not mean with regard to Jews such as himself (i.e., with respect to Torah, circumcision, dietary commandments, etc.), virtually

every statement Paul makes in his letters should be accompanied by the implied phrase,

“for non-Jews who are Christ-followers.”

Magnus Zetterholm asserts that the Paul within Judaism perspective situates Paul entirely in Judaism which emphasizes the continuity between Paul and Judaism. Zetterholm recognizes that the Paul within Judaism reading is close to the real Paul. In conclusion, scholars of the Paul within Judaism school claim that the ethnic audience of Paul’s letters consists solely of non-Jews and that his message is directed only at Gentiles.

Furthermore, although the RPP approach disagrees with the New Perspective on Paul (NPP), it is similar to the NPP in that it adheres to the concept of covenantal nomism in matters pertaining to salvation. Nanos draws attention to the concept of covenantal nomism, which “recognizes the initial role of divine grace and of faith to initiate the relationship, but also perceives a consequent responsibility to behave according to the terms of the agreement into which the participants have entered.”

Paul extends a warm invitation to Gentiles who have put their faith in Christ to align themselves with the God of Israel via the mediation of Christ. Paul, on the other hand, makes room for Jewish believers in Christ, including Paul himself, to continue to obey the Torah in order to maintain their covenantal relationship with God.

---

28 Zetterholm, Approaches to Paul, 239.
Some RPP scholars, but not all, suggest ‘the so-called “Sonderweg” trajectory, which detects in Paul’s letters the belief in a “special way” for non-Jews to be included in salvation through Christ, alongside the historical Sinai covenant with Israel.’\textsuperscript{32} For instance, Gager emphasizes two covenants of salvation which mean Gentiles are saved through Christ while Jews are saved by remaining Jewish and by observing the Mosaic Law.\textsuperscript{33} Gager also suggests that “Thus his [Paul’s] arguments against the validity of circumcision and the Mosaic covenant apply only to the status of the Law for Gentiles within the Jesus-movement.”\textsuperscript{34} Meanwhile, Pamela Eisenbaum argues that salvation through Christ is for Gentiles. Eisenbaum contends, Nevertheless, there is a growing number of scholars, myself among them, who would argue that what was accomplished by Jesus’ death was the reconciliation of Gentiles to God and that that is all Paul ever claimed Jesus accomplished. In other words, Jesus’ death is not intended for the salvation of the whole world but rather just for the salvation of Gentiles.\textsuperscript{35}

In this way, although not all RPP advocates agree with the view of the two-covenant salvation, some RPP academics argue that Paul’s soteriology may provide a separate path to salvation for Jews and non-Jews.

\textsuperscript{32} Nanos, “Introduction,” 9. The terms Sonderweg and two-covenant salvation will be used interchangeably in this thesis.


1.4 Research Question

However, there are numerous Pauline interpreters who have a different viewpoint and argue that Paul’s ethnic audience consists of both Jews and Gentiles. For example, N. T. Wright argues that “It is thus absolutely true, as has recently been stressed, that Paul ‘teaches the gospel using ethnic and kinship language to articulate God’s plan for salvation in terms of these identities,’ but this does not at all mean that we are wrong to see his message as being for all, Jew as well as Gentile.”36

Michael Bird contends that,

An anomalous aspect of Paul’s career is that, even while he attempted to protect his Gentile converts from Jewish proselytism, he never ceased to proclaim Christ to his fellow Jews and persisted in seeking amicable relations with Jewish Christ-believing communities.

Thus, I conclude that Luke and the early church’s portrayal of Paul as the apostle to Gentiles and to Jews is essentially correct.37

Brant Pitre, Michael Barber and John Kincaid argue that,

Paul’s commitment to Jeremiah’s new covenant promise helps clarify what he means when he says that “all Israel will be saved” (Rom 11:26). While it is certainly true that Paul articulates a remnant theology in Romans 9–11, it is equally important to point out that, when interpreted in context, Paul’s statements also imply that everyone who will be saved—whether Jew or gentile—will be saved through the new covenant.38

Michael Gorman argues that,

Paul’s primary mission, then, was to preach the gospel among the nations and thereby to the uncircumcised. But because his mission was part of a larger divine plan of bringing all peoples to recognize Jesus as Lord, he was happy to proclaim the good news to Diaspora Jews and was grief-stricken when only a relatively few responded (Rom 9:1–5). In fact, Paul’s concrete goal was to build multicultural communities of Christ-believers consisting of Jews and Gentiles alike.39

In addition, a number of Pauline scholars argue that Paul’s concern is not only in the salvation of Gentiles, but also Jews. For instance, Barclay argues that,

So does Paul’s gospel concern the whole of humanity? Let us hear him speak on this matter (my translations): “For I am not ashamed of the good news, for it is the power of God for salvation for everyone who believes, for both the Jew first and the Greek” (Rom. 1:16); “for we have charged already that both Jews and Greeks—all—are under sin” (Rom. 3:9); “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified, as a gift, by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23–24); “for there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, who is rich towards all who call upon him” (Rom. 10:12); “for God has shut up all people into disobedience, in order that he might have mercy on all” (Rom. 11:32); “we preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block, to the gentiles foolishness” (1 Cor. 1:23). It is, I think, incontestable, that when Paul says “Jews and Greeks” or “Jews and gentiles,” he means all people. He clearly regards the gospel as applicable to the whole of humanity.40

---

Pitre argues that,

Note well that in Romans Paul is not just speaking about “salvation” in general but about “the gospel” (τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, to euangelion) in particular being “to the Jew first” (Ἰουδαῖοι πρῶτον, Ioudaioi te prōton) (Rom. 1:16). Do not these verses suggest that Paul’s mission of evangelization gives priority to his fellow Jews and that Paul sees the “salvation” of Jews as taking place in the same way as of gentiles: through “faith” in the “gospel” (Rom. 1:17)?

Das argues that,

In preparing for Romans 11, Paul in 10:11 adds the word “everyone” to his quotation of Isaiah 28:16 (cf. Rom. 9:33) and is clear in 10:12–13 that there is no difference between Jews and gentiles with respect to salvation. Both have the same Lord (10:12), the Lord Jesus Christ (10:9). “All Israel … saved” in Romans 11:26 hearkens to the repeated use of “all” in Romans 10:8–13 to explain that one is saved, whether Jew or gentile, by believing in Jesus Christ.

Wright challenges the view of Sonderweg by saying that,

…this means that if Paul had held, or had even thought of holding, the kind of ‘two-covenant’ theory espoused in some circles, according to which Jews are saved by being good Jews and Gentiles are saved by becoming Christians, he would have had no need to pray the prayer of [Romans] 10:1, let alone 9:1–5, in the first place.

The disagreement between these Pauline interpreters and RPP academics invites

43 Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God, 1175.
more investigation into Paul’s salvific philosophy regarding Jews and non-Jews. It also requires more study on the people Paul writes to as this is insufficient in terms of ethnicity. Therefore, more research is required.

The proponents of Paul within Judaism school stress the continuity between Paul and Judaism. In terms of ethnicity, it is unquestioned that Paul was a Jew (Gal 2:15), who grew up within a Jewish background, and identifies himself as such: he was circumcised on the eighth day, he came from the nation of Israel, specifically the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, and a Pharisee according to the law (Phil 3:5). In terms of terminology, RPP scholars emphasize that Paul divided people into two groups based on ethnicity, namely Jews and non-Jews.44 It is undeniable that the subject of ethnicity is currently a hot topic in the discussion of cultural or social identity.45 In fact, for non-Jews, there were many different ethnicities in the first century. For instance, “as Dio Chrysostom observed, with reference to the population of Alexandria in the late 1st or early 2nd century C.E., the inhabitants consisted of Greeks, Italians, Syrians, Libyans, Cilicians, Ethiopians, Arabs, Bactrians, Scythians, Persians, and Indians.”46

46 Gruen, Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism, 8; J. W. Cohoon and H. Lamar Crosby,
While RPP scholars frame people based on ethnicity, classifying them into Jews and non-Jews (sometimes called Gentiles), and focusing on the issue of Paul’s accommodation of non-Jews, the questions to be asked are:

1. Did Paul address his letters exclusively to ethnic Gentiles?
2. What did Paul think about the salvation of Jews and non-Jews in classifying people as Jews and non-Jews (e.g. 1 Cor 1:22-24), when he encountered people with different ethnicities in different places (e.g. Corinth, Galatia)?
3. What was the rationale behind Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews?
4. Did Paul believe that Jews were already in a covenantal relationship with God and that they needed to maintain that covenant relationship by observing the law, while non-Jews were saved by Christ?
5. Did Paul perceive that both Jews and non-Jews were saved by Christ in the same way?

1.5 Selection of Scholars

The Paul within Judaism school is comprised of a large number of scholars, including John Gager, Lloyd Gaston, Caroline Johnson Hodge, Matthew Thiessen, Mark Nanos, Paula Fredriksen, Magnus Zetterholm, Kathy Ehrensperger, Pamela Eisenbaum, Stanley Stowers, Laura Salah Nasrallah and William Campbell. Since it is evident that this thesis cannot engage in discourse with every expert on Paul within Judaism, it must be admitted that the project’s selection of dialogue partners is rather
selective. The following factors were used to select scholars; the length of time they had spent researching in this area, having a substantial history of Pauline research and having published recent work in this area. As a result, Mark Nanos, Paula Fredriksen, and Matthew Thiessen, selective. The following factors were used to select scholars; the length of time they had spent researching in this area, having a substantial history of Pauline research and having published recent work in this area. As a result, Mark Nanos, Paula Fredriksen, and Matthew Thiessen,47 three experts on Paul within Judaism, are the primary dialogue partners for this research.

As Matthew Novenson suggests, Mark Nanos has made significant contributions since this school’s development in the mid-1990s.48 Since then he has published two provocative works about Paul’s letters to the Romans and the Galatians respectively. They are The Mystery of Romans (1996) and The Irony of Galatians (2001). He then edited The Galatians Debate (2002) and Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle (2015). Recently, Nanos published Reading Paul within Judaism (2018), Reading Romans within Judaism (2018), and Reading Corinthians and Philippians within Judaism (2018). The remarkable credentials of Nanos in this discipline, along with his extensive attention to detail in his study of Pauline texts, are noteworthy.


47 The order is arbitrary.
provides a full demonstration of her thoughts on Paul within Judaism. The extensive research that Fredriksen has done on the New Testament and Christian origin is excellent, and her most recent work on Paul in particular is remarkable.

Matthew Thiessen is a younger researcher than Nanos and Fredriksen, but his recent, important work on Paul is especially relevant. Paul’s accommodation of Gentiles and integration of them into Judaism is the subject of Thiessen’s *Paul and the Gentile Problem* (2016). Other relevant works are *The So-Called Jew in Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (2016), which he edited, and *Contesting Conversion: Genealogy, Circumcision, and Identity in Ancient Judaism and Christianity* (2011). His most recent book is titled *Jesus and the Forces of Death* (2021).49

Here, I will list just three similarities and differences between Nanos, Fredriksen, and Thiessen so that the reader may have a basic understanding of them. The main body of the thesis will provide more detail. First, all three RPP scholars concur that Paul only addresses his letters to Gentile Christ believers. Second, Paul upholds the Torah as his supreme authority and he is not a “Law-Free” apostle according to Nanos, Fredriksen, and Thiessen. Third, these three Paul within Judaism scholars have differing opinions on Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews. While Nanos holds a two-covenant theological perspective on this,50 Fredriksen and Thiessen disagree and emphasize that Jews are to continue to keep the law.51 While the three of them share some similarities and differences in their researches, this project will

49 Additionally, I see that Thiessen’s new book, *A Jewish Paul: The Messiah’s Herald to the Gentiles*, is about to be released (it will be published tentatively in August 2023). My project, however, is currently in its final stages and cannot interact with this upcoming work.
focus primarily on the soteriology for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s understanding and their research will be referred to when necessary.\textsuperscript{52}

1.6 Method

McIntyre defines the phenomena of post-truth in the 21\textsuperscript{st} century as “…a form of ideological supremacy, whereby its practitioners are trying to compel someone to believe in something whether there is good evidence for it or not. And this is a recipe for political domination.”\textsuperscript{53} However, in the field of Pauline Studies, it is even more difficult to determine the ‘truth’ of Paul’s philosophy because the protagonist is not in the 21st century but the 1st.

Regarding Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews, if he were still living, it would be more effective to ask him personally. This is obviously impossible. The works of Paul’s contemporaries such as Josephus and Philo, as well as other manuscripts, inscriptions, and archaeological findings from Paul’s period, provide other sources of information. However, the most significant source for assessing Paul’s soteriology is his undisputed authentic letters. Examining his letters and interpreting them in his own context (e.g. historical background, social values,

\textsuperscript{52} This thesis seeks to have a genuine dialogue with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos. Therefore, this thesis will quote the relevant points of view from them during the discussion in order to avoid misinterpreting or misrepresenting their meaning.

\textsuperscript{53} Lee C. McIntyre, \textit{Post-Truth} (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2018), 13. In other words, sometimes people do not even know the fact or the truth, their perspective or point of views are shaped by social media or political spin. Here borrowing the term “post-truth” from McIntyre to point out the difficulty of finding the truth. For more discussion on post-truth, see also Stuart Sim, \textit{Post-Truth, Scepticism & Power} (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2019); David Block, \textit{Post-Truth and Political Discourse} (Cham: Springer International, 2019); Ignas Kalpokas, \textit{A Political Theory of Post-Truth} (Cham: Springer International, 2019); Michael A. Peters, Sharon. Rider, Mats. Hyvönen, and Tina Besley, \textit{Post-Truth, Fake News Viral Modernity & Higher Education} (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2018).
economic and political situation) is the most significant way for determining his thought pattern. Focusing on Paul’s uncontested writings is therefore inevitable.

In order to analyze the mechanism of salvation for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s thought, this research will examine Paul’s four undisputed authentic letters: Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, and Romans. These four letters are selected partly because they are considered as the Hauptbriefe, the principal letters of Paul, and partly because the RPP scholars concentrate on these letters in their research. Therefore, by investigating these letters there can be a more in-depth dialogue with RPP scholars in the project.

In addition, as evidenced, there are a number of Pauline interpreters with varying interpretations. This thesis aims to determine Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews by investigating these letters grammatically, exegetically, historically, and sociologically, by conversing with the three RPP scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos, and by exploring which interpretation and understanding of Paul’s letters makes the most sense and is the most consistent. Despite the difficulty of the undertaking, it is essential to focus on Paul’s expressions, locate his letters in the first century, and seek Paul’s perspective on the salvation of Jews and non-Jews.

Since the goal is to determine Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews, this study will concentrate on crucial terms like νόµος (e.g. Rom 3:31, 10:4, 1 Cor 9:20, Gal 2:16), περιτόµη (e.g. Rom 2:25-29, 1 Cor 7:19, Gal 5:6, 6:15), ἀκροβυστία (e.g. 1

Cor 7:18-19, Gal 5:6, 6:15), πιστεύω (e.g. Rom 1:16, 10:4, 1 Cor 1:21, Gal 2:16), σοφίζω (e.g. Rom 5:9, 10, 8:24, 9:27, 10:9, 13, 11:14, 26, 1 Cor. 1:18, 21, 3:15, 5:5, 7:16, 9:22, 10:33, 15:2, 2 Cor. 2:15), Ἐλλην (e.g. Rom 1:14, 1:16, 2:9, 1 Cor 1:22, 24, 10:32, 12:13, Gal 2:3, 3:28), ἐθνὸς (e.g. Rom 1:5, 13, 2:14, 24, 3:29, 1 Cor 1:23, 5:1, 12:2, 2 Col 11:26, Gal 1:16, 2:2, 2:8, 9), Ἰουδαῖος (e.g. Rom 1:16, 2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29, 1 Cor 1:22, 23, 24, 9:20, 10:32, 12:13, 2 Cor 11:24, Gal 2:13, 14, 15, 3:28), Ἀβραὰμ (e.g. Rom 4:1, 2, 3, 9, 12, 13, 16, 9:7, 11:1, 2 Cor. 11:22, Gal. 3:6, 7, 8, 9, 14, 16, 18, 29, 4:22), the language of πασ, and the pronouns such as first, second and third-person pronouns in the letters.

1.7 Differentiation

Before examining Paul’s four undisputed texts, two types of significant distinction must be taken into consideration in order to understand his soteriology for Jews and non-Jews. It is crucial to first distinguish between the people to whom Paul writes and the subjects of his letters. To put it another way, it’s critical to recognize who Paul is speaking to and what (or who) he is speaking about while analyzing the text.

Second, it’s crucial to fully understand Paul’s various types of audience and the complex relationships between them. Stanley Stowers’ model helpfully points out different readers such as empirical readers, the encoded explicit reader and the encoded implicit reader.55 Also, as the example of 1 Corinthians shows, there can be different kinds of audience because of Paul’s previous visit to Corinth. Therefore, one

can distinguish at least six different kinds of audiences.

1. First are those who actually read or heard the letters, the actual readers or listeners. This is the audience whom Stowers calls the empirical readers.\textsuperscript{56}

2. Second are those whom Paul intended to read it. This is related to Paul’s intention.

3. Third are those whom Paul actually baptized, spoke with or preached to. In this thesis, I call them Paul’s actual audience.

4. Fourth are those with whom Paul actually lived in Corinth.

5. Fifth are those explicitly addressed in the text. Stowers calls them the encoded explicit reader.\textsuperscript{57} They are called Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) in this thesis.

6. Sixth are those implicitly addressed in the text. Stowers calls them the encoded implicit reader.\textsuperscript{58}

The relationship between these six different audiences is complicated. For example, those to whom Paul actually spoke in Corinth may or may not be the same as those to whom Paul wrote. Those whom Paul thinks would read the letter may or may not be identical with those who actually read 1 Corinthians. Those explicitly addressed in the text may or may not be the same as those who actually read the letter. Therefore, it is necessary to keep in mind that there are different kinds of audiences whom Paul might or might not be aware that he was addressing.

\textsuperscript{56} Stowers, \textit{A Rereading of Romans}, 21.
\textsuperscript{57} Stowers, \textit{A Rereading of Romans}, 21.
\textsuperscript{58} Stowers, \textit{A Rereading of Romans}, 21.
1.8 The Position of the Thesis

In this project, I intend to make some original contributions to the examination of Pauline soteriology as a whole. First, since the discussion of Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) is inadequate in Pauline scholarship, this thesis can prompt a reevaluation of Paul’s explicit audience in terms of ethnicity by providing an exhaustive discussion on this topic.\textsuperscript{59} Second, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos, Romans and Galatians have been the subject of substantial research on Paul’s soteriological ideas. However, their research on 1 and 2 Corinthians by Paul is quite insufficient.\textsuperscript{60} Consequently, I hope that my research on 1 and 2 Corinthians can fill this gap and contribute to the field.

This thesis will argue that in terms of ethnicity Paul’s explicit audience (to whom he writes) comprises both Jews and Gentiles. This thesis will contend that Paul understands that salvation through Christ applies equally to Jews and non-Jews. Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is the same regardless of ethnicity, which means that after the first coming of Christ, both Jews and non-Jews are being saved through faith in Christ up to the second coming of Christ (Chapters 1-4). Since Paul’s explicit audience is a key issue for the Paul within Judaism scholars, each chapter will first discuss this and then it will examine Paul’s salvific thought concerning Jews and Gentiles. By going through Galatians (Chapter 1), 1 and 2 Corinthians (Chapter 2) and Romans (Chapters 3-4), this thesis will assert that following the Christ event, Paul

\textsuperscript{59} This will be undertaken especially in the chapters analyzing Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians.

\textsuperscript{60} In contrast to his two provocative works on Galatians and Romans, Nanos writes only a handful of pieces on the Corinthian letters. In \textit{Paul: The Pagans’ Apostle}, Fredriksen does not devote an entire chapter to the letters to the Corinthians. In \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, Thiessen essentially just mentions 1 Cor 7:19 as the hermeneutical key in the introduction and conclusion, and his examination of 1 and 2 Corinthians is weak.
thought salvation for both Jews and non-Jews up until the second coming of Christ as being possible solely through faith in Christ, after which the findings of the whole project will be summarized.
2 Chapter 1: Galatians

How does Paul conceive of the salvation mechanism vis-à-vis Jews and non-Jews? Nanos, Fredriksen and Thiessen may be right to point out that the audience to whom Paul writes or preaches are primarily or exclusively non-Jews,¹ and to emphasize that the salvation of the Gentiles through Christ works by fitting them into the narrative of Abraham.² However, there still remains a question that requires resolution. Namely, whether Paul understands that salvation through Christ applies equally to Jews and non-Jews. By surveying Galatians and analyzing the arguments proposed by Paul within Judaism scholars, this chapter argues that according to Paul both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ without any differentiation.

Since Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) is a key element of the argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, this chapter will first discuss Paul’s explicit audience and then it will examine Paul’s salvific thought concerning Jews and Gentiles. For Paul’s explicit audience, it is the position of this thesis that Paul’s explicit audience in the letter of Galatians includes Gentile Christ believers.

Concerning Paul’s soteriology, this chapter examines the letter of Galatians in order

to argue that Paul’s theological understanding of salvation comes from the Christ event, which involves a re-evaluation of the Mosaic and Abrahamic covenants. Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, and also for Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ. From the perspective of the Christ event, the era of Mosaic covenant has faded; the Mosaic law has been relativized, circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter for Paul, Jewish Christ followers or Gentile Christ followers. According to Paul, Abraham functions as “a faith in God prototype” for all Christ believers. Paul holds the theological position that until the second coming of Christ, the only means of salvation for Jews and non-Jews after the Christ event is through faith in Christ.

2.1 ‘Write to’ or ‘Write about’?

In this section, it will be claimed that, in terms of ethnicity, Paul’s explicit audience (those to whom he writes) consists only of Gentiles. Furthermore, it will be argued that both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers are included in what Paul discusses in Galatians. Paul’s salvation mechanism for Jews and Gentiles is based on what he says about Jews and Gentiles in the letter as well as his explicit audience. As a result, it’s crucial to distinguish between the people Paul is writing to and the people he is writing about when examining his views on salvation for both Jews and non-Jews.

2.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience

Concerning Paul’s theological thought, the Gentile audience of Paul’s letters is
significant in Fredriksen’s view. Fredriksen contends that most of Paul’s letters are directed to communities of Gentile Christ believers, and that Paul’s letters seldom address Jews.\(^3\) Fredriksen articulates this position when she argues that “…in the letters we have from him, Paul addresses gentiles and only gentiles—in tandem with Paul’s commitment to an imminent eschatology, as the necessary point of orientation when interpreting Paul’s epistles.”\(^4\) For Fredriksen, Paul’s Gentile audience is the key to understanding his letters. Fredriksen contends that “[a]s a point of orientation for any interpretation, though, the audience of Paul’s remarks must always be kept in mind.”\(^5\) Fredriksen argues that, “[a]ll of his [Paul’s] extant letters are addressed to gentiles. This means that, whatever Paul says about the Law, he says it first of all with reference to gentiles.”\(^6\) In this sense, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) governs how his letters and thought should be understood.

Similarly, in the view of Nanos, Paul’s explicit audience in Galatians is Gentile Christ believers. Nanos argues that “In Galatians then, Paul does not express an opinion about the value of Jewish practices for Jewish people, not even proselytes—they are not the addressees…Rather, he confronts Christ-believing Gentiles who are considering conversion to proselyte status.”\(^7\) Nanos also contends for the vital role of

\(^3\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 113.
\(^4\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 122 n 52.
\(^5\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 130.
\(^6\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 130. Concerning Paul’s congregation in Galatia, Fredriksen argues that ‘All of the assemblies to which Paul writes are comprised primarily if not exclusively of Christ-following ex-pagan pagans…in Galatia (whose members “formerly did not know God,” 4.8; also, only non-Jews could be candidates for adult circumcision),’ see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 122.
Paul’s Gentile audience in his epistles. Nanos states,

Paul’s letters address specific concerns he has for the non-Jews in these communities. They are the encoded/implied reader, the target reader of Paul’s instructions, regardless of the fact that there are (probably) Jewish Christ-followers in the assemblies receiving the letters, and that non-Christ-followers also might read them. In order to keep this distinction front and center when interpreting what Paul means and does not mean with regard to Jews such as himself (i.e., with respect to Torah, circumcision, dietary commandments, etc.), virtually every statement Paul makes in his letters should be accompanied by the implied phrase, “for non-Jews who are Christ-followers.”

On this point, Thiessen also contends that Paul writes his letters to the Gentile Christ believers only. Furthermore, Thiessen argues that this reading can give a coherent understanding of Paul’s thought. Thiessen argues that,

Based on his own explicit claims that he is the apostle to the gentiles, it is historically more accurate to read his letters as addressing gentiles, and thus considerably more helpful in our quest for providing a coherent account of Paul’s thinking. This assumption, together with Paul’s remarks in 1 Cor 7:19, provides the hermeneutical key to reading Paul’s letters.

All of these representatives of the Paul within Judaism group, regardless of other differences, hold this key point in common. Namely that in his authentic letters Paul wrote exclusively to a Gentile audience, and moreover grasping this point is key to understanding Paul’s theological thought.

---

9 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 8. Please refer to the quotation from the thesis that I cited on pages 5-6.
10 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
2.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Gentile Christ Believers

Concerning Paul’s Gentile audience, it is agreed with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos that throughout the letter of Galatians, Paul writes to Gentile Christ believers. In other words, the encoded audience of Galatians is Gentile Christ believers in Galatia.\textsuperscript{11} This is for the following reasons. First, the adverb τότε shows the former life of his audience, who according to Paul, were enslaved to idolatry when they did not know God (Gal 4:8).\textsuperscript{12} Second, Paul’s conditional sentence ἐὰν περιτέμησθε implies that the audience has not been circumcised (Gal 5:2). Therefore, for Paul’s explicit audience, in line with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, it is the case that ethnically it does most certainly include Gentile Christ believers and they may be the most prominent ethnic group in Paul’s Galatian community.\textsuperscript{13}

2.1.3 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers?

Admittedly, with regard to Paul’s explicit audience, the data for Jews or Jewish Christ believers does not seem so strong. For example, by using Ἰουδαῖος in Gal 2:13-15, Paul is not talking to Jews in Galatia, rather he is talking about past events in Antioch (Gal 2:10). Therefore, there seems to be no clear data to indicate that Paul’s explicit audience involves Jews or Jewish Christ believers in the letter of Galatians.

\textsuperscript{11} Here borrowing the term “encoded reader” from Stowers meaning those who are being addressed explicitly in the text, see S. K. Stowers, A Rereading of Romans: Justice, Jews, and Gentiles (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 21. It is called Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) in this thesis.
Though it does not necessarily mean that Paul’s assemblies in Galatia include only Gentile Christ followers, however, it seems clear that Paul’s explicit audience in Galatians is Gentile Christ believers.

Nevertheless, regarding Paul’s theological perspective it’s vital to note that Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is influenced by both what he talks about on Jews and Gentiles in Galatians as well as his explicit audience. When discussing Paul’s understanding of his salvation mechanism regarding Jews and non-Jews in Galatians, it must be remembered that Paul’s thought is not confined and determined only by his explicit audience. It is necessary to differentiate between the audience to whom Paul writes (Paul’s explicit audience) and the people about whom Paul writes. While agreeing with RPP scholars that Paul writes to Gentile Christ believers, this in itself does not mean that Paul was writing only about Gentile Christ believers in Galatians.

It is evident from Paul’s letter to Galatia that he is writing about both Jews and Gentiles. Paul’s language about Jews and non-Jews (e.g. Jews, Greeks and Gentiles)

---


appears in Galatians.  

These terms indicate that Paul talks about Jews and non-Jews in his letter. For example, Paul explicitly writes about Jews with the phrase ἡµεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι (Gal 2:15). Paul also writes about Jews by using the phrase καὶ συνυπεκρίθησαν αὐτῷ [καὶ] οἱ λοιποὶ Ἰουδαῖοι (Gal 2:13). As one born a Jew, Paul also talks about himself in the letter (Gal 2:19-20). On the other hand, regarding non-Jews, Paul talks about preaching among the Gentiles (Gal 1:16, 2:2), and the blessing of Abraham to the Gentiles (Gal 3:14). These illustrations demonstrate that Paul addresses both Jews and non-Jews in the letter of Galatians. As a result, Paul writes to Gentiles in Galatians about Jews and Gentiles.

Therefore, Paul’s theological ideas concerning the ways in which Jews and non-Jews can be saved are articulated not only in terms of the explicit audience but also in terms of what Paul says about Jews and non-Jews throughout the letter. In other words, the argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos emphasizing Paul’s explicit audience is just one of the ways to explore Paul’s theological thought. However, contrary to what they claim, it does not fully determine and demonstrate his theological understanding. Even if Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos are correct that Paul writes exclusively (or primarily) to Gentile Christ believers, this does not mean his theological ideas are constrained by the ethnic identity of his explicit addressees. Rather, Paul’s theological thinking is also expressed through what he writes about Jews and Gentiles in Galatians. As a result, this study will not just concentrate on Paul’s explicit audience but also on what Paul says in Galatians regarding Jews and

16 For instance, Ἰουδαῖος appears in Gal 2:13, 14, 15, 3:28; Ἕλλην appears in Gal 2:3, 3:28; ἔθνος appears in Gal 1:16, 2:2, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 3:8, 14.
non-Jews.

2.2 Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event

This section will argue that Paul’s theology of salvation is drawn from and governed by the Christ event. The Christ event serves as a grand narrative for Paul, reshaping his thinking so that he rereads the Hebrew Bible. In light of the Christ event, Paul reflects on the past and discovers two separate and distinct narratives. One is in the divine trajectory, which is the story of Abraham, which continues into the story of Christ. The other one is in the human trajectory, and it is the narrative of the law, which is distinct from the story of Christ. Paul uses the Christ event as a meta-narrative to re-evaluate human history (including Jewish history). As a result, Paul’s theological reasoning begins with Christ as the solution to the human predicament.

2.2.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy?

According to Fredriksen, the critical source and formation of Paul’s theological understanding come from authoritative Jewish literature, especially from the texts of prophecy. For Fredriksen, Isaiah acts as the governing source that frames Paul’s thought, and thus it is formed as a certain kind of apocalyptic eschatology concerning Israel and the salvation of the other nations.\(^\text{17}\)

Fredriksen argues,

As with his great scriptural mentor and model, Isaiah, so also with Paul: his intense apocalyptic expectation propelled his high-contrast depiction of Israel and the nations. The narrative function of the pagan nations in apocalyptic traditions is precisely to represent “not-Israel” – that is, all those other peoples who have not known God and who do not know God but who will come to know God at the End-Time. This theological distinction, in short, echoes and even emphasizes this ethnic distinction.18

Because of this, the ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology derived from Isaiah, the narrative of prior Jewish thought, constitutes a hermeneutical grid for Paul’s theological thinking.19 Regarding Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen situates Paul under the umbrella of prophecy, Isaiah in particular, and consequently emphasizes the prospective development and continuity from Judaism to Paul.20

While there are a number of possible sources that influence Paul’s soteriology, it will be argued that Paul’s utterances in Galatians demonstrate that the Christ event, and not Isaiah, is the most influential source in Paul’s thought. As Paul himself acknowledged, it is undeniable that Paul had a significant Jewish ancestry (Phil 3:5-6). Paul utilizes a number of verses from the Hebrew Bible in Galatians. For example, Paul uses Gen 12:3c and Gen 22:18a in Gal 3:8,21 Deut 27:26 in Gal 3:10, Deut 21:23 in Gal 3:13, Hab 2:4 in Gal 3:11, Lev 18:5 in Gal 3:12, Isa 54:1 in Gal 4:27, Gen 21:10 in Gal 4:30, and Lev 19:18 in Gal 5:14.22 There is only one occasion in

18 Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 38. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 114-115.
20 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 17.
Galatians where Paul explicitly quotes Isaiah, and that is in Gal 4:27, where he quotes
Isaiah 54:1.\textsuperscript{23} Given that Paul cites not just Isaiah, but also Deuteronomy, Habakkuk,
Leviticus, and Genesis in Galatians, how can Isaiah, as Fredriksen suggested, serve as
a guiding source in Paul’s salvific thought? If Fredriksen believes that Paul’s use of
Isaiah 54:1 in Galatians 4:27 or elsewhere in Galatians demonstrates that Isaiah
actually serves as a mentor for Paul’s thought, she needs to elaborate. In addition, she
needs to explain why Isaiah serves as Paul’s mentor and not Deuteronomy, Leviticus,
Habakkuk, or Genesis.

On the other hand, I would argue that the Christ event functions as a grand
narrative in Paul’s thought, through which he re-evaluates the Hebrew Scriptures for
the following reasons:\textsuperscript{24} Paul’s self-identification as an apostle not from men nor via
men, but from Jesus Christ and the Father shows that he is Christ’s servant (Gal 1:1,
cf. Gal 1:10). Second, Paul is concerned with the gospel that is Christ’s (Gal 1:7), and
he declares specifically that he got the gospel through the revelation of Jesus Christ
(Gal 1:12). Paul argues that he (along with Barnabas and Titus) has freedom in Christ
Jesus (Gal 2:4). Paul’s autobiographical declaration demonstrates that Christ now
resides inside him (Gal 2:20). Paul indicates that Christ rescued him from the curse of
the law (Gal 3:13). Paul underlines that he takes pride in the cross of the Lord Jesus
Christ (Gal 6:14). Finally, Paul’s understanding of the eschatological era opened by
the Christ event rescues him from the present evil age and propels him into the new

\textsuperscript{23} In addition, Gal 1:15-16a may contain an allusion to Isa 49:1-6, see Silva, “Galatians,” 786-787.
\textsuperscript{24} Paul’s references to Christ in Galatians are: Gal 1:1, 3, 6, 7, 10, 12, 22, 2:4, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 3:1,
13, 14, 16, 22, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 4:14, 19, 5:1, 2, 4, 6, 24, 6:2, 12, 14, 18, these are significantly
greater than his references to Isaiah.
era of Christ (Gal 1:4, 6:15). All of these statements show that the Christ event operates as a determinant source in his soteriological philosophy.\textsuperscript{25}

Because of this, Paul rereads the Hebrew Scriptures in the light of the Christ event. For example, in Gal 3:13 Paul’s quotation of Deut 21:23 and his language of Christ with the phrase Χριστὸς ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασεν show Paul’s Christological interpretation of Deut 21:23. In the narrative of Hagar and Sarah (Gal 4:21-31), Paul identifies two distinct covenantal trajectories: one from Hagar, associating with slavery and the present Jerusalem (Gal 4:25), and one from barren Sarah, signifying the heavenly Jerusalem and freedom (Gal 4:26). Paul’s citation of Isaiah 54:1 in Gal 4:27 demonstrates why Sarah, who had been childless, should have been joyful when her son Isaac was born according to the promise made to Abraham. Paul’s quotation of Gen 21:10 in Gal 4:30 indicates who Abraham’s true heir was according to the trajectory of divine promise. Paul then addresses the Galatians and argues that “we” are in line with Sarah’s line of free woman (Gal 4:31). Importantly, Paul closes and wraps up the account of Hagar and Sarah using the language of Christ with the sentence ἡμᾶς Χριστὸς ἠλευθέρωσεν (Gal 5:1). In this manner, the idea of freedom in Christ can be traced through Sarah’s line but not Hagar’s. Also, it shows that Paul interprets the narrative of Hagar and Sarah from a Christological perspective, identifies its meaning, and exhorts Christ followers in Galatia (Gal 5:1). In this sense, although Paul is an ethnic Jew and was zealous among his contemporary co-religionists in Judaism (Gal 1:13-14, 2:15), the determinative source of Paul’s

\footnote{So far, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence in the letter to Galatia to support the notion that Isaiah is Paul’s governing source.}
theological understanding comes from the revelation that was his experience of Christ (Gal 1:1, 1:12). Paul uses the Christ event as a meta-narrative that serves as the basis for his theological framework, through which he re-evaluates the prior Jewish narrative. In other words, Paul rereads the Hebrew Bible under the eschatological age inaugurated by Christ (Gal 1:4). In light of the Christ event, Paul’s knowledge transcends a narrow dependence on the prophets.

2.2.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively?

Fredriksen identifies Paul’s thought as formed by Jewish prophetic literature, his narrative logic developing prospectively from the Jewish narrative to Christ. In this sense, Christ fulfills the prophetic message by securing the final redemption of Israel and other nations in Jerusalem. Regarding Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen argues for the continuity between the prophets and Paul’s thought. According to Fredriksen, driven by ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology, Paul focuses on the Gentile mission to solve Gentile problems such as idolatry or adultery by incorporating them into Jewish

26 Timothy H. Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 172 and 176. Lim further distinguishes Paul’s theological understanding from the persherists, see Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters*, 171. Barclay also argues that ‘God’s beneficence is here traced not in the gifts of nature (Philo), nor in the covenant history of Israel (LAB; or of the righteous: The Wisdom of Solomon), nor even in the gift of the Torah (4 Ezra): it took place in a specific but world-changing event, the death and resurrection of Christ,” see John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 352.

27 However, this reading is in contrast with Fredriksen’s view, see Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 46.


30 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 9 n 4. Fredriksen forms her argument based on the prophetic message and perceives Christ as opening a gate for Gentile’s salvation by bringing them to Israelite communities. Thiessen is in line with Fredriksen, see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 21-22.

covenental communities through Christ.\textsuperscript{32} Therefore, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s epistemology appears to proceed prospectively from Judaism to Christ, from human plight to solution, as opposed to “retrospectively from Christ back to Judaism, or from solution to plight.”\textsuperscript{33}

However, given that the Christ event rather than Isaiah serves as the grand narrative for Paul’s thought, I argue that Paul rethinks retrospectively and realizes that two distinct and separate narrative trajectories coexist prior to the Christ event. Paul’s statements in Galatians demonstrate, on the one hand, that the divine will of God was accomplished through the promise made to Abraham, which points to Christ. After posing several rhetorical questions to the Galatians (Gal 3:1-5), Paul argues that Abraham was recognized as righteous before God through faith in God (Gal 3:6). Paul then establishes a connection between Abraham and Christ, emphasizing that the promises made to Abraham and his seed, namely Christ (Gal 3:16). Paul also notes that the gospel was preached to Abraham beforehand (Gal 3:8) and identifies those who are in Christ with Abraham’s descendants (Gal 3:29). Thus, the Christ event is the determining factor by which Paul rethinks and discovers that the trajectory of Abraham’s story points forward to Christ.

However, in light of the Christ event, Paul recognizes another narrative in relation to the law that appears 430 years after Abraham’s narrative, and the law’s narrative is not identical to Abraham’s narrative and does not invalidate it (Gal 3:17). Paul reflects that the law’s narrative has time-limited and “added” characteristics in

\textsuperscript{32} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 9.
\textsuperscript{33} Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, \textit{Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination}, 16-17.
comparison to Abraham’s story (Gal 3:19), and he acknowledges that the faith — Christ — has arrived (Gal 3:25). Thus, the law’s narrative, which is distinct from Abraham’s narrative, exists prior to the occurrence of Christ. Therefore, in Galatians there are two different and separate narratives in Paul’s Christological reading.34

2.2.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity?

Concerning Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen situates Paul in a scriptural and Graeco-Roman world, arguing for the continuity and the importance of authoritative Jewish texts and Israelite tradition, showing how these texts work as a grand narrative of “Israel’s impending redemption” to shape Paul’s mind in which it indicates the salvation of Israel and other nations in the End.35 In this sense, Israel’s history and salvation become the final concern which lead Fredriksen to situate Paul within the Jewish narrative.36 According to Fredriksen, it seems that continuity with Judaism constitutes a fundamental ground to understand Paul’s epistemology.37

Notwithstanding the fact that the divine will of God is accomplished through the divine trajectory, the Abrahamic narrative points to the Christ narrative. I will argue that God’s will is not realized by the human trajectory, the narrative of the law in the

34 This point will be elaborated upon in this chapter’s section on Paul’s ultimate authority. On this issue, Boakye also argues that through the Christ event, Paul reads in retrospect and recognizes the discontinuity between the Abraham (and Christ) narrative and the Moses narrative, see Oakes and Boakye, Rethinking Galatians, 191 and 193.
36 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 17.
37 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 17.
context of human history (including Jewish history), which is discontinuous with the Christ event.

Concerning the divine trajectory, Paul views the Abraham story to be continuous with the Christ story because his remarks in Galatians reveal that God’s divine will was accomplished through the promise made to Abraham and that this promise points to Christ. Paul acknowledges the promise God made to Abraham and his seed and emphasizes explicitly that the seed he mentioned is Christ (Gal 3:16). In this way, the divine will of God can be traced through the narratives of Christ and Abraham because, according to Paul, they are in continuous relationship.

Regarding human trajectory, however, the narrative of Christ diverges from the narrative of the law. Since Paul acknowledges that everyone, including Jews and Gentiles, is under the power of sin (Gal 3:22) and the law is unable to impart life (Gal 3:21), so that no one is justified before God by the law (Gal 3:11), and those who possess the law are under the curse of the law (Gal 3:10). Paul contends that even though the Torah is holy (Rom 7:12), the power of sin, which originated in Adam (Rom 5:12–14), manipulates the law (Rom 7:5, 11) and renders humanity incapable of observing the law. In this way, Paul rereads human history (including Jewish history) in light of the Christ event and discovers the universal human predicament (Gal 3:22, cf. Rom 1:18-32). As a result of the power of sin, which renders humanity incapable of observing the law and fulfilling the divine will of God, the divine will of God does not culminate and reach a climax in human history (including Jewish history).

---

38 Even Paul himself struggled to observe the law and says, “I died to the law through the law” because of the power of sin (Gal 2:19-20).
Within the framework of divine and human realms, God’s beneficial act in Christ breaks into human history to rescue his believers, his activity continues, and his lordship is established over the world.\(^{39}\) For Paul, Christ’s death and resurrection are significant for him to acknowledge that these events inaugurated an eschatological era which delivers people from the present evil age by dealing with sins (Gal 1:4).\(^{40}\) The invasive character of the Christ event in the present evil age signifies there is discontinuity between the two ages (Gal 1:4). From the human perspective, the Christ event causes discontinuity with the human condition and opens a salvific gate moving “believers from ignorance to knowledge (Gal 4:9), from curse to blessing (Gal 3:13-14), from slavery to adoption (Gal 4:1-7).”\(^{41}\) Besides, Paul’s discontinuity language also appears in Paul’s history of Judaism and the law (Gal 1:12-14, 2:19-20).\(^{42}\) The Christ event that takes place “at the fullness of time” is a redemptive work of God to overcome the previous existing status of humanity (Gal 4:4) - it is not a development derived from the “the present evil age” or previous human history.\(^{43}\) In other words, the Christ event is not a development derived from the culmination of covenant

---

42 In Paul’s view, the two separated entities Ἰουδαία and τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ are in oppositional relation (Gal 1:13), see Longenecker, *Galatians*, 28.
promises that were previously given to Israel. In Paul’s narrative logic, the Christ event is an interruption to, not progress from, human history which inaugurated an eschatological era, and overturned the previous human plight. Käsemann rightly points out the discontinuity between the two ages,

[The apostle does not understand history as a continuous evolutionary process but as the contrast of the two realms of Adam and Christ. Pauline theology unfolds this contrast extensively as the struggle between death and life, sin and salvation, law and gospel. The basis is the apocalyptic scheme of the two successive aeons which is transferred to the present.]

In conclusion, in the framework of divine revelation and human history, Paul’s narrative logic of the Christ event demonstrates his way of thinking. Paul’s expressions in Galatians demonstrate that the decisive source of Paul’s soteriology is the Christ event, through which Paul rereads and employs the Hebrew Bible. While the story of Christ is continuous with the story of Abraham, the story of Christ is discontinuous with the story of the law in human history. The Christ event is a reversal of the previous human condition. God’s beneficial act in Christ acts as a

44 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 6. Wright argues unconvincingly that “We cannot expound Paul’s covenant theology in such a way as to make it a smooth, steady progress of historical fulfilment; but nor can we propose a kind of ‘apocalyptic’ view in which nothing that happened before Jesus is of any value even as preparation,” see N. T. Wright, Paul: Fresh Perspectives (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2005), 54. Barclay pushes back that “In Galatians, however, it is not clear that anything has happened on the human level as valuable “preparation” for the Christ-event; the divine promise given to Abraham is not preparation but pre-announcement;” see Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 412 n 50.


grand narrative to reshape Paul’s thinking in a way that he reads the human history retrospectorily in an entirely new way.\(^{47}\) Therefore, Paul’s theological comprehension proceeds from the solution (Christ) to the problem (humanity).\(^{48}\)

### 2.3 Ultimate Authority for Paul

In this section it will be argued that Christ rather than the law is the ultimate authority for Paul. In other words, the Torah is subordinate to Christ, since due to the Christ event the law is no longer the ultimate authority for Paul. When the term ultimate authority is employed in this discussion, it refers to that which Paul regards as the most prominent component and through which it functions as the supreme hermeneutic lens or prism through which other things can be viewed and evaluated. Regarding the salvation mechanism, Paul’s expressions in Galatians demonstrate that the Christ event has relativized the Mosaic covenant and the authority of the law. Although Paul views the law as a good thing as a whole (cf. Rom 7:12), Christ has taken the place of the law as the most influential priority in his life.

---


\(^{48}\) This reading is different from the retrospective-discontinuity model described by Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, see Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, 10-11. Also, this model is different from Hay’s and Wright’s retrospective-continuity model. For Hay, he places the starting point on Christ and emphasizes the continuity between God’s revelation and Israel’s history. Both of them interpret each other like a hermeneutical spiral and finally go back to Christ, see Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, 11; Richard B. Hays, “Apocalyptic *Poiēsis* in Galatians: Paternity, Passion, and Participation,” in *Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul’s Letter*, eds. M. W. Elliott et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2014), 204. For Wright, he argues in the logic started from (a) original plight to (b) solution and then to (c) reimagined plight, see N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 750.
2.3.1 The Role of Torah

Concerning Paul and his mission, according to Fredriksen Paul upholds the law as the ultimate authority. Fredriksen argues that Paul is blameless with respect to the law according to Phil 3:6 and points out the law given by God is a privilege for Jews (Rom 9:4); therefore, the curse of the law does not apply to Jews but Gentiles only.\(^{49}\) Compared with other perspectives, Fredriksen distinctively argues for the prominent role of the law in Paul’s thought.\(^{50}\) Governed by ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology, on the one hand, Fredriksen insists Paul still shows allegiance to the law, his Jewishness and Judaism. On the other hand, she rejects the reading that “Paul stands as history’s first Christian theologian, urging a new faith that supersedes or subsumes the narrow Ioudaïsmos of his former allegiances.”\(^{51}\) Having advocated for Paul’s allegiance to the law and his Jewishness, Fredriksen further argues that Paul upholds the ethnic difference between Jews and non-Jews, refuting the traditional reading of Paul which claims grace overrides ethnicity.\(^{52}\)

In comparison with Sonderweg advocates, Fredriksen has a different point of view on Paul himself.\(^{53}\) Fredriksen disagrees with Two Covenants scholars such as Gaston, Gager and Stowers that Paul himself ceased to observe the law during his Gentile mission. On the contrary, according to Fredriksen Paul still upholds the law

\(^{49}\) Fredriksen, Paul, 108 and 130.  
\(^{50}\) With her de-Christianized reading, Fredriksen recognizes herself as not in line with Wright, Barclay and Sechrest, see Fredriksen, Paul, 108 n 23.  
\(^{51}\) Fredriksen, Paul, 108.  
\(^{52}\) Fredriksen, Paul, 109-110.  
\(^{53}\) Sonderweg and Two Covenants are synonyms which mean Gentiles are saved through Christ while Jews are saved by staying as Jews and by observing the Mosaic Law, see Gager, The Origins of Anti-Semitism, 263-264.
and his Gentile mission is not a “Law-Free” mission. From a historical perspective, Fredriksen argues the “Law-Free” reading was derived from the fourth century by the Roman law, and this reading is imposed wrongly on the first century by later interpreters to explain Paul and his mission. Besides, Fredriksen has observed Paul’s language of the law has a ‘doubleness’ in character, including both negative and positive rhetorical statements. Furthermore, Fredriksen argues that this ‘double-sided’ character of the law can be explained by Paul’s explicit audience – Gentile Christ believers. The negative side addresses Gentiles’ inability to observe the law without Christ while the positive side points out their ability to fulfill the law with Christ and the indwelling of the Spirit. In this sense, Fredriksen refutes the assumptions of several scholars, and argues that Paul never ceases to observe the law and upholds the Torah as the final authority even after he becomes an apostle to the pagans. In short, Paul’s Gentile mission is not a “Law-Free” mission.

Similarly, in the view of Nanos, Paul is a Torah-observant Jew. In Galatians, Nanos contends,

Paul is himself an example of status and observance, and his message in this letter does not abrogate the identity or observance of Torah for Jewish people (i.e., Israelites) in the least but is instead predicated upon their continued validity for himself and other Jewish members of this movement.

Also, Nanos argues that Paul’s allegiance to the Torah has never changed, and

---

54 Fredriksen, Paul, 110.
55 Fredriksen, Paul, 110. However, Fredriksen does not point out clearly what fourth century sources she draws upon.
56 Fredriksen, Paul, 108.
57 Fredriksen, Paul, 130.
58 Nanos, The Irony of Galatians, 9.
after the Christ event, Paul still upholds it as the ultimate authority in his Gentile mission.\textsuperscript{59} Nanos argues,

I find Paul’s arguments and his assumptions about how his audiences will receive them make most sense if he remains a Torah-observant Jew—and they know this to be the case. In other words, after his Damascus Road experience, Paul remains committed to Jewish communal behavior as enjoined in the Mosaic covenant. He keeps Torah fully as a matter of fidelity, that is, as an expression of faithfulness, since he is a Jew.\textsuperscript{50}

In line with Fredriksen and Nanos, Thiessen also argues for Paul’s continuous allegiance to the Torah based on his interpretation in 1 Cor 7:19, he argues,

In fact, Paul’s use of the verb “to keep” (τηρέω) with the noun “commandment” (ἐντολή), a construction that other Jews used to signify faithful observance of the Jewish law (cf. Sir 32:23; T. Dan. 5.1; Josephus, Ant. 8.120; Matt 19:17–19; Rev 12:17; 14:12), suggests that Paul signals the abiding relevance of law observance.\textsuperscript{61}

To sum up, the overall argument of these three RPP scholars is that Paul is not a “Law-Free” apostle and his mission is not a “Law-Free” mission. Fredriksen, Nanos and Thiessen counter the claim that Paul himself has ceased to observe the law. On the contrary, Paul is still upholding the law and it continues to function as his ultimate authority in his Gentile mission.

\textsuperscript{59} Nanos, “A Jewish View,” 167.
\textsuperscript{60} Nanos, “A Jewish View,” 166. Zetterholm also believes that Paul is still a Torah observant and never ceases to follow the law, see Magnus Zetterholm, “The Paul within Judaism Perspective,” in Perspectives on Paul: Five Views, ed. Scot McKnight and B. J. Oropeza (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 177.
\textsuperscript{61} Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9.
2.3.2 Christ or Torah?

However, in contrast with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, it will be argued that Christ rather than Torah has become the ultimate authority for Paul. In other words, the law no longer functions as his final authority. Paul’s expression in the letter of Galatia demonstrates that his ultimate allegiance is Christ instead of Torah.

2.3.2.1 Paul’s Notion of Two Separate Covenants

Firstly, from the perspective of the Christ event, Paul has the notion of two different separating covenants in his mind: one is the Abrahamic covenant and the other is the Mosaic covenant which demonstrates how Paul perceives the role of Torah and Christ (Gal 3:17-19). In Paul’s time, the view of some of his contemporary Jews is that the Mosaic covenant is eternal and they emphasize the continuity between the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant. However, in Galatians, Paul’s language shows the relation between the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant is in discontinuity. That is, the two cannot be combined as one continuous covenant.

From the temporal perspective, Paul’s understanding is that the Abrahamic covenant ratified by God is unchangeable; however, the Mosaic covenant was time-

62 There were several different interpretations regarding covenants among Jewish literature in Paul's time, see A. Andrew Das, Paul and the Stories of Israel: Grand Thematic Narratives in Galatians (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016), 65-92.
63 For instance, Keener provides supporting resources by “citing 1 En. 99.2; Bar. 4:1; Wis. 18:4; Philo, Moses 2.14; Josephus, Ag. Ap. 2.277; 4 Ezra 9:37; 2 Bar. 77.15. See also 1Q5 8.10; 1Q20 6.8; 11Q19 39.8; 1 En. 93:6; L.A.B. 9:8; 11:2; Pesiq. Rab Kah. 4:2,” see Keener, Galatians, 275 n 608. See also Ben Witherington III, Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 253-254; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 400; Moo, Galatians, 230.
According to Paul, the law was added 430 years after the Abrahamic covenant and its temporal governing role holds until the coming of Christ (Gal 3:23-25, cf. Gal 3:17-19). The Mosaic covenant neither overrides nor replaces the Abrahamic covenant (Gal 3:17).

Also, Paul’s language of κληρονομία and the antithesis between ἐκ νόμου and ἐξ ἐπαγγελίας illustrates two different trajectories for receiving inheritance (Gal 3:18). One comes from the Mosaic covenant by observing the law, and the other comes from the Abrahamic covenant by putting confidence in the promise. Therefore, according to Witherington, the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant are “set over against each other as the essence or heart of two separate covenants.” The two covenants form both separate and different trajectories in Paul’s theological thought. In this sense, there are two incompatible systems in relation to the recognition of righteousness before God (cf. Gal 5:1-6), one is a Torah-defined value system while the other one is a Christ-defined value system.

### 2.3.2.2 Christ Event and Mosaic Covenant

Secondly, the Christ event is in line with the trajectory of the unchangeable

---

70 Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 452.
Abrahamic covenant which overrides the temporal Mosaic covenant according to Paul’s theological understanding.\textsuperscript{71} Rather than the Mosaic covenant framing the Christ event under the authority of Torah, Paul’s expression shows that the Christ event reframes the time-limited Mosaic covenant (Gal 3:24-25).

Paul explicitly points out that the seed of Abraham is Christ (Gal 3:16), indicating that Abraham and Christ have a certain kind of connection in his view. Also, within the framework of the human and divine realms, Paul’s language of διαθήκη indicates the divine covenant of Abraham.\textsuperscript{72} Paul’s notion of promise becomes prominent when he changes the terminology from διαθήκη to ἐπαγγελία which points forward to the Christ event (Gal 3:17).\textsuperscript{73} In this sense, the Christ event can be traced from the trajectory of the promise of Abraham rather than the Mosaic covenant.

On the other hand, as argued, Paul’s language shows that the Mosaic covenant has a time-limited character, it comes after the Abrahamic covenant and has been overridden by the coming of Christ (Gal 3:24-25).\textsuperscript{74} Between the Abrahamic covenant and the coming of Christ, the law has a temporal role for God’s people.\textsuperscript{75}

\textsuperscript{71} On the contrary, Paul’s opponents may have this thought: opponents may have viewed the Abrahamic covenant, the Mosaic covenant and the Christ event as one continuous trajectory. Therefore, they may still uphold the law as their ultimate authority even after the Christ event. On this point, see Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 400. However, Paul’s model is as follows: he views the Abrahamic covenant is as in line with the Christ event while the Mosaic covenant is an interlude in the trajectory of the covenant’s history.


\textsuperscript{74} Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 402. deSilva also argues that ‘A recurring topic is the temporary quality of these arrangements: “it was added,” 3:19; “until,” 3:19; “before faith came,” 3:23; “no longer,” 3:25,’ see deSilva, \textit{The Letter to the Galatians}, 314.

\textsuperscript{75} In-Gyu Hong, \textit{The Law in Galatians} (London: Bloomsbury, 1993), 149–56.
However, in the redemptive plan of God, “the Torah is an interlude in the history of the promise: it is neither the rubric for, nor the centerpiece of, God’s ordering of the world.”76 Thus, the Christ event puts an end to the time-limited Mosaic covenant and it overrides the era of Mosaic covenant according to Paul.

2.3.2.3 Paul’s Ultimate Authority: Christ

Thirdly, as previously indicated, I contend that Christ, not the law, serves as Paul’s ultimate authority since Paul derives his epistemology from the Christ event. Paul believes that the Mosaic covenant is no longer the final authority. While the law *per se* is not a bad thing (cf. Rom 7:12); however, with the Christ event Paul identifies that the situation of human plight is under the power of sin which is reinforced by the law that does not impart life (Gal 1:4, 3:21-25). For Paul, he recognizes τὰ πάντα, including Jews and non-Jews, are under the power of sin (Gal 3:22). In the era of the Mosaic covenant, though the function of the law can make sin known (Gal 3:19),77 however, Paul realizes that the Torah does not enable people to overcome the power of sin (Gal 3:21). Because of this, Paul believes that those who put their confidence in the law are “under the curse of the law” (Gal 3:10) and “kept in custody under the law” until the arrival of Christ (Gal 3:23).78 Paul understands that no one can attain

78 Paul’s language of ὑπό denotes the imagery of Christ’s deliberation, see Keener, *Galatians*, 284-285. For those who put themselves under the Mosaic covenant are under the risk of the curse of the law by turning away from the standard of it, see deSilva, *Galatians*, 60; Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 158; Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 141; Longenecker, *Galatians*, 117.
the righteousness of God through the works of the law (Gal 2:16, 3:11), and the narrative of the law is not continuous with the narrative of Christ.\(^{79}\) In this sense, in Paul’s thought Torah is not the end, but the means until the coming of Christ.\(^{80}\) With this understanding, Paul recognizes Christ’s death and resurrection as the fundamental solution to the human plight in which Christ event deals with sins and delivers Christ believers from the present evil age (Gal 1:4, cf. Gal 3:22);\(^{81}\) with the indwelling Spirit, Christ followers anticipating the age to come (Gal 6:15, 5:5); and the righteousness of God is attained through faith in Christ (Gal 2:16). In this sense, the era of the reign of the Mosaic covenant has passed while the era of the reign of Christ has come. In the new era of Christ, the power of the law has been put under the authority of Christ.\(^{82}\)

Paul acknowledges, in regard to the Christ believer being alive, that those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh with its desires and passions (Gal 5:24). It is a life that has been enlivened by the Spirit (Gal 5:25, cf. 2 Cor 3:6), which can follow the Spirit to fulfill the divine will of God and manifest the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, and peace (Gal 5:22-23). Paul emphasizes love as one of the significant characteristics of this life, the life derived from the Christ event and enabled by the Spirit, which can produce the fruit of the Spirit: love. Paul underlines that a life of faith operates through love (Gal 5:6), and that a life of love serves one another (Gal

---

\(^{79}\) Please refer to the section Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event analyzing Galatians.


\(^{81}\) From Paul’s perspective, the role of the law after the resurrection of Christ is not clear in Galatians, see Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 452. It will be discussed in the analysis of Romans.
5:13). Paul expressly asserts that the entire law has been fulfilled and can be summed up in one statement: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Gal 5:14). If Christ followers in Galatia bear each other’s burdens, they will be carrying out the law which “belongs” to Christ (Gal 6:2). In other words, a life that is enlivened by the Spirit and bears the fruit of the Spirit: love, naturally exemplifying the commandment to love one’s neighbor as oneself will fulfill the law of Christ. While emphasizing the interdependence and reciprocity of Christ followers in community (Gal 6:1-3), Paul further stresses that each individual within the community has his or her own responsibilities (Gal 6:4-5). Paul urges the Galatians to “sow” to the Spirit rather than to the flesh and to continue doing good to all people and Christ believers (Gal 6:8-10).

Paul rereads and reinterprets the law through the prism of the Christ event, which functions as a grand narrative to reevaluate the law in the eschatological era.

---

83 The term ἀλλήλων refers to reciprocity within the Galatian community (Gal 5:26, 6:2).
85 See also Oakes and Boakye, Rethinking Galatians, 145.
inaugurated by Christ. In the new era of Christ, redefining the law, it is evident that in Paul’s mind, with regard to circumcision and uncircumcision in the Christ community, circumcision is not a defining characteristic of this group (Gal 5:6, 6:15, 1 Cor 7:18-19). Christ functions as a higher authority for Paul, who relativizes and redefines the law.\footnote{Barclay, \textit{Obeying the Truth}, 131-135; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 431; Winger, “The Law of Christ,” 545; Wilson, “The Craftsman,” 392-393; Witherington, \textit{Grace in Galatia}, 247.} Paul does not permit the Sabbath, Kosher, or circumcision to be the defining characteristics of his Christ believing communities (including Jewish and Gentile Christ-believers) (e.g. Gal 5:2, 4:10, 2:11-16, 6:15, 1 Cor 7:19), but he allows Christ believers, Jewish Christ believers in particular, to continue to observe these practices as a praxis option (e.g. Rom 14).\footnote{John M. G. Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law? A Study of Romans 14:1-15:6,” in \textit{Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews} (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 58; Horrell, \textit{Solidarity and Difference}, 249 n 80. For more discussion on this point, see Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law? A Study of Romans 14:1-15:6,” 37-59; John M. G. Barclay, “Paul And Philo on Circumcision: Romans 2.25–9 in Social and Cultural Context,” \textit{New Testament Studies} 44, no. 4 (1998): 536-556.} Also, Paul recognizes that the Spirit-led life is not under the authority of the law (Gal 5:18);\footnote{A TLG search shows that the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον appears in Rom 6:14, 15, 1 Cor 9:20, Gal 3:23, 4:4, 5, 21, 5:18, as well as the works of Justinus Martyr, Eusebius, Clemens Alexandrinus, Acta Joannis, Plato, and Gregorius Nyssenus. However, their works do not appear to assist explaining Paul’s meaning of the phrase. The most essential consideration, in my opinion, is Paul’s usage of the phrase. For Paul, if anyone who receives circumcision, he is under the obligation to keep the whole law (Gal 5:3). In other words, if anyone who wants to attain the righteousness of God through the Torah-defined value system, namely, attaining the righteousness of God through the works of the law, he needs to observe the whole law and the law is the determining authority for him. In this way, Paul’s expression demonstrates that he is referring to the absolute authority of the Torah when he uses the phrase ὑπὸ νόμον (e.g. Gal 3:23–25, 4:21, 1 Cor 9:20). On this point, see also Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 430-431 n 22. However, Paul says explicitly that “all flesh” will not be justified by the works of the law (Gal 2:16, cf. 3:11). Paul also accuses those who are circumcised do not even keep the law themselves (Gal 6:13).} the law no longer serves as the final authority for Christ believers (Gal 3:24-25, cf. 1 Cor 9:20); rather, Christ is the final authority and defining component (Gal 1:7, 2:14, 16, 20). Paul’s theological position is that the Torah is subservient to Christ and the law’s authority has been
relativized within the context of the eschatological age that Christ has inaugurated (Gal 1:4).89

On the other hand, it has been suggested that Paul’s theological thought is drawn from the people he speaks to and about. Paul’s personification of the law as παιδαγωγός demonstrates his thought concerning the authority of the Torah. In Gal 3:25, Paul uses the first-person plural ἔσμεν instead of first-person singular εἰμί. Rather than Paul’s identification with his Gentile audience, Paul’s first-person plural verbs such as ἐφρούρομεθα, δικαιωθῶμεν and ἔσμεν in Gal 3:23-25 signify Jewish Christ believers including Paul himself. As Paul’s usage of “we” in Gal 2:15-17 explicitly signifies “we Jews” by which it pertains to Paul and Jewish Christ believers (Gal 2:16). In line with this usage and indicated by the phrases ὑπὸ νόμον ἐφρούρομεθα (Gal 3:23) and οὐκέτι ὑπὸ παιδαγωγὸν ἔσμεν (Gal 3:25), Paul’s first-person plural ἔσμεν in Gal 3:25 includes at least Paul and Jewish Christ believers and this usage continues to Gal 4:1-2, 3-4.90 In other words, from the perspective of ethnicity, it cannot exclude the possibility that Paul’s usage of “we” in Gal 3:25 does signify Paul and Jewish Christ believers. Therefore, Paul’s phrase οὐκέτι ὑπὸ παιδαγωγὸν ἔσμεν explicitly points out that the authority of Torah has been relativized in the Christ inaugurated eschatological era (Gal 3:25).91 Paul believes

---

90 Longenecker, Galatians, 149; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 419; Keener, Galatians, 294; Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 267; Dunn, The Epistle to the Galatians, 200. Moo identifies Paul’s first personal pronoun’s complicated usage and argues from another approach that “Paul is referring to himself and his readers and, by implication, all Christians,” see Moo, Galatians, 212. However, even from the different approach he also recognizes “we” in Gal 3:25 includes Jews, see Moo, Galatians, 244.
91 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 402; deSilva, The Letter to the Galatians, 332.
that Christ, not the Torah, is the final authority.

Furthermore, Paul emphasizes more clearly and explicitly that he διὰ νόμου νόμῳ ἀπέθανον, ἵνα θεῶ ζήσω (Gal 2:19). It means that “what is announced here is not the cessation of the Torah itself, but the end of its claim of ultimate authority in the life of Paul.”92 If the claim of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos is correct that the Torah is the final authority for Paul, in what way could Paul say that he died to the law (Gal 2:19-20) and he was not under the law (Gal 3:23)?93 However, Paul’s language demonstrates that Paul places himself in the trajectory of the Christ event wherein Christ has become his final authority by distancing himself from the law (Gal 2:19-20).94 With this understanding, Paul acknowledges the gospel he preaches is not the gospel of Moses, but τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:7) and he received it διὰ ἀποκάλυψης Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Gal 1:12). Paul is unquestionably a radical Jew in this regard when contrasted to the Jews of his day, the majority of whom still see the law as their supreme authority even in the wake of the crucifixion.95

Concerning the role of Torah in Paul, the dichotomy that either the law should cease, or the law should be upheld oversimplifies Paul’s theological thought. While there is no need or compulsion for him to observe the law, however, Christ rather than

---

92 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 385.
94 Keener, Galatians, 286.
95 Ben Witherington III and Jason A. Myers, Voices and Views on Paul: Exploring Scholarly Trends (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2020), 216. Barclay also argues that the law functions as the ultimate authority among different Jewish groups in Jerusalem and diaspora in Second Temple Judaism (e.g. 4 Ezra), see Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 400. For the recent discussion on the identity of Paul among Jews and Gentiles, see Michael F. Bird, An Anomalous Jew: Paul Among Jews, Greeks, and Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 1-30; Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, Paul, a New Covenant Jew, 11-63. The identity of Paul and Christ believers will be discussed in more detail in the chapter analyzing Romans.
the law is the most crucial component for him. In other words, Paul “can observe the Torah for Christ, or disregard the Torah for Christ, depending on the higher demands of ‘the good news.’”

2.4 Ultimate Authority for Jewish Christ Believers

In this section it will be argued that Christ rather than the law is the final authority for Jewish Christ believers in Paul’s understanding. In other words, the law is subordinate to Christ since, as a result of the Christ event, it is no longer the final authority for Jewish Christ followers. Paul’s statements about the means of salvation show that the Mosaic covenant and the rule of the law have been superseded by Christ. While there is no need or compulsion for Jewish Christ believers to observe the law, Paul believed that Christ has superseded the law as the most important factor in their lives.

2.4.1 The Role of Torah

Regarding the role of Torah for Jews (including Jewish Christ believers), RPP scholars argue the law still functions as the final authority for them. For Jewish Christ believers, Fredriksen argues,

For a Jew, recognizing Jesus as the eschatological Messiah is not the same thing as “converting.” Unlike Christ-following ex-Pagans, Jews continue to worship their same

96 Barclay, “Gift Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 212. See also Witherington and Myers, *Voices and Views on Paul*, 216.
God, to esteem his books, and to follow their ancestral practices.\textsuperscript{97}

For Jews, Jewish Christ followers and Paul, Nanos contends that “In that role Jews remain those who represent Christ by way of observing the Mosaic covenant. Christ-following Jews/Israelites are, according to Paul’s theological system, still under Torah (cf. 1 Cor. 7:17–20). That includes Paul.”\textsuperscript{98} On this point, Thiessen also argues that “He [Paul] argues that Jews should keep the laws that God gave to them, while Gentiles should be satisfied with the laws that God has laid upon them, not coveting those laws that God has given to Jews alone.”\textsuperscript{99} In the view of Thiessen, this implies that there are different levels of the laws for Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers respectively in Paul’s thought.\textsuperscript{100} For Jewish Christ followers, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, the law still functions as the final authority for them by which they remain in the covenantal relationship with God.

\subsection*{2.4.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ}

However, I contend that in regards to Jewish Christ followers, Christ, not the Torah, is the final authority according to Paul. As argued, Paul’s language of “we” in Gal 2:15-17 clearly denotes Jewish Christ believers (Gal 2:16), in Gal 3:23–25, Paul refers to both himself and Jewish Christ followers while using the first-person plural verbs (e.g. ἐφρουροῦμεθα, δικαιωθῶμεν, ὑμεῖς). In addition, the Mosaic covenant has

\textsuperscript{97} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 166 n 84.
\textsuperscript{98} Nanos, “A Jewish View,” 191.
\textsuperscript{100} Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 11; Zetterholm also has the notion of different level of the laws for different correspondents, see Zetterholm, “The Paul within Judaism Perspective,” 177.
a time-limited character (Gal 3:23-25, cf. Gal 3:17-19) and with the coming of Christ the Torah is no longer the ultimate authority for Paul (Gal 3:25).

As a result, Paul claims that the circumstances of Jewish Christ followers are the same as his own. While Jewish Christ believers might still keep the law, as Paul did, this does not indicate that the law still functions as the final authority for them. Instead, in the new era, Jewish Christ believers’ ultimate authority is Christ, who governs their life orientation.

2.5 Ultimate Authority for Gentile Christ Believers

This section will make the case that, in Paul’s theological thinking, Christ—and not the law—is the final authority for Gentile Christ believers. In other words, the Torah is subject to Christ because the law is no longer the final authority for Gentile Christ believers as a result of the Christ event. Paul’s words reveal that Christ has superseded the Mosaic covenant. Paul believed that Christ has replaced the law as the most important factor for them.

2.5.1 The Role of Torah

Fredriksen believes the Torah has a prominent role for Gentile Christ believers. Firstly, she argues that Paul’s positive and negative statements on the law are directed at Gentile Christ believers, not at Jews, as Paul’s explicit audience is exclusively Gentile Christ believers. Secondly, as mentioned, Fredriksen argues that Paul’s

mission is not a “Law-Free” mission since the law functions as the final authority for Paul’s Gentile converts.¹⁰² Concerning the status of Gentiles, Fredriksen argues that Paul believes Gentiles are sinners by nature (Gal 2:15).¹⁰³ Fredriksen argues that “Pagans notoriously indulge in the “works of the flesh”, which includes fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idol-worship, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, rivalries, divisiveness, envy, drunken carousing (Gal 5.19–21).”¹⁰⁴ With this understanding, Fredriksen contends that Paul meets and preaches the gospel to Gentiles who were associated with Judaism in synagogues before, so they may already have some knowledge about the Torah.¹⁰⁵ Moreover, Paul’s teaching to his Gentile converts is based on the Torah.¹⁰⁶

Thirdly, according to Fredriksen, Paul highlights the vertical relationship between the Jewish God and Gentile Christ followers and emphasizes the horizontal relationship between Gentile Christ believers and Jewish communities by fulfilling the law.¹⁰⁷ Concerning the horizontal relationship, Fredriksen claims that Paul emphasizes the sixth, seventh, eighth, and tenth of the Ten Commandments for Gentile Christ followers to observe so that they can maintain righteous behavior and justice within Jewish communities.¹⁰⁸ Regarding the vertical relationship, according to Fredriksen, Paul highlights the first two of the Ten Commandments for Gentile

---

¹⁰² Fredriksen, Paul, 110.
¹⁰³ Fredriksen, Paul, 124.
¹⁰⁴ Fredriksen, Paul, 124.
¹⁰⁶ For example, according to Gal 5:14, Paul’s quotation of “fulfilling the whole Law” is from Leviticus 19:18, see Fredriksen, Paul, 118-119.
¹⁰⁷ Fredriksen, Paul, 117.
¹⁰⁸ Fredriksen, Paul, 118.
Christ believers to show devotion towards the Jewish God.\textsuperscript{109} In this way, the Ten Commandments serve as the Jewish framework that frames Paul’s teaching to the Gentiles. In conclusion, Fredriksen claims that the Torah serves as the supreme authority for Paul’s Gentile converts in Jewish communities, just as it does for Jewish Christ believers.\textsuperscript{110}

2.5.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ

In contrast to Fredriksen, however, I contend that Christ rather than the Torah is the final authority for Gentile Christ believers, and that they are no longer under the στοιχεῖα in accordance with Paul’s theological thought.\textsuperscript{111} First of all, Paul’s thinking suggests that not only Gentiles are sinners, but Jews also. Paul’s language of τὰ πάντα demonstrates that all things, including Jews and Gentiles, are under the power of sin (Gal 3:22).\textsuperscript{112} Also, on the one hand, Paul’s phrase οὐκ ἐξ ἔθνων ἁμαρτωλοί indicates that Gentiles are sinners (Gal 2:15); on the other hand, by using the first-person plural verb, Paul’s expression εὑρέθημεν καὶ οὗτοι ἁμαρτωλοί (Gal 2:17), referring to ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι (Gal 2:15), explicitly shows that Jews are also sinners.\textsuperscript{113}

Second, Paul considers the situation of Jews and Gentiles before and after the Christ event in Gal 4:1-11 which shows that Christ is the ultimate authority for

\textsuperscript{109} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 118.
\textsuperscript{110} On this point, see also Nanos, “A Jewish View,” 172.
Gentile Christ believers. As argued, Paul’s usage of “we” such as in Gal 3:25, 4:3, 5 refers to “we Jews” in Gal 2:15 that is, Jewish Christ followers.114 Before the arrival of Christ (Gal 4:4), the situation of Jews is ὑπὸ νόμον (Gal 4:5) and ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου (Gal 4:3) - ὑπὸ νόμον represents one form of τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου according to Paul.115 However, as argued, the Mosaic covenant has been relativized in the new era of Christ in which Paul and Jewish Christ believers are no longer under the reign of the law (Gal 3:25) and are redeemed from the era of the law (Gal 4:4).116

Concerning Gentile Christ believers, according to Paul, they were enslaved by idolatry (Gal 4:8) and to τὰ ἁθετήκας καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα before they knew Christ (Gal 4:9). Also, the situation of Gentile Christ believers was not like the Jewish Christ believers who were under the law - one particular kind of στοιχεῖα - Paul’s phrase πῶς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν denotes that Gentile Christ believers were previously under the στοιχεῖα (Gal 4:9). However, after coming to know God (Gal 4:9), Gentile Christ believers are already in the new era of Christ (Gal 6:15; cf. Gal 1:4). By using “you”, Paul argues that now Gentile Christ believers are sons, not slaves (Gal 4:6-8).

Because of this, Paul’s logic appears as follows. Paul and Jewish Christ believers are no longer under the final authority of law since the Mosaic covenant has been relativized in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ. In the same way, for Gentile Christ believers, they are no longer under the στοιχεῖα of the world in the new

era of Christ. In other words, the στοιχεῖα has ceased to be the supreme authority for Gentile Christ believers. In this sense, they are in line with Paul and Jewish Christ believers that the law – a subset of the στοιχεῖα of the world – has no longer functioned as the ultimate authority for them. Because of this, Paul’s language demonstrates that Gentile Christ believers are now under the authority of Christ.

If Gentile Christ believers were to start following the Mosaic law (e.g. Gal 4:10, 5:2) as Jewish Christ believers do they would find the law did not impart life and the ability to overcome sin (Gal 3:21-22). More importantly, they would fall out of the salvific trajectory of God’s plan and miss the point by not turning their allegiance to Christ through whom they are saved (Gal 2:16) and enabled to live out the law of Christ (Gal 6:2).

Therefore, for Gentile Christ believers, according to Paul they are no longer under the authority of στοιχεῖα because Christ has delivered them and become the ultimate authority for them. In conclusion, in line with previous arguments, Christ rather than the Torah has become the final authority for Paul, for both Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in this new era according to Paul’s theological understanding.

2.6 Uncircumcision and Circumcision

In this section it will be argued that Christ rather than circumcision and uncircumcision has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers. There is no indication to show that Paul has a notion of

---

an effective eighth day circumcision in Galatians. On the contrary, Paul’s expressions in Galatians show that the value of circumcision and uncircumcision has been relativized by the new era inaugurated by the Christ event.

2.6.1 Effective Circumcision

Concerning circumcision, Fredriksen argues that the effectiveness of the eighth day covenantal circumcision applies to Jews and Jewish Christ believers since it incorporates them into the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God.\(^1\) Jewish ethnicity formed by the eighth day covenantal circumcision is significant according to Fredriksen. The eighth day circumcision of the flesh (\textit{kata sarka}) maintains the ethnic difference between Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers as it binds Jewish Christ believers within the covenantal relationship and reinforces their heart circumcision that Gentile Christ believers do not have.\(^2\)

Also, for Paul himself, Fredriksen argues that “…Paul boasts of his having been circumcised as an eight-day-old himself (Phil 3.5). Jewish circumcision, therefore, mattered very much to Paul, and (he believed) to Israel and to Israel’s god.”\(^3\) Therefore, for Paul and Jewish Christ believers, Fredriksen emphasizes they are already in the covenantal relationship. They are still worshipping the Jewish God, reading Jewish Scriptures, and awaiting the Kingdom of God until Christ’s Parousia that involves Israel’s salvation with non-Jews.\(^4\)

---

\(^1\) Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 129.
\(^2\) Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 114.
\(^3\) Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 107.
On the other hand, Fredriksen argues that “He [Paul] opposed circumcision for Gentiles, not for Jews. Paul expressed no view on Jewish circumcision, most likely because he assumed one. Namely, that Jews who honored their ancestral customs circumcised their sons into the covenant on the eighth day (cf. Phil 3.5).” In this sense, Paul seldom says anything in his letters about Jews’ circumcision because Paul’s explicit audience is mainly Gentiles. To sum up, according to Fredriksen, the eighth day covenantal circumcision is crucial for Paul and Jewish Christ believers to observe the law by which they remain in the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God until the second coming of Christ.

2.6.2 Ineffective Circumcision

For Gentile Christ believers, Fredriksen argues that the rationale behind Paul’s rejection of their circumcision is as follows. Since Gentile proselytes were not circumcised on the eighth day, their circumcision is not legitimate since it cannot bring them into the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God. Therefore they are not able to become Jews ethnically. The effectiveness of the eighth day covenantal circumcision is not applicable for Gentile proselytes as most of them are not circumcised on the eighth day. Based on Thiessen’s argument, Fredriksen argues that “the Judaizing gentile—clearly older than eight days—who subjects himself to circumcision accordingly transgresses the “law of circumcision” even as he tries to

honor it, precisely because he is more than eight days old: for him, then, circumcision counts as uncircumcision.\textsuperscript{127}

On the other hand, according to Fredriksen, Gentile proselyte circumcision cannot change Gentiles’ ethnicity - flesh and blood - so that they become Jewish.\textsuperscript{128} Because Gentile circumcision neither transforms Gentile Christ believers into Jews nor helps them to join in the covenantal relationship with God, they are still under the control of στοιχεῖα of the world and unable to observe the law.\textsuperscript{129} Therefore, Gentile Christ believers cannot enter into the Jewish covenantal relationship and salvation with Israel through circumcision.\textsuperscript{130}

Besides, as Paul thinks the Gentile proselyte circumcision is ineffective, Fredriksen frames the issue as an intra-Jewish problem in which Paul rejects his opponents’ form of non-Pauline Judaizing, in this sense, Paul is not against circumcision for Jews, he is against imposing circumcision on Gentiles.\textsuperscript{131} In this sense, even if Gentile Christ believers are circumcised, they would not become Jews, joining in the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God and be able to observe the law. To sum up, according to Fredriksen, eighth day circumcision is the key for constituting Jewish ethnicity and joining the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God by which people are enabled to observe the law.

\textsuperscript{128} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 128.
\textsuperscript{129} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 129. In Thiessen and Fredriksen’s view, the circumcision of Gentiles is like the model of Ishmael, not the one like Issac, see Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 129; Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 91-92.
\textsuperscript{130} For Fredriksen, the correct way for Gentile Christ believers to join in Israel’s redemption is through the patrilineal ideology of Abraham and the seed of Abraham – Christ, see Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 149-150.
2.6.3 Paul’s View on Uncircumcision and Circumcision

While Fredriksen argues for the prominent role of eighth day covenantal circumcision, however, Paul’s thought about circumcision in Galatians will be examined and it is the position of this thesis that both circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in the new era of Christ.132

2.6.3.1 Paul’s Notion of Two Ages

In Galatians, the framework of two ages is essential in Paul’s theological thought as it governs how Paul perceives circumcision and uncircumcision. In Paul’s understanding, while the present age continues, the new age has already broken into the world in which the kingdom of God has already come but has not yet been fully realized (Gal 1:4, cf. Gal 5:21).133 Furthermore, Paul claims that the present evil age will eventually pass away and the kingdom of God will be fully realized because in this kingdom, God’s righteousness will be fully realized and endure forever.134 Christ’s self-sacrificial death and resurrection inaugurates the new age and brings hope to the people (Gal 1:4). The deliverance inaugurated by Christ does not mean rescue from the world, but from the present age’s evil power.135 Betz rightly points out that “Paul speaks of the liberation out of the evil aeon and not the change of the

132 In Galatians, the term ἡ ἀκροβυστία appears in Gal 2:7, 5:6, 6:15 and ἡ περιτομή appears in Gal 2:7, 8, 9, 12, 5:6, 11, 6:15.
133 Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 76–77; Keener, Galatians, 572-573.
135 Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 76–77; Longenecker, Galatians, 8.
aeons themselves.”

In line with Paul’s language in Gal 6:14, the present evil world is in antithesis to the new creation in Gal 6:15. In the age to come, the notion of new creation means not only the forgiveness of sins for Christ believers but also refers to cosmic renewal in the new era. Christ’s crucifixion breaks all the dimensions of the human value system in which they used to put their confidence. Just as Paul himself has died to the world and belongs to the new creation (Gal 6:14-15), in the same way, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers are no longer under and belong to the power of old laws and principles (Gal 3:23-25; 4:1-5, 8-10). The Spirit enables Paul, Gentile Christ believers and Jewish Christ believers to experience and taste the age to come (Gal 5:5). To sum up, deSilva helpfully points out,

The death and resurrection of Jesus marks a decisive turning point in God’s dealings with humanity and, indeed, the whole of God’s creation, with the result that the powers that have dominated human beings have come to the end of their term ([Gal] 3:23–25; 4:1–5, 8–11), with Jesus liberating people from those powers and ushering them into a new era of freedom and righteousness.

136 Betz, Galatians, 42.
137 Moo, Galatians, 73 and 398.
138 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 394-395; Dunn, Galatians, 343; Moo, Galatians, 397–98. For more discussion on Paul’s notion of new creation, see T. Ryan Jackson, New Creation in Paul’s Letters a Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen Zum Neuen Testament. 2. Reihe; 272, (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).
139 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 394-395. On this point, see also Moo, Galatians, 330.
140 Keener, Galatians, 55.
141 Keener, Galatians, 55. Paul’s “we” in Gal 5:5 denotes all who have the Spirit through faith in Christ including Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, see Keener, Galatians, 456; Bruce, The Epistle to the Galatians, 231; Dunn, The Epistle to the Galatians, 269.
142 deSilva, The Letter to the Galatians, 73. See also Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 351-352. Wright also argues that “eschatology has been inaugurated in a new and dramatic way. Paul believed that the new age had already arrived with the death and resurrection of the Messiah and the gift of the spirit,” see Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God, 930. Nevertheless, Wright has a somewhat controversial eschatological view, see Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God, 451-452.
2.6.3.2 Paul’s τίς

With the framework of the two ages, I argue that Paul thinks circumcision and uncircumcision have no value in the new era of Christ. From the perspective of the Christ event (Gal 1:4, 6:15), Paul’s language of τίς with οὐτε, meaning nothing, demonstrates that the value of circumcision and uncircumcision does not matter in Paul’s thought (Gal 6:15, cf. Gal 5:6).

In other words, it does not matter whether someone has eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision in the new era. To put it more precisely, it does not matter whether Gentile and Jewish Christ believers, including Paul himself, have eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision as both circumcision and uncircumcision does not matter in the new creation (Gal 6:15).

For Paul and Jewish Christ believers, while circumcision in itself is not a bad or good thing, Paul neither argues “against circumcision as a rite or as a physical mark of Jewish identity”, nor advocates undoing his own and other Jews’ circumcision, however, there is no indication to demonstrate Paul’s notion of an effective eighth day covenantal circumcision in Galatians. On the contrary, Paul’s language of τίς shows that both circumcision and uncircumcision are nothing in the new era (Gal 6:15). Also, for Gentile Christ believers, the rationale behind Paul’s rejection of circumcision for them is not based on the ineffectiveness of non-eighth

143 BDAG, 1008.
144 Keener, Galatians, 573; Moo, Galatians, 397; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 396.
145 Keener, Galatians, 459.
146 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 392.
day circumcision. This is because, according to Paul, both circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ.

Because of this, for Paul, it is a problem when Gentile Christ believers such as Titus are requested to be circumcised to join the salvation of God (Gal 2:3-5), in this case, if Titus is circumcised it will make him go back to the Torah-defined value system - the Mosaic covenant by observing the law, and fall out of the Christ-defined value system - the trajectory of the Christ event in the new creation. Also, in the new era, Paul acknowledges that both the circumcised and uncircumcised need the gospel of Christ, the one who calls Peter to preach the gospel to the circumcised is the one who calls Paul to preach the gospel to the uncircumcised (Gal 2:7-8). To sum up, according to Paul’s theological thought, circumcision and uncircumcision have no value in new era of Christ. Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in the new era.

2.6.3.3 Identity of Christ Believers

If both circumcision and uncircumcision have no value in Christ’s era, uncircumcision, non-eighth day circumcision and eighth day covenantal circumcision that pertain to Jewish ethnicity have nothing to do with the identity of Christ believers. In other words, the Christ event has redefined who the people of God are - not one’s status of circumcised or uncircumcised. Also, although Paul identifies different gender, social status and ethnicities in his congregation (Gal 3:28), these

---

characteristics are not the crucial components of defining their identity because Christ is the most fundamental element for the identity formation of Christ believers in the new era. This is because the new era has overridden the old era, the reign of Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

2.7 Paul’s Usage of “we”

In this section it will be argued that Paul’s usage of “we” in Galatians cannot be oversimplified as solely Paul’s rhetorical self-identification with his audience – Gentile Christ believers. It is necessary to investigate Paul’s usage of first-person plural forms in different contexts in the letter in order to find out Paul’s meaning of “we”. While the ethnicities of Christ believers are not erased, Paul’s usage of “we” is not dominated by the notion of ethnic differentiation, but Christ.

2.7.1 Rhetorical Identification

Regarding Paul’s usage of the first-person plural pronoun in Galatians, Fredriksen argues that it is Paul’s rhetorical self-identification. Speaking of the false brothers, Fredriksen contends that ‘Paul says only that they tried “to bring us into bondage” (Gal 2.4). (Paul himself, as “a Hebrew born to Hebrew parents,” had been circumcised long ago, on his eighth day of life, Phil 3.5; his use of the first-person plural pronoun here registers his rhetorical identification with his current gentile addressees.)’ Fredriksen also argues that ‘I assume that Paul’s use of “we” in this

149 Moo, Galatians, 73.
150 The identity of Christ believers will be discussed in more detail in the chapter analyzing Romans.
151 Fredriksen, Paul, 95.
letter is usually his way of rhetorically identifying himself with his gentile auditors (e.g., Gal 4.5, “so that we might receive adoption as sons” can only refer to gentiles, since ethnic Israel, according to Paul—and quite apart from Christ—already has ‘sonship,’ Rom 9.4)."152 In this sense, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s first-person plural pronouns seem to be a rhetorical device to communicate with the Gentile Christ believers in Galatia in order to obtain a favorable hearing, as a Jew trying to identify with his non-Jewish audience.

2.7.2 The Christ Event

However, concerning Paul’s usage of “we”, I argue that Paul’s usage of the first-person plural pronoun in Galatians cannot be oversimplified and generalized as a rhetorical identification based on ethnic differentiation. First, as argued, since Christ has become the final authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in the new era which overrides ethnicity, circumcision and uncircumcision, Torah and Mosaic covenant, therefore, Paul’s usage of “we” in Galatians may have another meaning. Because of this, the rationale behind Paul’s usage of “we” is dominated by Paul’s fundamental notion of Christ rather than ethnicity.

Second, it is necessary to identify the complexity of the first-person plural pronoun usage in Galatians. First-person plural pronouns with different cases such as ἡμεῖς, ἡμῖν, ἡμῶν, ἡμᾶς appear 20 times in Galatians (Gal 1:3, 1:4 (3 times), 1:8, 1:23, 2:4 (2 times), 2:15, 2:16, 3:13 (2 times), 3:24, 4:3, 4:6, 4:46, 5:1, 5:5, 6:14,

152 Fredriksen, Paul, 129 n 72.
Depending on the immediate context, it is necessary to be cautious when attempting to interpret the connotation of the first-person plural pronoun in Galatians. For example, ἡμεῖς in Gal 1:8 points to Paul’s preaching team in Galatia, not his audience; ἡμῶν and ἡμᾶς in Gal 2:4 refer to Paul, Barnabas and Titus (Gal 2:1); ἡμεῖς in Gal 2:15 at least refers to Paul and Peter among the Jews (Gal 2:14). Because of this, Fredriksen seems to oversimplify Paul’s usage of “we” just as a rhetorical identification with Gentiles based on the framework of ethnic differentiation.¹⁵３

While it is possible that sometimes Paul’s usage of “we” does have a sense of ethnicity such as “we Jews” in Gal 2:15, however, it cannot be generalized and oversimplified that Paul’s usage of “we” in Galatians is just a rhetorical identification based on ethnic differentiation. For example, the first-person plural pronoun appears four times in Gal 1:3-4.¹⁵⁴ According to the immediate context (Gal 1:2), the connotation of “our” here refers to Paul, the brothers with Paul and the assemblies of Galatia, a group of people that includes Jews and non-Jews. The change from second-person plural pronoun to first-person plural pronoun which modifies πατρός demonstrates that both the brothers with Paul and the recipients of the letter “shared the same relationship with the supreme source of authority” (Gal 1:3-4).¹⁵⁵ Also,

¹⁵３ For instance, see Fredriksen, Paul, 95. However, according to Gal 2:1, apart from Paul himself there were Barnabas and Titus which means the first-person plural pronoun in Gal 2:4 includes Barnabas, Paul and Titus. Also, Paul’s phrase οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἑλευθερίαν ἣν ἔχουσιν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ demonstrates that Paul, Barnabas and Titus as a group were singled out because of their freedom in Christ, the action was not initiated by Paul himself, but ψευδαδέλφους (Gal 2:4). Because of this, there are two questions to be asked. First, it is not clear how Paul used “us” here to identify with ‘his gentile addressees’. Second, what is the connotation of “us” here? Paul with his Gentile addressees? Paul with Titus and Barnabas? Or any other combinations? It seems that Fredriksen’s rhetorical identification cannot explain away Paul’s usage of “us” in Gal 2:4 in which it does involve Barnabas and Titus.

¹⁵⁴ For the purpose here, there is only one possible counter example of Paul’s usage of “we” in Gal 1:4 is considered. The other examples in Galatians will not be examined.

¹⁵⁵ Dunn, The Epistle to the Galatians, 32.
when Paul emphasizes τῶν ἁμαρτωλῶν by using ἡμῶν rather than ὑμῶν (Gal 1:4a), he, as a Jew, is including himself under the power of sin. This notion is in line with Paul’s thought that all things, including Jews and non-Jews are under the power of sin (Gal 3:22, cf. Rom 2:12, 3:9). Moreover, it shows that Paul put himself, his companions and the assemblies in Galatia within the same narrative of Christ (Gal 1:4). Therefore, although Paul is an ethnic Jew, he consciously recognizes that he is under the power of sin along with the Gentiles and all of them are delivered from the present evil age by Christ (Gal 1:4). In this case, it is clear to see that Paul’s larger concern is Christ rather than ethnic differentiation. Paul’s usage of “we” is not based on his concern about his Jewishness and his Gentile converts’ non-Jewishness. Instead, by using the first-person plural pronoun in Gal 1:4, Paul puts himself, his companions and his Gentile audience under the umbrella of the Christ event.

2.8 Abraham and Christ

About the relationship between Abraham and Christ in Galatians, it will be argued in this section that the Christ event serves as a grand narrative for Paul to re-evaluate the Abraham narrative. Paul asserts that the figure of Abraham serves as a model of faith in God for Christ followers. As the relationship is established by faith in Christ, it is available to all who believe.

156 Keener, Galatians, 53.
157 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 351-352.
158 The original text is ἔξελθεν ἡμᾶς and there is no textual variant concerning the pronoun in Gal 1:4. See also Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 367.
2.8.1 Abraham Frames Christ

Concerning the salvation mechanism of Gentiles, Fredriksen argues that the ideology of patrilineal descent is important for Paul’s Gentile mission. Fredriksen contends,

In his [Paul’s] reconfiguring Gentile lineage via Abraham through *huiothesia*, adoption through spirit into Christ, Abraham’s *sperma*, Paul is at his most innovatively Roman:

Gentiles-in-Christ now count as sons, thus heirs, and they are now responsible to the patrilineal cult of their new adoptive family.\(^\text{159}\)

Fredriksen argues that Paul’s interpretation of Abraham is based on Genesis 15 which is about Abraham’s faith instead of Genesis 17.\(^\text{160}\) Fredriksen emphasizes that Abraham was ‘righteous’ through his faith rather than circumcision and she contends that through Paul’s gospel work the indwelling spirit enables Paul’s Gentile converts in Galatia to observe the law and behave righteously in the Jewish congregation.\(^\text{161}\)

In line with Fredriksen, Thiessen also contends that a new genealogical lineage of Abraham is made through Christ for Paul’s Gentile converts. Along the same lines Thiessen argues,

Paul still believes that ethnicity matters for his Gospel. He [Paul] argues in Galatians that Gentiles need to become related to Abraham in order to receive the promises that God gave to him. Gentiles inherit a new genealogy, becoming related to Abraham through the


\(^{160}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 106.

\(^{161}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 106.
reception of Christ’s Spirit (pneuma). This pneuma should be materially conceived, as contemporary Stoic thinking demonstrates.\textsuperscript{162}

Regarding the state of Paul’s Gentile converts, Thiessen argues that “Reception of Christ’s pneuma genealogically relates Gentiles to Abraham. Through faith, Gentiles have received the pneuma of Abraham’s seed, making them not only sons of Abraham (Gal 3:7) but also the very seed of Abraham.”\textsuperscript{163}

Meanwhile, Nanos emphasizes the significant role of the genealogy of Abraham for Gentiles. Nanos argues,

Is Paul driving a wedge between calling (grace and election/choice) and flesh (genealogical descent), or rather explaining that God chose a particular line of genealogical descendants to undertake a special task as “the seed”? I propose the latter…The overall point is that the seed continues to be narrowed down through Abraham’s genealogical descendants without regard for their activity, good or bad, and before any such activity has even taken place from which to influence God’s choice….\textsuperscript{164}

Furthermore, within the framework of the ideology of patrilineal descent, the role of Christ is vital for the salvation mechanism of Paul’s Gentile converts. Fredriksen argues,

…the sperma that God promised to Abraham were not Abraham’s many descendants (the usual understanding of this singular collective noun, “seed”), but Christ himself (Gal 3.16).

Hundreds of years before Sinai, Paul thus urged, gentile inclusion in Israel’s redemption

\begin{footnotes}
\item[164] Mark D. Nanos, \textit{Reading Romans within Judaism} (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2018), 227. Regarding the situation of Galatia, see Nanos, \textit{Reading Romans within Judaism}, 244.
\end{footnotes}
had already been promised to Abraham through Christ (3.17). And it is through Christ, not through circumcision, Paul continued, that gentiles are made not only into Abraham’s sons; by their own *pistis*—steadfast confidence—in the divine promise, they become sons of God as well (3.26–29, sons and so heirs, that is, to God’s Kingdom; cf. 4.5–7, the gentiles are adopted as sons).165

To sum up, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, the ideology of patrilineal descent of Abraham is prominent for the salvation of Paul’s Gentile converts since it constructs a certain kind of ethnic relation through Christ. With the notion of adoption and the ideology of patrilineal descent of Abraham, Paul constructs the identity of Gentiles-in-Christ by preaching the good news (about Christ) to Gentiles and helps them to be saved and joined in Jewish communities.166 In this sense, according to these three RPP scholars, the role of Christ (that is framed by the ideology of patrilineal descent of Abraham) is vital for the salvation of Gentiles in Paul’s thought.

### 2.8.2 Re-evaluates Abraham

In Galatians, Fredriksen emphasizes the importance of Abraham’s patrilineal descent in framing the Christ event for Paul’s Gentile converts and constituting a certain type of ethnic connection. It will be argued, however, that through the Christ event, Paul rereads the trajectory of the promise to Abraham, in which Abraham

---

166 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 148-149.
works as a model of faith in God, as Christ, not Abraham, is the final authority in Paul’s theological thinking.

As argued, the Christ event rather than Isaiah serves as the grand narrative through which Paul rereads and reflects on the Hebrew Scriptures, recognizing that Abraham’s story points forward and is continuous with the Christ’s narrative. Paul uses Abraham as an illustration to explain that Abraham was acknowledged as righteous before God because of his faith in God (Gal 3:6). Paul reaches a conclusion and addresses the Galatians, declaring that people who have faith are descendants of Abraham (Gal 3:7). In this way, Paul re-evaluates the Abraham story in light of the Christ event.

Meanwhile, Paul’s use of the aorist participle προϊδοσαμ, the aorist verb προευηγελίσατο, and the personification of Scripture in Galatians 3:8 all refer to the Abrahamic covenant (Gen 12:3, cf. Gen 18:18), and demonstrate his theological understanding of the divine promise in light of the Christ event (cf. Gal 3:16). In other words, from the perspective of the Christ event, Paul asserts that the gospel was preached to Abraham beforehand and that God’s plan of salvation would be extended to the nations (Gal 3:8). According to Paul, Christ’s coming into human history fulfilled the divine promise made to Abraham. In this sense, the Christ event is the goal, while Abraham’s promise is the means, pointing to Christ (cf. Gal 3:24-25). Paul’s logic is that the Christ event serves as a meta-narrative by which Abraham’s

---

167 On this point, please refer to the section of this chapter titled Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event.
168 Keener, Galatians, 230; Longenecker, Galatians, 115; deSilva, The Letter to the Galatians, 283; Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 227–228.
169 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 415.
story is re-evaluated and the trajectory of divine promise and the meaning of Scripture are recognized (Gal 3:8).  

Furthermore, Paul makes a link between Abraham and Christ by highlighting that the promises made to Abraham and his offspring, namely Christ (Gal 3:16), and by emphasizing that God gave Abraham his inheritance based on a promise and not the law (Gal 3:18). Paul understands that everyone, including Jews and Gentiles, is under the power of sin, so that the only way out for humanity is via faith in Christ, which is a justification through the trajectory of promise (Gal 3:22, cf. Gal 3:24). Paul tells the Galatians that regardless of whether they are Jewish or Greek, slave or free, male or female, their faith in Christ makes them children of God (Gal 3:26, 28). Paul’s logic is that if one belongs to Christ, then one is a descendant of Abraham and an heir through the line of promise (Gal 3:29). As such, the Christ event is the determining factor by which Paul rethinks and discovers that Abraham’s story points forward to Christ. Paul’s language in Galatians reveals that he reinterprets Abraham’s account in light of the Christ event, and that the Christ event becomes Paul’s final authority.

2.8.3 Faith in God Model

Considering Abraham’s significance in Galatians, I will argue that in Paul’s thought Abraham’s faith is a model for Christ followers and has nothing to do with the conception of a physical ethnic bloodline genealogical kinship construction.

---

Paul’s phrase reveals the antagonistic relationship between the works of the law and hearing with faith (Gal 3:2, 5). After challenging the Galatians with a series of rhetorical questions (Gal 3:1-5), Paul presses his audience to choose between two options: whether they acquired the Spirit through the works of the law, or by hearing with faith (Gal 3:2, 5). The term ἀκοῆς parallels the implied observance of the law, ἔργων νόµου, and it corresponds more closely with Abraham’s example, in which Abraham heard the promise and trusted in it (Gal 3:2, 5-6). In addition, Paul’s use of καθώς strengthens his argument in Gal 3:5 and demonstrates that Abraham serves as an essential example of one who is acknowledged as righteous via faith in God (Gal 3:6). Consequently, according to Paul, the common basis between Abraham and Christ followers is faith, not ethnic or genetic ties (Gal 3:7).

According to Paul, it is a fictive kinship relationship based on faith, a non-

---

172 Keener, Galatians, 232; Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 212. Paul’s language of νοµός and πίστεις here is in antithesis rather than complementary relation, this reading is in contrast with the view of Fredriksen. For her view, see Fredriksen, Paul, 130. In Galatians, Paul points out that there are two ways of justification. The first one is by the works of the law, but he thinks this way is not workable as he says ἐν νόµῳ ὁ δικαιοῦται παρὰ τῷ θεῷ (Gal 3:11). The second one is through faith in Christ (Gal 2:16, 3:11).
173 Paul’s rhetorical questions for Galatians is possibly to deal with his rival interpretation of Abraham in which they insist Abraham’s Torah observance, circumcision in particular, is the crucial factor for righteousness before God, see Longenecker, Galatians, 110; Barclay, Obeying the Truth, 66-67; Martyn, Galatians, 306; Thomas R. Schreiner, Galatians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 49; Moo, Galatians, 188; deSilva, The Letter to the Galatians, 279-280; Keener, Galatians, 223; Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 225.
174 I adopt the view that Paul’s ἔργων νόµου means Torah observance in general, see deSilva, Galatians, 216; Moo, Galatians, 158; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 373-375. For the view about the boundary marker between Jews and non-Jews, see Dunn, The Epistle to the Galatians, 134-137.
175 Paul’s ἀκοῆς πίστεως means hearing with faith, see Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 212; Lightfoot, St. Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians, 135; Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 131-132; Moo, Galatians, 183; Dunn, Galatians, 154; Burton, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, 147. For another possible interpretation, see De Boer, Galatians, 174-175.
176 Fung, The Epistle to the Galatians, 132; Schreiner, Galatians, 182-183. See also Witherington, Grace in Galatia, 217.
177 Moo, Galatians, 187 and 200; Keener, Galatians, 220-221.
genealogical line of lineage, and has no bearing on a person’s ethnicity. Paul’s view of this type of relationship is neither based on the framework of ethnicity, nor is it a fictive kinship relationship in the sense that Hodge argues.\textsuperscript{179} In other words, this type of relationship is not founded on an actual bloodline genealogy, but rather on faith in God as the basis for constructing a fictive, non-genealogical line of descent (cf. Rom 9:6-8).\textsuperscript{180} The people of God are therefore descendants of Abraham on the basis of their faith in God, rather than their actual physical descent.

As Christ believers received the Spirit through hearing with faith (Gal 3:2, 5) and Abraham was acknowledged as righteous because of faith (Gal 3:6), Paul connects the two groups by highlighting their faith and pointing out that οἱ ἐκ πίστεως are Abraham’s sons (Gal 3:6).\textsuperscript{181} By highlighting the significance of faith, Paul redefines their status as Abraham’s descendants (Gal 3:7).\textsuperscript{182} In this way, Abraham serves as an example of faith in God, which is a key attribute of Christ followers according to Paul’s philosophy.

While the formation of kinship is based on faith, it is open to all believers, both

\textsuperscript{179} Hodge argues that ethnicity had an important role in the construction of identity according to Paul. Hodge, for example, contends that “Paul does not reject an ethnic religion for a universal religion, but deploys ethnic discourses to realign the relationship between two groups of peoples, Ioudaioi and gentiles. Indeed, Paul offers no non-ethnic alternative; even being “in Christ” is ethnically defined…Paul’s understanding of ethnic identity, like that of many authors from ancient Mediterranean cultures, is rooted in ideologies of kinship, ties to homeland, loyalty to a particular god or gods, participation in religious practices, and adherence to particular laws or customs,” see Hodge, \textit{If Sons, Then Heirs}, 48. For further discussion on the role of ethnicity in Paul, please refer to the Romans chapter’s Identity of All Christ Believers section.

\textsuperscript{180} On this point, Boakye also argues that “Paul attempts to cut across the traditional view and suggest that the ‘true’ descendants of Abraham are not his physical, genetic progeny, but those who have faith as he did (Gal. 3:7-9),” see Oakes and Boakye, \textit{Rethinking Galatians}, 139. See also Oakes and Boakye, \textit{Rethinking Galatians}, 56-57, 65, 74.

\textsuperscript{181} Keener, \textit{Galatians}, 221. See also Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 188.

Jews and non-Jews, such as Abraham, who was a pagan before abandoning idols and believing in God.\textsuperscript{183} Since the relationship between Abraham and Christ believers is initiated by God’s gracious call and the human response of faith, human conditions such as ethnicity, genealogy, biological blood relation, social status, and gender have no bearing on the relationship and identity derived from the Christ event (Gal 3:7-9, 14, 28). In conclusion, the Christ event reinterprets Abraham’s promise and Abraham’s faith serves as a paradigm of faith in God for Christ believers. While faith in Christ is the human response to God’s salvation, it is available to everyone who believes.

2.9 Paul’s Salvation Mechanism

In this section, concerning Paul’s letter to the Galatians, it will be argued that Paul’s phrase of πίστις Χριστοῦ is objective genitive, the meaning of Paul’s expression of δικαιόω is to signify someone who is declared righteous before God, Paul’s notion of sin is universal, meaning that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin. Therefore, it will be argued that both Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same way through faith in Christ according to Paul’s understanding.

2.9.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ

According to Fredriksen, while Gentile Christ believers can partake in Israel’s salvation through patrilineal descent with Christ, their faith response is also necessary

for salvation. For Gentile Christ followers, Fredriksen refutes the interpretation of Paul’s πίστις as an inner psychological belief originating in the second century. By taking reference from Latin’s fides, Fredriksen argues the connotation of Paul’s πίστις is “steadfastness”, “conviction” or “loyalty” and Paul’s mission is to lead Gentile Christ followers to “obedience of ‘commitment’” to the gospel.

In Fredriksen’s view, through faith in Christ Gentiles are enabled to observe the law. Fredriksen argues,

Scripture had foreseen that God would δικαιοῦ τὰ ἔθνη ἐκ πίστεως (Gal 3.8 RSV: “justify the gentiles by faith”), and now, through Christ, he had. In the brief time remaining, these pagans ἐν Χριστῷ were enabled by and through their πίστις in Christ, and through God’s (or Christ’s) πνεῦμα infused in them, to fulfill the Law and to conduct community life in accordance with it (e.g., Gal 5.13–25). Though not “under the Law” (Gal 5.18), these inspired gentiles can now fulfill the Law.

Therefore, Fredriksen contends that Paul’s positive comment regarding the law applies to Gentile Christ followers who are enabled to keep the law.

Concerning the salvation mechanism for Gentile Christ believers, their righteous behavior in Jewish societies is vital until the second coming of Christ. By focusing on the second part of the Ten Commandments, Fredriksen argues that the meaning of Paul’s δικαιωσόνη is about the righteous behavior of Gentiles-in-Christ in the Jewish

---

184 Fredriksen, Paul, 120.
186 Fredriksen, Paul, 119-120.
187 Fredriksen, Paul, 130.
communities. Paul’s phrase δικαιωθέντες ἐκ πίστεως has the implication that Gentile Christ followers ‘can now act “rightly” toward their fellows in community’ in accordance with the law because of their faith in Christ and the empowerment of the indwelling spirit. As a result, according to Fredriksen, the relationship between νοµός and πίστες in Paul is complementary rather than antithetical. Governed by apocalyptic eschatology, Fredriksen contends that Paul’s salvation mechanism is articulated from a Jewish perspective, emphasizing the final redemption of Gentiles-in-Christ with his kinfolks in Jerusalem. Paul’s Gentile converts are anticipating Christ’s imminent, redemptive and victorious second coming by keeping the Torah.

Thiessen’s perspective on the salvation of the Gentiles concurs with Fredriksen’s proposal. Gentiles must establish a genetic relationship with Abraham by becoming his sons if they want to inherit his promises and inheritance. Only by believing in Christ and receiving the pneuma can the genetic connection be made. The pneuma of Christ is what makes it possible for people who aren’t Jewish to become pneumatic creatures and sons of Abraham. In this way, the sin of the Gentiles is resolved.

According to Nanos, Gentile Christ believers who have placed their faith in Christ and received the Holy Spirit are permitted to participate in Jewish communities without having to undergo circumcision. Nanos argues,

But from Paul’s perspective, there are other Jewish communal symbols active in the

---

188 Fredriksen, Paul, 121-122.
189 Fredriksen, Paul, 122.
190 Fredriksen, Paul, 130.
191 Fredriksen, Paul, 155.
192 Fredriksen, Paul, 119.
193 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 105-128.
experiences of these Gentiles that demonstrate that the change of aeons has occurred with
the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, where these Gentile addressees,
and those Jews who meet with them now within the ekklesias as indiscriminate equals, are
concerned. The receipt of the Holy Spirit of God and miracles wrought among themselves
bear witness that they are righteous ones—while yet remaining non-Jews—for they are
children of Abraham, indeed children of God, and thus full heirs.  

To summarize, Nanos, Fredriksen, and Thiessen believe that Paul’s Gentile converts receive Christ’s πνεῦμα through their faith in Christ, which enables them to obey the law and behave righteously in Jewish congregations up until the time that Christ returns for the second time. Paul creates a new genealogical lineage for Gentile Christ followers to be Abraham’s offspring by employing the notion of patrilineal descent.

2.9.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance?

Regarding the mechanism of salvation for Jews and Jewish Christ followers, according to Fredriksen, firstly Torah obedience has nothing to do with salvation for Jews, but it does for Gentiles. Secondly, according to Fredriksen’s Paul: The Pagans’ Apostle, the relation between Christ’s role and the salvation of Jews is

---

196 Paula Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” Expository Times 133, no. 1 (2021): 19-20: Fredriksen argues that “The narrative protagonist of the Pentateuch nowhere names ‘salvation’ among his motivations for choosing Israel. This god did not give his Law in order to ‘save.’ He gave his Law in order to set his people-group apart from other people-groups, to be for himself—or so he says (Lev 20.22,24; cf. Deut 7.7–8). This Jewish god gives his Jewish laws to his Jewish people not so that they would know how to earn a happy afterlife, but so that they would know how, in this world, to live a Jewish life—and thereby remain on his good side…Ironically, then, even for Paul’s version of the gospel, it is the gentiles’ ability to fulfill (some parts of) Jewish law that mattered for their salvation. That was Paul’s Judaizing message to them.”
unclear. Fredriksen argues that “For a Jew...What was required was more like a shift of perspective than a commitment to a radically different world view and set of ritual/cultic behaviors, such as Christ-following Gentiles had to sustain.” Although Fredriksen explicitly disagrees with the view of the Sonderweg scholars, Fredriksen’s saying “what was required was more like a shift of perspective than a commitment to a radically different world view…” is not clear enough to indicate the relation between the salvation of Jews and the role of Christ.

Thirdly, with relation to the salvation of Jews (including Jewish Christ-followers), Fredriksen emphasizes the centrality of Christ’s second coming. In Fredriksen’s view, the first advent of Christ causes a stumbling block to Jews, but the second advent of Christ is a victorious event in which the triumph of the returning Christ will build up the kingdom of God. According to Fredriksen, most of Paul’s contemporary Jews have temporary blindness with regard to the goal of the Torah—the returning of Christ (Rom 10:4, cf. 2 Cor 3:14-15). Also, Fredriksen argues that “Israel would so turn—that is, they would indeed recognize Jesus as the son of David, the eschatological Lord Messiah—only when God enabled them.”

---

197 Fredriksen, Paul, 166 n 84.
198 Fredriksen, Paul, 110.
199 Fredriksen, Paul, 166 n 84. Does this imply, for instance, that Jews can be saved without this “the shift of perspective” on Christ? Or, without this “the shift of perspective,” Jews cannot be saved? At the very least, I believe Fredriksen should clarify this topic for further discussion. Concerning the relations between Christ and Jews, Zetterholm also argues that “It is not unlikely that Paul envisaged that Israel in the end would turn to Christ, and, as Paula Fredriksen has pointed out, “turning” is not “conversion.” However, given the limited information we have at hand, I cannot see how anyone can reach a clear answer to this question...The focus on the salvation of the Jews risks, however, making us overlook Paul’s real concern,” see Zetterholm, “The Paul within Judaism Perspective,” 188-189.
200 Fredriksen, Paul, 141.
201 Fredriksen, Paul, 166.
202 Fredriksen, Paul, 166.
In a recent article, Fredriksen clarifies her scheme on the salvation of Jews, arguing that,

The reception of pneuma for all who have *pistis*—loyalty to the *evangelion*, be they gentile or Jew—initiates that transformation by which humans both living and dead will transition from flesh-bodies to star-bodies, *somata pneumatika*, at Christ’s triumphant public return (1 Cor 15.20–54; cf. Rom 1.4). Once Christ manifests from the temple mount (Zion), once the ‘full number of the nations’ ‘comes in,’ then God will cease rendering (most of) Israel insensible (11.25). At that point, ‘all Israel’—all twelve tribes of David’s kingdom—will be made safe or secured (*sōtēsetai*, RSV 11.26. ‘Be saved’ is perhaps a theologically overstuffed translation)…How will all seventy nations receive Christ’s spirit? How will all Israel be immersed ‘into’ Christ? And what about the dead (cf. 1 Cor 15.29)? (That’s a lot of people.) Alas, in his extant letters, Paul does not say…And, as we should expect of the messiah son of David, Christ will gather in all of Israel’s twelve tribes (Rom 11.26; cf. 11.12, their ‘full inclusion’). He will rule over the gentile nations (Rom 15.12). And then—again, this is an ancient Mediterranean family—the Son will turn the kingdom over to his Father (1 Cor 15.24, 28; cf. Phil 2.10).203

As a result, the blindness of Jews will be resolved at the second coming of Christ and the salvation of Jews is through the agency of the returning Christ and the reception of Christ’s *pnuema*. All Jews, the twelve tribes of Israel, including those who had died, “will be made safe or secured”204

---

204 Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” 18.
Concerning Jews, Thiessen contends that Paul’s gospel work has nothing to do with them. Thiessen argues that “In his extant letters, though, Paul rarely intends his remarks to address Jews directly. In his mind, only the Gentiles fall under his purview and authority.” Thiessen also argues that Paul never preaches the gospel to the Jews because,

Paul states that he is God’s ordained apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 1:5, 1:13–15). Romans 1:16, therefore, provides no evidence of his own missionary practices; rather, the verse encapsulates the two-pronged mission of the early Jesus movement that he mentions in Galatians 2—his Gospel was divinely given for Gentiles, while Peter’s Gospel was divinely given for Jews (Gal 2:7–9).

In addition, on the one hand, Thiessen stresses that Jews continue to observe the law. Thiessen argues that “But he [Luke’s Paul] does not conclude from this fact that Jewish observance of the law is incompatible with justification by faith. Luke’s Paul, once again, fits with the radical new perspective’s claim that Paul believed Jewish Christ followers ought to continue in their law observance.” On the other hand, Thiessen expressly rejects the notion of two-covenant theology. Thiessen contends that “I [Thiessen] would stress yet again that the two-track salvation, one for Jews apart from Christ Jesus and one for gentiles-in-Christ, often associated with the radical new perspective, finds support neither in Acts nor in Paul’s writings.”

Therefore, according to Thiessen, it is clear that Christ is the means of salvation

205  Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
206  Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
207  Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 166.
208  Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 166 n 17.
for non-Jews. For Jews and Jewish Christ believers, what matters for them is to keep observing the law until the second coming of Christ. However, according to Thiessen’s *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, it is not clear whether Christ is the key for the salvation of Jews and Jewish Christ believers.209

In contrast to Fredriksen and Thiessen, according to Nanos, Jews who maintain the Jewish covenant without accepting Jesus as the Messiah could still be saved. Nanos argues,

Paul believed that fellow Jews who did not share his convictions about these matters were mistaken or not “yet” adequately informed. They were still within the covenant, unlike those from the other nations who had not yet turned to Christ, but they were missing out on the promised day of glory for Israelites, when they would declare God’s message of reconciliation to all of the nations.210

In Rom 11:25-26, Nanos argues that,

The gifts and the calling of God are certain and irrevocable, which means that God is beholden to all Israelites in covenantal terms stretching back to promises made to Abraham, just as parents are beholden to their children. There are many stages in a relationship, but the bond is not broken.211

In conclusion, according to Nanos, Fredriksen, and Thiessen, Paul believed that the death and resurrection of Christ offer a door for non-Jews to participate in the salvation of Israel. Since that time, Paul’s gospel-preaching has become a mission to

---

209 Does this imply, for instance, that Jews can be saved without Christ? Or Jews cannot be saved without Christ? At the very least, I believe Thiessen should clarify this point for further discussion.


211 Nanos, *Reading Romans within Judaism*, 276. See also Nanos, *Reading Romans within Judaism*, 218, 223 and 232.
Gentiles as the redemption of Israel through Christ has expanded to include the other nations. The salvation of Gentiles is thus made possible by the resurrection of Christ. The Jews’ redemption, according to Nanos, is contingent on their covenantal bond with the Jewish God. Nevertheless, the triumphant coming of Christ, according to Fredriksen, is the key to the Jews’ salvation. Thiessen just highlights the necessity of Jewish law compliance on this point and more explanation is required.

2.9.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ

Regarding the salvation mechanism, while Nanos argues that Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ and Jews are saved in the covenantal relationship with their Jewish God, Fredriksen argues that the Gentiles are saved through the death and resurrection of Christ (the first advent of Christ) by the genetic connection with Abraham’s lineage, and then the Gentile Christ believers are saved (or secured in Fredriksen’s term) with Jews (including Jewish Christ believers) at Christ’s triumphant and public return (the second advent of Christ), however, this thesis argues that Jews and non-Jews are saved in the same way through faith in Christ, and that according to Paul’s theological perspective, the redemption of Jews and Gentiles has nothing to do with the genealogical connection to Abraham. According to Paul, following the first coming of Christ, both Jews and non-Jews would be saved through faith in Christ up until the second coming of Christ.

2.9.3.1 Objective Genitive Reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ

Concerning the interpretation of πίστις Χριστοῦ, it is agreed with Fredriksen that
the reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ is objective genitive.\textsuperscript{212} In Galatians, Paul’s phrase ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν explicitly denotes the subject of the verb ἐπιστεύσαμεν is Christ believers, not Christ (Gal 2:16).\textsuperscript{213} The phrase ἐπίστευσεν τῷ θεῷ and Paul’s language of ἐκ πίστεως signify the subject is Abraham (Gal 3:6-9).\textsuperscript{214} As introduced by the verb ἐπίστευσεν (Gal 3:6), trust rather than faithfulness has a better sense for πίστις (Gal 3:6-26).\textsuperscript{215} Besides, there is no indication to show that in Galatians the subject of πιστεύω and πιστός is Christ, however, there is data to demonstrate that a human is the subject of πιστεύω (e.g. Gal 2:16, 3:6).\textsuperscript{216} However, Paul’s focus is not on the cognitive sense of faith, for Paul the connotation of faith in Christ is to put confidence in Christ by which his life is reconstituted (Gal 2:19-20).\textsuperscript{217} In the same way, for Christ believers, the meaning of πίστις Χριστοῦ is that through faith in Christ they turn their allegiance to him so that their life is reordered based on the Christ event.\textsuperscript{218} From a social perspective, “πιστος is a distinguishing characteristic and group-identity marker” of Paul’s community.\textsuperscript{219}


\textsuperscript{213} Keener, Galatians, 180-181; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 380.

\textsuperscript{214} Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 380; Keener, Galatians, 181.

\textsuperscript{215} Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 359.

\textsuperscript{216} Moo, Galatians, 160-161; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 382; Keener, Galatians, 181.

\textsuperscript{217} Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 380.

\textsuperscript{218} deSilva, The Letter to the Galatians, 237; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 380.

2.9.3.2 Paul’s Notion of Sin

Regarding Paul’s notion of sin, I disagree with Fredriksen and argue that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin in Paul’s theological understanding.\textsuperscript{220} Even if the nation of Israel may have a pioneering role in the salvific plan of God (Gal 6:16),\textsuperscript{221} Paul’s language of \( \tau\alpha\pi\alpha\tau\alpha \) demonstrates that all things, including Jews and Gentiles, are under the power of sin (Gal 3:22).\textsuperscript{222} Also, as shown, Paul’s concept of sin covers not only Gentiles, but also Jews (Gal 2:15, 17). Paul and Peter are giving themselves the same status as Gentiles: sinners.\textsuperscript{223} In Paul’s understanding, the Christ event broke into human history, inaugurated an eschatological era (Gal 1:4, 6:15), and delivered Paul, his companions and Gentile Christ believers from the power of sin (Gal 1:4b, cf. Gal 3:22).\textsuperscript{224} Therefore, in Paul’s thought, his notion of sin covers not only Gentiles, but also Jews.

2.9.3.3 Paul’s Notion of \( \delta\text{ικα\text{ω}} \)

Concerning Paul’s notion of \( \delta\text{ικα\text{ω}} \), I disagree with Fredriksen and argue that \( \delta\text{ικα\text{ω}} \) primarily deals with the relation between God and human rather than

\textsuperscript{220} For her view, see Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 124.
\textsuperscript{222} Keener, \textit{Galatians}, 53; Martyn, \textit{Galatians}, 360; Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 239; Witherington, \textit{Grace in Galatia}, 260. Fredriksen seems to downplay the meaning of Gal 3:22. Though I agree with Thiessen that Paul’s epistemology is from solution (Christ) to plight (human), Thiessen limits the human predicament to Gentiles alone, which is not reflected in Paul’s language in Galatians, see Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 14.
\textsuperscript{223} Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 165.
\textsuperscript{224} In Gal 1:4, the verb \( \varepsilon\text{ι\epsilon\lambda\eta\tau\alpha} \) appears only one time in Paul’s undisputed letters which denotes “to deliver someone from peril or confining circumstance,” see \textit{BDAG}, 344; deSilva, \textit{Galatians}, 5; Dunn, \textit{The Epistle to the Galatians}, 35; Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 72; Witherington, \textit{Grace in Galatia}, 76–77.
confining it to a human and human relationship.\textsuperscript{225} The primary meaning of δικαιόω is to declare someone who is righteous.\textsuperscript{226} In Galatians, Paul’s language of δικαιόω first appears in Gal 2:16 where it has a passive sense and possibly implies recognition by God (cf. Gal 3:8, 3:11).\textsuperscript{227} Paul’s language demonstrates the importance of the present and future sense of God’s recognition. On the one hand, the present passive of δικαιοῦται denotes the one who is already considered righteous by God (Gal 2:16a), on the other hand, the future passive of δικαιωθῆσεται signifies the one who will be recognized as righteous in the final stage (Gal 2:16c).\textsuperscript{228} From the perspective of the Christ event - the first advent of Christ which indicates the death and resurrection of Jesus, Paul and Peter acknowledge that Christ believers are considered righteous not based on the observance of the law, but faith in Christ (Gal 2:16).\textsuperscript{229} In other words, though Jewish Christ believers possess and observe the Torah, they are considered righteous by God through faith in Christ, not by the works of the law according to Paul’s theological thought.\textsuperscript{230}

\textsuperscript{225} For her view, see Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 122.
\textsuperscript{228} Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 376.
2.9.3.4 The Salvation Mechanism of Gentiles

Concerning the salvation mechanism of Gentiles, I argue that following the first coming of Christ, through faith in Christ they are being saved up until the second coming of Christ. As argued, Paul refutes the notion of being reckoned righteous based on the observance of the law, rather he understands that through faith in Christ anyone can be regarded as righteousness before God, and their life is reconstituted by the Christ event (Gal 2:19-20). Also, Christ rather than the Mosaic covenant, the law, circumcision, uncircumcision and ethnicity, functions as the final authority for Gentile Christ believers in Paul’s theological thought. Moreover, the statement made by Paul demonstrates that the Christ event reshapes the narrative of Abraham and that Christ becomes the final authority for Paul. Paul’s use of Abraham as a model of faith in God for Christ followers rather than as an ethnic bond highlights the significance of faith in the Pauline salvation mechanism, which makes God’s salvation available to everyone who believes. Therefore, the salvation of the Gentiles depends solely on their faith in Christ and has nothing to do with the genealogical link with Abraham.

Also, according to Galatians, Paul’s language demonstrates that Christ delivers Gentile Christ believers from the power of sin and brings them into the new creation (Gal 6:15). Through the indwelling Spirit, Gentile Christ believers can bear the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23), behave with πίστις δι’ ἀγάπης ἐνεργουμένη (Gal 5:6) until the coming of the kingdom of God (Gal 5:21). In this sense, Gentile Christ believers do not need to convert to Judaism and become Jews, they become children

231 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 377.
232 Keener, Galatians, 176.
of God through faith in Christ and remain Gentiles. 233

2.9.3.5 The Salvation Mechanism of Jews

Concerning the salvation mechanism of Jews, I disagree with Fredriksen and instead argue that from Paul’s perspective Jews are saved through faith in Christ in the same way with Gentiles. It signifies that after the first coming of Christ, Jews are being saved through faith in Christ up until the second coming of Christ. For Paul and Jewish Christ believers, as argued, Christ rather than Torah has become their ultimate authority, in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ the Mosaic covenant and the law have been relativized, circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter. Moreover, Paul’s statement demonstrates that the Christ event reshapes Abraham’s story and that Christ is the ultimate authority for Paul. The significance of faith in the Pauline salvation mechanism, which makes God’s salvation accessible to everyone who believes, is highlighted by Paul’s use of Abraham as an example of faith in God for Christ followers rather than as an ethnic connection. Therefore, the salvation of the Jews is contingent upon their faith in Christ and has nothing to do with their genealogical link with Abraham.

In addition, as argued, Paul acknowledges that Jews are sinners and subject to the power of sin (Gal 2:15, 17, 3:22). By using the pronoun “we,” Paul also emphasizes that Jews are justified by faith in Christ when Christ comes (Gal 3:24),

233 Hurtado, Destroyer of the Gods, 101. Paul does not think it is necessary for a Gentile to become a Jew for salvation. In other words, according to Paul, the salvation of Gentiles has nothing to do with whether Gentiles could convert to Judaism or not. This is different from the view of Thiessen, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 14.
the salvation mechanism for Jews is the same as for Gentiles.\textsuperscript{234} As with non-Jewish Christ followers, the righteousness of Jewish Christ followers is determined by the Christ event and not by observing the law.\textsuperscript{235} In light of this, even though Paul and Jewish Christ followers possess the Torah, they are no different from Gentile Christ followers; they are saved through faith in Christ (Gal 2:15-16), and by being loyal to the truth of the gospel (Gal 2:5, 14).\textsuperscript{236}

Consequently, Paul’s expressions in Galatians demonstrate that Christ delivers Paul and Jewish Christ believers from the power of sin (Gal 1:4, cf. Gal 3:22) and ushers them into the new creation (Gal 6:15). With the indwelling Spirit, Jewish Christ followers can produce the fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23), behave with πίστις δι’ ἄγαπης ἐνεργομένη (Gal 5:6), and wait for the advent of God’s kingdom (Gal 5:21).\textsuperscript{237} Therefore, regarding Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews, Paul is not “arguing that Gentiles should be included, with Jews, in the people of God; he is arguing, rather, that Jews should be included, with Gentiles, in the mass of ordinary humanity.”\textsuperscript{238} Paul’s theological thinking leads to the conclusion that both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ in the same manner.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter has investigated Paul’s salvation discourse in Galatians to demonstrate that in Paul’s theological thought both Jews and non-Jews are saved in

\textsuperscript{234} Witherington, \textit{Grace in Galatia}, 269.  
\textsuperscript{236} Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 157. See also Westerholm, \textit{Perspectives Old and New on Paul}, 374.  
\textsuperscript{237} Keener, \textit{Galatians}, 176.  
\textsuperscript{238} Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 157.
the same way, through faith in Christ. In Christ’s inaugurated eschatological era, the Mosaic covenant era and the law have been relativized, circumcision and uncircumcision have no value for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers, as Christ has become the ultimate authority for them. Paul therefore held that following the first coming of Christ, Jews and non-Jews alike are being saved by faith in Christ up until the second coming of Christ.
3 Chapter 2: 1 & 2 Corinthians

In line with the analysis of the chapter on Galatians, the research question in this chapter on 1 and 2 Corinthians remains: how does Paul conceive of the salvation mechanism vis-à-vis Jews and non-Jews? It will be argued that Paul held that Jews and non-Jews are both saved in the same way, through faith in Christ without any difference, through dialogue with the Paul within Judaism scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos as well as through analyzing Paul’s authentic writings to the Corinthians.

This chapter will first analyze Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) before examining Paul’s salvific thought on Jews and Gentiles because Paul’s explicit audience is a major concern of Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos. The stance of this thesis is that both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers are included in Paul’s explicit audience in the letters to Corinth. In order to make the case that Paul’s theological view of salvation is derived from the Christ event, which requires a reinterpretation of the Mosaic covenant, this chapter examines both of Paul’s letters to Corinth. It will be argued that Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, and Christ also functions in that way for Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers. From Paul’s understanding of the Christ event, the Mosaic covenant has been set aside, the authority of Torah has been relativized, circumcision and uncircumcision no longer matter for salvation. Paul’s theological perspective holds that until the second coming of Christ, faith in Christ—regardless of one’s ethnic background—will be the only means of salvation for Jews and non-Jews alike.
3.1 ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’?

In this section, it will be argued that Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes) in the letters to Corinth comprises both Jews and Gentiles. This mixed audience is perhaps more clearly expressed in 1 Corinthians than in any other of the genuine Pauline letters. Paul’s expressions not only indicate that there are both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers within his Corinthian community (1 Cor 7:18), but he also addresses the Corinthian congregation, which includes Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, to greet each other (1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12), and urges them to wait for each other when partaking of the Lord’s Supper (1 Cor 11:33).

Meanwhile, it will be argued that in 1 Cor 8 the polemical issue between the ‘knowledgeable’ and the ‘weak’ is an intra-polemical problem which means that both the ‘knowledgeable’ and the ‘weak’ are Christ believers. Furthermore, Paul’s expressions indicate that the ‘knowledgeable’ comprises both Gentile and Jewish Christ believers. By employing second-person plural verbs (e.g. 1 Cor 8:9, 12), Paul addresses the ‘knowledgeable’ which includes Gentile and Jewish Christ believers. Also, Paul’s language of “all” shows that he does not only write to Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers (1 Cor 1:10). Therefore, all these expressions demonstrate that Paul’s explicit audience entails Gentile and Jewish Christ believers. In addition to his explicit audience (to whom he writes), Paul’s salvation mechanism for Jews and non-Jews is also dependent on what he writes about Jews and Gentiles. To determine Paul’s salvific perspective on Jews and non-Jews, it is crucial to distinguish between Paul’s explicit audience and the subjects of his writings. After exploring Paul’s explicit audience, it will be argued that Paul’s
actual audience (to whom he preached) includes Jews and Gentiles and the ethnic scope of Paul’s preaching comprises both Jews and Gentiles.

3.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience

In terms of ethnicity, Fredriksen argues that Paul’s letters are written to Gentiles only, and his discourse seldom addresses Jews.¹ Fredriksen contends that “…in the letters we have from him, Paul addresses gentiles and only gentiles—in tandem with Paul’s commitment to an imminent eschatology, as the necessary point of orientation when interpreting Paul’s epistles.”² Regarding Paul’s community in Corinth, Fredriksen points out that,

All of the assemblies to which Paul writes are comprised primarily if not exclusively of Christ-following ex-pagan pagans: in Thessalonica (a group who just turned to God from idols, 1 Thess 1.9), in Corinth (much concerned with close relations between Christ-following pagans and pagans outside of the ekklesia)….³

Meanwhile, Fredriksen asserts that,

In 1 Corinthians 8, writing to gentile Christ-followers about sacrifices to idols, Paul speaks of the ways that former idol-worshipers might still feel anxious around such sanctified foodstuffs: if they partake, their conscience might be defiled, presumably by feeling as if they were in some sort of genuine exchange with the god (1 Cor 8.7–8).⁴

For 1 Cor 7, Fredriksen contends that,

---
² Fredriksen, Paul, 122 n 52.
³ Fredriksen, Paul, 122. On this point, it seems that Fredriksen’s view is in line with Nanos, but Nanos argues in more detail, see below.
⁴ Fredriksen, Paul, 69.
In this passage in 1 Corinthians, then, Paul cannot be talking about God’s commandments
to Israel. Circumcision or foreskin does not matter, he must mean, specifically and only for
not-Israel, that is, for gentiles. (In fact, this whole section of Paul’s letter, 1 Cor 7, treats
exclusively intra-gentile issues.) Thus, those who received Paul’s gospel when “already
circumcised” must be gentile proselytes, not born Jews.5

Therefore, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s letters to Corinth are written to Gentiles
only.

Thiessen’s view on Paul’s explicit audience is based on his understanding of
Paul’s apostolic authority over the Gentiles. Thiessen argues,

Any attempt to understand Paul’s letters, consequently, must begin with his oft-repeated
assertions that God called him and set him apart as his agent to preach the gospel of Christ
to the gentiles (e.g., Rom 1:5; 11:13; 15:16; Galatians 2; cf. Eph 3:6–8). These claims to
having divine authority to preach to gentiles suggest that he wrote primarily, perhaps even
exclusively, for gentiles-in-Christ. Therefore, when Paul quotes Jewish scriptures or
comments on the Jewish law, he does so in relation to his mission to non-Jews.6

Also, Thiessen argues that, “[i]n his [Paul’s] extant letters, though, Paul rarely intends
his remarks to address Jews directly. In his mind, only the Gentiles fall under his
purview and authority.”7 In this sense, Thiessen’s argument is based on the governing
role of Paul’s apostolic authority over Gentiles. Regarding the letters to Corinth, for

5 Fredriksen, Paul, 107. Also, Fredriksen argues that “In 1 Corinthians 7, then, Paul is not talking
about Jews (those who were “already circumcised”) and gentiles (those “in foreskin”); instead, he is
talking about two different kinds of ex-pagan Christ followers,” see Paula Fredriksen, “Who Was
Paul?” in The New Cambridge Companion to St Paul, ed. by Bruce W. Longenecker (Cambridge:
7 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
instance, Thiessen argues that “Similarly, in writing to the Corinthians, Paul describes the former status of some of his gentile recipients as immoral idolaters (1 Cor 6:9–10; cf. 1 Cor 6:18).” Therefore, according to Thiessen, Paul’s letters to Corinth are written to Gentiles only.

Concerning Paul’s community in Corinth, in four articles Nanos contends that Paul addresses the ‘knowledgeable’ (1 Cor 8-10), Gentile Christ believers, to imitate him to renounce the right to eat food sacrificed to idols in order to influence the ‘weak’, Gentile-non-Christ-believers, to believe in God. First, concerning the identity of the ‘knowledgeable’ in 1 Cor 8, Nanos argues that they are Gentile Christ believers to whom Paul writes and Nanos asserts that 1 Cor 8-10 provides an excellent example to demonstrate Paul’s rhetorical adaptability to the ‘knowledgeable’. According to Nanos, Paul writes to the ‘knowledgeable’ to exhort them to imitate his behavior in order to teach them to live out the core value of Christ – the best interests of others. Nanos argues that “Paul thus moves his addressees from non-Jewish premises, since they are not Jews, to very Jewish conclusions, since they are Christ believers, which represents a Jewish (communal, philosophical,

---

8 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 53.
10 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 125.
religious, moral) way of being in the world—even for non-Jews.”

Nanos contends that Paul “calls the knowledgeable to change their lifestyle, to be sure, something he does not describe seeking among the recipients of his evangelistic tactics in 9:16-23.”

Likewise, Nanos applies the so-called rhetorical adaptability reading to Paul in 1 Corinthians 8-10. In terms of words, Nanos argues that “Paul begins his argument by reasoning from the knowledgeable ones’ premises that there is only one God and thus that idols are nobodies (8:4-6), and therefore the food offered to them can be eaten as profane (8:8; 10:19, 23, 25-26).” In terms of deeds, Nanos asserts that,

in his [Paul’s] argument throughout chapters 8 to 10, Paul does not become ‘knowledgeable’ to the ‘knowledgeable’ in the sense of lifestyle adaptability, but his rhetorical adaption to the premises of the ‘knowledgeable’ is based on empathy toward the ‘weak’ as well as communicating this empathy to the ‘knowledgeable’.”

Furthermore, Nanos contends that

in chapter 9, Paul illustrates his very different lifestyle, including his rhetorical adaptability, to demonstrate the lifestyle they should now imitate. Although Paul does not explicitly call the Corinthians to proclaim the gospel to their families and neighbors as much as to seek to live with respect for one another, he does call them to imitate his lifestyle in order to gain others in 10:31-11:1, and elsewhere throughout the letter (e.g.,

---

11 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 127.
12 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 127.
14 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 127.
To sum up, according to Nanos, Paul attempts to persuade the ‘knowledgeable’, Gentile Christ believers, from their worldview, and he himself does not eat or behave like them in deeds.\textsuperscript{16}

Second, concerning the identity of the ‘weak’ in 1 Cor 8, Nanos argues that they are Gentile-non-Christ-believers and he names the ‘weak’ as those who are polytheist idolaters.\textsuperscript{17} Nanos argues that “I join those who understand Paul to be explicitly describing his evangelizing tactics in 9:19-23, and my interpretation of the identity of the ‘weak’ throughout these chapters as non-Christ-believing idolaters.”\textsuperscript{18} Nanos contends that Paul applies fictive kinship language in 1 Cor 5 and 1 Cor 8-10 by pointing out that “the accommodation Paul expresses in 1 Cor 8 toward the impaired corresponds to the position he champions in 1 Cor 5 toward polytheists, not toward fellow Christ-believers.”\textsuperscript{19}

Regarding Paul’s language of ἀδελφοί, for the ‘weak’ group Nanos emphasizes the concept of a brotherhood of humankind derived from the Graeco-Roman context. Nanos argues that,

the concept of a brotherhood of humankind is not a Christian innovation, or only attested earlier among Israelites. It was at work in Alexander the Great’s concept of uniting the

\begin{thebibliography}{10}
\bibitem{15} Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 126.
\bibitem{16} Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 125. On this point, it will be argued that the group of ‘knowledgeable’ entails not only Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers. Also, Paul’s expression shows that he addresses the ‘knowledgeable’, including Gentile and Jewish Christ believers. Therefore, Paul’s explicit audience involves not only Gentiles, but also Jews, see below.
\bibitem{17} Nanos, “Why the ‘Weak’ in 1 Corinthians 8-10 were not Christ-believers,” 36.
\bibitem{18} Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 126.
\bibitem{19} Nanos, “The Polytheist Identity of the “Weak,” and Paul’s Strategy to “Gain” them,” 209.
\end{thebibliography}
world under his rule, and it was an important concept among philosophical groups, especially articulated by the Stoics and Cynics.\textsuperscript{20}

Furthermore, Nanos asserts that

Paul’s perspective reveals a sense of fictive kinship with all humankind – “on behalf of whom Christ died.” Idolaters who do not yet profess faith in Christ are to be regarded as brothers and sisters too, fellow-members of the family of humans God created and seeks to restore in Christ. That is a dimension of their identity about which the knowledgeable needed to be set straight, in view of their resistance to his earlier instruction proscribing idolatry for all Christ-believers.\textsuperscript{21}

Therefore, according to Nanos, the ‘weak’ are polytheistic idolaters and they are Gentile-non-Christ-believers, and the letters to Corinth are written to Gentiles only.\textsuperscript{22}

To sum up, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos Paul’s explicit audience is Gentile Christ believers only throughout the letters to Corinth even if there were Jews or Jewish Christ believers in Paul’s Corinthian community.

3.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Gentile Christ Believers

Concerning Paul’s explicit audience, it is agreed with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos that in his letters to Corinth Paul writes to Gentile Christ believers. This is because Paul’s expression of ὅτε ἔθνη ἦτε πρὸς τὰ ἐἰδωλια τὰ ἁφωνα clearly

\textsuperscript{20} Nanos, “The Polytheist Identity of the “Weak,” and Paul’s Strategy to “Gain” them,” 206.
\textsuperscript{21} Nanos, “The Polytheist Identity of the “Weak,” and Paul’s Strategy to “Gain” them,” 209.
\textsuperscript{22} See also Mark D. Nanos, “A Jewish View,” in Four Views on the Apostle Paul, ed. Stanley N. Gundry and Michael F. Bird, Zondervan Counterpoints Series (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 170. On this point, it will be argued that the group of ‘weak’ are Christ believers and they are most certainly predominantly if not exclusively Gentile Christ believers, see below.
demonstrates that Paul writes to Gentile Christ believers in Corinth (1 Cor 12:2). Therefore, for Paul’s explicit audience, in line with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, it is the case that ethnically it does most certainly include Gentile Christ believers and they may be the most prominent ethnic group in Paul’s Corinthian community.

3.1.3 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers?

Admittedly, with regard to Paul’s explicit audience, the data for Jews or Jewish Christ believers does not initially seem so strong. For example, Paul is not talking to Jews in 1 Cor 1:22-24, rather he is talking about the different responses of Jews and Gentiles (or Greeks) to his Christ crucified message. Therefore, at first it might seem that there is no clear data to indicate that Paul’s explicit audience involves Jews or Jewish Christ believers in the letters to Corinth. However, the question to be asked is: does Paul’s explicit audience include only Gentile Christ believers in the letters to Corinth? It will be argued that Paul’s Corinthian congregation includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, and then it will be shown that Paul’s explicit audience includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

---

3.1.3.1 Paul’s Corinthian Congregation

Concerning Paul’s Corinthian congregation, in terms of ethnicity, I argue that there are Jewish and Gentile Christ believers. Regarding the terms used by Paul, it is agreed with Thiessen that Paul’s usage of \(\text{περιτετμ\'η} \) and \(\text{ἀκροβοστ\'ια} \) pertains to Jews and non-Jews respectively (e.g. 1 Cor 7:19).\(^{24}\) This is because whenever Paul uses \(\text{περιτετμ\'η} \) and \(\text{ἀκροβοστ\'ια} \) without qualification it is Paul’s usual usage to refer to Jews and Gentiles respectively (cf. Rom 3:1, 3:29-30, 15:8-9, Gal 2:7-9, 2:12).\(^{25}\)

Circumcision as a physical requirement is a mark of membership in the covenant community for men and it is one of the distinctive markers to distinguish between Jews and Gentiles.\(^{26}\)

Since Paul’s language of calling appears frequently in 1 Cor 7 (e.g. 1 Cor 7:15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24), it is significant to explore the concept of calling in Paul’s thought in order to find out the meaning of his phrases \(\text{περιτετμ\'η\'νος τις \'εκλήθη} \) and \(\text{ἐν \'ακροβοστιά \'κκεκληταί τις} \). Regarding Paul’s notion of calling, I argue that his expression of \(\text{περιτετμ\'η\'νος τις \'εκλήθη} \) and \(\text{ἐν \'ακροβοστιά \'κκεκληταί τις} \) pertain to Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers respectively (1 Cor 7:18). There are three terms that are related to this concept of calling in Paul’s thought.\(^{27}\) First, Paul’s language of \(\text{κλητός} \) denotes that Paul self-identifies as an apostle of Jesus

---

24 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9.
26 Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 311.
27 The three terms are \(\text{κλητός} \) (1 Cor 1:1, 1:2 and 1:24), \(\text{κλῆσις} \) (1 Cor 1:26, 7:20), and \(\text{καλέω} \) (1 Cor 1:9, 7:15, 17, 18 (2 times), 20, 21, 22 (2 times), 24, 10:27, 15:9).
Christ by the will of God (1 Cor 1:1), he identifies Christ followers in Corinth as κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (1 Cor 1:2), and he recognizes that God’s calling could come upon both Jews and Gentiles without regard to their ethnicity (1 Cor 1:24). Second, by using κλῆσις, Paul addresses his audience to consider God’s calling (1 Cor 1:26), and requests his audience to remain in the calling (1 Cor 7:20). Third, by using second-person plural passive ἐκλήθητε (1 Cor 1:9), Paul recognizes that through the agency of God, the κλητοῖς ἁγίοις were called into fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:2, 9).

Besides, Paul acknowledges that God’s calling has nothing to do with prior conditions (such as ethnicity and social status) of people. And Paul requests his audience to remain in the state in which they were called (1 Cor 7:20, 24). To sum up, Paul’s notion of calling is as follows. First, the agent who initiates the call is God (e.g. 1 Cor 1:1, 9, 7:20, 24). Second, regarding Corinthians, it signifies their turning of allegiance to Christ, whether Jews or Gentiles, who would have a relationship with Christ and would remain in the calling of God (1 Cor 1:9, 24, 7:18, 20, 24).

Also, by responding to the question from Paul’s Corinthian community (1 Cor 29–33).

---

29 *BDAG*, 549.
30 In Paul’s thought, the calling is God’s divine invitation (1 Cor 1:1, 1:9), see *BDAG*, 549.
31 For instance, Paul’s expressions such as παρτετειμένος τις ἐκλήθη (1 Cor 7:18), ἐν ἀκροβυστία κέκληται τις (1 Cor 7:18), ὁ ἐν κυρίῳ κληθεὶς δοῦλος (1 Cor 7:22) and ὁ ἐλεύθερος κληθεὶς (1 Cor 7:22) show that God’s calling has nothing to do with ethnic background and social status. See also John M. G. Barclay, “Paul, Judaism and the Jewish People,” in *The Blackwell Companion to Paul*, ed. Stephen Westerholm (Maiden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 193; Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 303.
33 Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1119. For more discussion on Paul’s usage of calling, see Stephen J. Chester, *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul’s Theology and the Corinthian Church* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2003), 59–112.
using second-person plural imperative verbs to address the audience (e.g. 1 Cor 7:5), addressing different statuses such as unmarried and widows (1 Cor 7:8), married (1 Cor 7:10), the rest (1 Cor 7:12), slave (1 Cor 7:21), virgins (1 Cor 7:25) in relation to God’s calling, using the third-person singular imperative ἐπισπάσθω and περιτεμνέσθω to exhort Jews not to undo their circumcision and Gentiles not to circumcise respectively (1 Cor 7:18), using the third-person imperative verb μενέτω to exhort both, Jews and Gentiles, to remain in the calling (1 Cor 7:20, cf. 1 Cor 7:24), using the plural vocative ἀδελφοί (1 Cor 7:24, 29), all of these expressions show that Paul is dealing with the real situation of Christ believers in Corinth rather than a hypothetical situation.35 In this sense, the aorist third-person singular of ἐκλήθη signifies the called Jews (1 Cor 7:18, cf. 1 Cor 1:9), meaning Jewish Christ believers.36 The perfect passive third-person singular of κέκληται denotes the called Gentiles (1 Cor 7:18, cf. 1 Cor 1:9), meaning Gentile Christ believers.37 To sum up, Paul’s expression περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη and ἐν ἀκροβυστία κέκληται τις indicate

---

34 Paul’s phrase περὶ δὲ indicates that Paul is dealing with different real issues with respect to the Corinthian community (1 Cor 7:1, 25, 8:1, 12:1, 16:1, 12).
35 On this point, the view of Thiessen is that Paul is dealing with the real issue in his Corinthian congregation, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10-11. Fredriksen also has the same view, see Fredriksen, Paul, 107. For 1 Cor 7:17, my reading is that Paul concludes what he had said to the Corinthian audience with different statuses (e.g. 1 Cor 7:5, 8, 12) and points out his general rule to all the churches (1 Cor 7:17). And then Paul continues to address the Corinthian audience again with different statuses (e.g. 1 Cor 7:18, 21, 25).
36 On this point, Horrell also argues that “E.g., at Corinth gentiles seem to have formed the majority (1 Cor 8:7; 12:2), though there were certainly Jews among the membership too: Prisca and Aquila, along with Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater (Rom 16:21), and Crispus and Sosthenes (Acts 18:2, 8, 17; 1 Cor 1:1, 14; 16:19). Cf. also 1 Cor 7:18–19, which implies a Jewish presence among the congregation, since otherwise it would have been without significance to them,” see David G. Horrell, “Idol Food, Idolatry, and Ethics in Paul,” in The Making of Christian Morality: Reading Paul in Ancient and Modern Contexts (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 26 n 25.
37 Paul’s language of calling also has the meaning of salvation, see Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 548; Garland, 1 Corinthians, 303. By changing the tense of the verb from ἐκλήθη to κέκληται (1 Cor 7:18), Lightfoot argues that “the aorist of the preceding clause may have been guided by the fact that as a rule the conversions of the Jews were earlier than the conversions of the Gentiles,” see J. B. Lightfoot, Notes on Epistles of St. Paul from Unpublished Commentaries (London: Macmillan, 1895), 228.
that his Corinthian congregation consists of both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18).  

In this sense, Paul explicitly addresses Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 12:2), but it does not necessarily mean that Paul’s Corinthian community consists entirely of Gentile Christ believers. However, according to Paul’s expressions, it indicates that Paul’s Corinthian congregation contains both Gentile and Jewish Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18, cf. 1 Cor 9:20). Though there is no way to know the proportion of Jews and Gentiles in Paul’s Corinthian congregation, Paul’s expression shows that his Corinthian congregation comprises both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18).

3.1.3.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience

However, despite the fact that Paul’s community in Corinth included both Jews and non-Jews, this does not imply that the Jews are a part of the explicit audience (the people to whom he is writing) in the letters that Paul writes to the Corinthians. On the other hand, there is evidence to suggest that Paul is not only writing to Gentile Christ believers but also to Jewish Christ believers in his letters.

Paul communicates many forms of greetings in his writings to the Corinthians by the use of several verbs, including ἀσπάζονται (1 Cor 16:19-20, 2 Cor 13:12),

38 On this point, Horrell also argues that “The Corinthian Christian community certainly contained both Jews and Gentiles, though mostly the latter (1 Cor 12.2)...Paul’s illustration in 1 Cor 7.18f strongly implies a Jewish presence among the believers, or it would have been without significance to them,” see David G. Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 75 and 92. For Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s Corinthian community, Gruen argues that “Paul had an uphill battle to surmount them,” see Erich S. Gruen, Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism: Essays on Early Jewish Literature and History (Boston: Walter De Gruyter, 2016), 178.
ἀσπάζεται (1 Cor 16:19), and ἀσπάσασθε (1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12), and he emphasizes that the greeting is by his own hand (1 Cor 16:21). Since Paul writes to the Corinthian congregation as a whole by employing the phrase τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὖσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ (1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1), he instructs the Christ followers within his Corinthian congregation to greet one another with a holy kiss by the phrase ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ (1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12).39 In this context, when Paul writes ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους, he commands his Corinthian congregation, which includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18), to greet one another.40 At other words, Paul expects his Corinthian community members, including Jewish and Gentile Christ followers, to greet each other with a holy kiss when the writings are read in Corinth.41 Also, Paul exhorts his congregation in Corinth, both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18), to wait for one another

39 The following facts make it improbable that ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ in 1 Cor 16:20 and 2 Cor 13:12 refers exclusively to Gentile Christ followers. Paul does not identify which groups he is addressing, such as Gentiles (1 Cor 12:2), married people (1 Cor 7:10), slaves (1 Cor 7:21). Second, it is natural to read that Paul addresses the Corinthian congregation as a whole, given that the letters are addressed to τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ οὐσῃ ἐν Κορίνθῳ (1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1) and the Corinthian congregation includes persons of various ethnicities, socioeconomic groups, and marital statues (1 Cor 7:1-40). Third, it has been proposed that both Gentile and Jewish Christ followers are members of Paul’s Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18); hence, Paul addresses both Gentile and Jewish Christ followers with the term ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους (1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12). See also Garland, 1 Corinthians, 772-773; Paul Gardner, 1 Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018), 750-751; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 924; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 863; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 629; Mark A. Seifrid, The Second Letter to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 493-494; R. P. Martin, 2 Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014), 712-713; Murray J. Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 935.

40 Mullins argues that “The use of the second-person type greeting means that the persons greeted might not be among those who read the letter,” see Terence Y. Mullins, “Greeting as a New Testament Form,” Journal of Biblical Literature 87, no. 4 (1968): 425-426. However, Paul’s explicit audience (to whom he writes) would not change even though the persons greeted might or might not be among those who read the letter. In other words, it is related to Paul’s intention when he writes the greeting in the letters to Corinth and it has nothing to do with whether the Jewish or Gentile Christ believers were really there when the letters were read.

41 On this point, Mullins also argues for the interpretation of the greeting with ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ that “It is clearly a greeting from the writer to the third parties, with the readers of the letter as agents. It is not a liturgical or a sociological injunction from the writer to the readers,” see Mullins, “Greeting as a New Testament Form,” 426.
in regard to eating the bread and drinking the cup of the Lord by using the phrase ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε (1 Cor 11:33).42 Therefore, Paul’s explicit audience includes not only Gentile Christ followers (1 Cor 12:2), but also Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 11:33, 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, cf. 1 Cor 7:18).

3.1.3.3 ‘Knowledgeable’ and ‘Weak’ are Christ believers

Second, concerning 1 Cor 8, Paul’s expressions clearly demonstrate that there are two groups, namely the ‘knowledgeable’ (e.g. 1 Cor 8:1, 4) and the ‘weak’ (e.g. 1 Cor 8:7, 9, 10, 11).43 For the ‘knowledgeable’ group, it is agreed with Nanos that they are Christ believers in Corinth.44 From the perspective of the ‘knowledgeable’, there is only one true God even while identifying many gods and lords (1 Cor 8:4,

---

42 The following evidence makes it unlikely that ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε in 1 Cor 11:33 refers solely to Gentile Christ followers. Paul does not specify which groups he is addressing such as the Gentiles (1 Cor 12:2), married individuals (1 Cor 7:10), or slaves (1 Cor 7:21). Second, it is natural to read that Paul addresses the Corinthian congregation as a whole, given that the letters are written to τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν Κορίνθῳ (1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1) and the Corinthian congregation consists of people of varied ethnicities, socioeconomic statuses, and martial statuses (1 Cor 7:1-40). Third, it has been suggested that both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers are members of Paul’s Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18); hence, Paul addresses both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers with the phrase ἀλλήλους ἐκδέχεσθε (1 Cor 11:33). See also Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 448; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 558-559; Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 898-899.

43 This discussion concurs with a number of commentators that the unity covers the whole of 1 Corinthians, see Thielson, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 36-38; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 48-53; Gardner, I Corinthians, 24; Fee, The First Epistles to the Corinthians, 16; Margaret M. Mitchell, Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), 67-68; Hans Conzelmann, I Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975), 4. And the unity also includes the scope of 1 Cor 8-10, see David G. Horrell, Solidarity and Difference: A Contemporary Reading of Paul’s Ethics (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 187 and 192; Conzelmann, I Corinthians, 4; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1108-1109. Besides, the apparent inconsistency of Paul’s tone on the food sacrificed to the idols between 1 Cor 8 and 1 Cor 10 can be justified, see Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1108 and 1125; David G. Horrell, “Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1-11.1,” Journal for the Study of the New Testament 20.67 (1998): 101 and 105; Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 187 and 196.

44 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 125. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 69 and 122.
By calling Jesus Christ Lord (1 Cor 8:6; cf. 1 Cor 1:2, 9, 2 Cor 1:2, 3, 4:5), it indicates that the ‘knowledgeable’ are Christ believers (1 Cor 8:6).

However, regarding the group of ‘weak’, I disagree with Nanos’ view that the ‘weak’ are Gentile-non-Christ-believers and argue that the ‘weak’ are Christ believers who are within Paul’s Corinthian congregation for the following reasons. With the phrase ‘now concerning things sacrificed to idols’ (1 Cor 8:1), Paul is responding to the question raised from his Corinthian congregation. By using a second-person plural imperative verb to address his audience in Corinth (e.g. 1 Cor 8:9), describing vividly different perceptions regarding eating the food sacrificed to idols between the ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘weak’ (1 Cor 8:4-7), identifying himself with the group of ‘knowledgeable’ (1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6), all these expressions demonstrate that Paul is dealing with the real situation in Corinth rather than a hypothetical situation.

In terms of the identity of the ‘weak,’ first, Paul’s expression of “we” such as οἴδαμεν ὅτι (1 Cor 8:1, 4), πάντες γνώσιν ἔχομεν (1 Cor 8:1), ἡμεῖς (1 Cor 8:6) pertain to Paul and Corinthian ‘knowledgeable’ Christ believers. This is because the

45 See Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 189.
47 Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence, 90; Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 186; Thielson, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 628; Garland, 1 Corinthians, 364; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 372–373.
48 See also Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Freedom or the Ghetto (1 Corinthians 8:1–13; 10:23–11:1),” in Keys to First Corinthians (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 88; Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 188.
49 I concur with most of the commentators that οἴδαμεν ὅτι is Paul’s opening (e.g. 1 Cor 8:1, 4), and πάντες γνώσιν ἔχομεν is Paul’s quotation of Corinthian’s words (1 Cor 8:1), see Barclay, “1
author, Paul (with Sosthenes) (1 Cor 1:1), writes the letter of 1 Corinthians to the ἐκκλησία of God in Corinth, and Paul’s expression ἡγιασμένως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ demonstrates that they are Christ believers in Corinth (1 Cor 1:2).

In this sense, by using ‘we’, Paul identifies himself with the Corinthian ‘knowledgeable’ Christ believers (e.g. 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6).50 Because of this, the semantic range of ‘we’ is not ‘we’ humanity, but ‘we’ (‘knowledgeable’) Christ believers (e.g. 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6).51 In this sense, the meaning of πᾶσιν does not pertain to all humanity, but all Christ believers in Corinth (1 Cor 8:7). In other words, the meaning of Paul’s phrase ἀλλ’ οὐκ ἐν πᾶσιν ἡ γνώσις is that the knowledge is not in all the Corinthian Christ believers.

Given the fact that the knowledge is not in all Corinthian Christ believers (including Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18)), the term τινές does not indicate some of humanity, but some of the Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 8:7). If Paul’s πᾶσιν pertains to Paul’s all Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 8:7), then the phrase ‘their conscience being weak’ indicates that the group of ‘weak’ are Corinthian Christ believers with weak consciences, not polytheists or unbelievers. Moreover,
Paul’s usual description for non-Christ-believers is not the term ἀσθενής, rather they are defined by ἀπίστος by Paul (e.g. 1 Cor 6:6, 7:12, 13, 14 (2 times), 15, 10:27, 14:22 (2 times), 14:23, 24, 2 Cor 4:4, 6:14, 6:15).

Second, Paul’s usage of ἀδελφός also demonstrates that he is pointing to Christ believers rather than a fictive brotherhood of humankind derived from the Graeco-Roman context. Paul addresses his audience in Corinth with the vocative ἀδελφοί (e.g. 1 Cor 1:10, 11, 26, 2:1, 3:1, 4:6, 7:24, 29, 10:1, 11:33, 12:1, 14:6, 15:1, 16:15).

Regarding Paul’s language of calling, he addresses his ἀδελφοί to consider their calling (1 Cor 1:26), remain in the calling (1 Cor 7:24), and Paul expresses that they were called into fellowship with God’s son, Jesus Christ our Lord (1 Cor 1:9). Also, by using ἀδελφοί, Paul points out that they had received the gospel preached by him before (1 Cor 15:1). All of these expressions show that Paul’s usage of ἀδελφός means Christ believers rather than a fictive kinship of brotherhood originated from the Graeco-Roman context. If this reading is correct, it once again shows that the

---

52 Concerning Paul’s usage of ἀσθενής, it seems that the term is multivalent. For instance, it describes Paul as weak (1 Cor 4:10), it modifies the things of the world as weak (1 Cor 1:27), Paul’s presence is weak (2 Cor 10:10).


54 The term ἀδελφός appears in 1 Corinthians 39 times (1 Cor. 1:1, 10, 11, 26, 2:1, 3:1, 4:6, 5:11, 6:5, 6 (2 times), 8, 7:12, 14, 15, 24, 29, 8:11, 12, 13 (2 times), 9:5, 10:1, 11:33, 12:1, 14:6, 20, 26, 39, 15:1, 6, 31, 50, 58, 16:11, 12 (2 times), 15, 20). Please see the section on Abraham and Christ in the chapters analyzing Galatians and Romans for my argument that Paul’s form of relationship is not founded on genuine bloodline genealogy but rather on faith in Christ to build a fictitious, non-genealogical line of lineage.

brothers who have a weak conscience are the Corinthian Christ believers for whose sake Christ died (1 Cor 8:11). Therefore, the identity of the ‘weak’ is not non-Christ-believers, but Christ believers who are in Paul’s Corinthian community.

The view of the ‘weak’ Corinthian Christ believers is that they are still subjected to the influence of idols: they have been accustomed to idols until now, and to eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol (1 Cor 8:7). Therefore, regarding ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘weak’, it is concluded that both groups are Christ believers in Corinth. Because of this, the issue Paul is addressing in 1 Cor 8 is an intra-polemical issue (between Christ believers) in his Corinthian congregation.

3.1.3.4 Paul’s Explicit Audience: ‘Knowledgeable’

Concerning the ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘weak’, the question to be asked is as

56 Paul uses ὁ ἀδελφὸς δὺ ὄν Χριστὸς ἀπέθανεν to modify ὁ ἀσθενῶν (1 Cor 8:11). The article ὁ before ἀδελφὸς signifies the specific one instead of the brotherhood of humanity. That means the brother whom Christ died for is the specific one instead of the brotherhood of humanity. Besides, Paul uses τὸν ἀδελφὸν μου twice afterwards to refer to the group of ‘weak’ which reinforce the meaning of the ‘weak’ that they are Christ believers with weak consciences (1 Cor 8:13). See also Trebilco, Self-Designations and Group Identity in the New Testament, 33.

57 A number of commentators also have this view, see Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence, 143; Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 190–191; Thielson, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 655; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 428; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 348; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 386-388. This reading is in contrast with Nanos. In this sense, Nanos’ assertion “Paul’s perspective reveals a sense of fictive kinship with all humankind” is unconvincing, see Nanos, “The Polytheist Identity of the “Weak,” and Paul’s Strategy to “Gain” them,” 209.

58 Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1122; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 418; Thielson, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 639.

59 Even the identity of the informant is uncertain (1 Cor 10:28), it does not affect the discussion of the identity of the ‘weak’ in 1 Cor 8. For the identity of the informant, there are a number of different views. First, the informant is a Christ believer, see Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1125; though Horrell prefers the informant to be a Christ believer, he does not reject the possibility that this informant is a non-Christ believer, see Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 196-198. Second, the informant is an non-Christ believer, see Garland, 1 Corinthians, 496; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 555; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 493. Third, the informant is the host, see Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 227. Fourth, the identity of the informant is uncertain, see Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 401. Fifth, it is a less likely scenario as Paul uses the third-class condition in 1 Cor 10:28, see Brookins and Longenecker, 1 Corinthians 10-16, 23-24; Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 466.
follows. In terms of ethnicity, what is the identity of these two groups? First of all, it is clear that the division between ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘weak’ is related to eating the food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1, 4). The ‘knowledgeable’ perceive that they have the knowledge and right to eat everything, even the things sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:4-6, 9-10), while the ‘weak’ are still subject to the influence of idols (1 Cor 8:7).

Second, concerning the relation between the two groups, Paul’s language shows that the ‘knowledgeable’ should be aware of their right and knowledge in order not to hinder the ‘weak’ because of Christ. If not they may even sin against Christ (1 Cor 8:9-12). Also, Paul’s exhortation to the ‘knowledgeable’ is for the edification of the ‘weak’ (1 Cor 8:10-12), and he, despite identifying himself with the ‘knowledgeable’ (1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6), would renounce his right of eating in order not to cause the ‘weak’ to stumble (1 Cor 8:13).

Concerning the ethnicity of the ‘weak’ Corinthian Christ believers, it is agreed that they are most certainly predominantly if not exclusively Gentiles. Although Paul does not specify clearly whether the group of ‘weak’ involves Jews or non-Jews (1 Cor 8), however, as the issue is related to the eating of things sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:4), and the situation is that the ‘weak’ Corinthian Christ believers are still subjected to the influence of idols, the group of ‘weak’ are most likely Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 12:2).60 Therefore, Gentile Christ believers with weak consciences in Corinth belong to the group of ‘weak’.

Regarding the group of ‘knowledgeable’ Corinthian Christ believers, in terms of

60 It is also possible that this group may involve some Jewish Christ believers who ate food sacrificed to the idols before (cf. 1 Cor 10:7). But there is no way to know whether actually there are Jewish Christ believers in the group of ‘weak’ or not.
ethnicity, I disagree that the ‘knowledgeable’ are Gentiles only for the following reasons. By using “we”, Paul, as a Jewish Christ believer, identifies himself with the ‘knowledgeable’ group (e.g. 1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6). In this sense, Paul, as a Jew, perceives himself in the group of ‘knowledgeable’. Second, since Jewish Christ believers have the belief and tradition of monotheism, those idols or sacrifices have nothing to do with them and they may properly fit the worldview of ‘knowledgeable’. Third, as argued, since there are Jews and Gentiles in Paul’s Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18), Paul recognizes that not all Corinthian Christ believers are knowledgeable (1 Cor 8:7), and the ‘weak’ involves Gentile Christ believers, therefore, the ‘knowledgeable’ should include Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers who do not have weak consciences. Therefore, it seems implausible to claim that the ‘knowledgeable’ includes Gentile Christ believers only because Paul identifies with this group.

While there is no way to know the proportion of Jews and Gentiles in the ‘knowledgeable’ group, given the fact that the issue is intra-polemical between the ‘knowledgeable’ and ‘weak’ among Corinthian Christ believers, it is related to eating the food sacrificed to idols (1 Cor 8:1, 4), Paul’s self-identification with the ‘knowledgeable’ group (1 Cor 8:1, 4, 6), and Paul’s recognition of Gentiles and Jews

61 Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 338.
62 Since Jewish Christ believers in Corinth are monotheists, and do not have past experience of idolatry like pagans, the Jewish Christ believers in Corinth most likely belong to the group of ‘knowledgeable’. See also Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 331.
63 In other words, Paul recognizes that the knowledge is not in all Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 8:7), meaning that in the whole of Paul’s Corinthian congregation, there are either ‘knowledgeable’ or ‘weak’ Christ believers if it is differentiated from the ideology of conscience. Meanwhile, as argued, Paul’s Corinthian congregation does involve Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18). As the result, both the Gentile and Jewish Christ believers in Corinth belongs to the group of ‘knowledgeable’ or ‘weak’.
in his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18), it cannot be ruled out that both Gentile and Jewish Christ believers are among the ‘knowledgeable’. Therefore, it is concluded that the ‘weak’ includes Gentile Christ believers, while the ‘knowledgeable’ includes both Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers.

Furthermore, Paul exhorts the group of the ‘knowledgeable,’ which involves both Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers, by utilizing the second-person plural imperative βλέπετε (1 Cor 8:9), second-person plural ἀμαρτάνετε (1 Cor 8:12), the phrases ἡ ἐξουσία ὑμῶν and σὲ τὸν ἔχοντα γνῶσιν (1 Cor 8:9-10). In this sense, Paul’s language once again shows that his explicit audience includes not only Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers. In addition, Paul language of “all” indicates that Paul is speaking to Jews and Gentiles within his Corinthian congregation. In 1 Cor 1:10, Paul’s expression παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς…ἵνα τὸ αὐτὸ λέγητε πάντες καὶ μὴ ἐν ὑμῖν σχίσματα shows that Paul is talking to all of the members within his Corinthian congregation that involves Gentiles and Jews (1 Cor 7:18).  

In conclusion, Paul not only knows there are Gentiles and Jews in the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18), but also writes to Gentile and Jewish Christ believers to

64 The fact that “all” only refers to Gentile Christ followers in 1 Cor 1:10 is highly improbable due to the following considerations. To begin, the use of the word πάντες in Paul’s writings does not exclusively relate to Jews or Gentiles in terms of their ethnicity (1 Cor 1:10). Second, πάντες is a nominative adjective that modifies “the embedded second person plural subject of λέγητε,” see Timothy A. Brookins and Bruce W. Longenecker, I Corinthians 1-9: A Handbook on the Greek Text (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 14. Third, it has been proposed that Jewish and Gentile people who follow Christ are included in Paul’s Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18); as a result, the word “you all” in 1 Cor 1:10 refers to both Jewish and Gentile people who follow Christ. In addition, in 1 Cor 12:7, the emphatic position of the dative of Paul’s ἐκάστῳ may also demonstrate that Paul is addressing each one of the Christ believers, involving Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 7:18), in Corinthian community, see Brookins and Longenecker, I Corinthians 10-16, 68; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 653.
greet each other within the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12), he 
exhorts them to wait for one another regarding eating the bread and drinking the cup 
of the Lord (1 Cor 11:33). Also, Paul exhorts the Gentile and Jewish Christ believers 
in the group of the ‘knowledgeable’ not to cause the ‘weak’ to stumble (1 Cor 8:9, 
12). Paul’s language of “all” indicates that Paul speaks to both Jewish and Gentile 
Christ followers within the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 1:10). Therefore, it is 
concluded that Paul’s explicit audience in the letters to Corinth includes both Jewish 
and Gentile Christ believers.65 However, in spite of the fact that the data indicate that 
Paul writes to both Jews and Gentiles, there is no evidence to support a primary (e.g. 
Gentile) and secondary (e.g. Jewish) audience in terms of Paul’s explicit audience (to 
whom Paul writes). This is true despite Paul’s usage of the term πρῶτος in 1 Cor 
11:18, 12:28, 14:30, 15:3, 45, 46, 47, and 2 Cor 8:5.

If this reading is correct, it cannot be assumed that Paul’s directed language such 
as the second-person plural pronouns (e.g. 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2), ἀγίοις (e.g. 1 Cor 
1:2; 2 Cor 1:1), ἀδελφοί (e.g. 1 Cor 1:10, 11, 26, 2:1, 3:1, 7:24, 29, 15:1; 2 Cor 1:8, 
8:1, 13:11 1:13), Κορίνθιοι (2 Cor 6:11), pertains to Gentile Christ believers only, 
even if the majority of the congregation in Corinth are Gentile Christ believers.66 If 
Paul’s explicit audience includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers, this may 
explain why he occasionally singles out members of the Corinthian congregation for 
special attention. In 1 Cor 12:2, for instance, Paul singles out Gentile Christ followers

65 If this reading is correct, the main argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos regarding Paul’s 
explicit audience is dubious.
66 For the term about saints and brothers, this view is in contrast with Fredriksen, see Fredriksen, Paul, 
150-151. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 117 and 153.
from his Corinthian congregation to address their former relationship with idols. In the same manner that he sometimes addresses the unmarried and widows (1 Cor 7:8), sometimes he addresses the married (1 Cor 7:10), sometimes he addresses the slaves directly (1 Cor 7:21), and sometimes Paul commands the ‘knowledgeable’ Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 8:9). The group of Gentiles is only one of the groups Paul addresses inside his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 12:2); depending on the circumstances, he also addresses other groups within the Corinthian community. Paul’s appeal to Gentiles in 1 Cor 12:2 does not suggest that he writes only to Gentiles. Also, it may be better to explain Paul’s expression of οἱ πατέρες ἡµῶν πάντες ὑπὸ τὴν νεφέλην ἦσαν because there are Jews in his addressees (1 Cor 10:1). In fact, those expressions imply that Paul’s explicit audience comprises both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

On the other hand, Paul’s theological viewpoint must be understood in light of the fact that his soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is impacted by his explicit audience as well as the topics he addresses in relation to Jews and Gentiles. When exploring Paul’s view of the salvation mechanism concerning Jews and non-Jews in 1 and 2 Corinthians, it must be remembered that Paul’s understanding is not confined to and determined only by his explicit audience. It is crucial to distinguish between the audience to whom Paul writes (Paul’s explicit audience) and the people about whom Paul writes.

__________________________

67 It implies that there are Jews when Paul singles out the Gentile Christ believers to address.
In 1 and 2 Corinthians, it is clear that Paul is not only writing about Gentiles, but also Jews. Paul’s language about Jews and non-Jews, including Jews, Greeks and Gentiles, appears in 1 and 2 Corinthians.68 These terms indicate that Paul talks about Jews and non-Jews in his letters. For example, Paul writes about the different responses of Jews and non-Jews to his Christ crucified message (1 Cor 1:22-24), his concern not to give offense to Greeks or Jews or the church of God (1 Cor 10:32), the baptism of Jews and non-Jews (1 Cor 12:13), his suffering from Jews (2 Cor 11:24), the dangers from the Gentiles (2 Cor 11:26). These instances show that Paul talks about Jews and non-Jews in the letters to the Corinthians. In this way, Paul writes to both Jews and Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles in 1 and 2 Corinthians, and not exclusively or primarily to Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles.

As a result, Paul’s theological notions about the way in which Jews and non-Jews can be saved are not only expressed in terms of the explicit audience, but also in terms of what Paul writes about Jews and non-Jews. In other words, the argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos emphasizing Paul’s explicit audience is just one approach to discovering Paul’s soteriology. Contrary to what they assert, however, it does not completely define and demonstrate Paul’s theological understanding. Even if Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos are correct in asserting that Paul writes exclusively to Gentile Christ followers, this does not imply that his theological ideas are constrained by the ethnicity of his explicit addressees. In 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul’s theological beliefs are conveyed through his writings about Jews and Gentiles.

68 For example, Ἰουδαῖος appears in 1 Cor 1:22, 23, 24, 9:20 (3 times), 10:32, 12:13, 2 Cor 11:24; Ἕλλην appears in 1 Cor. 1:22, 24, 10:32, 12:13; ἔθνος appears in 1 Cor 1:23, 5:1, 12:2; 2 Cor 11:26.
Therefore, this study will not just concentrate on Paul’s explicit audience but also on what Paul says in 1 and 2 Corinthians concerning Jews and non-Jews.

### 3.1.4 Paul’s Actual Audience

Concerning Paul’s actual audience (to whom Paul preached), first of all, there is data to show that Paul has a certain kind of association or contact with Jews (2 Cor 11:24). Second, it is extraordinary for Paul, as a Jew, to describe himself in the terms “to the Jews I became as a Jew” and “to those under the law as under the law” though Paul recognizes that he is not under the law (1 Cor 9:20). Paul points out the purpose of his ἐγενόμην by using four purpose clauses which are ἴνα Ἰουδαίοις κερδήσω (1 Cor 9:20), ἴνα τούς ὑπὸ νόμον κερδήσω (1 Cor 9:20), ἴνα κερδάνω τοὺς ἀνόμους (1 Cor 9:21) and ἴνα τοὺς ἁσθενεῖς κερδήσω (1 Cor 9:22). Also, Paul’s language of εὐαγγελιζόμενος (1 Cor 9:18), his expression of διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (1 Cor 9:23), his purpose clause ἴνα πάντως τινάς σώσω (1 Cor 9:22), all of these expressions show that his main concern is proclamation of the gospel. In this sense, Paul’s cross-

---

69 Horrell, *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence*, 75. Though the real historical situation of Paul’s five times suffering of the thirty-nine lashes is uncertain (2 Cor 11:24), one of the possible explanations is that Paul kept preaching the gospel to his fellow Jews in synagogue, see Garland, *1 Corinthians*, 430-431; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1123; Fitzmyer, *First Corinthians*, 369. On this point, for the view of Fredriksen, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 110 and 127.

70 On this point, Gruen argues that “The most interesting feature for our purposes is Paul’s acknowledgment that he became like a ἱουδαῖος to the ἱουδαίοι. Since the apostle insists on several occasions upon his Jewish origins, the idea of “becoming like a Jew” must connote something more than just a birthright. Further, it is also something more than adherence to the Torah, since that characterizes the second group with which the adaptable Paul seeks to ingratiate himself. The process and outcome of becoming like a Jew remain slippery and unspecified…But the fact that Paul claims, even boasts, that he could become all things (including a Jew) to all people, demonstrates that, in his conception, Jewishness was no fixed and predetermined entity dependent upon heredity. Its very malleability is a trait of central importance for the apostle…Paul ultimately eschews ethnicity as the determinative factor,” see Gruen, *Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter?*, 193-194 and 200.

71 Paul’s usage of the term κερδήσω (κερδάνω in 1 Cor 9:21) appears five times in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor. 9:19, 20 (2 times), 21, 22). The term appears one time in Phil 3:8 showing that Paul wants to gain Christ.
cultural adaptive behavior is for the sake of gospel by which he attempts to win Jews and Gentiles to Christ.\textsuperscript{72}

In addition, though Paul is an ethnic Jew (cf. Phil 3:5), his cross-cultural adaptive strategy reveals his self-identification in Christ which transcends all cultures.\textsuperscript{73} Meanwhile, Paul here is not describing a theoretical situation, by using an aorist ἐγενόμην…ὡς (1 Cor 9:20-22), Paul is describing his past gospel preaching action.\textsuperscript{74} In other words, Paul had preached the gospel to Jews and Gentiles and attempted to win both Jews and non-Jews to Christ through his cross-cultural adaptive strategies (1 Cor 9:20-22).\textsuperscript{75} Because of this, the idea that ἐγενόμην…ὡς denotes only a rhetorical and discursive sense is questionable.

By demonstrating the renouncement of his right for the sake of the gospel (1 Cor 9:19-23), Paul was using his own example to persuade the ‘knowledgeable’ to imitate his renouncement (for the sake of the gospel) in order to avoid making the ‘weak’

\textsuperscript{72} Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 476; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 369; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1123; BDAG, 541. Though Paul’s adaptive behavior to win Gentiles may be viewed as opportunism, however, Paul’s cross-cultural adaptive behavior is not unlimited, moral dishonesty, deceitful, and hypocritical, see Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1123; D. A. Carson, “Pauline Inconsistency: Reflections on 1 Corinthians 9:19–23 and Galatians 2.11-14,” The Churchman 100 (1986), 10–11, 33; Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 211-213.

\textsuperscript{73} Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 702; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 425; Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 211-213; Richard B. Hays, First Corinthians (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011), 153. On the other hand, by addressing the ‘knowledgeable’ to imitate his renouncement, Paul’s concern here is to build up the group of ‘weak’, see Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1123. See also Horrell, “Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1-11.1,” 94.

stumble (1 Cor 8:9-13). In this sense, Paul’s concern is for the edification of the ‘weak’. Based on the six different kind of audiences, Paul’s expressions in 1 Cor 9:19-23 shows that those explicitly addressed in the text (the fifth category) corresponds to those to whom Paul actually preached (the third category). In other words, regarding the actual audience of Paul, Paul’s expression indicates that he had preached the gospel to Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 9:19-23).

3.1.5 Ethnic Scope

Concerning the ethnic scope of Paul’s preaching, although Paul is the apostle to the Gentiles, I argue that Paul’s apostolic authority to the Gentiles does not necessarily mean that Paul’s preaching is confined to Gentiles only. First, Paul identifies himself as the apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God (e.g. Rom 1:1, 1 Cor 1:1, 2 Cor 1:1; cf. Rom 15:6). Second, it is agreed that “God called Paul and set

---

76 Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence, 209; Horrell, “Theological Principle or Christological Praxis? Pauline Ethics in 1 Corinthians 8.1-11.1,” 95; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1123. Fredriksen seems to argue that Paul approaches Jews and Gentiles by his cross-culture adaptive behavior (1 Cor 9:20-21) in the setting of the synagogue (2 Cor 11:24), see Fredriksen, Paul, 165. However, there is no data to show that Paul’s expression of his cross-culture adaptive behavior in 1 Cor 9:20-21 happened in the setting of synagogue. On this point, my hypothesis is as follows: Paul does not say explicitly where his cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching happened, however, as Paul’s language describes his past real action, in this sense at least it did happen somewhere before which may include the metropolitan city Corinth in first century. If this is the case, Paul was using his own example that happened in the Corinthian congregation to persuade the ‘knowledgeable’ to renounce their right. From the perspective of ‘knowledgeable’ in Corinth congregation, they have already known and seen Paul’s cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching. Through Paul’s cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching, Paul may establish Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 15:1-3). That is the reason why Paul can identify different responses of Jews and Gentiles to his Christ crucified message (1 Cor 1:20-22). On the other hand, for Concannon’s proposal on 1 Cor 9:19-23 based on archaeology, textual resources and Buell’s ethnic reasoning of identity construction, see Cavan W. Concannon, “When You Were Gentiles”: Specters of Ethnicity in Roman Corinth and Paul’s Corinthian Correspondence (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014), 1-7, 28-45. For Paul’s notion of identity construction, it will be discussed more in details in the chapter of the analysis of Romans.

77 This is in contrast with Fredriksen’s claim that “And Paul took the “good news” of God’s approaching Kingdom not to fellow Jews, but to a much larger population: Paul preached to pagans,” see Fredriksen, Paul, 2.
him apart as his agent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles” (Rom 1:1, 1:5).  

However, I disagree that if it means that “God called Paul and set him apart as his agent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles” only. This is for the following reasons. 

In terms of Paul’s action, as argued, Paul did preach to Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 9:20-22). In Paul’s thought, it is clear that God’s gospel is for both Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 1:23-24; cf. Rom 1:1, 1:16, 10:12). In terms of Paul’s writing, as argued, Paul writes to both Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 11:33, 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, 1 Cor 1:10, cf. 1 Cor 7:18). 

Moreover, it is important to differentiate between the work and the ethnic scope of gospel preaching. The division of work between Paul and Peter does not necessarily mean that Peter preached the gospel to Jews only and Paul preached solely to Gentiles (Gal 2:7). For instance, Peter can contact and preach to Gentiles even though he is primarily responsible for preaching to Jews (Gal 2:11-14), also Paul can approach and preach to the Jews even though he is the apostle to the Gentiles (1 Cor 9:20-22). 

In other words, Paul’s apostolic authority to the Gentiles does not determine the ethnic scope of his gospel preaching. In fact, Paul’s gospel preaching to Jews and

---

78 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
79 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11. For the letters to Corinth, the term ἀπόστολος appears 10 times in 1 Corinthians (1 Cor 1:1, 4:9, 9:1, 2, 5, 12:28, 29, 15:7, 9 (2 times)) and 6 times in 2 Corinthians (2 Cor 1:1, 8:23, 11:5, 13, 12:11, 12). There is no evidence to show that Paul implicitly or explicitly describes himself as the apostle to the Gentiles only. On this point, Pitre argues that “I completely agree that Paul sees himself as “apostle to the Gentiles” (Rom. 11:13; cf. Gal. 1:15–16). But where does Paul ever say that his mission is not to Jews? To the contrary, when Paul gives programmatic descriptions of his gospel and his mission, he always puts Jews first,” see Pitre, “Roman Catholic Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 197.
Gentiles (1 Cor 9:20-22) reflects his understanding that God’s gospel is for both Jews and non-Jews (1 Cor 1:23-24; cf. Rom 1:1, 1:16, 10:12). To sum up, Paul’s status as the apostle to the Gentiles does not necessarily mean that the ethnic scope of his preaching is confined to Gentiles exclusively. On the contrary, all of the evidence above shows that the ethnic scope of Paul’s apostleship includes Jews and Gentiles.

### 3.2 Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event

This section will argue that Paul’s salvific idea in 1 and 2 Corinthians is derived from and governed by the Christ event. The Christ event acts as a grand narrative for Paul, causing him to re-evaluate the Hebrew Bible in light of his new perspective. Paul examines his past in light of the Christ event and discovers two distinct and divergent narrative trajectories. One is in the divine trajectory demonstrating the continuity between the story of Christ and the story of God’s wisdom. The other is in the human trajectory, showing that the story of the world’s wisdom (including the story of the law) is discontinuous with the story of Christ. Thus, Paul’s theological thinking shifts from Christ as the solution to the problem of humanity.

#### 3.2.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy?

According to Fredriksen, the fundamental source and formation of Paul’s thought

---


82 Therefore, it is questionable to claim that “…having divine authority to preach to gentiles suggest that he [Paul] wrote primarily, perhaps even exclusively, for gentiles-in-Christ…In his mind, only the gentiles fall under his purview and authority,” see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
are derived from Israelite history and authoritative Jewish scripture. Fredriksen argues that “…indeed framing Paul’s whole enterprise (as his letter to the Romans in particular shows us), was the eschatological vision of the prophets, especially of Isaiah: at the End of the Age, the nations, too, would worship Israel’s god alone.”

In this sense, for Fredriksen, the role of Isaiah is vital for Paul’s thinking in which it governs Paul’s salvific thought and his Gentile mission by bringing non-Jews to worship the God of Israel.

Concerning the letters to Corinth, according to Fredriksen, the imminent second coming of Christ drives Paul to address his Corinthian Gentile community urgently. Paul’s theological thought represents a certain kind of ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology in relation to (especially) the salvation of the other nations by turning them away from idols. Fredriksen argues that,

So close is the End that Paul can reasonably instruct his gentiles in Corinth to foreswear sexual activity, if they are able. The unmarried should stay unmarried; the married should if possible live as if they were not married, while not seeking to divorce (1 Cor 7.1–38).

“It is upon us,” he tells his assembly there, “that the ends of the ages have come”—and therefore they should not worship demons (10.11; cf. vv. 6–22 for the full context against idolatry).

Because of this, according to Fredriksen, it seems that Paul’s ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology originated from Isaiah. This narrative of prior Jewish thought, works as a

---

83 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 164.
85 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 132-133. For further discussion of Fredriksen’s view on Paul’s epistemology based on the letters to Corinth, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 89 and 140.
hermeneutical grid for Paul’s theological thought. Regarding Paul’s epistemology, therefore, Fredriksen views Paul as a Jew whose thought is under the umbrella of prophecy and consequently emphasizes the prospective development and continuity from Judaism to Paul.

Paul’s soteriology could have been influenced by a number of different sources, but it will be shown that his statements in 1 and 2 Corinthians demonstrate that the death and resurrection of Christ is the most prominent source in his theological thought, not Isaiah. There is no denying Paul’s strong Jewish lineage, as he himself acknowledged (Phil 3:5-6). In 1 and 2 Corinthians, Paul makes use of or references several passages from the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Paul cites Jer 9:23 in 1 Cor 1:31, Job 5:13 in 1 Cor 3:19, Psa 94:11 in 1 Cor 3:20, Gen 2:24 in 1 Cor 6:16-17, Deut 25:4 in 1 Cor 9:9, Exo 32:6 in 1 Cor 10:7, Psa 24:1 in 1 Cor 10:25-26, Psa 8:6 in 1 Cor 15:27, Gen 2:7 in 1 Cor 15:45, Hos 13:14 in 1 Cor 15:55, Psa 116:10 in 2 Cor 4:13, Lev 26:11-12 and Ezek 37:27 in 2 Cor 6:16-17, Exo 16:18 in 2 Cor 8:15, Psa 111:9 in 2 Cor 9:9, Jer 9:24 in 2 Cor 10:17, Deut 19:15 in 2 Cor 13:1. For Isaiah in particular, Paul explicitly cites Isa 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19, Isa 64:4 in 1 Cor 2:9, Isa 40:13 in 1 Cor 2:16, Isa 28:11-12 in 1 Cor 14:21, Isa 22:13 in 1 Cor 15:32, Isa 25:8 in 1 Cor 15:54, Isa 9:2 in 2 Cor 4:6, Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2, Isa 52:11 in 2 Cor 6:17-18.

Given that Paul quotes not just Isaiah but also Jeremiah, Job, Psalms, Exodus, Hosea,

---

Ezekiel, Deuteronomy, Habakkuk, Leviticus, and Genesis in 1 and 2 Corinthians, how can Isaiah serve as a leading source in Paul’s salvific philosophy, as Fredriksen suggested? If Fredriksen believes that Paul’s use of Isaiah in 1 and 2 Corinthians serves as a model for his philosophy, she must provide evidence. She must also explain why Isaiah is Paul’s mentor and not Jeremiah, Job, Psalms, Exodus, Hosea, Ezekiel, Deuteronomy, Habakkuk, Leviticus, or Genesis.

On the other hand, I will argue that the Christ event works as a grand narrative in Paul’s theological thought, through which he re-evaluates the Hebrew Scriptures for the reasons listed below.\(^{89}\) Paul’s self-identification as an apostle of Jesus Christ suggests that he is Christ’s servant (1 Cor 1:1, 4:9, 9:1-2, 2 Cor 1:1, cf. 2 Cor 11:5). Paul also defines himself as one of Christ’s ambassadors, pleading with the Corinthians to be reconciled to God on Christ’s behalf (2 Cor 5:20), and bringing the reconciliation of the world to God via Christ (2 Cor 5:19). Thirdly, Paul emphasizes that “we are all” — Christ followers – accountable before Christ’s judgement seat (2 Cor 5:10). Fourthly, Paul stresses that Christ believers joyfully anticipate the revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:7) and that they are to be blameless on the day of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:8). Fifthly, Paul’s exhortation to the Corinthians is in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:10), and his message is the crucifixion of Christ (1 Cor 1:23, 2:2-4). Finally, Paul acknowledges that the eschatological era inaugurated by the Christ event triumphs over the power of sin and

\(^{89}\) Paul’s references to Christ in 1 and 2 Corinthians appear in 1 Cor 1:1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 17, 23, 24, 30, 2:2, 16, 3:1, 11, 23, 4:1, 10, 15, 17, 5:7, 6:11, 15, 7:22, 8:6, 11, 12, 9:12, 21, 10:4, 9, 16, 11:1, 3, 12:12, 27, 15:3, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 23, 31, 57, 16:24, 2 Cor 1:1, 2, 3, 5, 19, 21, 2:10, 12, 14, 15, 17, 3:3, 4, 14, 4:4, 5, 6, 5:10, 14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 6:15, 8:9, 23, 9:13, 10:1, 5, 7, 14, 11:2, 3, 10, 13, 23, 12:2, 9, 10, 19, 13:3, 5, 13, which are significantly greater than his references to Isaiah.
death (1 Cor 15:21, 56), and those who are in Christ are made alive (1 Cor 15:22, cf. 1 Cor 15:45). Paul acknowledges that the death and resurrection of Christ marked the beginning of an eschatological age that transferred humanity from the dominion of Adam to the domain of Christ (1 Cor 15:22, cf. 1 Cor 15:45).

Paul also urges Christ followers in Corinth to realign their lives and pledge loyalty to Christ (1 Cor 7). All of these expressions suggest that the Christ event is the determinative source in Paul’s salvific thought.

In the meantime, as a result of the Christ event, Paul rereads the Hebrew Scriptures. For instance, Paul argues that the primary reason Christ sent him was to proclaim the gospel, the cross of Christ (1 Cor 1:17). Paul sees two responses to the word of the cross (1 Cor 1:18) based on his prior experience of gospel proclamation (1 Cor 2:1-5, 15:1-3). Paul then cites Isaiah 29:14 in 1 Cor 1:19 to build on the premise that God has made the world’s knowledge worthless (1 Cor 1:20-21). Paul references Isa 25:8 and Hos 13:14 in 1 Cor 15:54 and 15:55 to demonstrate that the power of death has been vanquished and that Christ is the conqueror (1 Cor 15:57). Paul emphasizes that he preaches Jesus Christ and that he himself is the servant of Christ (2 Cor 4:5), and he uses Isaiah 9:2 in 2 Cor 4:6 to demonstrate that Christ has given him the light of knowledge. Paul, having identified himself as an ambassador for Christ (2 Cor 5:20), realizes that now is “the acceptable time” and “the day of

---


91 Barclay, “Apocalyptic Allegiance and Disinvestment in the World,” 273-274.
salvation” by quoting Isa 49:8 in 2 Cor 6:2 and reminds the Corinthians that they have not received God’s gift in vain (2 Cor 6:2). Paul emphasizes that the Corinthians are in Christ Jesus (1 Cor 1:30) and cites Jer 9:23 to highlight the boasting in the Lord in 1 Cor 1:31. In this sense, although Paul has a strong Jewish background, the determinative source of Paul’s theological understanding comes from the Christ event. Paul uses the Christ event as a meta-narrative that serves as the basis for his theological framework, through which he re-evaluates the Hebrew Scripture. In light of the Christ event, Paul’s knowledge goes beyond what the Jewish authoritative narrative said. To sum up, Paul rereads the Hebrew Bible in the light of the eschatological age inaugurated by Christ (1 Cor 15:21, 56).

3.2.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively?

While Fredriksen articulates Paul’s thought within the framework of Jewish prophetic literature, Isaiah in particular, it seems that Paul’s narrative logic develops prospectively from the Jewish narrative to Christ. It means that in Paul’s thinking, Jewish history develops and culminates in Christ, then Christ fulfills the prophetic message by securing the final redemption of Israel and other nations. In the view of Fredriksen, Paul’s understanding is that the nations will be saved with Israel in Jerusalem at the end of time. Since Paul’s mentality is governed by his understanding of Jewish literature, this provokes him to preach the gospel to the

92 So far, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence in the letter of 1 and 2 Corinthians to support the notion that Isaiah is Paul’s governing source.
95 Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 35.
Gentiles.

Concerning the letters to Corinth, Fredriksen argues that,

However he construed “soon,” Paul remained convinced that he lived and worked in history’s final hours, in the charismatic caesura between Christ’s resurrection and his Parousia. He speaks in terms of past completed action: it is upon his gentile community that the ends of the ages have come (katēntēken, 1 Cor 10.11). And his reading of scripture, clearly, not only confirmed him in his convictions: it also articulated for him how he had to proceed. Heaven had commissioned Paul specifically to go to pagans, to turn them to Israel’s god.  

Fredriksen emphasizes the previous problems of Corinthian Gentile Christ believers by arguing that ‘Corinth, prior to receiving Paul’s message, had teemed with “fornicators, idol-worshipers, adulterers, sexual exploiters and effemirates, thieves, greedy ones, drunkards, revilers, robbers” (“And such were some of you!” 1 Cor 6.9–10).’ In this sense, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s writings to the Corinthians still demonstrate that Paul’s Gentile mission is driven by his ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology for solving the problems of Gentiles through Judaizing and incorporating Gentiles into Jewish covenantal communities. According to Fredriksen, Paul’s epistemology appears to go prospectively from Judaism to Christ, from human plight to solution, as opposed to “retrospectively from Christ back to Judaism, or from solution to plight.”

However, given that the Christ event rather than Isaiah serves as the grand

96 Fredriksen, Paul, 164.
97 Fredriksen, Paul, 124.
98 Fredriksen, Paul, 124-125.
99 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 16-17.
narrative for Paul’s thought, I argue that Paul rethinks retrospectively and realizes that two distinct and separate narrative trajectories coexist. Paul’s statements in 1 and 2 Corinthians demonstrate, on the one hand, that the divine will of God was accomplished through the wisdom of God which points to Christ. Paul notes that God’s wisdom was hidden in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for the glory of Christ believers (1 Cor 2:7). Paul specifies precisely that Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:24), and he indicates that Christ became wisdom from God, and also righteousness, sanctification, and salvation (1 Cor 1:30).

For Paul, he admits that God revealed the wisdom of God to him through the Holy Spirit and not the spirit of the world (1 Cor 2:10–12) and underlines that he has the mind of Christ (1 Cor 2:16). Likewise, Paul acknowledges that Christ sent him to preach the gospel without eloquent rhetoric and he understands that the message of Christ’s crucifixion is foolish to those who are being lost, but it is God’s power to those who are being saved (1 Cor 1:17-18). Paul believes that the world was ignorant of God’s wisdom, but that God is pleased with the foolishness of the message spoken to save those who believe and reveal God’s wisdom (1 Cor 1:21). In this way, in light of the Christ event, Paul rethinks and understands that the trajectory of the divine will of God is consequently through the wisdom of God, which was prepared by God before the ages and points to Christ.

On the other hand, in light of the Christ event, Paul’s remarks in 1 and 2 Corinthians reveal that there is another narrative in human trajectory - the wisdom of this world. This narrative is different and separate from the narrative of the wisdom of
God. Paul contrasts the wisdom of God with the wisdom of the world by asserting that none of the rulers of this age understand God’s wisdom (1 Cor 2:6). Paul emphasizes again the divine knowledge that none of the rulers of this age have grasped, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory (1 Cor 2:8). Paul believes that the god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers so that they cannot perceive the gospel of the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4:4). In this sense, for Paul, the narrative of the wisdom of the world is distinct from the narrative of the wisdom of God. The message of Christ’s crucifixion is foolishness to those who are perishing (1 Cor 1:18), a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles (1 Cor 1:23). On the one hand, the world as a subject did not come to know God by its intelligence (1 Cor 1:21). On the other hand, Paul’s remarks demonstrate that God made silly and disgraced the wisdom of this world (1 Cor 1:20, 27). Therefore, Paul language of wisdom demonstrates that there are two different and separate narratives, the wisdom of God and the wisdom of the world in Paul’s Christological reading.100

3.2.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity?

For Fredriksen, given the fact that the determinative source of Paul’s thought is from authoritative Jewish texts and Israelite tradition, Paul’s view on Jewish history develops and culminates prospectively up to Christ, it seems that Paul’s narrative logic is in continuity with Judaism. According to Fredriksen, since Paul’s thought is governed by Isaianic prophecy, since Paul sees the turning of Gentiles to the Jewish

100 These two trajectories will be elaborated in the next part about continuity and discontinuity.
God during his Gentile mission, therefore his mission is the continuation and fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah.\textsuperscript{101} In this sense, regarding Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen emphasizes the continuity between the prophets and Paul’s theological thought.\textsuperscript{102} Therefore, in the view of Fredriksen, continuity with Judaism is one of the key components to understanding Paul’s theological thought.\textsuperscript{103}

Despite the fact that the Christ event is continuous with God’s wisdom in divine trajectory, I will argue that the wisdom of the world (including the narrative of the law) is discontinuous with the Christ event. Concerning the divine trajectory, as mentioned, Paul acknowledges that God predestined the wisdom of God before the ages and emphasizes that the wisdom of God he referenced is Christ (1 Cor 1:24). Paul views the narrative of the wisdom of God to be continuous with the story of Christ because his words in 1 and 2 Corinthians reveal that the divine will of God was carried out through the story of the wisdom of God and that this wisdom refers to Christ. Additionally, Paul acknowledges that Christ has been risen from the dead (1 Cor 15:20), that all in Christ will be brought alive (1 Cor 15:22), and that Christ will ultimately hand over the kingdom to God and Father (1 Cor 15:24). According to Paul, the divine will of God can be traced in this way through the narratives of Christ and God’s wisdom.

Regarding the human trajectory, Paul’s statement suggests that the story of Christ is discontinuous with the story of the law and diverges from the story of the

\textsuperscript{101} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 164. See also Mark D. Nanos, \textit{Reading Romans within Judaism} (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2018), 17-18.
\textsuperscript{102} Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 46.
\textsuperscript{103} Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, \textit{Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination}, 17.
world’s wisdom. Since Paul acknowledges that everyone, including Jews and Gentiles, is under the power of sin and death derived from Adam (1 Cor 15:22, 56, cf. Rom 5:12-14), and the power of sin manipulates the law (1 Cor 15:56, cf. Rom 7:5, 11), both Gentiles who do not have the law and Jews who do have the law are under the power of sin and death and unable to accomplish God’s will. Also, Paul emphasizes that the narrative of the law - the old covenant of Moses - did not accomplish the divine will in Jewish history. Paul, as a minister of the new covenant, uses ὀ…ἀλλά to contrast the new ministry of Christ with the old ministry of Moses (2 Cor 3:3, 3:6). Paul classifies the ministry of Moses as death (2 Cor 3:7), the letters engraved on stones as killing (2 Cor 3:6-7), and condemnation (2 Cor 3:9). But Paul characterizes Christ’s ministry as the Spirit who gives life (2 Cor 3:6), and as pertaining to righteousness (2 Cor 3:9). Paul, as a Jew, places his trust in the new ministry and distances himself from the ministry of Moses (2 Cor 3:12-13)! All of these terms suggest that, according to Paul, the story of the law is not continuous with the narrative of Christ.

Furthermore, Paul’s use of μᾶλλον demonstrates that the ministry of Christ is more glorious than the ministry of Moses (2 Cor 3:8, 9, 11). Paul realizes that the glory of the ministry of the new covenant surpasses the glory of the ministry of the old covenant by comparing the glory of the two covenants (2 Cor 3:10). In other

\[104\] Gardner helpfully argues that “To speak then, as here, of “the power of sin” (ἡ δὲ δύναμις τῆς ἀμαρτίας) as “the law” is to describe the way in which sin uses the law to draw attention to disobedience and the failure of a person to obey the Lord. In effect, its power is to “imprison” or “shut up” all people “under sin” (Gal 3:22 ESV),” see Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 729. See also Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 892; John M. G. Barclay, Paul and the Gift (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 407.

words, the old covenant of Moses is subject to the new covenant of Christ and distinct from it. Paul also recalls that his forefathers were baptized into Moses (1 Cor 10:2), but they were unable to obey the law and struggled with idolatry (1 Cor 10:7), they grumbled (1 Cor 10:10), and behave immorally (1 Cor 10:8). All these expressions indicate that Paul rereads human history (including Jewish history) in light of the Christ event and discovers the universal human predicament (1 Cor 15:22, 56). In other words, “Paul’s understanding of the human plight, the Jewish narrative, and salvation history is only properly understood in light of Christ—indeed, ‘in Christ’ (2 Cor 5:16–17).”

Due to the power of sin, which renders humans incapable of obeying the law and carrying out God’s will, the divine will of God does not culminate and reach its climax in human history (including Jewish history).

In the meantime, Paul’s comments in his Corinthian letters demonstrate that the Christ event is the decisive source that breaks into human history and inaugurates a new eschatological age. Within the framework of the divine and human realms, God’s act of salvation in Christ invades human history to save his followers, his activity continues, and his lordship over the world is established. For Paul, the old

---


Paul understands the Mosaic covenant through the Christ event in which the narrative of Jewish literature is re-evaluated, see Lim, *Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters*, 161 and 176; Barclay, “Paul, Judaism and the Jewish People,” 194.


era was dominated by sin and death which originated from Adam (1 Cor 15:17, 21, 22, 26, 56), while the new age is begun and ruled by Christ (1 Cor 15:21, 22, 44, 57). From a human standpoint, the Christ event invades the human world, causing a discontinuity with the previous human situation and opening the door to salvation for Christ believers (1 Cor 1:21, 24).\(^{110}\)

Paul considers God’s beneficent act in Christ to be not just an event that overthrows the power of sin and death in the old age, but also the reversal of the human condition in which sin and death dominate humanity (1 Cor 15:20-24, 15:56-57).\(^{111}\) In other words, the Christ event is not a development derived from the culmination of covenant promises that were previously given to Israel.\(^{112}\) Therefore, Paul’s narrative logic in the letters to Corinth is in line with his logic in Galatians, the Christ event is an interruption to, not progress from, human history which inaugurated an eschatological era, and overturned the previous human plight.\(^{113}\)

In conclusion, Paul’s narrative logic of the Christ event exposes a discontinuity with human history in the framework of the divine and human realms. Paul’s statements in 1 and 2 Corinthians reveal that the Christ event, through which Paul rereads and utilizes the Hebrew Bible, is the primary source of his soteriology. While the story of Christ is continuous with the wisdom of God, it is discontinuous with the wisdom of the world throughout human history. In the eschatological era, the new reality of the Christ event and the indwelling Spirit enable Paul to retrospectively


\(^{113}\) Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 412.
comprehend human history (1 Cor 2:6, 7:31, 12:13). Paul views the occurrence of Christ as a reversal of the prior human state. God’s benevolent act in Christ functions as a meta-narrative to reshape Paul’s thinking so that he views human history retroactively in a wholly different way. Therefore, the progression of Paul’s theological thought is from the remedy (Christ) to the problem (humanity).

3.3 The Ultimate Authority

It will be argued in this section that the Christ event has superseded the Mosaic covenant in Paul’s view. Paul’s remarks regarding his means of salvation show how the Christ event has relativized the Mosaic covenant. As a result, for Paul and other Jewish and Gentile Christ followers, Christ has superseded the law as the final authority. Paul redefines the law in the context of the Christ inaugurated eschatological era. Paul views the law as a good thing in and of itself (cf. Rom 7:12), but Christ has come to be the most important element in his life. Paul’s words also demonstrate that both Jewish and Gentile followers of Christ are able to carry out the law because of the Christ event, and that Christ is ultimately more important to them.

than the law.

3.3.1 The Role of Torah

Regarding the role of Torah, Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos assert that the law functions as the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers. First of all, Fredriksen argues that Paul continues to uphold the law, his Gentile mission is not a “Law-Free” mission and the law still functions as the ultimate authority for him.\(^{117}\) Concerning Gentile Christ believers, throughout the Corinthian correspondence Fredriksen contends that ‘Yet Paul confusingly ties his statement that circumcision does not matter to these Christ-following gentiles’ nonetheless “keeping God’s commandments.” God’s commandments comprise Jewish law.’\(^{118}\) According to 1 Cor 7:19, Fredriksen argues that Paul was articulating a specific form of Judaizing to his converts, as Paul’s Gentile converts already have the indwelling spirit, they can live out the standards of Jewish community by observing the Ten Commandments,\(^{119}\) and especially the second table of the law.\(^{120}\)

According to Fredriksen, Paul’s Gentile converts are to observe the law in the Jewish communities.\(^{121}\) Regarding Jewish Christ believers, for Fredriksen the law is still an ultimate authority for them (1 Cor 9:20-21).\(^{122}\) Fredriksen contends that, 

As Christ-followers, these Jews—again, Paul emphatically included—continued to worship the Jewish god, to draw on Jewish scriptures, and to proclaim the Jewish message that the

\(^{118}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 107-108.
\(^{119}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 3, 111-112.
\(^{120}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 118.
\(^{121}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 108.
\(^{122}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 114 n 38.
god of Israel’s anointed son was coming to establish that god’s Kingdom…Why then think that these Christ-following Jews would cease living according to their own ancestral traditions, circumcision included, while they awaited the triumphant return of their messiah?¹²³

For Thiessen, 1 Cor 7:19 is vital and it shows Paul’s continuous allegiance to the law.¹²⁴ Thiessen argues that “this passage serves as a hermeneutical clue for how to understand Paul’s teaching about the Jewish law in general: this passage acts as a baseline of coherence regardless of the various contingencies of Paul’s letters.”¹²⁵ Concerning Gentile Christ believers, according to Thiessen, “Paul argues that his readers should not worry themselves about their position, only about the commandments that pertain to that position.”¹²⁶ Meanwhile, the prominent role of the law is applicable for both Gentile and Jewish Christ believers according to Thiessen. Thiessen argues that,

Paul’s statement that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matters now makes better sense. Paul does not contrast the rite of circumcision to the commandments of God; rather, he claims that being Jewish (circumcision) or being gentile (uncircumcision) does not matter—only keeping the commandments that God requires of each group of people.¹²⁷

Also, for Thiessen, “He [Paul] argues that Jews should keep the laws that God gave to

¹²³ Fredriksen, Paul, 113-114.
¹²⁴ Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9. Please refer to the quotation from the thesis that I cited on page 42. In this sense, Thiessen’s understanding seems to be that Paul reminds his audience, Gentile Christ believers, that they should not worry about their position, the state of circumcision and the state of uncircumcision, they should only be concerned about those commandments which pertain to that position.
¹²⁵ Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10.
¹²⁶ Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10. In this sense, Thiessen’s phrase “pertain to that position” implies that the relationship between ἡ περιτομὴ οὐδὲν ἐστὶν and ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδὲν ἐστὶν (1 Cor 7:19a) and τήρησις ἑτολοῦν θεοῦ (1 Cor 7:19b) is in a complementary relation.
¹²⁷ Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9.
them, while Gentiles should be satisfied with the laws that God has laid upon them, not coveting those laws that God has given to Jews alone.”

Nanos argues that 1 Cor 9:19-23 has been misread in the Christian tradition and he attempts to reconstruct its original meaning based on two assumptions. First, Nanos argues that “1 Cor 9:19-23 can be understood very differently, with a working hypothesis that Paul was Torah-observant as a matter of covenant fidelity and known to be halakhically faithful by the audience to which he addressed this text.” Second, Nanos contends that Paul remains as a Jew who promotes the ideal of Judaism by preaching Jesus. In this sense, Paul still upholds the Torah and it functions as the ultimate authority for his Gentile mission. For Jewish Christ believers, the argument of Nanos is that “In that role Jews remain those who represent Christ by way of observing the Mosaic covenant. Christ-following Jews/Israelites are, according to Paul’s theological system, still under Torah (cf. 1 Cor. 7:17–20). That includes Paul.” In this sense, according to Nanos, Torah remains a fundamental component for Paul.

To sum up, the overall argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos is that Paul

---

128 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10. See also Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
129 Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 115. Also, in Nanos’ view, the problem of the traditional reading is that Paul is a man of inconsistency and moral dishonesty and it cannot provide a thorough explanation to tackle this problem, see Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 119; Nanos, “Was Paul a “Liar” for the Gospel? The Case for a New Interpretation of Paul’s “Becoming Everything to Everyone” in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23,” 104.
134 For instance, see Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 106 and 108.
is not a “Law-Free” apostle and his mission is not a “Law-Free” mission. Fredriksen, Nanos and Thiessen counter the claim that Paul himself has ceased to observe the law. On the contrary, Paul still upholds the law and it continues to function as his ultimate authority in his Gentile mission. According to these three RPP scholars, in Paul’s understanding the law functions as the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

3.3.2 Ultimate Authority: Christ

3.3.2.1 Christ Event and Mosaic Covenant

The position of this thesis, however, is that in Paul’s letters to Corinth, the Christ event takes precedence over the Mosaic covenant. Paul employs the term διαθήκη to refer to both the old covenant (2 Cor 3:14) and the new covenant (2 Cor 3:6). Paul’s expressions such as μᾶλλον (2 Cor 3:8), πολλῷ μᾶλλον (2 Cor 3:9, 11), and ύπερβαλλούσης (2 Cor 3:10) indicate that the splendor of the ministry of the new covenant surpasses the glory of the ministry of the Mosaic covenant.  

Moreover, by comparing the ministries represented by the two covenants, Paul admits that he is not like Moses who was veiled (2 Cor 3:13, 18), and that the veil has been removed in Christ (2 Cor 3:14). Paul also acknowledges that he is one of


136 Barclay, Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Second Corinthians, 60; Barnett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 204; Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 313–314.

137 Keener, 1-2 Corinthians, 169; Barclay, Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Second Corinthians, 61; Barnett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 195; Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, Paul, a New
the servants of the new covenant rather than the old covenant (2 Cor 3:6), and one of the ambassadors for Christ rather than for Moses (2 Cor 5:20). In other words, with the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ, Paul considers himself to be living under the new covenant of Christ rather than the covenant of Moses (2 Cor 3). Thus, according to Paul, the Christ event puts the Mosaic covenant aside and supersedes the era of the Mosaic covenant.

3.3.2.2 Paul’s Ultimate Authority: Christ

Concerning the role of law, I contend that Christ, not the law, has become Paul’s ultimate authority, according to the Corinthian letters. First, it is extraordinary for Paul, an ethnic Jew, to state explicitly that μὴ ὃν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον (1 Cor 9:20, cf. Rom 6:14-15, Gal 5:18). If the claim of Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos that the Torah is Paul’s ultimate authority is accurate, in what sense could he say that he is not under the law (1 Cor 9:20)? However, as argued, since the Christ event has overridden the Mosaic covenant (2 Cor 3), Paul positions himself in the trajectory of

139 Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 270. Martin, 2 Corinthians, 195.
140 Barnett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 178.
141 For the authenticity of the phrase μὴ ὃν αὐτὸς ὑπὸ νόμον, see Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 254 n 86; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 370; Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 701.
142 Even though Fredriksen goes through 1 Cor 9:20-21, she does not explain the meaning of Paul’s phrase “not under the law” (1 Cor 9:20), see Fredriksen, Paul, 165, 228-229 n 38. Thiessen also does not explain Paul’s phrase “not under the law” and he seems to follow Nanos’ rhetorical view, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 178 n 53. Though Nanos discusses 1 Cor 9:19-23, however, as shown, Nanos’ rhetorical explanation is unconvincing. For Nanos’ view, see Nanos, “Paul’s Relationship to Torah in Light of His Strategy ‘to Become Everything to Everyone’ (1 Corinthians 9:19-23),” 106-140; Nanos, “Was Paul a ‘Liar’ for the Gospel? The Case for a New Interpretation of Paul’s ‘Becoming Everything to Everyone’ in 1 Corinthians 9:19-23,” 93-108. On this point, Pitre also observes that the Paul within Judaism scholars seem to ignore Paul’s saying in 1 Cor 9:20, see Pitre, “Roman Catholic Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 199 n 5.
the Christ event wherein Christ has become his ultimate authority by distancing
himself from the law (1 Cor 9:20-21, cf. 2 Cor 3:13). With the final authority of
Christ, Paul points out that to those under the law, he is not under the law, but he can
“enslave” himself to be under the law; to those outside the law, he can become as
outside the law; however, Paul underlines that he is not outside the law of God, but
“subject to the jurisdiction of Christ” (1 Cor 9:20-21). From the perspective of
power hierarchy, while the law itself is not abolished, its role has been put under
Christ. In other words, the authority of the law has been undermined with respect to
Christ. Paul himself, as a Jewish Christ believer, acknowledges that he is not subject
to the law but to Christ. In this sense, Paul is free to be under the Torah for Christ
and outside the Torah for Christ (1 Cor 9:20-21). In light of this, Paul is a more
radical Jewish Christ follower than other contemporary Jews, as the majority of them
continue to maintain the law as their supreme authority after the Christ event.

In the context of the eschatological age inaugurated by Christ, Paul’s theological
perspective is that the narrative of the law is discontinuous and subservient to the
narrative of Christ, as has been argued. In this sense, the era of the Mosaic
covenant has passed when the reign of Christ begins (2 Cor 3). While the law itself

\[143\text{ Fitzmyer, } First Corinthians, 370; Witherington, } Conflict and Community in Corinth, 212; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 426.
\[144\text{ See } BDAG, 338. \text{ Even though the word is } \epsilon\eta\nu\mu\omicron\sigma\varsigma \text{ rather than } \nu\omicron\mu\omicron\nu\omicron\varsigma \text{ in 1 Cor 9:21, it is clear that Paul recognizes that he is “subject to the jurisdiction of Christ.” Though Paul is not under the law (1 Cor 9:20), Paul’s expression } \alpha\lambda\lambda' \epsilon\nu\nu\mu\omicron\sigma\varsigma \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\omicron\omicron \text{ shows that he is not lawless (1 Cor 9:21). Also, it is clear that Paul is not against the law itself because he emphasizes the significance of keeping the commandments of God to his Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 7:19).}
\[146\text{ Barclay, “Gift Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 212.}
\[147\text{ Pitre, “Roman Catholic Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 198–199; Barclay, “Paul, Judaism and the Jewish People,” 194.}
\[148\text{ Please refer to the section Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event analyzing 1 & 2 Corinthians.}
has not been abolished, its authority has been relativized in the new era of Christ. Paul
admits that the gospel he proclaims is not the gospel of Moses, but rather the gospel
of Christ (1 Cor 9:12, 15:1-3, 2 Cor 2:12, 4:4, 9:13, 10:14). In this respect, Christ’s
authority has superseded and supplanted the supreme authority of the law.

Paul’s theological understanding of the function of Torah is oversimplified by
the dichotomy that either the law should cease or it should be upheld. Paul is not
compelled to observe the law, but Christ, not the law, is the most important aspect of
his life. Therefore, it is concluded that Christ, not the law, serves as Paul’s ultimate
authority.

3.3.2.3 Paul’s Redefinition of the Law

Concerning Paul’s view on the law, I argue that the Christ event has redefined
the law for his multi-ethnic Corinthian community. For 1 Cor 7:19, it is agreed with
Thiessen that the phrase τηρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ refers to obeying the law, and the
terms πειριτομή and ἀκροβυσσία refer to Jews and Gentiles respectively. Also, as

150 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 312; Thielman, “The Coherence of Paul View of The Law,” 238–39; Garland, 1 Corinthians, 306. Paul’s language of ἐντολή appears in Rom 7:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13:9, 1 Cor 7:19, 14:37, but only the plural form ἐντολῶν appears in 1 Cor 7:19. Nonetheless, regarding Thiessen’s interpretation, there are several things that need to be pointed out. First, the word used in 1 Cor 7:19 is not the verb τηρέω. Instead, it is the noun τήρησις which is a hapax legomenon in both the Pauline undisputed and disputed letters. Second, concerning the references Thiessen lists, the syntactical structure of τήρησις ἐντολῶν in 1 Cor 7:19 is rare. Though it is precisely the same construction in Sirach γάρ τοῦτο ἐστιν τήρησις ἐντολῶν (Sir 32:23), elsewhere the form of the verb τηρέω varies. For example, the verb is an imperative in τήρησον τὰς ἐντολὰς (Matt 19:17-19) and is a participle in τῶν τηροῦντων τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ (Rev 12:17) and οἱ τηροῦντες τὰς ἐντολὰς τοῦ θεοῦ (Rev 14:12). Third, the above three cross-references have a definite article before ἐντολή, but there is no definite article before it in 1 Cor 7:19. All of these factors may affect the interpretation of 1 Cor 7:19.
argued, περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη and ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ κέκληται τις pertain to Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers respectively (1 Cor 7:18). If Paul is not only talking about Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers, it cannot be assumed that the issue Paul is addressing is only related to Gentiles.

Concerning the relation between the phrases ἡ περιτομή οὐδέν ἐστιν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἐστιν and the τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ (1 Cor 7:19), I argue that the relation is contrastive rather than complementary. By using the conjunction ἀλλά, on the one hand Paul affirms the values of τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ and devalues both circumcision and uncircumcision on the other hand. In this sense, τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ (1 Cor 7:19b) is an antithesis to ἡ περιτομή οὐδέν ἐστιν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἐστιν (1 Cor 7:19a). Therefore, Thiessen’s complementary view and claim “only about the commandments that pertain to that position” is highly questionable.

Meanwhile, Paul’s expressions seem self-contradictory when he affirms τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ on the one hand (1 Cor 7:19b), but says ἡ περιτομὴ οὐδέν ἐστιν καὶ ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἐστιν on the other hand (1 Cor 7:19a). To put it more precisely, for Paul, as a Jew, to say uncircumcision is nothing maybe understandable, however, it is extraordinary for him to say circumcision is nothing! From the perspective of the Jewish law, since τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ includes the ritual of circumcision (Gen 17:10-14; 23-27), it is more extraordinary and even paradoxical for Paul to say

152 Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 551; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 347 n 205; Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 326; Brookins and Longenecker, I Corinthians 1-9, 170. Robertson and Plummer also argue that “the strongly adversative ἀλλά implies that the opposite of the previous negative is understood (cf. 1 Cor 3:7, 10:24),” see Archibald Robertson and Alfred Plummer, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1911), 147.
153 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10.
154 Garland, I Corinthians, 305; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 308; Ciampa and Rosner, The First
circumcision is nothing while affirming the significance of keeping the commandments of God (1 Cor 7:19).

Therefore, Paul’s language demonstrates that he has redefined the law in some sense for his Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 7:19). For Paul, the term ἐντολῶν in 1 Cor 7:19 does not appear to refer to every directive of the law of Moses (at least it does not refer to circumcision according to Paul’s language in 1 Cor 7:19). In other words, Paul redefines and distinguishes which part of the law is still valid and which part of the law is obsolete in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ. Because of this, there is no expression indicating that Paul divides the law and applies different parts of the law to Gentiles and Jews respectively in the sense that Thiessen claims (1 Cor 7:19). Since the Christ event has overridden the Mosaic covenant and Christ rather than the law has become the ultimate authority for Paul, his redefinition of the law is formed by the framework of the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ. In this framework, Paul devalues both circumcision and uncircumcision but emphasizes the importance of keeping the commandments of God (that have been redefined) for the Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers.

Letter to the Corinthians, 311-312; Gardner, I Corinthians, 326; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1119.  
156 Brookins and Longenecker, I Corinthians 1-9, 170.  
158 This is in contrast with Thiessen. In Thiessen’s view, Paul does not redefine the Law, but he divides different parts of the Law and applies the right part of the Law to the right audience such as priests, Jews and Gentiles. The phrase τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ means that Paul applies different parts of the law to Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 7:19). For Thiessen’s view, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 9-11. However, Paul’s expressions do not appear to create such a distinction in 1 Cor 7:17-24. Or at least, more explanation is needed from Thiessen.  
159 See also Gardner, I Corinthians, 327; Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 551.
3.3.3 Ultimate Authority for Christ Believers

Even though Paul emphasizes the importance of obeying God’s commandments (1 Cor 7:19), I argue that Christ, not the law, has become the ultimate authority for Paul’s Jewish and Gentile Corinthian believers in Christ. While the law is not the ultimate authority for Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, Paul’s expressions in the letters to Corinth indicate that Christ believers are able to live in accordance with the law and that Christ, not the law, has become the most important aspect of their lives.

First, in 1 Cor 7, I argue that Paul’s fundamental concern for his Corinthian Christ believers is to remain in the calling of God rather than keeping the commandments of God. The frequent appearance of Paul’s language of καλέω indicates that his concern for the audience is about calling (1 Cor 7:15, 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 24). Also, Paul’s frequent use of ἐκαστός shows that each one should remain in their calling (1 Cor 7:2, 7, 17, 20, 24). Paul commands his Corinthian Christ followers, whether they are single, married, unmarried, widowed, circumcised, uncircumcised, enslaved, free, or never married (1 Cor 7:3-25), to remain in conformity with their calling in Christ by using the imperatives ἐν ταύτῃ μενέτω (1 Cor 7:20) and ἐν τούτῳ μενέτω (1 Cor 7:24). Therefore, Paul’s expressions in 1 Cor 7 reveal that his primary concern for his Corinthian Christ followers is to remain in God’s calling rather than to keep God’s commandments. Paul believes that while

---

obeying God’s law is important (1 Cor 7:19), it is only part of remaining in God’s
calling.\textsuperscript{161}

Paul exhorts his Corinthian Christ followers to reorient their lives and be devoted
to Christ (1 Cor 7:31) because God’s calling is crucial in his mind.\textsuperscript{162} In the
eschatological age inaugurated by Christ, Paul’s concept of calling suggests that those
who have been called should turn their allegiance to Christ (1 Cor 1:9).\textsuperscript{163} Paul also
acknowledges that his explicit audience are the κλητοὶ ἁγίοι who call upon the
name of the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:2). By addressing both Jewish and Gentile
believers in Christ to remain in God’s calling (1 Cor 7:18, 20, 24),\textsuperscript{164} they are
exhorted to be loyal to Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:24). In this sense, Paul’s language of calling
demonstrates that he places both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in the Christ
event wherein Christ has become their ultimate authority. This is because, for Paul,
the era of the reign of Christ has come for Christ believers (2 Cor 3), including both
Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18, 19, 20, 24).

Moreover, within the context of the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ, I
contend that both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers are able to observe the law in
accordance with Paul’s understanding. First, Paul believes that the law is not a

\textsuperscript{161} In contrast with Thiessen’s view, the primary concern of Paul in 1 Cor 7 is to request his audience
to remain in the calling of God, Paul’s “keeping the commandments of God” in 1 Cor 7:19 comes
under the umbrella of the theme in regard to the calling of God.

\textsuperscript{162} Barclay, “Apocalyptic Allegiance and Disinvestment in the World,” 268, 273-274. This is the
reason why Paul prefers all Christ followers to have undivided devotion to the Lord (1 Cor 7:35).

\textsuperscript{163} Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 89-90; Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” 1111; Fee, The
First Epistle to the Corinthians, 44; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 68.

\textsuperscript{164} Pitre, “Roman Catholic Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 195; John M. G. Barclay, “The Gift
Perspective on Paul,” in Perspectives on Paul: Five Views, ed. Scot McKnight and B. J. Oropeza
(Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 229.
solution to the human plight.\textsuperscript{165} According to Paul, the law does not impart life to humanity so that it can overcome the power of sin and death (2 Cor 3:6, cf. 1 Cor 15:56, Gal 3:21-22).\textsuperscript{166} Compared with the life-giving Spirit, Paul’s expressions show that the written law kills (2 Cor 3:6), and its effect on humanity is death (2 Cor 3:7) and condemnation (2 Cor 3:9). In other words, if Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos are correct in their assertion that the Torah continues to function as the ultimate authority for Jewish and Gentile Christ believers after the Christ event, in what sense does Paul say that τὸ γὰρ γράμμα ἀποκτέννει (2 Cor 3:6) and classify the ministry of Moses as death (2 Cor 3:7) and condemnation (2 Cor 3:9)?

Paul’s expression τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ indicates, however, that the Spirit imparts life for the observance of the law rather than the written law (2 Cor 3:6).\textsuperscript{167} Also, through the Christ event, Gentile and Jewish Christ believers become a new creation in Christ (2 Cor 5:17), are enlivened in Christ (1 Cor 15:22),\textsuperscript{168} and are enabled to carry out the ethics of the new era, namely τήρησις ἐντολῶν θεοῦ (1 Cor 7:19, cf. Rom 3:31).\textsuperscript{169} In this sense, even though believers in Christ are no longer subject to the law’s final authority, the Christ event and the indwelling Spirit enable them to observe the law (1 Cor 7:19, 15:22, 2 Cor 3:6, cf. Rom 3:31, 8:4). In this

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{165} For human plight, Paul’s thinking suggests that not only Gentiles are sinners (e.g. 1 Cor 12:2, 5:1) but also Jews (e.g. 1 Cor 10:7-10). Also, by using ἡμῶν, Paul’s expression “Christ died for our sins” indicates that Paul and his explicit audience, including Jews and Gentiles, are sinners (1 Cor 15:3).
\textsuperscript{166} Harris, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 273; Martin, 2 Corinthians, 203; Barclay, Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Second Corinthians, 58; Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 379; Fung, “Justification by Faith in 1 & 2 Corinthians,” 252.
\textsuperscript{167} Keener, 1-2 Corinthians, 168; Fung, “Justification by Faith in 1 & 2 Corinthians,” 252; Barclay, Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible: Second Corinthians, 58; Martin, 2 Corinthians, 195.
\textsuperscript{168} Garland, 1 Corinthians, 707; Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 570; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 833; Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1229.
\textsuperscript{169} Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 474. See also Fitzmyer, First Corinthians, 308.
\end{footnotes}
sense, Paul not only redefined the law after the Christ event, but also indicates that the law continues to play a role for Christ followers (1 Cor 7:19, cf. Rom 3:31).

In the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ, Paul’s theological understanding for Jewish and Gentile Christ believers is that the authority of law has been relativized because the Torah is subordinate to Christ. Despite the fact that the Torah is no longer the ultimate authority for Jewish and non-Jewish Christ followers, they are able to live according to the law. Moreover, their ultimate allegiance is to Christ, not the Torah, because the era of the law has been superseded by Christ (2 Cor 3).

In conclusion, according to Paul’s thought, the Christ event has overridden the Mosaic covenant, Christ rather than the Torah has become the final authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers, and Christ believers are enabled to live out the law in the new era of Christ. While Paul thinks that the law itself is a good thing (cf. Rom 7:12), Christ rather than the law has become the most crucial component for him.

3.4 Uncircumcision and Circumcision

This section will make the case that for Paul, Jewish Christ believers, and Gentile Christ believers, Christ—and not circumcision or uncircumcision—has emerged as the supreme authority. In his letters to Corinth, Paul makes no mention of an eighth day circumcision that is considered to be effective. Instead, Paul’s words in

---

Please refer to the section entitled Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event in this chapter for more information on this topic. According to Paul, it seems that turning allegiance to Christ is demonstrated by avoiding sexual immorality (1 Cor 5:1), avoiding division among the Christ community (1 Cor 1-4), using spiritual gifts to build up each other (1 Cor 12) and having the hope of resurrection (1 Cor 15), see also Garland, 1 Corinthians, 306.
his writings to Corinth demonstrate how the new age brought on by the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ has relativized the value of both circumcision and uncircumcision.

3.4.1 Effective Circumcision

As mentioned (in the chapter analyzing Galatians), for Paul and Jewish Christ believers, Fredriksen contends that they are staying in the covenantal relationship with their Jewish God through the eighth day covenantal circumcision. Fredriksen argues that Paul is proud of his eighth day covenantal circumcision which matters for him and his kinsmen.\textsuperscript{171} In the covenantal relationship, Fredriksen emphasizes that Paul and Jewish Christ believers are still reading Jewish Scriptures, worshipping the Jewish God, and awaiting the Kingdom of God until the second coming of Christ.\textsuperscript{172}

In addition, Fredriksen argues that,

\begin{quote}
But Paul nowhere in his letters says anything about (much less against) Jews circumcising their own sons, and he explicitly preaches against epispasm (the surgical “making a foreskin” derided in 1 Macc 1.15; cf. 1 Cor 7.18, \textit{mē epispasthō}). He opposed circumcision for gentiles, not for Jews. Paul expressed no view on Jewish circumcision, most likely because he assumed one: Jews who honored their ancestral customs circumcised their sons into the covenant on the eighth day (cf. Phil 3.5).\textsuperscript{173}
\end{quote}

To sum up, according to Fredriksen, since Paul and Jewish Christ believers have undertaken the eighth day covenantal circumcision, they stay in the covenantal

\begin{footnotes}
\item[172] Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 113.
\item[173] Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 113.
\end{footnotes}
relationship with the Jewish God and are enabled to observe the law until the second coming of Christ.

### 3.4.2 Ineffective Circumcision

Paul’s repudiation of circumcision for Gentile Christ followers, according to Fredriksen, is as follows. The logic behind Paul’s rejection is that Gentile’s non-eighth day covenantal circumcision is ineffective and illegitimate, it neither binds them into the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God, nor enables them to observe the law and save them within Jewish communities.\(^{174}\) In this sense, they are not able to become Jews ethnically.\(^{175}\) In other words, even if Gentile Christ believers are circumcised, they would not become Jews, join in the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God, be able to observe the law and be saved with Israel, since they are not circumcised on the eighth day.

Regarding 1 Cor 7, Fredriksen argues that,

```
circumcision or foreskin does not matter, he [Paul] must mean, specifically and only for not-Israel, that is, for gentiles. (In fact, this whole section of Paul’s letter, 1 Cor 7, treats exclusively intra-gentile issues.) Thus, those who received Paul’s gospel when “already circumcised” must be gentile proselytes, not born Jews.\(^{176}\)
```

In this sense, according to Fredriksen, in 1 Cor 7:18-19 Paul argues that Gentile proselytes (the ones called to the gospel who were already circumcised), should not

---

174 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 129 n 71. Fredriksen’s argument on the effectiveness of eighth day circumcision is based on Thiessen’s argument, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 129 n 71 and Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 67.

175 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 128.

look to surgically remove their circumcision, and Gentiles (the ones called to the
gospel who were not circumcised), ought not to be circumcised. This is because for
Gentile proselytes and Gentiles, circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is
nothing: what matters is keeping God’s commandments.¹⁷⁷ For Fredriksen, Paul’s
reason for “circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing” is that the
effectiveness and legitimacy of the eighth day covenantal circumcision is not
applicable for Gentiles and Gentile proselytes as they are not circumcised on the
eighth day.¹⁷⁸

Because Gentile circumcision neither transforms Gentile Christ believers into
Jews ethnically nor incorporates them into the covenantal relationship with the Jewish
God, they are not able to observe the law and cannot join Israel’s salvation through
circumcision.¹⁷⁹ On the other hand, regarding 1 Cor 7:19, Thiessen argues that

> When Paul says, ‘Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing; but
> obeying the commandments of God is everything,’ he is not therefore claiming that
circumcision is a meaningless ritual that can be ignored. Rather, Paul’s point is that
God does not require the same things of all people at all times. Priests, for example,

had to obey a set of purity laws that did not apply to Israelites in general. Since only

---

¹⁷⁷ This speculation is based on Fredriksen’s argument, she contends that ‘Some of the men in
Corinth’s Christ-community had been circumcised at some point prior to Paul’s visit there. Were they
Jews by birth or by choice? Our interpretation depends on how we read what Paul says about
circumcision there: Was someone called [that is, to the gospel] who was already circumcised? He
should not seek to surgically remove his circumcision. Was someone called who was not circumcised
[literally, “in foreskin”]? Let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing and foreskin is nothing:
what matters is keeping God’s commandments. Everyone should remain as he was when called. (1 Cor
7.18–20),’ see Fredriksen, Paul, 107.
¹⁷⁸ Fredriksen, Paul, 129. According to Thiessen, imposing the circumcision on the Gentile Christ
believers is not appropriate for them, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 101.
¹⁷⁹ For Fredriksen, the correct way for Gentile Christ believers to join in Israel’s redemption is through
the patrilineal ideology of Abraham and the seed of Abraham – Christ, see Fredriksen, Paul, 149-150.
Jews are commanded to be circumcised, Gentiles are following the will of God by not being circumcised.\textsuperscript{180}

To sum up, the eighth day circumcision is the key for constituting Jewish ethnicity and covenantal relationship with the Jewish God by which people are enabled to observe the law.

3.4.3 Paul’s View on Uncircumcision and Circumcision

While Fredriksen and Thiessen argue for the importance of eighth day covenantal circumcision, it will be argued that neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is significant for Paul, Jewish Christ believers, or Gentile Christ believers in the new era of Christ.\textsuperscript{181} Christ, not circumcision or uncircumcision, is the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ.

3.4.3.1 Paul’s Notion of Two Ages

The framework of two ages is essential to Paul’s theological understanding in the letters to Corinth, as it governs Paul’s views on circumcision and uncircumcision.\textsuperscript{182} In Paul’s thought, while the present age is passing away (1 Cor 7:31; cf. 1 Cor 2:6),\textsuperscript{183} the new age inaugurated by Christ has already broken into the world in which God’s

\textsuperscript{180} Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 10.

\textsuperscript{181} In the letters to Corinth, the term ἄκροβυστία appears twice in 1 Cor 7:18-19, περιτομή appears in 1 Cor 7:19 and περιτέμω ρε appears twice in 1 Cor 7:18.

\textsuperscript{182} With the framework of divine and human realms, Paul’s languages of αἰών (e.g. 1 Cor 1:20, 2:6, 8, 3:8) and κόσμος (e.g. 1 Cor 2:12, 7:31) indicate his notion of two ages. See also De Boer, “Apocalyptic as God’s Eschatological Activity in Paul’s Theology,” 52 n 35.

kingdom has already arrived but is not yet completely realized (1 Cor 2:7-8, 1 Cor 15:20, 24, 2 Cor 6:2). Christ’s self-sacrificial death and resurrection inaugurates the new age: Christ believers are delivered from the old age dominated by sin and death on the one hand (e.g. 1 Cor 15:17, 21, 26, 56), and on the other hand, the Christ event gives life to Christ believers (e.g. 1 Cor 15:21, 22, 44, 57).

In the age to come, Paul’s concept of the new creation includes not only the deliverance of Christ’s followers from the power of sin and death, but also cosmic renovation (2 Cor 5:17-19). The crucifixion of Christ destroys all aspects of the human value system on which they previously relied (1 Cor 1:20-29, 2:8).

According to Paul’s reasoning, if the Christ event liberates Christ believers from the power of sin and death and enlivens them in the new era, then Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers are no longer under the power of the old age, but belong to the new age (cf. 2 Cor 5:17). In addition, the Spirit enables Paul, Gentile believers in Christ, and Jewish believers in Christ to experience and taste the age to come (1 Cor 2:10–12, 12:13). To sum up, the Christ event makes a decisive impact on humanity by which it liberates people from the old age and brings them into the new age.

184 Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 395; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 395; T. Ryan Jackson, New Creation in Paul's Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 119-149.


186 Pitre, Barber, and Kincaid, Paul, a New Covenant Jew, 72-73; Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 98; Keener, 1-2 Corinthians, 185; Harris, The Second Letter to the Corinthians, 433-434.

187 Keener, 1-2 Corinthians, 103; Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 542; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 671. By using ἄνθρωπος, Paul is talking about humanity, including Jews and non-Jews (1 Cor 2:10-11). Also, Paul’s “we” in 1 Cor 2:12 and 12:13 denotes all who have the Spirit through faith in Christ, including Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.
3.4.3.2 Paul’s οὐδέν

Within the framework of the two ages, I argue that Paul considers circumcision and uncircumcision to have no value in the new era of Christ. Since the conjunction between ἡ περιτομη οὐδέν ἔστιν and ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἔστιν is καί (1 Cor 7:19), Paul’s expression explicitly shows that circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing. In this sense, Paul does not only point out that “circumcision is nothing,” but also “uncircumcision is nothing.”

From the perspective of the Christ event (1 Cor 15:20-22), the value of circumcision and uncircumcision do not matter in Paul’s thought (1 Cor 7:19, cf. Gal 5:6, 6:15). In other words, it does not matter whether someone has eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision in the new era of Christ. To put it more precisely, it does not matter whether Gentile and Jewish Christ believers, including Paul himself, have eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision as neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matter in the new age of Christ (1 Cor 7:19, cf. Gal 6:15).

For Paul and Jewish Christ believers, while circumcision in itself is not a bad or

---

188 In response to Thiessen, however, his claim only focuses on the issue of circumcision when he argues that “he (Paul) is not therefore claiming that circumcision is a meaningless ritual that can be ignored,” see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10. In other words, Thiessen ignores Paul’s sentence ἡ ἀκροβυστία οὐδέν ἔστιν and overlooks Paul’s view on uncircumcision. Moreover, some of the terms are not clear in Thiessen’s assertion. Thiessen argues that “Paul’s point is that God does not require the same things of all people at all times,” see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10. The questions to be asked are: What do “the same things” mean? Who do “all people” include? What do “all times” mean? Meanwhile, Thiessen argues that “[Paul] is not therefore claiming that circumcision is a meaningless ritual that can be ignored,” see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 10. The question to be asked is: in what sense is the ritual not meaningless? At least at face value, it seems there is a contradiction with Paul’s expression ἡ περιτομη οὐδέν ἔστιν. Therefore, more clarification of Thiessen’s terms is needed for a constructive dialogue.

good thing, Paul neither argues “against circumcision as a rite or as a physical mark of Jewish identity”, nor advocates undoing his own or his fellow Jews’ circumcision. However, there is no indication to demonstrate Paul’s notion of an effective eighth day covenantal circumcision in the letters to Corinth. On the contrary, for Jewish Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18), Paul’s expression demonstrates that both circumcision and uncircumcision are nothing in the new era of Christ (1 Cor 7:19).

Also, for Gentile Christ believers, the rationale behind Paul’s rejection of circumcision on them is not based on the ineffectiveness of non-eighth day circumcision. This is because, according to Paul, for those who were uncircumcised when they were called to Christ (1 Cor 7:18), neither circumcision nor uncircumcision matter in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ (1 Cor 7:19). Therefore, in the Christ-inaugurated eschatological era, Paul devalues both circumcision and uncircumcision (1 Cor 7:18-19).


Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 392.

Concerning Fredriksen’s claim that περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη must mean Gentile proselytes, the response is as follow. First, concerning Paul’s usage of τίς (1 Cor 7:18), in terms of possibility, Paul’s meaning of περιτετμημένος τις may be Gentile proselytes, however, it may also be Jews. It is not possible to say which group is being referred to as we lack solid evidence to prove Fredriksen’s claim that Paul’s meaning here must mean Gentiles only. Second, since Paul’s explicit audience does not govern about whom he writes, thus even if Fredriksen is correct that Paul writes to Gentiles only, however, Paul’s language of τίς cannot be confined to Gentiles only. In other words, when Paul says περιτετμημένος τις, he means anyone, in terms of ethnicity, including Jews and Gentiles, having been circumcised. Just like Paul’s usage of ἄνθρωπος, he means all humanity, that is both Jews and Gentiles (e.g. 1 Cor 1:25, 2:5, 9:8 2 Cor 8:21). Third, according to Paul’s thought, the calling of God can come to both Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 1:24), it implies that the ethnic identity of περιτετμημένος τις ἐκλήθη who was called can be both Jews and Gentile proselytes (1 Cor 7:18). Fourth, as argued, based on Paul’s usual usage of the terms circumcision and uncircumcision, it means Jews and non-Jews respectively. Therefore, Paul’s meaning in 1 Cor 7:18 is that: Jews (including Gentile proselytes), the one called to the gospel who was already circumcised, he should not seek to surgically remove his circumcision, and Gentiles, the one called to the gospel who was not circumcised, let him not be circumcised, this is because for Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers, circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing: what matters is keeping God’s commandments. This speculation is based on Fredriksen’s argument, see Fredriksen, Paul, 107.
To sum up, according to Paul’s theological thought, circumcision and uncircumcision have no value in the new era of Christ. In the letters to Corinth, there is no indication to demonstrate that Paul has the notion of an effective eighth day covenantal circumcision following the Christ event. Instead, Christ rather than circumcision and uncircumcision has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in the new era of Christ.

3.4.3.3 Identity of Christ Believers

According to Paul, if circumcision and uncircumcision are of no significance in Christ’s era, then uncircumcision, non-eighth-day circumcision, and eighth-day covenantal circumcision have nothing to do with the identity of Christ followers. In other words, the occurrence of Christ has redefined who the people of God are, regardless of circumcision status.\(^{193}\) Although Paul identifies various social statuses and ethnicities in his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 1:26, 7:18, 7:22, 12:13), these characteristics are not fundamental to defining their identity, as Christ is the most important factor in the formation of the identities of Christ believers in the new era. Due to the fact that the new age of Christ has superseded the old, the reign of Christ has become the final authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ followers.\(^{194}\)

3.5 Paul’s Salvation Mechanism

In this section, concerning Paul’s letters to the Corinthians, it will be argued that

\(^{193}\) On this point, see also Horrell, *Solidarity and Difference*, 19-20.
\(^{194}\) The identity of Christ followers will be examined in further depth in the Romans analysis chapter.
Paul’s notion of sin is universal, meaning that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin, Paul’s language of πιστεύω, πίστις and σώζω signifies the importance of faith in the salvation mechanism of Paul through which the salvation of God is open to all who believe. Therefore, it will be argued that Paul’s theological view indicates that salvation comes through faith in Christ in the same way for both Jews and Gentiles.

3.5.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ

For Fredriksen, Paul’s salvation mechanism for Gentiles in the letters to Corinth is basically the same as Galatians. Governed by apocalyptic eschatology, Fredriksen argues that Paul’s salvation mechanism is articulated from a Jewish perspective, asserting the final salvation of Gentile Christ believers with Jews in Jerusalem.195 With the conception of patrilineal ideology, through faith in Christ, Fredriksen argues that Gentile Christ believers join in Jewish communities (while maintaining ethnic differentiation between Jews and non-Jews), and await the final redemption with Jews at the second coming of Christ.196 Fredriksen’s argument is that through faith in Christ Gentile Christ believers abandon their idolatry, turn their loyalty to the Jewish God exclusively (cf. 2 Cor 4:4),197 and are enabled by the indwelling Spirit to live out the law, so that they can act righteously in the Jewish congregations (1 Cor 7:19).198

With the ideology of patrilineal descent, through faith in Christ, Gentile Christ

195 Fredriksen, Paul, 155.
196 Fredriksen, Paul, 158-162. According to Fredriksen, Paul’s meaning of πίστις is commitment or steadfastness rather than psychological inner states and Paul’s connotation of δικαιοσύνη refers to the righteous behavior of Gentiles-in-Christ in the Jewish communities, see Fredriksen, Paul, 119-122.
197 Fredriksen, Paul, 111.
198 Fredriksen, Paul, 111-112.
believers are saved and enabled by the indwelling Spirit to act rightly in Jewish congregations until the second coming of Christ.

According to Thiessen, Paul’s perception is that Christ is the solution to the Gentile problem. Thiessen argues that “He [Paul] believed that in the crucified and resurrected Christ God had intervened in the world to address Gentiles, saving them from what he referred to as this present evil age and from the elements of the kosmos that enslaved them.” 199 After the revelation of Christ to Paul, Thiessen contends that solving the Gentile problem is Paul’s concern and “now he preaches Christ to the Gentiles (Gal 1:15-16).” 200 In this sense, in the view of Thiessen, Christ is the way out of the Gentile problem.

In line with Fredriksen and Thiessen, the role of Christ is crucial for the salvation of Gentiles according to Nanos. Nanos argues that,

in his role as an apostle of Christ, I believe it is correct to speak of Paul’s continued practice and teaching of Judaism, and of his communities as founded within the larger Jewish communities as Jewish subgroups…This subgroup understands the end of the ages to have begun with the resurrection of Jesus. 201

Meanwhile Nanos argues that,

Paul taught non-Jews who turned to God in Christ that they were to remain non-Jews—thus that they were not technically “under Torah.” At the same time, I believe that this means something very different from what it is usually understood to mean and that does not extend to Christ-following Jews, including himself. Explaining why can get at many

200 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 41.
issues central to my view of Paul. To sum up, regarding the salvation of Paul’s Gentile converts, the role of Christ is crucial in the view of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos.

3.5.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance?

According to Fredriksen, Torah obedience has nothing to do with the redemption of Jews (including Jewish Christ followers). Fredriksen refutes the notion of Sonderweg and contends that, due to the veil in their hearts (2 Cor 3:14-15), the majority of Paul’s contemporary Jews are temporarily blind to the purpose of the Torah – the return of Christ. Paul, according to Fredriksen, believed that all Jews will be rescued upon Christ’s second triumphant return. Thiessen, in agreement with Fredriksen, opposes the notion of Sonderweg and argues that “Jewish observance of the law is incompatible with justification by faith.” Thiessen further believes that Paul never preaches the gospel to Jews but only to Gentiles, and Paul rarely writes to Jews; hence, Christ is significant for the salvation of Gentiles but it is uncertain whether Christ is the key to the salvation of Jews. According to Nanos, Jews who uphold the Jewish covenant without acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah could still be saved.

---

203 Paula Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” Expository Times 133, no. 1 (2021): 19-20. Please note that Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos’ plan for the salvation of Jewish people was covered in the previous chapter; I am reiterating some of it here. Please refer to the thesis’ pages 80–85 for more information on this point.
204 Fredriksen, Paul, 110 and 166.
205 Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” 18.
206 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 166 n 17.
207 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 166.
208 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 11.
In conclusion, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos, Christ opens the way for non-Jews to join in the salvation of Israel. Through Christ, Israel’s redemption extends to the other nations, and Paul’s proclamation of the gospel is a mission for the Gentiles. Christ’s role is significant for the salvation of the Gentiles in this regard. According to Fredriksen, the triumphal return of Christ is the key to the Jews’ salvation. Thiessen just emphasizes the importance of Jewish complying in this regard. Nevertheless, according to Nanos, the Jews’ redemption is predicated on their covenantal relationship with the Jewish God.

3.5.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ

However, this thesis holds that both Jews and non-Jews are being saved through faith in Christ in the same way and the salvation of Jews and Gentiles has nothing to do with Abraham’s lineage in accordance with Paul’s theological understanding in the letters to Corinth, despite the various proposals mentioned above regarding Paul’s salvation mechanism by Fredriksen, Nanos, and Thiessen. Paul thought that both Jews and non-Jews would be saved by faith in Christ after the first coming of Christ and up to the second coming of Christ.

3.5.3.1 Paul’s Notion of Sin

Concerning the relationship between Paul’s explicit audience and those to whom Paul’s notion of sin refers in the letters to Corinth, even if Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos are correct that Paul’s explicit audience is only Gentiles, it does not necessarily mean that Paul is talking about the sin of Gentiles only. In other words, Paul can talk
to Gentiles about his concept of sin regarding Jews, or Gentiles, or both Jews and Gentiles in the letters to Corinth. From the perspective of ethnicity, the ethnic identity of Paul’s explicit audience does not determine to whom Paul’s notion of sin refers. Therefore, it is vital to distinguish the relationship between Paul’s explicit audience and his concept of sin in his letters to Corinth.

Also, since the possibility of Paul’s explicit audience of Jewish Christ believers cannot be entirely ruled out in the letters to Corinth, Paul’s notion of sin pertaining to Gentiles only based on Paul’s explicit audience is questionable. Additionally, Paul’s explicit audience (those to whom he writes) and those about whom he writes both influence his theological understanding of sin. One must distinguish between Paul’s explicit audience and the subjects of his letters to Corinth. Therefore, it is essential to find out Paul’s theology of sin by examining the letters to Corinth.

I argue that Paul’s theological understanding of sin impacts upon both Jews and non-Jews. First, Paul’s language of ἄνθρωπος shows that death comes through one man (1 Cor 15:21), and Paul’s expression ἐν τῷ Ἀδὰμ πάντες ἀποθνήσκονται demonstrates that all humanity regardless of ethnicity, in Adam die because of the power of sin (1 Cor 15:22, 56).209 With the Christ event Paul identifies the situation of human plight in the realm of Adam (1 Cor 15:22).

In this sense, according to Paul’s thought, all people in the realm of Adam, including Jews and Gentiles, are under the power of sin and death (1 Cor 15:17, 21, 26, 56). Also, by using the first-person plural pronoun, Paul’s expression ἁμαρτῶν

209 Gardner, 1 Corinthians, 675; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 832; Garland, 1 Corinthians, 706-707; Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1225; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 763.
ἡμῶν (1 Cor 15:3) shows that Christ deals with the sins of Paul and Corinthian Christ believers (1 Cor 15:1-3) which involved Jews and Gentiles.210 Furthermore, by using ‘they’, Paul points out the sins (idolatry in particular) of his Jewish ancestral fathers (e.g. 1 Cor 10:7-10).211 Therefore, in Paul’s thought, his notion of sin covers not only Gentiles, but also Jews.

3.5.3.2 Paul’s Language of πιστεύω, πίστις and σώζω

With his conception that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin, Paul acknowledges that Christ’s death and resurrection functions as the fundamental solution to the human plight in which the Christ event deals with sin and delivers Christ believers from the realm of Adam to Christ (1 Cor 15:22). Paul’s language of ἄνθρωπος shows that resurrection comes through one man (1 Cor 15:21), and Paul’s expression ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ πάντες ζωοποιήσονται demonstrates that all, including humanity regardless of ethnicity, in Christ will be enlivened (1 Cor 15:22),212 and all

210 Paul’s ἡμῶν in 1 Cor 15:3 should be read bilaterally, since he is addressing (Jewish and Gentile) Christ followers in Corinth by employing ἡμῖν (1 Cor 15:1-3, cf. 1 Cor 7:18, 11:33, 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12) and emphasizing his past proclamation of the gospel to them (1 Cor 15:2), which “you” received (1 Cor 15:3). See also Simon J. Gathercole, Defending Substitution: An Essay on Atonement in Paul (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), 72-73; Simon J. Gathercole, “‘Sins’ in Paul,” New Testament Studies 64, no. 2 (2018): 153-154; Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 299. The possible Pre-Pauline material does not affect Paul’s meaning, see Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 746; Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 803 n 55.

211 On this point, Thiessen also argues that “To be sure, some Israelites had fallen into idolatry from time to time throughout Israel’s history (cf. 1 Cor 10:7–10, in which Paul states four times that some of the Israelites [τινες αὐτῶν] were guilty of idolatry),” see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 47. Fredriksen appears to disregard this and instead emphasizes the underlying sin of Jews in “not realizing that Paul was right about the eschatological advent and identity of the messiah,” see Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” 16.

212 Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians, 832-833; Garland, 1 Corinthians, 707; Ciampa and Rosner, The First Letter to the Corinthians, 763-764; Barclay, “Apocalyptic Allegiance and Disinvestment in the World,” 264.
Christ believers are already living in the eschatological era inaugurated by Christ (1 Cor 15:20-28).\textsuperscript{213}

By using a first-person plural pronoun, in 1 Cor 15:57, Paul’s ἡμῖν and ἡμῶν signify that Christ brings Paul and Corinthian Christ believers, including Jews and Gentiles, to victory.\textsuperscript{214} In other words, according to Paul’s thought, Christ liberates Christ believers, including both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, from the power of sin and enlivens them (1 Cor 15:22, 56-57). In this sense, Paul recognizes Christ’s death and resurrection as the fundamental solution to the human plight, since the Christ event deals with sins and delivers Christ believers from the present passing age to the new age of Christ (1 Cor 1:20, 2:6-8, 3:18, 10:11, 2 Cor 4:4).\textsuperscript{215} Therefore, concerning salvation, Paul’s perception is that the Christ event constitutes a foundation for all who believe (e.g. 1 Cor 15:14, 17, cf. 1 Cor 2:5).

With the Christ event as a foundation for all who believe, regarding salvation, I argue that Paul’s language of πιστεύω, πίστις and σώζω demonstrates that both Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ.\textsuperscript{216} In Paul’s understanding, his message of Christ crucified is for both Jews and non-Jews (1 Cor 1:23-24),\textsuperscript{217} and his


\textsuperscript{214} Paul’s ἡμῖν and ἡμῶν in 1 Cor 15:57 should be read bilaterally, since he is addressing (Jewish and Gentile) Christ followers in Corinth by employing ἀδελφοί (1 Cor 15:50), ὑμῖν (1 Cor 15:51, cf. 1 Cor 7:18, 11:33, 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12), and referring to himself and Corinthian Christ believers by using “we all” (1 Cor 15:51), and “we” (1 Cor 15:52).

\textsuperscript{215} On this point, see also Maston, “Plight and Solution in Paul’s Apocalyptic Perspective,” 314-315.

\textsuperscript{216} The term πιστεύω appears in 1 Cor 1:21, 3:5, 9:17, 11:18, 13:7, 14:22, 15:2, 11, 2 Cor 4:13. The term πίστις appears in 1 Cor 2:5, 12:9, 13:2, 13, 15:14, 17, 16:13, 2 Cor 1:24, 4:13, 5:7, 8:7, 10:15, 13:5. The term σώζω appears in 1 Cor 1:18, 21, 3:15, 5:5, 7:16, 9:22, 10:33, 15:2, 2 Cor 2:15.

\textsuperscript{217} Barclay, “Gift Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” 214; Fee, \textit{The First Epistle to the Corinthians}, 80; Witherington, \textit{Conflict and Community in Corinth}, 113; Gardner, \textit{1 Corinthians}, 105; Thiselton, \textit{The First Epistle to the Corinthians}, 170.
message is to save those who believe (1 Cor 1:21).\textsuperscript{218} Meanwhile, in 1 and 2 Corinthians, there is no indication that the subject of πιστεύω and πιστίς is Christ, however, there is data to demonstrate that a human is the subject of πιστεύω and πιστίς (e.g. 1 Cor 1:21, 2:5, 3:5, 15:2, 15:11, 2 Cor 10:15). Also, there is no indication in 1 and 2 Corinthians that Paul thought the salvation of Jews and Gentiles has any connection to Abraham’s lineage.\textsuperscript{219} In other words, Paul believed that God’s redemption is available to everyone (Jews and non-Jews alike) who believe, and it has nothing to do with a person’s genetic relationship to Abraham.

Though there are different perceptions and responses to Paul’s message of Christ crucified, Paul’s thought is that for those who are being called, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power and wisdom of God (1 Cor 1:22-24).\textsuperscript{220} In addition, as argued, Paul’s language of σώζω demonstrates that the purpose of his cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching to Jews and Gentiles is to save them (1 Cor 9:20-22). Also, Paul recognizes that the gospel preached by him, received and believed by Corinthian Christ believers can save them (1 Cor 15:1-3).\textsuperscript{221} In this sense, according to Paul, salvation is open to all who believe.

3.5.3.3 The Salvation Mechanism of Gentiles

Concerning the salvation mechanism of Gentiles, I contend that after Christ’s


\textsuperscript{219} Given that the only occurrence of Ἡβραῖοι in 1 and 2 Corinthians is in 2 Cor 11:22, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence to formulate Paul’s concept of salvation for Jews and non-Jews.

\textsuperscript{220} Paul’s understanding is that God’s calling can come to both Jews and non-Jews (1 Cor 1:23-24).

\textsuperscript{221} For more discussion on 1 Cor 15:3, see Gathercole, *Defending Substitution*, 55-83.
first coming, they are saved via faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming. As argued, in Paul’s theological thought, after the Christ event Christ rather than the Mosaic covenant, the law, circumcision, uncircumcision and ethnicity functions as the ultimate authority for Gentile Christ believers. Paul’s belief that the salvation of Gentiles had any link to Abraham’s lineage is not suggested by 1 or 2 Corinthians, and Paul’s language of πιστεύω, πίστις and σώζω signifies the importance of faith in the salvation mechanism of Paul through which the salvation of God is open to all who believe. Therefore, Gentiles are being saved through faith in Christ. According to the letters to Corinth, Paul’s language demonstrates that Christ delivers Gentile Christ believers from the power of death and sin (1 Cor 15:22, 56-57), enlivens them (1 Cor 15:22, cf. 2 Cor 3:6), and brings them into the new creation (2 Cor 5:17) until the second advent of Christ (1 Cor 15:24). In this sense, Gentile Christ believers do not need to convert to Judaism and become Jews, they become children of God through faith in Christ and remain Gentiles.222

3.5.3.4 The Salvation Mechanism of Jews

Concerning the mechanism by which Jewish Christ believers are saved, I disagree with Fredriksen and contend that, from Paul’s perspective, Jews are saved via faith in Christ in the same manner as Gentiles. It means that after Christ’s first coming, Jews are saved via faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming. As argued, in

222 Larry W. Hurtado, Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 101. Paul does not think it is necessary for a Gentile to become a Jew for salvation. In other words, according to Paul, the salvation of Gentiles has nothing to do with whether Gentiles could convert to Judaism or not. This is different from the view of Thiessen, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 14.
Paul’s theological thought, after the Christ event, Christ rather than the Mosaic covenant, the law, circumcision, uncircumcision and ethnicity functions as the ultimate authority for Paul and Jewish Christ believers, Paul recognizes that Jews are also sinners and under the power of sin (e.g. 1 Cor 15:22, 56, 10:7-10), neither 1 nor 2 Corinthians imply that Paul thought there was any connection between Abraham’s lineage and the salvation of Jews, and Paul’s language of πιστεύω, πίστις and σῶζω signifies the importance of faith in the salvation mechanism of Paul through which the salvation of God is open to all who believe. Because of this, although Paul and Jewish Christ believers have Torah, regarding salvation mechanism in Paul’s thought, they are no different from Gentile Christ believers, they are saved through faith in Christ. According to the letters to Corinth, Paul’s language demonstrates that Christ delivers Jewish Christ believers from the power of death and sin (1 Cor 15:22, 56-57), enlivens them (1 Cor 15:22, cf. 2 Cor 3:6), and brings them into the new creation (2 Cor 5:17) until the second advent Christ (1 Cor 15:24). Therefore, like Galatians, regarding Paul’s theological thought on salvation mechanism, Paul is not “arguing that Gentiles should be included, with Jews, in the people of God; he is arguing, rather, that Jews should be included, with Gentiles, in the mass of ordinary humanity.”223 It is concluded that both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ in the same way according to Paul’s theological understanding.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explored Paul’s salvation discourse in the letters to Corinth to show that, in accordance with Paul’s theological thinking, both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ in the same manner. According to Paul, Jews and non-Jews alike are being saved by faith in Christ after the first coming of Christ up to the second coming of Christ. Paul’s discourse indicates that Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers. The Christ event overrides the Mosaic covenant, law, circumcision and ethnicity. Therefore, the lives of Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers have been reshaped, reconstituted and redirected through Christ until the second coming of Christ.
4 Chapter 3: Romans (1)

In this chapter, I look at whether Paul’s soteriology in Romans differs from his soteriology in Galatians, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians. It will be argued that both Jews and non-Jews are saved by faith in Christ without any distinction according to Paul’s theological thinking through dialogue with Paul within Judaism scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos and by exploring the authentic letter of Paul to the Romans.

The investigation of Romans is divided into two chapters partly because of its length and partly because of RPP scholars’ extensive analysis of Romans. Since Paul’s explicit audience is a key argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, this chapter will first discuss Paul’s explicit audience and then it will examine Paul’s salvific thought on Jews and Gentiles. It is the position of this thesis that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans involves not only Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers. Concerning Paul’s soteriology, I argue that in Romans Paul’s theological understanding of sin is not only directed to Gentiles, but also Jews. Paul’s soteriology is derived from and governed by the Christ event, which involves a rereading of the Hebrew Scriptures. Then the second chapter of the analysis of Romans will continue to dialogue with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos in order to find out the means of salvation for Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s thought.

4.1 ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’?

In this section it will be argued that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans includes not only Gentiles, but also Jews. It means that Paul does not only write to Gentile
Christ believers in Rome, but also Jewish Christ believers. In addition to his explicit audience (to whom he writes), Paul’s salvation mechanism for both Jews and non-Jews depends on what he writes about Jews and Gentiles. It is essential to distinguish between Paul’s explicit audience and what he writes about Jews and non-Jews in order to analyze Paul’s salvific thought on Jews and non-Jews.

4.1.1 Paul’s Gentile Audience

Concerning Paul’s explicit audience, Fredriksen argues that Paul only writes to Gentile Christ believers in Romans. Fredriksen articulates her arguments by considering several pieces of evidence in the Pauline text. Firstly, Fredriksen contends that,

> Whatever the actual ethnic makeup of the *ekklesia* in Rome, Paul addressed his letter solely and explicitly to its gentiles, while insisting on his own divinely granted authority to do so. “Paul… called to be apostle, set apart for the gospel of God … to bring about obedience of faithfulness… among all the *ethnē*, including yourselves” (1.1–6).

Secondly, Fredriksen strongly argues that Paul’s addressee in Rom 2:17 is a Gentile proselyte who calls himself a Jew. Fredriksen contends that ‘Paul’s fictive interlocutor in chapter 2, a pedagogical stand-in for his addressees, is also a gentile, though one “who calls himself a Jew” (2.17), that is, a Judaizing gentile, perhaps even

---

a proselyte.’ Fredriksen’s understanding is that ‘This judging gentile (2.1)—one “who calls [himself] a Jew” (2.17)—is inconsistent in his behavior (v. 3), saying one thing but doing another as he continues to sin in “typically gentile” ways (stealing, adultery, sacrilege, vv. 21–23), boasting in the Law and yet breaking the Law.’

Fredriksen also argues that Paul’s explicit audience – Gentile Christ believers – should govern how the reader interprets and understands the letter of Romans. On this point, Thiessen also argues that,

While virtually every scholar, whether endorsing the anti-legalist or anti-ethnocentric reading of Paul, has concluded that in Rom 2:17–29 Paul criticizes an interlocutor of Jewish descent who insists on the importance of law observance, Thorsteinsson has rightly called this interpretation into question. The Jew of this passage is only a so-called Jew. He thinks of himself as a Jew, but Paul disagrees. And Paul disagrees, not because he has redefined Jewishness, but because he does not believe that a gentile can actually become a Jew: for Paul nomos does not overcome physis or genos.

Thirdly, Fredriksen points out that “Paul is coming to Rome ‘in order that I may reap some harvest among you as well as among the rest of the ethnē … both Greeks and barbarians, the wise and the foolish’ (Rom 1.13–14).” Fourthly, Fredriksen

---


4 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 155-156.

5 Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 70.

suggests that the identity and struggle of Paul’s ‘I’ in Romans 7 is a Gentile.

Fredriksen argues that ‘Who then is Paul’s “I”? In view of the ascribed readers of Romans, the *ethnē* of 1.6 (Paul’s apostleship is to “all the pagans/gentiles/nations, including you”) and of 11.13 (“Now, I am speaking to you pagans/gentiles”), Paul’s first-person pronoun here in chapter 7 may be directed at gentiles, too.”⁷ Given the fact that Paul often takes references from scripture, these Gentiles are familiar with the scripture of Israel.⁸ Fifthly, Fredriksen argues that Paul is writing to Gentiles while talking about Jews in Romans 9-11. Fredriksen contends that,

> In this distinct section of his letter, Paul continues to address Rome’s gentile believers (“Now I am speaking to you *ethnē*,” 11.13), but his focus emphatically shifts. Paul turns from his soaring evocation of the impending redemption in Christ to speak of his “great sorrow and unceasing anguish” on account of his blood brothers, ethnic Israel (9.2–3).⁹

**Concerning Romans 9-11, Thiessen also argues that,**

> Again, in Rom 11:13, Paul explicitly refers to his readers as gentiles— “But I say to you gentiles (ὑμῖν ὁ δὲ λέγω τοῖς ἑθνεσιν),” arguing that the unbelief of many of his fellow Jews has not resulted in their divine abandonment….Clearly, he does not envisage himself speaking to Jews exclusively or even to a mixture of Jews and gentiles; rather, he speaks about the cause and consequences of Jewish unbelief, which prompts him in Rom 11:13 to address his gentile readership, who themselves are in danger: “From [Rom] 9:1 onward Paul has focused upon his non-Christ believing kinsmen, who are definitely not among the audience, whereas Paul’s readers have mainly stood in the background. In Rom 11:13,

---

⁷ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 123.
⁹ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 159.
however, he turns directly to his audience and explains to them their status with respect to these kinsmen.” Here too he stresses that he speaks authoritatively to those in Rome, inasmuch as he is the apostle to the gentiles.\textsuperscript{10}

Sixthly, concerning the identity of ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ in Rom 14-15, Fredriksen’s argument is based on Thorsteinsson’s work.\textsuperscript{11} Thorsteinsson argues that,

As for the identification of the “weak” and the “strong” in Romans 14-15, careful attention must be paid to what is explicitly stated in the passage and what is not. There is not much in the text itself that suggests that Paul is here dealing with groups of “Jewish Christians” and “gentile Christians.” He certainly does not identify them as such. The different attitudes towards eating, drinking and judging days described in the text are no sure indicators of Jewish versus gentile dispositions. These issues are all known to have been dealt with by non-Jews in the Greco-Roman world. Indeed, the “weak” vegetarian in 14:2 and the abstention from wine (14:17, 21) fits rather badly with Jewish practices in antiquity. Moreover, the fact that Paul identifies himself explicitly with the “strong” (15:1) strongly speaks against equating them with “gentile Christians.” Hence, while it is possible that the people depicted in the passage exemplify actual groups of people in Rome, Paul’s references to the “weak” and the “strong” in Romans 14-15 does not imply a mixed audience of Jews and gentiles.\textsuperscript{12}

Seventhly, according to Fredriksen, Paul writes to Gentiles only because Paul is a servant to the Gentiles. Fredriksen contends that “On some points I have written to you very boldly … because of the grace given to me by God to be an altar-servant

\textsuperscript{10} Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 45.
\textsuperscript{11} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 246 n 56.
\textsuperscript{12} Thorsteinsson, \textit{Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2}, 97.
[leitourgos] to the ethnē … to win obedience from the ethnē by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of spirit (Rom 15.16–19).”¹³ Eighthly, Fredriksen points out that ‘Paul preaches according to “the revelation of the mystery which was kept secret for long ages but is now disclosed and through the prophetic writings is made known to all the ethnē, according to the command of the eternal God, to bring about the obedience of faithfulness” (Rom 16.25–26, the letter’s finale).”¹⁴ Furthermore, according to Fredriksen only Gentile Christ believers are Paul’s explicit audience in the whole letter of Romans. Fredriksen asserts that ‘This rhetorical persona “represents or speaks for the letter’s recipient(s),” and his gentile identity remains stable throughout all the letter’s subsequent exchanges in later chapters (such as chapter 7).”¹⁵

In line with Fredriksen, based on Thorsteinsson’s Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2 Thiesssen argues from Romans 16 in particular that,

Yet Thorsteinsson rightly notes that these verses consist of second-person addressees. Paul himself does not greet these people; rather, he calls his readers to greet those he names, likely in order to help establish his credentials with a group of people who do not know him personally, but do know the people he mentions here. Consequently, “the greetings in Romans 16 say nothing conclusive about the identity of Paul’s intended audience.”¹⁶

---

¹³ Fredriksen, Paul, 155.
¹⁴ Fredriksen, Paul, 155.
¹⁵ Fredriksen, Paul, 156. It seems odd to me that Fredriksen scarcely discusses Paul’s greeting in Rom 16:3-16 when she deals with the issue of Paul’s audience.
¹⁶ Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 46; Thorsteinsson, Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2, 98-99. Das also has a similar view, see A. Andrew Das, “‘Praise the Lord, All You Gentiles’: The Encoded Audience of Romans 15.7-13,” Journal for the Study of the New Testament 34, no. 1 (2011): 105 n 52.
Thiessen also asserts that Paul’s explicit audience—Gentile Christ believers—functions as a fundamental component which governs the interpretation of Romans in particular related to Jewish issues such as circumcision (Rom 2), Torah (Rom 7) and the salvation of Israel (Rom 9-11). In other words, Paul is talking to Gentiles-in-Christ about their relationship with circumcision (Rom 2), the law (Rom 7) and their salvation with Israel (Rom 9-11).

In line with Fredriksen and Thiessen, Nanos argues that

Throughout the letter there are indications that the members of Paul’s target audience—the ones to whom he directs his attention specifically—are non-Jews, because he describes some people as his Jewish compatriots in chapter 16. These audience members are identified as those from among “the nations” (ta ethnē) to whom Paul is specifically called to proclaim the message of Christ (e.g., 1:5–6, 13; 11:13–32; 15:15–16). Furthermore, in the midst of Paul’s arguments, these non-Jews are often differentiated from “them,” Jews about whom Paul writes, and in many cases “they” are Jews who are not Christ-followers (e.g., 3:1–3; 9:1–5; 10:1–2; 11:1, 11–32; 15:25–32). Although there is controversy about whether Paul was always targeting non-Jews throughout the letter, in 11:13 he writes explicitly that he is targeting non-Jews, members from the nations other than Israel (“now I am speaking to you Gentiles”; NRSV), and this remains the case throughout this chapter.

In addition, concerning the identity of the ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ in Rom 14-15,

---

17 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 46.
Nanos argues that “‘weak’ or ‘stumbling’ for Jews not yet ‘able’ or ‘seeing’ their need to believe in Jesus as the Christ; ‘strong’ or ‘able’ for both Jews and gentiles believing in Jesus as the Christ…” In this sense, according to Nanos, ‘weak’ means non-Christ believing Jews while ‘strong’ pertains to both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

To sum up, according to Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos Paul’s explicit audience is Gentile Christ believers only throughout the letter of Romans even though there were Jews or Jewish Christ believers in the communities. For them, identifying Paul’s explicit audience as exclusively Gentile is vital because it would govern how Paul’s thought and his texts should be interpreted and understood.

4.1.2 Paul’s Explicit Audience: Jewish Christ Believers?

In terms of methodology, it is agreed with Fredriksen that the external evidence is not sufficient to reconstruct Paul’s explicit audience and an investigation should take place on the Pauline text in order to find out to whom Paul writes in Romans. Concerning the integrity of Romans 16, this discussion concurs with the scholars that

---

19 Nanos, The Mystery of Romans, 21 n 1. For more detailed discussion on this argument, see Nanos, The Mystery of Romans, 85-165.
20 See also Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, 21-33, 277. For more discussion on this view, see Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen, eds, The So-Called Jew in Paul’s Letter to the Romans (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016); Runar M. Thorsteinsson, Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2: Function and Identity in the Context of Ancient Epistolography (Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 2003).
21 Fredriksen, Paul, 155 n 56. For similar concern, see Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 181; John M. G. Barclay, Paul and the Gift (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 456. For the skepticism to reconstruct based on external evidence, see John M. G. Barclay, Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE-117 CE) (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 303-6. For searching the identity of ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ in Rom 14-15, Thorsteinsson also argues that “The Claudian edict is therefore not of much value for the interpretation of Paul’s letter,” see Thorsteinsson, Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2, 96.
at least Rom 16:1-23 is part of the original letter, and it was sent to Rome.\textsuperscript{22} For Paul’s explicit audience in Romans, in line with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, it is the case that ethnically it does most certainly include Gentile Christ believers and they may be the most prominent ethnic group. For example, concerning Paul’s identity, Paul understands that he receives his apostleship through Christ to bring ὑπακοὴν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν (Rom 1:5), and he points out that ἐν οἷς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Rom 1:6). Additionally, Paul also recognizes that he works as λειτουργὸν Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τὰ ἔθνη, so that he has the authority to address Gentile Christ believers in Rome (Rom 15:16). Furthermore, Paul writes that he wishes to go to Rome to have some fruit from among them just as he had elsewhere ἐν τοῖς λοιποῖς ἔθνεσιν (Rom 1:13). Paul’s language of ὑμῖν δὲ λέγω τοῖς ἔθνεσιν clearly demonstrates that Paul writes to Gentile Christ followers in Rome (Rom 11:13). Therefore, all these points clearly demonstrate that Paul’s explicit


\textsuperscript{23} For this view, see Ronald Y. K. Fung, \textit{Introduction and Commentary on Romans 1-8} (Taiwan: Campus Evangelical Fellowship Press, 2013), 27-33; John M. G. Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law? A Study of Romans 14:1-15:6,” in \textit{Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews} (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 43; Douglas J. Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018), 8; Beverly Roberts Gaventa, \textit{When in Romans: An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel According to Paul} (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016), 6-8. Scholars such as Jewett and Fitzmyer has abandoned the Ephesian hypothesis and adopted the view that Romans 16 is part of the original letter and the destination is Rome, see Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 9 and Fitzmyer, \textit{Romans}, 64.
audience in Romans certainly includes Gentile Christ believers.\(^{24}\)

Admittedly, with regard to Paul’s explicit audience, the data for Jews or Jewish Christ believers does not seem so strong. For example, Paul is not talking to Jews in Rom 1:16, rather he is talking about salvation for Jews and Gentiles. By using a second-person singular pronoun, it is not clear whether Paul is addressing Jews or Gentiles in Rom 2:17.\(^{25}\) Paul’s addressees in relation to the law are not clear enough to determine whether Paul writes to Jews or non-Jews (e.g. Rom 7:1, 4).\(^{26}\) Regarding Rom 9-11, Paul uses the third-person plural to indicate his kinsmen (e.g. Rom 9:6-7) while he explicitly addresses Gentiles by using a second-person plural pronoun (Rom 11:13). Therefore, there seems to be no clear data to indicate that Paul’s explicit audience involves Jews or Jewish Christ believers in Romans.

However, the question to be asked is this, does Paul’s explicit audience include only Gentile Christ believers in Romans? It will be argued that Paul’s explicit audience does not only include Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers in Romans.

---


\(^{25}\) As mentioned, Fredriksen and Thiessen argue that this is a Gentile proselyte who calls himself a Jew (Rom 2:17), see Fredriksen, Paul, 156; Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 46. On the other hand, it is also argued that it is Paul’s rhetorical device to address Jewish identity, see Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics, 185; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 469. I adopt the second view, meaning that here Ἰουδαῖος is not an actual ethnic Jew to whom Paul writes, it is a fictional character rather than a real person, and therefore it is not clear enough to demonstrate Paul’s explicit audience.

\(^{26}\) For instance, Engberg-Pedersen argues that “However, when Paul here (7:1) addresses the brothers in the second-person plural, adding that he speaks to people who know the Jewish law, it is in fact more likely than not that he presupposes that they are not Jews. Why else make the addition? Similarly, when he states of his direct addressees (again ‘You, my brothers’, 7:4) that they have died to the Jewish law through the body of Christ, he seems engaged in the same exercise as in Gal 4:1-11 where he suggests that the effect on gentiles of the Christ event closely parallels effect on Jews. This is supported by noting that in 7:5-6 Paul changes to a ‘we’ that includes the Jew that he himself was and his gentile immediate addresses,” see Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics, 185.
believers.

In Rom 16:1-2, Paul is speaking to the congregation members in Rome by recommending Phoebe to them and requesting them to accept her. In Paul’s greeting list (Rom 16:3-15), there is clear data which strongly suggest that there are some Jewish Christ believers. While the ethnic background such as Gentile or Jew cannot be determined by names, the term συγγενής in Rom 16:7 and Rom 16:11, meaning fellow Jews, clearly shows that both Andronicus and Junias are Paul’s fellow Jews. Also, Paul’s expression οἱ καὶ πρὸ ἐμοῦ γέγονα ἐν Χριστῷ demonstrates that there are Jewish Christ believers residing in Rome (Rom 16:7). Meanwhile, as mentioned, the term συγγενής signifies that Herodion is Paul’s fellow Jew (16:11).


28 I adopt the view that συγγενής means Paul’s fellow Jews because it is consistent for Paul’s usage and more probable in the context (Rom 9:3, 16:7, 11). For this view, see William Arndt et al., A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 950; Jewett, Romans, 962; Longenecker, The Epistle to the Romans, 745; Colin G. Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 562; James D. G. Dunn, Romans 9–16 (Dallas: Word, 1988), 894; Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 788; Gaventa, When in Romans, 4-5. Fung, Commentary on Romans 9-16, 2205-2207; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 937; Lampe, “The Roman Christians of Romans 16,” 224; Fitzmyer, Romans, 738; For Rom 9:3, Fitzmyer argues that “Paul writes syngeneis, lit., “relatives,” in the broad sense of tribesmen, members of the same background and culture, as also in 16:7, 11, 21,” see Fitzmyer, Romans, 544. For the meaning of Paul’s relatives, see A. Andrew Das, Solving the Romans Debate (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 91-97; Das, “”Praise the Lord, All You Gentiles,”” 105 n 52; Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 380 and 387. Witherington points out that the term συγγενίς is used differently between Rom 9:3-4 and 16:7, 9, see Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 387. In any case, for the purpose here it is clear that Andronicus and Junia are Jews.

29 See Fung, Commentary on Romans 9-16, 2210. Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 389; Jewett, Romans, 962; Longenecker, The Epistle to the Romans, 745; Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 562; Fitzmyer, Romans, 738; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 894; Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 790; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 940.

30 The name Ηρῳδίωνα itself may reflect this person has a certain kind of relationship with Herod, see Fung, Commentary on Romans 9-16, 2216-2217; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 941; Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 792; Jewett, Romans, 967; Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 394; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 896. In any case, Paul’s expression clearly shows that this person is a Jew. On this point, Nanos also agrees that “The Jewish context of Paul’s concerns fills his closing greetings to some twenty-six persons, of whom five are described explicitly with regard to their Jewish status (16:3-4, 7, 11),” see Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 47.
This person is a Jew in Rome whom Paul expects the Roman congregation to greet (on behalf of him) (16:11).\textsuperscript{31}

In Rom 16, Paul conveys different types of greetings by using several verbs such as ἀσπάσασθε, ἀσπάζομαι and ἀσπάζεται.\textsuperscript{32} The meaning of ἀσπάζομαι may indicate a warm welcome to a person in joining a community.\textsuperscript{33} The (aorist second-person plural middle) imperative ἀσπάσασθε is used throughout Rom 16:3-16 meaning that Paul requests the community members in Rome to greet those he names in Rom 16:3-15.\textsuperscript{34} By using the verb ἀσπάσασθε in Rom 16:3-15, Paul (by Tertius’ hand in Rom 16:22) is writing to give a command to the Christ followers in Rome to greet those he names (on behalf of him). Then Paul addresses Christ believers in Rome and those he names to greet each other by using the phrase ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους ἐν φιλήματι ἁγίῳ (Rom 16:16).\textsuperscript{35} In other words, when Paul writes ἀσπάσασθε ἀλλήλους, he expects that both groups, the Christ believers in Rome’s congregation and those he names in Rom 16:3-15 (including at least two Jewish Christ believers (Rom 16:7) and a Jew (Rom 16:11)), greet each other.\textsuperscript{36} In this sense, Paul not only writes to congregation members in Rome to greet those he names, but also writes to those he names to greet congregation members in Rome. In other words, Paul’s explicit audience not only

\begin{footnotes}
\item[32] The term ἀσπάσασθε appears 17 times in Rom 16:3-16, ἀσπάζομαι appears once in Rom 16:22 and ἀσπάζεται appears 3 times in Rom 16:21, 23.
\item[36] Mullins, “Greeting as a New Testament Form,” 425-426: Mullins argues that “The use of the second-person type greeting means that the persons greeted might not be among those who read the letter.” However, Paul’s explicit audience (to whom he writes) would not change even though the persons greeted might or might not be among those who read the letter.
\end{footnotes}
involves Gentile Christ believers, but also Jewish Christ believers.37

Moreover, concerning Rom 14:1-15:13, from the perspective of faith, Paul’s expressions clearly demonstrate that there are two groups, namely ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ (cf. Rom 14:1, 15:1). In Rom 14:1, Paul’s description τὸν ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει demonstrates that the ‘weak’ group is Christ believers rather than non-Christ believing Jews as they are defined by ἀπιστία by Paul in Rom 11 (e.g. Rom 11:20, 23).38 Also, regarding ‘strong’ and ‘weak’, Paul points out that the two groups are both for the Lord (Rom 14:6). This pertains to Christ (Rom 14:9), which indicates that both ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ are Christ believers.39 In this sense, the issue Paul is addressing in Rom 14:1-15:13 is an intra polemical issue (within Christ believers) in Rome. By using (second-person plural) imperative verbs to address audiences in Rome (e.g. Rom 14:1, 15:7), describing vividly different perceptions regarding the observation of the day and eating between ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ (Rom 14:2-6), expressing his own stance concerning clean and unclean (Rom 14:14), and identifying himself with the group of ‘strong’ (Rom 15:1), all these expressions show that Paul is dealing with the real situation of Christ believers in Rome rather than a hypothetical situation.40

37 See also Philip Francis Esler, Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul’s Letter (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 119.
40 Fung, Commentary on Romans 9-16, 1909; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 455; Mark Reasoner, The Strong and the Weak: Romans 14.1-15.13 in Context (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 37-41. Watson not only argues that here Paul is addressing the real situation in Rome, but also to the
Concerning these two groups, the question to be asked is: in terms of ethnicity, what is the identity of the ‘strong’ and the ‘weak’? First of all, it is clear that the division between ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ is about the observance of the law associated with eating and the observance of the day. The ‘strong’ perceive that they can eat all things (Rom 14:2) and regard every day alike (Rom 14:5), while the understanding of the ‘weak’ is that they can eat vegetables only (Rom 14:2) and regard one day above another (Rom 14:5). Second, concerning the relation between the two groups, Paul’s language shows that the ‘strong’ should accept the one who is ‘weak’ (Rom 14:1) and bear the weakness of those who are weak in faith (Rom 15:1), while the ‘weak’ should not judge the ‘strong’ (Rom 14:3). Meanwhile, Paul exhorts these two groups in Rome not to judge each other (Rom 14:13), and accept each other (Rom 15:7). Third, Paul, a Jewish Christ believer, identifies himself with the group of ‘strong’ (Rom 15:1), and thinks nothing is unclean in itself (Rom 14:14). In other words, according to Paul, he is on the side of the ‘strong’ group. Given the fact that the polemical issue of Christ believers in Rome is related to the observance of the law, Paul’s identification with the ‘strong’ group, and Paul’s recognition of Gentiles (Rom 11:13) and Jews (Rom 16:7, 11) in Rome, it seems implausible that both two Roman communities, namely Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in Rome, see Francis Watson, “The Two Roman Congregations: Romans 14:1-15:13,” in The Romans Debate, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 203-215. In any case, this view is in contrast to Thorsteinsson’s own view. While Thorsteinsson refutes the possibility that Paul addresses to the mixed audience of Jews and Gentiles by using the terms ‘weak’ and ‘strong’, however, Thorsteinsson does not identify and point out constructively what types of persons do the ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ mean even Thorsteinsson recognizes that “it is possible that the people depicted in the passage exemplify actual groups of people in Rome” (but Thorsteinsson personally is not convinced that Paul addresses to the actual groups of people in Rome), see Thorsteinsson, Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2, 97 n 38.

groups, ‘strong’ and ‘weak’, include Gentile Christ believers only.\footnote{In other words, Paul knows that there are Jewish Christ believers in Rome when he writes the letter of Romans. On this point, see also Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law? A Study of Romans 14:1-15:6,” 43.}

Moreover, in Rom 15:7 the basis of Paul’s direct exhortation to the ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ Christ believers in Rome is Christ’s redemptive work for Jews and Gentiles (Rom 15:8-9a).\footnote{Fitzmyer, Romans, 705; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 891-892; Schreiner, Romans, 709; Jewett, Romans, 889; Dunn, Romans 9-16, 851-852; Fung, Introduction and Commentary on Romans 1-8, 39.} The objective of Christ who became a servant of circumcision is to confirm the promises of the fathers and for Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy (Rom 15:8-9a).\footnote{Jewett, Romans, 892-893: Jewett argues that “The result of this grammatical conclusion is that v. 9a places Gentile conversion as the consequence of Christ’s becoming a servant to Israel and therefore as the logical fulfillment of the promises to the Jewish patriarchs that their blessing would extend to the whole world.” See also Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 891-892; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 460. For questioning Wagner’s reading in J. Ross Wagner, “The Christ, Servant of Jew and Gentile: A Fresh Approach to Romans 15:8-9,” Journal of Biblical Literature 116, no. 3 (1997): 473–485, see Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics, 356–357 n 29.} In this sense, Paul’s rationale of exhortation (Christ’s redemptive work for Jews and Gentiles (Rom 15:8-9a)) shows that Paul is dealing with the polemical issue between Jews and Gentiles among the ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ (Rom 14:1-15:13), and addresses both groups, ‘weak’ and ‘strong’, to accept each other (Rom 15:7).\footnote{If Paul only writes to Gentile Christ believers in Rome, the question to be asked is: what is the point by addressing ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ to accept each other based on Christ’s salvific work for both Jews and Gentiles? If this is the case, Paul can only point out Christ’s salvific work for Gentiles only. However, the conjunction διὸ (Rom 15:7), Paul’s direct exhortation to accept each other (Rom 15:7), and Paul’s ground on Christ’s work for both Gentiles and Jews (Rom 15:8-9a) indicate that Paul is addressing Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers among the groups of ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ in Rome. Concerning Paul’s terminology, Barclay argues that “Because they all participate in faith, to varying degrees, they all derive what is salient about their identity from Christ, and not from anything else that could be said about them (age, gender, ethnicity, social status or whatever),” see Barclay, “Faith and Self-Detachment from Cultural Norms,” 198.} As a result, even if it is impossible to determine the distribution and ratio of Jews and Gentiles in both groups, I concur with the commentators that both groups—or at least one group—of ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ Christ followers comprise both
Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.\textsuperscript{46} Because of this, Paul’s expression διὸ προσλαμβάνεσθε ἄλληλους shows that Paul writes to both groups in Rome, including Gentile and Jewish Christ believers, to accept each other (Rom 15:7). Therefore, it is concluded that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.\textsuperscript{47}

If this reading is correct, Paul not only knows there are Jewish Christ believers and Jew(s) in the Roman congregation (Rom 16:7, 11), but also writes to them to greet the Roman congregation (Rom 16:16). In addition, Paul not only writes to Jewish Christ believers to greet the Roman congregation (e.g. Rom 16:7), but also exhorts them to receive one another (Rom 15:7). Also, Paul’s expression διὸ ἀναπολόγητος εἰ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων suggests that he is speaking to everyone, including Jews and Gentiles, who is judgmental (Rom 2:1).\textsuperscript{48}

Furthermore, it is undeniable that Paul, as an apostle to the Gentiles, perceives himself to have authority over all the Gentiles.\textsuperscript{49} On this basis he writes to Gentile

\textsuperscript{46} Fitzmyer, Romans, 705; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 890; Thomas R. Schreiner, Romans (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018), 708; Barclay, “Do We Undermine the Law? A Study of Romans 14:1-15:6,” 43; Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 202.

\textsuperscript{47} Longenecker, The Epistle to the Romans, 47; Fung, Introduction and Commentary on Romans 1-8, 39-40; Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 2; Fitzmyer, Romans, 33; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 11. If Paul’s explicit audience in Romans does include Gentile Christ believers and Jewish Christ believers, the profound argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos is questionable and its governing role in interpreting Romans is also dubious.

\textsuperscript{48} Please see pages 198-202 of this thesis for further information on this point.

\textsuperscript{49} It is reasonable to think that Paul writes to Gentiles because he has authority over them. However, the identity of Paul’s Gentile apostle is not a decisive point to determine Paul’s ethnic audience. For instance, even Paul who is the apostle of the Gentiles and who has authority over Gentiles (Rom 1:1, 5-6), it does not necessarily to mean that the ethnic scope of his preaching and writing is confined to Gentiles only (e.g. 1 Cor 9:19-20). In the same way, even Peter who has been entrusted with the gospel to Jews (Gal 2:7), it does not necessarily to mean that Peter confines his activities to Jews only and cannot have a meal with Gentiles (e.g. Gal 2:12). On this point, see also David G. Horrell, “The Letters for All (Local) Christians: Were There “Pauline Churches”? in The Making of Christian Morality: Reading Paul in Ancient and Modern Contexts (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2019), 26.
Christ believers in Rome (Rom 1:5-6).\textsuperscript{50} However, after Rom 1:5-6, Paul also writes explicitly πᾶσιν τοῖς οὐσίν ἐν Ῥῴμῃ (Rom 1:7) which includes Gentile and Jewish Christ believers (cf. Rom 15:7, 16:3-15).\textsuperscript{51} In addition, Paul’s expression λέγω…παντὶ τῷ ὄντι ἐν ὑμῖν indicates that Paul is speaking to everyone who is among you (in Rome) (Rom 12:3) that involves Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rom 16:3-15, 15:7).\textsuperscript{52}

In this sense, Paul’s language of “all” once again shows that his explicit audience includes not only Gentiles, but also Jews. However, despite the fact that these data indicate that Paul writes to both Jews and Gentiles, there is no evidence to support the emergence of a primary audience (e.g. Gentile) and a secondary audience (e.g. Jew) in terms of Paul’s explicit audience (to whom Paul writes). This is true even though Paul’s use of the word πρῶτος suggests that he has a primary concern for Jews and then for Gentiles with regard to salvation (Rom 1:16), tribulation (Rom 2:9), and glory (Rom 2:10).


\textsuperscript{51} It seems improbable that ‘all’ in Rom 1:7 refers to Gentile Christ believers only for the following reasons. First, in terms of ethnicity, Paul’s language of πᾶσιν does not specify Jews or Gentiles (Rom 1:7). Second, here Paul’s emphasis of ‘all’ is with the locative sense which is ‘in Rome’ (Rom 1:7). Third, Paul’s expressions such as ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ and χάρις ὑμῖν καὶ εἰρήνη ἀπὸ θεοῦ πατρὸς καὶ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ signify that ‘all’ are Christ believers. Fourth, as argued, Paul’s explicit audience in Romans involves Gentile and Jewish Christ believers (Rom 15:7, 16:3-15), therefore, it seems that ‘all’ in Rom 1:7 refers to both Gentile and Jewish Christ believers (cf. Rom 15:7, 16:3-15). See also Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 52-53; Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 36; Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 113. On the other hand, Fitzmyer argues the reading of ἐν Ῥῴμῃ is reliable, see \textit{Fitzmyer, Romans}, 238.

\textsuperscript{52} The following factors make it unlikely that ‘all’ in Rom 12:3 refers only to Gentile Christ followers. First, Paul’s use of the word παντὶ does not specifically refer to Jews or Gentiles in terms of ethnicity (Rom 12:3). Second, Paul underlines “all” in this instance in the locative sense, which is “among you” (Rom 12:3). Third, it has been suggested that both Gentile and Jewish Christ followers are included in Paul’s explicit audience in Romans (Rom 15:7, 16:3-15); hence, the word “all” in Rom 12:3 refers to both Gentile and Jewish Christ followers. Also, Jewett argues that “…the correlation with the inclusive address of 1:7 lead me to the conclusion that Paul’s urgency is motivated by his knowledge of the role of charismatic gifts in the splintered house churches in Rome. He does not wish to single anyone out for blame here, particularly not charismatics, among whom he has explicitly identified himself by reference to his own ‘grace.’ Operating on the premise that every Christian has charismatic gifts (12:6), Paul wishes to include everyone in the scope of his authoritative discourse,” see Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 739.
If this reading is correct, it cannot be assumed that Paul’s directed language such as the second-person plural pronouns (e.g. Rom 1:7, 6:11-14, 12:1), ἀγίοις (Rom 1:7), ἀδελφοί (Rom 1:13, 7:1, 4, 8:12, 10:1, 11:25, 12:1, 16:17) pertains to Gentile Christ believers only, even if the majority of the congregation in Rome are Gentile Christ believers.53 If there are Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in Paul’s explicit audience, it may better explain why Paul occasionally singles out some members of the audience from the Roman congregation whom he wants to address. For example, sometimes Paul addresses those who know the law (Rom 7:1). As argued, if Paul does write to the Gentile Christ believers and Jewish Christ believers in Rome (Rom 15:7, 16:7, 11, cf. Rom 1:5-7), then Paul’s expression γινώσκουσιν γὰρ νόμον λαλῶ cannot be confined to Gentile Christ believers, God fearers and Gentile proselytes (Rom 7:1), but also includes Jewish Christ followers.54 In other word, this is further evidence that Paul is writing to mixed audiences. On the other hand, sometimes he is speaking to you Gentiles (Rom 11:13),55 and sometimes he is talking to everyone among you (in Rome) (Rom 12:3).56 Also, it may be better to explain Paul’s expression of Ἄβραὰμ τὸν προπάτορα ἣμῶν κατὰ σάρκα because there are Jews in his addressees.

53 For the term about saints and brothers, this view is in contrast with Fredriksen, see Fredriksen, Paul, 150-151. On the other hand, Paul’s language of ἀδελφοί in Rom 9:3 obviously has another meaning because of his phrase τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα.
54 This view is in contrast with Stowers as he thinks that here Paul points to Gentile God fearers, see Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, 277-278. On the other hand, it implies that there are those who do not know the law when Paul singles out to addresses those who know the law. Here νόμος means the Mosaic law and those who know the law may be Jewish Christ believers while Gentile Christ believers cannot be excluded either, see Fitzmyer, Romans, 455-457; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 437; Schreiner, Romans, 342; Dunn, Romans 1-8, 359.
55 It implies that there are Jews when Paul singles out Gentiles to address.
56 On this point, Moo argues that ‘Paul addresses this admonition not to any specific group or kind of person in the Roman community, but to “every person” among them. (Contrast 11:13–32, where Paul scolds the Gentile Christians for arrogance.),’ see Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 760.
Paul’s phrase “our forefather according to the flesh” may be explained more easily if Paul’s explicit audience includes not only Gentiles, but also Jews. This is based on the fact that until now there is no historical data to show that according to the flesh Abraham is called the forefather of Gentiles and proselytes in Paul’s time. In fact, those expressions imply that Paul’s explicit audience comprises both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

On the other hand, Paul’s explicit audience and the subject matter of his writings both have an impact on how his theological perspective is understood. When exploring Paul’s thought on the salvation mechanism concerning Jews and non-Jews in Romans, it must be remembered that Paul’s understanding is not confined to and determined only by his explicit audience. It is crucial to distinguish between the audience to whom Paul writes and the people about whom Paul writes.

In Paul’s letter to Rome, it is clear that Paul is not only writing about Gentiles, but also Jews. Paul’s language about Jews and non-Jews, including Jews, Greeks, Barbarians and Gentiles, does appear in Romans. These terms indicate that Paul does talk about Jews and non-Jews in his letter. For example, Paul writes about salvation Ἰουδαίῳ τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλλήνι (Rom 1:16), tribulation to all who do evil, Ἰουδαίου τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνος (Rom 2:9), glory to all who do good, Ἰουδαίῳ τε

57 In the next chapter of the analysis of Romans, there is more discussion on the translation of Rom 4:1, see page 259 n 140 of the thesis.
58 See Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 483 n 88. However, it still depends on the meaning of Paul’s ἡμῶν here, whether Paul is talking unilaterally from his Jewish point of view by using “our forefather” or Paul is talking bilaterally to the Jews in the Roman congregation.
59 For example, Ἰουδαίος appears in Rom 1:16, 2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29, 3:1, 9, 29, 9:24, 10:12; Ἑλλην appears in Rom 1:14, 16, 2:9, 10, 3:9, 10:12; βαρβάρος appears in Rom 1:14; ἔθνος appears in Rom. 1:5, 13, 2:14, 24, 3:29, 4:17, 18, 9:24, 30, 10:19, 11:11, 12, 13, 25, 15:9, 10, 11, 12, 16, 18, 27, 16:4, 26.
Furthermore, Paul’s concern for the power of sin on Ἰουδαίους καὶ Ἑλλήνας (Rom 3:9), Paul’s notion of God in relation to Ἰουδαίων and ἑθνῶν (Rom 3:29) and Paul’s notion of the Lord with Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλληνος (Rom 10:12). These examples demonstrate that Paul talks about Jews and non-Jews in the letter of Romans. (While the point should not require stating because it is self-evident, it is at times worth drawing attention to what is obvious. If Paul uses the formulation ‘Jews and Gentiles’ with both groups explicitly mentioned, then in those contexts he is certainly writing about both ethnic groups.) As a result, Paul is writing to both Jews and Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles in the letter of Romans, not only or primarily to Gentiles concerning Jews and Gentiles.

Even if Fredriksen and Thiessen are correct that Paul’s explicit audience is only Gentile Christ believers, however, Fredriksen and Thiessen seem also to agree that Paul talks about Jews and Gentiles in Romans. As a result, Paul’s theological notions about the way in which Jews and non-Jews can be saved are not only expressed in terms of the explicit audience, but also in terms of what Paul writes about Jews and non-Jews. In other words, the argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos emphasizing Paul’s explicit audience is only one of the ways to find out Paul’s soteriology. However, contrary to what they claim, it does not fully determine and demonstrate Paul’s theological understanding.

Even if Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos are correct that Paul writes only to Gentile Christ believers, this does not mean his theological ideas are constrained by

---

60 For example, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 159; Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 45.
the ethnic identity of his explicit addressees. Rather, Paul’s theological thinking is expressed through what he writes about Jews and Gentiles in Romans. As a result, this study will take into account Paul’s explicit audience in Romans as well as his concerns for salvation among both Jews and non-Jews.

4.2 Paul’s Notion of Sin: Universal or Gentiles?

In this section, it will be argued that in Rom 1:18-32 Paul does not employ ethnic labels because he sees humanity as a whole suffering from the same spiritual predicament that requires the same remedy in Christ. Paul’s expressions indicate that his notion of sin is not only directed to Gentiles, but all humanity which includes both Jews and non-Jews (e.g. Rom 1:18, 2:1). Thus, he speaks to everyone, rather than to Jews or to Gentiles.

4.2.1 Paul’s Notion of Sin: Solely Gentiles

Concerning Paul's notion of sin in Rom 1:18-32, given the fact that Paul’s explicit audience is Gentile, Fredriksen argues that Paul is talking to Gentiles about their fundamental transgression - idolatry. Throughout the letter of Romans, Fredriksen points out that Paul, governed by the Ten Commandments, is speaking to Gentiles-in-Christ about two aspects: emphasizing the importance of the allegiance to the Jewish god by focusing on the first and second commandments, and highlighting the maintenance of righteous behavior within Jewish communities based on the second
part of the Ten Commandments.61 For Fredriksen, both aspects are significant and she argues that ‘he [Paul] makes explicitly in his condemnation of idolatry in Romans 1.18–32, and the ways that the worship of idols leads to “all manner of wickedness” (v. 29).’62

If (the transgression of) idolatry is the fundamental problem of all wickedness of Gentiles,63 for Fredriksen Paul’s gospel and solution for his Gentile converts is that, they [Paul’s pagans] ceased worshiping their own gods and committed themselves to the god of Israel through his son (the cluster of ideas around πιστεύω, “to be steadfast”). Made right by God toward God, they were likewise pneumatically enabled to make right toward each other by acting rightly toward each other—“not like the ἐθνῆς who do not know God” (1 Thess 4.5; cf. Rom 1.18–32 and 13.13–14, for “typically pagan” bad behaviors).64 Therefore, Fredriksen contends that in Rom 1:18-32 Paul is pointing his finger at idolatrous Gentiles as they do not (or cannot) recognize the true Creator God.65

In the view of Fredriksen, Paul is still talking to Gentiles afterwards, but this pagan is a judgmental Gentile proselyte (Rom 2:1-29). Fredriksen argues that “The judgmental pagan proselyte who considers himself a Jew, however, will himself be judged (2.5). His circumcision counts as “foreskin,” whereas the “foreskinned” whose hearts are circumcised will be praised by God (2.25–29).”66 Concerning the identity

61 Fredriksen, Paul, 118-119.
62 Fredriksen, Paul, 118-119.
63 Fredriksen, Paul, 125-126.
64 Fredriksen, Paul, 121.
65 Fredriksen, Paul, 157.
of ‘you’ in Rom 2:17, Fredriksen strongly argues that Paul’s addressee is a Gentile proselyte who calls himself a Jew.\(^{67}\) To sum up, concerning Paul’s notion of sin, Paul is talking to Gentiles about their sins in Rom 1:18-32 and he continues to address a Gentile in Romans 2.\(^{68}\)

In line with Fredriksen, Thiessen also argues that idolatry functions as the fundamental sin of Gentiles. Thiessen argues that “Paul’s fellow Jews believed that they worshiped the true God and that the majority of gentiles worshiped idols (e.g., Letter of Aristeas 137; Philo, Special Laws 2.166). This idolatry was the fundamental sin of the gentiles and the root of the gentile problem.”\(^{69}\) According to Thiessen, Paul’s concern in Rom 1:18-32 is for Gentiles, Thiessen contends that,

> In conjunction with this language of otherness, Paul’s portrayal of these people fits the gentile world best. Romans 1:18–20 depicts the gentile problem as originating in their rejection of the knowledge of God that the divinely created order afforded to them. Such a refusal to acknowledge God leaves these people without excuse (ἀναπολόγητος). Although one could understand these statements as a universal indictment of all humanity, Israel had not only the created order but also the Jewish scriptures to point it to God: the Jews had been entrusted with the oracles of God (3:2). They had no need for the limited revelatory power of creation to direct them to God, nor would Paul need the evidence of creation to make the claim that Jews are without excuse: being entrusted with divine oracles, yet being

\(^{67}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 156. For more discussion on this point, see Thorsteinsson, *Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans 2*, 231–34.

\(^{68}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 156.

\(^{69}\) Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 47.
faithless in regard to them, would be a more powerful piece of evidence of any Jewish
guilt, as Rom 3:3 demonstrates.\(^{70}\)

Furthermore, Thiessen confirms that Paul’s audience is Gentiles, not Jews by
comparing Wisdom of Solomon 13-14 and Rom 1:18-32.\(^{71}\) Thiessen observes and
argues that,

Further, Rom 1:18–32 is remarkably similar to the indictment of the gentile world found in
the Wisdom of Solomon. Although Paul does not explicitly identify the people of Rom
1:18 as gentiles, this does not suggest that he intends to condemn all of humanity: “He does
not target ‘the impiety and injustice of all people,’ but ‘all the impiety and injustice of
persons who unjustly subvert the truth.’ ‘All’ describes the impiety, not the people.”\(^{72}\)

Also, Thiessen contends that,

So too Rom 1:18 speaks of impious and unjust (ἀσεβεία and ἀδικία) people who merit
God’s wrath (ὀργὴ θεοῦ). The author of Wisdom describes the idolatry of the gentiles, who
should have seen the greatness and beauty of creation and recognized the creator (13:5),
and asks how it was possible that these people were unable to find God through
investigation of his created world (13:9). Instead, the gentiles were ignorant of God and
were unable from the good things of creation to recognize the one who created them (13:1),
something that was inexcusable (οὐδὲ ἀντίκτυποι συγγνώστωι, 13:8). Similarly Rom 1:20 avers
that the gentiles are without excuse (ἀναπλογιέτος), since what was known of God is
manifest to them in the things that have been made (1:19–20).\(^{73}\)

\(^{70}\) Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 47.

\(^{71}\) Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 52.

\(^{72}\) Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 48. See also Thorsteinsson, *Paul’s Interlocutor in Romans*
2, 170.

For Thiessen, Paul continues to address gentiles in Rom 2:1-29. Thiessen argues that,

Paul provides his readers with very little information about this person who judges in Rom 2:1–16, yet I believe that Stowers and Thorsteinsson correctly argue that Paul continues to address gentiles in Rom 2:1–16—not the immoral and incontinent gentile, but a gentile who condemns such behavior among his fellows. This gentile appears to be one who attempts to live a virtuous life. Consequently, in Rom 1:18–32 Paul condemns the vice-ridden gentile world—a condemnation with which his judaizing gentile interlocutor agrees, while in Rom 2:1–16, Paul condemns gentiles who believe that they have attained a virtuous life (however achieved). And in Rom 2:17–29 Paul directs his attention to the interlocutor, condemning judaizing gentiles.\(^74\)

To sum up, according to the view of Fredriksen and Thiessen, Paul is talking to Gentiles about their transgressions in Rom 1:18-32,\(^75\) and he is continuing to address a Gentile in Rom 2.

4.2.2 Paul’s Notion of Sin: Universal

However, concerning the relationship between Paul’s explicit audience and those to whom Paul’s notion of sin refers in Rom 1:18-32, even if Fredriksen and Thiessen are correct that Paul’s explicit audience is entirely Gentile, it does not necessarily

\(^{74}\) Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 54. See also Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 46. Concerning Rom 2:17, Stowers has a different view and he argues that “Verses 17–29 depict a Jewish teacher of gentiles, but the portrait is even more specific: The discourse of 2:17–29 suggests a polemical construction of ‘missionary’ opponents. This Jew is one of Paul’s competitors for gentiles,” see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 54-55 n 54; Stowers, *A Rereading of Romans*, 150.

mean that Paul is talking about the sin of Gentiles only. In this sense, Paul can talk to Gentiles about his concept of sin regarding Jews, or non-Jews, or both Jews and non-Jews in Rom 1:18-32.\textsuperscript{76} From the perspective of ethnicity, the ethnic identity of Paul’s explicit audience does not determine to whom Paul’s notion of sin refers.\textsuperscript{77} Therefore, it is vital to distinguish the relationship between Paul’s explicit audience and his concept of sin in Romans.

Also, since it cannot be entirely ruled out that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans includes Jewish Christ believers, Paul’s notion of sin pertaining to Gentiles in Rom 1:18-32 based on Paul’s explicit audience is untenable.\textsuperscript{78} In addition, Paul’s theological understanding of sin is not only derived from Paul’s explicit audience (to whom he writes), but also those about whom he writes. It is necessary to distinguish between Paul’s explicit audience and the people about whom he writes in the letter.\textsuperscript{79} Therefore, it is essential to find out Paul’s theology of sin in Rom 1:18-32 by investigating the text. In contrast with the Paul within Judaism school scholars, I argue that Paul’s theological understanding of sin in Rom 1:18-32 is universal rather

\textsuperscript{76} This view is in contrast to Fredriksen’s view as she forms her argument based on Paul’s Gentile audience and highlights the problem of idolatry in Rom 1 pertaining to Gentiles only.
\textsuperscript{77} In this sense, even if Fredriksen and Thiessen are correct that Paul’s explicit audience is Gentiles and the ‘you’ in Rom 2:17 is a Gentile proselyte, it does not necessarily mean that Paul’s notion of sin refers to Gentiles only. For the identity of the Εἰ δὲ σὺ Ἰουδαῖος ἐπονομάζῃ in Rom 2:17, my view is that it is Paul’s rhetorical device by which it reacts to a fictive Jew, not a Gentile who has Judaized, and Paul is talking about Jewish identity, see Francis Watson, \textit{Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith} (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 285; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 469 n 51; Engberg-Pedersen, \textit{Paul and the Stoics}, 185. For the reading of the verb ἐπονομάζῃ as passive rather than reflexive, see Lionel J. Windsor, “The Named Jew and the Name of God the Argument of Romans 2:17-29 in Light of Roman Attitudes to Jewish Teachers,” \textit{Novum Testamentum} 63, no. 2 (2021): 233-237.
\textsuperscript{78} In other words, the logic of Fredriksen does not work in Romans. It cannot be argued that Paul’s notion of sin in Rom 1:18-32 points to Gentiles exclusively based on the claim that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans is solely Gentiles.
\textsuperscript{79} Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 126. Schreiner also points out the differences between the encoded audience of the letter and Paul’s rhetorical target, see Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 126.
than concerning Gentiles only and Paul speaks to humans, rather than to Jews or to Gentiles (Rom 2:1).

First, it is doubtful whether there is clear data to signify Jews and non-Jews in Rom 1:18-32. The question to be asked is: does Rom 1:18-32 have sufficient information for identifying Paul’s description pertaining to Jews or Gentiles? If the reading is confined to analyzing which characteristics in Rom 1:18-32 belonging to Jews or non-Jews, it may miss the point which Paul wants to make. I argue that in Rom 1:18–32, it is ambiguous whether Paul is referring to Jews or non-Jews.

It is undisputed that Paul’s statements about Jews (Rom 1:16, 2:9, 10, 17, 28, 29, 3:1, 9, 29, 9:24, 10:12) and non-Jews, such as Greeks (Rom 1:14, 16, 2:9, 10, 3:9, 10:12), Gentiles (e.g. Rom 1:5 and 11:13), and barbarians (Rom 1:14), represent his worldview on humanity.80 It should not be assumed that there was a fixed style or meaning among the ancient authors when they used language about ethnicities such as Jew, Gentile and barbaroi.81 However, it is difficult to be certain whether the characteristics in Rom 1:18-32 pertain to Jews or non-Jews.

80 This view is in agreement with the worldview of Thiessen’s Paul on Jews and non-Jews, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 7. Because of this worldview (Jews and non-Jews), apparently Paul’s description in Rom 1:18-32 sometimes seems to point to Jews (e.g. Rom 1:32) or non-Jews (e.g. Rom 1:26). However, in terms of ethnicity, Paul’s expression in Rom 1:18-32 does not signify clearly which verses are pointing to Jews or non-Jews. On the contrary, it will be argued that Paul’s primarily concern is humanity rather than ethnicity.

81 Erich S. Gruen, Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism: Essays on Early Jewish Literature and History (Boston: Walter De Gruyter, 2016), 41-49 and 173-178: Gruen compares the terms such as Greek, Jew and barbaroi used by Greek and Jewish authors (e.g. 2 Maccabees, Philo, Josephus and Paul) and demonstrates the varied usage and meaning of the terms by different authors in different contexts. Gruen also argues that “Greeks regularly reckoned other ethnê as barbaroi, a familiar clichê of this subject. Jews suffered that disability, in Hellenic eyes, like everyone else. But they could also turn the tables,” see Gruen, Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism, 171. According to Peter Marshall Fraser, Greek Ethnic Terminology (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), Morgan also argues that “…illustrates vividly how Greek ‘ethnic’ identities are not a set of fixed or objective categories, but vary according to context and the perspective of users,” see Theresa Morgan, “Society, Identity, and Ethnicity in the Hellenic World,” in Ethnicity, Race, Religion Identities and Ideologies in Early Jewish and Christian Texts, and in Modern Biblical Interpretation, ed. Katherine M. Hockey and David G. Horrell (London: T & T Clark, 2018), 26.
Firstly, there is no explicit mention of Jews and non-Jews to clearly demonstrate whether these verses describe Jews or Gentiles. Secondly, concerning the creation order of God, apart from Gentiles, it is possible that Jews are also under the creation order or natural revelation of God described in Rom 1:19-20.\(^2\) Thirdly, concerning the argument of all, Paul’s language of πᾶσαν modifies two nouns ἀσέβειαν and ἀδικίαν in Rom 1:18, however, the key is to whom ἀνθρώπων refers.\(^3\) Here, it is not clear whether it refers to Jews or Gentiles or both.

Fourthly, concerning Rom 1:21, the question to be asked is: who are the ‘they’ that did not glorify and give thanks to God even though they knew God? Are they Jews, non-Jews, Gentile proselytes, or Jewish apostates? From the perspective of ethnicity, again Paul does not give any clues in the immediate context to signify who are the ‘they’.\(^4\) Given the fact that there is no clue for identifying the ethnicity of “they”, the claim that Paul’s portrayal fits the Gentile world cannot be justified according to the appearance of Paul’s language of otherness in Rom 1:18-32.\(^5\) On  

---

\(^{2}\) Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, 108: Even though Moo argues that Rom 1:19-32 is mainly for Gentiles based on God’s creation, he notices that “This last point, especially, makes it improbable that Paul is thinking specifically of Jews in 1:19–32. It may not be, however, that Jews are entirely excluded either.” On the other hand, Thiessen’s logic is that the rejection of the knowledge of God is applicable only to the situation of Gentiles. It is not applicable to Jews because they already have the created order and Jewish scriptures which bring them to God. However, even though Jews have created order and Jewish scriptures, in Paul’s view it does not necessarily mean that Jews have not rejected the knowledge of God like Gentiles. On this point, Thiessen also observes that “To be sure, some Israelites had fallen into idolatry from time to time throughout Israel’s history (cf. 1 Cor 10:7–10, in which Paul states four times that some of the Israelites [τινὲς αὐτῶν] were guilty of idolatry,” see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 47. In this sense, according to Paul, both Jews and Gentiles could reject God, and even Jews have the created order and Jewish Scriptures which lead them to God.

\(^{3}\) For wider context, RPP scholars argue that in Romans Paul’s explicit audience is Gentiles by using the second-person pronoun (e.g. Rom 11:13) and Paul is talking about Jews by using ‘they’ in Rom 9-11, see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 45 and Fredriksen, *Paul*, 159. According to this logic, the question to be asked is: does Paul signify the sins of Jews by using ‘they’ in Rom 1:18-32? For comparison between Rom 2 and Rom 9-11 in order to find out the identity of Jews, see Novenson, “The Self-Styled Jew of Romans 2 and the Actual Jews of Romans 9–11,” 133–62.

\(^{4}\) This is in contrast with Thiessen, see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 47.
the contrary, it is necessary to find out the meaning of Paul’s language of otherness in Rom 1:18-32.

Fifthly, it is agreed with Thiessen and Fredriksen that idolatry is a meta sin in Rom 1:18-32, however, the question to be asked is: does it refer to Gentiles only in Paul’s thought? However, even Thiessen himself points out that “To be sure, some Israelites had fallen into idolatry from time to time throughout Israel’s history (cf. 1 Cor 10:7–10, in which Paul states four times that some of the Israelites [τινες αὐτῶν] were guilty of idolatry).” Therefore, it is not clear here whether Paul points to Gentiles only or if he includes Jews also. To sum up, concerning Rom 1:18-32, it is difficult to determine whether Paul is pointing to Jews in this verse or if he is describing Gentiles in the other verse. If Paul’s language of Jews and non-Jews does not exist in this passage, the reading framed by finding Jews and Gentiles may miss the point of Paul.

While a number of interpreters contend that Rom 1:18-32 refers to Gentiles, however, I argue that Paul’s language of ἄνθρωπος demonstrates that Paul has all humanity in mind. Paul is talking about the sin of humanity rather than the sin of Gentiles only in Rom 1:18-32. It is agreed with the Paul within Judaism school scholars that Rom 1:16-3:20 is Paul’s word rather than the language of Paul’s

---

87 Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 47.
88 At most it can be said that there some characteristics seem to pertain to Jews or non-Jews in the passage. Since Paul did not give any clues for the meaning of ‘they’ in Rom 1:18-32, at most it can be said that the ‘they’ points to τάσεως ἀνεξέλεγκτα καὶ ἀδικίαν ἄνθρωπον (τόν) (Rom 1:18).
89 For example, apart from the Paul within Judaism school scholars such as Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, see Witherington and Hyatt, *Paul’s Letter to the Romans*, 76; Fitzmyer, *Romans*, 270.
In Rom 1:18, Paul does not use Ἰουδαίος or Ἑλλην or ἔθνος, but ἄνθρωπων to signify those who suppress the truth and those on whom the wrath of God is placed. The term ἄνθρωπων is modified by πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν. It is agreed with Thiessen that the accusative, singular and feminine πᾶσαν is in agreement with two accusative, singular and feminine nouns ἁσέβειαν and ἁδικίαν, however, it seems that Thiessen overlooks the meaning of Paul’s ἄνθρωπων.

Throughout Rom 1:18-32, Paul does not specify what is the ethnicity of ἄνθρωπων in its context and he uses third-person plural pronouns and third-person plural verbs referring to πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων (Rom 1:18). For example, Paul uses αὐτοῖς twice to refer to πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων (Rom 1:19). Also, Paul refers to πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων by using αὐτοῖς (Rom 1:20, 24 and 26). In addition, Paul denotes πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων by third-person plural verbs or participles such as γνόντες (Rom 1:21), ἐδόξασαν (Rom 1:21), ἡχηρίστησαν (Rom 1:21), ἐματαιώθησαν (Rom 1:21), ἐμωράνθησαν (Rom 1:22), ἡλλαξαν (Rom 1:23), μετῆλαξαν (Rom 1:25), ἐσεβάσθησαν (Rom 1:25), ἐλάτρευσαν (Rom 1:25), ἐξεκαύθησαν (Rom 1:27), ἐδοκίμασαν (Rom 1:28). However, the ethnicity of ἄνθρωπων is not signified in Rom 1:28.

90 This view is in contrast with Campbell who argues that most of Rom 1:16-3:20 is the voice of the Teacher while some of them is Paul’s quotation of the Teacher, see Douglas A. Campbell, The Deliverance of God: An Apocalyptic Rereading of Justification in Paul (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 587-590. Apart from the Paul within Judaism school scholars, Schreiner also argues against Campbell’s view, see Schreiner, Romans, 110.
91 In Rom 1-3, the term ἄνθρωπος appears in Rom 1:18, 2:1, 3, 9-10, 16, 29, 3:28.
92 It does not matter here if Paul is talking about two objects: πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων or one object: πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων, the key is still on the connotation of the term ἄνθρωπων. I incline to read it as one object as πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν ἄνθρωπων.
93 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 48.
94 Jewett, Romans, 153.
1:18-32.

Furthermore, Paul continues to use the term ἄνθρωπε (Rom 2:1, 3) and he still does not specify whether his usage of ἄνθρωπος refers to Jews or Gentiles.\(^{95}\) Then Paul continues to use ἄνθρωπος with the phrase ἐπὶ πᾶσαν ψυχῆν ἄνθρωπον (Rom 2:9) and he begins to unpack the meaning of this term with the phrase Ἰουδαῖον τε πρῶτον καὶ Ἑλληνος (Rom 2:9-10), and emphasizes God’s impartiality towards Jews and Gentiles (Rom 2:10).\(^{96}\) In this sense, Paul is considering humanity when he uses the term ἄνθρωπος starting from Rom 1:18ff and unpacks the implications of ἄνθρωπος, meaning Jews and non-Jews in Rom 2:9. Thus, all the third-person plural pronouns, verbs and participles in Rom 1:18-32 refer to humanity as a whole.

In spite of Gaston’s assertion that Paul’s use of “all” with ἄνθρωπος refers to Gentiles or the Gentile world (e.g. Rom 1:18-32),\(^ {97}\) I contend that Paul’s use of the word ἄνθρωπος in Romans 1:18 expresses humanity, which includes both Jews and non-Jews. I support this argument with the following considerations. First, just two verses earlier, Paul employs two distinct ethnic terms Ἰουδαῖος and Ἑλλην (not ἄνθρωπος), to denote Jews and non-Jews respectively (Rom 1:16). Second, as argued, in Rom 1:18 Paul does not mention the ethnicity of ἄνθρωπον, he starts to unpack it in Rom 2:9. Third, in Paul’s undisputed letters, his usage of ἄνθρωπος appears in Rom 1:18, 23, 2:1, 3, 9, 16, 29, 3:4, 5, 28, 4:6, 5:12, 15, 18, 19, 6:6, 7:1, 22, 24, 9:20,

---

\(^{95}\) From the perspective of ethnicity, Paul’s usage of singular ἄνθρωπε still does not specify Jews or Gentiles.

\(^{96}\) It does not make sense if the connotation of ἄνθρωπος in Rom 2:9 means either Gentiles or Jews. In other words, when Paul uses the term ἄνθρωπος, Paul is talking about humanity which includes both Jews and non-Jews.

Whenever Paul uses ἄνθρωπος without qualification it is Paul’s usual usage to refer to a human being or humanity (e.g. Rom 5:12, 1 Cor 1:25, 2:5, Gal 1:1). In addition, Rom 2:9 clearly and explicitly shows that Paul’s language of ἄνθρωπος includes both Jew and non-Jew. Paul therefore refers to humanity, which includes both Jews and non-Jews, when he uses the Greek word ἄνθρωπων in Romans 1:18.

Though Paul’s worldview of humanity does involve Jews and non-Jews, Paul’s primary concern is humanity rather than ethnicity. After unpacking the meaning of ἄνθρωπος in Rom 2:9-10, Paul continues to articulate his concept of humanity by the term ἄνθρωπων indicating that God will judge the secrets of human beings (Rom 2:16). In other words, Paul is addressing humanity from Rom 1:18 to 2:16 in which he unpacks the meaning of ἄνθρωπος by using the terms Ἰουδαίου and Ἑλλήνος (Rom 2:9). Paul’s language also shows that οὐ ὁ ἔπαινος οὐκ ἔξ ἄνθρωπων, but God (Rom 2:29).

If this reading is correct, it explains the reason why Paul does not use the terms Jews or Gentiles in Rom 1:18 because his concern is humanity, including Jews and non-Jews, rather than ethnicity. Paul’s language of ἄνθρωπος demonstrates that his concern is the totality of humanity rather than pointing here and there in Rom 1:18-32.

98 See also BDAG, 81.
to Jews or Gentiles.\textsuperscript{99} If the reading is confined to look for Jews or non-Jews in Rom 1:18-32, Paul’s concern of humanity may be missed.

If Paul’s usage of ἄνθρωπος refers to humanity rather than ethnicity, Paul’s notion of sin in Rom 1:18-32 has universal meaning. Furthermore, Paul’s notion of universal sin is supported and articulated more clearly in Romans 3. Paul’s language of πᾶς δὲ ἄνθρωπος ψεύστης (Rom 3:4) and κρινεῖ ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον (Rom 3:6) indicates the concept of universal sin.\textsuperscript{100} Paul expresses clearly that both Jews and Greeks are under the power of sin (Rom 3:9) and he points out that all have sinned (Rom 3:23).\textsuperscript{101} In addition, Paul thinks that both Gentiles and Jews are under the power of sin throughout Romans and both of them are called by the grace of God.\textsuperscript{102}

On the other hand, it is agreed with Thiessen that there is a correlation between the Wisdom of Solomon and Rom 1:18-32.\textsuperscript{103} However, I argue that Paul’s notion of sin does cover Jews and non-Jews. Paul’s interaction with the Wisdom of Solomon and his language of ἄνθρωπος in Romans demonstrate Paul’s distinctive view regarding the concept of sin.\textsuperscript{104} This means that Paul’s theological understanding of

\textsuperscript{99} In contrast with Fredriksen and Thiessen, Paul’s concern is the universal sin of humanity rather than that of Gentiles only. For Rom 1:19-32, even Moo argues that it describes Gentiles, he points out that “natural revelation” cannot entirely exclude Jews in this passage, see Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 108.

\textsuperscript{100} Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 472.

\textsuperscript{101} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 103; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 462. Schreiner points out that “Not only does Paul specify that both Jews and Greeks have been indicted; he also goes beyond this by saying that “all” (πᾶντας, pantas) people have been indicted in his previous comments,” see Schreiner, \textit{Romans}, 182.


\textsuperscript{104} Paul reworks the distinction between Jews and Gentiles and addresses humanity which is under the power of sin. Linebaugh argues that “Whereas Wisdom of Solomon’s polemic serves to reinforce the anthropological distinction between Jew and Gentile (qua non-idolaters and idolaters), Paul reworks the aniconic tradition to establish the essential unity of humanity,” see Jonathan A. Linebaugh,
sin is not only applicable to Gentiles, but also to Jews.

Concerning Paul’s notion of sin, there is no Jewish exceptionalism in Paul’s theological understanding. Paul begins to address everyone who is judgmental after discussing human sins (Rom 1:18–32) by employing the second-person singular ἐνί, an interjection ὦ, a vocative ἄνθρωπε, and the phrase πᾶς ὁ κρίνων (Rom 2:1). As Paul already knows a number of Jews and Gentiles residing in Rome (e.g. Rom 16:3-16) when he writes the letter to Rome, by continuing to use the word ἄνθρωπος (cf. Rom 1:18ff), Paul’s expression διὸ ἄναπολόγητος ἐνί, ὦ ἄνθρωπε πᾶς ὁ κρίνων has an effect that Paul speaks to anyone who is judgmental regardless of ethnicity when the letter is read in Roman congregation (Rom 2:1, 3; cf. Rom 1:18). In this sense, Paul is talking to everyone, whether Jews or Gentiles, who judges the sins of the other has the same problem (Rom 2:3) and Paul’s word ἄνθρωπε (Rom 2:1) is in line with Paul’s usage of ἄνθρωπος in Rom 1:18, meaning that there is no one who can be exempted from the charge of Rom 1:18-32 in Paul’s thought. Paul is referring to everyone who is judgmental in this way, whether they are judging Jews or Gentiles (Rom 2:1). In other words, Paul refutes the notion of Jewish exceptionalism by incorporating Jews and Gentiles within the same common humanity in Rom 2:1-5.


105 Jewish exceptionalism is a view that Jews are exempted from the charge of sin. However, I argue that this notion is not applicable in Paul’s thought.

106 It is debatable who the addressee of Rom 2:1 is, see Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, 83–125. The key concern, however, is that Paul consistently uses ἄνθρωπος (e.g. Rom 1:18, 2:1, 3) instead of Ἰουδαῖος, Ἑλλην or ἔθνος, expressing humanity, which encompasses both Jews and Gentiles. See also Fung, Introduction and Commentary on Romans 1–8, 254; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 462–463: Barclay argues that “But Paul makes clear in 2:1–3 that he considers no one exempt from the charges in 1:18–32: any person (ἄνθρωπος) who criticizes such sins as if he were exempt is, in the truthful judgment of God (2:2), guilty of the same (2:1, 3)...Paul’s inclusion of Jews within a pessimistic portrayal of the human condition is not unparalleled among Second Temple authors.”

107 Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 144. See also Watson, Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith, 377,
In this sense, Paul is more negative than his Jewish contemporaries regarding anthropology.\textsuperscript{108} This is because, for Paul, both Jews and non-Jews are under the power of sin.\textsuperscript{109}

In conclusion, Paul talks to everyone, both Jews and Gentiles, who is judgmental (Rom 2:1), and Paul’s theological understanding of sin is universal in Rom 1:18-32.\textsuperscript{110} By using the term ἄνθρωπος and his interaction with the Wisdom of Solomon, Paul considers the story of humanity.\textsuperscript{111} Paul’s phrase πᾶσαν ἁσέβειαν καὶ ἁδικίαν,\textsuperscript{112} and Paul’s ἄνθρωπος clearly indicates that his notion of sin refers to all humanity (Rom 1:18), meaning that Paul’s theological understanding of sin covers both Jews and non-Jews and this notion exists throughout Romans.

\section*{4.3 Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event}

This section will argue that Paul’s soteriology is derived from and governed by the Christ event. Paul’s perspective is transformed by the Christ event, causing him to reread the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul thinks retrospectively in light of the Christ event and discovers two separate and distinct narratives. One is in the divine trajectory demonstrating continuity between the stories of Abraham and Christ. Christ’s story is distinct from the other narrative in the human trajectory, which is the story of the law.

\textsuperscript{109} Schreiner, Romans, 109.
\textsuperscript{111} Linebaugh, “Announcing the Human,” 216, 217 and 237.
\textsuperscript{112} Jewett, Romans, 152.
Paul employs the Christ event as a meta-narrative to re-evaluate the history of humanity (including Jewish history). Therefore, Paul’s theological comprehension progresses from the remedy (Christ) to the problem (humanity).

4.3.1 Source of Paul’s Epistemology: Christ or Prophecy?

Concerning the letter of Romans, according to Fredriksen, Isaiah functions as an important source that at certain places in the letter frames Paul’s theological understanding. Paul’s thought is constituted as a certain kind of apocalyptic eschatology regarding Israel and the salvation of the other nations. Fredriksen contends for the priority of Isaiah using J. Ross Wagner’s work as support. Based on Wagner’s Heralds of the Good News, Fredriksen argues that “(1) that Wagner, Heralds, has established, exhaustively, the import and impact of Isaiah on Paul’s thinking…(4) that Paul’s reordering of the traditional sequence—Israel first, then the nations, ceded first to a remnant of Israel, then to some of the nations, then to the fullness of the nations and all Israel (Rom 11.25–26).”

In this sense, in the view of Fredriksen, the determinative source and formation of Paul’s thought in Romans is derived from Israelite history and authoritative Jewish scripture. Fredriksen argues that “The formative history of Israel (Genesis and Exodus) and the words of the prophets, Isaiah in particular, orient Paul and his hearers.”

113 Fredriksen, Paul, 160 n 70.
114 Fredriksen, Paul, 164 n 79.
115 Fredriksen, Paul, 160.
theological thought in relation to the salvation in the end time.\textsuperscript{116} According to Fredriksen’s interpretation of Jewish literature, specifically Isaiah 66:18–20, the nations will be saved alongside Israel in Jerusalem at the end of time.\textsuperscript{117} According to Fredriksen, it seems that Paul’s ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology originated from Isaiah, the narrative of prior Jewish thought, works as a hermeneutical grid for Paul’s theological thought.\textsuperscript{118} Therefore, concerning Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen views Paul as a Jew whose thought is under the umbrella of prophecy and consequently emphasizes the prospective development and continuity from Judaism to Paul.\textsuperscript{119}

Paul’s soteriology could have been influenced by a multitude of sources, but it will be argued that his comments in Romans indicate that the death and resurrection of Christ, rather than Isaiah, is the most prominent source in his theological thought. Paul’s strong Jewish heritage cannot be ignored, as Paul himself acknowledged (Phil 3:5-6). In Romans, Paul quotes extensively from the Hebrew Scriptures. For example, Paul references Hab 2:4 in Rom 1:17, Psa 61:13 and Prov 24:12 in Rom 2:6, Psa 51:4 in Rom 3:4, Psa 13:1-3 in Rom 3:10-12, Psa 5:10 and Psa 139:4 in Rom 3:13, Psa 9:28 in Rom 3:14, Psa 35:2 in Rom 3:18, Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:3, Psa 31:1 in Rom 4:7, Psa 31:2 in Rom 4:8, Gen 17:5 in Rom 4:17, Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:22, Exo 20:17 and Deut 5:21 in Rom 7:7, Psa 43:23 in Rom 8:36, Gen 18:10 in Rom 9:9, Gen 25:23 in Rom 9:12, Mal 1:2-3 in Rom 9:13, Exo 33:19 in Rom 9:15, Exo 9:16 in Rom 9:17, Hos 2:25 in Rom 9:25, Deut 30:14 in Rom 10:8, Joel 2:23 in Rom 10:13, 1 King

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{116} Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 38.
\footnote{117} Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 35.
\end{footnotes}
Given that Paul also quotes Habakkuk, Psalms, Genesis, Hosea, Deuteronomy, Malachi, Joel, 1 Kings, and Exodus in Romans, how can Isaiah serve as the primary source for Paul’s salvific philosophy, as Fredriksen suggests? If Fredriksen thinks that Paul’s use of Isaiah in Romans serves as a guide for his soteriological thought, she will need to provide further explanation. Regarding the concept of eschatological pilgrimage, there is no evidence that Paul cites Isaiah 66:18-20, as Fredriksen suggested. She must also explain why Isaiah, and not Habakkuk, Psalms, Genesis, Hosea, Deuteronomy, Malachi, Joel, 1 Kings, or Exodus, is Paul’s tutor.

On the other hand, I would argue that the Christ event functions as a grand narrative in Paul’s thought, through which he re-evaluates the Hebrew Scriptures for

---


for the spread of God’s gospel (Rom 1:1). Paul also describes himself as a servant of Christ Jesus through God’s grace (Rom 15:16). Paul insists that God evaluates the hidden acts of humanity via Christ (Rom 2:6). Paul acknowledges that the righteousness of God is attained through faith in Christ for all believers (Rom 3:22) and underlines that redemption is found in Christ Jesus (Rom 3:24). Paul emphasizes that, having been justified by faith, we enjoy peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 5:1). Paul acknowledges that Christ died on our behalf (Rom 5:8), and through Him we have been reconciled (Rom 5:11). Paul highlights that nothing can separate us from God’s love in Christ Jesus (Rom 8:39). Paul claims he speaks the truth in Christ (Rom 9:1). Paul emphasizes his boasting in Christ (Rom 15:17-18). Paul argues that his former proclamation of the gospel from Jerusalem to Illyricum was Christ’s gospel (Rom 15:19). Paul exhorts the Rome congregation by means of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit’s love (Rom 15:30). Paul recognizes that the eschatological age inaugurated by the Christ event triumphs over the power of sin and death (e.g. Rom 5:12, 21; 6:23), and that those who are in Christ are made alive (e.g. Rom 5:21, 6:22-23). Paul acknowledges that the death and resurrection of Christ inaugurated an eschatological age that transported humanity from the domain of sin to the domain of grace (e.g. Rom 6:14). All of these expressions demonstrate that the Christ event is a determining factor in Paul’s thought.

Paul mentions Christ in Romans in Rom 1:1, 4, 6, 7, 8, 2:16, 3:22, 24, 5:1, 6, 8, 11, 15, 17, 21, 6:3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 23, 7:4, 25, 8:1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 17, 34, 35, 39, 9:1, 3, 5, 10:4, 6, 7, 17, 12:5, 13:14, 14:9, 15, 18, 15:3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29, 30, 16:3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 16, 18, 25, 27 which is far more than his references to Isaiah.
In the meantime, as a consequence of the Christ event, Paul rereads the Hebrew Scriptures. Given the great number of citations or quotations in Romans, I will only highlight two crucial passages to indicate that Paul rereads the Hebrew Bible through the lens of the Christ event. Firstly, in Rom 3:10-18, Paul’s citations of Psa 13:1-3 in Rom 3:10-12, Psa 5:10 and Psa 139:4 in Rom 3:13, Psa 9:28 in Rom 3:14, Isa 59:7 and Prov 1:16 in Rom 3:15, Isa 59:7 in Rom 3:16, Isa 59:8 in Rom 3:17, Psa 35:2 in Rom 3:18 indicate that sin holds universal power over Jews and Greeks (Rom 3:9) and that there is no justification by the works of the law (Rom 3:20). After demonstrating that the route of the works of the law is ineffective for attaining God’s righteousness, Paul outlines an alternative way. Paul asserts that the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law (Rom 3:21), as attested by the law and the prophets. The righteousness of God is accomplished by faith in Christ, and it is available to all believers (Rom 3:22). Paul then argues that redemption is a gift of grace through Christ (Rom 3:24). In other words, in light of the Christ event, Paul perceives the new path to God’s righteousness through faith in Christ, which is witnessed by the law and prophets.

Secondly, according to Paul, Christ is the goal of the law for righteousness to all who believe (Rom 10:4). Paul elaborates on his reference of Deut 30:14 in Rom 10:8 by stating that he is proclaiming this word (Rom 10:8). Paul then tells the Roman congregation that they will be saved if they confess Jesus as Lord and believe in their hearts that God raised him from the dead (Rom 10:9). Paul cites Isa 28:16 in Rom

---

123 For more discussion of the τέλος in Rom 10:4, see pages 222-223 of the thesis.
10:11 to demonstrate that people who believe in God will not be disappointed, and he cites Joel 2:23 in Romans 10:13 to demonstrate that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the Lord is the same for all who call upon him (Rom 10:12). Paul thus concludes, in light of the Christ event, that Christ is the purpose of the law and urges the Roman assembly to believe in Him.

In this way, although Paul has a strong Jewish heritage, the Christ event is the decisive source of his theological thought.\textsuperscript{124} Paul employs the Christ event as the basis for his theological framework, through which he re-evaluates the prior Jewish narrative.\textsuperscript{125} In light of the Christ event, Paul’s knowledge exceeds the traditional Jewish narrative.\textsuperscript{126} Paul rereads the Hebrew Scriptures in light of the eschatological age established by Christ.\textsuperscript{127}

4.3.2 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Prospectively or Retrospectively?

When Fredriksen attempts to articulate Paul’s theological thought within the framework of Jewish prophetic literature, the narrative logic of Paul seems to develop

\textsuperscript{124} Timothy H. Lim, \textit{Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 161 and 176: Lim argues that “The variety of biblical texts would not have disturbed him, for his belief in Jesus as the Christ did not result from a study of the Torah, but in an experiential encounter with the divine” and “To be sure the authoritative writings of Israel constituted the framework in which he worked, but his hermeneutics and exegetical endeavours have their source beyond these boundaries.”


\textsuperscript{126} Lim, \textit{Holy Scripture in the Qumran Commentaries and Pauline Letters}, 161, 172 and 176.

\textsuperscript{127} So far, there does not appear to be sufficient evidence in the letter to Romans to support the notion that Isaiah is Paul’s governing source. The NPP advocate Donaldson also disagrees that Paul’s thought can be framed in terms of Isaiah’s prophecy about eschatological pilgrimage, see Terence L. Donaldson, “Paul within Judaism: A Critical Evaluation from a “New Perspective” Perspective.” In \textit{Paul within Judaism: Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle}, edited by Mark Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm, 203-220. Lanham: Fortress Press, 2015.
prospectively from the Jewish narrative to Christ.\(^{128}\) In Paul’s thought, Jewish history develops and culminates with Christ. In this sense, Christ fulfills the prophetic message by securing the final redemption of Israel and other nations.

Governed by Paul’s understanding of Jewish scripture, this shapes Paul’s mentality and his Gentile mission. Fredriksen argues “Heaven had commissioned Paul specifically to go to pagans, to turn them to Israel’s god. Like the biblical prophets whose words he drew on, Paul expected God’s kingdom to contain two human populations: Israel and the nations.”\(^ {129}\) Regarding Romans, according to Fredriksen, Paul’s Gentile mission is driven by his ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology for solving the fundamental Gentile problems such as idolatry by incorporating them into Jewish covenantal communities through Christ.\(^ {130}\) In contrast to “retrospectively from Christ back to Judaism, or from solution to plight,” Fredriksen seems to claim that Paul’s epistemology appears to go prospectively from Judaism to Christ, from human plight to solution.\(^ {131}\)

Given that the Christ event rather than Isaiah serves as the grand narrative for Paul’s thought, I contend that Paul rethinks retrospectively and understands that two unique and separate narrative trajectories coexist. Paul’s words in Romans illustrate, on the one hand, that the divine will of God was carried out according to the divine

\(^{128}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 165 n 81. Driven by apocalyptic eschatology, according to Fredriksen, Paul thinks that the End is very near in his time. Fredriksen constitutes her argument based on his prophetic message and perceives Christ as opening a gate for Gentile salvation by bringing them to Israelite communities. See also Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 21-22.

\(^{129}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 164.

\(^{130}\) Fredriksen, *Paul*, 164. In this way, Paul recognizes the fulfilment of Isaiah’s prophecy in his time because he was influenced by Isaiah’s prophecy in his thinking and witnessed the return of Gentiles to the Jewish God during the time of his mission.

narrative trajectory. Paul asserts that the divine will of God can be discovered through the prophets. For instance, Paul emphasizes that the gospel of God was foretold by the prophets of God in the holy Scriptures (Rom 1:1-2). Paul states that the divine will of God, as witnessed by the law and the prophets on the one hand (Rom 3:21), is carried out through faith in Christ on the other (Rom 3:22). In this way, the law and the prophets reveal the divine will of God, which points forward to Christ. Paul’s remarks in Romans illustrate, thirdly, that God’s will was carried out through the promise made to Abraham, which points forward to Christ. Paul argues that Abraham was acknowledged as righteous before God not as a result of his works but rather as a result of his faith in God (Rom 4:5). Paul does this by comparing the two different ways to be credited as righteous before God (Rom 4:2-4). Paul emphasizes once more, by placing the phrase οὐ γὰρ διὰ νόμου in an emphatic position, that the promise provided to Abraham or to his seed is not via the law, but rather through the righteousness of faith (Rom 4:13). Paul then underlines that Abraham was credited with righteousness before God when he was uncircumcised (Rom 4:9-10), so that he might be the father of both circumcised and uncircumcised (Rom 4:11-12). Paul then establishes a connection between Abraham and ἡμᾶς by stating that ἐλογίσθη αὐτῶι is written not just for Abraham but also for “us” (Rom 4:23-24). Paul asserts that the acknowledgement of Abraham’s righteousness before God is likewise extended to those who believe in the one who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 4:24). For Paul, Abraham was recognized as righteous before God because of his faith in God, who gave Isaac from Sarah’s “dead” womb. Christ believers are recognized as righteous before God due to their faith in the God who raised Jesus from the dead. Paul
recognizes that Jesus was crucified because of our sins and resurrected because of our righteousness (Rom 4:25). Therefore, the Christ event is the decisive cause that provokes Paul to rethink and realize that the trajectory of God’s purpose is fulfilled by faith in the God who raised Isaac in Abraham’s account, which points forward to the God who raised Jesus from the dead, in whom believers in the Christ place their faith.

In contrast, Paul’s words in Romans show an alternative narrative in human trajectory in light of the Christ event. Paul recognizes, as a result of the Christ event, that there is another narrative in human history concerning the power of sin and death emanating from Adam that predates Moses (Rom 5:12, 14). While Paul believes that the law is holy and the commandment is holy, righteous, and good (Rom 7:12), and the law teaches people what sin is (Rom 7:7), nevertheless, the law is manipulated by the power of sin (Rom 7:8, 11), which does not bestow life to enable people to keep the law and brings about death (Rom 7:5, 9-11, cf. Gal 3:21). Paul regretfully confesses that the law provokes wrath (Rom 4:15), so emphasizing that the promise provided to Abraham is not fulfilled by the law but by faith (Rom 4:13). Therefore, the law’s narrative in human trajectory, which is distinct from Abraham’s narrative, existed before Christ.  

Hence, in Romans, Paul’s Christological understanding takes two distinct and separate narratives.

---

132 Concerning the narrative of the law, Witherington and Hyatt argue that “Nowhere in Romans does Paul spend much time on the story of Moses. This is largely true of his other letters as well (except in 2 Cor. 3:7–18). Paul believes that the story of Moses and those involved in the Mosaic covenant is not the generative narrative for Christians, whether Jew or Gentile. The Adam story, the Abraham story, and the Christ story are generative narratives for Christians, stories with lasting impact on their lives. Paul sees the story of Moses, like the Mosaic covenant and the Mosaic Law, as pro tempore. It was meant to guide God’s people between the time of Moses and Christ. But once the eschatological age dawned through the Christ-event, the Moses story could no longer be the controlling narrative of God’s people, precisely because now is the era of the new covenant,” see Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 144.

133 These two trajectories will be elaborated in the next part about continuity and discontinuity.
4.3.3 Paul’s Narrative Logic: Continuity or Discontinuity?

For Fredriksen, given the fact that Paul’s theological thought is derived from the authoritative Jewish texts and Israelite tradition, and his view on Jewish history develops and culminates prospectively until Christ, Fredriksen emphasizes that Paul’s epistemology is in continuity with Judaism. According to Fredriksen, the ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology has a prominent role which governs Paul’s thought. Fredriksen contends that “But behind that argument, indeed framing Paul’s whole enterprise (as his letter to the Romans in particular shows us), was the eschatological vision of the prophets, especially of Isaiah: at the End of the Age, the nations, too, would worship Israel’s god alone.”

Driven by apocalyptic eschatology, Paul thinks that the end is very near, in his lifetime. Fredriksen argues “Paul’s apocalyptic eschatology is trained on the near future; this present inbreaking of the spirit serves simply to confirm the nearness (in his own lifetime) of the coming cosmic fulfillment.” Governed by Isaiah’s prophecy in his thought and seeing the turning of Gentiles to the Jewish God during his mission, Paul recognizes that his mission is the fulfillment of the prophecy of Isaiah. In this sense, concerning Paul’s epistemology, Fredriksen stresses the continuity between the prophets and Paul’s theological thought. Continuity with Judaism constitutes a fundamental ground to understanding Paul’s theological

---

Fredriksen, Paul, 164.
Fredriksen, Paul, 165 n 81.
Fredriksen, Paul, 164. See also Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 17-18.
For example, Fredriksen argues that “Instead, echoing Isaiah, Paul presents redeemed humanity in two ethnically distinct families – Israel “according to the flesh” (kata sarka), Paul’s kinsmen, and ta ethne, everybody else, all the other nations,” see Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 46.
Despite the fact that the Christ event is continuous with the narrative of Abraham in divine trajectory, I will argue that the narrative of the law in human trajectory is discontinuous with the Christ event. Concerning divine trajectory, as mentioned, Paul considers the narrative of Abraham to be continuous with the narrative of Christ because his statements in Romans demonstrate that the divine will of God was carried out through the narrative of Abraham, which points to Christ. Also, Paul maintains that the divine will of God can be traced through the prophets (Rom 1:1-2). Paul asserts that the divine will of God, as witnessed in the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21), is accomplished through faith in Christ (Rom 3:22). In this manner, the law and the prophets reveal God’s divine will, which points to Christ. In this way, the divine will of God can be traced from the narratives of Christ and Abraham, as witnessed by the law and the prophets, because, according to Paul, they are in continuous relation.

138 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, 17. Although Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston point out that “Accordingly, continuity with Judaism forms a structural foundation for this paradigm. This does not mean that these scholars see Judaism as monolithic or that Paul never disagrees with Jewish forms of thinking; indeed, foundational theological pillars of Judaism (e.g., monotheism, election, eschatology, to borrow Wright’s threefold structure) are transformed or “re-imagined” in the light of Christ and the Spirit. Nevertheless, Paul sees Christ as the “climax” of a distinctly Jewish narrative, and everything inaugurated in Christ is the goal or culmination of Israel’s history,” see Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, *Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination*, 17. However, Fredriksen has a unique perspective on Christ. Briefly, Fredriksen distinguishes the status of Christ between the first and second advents and contends that Christ is End-time Davidic warrior, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 133-141. While Jews are still in a covenantal relationship with God, Christ opens the door for the salvation of Gentiles along with Israel, according to Fredriksen. For more discussion on Paul’s Christology, see Matthew V. Novenson, “The Jewish Messiahs, the Pauline Christ, and the Gentile Question,” *Journal of Biblical literature* 128, no. 2 (2009): 357-373; Matthew V. Novenson, *Christ Among the Messiahs: Christ Language in Paul and Messiah Language in Ancient Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). This project, however, concentrates on Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews rather than his Christology according to Paul’s thought.

The story of Christ, however, departs from the story of the law in terms of human trajectory. It is crucial to note that, according to Paul, it is not the law itself, which has a divine origin and is sacred, that causes discontinuity; rather, it is the power of sin, which dictates the law, binds humanity, and renders them incapable of observing the law. In other words, on a human level, humanity is unable to obey the law and carry out God’s will due to the power of sin.

First, Paul acknowledges that the power of sin and death originating from Adam existed before Moses (Rom 5:12, 14). Second, Paul recognizes that no one is justified before God by the law (Rom 3:20) and that everyone, Jews and Gentiles alike, are under the dominion of sin (Rom 1:18-32). Thirdly, even while Paul asserts that the law is righteous, good, and holy (Rom. 7:12), and that it instructs people on what sin is (Rom 7:7), the law is perverted by the power of sin (Rom 7:8, 11), which does not grant life to enable people to keep the law but rather causes death (Rom 7:5, 9-11, cf. Gal 3:21). In this way, Paul identifies the universal human plight by rereading human history (including Jewish history), in the perspective of the Christ event (Rom 1:18-32, cf. Gal 3:22). The divine will of God does not culminate and reach a climax in human history (including Jewish history) due to the power of sin, which renders human beings incapable of upholding the law and fulfilling it.

Paul’s wording in Romans reveals that the Christ event is the decisive factor that breaks into human history and ushers in a new eschatological age. Within the framework of the divine and human realms, God’s act of salvation in Christ invades

140 Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination, 10.
human history to save his followers, his activity continues, and his lordship over the world is established.\textsuperscript{141} The old era was ruled by sin and death (e.g. Rom 3:9, 23; 5:12; 21; 6:23), whereas the new age is ruled by life and the Spirit (e.g. Rom 5:21, 6:23, 8:2).\textsuperscript{142} From a human standpoint, the Christ event invades the human world, causing a discontinuity with the previous human situation and opening the door to salvation for Christ believers.\textsuperscript{143} Paul considers God’s benevolent act in Christ to be not just an event that overthrows the power of sin in the old age, but also the reversal of humanity’s predicament under the regime of sin (Rom 5:15-17).\textsuperscript{144} The Christ event functions as a reversal and “the historical turning point from sin and death to righteousness and life (3:21–26; 5:12–21), so that whatever may be said about God’s grace in the past cannot be compared in its effect to the grace-event in Christ.”\textsuperscript{145}

Therefore, Paul’s discourse shows that the Christ event is a reversal of the previous human condition. In other words, the Christ event is not a development derived from the culmination of covenant promises that were previously given to Israel.\textsuperscript{146} In this sense, Paul’s narrative logic in Romans is in line with his logic in Galatians, 1 Corinthians and 2 Corinthians, the Christ event is an interruption to, not progress from, human history which inaugurated an eschatological era overturning the previous human plight.\textsuperscript{147} Käsemann rightly points out the discontinuity between the two ages,

\textsuperscript{142} Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, \textit{Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination}, 10.
\textsuperscript{143} Blackwell, Goodrich and Maston, \textit{Paul and the Apocalyptic Imagination}, 11.
\textsuperscript{144} Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 496.
\textsuperscript{147} Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 412. Since Galatians, it cannot be presumed that Paul’s theological understanding has remained unchanged. Nonetheless, if this finding is accurate, Paul’s epistemology in Romans appears to be consistent with that of Galatians, 1 Corinthians, and 2 Corinthians.
[T]he apostle does not understand history as a continuous evolutionary process but as the contrast of the two realms of Adam and Christ. Pauline theology unfolds this contrast extensively as the struggle between death and life, sin and salvation, law and gospel. The basis is the apocalyptic scheme of the two successive aeons which is transferred to the present. Apparently Paul viewed his own time as the hour of the Messiah’s birthpangs, in which the new creation emerges from the old world through the Christian proclamation. Spirits, powers and dominions part eschatologically at the crossroads of the gospel.  

In conclusion, Paul’s narrative logic of the Christ event displays his way of thinking within the framework of the divine and human realms. Paul’s statements in Romans reveal that the decisive source of his soteriology is the Christ event, through which Paul rereads and employs the Hebrew Bible. In divine trajectory, Christ’s story is continuous with Abraham’s, while in human trajectory, Christ’s story is discontinuous with the story of the law. The Christ event is a reversal of the previous human condition. God’s benevolent act in Christ functions as a meta-narrative to reshape Paul’s thinking so that he views human history retroactively in a completely different way. Paul’s theological reasoning therefore proceeds from the solution (Christ) to the problem (humanity).  

---

150 Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, 103. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 474 n 62: Barclay contends that “Despite the surface impression that Paul’s reasoning in Romans 1–3 runs from plight to solution, there are several indications even here that his analysis of the plight in such terms arises from the good news itself: the wrath of 1:18ff. is revealed in the wake of the revelation of the good news (the γάρ of 1:18 pointing backwards); the character of the final judgment is known from this same good news (2:16); and the “faithlessness” of Jews (3:3) is recognized fully in their reaction to its preaching (cf. 10:19–11:10).” For the survey of narrative theology, see B. W. Longenecker, “Narrative Interest in the Study of Paul: Retrospective and Prospective,” in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 3-16. This model is different
4.4 **Conclusion**

This chapter has investigated Paul’s discourse in Romans to demonstrate that Paul’s explicit audience in Romans includes not only Gentiles, but also Jews. Paul’s expressions indicate that his notion of sin is not only directed to Gentiles, but humanity which includes both Jews and non-Jews. Paul’s theological understanding is derived from and governed by the Christ event by which Paul rereads Hebrew Bible and realizes what the solution is to the human plight. The next chapter continues to dialogue with Paul within Judaism school scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen, Nanos to analyze Paul’s salvation mechanism *vis-à-vis* Jews and non-Jews in Romans.

____________________

5Chapter 4: Romans (2)

In the previous chapter I argue that Paul’s soteriology is derived from the Christ event, his notion of sin is universal and his explicit audience in Romans includes Jews and non-Jews. However, there still remains a question that requires resolution. Namely, whether Paul understands that salvation through Christ applies to Jews and Gentiles in the same way or not? Through dialoguing with the Paul within Judaism scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, this chapter examines Paul’s language in Romans and argues that Christ has become the ultimate authority for Paul, and also for Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers. In particular it will be argued, from Paul’s perspective that through the Christ event, for Christ believers, circumcision has been relativized. Moreover, that even though they are enabled to live out the requirements of the law by the Spirit, the law has nothing to do with being considered righteous before God. One of Paul’s key hermeneutic moves is his appeal to the figure of Abraham in Rom 4. In that context, Abraham functions as the prototype for faith in God for all Christ believers. Given this, Paul acknowledges that salvation for Jews and non-Jews following the Christ event is understood to arise only through faith in Christ up until the second coming of Christ, without regard for ethnic distinctions.

5.1 The Ultimate Authority

This section will contend that Christ, not the law, is the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers. Regarding the salvation mechanism, Paul’s
expressions demonstrate that Christ has redefined the route for being counted as righteous before God. With Christ and the indwelling Spirit, all Christ believers are enabled to live out the law.

5.1.1 The Role of Torah

Concerning the role of Torah for Jewish Christ believers, the Paul within Judaism school argues that the law still functions as the ultimate authority. For Jews, Fredriksen emphasizes that “…for Israel the Law, God-given, was a defining privilege.”¹ Also, Fredriksen highlights the possibility of attaining the righteousness of God by the observance of the law. She contends that “Attaining righteousness through the Law is a genuine possibility, one that Paul thinks he himself had “blamelessly” realized (Phil 3.6); presumably, the rest of Israel may have done so too.”²

For Jewish Christ believers, Fredriksen points out the significant role of the law and argues that they continue to uphold and observe the Torah.³ Also, in the view of Thiessen, the role of the Torah is prominent for Jews. Thiessen argues that “…Jews should keep the laws that God gave to them, while Gentiles should be satisfied with the laws that God has laid upon them, not coveting those laws that God has given to Jews alone.”⁴ For Jewish Christ followers, Nanos argues that,

Those traditional ways of approaching Paul as well as Romans are easily challenged. I

² Fredriksen, *Paul*, 160 n 71.
³ Fredriksen, *Paul*, 166 n 84. Please refer to the quotation from the thesis that I cited on pages 52-53.
propose that Paul and his communities—including the community he did not found but wrote to in Rome—were subgroups of the Jewish communities that believed Jesus represented the dawning of the awaited age. The Jews in these subgroups, Paul included, observed the covenantal obligations of Torah, for they were Jews involved in a fully Jewish movement. They argued that the awaited-age gift of the Holy Spirit now enabled them to practice their commitment to the God of Israel according to the highest ideals of Torah.5

In this sense, according to the scheme of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, after the Christ event the law still functions as the ultimate authority for Jewish Christ believers by which they remain in a covenantal relationship with God.

Meanwhile, for Gentile Christ believers, the law also functions as the ultimate authority according to the Paul within Judaism school scholars. Fredriksen emphasizes that “Paul the apostle continued to be Law-observant during his missions to pagans.”6 Fredriksen argues that “…his [Paul’s] own gospel demanded that gentiles-in-Christ assume Jewish practices and principles—but to Judaizing in any way other than in his way.”7 Fredriksen also contends that without Christ and the indwelling spirit, Gentiles are not able to observe the law and it leads them into a worse situation as they are constrained by the flesh.8 For Paul’s Gentile converts, according to Fredriksen, the framework of the ten commandments functions as a Jewish constitution which governs Paul’s gospel preaching to the pagans.9 In this sense, by observing the law Paul’s Gentile converts have to live out the standards of

5 Mark D. Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2018), 4-5.
6 Fredriksen, Paul, 165 n 83.
7 Fredriksen, Paul, 157.
8 Fredriksen, Paul, 158. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 124.
9 Fredriksen, Paul, 118.
the Jewish community.¹⁰ For Gentile Christ followers, Nanos contends that,

The non-Jews who joined them did not become Jews and were thus not under the Mosaic legislation (Torah) on the same terms as Jews; however, they were committed to lives of righteousness defined in Jewish communal terms and thus by Torah, for they met in Jewish groups—and thus according to the Jewish norms for these groups—and were enabled by the same Spirit of God.¹¹

To sum up, according to RPP scholars, for Jewish Christ believers, the Torah functions as the ultimate authority for Paul’s Gentile converts.

5.1.2 Christ or Torah?

Regarding the role of the Torah, however, I contend that according to Paul’s theological thinking, the Torah is subordinate to Christ in the letter of Romans. As a result of the Christ event, the law is no longer the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile believers in Christ. Since Paul, Jewish Christ believers, and Gentile Christ believers are all subject to Christ’s ultimate authority, I contend that the means of attaining God’s righteousness has been changed. After the Christ event, Paul’s theological comprehension has become dominated by Christ.

While Paul emphasizes upholding the law (Rom 3:31) and says that the law is good in and of itself (Rom 7:12), his expressions in Romans show that believers in Christ are enabled and transformed to live out the law because of the Christ event, and

---

¹⁰ Fredriksen, Paul, 111-112. See also Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 44.
their ultimate allegiance is to Christ rather than the Torah. For Paul that empowerment to meet the previously unattainable divine requirements is made possible through the indwelling presence of the Spirit. In this way, Paul’s pneumatology or understanding of the Spirit as divine enablement is key to his whole theological understanding.

5.1.2.1 Ultimate Authority for All Christ Believers: Christ

At first, I concur with Fredriksen that the meaning of τέλος in Rom 10:4 is goal. The term τέλος could indicate termination (or end), or both termination and goal; however, the running imagery in Rom 9:30-33 supports the interpretation of goal. Contextually, the running imagery suggests that Paul’s use of τέλος refers to the purpose of a race (Rom 10:4). Concerning the connotation of νόμος in Rom 10:4, the term appears in Rom 9:31 and 10:5. It is clear that the two appearances of νόμος in Rom 9:31 mean Torah and also there is no logical or thematic change for Paul to point to anything else in Rom 10:4. Meanwhile, the term νόμος in the clause

---

12 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 160 n 71.
Mωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ τοῦ νόμου clearly means Torah (Rom 10:5). Therefore, it is agreed with Fredriksen that the meaning of νόμου in Rom 10:4 is the Mosaic Law.\textsuperscript{17}

In this sense, Paul, as a Jew, points out that the goal of the law is Christ for righteousness to all who believe, both Jews and Gentiles (Rom 10:4).\textsuperscript{18} Paul’s use of the present participle παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι indicates that Christ followers can place their faith in Christ in light of the Christ event; they do not need to wait until the second coming of Christ to attain God’s righteousness.\textsuperscript{19} Paul’s logic suggests that if Christ is the goal of the law, then the law is subordinate to Christ. This indicates that Christ is the end objective, and the law is the means that leads to Christ.\textsuperscript{20}

In this respect, Christ’s authority has superseded and supplanted the supreme authority of the law.\textsuperscript{21} While the law has not been abolished, its function has been subordinated to Christ from the perspective of the power structure.\textsuperscript{22} In other words, the law’s authority has been diminished in relation to Christ. Also, it implies that

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[17] Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 86-87, 160. The meaning of νόμος depends on context not whether it has the article or not, see Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 297.
\item[18] This is my own translation of Rom 10:4. Since Paul’s explicit audience in Romans includes both Jews and Gentiles, as argued, it is unlikely that Paul’s phrase παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι in Rom 10:4 refers only to Gentile Christ believers, but will also include Jewish Christ believers. With the view of goal, Jewett argues that “This is consistent with the phrase εἰς δικαιοσύνη (“toward, as a means to righteousness”), which has a directional sense that explains how Christ is the goal of the law,” see Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 619-620. Cranfield also contends that “what Israel had failed to recognize was that Christ had been all along the goal, the meaning, the substance, of that law which they had been so earnestly pursuing,” see Cranfield, \textit{A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans}, 505. In this sense, there is an interesting reversal as Gentiles identify Christ without the law while zealous Jews miss the goal of the law (Rom 9:30-31).
\item[19] From Paul’s expression there is no indication signifying the notion of the second advent of Christ in Rom 10:4. This is in contrast with the view of Fredriksen, see Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 166.
\item[20] Please refer to the section entitled Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event in the chapter analyzing Romans for further discussion on the narratives of the law and Christ.
\item[21] This thought seems to be in line with Gal 3:24-25.
\item[22] The continuous role of the law after the Christ event will be explored later.
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
Christ has in some way redefined the law.\textsuperscript{23} In addition, Paul’s expressions demonstrate that followers of Christ are not under the law (Rom 6:14),\textsuperscript{24} and that they have died to the law (Rom 7:4, 6).\textsuperscript{25} This is because, according to Paul, the era of Christ’s reign has arrived for all believers, both Jewish and Gentile (Rom 10:1, 12).\textsuperscript{26}

If the claim of RPP scholars that the Torah still functions as the ultimate authority for Jewish and Gentile Christ believers after the Christ event is accurate, then the following question must be asked: in what sense does Paul say that they had died to the law (Rom 7:1, 4) and were not under the law (Rom 6:14)? Paul’s language indicates, on the contrary, that he positions Jewish and Gentile Christ believers in the Christ event, in which Christ has become their final authority by distancing them from the law. This indicates that the era of the reign of the law has been relativized, and the Torah is no longer the supreme authority for Jewish and Gentile Christ followers.\textsuperscript{27} With the ultimate authority of Christ, Paul acknowledges that his explicit audience is κλητοὶ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Rom 1:6). Christ is the ultimate authority that governs their life orientation.

\textsuperscript{23} For more discussion, please refer to the section Paul’s Ultimate Authority: Christ in the chapter analyzing Galatians.
\textsuperscript{24} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 413; Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 164.
\textsuperscript{25} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 441; Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 176.
\textsuperscript{26} As argued, since Paul’s explicit audience in Romans involves Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, Paul language of ἀδελφοί pertains to Gentile and Jewish Christ believers in Rom 10:1. On this point, Jewett also argues that ‘In Christ “righteousness” is granted not just to a particular in-group, not just to those whose zeal for the law is aggressively advanced, but simply to “all who believe” in the gospel. In view of the fact that this “all” has repeatedly been shown by Paul to transcend ethnic boundaries between Greeks and Jews and barbarians, nothing less than the pacification and unification of the entire world is entailed in this verse,’ see Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 620.
\textsuperscript{27} Stephen Westerholm, “Paul’s Anthropological ‘Pessimism’ in Its Jewish Context,” in \textit{Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment}, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 98; Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 660. For the meaning of “we uphold the law” in Rom 3:31, it will be discussed later.
5.1.2.2 Redefine the Value System

Paul not only emphasizes the supreme authority of Christ for Jewish and Gentile Christ followers, but also outlines the new path to God’s righteousness. First, Paul does not believe that God’s righteousness can be attained through the value system defined by the Torah, namely the observance of the law. From the perspective of Torah, Paul emphasizes that believers are justified not by hearing the law, but by doing the law (Rom 2:15, cf. Rom 10:5). According to Paul’s thought, the law itself is good and holy (Rom 7:12), however, Torah does not impart life to people to be able to observe the law and to overcome the power of sin (Rom 7:5, cf. Gal 3:21-22), and the knowledge of sin comes through it (Rom 7:7). Paul makes it clear that no one is justified by the works of the law (Rom 3:20), even though the observance of the law is one way to attain righteousness.

Since Jewish and Gentile Christ believers are no longer under the authority of the law, they are also no longer under the Torah-defined value system for attaining the righteousness of God. In other words, even if Jewish and Gentile Christ believers live out the law (cf. Rom 3:31), they are not justified before God because Torah observance has nothing to do with justification according to Paul’s theological

---

28 Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 82.
29 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 453; Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 259.
30 Jewett, Romans, 266-267; I adopt the view that “the works of the law” means the law in general, see Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 96; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 567; Simon J. Gathercole, “Justification by Faith,” in The Oxford Handbook of Pauline Studies, ed. Matthew V. Novenson and R. Barry Matlock (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 433. Since the law does not impart life for people to observe the law, and since, as argued, Paul, Jews and non-Jews are under the power of sin, none of them can meet the standard of God through the works of the law, see Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 659. Paul’s notion here is in contrast with Fredriksen’s view because she argues that ‘Attaining righteousness through the Law is a genuine possibility, one that Paul thinks he himself had “blamelessly” realized (Phil 3.6); presumably, the rest of Israel may have done so too. But Israel did not “arrive at Law” (cf. the RSV’s “succeed in fulfilling that law”), since the Law’s goal is Christ, for righteousness (Rom 10.4),’ see Fredriksen, Paul, 160 n 71.
understanding (Rom 3:20). In this sense, Christ not only supplants the supreme authority of the law, but also alters the manner in which one is considered righteous before God.

On the other hand, since Jewish and Gentile Christ followers are subject to Christ’s authority, they are also subject to the value system defined by Christ. This indicates that they are recognized as righteous before God as a result of Christ. Paul’s expression clearly demonstrates that the goal of the law is Christ for righteousness to all who believe (Rom 10:4). In this sense, the righteousness is to all who put their confidence in Christ rather than to those who observe the law.

Paul argues that there is a different way to obtain God’s righteousness and that it is accomplished via faith in Christ. Instead of being a requirement for obtaining righteousness, faith denotes the acceptance of human weakness by placing one’s confidence in Christ. Paul also asserts unequivocally that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (Rom 10:12), and he insists that everyone who believes will not be put to shame (Rom 10:11).

As a result, to be considered as righteous before God does not depend on the Torah-defined value system, but rather on God’s beneficent act in Christ, in which righteousness is counted regardless of any human conditions. In other words, even

31 Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 541. Barclay also contends that ‘Jewish believers are by no means prohibited from observing the Torah, but even for them its authority is subordinate to “the truth of the good news.”’ They are required to acknowledge that it is not the common cultural framework of believers, and thus not to be imposed on Gentile converts,’ see Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 567.
32 Fredriksen seems to overlook Paul’s language here as Paul explicitly writes that the righteousness is to all who have faith in Christ. From the perspective of ethnicity, as argued, since Paul’s explicit audience in Romans involves Jews and Gentiles, it is improbable that Paul’s phrase πάντι τῷ πιστεύοντι in Rom 10:4 pertains to Gentile Christ believers only, but also Jewish Christ believers.
if they are able to observe the law, believers in Christ are not regarded as righteous before God according to the Torah-defined value system (Rom 3:31). What counts as righteousness before God is faith in Christ - total dependence on Christ. In this sense, Christ has redefined the means of the recognition of righteousness before God.

5.1.2.3 Fulfillment of the Law

Paul asserts that despite the fact that Christ has superseded the authority of the law (Rom 10:4) and that the observance of the law has nothing to do with justification (Rom 3:20), the law continues to play a role after the Christ event (Rom 3:31). It is clear that Paul is not an anti-nomist because of his positive statement on the law. His view is that the law itself is good, righteous and holy (Rom 7:12). Paul also emphasizes that through faith νόμον ἵστανομεν (Rom 3:31). Moreover, Paul’s expressions in Romans demonstrate that the Spirit’s outpouring of love motivated Christ followers to fulfil the Torah (Rom 3:31, 5:5, 8:4, 13:8, 10). Paul also indicates that Gentile Christ followers are able to observe the law (Rom 2:14-16).

In this sense, even though believers in Christ are no longer subject to the law and the law has nothing to do with justification before God (Rom 3:20), they are enabled to observe the law through Christ and the indwelling Spirit (Rom 8:4, cf. Rom 3:31).

---

36 Comparing with Galatians, Paul’s expression demonstrates that after the Christ event the continuous role of the law is clearer (Rom 3:31, cf. Gal 6:2).
Though Christ believers are enabled to live out the law, their ultimate allegiance is Christ rather than the Torah as the era of the law has been superseded by Christ (Rom 10:4).  

5.1.3 Ultimate Authority for Paul: Torah

According to Fredriksen, the Torah is the ultimate authority for Paul, an apostle to the pagans, and his mission among the Gentiles. In order for pagans to obey the law, they must be empowered by Christ (Rom 7:25) and the indwelling spirit (Rom 8:1-11) through Paul’s non-Law-Free gospel.  

On the one hand, Fredriksen argues that Paul is lawfully blameless based on her understanding of Phil 3:6.  

Fredriksen, on the other hand, contends that by adhering to Jewish tradition, “Paul the apostle continued to be Law-observant during his missions to pagans”; this view differs from the Old Perspective, the New Perspective on Paul, and the Sonderweg scholars.  

According to Fredriksen, the law therefore plays an essential function for Paul. Fredriksen emphasizes that Paul continues to demonstrate his allegiance to the Torah and his Jewishness in light of ‘apocalyptic’ eschatology. Fredriksen, having argued for Paul’s allegiance to the Torah, refutes the traditional interpretation of Paul,

---

40 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 566. Concerning the role of Torah, this is in contrast with Fredriksen’s view, see Fredriksen, Paul, 86-87.
41 Fredriksen, Paul, 124. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 163.
42 Fredriksen, Paul, 124.
43 Fredriksen, Paul, 165 n 83. For this view, see the articles in Mark D. Nanos and Magnus Zetterholm, Paul within Judaism Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle (Lanham: Fortress Press, 2015); Gabriele Boccaccini, Carlos A. Segovia, and Cameron J. Doody, Paul the Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016); Rafael Rodríguez and Matthew Thiessen, eds., The So-Called Jew in Paul’s Letter to the Romans (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016). Sonderweg and Two Covenants are synonyms which mean Gentiles are saved through Christ while Jews are saved by staying as Jews and by observing the Mosaic Law, see John G. Gager, The Origins of Anti-Semitism: Attitudes Toward Judaism in Pagan and Christian Antiquity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), 263-264.
according to which Paul contends that grace trumps ethnicity, and argues that Paul
upholds the ethnic distinction between Jews and non-Jews.\footnote{Fredriksen, \emph{Paul}, 109-110.}

Regarding the authority of the Torah over Paul, Fredriksen disagrees with the
\textit{Sonderweg} proponents. Fredriksen disagrees with Two Covenants scholars like
Gaston, Gager, and Stowers who contend that Paul himself ceased observing the law
Paul continues to uphold the law and that his mission to the Gentiles is not a “Law-
Free” mission.\footnote{Fredriksen, \emph{Paul}, 110.}

According to Fredriksen, from a historical perspective, the concept of “Law-
Free” gospel is imposed upon the first century by the fourth century; therefore, Paul’s
“Law-Free” gospel is a misreading of Paul.\footnote{Fredriksen, \emph{Paul}, 110.} Furthermore, Fredriksen notes that
Paul’s language regarding the law has a double-sided character.\footnote{Fredriksen, \emph{Paul}, 165.} Paul’s positive and
negative evaluations of the law depend on whether he is speaking to Jews or non-
Jews.\footnote{Fredriksen, \emph{Paul}, 108.} In this way, Fredriksen refutes the assumptions of a number of scholars and
contends that Paul continues to uphold the Torah as the supreme authority and
observes the law even as the apostle to the pagans. In essence, Paul’s mission among
the Gentiles is not a “Law-Free” mission.

In the same direction, Thiessen also argues for Paul’s continuous allegiance to
the Torah based on 1 Cor 7:19.\textsuperscript{50} Similarly, Nanos argues that Paul’s allegiance to the Torah never changed. Nanos argues that “after his Damascus Road experience, Paul remains committed to Jewish communal behavior as enjoined in the Mosaic covenant. He keeps Torah fully as a matter of fidelity, that is, as an expression of faithfulness, since he is a Jew.”\textsuperscript{51} To sum up, the argument of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos is that Paul is not a “Law-Free” apostle and his mission is not a “Law-Free” mission. The Paul within Judaism school scholars oppose the claim that Paul himself has ceased to observe the law. On the contrary, Paul is still upholding the law and it continues to function as his ultimate authority in his Gentile mission.

5.1.4 Ultimate Authority for Paul: Christ

However, Paul’s language in Romans demonstrates that the ultimate authority of Christ is not only applicable to Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, but also to Paul himself. Paul’s phrases such as παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι (Rom 10:4), οὗ γὰρ ἐστιν διαστολὴ Ἰουδαίου τε καὶ Ἑλλήνους, ὁ γὰρ αὐτὸς κύριος πάντων (Rom 10:12), his recognition that God did not reject him (Rom 11:1), all of these expressions signify that he himself is also under the authority of Christ.\textsuperscript{52} Also, Paul’s usage of ‘we’ denotes that through Christ he and his explicit audience are under grace which is derived from the Christ event (Rom 5:2, 5:15-16).\textsuperscript{53} This is in line with the situation

\textsuperscript{50} Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 9. Please refer to the quotation from the thesis that I cited on page 42.
\textsuperscript{51} Nanos, “A Jewish View,” 166–167.
\textsuperscript{52} As argued, the centerpiece of Paul’s theological thought is started and derived from the Christ event.
\textsuperscript{53} Started from Rom 4:24, with the phrase τοῖς πιστεύουσιν ἐπὶ τὸν ἐγείραντα Ἰησούν τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν, Paul’s expression of ‘we’ clearly signifies those who believe includes Paul and his explicit audience. Even if here Paul’s usage of “we” does not pertain to Paul and his explicit audience, at least it is clear that Paul’s usage of “we” does include Paul himself. On the other hand, ἡ χαρίς refers to
of Paul’s explicit audience as they are also no longer under the law, but grace (Rom 6:14). In this sense, like Paul’s explicit audience, Paul self-identifies as being under the authority of Christ, not the law.

Paul’s statements that Christ followers are not under the law (Rom 6:14) and that they died to the law (Rom 7:4, 6) are difficult to comprehend if he still believes that the Torah is the ultimate authority and that his mission is to bring his converts under the Torah. Paul’s expression reflects his theological understanding that Christ, not the Torah, is the ultimate authority for him and his explicit audience. While Paul explicitly states that the law itself is sacred, that the commandment is holy, righteous, and good (Rom 7:12), and that he upholds the law (Rom 3:31), Christ, not the law, is the most important element for him (Rom 10:4). In other words, he believes that the law’s authority has been relativized and that the Torah is subordinate to Christ.

As a result, he did not refer to himself as Moses’ servant, but δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ (Rom 1:1), and the gospel he proclaimed was not the law of Moses, but τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ (Rom 15:19, cf. Rom 1:9). Regarding the function of the law, Paul’s theological understanding is oversimplified by the dichotomy that the law should either be abolished or upheld as the ultimate authority. Instead the subordination model of the law to Christ is more in line with Paul’s expressions in Romans (e.g. Rom 10:4, 3:31). In this sense, Paul “can observe the Torah for Christ, or disregard the Torah for Christ, depending on the higher demands of ‘the good news.’”

54 In the view of Paul, Christ has relativized the ultimate authority of the law

God’s beneficial act in Christ which is given to humanity without regard to their worth, see Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 495.

54 John M. G. Barclay, “Gift Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” in Perspectives on Paul: Five
and placed it under his authority. According to Paul’s theological understanding, the ultimate authority of Christ applies to Paul as well as Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

5.2 Circumcision and Uncircumcision

It will be contended in this section that Christ, not circumcision or uncircumcision, has been established as the supreme authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers, and Gentile Christ believers. There is no evidence in Romans to suggest that Paul believed in an effective eighth day circumcision. On the contrary, Paul’s expressions demonstrate that the value of circumcision has been relativized by the figure of Abraham.

5.2.1 Effective Circumcision

Concerning Paul’s theological thought on circumcision and uncircumcision in Romans, according to Fredriksen, the role of the eighth day covenantal circumcision is prominent in the formation of Jewish ethnicity. Fredriksen argues the legitimacy and effectiveness of the eighth day covenantal circumcision for Jews and Jewish Christ followers because it incorporates them into a covenantal relationship with the Jewish God and enables them to observe the law.55 Within the framework of ethnic differentiation, the eighth day circumcision of the flesh keeps Jewish Christ believers at a distance from Gentile Christ believers as it binds Jewish Christ followers within

---

55 Fredriksen, *Paul*, 129.
the covenantal relationship and reinforces their heart circumcision which Gentile Christ believers do not have.\textsuperscript{56}

For Paul himself, Fredriksen argues that “…Paul boasts of his having been circumcised as an eight-day-old himself (Phil 3.5). Jewish circumcision, therefore, mattered very much to Paul, and [he believed] to Israel and to Israel’s god.”\textsuperscript{57} In addition, in the view of Fredriksen, Jewish circumcision is of great value for Jews and it is the privilege for Israel (Rom 3:1-2, 9:4-5, 11:29, 15:8).\textsuperscript{58} Therefore, for Paul and Jewish Christ believers, Fredriksen emphasizes that they are already in a covenantal relationship. They are still worshipping the Jewish God, reading Jewish Scriptures, and awaiting the Kingdom of God until the second coming of Christ that involves Israel’s salvation with non-Jews.\textsuperscript{59} In conclusion, the eighth day covenantal circumcision is the key for Paul and Jewish Christ believers to be able to observe the law by which they remain in a covenantal relationship with the Jewish God until the second coming of Christ.

5.2.2 Ineffective Circumcision

For Gentile Christ believers, circumcision is illegitimate and ineffective according to Fredriksen. The rationale behind Paul’s rejection of their circumcision is as follows. The effectiveness of the eighth day covenantal circumcision is not applicable for Gentile proselytes as none of them are circumcised on the eighth day.\textsuperscript{60}

\textsuperscript{56} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 114.
\textsuperscript{57} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 107.
\textsuperscript{58} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 107.
\textsuperscript{59} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 113.
\textsuperscript{60} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 129. According to Thiessen, imposing the circumcision on the Gentile Christ believers is not appropriate for them, see Thiessen, \textit{Paul and the Gentile Problem}, 101.
Fredriksen argues that ‘the Judaizing gentile—clearly older than eight days—who subjects himself to circumcision accordingly transgresses the “law of circumcision” even as he tries to honor it, precisely because he is more than eight days old: for him, then, circumcision counts as uncircumcision.’ As Gentile proselytes were not circumcised on the eighth day, their circumcision is not legitimate and it cannot bring them into covenantal relationship with the Jewish God. Therefore, they are not able to observe the law and become Jews ethnically.

In the view of Fredriksen, in Rom 2:28-29 Paul was addressing a Judaizing Gentile and he was talking about the ineffectiveness of proselyte circumcision, and Fredriksen further argues that external and fleshly circumcision does not redefine Jewishness in Paul’s thought. Paul’s rationale concerning the rejection of proselyte circumcision is that it cannot help pagans to become Jews because it is not an eighth day circumcision and thus it would not bring them into Israel’s covenant relationship with God. Therefore, through circumcision Gentile Christ believers cannot enter into the Jewish covenantal relationship and salvation with Israel. In this sense, even if Gentile Christ believers are circumcised, they would not become Jews, join in the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God and be able to observe the law. To sum

---

61 Fredriksen’s argument on the effectiveness of eighth day circumcision is based on Thiessen’s argument, see Fredriksen, Paul, 129 n 71. Thiessen argues the importance of circumcision on the eighth day, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 67.
62 Fredriksen, Paul, 128.
64 Fredriksen, Paul, 128. See also Fredriksen, Who Was Paul? 39.
65 For Fredriksen, the correct way for Gentile Christ believers to join in Israel’s redemption is through the patrilineal ideology of Abraham and the seed of Abraham – Christ, see Fredriksen, Paul, 149-150.
66 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 70.
up, according to Fredriksen, eighth day circumcision is the key for constituting Jewish ethnicity and joining the covenantal relationship with the Jewish God by which people are enabled to observe the law.

5.2.3 Paul’s view on Circumcision

While Fredriksen (and Thiessen) argue for the prominent role of eighth day covenantal circumcision, however, Paul’s theological thought on circumcision in Romans will be examined and it is the position of this thesis that the value of circumcision has been relativized. Christ rather than circumcision functions as the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

5.2.3.1 The Identity of ‘if you called yourself a Jew’

Regarding the identity of Ἰουδαῖος in Rom 2:17, since it has been argued that Paul’s logic flows from addressing humanity by using the term ἄνθρωπος (Rom 1:18, 2:1, 3, 16, 29), and unfolding the term by pointing to Jews and Gentiles (Rom 2:9-10), it is therefore clear that Paul talks about Gentiles by using ἔθνη (Rom 2:14-15) and about (a) Jew by the term Ἰουδαῖος (Rom 2:17). In Rom 2:17, it is Paul’s rhetorical device to address Jewish identity by which Paul points to a fictive interlocutor that may not be an actual Jew to whom Paul writes in the congregation of Rome.

---

67 Paul’s language ἡ περιτομή appears in Rom 2:25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 3:1, 30, 4:9, 10, 11, 12, 15:8 and ἡ ἄκροβυστία appears in Rom 2:25, 26, 27, 3:30, 4:9, 10, 11, 12.
68 Watson also identifies that Paul was talking about Jew (Rom 2:17-24) and Gentiles (Rom 2:14-16), see Watson, Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith, 323.
69 Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Paul and the Stoics (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 185; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 469 n 51; Jewett, Romans, 219 and 221. This view is in contrast with those who hold the view that Paul addresses an actual Jew. For instance, see Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 89; Watson, Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith, 319.
Because of this, Paul was talking about a Jew rather than talking to a judgmental Gentile proselyte in Rom 2:17.

5.2.3.2 Paul’s Theological Thought on Circumcision

Concerning Paul’s theological thought on circumcision in Romans, Paul, as a Jew, devalues circumcision by his bold saying ‘your circumcision has become uncircumcision’ if the one who has been circumcised is a transgressor of the law (Rom 2:25).\(^{70}\) Paul’s expression shows that the value of circumcision is subordinate to the observance of the law.\(^ {71}\) In other words, the observance of the law is in the supreme position when compared with circumcision and the key is not possession of the law but practicing the law.\(^ {72}\)

Besides, Paul uses ‘he’ to signify the one who is uncircumcised but practicing the requirements of the law (Rom 2:26). It is striking for Paul to point out that such a Gentile can be called a Jew (Rom 2:29). Because of this the definition of Jewish identity is questionable and has to be reconsidered (Rom 2:29).\(^ {73}\) In Rom 2:27, Paul’s rhetorical question once again implies that ‘he’ (the uncircumcised who keeps the requirements of the law) will judge ‘you’ (the circumcised who is a transgressor of the law) in which the notion of keeping the law is more valuable than circumcision in Paul’s thought. Paul’s logic is that circumcision has become uncircumcision if ‘you’ are a transgressor of the law. In this sense, the eighth day and non-eighth day

\(^{72}\) Jewett, *Romans*, 232; Moo, *The Letter to the Romans*, 167. Also, Paul condemns circumcised individuals of violating the law themselves (Gal 6:13).
\(^{73}\) Barclay, “Paul and Philo on Circumcision,” 545.
circumcision has become uncircumcision if someone transgresses the law. Paul’s expression implies that the value of the observance of the law overrides the value of circumcision, including eighth day and non-eighth day circumcision.

Moreover, Paul redefines Jewish identity by arguing for the significance of the circumcision of the heart, meaning the transformation of life enabled by the Spirit (Rom 2:28-29). According to this understanding, what is counted before God is not the physical circumcision but heart circumcision. In other words, it does not matter whether someone has eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision. To put it more precisely, according to Paul, it does not matter whether Gentile and Jewish Christ believers, including Paul himself, have eighth day circumcision or non-eighth day circumcision or uncircumcision because the crucial issue is the circumcision of the heart enacted by the Spirit. There is no contradiction between the circumcision of the heart (Rom 2:28-29) and Paul’s affirmation of the value of circumcision for Jews in light of their priority as the carriers of God’s promises in history (Rom 3:1-2). Paul, however, continues to downplay the significance of circumcision by using the example of Abraham (Rom 4:10-12).

According to Paul’s theological thought, the figure of Abraham relativizes the value of circumcision in relation to being counted as righteous before God (Rom 4:9-12). This is because Abraham is credited as righteous before God while he is

---

75 Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 191; Jewett, Romans, 243; Barclay, “Paul and Philo on Circumcision,” 555; Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 93–94.
76 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 454 and 487. See also Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 294.
uncircumcised (Rom 4:10), and his later circumcision is just a seal for the righteousness of faith (Rom 4:11).\textsuperscript{77} Abraham is credited as righteous before God through faith in God in which Abraham functions as a father and model for those who believe without regard to ethnicity (Rom 4:12-13), including both uncircumcised and circumcised (cf. Rom 4:16).\textsuperscript{78} Through the figure of Abraham, the value of circumcision has been relativized and it has nothing to do with righteousness before God. In addition, the objective of Christ who became a servant of circumcision is to confirm the promises of the fathers and for Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy (Rom 15:8-9),\textsuperscript{79} based on this rationale Paul exhorts the Christ believers in Rome to accept one another (Rom 15:7). To sum up, Paul’s language in Romans shows that the value of circumcision has been relativized and there is no indication to demonstrate that following the Christ event Paul has the notion of an effective eighth day covenantal circumcision.

However, in Paul’s understanding, if practicing the law is more important than circumcision, the law has a higher authority than circumcision. According to Paul’s theological thought, since it has been argued that Christ rather than the law has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, then the value of circumcision (including eighth day circumcision and non-eighth day circumcision) that is subordinate to the law is clearly not the final authority for Christ

\textsuperscript{77} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 294; Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 319.

\textsuperscript{78} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 318; Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 295; Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 125.

believers. In conclusion, Christ rather than the law and circumcision has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers (cf. Gal 6:15).

5.3 The Identity of All Christ Believers

This section will argue that the identity of all Christ believers, including Paul, is shaped and formed by a divine origin. Although the ethnicities of Christ followers are not eradicated, this type of identification has nothing to do with human lineage, ethnicity, or societal considerations. In particular, Paul’s terminology regarding calling demonstrates that, in his mind, the identity of all Christ followers is divine. In the context of salvation, ethnicity is not a determining factor for Christ followers, even if their ethnic identities do not disappear. Paul’s soteriology is independent of ethnicity for both Jews and non-Jews.

5.3.1 The Role of Ethnicity

For Paul’s identity construction of Gentile converts, the role of ethnicity is prominent in the view of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos. Thiessen argues that “although he [Paul] opposes a Gospel which calls Gentiles to convert to Judaism through circumcision and the adoption of the law, Paul still believes that ethnicity matters for his Gospel.”80 For the construction of Gentile identity, Thiessen contends that “Being in Christ does not undermine the importance of proper genealogy and

80 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 105.
ethnicity, as so many scholars assume; rather, Paul’s argument demonstrates how important genealogical descent remains for him.”81 Fredriksen points out that the notion of ethnic differentiation between Jews and non-Jews shows itself in Paul’s Gentile mission. Fredriksen argues that “Paul’s tireless and wide-ranging efforts at Pagan recruitment; his insistence on maintaining ethnic distinctions between Gentiles and Israel; his defiance of Pagan gods; his empowerment by spirit: in all these ways, Paul lived his commitment to the good news of God’s coming Kingdom.”82 On this point, Nanos also highlights the significance of ethnicity in Paul’s Gentile mission. Nanos argues that “He [Paul] was shaping, and they [Paul’s audience] were being shaped into subgroups of Judaism, that is, within a cultural way of life developed by and for Jews, even though many if not most of those who were joining these subgroups were and remained non-Jews.”83 In addition, other academics, such as

81 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 115.
82 Fredriksen, Paul, 167.
5.3.2 Divine Identity

Although Paul recognizes his own Jewishness (Phil 3:5), as well as the presence of Jews and Gentiles in his Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18), he does not categorize the identity of his apostleship and Christ followers with an ethnic term or entity. In contrast, the divine identity of Paul’s apostleship and Christ followers derives from God’s calling in Christ. If Christ, rather than the Torah and circumcision, has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Gentile, and Jewish Christ followers, then Christ is the most significant component of their identity, showing that their identity has nothing to do with human or social conditions.

84 After surveying early Christian literature such as Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, Buell asserts that ‘we can see how ethnic reasoning informs the ways that early Christians appropriate and (re)write the past and create a universalizing future for their “new” people,’ see Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 33.


86 Similarly, although the proposal is distinct, Sechrest puts Paul, Christ believers and Paul’s assemblies within the framework of ethnicity, see Love L. Sechrest, *A Former Jew: Paul and the Dialectics of Race* (London: T & T Clark, 2009), 15, 164, 206.
Concerning the notion of ethnicity, while it is agreed with Hodge that ethnicity is multivalent, however, it needs to be recognized that this concept was understood differently in antiquity. Though John Hutchinson and Anthony Smith helpfully point out the six features of ethnicity which involve: a common proper name, a myth of common ancestry, a shared history, a common culture, a link with a homeland and a sense of common solidarity, caution should be exercised when applying the modern understanding of the concept to the ancient world. Besides, it should not be assumed that there was a fixed style or meaning among the ancient authors when they used the language about ethnicities such as Jew, Gentile and barbaroi. On the one hand, the historical reliability of the tales is an issue, on the other hand the intention and meaning of the usage of the tales by ancient writers is another concern. Furthermore, Barclay rightly points out that ethnicity is a polythetic notion which involves many different elements such as shared history, culture and territory;

---


90 For instance, while Fredriksen argues the ‘heaven and earth’ characteristic of ethnicity based on the συγγένεια established between Jews and Spartans, see Paula Fredriksen, “How Jewish Is God? Divine Ethnicity in Paul’s Theology,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 137, no. 1 (2018): 195. However, Gruen is suspicious of the historical reliability of some ancient tales, he argues that the tale of the Jews and Spartans is a Jewish invention and he contends that the evidence of this tale comes only from Jewish sources rather than both Spartan and Jewish sources, see Gruen, *Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism,* 9 and 16. Regarding Fredriksen’s ethnic deity, Barclay argues that “Of course, Israel’s Scriptures and tradition have borne witness to this God, but God is, for Paul, not an ethnic deity but the God of all creation (Rom 1:18–22; 11:36), the God of gentiles as well as of Jews (Rom 3:30),” see John M. G. Barclay, “An Identity Received from God: The Theological Configuration of Paul’s Kinship Discourse,” *Early Christianity* 8, no. 3 (2017): 369.

91 For instance, Gruen argues that through redefinition and manipulation of tales Jews enhance their Jewish identity and declare their own supremacy, see Gruen, *Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism,* 9 and 16.
however, no one element is essential. Concerning the identity formation of Christ believers in the first century, while the legitimacy and meaning of ethnicity are questionable, there are two questions to be asked. First, did Paul classify his apostleship and the identity of Christ believers as an ethnic group? Second, what significance does ethnicity play in Paul’s view of salvation for Jews and Gentiles?

For the first question, while the Paul within Judaism scholars emphasize the crucial role of ethnicity, genealogy, social factors including fixed and fluid components in Paul’s shaping of Gentile identity, I argue that the identity of Paul and Paul’s converts which they received from God is divine and cannot be compared to an ethnic categorization according to Paul. The formation of this identity does not come from any human or social source. Paul’s language of God’s calling is an entry

92 Barclay argues that Ἰουδαῖος is in a cluster-formed polythetic category instead of a monothetic category, see John M. G. Barclay, “Ἰουδαῖος: Ethnicity and Translation,” in Ethnicity, Race, Religion Identities and Ideologies in Early Jewish and Christian Texts, and in Modern Biblical Interpretation, ed. Katherine M. Hockey and David G. Horrell (London: T & T Clark, 2018), 49 and 53. While Cohen contends that the ethnicity of Ἰουδαῖος is “closed, immutable, an ascribed characteristic based on birth”, see Shaye J. D. Cohen, The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 136. However, in the change of Izates, Barclay demonstrates that ancestry is one of the elements to define Jewish identity, but it is not an essential element for the identity of Ἰουδαῖος. Barclay further argues that “For a non-Ἰουδαῖος to become a Ἰουδαῖος is by no means distinct from ‘ethnic’ considerations. Izates’ political prominence merely amplifies what is at stake: This is about abandoning the customs, traditions, and practices of one people and adopting those of another, ‘foreign’ nation. It makes little sense to describe this change as ‘religious’ as opposed to ‘ethnic,’” see Barclay, “Ἰουδαῖος: Ethnicity and Translation,” 51. For the survey of the definition of Ἰουδαῖος, see David G. Horrell, “Ethnicity, Race, and Ancient Jewish and Christian Identities: Themes in Recent Research,” in Ethnicity and Inclusion - Religion, Race, and Whiteness in Constructions of Jewish and Christian Identities (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2020), 49-63.

93 For example, Morgan questions that “If ethnicity could be not only, or not at all, a matter of shared descent, history, or territory, nor even necessarily a matter of shared language, cult, or custom, but a tax status or the consequence of a certain job or a gift of citizenship; if it could be accretive, such that individuals and groups identified with and used multiple ethnicities; if one aspect of one’s identity, such as tax status did not necessarily march in step with any other, such as background or culture; if one could switch between ethnicities as between codes, according to context, or celebrate multiple identities or hybrid identities – then the modern scholar might be forgiven for wondering whether the concept remains useful at all for thinking about Hellenistic society or identity,” see Morgan, “Society, Identity, and Ethnicity in the Hellenic World,” 37.

94 In answering the two questions, the investigation is not limited to Romans, but Paul’s undisputed letters.

First, Paul understands that his apostolic identity has a divine origin. He emphasizes his apostolic identity and commission was received directly from the divine source, the risen Christ and God the Father, which is neither from the source of men, nor was any human mediation involved (Gal 1:1). Second, Paul’s language of self-identification points out his apostolic divine identity. When Paul describes himself as κλητὸς ἀπόστολος (1 Cor 1:1, Rom 1:1), the term κλητός denotes Paul’s identity as received from God. It signifies that Paul’s identity is not of his choosing. Cranfield rightly points out that “the word κλητός here expresses the thought of divine calling in opposition to human self-appointment—it is not on the basis of presumptuous human ambition but on the basis of God’s call that Paul is an apostle.” It means that the position of ἀπόστολος is God’s divine appointment. Paul’s language demonstrates that his apostolic identity comes from a divine source.
and it has nothing to do with any human conditions. Third, in terms of temporal aspect, Paul acknowledges that God chose him before he was born and called him by His grace to be commissioned to preach the gospel (Gal 1:15-16).\footnote{901} Paul understands that God’s calling is based on God’s grace and mercy, not based on human conditions (Gal 1:15, Rom 9:11-12, Rom 9:16). Thus, God’s prior and gracious call shows that Paul’s apostolic identity does not come from his observance of the law or his ethnicity.\footnote{902} Therefore, this is a form of identity constructed not by birth or by varied human and social components.\footnote{903}

Regarding Paul’s converts, Paul makes clear that the calling is initiated by divine agency, ὁ θεός (1 Cor 1:9, 7:15, 7:17, 1 Thess 2:12). And Paul characterizes the features of Christ followers as κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (1 Cor 1:2, Rom 1:7). These statements show that Paul’s converts likewise receive and construct their identities based on divine origin.\footnote{904} For Paul’s converts, God’s calling comes to people regardless of their ethnicity. While Paul identifies people with different ethnicities by using the term Ἰουδαιοὶ (1 Cor 1:22-24), Ἑλλην (1 Cor 1:22, 24) and ἔθνος (1 Cor 1:23), he understands that God’s calling not only comes to the Gentiles but also Jews (1 Cor

\begin{footnotes}
\item[901] Ronald Y. K. Fung, \textit{The Epistle to the Galatians} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 63; Bruce, \textit{The Epistle to the Galatians}, 92. For Gal 1:15, Paul’s phrase ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου may recall the prophetic commissions in the Hebrew Scriptures (Isa 49:1, Jer 1:5), see David A. deSilva, \textit{Galatians: A Handbook on the Greek Text} (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2014), 17. The term ὁ θεός is omitted in \textit{𝔓46 B F G} but appears in \textit{𝔓46 B F G A D 2R}, it may be the work of earlier scribes in order to make the meaning of the verse more clear by adding ὁ θεός, see deSilva, \textit{Galatians}, 17; Bruce M. Metzger, \textit{A Textual Commentary on the New Testament} (New York: United Bible Societies, 1994), 521-522.


\item[903] Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 376.

\item[904] In addition, Paul’s language of God’s gracious call links the identity of Paul and Paul’s converts. For instance, Paul describes his converts by the phrase τοῦ καλεσάντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι (Gal 1:16) and he describes himself καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ (Gal 1:15), see Bruce, \textit{The Epistle to the Galatians}, 80.
\end{footnotes}
Paul explicitly points out that his converts were called into fellowship with Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:9). The term κοινωνία denotes their status of being in Christ.

In conclusion, Paul’s phrasing suggests that his and his converts’ identities are derived from a divine source – God’s calling in Christ. The establishment of this identity is unrelated to human and social factors. In this sense, the claim that identity is shaped by human genealogy, ethnicity, and social factors, encompassing both fixed and fluid components, contradicts Paul’s statement.

Given that the divine identity of Paul’s apostleship and that of Christ believers is established by God’s calling, the issue that must be asked is: what does Paul mean by the term “call”? In fact, Paul’s usage of the term “call” has been discussed in the 1 Corinthians analysis chapter. Please note that this is only a brief summary. First, God is the initiator of the call (e.g. 1 Cor 1:1, 9, 7:20, 24). Second, the calling of God denotes a change of allegiance to the risen Christ, whether for Jews or Gentiles, who would have a connection with Christ and remain in the calling of God (1 Cor 1:9, 24, 7:18, 20, 24) until the second coming of Christ (1 Cor 1:7-8, 15:23-24). In other words, the calling of God in Christ forms the divine identity of Christ believers which

105 Larry W. Hurtado, Destroyer of the Gods: Early Christian Distinctiveness in the Roman World (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2016), 90-91. Strictly speaking, the coverage of ἔθνες is broader than Ἑλλην, both terms refer to non-Jews, see Brookins and Longenecker, I Corinthians I-9, 31. However, Thiselton argues that “the semantic contrast between Jew and Greek regularly denoted Jew and Gentile, so nothing of substance is at issue,” see Anthony C. Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 169. Gruen also argues that ‘Paul uses the phrase ta ethnē again and again, sometimes synonymously with “Greeks,” usually with a broader denotation. But the term signifies no more than “those who are not Jews,”’ see Gruen, Constructs of Identity in Hellenistic Judaism, 179.


107 Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 376.

108 Please refer to the pages 102-105 of this thesis.
involves Jewish and Gentile Christ believers.

In addition, according to Paul, the question to be considered is whether or not God’s calling is bound by Jewish ethnicity. The evidence reveals that, despite being a Jew, Paul’s understanding of God is not restricted by his Jewish background. In this section, I contend that, in Paul’s view, this God transcends human value systems such as ethnicity, gender, and social status because of the following considerations. First, for Paul, this God is the God of all creation (Rom 1:18-20, 25; 11:36), and he surpasses ethnicity as the God of Jews and Gentiles (Rom 3:29-30). Second, Paul acknowledged that Abraham, Paul’s ancestor (Rom 4:1), was initially a pagan who was credited with righteousness by God when he was uncircumcised (Rom 4:10), and that Jewish identity is established through circumcision. Third, Paul’s notion of God as a divine being who can call people of various ethnicities, socioeconomic rank, and gender (1 Cor 1:24, 7:2, 10, 16, 18, 21, 25), including Paul himself (1 Cor 1:1). For instance, while Paul identifies his Corinthian members as Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 7:18), freedmen and slaves (1 Cor 7:22), and males and females (1 Cor 7:2), Paul’s language of calling demonstrates that he uses a different framework to define the identity of those Corinthian Christ believers. Paul’s use of ἕκαστος emphasizes each Corinthian whom God has called (1 Cor 7:17) and exhorts them twice to remain in God’s calling (1 Cor 7:20, 24). Therefore, Paul categorizes those males and females (1 Cor 7:2), freedmen and slaves (1 Cor 7:22), Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 7:18) under the umbrella of the calling of God. In other words, in the eyes of Paul, there are

109 Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 369; Erich S. Gruen, Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter? (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020), 194.
110 On this point, see also Gruen, Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter?, 196-197.
called Jews, called Gentiles, called slaves, called freedmen, called males, called females in the Corinthian community. In this way, Paul categorizes his Corinthian Christ believers (with different ethnicities, gender and social status) under the canopy of God’s calling and urges them to continue to remain in that calling.

Further, no evidence suggests that Paul classifies the identity of his apostleship and Christ believers according to their ethnicity, even though Paul indicates that his congregation includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers (1 Cor 7:18). Also, as mentioned, the calling of God does not originate from a God who is confined to Jewish ethnicity, but this God, for Paul, is a creator who is above all creatures, including Jews and Gentiles, launching a divine call to both Jews and Gentiles, slaves and freedmen, males and females. In this way, the identity of Christ followers is formed by God’s calling, which cannot be compared to ethnic, gender, or social class classifications. In other words, the divine calling of God does neither strengthen nor diminish the ethnicity, gender, or socioeconomic standing of Christ believers.  

Therefore, Paul’s categorization of his identity as an apostle and a believer in Christ as a divine identity resulted from and was shaped by God’s calling, which does not compare with ethnic categorization.

In this manner, divine identity is defined as follows: the divine identity is initiated and formed by God’s calling in Christ, and not by socioeconomic factors like gender, social class, or ethnicity. According to Paul, both Jews and Gentiles could be called by God through Christ; therefore, the divine identity is formed regardless of

111 See also Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 356.
whether Jews or Gentiles are called. As stated, Paul holds Christ to be the most important component, and Christ serves as the supreme hermeneutic lens through which to view and evaluate all other things; consequently, the divine identity is reflected in Christ believers’ continued adherence to the calling of God until Christ’s second coming. In other words, the Christ-followers’ insistence on Christ as the definitive authority by which they view and evaluate everything else. Paul’s apostolic identity is functionally distinct from that of Christ believers (e.g. in Corinth), but both are formed by the calling of God in Christ, which depends on God’s allocation with regard to various people. In any case, for the purpose of this discussion, Paul’s apostleship and Christ-followers are both established by God’s calling and share divine identity.

On the other hand, due to the fact that the concept of the third race did not emerge until the second century, it may be anachronistic to apply it retrospectively to the first century.\textsuperscript{112} The Epistle to Diognetus with possible data pointing to the third race is likewise dated in the 2\textsuperscript{nd} century according to scholarly research,\textsuperscript{113} and it is

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{112} Gruen, Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter?, 206: Gruen argues that ‘The first actual appearance of the phrase “third race” has to await Clement of Alexandria writing in the late 2nd and early 3rd century. But Clement cites an earlier work, now unfortunately lost and of quite uncertain date, though surely not earlier than the 2nd century, the so-called Proclamation of Peter, the Petrou Keryigma.’ Similar to Fredriksen’s reasoning, she identifies the term “Christianity” as being from the fourth century and argues that it is anachronistic to place it in the first century, see Fredriksen, Paul, 110. Zetterholm, on the other hand, brings up the topic of the third race by stating that ‘Traditionally it has often been assumed that people within the early “church,” regardless of ethnicity, merged together into a third entity. Former Jews and former gentiles thus constituted a third race—“the Christians.” A fundamental part of such a construction is the idea that Paul stood in opposition to Judaism,’ see Magnus Zetterholm, “Paul within Judaism: The State of the Questions,” in Paul within Judaism Restoring the First-Century Context to the Apostle, ed. Mark D. Nanos, and Magnus Zetterholm (Lanham: Fortress Press, 2015), 37-38.
\item \textsuperscript{113} Clayton N. Jefford, The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus): Introduction, Text, and Commentary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 28-29. For a detailed discussion of the date of the Epistle to Diognetus, see Jefford, The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus), 15-29.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
unclear whether γένος ἢ ἔπιτηδευμα (The Epistle to Diognetus 1:1) refers to the third race or not. Second, the key difficulty is that the third race appears to lack a precise definition. In other words, does the third race possess any essential identifying qualities or components? How can we determine and classify if a particular group of people belongs to the third race in the absence of a definition or at least some basic identifying characteristics (or components)?

Third, more importantly, there is no evidence to suggest that Paul categorizes his apostleship, Christ believers and his ἐκκλησία as an ethnic entity. For instance, when Paul addresses τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεου in Corinth (1 Cor 1:2), he employs two phrases ἠγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ and κλητοῖς ἁγίοις to modify τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεου (1 Cor 1:2). As argued, by using the word “call,” Paul categorizes the identity of Christ believers as a divine identity established by the calling of God in Christ which has nothing to do with ethnicity. In Paul’s view, τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεου in Corinth is a gathering of κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (1 Cor 1:1, cf. 1 Cor 11:17-18) which consists of called Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 7:18), called males and females (1 Cor 7:2), and called freemen and slaves (1 Cor 7:22). In other words, despite the presence of Jews and

114 Jefford, The Epistle to Diognetus (with the Fragment of Quadratus), 134-135. Gruen argues that ‘Use of the term genos and reference to Christianity as a “new genos”—by contrast with Greeks and Jews—might suggest, as it has to some, an indirect reference to the notion of a “third race”. But that would seem to misconstrue the meaning. The author notably describes Christianity as γένος ἢ ἐπιτήδευμα: “race or practice”. The two are not presented as alternatives here; rather, the one appears to be explanatory of the other, a fitting supplement or gloss. The context in which the statement comes is that of an ostensible inquiry into the nature of the Christian god, Christian worship, Christian values, and Christian behavior. And the text as a whole constitutes an argument for the superiority of Christian belief by contrast with those of pagans and Jews. Ethnicity is irrelevant,’ see Gruen, Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter?, 204-205.

non-Jews in Paul’s Corinthian congregation, Paul’s usage of the term “call” does not appear to have an ethnic meaning in his mind.\footnote{Barclay also argues that “…Pauline churches look most like Diaspora synagogues in their ‘philosophical’ mode, or most like a ‘Judean school’ whose membership was not characterized by an ethnic bond,” see John M. G. Barclay, “Pauline Churches, Jewish Communities and the Roman Empire,” in Pauline Churches and Diaspora Jews (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 14-15.}

Furthermore, there is no evidence that Paul has a notion of a third race in 1 Cor 10:32. Following the discussion in 1 Cor 8-10, Paul urges Corinthian Christ believers, the Corinthian ‘knowledgeable’ Christ believers in particular, to be blameless to Jews, Gentiles, and τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ (especially with respect to the Corinthian ‘weak’ Christ believers) (1 Cor 10:32). Paul then instructs the Corinthian ‘knowledgeable’ Christ believers to imitate him in his renunciation of his rights for the edification of the Corinthian ‘weak’ Christ believers (1 Cor 11:1, cf. 1 Cor 9:11-18).\footnote{David G. Horrell, Solidarity and Difference: A Contemporary Reading of Paul’s Ethics (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 285-286.} In this regard, Paul’s statement in 1 Cor 10:32 does not imply that Paul has the notion of a third race and that he categorizes τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ as an ethnic unit.\footnote{For the meaning of ἐκκλησία in 1 Cor 10:32, Gruen argues that “The nearest one comes to it is an admonition in 1 Corinthians that no offense should be given to the Jews, to the Greeks, or to the ἐκκλησία of God. The meaning of ἐκκλησία for Paul, in general, remains ambiguous…For ethnic distinctions we must move beyond Paul,” see Gruen, Ethnicity in the Ancient World – Did It Matter?, 201-202.} Rather, Paul’s usage of τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ in 1 Cor 10:32 is in line with his usage in 1 Cor 1:1 which signifies the group of κλητοῖς ἁγίοις. In this way, Paul’s language once again shows that τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ originates from and is formed by the calling of God in Christ.

For the second question, while Paul within Judaism scholars emphasize the prominent role of ethnicity in Paul’s Gentile identity construction and salvation, I argue that the role of ethnicity is irrelevant regarding Paul’s soteriological thought
towards Jews and Gentiles, and that Paul reframes his Jewish ethnicity under the umbrella of Christ. First, as previously shown, Paul’s enumeration of sins in Rom 1:18-32 applies to both Jews and Gentiles because he employs the term ἄνθρωπος (Rom 1:18). If Paul believes that Jews and Gentiles share the same human condition (Rom 1:18-32) and not, as Fredriksen suggests, that Jews sin the sins of Jews and Gentiles sin the sins of Gentiles,¹¹⁹ then Paul believes that both Jews and Gentiles are subject to the power of sin and that there is no ethnic distinction in human plight (Rom 1:18-32, Gal 3:22.). Moreover, if, according to Paul, this God is able to call people of different socioeconomic classes, gender, and ethnicity in the human world (1 Cor 7:2, 18, 22, 1:24), then the divine identity of Christ followers has nothing to do with ethnicity. Also, as discussed, Paul believes that until the second coming of Christ (1 Cor 1:7-8, 15:23-24), Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ following the Christ event (Gal 2:15-16, 1 Cor 1:21-24, Rom 1:16). If there is no ethnic distinction with regard to human plight and both Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith in Christ after the Christ event and up until the second coming of Christ, then Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews does not include ethnicity as a basic component.

In addition, given the divine identity generated by God’s calling in Christ, Paul acknowledges his Jewishness, but reframes it within the context of Christ and

¹¹⁹ Fredriksen argues that “Are not all people ‘under sin’? Yes. But gentiles sin gentile sins, propelled by wrong worship. (Think again of Paul’s sin lists!). Jews sin Jewish sins. They read God’s texts, but through a veil, not perceiving their true meaning, which comes only via Christ (2 Cor 3.14–16). They are zealous for God’s law, but not in an enlightened way, because most do not realize what Paul has realized: that the Law points to Christ (Rom 10.4). Israel’s fundamental sin lay in not realizing that Paul was right about the eschatological advent and identity of the messiah—a misapprehension so extraordinary that Paul has to appeal to divine fiat to explain it (Rom 11.25, with 9.1–11.24 as narrative prelude),” see Paula Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” Expository Times 133, no. 1 (2021): 16.
emphasizes that he continues to follow Christ. In Phil 3:5-8, Paul’s expressions indicate that he was previously proud of his Jewishness such as his eighth day circumcision, belonging to the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews, a Pharisee and a persecutor of the church (Phil 3:4-6), but he explicitly points out that those Jewish characteristics are now loss because of Christ (Phil 3:7). The phrase διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν signifies that Christ has a significant impact on Paul in a way that his value system has been radically changed. Since then Paul redefines the definition of gain and loss and he comes to regard his Jewish characteristics as a loss. Though Paul’s Jewishness has not been erased (cf. Rom 3:1-2, 9:1-5), he declines to put his confidence in his Jewishness as before. In this sense, the Christ event has changed Paul’s value system in which he reevaluates his Jewishness.

In addition, Paul’s expressions show that he does not only reevaluate his Jewishness (Phil 3:7), but also all things because of Christ (Phil 3:8). The phrase ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ pushes Paul’s point in a strong and progressive sense (Phil 3:8).


121 The perfect tense of ἥγημαι denotes the ongoing effect on Paul initiated in the Christ event (Phil 3:7), see O’Brien, The Epistle to the Philippians, 383-384.


123 Moisés Silva, Philippians (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 157-158.

124 Martin and Hawthorne, Philippians, 190; O’Brien, The Epistle to the Philippians, 387. Paul uses the term πάντα in Phil 3:8.

125 Reumann, Philippians, 489; Martin and Hawthorne, Philippians, 189.
Paul changes the verb from the perfect tense ἔγνωσεν to the present tense ἔγνωσιν which demonstrates his ongoing conscious view on the redefinition of the loss and gain after the Christ event (Phil 3:7-8). Because of Christ, Paul, though a Jew, does not view his Jewish characteristics as a source of pride, on the contrary, he continues to pursue knowing Christ (Phil 3:14). Though the Jewishness of Paul is not erased, it is reframed and reordered for the service of Christ. Therefore, in Paul’s theological thought, he has reframed ethnicity under the umbrella of Christ.

In conclusion, Paul’s words demonstrate that his and his converts’ identity formation is founded on divine origin. Paul sees his apostleship and the identity of Christ believers as being derived from God’s divine calling in Christ, which cannot be compared to ethnic categorization. Christ, rather than the law and circumcision, is the final authority for Paul, Jewish Christ believers, and Gentile Christ believers; hence, their divine identity is entirely established and defined by God’s calling in Christ. In the context of salvation, ethnicity is not a determining factor for all Christ followers, even though their ethnic identities do not vanish. Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews does not depend on ethnicity, but on Christ.

127 Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 371.
128 Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 371. Concerning the identity of Christ believers, Boakye also argues that “God’s people were those in Christ; not a people primarily defined by ethnic, social or gender categories (Gal. 3:28), but rather by rebirth (Gal. 2:19; 5:24-25) by virtue of being in Christ,” see Peter Oakes and Andrew K. Boakye, *Rethinking Galatians: Paul’s Vision of Oneness in the Living Christ* (London: T & T Clark, 2021), 120. See also Oakes and Boakye, *Rethinking Galatians*, 114-115.
129 This view is in contrast with Fredriksen’s assertion, see Fredriksen, *Paul*, 124 and 107. However, she seems to overlook Paul’s language of reevaluation because of Christ (Phil 3:5-8).
130 Barclay, “An Identity Received from God,” 370; Hurtado, *Destroyer of the God*, 90.
131 Barclay, “Paul, Judaism and the Jewish People,” 192.
5.4 Abraham and Christ

This section will contend that the Christ event functions as a meta-narrative for Paul to reexamine the Abraham story in relation to the relationship between Abraham and Christ in Romans. Paul considers that for those who follow Christ, Abraham acts as a prototype of faith in God. The relationship is extended to all believers once it has been formed by faith in Christ.

5.4.1 Abraham Frames Christ

Regarding the salvation mechanism of Gentiles, according to Fredriksen, the ideology of patrilineal descent is vital for Paul’s Gentile converts. For Gentile Christ believers, Fredriksen compares Paul’s notion of adoption with that of Rome, pointing out that Paul uses Roman adoption concepts and arguing that Paul’s Gentile converts were adopted in a new Jewish family through the sperma of Abraham in a sense of patrilineal lineage: Christ. Fredriksen points out that her notion of genealogical kinship of Paul’s Gentile converts is based on Hodge’s concept of adoption through patrilineal lineage.

Concerning the distinctiveness of ethnic Jews in Jewish communities, Fredriksen argues that Jews already have adoption apart from Christ (Rom 9:4), and they are already in a Jewish family relationship with Christ (Rom 9:5), while Gentile Christ believers are adopted through Christ and maintain ethnic differentiation from Jews in

132 Fredriksen, Paul, 148-151.
133 Fredriksen, Paul, 128 and 148; Hodge, If Sons, Then Heirs, 19-42. In line with Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos also argue for the adoption of Paul’s Gentile converts based on a new genealogical lineage of Abraham which is made through Christ, see Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 163 and Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 227.
Jewish communities.\textsuperscript{134} Paul establishes a new genealogical lineage for Gentile Christ followers in order to make them Abraham’s descendants. Gentiles-in-Christ were saved and adopted into the Jewish communities on the basis of the concept of adoption. Christ is the subset of Abraham that frames Christ and adopts Gentiles into the Abrahamic family through Christ.

5.4.2 Re-evaluates Abraham

Addressing the relationship between Christ and Abraham in Romans, Fredriksen highlights the significance of Abraham’s patrilineal descent in framing the Christ event for Paul’s Gentile converts and constituting a certain type of ethnic bond. It will be argued, however, that through the Christ event Paul rereads the trajectory of the promise to Abraham, in which Abraham functions as a model of faith in God, but Christ, not Abraham, is the ultimate authority in Paul’s thought.

As argued, the Christ event rather than Isaiah functions as a grand narrative through which Paul re-evaluates the Hebrew Scriptures and sees that the Abraham narrative points forward and is continuous with the Christ’s narrative.\textsuperscript{135} Paul asserts that God’s resurrection power serves as the foundation for human faith in light of the Christ event. Paul acknowledges that one of the most significant parallels between the stories of Christ and Abraham is God’s capacity to create life and bring nonexistent things into being (Rom 4:17). In the story of Abraham, for instance, Abraham’s faith in the God who gave Isaac from Sarah’s “dead” womb rendered him righteous in

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{134} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 149-150.
\item \textsuperscript{135} On this point, please refer to the section of the chapter analyzing Romans titled Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event.
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
God’s sight (Rom 4:19-22). In the Christ narrative, Christ followers are considered righteous before God as a result of their faith in the God who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 4:24). According to Paul, the “resurrection” power of God provides the basis for Abraham and Christ followers to place their faith in God in both narratives.

Paul’s identification of God as holding “resurrection” power in the stories of Abraham and Christ, on the other hand, offers a basis for believers and highlights the centrality of the faith response of believers. Paul re-evaluates the story of Abraham in light of the Christ event (cf. Rom 3:22, 5:1-2), and highlights the significance of faith by quoting Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:3. Paul contends that Abraham was recognized as righteous by God not because of his deeds but because of his faith in God (Rom 4:5). Paul further emphasizes that God credited Abraham with righteousness while he was uncircumcised (Rom 4:9-10) so that he may be the father of both circumcised and uncircumcised (Rom 4:11-12).\(^{136}\) Paul explains that the divine will of God is realized through faith so that it is through grace, so that the promise is secure for all the seed, not just for those who are from the law, but also for those who share the faith of Abraham (Rom 4:16). Abraham was credited with righteousness (Rom 4:22) despite the fact that he was a hundred years old and Sarah’s womb was dead (Rom 4:19), he had unwavering faith in God’s promise (Rom 4:20), and he was fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised (Rom 4:21). Paul then establishes a connection between Abraham and Christ believers by declaring that ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ is not just written for Abraham, but also for “us” (Rom 4:23-24). Paul contends that

---

\(^{136}\) Paul identifies Abraham, who was pagan previously and counted as righteous before circumcision, in terms of his ethnicity. He was then circumcised so that he may become the father of both Jews and Gentiles.
God’s recognition of Abraham’s righteousness is also extended to all who believe in the one who raised Jesus from the dead (Rom 4:24). Abraham was acknowledged as righteous before God because of his faith in God, who gave Isaac from Sarah’s “dead” womb. In the same way, due to their faith in the God who resurrected Jesus from the dead, Christ followers are acknowledged as righteous before God. Abraham and Christ believers share, according to Paul, a response of faith in God, and this faith response demonstrates the human need to depend on God because, on the one hand, Abraham and Sarah’s old age exemplify human limitation, and, on the other hand, Christ believers have their own παραπτώματα due to the power of sin (Rom 4:25, cf. Rom 1:18-32). Paul then speculates and underlines that having been justified by faith, “we” have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ after drawing from the story of Abraham (Rom 5:1). Consequently, the Christ event is the decisive factor that prompts Paul to reconsider and realize that the trajectory of God’s purpose is fulfilled by faith in the God who raised Isaac from Sarah’s “dead” womb, which foreshadows the God who raised Jesus from the dead, in whom Christ believers place their faith.\(^1\)

According to Paul, Christ’s first advent into human history fulfilled the divine

\(^1\) Nonetheless, there is a difference between the birth of Isaac in the Abraham story and the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the Christ story. God was responsible for the birth of Issac, as he was able to give him to Abraham despite Sarah’s “dead” womb (Rom 4:19). Issac had not yet been born, lived, or died when God exhibited his “resurrection” power to fulfil his promise to Abraham; hence, it cannot be maintained that Issac was actually resurrected. One could say, at most, that Issac was “resurrected” from Sarah’s “dead” womb. Paul’s remarks in the Christ narrative imply, however, that Jesus rose from the dead (Rom 4:24). Paul thought that by the time God displayed his “resurrection” power, Jesus had already been born, lived, crucified, and resurrected by God. In this respect, the birth of Issac in the Abrahamic story and the resurrection of Jesus in the Christian narrative are not identical. Nonetheless, the similarities between the two accounts demonstrate God’s “resurrection” power and serve as the basis for the human response of faith (e.g. Abraham and Christ believers). The difference between the two narratives is that one includes overcoming the “dead” womb in order to give birth to Issac, who had never been dead, whilst the other entails defeating the power of death in order to raise Jesus from the death. Regarding the differences between these two narratives, see also Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 489-490.
promise made to Abraham. In other words, Paul sees that, from the perspective of the Christ event, the Christ event is the objective, while the promise of Abraham is the means of pointing to Christ.\textsuperscript{138} Paul’s reasoning is based on the fact that the Christ event serves as a meta-narrative through which he re-evaluates Abraham’s story and perceives the trajectory of divine promise and the meaning of Scripture.\textsuperscript{139} Paul’s use of language in Romans demonstrates that he reinterprets Abraham’s narrative in light of the Christ event and that the Christ event becomes Paul’s final authority.

5.4.3 Faith in God model

Considering Abraham’s significance in Romans, I contend that Abraham’s faith is a model for all Christ followers and has nothing to do with the conception of physical ethnic bloodline genealogical kinship construction. Regarding the righteousness before God, works and faith, according to Paul, have an antagonistic relationship (Rom 4:2-5).\textsuperscript{140} Paul argues that Abraham was recognized as righteous because of his faith in God,\textsuperscript{141} not his works before God (Rom 4:2-3).\textsuperscript{142} Paul then

\textsuperscript{138} Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 120; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 487.
\textsuperscript{139} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 231; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 555.
\textsuperscript{141} Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 284; Gathercole, \textit{Where Is Boasting?}, 243.
\textsuperscript{142} Paul’s expression of works here seems to exclude all the form of human works in regard to be counted righteousness before God, see Gathercole, \textit{Where Is Boasting?}, 236–40; Moo, \textit{The Letter to the Romans}, 283; Barclay, \textit{Paul and the Gift}, 483–484 n 92. The phrase ὁ θεὸς λογίζεται δικαιοσύνην χωρὶς ἔργων also highlights this point (Rom 4:6). For the refutation of the interpretation of the works of the law that pertains to boundary markers, see Witherington and Hyatt, \textit{Paul’s Letter to the Romans}, 259.
contrasts those who work with those who believe, emphasizing that those who have faith in God are considered righteous (Rom 4:4-5). For Paul, faith in and of itself is not counted as righteousness before God, but rather shows the human inability to depend on God.

Abraham was credited with righteousness via faith in God, according to Rom 4:9-12, which relativizes the significance of circumcision, given that Abraham was uncircumcised at the time of his justification. This indicates that Abraham’s justification before God has nothing to do with circumcision. Later, Abraham was circumcised as a sign of his faith-based righteousness. Abraham is the father of both uncircumcised and circumcised people since he was credited with God’s righteousness via his faith.

Paul also emphasizes that faith, and not the law, is the means to inherit the promise of God to Abraham (Rom 4:13-16). As mentioned, even if it seems impossible for Abraham to have a son (Rom 4:18–20), Paul explains that Abraham’s faith is based on the one who has the power to overcome death and bring into

124; Stephen Westerholm, Israel’s Law and the Church’s Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 119.
144 Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 287.
145 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 486.
146 Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics, 621: Wallace argues that the present active participle of πιστεύοντας functions substantially which denotes the ongoing aspect of faith (Rom 4:11). Also, the term πάντων points out that faith-in-God relationship is applicable for all who believe regardless the circumcision that pertains to ethnicity (Rom 4:11).
147 Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 293: Moo argues that ‘Paul thereby makes clear that it is not necessary to be Jewish to become a member of the people of God. Faith alone—apart from works (4:3–8), apart from circumcision (4:9–12)—is sufficient to gain entrance into Abraham’s spiritual “family.”
148 Gathercole, “Justified by Faith, Justified by his Blood,” 152.
existence what does not exist (Rom 4:17). If the fulfilment of God’s promise to Abraham is contingent on God’s resurrection and calling power, then human factors such as ethnicity and genealogy have no bearing on the fulfilment of God’s promise. Consequently, according to Paul, the common ground between Abraham and Christ followers is faith, not ethnic or genetic ties (Rom 4:23-24).

According to Paul, it is a faith-based, non-genealogical lineage that has no bearing on a person’s ethnicity. By emphasizing the necessity of faith in reaching God’s righteousness (Rom 9:30-32, 10:4), Paul redefines the identity of the true sons of Abraham as not being based on ‘flesh’ or physical bloodline, but on those who trust in God’s promise (Rom 9:6-8). Paul’s perspective on this form of relationship is neither based on the framework of ethnicity, nor is it a fictive kinship relationship in the sense that Hodge argues. In other words, this form of relationship is not based on actual bloodline genealogy, but rather on faith in God to establish a fictive,

---

149 Schreiner, Romans, 249. See also W. Sanday, and Arthur C. Headlam, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902), 113; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 308. For the view of God’s creative power, see Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 244; Dunn, Romans 1–8, 218; Jewett, Romans, 334.

150 Paul’s expression demonstrates that Abraham functions as an important paradigm in which Abraham is recognized as righteous by faith in God (Rom 4:22). See also Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 488–489.

151 Gathercole, “Justification by Faith,” 438: Gathercole argues that “Similarly here at the end of Romans 4, righteousness is reckoned to those who believe in the God who raised not Abraham’s family from death but his own son Jesus—that same Jesus who died for our sins.” See also Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 313; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 490. This reading is in contrast with the view of Stowers, see Stowers, A Rereading of Romans, 241-244.

152 Oakes and Boakye, Rethinking Galatians, 56; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 529-530; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 576.

153 According to Hodge, ethnicity played a significant part in the formation of Paul’s identity. Hodge, for instance, argues that “Paul does not reject an ethnic religion for a universal religion, but deploys ethnic discourses to realign the relationship between two groups of peoples, Ioudaioi and gentiles. Indeed, Paul offers no non-ethnic alternative; even being “in Christ” is ethnically defined…Paul’s understanding of ethnic identity, like that of many authors from ancient Mediterranean cultures, is rooted in ideologies of kinship, ties to homeland, loyalty to a particular god or gods, participation in religious practices, and adherence to particular laws or customs,” see Hodge, If Sons, Then Heirs, 48. For further discussion on the role of ethnicity in Paul, please refer to the Romans chapter’s Identity of All Christ Believers section.
non-genealogical line of descent. Hence, the people of God are descendants of Abraham based on their faith in God rather than on their physical descent.

In this way, Abraham serves as a model of faith in God, which is a key feature of Christ followers according to Paul’s philosophy. When kinship is established by faith in Christ, salvation is available to all who believe, Jews and non-Jews alike. As the relationship between Abraham and Christ believers is established by God’s gracious call and the response of human faith, human circumstances such as ethnicity, ancestry, biological blood relationship, social rank, and gender have no bearing on relationship and identity through Christ. In conclusion, the Christ event reinterprets Abraham’s promise, and Abraham’s faith serves as a model of God-belief for Christ followers. While faith in Christ is the human response to God’s salvation, it is open to everyone who believes.

5.5 Paul’s Salvation Mechanism

In this section it will be argued that the correct reading of Paul’s phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ in Romans is objective genitive. The meaning of Paul’s expression of δικαιώω is to signify someone who is declared righteous before God. In line with Paul’s notion of universal sin argued before, meaning that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin, this thesis argues that according to Paul’s philosophy, both Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ in the same manner.

154 Gathercole, Where is Boasting?, 233; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 483. By emphasizing the significance of faith, Paul also redefines the identity as sons of Abraham (cf. Rom 9:6-8).
5.5.1 For Gentile Christ Believers: Faith in Christ

Fredriksen’s assertion is that through faith in Christ Gentile Christ believers turn their allegiance to the Jewish God and they are enabled by the indwelling Spirit to act rightly to observe the law in the Jewish congregations until the second advent of Christ. Based on the notion of the construction of patrilineal ideology, Fredriksen argues that through faith in Christ, Gentile Christ believers join in Jewish communities and are included in the impending redemption of all Israel (Rom 11:25-26), their mortal body will be transformed and they are fully adopted as sons at the second coming of Christ (Rom 8:38). Thiessen agrees with Fredriksen’s suggestion regarding the salvation of the Gentiles. Gentiles who desire to inherit Abraham’s promises and heritage must create a genetic connection with him by becoming his sons. The genetic link can only be established by accepting Christ and the pneuma. People who are not Jewish can become pneumatic entities and heirs of Abraham because of the pneuma of Christ. Nanos draws attention to the significance of faith in Christ for Gentile Christ believers’ law observance in order that they behave righteously among Jewish communities in Rome by placing the Gentile audience of Romans in a Jewish setting. Nanos contends that “He [Paul] sought to identify with his non-Jewish disciples in the marginal situations that this

155 Fredriksen, Paul, 121, 164-165. It is important to note that the strategy that Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos proposed for the redemption of Gentiles was discussed in the chapter that evaluated Galatians; some of that strategy will be repeated here. Please refer to the thesis’ pages 77–80 for more information on this point.
156 Fredriksen, Paul, 160-162. See also Fredriksen, “Who Was Paul?” 46.
157 Fredriksen, Paul, 158-159.
158 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 105-128.
159 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 129-160.
message about Christ created and perpetuated for them; thus, he appealed to his own marginality among his fellow Jews for upholding this position.”

In conclusion, Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos believe that Christ’s role is essential for the salvation of Paul’s converts who are Gentile.

5.5.2 For Jewish Christ Believers: Torah Observance?

According to Fredriksen, Torah observance has nothing to do with the Jews (including Jewish Christ followers) being saved, and that the Sonderweg concept is inaccurate. For Jewish Christ believers, they are the remnant and a minority in Paul’s thought. Through faith in Christ they are enabled to act righteously towards Jewish Christ believers and Gentile Christ believers in Christ communities.

According to Fredriksen, Paul’s plan for the salvation of Jews (including Jewish believers in Christ) is that all of Israel will be saved at the second advent of Christ in accordance with God’s unchangeable promises (Rom 11:26, 29).

Thiessen is another one who disagrees with the concept of the Sonderweg; nonetheless, it is unclear whether Christ is, in Thiessen’s perspective, the most important factor in the salvation of Jews. Nanos argues for the two-covenant salvation and says that Jews who keep the Jewish covenant without recognizing Jesus as the Messiah could still be

162 Fredriksen, “Paul-Apostle to the Pagans: A Response to Paul Foster,” 19-20. Please note that the plan of Fredriksen, Thiessen, and Nanos for the salvation of the Jewish people was discussed in the chapter evaluating Galatians; I am repeating a portion of it here. Please refer to the thesis’ pages 80–85 for more information on this point.
163 Fredriksen, Paul, 110.
164 Fredriksen, Paul, 156-157 n 63. In this sense, the connotation of ‘righteousness’ is about righteous behavior in Jewish communities.
165 Fredriksen, Paul, 156-157 n 63. See also Fredriksen, Paul, 160.
166 Thiessen, Paul and the Gentile Problem, 166 n 17.
To summarize, it is unclear to what extent, according to Thiessen, Christ is necessary for the salvation of Jews. Fredriksen believes that the second coming of Christ holds the key to the Jewish people’s salvation. Nevertheless, in accordance with Nanos, the Jews’ redemption is dependent on the covenantal relationship that they have maintained with the Jewish God.

5.5.3 For Jews and non-Jews: Faith in Christ

Concerning Paul’s soteriology, while Fredriksen contends that Gentiles are saved via the death and resurrection of Christ (the first advent of Christ) by forming a genetic connection with Abraham, and then the Gentile Christ followers will be saved with Jews (including Jewish Christ believers) at Christ’s victorious and public return (the second advent of Christ), Nanos contends that Gentiles are saved by faith in Christ, whereas Jews are saved inside the covenantal connection with their Jewish God, nevertheless, according to Paul’s theological perspective in Romans, it is the position of this thesis that Jews and non-Jews are saved in the same way via faith in Christ and the genealogical tie to Abraham has nothing to do with the salvation of Jews and Gentiles. Paul asserts that after the first coming of Christ, Jews and non-Jews alike will be saved by faith in Christ until the second coming of Christ.

167 Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 218, 223, 232 and 276.
5.5.3.1 Objective Genitive Reading of πίστις Χριστοῦ

Regarding the interpretation of πίστις Χριστοῦ in Romans, it is agreed with Fredriksen that it should be read as an objective genitive because of the following reasons (e.g. Rom 3:22, 26). First, there is no indication that the subject of πιστεύω and πιστός is Christ in Romans, however, there is data to demonstrate that a human is the subject of πιστεύω (e.g. Rom 1:16, 3:28, 4:3, 18, 10:4). Paul’s phrases λογιζόμεθα γὰρ δικαιοῦσθαι πίστις ἀνθρώπων χωρίς ἔργων νόμου (Rom 3:28) and λογίζεται ἡ πίστις αὐτοῦ εἰς δικαιοσύνην (Rom 4:5) denote the subject of πίστις is the believer, not Christ. Second, Paul’s expression δύναμις γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι (Rom 1:16) and τέλος γὰρ νόμου Χριστὸς εἰς δικαιοσύνην παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι (Rom 10:4) signify the subject of πιστεύω as the Christ believer, not Christ. Third, Paul’s quotation ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἔλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην (Rom 4:3) and Paul’s phrase of δὲ παρ’ ἐλπίδα ἐπὶ ἐλπίδι ἐπίστευσεν εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι αὐτόν πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνων (Rom 4:18) have Abraham as their subject. Therefore, the objective genitive reading is the correct reading of Paul’s phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ in Romans. For Christ believers, the meaning of πίστις...

---

168 For instance, see Fredriksen, Paul, 121.
169 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 477; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 245; Gathercole, “Justified by Faith, Justified by his Blood,” 164. Gathercole further points out the reception of Pelagius and Augustine and concludes that “This appears to be a place in which the evidence is firmly stacked on the side of the ‘objective genitive’ interpretation,” see Gathercole, “Justification by Faith,” 436.
170 Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 245-246; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 477.
Χριστοῦ is that through faith in Christ they turn their allegiance to him so that their life is reordered and reconstituted based on the Christ event (Rom 5:8). From a social perspective, “πίστος is a distinguishing characteristic and group-identity marker” of Paul’s community.

5.5.3.2 Paul’s Notion of δικαιώμα

Regarding Paul’s notion of δικαιώμα, I disagree with Fredriksen and argue that δικαιώμα primarily deals with the relationship between God and human rather than confining it to human-human relations. In Romans, Paul’s meaning of δικαιώμα is to declare someone who is righteous before God. For instance, Paul’s language of δικαιώμα demonstrates that justification is before God (Rom 2:13, 3:20). Paul’s expression of δικαιώμα shows that God is the one who justifies (Rom 3:30, 8:30, 33). From the perspective of God, Paul points out that justification is by the grace of God.

---

a more recent discussion on this issue, see Michael F. Bird and Preston M. Sprinkle, eds., The Faith of Jesus Christ: Exegetical, Biblical, and Theological Studies (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2010).

172 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 477; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 327.
174 For her view, see Fredriksen, Paul, 122.
175 For her view, see Fredriksen, Paul, 122.
176 Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 375 and 476; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 94-96; Gathercole, “Justification by Faith,” 424. For Wright, he argues that the forensic meaning of δικαιώμα should be understood within the framework of covenant, meaning that the Gentiles in particular are declared righteous and to be included in the covenant as a member of the people of God, see N. T. Wright, Justification: God’s Plan and Paul’s Vision (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2009), 110-118; Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God, 934-935. For a critique on this view, see Stephen Westerholm, Justification Reconsidered: Rethinking a Pauline Theme (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 63; Gathercole, “Justified by Faith,” 156; Moo, The Letter to the Romans, 96; Douglas J. Moo, Galatians (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 54-56. For more discussion on the meaning of δικαιώμα, see Stephen Westerholm, Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The “Lutheran” Paul and His Critics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 261-296. For the debate on the view of imputation, see Michael F. Bird, “Incorporated Righteousness: A Response to Recent Evangelical Discussion Concerning the Imputation of Christ’s Righteousness in Justification,” Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society 47, no. 2 (2004): 253-275. For the view related to imparted righteousness, see Michael J. Gorman, Becoming the Gospel: Paul, Participation, and Mission (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 217-245.
(Rom 3:24) and by God’s beneficial act in Christ (Rom 5:9). From the perspective of humanity, the means for justification is by faith (Rom 3:28, 5:1), not by works (Rom 4:2). As argued, from the perspective of the Christ event Paul acknowledges that Christ believers are considered righteous not based on the observance of the law, but faith in Christ (Rom 3:20, 10:4, 11-12). In other words, although Jewish Christ believers possess and observe the Torah, they are considered righteous before God not by the works of the law, but through faith in Christ. Therefore, Paul’s language of δικαιώω primarily deals with the relationship between God and human.

5.5.3.3 The Salvation Mechanism of Gentiles

Concerning Paul’s soteriology for Gentiles, I contend that after Christ’s first coming, they are saved via faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming. As argued, according to Paul’s theological thought in Romans, since Paul’s usage of πίστις Χριστοῦ is objective genitive, meaning faith in Christ, his language of δικαιώω is primarily to deal with the relationship between God and humanity, both Gentiles and Jews are under the power of sin, Christ rather than the law, circumcision or ethnicity functions as the final authority for all Christ believers (including Gentile Christ believers). Paul’s remark also demonstrates that the Christ event functions as a grand narrative for him to reread Abraham’s story. By using Abraham as a model of faith in God for Christ followers rather than as an ethnic link, Paul emphasizes the significance of faith in the Pauline salvation mechanism, which makes God’s salvation available to everyone who believes. In conclusion, Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ, and their salvation has nothing to do with the genealogical
relationship with Abraham.

Paul’s expressions demonstrate that the crediting of Gentiles with righteousness before God has nothing to do with the observance of the law. Rather, Paul acknowledges that through faith in Christ, anyone can be considered righteous before God, and their life is reshaped and reconstituted by the Christ event (Rom 10:4, 11-12). Through the Christ event, Gentile believers in Christ are no longer subject to the power of sin but to the power of grace (Rom 6:14, 5:1-2). With the indwelling Spirit, Gentile Christ believers can behave properly (e.g. Rom 14:17) until the second coming of Christ (Rom 8:18-23, cf. Rom 14:11, 1 Cor 15:24). In this sense, Gentile Christ believers do not need to convert to Judaism and become Jews, they become children of God through faith in Christ and remain Gentiles.177

5.5.3.4 The Salvation Mechanism of Jews

Concerning Paul’s soteriology for Jews, I disagree with Fredriksen and argue that Jews are saved through faith in Christ in the same way as Gentiles in Paul’s view. It indicates that after Christ’s first coming, Jews are saved via faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming. Firstly, Paul’s expressions in Romans 9-11 point out that Jews are saved through faith in Christ.178 While Paul’s meaning of ‘all Israel’ in Rom

177 Hurtado, *Destroyer of the Gods*, 101. Paul does not think it is necessary for a Gentile to become a Jew for salvation. In other words, according to Paul, the salvation of Gentiles has nothing to do with whether Gentiles could convert to Judaism or not. This is different from the view of Thiessen, see Thiessen, *Paul and the Gentile Problem*, 14.
178 In Romans 9-11, the language of Christ appears in Rom 9:1, 3, 5, 10:4, 6, 7, 17. Stendahl observes that there is no Christ language after 10:17, see Krister Stendahl, *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 4; Krister Stendahl, *Final Account: Paul’s Letter to the Romans* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995), 39. Gaston argues that there is another way of salvation for Israel as the language of Christ is absent after Rom 10:17, see Gaston, *Paul and the Torah*, 148. However, the silence of Christ language after Rom 10:17 does not necessarily mean that there is another way for
11:26 is debatable, however, he emphasizes clearly that everyone (including Jews and Gentiles) is saved through faith in Christ (Rom 10:4, cf. Rom 1:16, 10:12).

Secondly, on the one hand, Paul clearly points out that the reason why the branches of his fellow Jews were broken off is because of their unbelief and they can be grafted in again by God if they do not continue in unbelief (Rom 11:20, 11:23). On the other hand, though Paul himself (as a Jewish Christ believer) comes from a Jewish background, he understands God is not only God of Israel but also God of all nations, and recognizes that God does not reject Israelites like himself (Rom 11:1).

Thirdly, as it has been argued, Paul’s theological perspective in Romans is that...
Paul uses the phrase \( \pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\kappa\varsigma \chi\rho\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\omicron \) in the genitive objective sense, his use of \( \delta\iota\kappa\alpha\iota\omicron\omicron \) primarily refers to the relationship between God and humanity, both Jews and Gentiles are subject to the power of sin, Paul and Jewish Christ followers are considered to be righteous before God according to the Christ event rather than their compliance to the law because Christ, not the law, circumcision, or ethnicity, serves as the ultimate authority for all Christ followers (Rom 3:20, 10:4, 11-12), Paul’s statement demonstrates that the Christ event functions as a meta-narrative for him to reevaluate Abraham’s story, Paul uses Abraham as a model for faith in God for Christ followers rather than as an ethnic link to highlight the importance of faith in the Pauline salvation mechanism, which makes God’s salvation available to everyone who believes. As a result, the Jews’ salvation is dependent upon their faith in Christ and has nothing to do with their descent from Abraham.

In this sense, Paul’s soteriology for Jews is the same as for Gentiles.\(^{184}\)

Although Paul and Jewish Christ believers possess and observe Torah, regarding Paul’s soteriology, they are no different from Gentile Christ believers, they need to be saved through faith in Christ and to be loyal to the truth of the gospel (cf. Rom 1:16-17). Through the indwelling Spirit, Jewish Christ believers can behave properly (Rom 14:17) until the second coming of Christ (Rom 8:18-23, cf. Rom 14:11, 1 Cor 15:24).\(^{185}\) Therefore, according to Paul’s thought, it is concluded that both Jews and

\(^{184}\) In terms of broader context in Romans, Paul’s usage of \( \tau\epsilon \) demonstrates his concern for both Jews and Gentiles (e.g. Rom 1:16, 2:9, 2:20, 3:9). Both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin in Paul’s theological understanding (Rom 3:9). Therefore, Paul identifies not only a “Jewish problem” but also a Gentile problem. Because of this human plight, Paul states clearly that the gospel is the power of God which saves everyone who believes, including Jews and Gentiles (Rom 1:16). In this sense, the wider context also shows that both Gentiles and Jews are saved through faith in Christ according to Paul’s theological thought.

\(^{185}\) Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 506.
non-Jews are saved in the same way through faith in Christ. Like Galatians, regarding Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews, Paul is not “arguing that Gentiles should be included, with Jews, in the people of God; he is arguing, rather, that Jews should be included, with Gentiles, in the mass of ordinary humanity.”\textsuperscript{186}

5.6 Conclusion

In order to show that Paul’s soteriology holds true for both Jews and non-Jews, this chapter has analyzed Paul’s discussion of salvation in Romans. Paul’s soteriology holds that Jews and Gentiles are saved in the same manner through faith in Christ. It indicates that after Christ’s first coming, Jews are saved via faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming. Paul’s expressions show that for Paul, Jewish Christ believers, and Gentile Christ believers, Christ has now taken the place of all other authorities. This takes precedence over all other factors, including the law, circumcision, and ethnicity. Therefore, up until the second coming of Christ, Paul’s life as well as the lives of Jewish and Gentile Christ followers have been reformed, reconstituted, and redirected through Christ.

\textsuperscript{186} Moo, \textit{Galatians}, 157.
6 Conclusion

6.1 Exegesis

After examining the letters of Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans, the thesis argued that Paul’s soteriology pertains equally to Jews and non-Jews through faith in Christ. Based on the findings of the research conducted on these letters, this section will advance the thesis’s overall argument by exegeting four crucial passages. In this manner, this section is part of the concluding chapter, drawing on the results of Chapters 2 through 5 to present additional arguments in support of the thesis, the passages chosen are: Gal 2:15–21, 1 Cor 9:19–23, 2 Cor 3:1–18, and Rom 3:20. They were selected because they elucidate Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews in a clear manner. After that I will progress towards the project’s conclusion.

6.1.1 The Exegesis of Gal 2:15-21

Regarding the exegesis of Gal 2:15-21, though Fredriksen and Thiessen examine this passage they do not address Paul’s use of δικαιόω in Gal 2:16.1 Similarly, Nanos does not exegete Gal 2:16.2 As argued, it is necessary to distinguish between Paul’s


2 Though Nanos covers Gal 2:15-21 in his work, see Mark D. Nanos, The Irony of Galatians: Paul’s Letter in First-Century Context (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 64 and 69, it is odd that he does not exegete Gal 2:16. For Nanos’ interpretation of Gal 2:16, he points out that “…and Gal 2:16, on my reading (cf. Mystery, 341–58),” see Nanos, The Irony of Galatians, 218 n 20. However, Nanos’ interpretation on the language of justification (e.g. Gal 2:16) which is in line with the word “living” (e.g. Gal 2:14) is highly questionable, see Ronald Y. K. Fung, A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians (Taiwan: Campus Evangelical Fellowship Press, 2008), 1:497 n 6. For Nanos’ view on this point, see Mark D. Nanos, The Mystery of Romans: The Jewish Context of Paul’s Letter (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996), 348.
explicit audience and the subject matter he discusses, in the letter to the Galatians, Paul is writing to Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles. Paul refers to Jewish Christ followers using the pronoun “we” (Gal 2:15, 2:16b), which includes at least Cephas and Paul (Gal 2:14) and possibly also Barnabas and “the rest of the Jews” (Gal 2:13). Paul underlines that “we” are aware that ἄνθρωπος (which can apply to Gentile or Jew) as previously argued, is not justified by works of the law but by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal 2:16a), and “we” Jews have trusted in Christ Jesus to be justified by faith in Christ and not by keeping the law (Gal 2:16b). Paul then explains his reasoning for why all flesh will not be justified by the works of the law (Gal 2:16c, cf. Gal 3:11, Rom 3:20). Since Paul thinks that a person (whether Jew or Gentile) (Gal 2:16a) and “we” Jews (Gal 2:16b) are not justified by the works of the law, Paul’s “all flesh” that “will not be justified by the works of the law” should cover everyone, including Jews and Gentiles (Gal 2:16c). Considering Paul’s soteriological philosophy for Jews and non-Jews, his crucial statement in Gal 2:16 highlights three important aspects.

First, as a Jew, Paul believes that no one, neither Jew nor Gentile, will be justified by the observance of the Torah (Gal 2:16c). Paul’s expression ἐξ ἔργων νόμου oὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σάρξ in Gal 2:16c is identical to that in Rom 3:20; but, in Rom 3:20, Paul adds the reason why this is the problem: for through the law comes

---

3 Please refer to the section ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’ in the chapter analyzing Galatians.
4 Please refer to the section Paul’s Notion of Sin in the chapter analyzing Romans.
5 For a discussion on the meaning of δικαιόω and the objective genitive of πίστις Χριστοῦ, please refer to the Galatians section entitled Paul’s Salvation Mechanism. In addition, as mentioned, I hold that Paul’s ἔργων νόμου refers to Torah observance in general, see 75 n 174.
knowledge of sin. Paul understands that everyone, Jew and Gentile alike, is under the dominion of sin (Gal 3:22) and the law is incapable of imparting life (Gal 3:21), no one is justified before God by the law (Gal 3:11), and those who possess the law are under the curse of the law (Gal 3:10). Paul confesses that the power of sin manipulates the law to such a degree that he himself struggled to keep the law and declares, “I died to the law through the law” (Gal 2:19). Hence, according to Paul, no one can acquire God’s righteousness by obedience to laws.

Second, Paul acknowledges that a person (whether Jew or Gentile) is justified by faith in Christ Jesus, not by the works of the law (Gal 2:16a). As argued, Paul’s use of ἄνθρωπος refers to the human race, Jews and non-Jews equally. The present passive of δικαιόω denotes that a person is counted righteous before God (Gal 2:16a). Paul believes that by trust in Christ, a person can attain God’s righteousness.

Third, Paul believes that Jews are saved by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, and he asserts unequivocally that “we” Jews already believed in Christ (Gal 2:16b). Regarding the salvation of Jews, Paul further highlights the significance of faith in Christ (Rom 10:4, 12, 11:23). Paul discloses that Christ rescued him from the power of sin (Gal 1:4, cf. Gal 3:22) and the curse of the law (Gal 3:13). Paul’s autobiographical statement demonstrates that he now lives by faith in Christ and that Christ resides within him (Gal 2:20). Christ will have died in vain, according to Paul, if God’s righteousness comes through the law (Gal 2:21).

Paul’s remarks illustrate, in conclusion, that his perspective of salvation for Jews

---

7 For the exegesis on Rom 3:20, see below.
8 For more discussion, see below.
and non-Jews is not based on the works of the law. In the interim, if Paul believes that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin (Gal 3:22) and that both are saved through faith in Christ (Gal 2:16), then according to Paul’s theological reasoning, both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ without distinction until the second coming of Christ (cf. Gal 5:21).  

6.1.2 The Exegesis of 1 Cor 9:19-23

Regarding the exegesis of 1 Cor 9:19-23, as demonstrated, Nanos’ rhetorical reasoning on 1 Cor 9:19-23 is not persuasive. Paul’s stated purpose to save and win Jews as well as his former preaching practice, which are described directly in 1 Cor 9:19-23, cannot be explained away by Thiessen’s rhetorical viewpoint on Paul. Though Fredriksen examines 1 Cor 9:20–21, her analysis of the content of Paul’s preaching is not convincing. First, there is no indication in 1 Cor 9:19–23 that the
content of Paul’s gospel proclamation to Jews is different to his preaching from his preaching to Gentiles. Paul contends that the gospel of Christ is the content of his message to Jews and Gentiles (1 Cor 9:12, 14, 16, 18, 23). Second, as discussed, “you” in 1 Cor 2:3-4 cannot be limited to Gentiles. Hence, Paul’s preceding preaching with the Holy Spirit and with power to “you” in Corinth does not only apply to Gentiles.

As argued, Paul is writing to both Jews and Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles from an ethnic perspective in the Corinthian letters; hence, ἁγίοις, ἀδελφοΙ, Κορίνθιοι and ὑµίς (the second-person plural pronouns) cannot be restricted to Gentiles.13 After discussing his renunciation of his rights in the midst of gospel preaching (1 Cor 9:12-18), Paul discusses his cross-culturally adaptable approach to preaching the gospel (1 Cor 9:19-23). Paul’s discussion is focused on spreading the gospel of Christ (1 Cor 9:12, 14, 16, 18, 23). Paul emphasizes that his gospel preaching strategy is to “enslave” himself to all in order to gain people for Christ (1 Cor 9:19). Contextually, his actual audience (to whom Paul preached), πᾶσιν (1 Cor 9:19, 22), is comprised of Jews (1 Cor 9:20), those under the law (1 Cor 9:20), those outside the law (1 Cor 9:21), and the weak (1 Cor 9:22). The aorist first-person ἐδούλωσα (1 Cor 9:19) and ἑγέρνομην (1 Cor 9:20, 22) indicate Paul’s cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching practices in the past, whereas the perfect first-person γέγονα (1 Cor 9:22) denotes his ongoing cross-cultural adaptive gospel preaching practices begun in the past in which he enslaved himself differently with regard to different audiences (1 Cor 9:19). Paul’s

13 Please refer to the section ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’ in the chapter analyzing 1 and 2 Corinthians.
language of κερδάσω indicates that the purpose of his enslavement is to win Jews (1 Cor 9:20), those under the law (1 Cor 9:20), those outside the law (1 Cor 9:21), and the weak (1 Cor 9:22) to the gospel of Christ (1 Cor 9:23, cf. 1 Cor 9:12). Paul’s expression further suggests that his intention or purpose in preaching the gospel across cultures τοῖς πάσιν (1 Cor 9:22) is to win and save some of them to Christ by any means possible (1 Cor 9:19-23).

To summarize, 1 Cor 9:19-23 exemplifies Paul’s soteriological thought for Jews and non-Jews, according to which both Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith in Christ (1 Cor 1:21-24, 15:1-3, cf. 1 Cor 9:12) and both Jewish and Gentile Christ believers eagerly await his second coming (1 Cor 1:7-8, cf. 1 Cor 15:24). If Paul believes that both Jews and Gentiles are saved through faith in Christ and he preached to Jews and Gentiles to win and save them to Christ (1 Cor 9:20, 22), then Nanos’ view that Jews are saved through the keeping of the law thus maintaining a covenant relationship is

---

14 Contextually, since Paul is speaking to the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 9:1, 2, 11, 12, 24) about what he did in Corinth (e.g. 1 Cor 9:11-12), Paul did preach the gospel of Christ in Corinth in which “you” (second-person plural) received, stand, and are being saved (1 Cor 15:1-3, cf. 1 Cor 2:1-2), and there are both Jews and Gentiles in the Corinthian congregation (1 Cor 7:18). So, it is quite probable that Paul’s practice of cross-cultural gospel preaching (1 Cor 9:19-23), through which he brought Jews and Gentiles to Christ, occurred in Corinth (1 Cor 7:18).

15 A number of commentators also have this view, see Horrell, Solidarity and Difference, 242; Gordon D. Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 476; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, First Corinthians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 369; John G. M. Barclay, “1 Corinthians,” in The Oxford Bible Commentary, ed. by John Barton and John Muddiman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1123; Anthony C. Thistlethwaite, The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000), 701; Pitre strongly argues that ‘I am not sure that one could ask for a clearer and more explicit statement of the fact that Paul sees his mission as inclusive of Jews and gentiles. What else might Paul mean when he says he strives “to win Jews” (ἵνα Ἰουδαίους κερδήσω, hina Ioudaious kerdēsō) (1 Cor. 9:20)’? Note well here the linguistic parallel between his mission to “win” (kerdēsō) Jews (“those under the law” [1 Cor. 9:20]) with his mission to “win” (kerdēsō) gentiles (“those outside the law” [1 Cor. 9:21]). In context, his “winning” both Jews and gentiles is his desire for their salvation: that he might “by all means save [νοῦσον, sōsō] some” (1 Cor. 9:22),’ see Brant Pitre, “Roman Catholic Perspective Response to Zetterholm,” in Perspectives on Paul: Five Views, ed. Scot McKnight and B. J. Oropeza (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2020), 197–198. For more discussion on 1 Cor 9:20, see N. T. Wright, Paul and the Faithfulness of God (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 1434-1443.
questionable,\textsuperscript{16} and Fredriksen’s view that Jews are saved through the agency of Christ precisely at the second coming of Christ is doubtful.\textsuperscript{17} In other words, if Paul believes that Jews are saved by obeying the law, why would he preach the gospel to Jews in order to win them over and save them (1 Cor 9:20, 22)? Why would Paul preach the gospel to Jews in order to win and save them after the Christ event (1 Cor 9:20, 22) if he believes that Jews are saved via the agency of Christ at the second coming of Christ? According to Paul’s soteriological perspective for Jews and non-Jews, as demonstrated, after the Christ event both Jews and Gentiles are saved by faith in Christ until the second coming of Christ.

6.1.3 The Exegesis of 2 Cor 3:1-18

Regarding the exegesis of 2 Cor 3:1-18, Nanos’ position requires further clarification.\textsuperscript{18} Fredriksen’s analysis of 2 Cor 3:14-15 in the context of Christ’s second coming is dubious.\textsuperscript{19} In his work, Thiessen does not go through 2 Cor 3:1-18 exegetically. Thiessen uses only a cross-reference of 2 Cor 3:17 and 2 Cor 3:18 to support Paul’s claim that “Christ became a life-giving pneuma” and “...those who

\textsuperscript{18} In his \textit{Reading Corinthians and Philippians, Reading Paul within Judaism, The Mystery of Romans, The Irony of Galatians}, Nanos does not cover 2 Cor 3. Regarding 2 Cor 3:14-15, Nanos argues that “The dynamic turns around perception or seeing, and this would suggest πάροιξις rather than πόροιςις or that πόροιςις can have a sense not so much of hardening, which does not describe sight or perception, but of covering up or obstructing the view of sight, understanding, perception, or thoughts; hence, covered by a callus,” see Nanos, \textit{Reading Romans within Judaism}, 168. However, Nanos does not justify why, in his opinion, Paul’s use of ποροίς in 2 Cor 3:14 can be read either as παροίκια or ποροίςις.
\textsuperscript{19} Fredriksen, \textit{Paul}, 166. Paul, however, believes that the veil has been removed in Christ (2 Cor 3:14), and whenever a person turns to the Lord, the veil is removed (2 Cor 3:16), just as “we all”, that is Paul and the Corinthian believers in Christ experienced after the Christ event (2 Cor 3:18).
arise out of Christ will be made of heavenly stuff—they will bear the image of the heavenly one” respectively. 

As argued, Paul writes to both Jews and Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles from an ethnic perspective in his letters to the Corinthians; therefore, the second-person plural pronouns cannot be restricted to Gentiles alone. Thus, in 2 Cor 3, Paul’s “you” refers to the Corinthian assembly, which includes both Jewish and Gentile Christ followers (2 Cor 3:1, 2, 3, cf. 2 Cor 1:1). Paul notes that “you” are “our” letter, “you” are the letter of Christ, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts (2 Cor 3:3). Paul’s “we” refers to the team of gospel preachers that included Paul and Timothy (2 Cor 3:3, 4, 5, 6, 12, 4:1, cf. 2 Cor 1:1, 1:19). Since Paul is addressing the Corinthian congregation (“you”), “we all” (2 Cor 3:18) refers to Paul, Timothy, and the Corinthian congregation, which includes both Jews and Gentiles in Christ.

Paul acknowledges that God qualifies him as one of the servants of a new covenant not by the letter, which kills, but by the Spirit, who is able to give life (2 Cor 3:5-6). Paul describes himself not just as the minister of the new covenant, but also as

21 Please refer to the section ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’ in the chapter analyzing 1 and 2 Corinthians.
22 See also Oakes and Boakye, *Rethinking Galatians*, 142.
23 Paul also recalls the proclamation of the gospel by “us,” namely Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, to the Corinthian congregation in 2 Cor 1:19.
24 Since Paul is addressing “you”, “we all” in 2 Cor 3:18 should be read bilaterally. In my view, here Paul makes a clear distinction between “we all” and “we.” My observation suggests: Paul refers to the preaching team by the “we” in 2 Cor 3:3, 4, 5, 6, and 12. Paul’s “we all” emphasizes that both the Corinthian Christ followers and the preaching team have unveiled faces (2 Cor 3:18). In 2 Cor 4:1, Paul again refers to the preaching team by using “we.” See also Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 308 and 313; Mark A. Seifrid, *The Second Letter to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014), 178; David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1999), 198–199; Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 204.
an ambassador of Christ (2 Cor 5:20), who proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5).

Paul, as a minister of the new covenant, looks back and compares this new ministry of Christ to Moses’ ministry. Paul classifies the ministry of Moses as kill (2 Cor 3:6), death (2 Cor 3:7), and condemnation (2 Cor 3:9), whereas the ministry of the Spirit is described as life-giving (2 Cor 3:6) and righteous (2 Cor 3:9), and he emphasizes that the glory of the new ministry of Christ surpasses that of the old ministry of Moses (2 Cor 3:9-11). If Paul classifies the ministry of Moses as death, in letters engraved on stones (2 Cor 3:7), and the letter kills rather than giving life (2 Cor 3:6), condemnation rather than righteousness (2 Cor 3:9), and he self-identifies as a servant of the new ministry and distances himself from the ministry of Moses (2 Cor 3:12-13), then does Paul believe that a person can be saved by obeying the Torah that came from the ministry of Moses? Here, Paul’s words appear consistent with his other assertion that no one is justified by the works of the law (Gal 2:16, Rom 3:20).

As Paul wrote about the veil (2 Cor 3:13-18), he compared and recounted the historical event of Moses putting on a veil because his face was radiant after encountering God (Exo 34:29-35), and Paul notes that the minds of the sons of Israel were hardened (2 Cor 3:14). Paul believes that the veil has been removed in Christ, despite the fact that the same veil remains on the Jews to this very day when they read the old covenant (2 Cor 3:14). Paul emphasizes that the old era of Moses has been set aside by the new era of Christ, indicating that Moses’ ministry is subservient to

---

Christ’s ministry. Paul compares the veil that Moses wore in the historical event (2 Cor 3:13, cf. Exo 34:29–35) to the veil that is internalized in the hearts of the sons of Israel in Paul’s day (2 Cor 3:15).26 Paul makes it clear that whenever a person turns to the Lord (Christ) (2 Cor 3:16),27 a veil that covers the heart is removed (2 Cor 3:13, 15-16). Also, as stated, Paul acknowledges that (God’s beneficent act in) Christ has removed the veil (2 Cor 3:14). Therefore, in the new covenant inaugurated by the Christ event (2 Cor 3:4-6), when a person turns to Christ, the veil that obscures their vision will be removed, and they will perceive the true significance of Christ’s new ministry. Paul then underscores that now the Lord is the Spirit and describes the Spirit’s work of liberty and transformation, drawing from the Exodus narrative and highlighting the significance of the Christ event (2 Cor 3:14-18).

Paul viewed Moses (2 Cor 3:15) and the old covenant (2 Cor 3:14) through the lens of the new covenant wrought by the Christ event and the indwelling Spirit. While Paul’s fellow Jews still read the old covenant and Moses as they did, the veil has not yet been lifted from the hearts of the sons of Israel (2 Cor 3:14-15). Paul explains that, as a result of the Christ event, if a person, especially a Jew, turns to the Lord (Christ), the veil (in their hearts) is removed (2 Cor 3:14-16) and they have freedom from the Lord, the Spirit, (2 Cor 3:17). Paul then emphasizes that “we all”—Jewish and

26 See also Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 381.
27 I adopt the view that the Lord refers to Christ in 2 Cor 3:16. Since Paul identifies himself as an ambassador of Christ (2 Cor 5:20), who proclaims Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5), contextually, with the Exodus narrative as a backdrop (2 Cor 3:13-16), Paul’s expressions about God’s beneficent act in Christ (e.g. 2 Cor 3:4, 14), the new covenant inaugurated by the Christ event (2 Cor 3:4-6), Paul’s words ἐὰς σήματον (2 Cor 3:15), and the veil is removed in Christ (2 Cor 3:14), therefore, whenever a person turns to the Lord (Christ), the veil is taken away (2 Cor 3:16). See also Barnett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians, 198–99. For the view that Lord refers to God (2 Cor 3:16), see Harris, The Second Letter to the Corinthians, 308; Scott J. Hafemann, 2 Corinthians (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 160; Garland, 2 Corinthians, 195. For the view that Lord refers to Spirit (2 Cor 3:16), see Witherington, Conflict and Community in Corinth, 382.
Gentile Christ followers—have been unveiled, reflecting the glory of the Lord, and have been transformed into the same image from glory to glory as the Spirit of the Lord (2 Cor 3:18).

For Paul, Christ has removed the veil (2 Cor 3:14), Moses’ ministry has been laid aside in light of new ministry (2 Cor 3:7-11), and the new ministry started by the Christ event with the indwelling Spirit is life-giving and righteous (2 Cor 3:6, 9). On this basis, “turning to the Lord” is the key to Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews. Under the new covenant inaugurated by the Christ event, Paul believes that when a person turns to Christ, the indwelling Spirit will transform his or her life (2 Cor 3:16-18), just as “we all”, Jews and Gentiles in Christ have been transformed. In this sense, Paul thinks that his fellow Jews can be like “we all”, once they turn to Christ, the veil in their heart will be removed, and the indwelling Spirit will transform their life (2 Cor 3:14-17).

6.1.4 The Exegesis of Rom 3:20

Regarding the exegesis of Rom 3:20, it is unclear why, in Fredriksen’s view, Rom 3:9–18 and Rom 3:22–23 apply to both Jews and Gentiles, whereas Romans 3:20 refers exclusively to Gentiles. Although Nanos goes through Rom 3:20, he does not explain the connotation of “all flesh.” In Paul and the Gentile Problem, Thiessen does not discuss Rom 3:20.

As contended, Paul is writing to both Jews and Gentiles about Jews and Gentiles

Fredriksen, Paul, 157: To be sure, Jews too, like gentiles, have sinned (3.9–18, 22–23). The non-Jew’s position, however, is worse vis-à-vis the Law, which can bring him only knowledge of sin (3.20).

28
29
from an ethnic perspective in the Roman letter; hence, the second-person plural pronouns, ἁγίοις, and ἀδελφοί cannot be restricted to Gentiles solely.³⁰ Paul argues that it is impossible to acquire the righteousness of God through the works of the law. Paul argues specifically that “all flesh” will not be justified by the works of the law before God, because through the law comes knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20). As it has been argued that, according to Paul, the law is manipulated by the power of sin (Rom 7:11),³¹ both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin (Rom 1:18-32, cf. Rom 3:9),³² and Paul talks to both Jews and Gentiles concerning Jews and Gentiles in the letter of Romans; therefore, Paul’s “all flesh” in Rom 3:20 cannot be limited to Gentiles solely as suggested by Fredriksen.³³ Instead, neither Jews nor non-Jews will obtain God’s righteousness by obedience to the Torah.³⁴ If Paul believes that no one will be acknowledged as righteous before God based on keeping the law (even Jews who already possess the Torah will not be recognized as righteous), then Nanos’ two-covenant salvation statement that Jews would be saved by observing the law is dubious.³⁵ Paul’s wording makes it apparent that “all flesh”, involving both Jews and non-Jews, will not be justified before God by works of the law (Rom 3:20).

---

³⁰ Please refer to the section ‘Write about’ or ‘Write to’ in the chapter analyzing Romans.
³¹ Please refer to the section analyzing Paul’s Understanding of the Christ Event in the chapter of Romans.
³² Please refer to the section analyzing Paul’s Notion of Sin in the chapter of Romans.
³³ Fredriksen, Paul, 157.
³⁵ Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 218, 223, 232 and 276.
In light of the fact that no one can attain the righteousness of God through the works of the law, Paul describes an alternative path to God’s righteousness through faith in Christ. Paul emphasizes to the Roman assembly that the righteousness of God has been revealed apart from the law, as attested by the law and the prophets (Rom 3:21), namely, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all believers (Rom 3:22). As mentioned, in the letter to the Romans, Paul writes to both Jews and Gentiles regarding Jews and Gentiles; hence, Paul’s πάντας in Rom 3:22 cannot be limited to Gentiles alone, but includes all believers, Jews and non-Jews alike. Paul indicates further that there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles who trust in Christ (Rom 3:22). Paul emphasizes that πάντες (Rom 3:23), including Jews and Gentiles, are counted as righteousness before God as a gift by his grace through Christ’s redemption (Rom 3:24).

Likewise, according to Paul, Christ is the goal of the law for all believers, Jews and Gentiles alike, to attain God’s righteousness (Rom 10:4). Regarding the new path to salvation via faith in Christ, Paul expressly states that there is no distinction between Jew and Greek (Rom 10:12). Concerning the salvation of Jews, Paul asserts that it is no longer by works, but by the grace of God (Rom 11:5-6). Paul makes it clear to Jews that if they do not remain in unbelief in Christ, they will be grafted in, for God is competent to do so (Rom 11:23, cf. Rom 11:20, 4:17). 37

36 On this point, see also Oakes and Boakye, Rethinking Galatians, 95. For more discussion on Rom 3:21-26, see Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 474-477.
37 Fitzmyer, Romans, 616; Witherington and Hyatt, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, 272; Barclay, Paul and the Gift, 552-553; Jewett, Romans, 691-692; Cranfield, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, 570. Concerning Rom 11:23, Nanos argues that ‘I suggest translating apistia (11:23) in terms of the rest of the Israelites’ “lack of faithfulness” (at this point) to carry out Israel’s calling to announce the message to the nations, not as if at issue in the metaphor is “unbelief” in Jesus as Messiah per se,’ see Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 220-221. Nanos’ view on “unbelief”
Paul’s comments demonstrate that his view of salvation for Jews and non-Jews is not based on the works of the law, but on faith in Christ. In the meantime, if Paul believes that both Jews and Gentiles have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God (Rom 3:23, cf. Rom 1:18-32), both are being saved through faith in Christ (Rom 3:23-24, 10:4), and there is no distinction between Jew and Greek (Rom 10:12), then according to Paul’s theological reasoning, after the Christ event, both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ without any distinction up until the second coming of Christ.

Following an examination of Gal 2:15-21, 1 Cor 9:19-23, 2 Cor 3:1-18, and Rom 3:20, Paul’s thoughts on salvation for Jews and non-Jews are presented below. Paul believes that the works of the law cannot justify anyone, whether Jew or Gentile (Rom 3:20; Gal 2:16). Paul’s past preaching of the gospel to Jews and non-Jews in order to win and save them demonstrates his conviction that Jews and Gentiles require the gospel of Christ equally (1 Cor 9:19-23). Paul believes that Jews and Gentiles are saved equally through faith in Christ until Christ’s second coming (Gal 2:16, 2 Cor 3:13-18). These four important passages elucidate Paul’s soteriological thought for Jews and non-Jews and support the findings of chapters 2-5.

in Rom 11:23 is unconvincing. Contextually, Paul contrasts the faith of Gentiles in Christ with the lack of faith of Jews in Christ (Rom 11:20, cf. Rom 10:4, 12). Additionally, there is no evidence that “unbelief” in Rom 11:23 refers to “lack of faithfulness” (at this point) to carry out Israel’s calling to announce the message to the nations. In addition, Nanos’ view on Rom 11:23 that “Paul’s language does not betray a concern with works-righteousness or overconfidence in God’s calling, nor does he suggest that these Israelites were guilty of claiming ethnic superiority; they are simply accused of being unfaithful to their covenant calling” is not convincing, see Nanos, Reading Romans within Judaism, 143. This is because, as mentioned, Paul believes that the salvation of Jews is not by the works of the law (Rom 3:20, 11:5-6) and contextually, Paul’s “unbelief” does not refer to covenant calling, but to Christ (Rom 10:4, 12, 11:5-6). In Paul and the Gentile Problem, Thiessen does not discuss Rom 11:23. Though Fredriksen goes through Rom 11:23, she does not explain the connotation of “unbelief” in Rom 11:23, see Fredriksen, Paul, 230 n 45.
6.2 Conclusion

When RPP advocates situate Paul and his letters in the first century and emphasize the prominent role of ethnicity in relation to Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews, it presses people to pay closer attention to Paul’s historical particularity and think deeply about Paul’s salvation mechanism concerning Jews and non-Jews in Paul’s time. With this background, this thesis has analyzed Paul’s soteriological thought in regard to both Jews and non-Jews through dialoguing with the Paul within Judaism scholars Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, and investigating the four undisputed authentic letters of Paul, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Romans. The research question throughout the thesis is: how does Paul conceive of the salvation mechanism vis-à-vis Jews and non-Jews? To answer this question, this thesis has shown that in Paul’s understanding salvation through Christ applies equally to Jews and non-Jews. To put it another way, Paul believed that salvation for both Jews and non-Jews up until the second coming of Christ was only achievable through faith in Christ after the Christ event.

Here the results of the whole project are summarized as follows. First, the thesis demonstrates that Paul’s explicit audience involves not only Gentiles, but also Jews. One of the key arguments of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos is that Paul writes his letters to Gentiles only, not to Jews. In the introduction of this thesis, as shown, many other Paul within Judaism scholars also argue that Paul’s explicit audience involves Gentiles only. Furthermore, according to RPP scholars, Paul’s explicit audience governs how Paul’s letters should be understood and interpreted.

On this point, based on the model of the different kinds of Paul’s audience that
emerge from the example of the letter of 1 Corinthians, this model is useful in analyzing Paul’s different kinds of audience (e.g. Paul’s explicit audience and Paul’s actual audience). In contrast to the claim of Fredriksen, Thiessen and Nanos, this thesis has demonstrated that in three letters, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Romans, Paul writes not only to Gentiles, but also Jews (e.g. 1 Cor 7:18, 11:33, 16:20, 2 Cor 13:12, Rom 15:7, 16:16), and there is no evidence to suggest that Paul writes primarily to Gentiles. If this finding is correct, in terms of ethnicity, it cannot be claimed that Paul writes all of his letters predominantly or exclusively to Gentiles. On this basis, it is necessary to re-evaluate how the letters of Paul should be understood and interpreted.

It is important to examine Paul’s explicit audience while analyzing his soteriology of Jews and non-Jews, but it is also important to take into account the subject matter of his writings. The role of Paul’s explicit audience is not the one and only essential factor for Paul’s salvation mechanism, it is just one of the ways for examining Paul’s salvific thought and it should not be the dominant component. In this sense, even if the ethnic identity of Paul’s explicit audience involves both Jews and non-Jews, or Jews only, or even Gentiles only, the examination of Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is not limited solely to Paul’s explicit audience.

However, Paul’s writings about Jews and non-Jews are also crucial to understanding his view on salvation. In fact, by talking about Jews and non-Jews in his letters, Paul’s expressions demonstrate what he thinks about soteriology for Jews and non-Jews. Paul’s writings on Jews and non-Jews are therefore an essential source for understanding his soteriology for both groups.
Second, after going through the *Hauptbriefe* this thesis has indicated that the Christ event plays a key role in Paul’s soteriology. Paul’s pattern of thought is consistent throughout the letters of Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians and Romans. The investigation has demonstrated that Paul’s soteriology derives from the Christ event and is governed by it. The Christ event influences Paul’s perspective, prompting him to reread the Hebrew Scriptures. Paul considers the Christ event in retrospect and discovers two separate and distinct narratives. One is in the divine trajectory, with the framework of divine and human realms, exhibiting continuity between the stories of Abraham and Christ. Christ’s narrative is distinct from the other narrative in human history, which is the narrative of the law. Paul uses the Christ event as a meta-narrative to re-evaluate human history (including Jewish history). In this sense, the progression of Paul’s thought is from solution (Christ) to problem (humanity).

Third, this thesis demonstrates that after the Christ event Christ rather than the law has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers. The Mosaic covenant has been superseded by the Christ event. While the law itself is good and the law is not erased, according to Paul it is the case that the authority of the law has been relativized by Christ. Also, according to Paul’s thought, the law does not impart life for Christ believers and it does not function in a salvific way for Jews and non-Jews (Gal 3:21-22, 1 Cor 15:56, 2 Cor 3:6, Rom 7:5).

Fourth, this thesis has indicated that Christ rather than circumcision (and uncircumcision) has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers. According to Paul, the value of circumcision and uncircumcision has been
relativized by the Christ event. While circumcision itself, as an ethnic identity marker, is not a good or bad thing, however, it does not function as a salvific way for Jews and non-Jews.

Fifth, this thesis has demonstrated that the Christ event functions as a grand narrative for Paul to reexamine the Abraham story in particular in Galatians and Romans. Paul asserts that the figure of Abraham serves as a model of faith in God for Christ followers. In this view, Paul’s phrasing shows that salvation is available to everyone who believes, Jews and non-Jews alike, and that it is established through faith in Christ and has nothing to do with a genetic tie to Abraham’s lineage.

Sixth, this thesis has demonstrated that Christ is the defining component that forms the identity of believers in Christ. Christ, rather than the law and circumcision, has become the ultimate authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers; therefore, Christ is the defining hallmark of Christ believers. Because of this, the life of Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers is refashioned and reconstituted in Christ.

Seventh, as this thesis has demonstrated, Paul held that following the first coming of Christ, both Jews and non-Jews were being saved by faith in Christ up to the second coming of Christ. According to Paul, since Christ has overridden the Mosaic covenant, the law, circumcision and uncircumcision, and has become the final authority for Paul, Jewish and Gentile Christ believers, the path of salvation for Jews and Gentiles is Christ as Christ has become the most important component for all who believe. In this sense, Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews is identically and exclusively based on faith in Christ. Also, the four specific passages Gal 2:15-21, 1 Cor 9:19-23, 2 Cor 3:1-18 and Rom 3:20 clearly show that Paul’s soteriological
understanding is that both Jews and non-Jews are saved through faith in Christ without distinction.

This thesis has focused on Paul’s soteriology for Jews and non-Jews based on his four undisputed letters. Obviously, this project does not claim to be the final word on Paul’s soteriology for Jews and Gentiles. In fact, this thesis is a preliminary study for exploring Paul’s salvific thought concerning Jews and non-Jews. Due to the limited space of this thesis, further work can be done based on other undisputed Pauline letters (e.g. Philippians, 1 Thessalonians and Philemon). Meanwhile, more work can also be done on ethnic identity as the subject of ethnicity has been currently a hot topic in Pauline scholarship.38 In any case, I hope this project has brought forward a genuine dialogue with the new trend in Pauline scholarship and has offered some contribution in the field of Pauline studies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


Barclay, John M. G. “Crucifixion as Wisdom: Exploring the Ideology of a Disreputable Social Movement.” In *The Wisdom and Foolishness of God: 1...


Barclay John M. G. “Pauline Churches, Jewish Communities and the Roman


Boccaccini, Gabriele, Carlos A. Segovia, and Cameron J. Doody. *Paul the Jew: Rereading the Apostle as a Figure of Second Temple Judaism*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2016.


Augsburg Fortress, 2016.


Conzelmann, Hans. *1 Corinthians: A Commentary on the First Epistle to the*...


Eisenbaum, Pamela Michelle. “A Jewish Apostle to the Gentiles.” In *Studying Paul’s*


Hays, Richard B. “‘Have We Found Abraham To Be Our Forefather According to the Flesh?’ a Reconsideration of Rom 4:1.” *Novum Testamentum* 27, no. 1 (1985): 76–98.


Horrell, David G. *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996.


1890.


Räisänen, Heikki. “Galatians 2.16 and Paul’s Break with Judaism.” *New Testament*


Stowers, S. K. *The Diatribe and Paul’s Letter to the Romans*. Chico: Scholars Press,
1981.


