

# MOTIF-SEMANTIC DIFFERENCES IN PAUL? A QUESTION TO ADVOCATES OF THE PASTORALS' PLURAL AUTHORSHIP IN DIALOGUE WITH MICHAELA ENGELMANN

Jermo van Nes<sup>1</sup> and Harro Koning  
(jermo.vannes@etf.edu and hjkonin@xs4all.nl)

## Summary

*New Testament scholarship is witnessing a growing number of studies advocating the plural authorship of the Pastoral Epistles (PE) on the basis of their mutual differences. Among them is the recent study by Michaela Engelmann highlighting 'motif-semantic' differences between the PE in terms of their Christology/soteriology, ecclesiology, heresiology, and image of Paul. While Engelmann and others challenging the common authorship of the PE offer significant contributions to the study of the PE's origins, their overall approach also raises methodological questions. By way of illustration, 1 Thessalonians and Philippians are studied in a way similar to that of Engelmann. Both letters are shown to exhibit a good number of motif-semantic differences, which might bring into question their explanatory power.*

## 1. Introduction

Contemporary study of the New Testament letters addressed to Timothy and Titus, collectively known as the Pastoral Epistles (PE), is anything but dull. Over the past two decades or so these once-labelled 'neglected'<sup>2</sup> letters have re-attracted a good deal of scholarly attention,

---

<sup>1</sup> This article was written in the capacity of research associate in the department of New Testament studies at the University of Pretoria, South Africa.

<sup>2</sup> S. E. Porter, 'Understanding Pauline Studies: An Assessment of Recent Research (Part Two)', *Themelios* 22 (1997), 13-24, esp. 19.

putting a new set of research questions on the agenda.<sup>3</sup> One of these concerns the common authorship of the PE, which has been debated ever since the end of the eighteenth century,<sup>4</sup> but continues to be the majority position among contemporary scholars mainly due to the work of Heinrich Julius Holtzmann.<sup>5</sup> In what is still referred to as a ‘magisterial study’,<sup>6</sup> Holtzmann marshalled the case that the PE were intentionally designed as a tripartite Pauline letter corpus by one and the same pseudonymous author.<sup>7</sup>

In the last three decades, however, a small but vocal group of scholars have started to question Holtzmann’s classic thesis.<sup>8</sup> One of

---

<sup>3</sup> See J. Herzer, ‘Abschied vom Konsens? Die Pseudepigraphie der Pastoralbriefe als Herausforderung an die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft’, *TLZ* 129 (2004), 1267-82; M. Gourgues, ‘La recherche sur les Pastorales à un tournant?’, *ScEs* 61 (2009), 73-86; I. H. Marshall, ‘The Pastoral Epistles in Recent Study’, in *Entrusted with the Gospel: Paul’s Theology in the Pastoral Epistles*, eds A. J. Köstenberger and T. L. Wilder (Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman, 2012), 268-324, esp. 304-308.

<sup>4</sup> See J. van Nes, ‘On the Origin of the Pastorals’ Authenticity Criticism: A “New” Perspective’, *NTS* 62 (2016), 315-20.

<sup>5</sup> H. J. Holtzmann, *Die Pastoralbriefe, kritisch und exegetisch behandelt* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1880). For a more recent defence of the PEs’ common (pseudonymous) authorship, see G. Häfner, ‘Das Corpus Pastorale als literarisches Konstrukt’, *TQ* 187 (2007), 258-73.

<sup>6</sup> M. Harding, *What Are They Saying About the Pastoral Epistles?* (New York/New Jersey: Paulist, 2001), 11.

<sup>7</sup> Holtzmann, *Pastoralbriefe*, 15-37, 84-118, 159-90, 253-82, esp. 253-56.

<sup>8</sup> See, for instance, P. Hofrichter, ‘Strukturdebatte im Namen des Apostles. Zur Abhängigkeit der Pastoralbriefe untereinander und vom ersten Petrusbrief’, in *Anfänge der Theologie*, ed. N. Brox et al. (Graz: Styria, 1987), 101-16; M. Prior, *Paul the Letter-Writer and the Second Letter to Timothy* (JSNTSup, 23; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989); J. Murphy-O’Connor, ‘2 Timothy Contrasted with 1 Timothy and Titus’, *RB* 98 (1991), 403-18; L. T. Johnson, *Letters to Paul’s Delegates: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus* (NTC; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 1-36; B. Reicke, *Re-examining Paul’s Letters: The History of the Pauline Correspondence*, eds D. P. Moessner and I. Reicke (Harrisburg, Pennsylvania: Trinity Press International, 2001), 105-20; R. M. Price, ‘Schleiermacher’s Dormant Discovery’, *JHC* 9 (2002), 203-16; W. A. Richards, *Difference and Distance in Post-Pauline Christianity: An Epistolary Analysis of the Pastorals* (StBibLit, 44; New York: Lang, 2002); R. Fuchs, *Unerwartete Unterschiede. Müssen wir unsere Ansichten über die Pastoralbriefe revidieren?* (BM, 12; Wuppertal: Brockhaus, 2003); G. M. Wieland, *The Significance of Salvation: A Study of Salvation Language in the Pastoral Epistles* (PBM; Bletchley: Paternoster, 2006); P. H. Towner, *The Letters to Timothy and Titus* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2006), 27-89; J. W. Aageson, *Paul, the Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church* (LPS; Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson, 2008); J. Herzer, ‘Rearranging the “House of God”: A New Perspective on the Pastoral Epistles’, in *Empsychoi Logoi: Religious Innovations in Antiquity*, ed. A. Houtman et al. (Pieter W. van der Horst Festschrift; AGJU, 73; Leiden: Brill, 2008), 547-66; M. Gourgues, *Les deux lettres à Timothée. La lettre à Tite* (CbNT, 14; Paris: Cerf, 2009), 27-59; J. Luttenberger, *Prophetenmantel oder Bücherfutteral? Die persönlichen*

these scholars is Michaela Engelmann, whose recent doctoral dissertation alerts to numerous so-called 'motif-semantic' differences between the PE in terms of their Christology/soteriology, ecclesiology, heresiology, and image of Paul.<sup>9</sup> She believes these motif-semantic differences attest to the plural authorship of the PE, which form a letter corpus by reception and not by intention.

Engelmann's work is without doubt a major contribution to the ongoing study of the PEs' origins. It significantly adds to the case for the letters' plural authorship, which seems to have gained strength over the years. However, it also raises questions regarding the methodology used by scholars who reject the common authorship of the PE. The aim of the present study therefore is not so much to challenge the case for the PEs' plural authorship, but rather to question the underlying method of studies supporting it. As the most comprehensive to date, the study of Engelmann lends itself to this purpose *par excellence*, and will serve as a dialogue partner.

## 2. The Pastorals as Inseparable Triplets? Engelmann's Thesis

Engelmann, in a study extending over 700 pages, boldly challenges Holtzmann's corpus theory that the PE are inseparable triplets. After discussing matters of terminology and the history of research,<sup>10</sup> Engelmann concludes that the PE have suffered far too long from the question of authorship, as this seems to have preoccupied scholars more than anything else in the last two centuries. The scholarly assumption of common authorship as based on the PEs' numerous lexical, grammatical, and thematic affinities has led to serious neglect of their individual qualities.<sup>11</sup> By way of an alternative, Engelmann proposes to study the PEs' central motifs and common theological themes in terms of (1) Christology/soteriology, (2) ecclesiology, (3) heresiology, and (4) the image of Paul separately.

---

*Notizen in den Pastoralbriefen im Licht antiker Epistolographie und literarischer Pseudepigraphie* (ABG, 40; Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 2012).

<sup>9</sup> M. Engelmann, *Unzertrennliche Drillinge? Motivsemantische Untersuchungen zum literarischen Verhältnis der Pastoralbriefe* (BZNW 192; Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012).

<sup>10</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennliche Drillinge?*, 1-106.

<sup>11</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennliche Drillinge?*, 107-17.

As a result, Engelmann with regard to Christology/soteriology finds different uses of salvation terminology (σωτήρ – ‘saviour’ – etc.) in the PE. Titus (1:3, 4; 2:10, 11, 13; 3:4, 6) applies such language to God and Christ. In 1 and 2 Timothy, however, σωτήρ is used more restrictively as it is applied exclusively to either God (cf. 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10) or Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 1:10).<sup>12</sup> Similar differences are found in the PE’s use of epiphany terminology (ἐπιφάνεια – ‘appearance’ – etc.). In Titus, such terms point to God’s act in Christ, referring to both his earthly (cf. 1:3) and future appearance (cf. 2:11, 13). This is also the case in 1 Timothy (3:16; 4:15; 6:14), but unlike in Titus epiphany language connotes no eschatological expectations. In 2 Timothy (1:10; 4:1, 8), it mainly points to Christ’s earthly appearance.<sup>13</sup>

In terms of ecclesiology, Engelmann affirms the shift that has been observed by scholars from ‘vertical’ to ‘horizontal’ Christianity in the PE, given their strong emphasis on hierarchy and tradition. Focusing on household terminology (οἶκος/οἰκία – ‘house’ – etc.), Engelmann insists that only Titus (1:7, 11; 2:5) and especially 1 Timothy (1:4; 3:4, 5, 12, 15; 5:4, 8, 13, 14) reflect strong community structures, as such terminology in 2 Timothy (1:16; 2:20; 3:6; 4:19) applies to individual households only.<sup>14</sup> In addition, Engelmann discerns different organisational structures in the PE, discussing their conceptions of ἐπίσκοποι (‘overseers’), πρεσβύτεροι (‘elders’), διάκονοι (‘deacons’), and χήραι (‘widows’).<sup>15</sup> Engelmann also devotes an excursus to the concept of εὐσέβεια (‘piety’) in the PE, which relates to the moral behaviour of church and household members. While it denotes the virtue of truthful living in Titus (1:1) in particular and 2 Timothy (3:5) in general, in 1 Timothy (2:2; 3:16; 4:7, 8; 6:3, 5, 6, 11) it is a central motif that is used in a Hellenistic fashion to encourage the practice of a pious lifestyle.<sup>16</sup>

With regard to heresiology, Engelmann observes motif-semantic differences in the PE’s use of μῦθος (‘myth’). The term specifically relates to the false teaching of the opponents in Titus and 1 Timothy. While in Titus (1:14) μῦθος seems to apply to the teachings of Judaizers, in 1 Timothy (1:4; 4:7) it seems to apply to the doctrines of

<sup>12</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 118-50.

<sup>13</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 150-76.

<sup>14</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 177-235.

<sup>15</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 235-344.

<sup>16</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 345-63.

semi-Gnostics. In 2 Timothy (4:4), however, the term is used in a general sense, as it has no specific referent.<sup>17</sup> Similarly, Engelmann points out subtle nuances in the motif-semantics of γενεαλογία ('genealogy'). Missing from 2 Timothy, the term as used in Titus (3:9) and 1 Timothy (1:4) seems to support a connection to Judaistic and semi-Gnostic opposition respectively.<sup>18</sup> With regard to the opponents, only in 1 and 2 Timothy are specific individuals named. Unlike 1 Timothy, however, 2 Timothy (1:15; 2:17; 4:10, 14) emphasises the personal harm inflicted on Paul. The opponents' turning away from the truth by claiming that the resurrection has already taken place (cf. 2 Tim. 1:18; 4:4) makes them an inner threat to the Ephesian church. Among the false teachers mentioned in 2 Timothy (2:17; 4:14) are Hymenaeus and Alexander, both of whom are also mentioned in 1 Timothy (1:20). Unlike 2 Timothy, however, they are 'handed over to Satan' and therefore seem to be expelled from the community (cf. 1 Cor. 5:1-5).<sup>19</sup>

The image of Paul in the PE is shown to be different also. Engelmann studies the representation of Παῦλος as based on prescripts, use of personal notes, and '*Paulusanamnesen*', i.e. pseudo-biographical details inserted for theological purposes. In Titus (1:1), Paul's authority is not established (yet), and needs further grounding. By introducing himself as a δοῦλος θεοῦ ('slave of God'), the author tries to make Paul stand in continuity with Israel's salvation history. Except for 3:11-13, no genuine Pauline fragments are embedded in Titus. 1 Timothy, on the other hand, needs no additional authorisation. It even claims Paul's authority by celebrating him as herald, apostle, and teacher of the Gentiles (cf. 1 Tim. 2:7). No personal notes are used, but 1:12-17, 2:7, 3:14-15, and 4:13 might be *Paulusanamnesen*. Unlike 1 Timothy and Titus, however, 2 Timothy stresses the need for a faithful successor who guards the truth of Paul's apostolic teaching after his death. For this purpose, a good number of biographical notes (cf. 2 Tim. 1:15-18; 3:10-11; 4:6-8, 9-22) and *Paulusanamnesen* (cf. 2 Tim. 1:3-5, 11) are incorporated.<sup>20</sup> Engelmann adds another excursus on the concept of παραθήκη ('deposit') in the PE. The term is found only in the Timothy correspondence, but in 1 Timothy (6:20) it denotes the contents of the

<sup>17</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 364-401.

<sup>18</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 401-408.

<sup>19</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 408-32.

<sup>20</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 433-535.

overall letter, while in 2 Timothy (1:12, 14) it denotes the Gospel as a paradigm for sound teaching.<sup>21</sup>

Overall, Engelmann concludes that many of the motifs and concepts previously used by scholars to support the PE's common origin actually prove otherwise. Based on her findings, Engelmann argues that the PE are individual compositions written by three pseudonymous authors over a longer period of time in the order 2 Timothy–Titus–1 Timothy. The first of these, 2 Timothy, includes many genuine notes and is closest to Paul's language as reflected in his undisputed writings. Titus, while fully grounded in Pauline theology, seems to be more distant from Paul than 2 Timothy. 1 Timothy was probably the latest composition, given its attestation to second-century Gnostic opposition and highest developed church order. By adopting materials from 2 Timothy and Titus, the author of 1 Timothy wanted to make it look like the final part of a tripartite Pauline letter-corpus.<sup>22</sup>

### 3. Methodological Considerations

Thus far, the study of Engelmann has been welcomed positively, as it makes an excellent case for the PEs' individual compositions.<sup>23</sup> Its overall conclusion that the PE substantially differ in motif and altogether constitute a receptional rather than intentional Pauline letter-corpus of which 1 Timothy is the final piece is highly plausible. Yet the argument for the PEs' plural authorship gives rise to at least three methodological questions.

First, even if the assumption of genuine Pauline fragments and *Paulusanamnesen* in the PE is warranted,<sup>24</sup> how are they to be located?

---

<sup>21</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlliche Drillinge?*, 536-58.

<sup>22</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlliche Drillinge?*, 559-601.

<sup>23</sup> See the reviews by J. van Nes in *JTS* 64 (2013), 676-78; S. Al-Suadi in *Religious Studies Review* 40 (2014), 161; M. Gourgues in *ScEs* 67 (2015), 148-53; and M. Janßen in *BZ* 59 (2015), 135-38.

<sup>24</sup> See, for instance, C. F. D. Moule, 'The Problem of the Pastoral Epistles: A Reappraisal', *BJRL* 47 (1965), 448, repr. in *Essays in New Testament Interpretation* (Cambridge: CUP, 1982), 129. Engelmann also poorly interacts with the detailed study of D. Cook, 'The Pastoral Fragments Reconsidered', *JTS* 35 (1984), 120-31, which demonstrates that there is uniformity in language and style throughout the PE. A similar conclusion was drawn by G. K. Barr, *Scalometry and the Pauline Epistles* (JSNTSup, 261; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2004), 88-93, whose highly sophisticated study is missing from Engelmann's bibliography. Barr concludes that only the passages regarding church leaders (cf. 1 Tim. 3:1-16 and Titus 1:7-9, 12-16)

Their presence is used as weighty evidence in support of editorial motives behind the different images of Paul in the PE, but a sound methodological framework to identify personal notes and *Anamnesen* is wanting. One of the few recent attempts to formulate criteria in order to find preformed traditions in the PE was by Mark Yarbrough, whose study is missing from Engelmann's bibliography.<sup>25</sup>

Second, does motif-semantic variation necessarily imply historical distance? According to George Wieland, whose work is also missing from Engelmann's bibliography, the answer to this question must be negative. Like Engelmann, Wieland, in what is 'one of the most comprehensive exegetical studies available of salvation in the Pastoral Epistles',<sup>26</sup> examined each letter separately for its key soteriological themes: (1) the benefits of salvation, (2) God and Christ in relation to salvation, (3) Paul and salvation, and (4) those who are saved. While each of the PEs is found to offer its own 'distinctive soteriological presentation' in 'response to a particular occasion',<sup>27</sup> Wieland for Titus alone concludes:

The short letter of Titus, while employing some novel language ... moves from pretemporal promise to eschatological glory, finding the source of salvation in God's grace and mercy, its achievement in Christ's self-giving to redeem and the giving of new life by the Spirit. Again, when considered independently of the other PE, the language of 'justified by grace' resonates with that of Paul and is not contradicted by the practical emphasis on good works as the proper *modus vivendi* of the community whose life is intended to authenticate its message.<sup>28</sup>

In a later article, Wieland points out – on the basis of ancient sources and archaeological discoveries – that some of Titus's ethical instructions (cf. 2:1–3:2), theological statements (cf. 1:2, 12; 3:4–7), incidental expressions (cf. 1:5, 10), and description of proper names (cf. 3:13) aptly correspond to aspects of first-century Cretan society and religious life.<sup>29</sup> All of these findings allow for Titus's Pauline

---

might be later interpolations, which is very different from Engelmann's selection of fragments (and *Anamnesen*).

<sup>25</sup> M. M. Yarbrough, *Paul's Utilization of Preformed Traditions in 1 Timothy: An Evaluation of the Apostle's Literary, Rhetorical, and Theological Tactics* (LNTS, 417; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 17–57.

<sup>26</sup> J. W. Aageson, review of Wieland, *Significance* in *CBQ* 70 (2008), 177.

<sup>27</sup> Wieland, *Significance*, 248.

<sup>28</sup> Wieland, *Significance*, 253.

<sup>29</sup> G. M. Wieland, 'Roman Crete and the Letter to Titus', *NTS* 55 (2009), 338–54.

authorship and suggest a real rather than ‘non-genuine’<sup>30</sup> Cretan community behind the addressee(s). Thus, while using a methodology very similar to that of Engelmann’s, Wieland demonstrates that the soteriological and socio-historical distinctives of Titus (like those of 1 and 2 Timothy) do not necessarily require a post-Pauline author or date.

Finally, even if the evidence presented by Engelmann (and others) warrants the assumption that the PE are pseudonymous compositions because it simply outweighs the evidence presented by scholars such as Wieland, how much are members of the *Corpus Paulinum* allowed to differ from one another before one can speculate about their plural authorship? Engelmann, for instance, finds motif-semantic differences for only three common terms that are unique to the PE (δεσπότης [‘master’],<sup>31</sup> εὐσέβεια, μῦθος), while she ignores twice the amount of such expressions that apparently do not differ motif-semantically (ἀρνέομαι [‘to deny’], ζήτησις [‘debate’], παραιτέομαι [‘to refuse’], πιστός ὁ λόγος [‘trustworthy is the saying’], ὑγιαίνω [‘to be healthy’], ὠφέλιμος [‘useful’]). This begs the question which and how many parameters eventually may discriminate between authors? If the mere listing of differences between the PE may serve as sufficient evidence for their plural pseudonymity, will no other New Testament letter attributed to Paul become suspect of being authored by someone other than the apostle?

#### 4. Motif-Semantic Differences in Paul? 1 Thessalonians and Philippians as a Test-Case

To illustrate some of the concerns raised above, the remainder of this study considers two New Testament letters that are almost universally agreed to have been written during Paul’s lifetime and under his direction: 1 Thessalonians and Philippians.<sup>32</sup> Similar to Engelmann’s

<sup>30</sup> Engelmann, *Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 579.

<sup>31</sup> In the margins, Engelmann (*Unzertrennlche Drillinge?*, 218-19) notes that, unlike in Titus (2:9) and 1 Timothy (6:1-2), δεσπότης in 2 Timothy (2:21) applies to God.

<sup>32</sup> Exceptions notwithstanding – e.g. E. Evanson, *The Dissonance of the Four Generally Received Evangelists and the Evidence of Their Respective Authenticity Examined*, 2nd ed. (Gloucester: Walker, 1805), 314-18; K. Schrader, *Der Apostel Paulus*, 5 vols (Leipzig: Kollmann, 1830-1836), vol. 5, 23-36; B. Bauer, *Kritik der paulinischen Briefe*, 3 vols (Berlin: Hempel, 1850-1852), vol. 3, 89-100, 110-17; A. B. van der Vies, *De beide brieven aan de Thessalonicensen. Historisch-kritisch onderzoek*

approach, both letters are analysed separately for their motif-semantic differences in terms of Christology/soteriology, ecclesiology, heresiology, and image of Paul.

#### **4:1 Christology/Soteriology**

Christological and/or soteriological language abounds in 1 Thessalonians and Philippians. The following expressions are studied for their motif-semantic variation: (a) εὐαγγέλιον ('Gospel'), (b) πίστις ('faith'), ἀγάπη ('love'), ἐλπίς ('hope'), (c) ἐν Χριστῷ ('in Christ'), (d) παρουσία ('coming' or 'presence') and (e) σωτηρία ('salvation').

##### **a. εὐαγγέλιον**

Central to the proclamation of 1 Thessalonians, according to Karl Donfried, 'is a God who is described as 'a living and true God' who raised his Son, Jesus, from the dead, and the claim that this action will deliver the Thessalonian believers from the 'wrath' to come<sup>33</sup> (cf. 1:9-10). This, in short, is the εὐαγγέλιον of both God (cf. 2:2, 8, 9) and Christ (cf. 3:2) that was entrusted to (cf. 2:4) and proclaimed by (cf. 1:5) Paul. It had reached the Thessalonians not only as a spoken word, but also in power, in the Holy Spirit, and in full conviction (cf. 1:5). To

---

*naar hunnen oorsprong* (Leiden: Van Doesburgh, 1865), 97-127; F. C. Baur, *Paulus, der Apostel Jesu Christi. Sein Leben und Wirken, seine Briefe und seine Lehre*, vol. 2, ed. E. Zeller, 2nd ed. (Leipzig: Fues, 1866), 50-88, 94-107; M. A. N. Rovers, *Nieuwtestamentische letterkunde*, 2nd ed. ('s-Hertogenbosch: Muller, 1888), 42-46, 49-55; W. C. van Manen, *Handleiding voor de oudchristelijke letterkunde* (Leiden: Van Nifferik, 1900), 49-51, 53-54; H. Detering, *Der gefälschte Paulus. Das Urchristentum im Zwielflicht* (Düsseldorf: Patmos, 1995), 104-53; M. Crüsemann, *Die pseudepigraphen Briefe an die Gemeinde in Thessaloniki. Studien zu ihrer Abfassung und zur jüdisch-christlichen Sozialgeschichte* (BWANT, 191; Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 2010), 79-185 – the vast majority of scholars in the history of the church has never questioned the authenticity of 1 Thessalonians and/or Philippians. To assume the common authorship of both letters is therefore equally (if not more) appropriate than assuming the common pseudonymity of the PE, for this hypothesis has been contested by many scholars in the past – see, for instance, the history of interpretation offered by L. T. Johnson, *The First and Second Letters to Timothy* (AB, 35A; New York: Doubleday, 2001), 20-54. Accordingly, the literary unity of both 1 Thessalonians and Philippians is also presupposed. This might be questionable – cf. U. Schnelle, *Einleitung in das Neue Testament*, 8th ed. (UTB, 1830; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 67-69, 165-68 – but the only fragment that is suspect of being a non-Pauline interpolation is 1 Thessalonians 2:13-16. For a recent defence of its authenticity, see D. Luckensmeyer, *The Eschatology of First Thessalonians* (NTOA, 71; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 115-72.

<sup>33</sup> K. P. Donfried, 'The Theology of 1 Thessalonians', in *The Theology of the Shorter Pauline Letters*, eds K. P. Donfried and I. H. Marshall (NTT; Cambridge: CUP, 1993), 29.

this message of salvation the Thessalonian believers were called and elected, which assured them of belonging to God's chosen people (cf. 1:1, 4; 2:12; 4:7; 5:24).<sup>34</sup>

The theme of election surfaces less prominently in Philippians, but the Gospel as preached (cf. 1:5, 12, 14; 2:16; 4:3, 15), served (2:22), defended (cf. 1:7, 16), and confirmed (cf. 1:7) by Paul and his companions is one of its central concerns also.<sup>35</sup> Philippians, however, focuses on the proclamation and outworking of this Gospel more than its actual contents.<sup>36</sup> It matches with 'the word' (1:14; cf. 1:18) that brings life (cf. 2:16), yet is referred to only as the 'gospel of Christ' (1:27) for which the Philippians need to strive 'in faith' (1:27b), that is, they need to live a life in a manner that is worthy of it (cf. 1:27a).<sup>37</sup> The outworking of the Gospel in the lives of Philippian believers is marked *inter alia* by the symbol of the cross, which is missing entirely from 1 Thessalonians. As Demetrius Williams has shown, Christ's willingness to die on a cross (cf. 2:6-11) is something to be imitated by Paul and the Philippians (cf. 3:1-21) in order to live an obedient life that saves one from judgment and brings about salvation (cf. 1:28).<sup>38</sup>

### b. πίστις, ἀγάπη, ἐλπίς

A further specification of Paul's gospel of election is the triadic formulation of πίστις, ἀγάπη, and ἐλπίς in 1 Thessalonians (cf. 1:3; 5:8).<sup>39</sup> Individually, faith in itself is said to have its object in God (cf. 1:8) and needs to be established (cf. 3:2). While the Thessalonians are praised for their faith (cf. 3:5-7), they could still grow in it (cf. 3:10). Faith is closely connected to love (cf. 3:6; 5:8), which must increase and abound (cf. 3:12). It concerns 'the needs of the body of Christ, its weak members as well as its leadership'<sup>40</sup> (cf. 5:13). Hope is what

<sup>34</sup> Cf. I. H. Marshall, 'Election and Calling to Salvation in 1 and 2 Thessalonians', in *The Thessalonian Correspondence*, ed. R. F. Collins (BETL, 87; Leuven: Peeters, 1990), 259-76.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. I. H. Marshall, 'The Theology of Philippians', in *The Theology of the Shorter Pauline Letters*, eds K. P. Donfried and I. H. Marshall (NTT; Cambridge: CUP, 1993), 117-74, esp. 127.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. G. D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 47.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Marshall, 'Philippians', 117-74, esp. 127.

<sup>38</sup> D. K. Williams, *Enemies of the Cross of Christ. The Terminology of the Cross and Conflict in Philippians* (JSNTSup, 223; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2002), 106-233.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Donfried, '1 Thessalonians', 28-63, esp. 53.

<sup>40</sup> Donfried, '1 Thessalonians', 56.

differentiates believers from non-believers (cf. 4:13), as the former believe that because of Christ's death and resurrection God will reunite believers with deceased ones at Christ's return (cf. 4:14).<sup>41</sup> Hope is also what unites Paul and the Thessalonians in that the latter are evidence of the apostle's effective ministry and eschatological reward (cf. 2:19).<sup>42</sup>

All three virtues of faith, love, and hope are also found in Philippians. Unlike 1 Thessalonians, however, they do not appear together in a single verse. Faith is said to have its basis in God and object in Christ (cf. 3:9).<sup>43</sup> It seems to equal the Gospel (cf. 1:27),<sup>44</sup> and is to be enjoyed (cf. 1:25). It is also uniquely described as sacrificial service (cf. 2:17). Love is implied to come from God (cf. 2:1)<sup>45</sup> and is experienced by Paul when the Gospel is proclaimed (cf. 1:16) or when it is shown to one another (cf. 2:2). Paul desires love to abound among the Philippians (cf. 1:9). The term hope has no eschatological connotations, and is referred to only once in relation to Paul's ambition to glorify Christ (cf. 1:20).

### c. ἐν Χριστῷ

From the very beginning of 1 Thessalonians, believers are said to be 'in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ' (1:1). The typical Pauline phrase ἐν Χριστῷ (= ἐν κυρίῳ 'in the Lord') is used another seven times in the letter. In his comparative study, Constantine Campbell distinguishes at least four different uses of this phrase: (1) as a periphrasis for believers (cf. 1:1; 2:14), (2) as related to believer's actions (cf. 3:8; 4:1; 5:12), (3) as a new status for believers (cf. 4:16), and (4) as connected explicitly to God or the Spirit as part of the Trinity (cf. 5:18).<sup>46</sup>

According to Howard Marshall, the variety of usage of ἐν Χριστῷ (= ἐν κυρίῳ = ἐν αὐτῷ 'in him') in Philippians is 'very similar' to

<sup>41</sup> J. A. D. Weima, *1–2 Thessalonians* (BECNT; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2014), 318.

<sup>42</sup> A. J. Malherbe, *The Letters to the Thessalonians* (AB, 32B; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 185.

<sup>43</sup> So J. Reumann, *Philippians* (AB, 33B; New Haven: YUP, 2008), 520-22.

<sup>44</sup> Fee (*Philippians*, 167) thinks the unusual phrase τῆ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ('the faith of the Gospel') is appositional.

<sup>45</sup> So Fee, *Philippians*, 180-81.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. C. R. Campbell, *Paul and Union with Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study* (Grand Rapids, Michiga: Zondervan, 2012), 119, 126, 139, 164-66.

1 (and 2) Thessalonians.<sup>47</sup> This assertion is only partially confirmed by the study of Campbell, showing Philippians' many uses of the phrase: (1) as a periphrasis for believers (cf. 1:1, 13-14; 2:19; 4:21), (2) as connected to believers' actions (cf. 2:24, 29; 3:1, 3; 4:1-2, 4, 10), and (3) as related to other members of the Trinity (cf. 3:14; 4:7, 19).<sup>48</sup> Yet Campbell in addition finds three other uses: (4) as connected to believers' characteristics (cf. 1:26; 2:1, 5), (5) as a reference to things that have been achieved for believers (cf. 4:7, 19), and (6) as related to believers' present participation in the events of Christ's narrative (cf. 3:9).<sup>49</sup> Furthermore, (7) Philippians uses the phrase σύν Χριστῷ ('with Christ') in reference to future participation or union with Christ (cf. 1:23).<sup>50</sup> Upon comparison with 1 Thessalonians, therefore, Philippians not only uses the phrase ἐν Χριστῷ more frequently (twenty-three times in total), but also in a more versatile way.

#### **d. παρουσία**

Of all Pauline letters, 1 Thessalonians is distinguished by the way it is dominated by future concerns (cf. 1:9-10; 2:19-20; 3:13; 4:13-5:11; 5:23).<sup>51</sup> The new state of being ἐν Χριστῷ results not only in serving God, but also in waiting for his Son to come from heaven (cf. 1:9-10). According to Donfried, it is 'Jesus' resurrection and the fact that the believer is ἐν Χριστῷ that leads to Paul's assurance of the believer's union with Jesus'<sup>52</sup> at his return. When referring to Jesus' coming, Paul prefers to use the word παρουσία (cf. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23). Twice it directly relates to holiness, a state or condition in which Paul wishes the Thessalonians to be found when Christ returns (cf. 3:13; 5:23). An alternative expression that Paul uses for this future event is ἡ ἡμέρα κυρίου ('the Lord's day'), pointing to the moment of Christ's return (cf. 5:2, 4).

Whereas eschatology is arguably 'the best hermeneutical key to interpret Paul's pattern of exhortation in [1] Thessalonians',<sup>53</sup> it is not among the major theological motifs of Philippians. When Christ's

<sup>47</sup> I. H. Marshall, *New Testament Theology: Many Witnesses, One Gospel* (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 2004), 353.

<sup>48</sup> Campbell, *Paul*, 99-100, 124-25, 138-39, 161-63, 171, 174.

<sup>49</sup> Campbell, *Paul*, 89-91, 104-105, 233.

<sup>50</sup> Campbell, *Paul*, 222-23.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Marshall, *New Testament Theology*, 244.

<sup>52</sup> Donfried, '1 Thessalonians', 35.

<sup>53</sup> Luckensmeyer, *Eschatology*, 319.

second coming is mentioned (cf. 1:6, 10; 2:16), it is referred to as *ἡμέρα Χριστοῦ* (Ἰησοῦ). Paul uses the word *παρουσία* only in relation to his own presence (cf. 2:12) or coming to the Philippians (cf. 1:26). Accordingly, it has no eschatological connotations. The unique phrase 'The Lord is near' (4:5) might echo apocalyptic language (cf. Zeph. 1:7, 14; Rom. 13:12), but if it introduces verses 6-7 it might also be an expression of realised eschatology ('Because the Lord is ever present, do not be anxious but pray').<sup>54</sup> If it is apocalyptic, Paul does not seem to expect Christ to return as soon as he implies in 1 Thessalonians (cf. 1:9; 2:19-20).<sup>55</sup>

### e. σωτηρία

Similar to *παρουσία*, the term *σωτηρία* in 1 Thessalonians has eschatological connotations. It is the explicit object of hope (cf. 5:8) and is opposed to the *ὀργή* ('wrath') that is coming (cf. 1:10; 2:16; 5:9). In the larger context of 5:1-11, Paul is concerned with the status of the Thessalonians when the Lord returns. He

asserts that they ought not to face this day with fear but with a sober-mindedness that is accomplished by clothing themselves ... with hope in the triumphant return of Christ, who will ensure that the day of the Lord is for them not a day of wrath but of salvation.<sup>56</sup>

A connection between Christ's second coming and the achievement of salvation is only implicit in Philippians' description of the Lord Jesus as Saviour (cf. 3:20). It presupposes

that at the end the dead will be raised up (first) to meet with Christ when he comes, and then living believers will be caught up to be with them 'in the air' with Christ, and all will be changed, dead and living alike.<sup>57</sup>

But whereas Paul in 1 Thessalonians (4:13-18) seems to expect this union between Christ and believers to follow Christ's return, Paul in Philippians seems to expect that death will bring him into union with Christ immediately. Also, the use of *σωτηρία* in Philippians differs from 1 Thessalonians. On the one hand, it refers to eschatological salvation (cf. 1:28; 2:12) as opposed to eternal *ἀπώλεια* ('destruction'), but neither of those references is related to Christ's second coming and

---

<sup>54</sup> Fee, *Philippians*, 407-408.

<sup>55</sup> A. L. Moore, *The Parousia in the New Testament* (NovTSup, 13; Leiden: Brill, 1966), 124-25.

<sup>56</sup> Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians*, 364.

<sup>57</sup> Marshall, 'Philippians', 165.

seems to be achievable only by one's living according to a certain ethical standard (cf. 1:27-29; 2:12-14). On the other hand, σωτηρία may refer to Paul's personal vindication at court (cf. 1:19), that is, his deliverance from prison and execution (cf. 1:13-14, 21-26; 2:17, 23-24).<sup>58</sup> Some scholars think that σωτηρία in this case refers to Paul's eschatological vindication,<sup>59</sup> but such an interpretation is weakened by the fact that salvation is said to come through the prayers of the Philippians and help of Christ's Spirit (cf. 1:19).

#### **4:2 Ecclesiology**

Believers gathering in the name of Jesus are called an ἐκκλησία ('assembly'), which according to 1 Thessalonians is both 'in' (cf. 1:1) and 'of' (cf. 2:14) God. This ἐκκλησία is rooted in God, the Father, and in Jesus Christ, the Lord, reminding the Thessalonians that they are God's elect through Jesus, whom they proclaim as Lord. Because they are doing well already (cf. 1:7-10; 4:9-12), Paul encourages the Thessalonian believers to continue to comfort and edify one another (cf. 5:11). Initially, the assembly was led by the example of Paul and his companions (cf. 1:6), but now the Thessalonians have become a leading example themselves (cf. 1:7-8). They are led by τοὺς κοπιῶντας ('those who are labouring') among them, προϊσταμένους ('those who are having charge') over them, and νοθετοῦντας ('those who are admonishing') them in the Lord (cf. 5:12). According to Gordon Fee, the definite article that is used for these participles 'indicates that Paul is not referring to three different kinds of leaders, but to the variety of tasks that befall ... leaders'.<sup>60</sup> For all of these labours they are to be acknowledged by the Thessalonians (cf. 5:12), which gives the overall impression that leadership patterns are in an early stage of development in Thessalonica.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>58</sup> Cf. R. P. Martin and G. F. Hawthorne, *Philippians*, 2nd ed. (WBC, 43; Nashville, Tennessee: Nelson, 2004), 49-50.

<sup>59</sup> So, e.g. Fee, *Philippians*, 128-30; M. Silva, *Philippians*, 2nd ed. (BECNT; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 2005), 69-72; G. W. Hansen, *The Letter to the Philippians* (PiNNTC; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans / Nottingham: Apollos, 2009), 78-80. Personal and eschatological salvation need not be mutually exclusive interpretations, but at least it shows that the use of σωτηρία in 1:19 slightly differs from that in 1:28 and 2:12.

<sup>60</sup> G. D. Fee, *The First and Second Letters to the Thessalonians* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2009), 204.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. R. A. Campbell, *The Elders: Seniority within Earliest Christianity* (SNTW; London/New York: T&T Clark, 1994), 120-22.

By contrast, the Philippians are not directly addressed as an assembly (cf. 3:6; 4:15<sup>62</sup>), but instead are called 'holy ones' (1:1; cf. 4:21)<sup>63</sup> and a people worshipping God in the Spirit, boasting in Christ Jesus and putting no trust in the flesh (cf. 3:3). As a community, they clearly are more organised than the Thessalonians, given the supposed existence of at least two coordinated church offices (cf. 1:1): ἐπίσκοποι and διάκονοι. In view might be 'individual members of the congregation who are unequivocally characterized by the designation',<sup>64</sup> giving general oversight and rendering actual deeds of service to the congregation. They were probably singled out and distinguished from the holy ones either because of the mutual conflicts among the (female) leaders of the community (cf. 4:2-3)<sup>65</sup> or because they might have been largely responsible for raising the collection offered to Paul (cf. 4:14-18).<sup>66</sup> In addition to the office of ἐπίσκοπος and διάκονος, Epaphroditus is called (cf. 2:25) an ἀπόστολος ('apostle'). In this context the term seems to denote 'messenger', which differs from Paul's understanding of it in 1 Thessalonians (2:7).<sup>67</sup> Also, the Philippians unlike the Thessalonians give evidence of their corporate sharing in the Gospel (cf. 1:5), Holy Spirit (cf. 2:1), and sufferings of Christ (cf. 3:10). This constitutes the partnership they have with Paul, providing material support for his missionary activities (cf. 4:14-15).<sup>68</sup>

### 4:3 Heresiology

In terms of heresy, 1 Thessalonians is silent about specific opponents other than 'Satan' (2:18; cf. 3:5). Paul reminds the Thessalonian believers of the great opposition he and his companions encountered during their founding mission trips to Philippi and Thessalonica (cf. 2:2; 3:4). It seems as if the Thessalonians experience(d) more or less

---

<sup>62</sup> Note that μόνου ('alone') is in the nominative case, which distinguishes the Philippian believers from the assemblies Paul is referring to.

<sup>63</sup> The adjective ἅγιος ('holy one') is also used substantivally in 1 Thessalonians 3:13, but there it applies to heavenly and not earthly believers.

<sup>64</sup> H. W. Beyer, 'ἐπισκέπτομαι κτλ.', *TDNT*, vol. 2, ed. G. Friedrich, trans. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1964), 616.

<sup>65</sup> So e.g. Fee, *Philippians*, 69.

<sup>66</sup> So e.g. Silva, *Philippians*, 41.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Reumann, *Philippians*, 425-26.

<sup>68</sup> J. M. Ogereau, *Paul's Koinonia with the Philippians* (WUNT II, 377; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), 311.

the same *ἀγών* ('struggle') with their fellow citizens as did Jewish Christians in Judea (cf. 1:6; 2:14; 3:3).<sup>69</sup> These Judean persecutors are said to have killed Jesus and the prophets and to have prevented Paul and his companions from evangelising Gentiles, including the Thessalonians (cf. 2:15-16), and therefore displease God and oppose all people.<sup>70</sup> The emphasis on (life and) death in the letter (cf. 1:9-10; 2:15; 3:8; 4:13-17; 5:3, 10) suggests that these opponents were ready to kill.<sup>71</sup> Like the Thessalonians (cf. 3:3), Paul and his companions still suffer from distress and persecution (cf. 3:7).

In Philippi, however, the opposition appears to be less violent, but theologically more diverse (cf. 1:28). Paul, who himself is opposed by people proclaiming Christ with wrong motives (cf. 1:15-16; 2:21), does not elaborate much on the Philippian agitators (cf. 1:28), but since they altogether undergo the same struggle they might be pagan citizens participating in the emperor cult (cf. 1:13-17, 30).<sup>72</sup> In addition, Paul warns the Philippians to look out for Jewish Christians insisting upon the circumcision of Philippi's Gentile believers (cf. 3:2-3).<sup>73</sup> Using polemical language, Paul calls them 'dogs', 'evil labourers', and people of 'mutilation' as opposed to people of genuine 'circumcision'. While Judaizers might have been in view when Paul wrote that 'many live like enemies of the cross of Christ' (3:18a), the comment on their final destruction (cf. 3:19a) equally applies to the Gentile oppressors at Philippi (cf. 1:28).<sup>74</sup> According to Helmut Koester, Paul's teaching on eschatology (cf. 3:9-11) and attack against perfectionism (cf. 3:12-15) indicate that these enemies were early Christian missionaries of Jewish origin holding beliefs typical of early Christian Gnosticism.<sup>75</sup> This would account, as Ferdinand Christian Baur and Rudolf Bultmann once argued, for some of the language in Philippians reminiscent of Gnostic teachings (cf. 2:6-7, 10; 3:4, 10; Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.* 1:1:1; 1:2:2;

---

<sup>69</sup> Weima, *1-2 Thessalonians*, 167-68.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Fee, *Thessalonians*, 94-100.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. D. Luckensmeyer and B. Neil, 'Reading First Thessalonians as a Consolatory Letter in Light of Seneca and Ancient Handbooks on Letter Writing', *NTS* 62 (2016), 31-48, esp. 34-35.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Fee, *Philippians*, 167.

<sup>73</sup> Fee (*Philippians*, 294) argues that their presence is not real, but hypothetical.

<sup>74</sup> So e.g. M. Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (BNTC; London: A&C Black, 1997), 229-32.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. H. Koester, 'The Purpose of the Polemic of a Pauline Fragment', *NTS* 8 (1962), 317-32.

1:4:1-2; 1:5:1; Theodoret, *Haer. Fab.* 1:7).<sup>76</sup> Also, Paul addresses the imminent threat of disunity among the Philippians by urging Euodia and Syntyche 'to be of the same mind in the Lord' (4:2).

#### **4:4 Image of Paul**

While 1 Thessalonians is unique in the Pauline corpus for its consistent use of the first person plural, three exceptions (cf. 2:18; 3:5; 5:27) make clear that Paul is the *primus inter pares* among the letter senders (cf. 1:1). Throughout the letter one learns that Paul in this capacity is thankful (cf. 1:2, 13; 3:9), prays (cf. 1:2), comforts (cf. 4:13-18), suffers/suffered (cf. 2:2, 14; 3:4, 7), exhorts/exhorted (cf. 2:3, 11; 4:1, 10; 5:14), preached (cf. 1:5; 2:2, 8, 9, 13, 16), encouraged (cf. 2:11), testified (cf. 2:12), and instructed (cf. 4:2, 6, 11). The apostle longs to see the Thessalonians in person (cf. 2:17-18; 3:6, 10, 11) and feels comforted by their faith (cf. 3:7). In character, he presents himself as sincere (cf. 2:3), unselfish (cf. 2:5), modest (cf. 2:6), kind (cf. 2:7a), pure (cf. 2:10), upright (cf. 2:10), blameless (cf. 2:10), careful (cf. 2:7b, 11), loving (cf. 2:8; 3:12), and persistent (cf. 2:9, 13, 17; 3:10). Paul in his ministry has proven effective (cf. 2:1, 19-20; 3:5, 6), being entrusted with the Gospel by God himself (cf. 2:4) and able to speak on his behalf (cf. 4:15). One can learn the most about the apostle's persona in 2:1-12, in which he is described as 'a gentle, understanding leader who adapts to the circumstances and conditions of his converts when he was in Thessalonica'.<sup>77</sup> Because of its antithetical style and exhortation by means of personal example, Abraham Malherbe thinks this is the longest of various paraenetic sections in the letter (cf. 1:5, 8; 2:13, 17; 4:7, 8; 5:6, 9, 15) that align Paul with the tradition of popular philosophers like Dio Chrysostom (cf. *Or.* 32:8-12), Lucian (cf. *Dem.* 1-8), Maximus of Tyre (cf. *Or.* 15:9; 36:5), Pliny (cf. *Ep.* 7:1), Isocrates (cf. *Nic.* 12-62), and Pseudo-Isocrates (cf. *Dem.* 9-11).<sup>78</sup> Paul's personal example as witnessed by the Thessalonians is to be imitated, as attested by explicit and implicit parallels concerning purity (cf. 2:3//4:7), love (cf. 2:8//3:12; 5:13), labour (cf. 2:9//4:11), blamelessness (cf. 2:10//5:23), exhortation (cf. 2:11-12//5:11), comfort (cf. 2:12a//4:18), and God's calling to a moral life (cf. 2:12b//5:23-

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Baur, *Paulus*, 50-59 and R. Bultmann, 'γινώσκω κτλ.', *ThWNT*, vol. 1, ed. G. Friedrich (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1933), 688-719, esp. 710.

<sup>77</sup> Malherbe, *Thessalonians*, 156.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Malherbe, *Thessalonians*, 153-56.

24).<sup>79</sup> In sum, the overall image of Paul that is emerging in 1 Thessalonians is one of a fellow suffering role model.

This image matches with that of Philippians only partially. Writing exclusively in the first person singular, Paul according to the letter thanks (cf. 1:3), prays (cf. 1:4, 8), suffers/suffered (cf. 1:30; 3:10; 4:14), preached (1:5, 12; 4:3, 15), and is blameless with regard to Torah observance (cf. 3:6). The apostle also longs to see the Philippians again (cf. 1:8, 25-27; 4:1), urging them to imitate his example on the basis of their collective memory (cf. 3:17; 4:9). Yet whereas in 1 Thessalonians Paul himself seems to be the main example to be followed, in Philippians the main focus is on the example of Christ. By pointing to the latter's suffering and humility (cf. 2:5-8) as well as his glory and vindication (cf. 2:9-11), Paul tries to make 'Christ and the pattern of life in Christ present to the community'.<sup>80</sup> For this reason, Paul in the letter opening introduces himself as one of the δοῦλοι Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ ('slaves of Christ Jesus'), which gives him the authority to be a rightful (cf. 3:5-6) defender of the Gospel (cf. 1:7, 16) over against its opponents (cf. 1:15-17, 28; 3:2, 18-19).<sup>81</sup> The latter probably occasioned Paul's imprisonment (cf. 1:13-14), ending either in his release or death (cf. 1:19-26; 2:17, 23-24). Sharing in Christ's sufferings is reason for Paul to express his ultimate goal, which is to know Christ and the power of his resurrection (cf. 3:8, 10) in order to be among the resurrected (cf. 3:10-11, 14, 20). This is what makes him focus on Christ (cf. 3:12, 15), even though he is a former persecutor of the church and still has imperfections (cf. 3:6, 12-13). Knowing Christ's resurrection is what makes him forget what is behind and look forward to what lies ahead (cf. 3:14, 16) – 'the commonwealth in heaven' (3:20).<sup>82</sup> This is why Paul in the midst of suffering is able to rejoice (cf. 2:17-18), and why the Philippians should do the same (cf. 3:1). Knowing Christ's resurrection is why sharing in the advancement of the Gospel is important to Paul (cf. 1:18, 20; 2:16).<sup>83</sup> Thus by arguing 'that even as Christ suffered and that suffering served to

---

<sup>79</sup> Cf. Malherbe, *Thessalonians*, 156.

<sup>80</sup> P.-B. Smit, *Paradigms of Being in Christ: A Study of the Epistle to the Philippians* (LNTS, 476; London/New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 161.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Reumann, *Philippians*, 81-83.

<sup>82</sup> P. T. O'Brien, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (NIGTC; Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1991), 460.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Ogereau, *Koinonia*, 348.

advance the [G]ospel, so too the suffering of Christ's servants ... advances the [G]ospel', Paul essentially 'sets before the Philippians his proof for the value of his sufferings'.<sup>84</sup> This makes the overall image of Paul in Philippians more like that of a fellow suffering martyr in the double sense of the word, being both a prisoner of Christ and a witness to his Gospel of vindication.<sup>85</sup>

## 5. Conclusion

Engelmann's work is among the finest of studies on the literary relationship of the PE and in approach is representative of many recent studies, stressing the letters' individuality. It seriously challenges any intentional letter corpus theory as the following terms (and derivatives 'κτλ') in the PE are clearly proven to differ motif-semantically:

	Titus	1 Timothy	2 Timothy
<b>Christology/Soteriology</b>			
σωτήρ κτλ	applies to God and Christ	applies to God	applies to Christ
ἐπιφάνεια κτλ	refers to Christ's earthly and future (eschatological) appearance	refers to Christ's future (non-eschatological) appearance	mainly refers to Christ's earthly appearance
<b>Ecclesiology</b>			
οἶκος = οἰκία κτλ	relate to community structures	relate to strong community structures	relate to individual households
εὐσέβεια	truthful living (in particular)	a lifestyle to be practised	truthful living (in general)

<sup>84</sup> L. G. Bloomquist, *The Function of Suffering in Philippians* (JSNTSup, 78; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 196.

<sup>85</sup> On the theme of martyrdom in Philippians, see *inter alia* E. Lohmeyer, *Der Brief an die Philipper*, 14th ed. (KEK 9; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1974), 1-8; N. Walter, 'Die Philipper und das Leiden. Aus den Anfängen einer heidenchristlichen Gemeinde', in *Die Kirche des Anfangs*, ed. R. Schnackenburg et al. (Heinz Schürmann Festschrift; Fribourg: Herder, 1978), 417-33; J. S. Pobee, *Persecution and Martyrdom in the Theology of Paul* (JSNTSup, 6; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1985), 47-118; P. S. Minear, 'Singing and Suffering in Philippi', in *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul and John*, eds R. T. Fortna and B. R. Gaventa (James Louis Martyn Festschrift; Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon, 1990), 202-19.

**Heresiology**

μῦθος	denote Judaistic opponents	denote semi-Gnostic opponents	denotes opposition in general
γενεαλογία	<i>idem</i>	<i>idem</i>	–

**Image of Paul**

Παῦλος	stands in continuity with Israel's salvation history	is herald, apostle and teacher of the Gentiles	is in need of a faithful successor
παραθήκη	–	the contents of the letter	the Gospel as a paradigm for sound teaching

The question, however, is whether these findings have sufficient explanatory power to prove the PEs' plural authorship, because a cursory reading of 1 Thessalonians and Philippians has shown that both letters also exhibit a good number of motif-semantic differences:

<b>Term</b>	<b>1 Thessalonians</b>	<b>Philippians</b>
<b>Christology/Soteriology</b>		
εὐαγγέλιον	originates from God and Christ	originates from Christ
πίστις	has its object in God	has its basis in God and object in Christ
ἐλπίς	has eschatological connotations	has non-eschatological connotations
ἐν Χριστῷ = ἐν κυρίῳ = ἐν αὐτῷ	relates to believers, believers' actions, believers' new status and the Trinity	relates to believers, believers' actions, the Trinity, believers' characteristics, participation and things achieved for/given to people
παρουσία	refers to Christ's return	refers to Paul's presence or coming
σωτηρία	denotes the assured salvation (in contrast to ὀργή) of the Thessalonians	denotes Paul's deliverance from prison and the non-assured salvation (in contrast to ἀπόλεια) of the Philippians
<b>Ecclesiology</b>		
ἀπόστολος	a member of the Twelve	a messenger in general
ἐκκλησία	applies directly to the Thessalonians	applies indirectly to the Philippians
<b>Heresiology</b>		
ἀγών	includes physical abuse	includes doctrinal opposition
<b>Image of Paul</b>		
Παῦλος	is a fellow suffering role model	is a fellow suffering martyr (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ)

Even if not all of these motif-semantic differences are of equal weight, should one start thinking about renouncing the common authorship of 1 Thessalonians and Philippians? Supposing the young condition of the church in Thessalonica, as many scholars do, why should the more developed church order and heretical (possibly semi-Gnostic) teachings in Philippians not be taken as evidence for a date long after Paul's death?<sup>86</sup> Why are the letter's many biographical elements (cf. Phil. 1:12-26; 2:19-30; 3:4-16; 4:11-18) and Pauline parallels<sup>87</sup> always supposed to serve as evidence for its authenticity, if they can also betray the work of an imitator? In absence of any parameters that allow one to set boundaries for the common or plural authorship of Pauline letters, the pseudonymity of Philippians seems to be a necessary consequence to face.

It should be stressed, however, that the intention of this study has not been to argue for the pseudonymity of 1 Thessalonians or Philippians. Instead, its modest aim has been to evaluate some of the arguments used by scholars to support the plural authorship of the PE. Even though the alleged secured pseudonymity of the PE places Engelmann (and others) in a better position to question their common authorship, the lack of set parameters allows for the conclusion that motif-semantic differences in other parts of the Pauline epistolary attest to their non-Pauline authorship. It is, in the end, up to the reader to decide whether one should adopt this conclusion or reconsider the

---

<sup>86</sup> Most, if not all, Pauline chronologists would agree that Philippians postdates 1 Thessalonians. See, for instance, R. A. Jewett, *Dating Paul's Life* (London: SCM, 1979), 163-64; G. Lüdemann, *Paulus, Der Heidenapostel*, 2 vols (FRLANT, 123; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980-1983), vol. 1, 272-73; K. P. Donfried, 'Chronology: New Testament', in *ABD*, ed. D. N. Freedman, 6 vols (New York: Doubleday, 1992), vol. 1, 1011-22, esp. 1016-22; L. C. A. Alexander, 'Chronology of Paul', in *DPL*, eds G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin and D. G. Reid (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1993), 115-23, esp. 118; R. Riesner, *Die Frühzeit des Apostels Paulus. Studien zur Chronologie, Missionsstrategie und Theologie* (WUNT, 71; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1994), 286; J. Murphy-O'Connor, *Paul: A Critical Life* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 24-31.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Phil. 1:2//Rom. 1:7b; Phil. 1:3-4//Rom. 1:8a//Cor. 1:4a; Phil. 1:6b//Cor. 1:8; Phil. 1:8a//Rom. 1:9a; Phil. 1:27c//1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 2:2//Rom. 15:5; Phil. 2:12b//2 Cor. 7:15b; Phil. 2:21//1 Cor. 13:5; Phil. 2:24//Rom. 14:14; Phil. 2:25//Phlm. 2; Phil. 3:3b//1 Cor. 1:31b; Phil. 3:6a//Gal. 1:13b; Phil. 3:9//Rom. 1:17; Phil. 3:17//1 Cor. 11:1; Phil. 3:21//1 Cor. 15:27b; Phil. 4:9b//Rom. 15:33; Phil. 4:20//Rom. 16:27b; Phil. 4:23//Gal. 6:18.

explanatory power of listing motif-semantic differences between members of the *Corpus Paulinum*.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> Thanks are due to Prof. Dr Martin I. Webber, Prof. Dr Armin D. Baum and the unanimous reviewers of the *Tyndale Bulletin* for their helpful comments that improved this article.