

Appendix I: Writing An Exegetical Paper: Galatians 2:15-16 as an Example

I. Style and Format

For style of writing a researched paper, use *Chicago Manual*, 14th ed. or one that you are familiar with. Be consistent in style! For standard abbreviations of biblical, apocryphal, intertestamental, rabbinic books, Nag Hammadi tractates, and early patristic writings, please follow those listed in the “Instructions for Contributors,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 107 (1988): 584-587 (Appendix IV).

A. Consistency and convenience in abbreviation:

Biblical text (Exo/ Exod; 1 Pet/ 1 Pt/ 1 Pet.)

B. Consistency and convenience in Footnotes (no endnotes, please)

1. Purpose: a. crediting¹

b. background information, further research²

c. giving more information, scholarly dialogue³

2. Format: a. first appearance in full bibliographical information:

Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, 9 volumes, E.T. by G. W. Bromiley, index 10th volume by R. E. Pitkin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), Vol. 7, p. 779; B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents* (California: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 10-22; cf. E. E. Ellis, “‘Those of the Circumcision’ and the Early Christian Mission,” *Studia Evangelica* 4 (1968): 390.

b. second appearance in abbreviated form:

TDNT 7: 780; Brinsmead, *Galatians*, p. 15; Ellis, “‘Those of the Circumcision’,” 391.

c. Avoid using *ibid.*

d. *Idem.* is for former author.

e. Do not put a full-stop before opening bracket, unless the full-stop belongs to the abbreviated word, such as et al.; ed.

B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents*. (California: Scholars Press, 1982)

C. Consistency and convenience in Bibliography

1. Monograph:

Brinsmead, B. H. *Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents*. California: Scholars Press, 1982.

Kittel, G. and G. Friedrich, eds. *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. 9 volumes. E.T. by G. W. Bromiley, index 10th volume by R. E. Pitkin. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976.

¹Cf. E. Lohse, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. G. Kittel and G. Friedrich, 9 volumes, E.T. by G. W. Bromiley, index 10th volume by R. E. Pitkin (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964-1976), Vol. 7, p. 779; J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids, reprint, 1962), p. 222.

²For a brief survey of the “agitators” theories, see B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents* (California: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 10-22.

³Ζῆς (present tense) suggests the basic principle of Peter’s life, i.e., living like a Gentile. τῇ ὑποκρίσει (2:13) and ὑπάρχων (2:14) do not denote a purposefully evil motive on Peter’s part, but of masking his own real conviction. Cf. Bauer, *BAGD*, p. 845, 838; Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*, p. 113; Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 109; A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Broadman, 1933), Vol IV, p. 287; K. S. Wuest, *Galatians in the Greek New Testament* (Eerdmans, 1951), pp. 72-73; and Machen’s *Notes on Galatians*, ed. J. Skilton (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972), p. 138. My conclusion is that Peter’s behavior contradicts his own theological convictions, and for this reason, his behavior stood condemned (κατεγνωσμένον ἦν, 2:11).

2. Articles:

Ellis, E. E. "“Those of the Circumcision’ and the Early Christian Mission.” *Studia Evangelica* 4 (1968): 387-399.

D. Consistency and convenience of a Style-sheet (MS Word)

1. Setting and Applying style
2. Changing style
3. Borrowing style

II. Preliminary Research and Reflection

A. Compare several translations and check out textual variants to determine the text on which you are going to work. Greek text is to be used though translations are helpful in reflecting translators' interpretations.

Gal 2:15-16

Greek: MacBible

Gal. 2:15 Ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἀμαρτωλοί,

Gal. 2:16 εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

RSV: MacBible

Gal. 2:15 "We who are Jews by birth and not `Gentile sinners'

Gal. 2:16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

KJV: <http://www.hivolda.no/asf/kkf/rel-stud.html>Text Bible Browser

Gal 2:15] We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,

[Gal 2:16] Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Vulgate:

[Gal 2:15] legem mandatorum decretis evacuans ut duos condat in semet ipsum in unum novum hominem faciens pacem

[Gal 2:16] et reconciliet ambos in uno corpore Deo per crucem interficiens inimicitiam in semet ipso

GNT 2:16 εἰδότες [δὲ] ὅτι οὐ δικαιοῦται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν, ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

RSV 2:16 yet who know that a man is not justified by **works of the law** but through **faith in Jesus Christ**, even we have **believed in Christ Jesus**, in order to be justified by **faith in Christ**, and not by **works of the law**, because by **works of the law** shall no one be justified.

NIV 2:16 know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.

B. When a specific translation is needed to develop the point of your paper or when there are important textual variants, it might be appropriate to begin the paper with the Greek text of the pericope you are studying with proper translation rendered and the focused study of special terms.

Translation:

We who are Jews by nature and not Gentile sinners, know that a man is not justified by works of law except through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of law, because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.⁴

Special Term:

the identity of "we" (Jewish non-Christians; Jewish Christians, Paul and the apostles?)
meanings of "justified"; "works of law"; "faith in Jesus Christ"?

C. Research in Library: Since dialogue is an essential interactional and edificational process in theological enterprise, consulting others' interpretations in various articles and monographs is encouraged.

1. Articles

a. ATLA

b. Religious Index One

c. RTA

author Barth, Markus
title JUSTIFICATION: FROM TEXT TO SERMON ON GALATIANS 2:11 - 21.
journal Interpretation
year 1968
volume 22(2)
pages 147 - 157

-Too often those who seek to be and do right prove to be wrong. Justification is an act of God's judgment. God sent Jesus Christ to be our defense attorney who admits our guilt and appeals to God's mercy. In his death on the cross Jesus demonstrated God's love and bore the sinfulness of the wicked. Through Christ's resurrection life in Christ is available. God will complete his judgment by revealing how man's most horrible sins have contributed toward the working out of his will. One is justified by faith, i.e. God's faithfulness, Christ's love and obedience, and one's applause to God's judgment. The sermon is followed by several exegetical annotations.

author Tyson, Joseph B.
title "WORKS OF LAW" IN GALATIANS.
journal J of Biblical Literature
year 1973
volume 92(3)
pages 423 - 431

Examines the phrase *erga nomou* in Galatians 2:15 - 16; 3:2, 5; and 3:10 - 12. Concludes (1) "Works of law" refers specifically to a life dedicated to nomistic service; it is not to be confused with human deeds of a possibly meritorious quality. (2) Nomistic service is primarily associated with circumcision and the food laws. (3) Paul believes that the conditions set by nomistic service had been superseded by a new set of conditions which can be denoted as faith in Jesus Christ. The death of Jesus has made this possible, and it constitutes

⁴This verse has been widely accepted as the most important one (only one verse in Greek New Testament) in Galatians; e.g., T. W. Manson, *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, ed. M. Black (Manchester University Press, 1962), p. 188, says that this verse is the center theme and argument of Galatians. H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Fortress Press, 1979), p. 115 says this verse is the beginning of Paul's "propositio." Cf. G. S. Duncan, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1934), pp. 64-65.

God's rejection of nomistic service. (4) Paul's understanding of this rejection involves a broadening concept of the chosen people. God's people are marked by faith and the spirit rather than by circumcision and food laws.

author Lambrecht, Jan
title THE LINE OF THOUGHT N GAL. 2:14b-21.
journal New Testament Studies
year 1978
volume 24(4)
pages 484 - 495

Reviews and evaluates 2 interpretations of vv 17 - 18: (1) Jewish Christians were found to be sinners because they no longer observed the law, having become believers; (2) describes the situation of the Jewish Christians, prior to their becoming Christians. Discusses certain difficulties within the passage and presents elements of a possible solution: (1) it is better not to take the gar clause of v 18 as the explanation or motivation of the me genoito at the end of v 17; (2) v 17 prolongs the reasoning of vv15 - 16; (3) vv18 - 21 are not the direct explanation of Paul's negative answer to the questions of v17b; a relatively new train of thought begins in v18.

author Cohn-Sherbok, Dan
title SOME REFLECTIONS ON JAMES DUNN'S: `THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH (GAL. 2.11 - 18)'.
journal J for the Study of the New Testament
year 1983
volume 18
pages 68 - 74

Challenges James D. G. Dunn's "The Incident at Antioch (Gal 2:11 - 18)," JSNT, 1983, 18: 3 - 57. Argues that substantive evidence is lacking to support Dunn's claims about the socio-political background of the period, the actual issue involved in the table-fellowship at Antioch, and the impact of Paul's rebuke on Peter for the growth of the early church.

author Dunn, James D. G.
title THE INCIDENT AT ANTIOCH (Gal. 2:11 - 18).
journal J for the Study of the New Testament
year 1983
volume 18
pages 3 - 57

Explores the question of what it was that the delegation from James objected to in the table-fellowship at Antioch, and how that defect could be remedied. Argues that the Gentile believers were observing the basic dietary laws of the Torah, but the men from James demanded more scrupulous attention to ritual purity and tithing. Through Peter's withdrawal Paul came to see that justification through faith applied not only to conversion, but to the whole of the believer's life. The consequences for Paul and for the development of the early church were profound: the incident shaped the future of Paul's missionary work, it yielded insight into what became a central Pauline theological theme, and it determined the whole character and development of Christianity.

author Dunn, James D. G.
title THE NEW PERSPECTIVE ON PAUL.
journal Bulletin John Rylands Library
year 1983
volume 65(2)

pages 95 - 122

Credits E. P. Sanders' Paul and Palestinian Judaism with breaking the mold of Pauline studies, identifying the central view of 1st cent. Palestinian Judaism as covenantal nomism. Thoroughly examines Gal 2:16 in a fresh look at Paul from this new perspective. Understands God's justification as his recognition of Israel as his people on the grounds of his covenant with Israel. Rejects Luther's view of justification. Holds that Paul rejected "works of the law" that involved characteristic national Jewish works such as circumcision and sabbath. Understands Paul to make faith in Jesus as Messiah the only identifying mark of God's people. Concludes that for Paul God's purposes and God's people have expanded beyond physical Israel. Discusses several of Sanders' shortcomings.

author Raisanen, Heikki

title Galatians 2.16 And Paul's Break With Judaism.

journal New Testament Studies

year 1985

volume 31(4)

pages 543 - 553

J. D. G. Dunn's assessment of E. P. Sanders's "new perspective" on Paul overdraws the degree of continuity between Paul and Palestinian Judaism. Continuity there is, to be sure, but more discontinuity than Dunn admits. Paul may yet consider himself a good Jew, but has in fact come to a real change of values, a break. But Paul is not himself the originator of this discontinuity; it antedates him. (see abstract #1833)

2. Monographs: Galatians; Justification by faith; Torah.

When using the NUCAT, check commentary, monographs and also journal location.

Betz, Hans Dieter.

Title: Galatians : a commentary on Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia / by Hans Dieter Betz.

Published: Philadelphia : Fortress Press, c1979. BS 2683.3

Cousar, Charles B.

Title: Galatians / Charles B. Cousar.

Published: Atlanta : John Knox Press, c1982

Hansen, G. Walter, 1946-

Title: Galatians / G. Walter Hansen.

Published: Downers Grove, Ill. : InterVarsity Press, c1994

Krentz, Edgar.

Title: Galatians / Edgar Krentz. Philippians, Philemon / John Koenig. 1 Thessalonians / Donald H. Juel.

Published: Minneapolis : Augsburg Pub. House, c1985

D. Read, and Underline. Read critically!

E. Get a sense what the main thrust of the resources you have. You may decide to use one or more approaches of exegesis and hermeneutics (as shared by lecturer in the first lecture) in your paper. Make sure you know your orientation, presupposition, strength and limit of the approach you are using. None of the approach is flawless and so objective that it is absolute; none of the approach is so subjective and limitless that it is not worth trying.

III. Actual Writing (putting thought in words, creating with words)

A. Macro-level:

Study the literary context of the passage in terms of its relation to the writing as a whole; reflect on the style and content of the pericope, its literary structure and its logical development; clarify the theological and historical language of the passage.

Study the historical setting of the passage, taking account of the social implications, the presence of cited materials, the intention of the writer and the issues being addressed in the recipient community.

The Galatian Debate Concerning the “Full Gospel”

The occasion of Paul’s letter to the Churches of Galatia was a dispute over the place of the law in Christian faith and practice. The identity of Paul’s opponents is disputed.⁵ It is proposed here that they were conservative Jewish Christian missionaries from Jerusalem,⁶ inspired by a zealously Pharisaic spirit (cf. Acts 15:1). They seriously challenged Paul’s authority and required⁷ (cf. Gal 6:12) the Gentile Christians of Galatia to be circumcised and to observe the Torah (that sacred element in their culture). Their argument was that in doing so the Gentile Christians would be fully accepted as the true people of God, belonging to the line of Abraham, and able to enjoy the benefits of the “full gospel” (cf. Gal 2:12). These missionaries had invaded the Galatian church with a “different gospel” (1:7) in order to perfect Paul’s gospel. These intruders and the Judaizers from Jerusalem were probably related. Evidence from Galatians substantiates the view that the opponents were Jewish Christians from Jerusalem. According to Galatians 2:4, those who opposed Paul were brethren who had been secretly brought in from Jerusalem to spy out the freedom of Paul and his companions. These Jewish Christians demanded that Gentile Christians adopt circumcision (5:2, 6:12f) and obedience to the Torah (3:2, 5:4). Paul saw these requirements as enslaving, and he responded by charging his brethren with pursuing insincere objectives (4:17, 6:12). The suggestion that the agitators were Jewish Gnostics who obeyed the law for syncretistic reasons, as Schmithals proposes, is to be rejected, but that the opponents had an “orthodox, Pharisaic view of the law”⁸ is obviously correct.

The Antioch Incident

The immediate context of 2:15-16 is an incident that had occurred in Antioch. Gentile Christians had been fully accepted into the circle of those Jews who believed that Jesus was God’s Anointed. The pillars of Jerusalem had agreed that Gentiles need not be circumcised to be considered fellow believers and counted among the people of God (2:1-10). It was a normal custom for believers, Jews and Gentiles, to share fellowship meals together. But certain persons who had come from James caused Peter, Barnabas, and other Judean Jewish believers to withdraw from these fellowship meals with Gentile believers. The reason for their withdrawal was presumably to demonstrate their continued loyalty to their ancestral faith.⁹

Peter had been living (ζῆς)¹⁰ like a Gentile. His withdrawal from the fellowship meal was probably the result of pressure from the circumcision party.¹¹ Paul accused Peter of hypocrisy,¹² because Peter did not follow his own

⁵For a brief survey of the “agitators” theories, see B. H. Brinsmead, *Galatians - Dialogical Response to Opponents* (California: Scholars Press, 1982), pp. 10-22.

⁶After Paul’s last visit to Galatian churches (Acts 18:23), the itinerant Jewish Christian missionaries arrived (cf. Gal 1:7, 4:17, 5:10, 6:12).

⁷ Cf. Robert Jewett, “The Agitators and the Galatian Congregation,” *New Testament Studies* (7, 1970-1971) who says that 6:12 οὗτοι ἀναγκάζουσιν ὑμᾶς περιτέμνεσθαι “refers to the ‘necessity’ of circumcision” (p. 200).

⁸W. Schmithals, *Paul and the Gnostics* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1972), p. 13.

⁹Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, “The New Perspective on Paul,” *Bulletin of the John Rylands University Library* 65 (1982-1983): 104.

¹⁰Ζῆς (present tense) suggests the basic principle of Peter’s life, i.e., living like a Gentile. Cf. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*, p. 114; E. W. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (T & T Clark, 1968), p. 112; J. G. Machen, *The Origin of Paul’s Religion* (Hodder & Stoughton, 1921), p. 123; and W. Bauer et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Chicago Press, 1957), p. 336.

¹¹Cf. E. E. Ellis, “‘Those of the Circumcision’ and the Early Christian Mission,” *Studia Evangelica* 4 (1968): 390.

¹²Τῆ ὑποκρίσει (2:13) and ὑπάρχων (2:14) do not denote a purposefully evil motive on Peter’s part, but of masking his own real conviction. Cf. Bauer, *BAGD*, p. 845, 838; Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*, p. 113; Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, p. 109; A. T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Broadman, 1933), Vol IV, p. 287; K. S. Wuest, *Galatians in the Greek New Testament* (Eerdmans, 1951), pp.

convictions or the spirit of the gospel (2:14). The conduct of Peter and other Judean Jewish Christians had pressured (ἀναγκάζεις) the Gentile Christians to live like Jews (Ἰουδαΐζειν)¹³ by observing food laws and circumcision. This pressure had placed the Gentile believers in unnecessary bondage; it implied that Gentiles were still unclean and outside the community of God's elect.

B. Micro-level:

The exegetical paper should concentrate on the meaning of the text for its original audience. Since a verse-by-verse commentary is usually not conducive to developing a sharply defined thesis in a paper, it should be provided only when it is appropriate for a particular purpose. In some instances it may be appropriate to define what you perceive to be the main thrust of a passage or to develop a hypothesis about a particular aspect of a passage.

In 2:15-16, Paul echoes the argument rebuking Peter:

We who are Jews by nature and not Gentile sinners, know that a man is not justified by works of law except through faith in Jesus Christ. And we have believed in Christ Jesus in order that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of law, because by works of law shall no flesh be justified.¹⁴

The word ἡμεῖς of 2:15 (“we who are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners”) refers to Paul, Peter and other Jewish believers. This Jewish self-definition¹⁵ differentiates Jews from Gentiles. Betz says succinctly that, “Jewishness is determined by birth”¹⁶ as the Jews understand it. In other words, Gentiles are sinners precisely because they have no Torah and consequently observe no Torah. Possession of Torah defines Jews religiously and ethnically.

In order to respond to the exclusive mindset of the Jewish Christians, Paul appeals first to the Jewish awareness of the concept of “being justified”¹⁷ (δικαιοῦται . . . δικαιοθῶμεν . . . δικαιοθήσεται 2:16), which is not something interjected as part of the structure of ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι (“we who are Jews by birth”). James Dunn claims that “being justified” is “evidently something Jewish.”¹⁸ He explains,

This is covenant language. . . . the language which stems from Israel's consciousness of election. The Gentiles are ‘sinners’ precisely in so far as they neither know nor keep the law given by God to Israel. Paul's mention of ‘being justified’ . . . (has) a deliberate appeal to the standard Jewish belief, . . . that the Jews as a race are God's covenant people. Almost certainly then, his concept of righteousness. . . is thoroughly Jewish too, where God's righteousness is precisely God's covenant faithfulness, his saving power and love for his people Israel.¹⁹

72-73; and *Machen's Notes on Galatians*, ed. J. Skilton (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1972), p. 138. My conclusion is that Peter's behavior contradicts his own theological convictions, and for this reason, his behavior stood condemned (κατεγνωσμένον ἦν, 2:11).

¹³Ἰουδαΐζειν (2:14) occurs only here in the NT. It means to accept partially or totally Judaistic customs (W. Gutbrod, “Ἰουδαῖος κτλ.,” *TDNT*, 3: 383). H. N. Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), p. 284 points out that these laws and circumcision have the social and religious function of distinguishing Jews from Gentiles.

¹⁴This verse has been widely accepted as the most important one (only one verse in Greek New Testament) in Galatians; e.g., T. W. Manson, *Studies in the Gospels and Epistles*, ed. M. Black (Manchester University Press, 1962), p. 188, says that this verse is the center theme and argument of Galatians. H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Fortress Press, 1979), p. 115 says this verse is the beginning of Paul's “propositio.” Cf. G. S. Duncan, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians* (Hodder and Stoughton, 1934), pp. 64-65.

¹⁵Cf. Betz, *Galatians*, p. 115; E. Stauffer, “Εγώ,” *TDNT* 2: 361-362; and Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), p. 113.

¹⁶Betz, *Galatians*, p. 115.

¹⁷Δικαιοῦται, δικαιοθῶμεν, δικαιοθήσεται appear 3 times of the same root word in Gal 2:16.

¹⁸Dunn, “Paul and ‘Covenantal Nomism’,” p. 105. Cf. E. P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Fortress Press, 1977), pp. 470-472, 501, 518 n. 5, p. 544 and *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Fortress Press, 1983), pp. 5-10) says that δικαιοῦται is used by Paul primarily as a transfer term.

¹⁹Dunn, “Paul and ‘Covenantal Nomism’,” p. 105: “Concept of righteousness, both noun and verb, is almost certainly thoroughly Jewish with strong covenantal overtones.”

Justification by faith in Christ is unprecedented in Judaism; Πίστις (“faith”) in Galatian 2:16 does not denote just any trust. Unfortunately, Dunn does not elaborate on this point. However, David Gordon in his article, “The Problem at Galatia,” shows that πίστις (“faith”) always refers to faith in Christ, so much so that Paul uses the two terms “faith” and “Christ” interchangeably to mean the same thing.²⁰ We can infer then that the ἡμεῖς does not include Jews but only the Jewish Christians who have placed their trust in the Messiah. The use of the aorist (ἐπιστεύσαμεν [“we believed”]) in Galatian 2:16 can be used as an argument for this point: a new and decisive step is necessary for the Jews when they place their trust in Christ. Here in his own cross-cultural hermeneutic, Paul has already taken a new step, using the concept not merely of trust but more specifically of trust in Christ as his hermeneutical key to refute the misunderstanding of the Jewish Christians and to propose a more inclusive symbol.

Paul then dismisses the idea of being justified “by works of the law” (2:16, οὐ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου . . . οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου . . . ἐξ ἔργων νόμου; cf. 3:2, 5, 10). Paul is not placing a proper understanding of the law in antithesis to a perverted view of the law or to the Mosaic or Abrahamic covenant which the law represents. Such an interpretation tends to see Judaism as a sort of perverted religion. And it also totally ignores the Jewish context and the situational character of the Galatian epistle. It assumes too quickly that the guilty conscience of individuals seeks salvation through a legalistic life. The Galatian debate is concerned not with individuals but with the people of God; more precisely, it is concerned not with the legalistic life of the individual but with the identity symbol of the people of God: “justification by faith in/of Christ” or by “works of law.”

To be a Jew is to be a member of the covenant and to observe circumcision, food laws and the Sabbath. In short, these observances were the cultural markers of the Jew. The phrase “works of the law” in Galatian 2:16 is fairly restricted and precise,²¹ referring to covenant works and not individual good works. In contrast to righteousness understood in terms of covenant works, Paul continues to speak of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. He resists emphasizing one particular cultural symbol as the identity marker of other people. On the one hand, Paul does not want to eliminate the cultural tradition for that particular group of people. On the other hand, he understands that a cultural symbol can never be totally inclusive. So the search for one inclusive symbol that affirms the uniqueness of all cultural symbols becomes necessary.

C. Theological Conclusion (Macro-micro)

Depending on the material in the pericope and the point of view adopted by the student, each paper should be organized somewhat differently; strive for a logical progression that moves from premises to conclusions, from exegetical conclusions to theological implications.

Paul is making two adjustments to the understanding of the old symbol, Torah. First, Torah can not continue to function as the identity symbol of the religion of Abraham because it excludes many of Abraham’s heirs (3:6-9, 14, 28, etc.). Second, those dimensions of Torah which function to exclude Gentiles can no longer be observed, for example, circumcision and food laws. Such observances deny “the eschatological reality of the presence of the promise to Abraham.”²² And they enslave persons whom Christ has come to set free.

Paul believes that the Messiah has come in this New Age when all the Messianic promises will be fulfilled. He has experienced the tension between the “now” and the “not yet” of eschatology, in which the law is abrogated in Christ, and yet also fulfilled in Christ. In Galatians 3 especially, Paul is pressed to state one side of the case to its limits because of the particular opposition from the Judaizers. In this New Age, the identity symbol of the people of God is to be reinterpreted in Christ. It is no longer the law. Membership of the true people of God is available by faith in the saving power of Christ’s death and resurrection. And believers are partakers with Christ in this New Age (3:26, 27).

At various points in the epistle, Paul says, “So there is neither Jew nor Greek there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise.” (3:28, 29) Paul even affirms that he bears on his body and not the mark of circumcision but the “marks of Jesus” (6:17). And he asserts that “neither circumcision counts for anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.” (6:15) Finally, he calls the Galatian believers “Israel of God.” (6:16) Through this transposition of elements

²⁰T. D. Gordon, “The Problem at Galatia,” *Interpretation* 41 (1987): 42-43.

²¹K. Haacker (“Paulus und das Judentum im Galaterbrief,” [“Paul and Judaism in Galatians”], *Gottes Augapfel*, ed. E. Brocke and J. Seim [1986], 95-111) for example will probably argue for a more precise interpretation: zealous act of the Pharisee Jews who followed the Maccabean pattern of violent reaction against the Greco-Roman world.

²²Gordon, “The Problem at Galatia,” p. 39.

from two cultures, the Pauline cross-cultural hermeneutic elevates Christ as the universal, unifying identity symbol for all cultures.

D. The hermeneutical essay can be in the form of a sermon, a detailed sermon outline, a lesson plan, an interpretive essay, or a cross-cultural hermeneutics that uses literary, theological, or ethical materials. The essay or outline should take the main thrust of the exegetical study and relate it to the modern world in a creative and thoughtful manner. Gather ideas concerning the theological implications of the passage for today; search for parallel situations and issues in the modern world and reflect on the altered implications when the modern situation substantially differs from the ancient one.

Implications for Cross-Cultural Hermeneutics

The exegetical study above reveals the major issue between Paul and his opponents: defining the identity symbol for the people of God. That theme, as well as such sub-issues as the law as requirement and racial inclusiveness, are relevant issues in cross-cultural hermeneutics. How can Christ provides different cultural groups with a workable paradigm for living with one another? Are they, as ethnic and religious groups, so rigid in their religious and cultural traditions, that they have become for them a kind of law imposed on some and excluding others? The problem of ethnic diversity is even further complicated by the religious pluralism that flourishes in many parts of the world.

A cross-cultural hermeneutic which hinges on “faith-in-Christ” on the one hand and “cultural uniqueness” on the other has tremendous implications for the way we look at problems in the world today, such as those in former Yugoslavia (Orthodox verses Catholic), in Ireland (Protestant verses Catholic), or in Malaysia (Muslim verses non-Muslim). The Malaysian context is the primary case study here.

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IV. Final, Polishing Steps:

A. Standard elements of an appropriate title, a well-designed introduction, and a conclusion should be a part of every paper. Work on the beginning paragraph so that it will capture the attention of the reader and project the goal of the research paper:

The concern for a viable approach to cross-cultural hermeneutics for constructing indigenous theology is a necessary and enduring one. Ever since Christianity received its commission to be the light and the salt of the world, the gospel of Jesus Christ has brought forth an audience, not only of Jews but also of Gentiles. Historically, we can trace this hermeneutical interest from Peter and Paul, Luke and John, Tertullian and Clement of Alexandria, Calvin and Luther, as well as contemporary figures such as Richard Niehbur and John Hick. All were concerned with cross-cultural hermeneutics.²³ One recurring issue in cross-cultural hermeneutics is the relationship between one’s particular culture and the uniqueness of Christ. Is Christ particular? Is he universal? Is he inclusive? Is he exclusive? How are we to understand Christ in relation to the culture in which we live and to which we preach? The issue is all the more crucial when we consider our beliefs and our culture in relation to the beliefs and cultures of others. Are we to proselytize others? Can Christ serve as a unique, inclusive and universal symbol?

When we speak of the uniqueness of Christ, does that mean that Christ cannot be inclusive in his uniqueness as well? This chapter examines Galatians 2:15-16 to understand how Paul views Christ as the inclusive and all-sufficient symbol of the people of God -- a people created out of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds. The conviction here is that Christ can serve as a sufficient identity symbol for all people. The chapter also examines both culture and Christ as identity symbols. How the old identity marker (culture) and the new identity marker (Christ) relate to each other is the hermeneutical question the chapter seeks to examine. It is also an attempt to take a new look at Paul’s hermeneutics in Galatians 3:1-20, which deals with Christ and Torah, the sacred tradition and cultural seedbed of the Jewish people.

B. Rework on the title:

“The Meaning of Justification by Faith in Christ”

²³Cf. *Gospel and Culture, The Papers of a Consultation on the Gospel and Culture, convened by the Lausanne Committee’s Theology and Education Group*, ed. John Stott and Robert T. Coote (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1979), pp. 2-5.

“Faith in Jesus as the Inclusive Identity Symbol”

“Jesus Christ as the All-Sufficient Identity Symbol”

“Galatians As a Resource for Christocentric Inclusivity” (within the monograph)

C. Spell-check using electronic dictionary

D. Ask a friend to read for critical comments, if possible.