

WHAT DID PAUL THINK HE WAS DOING?

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A STUDY OF PAUL'S USE OF ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ AND AN INTRODUCTION TO HIS  
"STATEMENTS OF ACTION"

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RICHARD LAST, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Richard Last, B.A. (York University)

SUPERVISOR: Professor Anders Runesson

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## Abstract

The goal of this study is to add to our knowledge of Paul's notion of apostleship, and to perhaps say something new about early views of the apostle-concept in general. I begin to present my original research in Chapter Two, where I attempt to offer a better description of Paul's definition of apostleship than the ones that came before it. Previous descriptions unanimously mention and give equal weight to a vision of Christ, and a charge to carry out certain activities as the two main components to apostleship. However, Paul's words on the matter suggest that he and his contemporary Christ-believers regarded the activities-component to be of greatest significance to the identity of the apostle. For this reason, I state that we must take a serious look at Paul's words on his apostolic activities if we seek to understand his notion of his apostleship. Yet, very little work has been done in the past to organize our first-hand data on Paul's actions. In the interest of launching this initiative, I compile an inventory of all actions that Paul claimed to perform in the past, present, and future. I call these passages "statements of action." Such an inventory has never been published, and I view it as this study's major contribution to NT scholarship. In Chapter Three, I place all statements of action into one or two of four categories. The categories are: (1) authenticating his authority; (2) converting; (3) establishing congregations; and (4) maintaining congregations. I argue that the four categories represent Paul's four apostolic objectives, and that Paul thought it necessary to

fulfill them in order to prepare his "converts" for imminent eschatological events.

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What Did Paul Think He Was Doing? A Study of Paul's Use of ἀπόστολος and  
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1. Chapter One: An Introduction to Paul and Apostleship

1.1. Purpose

Paul introduces himself to Roman and Corinthian believers as an individual "called to be an apostle" (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος) (Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1) and to the Galatians as an "apostle [sent] neither by human commission nor from human authorities, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead" (Gal 1:1).<sup>1</sup> His assertions to have been "called" and sent "through God" to do the work of an apostle imply that his apostleship was more than just an idle title; rather, it required him to do the tasks that he was called and sent to do. It also indicates that his actions were understood as "apostolic" in nature - a recent interpreter speaks of Paul's apostleship itself as a "task."<sup>2</sup> However, there are few focused studies on the organization and major components of Paul's apostolic duties. I believe that in order to appreciate Paul's understanding of his title, we must come to know what he thought it

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<sup>1</sup> All English translations of NT texts follow the NRSV unless otherwise noted. The Greek text of Gal 1:1 reads as follows: ἀπόστολος οὐκ ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι' ἀνθρώπου ἀλλὰ διὰ Ἰησοῦ χριστοῦ καὶ Θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν Paul also introduces himself as an apostle in 2 Corinthians 1:1 but does not claim to have been "called" or "sent" into apostleship in this verse.

<sup>2</sup> L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary* (Biblical Exegesis & Theology 34: Dudley: Peeters, 2003), 177.

entailed. Fortunately, Paul writes about what he thinks he is doing as an apostle. The present study focuses on Paul's articulations of his duties as an apostle. I believe that this should have been the first subject of inquiry in scholarship on his mission.

There is much at stake in the present study. A proper understanding of Paul's apostleship - as he explains it himself - will be to the benefit of the broader field of early Christianity. Experts in the quest for the historical Jesus will be interested in the potential for comparative work that focuses on parallels between the responsibilities of Paul and the Twelve (οἱ δώδεκα), whose missionary instructions appear to have originated with the historical Jesus (see Mark 3:14-15; 6:6-13). The Twelve are never called apostles in the titular sense by our earliest Gospel sources (i.e., Mark and Q); however, at least a decade before Mark wrote his Gospel, a member of the Twelve, Peter, is called an apostle by Paul (Gal 1:18, 2:8). Paul also provides us with the earliest surviving testimony to the existence of the Twelve as a group (1 Cor 15:5). In addition, Paul references an early group of apostles about whom he notes their witness to Jesus' resurrection, and to whom he compares himself (15:5-11). His words on apostleship are thus significant to historical research that attempts to reconstruct Jesus' life, and particularly his relationship with the Twelve.

In the first century, there developed an association between the meaning of the terms δώδεκα, μαθητής and ἀπόστολος. In Chapter Two of this study, we shall examine Paul's use of ἀπόστολος, paying particular attention to those whom he calls apostles and why. We shall determine the identity of the earliest apostles and the nature of the earliest

notions of apostleship among Christ-believers. In doing so, we shall challenge the majority scholarly view that a vision of Christ was a prominent and defining feature of early notions of apostleship.

The present study will also contribute to the scholarly discussion of early Christ-believing leadership. Only in the Pauline letters do we get a first-hand account of what it meant to be a figure of authority in the Jesus movement as early as the 50s, and a record of others who held this same authority.<sup>3</sup> Our review of Paul's use of ἀπόστολος in Chapter Two will identify whom Paul and our other NT authors recognized to hold the apostolate and the criteria by which this was determined. Chapter Three will reveal the major components of Paul's apostolic duties, and the means by which he hoped to achieve them.

This research will also provide insights into matters concerning Pauline community structure. Founding communities was a major component to Paul's understanding of his apostleship (see, e.g., Rom 15:20-21; 1 Cor 3:10; 2 Cor 10:15-16). This task is widely recognized as one of Paul's self-perceived apostolic duties. L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte writes, "[Paul's] prime goal was the proclamation of the gospel and the communities he founded were a necessary means to achieve that goal."<sup>4</sup> However, in Chapter Three we shall demonstrate that the establishment and maintenance of congregations were not means by which Paul achieved an apostolic goal, but rather were apostolic objectives themselves. The discussion in Chapter Three of Paul's apostolic duties will be particularly relevant for those interested in the formation of his communities throughout the eastern half of the Mediterranean world.

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<sup>3</sup> Though Paul casts the apostolate of others in a slightly different light than his own.

<sup>4</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul The Missionary*, 221.

This study will perhaps also be relevant to debates regarding the nature of Paul's theology. In Chapter Three I shall demonstrate that Paul's mission<sup>5</sup> was organized to such a degree that we can call him a "systematic doer." That is, his actions were carefully planned and were carried out with the objectives of his mission in mind. This argument might offer added insight to the debate regarding the systematic nature of Paul's thought.

I center my research on two related questions. First, what does Paul mean by calling himself an apostle? A thorough consideration of Paul's use of ἀπόστολος reveals that central to his self-perceived status as an apostle is his sense of apostolic responsibility. Paul distinguished himself not only from non-apostolic individuals, but from other apostles, too, by his work ethic. From here I proceed to my second topic of inquiry: what specifically does Paul claim to do as an apostle? There is a methodological distinction to be made between this question and the following question: What does Paul do as an apostle? The question that I ask forces an answer based strictly on Paul's own assertions. After we determine what Paul claimed to do, we will be ready to grapple with contextual issues regarding first-century mission, and Paul's place therein. I believe that research on Paul's mission should have begun with the questions that this study asks, since the answers to

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<sup>5</sup> Martin Goodman admits, "anyone sent to do anything may be said to have a mission of some sort." See *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 3. Goodman distinguishes between four types of mission on the basis of their objectives: informative, educational, apologetic, and proselytizing. A purpose of this thesis is to examine the objectives behind Paul's mission (Chapter Three). Unlike any of Goodman's four definitions, which each allow for only one objective behind the mission in question, I argue that there were four objectives behind Paul's apostolic activities.

all related questions hinge on the nature of the deeds Paul claimed to perform. In Chapter Three, I shall present an inventory of every action that Paul claims to carry out within the seven undisputed letters, and proceed to categorize this material.

### 1.2 Previous Research

Biblical scholars have been making serious attempts to understand Paul's apostolate since at least the middle of the nineteenth century. Due to the amount of research in this area, we shall focus here only on the most influential contributions to the general topic of apostleship in the NT. A review of research on the NT usage of the term ἀπόστολος will be taken up at the beginning of Chapter Two and a review of scholarship on Paul's mission is found in Chapter Three.

Paul's mission is a relatively recent topic of focus. Detailed discussions on his apostolic responsibilities were seriously lacking in NT scholarship before the middle of the twentieth century, and to some extent still are. This is surprising given that (as we shall see in Chapter Two) it is his apostolic activities that Paul emphasizes most when defending his apostolate against doubters (e.g., 1 Cor 9:1; 2 Cor 11:23; Gal 1:6-9). While Paul's duty as an apostle is now recognized as a key component to Paul's self-understanding, there remains much more to be said about the organization of his tasks, and his major goals as an apostle. The present study will attempt to steer the discussion in what I understand to be the best direction.

We shall now turn to a review of select contributions to the study of apostleship in the NT. Researchers have only recently concerned themselves to any level of specificity with Paul's apostolic tasks. Paul's deeds, though, could be the key to understanding the meaning of

the word *ἀπόστολος* among early Christ-believers, and indeed, some scholars have begun to recognize this.

### 1.2.1 The Origins of *ἀπόστολος*

In his 1865 commentary on Paul's letter to the Galatians, Joseph Barber Lightfoot put forward an important observation about the usage of *ἀπόστολος* by New Testament authors. He demonstrated that they were not defining the office of the apostle in a uniform manner.<sup>6</sup> Subsequent interpreters have embraced and refined this observation: it is now regularly noted that Luke's and Paul's criteria for apostleship are more clearly developed than any of the other New Testament authors, and that they are in disagreement with one another on fundamental points.<sup>7</sup>

In Acts, Luke defines apostles as a group of individuals chosen by Jesus (1:24; cf. 1:2; 10:41) from those who were with him during his earthly ministry (1:21-22; cf. 10:39; 13:30-31), and to whom he appeared after his death (10:40-41; cf. 13:30-31). Before he ascended to heaven he gave them instructions regarding their apostolic duties (1:2; cf. 10:42). The terms that Luke uses to denote these individuals are *ἀπόστολοι* and *μάρτυρες*. He uses these designations almost exclusively in reference to the Twelve.<sup>8</sup> The Twelve were sent by Jesus to be witnesses to his

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<sup>6</sup> Joseph Barber Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians with Introductions, Notes, and Dissertations* (Michigan: Zondervan, 1962), 101.

<sup>7</sup> Many interpreters hold that Luke did not view Paul as an apostle at all. See, for example: C.K. Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles: Volume I* (ICC: New York: T&T Clark, 1994), 666ff; and F.F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (TNICNT: Michigan: Eerdmans, 1988), 271. If these interpreters are correct, then this matter perhaps represents Paul and Luke's most significant disagreement.

<sup>8</sup> Barnabas and Paul are called *ἀπόστολοι* in 14:4 and 14, but in a sense of the word that means "emissaries." See Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 666ff; and Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 271. *μάρτυς* appears outside of Luke's ordinary usage of the term in 22:15 and 26:16 to reference Paul, and also in 6:13 and 7:58 with a different meaning.

earthly deeds (10:39) and resurrection (1:22; cf. 5:32; 13:30-31), and to preach that Jesus offers forgiveness of sins to those who will believe (5:21-32; 10:41-43). In addition, Peter was given the specific task of fulfilling these three duties among the Gentiles (9:32-10:48; cf. 15:7). Interpreters have noted that Paul does many of the same things that the Twelve are sent to do in Acts.<sup>9</sup> However, Luke never calls Paul an *ἀπόστολος* in the same sense that he calls the Twelve *ἀπόστολοι*. We should expect as much from Luke since Paul does not meet all of Luke's criteria for apostleship - Paul was not with Jesus during his earthly ministry (1:21-22; cf. 10:39; 13:30-31). Everyone in Acts who meets all three of Luke's criteria is termed an *ἀπόστολος*; anyone who does not is something else.

Luke does not regard Paul an apostle in the technical sense of the word, but Paul is clear in his claims to be an apostle (e.g., 1 Cor 1:1; Rom 1:1). Paul also calls others outside of the Twelve apostles. His criteria for apostleship thus do not narrow the apostolate to the Twelve. For these reasons, NT scholars have noted that Luke and Paul (and probably other early Christ-believers as well) were not working with common criteria for apostleship.

In 1887, W. Seufert wrote an influential study that challenged the historicity of the Twelve. Seufert argued that the Twelve were "invented" in the middle of the first century in order to narrow the concept of apostleship such that it would exclude Paul.<sup>10</sup> This theory

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<sup>9</sup> For example, see Victor C. Pfitzner, " 'Pneumatic' Apostleship? Apostle and Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles," in *Wort in der Zeit* (ed. Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann: Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 210-235.

<sup>10</sup> W. Seufert, *Der Ursprung und die Bedeutung des Apostolates in der christlichen Kirche der ersten und zweiten Jahrhunderte* (Leiden: Brill,

accounts for the difference between Paul's and Luke's definitions of apostleship: Paul did not associate apostleship strictly with the Twelve because the Twelve, as an institution, did not exist at Paul's time. According to Seufert, Luke created "the Twelve" in order to narrow the criteria for apostleship and thereby exclude Paul from the title. Seufert's theory is somewhat attractive. On the one hand, it explains why Luke's definition is narrower than Paul's. On the other hand, however, it unnecessarily throws the historicity of the Twelve into question.

The idea that the Twelve were created by later Christian tradition has been taken up and moderately adapted by a minority of biblical scholars. The theory deserves consideration as there have been, and still remain, prominent interpreters who deny the existence of the Twelve.<sup>11</sup> However, the evidence is not in their favour. The two strongest arguments in support of denying the historicity of the Twelve are tenuous at best. The first is rooted in the observation that the word δώδεκα appears only once in Q (Matt 19:28; cf. Luke 22:28-30). Philip Vielhauer states that this indicates that the institution was not widely known during the time of the formation of Q, and therefore possibly a later creation by the early church.<sup>12</sup> However, the term μαθητής occurs only twice in Q (Luke 6:40; cf. Matt 10:24f; Luke 14:26f; cf. Matt 10:37f) yet this is not reason enough to suggest that this wider

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1887); cf. John Howard Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy of Apostolic Authority* (SNTSMS 26; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 24.

<sup>11</sup> For a list of scholars who support this theory, see Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 168 n. 18. This list includes: Julius Wellhausen, Philip Vielhauer, Gunter Klein, Hans Conzelmann, and John Dominic Crossan.

<sup>12</sup> See Robert P. Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve: Discipleship and Revelation in Mark's Gospel* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 1968), 196.



group of disciples was created in later tradition.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, Mark's Gospel, which was composed close to the time Q was being revised or perhaps even earlier,<sup>14</sup> mentions the Twelve ten or eleven times.<sup>15</sup> Wolfgang Trilling convincingly argues that at least two of these references to the Twelve (3:16-19, 14:43) were circulating in pre-Markan tradition.<sup>16</sup> The argument from Q, therefore, does not follow.

Perhaps the strongest argument in support of the early church's creation of the Twelve has to do with discrepancies in the lists of the names of the Twelve in the New Testament (Mark 3:16-19; cf. Matt 10:2-4; Luke 6:14-16; Acts 1:13). Those who deny that the historical Jesus established the Twelve state that the names of the Twelve should have been remembered without variations had they been such significant and authoritative early witnesses to Jesus. Vielhauer and others argue that the variations in the lists indicates that the Twelve were still in the process of being "created" in New Testament times.<sup>17</sup> However, there is very little variation in the lists of the Twelve's names. The only significant difference is that Mark and Matthew record Thaddeus while Luke (in both his Gospel and in Acts) replaces Thaddeus with Jude of James. The other variations concern the order in which the names are

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<sup>13</sup> See Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 196.

<sup>14</sup> Burton Mack writes, "Mark wrote his story of Jesus some time after the war and shortly after Q had been revised with the Q3 additions. If we date Q3 around 75 C.E. to give some time for the additions obviously prompted by the war, Mark can be dated between 75 and 80 C.E." See Burton L. Mack, *The Lost Gospel: The Book of Q and Christian Origins* (New York: HarperCollins, 1993), 177. Most Markan scholars date the second Gospel between 65 and 75 CE. For example, see R.A. Guelich, Mark 1-8:26 (WBC 34A; Dallas: Word, 1989), xxix-xxxii; Joel Marcus, "The Jewish War and the *Sitz im Leben* of Mark," *JBL* 111/3 (1992), 441-42.

<sup>15</sup> 3:14, (possibly 3:16), 4:10, 6:7, 9:35, 10:32, 11:11, 14:10, 17, 20, 43. See Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 128.

<sup>16</sup> Trilling, "Zur Entstehung," 204-6

<sup>17</sup> Meye, *Jesus and the Twelve*, 200.

listed and do not present a problem for the historicity of the Twelve.<sup>18</sup> Furthermore, scholars have recently argued that Mark, John, Paul, L, and Q each give independent attestations to the Twelve's existence as followers of Jesus during his ministry.<sup>19</sup> Far from suggesting that the Twelve did not exist alongside the historical Jesus, the evidence affirms that they did.

Adolf Harnack's epic study of early Christian mission situated the apostolic institution within Judaism.<sup>20</sup> Harnack paralleled Paul's "wider view" of apostleship (i.e., the notion that there were individuals outside the Twelve who were, in some sense, *ἀπόστολοι*) to the custom of the Jewish patriarchate in sending its delegates throughout the diaspora.<sup>21</sup> Harnack's theory was developed and popularized by K.H. Rengstorf.

Rengstorf, in his search for the origins of the apostolate, concluded that the early Christian titular usage of the word was informed by the Jewish *shaliach* institution. This Jewish institution is based on the notion that "The one sent by a man is as the man himself" (m.Ber 5:5). Rengstorf unpacks the role of the *shaliach* as follows:

What characterizes the [*shaliach*] of all periods is their commissioning with distinctive tasks which take them greater or lesser distances away from the residence of the one who gives them. Thus the point of the designation is neither description of the fact of sending nor indication of the task involved but simply assertion of the form of sending, i.e., authorization.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 130-31.

<sup>19</sup> E.g. Meier, *A Marginal Jew*, 128-148.

<sup>20</sup> Adolf Harnack, *The Mission and Expansion of Christianity* (Translated and Edited by James Moffatt; New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1908), 319-68. Harnack was not the first to do so. Rather, he followed J.B. Lightfoot's 1865 commentary on Galatians.

<sup>21</sup> Harnack, *Mission*, 327ff.

<sup>22</sup> K.H. Rengstorf, "ἀπόστολος" (TDNT; Vol.1; Grand Rapids, 1965), 414-15.

Rengstorf argues that this Jewish institution informed the Christ-believing apostles; he suggests that the apostle's distinction and importance come from the one who sends him (i.e., Christ), not from himself. Rengstorf's thesis has been an important contribution to the study of early Christian usages of ἀπόστολος. However, it has also been widely abandoned.

Critics of the *Shaliach*-theory have noted that the Jewish institution is late. Our earliest evidence of it is from after 70 CE when the Jerusalem authorities sent envoys throughout the diaspora to collect the patriarchal tribute, which had become a necessary source of revenue only after customary pilgrimages to Jerusalem diminished with the destruction of the temple.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the term *shaliach* does not appear in Jewish texts before 140 CE.<sup>24</sup>

Scholars also find the *Shaliach*-theory problematic because the term *shaliach* is never used for missionaries or prophets.<sup>25</sup> While I believe that Christ-believing apostles have prematurely been grouped with prophets, it seems undeniable that Paul was an ancient missionary, by any definition of the term.<sup>26</sup>

Rengstorf has also been criticized for his approach to the question of the origins of ἀπόστολος. By tracing the origins of ἀπόστολος lexicographically, he is forced to arrive at too narrow a concept. The

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<sup>23</sup> Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy*, 28.

<sup>24</sup> See Arnold Ehrhardt, *The Apostolic Succession: In the First Two Centuries of the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953), 17; Francis H. Agnew, "The Origin of the NT Apostle-Concept: A Review of Research," *JBL* 1 (1986), 75-96; Schultz, *Paul and the Anatomy*, 28.

<sup>25</sup> Schütz argues that the patriarchal tribute is the "heart and core" of the *shaliach* institution. See *Paul and the Anatomy*, 27.

<sup>26</sup> The Twelve are also depicted as missionaries, particularly in Acts.

*shaliach* parallel does not allow for a notion of apostleship that is any broader than that of "delegated authority." There is more involved in Paul's understanding of apostleship. For Paul, as we shall see in Chapter Two, apostleship is not defined simply by the act of being sent but is rather also about the task at hand.<sup>27</sup> However, I am not willing to dismiss Rengstorf's theory as easily as others are.<sup>28</sup> I am open to the possibility that the *shaliach* institution, if it existed in the first century or earlier, informed the non-titular usage of ἀπόστολος,<sup>29</sup> and perhaps also Luke's definition of apostleship, which was not oriented around apostolic duty. But I hold that we must narrow our examination to NT material for inquiries into the nature of Paul's apostolate.

Recent contributions to the debate have been largely indebted to these earlier studies. One notable example is Walter Schmithals' monograph.<sup>30</sup> Schmithals continues the trend of looking externally for the origins of the New Testament usage of ἀπόστολος. Rather than looking to the *Shaliach* institution, though, he points to Jewish Gnosticism, claiming that the origins of apostleship lie in this tradition.<sup>31</sup> However, his perspective of Gnosticism throws the theory into question, and as a result it has not found much support.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy*, 28.

<sup>28</sup> Rengstorf's theory has been dismissed by, L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, see *Paul the Missionary*, 180; Schütz, see *Paul and the Anatomy*, 27ff; Frank Gavin, see "Shaliach and Apostolos," *The Anglican Theological Review* 9 (1927), 250-59; and Morris Ashcraft, see "Paul's Understanding of his Apostleship," *Review & Expositor* 55 (1958), 401ff; among others.

<sup>29</sup> See Harnack, *Mission*, 330.

<sup>30</sup> Walter Schmithals, *The Office of the Apostle in the Early Church* (New York: Abingdon, 1969).

<sup>31</sup> Schmithals, *Office*, 215.

<sup>32</sup> For a critique of Schmithals' theory, see L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 180ff.

The quest<sup>er</sup> for an external hypothesis has in recent decades fallen out of favour. Current contributors have shifted focus from external evidence to the use of ἀπόστολος within the New Testament texts.<sup>33</sup> Morris Ashcraft writes, "We must go to the N.T. records to understand apostleship."<sup>34</sup> John Howard Schütz notes that there are multiple forms of "apostolic self-consciousness" documented in the NT: he prefers to deal with one of them - Paul's.<sup>35</sup> C.K. Barrett and L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte outright reject external hypotheses and choose to focus on evidence from the NT in their quests for the origins of apostleship.<sup>36</sup>

Recent investigations of the meaning of "apostle" in the NT have been narrowed to specified studies on Paul's use of the word. C.K. Barrett rejects the historical value of the Gospels for answering questions such as: "What was an apostle? How is he to be defined and recognized?"<sup>37</sup> He argues that the NT evangelists answer these questions "in the eyes of" a generation later than Paul.<sup>38</sup> Barrett writes, "Paul is the starting point because we have his own words on what it meant to him to be an apostle."<sup>39</sup> In a more recent study, Lietaert Peerbolte similarly casts into doubt and rejects the historical value of NT texts outside of the Pauline corpus for the question of origins. Peerbolte's method is to look at our earliest source on the use of ἀπόστολος: Paul's

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<sup>33</sup> For example, see Morris Ashcraft, "Paul's Understanding;" C.K. Barrett, *The Signs of an Apostle: The Cato Lecture 1969* (London: Epworth Press, 1970); Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy* - particularly 33ff; Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*; N. Taylor, "Paul, Antioch and Jerusalem: A Study of Relationships and Authority in Earliest Christianity" (JSNTSS 66; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press), 222-26.

<sup>34</sup> Ashcraft, "Paul's Understanding," 403.

<sup>35</sup> Schütz, *Paul and the Anatomy*, 34.

<sup>36</sup> Barrett, *Signs*, 35; Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 180ff.

<sup>37</sup> Barrett, *Signs*, 35.

<sup>38</sup> Barrett, *Signs*, 35.

<sup>39</sup> Barrett, *Signs*, 35.

undisputed letters.<sup>40</sup> Paul is at the centre of the current discussion over first-century apostleship. However, recent publications have not dealt properly with the Pauline evidence. In Chapter Two, we shall demonstrate the significance of apostolic duty to early definitions of apostleship.

### 1.2.3 Moving Forward

The present study will build upon some of the major developments in our understanding of early Christian apostleship. Harnack and others have been correct to distinguish between the different definitions and conceptions of apostleship found within the NT. Seufert's argument that Luke's definition of apostleship is in reaction to Paul's is also very strong. The third evangelist's definition is so narrow and unlike any other NT author's that it was likely "correcting" the portrayal of the office by Paul and others.<sup>41</sup> However, his theory regarding the historicity of the Twelve is problematic.

External institutions, such as the Jewish *shaliach*, and also the Greek usage of *ἀπόστολος*, inform the non-titular meaning of the word in the NT. The Jewish *shaliach* and the Greek emissary tell us very little

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<sup>40</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 180ff.

<sup>41</sup> Given that Paul is Luke's hero in Acts, there may be scepticism over the theory that Luke "corrected" Paul's claims to apostleship in this document. However, there is not necessarily inconsistency in the view that Luke regarded only the Twelve as apostles, yet still thought very highly of Paul. There is no denying that Paul is the main character of the second half of Acts' narrative. However, he never calls Paul an apostle in the titular sense. Perhaps he would have liked to call Paul an apostle but refrained from doing so because there were not many Christ-believers who would have taken this seriously by the late first-century. If this were the case, then we find further evidence in our chart on NT figures called by the title "apostle" (Chapter Two). No document other than those written under Paul's name call Paul an apostle in the titular sense. Luke comes closer than most NT authors by calling him an apostle in the non-titular sense, but because Luke's definition of apostleship disqualifies those who were not with Jesus during his earthly ministry, Paul fails to meet Luke's standards.

about Paul's understanding of his own apostleship, though. Moreover, Luke's portrayal of apostleship tells us nothing about Paul's understanding of his apostolate. In order to understand Paul's apostleship we must focus our attention on what Paul says about it. In this study, we shall demonstrate that Paul speaks so frequently about duty while on the topic of his apostleship - and in such key situations - that our study exclusively on his statements of action is long overdue.

### 1.3 Method

We shall centre our study on two related questions: first, what does Paul mean by calling himself an apostle? We shall approach this question by examining Paul's use of the word for himself and for others. This analysis will be placed within the context of the above discussion about the origins of the word and our analysis below of the NT usages of ἀπόστολος. It will be demonstrated that key to Paul's identity as an apostle is his sense of duty. Paul even distinguishes himself from other apostles by the quality of his work ethic. Apostleship required the apostle to work, according to Paul. Indeed, in 1 Cor 1:17 Paul claims that he had been sent to work: "Christ did not send me to baptize, but to proclaim the gospel."<sup>42</sup> This leads to our second research question: What specifically does Paul claim to do as an apostle? We shall approach this question by isolating, categorizing, and analyzing Paul's articulations of duty - or, what we call, his "statements of action." We use the term "statement of action" to refer to passages where Paul declares that he had done something in the past, is doing something in

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<sup>42</sup> C.K. Barrett suggests that it was perhaps Paul who gave the term the meaning of "missionary." See, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Blacks; London: Hendickson, 2004), 230.

the present, or intends to do something in the future. We shall compile an inventory of statements of action, which will then be analyzed. Subsequently, we shall organize the action statements into four categories. We argue that these categories represent the objectives of Paul's mission, and the action statements represent the means by which he sought to achieve his objectives.

Paul does not label any of his actions as "apostolic." In Chapter Three when we create an inventory of his action statements, we shall see that he claims to perform deeds without specifying whether or not they have anything to do with his apostolic mission. Paul's silence on the matter may lead us to question the relationship between each of Paul's actions and his apostolic mission. However, by categorizing the action statements, we shall gain insights into the purposes behind Paul's claimed actions. At this point there will be no doubt that Paul's action statements hold relevance to his apostleship.

Lietaert Peerbolte describes Paul's task as "that of an 'apostle to the Gentiles' sent to proclaim the gospel where it has not yet been proclaimed."<sup>43</sup> Peerbolte continues to write, "Paul saw his task as that of a direct envoy of Christ..."<sup>44</sup> In our study we hope to develop this point by revealing the objectives and methods of "an envoy of Christ." In this way, we hope to offer a deeper understanding of what Paul meant when he referred to himself as an ἀπόστολος. With this study, Paul's understanding of his apostleship shall be approached for the first time with special focus on his statements of action.

#### 1.4 Material

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<sup>43</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 200.

<sup>44</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 200.



The primary source of evidence for this thesis is the undisputed Pauline epistles. Material external to the NT will not be taken into consideration. Rengstorf and others have already searched the Greco-Roman and Jewish literature of relevance for insights into Paul's understanding of apostleship with little success. Scholars have properly begun to focus attention on Paul's undisputed epistles. However, the disputed Pauline letters and the rest of the NT documents are also useful: they serve to provide the first century context of the usage of ἀπόστολος by Christ-believers. In Chapter Three, the inventory and organization of action statements will reflect only the data from the seven undisputed epistles.

#### 1.5 Mode of Procedure

Having introduced the wider significance of the topic; reviewed select contributions by New Testament scholars, and briefly scanned through the NT usages of ἀπόστολος, we turn now to the evidence from Paul. The contextual data reviewed above along with further considerations below will help to situate Paul's ideas with those of others. Interestingly, the Pauline evidence indicates that not only Paul but also other Christ-believers by the 50s regarded work ethic to be the most trusted sign of an apostle. In Chapter Three, we shall address this reality by compiling and organizing Paul's action statements in order to understand the purposes behind his apostolic activities. A fourth chapter will provide a summary of conclusions and offer directions for further research on Paul's mission.

## 2. Chapter Two: Paul's Use of ἀπόστολος

### 2.1. Introduction

In this chapter we shall expose a fundamental difference between the way that NT scholars define Paul's apostleship and the way that Paul describes it himself. Numerous scholars have put forward definitions of Paul's apostleship, and each description resembles closely the others. According to Ronald Fung, Paul believed that he was an apostle because (1) he experienced a vision of the risen Lord (1 Cor 9:1; 15:8; cf. Acts 22:14); (2) he was called to duty by direct revelation (Gal 1:1; 2:7; Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 1:1); and (3) he was charged to spread the gospel where it had not been before (1 Cor 9:2; 2 Cor 12:12; cf. Gal 2:8f).<sup>45</sup> Fung's description follows Raymond E. Brown's summary of the early Christ-believing apostle. Brown argues that the apostolic individual was "one who... through a vision of the risen Lord... has become an official witness to his resurrection and who has been commissioned by him to preach the gospel in a way fundamental to its spread."<sup>46</sup> Brown's definition is of *the apostle* rather than of Paul's apostolate, but it is largely based on Paul's words on his own apostleship. Marcus Bockmuehl follows Brown as well; he calls Paul the "emissary" of Christ, and one who was commissioned by the risen Lord.<sup>47</sup> Barrett's definition also resembles Brown's. He surmises, "An apostle is, in Paul's understanding, one

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<sup>45</sup> Ronald Y.K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (NICNT; Michigan: Eerdmans, 1988), 36.

<sup>46</sup> Raymond E. Brown, "The Twelve and the Apostolate," *JBC* 2 (1968), 789.

<sup>47</sup> Marcus Bockmuehl, *The Epistle to the Philippians* (Black's 11; London: Hendrickson, 1998), 171.

called by Christ and sent by him to preach the Gospel."<sup>48</sup> Victor Furnish's description, which is found in his commentary on Second Corinthians, is very similar to the others. He suggests that Paul's criteria for apostleship were (1) a vision of the risen Lord; and (2) a commission to preach the good news.<sup>49</sup> Common to each of the above definitions are a vision of Christ and a calling by Christ to preach.

In this chapter, we shall tweak the basic components of the aforementioned definitions in order to produce one that is closer to Paul's own words on the matter. We shall do so by developing two theses. The first is that Paul does not give equal weight to the two features of apostleship that the majority of the abovementioned critics regard as most central to his self-understanding (i.e., vision and commission). Rather, Paul regarded his commission, or apostolic activities, most central to his own apostolate. A vision of Christ is something that Paul, and our other NT writers, did not regard to be exclusively experienced by apostles.<sup>50</sup> Apostolic activities, on the other hand, played a significant part in the apostle's self-identity.

Second, we shall see that the definitions above do not adequately address what Paul was called to do. Paul says a lot about what he did after his calling. We shall discover below that his apostolic duties involved more than preaching the gospel.

In order to demonstrate these two points, we shall analyze passages where Paul uses the term ἀπόστολος. In the immediate context of

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<sup>48</sup> C.K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Black's 7; London: Hendrickson, 1968), 293.

<sup>49</sup> Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians* (Anchor 32A; New York: Doubleday, 1984), 425.

<sup>50</sup> Paul recounts visions of the risen Lord experienced by individuals who are not apostles. See 1 Cor 15:5-7

many references to apostleship is a description of apostolic activities. These references often suggest that Paul held the duty-component of his apostleship as particularly significant to his identity as an apostle. In addition, they provide direct mention of specific duties carried out by apostles.

Given the emphasis Paul lays on apostolic activities, we should be asking, "What did Paul do?" in order to better understand his conception of his apostolate. In Chapter Three we shall do just this; however, we must first support our assertion that Paul laid emphasis on apostolic duties over other components of his apostleship. We shall begin by reviewing non-Pauline notions of apostleship in the NT. We shall attempt to determine (1) the identity of the earliest apostles, and (2) the criteria by which these individuals were labeled apostles by non-Pauline authors. This analysis will provide the first-century context within which we shall place Paul's use of the word.<sup>51</sup>

After a consideration of the non-Pauline NT evidence, the focus of the chapter will shift to Paul's letters. I shall provide a letter-by-letter study of ἀπόστολος in Paul's writings. This chapter will demonstrate that Paul's focus on apostolic activities differed from later NT "definitions" of apostleship; however, it was similar to other views from the 50s, which also emphasized the duty component of apostleship. This will lead to our inquiry into Paul's statements of action in Chapter Three.

## 2.2 Non-Pauline Evidence

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<sup>51</sup> The word is rarely used in first-century Greek literature outside of the NT. See Josephus, *Ant.* 1.146 and 17.300.

ἀπόστολος is found a total of nine times within the four NT Gospels: six times in Luke, and one time in Matthew, Mark, and John respectively. These Gospel references tell us very little about first-century meanings of the term. A total of nine additional usages of ἀπόστολος are found within the disputed Pauline letters - four in Ephesians, two in each 1 and 2 Timothy, and one in Titus. There are further appearances of the term in Hebrews 3:1; 1 Peter 1:1; Jude 1:7; 2 Peter 1:1; 3:2; Revelation 2:2; 18:20; 21:14. The word is used by pre-Christian Greek authors in a non-titular sense to designate one who has been sent by someone else to carry out a mission (e.g., Hdt. *Hist* 1.21).<sup>52</sup> It is most often used to denote those involved with sea travel (e.g., Lys. 19.21).<sup>53</sup> ἀπόστολος also appears in some LXX manuscripts to translate *shaluach* in 1 Kings 14:6.<sup>54</sup> Unfortunately, these authors do not use the word frequently enough for us to reconstruct their views on the office behind the word.

We can be more optimistic about our potential to understand Luke's use of the word. ἀπόστολος appears six times in Luke and twenty-eight times in Acts. The Twelve are called apostles in Luke's Gospel narrative chronologically earlier than their encounters with the risen Christ (i.e., 11:49; 17:5; 22:14). We thus must decide whether his usage is an anachronism or whether it indicates that for Luke, a vision of Christ was not necessary for one to be recognized as an apostle. The simplest explanation is the former: the implication of Acts 1:22 is that that a vision of Christ was a necessary condition for apostleship.

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<sup>52</sup> For more examples, see Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon* (9<sup>th</sup> ed.; Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1953), 220.

<sup>53</sup> See Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 220.

<sup>54</sup> These are not the best LXX manuscripts, though. See Ashcraft, "Paul's Understanding," 401.

The third evangelist's definition of apostleship has been briefly discussed above, and it shall be given further consideration below since it is the most developed of first-century definitions of apostleship other than Paul's. However, in the following sections we shall attempt to determine what can be said about apostleship in the decades before the composition of Paul's letters. We shall first deal with the non-Pauline authors in an effort to bracket out Pauline biases. In section 2.3, we shall consider Paul's own words on the matter.

#### 2.2.1 Were There Apostles Before Paul's Time?

The first task in our search for conceptions of apostleship from the first Christian decades is to establish the identity of the earliest apostles. In this quest we must be aware of two problems. First, how are we defining "apostle"? Some individuals who were Christ-believers before Paul's conversion were labeled apostles by NT authors, but ἀπόστολος had titular and non-titular meanings in the first-century. We shall therefore be conscious of the sense in which these Christ-followers were called apostles.

Our second problem is that our decision to treat non-Pauline authors before we consider Paul's letters means that we are presently dealing with writers who composed their documents after Paul wrote his existing letters. What can these "late" documents tell us about the identity of the first apostles? Indeed, should not Paul himself, as the earliest Christ-following writer, be consulted first, given the nature of the present inquiry? Ideally, yes. But Paul uses the word in a way that is unique among NT authors; he places distinctive emphasis on the apostle's tasks. We shall therefore hold off on the Pauline evidence and deal with it all at once beginning with section 2.3. Our present focus

remains on what can be said about individuals who were apostlēs before the time at which Paul began to consider himself an apostle (c.34 CE).<sup>55</sup>

#### 2.2.1.1 The Two Meanings of ἀπόστολος in the NT

Each time ἀπόστολος is used in the New Testament it holds one of two meanings. The first is a non-titular designation denoting one who was sent as an envoy from a particular congregation or individual. This is very much like the way that the Greeks used the term. Such is the meaning in Mark 6:30, when Mark calls the Twelve οἱ ἀπόστολοι upon their return, having been sent out on a mission by Jesus.<sup>56</sup> Luke also uses this sense of the word when he calls Paul and Barnabas οἱ ἀπόστολοι in Acts 14:4 and 14:14 after they return from being sent out by the holy spirit while at the congregation of Antioch.<sup>57</sup> We also find this non-titular

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<sup>55</sup> I follow John Knox's chronology of major events in Paul's life because his epistle-based approach suits the present study. However, for the present study, the order with which Paul composed his letters is inconsequential. See *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (Georgia: Mercer, 1987), esp. 68.

<sup>56</sup> See Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8* (The Anchor Bible 27; New York: Doubleday, 2000), 405; Ashcraft, "Paul's Understanding," 405.

<sup>57</sup> There is debate over Luke's use of the word in these verses. Some interpreters believe that Luke employs a titular meaning here. For example, see Andrew Clark, "The Role of the Apostles," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* (ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson: Michigan: Eerdmans, 1998), 170-90; and J.W. McGarvey, *A Commentary on Acts of the Apostles* (Tennessee: Gospel Advocate, 1978), 3; 7. But this would be inconsistent with Luke's use of the word elsewhere; he only uses the titular designation in reference to the Twelve. It would also be inconsistent with Luke's portrayal of Paul and (especially) Barnabas as envoys throughout the rest of the narrative. Barnabas frequently plays the role of an envoy in Acts. He is at one point sent out as an envoy by the Jerusalem church to Antioch (11:22-25). Later, he and Paul are both envoys from Antioch to bring relief to the elders in Jerusalem during the worldwide famine (11:29-30). Paul and Barnabas both play the role of the emissary again in 15:2 when they are sent forth from Antioch to Jerusalem. Both individuals were used as emissaries in the early days of the Church according to Acts, but Barnabas more often than Paul. See Victor C. Pfitzner, "'Pneumatic' Apostleship? Apostle and Spirit in the Acts of the Apostles," in *Wort in der Zeit* (ed. Wilfrid Haubeck and Michael Bachmann: Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1980), 230.

usage in John 13:16: "Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers (ἀπόστολος) greater than the one who sent them." This non-titular usage is older than the second meaning of the word, which is not found before the first century. According to Rengstorf, the non-titular usage of the term denoted "commissioned representatives of a congregation."<sup>58</sup> It is in this sense that Paul is called an ἀπόστολος in Acts 14:4 and 14:14.<sup>59</sup>

The second usage of ἀπόστολος takes on the titular meaning. We have few examples of this employment in the NT outside of Paul's writing. These examples are found mostly in Luke-Acts. As has been indicated above, Luke uses this special title only for the Twelve. He calls the Twelve ἀπόστολοι six times in his Gospel<sup>60</sup> and he uses the word in this sense twenty-six times in Acts, each time referring to the members of the Twelve. It seems clear, then, that there were only twelve ἀπόστολοι in the technical sense according to Luke. Luke's criteria for apostleship in this sense are threefold: the apostles are a group of individuals chosen by Jesus (Acts 1:24; cf. 1:2; 10:41) from those who were with him during his earthly ministry (1:21-22; cf. 10:39; 13:30-31), and to whom he appeared after his death (10:40-41; cf. 13:30-31). Matthew is the only other NT writer to refer to the Twelve in the titular sense.<sup>61</sup>

Matthew refers to the Twelve as the "twelve apostles" in 10:2; however, there are problems with this passage - it is the only place

<sup>58</sup> Rengstorf, "ἀπόστολος", 422.

<sup>59</sup> See Acts 13:1ff. At this point in Acts' narrative, Paul (and Barnabas) are envoys of the Antioch congregation.

<sup>60</sup> 6:13; 9:10; 11:49; 12:5; 22:14; 24:10.

<sup>61</sup> Another possible instance is found in Mark 6:30. However, Mark's use of the word in this verse is now widely considered to be a non-titular designation. See, for example, Joel Marcus, *Mark 1-8* (Anchor Bible 27; New York: Doubleday, 1999), 388.



that Matthew calls the Twelve the "twelve <sup>ἀ</sup>postles."<sup>62</sup> The first evangelist usually refers to the Twelve as "disciples" (sixty-nine times), the "Twelve" (nine times), and the "twelve disciples" (twice).

The term also appears in 1 and 2 Peter and Jude.<sup>63</sup> Peter is introduced in both Petrine letters as an ἀπόστολος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ. It is difficult to know whether or not the authors of the Petrine epistles would designate anyone outside of the Twelve as ἀπόστολοι but it is certain that they do not. The use of the term in Jude 1:17 contributes little to our understanding of first-century Christian notions of apostleship; it is not clear whom the author of the letter is calling ἀποστόλων in 1:17.

We have encountered two meanings of ἀπόστολος in the NT outside of the Pauline corpus. First, the non-titular meaning. It is used of individuals who were sent out by congregations, or by other individuals, to act as representatives of the one(s) who sent them.

The second meaning of ἀπόστολος is technical. For Luke, this usage can only denote individuals who were with Jesus during his earthly ministry, who were commissioned by him to do work, and who saw (a) vision(s) of the risen Lord. In contrast to Luke's definition, the authors of the disputed Pauline letters exclude presence with Jesus during his earthly ministry as a criterion for apostleship. We must keep these definitions in mind while determining who the apostles were in the first Christian decades.

#### 2.2.2.2 The Earliest Apostles

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<sup>62</sup> See Barrett, *Signs*, 29-35.

<sup>63</sup> 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1; Jude 1:17.

We recall that in Acts, Luke defines apostles as a group of individuals chosen by Jesus (1:24; cf. 1:2; 10:41) from those who were with him during his earthly ministry (1:21-22; cf. 10:39; 13:30-31), and to whom he appeared after his death (1:22; cf. 10:40-41; 13:30-31). Before Jesus ascended to heaven, he gave them instructions regarding their apostolic duties (1:2; cf. 10:42). The terms that Luke uses to denote these individuals are *ἀπόστολοι* and *μάρτυρες*. He uses these terms almost exclusively in reference to the Twelve.<sup>64</sup> No individual outside of the Twelve is called *ἀπόστολος* in this sense. This is what scholars call the "titular usage" of *ἀπόστολος*. To apply Bockmuehl's description of Paul's office to the Twelve's in Acts: the Twelve were "emissaries of Christ."<sup>65</sup> They were special "bearers of the NT message."<sup>66</sup> Luke excludes Paul by definition from this group by virtue of his absence from Jesus' earthly ministry. However, it is surely in the titular sense that Paul is called an *ἀπόστολος* in the disputed (e.g., Eph 1:1; Col 1:1) and Pastoral letters (1 Tim 1:1, 2:7; 2 Tim 1:1, 11; Titus 1:1). Yet these authors do not assume Paul's presence among Jesus' followers during his earthly ministry. We therefore have two different definitions of the titular meaning of apostleship. In addition, Peter is introduced as an apostle in the titular sense in 1 and 2 Peter.

According to Luke, then, the Twelve were apostles before Paul's conversion. Luke gives no indication that he regarded Paul as an apostle

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<sup>64</sup> Barnabas and Paul are called *ἀπόστολοι* in 14:4, and 14, but in the non-titular sense of the word meaning "emissaries." See Barrett, *The Acts of the Apostles*, 666ff; and Bruce, *The Book of Acts*, 271. *μάρτυς* appears outside of Luke's ordinary usage of the term as a title designating the Twelve in 22:15 and 26:16 in reference to Paul, and in 6:13 and 7:58 again with a different meaning.

<sup>65</sup> Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 171.

<sup>66</sup> Rengstorf, "*ἀπόστολος*", 422.

in the titular sense. The authors of 1 and 2 Peter support Luke's portrait of Peter as an apostle, but they do not shed light on the time at which he began to be recognized as an apostle.

What can Mark's and Matthew's portrayals of the Twelve add to our knowledge of the date of their apostolate? Both authors refer to the Twelve as *ἀπόστολοι* - in Mark's Gospel during the missionary discourse (6:6-13, 30) and in Matthew's Gospel in the calling (*προσκαλεσάμενος*) of the Twelve (Matt 10:1-2). Mark does not portray the Twelve as representatives of a congregation, but rather as representatives of Jesus.<sup>67</sup> This does not exactly fit Rengstorf's description of the non-titular usage of the word. According to Rengstorf, the non-titular usage of the term denoted "commissioned representatives of a congregation."<sup>68</sup> Is our only option therefore to understand Mark to employ the titular usage of *ἀπόστολος* in reference to the Twelve? I believe not. Rengstorf's definition of the non-titular usage of *ἀπόστολος* is too narrow. Being commissioned by a congregation is not the quality that distinguishes the non-titular *ἀπόστολος* from the titular *ἀπόστολος*. I hold that the early Christ-following conception of apostleship would have allowed individuals to be sent forth by Jesus (as the Twelve are in Mark 6:6-13)

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<sup>67</sup> Jesus commissions the Twelve to go out and act as his representatives in 6:6-13. He gives three responsibilities (i.e., to preach, to exorcise, and to heal) to the Twelve in this passage, all of which are paralleled by Jesus' own deeds. Jesus' teaching (6:6b) is continued by the Twelve while they are away from him (6:30); the importance Jesus lays on repentance in his preaching (1:14-15) is mirrored by the Twelve's proclamation of repentance while they represent Jesus on their mission (6:12); the emphasis placed on the Twelve's authority to cast out demons (3:15; 6:7, 12) is matched in detail by Jesus' initial actions (exorcisms) in both Jewish and Gentile territories (1:21-28; 5:1-20); and the Twelve's healing (5:13) is mirrored by Jesus' own (i.e., 5:21-43). The Twelve's duties while on mission away from Jesus are matched by Jesus' deeds which they had witnessed Jesus do while "being with him (3:14)."

<sup>68</sup> Rengstorf, "ἀπόστολος", 422.

without being considered apostles. The distinguishing feature between the two meanings is a vision of the risen Christ and a calling by Christ to preach. NT authors regard visions of the risen Christ and being commissioned by Christ to preach his gospel as criteria for titular apostleship.

The Twelve are called ἀπόστολοι in Mark 6:30 not because they were apostles in this titular sense, but rather because they were emissaries of Jesus during his earthly ministry. They had not seen the risen Christ by 6:30 in Mark's narrative and therefore could not have been apostles yet. When NT authors reflect the earliest notion of apostleship, they, as a rule, call individuals ἀπόστολοι in the titular sense only if they had seen a vision of the risen Lord and had been commissioned by Christ to preach the gospel.<sup>69</sup> Mark uses the term only once in his Gospel - at the point where the Twelve served as emissaries on their only commissioned mission. It thus makes sense that Mark would refer to them as emissaries at this point in the narrative. The fact that they were not sent out as envoys of a congregation is irrelevant. They were sent out as envoys by Jesus. We must extend Rengstorf's definition of the non-technical meaning to include the notion of being sent as representatives of both congregations and individuals, not just of congregations.

Matthew uses the term only once and it is in reference to the Twelve (10:2). However, little can be said about apostleship in the first Christian generation from this verse, as it reflects views from

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<sup>69</sup> Luke is an exception to this rule. Matt 10:2 is another exception. Both authors reflect a late first century tendency to associate the Twelve with apostleship during Jesus' ministry.

Matthew's time.<sup>70</sup> What this verse tells us is that the Twelve were known to be apostles in the titular sense by 80 CE, the time that Matthew wrote his Gospel.<sup>71</sup>

The author of Revelation always uses *ἀπόστολοι* in the titular sense (see 2:2; 18:20; 21:14). In 2:2 there is reference to false apostles (*ἐπίρασας τοὺς λέγοντας ἑαυτοὺς ἀποστόλους καὶ οὐκ εἰσὶν καὶ εὗρες αὐτοὺς ψευδεῖς*) and therefore to the notion that the office of the apostle had developed to the point where recognized criteria existed. In 18:20, apostles are mentioned alongside saints (*οἱ ἅγιοι*) and prophets (*οἱ προφῆται*), which furthers the sense that the *ἀπόστολος* was conceived of as a figure of authority in Revelation. These three verses are relevant for discussions about the development of the apostolate by the end of the first century, but offer no insight into notions of apostleship in the earliest Christian decades.

There is an interesting usage of *ἀπόστολος* in Hebrews 3:1. In this passage, Jesus is called "the apostle and high priest of our confession" (*τὸν ἀπόστολον καὶ ἀρχιερέα τῆς ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν*). Rengstorf is probably right to say that "the only possible meaning of *ἀπόστολος* here is that in Jesus there has taken place the definitive revelation of God by God Himself."<sup>72</sup> In this sense, Jesus serves as God's envoy. He is designated an apostle nowhere else in the NT, and we certainly should not think that he was considered an apostle in the earliest Christian decades.

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<sup>70</sup> See Barrett, *Signs*, 29.

<sup>71</sup> Barrett, *Signs*, 29. For a discussion regarding the date of Matthew, see W.D. Davies and D.C. Allison, *Matthew 1-7* (ICC; New York: T&T Clark, 1988), 127-138.

<sup>72</sup> Rengstorf, "ἀπόστολος," 423.

We have determined that according to Luke there were apostles before Paul's calling - the Twelve. In the following section we shall inquire about the identity of other early apostles.

2.2.2 Who Were The First Apostles?

Our non-Pauline evidence provides very little definite information about specific individuals who were recognized as apostles by 50 CE. This is not only because these NT documents provide the names of few apostles, but also because their late date jeopardizes their historicity.

*Figure One: Who Were Apostles according to non-Pauline NT Authors?*

<b>Apostle(s)</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Date of Source</b>	<b>Titular/Non-Titular</b>
The Twelve	Mark 6:30	c. 75 CE <sup>73</sup>	Non-titular
Paul	Colossians 1:1	c. 75-100 CE <sup>74</sup>	Titular
The Twelve	Matthew 10:2	c. 80 CE <sup>75</sup>	Titular
Jesus	Hebrews 3:1	c. 85 CE	?
Peter	1 Peter 1 :1	c. 85 CE	Titular
The Twelve	Luke (e.g., 11:49; 17:5; 22:14	c. 80-90 CE	Titular
Paul	Ephesians 1 :1	c.90 CE	Titular
Unnamed Group	Ephesians 2:20; 4 :11	c.90 CE	Titular
God's Holy Apostles	Ephesians 3:5	c. 90 CE	Titular
Unnamed Group	Revelation 2 :2; 18:20	c. 90 CE	Titular
The Twelve	Revelation 21 :14	c. 90 CE	Titular
Unnamed Group	John 13:16	c. 90-95 CE	Non-titular
The Twelve	Acts of the Apostles (e.g., 4:33; 5:29; 8:14)	c. 80-95 CE	Titular
Paul	Acts of the	c. 95 CE	Non-titular

<sup>73</sup> Most scholars date Mark between 65-75 CE. See Joel Marcus, "The Jewish War and the Sitz im Leben of Mark," in *JBL* 111 (1992), 441-62.

<sup>74</sup> Bart Ehrman's dating of NT documents often reflects the majority view. See Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 112-194; 408-436; 445-474.

<sup>75</sup> See note 15.

	Apostles 14:4, 14		
Barnabas	Acts of the Apostles 14:4, 14	c. 95 CE	Non-titular
Paul	1 Timothy 1:1; 2:7	c. 100 CE	Titular
Paul	2 Timothy 1:1; 1:11	c. 100 CE	Titular
Paul	Titus 1 :1	c. 100 CE	Titular
Simeon Peter	2 Peter 1:1	c. 100 CE	Titular
Apostles Of Our Lord Jesus Christ	Jude 1:17	c.110	Titular

Five of the NT documents in question name the Twelve as apostles. But our earliest sources on the Twelve (Mark and Q) do not call them apostles in the titular sense. The only evidence that this group of followers were recognized apostles before the Easter event is from Matthew and Luke, which creates suspicion that these authors are interjecting a later understanding of the Twelve's apostleship into their accounts of Jesus' ministry.<sup>76</sup> First century sources freely call the Twelve *ἀπόστολοι* when they are dealing with the post-Easter era (e.g., Revelation, Acts). The association between apostleship and the resurrection is not a great mystery; both Paul and Luke tell us how the office is tied to the Easter event: these authors understand apostles to be (among) those who have seen the risen Lord.<sup>77</sup> More will be said about this below. We can be relatively sure, though, that the Twelve became

<sup>76</sup> Neither Mark nor John designate the Twelve *ἀπόστολοι* in their accounts of Jesus' ministry while Matthew's single designation (10:2) is most likely redactional and thus reflects a post-Easter notion that the Twelve became apostles before the resurrection.

<sup>77</sup> As noted above, this criterion is absent from Luke's Gospel. However, in Acts it serves as a condition for apostleship. Moreover, Luke describes the task of bearing witness to the resurrection as a major function of the apostle. See Acts 1:21-22.

recognized ἀπόστολοι sometime after the resurrection and before the composition of Matthew's Gospel.

Three of the charted NT sources document groups of apostles comprised of unnamed individuals. These sources - Ephesians, Revelation, and Jude - are each relatively late, but as we shall see below, Paul also records the existence of unnamed apostles. We shall therefore avoid following Luke's narrow definition of apostleship, which is supported by no other NT author.

### 2.2.3 Conclusions

We now have valuable contextual information about first century notions of apostleship. NT authors use the word in either a titular or non-titular sense. The titular usage denotes individuals who have seen the risen Lord and have been commissioned by Christ to do work. Luke pushes for the added qualification of having accompanied Jesus during his earthly ministry. The third evangelist's narrow definition of the term allows only for the Twelve to be counted apostles. Evidence that a wider conception of apostleship existed is found in the pseudo-Pauline epistles, which name Paul an apostle - and perhaps also in Revelation, and Jude, which each reference an unnamed group of apostles. NT authors rarely employ the non-titular usage of the term - it is found only in Mark, John, Acts, and possibly Hebrews. This usage denotes an individual sent out to complete a short-termed objective by either a congregation or an individual.

We were unable to determine the identity of all the earliest apostles. In order to do this we will need to throw the Pauline letters into the mix, as they represent our earliest NT sources and can shed some light on the period between the resurrection and the composition of



Mark's Gospel. We shall keep in mind that the non-Pauline documents identify the Twelve and an unnamed group as the earliest apostles. We know that the Twelve became acknowledged apostles sometime between the Easter event and 80 CE (when Matthew's Gospel was composed). The *terminus ante quem* of recognition (however broad) of the apostleship of the unidentified apostles is c. 90 CE - the date of the composition of Ephesians. In continuance with our pursuit for the first apostles, and subsequently for Paul's understanding of his own apostleship, we turn now to Paul's writing.

### 2.3 ἀπόστολος in Paul's Letters

The only NT documents to name Paul an apostle in the titular sense are the letters written under his name. In contrast, Peter and the Twelve are called by the title by multiple NT sources.<sup>78</sup> Quite clearly there was not a uniform apostle-concept in these early days of the Jesus movement. Paul's letters do, however, give us insights into views held by his contemporary Christ-believers.

The following part of the chapter will be divided into two sub-sections. In the first, we shall begin by determining which individuals Paul regarded to be apostles. Once we have completed this, we shall have surveyed each individual and group given the apostle designation in the NT. At this point we shall draw conclusions regarding which individuals were apostles before Paul's transformation experience on the road to Damascus, and we shall also establish how they defined themselves. In the second sub-section, we shall redirect our focus to Paul's description of his own apostleship. NT scholars traditionally interpret

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<sup>78</sup> For example: (1) The Twelve: Matt 10:2; Luke 11:49; Rev 21:14; Acts 4:33; (2) Peter: 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1; Gal 1:18; 2:8.

Paul to say that apostles are those who have seen a vision of the risen Christ and who have been commissioned by Christ to preach the gospel.<sup>79</sup> Based on the Pauline evidence, we shall argue that a vision of the risen Christ is not a distinguishing mark of an apostle, though it is a necessary condition for being an apostle.<sup>80</sup> Rather, Paul places an overlooked emphasis on apostolic activities. Most usages of ἀπόστολος in Paul's writing are accompanied by references to apostolic activities, which suggests that he understood his missionary work to be an integral component of his apostleship. Later NT conceptions of apostleship differ. We shall thus determine how and why Paul understands apostleship differently than do other NT authors.

We shall begin our present inquiry with Paul's use of ἀπόστολος to denote others and then turn to Paul's use of the title for himself.

### 2.3.1 Whom Does Paul Call an Apostle?

Each individual and group called ἀπόστολος or ἀπόστολοι by Paul is charted below. The chart is followed by a letter-by-letter analysis of its data. In this analysis, we shall show that most of Paul's usages of ἀπόστολος are preceded or followed by references to apostolic deeds. Along the way, we shall determine whom Paul recognized as his colleagues in apostleship. This will further our effort to understand Paul's definition of apostleship.

*Figure Two: Paul's Use of ἀπόστολος To Denote Others*

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<sup>79</sup> See pages 1-2 above.

<sup>80</sup> Paul states that all apostles experienced a vision of Christ, but he does not hold such an experience to be exclusive to apostles.

Name	Source	Date of Source	Titular/Non-titular	Comments
Silvanus, and unnamed others	1 Thessalonians 2:7	c. 50 CE <sup>81</sup>	Titular	
Epaphroditus	Philippians 2:25	c. 52-54 CE <sup>82</sup>	Non-titular	
Apostles in Jerusalem	Galatians 1:17	c. 54 CE	Titular	The Twelve, among others (Fung, 1988)
Cephas (Peter)	Galatians 1:18	c. 54 CE	Titular	
James, the Lord's brother	Galatians 1:19	c. 54 CE	Titular	There is not a scholarly consensus on James' status in this verse. See below.
Peter	Galatians 2 :8	c. 54 CE	Titular	
Unnamed apostles	1 Corinthians 4 :9	c. 53-54 CE <sup>83</sup>	Titular	
Unnamed apostles	1 Corinthians 9 :5	c. 53-54 CE	Titular	Barrett (1968) counts Cephas in this group
Unnamed apostles	1 Corinthians 12:28	c. 53-54 CE	Titular	
Unnamed apostles	1 Corinthians 15 :7	c. 53-54 CE	Titular	
''Our brothers '' (ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν)	2 Corinthians 8:23	c.54-55 CE <sup>84</sup>	Non-titular	
''Super-apostles '' (ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων)	2 Corinthians 11 :5; 12 :11	c. 54-55 CE	Titular	Paul's Corinthian opponents (Furnish, 1984) or the Jerusalem apostles: Peter and his

<sup>81</sup> Leon Morris, *The First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians* (NICNT; Michigan: Eerdmans, 1991), 13.

<sup>82</sup> See Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 26-28. Another option is c.60-62 CE. See Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 30-32.

<sup>83</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 1-5.

<sup>84</sup> C.K. Barrett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (Black's; London: Hendrickson, 1973), 1-11. Furnish dates 2 Cor 1-9 to 55CE and 2 Cor 10-13 to 56 CE. See Furnish, *11 Corinthians*, 29-55.

				"colleagues" (Barrett, 1973)
"False- apostles" (ψευδαπόστολοι)	2 Corinthians 11:13	c. 54-55 CE	Titular	Titular meaning employed ironically
The Twelve (Zahn, 1910); or apostles with connections to Roman churches (Jewett, 2007)	Romans 1:5	c.56-57 CE <sup>85</sup>	Titular	Paul's use of the plural verb ἐλάβομεν has created debate over who he has in mind.
Apostles to the Gentiles	Romans 11:13- 14	c. 56-57 CE	Titular	
Andronicus, Junia, and others who are unnamed	Romans 16:7	c. 56-57 CE	Titular	

Within our analysis of this charted data we will frequently come across references to apostolic activities. The importance Paul places on the duty-component to the apostle-concept has been overlooked in scholarship. However, our argument is important to make because, if accepted, it should push inquiries into Paul's understanding of apostleship into a new direction.

We begin our analysis with 1 Thes 2:7, the earliest usage of ἀπόστολος in the NT. In this verse, Paul is likely only referring to himself and Silvanus as apostles, though Timothy could also be implied. Silas is recorded in Acts to have been an important member of the Jerusalem community,<sup>86</sup> which strengthens the assertion that Paul had him

<sup>85</sup> See Robert Jewett, *Romans: A Commentary* (Hermeneia; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 18-22.

<sup>86</sup> E.g., 15:22, 27, 32; 15:40-18:5

in mind as one of the ἀπόστολοι in 1 Thes 2:7.<sup>87</sup> Our evidence from Luke on Timothy's status tells us something quite different: he was a native of Lystra, a region evangelized by Paul (Acts 16:1-3). Paul gives us further reasons to understand Timothy as something other than an apostle. On several occasions Paul describes Timothy as having played the role of an emissary, representing Paul in places at times when he was occupied elsewhere (e.g., 1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; Phil 2:19-23). Neither Paul nor Luke refer to Timothy as an apostle anywhere else. Indeed, Paul prefers to call him a "brother" (ἀδελφός) (2 Cor 1:1; 1 Thess 3:2) and a co-worker (συνεργός) (Rom 16:21). It is therefore unlikely that Paul would have referred to him on this one occasion as an apostle.<sup>88</sup> The verse also reveals that there were other "apostles of Christ" outside of Paul and Silvanus, of whom the Thessalonians perhaps had knowledge and whose "demands" (ἐν βάρει εἶναι) served as a benchmark for Paul and Silvanus' own apostolic rights.<sup>89</sup>

Preceding Paul's claim to share in the rights of other χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι in 2:7 is the assertion that he and Silvanus have been delegated

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<sup>87</sup> Bengt Holmberg depicts Silvanus as "a respected colleague almost equal to Paul himself." See *Paul and Power: The Structure of Authority in the Primitive Church as Reflected in the Pauline Epistles* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 65.

<sup>88</sup> Scholars generally regard Silvanus to have been recognized as an apostle, and Timothy to have been regarded as an emissary. See Keith F. Nickle, *The Collection: A Study in Paul's Strategy* (SBT 48; Illinois: Allenson, 1966), 18-22; Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 65; Charles A. Wanamaker, *The Epistles to the Thessalonians: A Commentary on the Greek Text* (NIGTC; Michigan: Eerdmans, 1990), 69, 99-100.

<sup>89</sup> On apostolic rights, Morris writes, "the meaning is that they, being apostles of Christ, had every right to be maintained by those to whom they preached...He makes with some emphasis the point that preachers have this right, even though he himself frequently forbore to exercise it." See Morris, *Thessalonians*, 66. Perhaps the rights of the apostle of Christ find parallels in the rights bestowed upon the Twelve in Mark's missionary discourse - particularly 6:10: "Wherever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the place."

the task of preaching the gospel - a task approved and entrusted by God (2:4). In the immediate context of 2:7 is also a statement regarding Paul and Silvanus's stay with the Thessalonians (2:1). What we have in the background of Paul's earliest use of *ἀπόστολος* is ample discussion of his - and also Silvanus's - tasks. In these verses, Paul closely associates apostleship with rights and tasks. The former is of little concern to him (1 Thess 2:7), but the latter is of particular interest.

In Paul's letter to the Philippians, Epaphroditus is named an *ἀπόστολος* (Phil 2:25). However, he is an apostle in the non-titular meaning of the term.<sup>90</sup> But for Paul, the emissary's significance is not much different from that of the apostle's. Scholars have overlooked this detail. For example, Barrett notes that "Epaphroditus was an envoy of the Philippian Christians, charged with conveying their gift to Paul. This in itself has nothing to do with an appearance of and a charge from Christ, and with preaching the Gospel."<sup>91</sup> However, Paul regards Epaphroditus' responsibility as equally burdensome to his own apostolic duty. He draws attention to Epaphroditus' task as the Philippians' *ἀπόστολος* just as he did in 1 Thes 2:7 to his and Silvanus' tasks as apostles of Christ. He appears to understand an apostle of any kind to be someone charged with the responsibility of carrying out a task or tasks. We thus are persuaded to understand Epaphroditus' role in the way that Bockmuehl describes it: "as Epaphroditus is [the emissary] for the Philippians ... so Paul is the 'emissary' of Jesus Christ, commissioned

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<sup>90</sup> Paul's letter to the Philippians is one of Paul's earliest epistles. His usage of *ἀπόστολος* in the non-titular sense indicates that Paul was aware of the older meaning of the term at a relatively early stage of his missionary career.

<sup>91</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 293.

not by a church but by the risen Lord himself."<sup>92</sup> To Bockmuehl's observation we might add that Paul tells the Philippians that Epaphroditus "[risked] his life (παραβολευσάμενος τη ψυχῇ) to make up for those services (λειτουργίας) that you could not give me" (Phil 2:30). He would later refer to his own apostolic duty as a life-risking endeavor (2 Cor 11:23-28). We should thus be careful not to distinguish too concretely between the non-titular and the titular apostle in Paul's writings. The duty component to apostleship is not reserved for Paul's technical usage of ἀπόστολος, but is rather of equal centrality to all individuals upon whom he bestows the designation.

In Galatians, Paul reveals that there are apostles in Jerusalem (1:17), but he names only one of them for certain: Cephas (1:18). It is very likely that in 1:19 Paul names James, the brother of Jesus, as an apostle as well. However, there is some debate regarding James' status in this verse. A number of NT scholars doubt that James is labeled as an apostle for grammatical reasons. The verse reads as follows after Paul reports his visit with Cephas in Jerusalem (1:17): ἕτερον δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων οὐκ εἶδον εἰ μὴ Ἰάκωβον τὸν ἀδελφὸν τοῦ κυρίου. The εἰ μὴ, ("except") is sometimes taken to refer to εἶδον rather than the entire preceding clause, so as to say, "I did not see any other apostle, but I saw only James, the brother of the Lord."<sup>93</sup> However, it is most natural to understand the εἰ μὴ as referencing the entire preceding clause, so as to say, "I saw none of the other apostles except James, the brother of the Lord."<sup>94</sup> This reading is supported by Paul's claim in 1 Cor 15:7 that James had

<sup>92</sup> Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 171.

<sup>93</sup> For this and other arguments, see J. Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* (E.T., Richmond, 1959), 92, n.2; "Paul, the Apostles, and the Twelve," *StTh* 3 (1950), 107.

<sup>94</sup> Fung, *Galatians*, 78.

experienced a vision of Christ, which is a qualification that all titular apostles presumably share in Paul's writings.

Paul writes a little about Cephas' and James' apostolic tasks. He speaks of them as figures of authority; it is they, along with John, who gave Paul and Barnabas fellowship (κοινωνίας) and - in not so many words - recognized the legitimacy of Paul's mission to the Gentiles. He also notes that Peter is an apostle of the Gentiles (ἀποστολήν τῆς περιτομῆς) (2:8). We can thus include missionary duties among Peter's apostolic tasks.

In 1 Corinthians, Paul betrays knowledge of an unidentified group of apostles four times. We can say frustratingly little about the identity of this group, but we can continue to expose Paul's emphatic remarks about apostolic tasks by considering what he writes in the context of these four verses (i.e., 1 Cor 4:9; 9:5; 12:28; 15:7). Much is revealed about the living conditions of the apostle in this letter. For example, in 4:9-13, Paul writes:

For I think that God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, as though sentenced to death, because we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and to mortals. We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. You are held in honor, but we in disrepute. To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our own hands. When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly. We have become like the rubbish of the world, the dregs of all things, to this very day.

In this passage, Paul speaks of the apostle's hardships as though s/he had a duty to endure them. To illuminate this idea further, we might look to what first century Cynic-Stoic preachers say about their own adversity. Dio Chrysostom, a younger contemporary of Paul, sees the philosophers' role in society similarly to Paul's view of the apostle's.



In a passage where he discusses the qualities of the ideal philosopher, he writes:

But to find a man who in plain terms and without guile speaks his mind with frankness, and neither for the sake of reputation nor for gain, but out of good will and concern for his fellow-man stands ready, if need be, to submit to ridicule and to the disorder and uproar of the mob... (Dio Chrysostom, *Discourse* 32,11-12).

Approximate contemporaries of Chrysostom, such as Epictetus, Lucian, and Maximus of Tyre, share his perspective on the ideal philosopher's endurance of hardships.<sup>95</sup> One might also cite Mark with these authors. In the second Gospel, the Twelve are instructed to preach (3:14), they speak frankly (6:12) and are prepared to meet opposition while doing so (6:11). In addition to the parallels between the apostle's and philosopher's endurance of persecution, we find philosophical similarities in these two figures' way of life: the apostle lacks of fine clothes and is homeless (1 Cor 4:11) while the Cynic views a general disdain of luxury to be part of a life of true freedom.<sup>96</sup> The desire to search for analogies to Paul's apostolic mission will strengthen as we continue. However, it would be premature to embark on an extensive comparative project of this kind before Paul's action statements have been properly compiled and their significance understood.

In the context of Paul's reference to an unnamed group of apostles in 1 Cor 4:9, he speaks of a specific apostolic task. He writes, *καὶ κοπιῶμεν ἐργαζόμενοι ταῖς ἰδίαις χερσίν* (4:12a). The term *κοπιῶμεν* usually designates Christian jobs, such as preaching and establishing and

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<sup>95</sup> E.g. see Epictetus, *Discourse* 3.22; Lucian, *Demonax*; Maximus of Tyre, *Discourse* 36.

<sup>96</sup> Cicero, *Tusc.* V,92; cf. Dio Chrysostom, *Oratio IV de Regno*.

maintaining congregations of believers (see 1 Cor 15:10; 16:16; Rom 16:6, 12; Gal 4:11; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 5:12).<sup>97</sup> The second part of the phrase could be a reference to Paul's policy of self-sufficiency (cf. Acts 17:7; 20:34; 1 Cor 9:6, 12, 15-18; 2 Cor 11:9; 12:13; 1 Thess 2:9).<sup>98</sup> Barrett translates this verse as follows: "We do our Christian service, and at the same time for our support engage in secular work."<sup>99</sup> Paul probably would not have distinguished between the apostle's "Christian service" and secular work as sharply as does Barrett. Paul understands the apostle's secular work of supporting himself by his craft as central to the integrity of the apostle. His self-sufficiency is part of the reason that he believes his behavior in Thessalonica was "blameless" (1 Thess 2:10). He engaged in such labors evidently because he regarded it to be beneficial to the success of his preaching. We shall treat his efforts to be self-sufficient in greater detail in section 3.2.2.

Paul's mention of the other apostles (οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι) in 1 Cor 9:5 is too vague for us to know their identity. But it is interesting that in this verse he appears to distinguish between apostles (οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι) and Cephas. However, we should continue to assume that Paul regarded Cephas to be among the apostles; he was probably singled out from the rest of the apostles because he had visited Corinth previously.<sup>100</sup>

Paul indirectly betrays something about the apostolic tasks of οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοι in this verse. He notes that the apostle has the right to

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<sup>97</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 110.

<sup>98</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 110.

<sup>99</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 110.

<sup>100</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 203-204.

take along his wife with him (9:5f). This implies that some apostles journeyed away from home, perhaps to take part in missionary activity.<sup>101</sup>

Paul only mentions the Twelve once in his letters - in 1 Cor 15:5. This verse is part of a creedal formula that Paul preserved in 15:5-7,<sup>102</sup> and is an important passage for the present study. It reads as follows:

...[Christ] appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

This passage is telling of Paul's understanding of apostleship, and also - because it is likely a well-known oral tradition that predates Paul's letters - of general notions of the office by the 50s. It leads us to question the standard scholarly definition of apostles, which tends to note a sighting of the risen Christ and instructions by Christ to do apostolic work, with no qualifiers.<sup>103</sup> In 1 Cor 15:5-7, a vision of Christ is common to all apostles, but not a distinguishing mark of their authority.<sup>104</sup> Apostles share their vision experience with "more than five hundred brothers" (15:6). In this passage it is reported that other non-apostolic experienced a vision of Christ as well (i.e., the Twelve). We can thus surmise that the Christ-believers represented

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<sup>101</sup> Paul again neglects to identify the names of the apostles he has in mind in 1 Cor 12:28. We should not assume that these unidentified individuals are the Twelve and only the Twelve. Nowhere does Paul identify the Twelve as apostles. However, some scholars believe that Paul indirectly labels the Twelve as apostles. For example, Fung believes this to be the case in Gal 1:17. See Fung, *Galatians*, 70. Zahn interprets Paul to have in mind the Twelve in Rom 1:1-5. See Theodor Zahn, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Romer* (Kommentar zum Neuen Testament 6; Leipzig: Deichert, 1910), 43-44.

<sup>102</sup> See Barrett, *First Epistle*, 341.

<sup>103</sup> For example, Barrett writes, "An apostle is, in Paul's understanding, one called by Christ and sent by him to preach the Gospel." See Barrett, *First Epistle*, 293.

<sup>104</sup> Though it is a necessary condition for being an apostle.

by 15:5-7 did not hold the apostle's vision of Christ to be unique. Apostleship was special for some other reason.

Paul shifts topics in 15:8 from visions of Christ to apostleship in general. In 15:8-11 he admits that Christ appeared to him after all other apostles because he is "least of the apostles" (ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων), as a result of his involvement with persecutions of the church before his calling (15:9). However, he proceeds to counter his "least of the apostles" status with the claim that he had worked harder than any of the other apostles (περισσότερον αὐτῶν πάντων ἐκοπίασα) (15:10). His next statement places all apostles on equal footing: "Whether then it was I or they (i.e., the other apostles), so we proclaim (κηρύσσομεν) and so you have come to believe (ἐπιστεύσατε)" (15:11). This verse tells us something about general notions of apostleship: the quality of their work makes them unique. Apostles have seen a vision of the risen Christ, but they have also successfully proclaimed the gospel - that is, they have proclaimed the gospel in a way that brings others to faith in Christ. In this early period, the latter qualification was perhaps more important than the vision because it could be supported with material evidence. Both a vision and successful proclamation of the gospel were conditions for apostleship, but only one of them could be proven.

There are two schools of thought regarding the identity of the super-apostles (ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων) of 11:5 and 12:11.<sup>105</sup> One school proposes that they were Paul's Corinthian opponents, whom he calls

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<sup>105</sup> But his first usage of ἀπόστολος in the letter is a non-titular reference to "our brothers, apostles of the assemblies" (ἀδελφοὶ ἡμῶν ἀπόστολοι ἐκκλησιῶν) (8:23). Little else is said about these envoys. They do not share in the kind of apostleship by which Paul defines himself, but we know from Paul's words about another non-titular apostle that they are responsible for doing "the work of Christ" (τὸ ἔργον χριστοῦ) (Phil 2:30).

pseudo-apōstles (ψευδαπόστολοι) in 11:13.<sup>106</sup> Käsemann, Barrett, and others see this as a mistake. They point out that in 11:15 Paul calls the pseudo-apostles "servants of Satan." They then ask how Paul could claim earlier to be "not inferior" (11:5) to the super-apostles if they are servants of Satan! Barrett states that such a scenario is "intolerable."<sup>107</sup> This second school identifies the super-apostles as the Jerusalem apostles.<sup>108</sup> However, their primary objection to the former school is unwarranted: Paul's claim to be "not inferior" (ὑπερηκείαι) to the "ministers of Satan" is different from claiming equal status with them. Paul's point is that they do not have greater standing than he - a claim that perhaps countered those coming from some of the Corinthians. Moreover, the flow of the Greek is disrupted if we take the super-apostles to be the Jerusalem apostles; "apostles" of a non-Pauline gospel are the subject of 11:4. Paul bestows upon them the ironic title "super-apostles" in 11:5 and 12:11, but confirms in 11:13 that they are really false-apostles.<sup>109</sup> They are also deceitful workers (ἐργάται δόλιοι) and they disguise themselves as apostles of Christ (ἀποστόλους χριστοῦ) (11:13). We can therefore surmise that they came to Corinth claiming to be apostolic figures of authority.

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<sup>106</sup> Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 502-504.

<sup>107</sup> Barrett, *Second Epistle*, 31.

<sup>108</sup> This view is held as early as the fourth century by Chrysostom. See *NPNF* (1<sup>st</sup> ser.; New York: Christian Literature, co., 1900), XII: 385. Chrysostom's position is supported by Ferdinand Christian Bauer, *Paul: His Life and Work* (2 vols.; London: Williams and Norgate, 1875-76), I:285; Ernst Käsemann, "Die Legitimat des Apostels. Eine Untersuchung zu II Korinther 10-13," *ZNW* (1942), 41-48; and Barrett, *Second Epistle*, 277-79, among others.

<sup>109</sup> ψευδαπόστολοι appears nowhere else in ancient literature. Paul may have created the term himself. It is perhaps inspired by the term and notion of "false prophets." See Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 494.

Interestingly, Paul does not respond to his opponents' claims by attacking the authenticity of their visions of the risen Christ. But he does critique their actions. Immediately after he points out that his opponents boast about their status, he calls them false-apostles (ψευδαπόστολοι) and deceitful workers (ἐργάται δόλιοι).<sup>110</sup> That is, before attacking any other claims that they had made, Paul attacks their work. It seems as though Paul regarded an attack on their work ethic to be the most effective way to convince the Corinthians of the fallacy of their office. We can therefore postulate that work ethic was an important element of the Corinthians' notion of apostleship, as well as Paul's.

We can provide a sketch of the "false apostle's" activities in Corinth. They evidently came to Paul's Corinthian community and proclaimed a Jesus, spirit, and gospel different from the one that Paul had proclaimed (11:4). They had no problem preaching where another had already preached. They appeared to the Corinthians as better-trained orators than Paul (11:6), and they boasted about their qualifications (11:12). Paul did not know of their specific boasts,<sup>111</sup> and we can therefore say little of their merits.

In Paul's letter to the Romans, he refers to unidentified apostles twice before finally giving specific names in 16:7. His references to

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<sup>110</sup> ἐργάτης is commonly used by NT authors as a title for a missionary (e.g., Matt 9:37-38 par.; 10:10 par). Some NT scholars have suggested that Paul's opponents applied it to themselves. E.g. Dieter Georgi, *Die Gegner des Paulus im 2. Korintherbrief. Studien zur religiösen Propaganda in der Spätantike*. (WMANT 11: 1864), 1964: 49-50; Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity. Essays on Corinth* (ed. and tr. By J.H. Schütz; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982), 48; cf. Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 494.

<sup>111</sup> In 11:22-23 Paul tells us about his own qualifications, but not necessarily anything about the Corinthian apostles' merits. He appears to be guessing about what their claims might have been in these verses. Paul would have regarded any such claims as false, as he earlier describes them as ministers of Satan (11:15).

unnamed apostles are in 1:5 and 11:13. In 1:5, he states, "we have received grace and apostleship..." Paul is not using an epistolary plural,<sup>112</sup> so to whom is he referring here? One suggestion is the Jerusalem apostles.<sup>113</sup> However, Paul does know of other apostles besides the ones in Jerusalem (e.g., Silvanus). There is nothing in the context of 1:5 to suggest that he has specifically the Jerusalem apostles in mind. Robert Jewett presents another answer. He proposes that Paul had in mind "the apostles whose emissaries had established the house and tenement churches in Rome in the decades before the writing of this letter."<sup>114</sup> This is an appealing solution. The apostles who reached Rome would have shared with Paul in a Gentile mission, for most of the Roman believers were non-Jewish.<sup>115</sup> Indeed, in 1:5 Paul announces that he and the apostles he has in mind "bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for the sake of his name..." Moreover, Paul names two apostles among the Roman believers in 16:7, so we know that there were apostles there.<sup>116</sup>

Paul speaks about apostolic duty in 1:4b-6:

...Jesus Christ our Lord, through whom we have received (ἐλάβομεν) grace (χάρις) and apostleship (ἀποστολήν) to bring about the obedience of faith (ὑπακοήν πίστεως) among all the Gentiles (ἔθνεσιν) for the sake of his name, including yourselves, who are called (κλητοίς) to belong to Jesus Christ.

This task is specific to apostles of the Gentiles (ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος) (11:13). In 11:13, Paul claims to be "an" apostle to the Gentiles, not

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<sup>112</sup> See Jewett, *Romans*, 109.

<sup>113</sup> Zahn, *Paulus*, 43-44.

<sup>114</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 109.

<sup>115</sup> See Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 69-79.

<sup>116</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 109.

"the" apostle to the Gentiles.<sup>117</sup> The absence of the definite article indicates that there were more than him who claimed this title. He does not indicate who they were, but Luke credits Peter with introducing the gospel to the Gentiles (9:32-10: 48; cf. 15:7). Perhaps Peter's work was associated with the gentile mission by Paul's time, too. 11:13-14 is particularly important for our understanding of the apostle to the Gentiles' role. Paul writes, "inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I glorify (δοξάζω) my ministry in order (εἰ πως) to make my own people jealous (παραζηλώσω), and thus save (σώσω) some of them." Jewett observes Paul to mean that this is "a generic obligation of every Gentile apostle."<sup>118</sup> We shall explore what this obligation might have involved below. For now it is enough to note that Paul understands each apostle of the Gentiles - of whom there were more than just Paul - to work among the Gentiles with the salvation of "some" Jews in mind.

Paul names two apostles in 16:7 - perhaps they were apostles to the Gentiles (έθνών απόστολος). The verse reads as follows: "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives (συγγενείς μου) who were in prison with me; they are prominent (έπίσημοι) among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was." Scholars are divided on whether or not Paul employs the titular meaning of απόστολος in this verse.<sup>119</sup> Jewett's arguments in favour of the titular meaning are convincing. He suggests

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<sup>117</sup> For έθνών απόστολος, see Rom 1:5; 15:16; Gal 1:16; 2:7, 9; 1 Tim 2:7. In Acts, Paul is called an "instrument," "minister," and "witness," but never an apostle of the Gentiles. See Acts 9:15; 26:16.

<sup>118</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 679.

<sup>119</sup> Some scholars suggest that Andronicus and Junia served as emissaries of a particular congregation. See Jewett, *Romans*, 963; and C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans: Volume II* (ICC; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979), 789. Other scholars argue that the two apostles served as witnesses to the resurrection and preachers of the gospel. See Schmithals, *Office of the Apostle*, 62; and Jewett, *Romans*, 963.



that Andronicus and Junia were apostles rather than emissaries because Paul does not link them to a congregation (cf. Phoebe in 16:1-2), which he tends to do when he uses ἀπόστολος in the non-titular sense.<sup>120</sup>

#### 2.4 Conclusions: The Identity of the Earliest Apostles and the Activities of their Apostleship

The NT evidence leads us to eight different individuals and groups of apostles<sup>121</sup> in existence before Paul's calling. First, we know of three figures by name: Peter (Cephas) (Gal 1:18; 2:8; 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1), James, the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19), and Silvanus (1 Thes 2:7). Paul reveals two groups of apostles by location: those in Jerusalem (Gal 1:17) and those in Rome (Rom 1:5). We also know of two groups of apostles, within which overlap is certain: apostles of Christ (1 Thes 2:7; cf. Jude 1:17) and apostles to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13-14). There is good attestation to the apostolic status of the Twelve by or soon after the composition of Paul's letters (e.g., Matt 10:2; Luke 11:49; 17:5; Rev 21:14; Acts 4:33; 5:29). They were among those to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection (1 Cor 15:5), but this was apparently not enough to be counted among the apostles (see 1 Cor 15:6). However, by the time Matthew wrote his Gospel, they were known as apostles. Paul's Corinthian opponents were surely recognized as apostles by some, though not by Paul. Regardless of Paul's dislike for them, we should count them among Paul's contemporary apostles - indeed, we cannot be sure that any of the abovementioned individuals were unanimously recognized as apostles. In addition to these specific individuals, there

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<sup>120</sup> For example, Epaphroditus is linked with the Philippian assembly. See Jewett, *Romans*, 963.

<sup>121</sup> Though overlap is possible in some cases and definite in others.

were others who our NT authors failed to identify (1 Cor 4:9; 9:5; 12:28; 15:7; 2 Cor 8:23; Eph 2:20; 4:11; Rev 2:2; 18:20).

We found that Paul's primary challenge to the authenticity of his rivals' apostleship was an attack on their work ethic (2 Cor 11:13). We can therefore surmise that apostolic duty was a major component to the office in the minds of Paul, the Corinthian believers, and perhaps Paul's Corinthian rivals, too.

Our analysis of Paul's use of ἀπόστολος to denote others has revealed certain tasks associated with the apostle-concept. He describes Silvanus and himself as χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι (1 Thes 2:7). Their tasks include preaching the gospel approved and entrusted by God (2:4). Peter and James are credited with granting fellowship to Paul and recognizing the legitimacy of his apostolic mission to the Gentiles (Gal 2:9). However, John is also credited as having this authority, and he is nowhere directly named an apostle by Paul, though Paul could have him in mind when he speaks of the Jerusalem apostles (Gal 1:17). Peter, James, and other apostles also took part in missionary activity (see 1 Cor 9:5). The unnamed apostles in 1 Corinthians endured persecution and opposition (4:9-13), preached, and established and maintained congregations of believers (4:12a), and also supported themselves without appealing to the generosity of the people to whom they brought the gospel (4:12a). Paul later states that apostles proclaim the gospel in a way that produces believers (15:11). The "super-apostles" in Corinth are credited to have worked (2 Cor 11:3), and to have proclaimed Jesus, the Spirit, and the gospel - though a different one from Paul (11:4). In Romans, Paul describes the tasks of the apostle of the Gentiles to be to turn all the Gentiles toward Christ (1:4b-6), and to make Israel jealous and

to save "some" of them as a result (11:13-14).<sup>122</sup> We retrieved this (and more) data on the apostle's duty by scanning just the immediate contexts of Paul's usages of ἀπόστολος. Paul almost always mentions apostolic duty when on the topic of apostleship. This suggests that inherent to Paul's notion of apostleship was a duty to carry out apostolic activities. We also have evidence that Paul's contemporaries understood the apostle's work to be a defining feature of his or her apostolate. The other criterion for apostleship that scholars unanimously mention is a vision of Christ. But in Paul's writings, it is portrayed as a qualification not exclusive to apostles. We thus have good reason to direct our attention to Paul's tasks in our quest to better understand his notion of apostleship.

#### 2.5 Paul's use of ἀπόστολος in Reference to Himself

Peter, James, and Silvanus were apostles before Paul. These three individuals, along with the unnamed others, saw visions of the risen Christ, though these visions alone did not make them apostles (1 Cor 15:5-7). Paul admits to having seen his visions of Christ chronologically later than did the other apostles (1 Cor 15:8); however, he believed that God had set him apart to be an apostle before he was born (Gal 1:14). The "vision of Christ" criterion was not one that Paul emphasized while justifying his apostolic status. Rather, Paul's words on the apostolate of others, as we have seen, suggest that he understood his own apostleship to be task-driven. His words in reference to his own

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<sup>122</sup> In Acts, the Twelve were sent by Jesus to be witnesses to his earthly deeds (10:39) and resurrection (1:22; cf. 5:32; 13:30-31), and to preach that Jesus offers forgiveness of sins to those who will believe (5:21-32; 10:41-43). In addition, Peter was given the specific task of fulfilling these three duties among the Gentiles (9:32-10: 48; cf. 15:7).

authority affirm this. He states in Gal 1:16 that God granted him a vision of Christ "[in order] to proclaim him among the Gentiles." This work is what really defined Paul after his calling.

Paul describes his apostolic task as both concentrated on the Gentiles in the short-term (e.g., Gal 1:15-16; 2:9-10; Rom 1:1-6) and designed in the interest of Jews in the long run (e.g., Rom 11:13-14). He is forceful in his assertions of independence from other apostles and leaders (e.g., Gal 1:1-2, 16-20), and he distinguishes himself from contemporary apostles by two criteria: (1) he persecuted Christians before his calling to apostleship; and (2) he - or God through him - worked harder than any other apostle (1 Cor 15:9-11). The latter distinction is enough reason for studies on Paul's apostolic self-understanding to focus on his activities. In 1 Cor 9:1 Paul gives further reason. He asks: "Am I not free (ἐλεύθερος)? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen (ὠρακα) Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work (ἔργον) in the Lord?" Each question is in response to the one that comes before it (with the exception of the first question which has no preceding question to respond to).<sup>123</sup> Interestingly, Paul responds to "Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?" with "Are you not my work in the Lord?" Paul is seemingly suggesting that his apostolic work is proof that he saw a vision of Christ.

The idea that his work proved that he experienced a vision of Christ solves two significant problems for Paul: (1) the problem of proving that he has seen a vision of Christ, and (2) the problem of authenticating his authority. A vision of Christ would not alone have made Paul an apostle in the minds of others (see 1 Cor 15:5-7); but he

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<sup>123</sup> See Barrett, *First Epistle*, 200-201.

nonetheless had to demonstrate that he had a vision since all apostles did by definition. He then had to prove that he was someone who saw a vision and who was also an apostle. But Paul could not even prove without a doubt that he had experienced a vision of Christ. Unlike the Twelve, who received visions of Christ at or around the same time (1 Cor 15:5), the "more than five hundred brothers" who had visions of Christ at one time (1 Cor 15:6), and the apostles who saw visions of Christ at or around the same time (1 Cor 15:7), Paul had his vision of Christ after all the rest and without anyone of note present to support his claim (1 Cor 15:8).

Our NT writings attest to the difficult time Paul had convincing others of his vision: only those documents written in Paul's name call him an apostle in the titular sense. This is unimpressive compared to our NT attestation to the Twelve's apostleship. The Twelve would have had an easier time than Paul convincing others that they had seen the risen Lord and that Christ had commissioned them because they were able to confirm each other's visions of Christ and apostolic status. Moreover, they were Jesus' closest followers during his earthly ministry. Christ-believers would not have been unreasonable to think that if Christ were to appear to anyone after the Easter event it would be to his closest followers. Paul could not claim to be a close follower of Jesus - rather, he had to admit that he persecuted Christ-believers after the resurrection (1 Cor 15:9). Indeed, this is one of the things that distinguished Paul from the other apostles. The other, as noted above, is his apostolic labours. And therein lies Paul's proof of apostleship. Though he persecuted Christ-believers before he came to believe in Christ, he worked harder than other apostles when he became

an apostle himself (1 Cor 15:9-10). The two distinguishing marks balance each other out and make Paul an apostle. This is among the reasons behind Paul's emphasis on the labour component to apostleship.

Paul's success as a missionary provided a visible token of proof that he was who he claimed to be. We have seen that early Christ-believers regarded a respectable work ethic to be an important characteristic of true apostleship (e.g., 1 Cor 11:13). To the Corinthians, Paul writes, "If I am not an apostle to others, yet at least to you I am, for you are the seal (σφραγίς) of my apostleship (ἀποστολῆς) in the Lord" (1 Cor 9:2). There was no visible token to prove the authenticity of Paul's encounters with Christ, but the Corinthian congregation provided a token of Paul's successful work in Christ's name and thus, according to Paul's - and evidently the Corinthians' - understanding of apostleship, provided proof of his apostolic status.<sup>124</sup> Apostolic activities were central to the early Christ-believers' understanding of apostleship. But they were so stressed by Paul because they were the only available demonstration of his calling

## 2.6 Conclusions

Paul defined apostleship as Brown and the others noted that he did. However, he understood it to be task-driven, and he evaluated the apostolic status of others based on their work. Previous descriptions of Paul's apostleship have not properly taken this into account. The "vision of Christ" criterion is present in Paul's understanding of apostleship, but Paul mentions it nowhere near as often as he does apostolic tasks. Moreover, he realized that it would be difficult for

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<sup>124</sup> See Barrett, *First Epistle*, 201. For Paul's use of σφραγίς elsewhere, see 2 Cor 1:22 and Rom 4:11.

him to prove that he had experienced a vision, and when he tried to do so, he pointed to the success of his missionary activity (1 Cor 9:1). He distinguished himself from contemporary apostles by two criteria: (1) he persecuted Christ-believers before his vision and calling; and (2) he - or God through him - worked harder than any other apostle (1 Cor 15:9-11). Unlike the Twelve, who received visions of Christ at or around the same time (1 Cor 15:5), the "more than five hundred brothers" who had visions of Christ at one time (1 Cor 15:6), and the apostles who saw visions of Christ at or around the same time (1 Cor 15:7), Paul had his vision of Christ after all the rest and without anyone present to support his claim (1 Cor 15:8). He therefore laid emphasis on his work. He pointed to the Corinthian community as proof of his apostleship, and he surely did the same to his other congregations.

Since Paul's tasks were so important to his identity as an apostle, we shall now turn our attention to his apostolic mission. In Chapter Three, we shall isolate and categorize his statements of action in an attempt to reveal the major objectives and tasks of Paul's apostleship. In this way, we shall achieve a detailed understanding of the most important component of Paul's apostleship.

### 3. Chapter Three: Paul's Statements of Action - Apostleship in Action

#### 3.1. Introduction

Paul distinguishes himself from other known apostles in 1 Cor 15:10 on the grounds that "he worked harder than any of them." Despite this plea to be evaluated by his work ethic, biblical scholars have always been more interested in Paul's thoughts than in his actions.<sup>125</sup> When the apostle's actions are the focus of scholarly attention, they are described in inadequate detail. The fact remains that we cannot understand Paul's notion of apostleship without studying closely his understanding of his apostolic duties. However, Paul's "statements of action" - a term that we have coined to designate passages wherein Paul asserts to have performed deeds - have yet to even be inventoried! This should have been NT scholars' first step in dealing seriously with Paul's mission. It is not until we attempt this that we can begin to appreciate his understanding of his mission - and subsequently his apostleship. We shall therefore compile Paul's statements of action and then tap into their interpretive value. The actions themselves should not come as a surprise, many scholars have already noted some or most of them in their own descriptions of Paul's tasks. However, an inventory of every thing that Paul claimed to do will allow for new insights into the methods with which he conducted and managed his mission.

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<sup>125</sup> Recent major publications on Paul have neglected detailed descriptions of his deeds. These include, J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: the Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980); J.D.G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: Clark; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998); C.J. Roetzel, *Paul. The Man and the Myth* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998); T. Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox; Edinburgh: Clark, 2000); J.G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000); cf. Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul the Missionary*, 14.



In this chapter, we shall first review the conclusions that scholars have recently drawn regarding Paul's mission. NT experts have been terse in their dealings with Paul's apostolic tasks and have spent little time describing his actions beyond preaching the gospel and establishing assemblies of believers. As we shall see, Paul's apostleship was more burdensome than this.

After reviewing recent scholarship on the matter, we shall present an inventory of action statements and focus the rest of the study on their significance to our understanding of Paul's self-perceived apostolic duties. It will become apparent in this analysis that Paul's mission was focused on community-maintenance. This is not to suggest that community-maintenance was Paul's only missionary objective. Each of his action statements informs us of a component of his overall mission. They also each suggest that Paul was a systematic doer. His deeds were carefully plotted to further the success of his mission. Evidently, Paul understood missionary success as the completion of four apostolic objectives. We shall reveal Paul's four apostolic goals below.

Our method of determining Paul's missionary objectives is to categorize his action statements. The categories shall inform us of the purposes behind each of Paul's actions. They shall also give us insight into the way with which his relationship with his converts developed throughout his ministry. The study shall conclude with a summary of the importance of Paul's statements of action for new research on Paul and apostleship.

### 3.2 Paul's Mission in Recent Scholarship

Morris Ashcraft's article from 1958 identifies parallels between Paul's mission and the missions of the OT prophets - namely Isaiah,

Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.<sup>126</sup> His focus on ancient analogies to Paul's mission represents a scholarly trend of his time to identify Paul as a prophet (or philosopher).<sup>127</sup> However, this usually comes at the expense of interpreting Paul's mission in its detailed entirety. Ashcraft is content to describe Paul's apostolic duties as the proclamation of God's word to the Gentiles.<sup>128</sup> He writes, "To Paul, it appears, fulfilling his role as an apostle meant that he was busy proclaiming the gospel."<sup>129</sup> This quote is a fair representation of the scholarly tendency to deconstruct Paul's individual duties so that they each fit under one heading - in Ashcraft's case it is "proclaiming the gospel." Ashcraft sees little need for probing into Paul's individual tasks. In Chapter Two we saw that Paul distinguished himself from other apostles (and indeed, from all individuals) by his labours as an apostle (1 Cor 15:10). We thus need to show more concern for these labours if we are to answer the question after which Ashcraft named his article: "Paul's Understanding of his Apostleship."

In his book from 1969, Walter Schmithals credits the apostle's mission as the defining feature of his apostolate. He follows Ashcraft in his emphasis on the gospel-preaching component to Paul's mission.<sup>130</sup> But in addition, he stipulates that the type of preaching that Paul did required a "sending forth."<sup>131</sup> He arrives at this conclusion after

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<sup>126</sup> Ashcraft, *Paul's Understanding*, 407ff.

<sup>127</sup> Recently, Robert Key has developed this idea by characterizing Paul as an ancient spiritual guide. See "Paul the Spiritual Guide: A Social Identity Perspective on Paul's Apostolic Self-Identity" *Tyndale Bulletin* 56 (2005), 155.

<sup>128</sup> Ashcraft, *Paul's Understanding*, 409.

<sup>129</sup> Ashcraft, *Paul's Understanding*, 411.

<sup>130</sup> Schmithals, *Office*, 22-23.

<sup>131</sup> Schmithals cites Rom 10:15 in support of this observation. See *Office*, 22-23.

observing Paul's usage of the words ἀπόστολος and ἀποστέλλειν.<sup>132</sup> Schmithals then proceeds to obscure his observation by noting that the tasks of an apostle are indistinct from the tasks of a non-apostolic missionary, despite the apostle's "sending forth." To this end he also argues that the apostle's mission is no more extensive or successful than those of other missionaries.<sup>133</sup> Paul would disagree. His success as a missionary is the major point by which he sought to prove his apostolic status to the Corinthians (2 Cor 3:1-4). To Paul, a defining feature of an apostle was the ability to succeed as a missionary. Schmithals might have better supported his argument by comparing the individual tasks carried out by Paul with those carried out by a non-apostolic missionary, such as Apollos (see 1 Cor 3:5-4:7). However, he does not show a great deal of interest in Paul's individual tasks as an apostle. Below we shall reveal all of Paul's claimed deeds, both major and minor ones, which will provide the basis for further research into the similarities and differences between the tasks of an apostle and the tasks of a non-apostolic missionary.

John Howard Schütz's 1975 book identifies three parts to Paul's apostolic tasks. The first is "the gospel." According to Schütz, Paul's proclamation of the gospel is the result of God working within and through him.<sup>134</sup> It is the "source" of Paul's apostolic activity, and an "on-going force."<sup>135</sup> The gospel is the manifestation of God's work, and Paul is as well. Schütz sees everything that Paul does as that which the

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<sup>132</sup> Schmithals, *Office*, 23.

<sup>133</sup> Schmithals, *Office*, 23.

<sup>134</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 232.

<sup>135</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 232.

gospel does.<sup>136</sup> This creates a scheme where there is no apparent need to probe into the detail of Paul's mission.

The second part to Paul's apostolic role is his function as a role model to Christ-believers. Paul is a role model because the gospel sets the standard for his behaviour, the gospel itself being God's power made manifest. The result of this equation is that there is an association between the behavior of Paul and that of God.<sup>137</sup> From this, Schütz argues that Paul would, and did, encourage others to act like himself - knowing that he acted himself in a divine manner.<sup>138</sup> Paul, indeed, does urge others to imitate him (1 Thess 1:6; Phil 3:17; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; cf. 1 Thess 2:14).<sup>139</sup> In summary of this duty, Schütz writes, "The apostle behaves as one worthy of the calling of God in order to urge others to that same worthiness."<sup>140</sup> This is an excellent observation, and Paul's action statements support it. Below we shall argue that Paul's behavioral deeds represent a category of his apostolic duty.

The third activity is "building up" (2 Cor 10:8, 13).<sup>141</sup> Schütz describes this as Paul's work to found communities. He parallels the instructions "to build" given to Paul with similar instructions given to OT prophets (e.g., Isa 49:17; Jer 24:6; 31:28; 42:10; 45:41; Ezek 36:36).<sup>142</sup> These three components - the gospel, Godly behavior, and community-building - comprise the content of Paul's apostolic activities according to Schütz. Schütz' study offers a fine perspective of Paul's

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<sup>136</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 232.

<sup>137</sup> Paul does not equate his behavior with that of God's, but he does equate his behavior with that of Christ's (see 1 Cor 11:1).

<sup>138</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 228.

<sup>139</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 228.

<sup>140</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 228. Cf. 1 Thess 2:10-12.

<sup>141</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 224.

<sup>142</sup> Schütz, *Paul*, 224.

responsibilities, but not a full account of the matter. He inadequately addresses Paul's responsibility to maintain his communities. He also fails to provide a comprehensive list of Paul's apostolic responsibilities.

L.J. Lietaert Peerbolte, in his 2003 book entitled *Paul the Missionary*, attempted to define Paul's tasks in greater detail than had previously been achieved. He draws attention to the numerous communities of believers that Paul established. These include congregations in Philippi (Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 2:2), Thessalonica (Phil 4:16; 1 Thess 1:1), Athens (1 Thess 3:1), Corinth (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1), Ephesus (1 Cor 15:32; 16:8), and various places in Galatia (1 Cor 16:1; Gal 1:2).<sup>143</sup> He questions whether Paul set out to establish communities of believers or whether the communities resulted from his proclamation of the gospel. He concludes that the preaching of the gospel was Paul's primary task and that the communities served to supplement this duty.<sup>144</sup> The reason that Paul established communities was to create new centers from which the gospel would spread.<sup>145</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte also argues that the communities were a means by which Paul could achieve his primary goal of preaching the gospel.<sup>146</sup> In addition, he discusses Paul's work to support himself. This work was called "secular" by Barrett<sup>147</sup>, and largely ignored in Schultz' study, but Lietaert Peerbolte correctly discusses it alongside Paul's other tasks as an apostle. Paul's working to support himself, and also his acceptance of support from others, is described as

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<sup>143</sup> See Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 204.

<sup>144</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 207, 254-55.

<sup>145</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 213. Cf. 1 Thess 1 :7-9.

<sup>146</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 221.

<sup>147</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 110.

a two-pronged method by which Paul was able to preach the gospel.<sup>148</sup> By achieving funds in these ways, he was able to go into places where there were no existing believers to support him. By going into places where there were no believers, he was able to "most effectively" contribute to the growth of the gospel.

Lietaert Peerbolte's description of Paul's apostolic duties is better than previous attempts to do the same. However, he downplays the significance of founding communities to a task supplementary to Paul's primary duty of preaching the gospel. Paul's communities served a greater purpose than this. They provided believers with an organizational structure that was previously lacking in their locale, and they served as proof of Paul's apostleship (2 Cor 3:1-3). Paul's statements of action indicate that he spent more time establishing and maintaining his assemblies than doing anything else. Paul's responsibilities to his assemblies are not adequately addressed by Lietaert Peerbolte.

Eckhard J. Schnabel's massive 2004 study follows a more recent scholarly trend to speak about Paul's mission at length. Schnabel reiterates the unanimous observation of previous scholars that Paul's proclamation of the gospel was his primary missionary task.<sup>149</sup> He portrays Paul as a teacher who is a representative of Jesus (2 Cor 5:20; 13:3; Rom 15:18).<sup>150</sup> According to Schnabel, Paul understands himself to be a "pioneer missionary" who focuses his ministry in areas where no other had laboured.<sup>151</sup> Schnabel recognizes that Paul carries out other

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<sup>148</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 228.

<sup>149</sup> Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1480.

<sup>150</sup> Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1480.

<sup>151</sup> Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1480.

duties, but he understands them each to be subject to the same rule: "The one decisive factor is that people are won for faith in Jesus Christ (1 Cor 9:19). This basic rule controls Paul's behaviour: he can live as a Jew among Jews, and he can live like a Gentile among Gentiles (1 Cor 9:20)."<sup>152</sup> This is an important observation. I believe that Paul's organization of his mission was more complicated than this, but we shall return to it below.

Robert Key's 2004 PhD dissertation on Paul's missionary activity is summarized in an article he published in 2005. Key observes the scholarly tendency to identify Paul with the OT prophets or the Greco-Roman philosophers.<sup>153</sup> Key, instead of citing the OT prophets or first-century itinerant preachers, notes that the Spiritual Guide is the figure that parallels Paul most closely.<sup>154</sup> In our study, we shall take a step back in order to better appreciate Paul's understanding of his mission. It is my hope that the present study will serve to inform future research on first century analogies to Paul's mission.

Lacking in scholarship on Paul's mission is an inventory of the duties for which he claims to be responsible. As a result, there is also

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<sup>152</sup> Schnabel, *Early Christian Mission*, 1480.

<sup>153</sup> Recent publications arguing that Paul perceived himself as a prophet include: Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*; and M. Eugene Boring, *The Continuing Voice of Jesus: Christian Prophecy and the Gospel Tradition* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1991). Studies that portray Paul as a Greco-Roman philosopher (to varying degrees) include: Clarence Glad, *Paul and Philodemus. Adaptability in Epicurean and Early Christian Psychagogy* (NTS 81; Leiden: Brill, 1995); F. Gerald Downing, *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches* (London: Routledge, 1998); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000); and Abraham Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989). While I believe that a compilation of action statements should precede generalizations about Paul's apostolic actions, convincing arguments have nonetheless been made regarding Paul and the Cynic-Stoic preachers. For example, Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*; and Downing, *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches*.

<sup>154</sup> Key, "Paul the Spiritual Guide," 155.

lacking a definitive account of Paul's responsibilities as he describes them himself. In an attempt to fill this void, we shall devote the rest of this chapter to action statements. We shall argue below that each action statement fits into one or two of the categories. The categories represent not only the outline of Paul's apostolic duty but also the stages through which his relationship with his converts developed. We shall get beyond the observation that Paul preached the gospel, and shall see that Paul's many tasks were programmatic in their relation to each other. We shall also determine whether Schnabel's rule is the guiding force behind each of Paul's tasks or if more is at play. We shall draw our attention to the actions that Paul told his communities he was performing, and how often he told them. After a review of this data - which will be started in this study but will need to be continued elsewhere - we may then begin to determine whether Paul might have understood himself as a prophet, philosopher, spiritual guide, or something else. We may then also begin to determine what others living in the first century might have understood Paul to be.

### 3.3 Paul's Statements of Action

Each of Paul's seven undisputed letters contains statements of action. When compiled they represent Paul's apostolic responsibilities in his own words. By "statements of action" I refer to any deed that Paul claims to have done in the past, to be doing in the present, or intends to do in the future. These actions could be verbal - such as teaching, preaching, or praying - or they could be physical deeds. However, in order to be counted as an action statement, a passage must meet requirements of specificity and reality. Our requirement of specificity disqualifies vague descriptions of deeds. This includes



Paul's statement in 1 Thess 2:7b, where he reminds the Thessalonians that he was "gentle" among them. This is admittedly a statement where Paul claims to be doing something (i.e., being gentle), but it betrays little about a specific apostolic duty and is thus not included as a statement of action.<sup>155</sup>

Our requirement of reality excludes numerous passages that otherwise fit our definition of action statements. The reality requirement limits action statements to those that describe deeds that Paul actually performed. As a result, negative actions shall be excluded from our discussion. Paul sometimes tells his communities about things that he did not do. For example, in 2 Cor 1:23b, he tells the Corinthians that he "did not come again to Corinth." Paul quite often writes about his travels, which means that they will be represented in the list of statements of action below, but 2 Cor 1:23b will not be counted as an action statement.<sup>156</sup>

Paul also sometimes writes about something that he intended or wanted to do but did not do. In 1 Thess 2:18, he recounts a time when he wanted to come to Thessalonica but could not overcome the obstacles in the way of doing that. A similar situation is found in 2 Cor 1:15-22. Rather than statements of action, these are admissions of inaction. Negative actions, such as in 2 Cor 1:23b, are such by choice, and failed actions, such as in 1 Thess 2:18 and 2 Cor 1:15-22, are such by circumstance.

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<sup>155</sup> Additional statements that do not meet our specificity standard include Gal 2:2; Phil 2:16; 4:15.

<sup>156</sup> Further examples of negative actions are found in 1 Thess 2:5-8 and 2 Cor 4:1-2.

Things that happened to Paul but that he did not do himself are not statements of action, either. For example, being persecuted. Paul frequently writes about the persecutions that he had endured. At times he describes them as part of his overall role as an apostle (i.e., 1 Thess 3:3b), and at other times he lists them in a less reflective manner (i.e., 2 Cor 4:7-9; 6:4-10). Paul's role in these actions was passive; the present study focuses on actions that Paul himself carried out.

On occasion Paul writes about something that he would like to do in the future but that he cannot commit to. These statements also fail to meet our reality requirement. An example is in Phil 1:27-28a:

Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, and are in no way intimidated by your opponents.

Paul may come to visit the Philippians, or he may arrange to keep in touch with them by different means. He does not claim to do one or the other and we thus do not count this passage among action statements.

Something else to note is that Paul certainly did a few things that he never wrote about in his letters. The method that we employ has no way of addressing these actions. Furthermore, Paul probably performed some duties more often than the following inventory of action statements might indicate. For example, scholars generally hold that Paul taught a lot - and with good reason: much of Paul's letters are pedagogical in content. However, in the case of teaching, we are looking for Paul to claim that he teaches - which he does. But we do not want to classify an action as teaching unless Paul does so himself. In this sense, the present study takes a minimalist approach to the evidence. When we place

the action statements into categories that we create in section 3.4, we allow for more interpretive work. But the evidence embraces a minimalist approach during the inventory stage of this study - Paul claims to do a lot of things. There is little need to make a case for things that Paul did in addition to those that he talks about himself. Paul's statements of action are plentiful and extensive.

### 3.3.1 An Inventory of Action Statements

The actions presented below are limited to meet the requirements of specificity and reality outlined above. They are listed in order of most-frequently stated to least-frequently stated.

*Figure Three: Paul's Statements of Action*

Statement of Action	Source	Number of References
Traveling (ἔρχομαι, πορεύομαι)	Rom 15:23, 24, 25, 28; 1 Cor 2:1-2; 4:19a; 16:3, 4, 5, 6; 2 Cor 2:12, 13b; 7:5; 8:19; 10:14; Gal 1:17b, 18, 21; 2:1; Phil 1:26; 2:24; 4:15	22
Proclaiming the gospel/ proclaiming Jesus (εὐαγγελίζω)	Rom 1:9; 15:18-19,20; 1 Cor 1:17, 23; 2:1-2; 9:16, 18; 15:1; 2 Cor 2:12; 4:5; 10:14, 15- 16; 11:17; Gal 1:6,15- 16; 2:1; 1 Thess 1:5, 7b; 2:2b, 9; 3:2-3	22
Boasting (καυχάομαι)	Rom 5:2, 3, 11; 1 Cor 15:31; 2 Cor 1:12; 7:4; 10:8; 11:10, 18, 21; 12:5, 9; 2 Cor 9:2, 3; Gal 6:14; Phil 1:26; 2:16; 3:3; 1 Thess 2:19	19
Sending (πέμπω)	1 Cor 4:17; 16:3b, 12; 2 Cor 8:18, 22; 9:5; 12:18; Phil 2:19, 23, 25, 28; 1 Thess 3:2-3, 5; Phlm 1:12	14
Writing Letters (γράφω)	Rom 15:15; 1 Cor 4:14; 5:9, 11; 9:15; 2 Cor 1:13; 2:4, 9; 13:10a; Gal 6:11	10

Praying (προσεύχομαι, δέησις)	Rom 1:9; 10:1; 15:30-31; 1 Cor 14:15; 2 Cor 13:7, 9; Phil 1:4-5; 1 Thess 1:2; Phlm 1:4	9
Supporting himself	1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 11:7; Phil 2:16; 1 Thess 2:9 (cf. 2 Cor 11:8-9;	5
Remembering the poor/Collection for Jerusalem leaders	Rom 15:25; 1 Cor 16:1, 3b; 2 Cor 9:5; Gal 2:10	5
Powers (δυνάμεις), Signs (σημείον), Wonders (τέρας)	Rom 15:18-19; 1 Cor 4:19b; 2 Cor 12:12; 1 Thess 1:5	4
"Converting" Gentiles	Rom 1:5; 11:13-14; 15:18-19; Gal 1:16	4
Laying a foundation/Establishing communities (θεμέλιον ἔθηκα)	Rom 15:20-21; 1 Cor 3:10; 2 Cor 10:15-16	3
Teaching/Giving Instructions (διδάσκω, διατάσσω)	1 Cor 4:17; 11:34b; 1 Thess 4:2	3
Building up (οἰκοδομή)	Rom 15:20; 2 Cor 10:8; 13:10b	3
Work in the gospel	Phil 2:22; 4:3	2
Baptizing (βαπτίζω)	1 Cor 1:14, 16	2
Becoming a slave (δουλόω)	1 Cor 9:19, 27	2
Persecuting the Church	Gal 1:13b	1
Advancing in Judaism	Gal 1:14	1
Opposing (κατὰ πρόσωπον)	Gal 2:11	1
Validating apostleship	Gal 2:2	1
Becoming a Jew	1 Cor 9:20a	1
Becoming as one under the law (ὡς ὑπὸ νόμον)	1 Cor 9:20b	1
Becoming weak (ἀσθενής)	1 Cor 9:22a	1
Becoming all things (πάντα)	1 Cor 9:22b	1
Pleasing people (ἀρέσκω)	1 Cor 10:33	1
Being generous and sincere (ἀπλότητι καὶ εἰλικπίείᾳ)	2 Cor 1:12	1
Proclaiming himself	2 Cor 4:5	1
Carrying the body of the death of Jesus	2 Cor 4:10	1
Persuading others (πείθω)	2 Cor 5:11	1
Taking wages from churches	2 Cor 11:8-9	1
Saving some Jews (σώζω)	Rom 11:13-14	1
Conducting himself blamelessly (ἀμέμπτως)	1 Thess 2:10	1

This data represents Paul's apostolic actions. The task of analyzing the chart is a heavy one: the statements are in need of individual analyses, and the presence of some on the chart calls for explanations, too. They are each part of Paul's apostolic mission, and thus merit our attention. Moreover, the compiled list is in need of analysis in its entirety.

In an effort not to bite off more than can be chewed in the final pages of this study, we offer below one possible direction for interpreting the data. We argue that the systematic nature of Paul's tasks provides clues to his perceived missionary objectives. Paul's tasks are like the bricks of a building about to be constructed, each action contributing to the satisfaction of his missionary objectives. They are highly interrelated and complementary to one another. While debates over whether Paul was a systematic theologian continue to be renewed,<sup>157</sup> this inventory of action statements demonstrates that Paul was a systematic missionary.

Due to space constraints, we shall analyze only a selection of Paul's most frequently mentioned action statements to demonstrate the interrelatedness of his actions. In section 3.4 we shall attempt to determine what Paul hoped to achieve by carrying out these tasks. We shall do so by placing each action statement into one or two of four categories. These four categories represent Paul's perceived missionary objectives.

### 3.3.2 The Interrelatedness of Paul's Action Statements

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<sup>157</sup> For a review of the most influential arguments against the notion that Paul was a systematic theologian, see Stephen Westerholm, *Perspectives Old and New on Paul: The "Lutheran" Paul and his Critics* (Michigan: Eerdmans, 2004), 164-200.

In the present section we shall survey a selection of Paul's most frequently mentioned action statements in order to exhibit their unified character. Paul never performed one action that was counterproductive to the success of another. He was a systematic doer - a missionary consciously working his way toward the major objectives of his apostleship. We shall discuss the nature of Paul's missionary objectives in section 3.4, but we now turn to a selection of action statements that Paul mentions most often in order to demonstrate their interrelatedness.

It is regularly overlooked that Paul traveled as often as he did. He discusses his travels more than any other duty except preaching the gospel. Paul's apostleship begins and concludes (as far as we know) with his travels. He states that he traveled to Arabia immediately (εὐθέως) after being set apart to become an apostle by God (Gal 1:16-17),<sup>158</sup> and he announces to the Roman believers that he plans to make his way to Rome and Spain after visiting Jerusalem to offer his and his believers' gift (Rom 15:23-24).<sup>159</sup>

Paul traveled throughout his ministry. The majority of his twenty-two action statements in reference to travel attest to this. The final action that Paul mentions, setting out for Spain (Rom 15:28), is one that would have been carried through chronologically later than his letters allow us to further comment. The reason behind Paul's constant

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<sup>158</sup> Regardless of his destination, Paul had traveling on the mind after his calling on the road to Damascus. He mentions two options besides traveling to Arabia: conferring with someone, and traveling to Jerusalem to see the apostles there (Gal 1:16-17). These two alternative options were never real threats to Paul's plan of going to Arabia; he is clear in vv.16-17 that he did not receive instruction or advice from anyone. See Fung, *Galatians*, 69.

<sup>159</sup> This is ample reason to study Paul in the context of first-century travel, and first century travelers such as the itinerant Cynic-Stoic preachers.

traveling is found within his understanding of his <sup>g</sup>ospel-preaching task, which was more burdensome than merely "preaching the gospel."

Paul regarded the proclamation of the gospel to be his primary task (1 Cor 1:17). He mentions it in the form of an action statement twenty-two times - tied for the most with traveling. But he stipulates that he was not sent to preach the gospel, but rather to preach the gospel in areas untouched by fellow missionaries (see Rom 15:20-21; 1 Cor 3:10; 2 Cor 10:15-16), and to all (πᾶσιν) Gentiles (Rom 1:5). This is a much more ambitious and organized task than to freely preach the gospel to whomever and wherever he can.<sup>160</sup> In order to assume this responsibility Paul would have had to travel extensively, which we know that he did. Indeed, Paul's two most frequently stated actions are complementary to one another.<sup>161</sup>

We are already beginning to see the cohesiveness of the action statements. Paul's preaching task was as burdensome as his traveling was broad.

The quantity of action statements on the topic of boasting (καυχᾶσθαι) may come as a surprise. Paul writes about boasting more than other activities such as letter-writing and praying. Paul boasted in a

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<sup>160</sup> A similarly arduous task is issued forth from the risen Jesus to his disciples in Matt 28:19-20. See also, Mark 3:14-15

<sup>161</sup> The content of Paul's gospel is centered on Christ crucified and his importance to those who are on the way to salvation (1:18). Barrett deals in detail with the content of Paul's gospel throughout his commentaries on 1 and 2 Corinthians. Paul sometimes qualifies the word εὐαγγέλιον with Χριστοῦ (see 1 Cor 9:12; 2 Cor 2:12; 9:13; 10:14; Gal 1:7; Phil 1:27; 1 Thess 3:2). Commentators do not distinguish between "the gospel" and "the gospel of Christ." Of Paul's twenty-two statements of action having to do with preaching the gospel, sixteen are without the "of Christ" qualifier, or an equivalent (i.e., Gal 1:15-16), and six are with it. This task was entrusted to Paul at the time of his call to apostleship (Gal 1:15-16; cf. 1:1, 12). See Fung, *Galatians*, 66; Morris, *Thessalonians*, 95.

way unlike his Corinthian opponents; his kind is not a self-centered boasting (2 Cor 11:1-12:13). But it is rather a means by which he glorified God.<sup>162</sup> The proper way to boast is to boast in God (Rom 5:11); in Christ (Phil 3:3); in the hope of the glory of God (Rom 5:2); in the cross of Christ (Gal 6:14); in tribulations (Rom 5:3); and in weaknesses (2 Cor 12:5, 9).<sup>163</sup> On the other hand, boasting that is "in man" is prohibited and disrespected by Paul.<sup>164</sup> Since Paul's boasting is (often) described in the form of an action statement, it can be further studied for insight into his role as an apostle. As we shall see below, Paul's own boasting is a behavioral action that functions to model proper behaviour for his believers. Though Schütz' discussion of Paul's role-model responsibility did not include the act of boasting (see above), we shall soon be able to confirm that Paul took on this function, and we shall see that boasting was one means by which he planned to achieve it.

One value in having an inventory of Paul's action statements is that it draws our attention to aspects of Paul's mission that might have otherwise been ignored or overlooked for other duties. Paul's sending forth of individuals is one of those tasks. It is the fourth most-frequently mentioned action statement. Paul sends out Timothy (1 Cor 4:17; Phil 2:19; 1 Thess 3:2); Apollos - unsuccessfully - (1 Cor 16:12); the brother who is famous (2 Cor 8:18; 12:18); Titus (2 Cor 8:16-17; 12:18); Epaphroditus (Phil 2:25); and Onesimus (Phlm 1:12). He usually uses the word πέμπω in reference to these emissaries, reserving ἀποστέλλω

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<sup>162</sup> Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 164.

<sup>163</sup> See Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 165.

<sup>164</sup> Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 165.



for himself.<sup>165</sup> He records having sent Timothy more often than anyone else. Timothy was a trusted partner who played a significant role in Paul's work in Corinth,<sup>166</sup> and possibly shared broader responsibilities with Paul.<sup>167</sup> He was sent by Paul to Corinth in order to urge local believers to behave properly - that is, to imitate (μιμητής) Paul (1 Cor 15-17). While imprisoned, Paul sent Timothy to Philippi as a representative of himself (Phil 2:19).<sup>168</sup> He sent him again to the Thessalonians, this visit for the purpose of encouragement during their persecutions (3:1-3) and also to inquire about how they were faring through them (3:5).

Sending out co-workers enabled Paul to better maintain his congregations than would have otherwise been possible. Because Paul understood the gospel-preaching component of his task to require going places without established meeting places for believers, he had to establish them himself. By virtue of his responsibility for "all" Gentiles, he needed to establish quite a number of them. After Paul left one of them in order to continue his travels, it still required encouragement and teaching, among other things. Paul's act of sending out co-workers to offer his congregations support was an important means by which he managed his converts. Delegating such duties to co-workers also allowed Paul the time to expand his mission.<sup>169</sup> It thus was an

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<sup>165</sup> The one exception being 2 Cor 12:17 where Paul uses ἀποστέλλω in reference to individuals he sent to Corinth.

<sup>166</sup> See Rom 16:21; 2 Cor 1:1, 19; Phil 1:1; 2:19; 1 Thess 1:1; 3:2, 6; Phlm 1; cf. Acts 16:1; 17:14, 15; 18:5; 19:22; 20:4.

<sup>167</sup> Bockmuehl suggests that Timothy might have been a partner to Paul in the Gentile mission as a whole. See *Philippians*, 48-49.

<sup>168</sup> Bockmuehl, *Philippians*, 164.

<sup>169</sup> Epaphroditus was sent forth by Paul for a different reason: He was sent to Paul with a financial gift by the Philippian congregation (Phil 4:18 cf. 2:25). Paul sent Epaphroditus back to the Philippians in order

integral part of Paul's overall mission. More will be said about it below.

Paul's statements of action have so far shown that his individual tasks were components of a larger plan. We have also observed that his Gentile mission in general, and efforts to maintain his communities, were a team enterprise. The same is true about his letter writing, which he mentions in the form of actions statements ten times. E. Randolph Richards' recent study of first-century letter writing convincingly demonstrates that Paul's co-senders (e.g., Silvanus and Timothy in 1 Thess) and secretaries (e.g., Tertius in Romans) contributed to the composition of the Pauline epistles.<sup>170</sup> Richards does so by revealing first century letter writing techniques and norms, and by demonstrating that Paul's *modus operandi* was conventional for his time. The purpose behind Paul's letters varies. In general, the epistles addressed to his communities were composed to encourage and to instruct - and thus to uphold his communities during times of persecutions and hardships when he could not be present to encourage and to instruct the believers personally.

A pattern has emerged from our analysis of Paul's most-frequently stated action statements that throws Lietaert Peerbolte's portrait of Paul's mission into question - specifically the argument that the preaching of the gospel was his primary task and that the communities served to supplement this duty.<sup>171</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte portrays the

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that they would stop worrying about him and be joyful upon his return (2:25-28).

<sup>170</sup> E. Randolph Richards, *Paul and First-Century Letter Writing: Secretaries, Composition and Collection* (Illinois: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 34, 81.

<sup>171</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 207, 254-55.

communities as little more than a means by which Paul achieved his primary goal of preaching the gospel.<sup>172</sup> However, the efforts Paul placed into the maintenance of his communities suggest that he did not view his task of founding them as any less important than the proclamation of the gospel. Indeed, Paul seems to have regarded membership in local communities as essential to living according to the gospel. In addition to the evidence above, further support for this argument is found in 1 Cor 6:1, where he instructs the Corinthians to set up a court before which believers would be heard and judged by other believers. Moreover, he urges the Thessalonians to strive for self-sufficiency, and to depend on no one outside the assembly for anything (1 Thess 4:10b-12). Paul's believers could not have met these instructions without a structured meeting place. Positive reception of the gospel went hand-in-hand with membership in a congregation of believers. Paul did not regard one as supplementing the other, but rather focused a great amount of his attention on both proclaiming the gospel and providing structure for resulting communities of believers.

Nine statements of action are on the matter of prayer, though Paul mentions prayer much more often than that. The subjects of his prayers vary. Some of them are on behalf of his converts. For example, he prays that the Corinthians do no evil (2 Cor 13:7), and that they be restored (κατάρτισιν) (2 Cor 13:9).<sup>173</sup> In addition to prayers on behalf of his converts, Paul gives thanksgiving prayers for the faith of the

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<sup>172</sup> Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 221.

<sup>173</sup> *κατάρτισιν* in this verse means "setting right something that has gone wrong." His prayer is for the Corinthians to be restored to a "proper Christian life" (cf. 1 Cor 1:10). See Barrett, *Second Epistle*, 340.

Thessalonians (1 Thes<sup>s</sup> 1:2) and Philippians (Phil 1:4-5).<sup>174</sup> That Paul often prays for the maintenance of his communities of believers illustrates his concern for them. Properly functioning congregations were evidently a significant component of his apostolic objectives. This perhaps explains why he is constantly under anxiety over their maintenance (2 Cor 11:28).

Paul devoted his prayers to other matters, too. The varied nature of their content makes them difficult to categorize, as we shall see below. In addition to prayers on matters of congregation maintenance, Paul prays to be able to come to Rome (Rom 1:9-10), to be rescued from potential opponents in Jerusalem (Rom 15:30-31), for the well being of Philemon (Phlm 1:4), and for the salvation of the Jews (Rom 10:1).<sup>175</sup>

Several action statements demonstrate that Paul worked to support himself while he preached. There were no wage-earning preachers in the first-century eastern Mediterranean.<sup>176</sup> Indeed, none of Paul's tasks discussed so far would have earned him wages. For this reason, apostles had the right to ask for support from the congregations that they founded and worked with (1 Cor 9:3-18). However, Paul often supported himself.<sup>177</sup> He reminded the Thessalonians that he "laboured and toiled"

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<sup>174</sup>In the Philippians passage, he mentions prayer (δέησις) twice. Bockmuehl writes, "The double reference to prayer indicates the indispensable importance which ongoing and specific prayer had for Paul's work." See *Philippians*, 58.

<sup>175</sup> This last prayer illustrates Paul's notion that the Gentile mission held significance for the salvation of Jews. Far from regarding the Jews' present rejection as absolute, Paul in fact understood it to be temporary. See Cranfield, *Romans 9-16*, 513.

<sup>176</sup> Morris, *Thessalonians*, 72.

<sup>177</sup> Paul uses various terms in these action statements. Some of which are: κόπος, μόχθος, ἐργαζομαι, κοπιᾶω. His method of supporting himself is well documented in the NT (Acts 17:3; 20:34; 1 Cor 9:6, 12, 15-18; 2 Cor 11:9; 12:13; 1 Thess 2:9).

night and day while he proclaimed the gospel there (1 Thess 2:9).<sup>178</sup> He chose to support himself in Thessalonica in order that he not burden (ἐπιβαρῆσαι) any of them while preaching the gospel (1 Thess 2:9). He had this in mind when he claimed to have conducted himself blamelessly (ἀμέμπτως) while in their presence (2:10).

Paul regarded his self-sufficiency as beneficial to the success of his proclamation of the gospel and to his success in structuring congregations of believers. He conducted himself in this manner not only in Thessalonica, but also in Corinth (2 Cor 11:7) and probably elsewhere, too. It is difficult to determine why he understood self-sufficiency to be so beneficial. On this matter, Barrett offers the following supposition: "One can only conclude that Paul judged the situation in Corinth and the surrounding area to be such that it would be better for the progress of the Gospel if he were under no financial obligation to the church; his grounds for this judgement are not stated."<sup>179</sup>

Early in Paul's ministry he had agreed with the Jerusalem pillars to "remember the poor" (Gal 2:10). This responsibility is described not as an imposition onto his mission by the Jerusalem leaders but rather as something that both sides were eager to have carried out.<sup>180</sup> Although this responsibility was not an original apostolic duty - he was not commissioned to provide financial assistance to the Jerusalem leaders - Paul incorporated it well into his overall agenda. He references this

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<sup>178</sup> In this action statement Paul uses both "labour" (κόπον) and "toil" (μόχθον), two words that appear together also in 2 Cor 11:27. His use of these two words together stresses the difficulty with which self-sufficiency came in Thessalonica. See Morris, *Thessalonians*, 73.

<sup>179</sup> Barrett, *Second Epistle*, 281.

<sup>180</sup> In Gal 2:10 Paul writes, "They asked only that I remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do."

task in five action statements (Gal 2:10; 1 Cor 16:1, 3b; 2 Cor 9:5; Rom 15:25). In these statements, he asks his communities to voluntarily (1 Cor 16:3; 2 Cor 8:6) contribute to the collection what they may, and he indicates that it is for the satisfaction of a spiritual, rather than legal, debt (Rom 15:27).<sup>181</sup> Upon completion of the collection, he planned to personally deliver it (Rom 15:25; 1 Cor 16:4) to Jerusalem with representatives from his assemblies (1 Cor 16:3-4). Although the Jerusalem collection has in the past been paralleled to the Didrachma tax paid by all Jews to the Jerusalem Temple,<sup>182</sup> there is little to suggest that Paul and his congregations regarded it as a form of taxation.<sup>183</sup> It is rather described by Paul as a voluntary financial offering. Barrett writes the following about why Paul carried out the task: "because he had been asked to do so, because, no doubt, he felt a genuine compassion for the needy, and probably because he hoped that it would cement together the two divisions of the church, which already were showing signs of at least uneasy partnership."<sup>184</sup> In this way, the collection did not compromise Paul's other responsibilities. Rather, it constituted a chief component of his mission from a very early stage in his apostleship. He perhaps even regarded the blessing of the Jerusalem leaders to be necessary for the success of his overall mission to the Gentiles, as the Jerusalem leaders could give Paul's ministry added credibility. The task is mentioned in the form of an action statement only four times, but he regarded its successful completion to be worth his life (Rom 15:30-31).

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<sup>181</sup> Fung, *Galatians*, 102.

<sup>182</sup> J. Jeremias, *Jerusalem zur Zeit Jesu* (1958). Cf. Barrett, *First Epistle*, 386.

<sup>183</sup> See Kittel, *T.W.N.T.*, iv. 286.

<sup>184</sup> Barrett, *First Epistle*, 386.

Paul's performance of various tasks that involved powers (*δυνάμεις*), signs (*σημείον*), and wonders (*τέραξ*) could have also been grounded in an effort to gain credibility from believers and others. In 1 Thess 1:5, he states that he (and his co-workers) delivered the gospel to the Thessalonians in word, in power (*δυνάμει*), in the Holy Spirit (*πνεύματι ἁγίῳ*), and in conviction (*πληροφορίᾳ*). Paul's understanding of power is best revealed in Rom 1:16, where he seems to say that God is in the gospel, thus making the gospel itself power (Rom 1:16).<sup>185</sup> In 1 Cor 4:19, Paul warns that at his next visit he will determine (*γνώσομαι*) the power that his opponents are said to yield. Jewett constructs Paul's understanding of power to be centered on the presentation of the risen Christ to believers as *πνεῦμα*.<sup>186</sup>

On a related matter, Paul speaks of the performance of signs and wonders (2 Cor 12:12; Rom 15:19). He reminds the Corinthians that the signs of an apostle (*τὰ μὲν σημεῖα τοῦ ἀποστόλου*) were performed among them.<sup>187</sup> He does not specify who performed these signs in Corinth; however, he claims to the Romans that he has performed signs himself (15:18-19). In these verses, Paul credits the "power of signs and wonders" as partially responsible for his successful mission to the Gentiles in the east. He evidently understood them to be a partial means by which to bring individuals towards faith in Christ.<sup>188</sup> Jewett describes the significance

<sup>185</sup> Morris, *Thessalonians*, 46.

<sup>186</sup> See Jewett, *Romans*, 910-11.

<sup>187</sup> The phrase "signs of an apostle" was perhaps borrowed from either his Corinthian rivals or the Corinthian believers. See Barrett, *Second Epistle*, 320.

<sup>188</sup> He does note, however, that it was Christ who performed signs and wonders through him (15:18). The phrase "signs and wonders" (*σημείον καὶ τέραξ*) was used of prophets to legitimize their divinely appointed position and role (e.g., Deut 13:1-2; Isa 20:3). See Fritz Stolz,

of power, sign, and wonder-related performances as follows: "Insofar as they demonstrate the power of Paul's regent, these signs authenticate his ambassadorial role, and the appropriateness of his addressing the varied Christian communities in Rome."<sup>189</sup> Ability to use powers was evidently an effective tool for an apostle. It had the result of authenticating his or her role. This task and the two reviewed before it (self-sufficiency and the Jerusalem collection) are linked by their perceived ability to create credibility and serve as a "proof" of Paul's apostleship. We shall see below that other action statements fit this description as well.

Four action statements illustrate Paul's notion that his apostleship is directed towards the Gentiles (Rom 1:5; 11:13-14; 15:18-19; Gal 1:16). In Galatians, he claims that God's purpose in making him an apostle was so that he would bring the gospel to the Gentiles (1:16). In Rom 1:5, he specifies that he is responsible for all (πάντων) Gentiles. This verse demonstrates the burden of Paul's mission, as he understood it himself.<sup>190</sup> His claim to have fulfilled all that he could do in the east is telling of his perceived success (Rom 15:23).

Three statements of action refer to the apostle's founding of congregations (Rom 15:20-21; 1 Cor 3:10; 2 Cor 10:15-16). However, he often makes reference in other forms to his success establishing communities in Philippi (Phil 1:1; 1 Thess 2:2), Thessalonica (Phil 4:16; 1 Thess 1:1), Athens (1 Thess 3:1), Corinth (1 Cor 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1), Ephesus (1 Cor 15:32; 16:8), and various places in Galatia (1 Cor

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"Zeichen und Wunder. Die prophetischen Legitimation und ihre Geschichte," *ZThK* 69 (1972), 125-44.

<sup>189</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 911.

<sup>190</sup> See Jewett, *Romans*, 111.



16:1; Gal 1:2).<sup>191</sup> Two of Paul's three action statements specific to this activity include the phrase "laying a foundation" (1 Cor 3:10; Rom 15:20). In 1 Cor 3:10 Paul notes that the task of laying the foundations for communities of believers is a God-given (κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι) enterprise. In Rom 15:20, he tells his readers that he aspires to build his communities in places that have yet to hear the gospel, and he references this ambition in 2 Cor 10:16 as well. He is serious about his disdain for building on another's foundation (1 Cor 3:6-15; 2 Cor 10:12-18). He claims in Rom 15:23 to have "no further place" in the eastern half of the Mediterranean to preach the gospel. Jewett takes this claim to mean "that he had fulfilled his specific calling to establish churches in a sufficient number of important centers to make the subsequent missionizing of their regional hinterlands' by local colleagues feasible."<sup>192</sup>

### 3.3.3 Conclusions

Ashcraft, Schmithals, Schütz, Barrett, Lietaert Peerbolte, and others are right to emphasize the gospel-preaching component to Paul's mission - Paul himself emphasizes it, too. But Paul's actions are performed with larger missionary goals in mind. They are unified in their perceived ability to help achieve the purposes of Paul's apostleship, as he sees them himself. It is therefore no surprise that Paul writes an equal amount of action statements to discuss his travels as he does his preaching. Because Paul's objective was to preach to people who had not heard the gospel before, and to reach "all" the Gentiles, he had to travel often, and to places where the gospel had yet

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<sup>191</sup> See Lietaert Peerbolte, *Paul*, 204.

<sup>192</sup> Jewett, *Romans*, 914.

to reach. It is inaccurate to speak of Paul's mission as though it only involved gospel-preaching. This task is one of his many responsibilities. Below, we demonstrate that Paul's missionary plan involved at least four components.

We have also realized that founding and maintaining congregations was not a supplementary or secondary task to Paul, as Lietaert Peerbolte has recently suggested. They both constituted major objectives. His actions were unified in furthering both of these missionary aims. He wrote to his congregations, sent co-workers to them, visited them himself, prayed for their continuing faith, prayed for them to live properly, and continually sought to preach in places where building more congregations would be necessary. Paul's top statements of action point to an understanding of mission that is very much centered on community-building. The statements of action also indicate that something larger than community-building is going on. They each appear to function as a means by which Paul sought to achieve the objectives of his mission. Below we shall identify these objectives.

Our inventory of action statements shows that Paul's tasks were unified, and apparently serving the same purposes. Indeed, even when he assumed a responsibility that was not original to his commission (i.e., the Jerusalem collection) he integrated it into an overall missionary scheme.

We shall direct our attention to Paul's primary apostolic objectives for the balance of the present study. When categorized, the

action statements give us insights into the nature of Paul's larger apostolic plan.<sup>193</sup>

#### 3.4. Categorizing Paul's Statements of Action

I present below a categorization of Paul's action statements. The categories are my own and we are thus no longer exclusively using Paul's words for the basis of our discussion. However, they were chosen based on their ability to encompass all of Paul's action statements. Only four categories were needed to do this. The fact that all action statements fit into just four categories is telling. It demonstrates that each of Paul's actions served one (or two, in some cases) of four purposes. This could be interpreted by NT scholars in one of two ways: a coincidence, or evidence that Paul regarded the purpose of his apostolic mission to be four-folded, and as suggested by the following chart.

I interpret the four categories to reflect Paul's missionary objectives. The action statements within each category represent the methods Paul used to achieve his objectives. The categories also inform us of the different stages through which Paul's relationship with his converts progressed. That is to say that Paul would have, for example, behaved and acted differently in the "converting" phase than he would have in the "maintaining assemblies" phase, though overlap of particular actions into two categories is sometimes a reality.

Figure Four: Categorizing Paul's Statements of Action

Missionary Objectives	Apostolic Activities
<u>Authenticating his authority</u>	1. Supporting himself (e.g., 1 Cor 16) [5] 2. Collection for Jerusalem leaders (e.g., Gal 2:10) [5] 3. Validating apostleship (Gal 2:2) [1] 4. Being generous and sincere (2 Cor 1:12) [1] 5. Blameless conduct (1 Thess 2:10) [1] 6. Opposing (Gal 2:11) [1]
<u>Converting</u>	1. Proclaiming the gospel (e.g., 1 Thess 1:5) [22] 2. Performing powers, signs, and wonders (e.g., Rom 15:18-19) [4] 3. Converting Gentiles (e.g., Rom 1:5) [3] 4. Becoming a slave (e.g., 1 Cor 9:19) [2] 5. Becoming a Jew (1 Cor 9:20a) [1] 6. Becoming as one under the law (1 Cor 9:20b) [1] 7. Becoming as one outside the law (1 Cor 9:21) [1] 8. Becoming all things (1 Cor 9:22b) [1] 9. Proclaiming himself as a slave for Jesus' sake (2 Cor 4:5) [1] 10. Carrying the body of the death of Jesus (2 Cor 4:10) [1] 11. Persuading others (2 Cor 5:11) [1] 12. Saving some Jews (Rom 11:13-14) [1]
<u>Organizing Assemblies of Believers</u>	1. Traveling (e.g., Phil 1:26) [22] 2. Laying foundations/Establishing communities (e.g., 1 Cor 3:10) [3] 3. Building up (e.g., 2 Cor 10:8) [3] 4. Teaching (e.g., 1 Cor 4:17) [3] 5. Baptizing (e.g., 1 Cor 1:14) [2] 6. Taking support from other churches (2 Cor 11:8-9) [1]
<u>Maintaining Assemblies</u>	1. Proclaiming the gospel (e.g., 1 Thess 1:5) [22] 2. Traveling (e.g., Phil 1:26) [22] 3. Boasting (e.g., 2 Cor 1:12) [18] 4. Sending co-workers to assemblies (e.g., 1 Thess 3:2-3) [14] 5. Writing letters (e.g., Gal 6:11)

	[10] 6. Praying (e.g., 2 Cor 13:9) [9] 7. Teaching (e.g., 1 Cor 4:17) [3] 8. Pleasing people (1 Cor 10:33) [1] 9. Taking support from other churches (2 Cor 11:8-9) [1]
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\* Numbers inside boxed brackets indicate the frequency with which Paul refers to the duty in action statement form.

It was necessary to choose categories that would best represent the individual statements of action. However, we do not assume that the categories without a doubt reflect Paul's perceived missionary objectives. Paul does not explicitly state that he served to achieve these four objectives, though his action statements give us good reason to believe that he did. That each of Paul's action statements can fit appropriately into one of the four categories supports our notion that the categories reflect Paul's missionary objectives. We therefore hold the categories to represent the outline of Paul's purpose as an apostle. They are controlled by the action statements within them. Each action statement fits into one - and sometimes two - of the four categories.

Some overlap of individual action statements into more than one category does occur. It is a product of the categorization process rather than of the categories themselves. A case example is Paul's gospel-preaching task. In the chart, this activity is first listed under "converting." However, we know that Paul preached the gospel in other situations as well. For example, he had to remind the Corinthians of parts of the gospel (1 Cor 15:1-11) after they had already been "converted." Moreover, Paul describes his purpose in proclaiming the gospel as saving (σώζω) individuals (1 Cor 9:22-23; 15:1-2). And he gives no indication that this goal was to be accomplished during the "converting" stage only. Rather, 1 Cor 15:1-10 illustrates that this was

a goal that Paul continuously attempted to achieve throughout his ministry, and for this reason, his preaching fits into both the "converting" and "maintaining assemblies" categories.

Paul's teaching activity is listed under both the third and fourth categories ("organizing assemblies of believers" and "maintaining assemblies"). This is because Paul tells us that his teaching responsibilities to a community did not cease upon the organization of that community. One of Paul's teaching statements of action (1 Cor 4:17) demonstrates that he conducted teachings in every place that he went, and during the organization stage and in the maintenance stage as well. Paul also sent co-workers out to remind his communities of his teachings, and because this happened after Paul's organization of the congregation, it was surely during the maintenance stage of his relationship with the converts. In Thessalonica, Paul's instructional duties were not completed by the time that he left, for the Thessalonians required additional guidance regarding the state of those who had died and the *parousia* (see 1 Thess 4:13-5:11). For these reasons, Paul's teaching responsibilities cannot be contained in one category. Rather, they fit into both Category Three and Category Four.

#### 3.4.1 Explaining Categorizations

There is insufficient space to address the categorization of each statement of action, so we shall address only the ones that are most potentially problematic. We shall begin with Category One: Authenticating his Authority. Behavioral responsibilities such as being generous and sincere, displaying blameless conduct, supporting himself, and opposing those who violate central aspects of his gospel, are grouped here. Schütz' study, though it is quite different from ours,

claimed that one of Paul's major tasks was to act as a role model for Christ-believers. This postulation is well-supported by our inventory of action statements. Paul often calls for his converts to imitate him (e.g., 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; 1 Thess 1:6; Phil 3:17). His behaviour thus provides the examples of what they should be imitating. However, this first category of actions encompasses more than Schütz had in mind. Paul's conduct was not only meant to be imitated, but also to serve as proof of his authority (e.g., 2 Cor 1:12-14). We shall return to this point in section 3.4.2.

Another Category One behavioral duty is Paul's self-sufficiency. While in Corinth, Paul accepted support from other churches (ἐκκλησίας), and also from believers who came from Macedonia, in order that he could afford to work (διακονίαν) there (2 Cor 11:8-9).<sup>194</sup> Furnish argues that Paul's reason for accepting financial help from other congregations and not the Corinthians while in Corinth was because he considered himself responsible for them, "as their father in the faith" (11:2; 12:14-15).<sup>195</sup> Indeed, Paul appears not to have accepted support from the Thessalonians while preaching there, either (1 Thess 2:9). The practice of not accepting wages from the churches that he is founding is consistent with his request that the Thessalonians support themselves and be dependent on nobody (1 Thess 4:11, 12).<sup>196</sup> We do not have Paul's words on why he did it, but we can surmise that he regarded it to be in the best

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<sup>194</sup> He does not mention from whom he receives the support, though it is likely that the Macedonian believers were from Philippi - Paul states that the Philippians offered him support even after he had left their city (Phil 4:15-16).

<sup>195</sup> Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 509.

<sup>196</sup> Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 508. Note also that teachers and philosophers were advised not to attach themselves to wealthy patrons. See Lucian, *On Salaried Posts* 20; and Musonius, Fragment 11.

interest of his reputation among potential believers. For this reason, it is a duty that belongs with Paul's other Category One ("authenticating his authority") deeds.

More should be added about the action called "opposing" (Gal 2:11), which is also within the first category. "Opposing" refers to the confrontation that Paul had with Peter in Antioch. Along with the majority of Category One responsibilities, it is behavioral. When Paul challenged Peter in Antioch, he demonstrated to those present that he was sincere and committed to the gospel that he preached and the lifestyle that he followed. Had Paul not confronted Peter's inconsistent table-fellowship policy, he might have looked like a fraud himself. We cannot claim to know for certain why Paul decided to confront Peter rather than to quietly observe his behaviour. But we can surmise that Paul had a lot invested in the issue, and I suspect that he would have lost face had he not made it known that he regarded Peter's manners as hypocritical. We tentatively group this action in Category One.

Paul's "becoming" statements (i.e., becoming a slave, becoming a Jew, becoming as one under the law, etc.) are all placed under Category Two: Converting. His explanation in 1 Cor 9:21-23 about why he became all of these things provides the basis for this. In 9:21 he states that he became a slave in order to win (κερδήσω) more converts. It is easy to see why this particular "becoming" statement fits under Category Two. In 9:23 he tells the Corinthians that the purpose behind his other "becoming" statements is for the sake of the gospel (διὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον). Because Paul understands the proclamation of the gospel to be the means by which individuals are brought to faith (e.g., Rom 1:1-6), we understand the purpose behind these "becoming" statements to also be for



the sake of converting. We therefore categorize them all under Converting.

Paul's prayers are listed under Category Four: Assembly Maintenance. The content of Paul's nine prayer action statements are not all on matters of assembly maintenance. But a number of them are (i.e., 1 Thess 1:2; Phil 1:4-5; 2 Cor 13:7). Their place in Category Four is not a perfect fit. However, they are more appropriate here than anywhere else. For the same reason, Paul's boasting is placed under the fourth category. His boasting action statements are usually, but not always, to set an example for the proper way to boast.<sup>197</sup> These two actions are tentatively placed under Assembly Maintenance.

#### 3.4.2 Paul's Overall Mission As Informed by the Categories of Action Statements

The four categories represent Paul's objectives as an apostolic missionary. They reflect the aims of his work in each new location - to authenticate his authority, to convert, to establish a congregation for the new believers, and to maintain their community after he leaves. The action statements within each category illustrate the means by which he would attempt to achieve each goal. They provide us with the details of Paul's apostolic duty.

Paul's first goal in any new region was to convince others of his apostolic authority. He did so by behaving in a manner that he deemed most appropriate. This meant that Paul strove for self-sufficiency (e.g., 1 Cor 16:1), and acted with generosity and sincerity (2 Cor

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<sup>197</sup> For example, in 2 Cor 10:17-18 he writes, " 'Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.' For it is not those who commend themselves that are approved, but those whom the Lord commends." The other kind of boasting, which Cranfield calls "boasting in man," is prohibited and disrespected by Paul. See Cranfield, *Romans 1-8*, 165.

1:12). In addition, Paul refused to concede a point central to the gospel that he preached and the lifestyle that he lived. Paul's dispute with Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:11), his disagreement over the necessity of circumcision with the "Judaizers" in Galatia, and his quarrel over matters of authority and proper behavior with his Corinthian opponents are examples of this behavior. Besides behavioral means by which to authenticate his apostleship, Paul also performed powers, signs, and wonders for the same purpose (Rom 15:18-19). Moreover, Paul sought to keep up the collection for Jerusalem throughout his eastern ministry. This was partially in an effort to validate himself and his churches in front of the acknowledged leaders of the movement in Jerusalem. The delivery of this gift was planned as Paul's final act before traveling to Rome (Rom 15:22-25).<sup>198</sup>

Once Paul had gained the trust of the people to whom he was beginning to preach - and perhaps also at the same time that he was doing it - he proceeded to turn individuals towards faith in Christ. To achieve this goal Paul proclaimed the gospel, but he also transformed himself in ways that he deemed would allow for his greatest success. Paul describes his method in 1 Cor 9:19-23.

Although he regarded the proclamation of the gospel as a primary part of his apostolic activity (1 Cor 1:14), he perhaps spent most of his efforts organizing and maintaining assemblies of believers. Meeting-places were established in the households of believers before he left a

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<sup>198</sup> However, the collection for Jerusalem was a project that ran through the initial stage of authenticating his authority in the cities he evangelized and into the final days of his apostolic duty in the east.

city to go to another.<sup>199</sup> Once a meeting-place was founded, Paul would "lay the foundation" for the community by teaching (e.g., 1 Cor 4:17), baptizing (e.g., 1 Cor 1:14), and "building up" (e.g., 2 Cor 10:8).

After Paul became satisfied with the stability of a local congregation, he would move on to another location and repeat the tasks listed in categories one through three, in an effort to once again gain the trust of potential believers, convert them, and establish congregations for them. However, his responsibilities for the first location would not cease. Rather, his relationship with the first community would enter the "maintenance" stage. This stage was perhaps the most demanding. It required many of the same duties from stages one through three, such as teaching and traveling,<sup>200</sup> and in addition to these tasks, Paul would begin the new ones. These included letter writing, and sending co-workers to visit when he could not do so himself. Category Four duties were a special concern for Paul. He admits in 2 Cor 11:28 to daily anxiety over the state of all of his congregations. His objective to maintain the congregations that he established meant that he had to rely on his co-workers to represent him in person, and help him compose letters. That Paul was able to achieve this objective is a testimony to the efficiency and success of his missionary team.

### 3.5 Conclusions

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<sup>199</sup> H. Gulzow, "Soziale Gegebenheiten der altkirchlichen Mission," In *Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte* (Vol 1: Die alte Kirche, 1974), 198; Ekkehard W. Stegemann and Wolfgang Stegemann, *The Jesus Movement: A Social History of its First Century* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 277. For the theory that early Christian communities were organized in houses based on the usage of household terminology in NT documents, see Stegemann and Stegemann, *Jesus Movement*, 277-78.

<sup>200</sup> Paul's visits to Corinth subsequent to his first, for example, were for maintenance purposes.

In this chapter, we moved beyond discussions of the gospel-preaching component of Paul's apostolic work. We recognized that Paul's gospel preaching was a means rather than an end. Creating an inventory of action statements has drawn our attention to actions that are commonly overlooked in studies on Paul's mission - such as boasting, and his sending forth of co-workers. We have come to realize that Paul's apostolic duties were such that it was necessary for him to enlist a band of co-workers. If he was going to succeed at proclaiming the gospel to all Gentiles (Rom 1:5) and only in regions hitherto untouched by Christ-believing missionaries (Rom 15:20-21; 1 Cor 3:10; 2 Cor 10:15-16), then he would need a team to help him maintain the congregations that he would be required to establish. There is cohesiveness to Paul's individual tasks. We did not have space to discuss each action statement and their contribution to our understanding of Paul's mission, but from those that we did analyze, we noticed that they each functioned to achieve common goals. This was confirmed upon the categorization of action statements. The categorization process illustrated that each of Paul's actions served one or two of four primary purposes.

The categories represent the things that Paul hoped to achieve with his mission to the Gentiles - authenticating his authority, converting, establishing communities, and maintaining those communities. In a sense, Paul's apostolic responsibility was to achieve these goals - though the action statements allow us to also comment on means by which he accomplished these goals.

We discussed above Schnabel's understanding of the guiding force behind all of Paul's actions: to win individuals for faith in Christ. It is easy to see how this could be the guiding force behind the four

objectives identified in this study: Paul needed to authenticate his authority in order that people would take the gospel he preached seriously and then be won over by the gospel; Paul needed to establish and maintain congregations for believers in order to strengthen them and ensure that they remained in faith. It is interesting, though, that the action statements led us to four apostolic purposes. We are thus left with a portrait of Paul's mission that is more complex and organized than Schnabel's rule would suggest. Paul was not just acting to win converts. Rather, he was acting to achieve four separate but related missionary goals. Paul chose his actions based on their perceived ability to realize one or more of those components.

#### 4. Chapter Four: Conclusions and Directions for Future Research

##### 4.1 Summary of Conclusions

In this study, we entertained two distinct but related questions: (1) What does Paul mean by calling himself an apostle? and (2) What does Paul claim to do as an apostle?

We began our inquiry into the first question by considering first century notions of apostleship. Our efforts led us to compile lists of the individuals on whom NT authors bestow the title "apostle." These lists represent Paul's contemporary apostles, of whom we know three by name: Peter (Cephas) (Gal 1:18; 2:8; 1 Pet 1:1; 2 Pet 1:1), James, the brother of Jesus (Gal 1:19), and Silvanus (1 Thes 2:7). In addition, we know two groups of first century apostles by location: apostles in Jerusalem (Gal 1:17) and apostles in Rome (Rom 1:5). We also know of two groups of apostles that are distinguished, if at all, by an unknown basis: apostles of Christ (1 Thes 2:7; cf. Jude 1:17) and apostles to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13-14). Moreover, Paul's Corinthian opponents were surely recognized as apostles by some, though not by Paul. In addition to these individuals, there were other apostles whom our NT authors failed to identify (1 Cor 4:9; 9:5; 12:28; 15:7; 2 Cor 8:23; Eph 2:20; 4:11; Rev 2:2; 18:20).

There is good attestation to the apostolic status of the Twelve by or soon after the composition of Paul's letters (e.g., Matt 10:2; Luke 11:49; 17:5; Rev 21:14; Acts 4:33; 5:29). They were among those to whom Christ appeared after his resurrection (1 Cor 15:5). However, a vision of Christ was apparently not enough to qualify one as an apostle by Paul's time (see 1 Cor 15:6).

We found that NT authors later than Paul define apostles as individuals who have seen the risen Lord and have been commissioned by Christ to do work. Luke pushes for the added qualification of having accompanied Jesus during his earthly ministry. The third evangelist's narrow definition of the term allows only for the Twelve to meet his criteria of apostleship. However, evidence that a wider conception of apostleship existed in the first century is found in the pseudo-Pauline epistles, which name Paul an apostle; and perhaps also in Ephesians, Revelation, and Jude, which each reference an unidentified groups of apostles. We analyzed Paul's understanding of his apostleship in the context of these first century views of the office.

For Paul, we found that the "vision of Christ" criterion was not emphasized. Rather, he laid stress on the second condition: he understood apostleship to be oriented around the apostle's duties. Even non-titular apostles are associated in Paul's writings with a strong sense of duty.

Paul did receive a vision of Christ, as did all other apostles (1 Cor 15:5-8), but it did not alone lead to his apostleship. More than five hundred contemporaries of Paul's received visions of Christ yet did not become known as apostles (1 Cor 15:6). Rather, Paul's vision, combined with God's calling, and his command that Paul carry out work in the name of Christ, made Paul an apostle (see Gal 1:16).

The centrality of duty in Paul's notion of apostleship was common to others during the first half of the first century. 1 Cor 15:5-8, which scholars hold to be pre-Pauline material, supports this suggestion, as does Paul's rebuttal against the "super-apostles" in the same letter. It remains somewhat suspicious, though, that Paul's

emphasis on the apostle's labours mimicked the character of his office: Paul's work ethic was his only available "proof" of his apostleship.

Paul distinguished himself from contemporary apostles by two criteria: (1) he persecuted Christ-believers before his calling; and (2) he - or God through him - worked harder than any other apostle (1 Cor 15:9-11). These are key verses. They show that Paul considered his work ethic a distinguishing feature of his apostleship. This same point is stated in 1 Cor 9:2, where Paul writes, "If I am not an apostle to others, yet at least to you I am, for you are the seal (σφραγίς) of my apostleship (ἀποστολή) in the Lord" (1 Cor 9:2). The product of Paul's labours (i.e., his converts) serves as the proof of his apostleship.

This is all to say that apostolic work is central to Paul's understanding of his apostleship. Paul lays claim to it as his apostolic identity marker. Thus, in response to the first question (What does Paul mean by calling himself an apostle?) I answer that foremost Paul means that God has charged him with a task.

From here we proceeded to our second topic of inquiry: what specifically does Paul claim to do as an apostle? This question requires an answer strictly based on Paul's claims. We approached the question by compiling every action that Paul asserted to have performed in his seven authentic letters. We call these passages "statements of action," or "action statements."

In Chapter Three, we presented a chart of all actions that Paul asserted to have carried out. This inventory provides what we hold to be a starting point for inquiries into Paul's mission. It provides the foundation upon which research on Paul's apostolic activities should



build. It will hopefully lead to fresh ideas about the content of Paul's mission in its first century context.

Our analysis of the action statements pointed to their interrelatedness, and their apparent propensity to be serving similar purposes. We proceeded to categorize the action statements in order to understand the purposes behind their interconnectedness. We found that each action statement fits into one or two of four categories. The categories are: (1) authenticating his authority; (2) converting; (3) establishing communities; and (4) maintaining communities.

We went into some detail explaining what each category and its accompanying action statements required of Paul. We argued that these categories represent Paul's missionary objectives. Although the categories are our own creation, they were nonetheless chosen based on their ability to account for all of the action statements. We argued that the action statements within each category represent the methods Paul used to achieve his objectives. Paul chose to carry out each of his actions based on their perceived ability to realize one or more of his four missionary objectives. The categories and the action statements provide our answer to our second question, What does Paul claim to do as an apostle?

We further concluded that Paul's mission was systematic in nature. His actions were not all guided by Schnabel's one rule (i.e., that people be saved), but they were rather performed with his four missionary objectives - authenticating his authority, converting, establishing communities, and maintaining communities - in mind. His actions were carefully planned and his entire mission was structured around achieving his four objectives.

#### 4.2 Directions for Further Research

Throughout the preceding two chapters of this study, we noted that the action statements and the categories of action statements made for too much data to be sufficiently analyzed in a work of this length. I hope that future inquiries into Paul's apostolic duty are focused on his action statements; they seem to be the basis for further insights into Paul's understanding of his mission. However, by no means do I believe that it is necessary for future studies to adopt the interpretations of the action statements presented in this study. An underlying objective of this thesis was to demonstrate the interpretive value in Paul's statements of action. I hope to have given sufficient grounds for the formation of scholarly dialogue on the approach adopted in this work. The greatest benefit of our approach is that it leads to conclusions that are firmly based on an inventory of deeds that Paul himself claimed to have performed.

In this study, Paul's statements of action served as the basis for our search for his missionary objectives. I believe that an opportunity exists to devote specialized studies to each of the four categories (i.e., missionary objectives) along with their accompanying action statements. The realization that Paul had four missionary objectives calls for further inquiries. For example, how does each objective rank in overall importance to Paul's mission? How are each of the objectives represented in each of Paul's letters? What can each objective tell us about Paul's understanding of his apostleship?

We can also begin to look for parallels between the Paul's apostolic plan and the objectives of other first century missionaries. One such missionary is Apollonius of Tyana. Apollonius was a traveling

philosopher during Paul's time whose ministry brought him through Europe and India. Interestingly, Apollonius appears to have established a philosophical school in Ephesus, and to have written letters. Paul performed parallel tasks himself, which we categorized under "establishing communities" and "maintaining communities" respectively. It would be a meaningful endeavor to compile Apollonius' deeds as recorded by our major source on his travels and actions, third century sophist Philostratus, and to then compare them with Paul's action statements. Compiling an inventory of Apollonius' actions as recorded by a later source, is, of course, a different project from compiling Paul's actions as recorded by Paul. The historicity of Philostratus' account of Apollonius' deeds would be called into question at a regularity that we did not experience while we compiled Paul's accounts of his own deeds. But the potential parallels between Paul and Apollonius' missions, and the prospective insights to which this would lead, make the attempt a meaningful enterprise.

I have purposely refrained from portraying Paul as a philosopher, prophet, or spiritual guide. I attempted to remain as close to Paul's own words as possible. Paul refers to himself not as a philosopher, prophet, or spiritual guide, but rather as an apostle. I hope that we have a better understanding of what he thought this title entailed. The task ahead of us is to continue to work with Paul's action statements to refine our understanding of his perspective of his job as an apostle. Only after we have satisfactorily achieved this will it no longer be premature to embark on comparative projects.

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