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# Who Are the *Apistoi*? Symbolic Boundaries and Anthropological Language in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1

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**WHO ARE THE *APISTOI*? SYMBOLIC BOUNDARIES AND  
ANTHROPOLOGICAL LANGUAGE IN 2 COR 6:14-7:1**

A Masters Thesis

Presented to

The Graduate College of  
Missouri State University

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts, Religious Studies

By

Nii Addo Kobina Abrahams

August 2017

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ANTHROPOLOGICAL LANGUAGE IN 2 COR 6:14-7:1**

Religious Studies

Missouri State University, August 2017

Master of Arts

Nii Addo Kobina Abrahams

**ABSTRACT**

Joseph A. Fitzmyer's "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1," originally published in 1961, argued that 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 was an interpolation from an undiscovered Qumran text. Fitzmyer's thesis was the prevailing scholarly opinion for over a decade, and while several counter-arguments have convincingly challenged Fitzmyer's theory, scholars are still hard-pressed to explain how the passage fits into its context. Not only does 6:14-7:1 seem to lack any organic connection to the verses immediately prior or following, but it also contains unique vocabulary and what seems to be uncharacteristic use of standard Pauline terms. However, all of these features can be explained by a properly contextualized reading of the passage which accounts for Paul's use of anthropological language throughout the passage and the rest of 2 Corinthians. This project demonstrates that 6:14-7:1 is an integral, authentic part of 2 Corinthians by applying the concept of symbolic boundaries to Paul's rhetoric in the first half of the letter. My reading shows—contrary to the majority opinion among current scholars—that the unbelievers to whom the Corinthians are "improperly yoked" are Paul's apostolic rivals, the "super-apostles," and that prior to and throughout 6:14-7:1, Paul uses anthropological language to delineate a symbolic boundary between himself and these false ministers of the gospel. This anthropological language unites 6:14-7:1 with its immediate context and explains many of the passage's unusual features.

**KEYWORDS:** anthropology, symbolic boundaries, Paul, 2 Corinthians, interpolation, super-apostles, *sarx*, *sōma*, *pneuma*

This abstract is approved as to form and content

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In the interest of academic freedom and the principle of free speech, approval of this thesis indicates the format is acceptable and meets the academic criteria for the discipline as determined by the faculty that constitute the thesis committee. The content and views expressed in this thesis are those of the student-scholar and are not endorsed by Missouri State University, its Graduate College, or its employees.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Literature Review.....	8
Conclusion: Project Goals.....	20
Chapter 2: Anthropology .....	22
Describing 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as an Anthropological Reflection .....	26
Pauline Physical and Social Anthropology: The Basics .....	30
Conclusions.....	42
Chapter 3: Exegesis.....	44
Contextual Analysis: 2 Cor 1:3-6:13 .....	44
Formal Analysis .....	56
Detailed Analysis .....	59
Conclusion .....	84
Conclusions.....	86
References.....	90

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Among Paul's letters, 2 Corinthians offers its readers a distinct view of Paul the apostle. It is written to a community of believers which, perhaps more than any other, brought Paul great pain (2 Cor 2:1-4) and great joy (1 Cor 1:4-7). Like its predecessor in the biblical canon, 2 Corinthians deals with a myriad of issues, but it is uniquely marked by sorrow, anger, compassion, and even jealousy. Alfred Plummer spoke of the epistle in 1915:

The mixture of human weakness with spiritual strength, of tenderness with severity, of humility with vehement self-vindication, of delicate tact with uncompromising firmness, produces an impression of intense reality, but at the same time bewilders us as to the exact aim of this or that turn of expression. The Greek is harder to construe than that of the First Epistle [to the Corinthians], owing to the ruggedness which results from dictating when the feelings are deeply stirred.<sup>1</sup>

Aside from its emotional character, 2 Corinthians is also unique among Paul's letters as it relates to the question of literary integrity. In 1776, Johann Solomo Semler proposed that chapters 10-12 of 2 Corinthians were from a separate letter of Paul written after he wrote a letter which comprises chapters 1-9.<sup>2</sup> Partition theories for 2 Corinthians have since

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<sup>1</sup> Alfred Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians*, International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1915), 48.

<sup>2</sup> Frank J. Matera, *II Corinthians: A Commentary*, New Testament Library (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003), 25.



become abundant, and while many scholars hold to a two-letter theory, some have suggested that 2 Corinthians is a combination of three or more letters.<sup>3</sup>

These partition theories largely serve to explain the existence of four possible “literary seams” in 2 Corinthians. According to Walter F. Taylor, Jr., a literary seam “consists of a block of material that is a clearly defined unit and seems out of place when compared with the material preceding and following it. Such seams can be either indications of material inserted into a previously existing document or signs of a document put together by an editor from original independent documents or fragments of documents.”<sup>4</sup> The potential literary seams in 2 Corinthians are between chapters 1-9 and 10-13, between 2:13 and 2:14, between chapters 8 and 9, and between 6:14-7:1 and the material surrounding it.<sup>5</sup>

The seam at 6:14-7:1 is a significant interpretive challenge. In 2 Cor 6:1-13, Paul pleads with the Corinthians “not to accept the grace of God in vain” (6:2, NRSV). He then attests to his apostolic legitimacy with a catalogue of sufferings. The plea seems to end in 6:11-13, where Paul says, “Our mouth has been opened (ἀνέωγεν) to you, Corinthians; our heart for you has been broadened (πεπλάτυνται). There is no restriction (οὐ στενοχωρεῖσθε) in us, but there is restriction in your affections (ἐν τοῖς σπλάγχνοις)

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<sup>3</sup> For example, Walter F. Taylor, Jr. suggests that 2 Corinthians is a combination of five distinct letters of Paul (Walter F. Taylor Jr., *Paul, Apostle to the Nations: An Introduction* [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2012], 200).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 170.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.

for us. Now, with the same response (τὴν δὲ αὐτὴν ἀντιμισθίαν)—I speak as if to children—also broaden your hearts (πλατύνθητε καὶ ὑμεῖς).”<sup>6</sup>

Then, in 6:14, Paul seems to shift focus entirely. His emotional plea is replaced by an authoritative command: “Do not be improperly yoked (ἑτεροζυγοῦντες) with unbelievers (ἀπίστοις).” Comparisons of antitheses—righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, Christ and Beliar, believer and unbeliever, and the temple of God and idols—expose the Corinthians’ folly in being “yoked” with *apistoi* (unbelievers).<sup>7</sup> Paul then identifies the community as “the temple of the living God,” and with a string of quotations demonstrates that the Corinthians must “come out” (ἐξέλθατε) from among the *apistoi* and cleanse themselves (καθαρίσωμεν) from defilement (μολυσμοῦ).

However, in 7:2, Paul resumes his plea with the Corinthians, asking the Corinthians to “make room” (χωρήσατε) for him and Timothy and again emphasizes the legitimacy of his ministry: “We have wronged no one, we have corrupted no one, we have taken advantage of no one” (NRSV). He reminds them that the Corinthians are in his and Timothy’s hearts (7:3; cf. 3:2-3) and that they overflow with joy in all their afflictions (ὑπερπερισσεύομαι τῇ χαρᾷ ἐπὶ πάσῃ τῇ θλίψει ἡμῶν). The parallelism between the themes of 6:11-13 and 7:2-3 (proof of apostolic legitimacy, a demonstration of Paul’s affections for the Corinthians, joy in the midst of affliction), compounded by the shift in tone and theme at 6:14-7:1, lends itself to the notion that 6:14-7:1 is at least a

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<sup>6</sup> All translations are mine unless otherwise noted.

<sup>7</sup> As pages 59-64 will show, there are multiple interpretive options for who these unbelievers are.

digression.<sup>8</sup> But the passage also contains unusual vocabulary (eleven *hapax legomena*), and various terms are used in ways uncharacteristic of Paul's standard practice.<sup>9</sup> Furthermore, the passage seems to promote an attitude about relationships with unbelievers that directly contradicts his previous advice in 1 Corinthians 5; there, Paul said complete separation from those outside the *ekklēsia* (assembly, church)<sup>10</sup> was impossible (1 Cor 5:9-10), but 6:14-7:1 seems to promote total separation. The combination of these features has led many scholars to conclude that 6:14-7:1 is a non-Pauline interpolation.

Joseph Fitzmyer's 1961 essay entitled "Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1" popularized the interpolation thesis.<sup>11</sup> Fitzmyer identified five features of the passage which suggested it was an interpolation from a Qumran text: the "triple dualism" of righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, and Christ and Beliar;

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<sup>8</sup> As I will explain later, the NRSV and other major translations have translated 7:2 in ways which over-emphasize these features (see pages 56-57).

<sup>9</sup> ἑτεροζυγεῖν (improperly yoked), μετοχή (partnership), συμφώνησις (agreement), Βελιάρ (Beliar), συγκατάθεσις (concord), and μολυσμός (defilement) are NT hapaxes. ἐμπεριπατέω (walk about), εἰσδέχομαι (welcome), θυγάτηρ (daughter) and παντοκράτωρ (Almighty) are Pauline hapaxes; note, though, that Paul uses περιπατέω in 2 Cor 10:3. μερίς (share) appears in other NT books, but among the letters attributed to Paul, it appears only in Colossians, a letter of disputed authenticity; I will consider it a Pauline hapax. Thrall offers a good summary of the objections based on uncharacteristic terminology (Margaret Thrall, "The Problem of II Cor. vi. 14-vii. 1 in Some Recent Discussion," *NTS* 24 [1977]: 133).

<sup>10</sup> Wayne Meeks offers a helpful discussion of the problems with translating *ekklēsia* as "church" (Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul*, 2nd ed. [New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003], 108).

<sup>11</sup> Some of Fitzmyer's contemporaries argued likewise: P. Benoit, "Qumrân et le Nouveau Testament," *NTS* 7 (1961): 276-96; J. Gnilya, "2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 in Light of the Qumran Texts and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs," in *Paul and Qumran* (ed. Jerome Murphy-O'Connor; Chicago: Priory, 1968): 48-68.

opposition to idolatry; the community-as-temple metaphor; a call for separation from impurity; and a “concatenation of Old Testament texts.”<sup>12</sup> These features, as well as the *hapax legomena*, led Fitzmyer to conclude, “The evidence seems to total up to the admission of a Christian reworking of an Essene paragraph which has been introduced into the Pauline letter.”<sup>13</sup>

Fitzmyer’s interpolation thesis has been expanded upon by a number of scholars. Hans Dieter Betz, for example, argued that the passage was indeed an interpolation, but connected it with “the movement to which Paul’s opponents in Galatia belonged,” rather than the Qumran sect.<sup>14</sup> According to Betz, 6:14 reveals the author of the fragment believed one’s status as *pistos* (faithful) is determined by whether one is faithful to the Torah.<sup>15</sup> This thesis is well-known, but hardly convincing.<sup>16</sup> More recently, William O.

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<sup>12</sup> Joseph A. Fitzmyer, “Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1,” in *The Semitic Background of the New Testament* (ed. Joseph A. Fitzmyer; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997; repr. *CBQ* 23, 1961), 208.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

<sup>14</sup> Hans Dieter Betz, “2 Cor 6:14-7:1: An Anti-Pauline Fragment?,” *JBL* 92.1 (1973): 108.

<sup>15</sup> He argues that the phrase *heterozygein apistois* (6:14a) finds its rabbinic equivalent in the phrase “to throw off the yoke of heaven,” a figure of speech describing apostasy from Judaism. Thus, “the terminology of πιστός/ἄπιστος cannot be taken in the Pauline sense. . . . Rather, the terms in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 are to be seen from the Jewish point of view” (*Ibid.*, 90).

<sup>16</sup> The connection between the phrase *heterozygein apistois* and the rabbinic phrase “to throw off the yoke of heaven” is hardly intuitive. *Heterozygeō* (from *eteros*, “different,” and *zygos*, “yoke”) means something much closer to “to come under a yoke” than to throw one off. Betz pays no attention to the meaning of *heterozygeō*, and his choice to compare *heterozygein apistois* with rabbinic theology—rather than the LXX, which is a far more apposite starting point given the heavy LXX influence in the passage—is arbitrary. Moreover, if the *zygos* is actually the Torah, Betz is unable to explain why an editor would insert a passage that is so anti-Pauline into the middle of the

Walker has argued that “the removal of 6.14-7.1 leaves a perfect chiasmus in the . . . material immediately preceding and immediately following.”<sup>17</sup> Though Walker leaves the question of authorship open, he does claim that the chiasm formed by 6:11-13 and 7:2-3 “significantly [strengthens] the case for viewing these verses as a later insertion into the text of Paul’s letter to the Corinthians.”<sup>18</sup> Stephen J. Hultgren has suggested the passage displays linguistic and theological parallels with Rev 21:3-8 and Eph 5, ultimately concluding that the passage “is neither Pauline nor Essene in origin, but is rather a piece of parenesis that originated in a Jewish-Christian circle in Ephesus . . . and that was interpolated by an Ephesian redactor of 2 Corinthians.”<sup>19</sup>

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letter. For more critique, see William J. Webb, *Returning Home: New Covenant and Second Exodus as the Context for 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1*, Library of New Testament Studies 85 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 186–87.

<sup>17</sup> William O. Walker, “2 Cor 6.14–7.1 and the Chiastic Structure of 6.11–13; 7.2–3,” *NTS* 48.1 (2002): 143.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 144. My analysis will show that 6:14-7:1 is itself chiastic (see pages 57-58). In that case, the parallelism between 6:11-13 and 7:2-3 is not a problem, because 6:14-7:1 actually contributes to the chiastic structure.

<sup>19</sup> Stephen J. Hultgren, “2 Cor 6.14–7.1 and Rev 21.3–8: Evidence for the Ephesian Redaction of 2 Corinthians,” *NTS* 49.1 (2003): 39. Hultgren’s argument falters primarily on three points. First, he suggests that the juxtaposition of *sarx* and *pneuma* as “describing the whole person in a single orientation” is non-Pauline; however, this perspective (which is actually quite popular among those who uphold the passage’s integrity) does not properly account for the grammar of 7:1, which suggests another reading (see pages 79-82). Second, he objects to the use of Beliar as a name for Satan and the appearance of the phrase καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι in 6:16 because of widespread use of both in Qumran literature. Fee and Thrall both note, however, that Beliar was so widely used in the first century that no specific connection with Qumran can be assumed (Gordon Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1 and Food Offered to Idols,” *NTS* 23 [1976]: 146; Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1,” 137). Additionally, Beliar is etymologically appropriate for Paul’s purposes in this section (see pages 66-67), and the phrase καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι has a very close parallel in 2 Cor 4:6 (ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν). Third, Hultgren assumes (along with the majority of scholars) that the *apistoi* mentioned in 6:14 are non-Christian pagans, which means that the imperative to separate from them

Others, still troubled by the apparent links with the theology of the Qumranites yet still seeing the passage as somewhat Pauline, have offered a tentative challenge to Fitzmyer by suggesting that the passage is a non-Pauline fragment, edited and inserted into the letter by Paul himself.<sup>20</sup> Gordon Fee's challenge was more aggressive.<sup>21</sup> Fee's primary focus was the *hapax legomena*, which he comprehensively demonstrated to be a poor reason to dispute the passage's authenticity.<sup>22</sup> However, Fee also pointed out how Fitzmyer and others failed to deal with the passage properly.

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would contradict 1 Cor 5:9-10. However, if the *apistoi* are Paul's opponents in Corinth, then there is no contradiction (see pages 60-62).

<sup>20</sup> Nils Alstrup Dahl and Paul Donahue, "A Fragment and Its Context: 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1," in *Studies in Paul: Theology for the Early Christian Mission* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1977); David Rensberger, "2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1—A Fresh Examination," *SBT* 8 (1978): 25–49; Victor Paul Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 1st ed., Anchor Bible 32A (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, 1984), 383. Paul Brooks Duff, following Dahl and Rensberger, agrees that it is a non-Pauline fragment but leaves the question of who placed it there unresolved (Paul Brooks Duff, "The Mind of the Redactor: 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 in Its Secondary Context," *NovT* 35.2 [1993]: 160–80). Ralph Martin follows Rensberger, but disagrees with Rensberger's conclusion that the *apistoi* are the super-apostles and sides with the critical majority who believe the *apistoi* are Gentile pagans (Ralph P. Martin, *2 Corinthians*, ed. Peter H. Davids, 2nd ed., Word Biblical Commentary 40 [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014], 358).

<sup>21</sup> Fee, "II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1."

<sup>22</sup> The verbal forms of μετοχή and μολυσμός (μετέχω and μολύνω) appear in 1 Cor 8-10: "For we all share [μετέχομεν] of the one bread" (1 Cor 10:17b); "You cannot share [μετέχειν] of the table of the Lord and of demons" (1 Cor 10:21b); "Their conscience, being weak, is defiled [μολύνεται]" (1 Cor 8:7c). Fee further argues that ἑτεροζυγεῖν is the antonym of συζυγέω (Phil 4:3). On συμφώνησις and συγκατάθεσις, Fee notes that Paul uses σύμφωνος in 1 Cor 7:5 with roughly the same meaning as συμφώνησις in 2 Cor 6:15 and that there are eighteen other "σύν-compounds" in the Pauline corpus that are also NT hapaxes. He is unconvinced by the supposedly intrinsic connection between the title Βελιάρ and the Qumran sect: "The concept of Belial as the Prince of Evil did not originate in Qumran. It is a thoroughgoing trademark of the Jewish apocalyptic period. Therefore, the force of the argument lies not in the appearance of the word itself, but in the coincidence of this word in a passage which also has other linguistic affinities with Qumran." The hapaxes in the catena—ἐμπεριπατεω, εισδέχομαι,

What strikes one as he reads the vast array of literature on this passage is the general unwillingness, except for a few who believe in the letter's integrity, to deal with the contextual question. Nonetheless, the questions of integrity and authenticity must ultimately be answered at this one point: which hypothesis can make the best sense of the letter in its present form? For after all, whether authentic or spurious, whether put there by Paul or some redactor, there it sits, right there between vi. 13 and vii. 2. And *someone* put it there, unless of course one is willing to allow with Père Benoit that it is "a meteor fallen from the heaven of Qumran into Paul's epistle" (emphasis original).<sup>23</sup>

This failure has been recognized and critiqued by numerous scholars who, like Fee, have argued in various ways that 6:14-7:1 is authentically Pauline.<sup>24</sup>

### Literature Review

Each of the following scholars supports the passage's authenticity. Their arguments are loosely organized into three categories: linguistic approaches, structural/rhetorical approaches, and examinations of LXX (Septuagint) influence.

**Linguistic Approaches.** Margaret Thrall contends that "many of the arguments for a non-Pauline origin of II Cor. vi. 14 – vii. 1 are weak."<sup>25</sup> While she acknowledges the passage's attitude seems to contradict 1 Cor 5:9-10 and recognizes its affinities with

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and παντοκράτωρ—cannot demonstrate inauthenticity because they are drawn from other texts. Fee does not treat μέρις, probably because of its attestation in Colossians (Fee, "II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1," 145–47).

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 142. The quote comes from from Père Benoit, "Qumrân et le Nouveau Testament," *NTS* 12 (1961): 279.

<sup>24</sup> See Emmanuel Nathan, "Fragmented Theology in 2 Corinthians: The Unsolved Puzzle of 6:14-7:1," in *Theologizing in the Corinthian Conflict: Studies in the Exegesis and Theology of 2 Corinthians*, ed. Reimund Bieringer et al., *Biblical Tools and Studies* 16 (Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 214–15, for an extremely helpful and comprehensive table of scholars and their positions. The chart highlights the turn from interpolation theories "towards authenticity and integrity in recent times" (Ibid., 216).

<sup>25</sup> Thrall, "The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1," 133, 138.

Qumran literature, she does not believe either of these points are enough to dispute its authenticity. To the former objection, she says, “The present passage might at first seem to forbid all relations with pagans. But actually what it requires is that Christians should avoid idolatry and moral defilement, which is no more than what Paul demands in 1 Corinthians. . . . It does not, therefore, express a non-Pauline point of view.”<sup>26</sup> To the latter, she shows that the title “Beliar” as a name for Satan appears in multiple sources outside of the Qumran literature and therefore has no intrinsic connection to Qumran ideology.<sup>27</sup> She also explains how each verse in 6:14-7:1 is linguistically or rhetorically connected to prior sections of the letter.<sup>28</sup> Although she tentatively describes 6:14-7:1 as resuming 6:1-2, with 6:3-13 as a digression, she refrains from making any firm statements about the passage’s context.<sup>29</sup>

In his monograph entitled *Holiness and Community in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1*, J. Ayodeji Adewuya conducts a historical-grammatical analysis of the ἅγιος word-group in 2

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<sup>26</sup> Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1,” 133–34.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 137.

<sup>28</sup> She sees three connections between 4:3-6 and 6:14-15: the warning against close relations with the same *apistoi* who have been blinded to the light of the gospel (4:4), the reference to Beliar, another name for Satan (4:4), and the comparison of *phōs* and *skotos* which recalls the notion that *apistoi* are in darkness. Furthermore, in 6:14 believers are associated with *dikaiosynē*, and in 5:21 Paul says Christ was made to be sin on their behalf so that the Corinthians might become the *dikaiosynē* of God. The emphasis in 6:16-18 on the “close and gracious relationship between God and his people . . . follows very suitably after the description of God’s reconciling activity in v. 18-19 and the appeal in v. 20.” Finally, the phrase “the fear of God” in 7:1 has prior use in 5:11 (*Ibid.*, 145).

<sup>29</sup> Her proposal is qualified by the following statement: “No solution to the problem of context seems entirely satisfactory, and in view of the notorious difficulties the passage presents it would be hazardous to propose a fresh explanation with any great confidence” (*Ibid.*, 144).



Corinthians to elucidate how Paul’s concept of communal holiness connects 6:14-7:1 to the rest of the letter. He critiques interpretations of the passage that emphasize personal ethics and individual holiness.<sup>30</sup> Rather, Adewuya describes how communal holiness—which is “grounded on covenant-relationship with God, manifests itself in ethical purity, consists of maintaining boundaries, and has the desire to model God as its goal”—has been violated by the strain in Paul’s relationship with the Corinthians.<sup>31</sup> 6:14-7:1, therefore, is communal paraenesis: “It is a call to the Corinthian Christians for a proper self-understanding as ‘people’ and ‘temple of God.’”<sup>32</sup>

David Starling attempts to bridge the gap between scholars who read *apistoi* as a reference to pagans and as a reference to the super-apostles. To do so, Starling also focuses on the theme of holiness in 2 Corinthians. Based on the first use of holiness language in the letter (1:12), which becomes “programmatic” for its other uses, he suggests that the type of holiness Paul has in mind “is somehow related to the criticisms against which he intends to defend himself, and its content is unpacked in terms of a contrast between ‘fleshly wisdom’ (σοφία σαρκική) and the ‘grace of God’ which becomes the focus of both his defence [sic] of his own conduct and his critique of his

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<sup>30</sup> Interestingly, despite his emphasis on communal holiness, Adewuya still concludes that the imperative in 7:1 is in reference to the individual bodies of believers (J. Ayodeji Adewuya, *Holiness and Community in 2 Cor 6:14-7:1: Paul’s View of Communal Holiness in the Corinthian Correspondence* [New York: Peter Lang, 2005], 120, 198); see pages 80-81.

<sup>31</sup> Adewuya, *Holiness and Community*, 193. Adewuya also describes how Paul’s concept of holiness was “mission-oriented,” while that of the Qumranites was sectarian and “legalistic” (Ibid., 86).

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 127.

opponents’.”<sup>33</sup> This fleshly wisdom, the “sophistic adulation of rhetorical polish and outward appearance, along with the more general Graeco-Roman [sic] contempt for all things weak and servile” has led the Corinthians to side with the super-apostles.<sup>34</sup>

Therefore, Starling concludes that Paul is indeed addressing the problem of relationships with the super-apostles in 6:14-7:1, but he does so indirectly by telling the Corinthians to stop being “mismatched with the pagans [*apistoi*] in their adulation of fleshly wisdom and rhetoric.”<sup>35</sup>

**Structural/Rhetorical Approaches.** Following Thrall, Jerome Murphy

O’Connor acknowledges that the proposals for the passage’s integrity within the context of chapter 6 have been weak, and critiques Collange and Rensberger for arguing that the *apistoi* are Paul’s opponents on the basis of Paul’s normal use of the word.<sup>36</sup> But Murphy O’Connor critiques Thrall’s theory that 6:14-7:1 resumes 6:1-2; furthermore, he argues that 6:3-10 and 6:12-13 are two separate digressions, the second prompted by Paul’s citation of LXX Deut 11:16 in 6:11.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> David Starling, “The Ἄπιστοι of 2 Cor 6:14: Beyond the Impasse,” *NovT* 55.1 (2013): 55–56.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Relating 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 to Its Context,” *NTS* 33.2 (1987): 272. See also Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-Vii. 1,” 144.

<sup>37</sup> In support of his theory that Paul’s second digression was prompted by citing LXX Deut 11:16, he explains that “once Paul had written [ὡς μηδὲν ἔχοντες καὶ πάντα κατέχοντες, “having nothing and possessing all things”] he became conscious that ‘possessing all things,’ particularly after ‘making many rich,’ was in fact a summary of the reward promised for perfect obedience to God in Dt 11. 13-15. This type of associative jump in which the meaning changes slightly is far from unusual in Paul. . . . If this is correct, it becomes possible to explain why Paul formulated the beginning of his

As part of his structural exegesis of 2 Cor 2:14-7:4, Daniel Patte argues that 2:14-3:6 (the introduction to the self-contained discursive unit of 2:14-7:4) introduces the central problem that Paul addresses in the following chapters: “Paul’s ministry [has] both negative (death) and positive (life) effects upon people,” which to the Corinthians indicates his ministry is “governed by bad motivations.”<sup>38</sup> According to Patte, Paul must not only demonstrate that authentic ministry indeed brings positive *and* negative effects, but also that “the negative effects of a ministry are not necessarily to be attributed to . . . ministers and their competence.”<sup>39</sup> In fact, Paul argues that one of these negative effects—the Corinthians being closed off to him (6:11-13)—is actually caused by *other ministers*, the “super-apostles” (12:11).<sup>40</sup> Thus, in 6:14-7:1, Paul urges the Corinthians to separate from these unfaithful ministers because they—like ministers of the gospel—have

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ethical exhortation (6. 11) as he did. His mind moved forward to the next verse in Dt (11. 16), and by dropping the negative participle (μή) the ‘heart swollen with pride’ became a ‘heart wide open.’” The problem is that the so-called “heart swollen with pride” (πλατυνθῆ ἡ καρδία) in LXX Deut 11:16 has been opened toward idolatry, not toward God. This is not a slight change in meaning, like the connection between 6:10c and LXX Deut 11:13-15. On such a reading, there are two full reversals of thought, based on the same citation, within three verses: the first at 6:12-13 (reversed to the opposite of the original context) and then again at 6:14 (reversed back to the original context) (Murphy-O’Connor, “Relating 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1,” 273–74). Webb argues that LXX Isa 60:4-5 is a more viable option (Webb, *Returning Home*, 153, 169–70).

<sup>38</sup> Daniel Patte, “A Structural Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 2:14-7:4 with Special Attention on 2:14-3:6 and 6:11-7:4,” in *Society of Biblical Literature: 1987 Seminar Papers*, ed. Kent Harold Richards (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1987), 39.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> As Patte describes it, Paul initially suggests the source of this “lack of openness” comes from within the Corinthians themselves (6:12). But because he expects that they will not be convinced by this, he argues in 6:14-18 that they are closed off to him because they are yoked to other (unfaithful) ministers. This shift only takes place so that in 7:1, Paul can return to his original claim, namely, that the Corinthians are responsible for their own “defilement” (their lack of openness) and are thereby also responsible for cleansing themselves of it (*Ibid.*, 44–45).

a cultic responsibility to ensure that their attitude is equal to the work God has done within and among them.<sup>41</sup>

David A. deSilva suggests that the central theological concern in 1 Cor 10 reappears in 6:14-7:1; namely, that “participation in the eschatological reality of one age precludes participation in its opposing age.”<sup>42</sup> However, he claims that unlike in 1 Corinthians, the term *apistoi* “might simply be translated as ‘unfaithful to the gospel,’ or ‘displaying an absence of faith in the gospel.’ This . . . may thus include those who are unfaithful to the gospel of Christ by virtue of their subscription to ‘a different gospel.’”<sup>43</sup> The predominance of the dualistic theme prior to chapter 6 prepares the way for the “antitheses” in 6:14b-16a, where it reaches its culmination.<sup>44</sup> This climax supplements 5:20-6:2 by creating a “new moment of decision for the Corinthians, a new ‘acceptable time’ and ‘day of salvation’ [cf. 6:2] in which to separate themselves from the world which is passing away and those who are perishing through unbelief.”<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Patte, “A Structural Exegesis,” 39, 48.

<sup>42</sup> David A. deSilva, “Recasting the Moment of Decision: 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1 in Its Literary Context,” *AUSS* 31 (1993): 10.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

<sup>44</sup> “Paul opens the argument proper by describing his party as a fragrance of Christ to God ‘among those who are being saved and those who are perishing’ . . . a division of humanity clearly illustrative of apocalyptic dualism. A similar division appears in the distinction between those who, ‘with unveiled faces gaze at the glory of the Lord’ and those whose minds ‘the god of this age has darkened,’ who are in fact referred to as ‘unbelievers.’ . . . Paul distinguishes the ‘things which are seen’ from ‘the things which are not seen’ . . . declaring that the former belong to this temporary reality . . . while the latter are eternal. . . . Finally, there is the anthropological dualism created when Paul differentiates between this mortal body, the ‘earthy tent’ which will be destroyed, and the ‘dwelling from God,’ an eternal body, for which the believer longs” (*Ibid.*, 10).

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

Michael Goulder presents two theses regarding the passage: first, that 6:14-7:1 is part of a sequence of thought “which is found twice elsewhere in the Corinthian letters”; second, that the *apistoi* are “faithless Christians.”<sup>46</sup> The thought sequence first appears in 1 Cor 4-6. Paul first asks for apostolic recognition (4:1-5), then contrasts his readers’ experiences of power with his own sufferings (4:6-13), and finally asserts his parental authority (4:14-21) so that he can address the polluting effects of immorality and establish a requirement to separate from undisciplined members of the community (5:1-6:20).<sup>47</sup> Goulder argues that this same sequence occurs in 2 Cor 5:1-7:1, and 6:14-7:1 is the final element where Paul addresses immorality and demands separation from it.<sup>48</sup> On the identity of the *apistoi*, Goulder offers five arguments.<sup>49</sup>

1. When the term is used in 4:4, it is in reference to Paul’s opponents, not pagans.
2. *Apistos* often means “faithless” in other New Testament literature.
3. Paul might be using *apistoi* as “a term of abuse for immoral Christians.”

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<sup>46</sup> Michael Goulder, “2 Cor. 6:14-7:1 as an Integral Part of 2 Corinthians,” *NovT* 36.1 (1994): 47.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 48.

<sup>48</sup> The full sequence is as follows: Paul establishes himself as the bearer of the ministry of reconciliation (5:18; cf. 1 Cor 4:1-5), and catalogues his sufferings as the source of his apostolic authority (6:4-10; cf. 1 Cor 4:11-13). He appeals to his audience as children (6:11-13; cf. 1 Cor 4:14-21). Then—just as in 1 Cor 5-6—Paul stresses the pollution caused by “contact with untrue Christians” and demands that the Corinthians separate themselves from the sources of pollution (6:14-7-1) (*Ibid.*, 50). The third sequence is in 2 Cor 10-13. Paul’s apostleship comes under attack, and he defends himself as a minister of Christ (11:23). He again lists his weaknesses as a testament to his authority (11:22-33), and says that he is coming to Corinth as a parent (12:14-18). He challenges the Corinthians to live a “pure spiritual life” (12:19-21), but warns them that he will apply discipline himself if the issues in the community are not addressed by the time he arrives (13:1-10) (*Ibid.*, 52).

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 53–54.

4. The word *pistos* (6:15b) is never used as a term for “Christian” in contrast with a pagan.

5. Reading *apistoi* as Paul’s opponents prevents a contradiction between this passage and 1 Cor 5:9-13.

Ben Witherington III argues that 6:14-7:1 is appropriate for its context because Paul “has just named all that he has done and given up in order to be a servant of God and of the Corinthians.”<sup>50</sup> His command for the Corinthians to separate from unbelievers is simply a request for “commensurability.”<sup>51</sup> Similarly, Frank Matera calls the passage “the ‘outworking’ of Paul’s discussion of his apostolic ministry (2:14-7:4), inasmuch as it explicitly calls the Corinthians to be reconciled with their apostle [by separating from unbelievers].”<sup>52</sup> The “moral crisis” in Corinth (cf. 2 Cor 12:21) necessitates their “moral conversion,” which Paul requests in a well-structured argument.<sup>53</sup>

A) the plea for reconciliation (6:11-13)

B) exhortation to separate from unbelievers (6:14-7:1)

A) resumption of the plea for reconciliation<sup>54</sup>

Volker Rabens argues that 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 has as its primary meaning a command for “selective removal from covenant-forming relationships with idolatrous people

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<sup>50</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary on 1 and 2 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 340.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Matera, *II Corinthians*, 160.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Don Garlington follows Matera, highlighting this same structure (Don B. Garlington, *A Commentary on the Greek Text of Second Corinthians* [Eugene: Cascade Books, 2016], 200).

outside the church.”<sup>55</sup> However, Rabens also contends that the passage displays deliberate ambiguity via *double entendre*. Paul’s audience would not only have understood the imperative to separate from *apistoi* as referring to Gentile pagans, but also to Paul’s opponents in Corinth.<sup>56</sup> This secondary meaning “comes most clearly to the fore upon a second reading of the letter, that is, with the overt criticism of Paul’s opponents in chapters 10-12 in one’s mind.”<sup>57</sup> Rabens argues Paul considers both groups to be *apistoi* because they each disrupt the lines of demarcation Paul has attempted to draw between the Corinthians and pagans, as well as between himself and false apostles.<sup>58</sup>

**LXX Influence.** G. K. Beale argues that “there is a common, precise OT theme which best explains the presence of the series of OT quotes [in 5:17-7:1ff].”<sup>59</sup> This theme is new creation. Beale explains that new creation and reconciliation are the inauguration of the prophetic promises “of a new creation in which Israel would be restored into a peaceful relationship with God.”<sup>60</sup> In 5:17-6:13, Paul suggests that authentic new-creation living requires the Corinthians to accept his apostleship. This theme continues in 6:14-7:1: “The rejection of Paul as God’s true apostle of reconciliation by some of the

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<sup>55</sup> Volker Rabens, “Paul’s Rhetoric of Demarcation: Separation from ‘Unbelievers’ (2 Cor 6:14-7:1) in the Corinthian Conflict,” in *Theologizing in the Corinthian Conflict: Studies in the Exegesis and Theology of 2 Corinthians*, ed. Reimund Bieringer et al., Biblical Tools and Studies 16 (Walpole: Peeters, 2013), 232.

<sup>56</sup> Rabens, “Paul’s Rhetoric of Demarcation,” 232.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 250.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

<sup>59</sup> G. K. Beale, “The Old Testament Background of Reconciliation in 2 Corinthians 5-7 and Its Bearing on the Literary Problem of 2 Corinthians 6.14-7.1,” *NTS* 35 (1989): 551.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

Corinthians was an expression of . . . worldly impurity and demonstrated that they had begun to evaluate in the same manner as the unbelieving world.”<sup>61</sup> The reference to *apistoi* in 6:14 “is to be understood generally as emphasizing the worldly, *unbelieving standards* . . . used by the false apostles and those under their influence, as well as by some in the readership who were not repenting of sins of which Paul had earlier convicted them.”<sup>62</sup> Paul then implores the Corinthians to reject these standards in order to be reconciled to Christ and participate in new creation.<sup>63</sup>

William Webb’s monograph proposes that 2 Cor 2:14-7:4 is contextually united “through the use of new covenant and exilic return traditions.”<sup>64</sup> He argues that Paul presents himself to the Corinthians as the *ebed Yahweh*, the servant of Isaiah, “which seems to allow him to formulate his proclamation-message in exilic return terms.”<sup>65</sup> Within 6:14-7:1, these traditions emerge most prominently within the catena. There, “like the ‘*ebed*, [Paul] prompts their return with the cry for a new exodus . . . and with

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<sup>61</sup> Beale, “Old Testament Background,” 568.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 573.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 573–74.

<sup>64</sup> Webb, *Returning Home*, 176.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 112. For example, in the passage’s immediate context (5:11-7:4), “significant points of contact with the fragment through *exilic return traditions* include: τὰ ἀρχαῖα . . . καινά (5.17), the quotation from Isa. 49.8 (6.1-2), the removal of stumbling blocks, προσκοπήν (6.3), the commendation as θεοῦ διάκονοι—recalling Paul’s ‘*ebed*’ role (6.4a), and the ‘enlarging the heart’ idiom in connection with Paul’s father-child relationship to the Corinthians (6.11-13)” (*Ibid.*, 157–58).



promises related to their home coming—just as he will welcome them as his children, so will their covenant God make them his sons and daughters.”<sup>66</sup>

James M. Scott calls Beale’s and Webb’s treatments of 6:16-18 “cursory” at best, and claims to offer a closer examination of the catena.<sup>67</sup> He notes a significant parallel between the “threefold structure” of 6:16c-18 and Rom 3:10-18.<sup>68</sup> Then, turning to the citations themselves, he notes that “the conflation of Lev. 26.11-12 and Ezek. 37.27 . . . presents the promise of the New Covenant in conscious continuity with the Sinai Covenant.”<sup>69</sup> According to Scott, Paul then manipulates the next citation of LXX Isa 52:11 to exhort the Corinthians to “practice the implications of the New Covenant situation for their sanctification.”<sup>70</sup> The final combination of LXX Ezek 20:34, LXX 2 Sam 7:14, and LXX Isa 43:6 equates an “adoption formula” with the preceding covenant formula. Scott argues that this not only extends the promise to both sons and daughters (6:18), but also anticipates the eschatological restoration of the Davidic monarchy under Christ, the Davidic messiah.<sup>71</sup> This restoration framework is consistent with Paul’s broader restoration theology. The restoration of the Corinthians (as part of Paul’s Gentile

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<sup>66</sup> Webb, *Returning Home*, 158.

<sup>67</sup> James M. Scott, “The Use of Scripture in 2 Corinthians 6:16c-18 and Paul’s Restoration Theology,” *JSNT* 56 (1994): 74. This is not a fair critique of Beale, whose primary focus was not 6:14-7:1. However, it is true that Webb’s analysis focuses more on the source, form, and redaction of the citations than their theological contributions (Webb, *Returning Home*, 32–58).

<sup>68</sup> Scott, “The Use of Scripture,” 77–78; see also page 72.

<sup>69</sup> Scott, “The Use of Scripture,” 82.

<sup>70</sup> In his final section, Scott will explain that 6:14-7:1 is Paul’s way of explaining how the Corinthians should open their heart, by way of this practice (*Ibid.*, 84, 96).

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 88.

mission) is “an essential precursor to the eventual salvation of all Israel; for it is not until the full number of the Gentiles comes in that all Israel will be saved (Rom. 11.25-26).”<sup>72</sup>

John Olley ignores the question of authenticity and instead focuses on the significance of θυγάτηρ in the catena, as this is the only place that the term appears in all the letters ascribed to Paul.<sup>73</sup> While other commentators overlook its appearance, he concludes that “the use of sons [υιὸς] and daughters [θυγατέρας] follows a common OT pattern when there is a reference to children.”<sup>74</sup> Before identifying this pattern, Olley proposes that 6:18 is formed by a combination of LXX 2 Sam 7:14 and LXX Deut 32:19, rather than LXX 2 Sam 7:14 and LXX Isa 43:6.<sup>75</sup> As he explains, υιὸς and θυγατέρας are syntactically closer in LXX Deut 32:19 than in LXX Isa 43:6; additionally, the verse’s context is appropriate for 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, and Olley demonstrates that LXX Deut 32 has a significant influence on 1 Cor 10, part of a major discourse against idolatry.<sup>76</sup> When he returns to his initial thesis, Olley contends that θυγάτηρ is often used in LXX passages where God speaks of his children, as well as other passages where family or

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<sup>72</sup> Scott, “The Use of Scripture,” 92.

<sup>73</sup> Notably, most commentators do not mention θυγάτηρ as a hapax; see, for example, Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1”; Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1”; Starling, “Beyond the Impasse.”

<sup>74</sup> John W. Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV? ‘Sons and Daughters’ in 2 Cor 6.18,” *NTS* 44.2 (1998): 206.

<sup>75</sup> The latter option is the viewpoint of the vast majority of scholars.

<sup>76</sup> There is a condemnation of Israel for abandoning God for other gods (32:15-16) and making sacrifices to them (32:18). V. 18 explicitly refers to God as a parent, and vv. 20-21 to children; the end of the passage (32:22-27) “brings a promise of cleansing.” In regard to 1 Cor 10, Olley explains that 1 Cor 10:20 echoes LXX Deut 32:17, 1 Cor 10:22 echoes LXX Deut 32:21, and 1 Cor 10:4 is clarified by LXX Deut 32, where “‘Rock’ is a description of God (and of idols as ‘rocks’ that provide no protection)” (Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV?,” 210).

parenting concerns are present. Therefore, Olley concludes that the appearance of *θυγατέρας* simply indicates a simple continuity with the LXX usage, rather than a democratization of the Davidic promise in LXX 2 Samuel.<sup>77</sup>

### **Conclusion: Project Goals**

The goal of this project is to contribute to the ongoing discussion on the nature of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. It has three main objectives related to this goal. First, it will demonstrate that the passage is indeed original to 2 Corinthians and authentically Pauline on the basis of its function as part of Paul's plea for reconciliation in 2:14-7:16 and its connections to the rest of the letter and the Pauline corpus. Second, I will describe the debate among scholars who uphold the passage's authenticity on the identity of the *apistoi* mentioned in 6:14. In regard to this debate, my project will defend the minority position that the *apistoi* are Paul's rivals in Corinth, the "super-apostles." Finally, the summary of previous scholarship above demonstrated that most of the scholarly literature has focused on how the passage relates to its immediate context based on linguistic arguments or structural/rhetorical arguments, or the theological significance of the LXX citations. While I will not overlook these concerns, there is a gap in the scholarly material that could be filled by examining how this passage is specifically related to Paul's ongoing anthropological argument in the preceding chapters.<sup>78</sup> This project's third objective is to

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<sup>77</sup> Olley, "A Precursor of the NRSV?," 211.

<sup>78</sup> A number of studies have examined various pieces of this argument, but have failed to include 6:14-7:1 in their analysis. See Sigurd Grindheim, "The Law Kills but the Gospel Gives Life: The Letter-Spirit Dualism in 2 Corinthians 3.5-18," *JSNT* 84 (2001): 97-115; John Gillman, "A Thematic Comparison: 1 Cor 15:50-57 and 2 Cor 5:1-5," *JBL* 107.3 (1988): 439-54; Paul Brooks Duff, "Transformed 'from Glory to Glory': Paul's

fill this gap. Chapter 2 will be devoted to some theoretical considerations and an overview of several anthropological terms that Paul uses across his letters and which are relevant to the passage at hand. Then, in Chapter 3, I will apply my findings from Chapter 2 to 2 Corinthians, offering an overview of Paul's use of anthropological rhetoric prior to 6:14-7:1 and then conducting a detailed analysis of the passage. The analysis will support the conclusion that Paul is directly referencing his opponents in 6:14.

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Appeal to the Experience of His Readers in 2 Corinthians 3:18," *JBL* 127.4 (2008): 759–80; David E. Aune, "Anthropological Duality in the Eschatology of 2 Corinthians 4:15-5:10," in *Paul Beyond the Judaism/Hellenism Divide*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2001), 215–40.

## CHAPTER 2: ANTHROPOLOGY

Paul has been identified in various ways throughout the centuries: apostle, missionary, pastor, theologian. Rarely, if ever, has he been called an anthropologist. While this label (as well as others) is an anachronism of sorts, it is nevertheless true that Paul's letters contain a significant amount of reflection on the nature of humanity. Anthropology is, broadly speaking, the study of humanity; various subfields, such as physical and social anthropology, have more particular concerns, such as biological characteristics or social phenomena (e.g. religion, political structures, kinship models, etc.).<sup>79</sup> Jeremy MacClancy writes, "Anthropology has no bounds. It has no limits. So long as something appears to fit, however vaguely . . . within 'the study of man,' it can be called anthropology."<sup>80</sup>

In the early years of its development as a discipline, anthropology (as well as other social sciences) was demonstrably influenced by Christian theological discourse and categories. Talal Asad, for example, notes that in eighteenth-century Europe, "older, Christian attitudes toward historical time (salvational expectation) were combined with the newer, secular practices (rational prediction) to give us our modern idea of

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<sup>79</sup> On anthropology, see Craig J. Calhoun, ed., "Anthropology," *Dictionary of the Social Sciences* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780195123715.001.0001/acref-9780195123715-e-66>.; on physical anthropology, see Andrew M. Colman, "Physical Anthropology," *A Dictionary of Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199657681.001.0001/acref-9780199657681-e-6346>.; on social anthropology, see Andrew M. Colman, "Social Anthropology," *A Dictionary of Psychology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780199657681.001.0001/acref-9780199657681-e-516>.

<sup>80</sup> Jeremy MacClancy, *Anthropology in the Public Arena: Historical and Contemporary Contexts* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2013), 1.

progress.”<sup>81</sup> Although this sort of “universal teleology” is not distinctively Pauline, many of the eighteenth-century scholars and explorers who gave birth to anthropology as a discipline were influenced by Pauline concepts because they were either Christians themselves or were influenced by Christianity.<sup>82</sup> In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, prominent British anthropologists like E. B. Tylor (1832-1917) and Mary Douglas (1921-2007) were also influenced by their Christian heritage.<sup>83</sup> In fact, in his *Theology and Social Theory*, where he reflects on the influence of Christian thought on the development of social theory, John Milbank went so far as to say, “‘Scientific’ social theories are themselves theologies or anti-theologies in disguise.”<sup>84</sup>

Milbank’s suggestion may go too far; there are certain metaphysical assumptions associated with Christian theology that anthropology does not claim. Nevertheless, anthropologists did not draw on theological language for mere convenience. Because anthropology and theology share similar concerns,<sup>85</sup> some theological discourse, when

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<sup>81</sup> Talal Asad, *Genealogies of Religion: Discipline and Reasons of Power in Christianity and Islam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), 28.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 29; John Schmalzbauer, “Why No Christian Sociology? Exploring the Hidden History of an Interdisciplinary Conversation,” in *Beyond Integration: Inter/Disciplinary Possibilities for the Future of Christian Higher Education*, ed. Todd C. Ream, Jerry A. Pattengale, and David L. Riggs (Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press, 2012), 67.

<sup>83</sup> Tylor was raised as a Quaker, and his anti-Catholic bias permeated even his greatest work (Timothy Larsen, *The Slain God: Anthropologists and the Christian Faith* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014], 18.). Douglas made it a point to defend the ongoing significance of her Catholic faith throughout her career (Ibid., 124.).

<sup>84</sup> John Milbank, *Theology and Social Theory: Beyond Secular Reason*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 3.

<sup>85</sup> Joel Robbins, “Anthropology and Theology: An Awkward Relationship?,” *Anthropological Quarterly* 79.2 (2006): 288.

read carefully, can be understood anthropologically as well. This is certainly true of Paul's letters. For example, Paul's description of the resurrection body in 1 Cor 15—framed as a doctrinal clarification (1 Cor 15:12-15)—can also be read as physical anthropology, an attempt to describe the way in which human bodies evolve as a result of the process of life and death. When Paul writes to the Thessalonians saying, “This is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to control your body in holiness and honor, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God” (1 Thess 4:2-5, NRSV), he is doing a sort of social anthropology by explaining the *ekklēsia*'s norms and values as distinct from those of the Gentiles.

There are, of course, stark differences between Paul and the contemporary anthropologist. Though the influence of postmodernism has (to some degree) corrected its problematic roots, it is widely acknowledged that the field of anthropology emerged out of the Enlightenment ideal of objective knowledge and was cultivated as a tool to promote colonial interests.<sup>86</sup> Anthropologists now recognize that their descriptions of human behavior are not objective, ideologically neutral descriptions of reality. Robert Layton says, “Rather than assuming they are gifted with a uniquely Western skill for objectivity, anthropologists have had to learn to be reflexive, to ask themselves what past experiences they are relying upon to interpret an event and how their presence is subjective interpreted by those they are working with.”<sup>87</sup> Reading Paul with an anthropological lens therefore requires one to recognize that Paul's discourse is situated

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<sup>86</sup> Robert Layton, *An Introduction to Theory in Anthropology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 186, 192.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 191.

in a first-century Greco-Roman context and comes from a man with markedly different concerns than an eighteenth- or twenty-first-century anthropologist. These concerns will become apparent later.

Furthermore, Paul is quite different from most contemporary anthropologists because he and his readers share the same worldview. As such, he is under no pressure to control for his biases or confess his presuppositions. He does not engage in anything like “reflexive thinking”; instead, all of his letters are self-conscious attempts at persuasion and their contents must be read as such. Thus, when examining the anthropological content of Paul’s letters, one must also examine how that content is deployed to accomplish his rhetorical goals. This means that my study is not an exercise in Christian theological anthropology.<sup>88</sup> I am not interested in discerning whether Paul’s anthropological ideas are biologically accurate or theologically orthodox, or developing an ideology which can be applied to the modern world. My project is descriptive, and I will focus on how Paul utilizes anthropological language for his purposes.<sup>89</sup> Before I begin, however, I must demonstrate that my anthropological approach is actually appropriate for studying 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.

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<sup>88</sup> For a brief definition, see T. A. Noble, “Anthropology,” ed. Martin Davie et al., *New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2016).

<sup>89</sup> The phrase “anthropological language” resists definition, because anthropology is such a broad field of study. Nevertheless, in each place the phrase is invoked, I will attempt to demonstrate how the relevant language describes “biological characteristics or social phenomena” (see page 22).



## **Describing 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 as an Anthropological Reflection**

**Brief Excursus on 6:14.** There are a number of significant anthropological reflections within Paul’s letters. 1 Cor 15—Paul’s “treatise” on resurrection—is prominent among these, as well as Rom 1:18-3:20 and 7:7-25; the anthropological content of 2 Corinthians 4-5 has also been thoroughly examined. 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 is rarely counted among these reflections, likely because discussion surrounding the passage largely focuses on issues of authenticity and context. Yet it contains some significant anthropological terms and categories (*apistoi*; *molusmos*, “defilement”; *sarx*, “flesh”; *pneuma*, “spirit”; *hagiōsynē*, “holiness”) and other terms that, within the context of the passage and other Pauline letters, have anthropological implications (*dikaiosynē*, “righteousness”; *anomia*, “lawlessness”; *phōs*, “light”; *skotos*, “darkness”; *eidōloi*, “idols”; *hyioi*, “sons”; *thygaterai*, “daughters”; *katharizein*, “to cleanse/purify”). Additionally, the paraenetic thrust of the passage rides on anthropological concerns. A brief exegesis of 6:14 demonstrates this quite clearly.

The participle *heterozygountes* (*heterozygeō*) is a NT hapax. It comes from ἕτερος, “other than should be/different,” and ζύγος, “yoke” (the wooden crosspiece by which teams of animals drew the plow).<sup>90</sup> Its only use in the Septuagint—Lev 19:19b—prohibits breeding animals of different species: “You will not breed together animals of a different yoke” (τὰ κτήνη σου οὐ κατοχεύσεις ἕτεροζύγω). Michael Newton suggests that the logic behind the levitical command is that “the order of God’s creation be preserved,”

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<sup>90</sup> Rengstorf, “ἕτεροζυγέω,” *TDNT* 2:901. The literal meaning is something like “joining two different [animals] under the [same] yoke [to draw the plow].”

and the use of *heterozygeō* here suggests that similar logic is at play in 6:14-7:1.<sup>91</sup> The Corinthians (read *pistoi*) and *apistoi* represent two different “species,” two different types of human; perhaps there is a physical difference (i.e. the bodies of *apistoi* are in some way ontologically different from those of the Corinthians) or a social incompatibility (i.e. the *apistoi* conduct themselves improperly). In either case, the boundary which divides them has been disrupted.

**Symbolic Boundaries.** According to Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, symbolic boundaries are

conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality. Examining them allows us to capture the dynamic dimensions of social relations, as groups compete in the production, diffusion, and institutionalization of alternative systems and principles of classifications. Symbolic boundaries also separate people into groups and generate feelings of similarity and group membership (Epstein 1992, p. 232). They are an essential medium through which people acquire status and monopolize resources.<sup>92</sup>

The concept of symbolic boundaries originates with Durkheim and Max Weber, the fathers of modern sociology and prominent influences on twentieth-century anthropology. Durkheim argued that symbolic boundaries reinforce group solidarity. According to Durkheim, in both religious communities and societies at large, both the internal and external boundaries of the group “coincide with those delimiting the sacred

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<sup>91</sup> Michael Newton, *The Concept of Purity at Qumran and in the Letters of Paul* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 111.

<sup>92</sup> Michèle Lamont and Virág Molnár, “The Study of Boundaries in the Social Sciences,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 28 (2002): 168.

from the profane.”<sup>93</sup> Weber, on the other hand, suggested that symbolic boundaries contribute significantly to social inequality; humans compete with one another for resources, discriminating against other groups for various cultural reasons. In the process, “they form status groups whose superiority is defined in relation to other groups.”<sup>94</sup>

Durkheim and Weber help reveal how social groups are sustained by both external and internal symbolic boundaries. External boundaries determine who belongs to the group; internal boundaries establish hierarchy and structure within the group itself. How are these boundaries created? In her landmark monograph, *Purity and Danger*, Douglas explains that “rituals of purity create unity in experience” by demarcating symbolic boundaries and creating symbolic patterns. These patterns bring order to chaos: “Within these patterns disparate elements are related and disparate experience is given meaning.”<sup>95</sup> In sum, ritual is how symbolic boundaries are created and supported.<sup>96</sup>

Although boundary-making rituals do not *necessarily* involve purity concepts, Douglas’ emphasis on purity is particularly appropriate for this project because Paul describes the threat to the new boundaries established by the work of the Spirit as a “defilement of body and spirit” (7:1). Whether the Corinthians are separated from the

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<sup>93</sup> Michèle Lamont, Sabrina Pendergrass, and Mark Pachucki, “Symbolic Boundaries,” ed. James D. Wright, *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences* (Amsterdam: Elsevier, 2015), 850.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, 851.

<sup>95</sup> Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*, 2nd ed., Routledge Classics (New York: Routledge, 2001), 3.

<sup>96</sup> Meeks briefly mentions the concept of symbolic boundaries as they relate to the Pauline letters, though his discussion of them is isolated to “the issue of idolatry and rules for marriage and sex” in 1 Corinthians (Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 97). See also Kwanghyun Cho, Ernest van Eck, and Cas Wepener, “Paul’s Community Formation in 1 Thessalonians: The Creation of Symbolic Boundaries,” *HvTSt* 71.1 (2015): 1–7.

*apistoi* by physical or social differences, there is a crucial symbolic boundary between *pistoi* and *apistoi* that has somehow been disrupted by the two classes being brought together as one under a metaphorical *zygos* (yoke).<sup>97</sup> As a result, the Corinthians' holiness and purity is in jeopardy (7:1). The improper yoking of *pistoi* and *apistoi* has even has cosmological implications; in 6:15, Paul describes the arrangement as an chaotic, illogical "agreement" between Christ and Beliar. In sum, the command to cease being improperly yoked with unbelievers is nothing less than a statement about the anthropological (and thereby cosmological) incompatibility of the two parties. Paul's command to cease being improperly yoked with these *apistoi* can be understood as an attempt to reduce the "anthropological ambiguity" (defilement) produced by the two parties transgressing a symbolic boundary.<sup>98</sup>

As will be shown in Chapter 3, defilement is not always easily defined. Douglas writes, "Defilement is never an isolated event. It cannot occur except in view of a systematic ordering of ideas. . . . The only way in which pollution ideas make sense is in reference to a total structure of thought whose key-stone, boundaries, margins and internal lines are held in relation by rituals of separation."<sup>99</sup> I do not have the space to describe the total structure of thought in which Paul's understanding of defilement is contained. Nevertheless, one can trace the contours of this structure and elucidate some guiding principles for my reading of 2 Corinthians. My goal in this chapter will therefore be to lay out a basic framework of Paul's physical and social anthropology by briefly

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<sup>97</sup> The rituals associated with establishing this boundary will be discussed below and in chapter 3.

<sup>98</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 39–41.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

describing some of the most significant anthropological terms and categories in the Pauline corpus.

### **Pauline Physical and Social Anthropology: The Basics**

While tracing the development of Paul's reflections on the "inner human" from 1 Thessalonians to Romans, Betz proposes that

[Paul] became increasingly involved in ongoing controversies about the nature of the human being, to which he responded at various stages in various conversations with different addressees under differing intellectual conditions. Thus, put briefly, when his anthropology changed, it developed in the course of his struggle as he formulated a Christian alternative to the predominant religio-philosophical dualistic anthropology of body and soul.<sup>100</sup>

While it is true that there is a marked increase in the amount and complexity of Paul's anthropological statements from 1 Thessalonians to 1-2 Corinthians and Romans, it is problematic to assume that Paul's anthropological framework developed over the course of his ministry.<sup>101</sup> George van Kooten explains:

Although 1 Thess is indeed Paul's first preserved letter, this view neglects the fact that, prior to his visits to the cities of the Eastern Mediterranean, Paul had already spent about fourteen years in the Roman provinces of Syria and Cilicia, in cities such as Antioch and Tarsus, where he must have already tested the reception of his gospel by the Hellenized world.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Hans Dieter Betz, "The Concept of the 'Inner Human Being' (Ὁ Ἰσὼ Ἄνθρωπος) in the Anthropology of Paul," *NTS* 46.3 (2000): 316.

<sup>101</sup> There is no consensus on the dating of Paul's letters, though most scholars consider 1 Thessalonians to be Paul's first letter and Romans one of the last, if not *the* last. A rough timeline can be found here: Harold W. Attridge, ed., "Possible Chronology of the Pauline Letters," in *The HarperCollins Study Bible (Fully Revised and Updated): New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, Student Edition* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006), 1908.

<sup>102</sup> George H. van Kooten, *Paul's Anthropology in Context: The Image of God, Assimilation to God, and Tripartite Man in Ancient Judaism, Ancient Philosophy and*

The appearance of development in certain ideas over the course of Paul's ministry can also be explained based on Paul's relationships with the communities he corresponds with. Paul only spent approximately three weeks in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-10), making it highly unlikely he could teach his converts more complex ideas. By comparison, Paul spent at least a year and a half in Corinth (Acts 18:1-18, esp. v. 11) and other teachers, like Apollos, went there after he left (Acts 19:1). Paul himself did not establish any communities in Rome, but it is highly plausible that Christ-believers had a notable presence in the city as early as 50 C.E., perhaps eight years prior to the writing of Paul's letter to the Romans.<sup>103</sup> And it is also clear that 1-2 Corinthians and Romans each address rhetorical situations far more complex than that of 1 Thessalonians.<sup>104</sup> The combined weight of these arguments rules out a chronological approach.

The following survey draws on the full body of Paul's undisputed letters without giving credence to a timeline of Paul's letters. This broad, thematic approach means that many of the specific reasons for Paul's varied use of terms across his letters will not be

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*Early Christianity*, Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament 232 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 296.

<sup>103</sup> Leander E. Keck, "The Letter of Paul to the Romans," in *The HarperCollins Study Bible (Fully Revised and Updated): New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, Student Edition*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006), 1909.

<sup>104</sup> Victor Paul Furnish, "The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians," in *The HarperCollins Study Bible (Fully Revised and Updated): New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, Student Edition*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006), 1932–33; John T. Fitzgerald, "The Second Letter of Paul to the Corinthians," in *The HarperCollins Study Bible (Fully Revised and Updated): New Revised Standard Version with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, Student Edition*, ed. Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006), 1958; Keck, "The Letter of Paul to the Romans," 1910.

addressed. The terms examined here have been selected in conjunction with those in Robert Jewett's *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, a foundational work in the study of Pauline anthropology. Three terms have been omitted from Jewett's catalogue: *nous*, *anthrōpos esō*, and *anthrōpos exō*.<sup>105</sup>

**The Body (*Sōma*).** Paul refers to human bodies as *sōmata* (sing. *sōma*). The term is most often used “to depict the observable human body.”<sup>106</sup> The well-known statement in Romans 12:1, though, characterizes Paul's non-technical use of the term: “I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship” (NRSV). To clarify, Paul rarely refers to the *sōma* in a neutral context; it carries deep anthropological and cosmological significance for him, and is not merely a technical term for the physical body. It is often characterized as the locus of divine activity (e.g. Rom 8:11; 2 Cor 4:10) and even as the temple of God himself (1 Cor 6:18-20). Paul writes that believers must all “must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil” (2 Cor 5:10, NRSV). And he is adamant that resurrected existence is somatic existence (1 Cor 15:35-49). Indeed, the *sōma* and its place amidst the cosmos is so central to Paul's worldview that Rudolph Bultmann considered it “the most important Pauline anthropological term.”<sup>107</sup> As I will

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<sup>105</sup> *Nous* does not appear in 2 Corinthians, and *anthrōpos esō* and *exō* will be covered in chapter 3.

<sup>106</sup> Robert Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms: A Study of Their Use in Conflict Settings* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1971), 456.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

note later, the *pneuma* is more significant to Paul than the *sōma*; nevertheless, the *sōma* as the physical body is a crucial element in his anthropological framework.

*Sōma* language was often used in Greco-Roman rhetoric to describe the proper order and function of social groups such as the state.<sup>108</sup> Similarly, Paul also uses somatic language when describing the *ekklēsia*, calling it the *sōma* of Christ (e.g. 1 Cor 12:12-30; Rom 12:4-8). The temple metaphor applied to the individual *sōmata* of believers also applies to the *ekklēsia* as a collective (1 Cor 3:16-17). Paul's emphasis on "giving the greater honor to the inferior member" of the communal *sōma* (1 Cor 12:24), however, runs counter to the more common use of somatic language by Greco-Roman rhetoricians to reinforce "benevolent patriarchalism" within the social body.<sup>109</sup>

Where Paul's use of somatic language differs most strongly from that of his contemporaries, however, is in its emphasis on the literal participation of Christ-believers in Christ's *sōma*.<sup>110</sup> Baptism and the *kyriakon deipnon* (Lord's supper) are both described as somehow allowing Christ-believers to mystically become part of Christ's body (e.g. Rom 6:3-5; 1 Cor 10:16). This is why, for example, Paul tells the Corinthians that for a man to have sex with a prostitute is equivalent to Christ himself doing so (1 Cor 6:15-16); bodies with God's *pneuma* within them are literally "members of Christ" and "one spirit" with God.<sup>111</sup> The precise details of how this participation works are absent from Paul's

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<sup>108</sup> Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 38–46.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 44.

<sup>110</sup> Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 89.

<sup>111</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 175–79.



letters.<sup>112</sup> Regardless, it seems clear that in Paul’s worldview, the cosmic renewal that was taking place at the dawn of the new age was playing out in the bodies—both individual and social—of Christ-believers.

**The Flesh (*Sarx*).** Greco-Roman philosophers and medical doctors rarely described the *sarx* (flesh) in positive terms. On the hierarchy of substances, it occupied a low stratum, often characterized as “heavy” or “earthy,” which was—at least to some degree—part of the reason many philosophers believed that the soul left the body at death.<sup>113</sup> Its place on the elemental hierarchy corresponded to its philosophical depiction; Epictetus, for example, described it as the source of unwanted desires, and the Orphics and Plato described the fleshly body as a “prison-house” which one’s soul happily escaped at death.<sup>114</sup> There are similar denigrations of the flesh in Qumranic literature and in Philo.<sup>115</sup> Medical doctors, on the other hand, often used *sarx* “to refer to muscle or any

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<sup>112</sup> See Michael J. Gorman, *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul’s Narrative Soteriology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009); Michael Patrick Barber and John A. Kincaid, “Cultic Theosis in Paul and Second Temple Judaism,” *Journal for the Study of Paul and His Letters* 5.2 (2015): 237–56; John A. Kincaid and Michael Patrick Barber, “‘Conformed to the Image of His Son’: Participation in Christ as Divine Sonship in Romans 8,” *Letter & Spirit* 10 (2015): 35–64.

<sup>113</sup> By contrast, substances like *pneuma* were described as “light” and “airy,” even “fiery.” See Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 115–17; T. M. Robinson, “The Defining Features of Mind-Body Dualism in the Writings of Plato,” in *Psyche and Soma: Physicians and Metaphysicians on the Mind-Body Problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment*, ed. John P. Wright and Paul Potter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 43.

<sup>114</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 117.

<sup>115</sup> Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 93.

fleshy part of the anatomy . . . as opposed to the bones, blood, humors, and internal organs.”<sup>116</sup>

Paul’s attitude toward the *sarx* displays similarities with both of these perspectives. As to the philosophical perspective, he says (like Epictetus) that “nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh” (Rom 7:18) and that the “works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these” (Gal 5:19-21a, NRSV); in 2 Corinthians, Paul often denigrates things which take place *kata sarka*, “according to the flesh” (e.g. 1:17; 5:16; 10:2, 3; 11:18). He also says that “flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Cor 15:50)—that is, resurrected bodies cannot be made of flesh and blood—because *sarx* (and *aima*, blood) are lower, perishable forms of matter (1 Cor 15:42-56).<sup>117</sup> As to the medical perspective, Paul sometimes uses *sarx* as a synonym for *sōma* (e.g. 1 Cor 6:16; 15:39; 2 Cor 4:11; 7:5; 10:3), which is consistent with the notion of flesh in traditional Jewish anthropology, and it is possible that his *skolops tei sarki* (thorn in the flesh; 2 Cor 12:7) was some sort of physical ailment.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>116</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 171.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

<sup>118</sup> On the interchangeability of “flesh” and “body” in Jewish anthropology, see Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 119. Though he disagrees with those who argue that the *skolops tei sarki* is a physical ailment, David I. Yoon offers a good summary of this view (David I. Yoon, “Paul’s Thorn and His Gnosis: Epistemic Considerations,” in *Paul and Gnosis*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and David I. Yoon [Leiden: Brill, 2016], 23–25).

In addition to these more-or-less standard perspectives on the *sarx*, Paul adds a cosmological element which—although comparable with his Jewish contemporaries at Qumran—makes his view unique from his Hellenistic contemporaries.<sup>119</sup>

In spite of the way Paul can sometimes speak of *sarx* as an apparently neutral agent or substance (see Rom. 9:3-5; 2 Cor. 4:11; Gal. 2:20), the overwhelming bulk of his references to *sarx* place it in the category of “this world” in its opposition to the plan of God. . . . It is [his] apocalyptic dualism and demonizing of *sarx* that makes Paul’s world view so different from that of the upper-class ideology of the Greco-Roman Mediterranean. Paul’s mythological-cosmological notion of flesh as a corrupt element, that element of the cosmos in opposition to God and the Spirit, assumes an agency for *sarx* that would have appeared odd and superstitious to medical writers.<sup>120</sup>

This cosmological element appears across Paul’s letters. He says, for example, that “what the flesh desires is opposed to the Spirit, and what the Spirit desires is opposed to the flesh” (Gal 5:17, NRSV). Paul describes the mind set on the flesh as hostile to God, incapable of submitting to his law (Rom 8:7). However, the *sarx* can be overpowered by God’s Spirit, which makes it possible for people to resist the desires of the *sarx*. Furthermore, at the *eschaton*, the bodies of Christ-believers will shed the *sarx* (along with the other, lower forms of matter that comprise the *sōma*) “and be left with the purer, transformed part of the pneuma. Christians will have bodies . . . composed entirely of pneumatic substance.”<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> On the relationship between Paul’s concept of “flesh” and that which has been found at Qumran, see David Flusser, “The ‘Flesh-Spirit’ Dualism in the Qumran Scrolls and the New Testament,” in *Judaism of the Second Temple Period: Qumran and Apocalypticism*, trans. Azzan Yadin, vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007), 283–92; Benjamin Wold, “‘Flesh’ and ‘Spirit’ in Qumran Sapiential Literature as the Background to the Use in Pauline Epistles,” *ZNW* 106.2 (2015): 262–79.

<sup>120</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 172.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

**The Spirit (*Pneuma*).** The *pneuma* is the most important element in Paul's anthropological framework. As mentioned above, God's *pneuma* makes it possible for Christ-believers to resist the desires of the *sarx*, and resurrected bodies will be made entirely of *pneuma*. These two points expose an important feature of Pauline anthropology: Paul uses *pneuma* language both in reference to an ontologically distinct divine entity—God's *pneuma*—and to a type of material that is part of the physical world and plays a role in the makeup of human bodies.

Jewett argues that Paul draws a distinction between God's *pneuma* and the *pneuma* "apportioned into man's possession at baptism."<sup>122</sup> It is true that Paul sometimes makes reference to a personal *pneuma*—Jewett calls it the *pneuma tou anthrōpou*, "the human spirit"—that he and others possess (e.g. Rom 1:9; Gal 6:18; Phil 4:23; Philem 25), one which must be kept pure in anticipation of the *Parousia* (1 Thess 5:23). Paul also explicitly affirms that the *pneuma* received at baptism and the *pneuma tou anthrōpou* are two different spirits (Rom 8:16). But Paul also says that Christ-believers are given a *pneumatōs agiou*, "holy spirit" (Rom 5:5) and, in a passage which parallels the baptismal language in Romans, identifies the *pneuma* received in baptism as the *pneuma* of God's son (Gal 4:6). He also explicitly affirms that the apportioned *pneuma* is God's: "But it is God who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us, by putting his seal on us and giving us his Spirit in our hearts as a first installment" (2 Cor 1:21-22, NRSV).

Therefore, while the *pneuma tou anthrōpou* is most accurately understood in light of Hellenistic traditions which describe the *psychē* (soul) as composed of some type of *pneuma* (i.e. the *pneuma tou anthrōpou* is closely associated with personhood/"self"

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<sup>122</sup> Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, 451.

concepts), God's *pneuma*—hereon referred to as the Spirit—is the *pneuma* given to Christ-believers at baptism.<sup>123</sup> It dwells within their bodies and begins a process of physical transformation that is completed at the *eschaton* (e.g. 2 Cor 3:17-18; Phil 1:6; Rom 8:11; 1 Cor 15:50-55). It also enables Christ-believers to practice the unique social ethics of the *ekklēsia*, which distinguish them from their pagan neighbors (e.g. Gal 5:18-6:10; Phil 2:1-4; 1 Thess 5:1-8). Finally, the *pneuma* is intimately involved in baptism and the Lord's supper, the two primary boundary-making rituals of the *ekklēsia*.<sup>124</sup> Beyond its mystical function, by which Christ-believers were thought to be incorporated into Christ's *sōma*, baptism also served to establish external symbolic boundaries.

By making the cleansing rite [i.e. baptism] alone bear the whole function of initiation, and by making initiation the decisive point of entry into an exclusive community, the Christian groups created something new. For them the bath becomes a permanent threshold between the “clean” group and the “dirty” world, between those who have been initiated and everyone who has not.<sup>125</sup>

The Lord's supper also had a dual function, reinforcing both internal and external symbolic boundaries.

The *communitas* experienced in baptism, in which divisions of role and status are replaced by the unity of brothers and sisters in the new human, ought to be visible, in Paul's intention, in the Supper. . . . Paul uses the symbolism of the Supper ritual not only to enhance the internal coherence, unity, and equality of the Christian group, but also to protect its boundaries vis-à-vis other kinds of cultic association.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> On the connection between the *psychē* and *pneuma*, see Heinrich von Staden, “Body, Soul, and Nerves: Epicurus, Herophilus, Erasistratus, the Stoics, and Galen,” in *Psyche and Soma: Physicians and Metaphysicians on the Mind-Body Problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment*, ed. John P. Wright and Paul Potter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 79–116.

<sup>124</sup> See Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 150–63.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 153.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 159–60.

It thus becomes apparent that *pneuma* is a versatile term and is central to the most important elements of Paul's anthropology.

**The Soul (*Psychē*).** *Psychē* is perhaps the most complicated of all the terms explored here. In 1 Cor 15, Paul contrasts the *sōma psychikon* (physical/psychic body) with the *sōma pneumatikon* (spiritual/pneumatic body); the *sōma psychikon* is the flesh-and-blood body that cannot inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor 15:50). Throughout 1 Corinthians, *psychē*/psychic experience is contrasted with *pneuma*/pneumatic experience (1 Cor 2:14), to the extent that—given the *sarx/pneuma* dichotomy in other letters—*psychē* seems to be synonymous with *sarx*.<sup>127</sup> But elsewhere, the term is more fluid. The line between *psychē* as “soul” and *psychē* as “life” (i.e. existence) is sometimes blurry (e.g. Rom 11:3; 16:4; Phil 2:30). Furthermore, in 1 Thess 5:23, Paul speaks of the *psychē* as one of three components that make up the entirety of a human being (*pneuma*, *psychē*, and *sōma*), and in Phil 1:27, he uses *psychē* language when expressing his desire for church unity: “Live your life such that it is worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that—whether I come and see you or, being absent, I hear about you—you stand in one spirit, struggling along with one another with one *psychē* in the faith of the gospel.”<sup>128</sup>

Paul's use of *psychē* language is further complicated by the fact that Paul does not adopt the most popular connotations of *psychē* used by his Greco-Roman and Jewish contemporaries. The Hippocratic notion of the *psychē* as something which leaves the

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<sup>127</sup> Jewett explains that in 1 Corinthians, “Paul uses this term against the Gnostics in such a way as to make it plain that he could not accept the full [dualistic] implications of their use of the word” (Jewett, *Paul's Anthropological Terms*, 449).

<sup>128</sup> Μόνον ἀξίως τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τοῦ Χριστοῦ πολιτεύεσθε, ἵνα εἴτε ἐλθὼν καὶ ἰδὼν ὑμᾶς εἴτε ἀπὼν ἀκούω τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν, ὅτι στήκετε ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι, μιᾷ ψυχῇ συναθροῦντες τῇ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου.

body at death is wholly absent,<sup>129</sup> and there are no hints of Plato’s tripartite soul.<sup>130</sup> And even though the *pneuma tou anthrōpou* bears similarities with the *psychē* as “soul,” Paul “avoids the interchangeability between πνεῦμα and ψυχή which was the mark of the Rabbinic usage.”<sup>131</sup>

Jewett concludes that Paul most often uses *psychē* in three ways: “It can bear the sense of one’s earthly life as it is publically observable in behavior; the sense of the individual’s earthly life which can be lost in death; or the sense of the individual person.”<sup>132</sup> While these three uses are present, they clearly do not provide a comprehensive framework for describing the *psychē*. Since Paul does not use the term frequently in 2 Corinthians (only in 1:23 and 12:15), it is not necessary for my purposes to further clarify the ambiguities described above.<sup>133</sup>

**Other Terms (*Kardia, Nous, Syneidēsis*).** In 2 Corinthians, the *kardia* (heart) is described as the place where the Spirit dwells (1:22; cf. Gal 4:6) and is thereby the focal point of the process of divine transformation that takes place because of the Spirit (3:17-18). Paul’s *kardia* is evidence of his apostolic integrity because the Corinthians have been “inscribed” there by the Spirit (3:3). The *kardia* is the locus of divine activity in other letters as well (Rom 5:5). But the *kardia* is also “the source of will, emotion, thoughts

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<sup>129</sup> See Beate Gundert, “Soma and Psyche in Hippocratic Medicine,” in *Psyche and Soma: Physicians and Metaphysicians on the Mind-Body Problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment*, ed. John P. Wright and Paul Potter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 18.

<sup>130</sup> See Robinson, “The Defining Features of Mind-Body Dualism,” 44–45.

<sup>131</sup> Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 449.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 448.

<sup>133</sup> For more, see van Kooten, *Paul’s Anthropology in Context*, 298–302.

and affections” (Rom 1:21; 9:2; 1 Cor 4:5; 2 Cor 2:4; Phil 1:7).<sup>134</sup> This is wholly in line with Jewish tradition, which “[locates] the epicentre [sic] of personhood/consciousness with the ‘heart’.”<sup>135</sup> At times, Paul uses *kardia* as a synonym for *nous* (mind). This is particularly true of 2 Corinthians, where *nous* language is noticeably absent.<sup>136</sup>

On the *syneidēsis* (conscience), Dale Martin writes, “[*Syneidēsis*] is a knowledge within the self of past action performed by the subject, a conviction of past misdeeds; and as such it is portrayed as a pain, a disease, or an agent that punishes and inflicts pain.”<sup>137</sup> Several scholars have thus suggested that translating *syneidēsis* as “conscience” is misleading.<sup>138</sup> Martin himself suggests that “Paul . . . has no firm theory of syneidesis, anymore than he has a consistent theory of other aspects of the human self, like *kardia* (heart), *pneuma* (spirit), or *psychē* (soul).”<sup>139</sup> Both of these arguments are problematic. Jewett argues that Paul ascribes a dual function to the *syneidēsis*, whereby it is both “the painful knowledge of transgression which is to be avoided at all costs” and “the autonomous agent which knows and mark’s one’s own transgressions.”<sup>140</sup> Furthermore,

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<sup>134</sup> Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 448.

<sup>135</sup> Frederick S. Tappenden, “Embodiment, Folk Dualism, and the Convergence of Cosmology and Anthropology in Paul’s Resurrection Ideals,” *BibInt* 23 (2015): 444.

<sup>136</sup> *Noēma*, “thought,” is used, though never in a positive context (3:14; 4:4; 10:5; 11:3).

<sup>137</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 180.

<sup>138</sup> *Ibid.* See also C. A. Pierce, *Conscience in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1955), 50, and Richard A. Horsley, “Consciousness and Freedom among the Corinthians: 1 Corinthians 8-10,” *CBQ* 40 (1978): 586.

<sup>139</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 181.

<sup>140</sup> Jewett, *Paul’s Anthropological Terms*, 459.



there are other descriptions of the *syneidēsis* which do not fit either of Jewett's categories and instead—contrary to both of the above claims—are consistent with each other and with the modern notion of conscience.<sup>141</sup> The *syneidēsis* bears witness to the law written on Gentile hearts (Rom 2:15); actively confirms truth (Rom 9:1); gives testimony (2 Cor 1:12); and even serves as a judge of the character of others (2 Cor 4:2; 5:11). The evaluative qualities are most relevant for my study, even though the *syneidēsis* will not feature prominently.

## Conclusions

The survey above reveals a few general principles which will guide me in my approach to 2 Cor 6:14-7:1. First, any study of Pauline anthropology cannot isolate one term or concept from the rest of Paul's anthropological framework. His understanding of the human person is characterized by interdependence; for example, God's *pneuma* dwells in the *kardia* and disempowers the *sarx*, which is related to the *psychē*—and all of these are part of the *sōma*. This tendency toward interrelation in Paul's anthropology means, secondly, that one should expect to see some overlap in Paul's use of various terms. One term may be used as a synonym for another, or perhaps evoke the significance of a concept not explicitly stated.

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<sup>141</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary defines "conscience" as "the internal acknowledgement or recognition of the moral quality of one's motives and actions; the sense of right and wrong as regards things for which one is responsible; the faculty or principle which judges the moral quality of one's actions or motives." "Conscience, N.," *OED Online* (Oxford University Press, September 2011), <http://www.oed.com.proxy.missouristate.edu/view/Entry/39460?rskey=tVbU7E&result=1>.

This leads to the third principle: even though many of these terms and concepts are deeply embedded in Paul’s worldview, their full significance in context may not always be readily apparent. Unpacking the anthropological content of the chapters leading up to 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 will require me to not only identify some “veiled” concepts but also to explain how these concepts amplify one another as Paul’s argument builds. This means—as the fourth and final principle—that Paul’s rhetorical skill cannot be underestimated. Not only is he quite capable of and comfortable with manipulating certain terms and ideas in order to prove a particular point, but he is also careful to build his case slowly, even subtly at times, and it is the interpreter’s job to identify and clarify these subtleties.

In the next chapter, I will apply these principles to 2 Corinthians. My exposition of the opening six chapters of the letter will draw out some meaningful anthropological themes as they relate to Paul’s argument. Along the way, I will note some passages which present their own interpretive challenges.<sup>142</sup> Although I will not be able to address these passages at length, my focus on their anthropological content and their rhetorical function will clarify some of the interpretive issues associated with them and thereby establish how they relate to 2 Cor 6:14-7:1.

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<sup>142</sup> 3:7-18; 4:7-12; 4:16-5:10.

## CHAPTER 3: EXEGESIS

The chapters prior to 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 make ample use of many of the anthropological concepts I have explored thus far. A contextual analysis of 6:14-7:1 shows that it is the culmination of Paul's first argument against his rivals.<sup>143</sup> This argument is characterized by anthropological rhetoric which emphasizes the symbolic boundary which separates true and false ministers of the gospel.

### **Contextual Analysis: 2 Cor 1:3-6:13**

When Paul begins his defense of his ministry, he starts with a surprising theme: his own afflictions. He starts by telling the Corinthians, "Just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ" (1:5, NRSV). How is the suffering of Christ made abundant for Paul and his coworkers? By both his own embodied experiences of suffering and his participation in Christ's suffering made possible by the work of the Spirit within him (4:8-10; cf. 1 Cor 6:17, 19; 12:13). Because the Corinthians are united with Christ in the same way, Paul can also say, "If we are afflicted, it is for your encouragement and salvation; if we are encouraged, it is for your encouragement, which enables you to endure the same sufferings that we suffer. Our

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<sup>143</sup> Since the letter's integrity is contested, there can be little agreement on its rhetorical structure, and detailed exploration is beyond the scope here. For my purposes, I will assume that 6:14-7:1 is part of the *probatio* (arguments), which covers 3:1-12:18. The first argument against Paul's rivals runs concurrently with Paul's argument for his apostolic legitimacy (1:3-7:16). Paul then addresses his handling of the Jerusalem collection (8:1-9:15), and then the second argument against Paul's rivals—which, again, runs concurrently with an argument for his legitimacy—is in 10:1-12:17. The *peroratio* (application of the arguments) covers 12:19-13:10.

hope for you is firm, for we know that as you share in the sufferings, you also share in the encouragement” (1:6-7, NAB).<sup>144</sup>

This reciprocal sharing of experience is a crucial feature of the collective *sōma* to which Paul and the Corinthians belong. God has established them both *en Christos*, “in Christ” (1:21), which is why Paul can call God as a witness against him to testify as to why his travel plans changed (1:23). It is also why the Corinthians should recognize his sincerity (2:17); Paul does not make his plans *kata sarka*, “according to the flesh” (1:17) because he is in Christ and is not governed by fleshly standards.

Paul repeatedly invokes the *en Christos* formula in the opening stages of the letter (1:20, 21; 2:10, 14, 17). Though he does not explicitly identify it as such, the formula is somatic language. Believers are *en Christos* insofar as their individual bodies have become united with Christ’s *sōma* through baptism and they participate in Christ’s *sōma* through the Lord’s supper. Furthermore, because the *ekklēsia* as a whole is Christ’s *sōma*, they are *en Christos* insofar as they belong to the community and participate in communal worship.

All of these features are made possible by the Spirit God has placed in their hearts as an *arrabōn*, “first installment” (1:22; cf. 1 Cor 12:13), of their eventual transformation. The use of this formula in 2:17, though, is where Paul first introduces the anthropological contrast between himself and his opponents: “For we are not peddlers of God’s word like so many; but *in Christ* we speak as persons of sincerity, as persons sent from God and

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<sup>144</sup> The NRSV translates *παράκλησις* (encouragement) as “consolation.” The NAB therefore seems more appropriate, given that Paul is neither consoling the Corinthians nor being consoled; indeed, quite the opposite!

standing in his presence” (NRSV). I must emphasize, therefore, that the *en Christos* formula represents a symbolic boundary.

The Christian groups were exclusive and totalistic in a way that no club nor even any pagan cultic association was. Although . . . the boundaries of the Pauline groups were somewhat more open than those of some other early Christian circles, to be “baptized into Christ Jesus” nevertheless signaled for Pauline converts an extraordinarily thoroughgoing resocialization, in which the sect was intended to become virtually the primary group for its members, supplanting all other loyalties.<sup>145</sup>

Having just described himself as “the aroma of Christ to God among the ones being saved and the perishing ones” (2:15), Paul asks a rhetorical question: Who is qualified to spread “the fragrance that comes from knowing him” (2:14, 16)? His initial response is that while his own apostolic credentials stem from the fact that he is *en Christos*, the so-called “peddlers of God’s word” lack such sincerity because they are not incorporated into Christ’s *sōma*. Despite this, the Corinthians have transgressed this boundary by giving their loyalty to the peddlers of God’s word. In order to regain their loyalty, Paul will build his case for his own apostolic legitimacy by further describing the features of this symbolic boundary with anthropological language.

In fact, he continues to do so in chapter 3. The rival apostles brought along written letters of recommendation as proof of their authority (3:1).<sup>146</sup> But Paul’s letters are the Corinthians themselves, and they are “written” by the Spirit on his and his coworkers’ hearts (3:2-3). Presumably, the rivals are not capable of receiving such (superior) letters, since they have not received the Spirit as an *arrabōn*. Similarly, as

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<sup>145</sup> Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 78–79.

<sup>146</sup> Jerry L. Sumney, *Identifying Paul’s Opponents: The Question of Method in 2 Corinthians*, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 40 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 130.

ministers of the new covenant of the Spirit (3:6), Paul and his coworkers are alive and being given life, but those who bear letters are being killed. This clarifies Paul’s earlier statement about being Christ’s aroma “among the ones being saved and the perishing ones” (2:15). Those who are *en Christos* are the ones being saved, while those who are outside of Christ are the ones who are perishing. The latter category is narrowed by 3:6 to ministers of the covenant of letters: “[God] has made us [i.e. Paul and his coworkers] competent to be ministers of a new covenant, not of letter but of spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life” (NRSV). Because Paul has been contrasting his own ministry with that of his rivals, one can assume that they are the ministers of this covenant of letters; since the letter kills, Paul’s rivals in Corinth are “the perishing ones,” being killed by their practice of self-commendation through letters.

Paul then moves into a discourse about the veiled nature of the Mosaic covenant in which he makes three further claims about his opponents.<sup>147</sup> First, Paul connects his opponents’ letters of recommendation with the “ministry of death, carved in letters on stone” (3:7) by using *graphō* cognates in 3:2-3 and 3:6-7 and *lithos* cognates in 3:3 and 3:7.<sup>148</sup> In this way, Paul suggests these ministers of letters are not only being killed

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<sup>147</sup> As Witherington explains, this section “has been subject to all sorts of hermeneutical gerrymandering” (Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 378–79). I will not speculate on the meaning of this passage as it relates to Paul’s view of the Mosaic law.

<sup>148</sup> ἡ ἐπιστολὴ ἡμῶν ὑμεῖς ἐστε, **ἐγγεγραμμένη** ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ἡμῶν, γινωσκομένη καὶ ἀναγινωσκομένη ὑπὸ πάντων ἀνθρώπων· φανερούμενοι ὅτι ἐστὲ ἐπιστολὴ Χριστοῦ διακονηθεῖσα ὑφ’ ἡμῶν, **ἐγγεγραμμένη** οὐ μέλανι ἀλλὰ πνεύματι θεοῦ ζῶντος, οὐκ ἐν πλαξίν **λιθίναις** ἀλλ’ ἐν πλαξίν καρδίαις σαρκίνας. . . . ὃς καὶ ἰκάνωσεν ἡμᾶς διακόνους καινῆς διαθήκης, οὐ **γράμματος** ἀλλὰ πνεύματος, τὸ γὰρ **γράμμα** ἀποκτένει, τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖ. Εἰ δὲ ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου ἐν **γράμμασιν** ἐντετυπωμένη **λίθοις** ἐγενήθη ἐν δόξῃ, ὥστε μὴ δύνασθαι ἀτενίσαι τοὺς υἱοὺς Ἰσραὴλ εἰς τὸ πρόσωπον Μωϋσέως διὰ τὴν δόξαν τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ τὴν καταργουμένην.

*themselves*, but they are also killing others by their ministry. Second, having made this connection, Paul’s midrash on Moses’ veil emphasizes that his opponents have been intentionally deceptive by hiding the fact that they are not true ministers of the covenant of the Spirit. In the same way that Moses veiled his face “to keep the people of Israel from gazing at the end of the glory that was being set aside” (3:12, NRSV), these false apostles have hidden the true nature of their ministry by relying on fleshly means of self-commendation instead of the Spirit as a witness of their credentials.<sup>149</sup> Third, the last two verses return to the earlier distinction made based on the Spirit. Paul writes, “Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (3:17), and that Spirit is fulfilling its purpose as an *arrabōn* by transforming those who bear it into the image of the glory of God (i.e. Christ; cf. 4:4) “from one degree of glory to another” (3:18, NRSV). Freedom, apostolic sincerity, and eschatological transformation are only available to those who possess the Spirit, which excludes Paul’s opponents from legitimate apostleship.

In chapter 4, Paul returns to speaking about the perishing ones: “In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers so they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (4:4).<sup>150</sup> This light—the “knowledge of the glory of God” (4:6)—is a “treasure” which Paul and his coworkers carry in “earthy vessels” (4:7). Just like thin, frail earthenware vessels not meant for permanent storage,<sup>151</sup> their bodies are not the containers one might expect to carry this treasure, especially they are so often

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<sup>149</sup> See Mark Douglas Given, *Paul’s True Rhetoric: Ambiguity, Cunning, and Deception in Greece and Rome*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001), 123.

<sup>150</sup> See pages 61-62.

<sup>151</sup> Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 386–87.

in danger of breaking (4:8-9). But Paul explains that he and his coworkers, afflicted and perplexed as they are, have been given this treasure in bodies of mortal flesh “so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us” (4:7, NRSV). He resists the urge to commend his ministry through standard means of commendation; instead, through Christ (διὰ Ἰησοῦν, 4:11) they are handed over (παραδιδόμεθα) to death so that Christ’s life may be made manifest in their very bodies (4:10-11).<sup>152</sup> But because Paul’s opponents have not received the Spirit, they are blind to this treasure: “They look only at transient appearances, the wasting away of Paul’s outer nature; they do not see the inner daily renewal, nor do they fix their gaze on invisible eternal realities.”<sup>153</sup>

Paul’s statement about the death of Christ at work in his body is supplemented by his earlier self-description as the “aroma of Christ to God” (2:15). Together, these two anthropological claims indicate that Paul believes his own body is a vehicle of the divine presence, and that his suffering is actually what qualifies him for his apostolic ministry. Duff says “the saving activity of God, described as ‘the dying of Jesus,’ is manifested in the apostle’s body. . . . Paul’s afflictions manifest the salvation even just as Jesus’ suffering and death demonstrate the power of God (cf. 1 Cor. 1:18 ff.).”<sup>154</sup> And all of this

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<sup>152</sup> This could contradict the earlier claim that as ministers of the covenant of the Spirit, Paul and his coworkers are alive and being given life. However, it seems that to be “handed over to death” is a specific reference to Paul’s experiences of suffering, not a statement about Paul’s anthropological status. His possession of the Spirit ensures that he is being given life *even as* his body approaches death. See pages 52-53.

<sup>153</sup> Gillman, “A Thematic Comparison,” 454.

<sup>154</sup> Duff, “The Mind of the Redactor,” 175. See also Duff, “Transformed ‘from Glory to Glory,’” 776–79.



is for the sake of the Corinthians: “Therefore, death is at work in us, but life in you” (4:12).

The life which the Corinthians are receiving has come to them as a result of the Spirit of God, who is “the one who raised the Lord Jesus” (4:14) and who will raise them as well along with Paul and his entourage. His mention of the eschatological promise of resurrection prompts a flourish in 4:16-5:10 which has been the subject of extensive scholarly analysis. Paul speaks of two “humans” (*anthrōpoi*), an outer and an inner; while the outer human is being destroyed (*διαφθείρεται*), the inner human “is being renewed from day to day” (4:16). Various proposals have sought to clarify Paul’s meaning here. Troels Engberg-Pedersen argues that the outer human is Paul’s physical body, while the inner human “[refers] to the bodily *pneuma* as present within Paul’s physical body or to Paul’s body as ‘pneumatized.’”<sup>155</sup> Betz writes, “The concepts of ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ correspond to the contradictions of human life in this world as exemplified by the ‘antitheses’. In other words, the ‘outer’ and ‘inner’ human being is not a metaphor, but something ‘real’, although only the ‘outer’ is visible, the ‘inner’ is invisible.”<sup>156</sup> Randar Tasmuth contends that the outer human “is . . . a metaphor for the physical body” while the inner human “is neither body nor soul . . . [it] is by nature close to, but not identical to the spiritual (*πνευματικός*) person.”<sup>157</sup> While these proposals are all more or less

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<sup>155</sup> Troels Engberg-Pedersen, “The Material Spirit: Cosmology and Ethics in Paul,” *NTS* 55 (2009): 188.

<sup>156</sup> Betz, “The Concept of the ‘Inner Human Being,’” 334.

<sup>157</sup> Randar Tasmuth, “Pauline Anthropology: On the Inner Human Being and the Human ‘I,’” *Ususteaduslik Ajakiri* 67.2 (2014): 51, 63.

accurate, they lack the clarity necessary to describe the *anthrōpos exō* and *esō* as they are related to Paul's argument.

Frederick S. Tappenden's category of "folk dualism" seems a helpful tool here. "By *folk dualism*," Tappenden explains, "I mean notions of dualism that are intuitive and not necessarily wrapped up—or worked-out—in any formal, systematic way. To say these notions are intuitive is to insist they emerge as a result of embodied human existence in the world (including both cognitive processing and somatic functioning)."<sup>158</sup> A growing body of literature suggests that "all human beings have a proclivity toward dualistic modes of thought that . . . cause certain capacities (such as thought, emotion, personhood, physiology, etc.) to cluster together and gravitate toward certain poles (such as in/out, mind/body, etc.)."<sup>159</sup> This is even true for Paul's ancient cultural context. Tappenden shows that in "classical Hebraic culture," person-concepts are more closely connected with the somatic interior (i.e. the heart, throat, breath, blood, etc.) than the exterior.<sup>160</sup> Furthermore, many of Paul's Greek philosophical predecessors articulated some form of dualism, including Homer, the Orphics, Socrates, Plato, and the Stoics.<sup>161</sup> One should therefore fully expect Paul, a participant in both Jewish and Hellenistic culture, to display some sort of folk dualism.

Paul's folk dualism is evident in his descriptions of the *anthrōpos exō* and *esō* and the earthly and heavenly dwellings (2 Cor 4:16-5:10). I have shown that Paul has a

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<sup>158</sup> Tappenden, "Embodiment," 435.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, 434–35.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 444.

<sup>161</sup> Gundert, "Soma and Psyche," 13; Robinson, "The Defining Features of Mind-Body Dualism," 37-38, 40-42; von Staden, "Body, Soul, and Nerves," 96.

wholistic view of the human *sōma*, but here, Paul's *anthrōpos exō* and *esō* are simultaneously undergoing opposite processes. Furthermore, both the earthly and heavenly dwellings are described as sets of clothes that can be put on and taken off.<sup>162</sup>

Tasmuth explains:

Paul starts with 2 Cor 5:1: “For we know that if (ἐάν) our earthly *house* (οἰκία) of this tent (σκηνή) is destroyed, we have a *habitation* (οἰκοδομή) from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.” In 2 Cor 5:8 he refers to death: “we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” The phrase ἡ οἰκία τοῦ σκήνους is a metaphor where ἡ οἰκία (‘house’) really refers to the σκήνος (‘body’). The basic semantic meaning of σκήνος is ‘tent’, but the figurative extension of the expression also means ‘body’, more precisely ‘ephemeral or transitory body.’ Thus it seems clear that our earthly, *tent-like house* is to be identified with our outer person (4:16b), and thus perhaps also with our *mortal flesh* (4:11).<sup>163</sup>

In essence, Paul draws a distinction between his own “self” and his somatic exterior—his physical body—regardless of whether he is speaking of his present earthly body (the *anthrōpos exō*) or his future heavenly body.

However, Paul does not think his own “self” is entirely distinct from either of these somatic exteriors; as Tappenden explains, “Partitive understandings of the human subject are central to Paul’s anthropology . . . though the precise nature of such partitions is characterized by integration and interrelation rather than opposition and difference.”<sup>164</sup>

This is certainly the case for the *anthrōpos exō* and *esō*. Paul’s own “self” is distinct from his *present* somatic exterior, but is driven by a proleptic experience of his *future* somatic

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<sup>162</sup> Paul also says that he does not wish to be “unclothed”—that is, without any body at all—but rather “to be further clothed” (5:4). Per David Aune, “Paul appears to be implicitly arguing against the widespread view of Hellenistic eschatology that the postmortem freedom of the soul free from the body is a desirable and permanent form of future existence” (Aune, “Anthropological Duality,” 229).

<sup>163</sup> Tasmuth, “Pauline Anthropology,” 53.

<sup>164</sup> Tappenden, “Embodiment,” 454.

exterior. His present manner of life is informed both by the knowledge that he will receive a new body and by the Spirit functioning as an *arrabōn* of the benefits of that future heavenly body. This is the key anthropological marker of those who are *en Christos*, and it manifests in particular ethics and modes of behavior. Paul’s belief that he and his coworkers are being prepared “for an eternal weight of glory beyond all measure” (4:17, NRSV) means that they do not lose heart (4:16), they remain confident (5:6), they aim to please God (5:9), and remain transparent in their efforts to persuade the Corinthians (5:11).<sup>165</sup> Furthermore, they do not regard people “according to the flesh” (5:16), because their inner natures, their “selves,” no longer correspond to their earthly, fleshly somatic exteriors.<sup>166</sup>

Paul describes this proleptic experience as “new creation” (5:17), and as a participant in new creation, Paul has received the “ministry of reconciliation” (5:18).<sup>167</sup> This ministry is not merely a matter of the gospel one proclaims. Paul has described his

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<sup>165</sup> “Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we seek to persuade people, but have been made transparent before God, and I hope also to your consciences” (Εἰδότες οὖν τὸν φόβον τοῦ κυρίου ἀνθρώπους πείθομεν, θεῶ δὲ πεφανερῶμεθα· ἐλπίζω δὲ καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνειδήσεσιν ὑμῶν πεφανερῶσθαι). A somewhat figurative rendering of *phanereō* as “to make transparent” is appropriate given the implied comparison with the “veiled” rhetoric of the super-apostles. Of course, there is ample evidence from the Corinthian correspondence alone that Paul is quite willing to “veil” his true meaning or intentions; see Given, *Paul’s True Rhetoric*, 90–126.

<sup>166</sup> Paul will repeat the *kata sarka* formula in 10:3–4, making clear what is unstated here: “For we live in flesh, but we do not wage war according to the flesh; indeed, our weapons of war are not fleshly, but *with the power of God* they destroy strongholds” (ἐν σαρκὶ γὰρ περιπατοῦντες οὐ κατὰ σάρκα στρατευόμεθα—τὰ γὰρ ὄπλα τῆς στρατείας ἡμῶν οὐ σαρκικὰ ἀλλὰ δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ πρὸς καθαίρεσιν ὀχυρωμάτων).

<sup>167</sup> The NRSV renders 5:17b as, “Everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” A more literal translation, however, reads, “The old has passed away; behold! The new has come/taken [its] place.” To say that everything has passed away is to mask the fact that a Christ-believer’s earthly dwelling *is in the process of passing away*.

very body as one that is particularly appropriate for this ministry (4:7-15; 5:5), and he has done so in contrast with the bodies and ethics of his rivals so that the Corinthians “may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart” (5:12, NRSV). They—that is, Paul’s rivals—have not been established *en Christos*, nor have they received the Spirit as an *arrabōn*; since they do not have this *arrabōn*, they cannot perceive the divine activity manifest in Paul’s body. Furthermore, they have no heavenly bodies waiting for them at the *eschaton*, and are therefore not influenced in the present by the characteristics of a heavenly body. On the contrary, their inner selves are being destroyed along with their outer selves, and their behaviors correspond to this reality: they peddle God’s word, rely on physical letters of recommendation, speak in veiled speech, and practice self-commendation. In sum, they are anthropologically inadequate for the ministry of reconciliation. Based on this contrast between Paul and his opponents, then, one might understand 5:20 as implying something like, “We *alone* are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us, *not them*. We beg you on behalf of Christ: be reconciled to God *through our ministry*.”

Then, at the beginning of chapter 6, there is an observable shift in the tone and focus of Paul’s rhetoric. He moves from a forensic mode of argument to a deliberative, urging the Corinthians “not to accept the grace of God in vain” (6:1).<sup>168</sup> In a rhetorical

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<sup>168</sup> Chapters 1-5 display all of the key features of forensic rhetoric: a judicial setting (1:23), a narration of facts (1:15-2:4, 12-13), a “refutation of the opponent” (2:17-3:18), an articulation of the speaker’s character (4:2, 7-5:21), and “the theme of justice” (5:18-21) (Fredrick J. Long, *Ancient Rhetoric and Paul’s Apology: The Compositional Unity of 2 Corinthians*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 131 [New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004], 33). While forensic rhetoric focuses on defending past actions, deliberative rhetoric aims at persuading an audience to take a particular course of action in the future (Witherington, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 43).

outburst (6:4-10), he restates his credentials as laid out in the preceding chapters, and in 6:11-12, makes one final statement in his own defense: “Our mouth has been opened to you, Corinthians; our heart for you has been broadened. There is no restriction in us, but there is restriction in your affections for us.” Then, “as if to children,” Paul tells the Corinthians to broaden their hearts (6:13).

Harris suggests that Paul’s manner of speech here—“as if to children”—is an appeal to “his distinctive spiritual relationship to the Corinthians.”<sup>169</sup> Certainly, the use of τέκνον for “child” rather than υἱός reveals a level of intimacy that characterizes Paul’s relationship with the Corinthians (cf. 12:14-16).<sup>170</sup> Indeed, Paul often refers to his converts as “brothers” and “sisters,” which denotes a mutuality within the *ekklesia* that runs counter to the “closely structured, hierarchical society of the Greco-Roman city.”<sup>171</sup> But Paul’s choice to use father-child language here implies a hierarchical assertion of his spiritual authority over the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor 4:14-21), which he hopes they have come to recognize over the course of his argument thus far. Martin explains that in the ancient Greco-Roman family, “the household lives harmoniously when the different members—paterfamilias, wife, children, slaves—all occupy their proper positions with mutual respect but submission to those above them in the familial pyramid. *The necessity of interdependence and mutuality between the different members does not in any way*

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<sup>169</sup> Murray J. Harris, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, New International Greek Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 491.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*, 491.

<sup>171</sup> Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 89. Meeks notes that “the fictive use of kinship terms with strong language of affection” is common in initiatory rituals and—within sectarian groups—often carries over into the daily life of the community (*Ibid.*, 88–89).

*imply equality*” (emphasis added).<sup>172</sup> By describing himself as their father, Paul reminds the Corinthians that their mutual love does not mean they can abandon their loyalty to him; he is worthy of respect and honor precisely because he is their spiritual father. In sum, Paul uses an anthropological image in 6:13—the parent-child relationship—to establish his authority in familiar terms so that he might easily shift into the deliberative request which follows in 6:14-7:1. It is no surprise, then, that Paul begins this request with an anthropological metaphor.<sup>173</sup>

### Formal Analysis

One of the objections raised against 6:14-7:1 is that it interrupts 6:11-13 and 7:2-3. Walker suggested that when the passage is removed, a perfect chiasm appears in this material.

- A<sup>1</sup>. Assurance of affection (6:11)
  - B<sup>1</sup>. Disclaimer of responsibility for alienation (6:12)
    - C<sup>1</sup>. Appeal for affection (6:13)
    - C<sup>2</sup>. Appeal for affection (7:2a)
  - B<sup>2</sup>. Disclaimer of responsibility for alienation (7:2b)
- A<sup>2</sup>. Assurance of affection (7:3)

The parallelism in these sections cannot be denied, but it provides little basis for disputing the passage’s authenticity. Fee’s argument on this point is particularly strong. He explains that ancient manuscripts were written in *scriptio continua*. Since this sort of supposed interpolation can only be explained by a redactor inserting a passage into his copy of a manuscript written in this form, whoever first inserted the passage would have “arbitrarily decided to insert this piece of parenesis [sic], which he thought to be Pauline,

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<sup>172</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 41.

<sup>173</sup> See pages 26-29.

between the ΥΜΕΙΣ and ΧΩΡΗΣΑΤΕ. No redactor in his right mind—or otherwise—would have done such a thing.”<sup>174</sup>

Indeed, the parallelism between 6:11-13 and 7:2-3 is often exacerbated not only in the relevant scholarship, but in translations as well. For example, the NRSV, RSV, NIV, ESV, and NET all include the phrase “in your hearts” in 7:2, such that it matches the closing phrase of 6:13.<sup>175</sup> This leaves the impression that 6:14-7:1 interrupts a single thought: “Open wide your hearts also. . . . Make room in your hearts for us.” But the Greek of 7:2 simply reads, “Make room for us (Χωρήσατε ἡμᾶς).” There are no linguistic parallels between 6:13 and 7:2; they are clearly independent thoughts. Moreover, in 7:3, Paul explicitly indicates that he is returning to his earlier theme: “I said before (προεῖρηκα) that you are in our hearts.” As Starling explains, “Paul’s use of προεῖρηκα in 7:3 . . . hardly serves any function if there has been no intervening digression.”<sup>176</sup> Paul’s own vocabulary makes it clear that in his original letter, there was an intervening unit between 6:13 and 7:3.

But 6:14-7:1 is not a true digression, because it accompanies Paul’s deliberative request in 6:13. Thrall writes, “One has the impression that Paul’s rivals for the Corinthians’ affections were not so much their pagan friends as Christians who propounded and exemplified a different view of the apostolate.”<sup>177</sup> If these rivals are the reason the Corinthians are restricted in their affections toward Paul, then it is entirely

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<sup>174</sup> Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1,” 143.

<sup>175</sup> The NASB and ASV also add this phrase, but do not use its parallel in 6:13. The NASB opts for “open wide to us also,” while the ASV reads, “Be ye also enlarged.”

<sup>176</sup> Starling, “Beyond the Impasse,” 49.

<sup>177</sup> Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1,” 140.



natural that his request for them to return his affections would be followed by an elaboration on the source of the restriction. Furthermore, the passage has its own concentric pattern.<sup>178</sup>

- A<sup>1</sup>. Ethical Imperative: Break ties with unbelievers (6:14a)
  - B<sup>1</sup>. Antitheses (Proof Texts): Opposites cannot function in unity (6:14b-16a)
    - C. Identity: The Corinthians are the temple of God (6:16b)
  - B<sup>2</sup>. Catena (Proof Texts): To receive God's promises, one must reject impurity (6:16c-6:18)
- A<sup>2</sup>. Ethical Imperative: Cleanse yourselves of defilement and pursue holiness (7:1)

When 6:14-7:1 is inserted into Walker's chiasm, a concentric pattern spanning 6:11-7:3 emerges quite clearly.

- A<sup>1</sup>. Assurance of affection (6:11)
  - B<sup>1</sup>. Disclaimer of responsibility for alienation (6:12)
    - C<sup>1</sup>. Appeal for affection (6:13)
      - D<sup>1</sup>. Ethical Imperative: Break ties with unbelievers (6:14a)
        - E<sup>1</sup>. Antitheses (Proof Texts): Opposites cannot function in unity (6:14b-16a)
          - F. Identity: The Corinthians are the temple of God (6:16b)
        - E<sup>2</sup>. Catena (Proof Texts): To receive God's promises, one must reject impurity (6:16c-6:18)
      - D<sup>2</sup>. Ethical Imperative: Cleanse yourselves of defilement and pursue holiness (7:1)
    - C<sup>2</sup>. Appeal for affection (7:2a)
  - B<sup>2</sup>. Disclaimer of responsibility for alienation (7:2b)
- A<sup>2</sup>. Assurance of affection (7:3)

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<sup>178</sup> "A longer text that is chiastically structured has two or more parallel elements at its 'top' and 'bottom.' This pattern may continue, moving in (so to speak) from both ends, for the entirety of the text, so that the text appears to have a complex and complete parallel structure of, for example, A-B-C-D-E-E'-D'-C'-B'-A'. This is sometimes referred to as a *concentric* arrangement of the text or *ring composition*" (Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* [Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009], 93).

## Detailed Analysis

**6:14a.** The opening phrase represents the passage’s primary ethical imperative.

*Do not be improperly yoked with unbelievers (Μὴ γίνεσθε ἑτεροζυγοῦντες ἀπίστοις).*

As previously mentioned, the command to cease being improperly yoked with unbelievers is nothing less than a statement about the anthropological and cosmological incompatibility of the Corinthians and these so-called unbelievers.<sup>179</sup> The Corinthians (read *pistoi*) and *apistoi* are two different “species” because of a symbolic boundary—ontological, social, or both—represented by the *en Christos* formula. Yet they have nevertheless been joined together under a *zygos*, a yoke, and this will ultimately result in them receiving the grace of God in vain (6:1). Paul thus asks them to restore proper order by breaking this yoke. For Paul, there are two broad classes of humanity—those who have received the Spirit and those who have not—and even though these two classes cannot live completely separated from each other (1 Cor 5:9-10), the symbolic boundary between them which must be maintained.<sup>180</sup> Whatever this *zygos* is, it has disrupted the new lines of demarcation that have emerged among humans in the last days.

The question of the *zygos* is directly related to the identity of the *apistoi*. One option is that the *apistoi* are non-Christian pagans, as in 1 Corinthians (e.g. 6:6; 7:12-15;

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<sup>179</sup> See pages 26-29.

<sup>180</sup> This type of cosmological dualism pervades Paul’s ethics. He expresses a similar concern in 1 Cor 6:15-17 when he vehemently rejects the idea of Christ being joined with a prostitute and in 1 Cor 10:21 when he tells the Corinthians they “cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons” (NRSV). There are even more examples of this dualism both within the Corinthian letters (e.g. 1 Cor 3:1-3; 5:4b-5, 9-13) and in the rest of Paul’s undisputed letters (e.g. Rom 8:5-17; Gal 5:2-6; 1 Thess 4:3-5), proving that this understanding of humanity is integral to Paul’s thought.

10:27; 14:22-24). If the *apistoi* are pagans, as most commentators suggest,<sup>181</sup> then the *zygos* is more than likely eating food sacrificed to idols, or perhaps more specifically—as Fee suggests—eating idol food at the idol temple.<sup>182</sup> But if that is the case, one is faced with a significant conflict between the imperatives of 6:14 and 6:17 and 1 Cor 5:9-10, whereby Paul would have had to completely change his mind on the subject of relationships between Christ-believers and pagans.<sup>183</sup> Another option is Betz’s proposal, which assumes interpolation; in this case, since the passage is derivative of Paul’s opponents in Galatia, the *apistoi* would be those who do not sit under the *zygos* of the Torah.<sup>184</sup> However, this theory has a number of flaws and has not received any support since its creation.<sup>185</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Plummer, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*; Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1”; Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-Vii. 1”; Furnish, *II Corinthians*; Murphy-O’Connor, “Relating 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1”; C. K. Barrett, *A Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, Harper’s New Testament Commentaries (New York: Harper & Row, 1973); Webb, *Returning Home*; Margaret Thrall, *II Corinthians: A Critical and Exegetical Commentary*, 2 vols., International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994); Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*; Paul Barnett, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997); David E. Garland, *2 Corinthians*, New American Commentary 29 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 1999); Matera, *II Corinthians*; Martin, *2 Corinthians*.

<sup>182</sup> Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1,” 158.

<sup>183</sup> Fee’s proposal eliminates this contradiction, but it only takes a superficial reading of the letter to see that idolatry—in the sense of eating food at an idol temple—is not even a minor concern in 2 Corinthians. If this particular form of idolatry was still a problem after Paul’s extensive argument against it in 1 Cor 8-10, one would certainly expect Paul to spend more than six verses on the topic.

<sup>184</sup> Betz, “An Anti-Pauline Fragment?”

<sup>185</sup> See page 5, note 16.

J. Adodeji Adewuya offers a helpful hermeneutical point on the subject:

“Although it is always best for the interpreter to look for consistency in the way authors express themselves, nonetheless it must be allowed that unique meanings of words and concepts are possible, given the cultural and contextual background of addressees.”<sup>186</sup>

Some scholars, recognizing the possibility that Paul could have easily departed from his typical use of the word while writing 2 Corinthians, have suggested that the *apistoi* are Paul’s opponents in Corinth.<sup>187</sup> Paul calls them “super-apostles” (τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων) in 11:5, but does not describe their background in great detail.<sup>188</sup>

Harris contends that Paul’s readers “could not yet be expected to make [this] association, especially since the term [*apistoi*] . . . has already been used unambiguously in 4:4 to refer to unbelievers [that is, non-Christians] whose minds have been blinded to the light of the gospel.”<sup>189</sup> If this—the only other reference to *apistoi* in 2 Corinthians

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<sup>186</sup> Adewuya, *Holiness and Community*, 102.

<sup>187</sup> J. F. Collange, *Enigmes de La Deuxième Épître de Paul Aux Corinthiens: Étude Exégétique de 2 Cor. 2:12-7:4*, Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series 18 (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 305–6; Dahl and Donahue, “A Fragment”; Rensberger, “2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1”; Patte, “A Structural Exegesis,” 45; deSilva, “Recasting the Moment of Decision”; Goulder, “2 Cor. 6:14-7:1”; James M. Scott, *2 Corinthians*, New International Biblical Commentary (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1998), 152–53; Scott J. Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000); Garlington, *Second Corinthians*, 207. Witherington does not rule it out, though he considers it unlikely (Witherington III, *Conflict and Community in Corinth*, 404). J. Ayodeji Adewuya suggests that *apistoi* should be read inclusively to include not only the super apostles but also unbelievers outside the Christian community (Adewuya, *Holiness and Community*, 103).

<sup>188</sup> I will assume they are Jewish Christians of some sort (11:22), but anything beyond this is beyond the scope of this project. For more, see Sumney, *Identifying Paul’s Opponents*.

<sup>189</sup> Harris, *Second Epistle*, 499. So also Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii.1,” 143–44.

outside of the passage—is indeed an unambiguous reference to non-Christian unbelievers, then the super-apostles thesis cannot stand. However, I have shown that the “perishing ones,” first mentioned in 2:15, are not pagans. Instead, they are Paul’s opponents in Corinth.<sup>190</sup> These so-called super-apostles proclaim a different Jesus, spirit, and gospel than Paul (11:4). For Paul, the super-apostles are *apistoi* in the literal sense; they are ministers of a death-bringing covenant based on letters (3:6) and their practice of self-commendation is a sign that they lack the “spirit of faith” (4:13) that is a result of receiving the Spirit. 4:3-4 describes these perishing ones—that is, the super-apostles—as the *apistoi* who are incapable of seeing the light of Paul’s gospel because “the god of this age” (ὁ θεὸς τοῦ αἰῶνος) has blinded their minds (4:4). It is not the case, therefore, that *apistoi* in 4:4 is an unambiguous reference to non-Christian pagans. These *apistoi* are the super-apostles.

Rabens notes that recent linguistic studies show the interpretation of potentially ambiguous language (i.e. *apistoi*) is largely based on the most recently processed information and connections with “pre-existing knowledge structures.”<sup>191</sup> Upon first reading, some pre-existing knowledge structures (i.e. the references to *apistoi* in 1 Corinthians) would certainly lend themselves to the pagan interpretation; however, others, such as Paul’s rhetorical strategy when dealing with factionalism in 1 Cor 1-4, would have lent themselves to a different reading.<sup>192</sup> Additionally, the most recently processed information—Paul’s rhetoric in 2 Cor 1-4—would push the Corinthians toward

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<sup>190</sup> See pages 46-47.

<sup>191</sup> Rabens, “Paul’s Rhetoric of Demarcation,” 243–44.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 246–47.

identifying the *apistoi* in 6:14 as Paul's opponents, and after 4:4, Paul continues to juxtapose his ministry with that of his opponents (4:5, 7; 5:11-12; 6:3-4), saying nothing that might be interpreted as a reference to pagans. If there had been any confusion at 4:4, this would certainly be enough impetus for them to identify the *apistoi* of 6:14 as Paul's opponents.

It is possible that if some of the Corinthians were still involved in the inappropriate relationships with pagans described in 1 Cor 6 and 8-10, they would have understood 6:14a as prohibiting those relationships. I therefore tentatively side with Rabens in that there is perhaps a *double entendre* at play here. But contra Rabens, I suggest that Paul's primary referent when speaking of *apistoi* here is indeed the super-apostles, because in the larger context of the letter—both prior to and following 6:14-7:1—Paul is not concerned with how the Corinthians relate to pagans, but rather how they relate to him and whether they recognize his apostolic authority.

This means there are multiple possibilities for identifying the *zygos*. Paul says in 11:4 that the Corinthians are bearing with (*ἀνέχεσθε*) the gospel preached by these super-apostles, so 6:14a could be Paul telling the Corinthians to reject this gospel *zygos*. But Paul also says that they “receive a different spirit” (11:4) from the super-apostles, and if that is the case, then the *zygos* could be this spirit. There is also evidence that the super-apostles were taking money for their preaching (2:17; 11:7, 20), so the *zygos* could be this financial obligation; as is clear from 11:7-10, Paul clearly views taking money from the Corinthians as improper. If the super-apostles are “Palestinian Judaizers” (as argued by Harris), then the *zygos* could be some more specific element of their Judaizing

program.<sup>193</sup> More than likely, though, the *zygos* is all of these things, and anything else that would bring the Corinthians under the spiritual leadership of the super-apostles.

It is the super-apostles, not pagans, who pose a threat to Paul's authority and to the status of the Corinthians *en Christos*. To be improperly yoked with unbelievers, then, is to bear with (or as the NRSV renders *anesthe* in 11:4, submit to) the super-apostles and their ministry, which is not simply different from Paul's in appearances but representative of an entirely different spiritual realm where the true light of God does not shine in people's hearts (4:6). Furthermore, since they are separated from the Corinthians by a symbolic boundary, the super-apostles themselves are not filled with the Spirit which gives life; because they are perishing and blind to the true gospel, these ministers of death are a different species than the Corinthians and have no share with them.

**6:14b-16b.** After the primary ethical imperative, Paul then asks a series of questions.

*For what partnership do righteousness and lawlessness have, or what fellowship do light and darkness share? And what agreement is there between Christ and Beliar, or what share does a believer have with an unbeliever? And what concord does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God (τίς γὰρ μετοχή δικαιοσύνη καὶ ἀνομία, ἢ τίς κοινωνία φωτὶ πρὸς σκότος; τίς δὲ συμφώνησις Χριστοῦ πρὸς Βελιάρ, ἢ τίς μερίς πιστῶ μετὰ ἀπίστου; τίς δὲ συγκατάθεσις ναῶ θεοῦ μετὰ εἰδώλων; ἡμεῖς γὰρ ναὸς θεοῦ ἐσμεν ζῶντος). . .*

It is of the utmost importance to Paul that the Corinthians recognize the symbolic boundary between themselves and the super-apostles. As argued above, Paul believes that his very body is “the harbinger of [God’s] presence” (cf. 2:14-16; 5:18-21).<sup>194</sup> Thus, Paul fears that when he arrives, he “may have to mourn over many who previously sinned and

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<sup>193</sup> See Harris, *Second Epistle*, 86–87, and Sumney, *Identifying Paul’s Opponents*.

<sup>194</sup> Duff, “The Mind of the Redactor,” 169; see also page 49.

have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and licentiousness that they have practiced” (12:21, NRSV). The implication of this warning—perhaps a veiled threat—is unclear; Paul does not say what will happen to those who have not repented, nor does he explain how he is planning to deal with them (13:4). But here, Paul speaks to the Corinthians as a father to his children (6:13) in hopes of exhorting them to avoid whatever consequences will be levied upon his arrival.<sup>195</sup> These five comparisons, framed as rhetorical questions, reinforce the symbolic boundary between the Corinthians and *apistoi* by exposing the foolishness of the Corinthians’ practice of being yoked to the ministers of death.

Elements of this section are often cited as evidence for interpolation; Fitzmyer, for example, rooted two of his five points—the triple dualism (righteousness/lawlessness, light/darkness, Christ/Beliar) and opposition to idols—in this section. Five of the eleven hapaxes also appear here. But Fee has comprehensively demonstrated that the vocabulary here is not a cause for concern.<sup>196</sup> Moreover, Fee also notes that the passage directly prior (2 Cor 6:3-10) contains four NT hapaxes and one Pauline hapax. Overall, 2 Corinthians contains 160 Pauline hapaxes and 84 NT hapaxes, which means (on average) there is one Pauline hapax every 1.6 verses and one NT hapax every three verses.<sup>197</sup> The number of hapaxes here is only slightly irregular and does not constitute firm grounds for disputing the authenticity of the passage.

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<sup>195</sup> Cf. 11:2-3; 12:14-15; 1 Cor 4:14-21.

<sup>196</sup> See page 7, note 22, and Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1,” 145–46.

<sup>197</sup> Fee, “II Corinthians VI.14-VII.1,” 144; Harris, *Second Epistle*, 17.



The triple dualism identified by Fitzmyer is also thoroughly Pauline. Paul compares *dikaiosynē* (righteousness) and *anomia* (lawlessness) elsewhere in his letters while urging his audience toward sanctification, as he does here.<sup>198</sup> Moreover, this comparison recalls 6:7, where Paul describes his own ministry as one that employs the “weapons of *dikaiosynē*” in its hands, and anticipates 11:15, where Paul says that the super-apostles “disguise themselves as ministers of *dikaiosynē*.” The second contrast between *phōs* (light) and *skotos* (darkness) is well-attested in other Pauline letters, and resonates deeply with the rest of the letter.<sup>199</sup> The *apistoi* of 4:4-6 are in darkness, blind to the light of the gospel which shines in Paul’s and his coworkers’ hearts. Later, Paul says the super-apostles disguise themselves as apostles of Christ, no doubt because their god, Satan, disguises himself as an angel of light (11:14). With both comparisons, there are self-conscious allusions to the larger body of the letter, and these allusions are ideologically consistent with Paul’s rhetorical goals insofar as they reinforce Paul’s notion that submitting to his authority is integral to being reconciled to God (5:18-20; 10:7; 11:2-4) and his consistent emphasis on the anthropological incompatibility of the Corinthians and the super-apostles.

Furnish explains that the proper name “Beliar,” used in the third antithesis, is a variant form of “Belial,” which comes from a Hebrew term that can mean

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<sup>198</sup> Cf. Rom 6:19.

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Rom 13:12; 1 Thess 5:4, 5. Phil 2:15 does not use *skotos*, but invokes the same basic contrast between the children of God as stars (φωστῆρες) shining among a “crooked and perverse generation,” its darkness clearly implied by the role of the children of God.

“worthlessness” or “perversion.”<sup>200</sup> Thus, its use here as another name for Satan is appropriate. The comparison term here, *symphōnēsis* (agreement), typically appears in the context of human agents sharing common interests or agreeing to a set of terms.<sup>201</sup> The positive component of the comparison, Christ, requires a personified negative component, so Paul sets up Beliar/Satan as the chief cosmic entity opposed to Christ to juxtapose the cosmic embodiments of righteousness and lawlessness, light and darkness, and purity and perversion.<sup>202</sup>

No argument can be made that Beliar is a characteristically Pauline term, and Fitzmyer demonstrates quite conclusively that Beliar was popular as a title for Satan in literature from Qumran.<sup>203</sup> However, Fitzmyer does not take seriously other potential sources of influence. There is, for example, remarkable similarity between this passage and *Jubilees* 1:13-23, where Beliar is also mentioned. Beliar appears multiple times in the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* in dualistic comparisons (*T. Sim* 5:3; *T. Levi* 19:1; *T. Naph* 2:6; 3:1) and in the *Ascension of Isaiah* as “the ruler of this world” (2:4; cf. 2 Cor 4:4). As Thrall says, “The use of the word Belial, or Beliar, does not prove any

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<sup>200</sup> Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 362.

<sup>201</sup> Danker, “συμφωνώ,” *BDAG* 961.

<sup>202</sup> So says Harris: “As the embodiment of righteousness, Christ is set over against Beliar as the embodiment of iniquity” (Harris, *Second Epistle*, 503). Barrett notes that the Hebrew *b<sup>e</sup>liyya’ al* “was sometimes interpreted as *b<sup>e</sup>li’ol*, ‘having no yoke,’ that is, as one who has thrown off (God’s) yoke” (Barrett, *Commentary on the Second Epistle*, 198). Garlington comments that in the Pseudepigrapha, Beliar is often described as “the tempter who lures man into sin by his spirits” (Garlington, *Second Corinthians*, 209), and Hafemann agrees (Hafemann, *2 Corinthians*, 281); perhaps influenced by this notion, Paul says in 11:3 that he fears the Corinthians will be lead astray—presumably by the super-apostles, the agents of Beliar—from their devotion to Christ.

<sup>203</sup> Fitzmyer, “Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph,” 212.

connection between II Corinthians and Qumran. The available evidence simply shows that this was a fashionable word in the first century.”<sup>204</sup> Moreover, there is good reason to believe Paul (or even an editor of his letter) would not have had access to Qumran texts. Murphy O’Connor explains: “Qumran was a closed community. Dissemination of its teachings was forbidden (1QS 9:16-17), and secrecy was reinforced by writing certain documents in code (e.g. 4Q186). *Specifically* Qumran ideas, therefore, are extremely unlikely to have penetrated Jewish life in Palestine, and still less in the Diaspora” (emphasis added).<sup>205</sup>

The fourth comparison between *pistos* (believer) and *apistos* (unbeliever) may seem redundant in light of 6:14a. However, I have demonstrated with the first two comparisons that Paul is using these questions to (1) reinforce his authority as a minister of the true gospel and therefore his intrinsic connection to the Corinthians and (2) re-emphasize the anthropological incompatibility of the Corinthians and the super-apostles. Thus, the mention of *pistos* takes advantage of the similarity between *pistos* and *pistis* (faith) and carries with it the weight of all of Paul’s statements about his own *pistis*: Paul works with the Corinthians for their joy in the faith (1:24); he and his coworkers have a “spirit of faith” (4:13); they walk by faith, not by sight (5:7). Whatever faith the Corinthians have is the same faith that Paul has. Of course, by comparison, the super-apostles lack any truth faith or faithfulness. They do not possess the right spirit for it; indeed, their boasting in outward appearances (5:12) exposes the fact that they walk by sight, rather than faith.

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<sup>204</sup> Thrall, “The Problem of II Cor. vi.14-vii. 1,” 137.

<sup>205</sup> Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, “Philo and 2 Cor 6:14-7:1,” *RB* 95 (1990): 59.

As with the triple dualism, the opposition to idolatry—represented in the final comparison between the temple of God and idols—is deeply Pauline. Paul has already established a community-as-temple metaphor in 1 Cor 3:16-17, and elsewhere emphasizes that it is their collective receipt of the Spirit which unites them with Christ (1 Cor 12:13).<sup>206</sup> Nor would the idea that God’s temple—Christ’s body—is opposed to idols be a surprising revelation. Paul makes opposition to idols as clear as possible in 1 Cor 10:19-21: “What do I imply then? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be partners with demons. You cannot drink of the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons” (NRSV).

Having already identified Beliar/Satan, whose spirit the super-apostles proclaim, as the chief demonic entity and cosmic embodiment of perversion, Paul uses the final comparison to rearticulate the symbolic boundary between *pistoi* and *apistoi* by demonstrating the incompatibility between the Spirit of the Corinthians and the idolatrous spirit of the super-apostles. Still, the mention of *eidōloi* here seems odd, since separation from pagan idolatry is not what Paul is commanding in 6:14, and a metaphorical reading of the term seems unlikely given Paul’s typical usage.<sup>207</sup> Would Paul really equate the spirit of the super-apostles to that of idols?

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<sup>206</sup> It is notable that Paul uses *ναός* for “temple” rather than *τὸ ἱερόν*, as the former corresponds to “the most sacred part of the temple structure,” while the latter to the general temple complex (Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 367).

<sup>207</sup> Webb notes that every contrast between the living God and idols in the Old Testament, intertestamental literature, and the New Testament refers to literal idols, and that every use of the *εἶδολ* stem in the Pauline corpus is in reference to literal idols (Webb, *Returning Home*, 193–94).

The simple answer is yes. 1 Cor 10:19-21 clearly illustrates Paul's attitude toward idols: even if physical idols are nothing, demons are something, and the demonic spirits associated with idols are dangerous enough that Paul will not permit the Corinthians to participate in sacrificial meals at pagan temples (1 Cor 10:14) even though he acknowledges that some of them possess prophylactic *gnosis*.<sup>208</sup> Furthermore, the spirit of the super-apostles is not just any spirit; it is Beliar, the chief demonic entity and cosmic embodiment of perversion. The threat to the Corinthians who are under a yoke with the super-apostles, then, is very real indeed.

Linking the super-apostles with *eidōloi*, therefore, is a rhetorical power-play which draws on Paul's previous teaching about the nature of idols and what Paul has said thus far about the super-apostles themselves. On the one hand, the super-apostles themselves, as *eidōloi*, are nothing; they wish to be recognized as apostolic equals (3:1; 11:12), but they are deceivers and liars (2:17; 4:2; 11:13) and Paul is superior to them in every way (3:6; 6:4-10; 11:6-12:13). On the other hand, their demonic patron, Beliar, is dangerous and defiling; lest the Corinthians—who were confident that they belonged to Christ (2 Cor 10:7)—be led astray, Paul reminds them via this power-play that they cannot be *en Christos* and have concord with demons. True representatives of righteousness, light, Christ, faith, and God's temple are opposed to the super-apostles and their idolatrous, deceptive spirit (2:17; 11:4).

There is, therefore, an implicit threat running throughout these five comparisons that culminates in this comparison between the temple of God and idols. Having established a sense of eschatological urgency in 6:2, Paul now amplifies that urgency by

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<sup>208</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 189.

informing the Corinthians that their immature preference for the super-apostles has actually caused them to become willing participants in idolatry. The threat, then, is that at this crucial juncture—this new “day of salvation” (6:2)—the Corinthians who are improperly yoked with the super-apostles will be exposed as partners in their faithlessness. There can be no concord between the temple of God and idols; put another way, those who continue to submit to or bear with the super-apostles do not belong to the body of Christ. Indeed, note Paul’s exhortation at the end of the letter: “Examine yourselves to see whether you are living in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not realize that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless, indeed, you fail to meet the test” (13:5, NRSV)!

Of course, Paul is not content to leave things as they are. His desire is for the Corinthians to submit to him—not only because of whatever concerns he may have to maintain control over the congregation he founded, but also because of his deep love for them (7:1; 12:14-19) and firm belief that his own body and proclamation of the gospel are integral to the work being accomplished within them by the Spirit. His emphatic assertion that “we are the temple of the living God” in 6:16b bridges the gap between the implicit threat in 6:14b-16a and the catena.

**6:16c-18.** The catena lays out God’s promises as an impetus to separate from idolatrous impurity and be reconciled both to God and to Paul.

*. . . as indeed God said: “I will dwell in them and walk about among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people. Therefore, come out from among them, and be separate, says the Lord, and do not touch impurity; then I will welcome you and be a father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters,” says the Lord Almighty (καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι Ἐνοικήσω ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω, καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτῶν θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔσονται μου λαός. διὸ ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῶν, καὶ ἀφορίσθητε, λέγει κύριος, καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε· κἀγὼ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς· καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῖν εἰς πατέρα, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μοι εἰς υἱὸς καὶ θυγατέρας, λέγει κύριος παντοκράτωρ).*

Fitzmyer suggested that the introductory phrase καθὼς εἶπεν ὁ θεὸς ὅτι (as indeed God said) was further evidence that the passage is inauthentic, as it never appears anywhere else in the New Testament.<sup>209</sup> However, Paul uses an almost identical phrase (ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ὁ εἰπὼν) in 4:6. Invoking the authority of God himself further escalates the eschatological urgency Paul has been developing thus far.<sup>210</sup> The structure of the catena also attests to its authenticity.

In the undisputed Pauline letters, the only citation combination to likewise incorporate six OT texts into one continuous quotation is Rom. 3.10-18, which, interestingly enough, has a threefold structure similar to that in 2 Cor. 6.16-18! Just as in Rom. 3.10-18 the citation combination begins and ends with axiomatic statements which are concretized in a middle section, so also 2 Cor. 6.16-18 has corresponding beginning and ending premises with a concretizing parenthesis in the middle; hence the citations form three parts consisting of three lines each. . . . By contrast, the only two citation combinations to be found so far in Qumran do not even approach the complexity of Rom. 3.10-18 and 2 Cor. 6.16-18, whether in terms of the number of Scripture passages combined into a single quotation or in the intricacy of the design.<sup>211</sup>

The catena begins (6:16c) by combining LXX Lev 26:11-12 and LXX Ezek 37:27.<sup>212</sup> The contexts of these two selections are so similar that it is hardly surprising that they are combined here. Olley notes that “the context of the Leviticus passage is of separation from worshipping idols and of reverencing ‘my holy place’ [τῶν ἁγίων μου],

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<sup>209</sup> Fitzmyer, “Qumran and the Interpolated Paragraph,” 215.

<sup>210</sup> Matera, *II Corinthians*, 164.

<sup>211</sup> Scott, “The Use of Scripture,” 77–78.

<sup>212</sup> “And I will set my tent among you, and my soul will not abhor you; and I will walk about among you and be your god, and you will be my people” (καὶ θήσω τὴν διαθήκην μου ἐν ὑμῖν, καὶ οὐ βδελύξεται ἡ ψυχὴ μου ὑμᾶς· καὶ ἐμπεριπατήσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ἔσομαι ὑμῶν θεός, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἔσεσθέ μου λαός [LXX Lev 26:11-12]); “And my encampment will be among them, and I will be their god, and they will be my people” (καὶ ἔσται ἡ κατασκήνωσίς μου ἐν αὐτοῖς, καὶ ἔσομαι αὐτοῖς θεός, καὶ αὐτοὶ μου ἔσονται λαός [LXX Ezek 37:27]).

appropriate for the Corinthian context also.”<sup>213</sup> Similarly, in Ezek 37:26, God declares that he will set τὰ ἁγιά μου, “my holy things,” among his people after bringing them out of idolatry; notably, in 37:28, God says, “And the nations will know that I am the Lord, the one sanctifying them, when my holy things are in their midst forever.”<sup>214</sup>

As it appears in 6:16, the promise that God will dwell in and walk about among his people is contingent on their separation from their impure, idolatrous neighbors (6:17). All the verbs are in the future tense, but the citations narrate the past experiences of the Corinthians. God has already taken up residence among them; that much is clear from their abundance of spiritual gifts (1 Cor 1:7) and their receipt of the Spirit as an *arrabōn*. But the Corinthians have not separated themselves completely from idolatry, because they have now come under a yoke with the super-apostles. By exposing this inconsistency between the timeline of God’s promise and the Corinthian experience, Paul again increases the eschatological urgency which has been steadily building since 6:2. The next two citations in 6:17 make this inconsistency clear.

The first is LXX Isa 52:11 (6:17a): “Depart, depart, come out from there, and do not touch impurity; come out from its midst! Be separated, you who carry the vessels of the Lord.”<sup>215</sup> Matera explains that “the historical setting of the Isaiah quotation is the Babylonian exile and God’s command for the people to leave Babylon, avoiding contact

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<sup>213</sup> Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV?,” 207. A more appropriate translation for τῶν ἁγίων μου in LXX Lev 26:2 would be “my holy things,” as in LXX Ezek 37:26.

<sup>214</sup> καὶ γνώσονται τὰ ἔθνη ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰμι κύριος ὁ ἁγιάζων αὐτοὺς ἐν τῷ εἶναι τὰ ἁγιά μου ἐν μέσῳ αὐτῶν εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.

<sup>215</sup> ἀπόστητε ἀπόστητε ἐξέλθατε ἐκεῖθεν καὶ ἀκαθάρτου μὴ ἄπτεσθε, ἐξέλθατε ἐκ μέσου αὐτῆς ἀφορίσθητε, οἱ φέροντες τὰ σκεύη κυρίου.



with anything unclean.”<sup>216</sup> Paul’s reasoning for using this verse seems clear. The Corinthians, who (like Paul) carry the Spirit in their vessels (bodies; cf. 4:7) must come out from—that is, separate from—the impurity the super-apostles carry in their vessels. Harris, however, suggests that the use of *autōn* (Paul’s adaptation of the singular *autēs* in Isa 52:11) undermines this conclusion.

If ἀντῶν denotes Paul’s adversaries, the command ‘come out from among them’ sounds decidedly odd. Unless these rivals outnumbered the members of the Corinthian congregation—which is impossible—Paul would have addressed the Corinthians *ex hypothesi* with words such as those used in 1 Cor. 5:13 with regard to the incestuous man, ἐξάρατε τούτους ἐξ ὑμῶν ἀντῶν, ‘Drive these people out from among you,’ rather than ‘come out from among them.’ That is, a minority ‘comes out’ from the majority, not a majority from a minority.<sup>217</sup>

But it is not a simple thing to assume that the entire Corinthian community was yoked to the super-apostles. The house-church model which was characteristic of Paul’s mission lent itself to divisions whereby individual house-churches might attach themselves to different leaders.<sup>218</sup> Indeed, the Corinthians have fallen into factionalism once before (1 Cor 1:11-12), and Paul himself anticipates such a situation when he arrives (2 Cor 12:20). Presumably, the super-apostles were being supported and housed by a member of the community who would have likely also held gatherings in their home. If that is the case, it is highly plausible that those yoked to the super-apostles are a small but highly influential group from one house-church (perhaps “the Strong” of 1 Corinthians), and Paul is, to use Harris’ own categories, summoning a minority out from a minority. Even if this is not the case, the command to “come out” recalls the image of

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<sup>216</sup> Matera, *II Corinthians*, 166.

<sup>217</sup> Harris, *Second Epistle*, 507.

<sup>218</sup> Meeks, *The First Urban Christians*, 74–77.

the *zygos* from 6:14. Paul has left this image of “coming out” intact not only because it fits the image of coming out from under a yoke, but also the explicit allusion to Babylonian idolatry reinforces his claim that the super-apostles are agents of Beliar. This image is compounded when Paul cites a portion of LXX Ezek 20:34 (καὶ γὰρ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς) in 6:17b.<sup>219</sup> The context of this citation is further evidence that Paul is using the catena to amplify the eschatological urgency created in 6:2.

God is gathering people for purging, removing rebels who are worshipping idols. Ezek 20.34 has both the rescuing exodus imagery of ‘mighty hand and outstretched arm’ and the following phrase, ‘and with wrath poured out’ (as also in v. 33). There is to be a ‘purging of rebels’ (v. 38), alluding to the persistent worship of other gods in vv. 1-32. If 2 Cor 6:17bβ is citing Ezek 20.34 then it has a note of warning. *It is reinforcing the need to be separated from the worship of idols if the hearers are to be ‘God’s people’.* There is a comparable emphasis in the similar phrase in Ezek 20.41: καὶ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς, referring to God gathering the people so that ‘you shall loathe yourselves for all the evils that you have committed’ (v. 43). *An examination of the OT context of the phrase points to a nuance which is overlooked by commentators, but which is peculiarly appropriate to the Corinthian context (emphasis added).*<sup>220</sup>

Of course, here it is not a matter of separating from pagan worship, but rather from the idolatrous, deceptive ministry of Beliar’s agents.

Similarly, the next citation—LXX 2 Sam 7:14 (6:18a)—emphasizes that God’s promise of adoption comes with particular ethical expectations (cf. 12:21-13:4).<sup>221</sup> The

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<sup>219</sup> The full verse reads, “And I will bring you out from the people and I will gather you from the lands, in which you had been scattered, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm and with poured-out wrath” (καὶ ἐξάξω ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῶν λαῶν καὶ εἰσδέξομαι ὑμᾶς ἐκ τῶν χωρῶν, οὓς διεσκορπίσθητε ἐν αὐταῖς, ἐν χειρὶ κραταιᾷ καὶ ἐν βραχίονι ὑψηλῷ καὶ ἐν θυμῷ κεχυμένῳ).

<sup>220</sup> Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV?,” 208.

<sup>221</sup> “I will be unto him a father, and he will be unto me a son, and if injustice comes from him, then I will punish him with a rod of men and attacks of sons of men” (ἐγὼ ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα, καὶ αὐτὸς ἔσται μοι εἰς υἱόν· καὶ ἐὰν ἔλθῃ ἡ ἀδικία αὐτοῦ, καὶ ἐλέγξω αὐτὸν ἐν ῥάβδῳ ἀνδρῶν καὶ ἐν ἀφαῖς υἱῶν ἀνθρώπων).

connection with 2 Samuel also explains the use of *kyrios pantokratōr* (Lord Almighty) in 6:18c; the phrase appears twice in 2 Samuel, including its use in the Nathan oracle Paul uses in 6:18a.<sup>222</sup> The final citation is LXX Isa 43:6 (6:18b).<sup>223</sup> This selection not only explains why Paul uncharacteristically uses the phrase *huiou kai thygaterous* (sons and daughters), but also bears close similarities with the themes expressed by Paul’s previous citation of LXX Ezek 20:34.<sup>224</sup> In LXX Isa 42:24-25, the prophet describes how God punished Israel for rejecting his law, but 43:1-7 brings a promise of redemption and eventual glorification. The inclusion of daughters democratizes the promise to David made in 2 Sam 7:14, which is not Paul’s typical practice but is nevertheless consistent with his understanding of women’s role in the *ekklēsia* (e.g. Rom 16:1-2, 7; Gal 3:28; Phil 4:3).<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup> Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV?,” 209.

<sup>223</sup> “I will say to the north, ‘Bring them,’ and to the southwest, ‘Do not linger; bring my sons from a land far away and my daughters from the ends of the earth’” (ἐρῶ τῷ βορρᾶ ἼΑγε, καὶ τῷ λιβί Μῆ κώλυε ἄγε τοὺς υἰοὺς μου ἀπὸ γῆς πόρρωθεν καὶ τὰς θυγατέρας μου ἀπ’ ἄκρων τῆς γῆς). Olley has suggested that the citation is actually LXX Deut 32:19. His argument is attractive, primarily because he demonstrates that Paul has already drawn on this chapter in a previous argument against participation in idolatry (1 Cor 10:20, 22; cf. LXX Deut 32:17, 21), which provides a further point of continuity between 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 and the rest of Paul’s letters. The two verses are similar enough contextually that there is little lost in an argument for the passage’s authenticity if the source is actually LXX Deut 32:19. Nevertheless, Olley cannot account for the dramatic shift in tone between 6:18 and the Song of Moses in LXX Deut 32, which ends with a promise of cleansing rather than welcome and adoption (Ibid., 209–11).

<sup>224</sup> Per Harris, “This verse and the previous one refer to the second exodus, so that this addition to the quotation from 2 Sam. 7:14 has the effect of linking the Davidic promise with the ‘restoration’ theology of Ezek. 20:34” (Harris, *Second Epistle*, 510).

<sup>225</sup> Olley, “A Precursor of the NRSV?,” 211. Martin suggests that “the inclusion of the feminine noun may well point forward to the discussion in 2 Cor 11:2-3 and denote Paul’s self-conscious role as ‘groomsman’ . . . who mediated between Christ the bridegroom and the church as the new Eve” (Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 372).

To summarize, all of the citations in the catena are remarkably appropriate for the rhetorical situation in 2 Corinthians. They affirm the Corinthians in their anthropological identity (both individually and corporately) as God’s chosen dwelling place (LXX Lev 26:11-12; LXX Ezek 37:27) while making it clear that they must separate themselves from the idolatrous impurity embodied by the super-apostles (LXX Isa 52:11; LXX Ezek 20:34) and that failure to do so will result in discipline in accordance with the covenant of adoption they have received (LXX 2 Sam 7:14; LXX Isa 43:6).<sup>226</sup> Harris clarifies: “It is not that obedience to the call for separation creates that relationship, but once that relationship has been created it demands separation from all that is unholy.”<sup>227</sup>

**7:1.** Lest they grasp the demand for separation too late (cf. 12:21), Paul uses the last verse of the passage to offer a final plea for cleansing.

*So, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves by separating from every defilement of flesh and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God (ταύτας οὖν ἔχοντες τὰς ἐπαγγελίας, ἀγαπητοί, καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, ἐπιτελοῦντες ἀγιωσύνην ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ).*

I have demonstrated how this passage employs the rhetoric of eschatological urgency to motivate the Corinthians to submit to Paul’s authority and reject the idolatrous ministry of the super-apostles. Thus, the “promises” (ἐπαγγελίας) mentioned in 7:1 include the eschatological promise in 6:2—the day of salvation is now—whereby Paul initially established this urgency. This promise, which comes from LXX Isa 49:8, has clear

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<sup>226</sup> According to Barber and Kincaid, “Paul’s explicit identification of the church with the temple in 1 Cor 3:16-17 directly follows his teaching that purifying fire will test each person’s work when the Day of the Lord comes (3:10-15).” While the flow of thought is reversed here (the temple metaphor comes before the threat of judgment), the connection between the community as God’s temple and eschatological testing (cf. 2 Cor 13:1-10) is the same, which may further illustrate the passage’s authenticity (Barber and Kincaid, “Cultic Theosis,” 248).

<sup>227</sup> Harris, *Second Epistle*, 507.

thematic connections with the passage at hand. In LXX Isa 49:9 God tasks Israel with telling the nations to come out (ἐξέλθατε; cf. 2 Cor 6:17) of their bonds (*desmoi*), as Paul calls the Corinthians to come out from under a *zygos* with the super-apostles.

Additionally, Israel—the light to the nations—will illuminate the darkness (49:6, 9), mirroring the juxtaposition of *phōs* and *skotos* in 6:14.<sup>228</sup> The restoration language in the Isaiah passage also pairs well with the catena.

These promises also include the explicit promises of the catena: the promise of God’s indwelling, which has been fulfilled through the Corinthians’ receipt of the Spirit as an *arrabōn*, and the promise of discipline, which will be fulfilled if the Corinthians continue in fellowship with the super-apostles. These promises are the impetus for Paul’s imperative that the Corinthians cleanse themselves “of every defilement of flesh and spirit.”

Paul typically uses *sarx* (flesh) negatively and/or in opposition to *pneuma*.<sup>229</sup> As I have already noted, however, Paul sometimes uses these terms flexibly. At times, he uses *sarx* as a synonym for *sōma*, and sometimes *pneuma* language is used in ways that suggest Paul believes in a personal *pneuma* that may be associated with the “self.”<sup>230</sup> In fact, Paul has already used *sarx* language atypically in 2 Cor 4:10-11 and will do so again in 7:5 and 10:3. Furthermore, in 1 Cor 6:15-19—another ethical argument based on

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<sup>228</sup> Note how even though Paul includes himself among those who have these promises (7:1), he is actually representing himself as the suffering servant of Isa 49 (cf. 2 Cor 6:4-10), the emissary of the message of salvation, proclaiming to the Corinthians that they must come out from under the yoke of the super-apostles into the light of Christ. Beale agrees (Beale, “Old Testament Background,” 562).

<sup>229</sup> Taylor Jr., *Paul, Apostle to the Nations*, 243. Fee’s argument renders any objections based on *μολυσμοῦ* irrelevant; see page 7, note 22.

<sup>230</sup> See pages 37-38.

anthropological and cosmological incompatibility—Paul uses *sarx* as a synonym for *sōma*.<sup>231</sup> In 7:13, Paul uses *pneuma* atypically, and has done so in a previous letter to the Corinthians (1 Cor 16:16). One should not be surprised, therefore, if these terms function differently here.

Among scholars who support the passage’s authenticity, the most popular reading of 7:1 suggests that *sarx* and *pneuma* are used complementarily to refer to the inner and outer aspects of a person.<sup>232</sup> However, Paul has already drawn a distinction between the inner and outer person in 2 Cor 4:16 by distinguishing between the *anthrōpos esō* and *anthrōpos exō*. Additionally, *sarx* and its derivatives appear eleven times in 2 Corinthians (including 7:1) and are used in one of three ways: as a synonym for *sōma* (4:11; 7:5; 12:7); as a close parallel with *sōma* (10:3); or as a perspective or standard (1:17; 5:16 [twice]; 10:2; 10:3; 11:18).<sup>233</sup> While it is not unlikely that Paul would use a term like *sarx* atypically, it *is* unlikely that he would depart from his usage thus far in the letter to refer to a distinction he has already made with other vocabulary. This interpretation also assumes, as Martin describes, that “[Paul] could have been using popular language to designate the makeup of a person, both material and immaterial.”<sup>234</sup> But in Greco-Roman body ideologies, *pneuma* was not immaterial; while it was certainly a higher-status type

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<sup>231</sup> See Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 176–78.

<sup>232</sup> Barrett, *Commentary on the Second Epistle*, 202; Harris, *Second Epistle*, 512; Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 375; Garlington, *Second Corinthians*, 217.

<sup>233</sup> There is obvious difficulty with determining the precise nature of the *skolops tēi sarki* (thorn in the flesh; 12:7), which makes categorizing it a challenge. Of the three categories, it could be either a synonym or a close parallel; these two options seem to account for most of the possibilities.

<sup>234</sup> Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 375.

of “stuff” than *sarx*, it nevertheless existed on a continuum of substances that were all considered part of the material world.<sup>235</sup> It also cannot be that *pneuma* here is the Spirit.<sup>236</sup> Although this is the most common use of *pneuma* in 2 Corinthians (eleven out of seventeen uses),<sup>237</sup> if this were the case, Paul would be implying that God’s own Spirit can be defiled! This seems highly unlikely.<sup>238</sup> So what exactly is Paul asking of the Corinthians?

It is a mistake to individualize Paul’s exhortation in this verse. After identifying himself and the Corinthians as God’s temple, Paul continues to draw on this corporate identity throughout the passage. The promises of the catena are for the entire *ekklēsia*; the individual Corinthians receive the benefits of those promises by virtue of their participation in Christ’s *sōma*, which is the entire community. One must keep this in mind when Paul says, “Let us cleanse ourselves” (καθαρίσωμεν ἑαυτοὺς). Coupled with

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<sup>235</sup> Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 21–24. Martin further comments, “[Pneuma] was not safely cloistered in a separate ontology; rather, it permeated other forms of nature and therefore could be acted upon, damaged, and even altered by other natural elements” (Ibid., 24).

<sup>236</sup> Martin, *2 Corinthians*, 375.

<sup>237</sup> *Pneuma* is used in reference to God’s Spirit (1:22; 3:3; 3:6; 3:8; 3:17 [twice]; 3:18; 4:13; 5:5; 6:6; 13:13), as a synonym for the mind (2:13; 7:13), in contrast with “letters” (3:6), as a reference to divine powers (11:4), and as a manner of action (12:18).

<sup>238</sup> Martin seems to suggest otherwise (Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, 177–78.), but a close reading of the relevant material reveals that Paul stops short of making such a claim. In 1 Cor 6:12-19, Paul argues that by having sex with prostitutes, some members of the Corinthian congregation have united the cosmic, pneumatic body of Christ with a prostitute. But Paul does not say that this is wrong because Christ’s cosmic body is defiled, but because it is united with that of a prostitute, which—because of its participation in idolatrous fornication—belongs to a cosmic realm that has no participation in Christ. The sex act would produce a unification of bodies which belong to realms which are opposed in their values, epistemologies, power structures, and ontologies. But Paul stops short of saying that Christ’s pneumatic body is *defiled* by the sex act.

*apo* (from) which here denotes separation by motion away from something,<sup>239</sup> this clause does not indicate that the individual members of the community must cleanse their own *sarx* and *pneuma* of defilement.<sup>240</sup> Such a reading does not make sense given that the source of defilement in this passage is *the super-apostles themselves*, not something inside the Corinthians. Rather, one must read this as a request for a particular communal act. The Corinthians—as a group—must cleanse their “temple” of defilement *by separating from the source of that defilement*, i.e. the super-apostles, who embody Beliar’s perversion and impurity.<sup>241</sup>

Fascinatingly, it appears that *double entendre* bookends this passage. Above, I explained how it functioned in 6:14 in relation to *apistoi*; here, because of the comprehensive nature of the imperative, Paul can simultaneously refer to more obvious sources of defilement (cf. 12:20-21) and to the super-apostles, whose yoke brings defilement of both flesh and spirit.<sup>242</sup> Garlington explains that the aorist subjunctive

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<sup>239</sup> Harris, *Second Epistle*, 512.

<sup>240</sup> Were that the case, one might see something like καθαρίσωμεν ἕκαστος ἑαυτούς. Adewuya recognizes this: “The call to cleansing . . . although applicable personally, is communal and is entirely consistent with the thesis we are following, namely, that Paul is calling the Corinthians, who are both God’s temple and people to live as befit their calling.” Nevertheless, he still concludes that “when Paul demands cleansing of σαρκὸς καὶ πνεύματος, he is referring both to the physical body and to the ‘seat of emotion and will’” (Adewuya, *Holiness and Community*, 120–21).

<sup>241</sup> David A. DeSilva explains that the imperative “is Paul’s way of returning from the *catena* to the appeal for association, for openness and reconciliation between Paul and the Corinthians, as the breach in their relationship [caused by their relationship with the super-apostles] may be interpreted by Paul in the context of the *catena* as a ‘defilement of body and spirit’” (deSilva, “Recasting the Moment of Decision,” 14).

<sup>242</sup> Rabens agrees: “Against the background of Paul’s holistic anthropology it is doubtful that 7:1 implies a differentiation between bodily and spiritual defilement.



*katharisōmen* “is hortatory and constative, pointing to a *repeated course of action conceived of as a unitary experience*” (emphasis added).<sup>243</sup> Moreover, as a present participle, *epitelountes* adopts the mood of its primary verb (*katharisōmen*), which again denotes a process of ongoing sanctification (cf. 2 Cor 3:18, Phil 3:10-14) rather than the Essene concept of perfect holiness.<sup>244</sup> Of course, the primary referent of the *double entendre* is the super-apostles, who Paul says offer a different spirit through their apostolic proclamation than he does (11:4). Like the *arrabōn* Paul and the Corinthians have received, this spirit is a gift from their divine patron, Beliar; but Beliar is the cosmic embodiment of defilement, and his *pneuma* is defiling. In Paul’s anthropological framework, the super-apostles literally embody Beliar’s defilement through their possession and proclamation of his spirit.

One must also keep in view Paul’s flexible use of *sarx* language in 2 Corinthians, whereby one is given ample reason to read *sarx* here as a synonym for *sōma*. The flesh of the super-apostles—that is, their bodies—is defiled not only by the presence of Beliar’s corruption within them, but also by their self-commendation, comparison (10:12), and veiled speech. The Corinthians must cleanse themselves corporately by coming out from under their yoke of death and separating from them.

Starling emphasizes that “holiness” (*hagiōsynē*) here “is not an exclusively metaphorical or spiritual purity. . . . [Its] principal application in the immediate context of the paragraph is to the need for the Corinthians to separate from the pagan σοφία σαρκική

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Rather, defilement of body-and-spirit appears to be used as a hendiadys for any kind of defilement” (Rabens, “Paul’s Rhetoric of Demarcation,” 247).

<sup>243</sup> Garlington, *Second Corinthians*, 217.

<sup>244</sup> Furnish, *II Corinthians*, 366.

that has attached them to the false apostles and alienated them from Paul.”<sup>245</sup> Here one should take note of Douglas’ insight on holiness: “Holiness requires that individuals shall conform to the class which they belong. And holiness requires that different classes of things shall not be confused.”<sup>246</sup> By using holiness language here, Paul brings his argument back to his original statement about the symbolic boundary between the Corinthians and the super-apostles. They are two classes which must not mix, and complete holiness requires that proper boundaries be re-established. Furthermore, because Paul has characterized the process of “bringing holiness to completion” as a course of action repeated over time, his request in 7:1 is amplified by the concept of ongoing sanctification he established in 3:17-18 and 4:16-18; that is, the gradual transformation the Corinthians are experiencing through the Spirit within them includes this act of communal separation. Finally, it completes the request for the Corinthians to open their hearts to him. By bringing their holiness to completion, they will be participating in the same holiness by which Paul has commended himself to them (6:6).

If this separation takes place, it must be “in the fear of God” (ἐν φόβῳ θεοῦ). Garlington suggests this clause can be interpreted in three overlapping ways: causal (because one fears God), circumstantial (while fearing God), and instrumental (by the fear of God).<sup>247</sup> However, Paul introduced the fear of God in 5:11 as a causal factor; that is, because he and his coworkers fear God, they do not veil their attempts at persuasion like the super-apostles. Given the paraenetic goal of the passage at hand, one should

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<sup>245</sup> Starling, “Beyond the Impasse,” 59.

<sup>246</sup> Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, 54.

<sup>247</sup> Garlington, *Second Corinthians*, 218.

privilege the causal interpretation. Because the Corinthians fear God, they must bring their holiness to completion by separating themselves from the super-apostles.

## Conclusion

In 7:2, Paul re-adopts the emotional tone which characterized 6:1-13. This carries over into chapters 8 and 9, where he discusses the Jerusalem collection. As such, one does not see the implications of the opening chapters until chapter 10. Yet when one reaches this point in the letter, the significance of my contextual analysis is immediately apparent. For example, the first few verses of chapter 10 rely heavily on the familiar *kata sarka* and *en Christos* formulas:

I ask that when I am present I need not show boldness by daring to oppose those who think we are acting according to human standards. Indeed, we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards; for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. . . . Look at what is before your eyes. If you are confident that you belong to Christ, remind yourself of this, that just as you belong to Christ, so also do we (10:2-4a, 7, NRSV).

One should also recall Paul's implied message at the end of chapter 5; at the end of chapter 10, Paul explicitly condemns the senselessness of self-commendation, even going as far as to say that "it is not those who commend themselves that are approved, but those whom the Lord commends" (10:18, NRSV).<sup>248</sup> Moreover, I have already described how the antitheses in 6:14b-16b anticipate Paul's statements about the super-apostles in chapter 11, though I have yet to mention the additional thematic parallels

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<sup>248</sup> See page 54.

between 6:4-10 and the first half of the “Fool’s Speech” (11:21b-29).<sup>249</sup> Even Paul’s description of his “thorn in the flesh” (12:7b-10) is thematically similar to an earlier portion of the letter (4:7:-12). These intra-textual links both reveal Paul’s consistent focus on the super-apostles throughout 2 Corinthians and support a one-letter theory for the letter’s origin.

In his conclusion to the letter, Paul makes a few final requests of the Corinthians.

Finally, brothers and sisters, farewell. Put things in order, listen to my appeal, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the saints greet you. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you (13:11-13, NRSV).

One is thus reminded of the disorder Paul attributes to the bond between the Corinthians and the super-apostles. Whatever “quarreling, jealousy, anger, selfishness, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder” (12:20, NRSV) he might find upon his arrival is—in Paul’s mind—ultimately the result of the Corinthians being improperly yoked with the ministers of Beliar, a bond which Paul perceives to be disrupting the new symbolic boundary which has emerged through the work of the Spirit. Proper order can only be restored by a cleansing of every defilement of flesh and spirit that will restore their anthropological purity, and such a cleansing is only possible through submission to Paul’s unique, embodied proclamation of the gospel. It seems, therefore, that 6:14-7:1 is the very heart of the appeal Paul asks the Corinthians to accept. Interpreters of this passage must cease being yoked to the interpolation thesis.

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<sup>249</sup> See pages 65-66. 6:4-10 and 11:21b-29 are both lists of Paul’s experiences which describe his sufferings—rather than his successes—as what qualifies him to be a “servant of God” (6:4) or “minister of Christ” (11:23). Aside from the general focus on hardships, both explicitly mention beatings (6:5; 11:24-25b), imprisonment (6:5; 11:23), sleep deprivation (6:5; 11:27), hunger (6:5; 11:27), and “labors” (κόπος).

## CONCLUSIONS

In the opening chapter of this project, I briefly described the scholarly debate on the integrity of 2 Corinthians. Various partition theories have been suggested to explain the appearance of four “literary seams” in the letter: between chapters 1-9 and 10-13, between 2:13 and 2:14, between chapters 8 and 9, and between 6:14-7:1 and the material surrounding it. The final seam at 6:14-7:1 is notoriously difficult. Scholars have noted several features of the passage—a shift in tone, unusual vocabulary, a seemingly abrupt divergence from the argument which is resumed equally abruptly, and unusual theological/ethical ideas—which, in the past, led many to conclude the passage was a non-Pauline interpolation or (more specifically) a fragment from an undiscovered Qumranic text.

In recent years, however, the authenticity of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1 has been vigorously defended by scholars using a variety of approaches. A literature review grouped these arguments into three main categories: linguistic approaches, structural/rhetorical approaches, and examinations of LXX influence. At the conclusion of the literature review, I laid out three objectives for my project:

1. Demonstrate that 6:14-7:1 is original to 2 Corinthians and authentically Pauline
2. Defend the minority position that the *apistoi* mentioned in 6:14 are Paul’s rivals in Corinth, the “super-apostles”
3. Fill a gap in the scholarly material by focusing on how 6:14-7:1 is related to Paul’s ongoing anthropological argument in the preceding chapters

To accomplish these objectives, I turned my attention in Chapter 2 to crafting a basic framework for reading 2 Corinthians with an anthropological lens. I began by

offering a brief definition of anthropology and describing how the field's relationship with Christian theology makes it a suitable tool for analyzing Paul's letters if it is utilized appropriately. I then laid out the case for reading 6:14-7:1 anthropologically in a brief excursus. I explained that the LXX background of the command in 6:14 to cease being "improperly yoked" with *apistoi* meant that this command was both a statement about the anthropological incompatibility of the Corinthians and *apistoi* and an attempt to reduce the anthropological ambiguity produced by the two being joined together under a metaphorical yoke. Along with this excursus, I introduced the concept of symbolic boundaries and explained how the separation Paul wanted to establish between the Corinthians and *apistoi* can be described as a symbolic boundary.

The rest of Chapter 2 was devoted to a study of some significant anthropological terms in Paul's letters—*sōma*, *sarx*, *pneuma*, *psychē*, *kardia*, and *syneidēsis*—so that the way 6:14-7:1 functions in its context as an anthropological reflection might become more clear. I extrapolated four methodological principles from this survey.

1. Any study of Pauline anthropology cannot isolate one term or concept from the rest of Paul's anthropological framework, because his understanding of the human person is characterized by interrelation.
2. Because of this tendency toward interrelation, any study of Pauline anthropology should expect some overlap in Paul's use of various terms; one term might be used as a synonym for another or evoke the full significance of a concept not explicitly stated.
3. Even though many of Paul's anthropological concepts are deeply embedded in his worldview, their full significance may not always be readily apparent; any study of Pauline anthropology must identify "veiled" concepts and explain how various concepts amplify one another.
4. Any study of Pauline anthropology must be aware of Paul's rhetorical skill by pointing out his manipulation of terms and concepts for the purposes of a specific argument and identifying the subtleties of said argument.

In Chapter 3, I applied these principles to 2 Corinthians. The contextual analysis of the chapters preceding 6:14-7:1 revealed that the *en Christos* formula represented the symbolic boundary that separated Paul and the Corinthians from Paul's rivals, the super-apostles. To help the Corinthians perceive this boundary, Paul distinguished himself from the super-apostles anthropologically by describing the unique way the Spirit made his very body essential to the Corinthians' receipt of the gospel and ongoing transformation in Christ. While his possession of the Spirit made him (and the Corinthians) part of Christ's body, the super-apostles could never be part of that body or perceive its glory, because they were ministers of a different covenant. Next, a formal analysis of 6:14-7:1 showed that it has its own concentric pattern which fits neatly between 6:13 and 7:2a, providing further evidence for the authenticity of the passage.

The bulk of Chapter 3 was devoted to a detailed analysis of 6:14-7:1. In this portion, I first recalled the brief excursus on 6:14 from Chapter 2, where I argued (as described above) that the Corinthians had transgressed the symbolic boundary between them and *apistoi*, a grave error which Paul wants them to correct. Then, I argued—for contextual and linguistic reasons—that the *apistoi* in 6:14 were indeed the super-apostles, though *double entendre* could expand the category as it is used here to include pagans as well. I subsequently showed how the five antitheses in 6:14b-16b reinforced the symbolic boundary which separated Paul and the Corinthians from the super-apostles by juxtaposing Christ's purity with Beliar's defilement and perversion and identified some intra-textual links which support the passage's authenticity and the integrity of 2 Corinthians. 6:14b-16b was also shown to amplify the eschatological urgency established by Paul's claim in 6:2 that the day of salvation was at hand.

Next, I examined 6:16c-18, where, in a string of LXX citations, Paul further amplified this urgency by connecting the Corinthians' experience with that of ancient Israel. I finally argued that in 7:1, Paul makes use of this urgency to urge the Corinthians to separate themselves from the super-apostles, employing a *double entendre* like that which began the passage by describing their bond as a "defilement of body and spirit." The conclusion of this chapter examined how this passage and the chapters before it are connected to the latter half of the letter.

Now that it has begun, it is unlikely that the debate surrounding the integrity of 2 Corinthians will ever be resolved. It is my hope, though, that this project has demonstrated the benefits of reading 6:14-7:1 as an integral part of 2 Corinthians. There is no real literary seam there; the complete continuity between the anthropological themes of 1:3-6:13 and 6:14-7:1 reveals the fundamental connection between these two sections. It would therefore seem, considering the evidence presented here and elsewhere, that "now is the acceptable time" to move beyond the debate on this passage and concentrate on other issues related to the integrity of 2 Corinthians.



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