Paul's Missionary Strategy and Prayer

John Chung (Kwang Ho Chung)*

*The following article is an edited selection from Dr. Chung's Th.D. thesis, "Paul's Prayer and Mission: A Study of the Significance of Prayer in Paul's Missionary Theology and Praxis, and its Contemporary Relevance." It is of great interest as a teaching tool for classes on the Biblical Theology of Missions. Dr. Chung was born in Seoul, South Korea, and studied at Chongshin University and Seminary (B.A., M.Div.), Kosin University (Th.M.), and the University of Birmingham (Th.D.). He was ordained in 1981 with the Presbyterian Church in Korea and sent as a missionary to Kenya in 1986 where he is currently the Principal at Grace Bible College, Nakuru.

In this article we will investigate Pauline missionary strategy mainly in relation to the prayers of Paul. Certain aspects of the intercessory prayer network of Paul with his churches in his missionary praxis will receive particular attention and help us to reflect on them in relation to the contemporary mission partnership.

In Section I, we will deal with missionary strategy and prayer in terms of the purpose of mission, providence in mission, self-supporting policy, travel, and the methods to maintain Paul's missionary churches. We will find that intercessory prayer is essential to both Pauline missionary strategy and methods and his missionary theology.

In Section II, we will look at two aspects of mission partnership in terms of sharing people and sharing prayers and will emphasize that, even though intercessory prayer is essential to unity in mission, sharing prayer has been neglected in Christian mission in the past.

I. Missionary strategy, methods, and prayer

The term "strategy" implies a complex programme, the total process of a project or an enterprise. For this an aim should be identified and described, a methodology adopted, the means and resources for the methods must be available, and the supervision and evaluation of the

process should be planned and exercised. Dean Gilliland conveys the nature of Paul's missionary strategy through the idea of spiritual warfare:

> The term strategy has been borrowed from the vocabulary of war. Strategy has to do with the conception of a plan before the campaign and its modifications as the war progresses. The parallel is obvious, for the apostle was himself contending in a battle, not with flesh and blood, but against 'the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic power of this dark age' (Eph. 6:10). Evangelism for him was spiritual warfare.[1]

In this spiritual warfare Paul has a strategy in which divine providence and power work with the will and plan of humans. According to Gilliland, "this sensitive combination of the human and the divine could be described as the miracle of mission."[2] Strategy has to do with aims, plans, methods, evaluation, and appreciation of ability and capacity in the field, as well as the detailed preparation of the materials and personal qualities needed for the achievements of the projected programme. Therefore, strategy is built upon the goal,[3] and the whole process would be taken for the goal.

1. Missionary Strategy and prayer

In this section we deal with topics selected specially in their relation to prayer: purpose of mission, providence in mission, missionary travel strategy, and self-supporting policy.

1.1. The purpose of Paul's mission

The ultimate motives of the Pauline mission were based on the divine love of God for humanity and the whole creation; the supreme aim of mission was for the glory of God through the salvation of humankind (individual and social – the Jews and the Gentiles) and the universe.[4] The substance of Paul's gospel as the "gospel of God"[5] and

---

[1] Gilliland, *Pauline Theology & Missionary Practice*, 284.

[2] Gilliland, *Pauline Theology & Missionary Practice*, 284.

[3] A. Moreau, ed., *Evangelical Dictionary of World Mission* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000), 911, defines partly, "conscious strategy would have to build on basic concepts of what the goal is understood to be."

[4] Rom. 1:18-25; 11:33-36; Phi. 2:4ff. See, Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 177ff.; Gilliland, *Pauline Theology& Missionary Practice,* 63-67.

of Christ[6] was given by revelation in his conversion,[7] and the whole complex of the gospel for Paul, according to Beker,

> proclaims the new state of affairs that God has initiated in Christ, one that concerns the nations and the creation. Individual souls and their experience are only important within that worldview context and for the sake of the world … thus he proclaims God's act in Christ as the imminent manifestation of his cosmic, world-encompassing glory.[8]

Paul envisions the redemption of the whole creation, as when he teaches the communal prayer of creation and redemption in the Holy Spirit in calling God "Abba" (Rom. 8).[9] For Paul the doctrine of creation was neither ignored nor was it considered subordinate to the doctrine of redemption, as Ian Barbour criticizes most theologians who "assumed that humanity would be saved from nature, not in and with nature. The created order was too often viewed as the stage or background for the drama of redemption, not as part of that drama."[10] For the above aim he was primarily engaged in planting universal and eschatological churches as the redeemed body of Christ to be the agency for good news and peace for the world, and for the redemption of the creation as the cosmos of Christ through his death and resurrection.[11] I propose to deal with the salvation of humankind, peace for the world, and the transformation of the universe as the supreme aims of Pauline mission outside of this article.

---

[5] Rom. 1:1; 1 Th. 2:2, 8-9; 2 Co. 11:7; Rom. 15:16; 1 Ti. 1:11.

[6] Rom. 15:19; 1 Co. 9:12; 2 Co. 2:12; 4:4; 9:13; 10:14. (Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 8).

[7] Phi. 3:4-6; Rom. 11:12: 1 Co. 9:1; 11:21-22; 15:8-10; Gal. 1:11-2:21. See, Kim, *The Origin of Paul's Gospel,* 28; Segal, *Paul,* 52, 79; B. Gaventa, "The Maternity of Paul, Gal. 4:19," in R. T. Fortna and B. R. Gaventa, eds., *The Conversation Continues: Studies in Paul & John in Honour of J. Louis Martyn* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990), 195.

[8] Beker, *Paul the Apostle*, 8.

[9] N. T. Wright, "Romans," in Leander L. Keck, ed., *The New Interpreter's Bible*, vol. X (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 596, asserts that in Rom. 4:13 "Paul declared that God's promise to Abraham had the whole world in view."

[10] I. Barbour, *Ethics in Age of Technology* (London: SCM, 1992), 77.

[11] Rom. 1:20-25; 8:19-25; 1 Co. 11:24; Col. 1:20.

1.2. Providence in mission

Wayne Grudem defines God's providence as follows: "God is continually involved with all created things in such a way that he (1) keeps them existing and maintaining the properties with which he created them; (2) cooperates with created things in every action, directing their distinctive properties to cause them to act as they do; and (3) directs them to fulfill his purpose."[12] As a Pharisee,[13] Paul believed in providence in his mission.[14] G. Shaw understands that thanksgivings (e.g. 2 Co. 2:14ff.) are "transformed into an assertion of divine guidance."[15] Paul inherited not only the belief of the ancient Israelites that God controls and directs everything,[16] but also the Pharisaic belief

---

[12] W. Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Leicester: IVP, 1994)*,* 315. He depends on the definition of L. Berkhof's *Systematic Theology* (Edinburgh: the Banner of Truth Trust, 1976), 166. P. Fulljames, *God and Creation in Intercultural Perspective* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1993), 28-29, succinctly summarizes Karl Barth's threefold definition of providence: (1) God preserves with fatherly care and protection, (2) God's accompanying human beings, and (3) God's rulership over the world.

[13] Josephus describes the belief of the Pharisees that "when they determine that all things are done by fate, they do not take away the freedom from men of acting as they think fit; since their notion is, that it hath pleased God to make a temperament, whereby what he wills is done, but so that the will of men can act virtuously or viciously" (*Ant,* XVIII, I, 3). The Pharisees "describe all to fate (or providence), and to God, and yet allow, that to act what is right, or the contrary, is principally in the power of men, although fate does cooperate in every action." (Josephus, *War.* II, 8.14).

[14] This providential guidance in the Pauline mission is more clearly reflected in the history of Luke: God is the sovereign Lord. See, Acts 7:35, 42; 13:16-22, 46; 17:26. J. Dunn, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Peterborough: Epworth Press, 1996), xix, both in the creation and in the consummation of the history (Acts 17:31). Mission is under God's initiative (Acts 8:26; 9:10-12; 10:19ff.; 13:1-4; 16:6-10; 19:21; 20:22); visions and prayers as tokens of the divine providence are coined in the speeches – E. Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles,* (Basil Blackwell, 1971), 323 – and they shows the divine initiative in the Gentile mission: Abrahamic vision (Acts 7:2); Peter's (10:9-16); Cornelius' (10:3ff.); seven visions of Paul (9:4ff.; 9:12; 22:17ff.; 16:9; 18:9-11; 23:11; 27:23-26). See, S. Wilson, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Cambridge: CUP, 1973), 177.

[15] G. Shaw, *The Cost of Authority: Manipulation and Freedom in the New Testament* (London: SCM, 1983)*,* 102.

[16] E.g., the hardening of the heart of Pharaoh in Ex. 7:3; for man's success in Deu. 8:18; 2 Sa. 24:1; 1 Ki. 22:21; for divine guidance in Gen. 50:20; Psa. 37:23; Ecc. 8:12; Jer. 10:23; Sir. 39:24-27.

in providence.[17] Paul shares the Jewish belief that prayers are answered in the light of providence, though the answers are conditional.[18] Prayer is tuned into the symphony of providential conduct. It is neither demanding nor commanding God to do what people want, as Moore says about Jewish prayer:

> Prayer essentially differs from an incantation or a magical formula, which is imagined to be efficacious in and of itself to attain the desired end. The experience of all religions which attained to the higher conception of prayer with which we have been dealing proves how difficult it is for the mass of men to expel from their minds the delusion that prayer is an efficacious means of moving God to do what the petitioner wants, rather than the submission of his desires to the wiser goodness of God.[19]

To believe in the providence of God denies fatalistic pessimism with doubts and worries and stirs the faith and hope which are mingled in his prayer. Prayer for Paul was a means of his belief and hope in the divine providence (Rom. 8:28), as he brings the concept of providence and divine love in the Theo-Christo-Pneumato-Cosmic prayer text of Romans 8:15-38. Peter Baelz asserts that prayer is "divine-human confrontation and for divine-human co-operation" and "a creative participation in divine activity."[20] Dependence upon God's grace for the forgiveness of sins and a sense of great humility in the heart are felt in the presence of God in prayer, in which the Rabbis believed they stood as the covenantal elect as the foundation of their faith and hope in God's promises.[21] The Essenes also believed and prayed that God had plans and worked for them: "Blessed be the God of Israel…He has let us know the great plans of his intellect…the lots of light so that we may

---

[17] See, L. Finkelstein, *The Pharisees: The Social Background of their Faith,* vol. I-II (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, [1938] 1940), 5700 (Jewish calendar), 196ff.

[18] G. Moore, *Judaism in the First Century of the Christian Era,* 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, [1927] 1966), II, 231.

[19] Moore, *Judaism,* II, 234.

[20] Baelz, *Prayer and Providence,* 7ff.

[21] E. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism: A Comparison of Patterns of Religion* (London: SCM, 1977), 233.

know the signs…"[22] Prayer is an undergirding and interweaving of human and divine will.[23] Paul's belief in providence is explicitly expressed in his travel catalogues[24] to which we now turn.

1.3. Missionary travel strategy and prayer

There are three main elements in Paul's missionary travel strategy: (1) according to historical contexts, (2) under a biblical trajectory, and (3) by prayer.

1.3.1   According to historical contexts:

In terms of urban mission and travel strategy in the political and geographical vision of Roman empire, Paul's strategy was mission from the major cities to lesser cities, towns, and villages.[25] Martin Dibelius writes that Paul "himself was content to conduct his mission in a few towns, most of which were communication centres; from there the gospel was carried further afield by others."[26] Hengel reaffirms the travel route of Paul:

> His travel strategy is oriented in the names of the Roman provinces – starting from Judea with its capital Jerusalem (Rom. 15:25), through the double province of Syria and Cilicia, Galatia … Asia, Macedonia and Achaia (Rom. 15:26), going on to Illyricum (15:19). Here he concentrates on the provincial capitals, and it is probably no coincidence that Roman colonies like Antioch in Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, Troas and Philippi also play an important role.[27]

"The Jews First" in the urban metropolis is Paul's policy in missions (Rom.1:16) – the Jews heard the gospel first (Rom. 8:14). Paul took the

---

[22] *DSS,* 4Q503. Frags. 51-55 in Florentino Garcia Martinez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Translated: The Qumran Texts in English,* trans. Wilfred G. E. Watson (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996).

[23] Prayer is the best combination of human effort and divine works (Col. 1:29, cf. Phi. 2:12ff.), C. Moule, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon* (Cambridge: CUP, 1957), 85.

[24] "By God's will" (Rom. 1:10; 15:32; 1 Co. 4:19; Phi. 2:24, cf. Act. 18:21; Heb. 6:3), with "the Lord's permission" (1 Co. 16:7), by divine direction (1 Th. 3:11), and "by revelation" (Gal. 2:2).

[25] D. Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 129; M. Hengel, *Pre-Christian Paul* (London: SCM, 1991), 92; Meeks, *The First Urban Christians,* 40-50.

[26] M. Dibelius, *Paul* (London: Longamns, 1957), 68.

[27] Hengel, *Pre-Christian Paul,* 10ff.

Jewish synagogue[28] congregations in the major cities of the Roman provinces and their centres (1 Co. 16:1-19; Rom. 15:19) as stepping stones to make a contact point (2 Co. 11:24ff.). It means a temporal sequence – first the Jews, then the Gentiles – but it does not mean the subordination of the Gentiles to the Jews who had privileges (Rom. 9:4-5) in their status and positions but as for the source of the gospel for the Gentiles who are the "debtors" (Rom. 15:27).

1.3.2   Under a biblical trajectory:

Rainer Riesner[29] argues convincingly that Paul had a "geographic framework of the mission" "from Jerusalem as far round as Illyricum" (Rom. 15:19).[30] According to Riesner, this eschatological perspective on missionary travel strategy and church establishment, along with the missionary field demarcation (Gal. 2:7ff.), was prefigured in Isa. 49:6, which is "a decisive text for Paul's theological understanding of the Damascus-event," and Isa. 66:18-21 which "provides a more specific geographic description within the context of eschatological hope for the Gentiles."[31]   Paul as "a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (Rom. 15:16) read this text as being fulfilled in his Gentile mission to the nations who had not heard God's fame and glory (Isa. 66:19, cf. Rom. 15:20: "where the name Christ has not yet been named"). Wayne Meeks regards Rome as central to Paul's missionary direction, when he says:

> Paul's mental world is that of the Greek-speaking eastern provinces, specially that of the Greek-speaking Jew. Still it is a Roman world – the existence of this letter and the travel plans outline in its chapter 15 indicate how central Rome is, even to one who at this moment is worried about Jerusalem – even though it is Rome as seen from the cities of the East.[32]

---

[28] Paul does not use the word 'synagogue' in his letters, but his contacts with synagogues were not in doubt. See, Meeks, *The First Urban Christians,* 26-27, 39.

[29] Riesner, *Paul's Early Period*, 241.

[30] ὥστε με ἀπὸ Ἰερουσαλὴμ καὶ κύκλῳ μέχρι τοῦ Ἰλλυρικοῦ πεπληρωκέναι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

[31] Riesner, *Paul's Early Period*, 244-245.

[32] Meeks, *The First Urban Christians,* 50.

This geographical and biblical vision provides the stages upon which Paul endeavoured to organize his collection in his priestly ministry (Rom. 15:14-29).

We turn to Paul's final destination: Rome or Jerusalem or Spain? In the light of the eschatological fulfillment of the Old Testament, there is a positive direction to new places (Rom. 15:14-22). Paul's goal is to preach the gospel where Christ was not preached in order to avoid building on another's foundation and to fulfill the prophecy of the Old Testament (Isa. 52:15),[33] by proclaiming Christ to those who have never seen or heard him. New places were intended in the light of an eschatological missionary perspective,[34] because churches in new places are his joy, hope, glory, and crown of boasting in the day of the Lord (1 Th. 2:19-20). Johannes Munck argued against the theory of the Tübingen school that the conflict between Paul and Jerusalem fixed Paul's eyes on Rome as the destiny of his missionary journey, and stressed that Paul's eyes were always upon Jerusalem and that only later did he develop his journey to Rome to stand before the Emperor, when he made his apology in Jerusalem.[35] But this view is only partly correct. My thesis is that Spain was the final destiny of Paul's journey (Rom. 15:28); Rome was a stepping-stone to Spain; he wanted to be sped on his journey by the Christians in Rome where he hoped to spend only a little time (Rom. 15:24). This centrifugal[36] direction which is projected by the Old Testament, as one of two directions, centripetal and centrifugal, was the foundation of Paul's consistent policy, which was not to establish new churches on the foundations of others (Rom. 15:20).

1.3.3   By prayer:

Paul always had purposes for his missionary journeys, for example, for supplying their deficiencies (1 Th. 3:10-11), for benefits for the Corinthians (2 Co. 1:15ff., 13:2), for sharing spiritual gifts (Rom. 1:11) for mutual strength and encouragement, for successful delivery of the collection (Rom 15:30-32), and for evangelism and preaching (Eph.

---

[33] T. Schreiner, *Paul: Apostle of God's Glory in Christ* (Leicester: IVP, 2001), 60.

[34] O. Cullmann, *Salvation in History* (London: SCM, 1965), 307.

[35] Munck, *Paul and Salvation of Mankind,* 282ff.

[36] See, J. Blauw, *The Missionary Nature of the Church: A Survey of the Biblical Theology of Mission* (London: Lutterworth, 1962), 31-54, characterized missionary aspect of the Old Testament as centripetal, while mission in the New Testament as centrifugal, which seems too artificial.

6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4). The word "gift" (χάρισμα) is used in Romans in several different ways,[37] and here it is probably better to take the word in a more general sense as denoting a blessing or benefit to be bestowed on the Christians in Rome by God through Paul's presence. By the imparting of the gift they may strengthen each other in faith and obedience, as John Calvin comments:

> Note how modestly he expresses what he feels by not refusing to seek strengthening from inexperienced beginners. He means what he says, too, for there is none so void of gifts in the Church of Christ who cannot in some measure contribute to our spiritual progress. Ill will and pride, however, prevent our deriving such benefit from one another.[38]

Paul always organized group travels; larger lists of travel companions[39] clearly indicate the group travels of Paul. There are two important benefits of group tours – practical and theological. Ronald Hock gives some advantages of such travel: it provides "greater safety" and "opportunities to engage in various intellectual pursuits" with conversations, discussions, and reading on sea voyages.[40] We can confidently presume that Paul and his friends were engaged in letter-

---

[37] (i) It denotes generally God's gracious gift in Jesus Christ (Rom. 5:15,16; 6:23). (ii) In the plural it denotes the gracious gifts bestowed by God on Israel (Rom. 11:29). (iii) It denotes a special gift or endowment bestowed on a member of the Church by God in order that it may be used by that member in his service and in the service of men (Rom. 12:6, cf. 1 Co.12-14), Cranfield, *Romans,* I, 79.

[38] J. Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul to the Romans and Thessalonians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1960), 24.

[39] 2Co. 1:19; Col. 4:10; 1 Th. 2: 17ff.; 3:1-13; Phm. 23-24; 2 Ti. 4:11; cf. Act. 15:40; 16:3ff.; 20:4, 38; 21:16. See the "We passages" in the Book of Acts 16:10-17; 20:5-16; 21:1-8; 27:1-28:16. Even if the "We passages" were not securely regarded as by a companion of Paul, they nevertheless give some insight into how the ancients thought. Cf. traditional view that the author of the Book of Acts was one of the companions of Paul (e.g., F. F. Bruce, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Leicester, IVP, 1952), 1-9; *contra* H. Cadbury, "'We' and 'I' passages in Luke-Acts," *NTS,* 1957, 128-32; *The Making of Luke-Acts* (Peabody: Hendricksen, [1927] 1958), 351- 360; Haenchen, *The Acts of the Apostles,* 489-491, regards "we" "as a very forceful stylistic device." (491)

[40] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 28ff.

writing,[41] evangelism, and prayer (e.g., 1 Th. 3:1-13), with avoidance of esoteric individuality and as the reality of the communal body of Christ.

Causes and hindrances for a mission journey are:

(1) Positive cause "by God's will,"[42] with "the Lord's permission" (1 Co. 16:7), in divine direction (1T h. 3:11), and "by revelation" (Gal. 2:2). Paul's prayer does not mean to change or to alter or to bend God's will to human desires and needs, but to agree with God's sovereign plan for his missionary movements. He was sometimes not sure that the desire and request for his missionary trip were God's will, and he had been prevented from going (Rom. 1:13), but he did not cease to entertain his desire until he had been persuaded that it was consonant with the revealed will of God. He resigned himself completely to the will of God in this matter[43] with his acknowledgement that God is the author of the order of all events (Rom. 11:36). Before the letter to the Romans was completed, Paul was given divine assurance of his request being granted (Rom. 15:28-33).

(2) Negative hindrance by Satan (1 Th. 2:18): the delay to visit Rome (Rom. 1:8-17) was not the hindrance by Satan as in 1Th. 2:18, but the activity of evangelization (Rom. 15:22) in the sense of missionary employment of more urgent business, which he could not have neglected in an open mission field.[44] Satan's hindrances might be Paul's "thorn in flesh" (2 Co. 12:7) or Satan's destruction of the spiritual life of the converts or "the exigencies of his mission at the time being"[45] (Moffat). This is an apocalyptic aspect of struggle and opposition in Pauline mission, in which Satan employs his instruments like "the principalities," "the powers," "the world rulers," "the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 6:12).

---

[41] Pauline letters were products of group works (1Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:1; Phi. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1Th. 1:1; 2 Th. 1:1; Phm. 1).

[42] Rom. 1:10; 15:32; 1 Co. 4:19; Phi. 2:24; cf. Act.19:21; 20:22ff.; Heb. 6:3; cf. apostleship given by the will of God (2 Co. 1:1).

[43] J. Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans,* NICNT, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959-65), 21.

[44] Cf. Calvin, *Romans,* 25.

[45] J. Frame, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians,* ICC, (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1912), 121.

For prayer request for safe travel (Rom. 15:30-31),[46] Paul did not forget Jewish examples of a Jewish prayer before a journey, [47] and Jews of Paul's day were well aware of the truth that "man proposes, God disposes:"[48] "May it be Thy will, O Lord my God, to lead me forth in peace, and direct my steps in peace..." (*M. Berakoth,* 29b). Paul in his travel catalogues requests financial support for travel, with supplies and equipment and with prayers and goodwill for himself, [49] and for his assistances (1 Co. 16:11b). Paul used an ancient traveling term, Προπέμπω[50], which means "accompany, escort" or "help one's journey with food, money, by arranging for companions, means of travel, etc."[51] Thus human companionship and financial co-operation were balanced in their sending with their mutual prayers. To sum up, the Pauline missionary journey was guided by the three fundamental guidelines: the Roman map, the Old Testament, and prayer.

1.4. Self-supportive, dependence policies, and prayer

Paul's self-supportive policy goes hand in hand with his triangular dependency on God and the support of his churches, in which both vertical and horizontal resources are cultivated in his prayer.

---

[46] Paul does not have explicit prayers for safe journey, but there is no doubt about the aims of Paul when he prayed in Miletus for sailing for Jerusalem (Acts 20:36; 21:5), Johnston, *Prayer in Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha,* 13.

[47] Jacob's vow for a safe journey (Gen. 28:20-22); Ezra's fasting and prayer for the safe journey (Ezra 8:21-23); αἰτησον for the guidance and successful ending (Tob. 4:19; 11:1); Abraham's prayer for guidance and protection of God on the way (Jub. 12:21) and thanks for the safe journey from Ur to Canaan (Jub. 13:7) and from Egypt (Jub. 13:15), Johnston, *Prayer in Apocrypha,* 13.

[48] Cranfield, *Romans.* 78. cf. Jam. 4:15.

[49] Rom. 15:24; 1 Co.16:6; 2 Co.1:16.

[50] Rom. 15:24; 1 Co. 16:6; 16:11; 2 Co. 1:16, cf. Act. 20:38; 21:5. Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 86ff., stresses that Luke used Προπέμπω as "a fixed missionary terminology." C. Dodd grasped the implication, in his *The Epistle to the Romans* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1932), 229: "Thus the expression seems to have been almost a technical term with a well-understood meaning among missionaries. Paul is hinting that he would like the church of Rome to take some responsibility for his Spanish mission, so that he can start work in the west with their moral support at least, and possibly with some contribution form them in assistance or funds."

[51] Bauer, 709. It also means to "send on one's way" (1 Ma. 12:4; 1 Es. 4:47; Epistle of Aristeas 172).

1.4.1. Ronald Hock classifies four means of support[52] which sustained Greco-Roman philosophers in Paul's time: (1) charging fees (μισθοί) by Sophists, which was criticized by Socrates,[53] (2) entering the households of the rich and powerful, (3) begging, by some of homeless and shameless Cynics, and (4) work, on the part of Cynics who were popularly self-sufficient enough to give a philosopher freedom.[54] We will argue that Paul's survival methods were mainly two types: self-supporting in principle and dependence in unavoidable situations.

1.4.2. Paul supported his missionary works by the work of his hands.[55] He must have learnt his trade from his father, according to both Jewish custom,[56] from the practice of the Pharisees,[57] and from the typical practice of Greco-Roman society.[58] Paul as a Roman citizen[59] could also enjoy "freedom from tribute (*aneisphoria*)."[60] While Luke

---

[52] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 52ff.

[53] Socrates and his men's policy of self-support: for "the acquisition of virtue" – Philo, *On Providence* (Fragment II), 750 – they were contented with a little (*Op. cit.,* 755), and also wished to preserve their freedom and to erase the motives of deceit and avarice (Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 53).

[54] A. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 11-24; Meggitt, *Paul, Poverty and Survival,* 155; Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,*53.

[55] 1 Co. 4:12; 1 Th. 2:9; cf. Act. 18:3; 19:11-12; 20:34.

[56] "Whoever does not teach his son a craft teaches him to be a robber" (*B. Qidd.* 1.11). "Excellent is the study of Torah together with the practice of a trade" (*M. Aboth* 2:2).

[57] E.g., The Hillels and Joshua ben Hananyas labored all day in their smithy and workshop and studied in the evenings and Sabbaths (Finkelstein, *The Pharisees,* 221).

[58] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 23.

[59] Cf. Act. 16:37ff.; 22:25-9; 23:27.

[60] Emil Schürer describes general legal privileges of Roman citizens: (1) "freedom from tribute (*aneisphoria*)" (2) freedom from flogging or executing, (3) "exemption from city magistrates or Roman officials, from torture and from cruel or humiliating forms of execution such as crucifixion," (4) the right of appeal against capital sentences and right to appeal to the emperor, (5) the right to stand trial in Rome. See, E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C. - A.D. 135),* revised and eds. G. Vermes, M. Black, F. Millar, M. Goodman, and P. Vermes, 3 vols. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1973-1987), III, 134ff.

identifies Paul's trade as a tentmaker (Act. 18:3: σκηνοποιός),[61] Paul did not indicate the nature of his work except that he worked with his hands. The traditional view on the nature of Paul's trade was that he was a weaver of tentcloth from *cilicium* (goats' hair), but the view today is that Paul was making tents of leather.[62] Ronald Hock denies the conventional view that Paul learned his trade with his education at the foot of Gamaliel (Acts 22:3).[63] For Paul, working as a leatherworker at his tent-making in his workshop[64] as a means of self-support was not at the periphery of his missionary activities, but was central to them, as Hock is convinced that "workshop conversations with fellow workers, customers, or those who stopped by might easily have turned into occasions for informal evangelization."[65]

1.4.3. The reasons for Paul's *refusal* of the apostolic right to receive financial support are as follows:

(1) Because of parental affection for his converts,[66] Paul did not like to make any financial burden on the new converts (2 Th. 3:8).[67]

(2) For an exemplary instruction to the church by working himself (2 Th. 3:7-9). Paul's paraenesis "to work with your hands" (1Th. 4:10-12) was based on the Jewish regard for the value of toil and the current ethics of Hellenistic moralists who practiced self-supporting works without need of anything (cf. 1

---

[61] In the NT σκηνοποιός occurs only in Acts 18:3. It denotes "a leather-worker" rather than the conventional term for a weaver of tent-fabric or carpet, which is a coarse clothe woven from goat's hair, and which the Romans called *cilicium,* because it was made in Cilicia (W. Michaelis, σκηνοποιός, *TDNT,* VII, 393ff.).

[62] Michaelis, σκηνοποιός, *TDNT,* VII, 393ff. , also Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 20-25.

[63] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 20-25, asserts that Paul's apprenticeship was from his father, *contra* Michaelis, *TDNT,* VII, 394, denies the hypothesis.

[64] Paul utilized the workshop, where the artisan-philosophers like the Cynics engaged in their intellectual and philosophical discussions, as the place for his evangelistic discussions of the gospel with fellow workers and customers, etc. (Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry*, 41).

[65] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 68. See also, 16, 25, 67.

[66] 1 Th. 2:7-12; 2 Co. 12:14ff., cf. 11:11. Cf. Holmberg, *Paul and Power,* 89.

[67] Cf. Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours,* 49-61.

Th. 4:12),[68] and directed against the idleness which was due to the Thessalonian belief in the imminent Parousia.

(3) To avoid the hindrance to the Gospel of Christ (1 Co. 9:12). He did not want to be misunderstood as a sophist, who peddles his teaching and miracles (2 Co. 2:17: "peddlers of God's word").[69] He wanted to erase the impression of greed,[70] because he was attacked as preaching for monetary gain.[71] He did not use godliness as a means to financial gain (1 Ti. 6:5-10), and he was contented with all situations (Phi. 4:12). He did not receive support from the church where there was a lack of mutual trust between the church and him, i.e., the church in Corinth.[72] This model created a criterion for the true or false preacher in the Early Church: "And, when the apostle goes forth, let him take nothing save bread, till he reach his lodging, but if he asks money, he is a false prophet," (*Didache,* xi. 6); "but whosoever shall say in the spirit: Give me money, or any other thing, ye shall not hearken to him, but if he bid you give for others that are in need, let no man judge him." (*Didache,* xi. 12).

(4) Because he had received a special commission under obligation.[73] The commission is laid on him, not by his will. If it is by his will, he deserves a reward, but it was impossible to reject it (Rom. 1:14; Gal. 1:15). It is God's business – to preach the Gospel voluntarily (free of charge) is the ground of Paul's boasting (1 Co. 9:15; 2 Co. 11:7, 10) and is its own reward (1 Co. 9:17). Like an athlete and a boxer (2 Co. 9:24-26), Paul was a competitor himself. His effective preaching and

---

[68] Cf. Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 43-47. Hock asserts that Paul's teaching depended on the current ethics of Hellenistic moralists.

[69] Cf. 1 Th. 2:5; 2 Co. 11:20; 12:14b, 17.

[70] 2 Co. 12:14, cf. Act. 20:33-34. 1 Th. 2:5. Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul or Ours,* 49-61; J. Everts, "Financial support," in G. F. Hawthorne, R. P. Martin, & D.G. Reid, eds., *DPL*, (Downers Grove, Ill./Leicester: IVP, 1993), 299; Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 48.

[71] 1 Th. 2:9; 1 Co. 4:12; 9:3-18; 2 Co. 12:13ff. See, Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers,* 45-48, for comparison of Paul with the Cynics with their boldness, deception, guile, personal gain, greed, flattery, and personal glory.

[72] Cf. 1 Co.1:12; 4:3,8-13; 9:2-3; 2 Co.6:11-13; 10:6a; 13:3 (Holmberg, *Paul and Power,* 92).

[73] 1 Co. 9:16-18, cf. Act. 9:15; 13:2; 22:21.

miracles[74] would avail nothing if he has broken the rules of the course.[75]

(5) He had consciousness of being a slave to all for the sake of the Gospel (1 Co. 9:19, 23), as Robertson and Plummer comment that "He is the slave of Christ, and becomes a slave to others, in order, like a faithful steward, to make gains for his master."[76] A servant has no claim! (1 Co. 4:1, 10-13; cf. Luk. 17: 7-10). He knew that the Gospel of Christ as the gospel of Jesus' sacrificial love was a free gift (2 Co. 11:9). He wants to become a sharer of the blessings of the gospel (1 Co. 9:23).

To sum up, the main elements for the refusal of apostolic rights are parental care and affection for the new converts, a proper work ethic, financially transparent stewardship, the divine commission to preach, faithful service for Christ, and the heavenly reward for his hard work. The hardship of Paul as a tentmaker is involved in his weakness (1Co. 2:3), his preparedness to be a slave to all (1 Co. 9:19), and his humiliation (2 Co. 11:7).[77] Paul believed himself to have been approved and commissioned as an apostle with responsibility for preaching, teaching, warning, exhorting, guiding, praying and if necessary, disciplining the churches. But he tried to exercise the apostolic authority in the lowliness and loving self-giving that had been demonstrated in the obedience of Jesus Christ (Phi. 2:1ff.). He tried to abstain from exercising this apostolic right (e.g., 2 Co. 9), because he tried to identify with his churches in their difficulties and tribulations in the last days.

1.4.4. On the other hand, it is worth noting different aspects of Paul's use of the apostolic rights to *receive* financial support:

(1) Paul, in his thanksgiving (Phi. 1:3-11), thanks God for mutual κοινωνία of the Philippians with remembrance of their missionary and financial support, which produces his εὐχαριστία τῷ θεῷ.[78]

---

[74] 1 Co. 10:9-11; 14:18-19; 2 Co..12:12; Rom.15:18-19; Gal. 3:5.

[75] A. Robertson and A. Plummer, *1 Corinthians, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the First Epistle of St Paul to the Corinthians,* International Critical Commentary (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1914), 197.

[76] Robertson and Plummer, *1 Corinthians,* 191.

[77] Hock, *The Social Context of Paul's Ministry,* 65.

[78] G. Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, SNTSMS 92 (Cambridge: CUP, 1997), 98.

(2) Paul received support from the churches which he founded in order to teach the significance of "financial partnership"[79] that the church has the character of missionary support (Phi. 2:25; 4:15-18).

(3) Paul received support when the relation between the church and himself had developed into a full, trusting κοινωνία.[80]

(4) When he had no means of earning self-support, he received offerings as mutual sacrificial offerings (Phi. 2:17), like "a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God" (Phi. 4:18).

(5) Paul was prepared to collect financial support for public charity and asked the Corinthians for their offerings for public fund-raising (1 Co. 16:1-4; 2 Co. 8-9), which will result in thanksgiving to God (2 Co. 9:11-12, 15) .

(6) He asked for assistance for his missionary journey.[81]

In summary, Paul, as a receiver of δόμα, regards κοινωνία δόματος which G. Peterman calls "an act of true spiritual worship,"[82] in which he had shared with his wish-prayer that God, who is a great Benefactor, will repay them (Phi. 4:19), because Paul is not able to repay them.[83] Thus, we are convinced that exchange of intercession and offering is their mutual Parousia in their worship. Now let us turn to key methods for the maintenance of missionary churches and to observe how an intercessory prayer network is important for the Pauline missionary method.

2. Methods for the maintenance of Paul's missionary churches and prayer

How could Paul help the newly established churches to grow in strength continually? What part did the prayers of Paul and his churches play within the Pauline missionary strategy? I will survey five key methods Paul applied for the management of his churches: to re-

---

[79] Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, 146-153.

[80] From the churches of Galatia (1 Co. 16:1) and Macedonian churches (2 Co. 11:8; Phi. 2:25; 4:15).

[81] Rom. 15:24; 1 Co. 16:6; 16:11; 2 Co. 1:16; cf. Act. 20:38; 21:5.

[82] Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, 155.

[83] Gift which is given to the poor as a second party is considered as a loan to God as a third party, cf. Pro. 19:17. No reward is here expected from the receiver, Paul, but from God, which is different from Greco-Roman concept that all rewards return from the receiver (Peterman, *Paul's Gift from Philippi*, 156).

visit the churches, to send delegates, to write letters, to generate the collection project, and to formalize the network of intercessory prayers between himself and the churches. We will see again that Pauline prayers penetrate the entire content of his missionary theology and practice.

Bengt Holmberg developed his thesis on how Paul's power was exercised in his churches[84] on the basis of Robert W. Funk's theory of the three forms of Paul's presence: "the aspect of the letter, the apostolic emissary, and his own personal presence," of which "the presence of Paul in person will be the primary medium by which he makes his apostolic authority effective…Letter and envoy will be substitutes…."[85] I follow up Robert Funk's and Bengt Holmberg's theses on these forms of Paul's relations to his local church in the exercise of his authority with two additional strategies: to re-visit and to formalize the network of intercessory prayers.[86] The three forms mentioned are thoroughly discussed in their sociological aspects by Holmberg, and I avoid duplication here, but develop the relationship of Paul with his church missiologically.

2.1. Revisiting the churches

It was Paul's regular practice to revisit his newly founded churches for missionary pastoral care.

2.1.1. Paul always had a purpose of revisiting.[87] Examples include his visit to the Thessalonians for supplying their deficiencies (1 Th. 3:10); to the Corinthians for bringing some benefit (2 Co. 1:15ff.), for disciplinary purpose (2 Co. 13:2), and to receive some kind of support

---

[84] Holmberg, *Paul and Power*, 74-93.
[85] Robert W. Funk, "The Apostolic Parousia: Form and Significance" in *Christian History and Interpretation.* F. S. J. Knox and Farmer-Moule-Niebuhr, eds. (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), 249, 268 (from Holmberg, *Paul and Power*,73ff.).
[86] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 296ff.
[87] Compare in Acts: (1) Strengthening and encouraging the disciples to remain true to faith. Paul provided doctrinal and ethical instruction (Act. 14:21-22; 18:23;20:2); (2) to supervise and check the progress of the gospel (Act. 15:36); (3) to deliver the decision of the church council in Jerusalem (Act. 16:4); (4) to remove any misunderstanding for the unity between the Jewish Christians and the Gentiles and the freedom of the gospel with some ethical practices (Act. 15:20).

for his missionary journey (2 Co. 1:16);[88] and to the Philippians for mutual progress, joy in the faith, and glory in Christ (Phi. 1:25ff.).

2.1.2. Paul's intention in abstaining from revisiting was that the exercise of his authority should not be misused and that he should not lord it over their faith, but remain as their co-worker (2 Co. 1:23ff.).

2.2. The team operation of the delegates

In absentia, Paul sent his co-workers as corporate witnesses with their corporate wisdom and corporate prayer-power to the newly established churches. The groups and functions of the delegates were various.

2.2.1 W. H. Ollrog gives three groups:[89] (1) the most intimate circle: Barnabas; Silvanus; Timothy, as a brother (2 Co. 1:1); and Titus (2 Co. 8:23a), as a very earnest, reliable and valuable associate (2 Co. 7:6-7, 13-15);[90] (2) the "independent co-workers": Priscilla and Aquila; (3) the representatives from local churches: Epaphroditus (a financial supporter, Phi. 2:25-29), Epaphras, Aristarchus, Gaius, and Jason. Ecclesiastically mission partners, representing their churches and being responsible for the cooperative mission of Paul and the local churches. Through their delegates the churches themselves become partners in Paul's mission. Theologically they are engaged in the mission as a function of the church.[91]

2.2.2 The five functions of the delegates I table here are:
   (1) They are *the eschatological co-founders* (1 Co. 4:1-9) of the churches and co-workers with Paul and God to carry out the saving plan of God in the present eschatological interim. They

---

[88] Though this visit was very painful to Paul (2 Co. 2:1; cf. 2 Co.12:14; 13:1).

[89] W. Olllrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 92-106 (from Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 132), See, E. Ellis, "Paul and his co-workers," *NTS* 17, 1971, 437-452, and also in *DPL*, 183-189 for detailed identity and classification of the coworkers.

[90] In respect of church pastors, cf. Tychicus at Ephesus (2 Ti. 4:12), Carpus at Troas (2 Ti. 4:13). Also Paul's bad companions: Phygelus and Hermogenes (2 Ti. 1:15), opposed by Alexander the coppersmith (2 Ti. 4:10); forsaken by the colleagues (2 Ti. 4:10).

[91] W. Olllrog, *Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter*, (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag), 125, 131ff., 234ff., from, Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 132.

knew where they stood and what they worked for and with whom they worked. What does it mean that he completed the evangelization from Jerusalem to Illyricum (Rom. 15:19)? He established the churches in those areas through his disciple-colleagues by means of their preaching and teaching.

(2) They are the *co-authors, co-senders, and deliverers* of Paul's letters,[92] and stood for the content of the letters. They were strategically sent to the church and set up a mission base for perspective missionary enterprise, e.g. Phoebe[93] (Rom. 16:1-2).

(3) They are the *financial managers* in Pauline missionary enterprise, dealing with finances.[94] Paul delegated the collection of the offerings to his colleagues: Titus, whom the Corinthians loved and trusted, and two other brothers of the churches, Timothy (1 Co. 16:10; Phi. 2:19-22) and Apollos (1 Co. 16:1-2). These were not newcomers but renowned in all the churches and men of integrity (2 Co. 8:18-19). Paul followed the pattern of the Jewish practice of the delivery of the temple tax from the Jewish Diaspora to the temple in Jerusalem. As Philo says, "… at certain seasons there are sacred ambassadors selected on account of their virtue, who convey the offerings to the temple."[95] Paul maintained his integrity in money affairs as he dealt with public money by inviting his colleagues to be involved in it as witnesses together in the principle of *coram deo* (Rom. 12:17; cf. Pro. 3:4).[96] Paul believed that his colleagues were men without impropriety and suspicion.

(4) They are the *protectors* of the churches. They instructed them to follow the ways of Paul as he himself had taught them in that very congregation (1 Co. 4:17), and to work together "in the same spirit" and "the same steps" (2 Co. 12:18). They were the wings of the Apostle to protect the faith of newly born converts against persecutions (1 Th. 3:2-5).

---

[92] E. Ellis, "Coworkers, Paul and his," in *DPL*, 188. Timothy in 2 Co. 1:1; Phi. 1:1; Plm. 1; Silvanus and Timothy in 1 & 2 Th. 1:1; Sostenes in 1Co. 1:1 are mentioned in the salutation of Paul's letters.

[93] Jewett, "Paul, Phoebe, and the Spanish Mission," 142-161, treats insightfully Phoebe's role in Spanish mission strategy of Paul, as the bearer of the Letter to the Romans, for cultivating moral and logistical supports from house-churches in Rome.

[94] 2 Co. 8:16-24; 12:16-18; cf. Act. 20:4.

[95] Philo, *Special Laws*, I, 78, in *The Works of Philo: Complete and Unabridged,* trans. C. Yonge (Hendrickson, 1998).

[96] Hughes, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 317.

(5) They are the *eschatological companions* of missionary sufferings[97] in which they depended on God (2 Co. 1:9ff.) and expected future glory.[98]

2.3 Through the Letters

The ancient letter style contained the complex prescripts – thanksgiving and prayers in Greek, Babylonian and Assyrian letters. Greek and Semitic letters contain introductory and closing assurance of the writer's constant prayers for the health and general welfare of the readers.[99] The Pauline letters contain greetings, teachings (doctrinal and ethical), the deep missionary concerns and affection of Paul (Gal. 4:19; 1 Th. 2:7-11), and his intercessions for the churches. The letters were substitutes for Paul's personal presence among the churches in his absence[100] and also for his personal activity in the cases of Thessalonians[101] and also of Romans, whose letter was written when Paul was going to Jerusalem, where he might be ending his missionary life and career with possible imprisonment and death at the hands of unbelieving Jews.[102]

The parousia of Paul in written form is reflected in the various functions of the letters:

2.3.1. Their *social* functions, according to Heikki Koskenniemi's points of the communal feature, are (a) to maintain "the friendly relationship", (b) as a *parousia* his physical presence *in absentia*, and (c) as a form of homiletic-cum-dialogue.[103] Paul had a lively feeling of

---

[97] Rom. 8:17; 1 Co. 4:9-13; 2 Co. 1:5-10; 1 Th. 2:2, 15ff.; 3:7, cf. Act. 17:1-9. See, S. Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle: The portrait of Paul in the Miletus speech and 1 Thessalonians,* SNTSMS 108 (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), 163-67, esp. 165, n. 129 for the consistent use of 'us' as Paul and his companions in 1 Thessalonians.

[98] Rom. 5:3; 8:17ff.; Phi. 3:10; 1 Th. 4:15-18; 5:9-11, cf. Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle,* 184.

[99] Cf. J. Weima, *Neglected Endings: The Significance of the Pauline Letter Closings,* JSNTSS. 101 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 29-76.

[100] 1 Co. 5:3-5; 2Co. 10:11-12; Col. 2:5; Gal. 4:20.

[101] 1 Th. 2:17; 3:1-3, 6,10ff. Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle,* 147, 156.

[102] Rom. 15:31a; cf. Acts 19:21; 20:22-25; 21:4-14. Chae, *Paul as Apostle to the Gentiles,* 15-17.

[103] Heikki Koskenniemi, *Studien zur Idee und Phraseologie des griechischen Briefes bis 400 n. Chr.* (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedeakatemie, 1956), from W. Doty, *Letters in Primitive Christianity* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973), 11-13. Cf. 2 Co. 10:10-11.

unity with the congregations, and his letters were regarded by Martin as " an extension of his person, a means of conveying apostolic authority, and a vivid realization of the closeness of the bond that united apostle and congregation."[104]

2.3.2. Their *paraenetic* (ethical exhortation and instruction) function is to equip the congregations with continuing instructions (Rom. 15:15). Calvin Roetzel noticed at least three different types of paraenesis in Paul's letters: (a) "the cluster of unrelated moral maxims" (e.g., Rom. 12:9-13); (b) "lists of virtues and vices" (e.g., Gal. 5:19-23); and (c) "a prolonged exhortation or homily on a particular topic".[105] Paul's letters were direct reminders to his churches to remember his words, works, and life of suffering.[106] There are also prayer-exhortations in the paraenetic section of the letters.[107]

2.3.3. Their *juridical* function is to provide appropriate rules as the means for the authority of Paul to be exercised in his absence. Paul through his letters exercised his authority not with authoritarian severity, but "for building up and not for tearing down" (2 Co. 13:10). He sometimes tested their obedience (2 Co. 2:9). The letters strengthened the churches against heresies (Phi. 3:1-4:1; Col. 2:8-23) and persecution (Phi. 1:27-30; 1 Th. 1:14ff.).

2.3.4. Their *liturgical* purpose was to use them at worship. As the official letters of Jeremiah 29:7-9, Baruch 1:10-15, and 2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch 86:1 were to be read for a liturgical purpose, so those of Paul were to be read in the church worship. [108] The Pauline Letters at worship had two fundamental functions: first, "the letter

---

[104] R. Martin, *New Testament Foundations,* Vol. 2: Acts-Revelation (Exeter: Paternoster, 1978), 247.

[105] E.g., 1 Co. 5:-15; 1Th. 4:13-18; 5:1-11; C. Roetzel, *The Letters of Paul: Conversations in Context* (Atlanta, Georgia: John Knox Press, [1975] 1982), 35ff.

[106] 1 Th. 2:9; 2 Th. 2:5; Col. 4:18 (Michel, *TDNT,* iv, 682).

[107] Rom. 12:12-14; 1 Co.7:5; Phi. 4:6; 1 Th.5:17f; Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4 (Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 301).

[108] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 42. At the Lord's Supper (1Co. 16:19-24; *Didache* 10:6) and in the church (Col. 4:16).

could be seen as a Pauline *speech,*" according to Walton,[109] "for it would be read aloud to the church assembled." Secondly, the letter could be a prayer book. The letters contain more prayers than any other writings of the NT. Richard Longenecker quotes Robert Morgenthaler's findings[110] that Pauline prayer words are the richest in the New Testament; he uses the term prayer more frequently than any other writer. He lists 16 different words for prayer (cf. c. 45 words in appendix) which occur 133 times in the thirteen canonical Pauline letters. In comparison, Matthew has 8 of these prayer words 60 times, Luke has 10 words 57 times, John has 3 words 15 times, Acts has 10 words 80 times, and Hebrews has 7 words 18 times, while these prayer words also appear 59 times in the rest of the New Testament. The epistles may be called Paul's prayer books for the converts. Grace benedictions, peace benedictions, greetings, and doxologies at the end of the letters were for liturgical use, while no farewell wish or health wish for the recipient appears in the closing greeting, which was in the form of Greek letters.[111] Paul thought of himself as "present in the spirit" at worship, and also he rejoiced in the orderly manner and strong faith of the Colossians (Col. 2:5).

2.3.5. For our present concern, the *missiological* purpose of the letters is the most important because they contain Paul's missionary theology and practice developed during his missionary engagement, such as the conversion of Jews and Gentiles, missionary contexualization (cf. 1 Co. 9:19-23),[112] the doctrine of salvation, covenantal nomism in Christ

---

[109] Walton's detailed analysis and comparison of 1 Thessalonians with the Miletus speech of Luke's Paul in Acts 20 (Walton, *Leadership and Lifestyle,* 147, n. 37).

[110] R. Morgenthaler, *Statistik des neutestamentlichen Wortchatzes,* (Zürich-Frankfurt: Gotthelf, 1958), in Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 204.

[111] Weima, *Neglected Endings,* 29-39, 77-117, 135-144.

[112] G. Bornkamm, "The Missionary Stance of Paul in 1 Corinthians 9 and in Acts," in L. E. Keck and Martyn, J. L., eds., *Studies in Luke-Acts* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1966), 196, calls the passage as "Paul's classical formulation of the maxim which characterized his whole missionary approach." He succinctly argued that Paul had "the changeless gospel, which lies upon him as ἀνάγκη (9:16)", that is, "his message of justification," to be applied not into "the different standpoints (Standpunkte) of Jews and Gentiles, but…their respective positions as the historical places (Standorte) where the 'calling' of each man occurs through the gospel." He gives some of the historical cases in Timothy's circumcision (Act. 16:3), Paul's taking a Nazarite vow (Act. 18:18),

(Rom.10:4), etc., together with information about his missionary travel plan and diaries (Rom. ch.1, ch. 15). Paul had "the daily pressure … anxiety for all the churches" (2 Co. 11:28), which must have been embraced in his prayers. Missionary pastoral prescriptions for healing the spiritual sicknesses of the church such as their divisions (1 Co. 1:10-17), and pastoral affection and love and sufferings (2 Co. 2:4; chs. 10-13) are conveyed through his letters. Above all, prayers of thanksgivings and intercessory prayers of wish-prayers, prayer-reports, prayer-requests and exhortations are intermingled with missionary preaching, teaching and ethics in his letters. The writing of letters with his prayers was a part of Paul's intercessory mission. They reveal much about the hidden springs of prayer behind his own missionary life.

2.4. The intercessory prayer network with the churches

Intercessory prayers, like his letters, were substitutes for Paul's presence (cf. 1 Co. 5:3-5). G. P. Wiles, concluding his research on *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* wrote that, alongside the above methods of Paul and his team, "there was the ceaseless remembering of his churches in prayers of thanksgiving and supplication whereby he might continue to minister to them even when compelled to be absent."[113] But most researchers miss this most important factor in Pauline missionary methods, namely his intercessory prayers, which without hesitation I would like to emphasize were essential to Paul's missionary strategy. Gordon Wiles concludes his thesis:

> Prayer buttressed all his mission work – in advance of his visit, during them, and after he had departed. All his plans were conceived under the constant sense of the guidance and will of God. None of his bold advances would have seemed worthwhile to him apart from the continual undergirding by the prayers of the apostle and his associates. Taken together, then, the intercessory prayer passages offer impressive documentation of Paul's unfailing reliance upon the ministry of supplication, his own and that of his fellow believers.[114]

In comparing our own mission with its many methods and finance, but with little result, I believe that what we lack is the fundamental

---

and Paul's participation in the purification rite for four Nazarites (Act. 21:17-26).

[113] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 295ff.

[114] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 296.

principle and exercise of effective prayer. We will survey below all the aspects of the intercessory prayers, such as their backgrounds, types, functions and topics, and we will conclude that, as the foundation of Pauline missionary work was prayer, so must today's mission be for us. We would like to expand this intercessory strategy below.

To sum up, we have surveyed key methods Paul applied for the management of his churches: to re-visit the churches, to send delegates as the agency of and eschatological co-workers with God, to write letters, and to formalize the network of intercessory prayers between him and the churches, except to generate the collection project for the poor in Jerusalem, which we will fully develop outside of this article. From the above investigation we point out that the main elements of the mission partnership of Paul and his churches are centred on people, the human resource; on financial resource, the material and transactional element; and on prayer, the spiritual and creative element. Now we come to look more specially at the intercessory prayer network of the Pauline churches.

3. The intercessory prayer network of Paul with his churches

3.1. The reality of Paul's intercessory prayers for his churches

Were the intercessions of Paul in his letters merely an epistolary expression without real prayers or polite exaggerations to be expected in an ancient letter? Graham Shaw regards Pauline thanksgivings as "flattery and manipulation" to control his readers or a means of "self-dramatization."[115] Were his prayer-requests merely incidental afterthoughts, quite secondary to his main intent in writing? Are prayers like thanksgivings mere literary devices a "mechanical regularity modified by the object τῷ θεῷ"?[116]

3.1.1 On the contrary, O'Brien asserts that the thanksgivings of Paul are perhaps "summaries of the actual prayers which the apostle offered to God. We may assume that these summaries contain the essential points of the petitions and thanksgivings."[117] A deep, intercessory sense lies behind all his preaching, teaching, prophesying, and pastoral work.

---

[115] E.g., 1 Th. 1:2-3; 2:13; 3:9; 5:18; 2 Co. 1:3-11 (Shaw, *The Cost of Authority,* 101-106).

[116] Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings*, 37.

[117] O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgiving*, 13ff., 266.

Intercessions are at the heart of his self-understanding, a basic consequence of the intercessory act of God in Christ, and an extension of the intercessory ministry of the exalted Christ (Rom.8:34) and of the indwelling Spirit.[118]

3.1.2 They are directed τῷ θεῷ of the psalmists,[119] τῷ θεῷ μου "my God,"[120] who is the Father of Jesus Christ. The address "my God" reflects the Jewish prayer-style, and this suggests an actual offering of thankful prayer. The prayer-report begins with a solemn calling on God to bear witness to his unceasing intercessions: "For God is my witness" (Rom. 1:9-10). It is a form of oath, and oath is the strongest form of asseveration. Paul uses the oath in various forms and for various reasons.[121] God is a witness to his hidden priestly ministry (Rom. 15:16) in his intercessions for the gospel ministry.

3.1.3 Even though there were conventional, fixed formulas for the health-wish in the opening greetings in ancient letters,[122] they are actual prayers of Paul and his churches – "constantly" (1 Th. 1:2), "earnestly" (1 Th. 3:10), "without ceasing" (Rom. 1:9).[123] Paul wrote his letters praying and entrusting his churches in hostile conditions into the Lord's hands. πάντοτε or ἀδιάλειπτως[124] refer to the actual remembrance of them at his regular times of prayer, not to continual prayers.[125] As Peter O'Brien asserts, they "do not point to lengthy periods of time in unbroken prayer, but rather indicate that Paul did not forget his addressees in his regular times of prayer (not 'zu jeder Zeit' but 'im jedem Gebet')."[126] References to unceasing or constant prayer in

---

[118] Rom. 8:15ff., 23, 23-24, 26-27; Gal. 4:6.

[119] 1 Co.1:4; 1 Th.1:2; 2:13; 3:9; 2 Th.1:3; 2:13.

[120] Rom.1:8; Phi.1:3; Phm. 4.

[121] Cf. 2 Co. 1:23; 11:31; Gal. 1:20; 1 Th. 2:5.

[122] E.g., "Greetings and good health," commonly given with the qualifying phrase "continual," "always" or the adverb "many" or "Above all, I pray that you are well together with your family" (Weima, *Neglected Endings*, 36ff.).

[123] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 186, 194; O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings*, 266.

[124] πάντοτε (1 Co. 1:4; Phi. 1:4; Col. 1:3; 1 Th. 1:2; 2 Th. 1:3; 2:13; Phm. 4), ἀδιάλειπτως (1 Th. 1:2; 2:13).

[125] See, O'Brien, "Thanksgiving within the Structure of Pauline Theology," in Donald A. Hagner, and Murray J. Harris, eds., *Pauline Studies: Essays presented to Professor F. F. Bruce on his 70th Birthday* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1980), 56.

[126] O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings*, 266.

Pauline prayers[127] are numerous. Paul's letters are saturated with his prayers which he prayed alone and sometimes with his colleagues, and when he penned the letters he also turned himself to God in actual prayer in summary form or intention.[128] At this juncture we are going to survey succinctly three major categories of Pauline prayers: prayers of adoration, of thanksgivings, and of petition, and touch the core of their subjects.

3.2. Forms and functions of "prayers of adoration"

3.2.1 Within the framework of Paul's intercessory prayers, prayers of adoration have a significant role. They may be helpfully categorized as either blessing (berakah, εὐλογητὸς) formula prayers[129] or doxology (δόξα) type prayers,[130] although both derive from Jewish prayer.[131] Berakah formula prayers initiate an epistolary function, while doxology type prayers, on the other hand, frequently link, conclude, or

---

[127] Harder, *Paulus und das Gebet*, pp. 8-19; Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 181: (1) In the opening thanksgivings: Rom. 1:9; 1 Co. 1:4; Phi. 1:3f; 1 Th. 1:2; 3:10; Phm. 4; Eph. 1:15; Col. 1:3, 9; 2 Th. 1:3, 11, (2) other references in the prayer requests and exhortations: Rom. 12:12; Phi. 4:6; 1 Th. 5:17; Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4, 12, and (3) references to "watchings" (2 Co. 6:5; 11:27; Eph. 6:18, cf. Luk. 21:36).

[128] Therefore, "in all the prayer passages in the epistles must lie to some extent the language and structure of the prayers used in his own devotional practices." (Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 23).

[129] Eph.1:3; Rom. 1:25; Rom. 9:5; 2 Co. 1:3-4; 11:31; 1 Co. 14:15.

[130] Rom. 1:21, 23; 4:20; 11:33-36; 15:6,9; 16:25-27; 1 Co. 6:20; 10:31; 2 Co. 1:20; 4:15; 9:13; Gal. 1:5,24; Eph. 3:20ff.; Phi. 1:11; 2:11; 4:20 (Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 297).

[131] The Jewish prayers have two types of adoration prayers:

(1) The 1st type is the "'berakah-formula prayer,' wherein (a) praise to God is declared in the opening address ('Blessed art Thou, O Lord' or 'Blessed be the Lord'), (b) statements are made about God's person and what he has done on behalf of his people, which are introduced by a relative clause or substantive participle ('who' or 'the One who'), (c) the verb in those statements is cast in the perfect tense ('has'), and (d) the content regarding God's activity is expressed, whether briefly or in extended fashion." (Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 215).

(2) The 2nd type is called "'eulogy-type prayer', wherein a statement extolling God comes at the end of a long prayer, expresses itself not in the perfect tense but by an active verb or participle, and is mostly brief- usually no more a few words of praise that reflect in summary fashion what has been prayed in the longer prayer" (Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 215).

summarize the main themes of the letters,[132] and were to be used at worship. We include the four groups of Pauline hymns which Martin classified,[133] even though some are overlapped: (a) sacramental (Eph. 5:14; Tit. 3:4-7); (b) meditative (Eph. 1:3-14; Rom. 8:31-39; 1 Co. 13); (c) confessional (1 Ti. 6:11-16; 2 Ti. 2:11-13); (d) Christological (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:15-20; 1 Ti. 3:16; Phi. 2:6-11).

3.2.2 In this respect of Berakah-type prayers, O'Brien discerns epistolary, didactic, and paraenetic functions:[134] (i) the epistolary function being to introduce and prefigure the main themes of the letters (Rom. 1:25; 9:5; 2Co. 1:3-11 for the following chapters 1-9; Eph. 1:3-14); (ii) the didactic function being to teach (1 Co. 14:16; 2Co. 1:4-5 – participation in sufferings); and (iii) the paraenentic (hortatory) function being to appeal and exhort – to appeal to his readers to identify with him in their prayers of corporate thanksgiving (2 Co. 1:11; cf. 4:15).

3.3. Prayers of petition

This petition follows the pattern of the Shemoneh Esreh, in which praise and thanksgivings are mingled with the eulogistic formula ("blessed art Thou, O Lord") and followed by a brief statement ("…gracious Giver of knowledge") (the Shemoneh Esreh, No. 4). G. Wiles and Peter O'Brien[135] based their works on the framework of Paul Schubert's *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings*. Some of Paul's prayers in both of these authors overlap and are thoroughly discussed. Here we will avoid duplication. It suffices here to point out the main topics of these prayers for our purpose.

3.3.1. Wiles classifies **wish-prayers**[136] into four main groups: (1) principal wish-prayers, which have the optative "may"[137] and the future

---

[132] Weima, *The Neglected Endings,* 135-145.

[133] R. Martin, *Carmen Christi,* SNTSMS (Cambridge: CUP, 1967), 19.

[134] O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgivings*, 254-57; "Ephesians I: An Unusual Introduction to a New Testament Letter," *NT S* 25, 1978-79, 504-516.

[135] Wiles' *Paul's Intercessory Prayers* develops four main petitionary prayers: wish-prayers, prayer-reports, prayer-request and exhortations, and O'Brien's *Introductory Thanksgivings in the Letters of Paul*.

[136] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 299-30. The background of wish-prayers in their forms lies in Jewish prayers: Dan. 3:98; 2 Bar. 78:2; 2 Ma. 1:1-6 (address-greetings-wish prayer-prayer report), Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 28ff. Also the *priestly* prayers of the OT influenced the concepts and language of Pauline priestly intercessory prayers: for sanctification (1 Th.

indicative,[138] (2) the opening benedictions;[139] (3) the closing benedictions;[140] and (4) curses and "pronouncement blessing."[141] The major topics of the wish-prayer are the ordinary and mundane, and the greater and more theological: (1) for missionary travel (1 Th. 3:11), (2) for eschatological preparation with love for all humanity and sanctification (1 Th. 3:12-13; 5:23), (3) for universal unity among Christians (the Jews and the Gentiles) in Christian worship (Rom. 15:5-6). The functions of wish-prayers are similar to those of thanksgivings as above: epistolary to introduce themes of the letters,[142] didactic and paraenetic functions (1 Co.14:13-19; Rom. 8:26ff.), and the liturgical function.[143]

3.3.2. Prayer-reports:

(1) At the beginning of most of his letters, in the formal thanksgiving section,[144] and also in the body of the letters,[145] Paul assures his readers of (i) his continual thanksgivings for them and (ii) his constant intercessions for them.[146] While thanksgivings are designed to prepare the general theme and mood of the letters, the prayer-reports announce the immediate

---

3:13; 5:23), for the priestly ministry (Rom. 15:16), for a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1), and for an irreproachable (1Co. 1:8). See, Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 38-41, 68.

[137] E.g. Rom. 15:5-6 (δώη); 15:13 (πληρώσαι); 1Th. 3:10-13 (κατευθύναι, πλεονάσαι, περισσεύσαι); 5:23 (ἁγιάσαι); also similar wish-prayers in 2 Th. 2:16-17; 3:5; 3:16; 2 Ti. 1:16, 2 Ti. 2:25.

[138] E.g. Rom. 16:20a (συντρίψει); 1 Co. 1:8-9 (βεβαιώσει); Phi. 4:19 (πληρώσει).

[139] Rom. 1:7b; 1 Co. 1:3; 2Co. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Phi. 1:2; 1 Th. 1:1b; 2 Th. 1:2; Phm. 3; Eph. 1:2; Col. 1:2b.

[140] Rom. 16:20b; 1 Co. 16:23; 2Co. 13:13; Gal. 6:18; Phi. 4:23; 1 Th. 5:28; 2 Th. 3:18; Phm. 25; Eph. 6:23-24; Col. 4:18c.

[141] 1 Co. 5:3-5 (curse); 16:22 (curse); Gal. 1:8-9 (curse); 6:16 ("pronouncement blessing").

[142] E.g. 1 Th. 3:11-13; 5:23; Rom. 15:13.

[143] 1 Th. 5:23; Rom. 15:5ff., 13, 33; 16:20; Gal. 6:16; 1 Co. 16:22; Phi. 4:19; Plm. 17-25; 2 Co. 13:11, Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 43ff.

[144] In thanksgiving periods: εὐχαριστῶ, e.g. Rom. 1:8-12; 1 Co. 1:4-9; 2 Co. 1:10-11; Eph. 1:15-23; Phi. 1:3-11; Col. 1:3-14; 1 Th. 1:2-10; 2 Th. 1:3-12; Phm. 4-6; 1 Ti. 1:12-14; 2 Ti. 1:3-7).

[145] Rom. 10:1; 1 Co. 5:3; 2Co. 9:14; 13:7, 9b; Eph. 3:14-19; Col. 1:29-2:3-5; 4:12.

[146] Rom.1:8-9; 10:1; 2 Co. 13:7, 9; 9:14; Phi.1:4-6, 9-11; 1 Th.1:2-3, 3:10. Phm. 4-6.

occasion, the central themes, and the purpose of his letters.[147] The primary purpose of the prayer-report is glorification of God and the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Th. 1:11-12). The major topics of the prayer reports concern (i) spiritual well-being (1 Th. 3:10), (ii) the salvation of Israel (Rom. 10:1), (iii) the holy body of Christ in the Holy Spirit with the power of God (Eph. 3:16-17a), and (iv) the fullness of the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge (Eph. 3:17b-19).

(2) These prayer-reports are based on the store of memories.[148] Memory links experience in the past with a desire to see in the future. Paul's remembrance of his converts in his prayers indicates his continuing pastoral care for them at present, and this caused him to thank God for their mutual concerns and experiences in the past, and made him expect to meet them again. Prayer-reports contain the process of historicization of memories in the prayers. History is written memory and its interpretation. Memory provides the undeleted materials from its store and bridges the past to the present, making them re-live in today's mirror. Memory is the foundation of ethical and religious beliefs and behaviours: all the religious revelations and traditions are produced in people's memories and rewritten or edited. This historical function of memory is best expressed in the OT prayers which depend on the divine remembrance.[149] Otto Michel regards the divine remembrance as an important "feature of Old Testament prayer that in severe assault and distress the cry μνήσθητι goes up and reliance is placed on God's word."[150] Judith Newman asserts

---

[147] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 225, 229, 241.

[148] E.g. Rom. 1:9b-10; Eph. 1:16b-19; 1 Th. 1:2-3; Phm. 3.

[149] Cf. A. Verhey, "Remember, remembrance," in *ABD*, vol. 5, 667-69: God remembers "his covenant" (Psa. 105:8; 1 Ch. 16:15; Psa. 106:45; 111:5; also Luk. 1:72), the laments and other prayers (Exo. 32:13; Jud. 16:28; 1Sa. 1:11; 2 Ki. 20:3; Psa. 25:6; 74:2, 18, 22; 106:4; 119:49; 137:7; Jer. 14:21; Lam. 5:1; Hab. 3:2. Neh. 1:8, etc.).

[150] Jud. 16:28; 2 Ki. 20:3; 2Ch. 6:42; Job 7:7; 10:9; Psa. 73:2; 18:22; 88:50; 102:14; 105:4; 118:49; 131:1; 137:7; Isa. 38:3 (O. Michel, μιμνῄσκομαι, *TDNT,* IV, 675). Praise and confession of worship come from remembrance of the past acts of divine deliverance (Psa. 6:5; 1Ch. 16:8); the church is to remember the apostle and what he had delivered (1 Co. 11:2). The faculty of memory "maintained the beloved dead in the recollection of the living" (Michel, *TDNT,* IV, 679). Also J. Newman, *Praying by the Book: The Scripturalization of Prayer in Second Temple Judaism* (Atlanta: Scholars

that Old Testament prayer depends on the divine promises "as a means of inducing God to listen to the prayer and act on behalf of the supplicant."[151] Prayers in the time of pre-exilic Israel show that the remembrance of past events and, especially in the book of Deuteronomy, the divine promises played a leading role in the reusing and rewriting of the scriptures in their prayers in the process of what Judith Newman calls "scripturalization."[152]

(3) The prayer-reports use pronouns in their prepositional phrases to show that they are made on behalf of others, for example, for them (Rom. 10:1), making remembrance of you (Rom. 1:9), and your improvement (2 Co. 13:9). They are intended to foster the intercessory partnership of the churches in Paul's mission[153] and the missionary pastoral concerns of the letters.[154] Prayer-reports are aimed at forming an international and eschatological network of prayer between God, Paul, and the churches in an eschatological context in which the prayer-reports contain an eschatological climax – the day of the Lord.[155]

3.3.3. Prayer requests:[156] Prayer requests in the letters were sent on behalf of Paul himself and for the missionary partnership of the local churches,[157] as living tokens of loving fellowship of mutual love and

---

Press, 1999), 37, "Remembrance serves to 'remind' God of their relationship and with it their expectation of absolution of any possible ill consequences from the blood guilt. Such a remembrance of the past within a prayer, brief and allusive though it is, also marks an important step in the process of scripturalization." e.g. Gen. 32:10-12; Exo. 32:11-13; Deu. 9:26-29, and the remembrance of community history in Gen. 32:10-12; Exo. 32:11-13; Deu. 9:26-29; 21:7-8; 26:5-10.

[151] Newman, *Praying by the Book*, 17.

[152] Newman, *Praying by the Book,* 12-13 defines "scripturalization" thus: it is "the reuse of biblical texts or interpretative traditions to shape the composition of new literature."

[153] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 229.

[154] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 180.

[155] E.g. Phi.1:6,10; 1 Th. 1:3; 3:10; 1 Co.1:8.

[156] Cf. Prayer requests to a prophet or an intercessor: e.g. Num 11:2; 21:7; 1 Sa. 12:19; 1 Ki. 13:6; Job 42:8; Isa. 37:4; Jer. 37:3; 42:2, 20; Jdt. 8:31; Act. 8:24. Also Shemoneh Esreh No. 13; *M. Berakoth*, 34b; *M. Aboth* iii, 2.

[157] E.g. Rom. 15:30-32; 2 Co. 1:11; Eph. 6:19-20; Phi. 1:19; Col. 4:3-4:1; 1 Th. 5:25; 2 Th. 3:1-2; Phm. 22.

mission participation. Paul seeks a network of mutual intercessory prayer-responsibility in difficulties and also as preparation for the Parousia in their actual prayer struggles (Rom. 15:30-32). Paul and his churches needed each other's prayers for the gospel advance to the West (Rom. 15:30-32) and for divine intervention in missionary perils (2 Co. 1:10ff.). The churches participated in Paul's mission and sufferings by complying with his prayer requests (e.g. Phi. 1:19ff., 25ff.).

3.3.4. Prayer exhortations:[158] The major topic of prayer exhortations is the efficacy of all the prayers offered in Christ Jesus, of which Paul was certain (Phi. 4:6-7; Eph. 3:20-21).[159] Prayer exhortations are based on the Jewish and Christian practice of regular prayers, e.g., day and night (2 Ma. 13:10-12), the thrice-daily prayers in Acts 3:1 and *Didache* 8:3, and also on the ancient epistolary assurances of constant prayers for the readers. The prayer exhortations are used as Theo-Christo-Pneumatic admonition by the Lord Jesus, the Spirit, and God,[160] and for all men and women, even enemies and persecutors (Rom. 12:14-21), and for liturgical use.[161] In prayer exhortation, prayer in which the churches bring their needs in thanksgiving and supplications is to cure anxieties (Phi. 4:6).

3.3.5. I add, fifthly, an eschatological petition: Μαράνα θά (1 Co. 16:22). Paul adopted a promise of, and a prayer[162] for, the coming of the Lord which was used among the Palestinian Aramaic-speaking church, Μαράνα θά ("Our Lord, come," 1 Co. 16:22, cf. Rev.22:20: "Amen, Come, Lord Jesus!").[163] The Aramaic term for "lord" is *Mare,*

---

[158] E.g. Rom. 12:12; Eph. 5:20; 6:18; Phi. 4:6; Col. 4:2; 1 Th. 5:15-18; 1 Ti. 2:1-2; 2:8.

[159] See, Hunter, "Prayer*,"* 734.

[160] 1 Th. 5:17ff. ; Phi. 4:6; Rom. 12:1, 14; 15:30; 1Co. 7:5.

[161] 1Th. 5:16-22; 1Co. 14:26-33; Eph. 5:19ff.; 1Ti. 2:1-2.

[162] J. Dunn, *Unity and Diversity in the New Testament: An Inquiry into the Character of Earliest Christianity* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977), 53, n. 44, thinks *maranatha* is an invocation rather than a prayer, but the liturgical acclamations are also a cry of prayer like *Abba*, cf. Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament*, 74.

[163] There are three possible but slightly different meanings of this formula: (1) "our Lord, come" as a petition for the parousia and an imperative, as Αμήν, ἔρχου κύριε Ἰησοῦ in Rev. 22:20, (2) the confession "our Lord has come" as an indicative, (3) the statement "our Lord will come" or "Our Lord

and *mari (my lord)* is the Hebrew Adonai (my Lord). The eschatological hope and Parousia are bridged by this prayer, "Maranatha." As Marshall comments, "it is this hope that fills their horizon."[164] The closing section of 1 Co.16:20-24 has a liturgical function also, as J. Robinson asserts: "The salutations, the kiss, the peace, the grace are all rich with the overtones of worship. The last word of the letters is the first of the liturgy, the one being written to lead into the other."[165]

3.4. Prayers of Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving-prayers[166] are embedded in various forms of Paul's prayers, such as praise, wish-prayers, prayer-reports and prayer-exhortations mingled in the opening thanksgiving sections of the letters. Thanksgiving comes first and then request. Paul Schubert observed that the thanksgiving section (period) after the epistolary greeting has a certain common structure and epistolary function rather than liturgical function[167] in most of the Pauline letters.

3.4.1. *Structurally,* there are two types of thanksgiving:
(1) "I thank God" (εὐχαριστῶ τῷ θεῷ) followed by the nominative masculine participal constructions.[168] (2) Brief thanks to God with ὅτι-clause that spells out the basis for the apostle's thanksgiving.[169]

3.4.2. *Functionally,* Paul Schubert observed two major purposes of thanksgiving prayers, namely to introduce epistolary and didactic purposes: firstly, "to indicate the occasion for and the contents of the letters which they introduce,"[170] and, secondly, to establish contact with the readers, to remind them of the instruction given before, and to set

---

is here" (i.e., in worship, and especially the Lord's Supper), K.G. Kuhn, μαραναθα, *TDNT,* IV, 469-470.

[164] I. Marshall, *Jesus the Savior: Studies in New Testament Theology* (London*: SCPK, 1990),* 201.

[165] J. Robinson, "Trace of a Liturgical Sequence in 1Co. Xvi. 20-24," *JTS,* New Series, 1953, 38-41.

[166] Εὐχαριστέω / Εὐχαριστία / εὐχάριστος / χάρις occur about 46 times in the Pauline letters except for Galatians and Titus. See, O'Brien, "Thanksgiving within the Structure of Pauline Theology," 50.

[167] Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings,* 4-39.

[168] E.g. 2Co. 1:11; Phi. 1:3ff.; Eph. 1:15ff.; Col. 1:3ff.; Phm. 4ff.

[169] E.g. Rom. 1:8; 1 Co. 1:4ff.; 1 Th. 2:13; 2 Th. 1:3; 2:13ff.

[170] Schubert, *Form and Function of the Pauline Thanksgivings,* 26.

the tone and atmosphere of the letter with the main theme or topics to be presented.[171] Peter O'Brien drew upon Schubert's research and modified the purposes into four major functions:[172] (1) pastoral function to express the apostle's deep pastoral and apostolic concerns to both individuals (Phm. 3-6) and congregations;[173] (2) a didactic function; (3) a paraenetic (exhortatory) purpose to introduce exhortatory themes of the letters; and (4) an epistolary function. We can also add a liturgical function, thus giving five functions of the thanksgivings, which are overlapped with the functions of the intercessory prayers, (1) epistolary, (2) didactic, (3) paraenetic, (4) liturgical, (5) missionary-pastoral function. We summarize the functions or purposes in brief as follows:

(1) *Epistolary function*: they introduce the occasion of the letter, and articulate the main themes of the letters.[174]

(2) *Didactic function:* Paul instructs the recipients, reminding them of the previous teachings and new guidance.[175] In didactic contexts, thanksgivings go together with giving glory to God.[176]

(3) *Paraenetic* (*exhortation*) *function:* they introduce the paraenetic thrusts of the letters. Phi. 1:9-11, for instance, introduces the major themes of the letter (the growth in love of the Philippians (Phi. 2:1-11; 4:1-3), and their sanctification for the Parousia (Phi. 2:14-16). Thanksgiving is the will of God (1 Th. 5:18). It is to be the accompaniment of every activity of the believers in the body of Christ (Col. 3:17; Eph. 5:19-20). Thanksgiving is an effective means of strengthening faith, for it puts the heart into a more suitable frame to petition Him for further favours, and joy in the Christian life (Phi. 1:3-4).

(4) *Liturgical purpose*: while Paul thanked God for the various reasons,[177] the Pauline churches with their adoration also

---

[171] Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 218.

[172] O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgiving,* 14ff., 262ff.

[173] See, Phi. 1:3-11; 1 Co. 1:4-9; O'Brien, "Thanksgiving within the Structure of Pauline Theology," 50-66, 55; cf. Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 218.

[174] E.g. Rom. 1: 8-15; 1 Co. 1:4-9; 1 Th. 1:2ff.; 2 Th. 1:3ff.; 2:13ff.; Phi. 1:3-11; Col. 1:3-14; Phm. 4-6.

[175] 1 Co. 1:4-9; 1 Th. 1:3ff.; 2 Th. 2:13ff.; Phi. 1:9-11; Col. 1:3ff.; Eph. 1:3ff.

[176] Rom. 1:21; 2Co. 1:11; 2 Co. 9:12-15.

[177] Paul's thanksgiving for the Christian triad of faith, love, and hope: for the faith of the Church in Rome (Rom. 1:8; 1 Th. 1:2-3; 2 Th. 1:3; Col. 1:4; Plm.

thanked God at their worship. In comparison with this thanksgiving, we note that the last three blessings of Amidah are Jewish thanksgivings for "restoration of His presence to Zion; gratitude for His daily miracles; bestowal of peace."[178]

(5) *Missionary pastoral purpose:* to care about the missionary churches in the network of prayers between Paul and his churches and God. Thanksgiving in Phi. 1:3ff. is for the mutual partnership of the church in the gospel, and the other one in Phm. 4-7 is missionary care for Onesimus.

3.4.3. The fundamental reasons for thanksgiving prayers are twofold: thanksgiving and glory (i) for God's creation (Rom. 1:20-21) as the universal theatre of God and (ii) for God's redemption in Christ. The primary topic of thanksgiving is the gospel of the word of God to which no thanksgiving period (section) omits a reference except 2 Co. 1:3ff.[179] Thanksgiving prayer cosmologically binds together God, the church as the Body of Christ, and the creation reconciled for renewal.

3.4.4. There are eight shorter thanksgiving prayers.[180] There are six occasions for thanksgiving over food.[181] Thanksgiving is the

---

5; Eph. 1:5), for God's grace in Christ Jesus, and spiritual knowledge and gifts (1 Co. 1:4-7), for the predestination of the Church in Ephesus (Eph. 1:3ff.), for the partnership of the Church in Philippi in the Gospel (Phil. 1:3-5), for the works and patience of the Thessalonians (1 Th.1:2ff.), for the proclamation of the gospel and his reader's reception of it (1 Th. 1:3-10; 2:13-14); for their calling through the gospel (2 Th. 2:14), confirmed testimony to Christ (1 Co. 1:6), the active participation in the gospel (Phil. 1:5), their reception of the gospel of hope (Col. 1:6), and for their continued spiritual growth (cf. Rom. 1:8; Eph. 1:15; Col. 1:4-5; 1 Th. 1:3; 2 Th. 1:3-4; Phm. 5.

[178] *ADPB*, 74.

[179] O'Brien, *Introductory Thanksgiving,* 265.

[180] χάρις τῷ θεῷ ("thanks be to God": Rom. 6:17; 7:25; 1 Co. 15:57; 2 Co. 2;14; 8:16; 9:15; 1 Ti. 1:12; 2 Ti. 1:3), which combines the Greek prayer in the papyri ("thanks be to god") and the eulogies of praise at the close of many Jewish prayers of adoration as the ground for thanksgiving (cf. 1Co. 15:57; 2Co. 2:14; 8:16); Reinhard Deichgräber, *Gotteshymnus und Christushymnus,* 43ff. See, P. O'Brien, "Thanksgiving," 60; Longenecker, "Prayer in the Pauline Letters," 219.

[181] Εὐχαριστέω in Rom. 14:6 (twice); 1 Co. 10:30; 11:24; εὐχαριστία in 1 Ti. 4:3, 4.

recognition and proclamation of the lordship of God,[182] who creates and provides food as the gift generated from the soil, for which God also provides the sun, air, and rain for their biological growth, and it is also denial of idol worship (1 Co. 10:19, 30 // 1Ti. 4:4-5, cf. Rom. 14:6). Our body and the soil are united through the foods physically, and "food which God created [is] to be received with thanksgiving …" and "it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer" (1 Ti. 4:3-5). Thus thanksgiving-prayer over food brings about a cosmic unity between matter and our body and soul. This picture is most clearly seen in the Eucharist, in my view, where our body and soul as members of the body of Christ (the church), and the matter of creation which is reconciled through the death of Christ (Col. 1:20; Eph. 1:7-10) and consecrated by thanksgiving at the Lord's table, are spiritually and cosmologically united to Christ, who is the cosmic Lord and Head over the universe and the church.[183] This perspective becomes a very important aspect of our understanding of the Holy Communion and may be interpreted ontologically, socially, cosmologically, and eschatologically.

Summary:

The basis of the thanksgivings was God's creation and its products and God's redemption; and the primary topic of the intercessions is growth in Christian maturity[184] in the triad of the Christian life – faith, hope and love, and their sanctification, and the glorification of God and Jesus Christ. We can find prayers for practical items like travel, daily food, the health or healing of the believers (except his own petition for his sickness), financial betterment, etc.; but the emphasis is on spiritual well-being of the churches. Thus, Paul admonishes the Corinthians: "we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen; for the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal" (2 Co. 4:18). Prayers for the salvation of Israel, for the eschatological preparation for the Parousia with love for all humanity and for sanctification, and for participation in missionary sufferings were all interlinked in the networking of Pauline intercessory prayer with his churches.

---

[182] "The earth is the Lord's and everything in it" (1 Co. 10:25-30, cf. Psa. 24:1; 50:12; 89:12). cf. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* 242.
[183] Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles,* 242.
[184] 2 Th.1:12; 2 Co.1:11; Phi.1:9ff.; Col.1:9ff.

In summary, prayer and theology go together "hand in hand" in Pauline missionary praxis, and the fundamental means of survival for the Pauline churches was the prayer partnership between Paul and his team and his churches, which we now come to apply missiologically in the next section.

II. Missiological Application

Before we deal with prayer partnership in mission, it is appropriate to look at the current missiological discussion of mission partnership. Although David Bosch thoroughly reviewed the missionary paradigms of the 20th century,[185] Andrew Kirk has noted three areas which were not covered by him.[186] In discussing "sharing in partnership," Kirk highlights four aspects: (1) sharing in a common project, (2) sharing gifts, (3) sharing material resources, and (4) sharing in suffering.[187] Here we avoid a duplication of the four aspects and develop two more important topics which Kirk did not deal with: (1) sharing people and (2) sharing prayers. We will deal first with sharing people and then concentrate on sharing prayers as our main topic.

1. Sharing people
1.1. Mission partnership in solidarity and mutuality
1.1.1. Mission partnership is based on solidarity. We remember that no Pauline churches were so self-sufficient that they could not receive people from other churches, in the same way that they were able to equally share even their financial resources. Today there is a flow of missionaries from the third world to the northern countries as well as to the third world. The world churches and mission identify non-material resources, human and spiritual, and seek to share them equally in all continents.

---

[185] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, Chapter 12: "Elements of an Emerging Ecumenical Missionary Paradigm," 368-510.

[186] (1) "Overcoming Violence and Building Peace", (2) "Care of the Environment", (3) "Sharing in Partnership." See, A. Kirk, *What is Mission?* (Darton, Longman & Todd, 1999), 2, 143-204.

[187] Kirk, *What is Mission?* 188-191: (1) Sharing in a common project, e.g. partnership of the church at Philippi (Phi. 1:5; 4:15); (2) Sharing of gifts, e.g., gifts of the Holy Spirit "for the common good" (1 Co. 12:7-10; Rom. 12:16), and "building up the body of Christ…maturity" (Eph. 4:11-13); (3) Sharing of material resources, e.g. the collection (2 Co. 8:1-14; 2 Co. 9:1-4; Rom. 15:26-7), and "a ministry of prayer" (2 Co. 9:14); (4) Sharing in suffering (2 Co. 1:7; 4:8-12; Phi. 3:10; Gal. 6:17; Col. 1:24).

We find today that there is no church so poor that it cannot offer her missionaries in Christian mission, just as was demonstrated in the Pauline churches. Sending missionaries is the climax of missionary identification in mission partnership and solidarity. The missionaries witness to the unity of the universal church, share the fellowship of universal brotherhood in respect and love, and stand for humanity and cosmos as priestly companions. Solidarity is the essence of mission partnership, and in this essential combination of partnership, intercessory prayers are still playing a key role, because identification of partners in intercessory prayers is a core element of sharing.

1.1.2. Mission partnership also develops in mutuality. The San Antonio Report in section IV, Towards Renewed Communities in Mission,[188] proposes renewed missionary communities with the emphasis on a missionary partnership in the exchange of personnel and of multi-directional sharing.

When David Bosch speaks of "interculturation," he discusses sharing people in mutual partnership:

> This does not make missionaries redundant or unimportant. They will remain, also in the future, living symbols of the universality of the church as a body that transcends all boundaries, cultures and languages. But they will, far more than has been the case in the past, be ambassadors sent from one church to the other, a living embodiment of mutual solidarity and partnership.[189]

To sum up, solidarity and mutuality in sharing people are two sides of the coin of mission partnership, and these two are bound together in the concrete reality of mutual intercessory prayer.

1.2. Mission partnership in theological education
1.2.1. In the 19th century, Henry Venn (1796-1873),[190] the General Secretary of the CMS (Church Missionary Society), and Rufus

---

[188] F. Wilson, ed., *The San Antonio Report: Your Will be Done. Mission in Christ's Way* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1990), 70.
[189] Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 456.
[190] S. Neill, *History of Christian Mission* (London: Penguin, 1990), 384-87, 431-33. See, "If the elementary principles of self-support and self-government and self-extension be thus sown with the seed of the Gospel, we may hope to

Anderson (1796-1880),[191] the General secretary of ABCFM (the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions), simultaneously developed the "Three Self-Principle" in their mission theory. The "Three Self-Principle" or "Indigenous Church Principles" consisted of (i) "Self-Support, (ii) Self-Government; (iii) Self-Propagation". Alfred Robert Tucker (1849-1914) in Uganda, and Robert E. Speer, the successor to Rufus Anderson, and John Livingstone Nevius (1829-1893) in Manchuria (today North eastern China) and Korea, had successfully applied the Principle. In addition to the Three Self-Principle, however, Paul Hiebert added "Self-Theologizing" as a fourth element of the Self-Principle. He asserts that western theology passed on by missionaries or local theologians can be compared with the flowers in the vase or flower pot without being rooted in the native soil, in effect a form of "theological colonialism."[192]

1.2.2. In postmodern missiological and theological contexts, David Bosch realized that an "exchange of theologies" is needed in the sense of "in*ter*culturation," not of inculturation.[193] For "self-theologizing" we cannot overlook theological education as an ongoing missionary programme in the current situation. Theological students from the West go to the East and the South while students from the Third World still study in the West. There are a great number of difficulties in the exchange of theological studies, for example, linguistic incapability to acquire different ancient languages in order to read the ancient texts; lack of facilities such as fine libraries and research centres in the Third World; the different procedures and orientations in reading – oral traditions in the East and South and scientific reading in the West; different research methods or methodologies between the West and the Third World; lack of technological tools such as the Internet and writing devices; the financial burdens of the Third World students; and the harsh climate in the South. However, despite these difficulties, and through existing theological scholarships at different institutions, the

---

see the healthy growth and expansion of the Native Church…" in N. Thomas, ed., *Readings in World Mission* (London: SPCK, 1995), 208-9.

[191] W. Shenk, "Henry Venn 1796-1873, Champion of Indigenous Church Principles," in Gerald H. Anderson, ed., *Mission Legacies* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 1995), 541-2.

[192] P. Hiebert, *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 46.

[193] Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 456.

exchange of theological studies and theologies has been and must be carried on.

2. Sharing prayer

Nowhere is the missionary concept of equal and interdependent partnership expressed more explicitly than in intercessory prayer. Mission partnership in intercession in the case of Paul and his churches was the key point of successful mission for the gospel advance to the West (Rom.15:30-32). The churches participated in Paul's mission and sufferings in complying with his prayer requests.[194]

2.1. Characteristics of intercessory prayers

2.1.1.   The essence of intercession is that the Christian church must have a missionary willingness to identify with the world of creation and humanity and their joys and sufferings. This identification model and function of the intercessory prayers of Paul derives from the characteristic ambivalence (for/against) of the Old Testament intercessions of Abraham, Moses and Elijah,[195] and also the incarnational identification (Phi. 2:1ff.) of Jesus with humankind.[196] Paul identified himself with his people in his wish-prayer in Rom. 9:1-3, in which his burden for his brethren was so great and his sorrow so overwhelming that he was willing to identify himself with them, even to the point of ἀνάθεμα εἶναι. According to this biblical model of integrity, today's universal churches in their mission need a mutual identification with each other in their historical cultures and eschatological hope.

---

[194] E.g. Rom. 15:30-33; 2 Co. 1:11; Phil. 1:19f, 25ff.; 1 Th. 5:25; Phm. 22; Eph. 6:18-20; Col. 4:2-4; 4:18b; 2 Th. 3: 1-3.

[195] Abraham's intercession for Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 18:22ff.); Moses' intercession both against Israel, and yet for Israel (Exo. 32:30-34, cf. Rom. 9:3); Elijah's intercession against unfaithful Israel, but on behalf of true Israel (1Ki. 19:9-14, cf. Rom. 11:2-5); Jeremiah's intercession for and against Israel, Jer. 8:18-9:1.

[196] Jesus identified Himself with man's lost estate: (i) in relation to the powers of death, He took upon Himself "the form of a slave, being made in the likeness of men" (Phi. 2:7); (ii) in relation to sin, He was sent "in likeness of sinful flesh and for sin" (Rom. 8:3) and became end of sin (Rom. 6:21); (iii) in relation to the law, He was "born of a woman" and "under the law" (Gal. 4:4) and end of the law (Rom. 10:4) in order to redeem us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13); Robinson, *The Body,* 37-45 and cf. the identification of the suffering servant with sinners (Isa. 54:12).

2.1.2. **Prayer and remembrance**: From the Babylonian exile up to today, the final resource of Israel's survival is its theology of remembrance derived from the Deuteronomic theology of remembrance.[197] The Israel of the Old Testament appealed to the divine memory[198] of God's covenant with His creation and people in their prayers. Prayer and remembrance must be also used as a missionary survival strategy for the past, present, and future of God's work and of Christian mission.

Otto Michel observed that a basic element of Old Testament ethics is to remember "the past acts of God, His commandments and His unexhausted possibilities."[199] Memory of the past has a *historical didactic* function to remind us of events of the past and the people and things involved there, which was also part of the teaching style of the Rabbis. The Jewish people have fought against forgetfulness of great national events like the Exodus and Exiles in the past, because forgetfulness is like death for them (cf. Psa. 6:5). Memory has a *social* function for the social relationship between people: for an example the request μνήσθητί μου recurs (Gen. 40:14) when one makes a special request to remembrance.[200] According to Verhey, memory makes "the formation of identity and the determination of conduct" in a community and provides "community and continuity." [201] It also stirs the desire to see each other again and re-create the relations of a community of solidarity.[202] The function of the delegates of Paul to his churches was to remind the churches of the ways of Paul as he himself had taught them in that very congregation (1 Co. 4:17). It is the duty of a community to remember its preacher, leaders, and teachers (Heb. 13:7).[203] In its *socio-economical* function, too, memory is the foundation for the charity in the Pauline collection (Gal. 2:10):

---

[197] Deuteronomic Theology of remembering (Deu. 5:15; 7:18; 8:2, 18; 9:7; 15:15; 16:3, 12; 24:18, 20, 22; 32:7), Michel, *TDNT,* IV, 675; B. Childs, *Memory and Tradition in Israel,* Studies in Biblical Theology No. 37 (London: SCM, 1962), 45-56.

[198] H. Eising, rkz, *TDOT,* IV, 64-82. Gen. 9:15-16; Exo. 2:24; 6:5; 32:13; Lev. 26:24; Deu. 9:27; Psa. 104:8; 105:45; 110:5; Eze. 16:60; 2 Ma. 1:2; Luk. 1:72 (Michel, *TDNT,* IV, 675).

[199] Num. 15:39-40; Deu. 8:2, 8 (Michel, *TDNT,* IV, p. 675). Also Luk. 22:19; 1 Co. 11:24, 25 for the saving action of God.

[200] See, Michel, *TDNT,* IV, 676.

[201] A. Verhey, "Remember," *ABD,* vol. 5, 667-69.

[202] E.g. 1 Th. 3:6.

[203] Michel, *TDNT,* IV, 682.

"remember the poor." The *liturgical* function of memory in the Eucharist is to re-enact the past event in the mirror of memory, in the present and toward the future until the Parousia.

These functions of memory were applied in the Pauline missionary method. The parental and pastoral memory of Paul in the mutual prayers of his churches was a means of survival among the newly established churches. Therefore, in today's mission strategy, mutual remembrance in prayer in mission partnership must be considered the supreme means of maintenance for the successful mutual survival of the mission agencies and churches for the future.

2.2. Sharing universal Agape

Paul's intercessory prayers were for all in his priestly service – for friends, enemies, and the unknown believers in Rome and Laodicea (Rom. 15:33; Col. 2:1ff.), always based on divine love (Rom. 12:12-14; cf. Luk.6:27-28), for there are no limitations in the genuine intercession circle.[204] This is a particular characteristic of Paul's intercessory prayers and has been called by Wiles "the all-inclusive quality of Paul's prayers."[205] Love of God and genuine love of humankind are always combined and expressed in prayer, because, as William Law said, "Intercession is the best arbitrator of all difference, the best promoter of true friendship, the best cure and preservative against all unkind tempers, all angry and haughty passions."[206] The horizontal equality of humanity is stressed in prayer, regardless of status, rank or possessions.

2.3. Prayer in world mission and unity

2.3.1. David Bosch clearly sketched the ecumenical unity of the WCC (World Council of Churches) in mission during the last century from Edinburgh in 1910 to the San Antonio CWME (the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism) meeting in 1989. But he summed up that "the goal of structural church unity ('in one faith and in one eucharistic fellowship') … has in recent years been put on the back burner. Also … the ecumenical movement and many member churches of the WCC have virtually lost their missionary vision."[207] Many evangelical churches withdrew from the wider ecumenical movement after the New Delhi integration of the IMC (the International

---

[204] 2 Co. 13:14; Gal. 6:16; Phi. 1:4; 1Th. 1:2; 3:12.

[205] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 180.

[206] Cited by H. Fosdick, *The Meaning of Prayer* (London: SCM, 1927), 187.

[207] Bosch, *Transforming Mission,* 461.

Missionary Council) into the WCC in 1961,[208] and they developed their own evangelical ecumenical movement from Wheaton 1966 to Manila 1989. Bosch drew some of the contours of the postmodern paradigm of unity in mission: unity, not uniformity, preserves cultural, social and doctrinal diversity which strives after unity, and "mission in unity means an end to the distinction between 'sending' and 'receiving' churches, which John Mott called as early as at Jerusalem Conference in 1928."[209] This ideal of unity in diversity was affirmed by the Manila Manifesto of 1989 for "cooperation in evangelism," which "involves people of different temperaments, gifts, callings and cultures, national churches and mission agencies, all ages and both sexes working together."[210]

2.3.2. Now, in terms of application "for the sake of unity and of mission," David Bosch asserted that "we need new relationships, mutual responsibility, accountability, and interdependence (not independence!)" [211] between the West and the East and South. This is the model of the Pauline churches in their racial, social, cultural, religious, and economical diversities. We have already discussed this essential model of unity among the Pauline churches, which was organized by the intercessory prayer networking of Paul and his churches (e.g., Rom. 15:5ff.). The dynamic characteristics of the prayer traditions of the Western, Asian, American and African churches are the most common properties for international and universal sharing. For Christian unity despite different Christian confessions, we are reminded of Oscar Cullmann's confession: "shared prayer is indispensable to the cause of unity and in fact for a long time has been a bond which has held Christians together."[212]

---

[208] The IMC and the WCC integrated at the New Delhi Assembly of WCC with the formation of the World Mission and Evangelism (later Commission on World Mission and Evangelism) in 1961. Those who attended included Newbigin, Hoekendijk. IMC became CWME (Commission of World Mission and Evangelism), and three departments of Witness, Service, and Unity were created, based on the missionary theology of Hoekendijk: *kerygma*, *diakonia*, and *koinonia*. The theme of the Assembly was **"**The Light of the World; the Lordship of Christ all over the World."

[209] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 464-5.

[210] J. Stott (ed.), *Making Christ Known: Historic Mission Documents from the Lausanne Movement 1974-1989* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1996), 242.

[211] Bosch, *Transforming Mission*, 466.

[212] Cullmann, *Prayer in the New Testament,* xi.

Conclusion

We conclude that intercessory prayers are central to Paul's missionary strategy in respect of purpose of mission, providential guidance in mission, missionary travel strategy, and self-support policy, and praxis, hand-in-hand with other methods such as re-visiting the newly founded churches, sending his fellow workers as eschatological co-workers, writing letters, and financial partnership. Paul's prayers form the glue that binds together material, human, and divine resources; they offer a vision for God's future, rooted in the memory of God's saving action in the past.

From our investigation of the intercessory prayer network of Paul with his churches, we learn that power and prayer are not unrelated in Pauline prayers. Paul, like Jesus, sees God as *the* powerful ally in the struggle against the various powers which enslaved mankind and nature (Rom. 8:21) in sin, flesh, law, and death.[213] The believers wrestle with these powers in the Spirit (Rom. 8:26ff.) and in their prayers (Eph. 6:18-20).[214] The efficacy of all the prayers offered in Christ Jesus was certain for Paul (Phi. 4:6-7; Eph. 3:20-21) because of the supply of the Holy Spirit to his intercessions (Phil. 1:19ff.).[215] Paul as a missionary pastor taught his converts the significance of prayer, and made his churches praying churches. Richard Longenecker also emphasizes that prayer is "the lifeblood of every Christian and the wellspring of all Christian ministry. And what was true for Paul and his readers in that day remains true for us, his readers, today."[216]

---

[213] Rom. 8:21; 1 Co. 2:6-8; 2 Co. 4:4; Gal. 4:3-11; Eph. 6:10-17.

[214] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers,* 268ff.

[215] Wiles, *Paul's Intercessory Prayers*, 280; cf. Hunter, "Prayer," 734.

[216] R. Longenecker, *Into God's Presence: Prayer in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001), 226.