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The Domestication of Paul: Christian Responses to the Rise of Paul in the Second Century

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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this dissertation is to account for the prominence of Paul in Late Antique Catholicism. As an apostle and authority, Paul did not emerge as the dominant figure among Apostolic-Catholics until the end of the second and beginning of the third century, and even at that it was done within the context of the authority of the other twelve disciples. I suggest that Paul’s popularity and authority arose first among Charismatic-Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionites who were frustrated with the emerging doctrinal and ecclesial authority of the Apostolic-Catholic Church. These three movements identified with Paul as a singular authority and rejected, or at the very least, diminished, the authority derived from the other twelve disciples. These alternative churches were growing in influence during the second century and rooted their authority in Paul. As these churches grew, their influence threatened the primacy of the dominant Apostolic-Catholic Church and forced it to engage Pauline forms of Christianity. The popularity of Paul was then first witnessed in these discursive movements, and not, among the Apostolic-Catholics.

Through use of social memory, ritual, and identity theories, I explore the growth of discursive Pauline Christianities in the second century and detail the orthodox reactions. Ultimately, the response to these transgressive movements was seen in two ways. The more Torah-focused Christians rejected the authority of Paul completely and
depicted him as the arch-heretic. The Apostolic-Catholics, however, responded differently and maintained that Paul represented the same teaching as the twelve, simultaneously arguing that Paul did not have a private teaching and that their own teachings were definitively Pauline. In the process of incorporating Paul, the Apostolic-Catholics domesticated his image and removed the charismatic, mystical, and scriptural memories of the discursive churches from their image of Paul. It was in reaction to these transgressive communities that the domesticated Paul became the dominant apostle, even if one among many, for the Apostolic-Catholics.
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The purpose of this dissertation is to account for the prominence of Paul in Late Antique Catholicism. As an apostle and authority, Paul did not emerge as the dominant figure among Apostolic-Catholics until the end of the second and beginning of the third century, and even at that it was done within the context of the authority of the other twelve apostles. I suggest that Paul’s popularity and authority arose first among Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionites who were frustrated with the emerging doctrinal and ecclesial authority of the Apostolic-Catholic Church. These three movements identified with Paul as a singular authority and rejected, or at the very least, diminished, the authority derived from the other twelve apostles. These alternative churches were growing in influence during the second century and rooted their authority in Paul. As these churches grew, their influence threatened the primacy of the dominant Apostolic-Catholic Church and forced it to engage Pauline forms of Christianity. The popularity of Paul was then first witnessed in these discursive movements, and not, among the Apostolic-Catholics.

The response to these transgressive movements was seen in two ways. The more Torah-focused Christians, otherwise known as Ebionites, rejected the authority of Paul completely and depicted him as the arch-heretic. The Apostolic-Catholics, however,

1 Each of these terms is discussed in detail below.
responded differently and maintained that Paul represented the same teaching as the
twelve, simultaneously arguing that Paul did not have a private teaching and that their
own teachings were definitively Pauline. Both approaches served to undercut the
discursive authority of the Charismatics, Valentinians, and Marcionites.

Charismatic Catholics were late first- and early second-century Christian
communities who supported or relied upon charismatic leadership, even though they
participated at some level within the Apostolic-Catholic umbrella. These communities, as
we will see, pushed against the ecclesial structure of the Apostolic-Catholic Church and
sought a more independent and less formalized leadership that included women. The
clearer, positive expression of this community is found in the extant second-century Acts
of Paul and Thecla and the Martyrdom of Paul, as well as the polemical descriptions
found in the Apostolic-Fathers.

The Valentinians were the second-century followers of the teacher Valentinus.
These figures participated in the Apostolic-Catholic Church but advocated for more
ecstatic religious rites and the private teaching mediated through Paul and their teachers
that was not available to other Christians. The source material for this section is drawn
largely from the original works of Valentinus, Ptolemy, Heracleon, and Theodotus, as
well as the narrative works of the Apocalypse of Paul, Gospel of Mary, the Prayer of the
Apostle Paul, Exegesis on the Soul, and the Valentinian Liturgy.

The Marcionites were the second-century followers of Marcion who decried the
use of what would become the Old Testament within Christian theology and rejected the
authority of all scriptural works save for the modified letters of Paul and the Gospel of
Luke. This section is drawn exclusively from the heresiological writings of the
Valentinians and Apostolic-Catholics as they detailed the theology and arguments of Marcion and his followers.

The Ebionite Church was the conservative branch of the first generation after Jesus, and had its roots in the more commonly recognized Jerusalem Church of the original apostles. This group remained primarily concerned with following the Torah, and largely understood Jesus as a messianic figure but with limited salvific import. Following the original teachings of figures like Peter and James, this community opposed both the teaching and credibility of Paul. Because of this rejection of Paul, the Ebionites found themselves at odds with both the subversive Pauline Churches of the Charismatics, Valentinians, and Marcionites, but also with the Apostolic-Catholics. Although this community was not vested in establishing a particular memory of Paul, save for his heretical status, they do provide a unique vantage point as they were a community simultaneously – and directly – engaged with both the Pauline churches of Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionites as well as the Apostolic-Catholics.

The Apostolic-Catholics were the liberal branch of the first generation after Jesus whose response to the Pauline Churches was not rejection, but rather sublimation. This gentile-focused community worked to incorporate Paul into their own theological and

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2 In this context, one may include any of the many titular designations for Jewish-Christians in the first century, as they collectively may be observed to represent a conservative approach to Torah and the divinity of Christ. I do not limit this description to a specific church or group of people, but rather the response of a larger contingent of first generation of Jesus followers.

3 Rather than use teleological terms like proto-Catholic or pre-Catholic, I instead employ the term Apostolic-Catholic to refer to those Christians who rooted their authority in the apostolic succession of the Catholic church.
ecclesial framework, simultaneously usurping the Pauline Churches of their discursive authority and domesticating the teachings of Paul. The inclusionary act toward Paul necessarily fractured this original Jerusalem Church movement and pushed the Ebionites away as they rejected his apostolic, and therefore authoritative, status entirely.

Although the seeds of this separation likely began in the latter half of the first century, the formal separation began in the early second century around the publication of the canonical Acts of the Apostles that melded the missions, teaching, and efforts of Peter and Paul into one. The acceptance of Paul by the Apostolic-Catholics solidified this separation because the Ebionites instead sought to establish their own authority exclusively through the teachings of Jesus, James, and Peter via a total denial of the Pauline-traditions’ claims to theological and ecclesial legitimacy. Their position inherently carried with it a rejection of the apostolicity and authority of Paul by both the Apostolic-Catholics and the Pauline Churches. The inclusion of Paul within the Apostolic-Catholic framework also brought with it the domestication of Paul. Once within the Apostolic-Catholic umbrella, the charismatic, esoteric, and theologically innovative elements of Paul were lessened to serve the larger purpose of constructing the universal Church of God.

No longer did Paul possess a secret knowledge only given to a select few, no, Paul had been transformed into the preacher of the same message taught by Peter, John, and others. Paul was the Apostle, though he taught the same apostolic message as the others.
Scholarly Background on the History of Paul in the Second Century

Scholarship on Paul in the second century can comfortably be divided into two approaches: The Pauline Captivity Model and the Reception of Paul. Each of these approaches has their merits and certainly has advanced our understanding of both Paul and the development of the early Christian period. However, each has limitations. I will explore each of these models here with consideration of the most prominent scholarly contributions. Ultimately, however, I will offer my own approach to the study that brings a methodological blend of social memory, cognitive ritual study, and authority/deviance analysis to illuminate a new understanding of Paul in the early church in what I call the Domestication of Paul approach.

Pauline Captivity

The theory of Pauline Captivity has dominated the scholarship of Paul in the early church. This model dates back to the work of F.C. Baur, and was championed by Adolf Harnack, Walter Bauer, and Hans von Campenhausen in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Pauline Captivity suggests that Marcion and the gnostics claimed

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4 Though there are several works for each of these scholars that contributed to this thought, I here include only the most relevant titles. F.C. Baur, *Paul the Apostle of Jesus*
Paul, and that it was only through the pseudonymous writings of the Pastoral Epistles and Luke’s Acts of the Apostles that Apostolic-Catholics such as Irenaeus were able to reclaim Paul. In effect, this research argues that Paul was originally an Apostolic-Catholic author who had been held captive by the gnostics and Marcionites during the second century, and it was not until later Apostolic-Catholic authors such as Irenaeus that Paul was “reclaimed” for the Apostolic-Catholic Church.

The Pauline Captivity narrative is still found among some scholars today, such as Calvin Roetzel in his, *Paul: The Man and the Myth*, and article, “Paul in the Second Century” in *The Cambridge Companion to St. Paul*. Jason Scarborough has argued a

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5 I use this collective term as the scholars did when they were writing in the late 19th and early 20th centuries in my state of the question section. These scholars were comfortable referring to them as a collective group, and although they did recognize some internal distinction, overall, they wrote about them as a single category, much like they did with Catholic Christians. This is significant only in that it led to the Pauline Captivity model that dominated the field until relatively recently.

similar Pauline Captivity interpretation in his dissertation, “The Making of an Apostle: Second and Third Century Interpretations of the Writings of Paul,” where he argues that prior to Irenaeus there is almost no record of the use of Paul in the apostolic period.\(^7\)

Recently there has been a trend among scholars to move away from this model in favor of a more sympathetic reading of Paul’s reception among early Apostolic-Catholic authors. The Captivity model hinges on the assumption that Paul, despite being a foundational figure for the Apostolic-Catholic Church, was not popular among Apostolic-Catholic authors during the late first and early second centuries. Some have even argued that these Apostolic-Catholic authors were “embarrassed” by Paul and sought to diminish his influence within the Church. As many scholars have recognized and I will show below, there is ample evidence for the use, reception, and memory of Paul among early Apostolic-Catholics that directly challenges the assertion that Paul was not a popular figure among the early Apostolic-Catholics. Though the Captivity model has illuminated much of our understanding of the early Church and Paul, ultimately it fails to fully grasp the complexity of the fight over Paul.

**The Reception of Paul**

The second scholarly approach, that of Pauline reception, is the attempt to evaluate the theological and ecclesial use of Paul by early church theologians. This

approach assumes an understanding of Pauline theology that is then used to evaluate the veracity of later interpretations and influences with the hope of identifying the correct reception and use of Paul against the incorrect and misunderstood use of Paul.

Fundamentally, this approach is the quest for, or the assumption of, an understanding of the historical Paul. There have been very few modern attempts to examine the second-century use of Paul that are not in some way guided by the so-called Quest for the Historical Paul.

In 1979, Lindemann published his *Paulus im ältesten Christentum*, which directly challenged Harnack’s work on Pauline Captivity and argued that Paul was a widely-used figure among early Apostolic-Catholics. He also demonstrated a much smaller role for Paul among the gnostics than what had been traditionally assumed among scholars of Pauline Captivity. His methodological approach was to show Apostolic-Catholic allusions to Paul among second and third century theologians in order to demonstrate the Apostolic-Catholic use of Paul. For him, Paul was consistently understood in the first and second centuries among Apostolic-Catholics, and was imagined as the apostle to the gentiles, founder of churches, and chief opponent of heresy. He argued that those proto-orthodox figures who did not cite Paul did so out of geographical separation, genre, or lack of evidence, not out of embarrassment as the Pauline Captivity model would suggest. He even went so far as to argue that outside of the Epistle of James, and a few later Jewish-Christian writings, there is no evidence to suggest a substantial anti-Paul

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movement. Ultimately, his contribution to the development of Pauline reception resides in his identification of nuance among early Christian interpreters, and his use of both Pauline imagery and theology among later writers.

David Rensberger’s 1981 dissertation, “As the Apostle Teaches: The Development of the Use of Paul’s Letters in Second Century Christianity,” set out to disprove the Pauline Captivity model. Although his work is comprehensive in its analyses of both the Pauline Captivity model and its inclusion of second century writers, he dismisses any notion of Pauline imagery as irrelevant to the discussion of Pauline reception. However, unlike Lindemann, Rensberger attempts to identify which figures “correctly” interpreted Paul in the second century. Similar to this model is that of Donald Penny, who in his dissertation, “The Pseudo-Pauline Letters of the First Two Centuries,” argues for a theory of Pauline Fragmentation, where one can identify the origins of trajectories among late first and early second century thinkers who used Paul. He concludes that none can lay an authoritative claim to Paul or Pauline theology. In other words, the trajectories of Pauline interpretation cannot be extended back to Paul or Paul’s letters due to inaccurate understandings of Paul, and therefore the trajectories may only be found in their later interpretive contexts.


Daniel Marguerat focuses on the reception of history of Paul from the authentic letters, through the disputed, and in both the Acts of the Apostles and Acts of Paul.\textsuperscript{11} His approach was to understand the full measure of Pauline influence on the second century and ultimately concludes that the seven authentic letters of Paul are only a small part of a much larger Pauline reception. Acts, in his mind, can thus be officially termed Pauline, as it employs a Pauline narrative and clearly was aware of traditional legends of Paul. Furthermore, he argues, many of these stories stem from the very churches that Paul founded. Marguerat identifies three images of Paul and avers that Luke and other second century writers were not necessarily inventing images, but rather inheriting already established traditions and legends of Paul.

James Aegeson’s, \textit{Paul, The Pastoral Epistles, and the Early Church} looks at Pauline reception through images, theology, and the use of letters in the second century. Aegeson argues that the Pastoral Epistles reflect the first stage of a Pauline canonization and show the connection between Paul and the Apostles already evident by the end of the first century. Aware of the social issues reflected in these various images, he argues that one can identify and trace Pauline trajectories from Paul through the first two centuries and explore the tensions between the different groups.\textsuperscript{12}

Richard Pervo, in \textit{The Making of Paul: Constructions of the Apostle in Early Christianity}, traces the development of Paul from the historical figure, through the

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\bibitem{marguerat}
\bibitem{aegeson}
\end{thebibliography}
pseudepigraphical letters, to Irenaeus, comprehensively addressing the interpretations and uses of Paul. For this work, Pervo assumes an understanding of the historical Paul and his theology and discusses how later interpreters correctly, or incorrectly, understood and used Paul. Furthermore, he seems to resuscitate the Pauline Captivity narrative and emphasizes the heretical use of Paul and the subsequent Apostolic-Catholic response.

Michael Bird and Joseph Dodson are specifically concerned with the reception history of Paul and released an edited volume entitled, *Paul and the Second Century*. This work is a broad consideration of the reception of Paul theologically and ecclesiologically in the second century. The topics are far ranging and open, but all are focused on the reception of Paul among early Christian writers. It should be noted that most of these articles, including the introduction, speak to the difference in Paul’s intention versus his reception. In other words, although pioneering in its specificity, the volume is still concerned with isolating the historical Paul.

Pagels, de Boer, Kaler, and White offer a more nuanced perspective of Pauline development and evaluate Paul through image and memory, and are less concerned with the historical Paul. Elaine Pagels, playing somewhere in the middle of Pauline Captivity and Pauline Fragmentation, argues that the second century witnessed two separate movements of Pauline reception: anti-gnostic (Irenaeus) and gnostic (Valentinians).

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Pagels proposes that the Valentinians read the Pauline corpus not as gentiles versus Jews, but rather as psychics versus pneumatics. For her, it was not a chronologically responsive situation where late second and third century Apostolic-Catholics reclaimed Paul from the gnostics, but rather a scenario in which both gnostic and Apostolic-Catholic groups were competing simultaneously for the image of Paul.

Martinus de Boer, in his 1980 article, “Images of Paul in the Post-Apostolic Period,” argues that the portrayal of Paul in Colossians, Ephesians, Acts, and the Pastorals marks the beginning of a Pauline trajectory in the second century. He observes six aspects of this image: Paul the Apostle; Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles; Paul, the Evangelist of the Whole World; Paul the Sufferer; Paul, the Redeemed Persecutor; and Paul the Authoritative Teacher of the Church. As he explains, these six characteristics enabled the second century authors to interpret and imagine Paul in a variety of ways. In his reconstruction, the apostolic period remembered Paul not as the epistolary figure, but instead as the ecclesial figure of legend. Michael Kaler picks up this model, and in his 2004 article, “Towards an Expanded Understanding of Nag Hammadi Paulinism,” explores three specific legends of Paul: Paul, Apocalyptic Hero (Coptic Apocalypse of Paul); Paul, One of the Apostles (Exegesis on the Soul); and Paul, the Image of Christ (Testimony of Truth and Silvanos). His later monograph, Flora Tells a Story: The

Apocalypse of Paul and Its Contexts, explores the image of Paul as Apocalyptic Hero more fully and explains its possible evangelical elements.\textsuperscript{18}

Finally, Benjamin White’s 2014 Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle focuses explicitly on the image of Paul among Apostolic-Catholics.\textsuperscript{19} Confining himself to only Irenaeus and Third Corinthians, and using social memory theory, White explores the Apostle memory in the second century showing not only how it developed, but also its social implications and relationship with competing memories of Paul. Working under the assumption that writers in the second century had lost access to the “real” Paul, White instead explores the notion of Pauline persona and argues that it was through the selection, combination, and interpretation of a diverse collection of Pauline materials that Christians constructed the image of Apostle that was “particularly constitutive of their collective cultures.”\textsuperscript{20}

While there are still strong tendencies among scholars to investigate the theological influences of Paul, and even more so to isolate the historical Paul, there is movement in considering the social memories of Paul in the second century. This has largely been confined to the work of Pagels, de Boer, Kaler and White, and it is in this conversation, that I intend to contribute with my Domestication of Paul model. Though

\textsuperscript{18} Michael Kaler, Flora Tells a Story: The Apocalypse of Paul and its Contexts (Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2008).

\textsuperscript{19} Benjamin L. White, Remembering Paul: Ancient and Modern Contests over the Image of the Apostle (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014).

not the overall intention, these scholars still position the second century materials against the historical Paul of the first century in an attempt to demonstrate legitimate church trajectories or validate theological positions.

**The Domestication of Paul**

As I stated at the outset, I argue that the Ebionite and Apostolic-Catholic opinions of Paul emerged in response to the growing popularity of the Pauline based Charismatic, Valentinian, and Marcionite Churches. This differs from the Captivity model in that I do not hold that the Apostolic-Catholics were embarrassed or antagonistic towards Paul, but rather rooted their authority differently through the original twelve apostles. It was only through the rise of these alternative and transgressive churches that the Apostolic-Catholics were forced to engage with the memories of Paul. Their collective solution, aside from the Ebionite rejection, was to subsume Paul under their own umbrella. In the process of assuming Paul, they melded his theology, teaching, and authority with that of their own apostolically constructed authority.

As a result, they domesticated Paul’s theology from their opponents and diminished the memories of his charisma, his mysticism, and his understanding of the scripture and the Old Covenantal God. The Apostolic-Catholic Church, in their quest to form the Universal (i.e., Catholic) Church of God sought to create an inclusive ecclesial model that welcomed all people rather than privileging the few. In other words, they took Paul and molded him into a figure wholly in line with their own theology, eschewing the
charismatic, mystical, and theological Pauline aspects relevant for their opponents. They domesticated Paul from a charismatic theologian who received his knowledge from a mystical experience to one who taught a message that was approved by the twelve. The Apostolic-Catholic domestication of Paul transformed him from an independent authority to one apostle among many, and all of whom taught the same message.

My work builds upon the pioneering research of Pagels, de Boer, White, and Kaler who bring social memory and social-scientific methods to the forefront of their analyses of Paul in the second century. My approach not only broadens the material studied to include non-Apostolic-Catholic writings, but also includes additional methodological elements. Augmenting my use of historical-critical and textual approaches, I also employ aspects of social memory theory, cognitive ritual studies, and authority and deviance.

**Social Memory**

My use of social memory is primarily mediated through Maurice Halbwachs, Jan Assman, Paul Connerton, and Anthony Le Donne.  

21 Social memory is best explained as

the transition from individual memory to collective memory, and it functions to observe
the concretized belief structures of a social group. The process of social memory
formation is known as “localization,” where mental images associated with the past are
anchored to specific mental frames of reference in the present. These individual mental
images are both distinct and independent from one another, but when put together within
a frame of meaning, they are connected and narrate a story. The purpose is to connect
disparate memories of the past in a logical way with the present to provide meaning to
both the past and the present. Memory then functions as a process of piecing together
individual mental images into a framework that provides meaning. The process of
remembering, is actually a process of imaginative reconstruction, by which individuals
connect particular images of the present circumstances, into specific elements associated
with the community’s past. This process, otherwise known as keying, connects publicly
accessible memories of the past with present circumstances. Explaining the significance
and process of keying, Barry Schwartz writes,

Keying defines social memory’s function, matching the past to the present
as (1) a model of society, reflecting its needs, interests, fears, and
aspirations; (2) a model for society, a template for thought, sentiment,
morality, and conduct; and (3) a frame within which people find meaning
for their experience. In these senses, social memory is preserved by and
for the functions it performs. By keying events of the present to a sacred

The Historiographical Jesus: Memory, Typology, and the Son of David (Waco: Baylor
University Press, 2009


past, communities and their members alike refer to and frame the collective experience.\textsuperscript{24}

The act of keying gives significance to past experiences in contemporary circumstances, it makes the memory and history of a community relevant, important, and ultimately, meaningful to the present members.

The cognitive reconstruction of keying into the past is fundamentally spurred and constrained by “social frameworks,” through which individual memory becomes a collective memory through social dialogue.\textsuperscript{25} It is through this social dialogue where the reconstructed memories are corrected and completed by established collective memories. Social groups therefore stabilize individual memories by providing the parameters for their formation. Collective memory creates social frameworks in which individual memories must be localized if they are to have meaning, and in this way, the community has a direct influence on the memories of the individual. Thus, in providing meaning, the community structures the memory, and confines the narrative to produce the social memory of the community.

Jan Assman builds on the work from Halbwachs and argues that all memories are intentionally constructed, and in what he identifies as the process of cultural memory, explains that figures of social importance, poets, priests, political leaders, etc.,


\textsuperscript{25} Halbwachs, \textit{On Collective Memory}, 182-183.
intentionally construct the memories of the community from their power positions. Cultural memory emerges from historical sources whose mnemotechnics formed the basis of contemporary identity, politics, and power. Where Halbwachs would assert an almost passive construction of social memory, Assman instead argues for a “socio-constructivist” concept of cultural memory as a deliberate creation, rather than a natural outgrowth, of the culture from which it arises. The careful construction of cultural memory relies on “repetition and interpretation, which are functionally equivalent processes in the production of cultural continuity.”

Connerton’s ritual analysis and Zerubavel’s countermemory also warrant explanation. Connerton, heavily influenced by Durkheim, explains that one element of ritualistic social memory, what he calls habit memory, is the formation of individual memory through repetitive behavior that does not define the meaning of the memory, but instead only serves to repeat the action enough to become internalized. Thus, the meaning of the ritual is not explained, but rather habituated through action to forge the communal memory. Zerubavel discusses the importance of countermemory, which challenges and subverts the dominant version of collective memory, creating the tensions that produce the dynamics of change in political culture.

One final note on social memory as it relates to historical study: When Halbwachs first proposed the theory, he did so on the assumption that history and social memory are two distinct and wholly incompatible enterprises. In his view, the past is reconstructed through the mnemonic process to address contemporary concerns or issues and not


26 Assman, Cultural Memory and Early Civilization, 72.
preserved in memories. Thus, social memory is of little value to the historian interested in
the “true” history, but rather only an aid in understanding the present community in
question. For him, historical analysis was an objective, almost scientific approach, which
could only take place once the communal memory had dissipated. Jacque Le Goff
continues a similar approach today and maintains that history occurs through this process
of memory reconstruction. 27 Historical study has a dynamic relationship with social
memory and exists only as a corollary to the reconstructive process, something added to
the historical process. Pierre Nora, however, argues quite the opposite and maintains that
because memory is subject to change, it is a preserver of the “true” past more so than
history. 28 In his reasoning, the very malleability of social memory is what permits the
historian to witness the “true” development of ideas, rituals, social movements, etc.,
whereas traditional historical approaches are static and limited by incomplete records and
insufficient data requiring the historian to interpret and produce a reasoned conclusion.
Social memory is a subconscious, active process of holding continuity with the past
where historical study is the intentional reformulation of that memory.

I give this background to position myself closer to, though not entirely in line
with, Nora’s work and argue that in evaluating these second-century materials through
the use of social memory one can see more clearly the community’s memory of itself and
the development of its memory. Social memories are not reconstructed wholesale by a

27 Jacques Le Goff, History and Memory, trans., Steven Rendall and Elizabeth Claman

28 Pierre Nora, “Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de mémoire,” Representations
contemporary community, rather they emerge from the continuous development and growth of the community, and as such, must participate in the existing memorial framework of the community. Social memories, although dynamic and constantly subject to change, are bound by their internal continuity.

**Cognitive Ritual Analysis**

My use of cognitive ritual studies relies on the work of Harvey Whitehouse who delineates between dogmatic and imagistic modes of religiosity in his analysis and avers that the two modes represent the psychological options available to the human mind in terms of religious transmission. Memory, he explains, functions either semantically or episodically, and that in turn affects the transmission of religion through either a dogmatic or imagistic mode. The dogmatic, derived from semantic memory, functions in a routine-ritualization process that institutionalizes ritual behavior to reinforce basic religious information to the participants. These rituals are not emotionally charged and they do not illicit an experiential response, rather they function to instill basic tenets of the religion without provoking independent thought or questioning that cannot be controlled by the governing religious authority. As Whitehouse maintains, the dogmatic

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runs the risk of becoming "tedious" to the participant, who then can become bored and disinterested, which could result in the arrested transmission of the religious tradition.\(^{30}\)

The imagistic, in contrast, derives from episodic memory and relies entirely on the highly emotive (or highly arousing) elements of traumatic religious experience. These episodes are not intended to be repeated frequently by the participant and they do not impart knowledge of the religion, but rather are purely designed to inspire a personal, emotionally-charged experiential response by the participant. This ties the individual to the religious tradition in a deeply and powerfully, albeit ill-defined and not controlled way, as it does not impart the meaning of the ritual with the emotional connection. The failed religious transmission occurs in the imagistic mode when the participants become to individuated in experience and cannot relate (i.e., transmit) their experiences to another.

The discrepancy of religious experience between the Pauline Churches and the Ebionites and Apostolic-Catholics is seen most acutely with the Valentinians, although there is evidence of imagistic practices among the other communities as well.

**Authority/Deviance and Identity Construction**

In my approach I also incorporate methodological elements of authority, deviance, identify formulation and self-definition. For this approach I rely primarily on

\(^{30}\) Whitehouse, *Modes of Religiosity*, 151.
the work of Bruce Lincoln, Richard Jenkins, Karina Korostelina, and Harrison White.\(^{31}\) I focus on the elements and practice of self-definition among early Christians and the competition for church primacy as seen through the images of Paul. In the second century, different Christian churches and communities were competing with each other theologically, ritualistically, and socially, and in these ideological clashes the images of the original disciples and apostles were employed as champions of their respective positions. While this was done in many ways and with many different figures, Paul was by far the most popular, and the most contentious. This dissertation is concerned with these memories of Paul to show the diversity and intensity of early these Christian debates.\(^{32}\)


\(^{32}\) My use of “memory” is not concerned with the personal recollection of an individual, but rather the collectively constructed social memories of a community. A theory first proposed by Maurice Halbwachs, collective memory is not the personal recollection of an individual, but rather the large-scale remembrances of many people upon a singular history in which all participate. Social memories are intentionally constructed and figures of social importance, poets, priests, political leaders, etc., form the memories of the community from their power positions. How a group cohesively remembers their history, their mythology, will have a direct influence on how the community defines itself morally, politically, and religiously. Social memories are not understood as historically accurate accounts of a community’s past, but rather a contemporary social reconstruction
By “the competition for church primacy,” I refer to the goal of early Christian communities to establish their individual theologies, social concerns, and rituals as the “true” or “correct” church of God. This necessarily entails a consideration of their self-definition, because their self-constructed identity exemplified what they believed was the correct interpretation of God and how best to engage God, in other words, how to exist as a community, theologically, socially, and ritualistically. While there are certainly social ramifications to these arguments such as political protection, financing, and even use of physical space, the larger concern was a religious drive to be the exclusive interpreter, and therefore author, of Christian behavior. Some of the most vibrant – and indeed violent – arguments within Christianity have been over highly complex theological issues such as bodily resurrection, the means and efficacy of baptism, and on the nature of Jesus and his relationship to God and humanity. These questions participate in the larger theological system of a community and ultimately relate to the process of salvation. These discussions and debates are at the very basic level engaged with what it of the past that represents the concerns of the contemporary community. From this understanding, I will explore how the memories of Paul are reflective of each Christian community’s theological and self-constructed identity, which in turn, will enable an exploration of the competition for church primacy.


is to be religious; namely, how to exist as a community and how that community is to interact with the supernatural.  

These inter-community arguments are so intense because they influence how humanity is understood, how the divine is conceived, what the world means, and how

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36 I here draw largely upon the social-scientific engagement with religion via Emile Durkheim (trans., Karen E. Fields), Elementary Forms of Religious Life (New York: Free Press, 1995); Mary Douglas, Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo (New York: Routledge, 2002); and Peter Berger, The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1967) as well as the philosophical study of religion through Ludwig Feuerbach (Trans. George Elliot), The Essence of Christianity (Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books, 1989) and Jeffrey J. Kripal, The Serpent’s Gift: Gnostic Reflections on the Study of Religion (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007). Following the articulation of Durkheim, religion is exclusively a human phenomenon and serves a primarily social function helping to articulate the beliefs of the community to itself. According to his analysis, the creation of the sacred serves as a cover or screen for the needs of society. These screens then permit the society to present itself, to itself, as the sacred emerges as social fact. These social facts would then divinely institute the social norms of the community, and in so doing, articulate acceptable and unacceptable behaviors. He also maintained the rituals of the community helped to connect the individual to the community as they provide a non-verbal means of unity and bond. This ritual serves to emphasize the leadership of the church, the historical rituals of the community, and all the while, bonding the participants in unity as they, collectively, enter into a sacred mindset to perform the ritual. More philosophically, Feuerbach argued that religion is more a study of humanity in which the very idea of God was merely the human discovery of the self as a being. Feuerbach proposed what is now understood as his “Projection Theory,” in which he argues that humanity has projected itself, its needs, concerns, etc., onto a governing deity. Kripal explains that Feuerbach actually had an incarnational model of understanding the relationship between human and deity, incorporating the ascent/descent, manifestation, and ultimate reconciliation. In this analysis, the human creates or has a desire which is projected onto the deity, this desire then descends back to the human in the form of a divine command, it then becomes manifest in both the individual and the community, and reconciliation is found in whether the community members choose to follow, or not follow, this divine edict. For Feuerbach, the study of theology is actually the study of anthropology, as the community projects its concerns onto the deity. Through a blend of sociological and philosophical considerations of the nature of religion, we may conclude the fundamental function of religion is related to community construction for both itself and the supernatural.
humanity can escape this realm and reside in heaven with the divine. For example, in the early Christian period when Valentinians and Apostolic-Catholics argued over the technicalities of bodily resurrection, they did so mindful of the impact this argument had on their larger economy of salvation. For the Apostolic-Catholics, a resurrection of the spiritual body denied the physical resurrection of Jesus, which negated the sacrificial significance of Jesus, thus undermining the ransom Christology, which then canceled the redemptive power of Jesus and the salvific act of God. For the Valentinians, however, a corporeal resurrection would imply that the transcendent realms were a physical space that would permit the presence of materiality, thus undermining their cosmological structure, which would then challenge their dual deities, and therefore render their entire system untenable. So while the historical records bear an intense debate over bodily resurrection, what the historian must discern is the larger consequence of the debate, effectively what is at stake. In this example, it is salvation. The purpose of my dissertation is to discern these unspoken but implied consequences that can be witnessed through their disputed memories over Paul.

In my dissertation I hope to illuminate our understanding of both the figure of Paul among early Christians, and how the values and recriminations of these communities influenced these memories to account for the rise, and subsequent domestication of, Paul in the second century. I have structured this work to show the contentiously shared memories of these communities, and how their debates over the figure of Paul reflect their theological, ecclesial, and social differences. Following the social identity work of White, I contend that these early Christian communities mutually formulated their identities through their interactions with each other in a subversive
attempt to establish authority. According to White, social group identities are constructed and maintained through engagement with opposing identities, but over a common element. As he explains,

Identity achieves social footing as both a source and a destination of communications to which identities attribute meaning. Consequently, without footing, identities would jump around in a social space without meaning and thus without communication. Gaining control presupposes a stable standpoint for orientation. Identity becomes a point of reference from which information can be processes, evaluated. Footings thus must be reflexive; they supply an angle of perceptions along with orientation and assessments that guide interaction with other identities, to yield control. So all these processes among identities in their footings can be understood only as an inextricable intermixture of social with cultural spreads, out of which meanings are constructed jointly.37

In the context of early Christianity, we can see how this model elucidates these arguments as the conflict over the right to govern the Christian teaching. I therefore will blend White’s theoretical model with a consideration of authority and deviance, and evaluate the social memories of these different communities in order to more clearly see their mutual identity construction.

**Overview**

What I present in this dissertation is a consideration of the dynamic process of identity formation between five different Christian communities: Charismatic Catholics,

Valentinians, Marcionites, Ebionites, and Apostolic-Catholics to demonstrate the non-Apostolic-Catholic popularity of Paul and their responsive rejection or domestication.

The rise in the prominence of Paul was not a chronological or linear act in history, but rather an on-going, centuries-long discussion between these different communities that ultimately gave way to the Paulinism that dominated the church of Late Antiquity. My work then serves to explain how Paul emerged as the triumphant figure of the early church, and why the Catholic Church of today relies so heavily on the theology and ecclesiology of Paul. The significance of this work is to account for the rise in Catholic Paulinism of the third century. Namely, how did Paul come to dominate a theological landscape already rooted in the Torah-based teachings of Jesus’ original disciples and their followers.

The five chapters of this work will focus on the independent memories of the Charismatic Catholics who remember Paul as a Charismatic Teacher, the Valentinians who understand Paul as the Mystagogue, the Marcionites who imagine Paul as the revealer of a new religion, the Ebionites who see Paul as the Arch-Heretic, and the Apostolic-Catholics who imagine Paul as the Teacher of the Apostolic Message. The concluding section of the dissertation will engage the questions of shared images, meaning, and a more reflective consideration of the different Christian identities and their social and ecclesial interactions in the second century. Ultimately, my work serves to distill these different images to isolate the identities of the communities behind them and to show more precisely the nature, scope, and significance of early Christian discourse over the memories of Paul. The comparative analysis of this research project details the
debates of early Christianity and provides us a new vantage point to early church development and growth.

Though the work is structured to show the Ebionite and Apostolic-Catholic responses to these alternative memories, I do not suggest this was a literal engagement of two sides, but rather an interwoven discussion among all five communities (and several others not discussed here). I am confined by the source material to show this community engagement within the non-Apostolic-Catholic communities, but I do hold that this process took place across all of these different Christian boundaries.

In chapter one I consider the memory of the Charismatic Catholics as seen through the heresiological and polemical writings of the Pastoral Epistles and Didache, as well as the proponent the Acts of Paul and Thecla and the Martyrdom of Paul. These charismatic communities, with a large presence of female leadership, used Paul to justify their practices of itinerant, charismatic leadership and inclusion of women in the church, as well as to valorize the presence of persecution and martyrdoms. The use of Paul for these churches permitted them to challenge the ecclesial authority of the emerging Apostolic-Catholic infrastructure. Chapter two engages the Valentinian memory of Paul in which he functioned as a Mystagogue, or spiritual guide who showed the path of salvation to the Valentinian practitioners. This memory also functioned to preserve their understanding of a private teaching given to Paul from Christ, as well as their ecstatic liturgical practices structured to provide mystical experiences. The primary discursive act of this memory was to challenge the interpretive authority of the Apostolic-Catholics, and by extension, their liturgical practices and economy of salvation. The third chapter discusses Marcion’s understanding of Paul as one who had the real message of Christ
from the true God who must overcome the oppression of the Creator to teach the truth.

Paul is the sole apostle who possesses the accurate message of Christ, and Marcion used this perspective to challenge the scriptural authority of the dominant Apostolic-Catholic theology and ecclesiology, which relied on the gospels and Jewish nature of Jesus’ teachings.

Chapters four and five consider the responses of the Ebionite and Apostolic-Catholic churches to these discursive communities. I assert that Paul’s popularity among these groups emerged from his authority among the discursive Pauline churches explored in the first three chapters. The original Christian movement began with the Jewish followers of Jesus; namely the twelve, as witnessed in the writings of James, Q, and even the Didache to a degree.\(^{38}\) It was against this movement that Paul operated, and it was not until much later in a process that began with Luke’s Gospel, and later his Acts of the Apostles, that the teaching of the twelve were conflated with Paul’s.\(^{39}\) It was the popularity of Paul, and the authority of Paul, which forced the original Jewish and Apostolic-Catholic Christians to confront him as the theological and ecclesial figure. In chapter four I consider the Ebionite memory of Paul as seen primarily in the Pseudo-Clementine literature. This community championed a more Torah-focused Christianity and remembered Paul as the arch-heretic who turned the Jewish teachings of Jesus into the heretical philosophy of Christianity. In the final chapter I consider the memory of


Paul among what would become the Catholic Church, or what I refer to as the Apostolic-Catholics to avoid a teleological dilemma. This memory, attested to through Polycarp and others, invoked Paul to legitimate ecclesial authority and unite their churches. This chapter includes an analysis of Clement of Rome, Papias, Ignatius, Polycarp, and a more detailed and in-depth examination of the influential and comprehensive memories of both Irenaeus and Third Corinthians because they provide the most accessible and complete example of this memory in the second century.

What follows in the concluding chapter is a discussion of the shared terms, reflection on these early Christian debates, and consideration of the imitative acts of the memories. In all five of these communities there is a memory of Paul that functions to preserve or protect second-century beliefs and behaviors. Closely related to this is the idea of imitating the respective memory of Paul because it reflects the will of God and true teaching of Paul. In effect, it is through the imitation of Paul, the imitation of their Paul, that each community finds the efficacy of their memory of Paul and publically defines their own identity and primacy as the true church of the Christian God.
PART ONE: Pauline Churches and the Rise of Paul
Chapter One: The Memory of the Charismatic Catholics

Introduction

The first Christian memory of Paul in my consideration is that of the Charismatic Catholics. The relationship between these communities and the governing Apostolic-Catholics is tenuous, as they shared much in the way of theology and ritual, however they differed in terms of ecclesial authority. The Apostolic-Catholics maintained an ecclesial model with a structured system of authority with strict theological control and scriptural interpretive jurisdiction. The Charismatics, however, welcomed the presence and teaching of the itinerant preachers who may or may not preach a message similar to the Apostolic-Catholics. The friction between these two communities was found most prominently in their respective models of ecclesial authority. Charismatic Catholics could operate under the jurisdiction of the Apostolic-Catholics, but yet welcomed the diverse preaching of Christian wanderers. The Apostolic-Catholics found these itinerant teachers as rivals who challenged their exclusive interpretive supremacy, and therefore by extension their ecclesial authority.
In the late first and early second centuries a prominent collection of charismatic teachers, many of whom were women, operated in tandem with the more structured, hierarchical model of the Apostolic-Catholics. Although we have much anecdotal evidence for this charismatic model, largely written from figures like Clement of Rome, Ignatius, and Polycarp and the authors of the Pastoral Epistles who were intending to limit this itinerant approach of preaching, the most explicit example of the charismatic proponents comes from the second-century *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. The group who authored and endorsed this text remembers an image of Paul as Teacher, although his authority is rooted in his charismatic leadership and not in an approved teaching conferred or confirmed by the apostles. In the narrative of the *Acts*, Paul assumes the authority to teach without apostolic approval, and this self-assumption of authority is also seen with Thecla who baptizes herself and proclaims that she will teach.

In this chapter I first begin with a historical consideration of the Charismatic Catholics, relying on the Jewish-Christian *Didache* and the polemical works of early second-century authors to explore the socio-historical reality of these charismatic groups. I will then focus on the charismatically composed, *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and *The

Martyrdom of Paul, as a test-case to illuminate the Charismatic memory of Paul. Through consideration of these materials, I will show how the Charismatic Catholic memory of Paul endorses charismatic teachers, the ecclesial authority of women, and the valorization of martyrdom, all of which directly subvert the ecclesial governance and theological authority of the Apostolic-Catholics.

Charisma

Toward the end of the first century the Apostolic-Catholics began to transition to a more formalized ecclesial structure, abandoning the charismatic and eschatologically focused movements of the earlier Christians. This transition was not immediate or consistent, as vestiges of the charismatic communities existed well into the third and fourth centuries. What I will focus on here is the relationship between these charismatic communities and the developing structure of the Apostolic-Catholics. Although there has been much scholarship written on the topic of charisma among first century Christians, little consideration has been given to the transitionary period of early second century and the struggle for ecclesial authority.

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41 For the presence of charisma in the early church see James D.G. Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit (London: SCM Press, 1975).

42 Stewart-Sykes is a standout.
My consideration of charisma naturally emerges from Weber’s sociological theories and their application within early Christian studies. As applied directly to biblical studies, and by way of defining charisma in the context of authority and leadership, Turcotte writes,

Charismatic personages are humans who act in history; they are produced by it to some extent, and in the turn they produce it in their way. An individual claiming legitimacy for actions or sayings on the basis of a personal experience rises above the ordinary; in all probability charisma could be accounted of by changes in appearance and the acceptance of some outstanding characteristic. Perhaps more important than the level of personal inspiration is its being paired with an open rejection of institutional mediations. In the case in which disciples survive the charismatic personage and establish socioreligious forms that are more or less rapidly institutionalized, personal charisma changes into office charisma.

According to Turcotte, the charismatic personage established his or her authority through a personal charisma that was legitimated by a unique personal experience and knowledge not available to all. Working from a consensus definition similar to what Turcotte proposes, sociological scholars of early Christianity argue that the personal charisma of both Jesus and Paul is responsible for the creation of their respective movements. It


was after the death of these charismatic personages that the movements began to rely on a hybrid of personal and office charisma for ecclesial leadership. This can be seen in the quickly recognized office charisma of figures like Peter and James after the death of Jesus, and as Dunn explains, the general acceptance of spiritually informed charisma within the communities of both Peter and Paul.  

The notion of charismatic teaching in itself, however, is a problematic and complicated idea, and much has been written on the contentious relationship between early charismatic leaders and the more established ecclesial figures within the New Testament. Stewart-Sykes, however, is a firm opponent of this position and argues that in strict Weberian terms it is inaccurate to speak of charismatic leadership as challenging the ecclesial structure. By definition, he explains, charismatic leaders do not seek to manage or govern and would therefore have no interest in overthrowing the established

46 Blasi, Making Charisma.

47 Dunn, Jesus and the Spirit, 260-265.

leadership. As he argues, there is a symbiotic relationship between the established leaders and charismatic in early Christianity, from the New Testament corpus through the early first and second century writings, that is often overlooked as scholars assume a competitive dynamic with each vying for sole authority. Using the letters of Paul, the Didache, Clement, Hermas, and Ignatius as examples, Stewart-Sykes argues that there is no actual evidence for a socially antagonistic relationship. Summarizing the collective assumptions of this opposing scholarship, he writes,

In exploring the consensus that office in Christian communities had in some way supplanted the exercise of charisma, it was observed that one of the reasons why a conflict between office and charisma has been assumed is the assumption, in turn, that officers exercised functions in the assembly. As far as is possible, it has been show that they did not, and so there were no grounds for conflict. A second confusion in the consensus was identified: that charismatic leadership has been identified with the exercise of charismatic functions. Rather, it has been suggested, charismatic functions could be exercised in within a society with traditionally legitimated leadership…Rather than representing a conflict betwen charisma and office, as the older consensus assumed, an examination of the relevant material has shown either that there was no conflict, or that the conflict which occurred was between teachers and house-holder bishops. I suggest that the conflict comes about because teachers may threaten the traditionally legitimated bishop, in that they are capable of acting outside the structures of the household through becoming self-supporting. At the time of the Didache, no conflict has appeared, and the teaches appear to content to accept patronage from the bishops and deacons, but we may deduce that there was criticism of the bishop, presbytery, and deacons from various teachers in several of the communities addressed by Ignatius, that teachers had adopted the position of presbyters in the Corinth addressed by Clement, and that Hermas, a

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householder, is suspicious of a teacher whom he characterizes as a false prophet.\textsuperscript{50}

For Stewart-Sykes, the tensions between charismatic and legitimated leadership lies not in the grounds of authority, but in the theology taught and the combative behaviors. While we need not pursue the specific details of this argument, we can see the theological grounds upon which the authors of the *Acts of Paul* and the emerging Apostolic-Catholics would differ: namely, authority. Stewart-Sykes’ argument is contingent on the social responsibilities of leadership, on which he may well be correct, however the difference identified here lies with the spiritual authority of the message and its communication, not with the administration of that message and the associated community. Stewart-Sykes’ article is important for specifying the point of friction: a direct challenge to the theological authority of the bishop, not an ecclesial affront to the established leadership. In return, a rejection of charismatic authority emerged because it conflicted with the ecclesial, and in particular theological, control of the governing episcopal figures.

**The Charismatic Practices of the Didache**

The socio-historical reality of these communities is most easily accessed through the *Didache* and heresiologically charged letters of the Apostolic Fathers. The process of

\textsuperscript{50} Stewart-Sykes, “Prophecy and Patronage,” 189.
institutionalizing office charisma likely began in the mid- to late first century after the deaths of the original apostles. This legitimating act of apostolic authority will be detailed in chapter five, so here I only provide a cursory analysis focusing on texts not examined later. The *Didache*, a late first-century, Jewish-Christian text that was written in a gentile context, details the acceptable behaviors of early Christian teachers and offers a unique vantage point in the transition from personal charisma to office charisma. The practice of non-authorized, personal-charisma.

The *Didache* stands as one of the earliest witnesses to charismatic authority within a Christian community.\(^{51}\) Though the text clearly emerges from a Jewish-Christian context that would likely be written against the teachings of Paul, it nonetheless provides an example of charismatic practices in the early church.\(^{52}\) Furthermore, it stands in a transitionary moment that speaks to both the importance of charismatic authority, but also to the rising authority of the Apostolic-Catholic ecclesiological structures. In commenting on the function and role of the charismatic teacher, the *Didachist* expressly supports the notion of itinerant teachers, and even offers specific instructions about how they are to be treated, assessed, and followed. The text reads,


\[^{52}\text{The *Didache* and its community will be explored in more detail in the discussion of the Ebionites in chapter four.}\]
And welcome anyone who comes and teaches you everything mentioned above. But if the teacher should himself turn away and teach something different, undermining these things, do not listen to him. But if his teaching brings righteousness and the knowledge of the lord, then welcome him as the lord.\textsuperscript{53}

The passage quoted above clearly recognized the authority of transient teachers and certainly encouraged the audience to welcome such individuals. However, the specific teaching of the visiting preacher must be evaluated to ensure that it is correct. The author’s emphasis on evaluating the teaching demonstrates his or her concern with the content of the message, not the medium of the content. In the following paragraph of the text, the author stipulates how long a visiting teacher may remain in the community. The author states,

But act towards the apostles and the prophets as the gospel decrees. Let every apostle who comes to you be welcomed as the Lord. But he should not remain more than a day. If he must, he may stay one more. But if he stays three days, he is a false prophet. When an apostle leaves he should take nothing except bread, until he arrives at his night’s lodging. If he asks for money, he is a false prophet.\textsuperscript{54}

\textsuperscript{53} \textit{Did.} 11.1-2. Unless otherwise noted, all Greek and translations and original from Ehrman. Ὅς ἃν οὖν ἐλθὼν διδάξῃ ὑμᾶς ταῦτα πάντα τὰ προειρημένα, δέξασθε αὐτὸν· ἐὰν δὲ αὐτὸς ὁ διδάσκων στραφεὶς διδάσκῃ ἄλλην διδάσχην εἰς τὸ καταλῦσαι, μὴ αὐτοῦ ἀκούσητε· εἰς δὲ τὸ προσθεῖναι δικαιοσύνην καὶ γνώσιν κυρίου, δέξασθε αὐτὸν ὡς κύριον.

\textsuperscript{54} \textit{Did.} 11.3-6. Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ προφητῶν, κατὰ τὰ δόγμα τοῦ εὐαγγελίου οὕτω ποιῆσετε. πᾶς δὲ ἀπόστολος ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς δεχθῆτω ὡς κύριος· οὐ μενεὶ δὲ εἰ μὴ ἣμέραν μίαν· ἐὰν δὲ ἥ χρεία, καὶ τὴν ἄλλην· τρεῖς δὲ ἐὰν μείνῃ, ψευδοπροφητῆς ἐστίν. ἐρχόμενος δὲ ὁ ἀπόστολος μηδὲν λαμβανέτω εἰ μὴ ἄρτον, ἢς οὐ αὐλισθή· ἐὰν δὲ ἄργυριον αἰτῇ, ψευδοπροφητῆς ἐστί.
The Didachist offers very specific regulations regarding the presence of a visiting teacher and how long he may stay, what he should take with him, and what his perspective over money should be. So in addition to assessing the content of the teaching, the community was also concerned with the social behaviors of the teacher. According to the Didachist, a true charismatic preacher of God should remain highly moral and itinerant.

Although certainly in favor the itinerancy, the Didachist accepted the possibility of residence and even had instructions concerning a visiting preacher who wanted to join a community. The author explains,

Everyone who comes in the name of the Lord should be welcomed. Then, when you exercise your critical judgment, you will know him; for you understand what is true and what is false. If the one who comes is simply passing through, help him as much as you can. He should not stay with you more than two or three days, if need be. If he wants to remain with you, and is a tradesman, let him work and eat. If he does not have a trade, use your foresight to determine how he as a Christian may live among you without being idle. If he does not want to behave like this, he is a Christmonger. Avoid such people.55

The detailed instructions provided by the Didachist clearly speak to the historical reality of itinerant, charismatic preachers moving between communities. However, the Didachist also stipulates that the communities are to elect for themselves ecclesial leaders.

55 Did. 12.1-5. Πᾶς δε ὁ ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὑμῶν κυρίου δεξιόθητο· ἐπείτα δὲ δοκιμάσαντες αὐτὸν γνώσεσθε, σύνεσιν γὰρ ἔξετε δεξιόν καὶ ἁριστεράν. εἰ μὲν παρόδιος ἔστιν ὁ ἐρχόμενος, βοηθεῖτε αὐτῷ, ὡσον δύνασθε· οὐ μενεὶ δὲ πρὸς ύμᾶς εἰ μὴ δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἡμέρας, ἐὰν ἦν ἀνάγκη, εἰ δὲ θέλει πρὸς ύμᾶς καθήσαται, τεχνίτης ὁν, ἐργαζόμεθα καὶ φαγέτω. εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἔχει τέχνην, κατὰ τὴν σύνεσιν ύμῶν προνοίασατε, πῶς μὴ ἄργος μεθ’ ύμων ζήσεται Χριστιανός. εἰ δ’ οὐ θέλει οὔτω ποιεῖν, χριστεύμενος ἔστιν προσέχετε ἀπὸ τὸν τοιοῦτον.
At the turn of the century, many communities were transitioning to the more formalized ecclesial structure of the Apostolic-Catholics. The socio-historical need for this transition lies largely in the response to lessened eschatological expectations and a need for basic community governance. As Turcotte explains,

The postapostolic age features a decline in eschatological expectation and, consequently, an increasing immersion into everyday affairs. With the passage to the quotidian, personal charisma gave way more and more to office charisma and the bureaucratization of power in the hands of bishops and presbyters…. The church came into being, an institution that was formally charismatic, born from the reification of the charisma of its origins, from an essentially pneumatic charisma. The church encompassed various elements simultaneously—a sacerdotal caste properly under control and separated from the world, an intent to expand universally that entailed a religious leveling of its members, a rationalize and systematic instruction in dogma and cult, and in the institutionalization of charisma and the transformation of it into office charisma. 56

The tension between itinerant authority and ecclesial governance is witnessed clearly in the Didache, as the author awkwardly supports the presence of both. The author is clearly speaking from a tradition of charismatic authority, but has begun to accept the historical reality of communal governance and authority, and therefore endorses the authoritative roles of bishop and deacon. The author writes,

And so, elect for yourselves bishops and deacons who are worthy of the Lord, gentlemen who are not fond of money, who are true and approved. For these also conduct the ministry of the prophets and teachers among

56 Turcotte, “Major Social Scientific Theories,” 50.
you. And so, do not disregard them. For these are the ones who have
found honor among you, along with the prophets and teachers.\textsuperscript{57}

Given the explicit instructions the Didachist also has regarding baptism,\textsuperscript{58} the Eucharist,\textsuperscript{59}
and the election of bishops and deacons, one can see the transitional element of this text

\textsuperscript{57}\textit{Did.} 15.1-2. Χειροτονήσατε οὖν ἑαυτοῖς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους ἅξιους τοῦ κυρίου,
ἀνδρας πραεῖς καὶ ἀφιλαργύρους καὶ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ διδακμασμένους· ὑμῖν γάρ
λειτουργοῦσι καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν λειτουργίαν τῶν προφητῶν καὶ διδασκάλων. μὴ οὖν
ὑπερϊδήτε αὐτοῖς· αὐτοὶ γὰρ εἰσίν οἱ τετιμημένοι υμῶν μετὰ τῶν προφητῶν καὶ
dιδασκάλων.

\textsuperscript{58}\textit{Did.} 7.1-4. “But with respect to baptism, baptize as follows. Having said all these
things in advance, baptize in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
in running water. But if you do not have running water, baptize in some other water. And
if you cannot baptize in cold water, use warm. But if you have neither, pour water on the
head three times in the name of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. But both the one
baptizing and the one baptized should fast before baptism, along with some others if they
can. But command the one being baptized to fast one or two days in advance.” Πᾶς δὲ ὁ
ἐρχόμενος ἐν ὅνοματι κυρίου δεχόμενος· ἐπεί ταῦτα ταῦτα δεδοκιμασμένα αὐτόν γνώσεσθε, σώσασιν
γάρ ἔξετε δεξιὰν καὶ ἀριστερὰν. εἰ μὲν παροδιός ἐστιν ὁ ἐρχόμενος, βοηθήτε αὐτῷ, δόσον
dύνασθε· οὐ μενεὶ δὲ πρὸς υμᾶς εἰ μὴ δύο ἢ τρεῖς ἡμέρας, εὰν ἢ ἀνάγκη, εἰ δὲ θέλει πρὸς
ὑμᾶς καθήσθαι, τεχνίτης ὁν, ἐργαζόμενος καὶ φαγέτω. εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἔχει τέχνην, κατὰ τὴν
σώσασιν υμῶν προνοησάτε, πάς μὴ ἄργος μεθ᾽ υμῶν ζήσεται Χριστιανός· εἰ δ’ οὐ θέλει
οὗτος ποιεῖν, χριστιανός ἔστι· προσέχετε ἀπὸ τῶν τοιούτων. For a detailed analysis of
the baptismal practices of the Didache, see, Everett Ferguson, \textit{Baptism in the Early

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Did.} 9.1-5. “And with respect to the thanksgiving meal, you shall give thanks as
follows. First, with respect to the cup: “We give you thanks, our Father, for the holy vine
of David, your child, which you made known to us through Jesus your child. To you be
the glory forever.” And with respect to the fragment of bread: “we give you thanks, our
Father, for the life and knowledge that you made known to us through Jesus your child.
To you be the glory forever. As this fragment of bread was scattered upon the mountains
and was gathered to become one, so may your church be gathered together from the ends
of the earth into your kingdom. For the glory and the power are yours through Jesus
Christ forever.” But let no one eat or drink from your thanksgiving meal unless they have
been baptized in the name of the Lord. For also the Lord has said about this, “Do not give
what is holy to the dogs.” Περὶ δὲ τῆς εὐχαριστίας, οὗτος εὐχαριστήσατε· πρῶτον περὶ
as it both welcomed charismatic teachers, but was beginning to impose an ecclesial leadership on the community.  

It is in the tension of this transition that we find the significance of the Charismatic Catholics who resisted this change and rejected the theological jurisdiction, and therefore the (male-dominated) ecclesial authority, of the Apostolic-Catholics. We now turn to the Charismatic Catholic, Acts of Paul and Thecla and Martyrdom of Paul.

The Charismatic Practices of the Acts of Paul and Thecla

The Acts of Paul and Thecla and the Martyrdom of Paul are components of a single document, the Acts of Paul, a text that also occasionally includes 3 Corinthians, and has come to us largely in fragments.  

The text itself is a mid-to-late second century

τοῦ ποτηρίου· Ἐυχαριστοῦμεν σοι, πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὑπὲρ τῆς ἀγίας ἀμπέλον Δανείδ τοῦ παιδός σου· σοι ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. περὶ δὲ τοῦ κλάσματος: Ἐυχαριστοῦμεν σοι, πάτερ ἡμῶν, ὑπὲρ τῆς ὑπηρεσίας καὶ γνώσεως, ἢς ἐγνώρισας ἡμῖν διὰ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ παιδός σου. σοι ἡ δόξα εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. ὁσπερ ἦν τούτο τὸ κλάσμα διεσκορπισμένον ἐπάνω τῶν ὁρέων καὶ συναχθὲν ἐγένετο ἐν, οὕτω συναχθήτω σου ἡ ἐκκλησία ἀπὸ τῶν περάτων τῆς γῆς εἰς τὴν σὴν βασιλείαν. ὅτι σοῦ ἐστιν ἡ δόξα καὶ ἡ δύναμις διὰ Ἰησοῦ εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας. μηδείς δὲ φαγέτω μηδὲ πιέτω ἀπὸ τῆς εὐχαριστίας ὑμῶν, ἀλλ’ ὦ βαπτισθέντες εἰς ὅνομα κυρίου· καὶ γὰρ περὶ τούτου εἴρηκεν ὁ κύριος· Μὴ δοῦτε τὸ ἅγιον τοῖς κυσί.


text, and Tertullian⁶² records that it was a forgery composed by a presbyter in Asia Minor “out of love for Paul.”⁶³ The text is primarily focused on Thecla and records how the

⁶² Although active in the early third century in North Africa, the prominence that Tertullian plays in early Christian debates over the memories and reception of Paul cannot be understated (For a recent consideration of reception history of Paul in Tertullian, see Todd D. Still and David E. Wilhite (eds.), *Tertullian and Paul* (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013). There is little historical evidence for his life, and much of the scholarship has accepted Jerome’s assertions about Tertullian serving as a presbyter of Carthage in the late second and early third century, that his father was a centurion, and that he eventually gave into the New Prophecy of Montanism later in his life (Frend, *Rise of Christianity*, 348-349.). However, recent scholarship has become skeptical of these assertions. In particular, given that he himself notes he was not ordained he was likely not an official presbyter, but probably did participate in the lay eldership of the Carthaginian church, and it is doubtful if he ever actually joined the Montanist movement (David E. Wilhite, “Introduction,” in *Tertullian and Paul*, eds. Todd D. Still and David E. Wilhite, xvii-xxiv. (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), xix.). He was quite popular in North Africa through the administration of Cyprian, though by the time of Augustine he had come to be understood as theologically controversial. However, for our purposes Tertullian was a virulent heresiologist who vociferously attacked false images, uses, and memories of Paul, and in the process helped crystallize these memories. J. Patout Burns Jr. and Robin M. Jensen, *Christianity in Roman Africa: The Development of Its Practices and Beliefs* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014); Geoffrey D. Dunn, *Tertullian* (London: Routledge, 2004); David Rankin, *Tertullian and the Church* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and David E. Wilhite, *Tertullian the African* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyer, 2007)

preaching of Paul so amazed her that she abandoned her marriage and chose to follow him.\(^{64}\) Her family reported this social breach and the local governor arranged for Paul to be scourged and expelled from the city and Thecla to be burned for her actions.\(^ {65}\) She is saved from the fire, but soon sentenced to death again, though this time by wild beasts.\(^ {66}\) Again she is saved, but in a rare display of female agency and autonomous authority, she baptizes herself.\(^ {67}\) After her baptism, she reunites with Paul for a time but eventually returns to Iconium to convert her mother.\(^ {68}\) The narrative also includes Paul preaching,

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\(^{65}\) *Acts of Paul*, 3.7-3.20.

\(^{66}\) *Acts of Paul*, 3.21-4.6.

\(^{67}\) *Acts of Paul*, 4.7-14. The notion of her self-baptism, and female baptism in general, will be discussed in more detail in the pages below. Although her behavior is certainly peculiar in early Christianity, both for the self-baptismal act and that she was a woman performing the baptism, Ferguson argues that the liturgical aspects of the rite remain consistent with other Apostolic-Catholic baptismal expectations. As he explains, “Thecla imitated church practice: a nude immersion (at least implied), baptizing ‘in the name of Jesus Christ,’ and describing the baptism with the words ‘wash’ and ‘bath.’” Everett Ferguson, *Baptism in the Early Church: History, Theology, and Liturgy in the First Five Centuries* (William B Eerdmans Publishing: Grand Rapids, MI, 2009), 230.

\(^{68}\) *Acts of Paul*, 4.15-18.
baptizing, and performing miracles.\textsuperscript{69} The story concludes with Paul’s martyrdom in Rome and stands as the first detailed account of his death.\textsuperscript{70}

It is of note that there is no mention of the original twelve disciples in this text, and the only other figures who are discussed in the \textit{Acts of Paul and Thecla} are Titus and Luke, known companions of the canonical Paul.\textsuperscript{71} And although the work is primarily focused on Paul and Thecla as the central characters of the narrative, the text was enormously popular among early Apostolic-Catholics, so much so, that at some point the non-canonical and inauthentic \textit{3 Corinthians of Paul}, a text that properly belongs among the Apostolic-Catholics was even inserted into the manuscript. Theologically, the \textit{Acts of Paul and Thecla} emphasizes chastity and bodily resurrection and does not seem to contradict the general teachings of the Apostolic-Catholics. It does, however, identify an alternative authority for Paul and his teaching.\textsuperscript{72} In the \textit{Acts}, Paul is presented as a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{69} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 5-11.
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\textsuperscript{71} Within the canonical corpus of Paul, Titus is mentioned as a companion of Paul in 2 Corinthians 2, 7-8, and 12, Galatians 2, 2 Timothy 4, and of course Paul’s letter to Titus. Luke is recognized as a friend of Paul’s in Colossians 4, Philemon 1, and 2 Timothy 4.
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\textsuperscript{72} The scholarship on the non-catholicity of the text is largely taken from later church Fathers who sought to have the text repressed for later, fourth-sixth century concerns. Jeremy W. Barrier, \textit{The Acts of Paul and Thecla: A Critical Introduction and Commentary} (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 25-30; Léonie Hayne, “Thecla and the Church Fathers,” \textit{Vigilae Christianae}, 48 no. 3 (September 1994): 209-218; Boughton suggests that any incongruence with later Catholic theology was due to its hagiographical intent, though historical style of writing. As she explains, “the \textit{Acts of Paul} and its Thecla...
charismatic leader who is the author of his own teaching. Though he received that teaching from the lord, there is no external verification or authentication from the apostles. Paul is the sole source of authoritative teaching, and there is no evidence of an apostolic teaching or apostolic approval in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*.

Davis details the charismatic aspects of Thecla’s character in the narrative and argues that her depiction represents the community’s advocacy of charisma against the episode were proscribed not because church authorities wanted to suppress history but because the work pretended to contain a level of historical and doctrinal truth that could never be found in works of its kind.” Lynn C. Boughton, “From Pious Legend to Feminist Fantasy: Distinguishing Hagiographical License from Apostolic Practice in the ‘Acts of Paul/Acts of Thecla,’” *The Journal of Religion* 71 no. 3 (July 1991): 362-383, 383. The early reception of the text, Tertullian notwithstanding, seems to have been rather positive as the Hippolytus text, *In Danielem* 29.3, takes Paul’s episode with the lion (chapter 9) as legitimate and uses it to justify the biblical account of Daniel with the lions. Moreschini and Norelli date the text to the 203-204, and Pervo thus concludes that “the *APl* is evidently scarcely thirty years old, but it has attained the status of ‘gospel truth,’ as it were, at Rome. (Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 44; Claudio Moreschini and Enrico Norelli, *Early Christian Greek and Latin Literature: A Literary History, Volume 1: From Paul to the Age of Constantine*, trans. Matthew J. O’Connell (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 2005), 242-243. Origen similarly seems to accept the text as genuine and references a quotation from Paul in the text as if from Paul himself. Again, as Pervo has shown, Origen’s remarks in *De Pascha*, “The married man who eats the Passover ‘shall gird’ also his ‘loins’ because the Apostle has said, ‘blessed are those who have wives [if they live] as those who have none,’” are taken from the *Acts of Paul* 3.5 and treated as the direct words of Paul (Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 45). However, in book 20 of his *Commentary on John*, Origen does note that there are some who deny the authority of the text. Although Pervo assumes this has more to do with the limiting of the scriptural canon than with any direct rejection of the text. (Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 45).
established ecclesiology of the contemporary Apostolic-Catholics. Following the work of Theissen, Davis writes,

In early Christian culture, there was a standard social type which we know as the wandering charismatic; the salient characteristics of this social type were persons who spurned home, family, possessions, and protection for the sake of teaching the Gospel. Thecla’s asceticism and itinerancy mark her as a clear example of this type in early Christianity. In the first two centuries CE, apostles and other itinerant miracle workers enjoyed considerable authority in local Christian communities – an authority not dependent on institutional structures, but instead on persuasive demonstrations of charisma or spiritual power.

Davis’ identification of Thecla as a charismatic teacher is established in the context of the Cult of Thecla that emerges in later Christianity. However, Thecla’s role within the narrative is what enables this cult to develop around her, and as Davis argues, it speaks to a historical reality of the second century.

Citing her itinerancy, chastity as asceticism, role as confessor, and transvestiture into the clothing of an itinerant preacher, Davis describes Thecla’s role as

73 Davis, The Cult of Saint Thecla.

74 Davis is specifically drawing from the description of charismatic teachers in Theissen, Sociology of Early Palestinian Christianity, 8-16., and The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity, 28-35.

75 Davis, Cult of Saint Thecla, 26.

76 Davis, Cult of Saint Thecla, 81-194.

77 Davis, Cult of Saint Thecla, 18-35.

78 The itinerant role of both Paul and Thecla is an obvious trope of the story, however, Davis observes that the specific use of the term ze/noi (stranger) to describe both Paul
a charismatic teacher within the rubric of Theissen’s sociological analysis. From this, Davis then evaluates the exchange between Tryphaena and Thecla in chapter four, in which Tryphaena invites Thecla to her home, allows her to stay for eight days, and then continues to offer her (and Paul) “a large amount of clothing and gold” for her continued teaching elsewhere, as a window into a probable historical situation.\(^8^2\) As he explains, the relationship between Tryphaena and Thecla might finally serve as an imaginative model for reconstructing the social organization of the communities behind the story. If the legend of Thecla traces its oral roots to settled communities in second-century Asia Minor – perhaps domestic circles of widows who shared a common commitment to the life of chastity – such communities may have served as sources of support for charismatic members who travelled and taught, communicating the story of Thecla and its distinctively ascetic message to settled communities in other locales. Perhaps some of these charismatic women claimed the status of “confessor” and performed an intercessory function for local... and Thecla in the text is a reference to the itinerancy of classical figures like Odysseus, the heroes of the LXX, and those who will inherit the kingdom in Matthew 25.31-46. Davis, *Cult of Saint Thecla*, 22-26.

\(^7^9\) Davis, *Cult of Saint Thecla*, 19-22.

\(^8^0\) That she able to act as an intercessor after her imprisonment suggests that she assumed a martyr-like status with the community following her incarceration. This is not without historical precedence as passage from Irenaeus who describes this process. He also notes the social complications of this practice and how it challenged the authority of Cyprian in the early third century. Davis, *Cult of Saint Thecla*, 26-31.

\(^8^1\) Although common among scholars to assume her changing of close is a gender statement, which it may well be too, Davis argues that it also speaks to the conventions of female travel in antiquity; namely, that women often dressed as men for travel. Davis, *Cult of Saint Thecla*, 31-34.

\(^8^2\) *Acts of Paul*, 4.16.
communities. Perhaps some even practiced transvestitism as a sin of their break from society and as a means of facilitating their travel.\textsuperscript{83}

Davis, a cautious scholar, offers a speculation into the community from which this text emerged. His observation of the likely female-dominant community that advocated for an austere and chaste existence is useful for understanding the social reality of this community. Davis’ work is helpful in identifying not only the focus of the text and the community who wrote it, but also in postulating the dynamic of their relationship to the existing ecclesial structures. From this we can return to the work of Stewart-Sykes and see how this community would not necessarily stand in opposition or conflict to the legitimated leadership of the ecclesial authority, yet at the same time advocate for a different theological approach, rooted in a particular authority that \textit{would} challenge their apostolic authority.

Hylen, in comparing the \textit{Acts of Paul and Thecla} and 1 Timothy, has presented a convincing case that there was indeed a community of itinerant and chaste women who taught an ascetic message as charismatic teachers, and this was the specific tension between them and the more established ecclesiological communities.\textsuperscript{84} This again is not to suggest a divisive scenario, but rather highlight the tensions that would exist between these two groups that is evident in social practice, teaching, and certain rituals (such as baptism).

\textsuperscript{83} Davis, \textit{Cult of Saint Thecla}, 35.

As we will see, the Acts emphasizes an opposing, decidedly unapproved, authority for Paul than that which was seen among the Apostolic-Catholics yet their theologies do not appear at odds. We are thus left with the conclusion that this was a point of specific contention between these groups, and perhaps on grounds of the authority of the teaching and its communication, not for the community leadership and management. The work done in this chapter illustrates how the Acts of Paul and Thecla also positions Paul as a charismatic teacher and, and in so doing, uses the apostle to justify their itinerant, charismatic, female-focused mission throughout Asia Minor.\textsuperscript{85} It is through the actions of Thecla, at the expressed approval of Paul in the text, that legitimate their own self-defined identity of charisma and female leadership. Viewing both characters together provides the necessary framework to understanding the identity of the community behind the text.

**Paul as a Charismatic Leader in the Acts of Paul and Thecla**

The narrative begins with a fragmentarily preserved story of Paul’s departure from Damascus\textsuperscript{86} and his expulsion from Antioch,\textsuperscript{87} both of which are consistent

\textsuperscript{85} For the sake of ease, I will continue to refer to this practice as charismatic leadership, but do so with the intention of charismatic communication.

\textsuperscript{86} Acts of Paul, 1. This passage is found in the unpublished Coptic fragment in the John Rylands Library (P. Ryl inv. 44); APL 9., and taken from the translation of Pervo, Acts of Paul, 1.
episodes with other contemporary narratives of Paul and so this text is already participating in an accepted story arc of Paul.\textsuperscript{88} The third chapter of the text, and the most relevant to our discussion, begins with Paul’s entrance into Iconium.\textsuperscript{89} He immediately develops a cadre of followers, most of whom are women, and his repute grows rapidly in the city.\textsuperscript{90} The force of Paul’s charisma is witnessed by Thecla’s mother in her discussion with Thamyris, Thecla’s fiancé.\textsuperscript{91} Within the narrative itself, Paul had only been in Iconium for a few days when we find Thamyris looking for Thecla. Her mother tells Thamyris,

\begin{quote}
I’ve got some strange news for you Thamyris. She hasn’t left her window for three days and three nights, nor has she taken a drop or tasted a bite. She is intoxicated by the sight of a stranger and his wily and enticing discourse. I am amazed that such a modest girl can put up with all this. Thamyris, this fellow is agitating Iconium, specifically your Thecla. All
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{87} Acts of Paul, 2. This passage is found in the P Heid 1-6, and taken from the translation of Pervo, Acts of Paul, 2. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Pervo.

\textsuperscript{88} For his departure from Damascus to Jerusalem see the Valentinian Apocalypse of Paul (discussed in chapter one), the Epistula Apostolorum, 31-33, and the canonical Acts of the Apostles, 9. Paul’s departure from Antioch is also seen in the Acts of Titus: however, as there is a clear textual influence from the Acts of Paul and the canonical Acts on this narrative, viewing it as an independent witness the story is problematic. Richard I. Pervo, “The Acts of Titus: A Preliminary Translation, with an introduction and Notes,” in Society of Biblical Literature 1996 Seminar Papers (SBLSP 35; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1996), 455-482.

\textsuperscript{89} Acts of Paul, 3.1.

\textsuperscript{90} Acts of Paul, 3.5-6., Paul is welcomed into the city by Onesiphorus who takes him to his house where “people knelt for prayer, bread was broken, and God’s message about self-control and resurrection [was] proclaimed” by Paul.

\textsuperscript{91} Acts of Paul, 3.8-10.
the women and young people are coming to him for instruction. ‘You must,’ he says, ‘revere the one and only God and live chastely.’

Although one might see sexual overtones in the passage, the story itself is instead focused on a young woman who has become entranced by Paul for both his ability as a teacher and for the content of his teaching. Whether drawn from the real experience of witnessing family members responding to the influence of traveling teachers, or simply constructing a persuasive narrative, the author places clear distress in her mother’s words as she describes her daughter not drinking or eating for three days because she is listening


93 For a discussion of the sexual nature and social significance of this passage see, Kate Cooper, The Virgin and the Bride: Idealized Womanhood in Late Antiquity (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996), esp., 50-54., and Judith Perkins, The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era (New York: Routledge, 1995), 41-76. Although the connection to contemporary romance novels is helpful, it does present Thecla in a passive position. Challenging this assertion, Susan Calef argues that Thecla is an active agent who goes beyond the romance comparison and such a perspective ultimately proves limiting in its perspective of Thecla’s role. Susan A. Calef, “Thecla ‘Tried and True’ and the Inversion of Romance,” in A Feminist Companion to the New Testament Apocrypha, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Maria May Robbins, 163-185 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006). Regardless of the theoretical approach, the intention here is show the inversion of the sexual nature of this scene and emphasize her adoration of Paul as a teacher and for the message of his teaching.
to Paul. According to her mother, Thecla is literally mesmerized by him - and she is not the only one. Her mother reports that “all the women and young people are coming to him for instruction.” Yet despite the popularity Paul immediately enjoys, the text intentionally describes Paul in rather unflattering physical terms. When Paul entered Iconium Onesiphorus went to find him based of the description of Titus. As the text reads, “Then he saw Paul coming, short, bald, bow-legged, healthy-looking, single-browed, a bit long-nosed, and bursting with beneficence.” Bremmer argues that the negative description of Paul is an attempt to assuage any sexual aspects of her interest in

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94 For a more detailed discussion of the sociological factors influencing Theoclia as mother in the story, see Cornelia B. Horn, “Suffering Children, Parental Authority and the Quest for Liberation?: A Tale of Three Girls in the Acts of Paul (and Thecla), the Act(s) of Peter, the Acts of Nerseus and Achelleus and the Epistle of Pseudo-Titus,” in A Feminist Companion to the New Testament Apocrypha, ed. Amy-Jill Levine and Maria May Robbins, 118-145 (New York: T&T Clark, 2006), esp., 118-130. Paul is understood to teach a largely ascetic message that calls for followers to give up their possessions, sexual urges, and conventional social lives. Pauline Nigh Hogan, “Paul and Women in Second-Century Christianity,” in Paul and the Second Century, ed. Michael F. Bird and Joseph R. Dodson, 226-243 (London: T&T Clark International, 2011), 231. Pervo also regards this text as “anti-establishment” and “rejecting the official forms of authority, notably the Empire and its institutions, particularly like the family.” Although this may be too extreme of a conclusion to reach, the text certainly does not endorse these structures. Pervo, Making of Paul, 42.

95 Acts of Paul, 3.9. πᾶσαι γὰρ αἱ γυναῖκες καὶ οἱ νέοι εἰσέρχονται πρὸς αὐτόν, διδάσκόμενοι παρ’ αὐτοῦ


97 Acts of Paul, 3.3 εἶδεν δὲ τὸν Παῦλον ἐρχόμενον, ἀνδρὰ μικρὸν τῷ μεγέθει, ψιλὸν τῇ κεφαλῇ, ἀγκύλον ταῖς κνήμαις, εὐεκτικὸν, σύνοφρυν, μικρῶς ἐπίρριπον, χάριτος πλήρης
Paul. Using contemporary physiognomy descriptions, Bremmer explains this description of Paul,

It is striking that his description is hardly wholly positive. Meeting eyebrows indicated tristem maxime hominem sed et parum sapientem, bow-legged people were dim-witted, small men too quick, and baldness was considered ugly, as various literary passages show…the reason for the negative characteristics probably lies in the following chapters where Thecla is pictured as being mesmerized by Paul’s message. If Paul had been described as physically attractive, her fascination could have easily been understood. However, this description causes the reader to look into a different direction.98

Bremmer’s contextualization of Paul’s description permits us a more precise window through which to observe just how strikingly unflattering this depiction of Paul really is, and how it forces the reader to accept Thecla’s fascination with Paul in a non-physical manner; namely, on account of his ability as teacher and the substance of his teaching.99

Theoclia, Thecla’s mother, describes her in terms similar to the “lovesick” characters of contemporary pagan novels;100 however, Thecla is entranced by Paul completely on the


99 Although Andrew Gregory disagrees and sees this presentation in a positive light, he does so without qualification other than to say, “this description need not be unflattering if read in the light of ancient physiognomy and of Heracles.” Andrew Gregory, “The Acts of Paul and the Legacy of Paul,” in Paul and the Second Century, ed. Michael Bird and Joseph R. Dodson, 169-189 (London: T&T Clark International, 2011), 179. See also Pervo who argues the description is over shadowed, and therefore to be ignored, by the ensuing comment of his angelic countenance Pervo, Making of Paul, 91-95.

basis of his teaching and not through lust in a sexual or erotic nature. In the narrative, Paul has become the teacher for a movement in Iconium only three days after entering the city despite the physical conditions which would suggest a “dimwitted” and “ugly” man. Thus we find that the narrative emphasizes the physical deficiencies of Paul in order to valorize him for his pedagogical acumen and the speed with which he acquired followers. Because Paul was able to overcome these physical hurdles to become a popular teacher, and did so without any support or validation from apostles indicates support for the practice of charismatic teaching.

After the scene discussed above between Thecla’s mother and her fiancé, Thamyris has Paul arrested for corrupting the city. In the course of the trial Paul must explain who he is and what he teaches. Paul says,

If, proconsul, I am being examined today regarding my teaching, listen. The living God, the avenging God, the jealous God, the God who requires nothing yet needs that humanity be saved has sent me to draw people away from corruption, impurity, every pleasure, and death, so that they may cease erring. Therefore, God sent his son, who alone has compassion for a world gone astray, whom I proclaim and in whom I teach that people should locate their hope, so that they may not be subject to condemnation but rather have confidence in and reverence for God, as well as intimacy with majesty and passion for truth. So if I teach matters revealed to me, what law am I breaking, Proconsul?

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102 Acts of Paul, 3.15.

103 Acts of Paul, 3.17 Εἰ ἐγὼ σήμερον ἀνακρίνομαι τί διδάσκω, ἄκουσον, ἀνθύπατε. Θεὸς ἔδωκεν, Θεὸς ἐκδικήσεως, Θεὸς ἐρωτημάτως, Θεὸς ἀποστείλας, χρήσαντος τῆς τῶν ἀνθρώπων σωτηρίας ἐπεμψεν με, ὅπως ἀπὸ τῆς φθορᾶς καὶ τῆς ἀκαθαρσίας ἀποσπάσω αὐτούς καὶ
I include this passage to demonstrate the emphasis on Paul’s divinely revealed teaching. Paul received this teaching from the lord and preached it. He did not receive it from, nor verify it with, the apostles. This is not an apostolic teaching; this is Paul’s teaching. Here we see the specific importance of charismatic leadership as this scene justifies the practice of inspired teaching. This is clear example of the Charismatic’s transgressive move against the Apostolic-Catholics who ground their authority in the apostolicity of their teaching. Furthermore, that Paul roots his authority to teach in the divine message necessarily assumes that if a teaching is divine, it is right to preach it. This assumption becomes further emphasized through Thecla, as she now shifts into the primary character of the story.

After his trial, Paul is flogged and expelled from Iconium. Later in the story, after Paul and Thecla travel to Antioch, Thecla is tortured and sentenced to a horrific

104 This notion of inspired teaching is what Pervo refers to as spiritual gifts, which underlies the theological structure of the Acts of Paul. Pervo, Making of Paul, 142.

105 Paul’s expulsion recalls the ejection of both Paul and Barnabas from Iconium in the canonical Acts chapter 14. Although there is an unlikely literary connection, it is probable that the author of the apocryphal acts was aware of the Lukan version and simply modified. That the expulsion does not include Barnabas further serves to emphasize Paul’s unique status among the apostles. For more see Richard Bauckham, “The Acts of Paul as a Sequel to Acts,” in The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Literary Setting. Volume I, ed. B.W. Winter and A.D. Clarke, 105-152 (Michigan and Carlisle,
death because she refused the advances of a certain Alexander. During the course of her trial, a series of miracles occur to prevent her from harm, and at one point she jumps into water and baptizes herself. She escapes her torture and travels to Myra to find Paul where she tells of her baptism and that she has been teaching. Paul is joyous and encourages her to continue teaching in Iconium. Thecla assumed the authority to baptize herself. She is not under the direction of a presbyter or bishop, nor does she seek validation from any ecclesial authority for the act. She also proclaims herself teacher and is encouraged by Paul and the others in Myra to continue preaching. Thecla, just as Paul, found her authority in her ability to teach a divinely inspired message. We saw previously the association between divine inspiration and the right to teach because that


106 Thecla is actually quite violent in her rejection of him as “she grabbed Alexander, tore his cloak, knocked the crown from his head and turned him into an object of derision.” (4.1). In response to his humiliation, Alexander brings her before the governor who “condemned her to the beasts.” (4.2)


110 Acts of Paul, 4.16.

111 Although Davies is correct to observe that Thecla herself does not baptize others, this action is still suggested within the text, because one who teaches also baptizes. Stephen J. Davis, “Women, Tertullian and the Acts of Paul,” Semeia 38 (1986): 139-143.

112 For more explicit discussion of the charisma of Thecla, see Davis, The Cult of Saint Thecla, 26-36.
is what Paul does, and here we see Thecla act in a similar capacity. Furthermore, as Thecla is a woman, this is an implicit acceptance of female baptism and teaching.

To put this in a more historical context, the letters of Ignatius identify several women playing significant roles in the church. In his letter to Smyrna, Ignatius writes to Tavia and Alce. In his letter to Polycarp, Ignatius names the wife of Epitropus “with her whole household and children,” and again Alce. Epitropus’ wife is likely a widow because she is understood to run the household, and Ignatius also identifies somewhat of an Order of Widows in both of these letters as well. This, coupled with the absence of women mentioned in the Johannine epistles, and the specific limitations of their leadership in the Pastorals, along with Tertullian’s refusal to recognize the Acts of Paul and Thecla and his denunciation of female baptismal teaching, as well as his placement of the text in Asia Minor, suggests that the Asia Minor churches were embroiled in this very debate over women leadership and baptisms. Thus, with Thecla baptizing herself

116 Tertullian, De baptism, 17.5
117 For a contextual consideration of the role of women in religious authority in Asia Minor, see Katherine Bain, Women’s Socioeconomic Status and Religious Leadership in Asia Minor: In the First Two Centuries CE (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014).
and with Paul’s approval, the texts speaks to the contemporary debate and suggests that Paul endorses the Charismatic perspective. In comparing the text with the contemporary *Acts of John*, Bremmer notes the social reality of the text and its influence among other Christian circles in the Mediterranean. He writes,

> The portrayal of women in the *AJ* and *AP* also suggests that they were conscious of their high status and used to a degree of independence which we do not normally associate with Greek women…but we can hardly fail to notice that the *AP* did not need to have a liberating effect on these women: evidently, they were liberated already – at least as far as that was possible in that period. The situation was perhaps not that different in other areas of the Roman Empire…Once the *AP* travelled the Mediterranean outside south-west Asia Minor, these women could appropriate the example of Thecla and aspire to the same independence. And indeed, the already mentioned notice of Tertullian informs us that Thecla’s behavior had inspired Carthaginian women to request the right to baptize and to teach. The *Acts of Paul and Thecla*, then, not only testifies to the power of the Word but also demonstrates the power of a text.\(^\text{118}\)

The role of Thecla was undeniably potent among early Christians, and here the text serves to further emphasize her charismatic and female authority as it is under the approval – and imitation of – Paul.\(^\text{119}\)

Indeed, the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* uses their memory of Paul to justify the charismatic leadership and defend the role of women in the church.

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\(^{118}\) Bremmer, “Magic, Martyrdom and Women’s Liberation,” 59.

Paul as Martyr in the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and *Martyrdom of Paul*

Paul’s martyrdom in the *Acts of Paul* teaches the readership that they too will be like Jesus should they suffer. Unlike Ignatius, this memory of Paul does not serve to unify the church, inform apostolic authority, or instantiate the cosmic significance of ritual.\(^{120}\) The only import in Paul’s martyrdom for the community is that it is divinely approved and will connect one with Jesus and God. The martyrdom of Paul occurs in the final three chapters of the *Acts of Paul* and presents him as a figure in the same image as Jesus. The passion of Paul begins in chapter 12 with his trip from Philippi to Corinth. Upon arriving in Corinth,

He taught for forty days about what he had endured, what he had experienced in various places and the sundry marvels accorded to him. In every account he praised God the almighty and Christ Jesus who had been well pleased with Paul in every place.\(^{121}\)

In referencing the forty days of Paul’s teaching, the author keys into the communal memory of Jesus’ forty days of teaching after his resurrection to the apostles in Acts. In Luke’s canonical account he explains the context of his story and Jesus’ actions prior to his ascension. Luke writes,

\[\text{Luke writes,}\]

\(^{120}\) Ignatius’ understanding of martyrdom and its effect on the church will be detailed in chapter five.

\(^{121}\) *Acts of Paul*, 12.1. Pervo translation of composite text.
In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. After his suffering he presented himself alive to them by many convincing proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God. While staying with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. “This,” he said, “is what you have heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Although it does not occur after his own resurrection, in the Acts of Paul, Paul teaches for forty days in Corinth to the church Paul founded, just as Jesus spoke to the apostles Jesus selected. The comparison with Jesus is extended further by the reference to Jesus’ baptism. In the synoptic gospels, after John baptizes Jesus the skies part and the voice from heavens proclaims, “this is my son, with whom I am well pleased,” before Jesus is hastily taken into the wilderness for forty days. The narrative function of these allusions is to convey the authority of God through Paul. As Pervo explains,

122 Acts 1.1-5. Τὸν μὲν πρῶτον λόγον ἐποιησάμην περὶ πάντων, ὦ Θεόφιλε, ὡς ἦρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς ποιεῖν τε καὶ διδάσκειν, ἄχρι ἂς ἡμέρας ἄνελθησον διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου ὁ ἀποστόλος τοῦ θεοῦ· καὶ παρέστησεν αὐτοῦ μὴ χωρίζεσθαι ἀλλὰ περιμένετε τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς ἢν ἠκούσατέ μου, ὅτι Ἰωάννης μὲν ἐβάπτισεν ὕδατι, ὑμεῖς δὲ ἐν πνεύματι βαπτισθήσεσθε ἁγίῳ οὐ μετὰ πολλὰς ταύτας ἡμέρας.

123 See Mark 1.11. καὶ φωνὴ ἐγένετο ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν· σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, ἐν σοι εὐδόκησα. Matthew 3.17. καὶ ἰδοὺ φωνὴ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν λέγουσα· οὗτος ἐστιν ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, ἐν ὦ εὐδόκησα. and Luke 3.22. καὶ φωνὴν ἐξ οὐρανοῦ γενόσθαι· σὺ εἶ ὁ υἱὸς μου ὁ ἀγαπητὸς, ἐν σοι εὐδόκησα. Although there are slight textual variations in all three versions, each notes the pleasure God has for Jesus after his baptism.
For the author and his audience, it was gospel: Paul’s life imitated that of his master; only through the power of Christ could the apostle achieve what he had achieved and endure what he had endured. This is the meaning of the final doxology: credit belongs to God.\textsuperscript{124}

The emphasis on the authority of God was already seen in the text’s emphasis on Paul as charismatic teacher. This notion of divine authority over apostolic authority is further enhanced in the narrative of Paul’s martyrdom.

After the forty days, Paul announces that he must travel to the “fiery furnace” that is Rome.\textsuperscript{125} The fiery furnace language keys into the memorialized imagery of Daniel,\textsuperscript{126} 4 Maccabees,\textsuperscript{127} and \textit{1 Clement},\textsuperscript{128} and implies that just as Nebuchadnezzar wrongly

\textsuperscript{124} Pervo, \textit{Acts of Paul}, 284.

\textsuperscript{125} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 12.2.

\textsuperscript{126} Daniel 3. 19-20. “Then Nebuchadnezzar was so filled with rage against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that his face was distorted. He ordered the furnace heated up seven times more than was customary, and ordered some of the strongest guards in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.” τότε Ναβουχοδονοσορ ἐπλήσθη θημοῦ, καὶ ἡ μορφή τοῦ προσώπου αὐτοῦ ἠλλοιώθη, καὶ ἔπεταξε καθήναι τὴν κάμινον ἐπταπλασίως παρ᾽ ὅ ἐδει αὐτῷ καθῆναι καὶ ἄνδρας ἱσχυροτάτους τῶν ἐν τῇ δυνάμει ἐπέταξε συμποδίσαντας τὸν Σεδραχ, Μισαχ, Ἀβδεναγω ἐμβαλεῖν εἰς τὴν κάμινον τοῦ πυρὸς τὴν καιμόμενην.

\textsuperscript{127} 4 Maccabees 16.21. “Daniel the righteous was thrown to the lions, and Hananiah, Azariah, and Mishael were hurled into the fiery furnace and endured it for the sake of God.” καὶ Δανιηλ ὁ δίκαιος εἰς λέοντας ἔβληθη καὶ Ανανίας καὶ Ἀζαριας καὶ Μισαηλ εἰς κάμινον πυρὸς ἀπεσφενδονήθησαν καὶ ὑπέμειναν διὰ τὸν θεὸν

\textsuperscript{128} \textit{1 Clement} 45.7. “Or were Ananias, Azriias, and Misael shut up in the fiery furnace by those who participated in the magnificent and glorious worship of the Most High?” ἡ Ἀνανίας καὶ Ἀζαριας καὶ Μισαηλ ὑπὸ τῶν θησαυρούντων τὴν μεγαλοπρεπὴ καὶ ἐνδοξὸν θρησκείαν τοῦ ὑψίστου κατείρχησαν εἰς κάμινον πυρὸς;
condemned Daniel, so too will Nero wrongly martyr Paul. \(^{129}\) And although he does not explicitly state that he will be martyred, with the allusions to the fiery furnace and Paul’s comment that he “should not be able to endure it if the Lord did not empower me,” \(^{130}\) suggests that Paul was aware of his own impending death. Again, similar to Jesus who also expresses knowledge of his ensuing crucifixion. For example, in the Matthean version, the author explains that,

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid it, Lord! This must never happen to you.” \(^{131}\)

Not only does Paul allude to his own impending death as Jesus did, but his followers also appeal to God to intervene just as Peter did for Jesus. \(^{132}\)

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\(^{129}\) Pervo reads this an anti-imperial statement in the text, arguing that the Acts of Paul is an anti-Roman polemical narrative. While the story may belie some anti-Roman sentiment, the thrust of this section is to foreshadow the martyrdom of Paul and not to incite anger or derision toward Rome and the imperial authorities. Pervo, Acts of Paul, 284.

\(^{130}\) Acts of Paul, 12.2. Pervo translation of composite text.

\(^{131}\) Matthew 16.21-22. ἀπὸ τότε ἤρξατο ὁ Ἰησοῦς δεικνύειν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἀπελθεῖν καὶ πολλὰ παθεῖν ἀπὸ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καὶ ἀρχιερέων καὶ γραμματέων καὶ ἀποκτανθῆναι καὶ τῇ τρίτῃ ἡμέρᾳ ἐγερθῆναι. καὶ προσλαβόμενος αὐτὸν ὁ Πέτρος ἤρξατο ἐπιτιμᾶν αὐτῷ λέγον· ἔλεος σοι, κύριε· οὐ μὴ ἔσται σοι τοῦτο. See also Mark 8.31-9.1 and Luke 9.22-27.

\(^{132}\) Acts of Paul, 12.3. “When the believers and Paul heard this, they raised their voices and prayed: ‘God of our lord, Father of Christ, come to the aid of your slave Paul, so that he may remain with us because of our weakness.’” Pervo translation of composite text.
God does not intervene and Paul continues to Rome where the text attempts to explain the Neronian persecution of Christians. According to the Acts, Paul healed Patroclus the cupbearer of Nero who had been pushed out of the window by the devil and died.\textsuperscript{133} After Patroclus had been raised from the dead, he went to see Nero and informed him that that Christ would “destroy all kingdoms. He alone will be eternal and no kingdom will elude him.”\textsuperscript{134} When asked about his allegiance, Patroclus tells Nero that he is indeed a soldier for Christ, at which point the other leading guards of Nero also proclaim their allegiance to Christ.\textsuperscript{135} Nero is enraged and imprisons all the guards and Christians, including Paul.\textsuperscript{136}

Nero identifies Paul as the leader of the group and asks him, “Agent of the great king, albeit my prisoner, why did you come up with the idea of surreptitiously entering Roman territory and recruiting from my dominion?”\textsuperscript{137} In response, and apparently “inspired with the entire audience in mind,” Paul replies,

Caesar, we do not recruit from your dominion alone, but from every inhabited place, for we have been directed to exclude no one who wishes to enlist in the service of my king. If enrolling in his service should actually appeal to you, neither wealth nor the splendors of present

\textsuperscript{133} Acts of Paul, 14.1
\textsuperscript{134} Acts of Paul, 14.2.
\textsuperscript{135} Acts of Paul, 14.2.
\textsuperscript{137} Acts of Paul, 14.3. Pervo translation of composite text.
existence will avail you, but if you submit and entreat him, you will experience deliverance. For on a single day he will destroy the world.\footnote{Acts of Paul, 14.3. Pervo translation of composite text.}

Unmoved by Paul’s words, Nero orders all the prisoners to be burned at the stake except for Paul, who as a Roman citizen, would be beheaded. Paul continued teaching to the guards of his prison, and Nero remained incensed and started to kill all the Christians in Rome without a trial, and it was not until the intervention of the local citizenry that Nero stopped.\footnote{Acts of Paul, 14.3.} However, he still intended for Paul to be decapitated and in response to this edict, Paul announces his post-mortem return saying,

\begin{quote}
Caesar, my life for my king is not ephemeral. Even if you decapitate me, I shall do this: rise and appear to you, because I shall not have died but remain alive in my Lord Christ Jesus, who will come to judge the earth.\footnote{Acts of Paul, 14.4. Pervo translation of composite text.}
\end{quote}

Despite the protestations from the guards he converted, Paul remained focused and told them to “come promptly here to my tomb at dawn. You will find two men praying, Titus and Luke. They will seal you in the lord.”\footnote{Acts of Paul, 14.5. Pervo translation of composite text.} This allusion to Titus and Luke, similar to what will be seen in Third Corinthians, appeals to the canonical companions of Paul.\footnote{See this discussion in chapter five.}
After this Paul prayed in Hebrew, stretched out his neck, and “when the executioner lopped off his head, milk spewed out onto the soldiers clothes.”

There are two keys into the crucifixion of Jesus in this narrative. First, Paul’s prayer in Hebrew just before his death recalls the words Jesus cries out to God in Aramaic in the gospel accounts. Matthew records that on cross just before his death Jesus cried out, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” which Matthew then translates for his Greek audience as, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” The second key is non-blood liquid that pours forth from both Paul and Jesus when each is cut open. In the Acts of Paul, after his decapitation milk flows out instead of blood. In the passion account of Jesus preserved in the canonical Gospel of John, “one soldier thrust his lance into his [Jesus’] side, and immediately blood and water flowed out.” Although the actual substances may be different, that both figures issued a non-blood liquid when lanced encourages the reader to equate the two peculiar episodes. Furthermore, with the specific mention of milk, the author of the Acts of Paul is referencing Paul’s letter to the Corinthians where he writes, “And so, brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as

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144 Matthew 27.46. θεέ μου θεέ μου, ινατί με έγκατέλπες; See also Mark 15.34, who records Jesus’ words in Aramaic rather than Hebrew, “Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani.” λωι ελοι λεμα σαβαχθανι; ὁ ἐστιν μεθερμηνεύμενον· ὁ θεός μου ὁ θεός μου, εἰς τί έγκατέλπες με; 

145 Acts of Paul, 14.5. “When the executioner lopped off his head, milk spewed out onto the soldier’s clothes.”

146 John 19.34. ἀλλ’ εἰς τῶν στρατιωτῶν λόγχη αὐτοῦ τὴν πλευρὰν ἐνυξεν, καὶ ἔξηλθεν εὐθὺς αἵμα καὶ ύδωρ.
spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for solid food. Even now you are still not ready, for you are still of the flesh.” 1 Corinthians 3.1

Apparently when told of this milk-pouring episode Nero was in a flummoxed state, and it is at this point that the resurrected Paul appears to him and says, “Caesar, behold Paul, the soldier of God. I have not died, but live. Many dreadful things will happen to you because of the righteous you have killed.” 148 And while the Jesus account does not include him rebuking his executioner, the parallel examples of physical resurrection and speaking again blend the authorities of Paul and Jesus. The story ends with Nero releasing the remaining prisoners and Titus and Luke sealing the guards Paul had converted.

In the Acts of Paul and Thecla and Martyrdom of Paul, Paul is presented in a similar fashion as Jesus, as the narrative includes stories of him healing a rich man’s son, preaching, delivering beatitudes, acquiring a disciple in Thecla, and the process of

147 1 Corinthians 3.1-3a. Κἀγώ, ἄδελφοι, οὐκ ἠδυνάθην λαλῆσαι ὡς πνευματικὸς ἀλλ’ ὡς σαρκίνος, ὡς νηπίος ἐν Χριστῷ. γάλα ὑμᾶς ἐπότισα, οὔ βρῶμα· οὔπω γὰρ ἐδόνασθε. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἐτι νῦν δύνασθε, ἐτι γὰρ σαρκικοὶ ἐστε.


149 Paul’s preaching throughout text is quite similar to Jesus’ depiction in the gospels as he is itinerant, charismatic, and unsettling to the social order.

150 Pervo also likens this to the gospels and argues, “The opening macarisms/beatitudes of the Sermon in Matthew 5 and Luke 6 turn the world upside down. That is precisely the
his martyrdom.\textsuperscript{152} By imitating the actions of Jesus in Paul, the author recalls the mental frame of Jesus for the audience and encourages their connection. Thus, this memory of Paul and Jesus are mapped onto each other within the mind of the audience in a process which permits the authority of Jesus to blend with that of Paul, and both then assume the responsibilities, roles, and authority of each other. Paul’s martyrdom further solidifies this connection as he is offered the chance to repent,\textsuperscript{153} bleeds milk when executed (as Jesus bled water),\textsuperscript{154} is resurrected from the grave,\textsuperscript{155} and physically greets his followers.\textsuperscript{156}

function of the beatitudes here, with the exception that they generate a prompt and explicit disruption of the social order.” Pervo, \textit{Making of Paul}, 101.

\textsuperscript{151} Although Thecla is never designated specifically as a disciple, she does abandon her family and social obligations to follow him much like the original disciples did to follow Jesus. Furthermore, Paul is also depicted in the text with other people following him, notably Onesiphorus, and even enters Iconium in the opening scene with his pupils Demas and Hermogones accompanying him (3.1-4).

\textsuperscript{152} Similar to the contemporary \textit{Martyrdom of Polycarp}, both second-century texts explicitly depict their protagonists to die in the same manner as Jesus in the gospels.

\textsuperscript{153} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 14.3.

\textsuperscript{154} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 14.5.

\textsuperscript{155} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 14.6.

\textsuperscript{156} \textit{Acts of Paul}, 14.6-7.
Conclusion

The Paul as Martyr memory is important for the community because it speaks to their present circumstances of persecution and martyrdom. Although the details of martyrdom are difficult to discern, but with the known martyrdom of Polycarp, and those of Carpus, Papyrus, and Agathonice, recorded by Eusebius, there appears to have been at least four prominent ecclesial figures martyred in Asia Minor in the second century as noted previously for Ignatius. Additionally, in passing through Asia Minor en route to his own martyrdom, Ignatius of Antioch identified the church of Ephesus as the “passageway for those slain for God.” Ultimately, then, in remembering Paul as Martyr, The Acts of Paul and Thecla and the Martyrdom of Paul were relating their present plight with that of Paul, and if Paul is enduring the same treatment, and he is a figure in the ilk of Jesus, then they too, in enduring persecution will be like Jesus.

157 Polycarp’s martyrdom is recorded in full text account aptly titled the Martyrdom of Polycarp, as well as by Irenaeus (Adv. Haer. 3.3.4.) and Eusebius (H.E. 4.15.1).


159 Ignatius, Ep. Ephesians, 12.2 πάροδός ἐστε τῶν εἰς θεὸν ἀναιρουμένων
This image again serves to reinforce the charismatic potency of Paul to their social situation. The charisma of Paul as teacher permeates into the memory of martyr, and thus, the Charismatic Catholics exhibited a consistently charismatic memory of Paul that rejected and subverted the theological jurisdiction, and by extension, the ecclesial authority of, the Apostolic-Catholics.
Chapter Two: The Memory of the Valentinians

Introduction

In the second century the Valentinian and Apostolic-Catholic churches began to formally separate. Both groups wrote intensely against the other, advocating their respective theologies, social practices, and liturgical behaviors, and an important element of this exchange was the conflict over the authority of the apostolic figures. Each church argued fervently that Peter, Paul, and the other early Christian leaders were supporters of their beliefs. The Valentinians looked primarily to Paul for validation, and it is through their memories of him that we are able to understand their self-definition and identity.  

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160 The Valentinians did rely on other apostles as well; however, given the intense focus on Paul seen in Ptolemy’s Letter to Flora, the Prayer of the Apostle Paul, the writings of Theodotus, and as will be shown here in the Apocalypse of Paul, there is a clear emphasis on Paul more than any other figure.
It is in this context that we look at the second emergent memory of the authority of Paul, that of a Valentinian Mystagogue.

The Valentinian memory of Paul advocated for their own interpretation of scripture, consequent liturgical behaviors, and salvation scheme and each of these was a direct challenge to the theological authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. Fundamentally, the memory of Paul for the Valentinians represented a transgressive act that directly defied the sole interpretive authority over scriptural materials held by the Apostolic-Catholics. Where the Charismatics rivalled the ecclesial structures of the church, here we find a more potent and direct challenge to the control over the scriptural interpretation, the very means by which the Apostolic-Catholics justify their ecclesial control. As we will see this had more tangible ramifications for both ritualistic behaviors and the means of salvation, which thus forced the Apostolic-Catholics to engage in their own memory construction of Paul.

I have divided my examination into three sections. In the first, I discuss Valentinian understanding of Apostolic Succession and the authority of Paul as the Apostle; second, the debate over the ascent of Paul and the image of him as Mystagogue; and third how Paul is presented as a pneumatic figure who represents the Valentinian ideal. Ultimately, this chapter will clarify the complex memories of Paul as the Apostolic Authority, Mystagogue, and Pneumatic ideal of the Valentinians and show how their discursive memory of Paul challenged the interpretive authority of the Apostolic-Catholics.
Paul the Apostle

Similar to other Christians of the second century, the Valentinians also claimed an apostolic connection to the original apostles. The use of Paul as the central character in their theology is an action that challenged the dominant Apostolic-Catholic memory of Paul in that it proposed an alternative apostolic lineage. The Valentinian connection to Paul undermined the apostolicity of the Apostolic-Catholic Church by proposing that Paul gave secret teachings to some followers (i.e., those would become the Valentinians) and not to others (namely, the Apostolic-Catholics), and in so doing, challenged the apostolic authority of the Apostolic-Catholic Church. Furthermore, and as I will show here, the Valentinian memory of Paul as the Apostle is understood through his authority as a teacher. The authority of Paul as Apostle is not rooted in his founding of churches, spreading the gospel, or converting Gentiles, but rather in the secret divine knowledge he received during his vision that he taught privately to select followers. Paul, for the

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161 For a more detailed consideration of the development of apostolic succession among Apostolic-Catholics see, Francis A. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of the Episcopacy in the Early Church* (New York: Newman Press, 2001), and Arnold Ehrhardt, *The Apostolic Succession in the First Two Centuries of the Church* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1953). While there is some variation in the exclusivity of Paul as The Apostle for the Valentinians, there is a clear veneration of him as an important apostle throughout the Valentinian corpus, consider the more explicit *Prayer of the Apostle Paul* and *Excerpts of Theodotus* which will be discussed in more detail below.

162 Outside of perhaps Peter, Philip, John, and Mary, there are very few Apostles who are recognized with any degree of regularity or reverence that is seen towards Paul, and even then, Paul far exceeds the others.
Valentinians, is remembered as the eminent Apostolic Teacher of a secret divine message. The secretive, divinely revealed message exposes the deeper truths of his letters.

The Apostolic-Catholic model of apostolic succession relies on the assumption that while both Peter and Paul were the leaders of the early church, the other apostles should be viewed with the equal degree of reverence.\textsuperscript{163} All the apostles heard their teaching directly from Jesus, whether in person or otherwise, and shared this message with their respective followers. I will explore this in more detail in chapter five, but what is significant to note is that there is a clear line of trajectory that one can trace to the original source of the teaching. The Valentinians trace their apostolic succession to Paul himself. In this section I will show how the Valentinians occasionally held some of other apostles in high regard as teachers, but none more than Paul. I include here a brief survey of Ptolemy’s \textit{Letter to Flora}, the \textit{Exegesis on the Soul}, the \textit{Prayer of Paul the Apostle}, and the \textit{Coptic Apocalypse of Paul}.\textsuperscript{164}

\textsuperscript{163} This idea is spelled out more clearly in the chapter on the Apostolic-Catholic memory of Paul.

\textsuperscript{164} I include these texts to provide an overview of the Pauline perspective among the Valentinians in the second century. I will consider more theologically sophisticated examples from Heracleon and Theodotus at relevant discussions within the paper, but here I confine our discussion to the general lived and liturgical texts of the Valentinian tradition.
Ptolemy’s Letter for Flora

The first explicit identification of Paul as Apostle is found in Ptolemy’s *Letter to Flora* preserved by Epiphanius. Ptolemy was a prominent disciple of Valentinus in the middle of the second century in Rome, and was known by the late second early and third century Catholic writers, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, and possibly Justin Martyr, who records the martyrdom of a mid-second century Christian in Rome named Ptolemy. The *Letter to Flora* was written to encourage a young Valentinian Christian


166 Irenaeus records Ptolemy’s theological and cosmological system in *Adv. Haer.* 1.1.1-1.8.5.

167 Tertullian discusses the popularity of Ptolemy’s school and the particular theology he held that differed from Valentinus. *Adv. Valent.* 8.

168 According to Hippolytus, Ptolemy was one of the first and most influential students of Valentinus, and along with Heracleon, a leader of the Italian school. *Ref. Adv.* 6.35.5-7.

169 Justin records the story of a woman in Rome who converted to Christianity and then refused to have sex with her husband. While a tumultuous story and of special socio-historical significance, for our purposes we need only note that she is purported to have been taught by a certain Ptolemy, who was later put to death over the matter (*Apology*, II.2.). As Lampe has argued, the timing the story, rarity of the name Ptolemy in Rome, and the focus on the idea of divorce in the letter to Flora would suggest the possibility of this being the same Ptolemy, and even potentially, that Flora was the unnamed Christian woman in Justin’s account. Peter Lampe, *From Paul to Valentinus: Christians at Rome in the First Two Centuries*, trans. Michael Steinhauser (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 237-240.
in her spiritual growth and to clarify her theological understanding regarding the authority of God and the law.\textsuperscript{170}

In the \textit{Letter}, Ptolemy uses the title, “the apostle” three times, but only twice applies the title to Paul.\textsuperscript{171} Ptolemy discusses the role of God, and not the devil, in the creation of the world, and clarifies for Flora that the devil could not have been involved with the creation of the law because the law intends to abolish the very injustice the devil instills. In defense of this he cites not only the words of “the savior” about the house divided in Matthew 12.25, but goes on to cite the Gospel of John as well and refers to the author as “the apostle.” Ptolemy writes,

And, further, the apostle states that the craftsmanship of the world is his, and that “all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made,” thus anticipating these liars’ flimsy wisdom.\textsuperscript{172}

Ptolemy cites John 1.3, “through him all things were made; without him was not anything made,” to demonstrate that nothing was made apart from God. The term apostle is only


\textsuperscript{172} Ptolemy, \textit{Ep. Flora}, 33.3.6. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are taken from Layton. ἐτι τε τὴν τοῦ κόσμου δημιουργίαν <αὐτοῦ> ἵδιαν λέγει εἶναι τά τε πάντα δι' αὐτοῦ γεγονέναι καὶ χωρίς αὐτοῦ γεγονέναι οὐδὲν ὁ ἀπόστολος, προαποστερήσας τὴν τῶν ψευδηγοροῦντων ἀνυπόστατον σοφίαν.
used three times by Ptolemy, and in each case it is used for those who provide knowledge. In this instance, John is identified as apostle because of the information he provides regarding creation.

The other two uses of apostle in the letter are reserved for Paul, and both are used only in relation to his teaching. In 33.5.13-15, Ptolemy defends the practice of fasting to Flora and refers to 1 Corinthians 5.7 for support. Ptolemy writes,

Nevertheless, fasting as to the visible realm is observed by our adherents, since fasting, if practiced with reason can contribute something to the soul so long as it does not take place in imitation of other people or by habit or because fasting has been prescribed for a particular day. Likewise, it is observed in memory of true fasting, so that those who are not yet able to observe true fasting might have a remembrance of it from fasting according to the visible realm. Likewise, the apostle Paul makes it clear that Passover and the Feast of the Unleavened Bread were images, for he says, “Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed” and, he says, be without leaven having no share in leaven – now, by “leaven” he means evil – but rather “be fresh dough.”

Here again we see the term apostle applied to a figure in relation to the teaching the figure provides. In this instance, Paul’s remarks in 1 Corinthians 5.7, “Clean out the old


173 Ptolemy, Ep. Flora. 33.5.13b-33.5.15. ἀφεγίν γὰρ θέλει ήμας ἀπὸ τῶν ἑργῶν τῶν πονηρῶν. καὶ νηστείας δέ· ἀλλὰ σκόπῳ τὴν σωματικὴν βούλεται νηστείαν ήμας νηστείαν, ἀλλὰ τὴν πνευματικὴν, ἐν ᾧ ἐστιν ἁρπαγή πάντων τῶν φαύλων. φυλάσσεται μέντοι γε καὶ παρὰ τοῖς ζωμέτους ἡ κατὰ τὸ φαύλον νηστεία, ἐπεί καὶ συνεχής τι συμβάλλει, δύναται αὕτη μετά λόγου γινομένη, ὅπως ἐνέπρεπε διὰ τὴν προς τινὰς μίμησιν γίνεται μήτε διὰ τὸ ἔθος μητε διὰ τὴν ἡμέραν, ὡς ὑφομένης <εἰς> τοῦτο ἡμέρας. ἢμα δὲ καὶ εἰς ἀνάμιμην τῆς ἀθλητῆς νηστείας, ὥστε οἱ μηδενεὶς ἐκεῖνην δυνάμεις νηστείας ἀπὸ τῆς κατὰ τὸ φαύλον νηστείας ἔχοι τὴν ἀνάμιμην αὐτῆς, καὶ τὸ πάσχα δὲ ὑμοίως καὶ τὰ ἄζυμα, ὅτι εἰκόνες ἔσαν, δηλοι καὶ Παῦλος ὁ ἀπόστολος «τὸ δὲ πάσχα ἡμῶν, λέγον, έτόθη Χριστός», καὶ «Ἰνα ἦτε, φησιν, ἄζυμοι, μὴ μετέχοντες ζύμης (ζύμην δὲ νῦν τὴν κακίαν λέγει), ἀλλ᾽ ἦτε νέον φύραμα»
yeast so that you may be a new batch, as you really are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed,” are understood by Ptolemy to refer to the physical process of fasting because of its influence on the soul. Ptolemy does not rely on his authority as teacher, and does not refer to scripture as authoritative in itself, but rather roots the authority of this interpretation in the apostleship of Paul just as he had done previously with John.

The middle portion of the letter was written to show “both that there is human legislation which has been slipped into the law and that the law of God himself divides into three subdivision,” to Flora. At this point, Ptolemy again refers to Paul as the apostle for authority, however he goes further this time and specifically delineates him from the other disciples and combines quotations from both Ephesians and Romans.

Ptolemy writes,

His disciples made these teachings known, and so did Paul the Apostle: he makes known to us the part consisting of images, through the passage on the paschal lamb and the unleavened bread, which we have already spoken of. The part consisting of a law interwoven with injustice, he made known by speaking of “abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances;”

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174 Ptolemy, Ep. Flora. 33.7.1. Ὑς μὲν οὖν συντόμως ἐστιν εἰπεῖν, αὐτάρκως οἶμαι σοι δεδείχθαι καὶ τὴν ἐν ἀνθρώπων παρεισδύσασαν νομοθεσίαν καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν θεοῦ νόμον τρικτή διαιρούμενον.

175 Eph. 2.15. “He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace.” τὸν νόμον τὸν ἐντολῶν ἐν δόγμασιν καταργήσας, ἵνα τοὺς δὸς κτίσῃ ἐν αὐτῷ εἰς ἕνα καινὸν ἀνθρώπον ποιῶν εἰρήνην.

176 Rom. 7.12 “So the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.” ὡστε ὁ μὲν νόμος ἁγιὸς καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἁγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἁγαθή.
and the part no interwoven with the inferior, when he says, “the law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good.”

In this instance, the disciples are only noted because they made known the teachings that Ptolemy is providing to Flora. Furthermore, Paul is emphasized among them as a teacher and is given the epithet of apostle because of it. While the emphasis of Paul may be merely a byproduct of having letters written by him, the point remains that his apostleship is still ascribed because of his teachings. Furthermore, that Ptolemy is putting himself in the same teaching tradition as Paul, insofar as he is teaching the same knowledge that Paul taught, he is positioning himself in the same authoritative capacity as Paul and therefore able to accurately interpret the meaning of the text. It is the knowledge of Paul, and in the imitation of Paul the teacher, that grants Ptolemy the authority to instruct Flora.

Ptolemy established the authority of his teaching through the apostolic lineage of Jesus to his disciples, and most notably, Paul, to himself. Furthermore, Ptolemy explains that if Flora continues in her development she, too, will receive the apostolic knowledge of the disciples and learn of the true interpretation. Ptolemy ends his letter,

For, God permitting, you will next learn about both the first and principle

177 Ptolemy, Ep. Flora, 33.6.6. ταῦτα δὲ καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ ἀπόστολος Παῦλος ἔδειξε, τὸ μὲν τῶν εἰκόνων, ώς ἡ δὴ εἴπομεν, διὰ τοῦ πᾶσα εἰς τῶν ἀξίωμαν δειξας δὴ ἡμᾶς, τὸ δὲ τοῦ συμπεπληγμένου νόμου τῇ ἀδίκιᾳ, εἰπόν «τὸν νόμον τὸν ἐν τὸν ἐν δόγμας κατηργήσαι», τὸ δὲ τὸν ἀσυμπλόκου τῷ χείρῳ, «ὁ μὲν νόμος» εἰπόν «ἄγιος, καὶ ἠ ἐντολῇ ἄγια καὶ δυκαία καὶ ἀγαθή».

178 Layton, Gnostic Scriptures, 313 footnote g.
and the generation of these two other Gods, if you are deemed worthy of the apostolic tradition, which even we have received by succession; and along with this you will learn how to test all the propositions by means of our savior’s teaching.\textsuperscript{179}

Not only does Ptolemy clearly articulate a model of apostolic succession, but his specific identification of Paul as the apostolic figure in this lineage points to both a Pauline authority and Valentinian connection to, and imitation of, that apostolic teaching authority.\textsuperscript{180}

\textbf{Exegesis on the Soul}

The \textit{Exegesis on the Soul} is a second-century catechetical narrative that explained the nature of sin, exhorted the audience to repentance, and taught salvation in the Valentinian mythology.\textsuperscript{181} The story within the text includes the descent, prostitution, and eventual

\textsuperscript{179} Ptolemy, \textit{Ep. Flora}, 33.7.9. μαθήση γάρ, θεοῦ διδόντος, ἐξῆς καὶ τὴν τούτων ἀρχὴν τε καὶ γέννησιν, ἀξιομενή τῆς ἀποστολικῆς παραδόσεως, ἢν ἐκ διαδοχῆς καὶ ἡμεῖς παρειλήφαμεν μετὰ καὶ τοῦ κανονίσαι πάντας τοὺς λόγους τῇ τοῦ σωτήρος ἡμῶν διδασκαλίᾳ.

\textsuperscript{180} The significance of this connection is found not in terms of theological agreement between Ptolemy and Paul, but rather in the expression of the connection to Paul from Ptolemy. So Rensberger is correct to note the theological inconsistencies between the two, however, this is an irrelevant observation for the present study. Rensberger, “As the Apostle Teaches,” 221-225.

\textsuperscript{181} The text itself has received limited treatment among scholars, though recently Hugo Lundhaug has examined the text through a cognitive-scientific approach: Hugo Lundhaug, \textit{Images of Rebirth: Cognitive Poetics and Transformational Soteriology in the
restoration of the soul. This is a dual presentation in that it refers to the collective, original soul of humanity and also the individual soul of each person. It was an instructive text that taught the Valentinian mythology, warned against the insidiously sinful environment of the created realm, and taught the means by which a soul is restored to the Divine. In the Exegesis on the Soul there are few references to the apostles or Paul, but one in particular worth discussion is in 130.28-131.14 where the author refers to the “apostles of the savior.” In this scene, God as the father is chastising the soul for her infidelity and for prostituting herself to others. Quoting from Ezekiel 16.23-26, the father says to her,

And it happened after much depravity, the Lord said, “You built for yourself a place of sexual deviance and made a place of beauty in the flat-broad places and you built brothels on every road and you destroyed your beauty and you spread your legs apart on every road and you increased your prostitution and you prostituted yourself with the Sons of Egypt Those who are neighbors, ones of great flesh.” And who are the, “Sons of Egypt, of great flesh” if not the fleshes and perceptible things of the earth? These by which the soul is polluted in this place when she receives bread from them, when she receives wine, receives oil, and when she receives clothing, and the other nonsense which are external surrounding the body. These which she thinks are suitably necessary to her. And this prostitution, the apostles of the savior pronounced “Guard yourselves against it, purify yourselves from it.”

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182 Exegesis on the Soul, 130.12-30. Unless otherwise noted, all translations are by author. Αὐτοὶ δὲ οἱ μῖᾶς ἡμέρας ἐποίεις ἐγείρεσιν ἔτη ἐν τῇ θεσμῷ καὶ θάνατοι, καὶ ἐξ θεσμοῦ εἴσημα τῷ θεῷ.
In this passage, the author explains how the soul has become distracted from its devotion to God and defiled itself by associating with others. By using the teaching of the apostles, the author turns this metaphor into a warning for contemporary Valentinians to be wary of distraction and remain steadfast in their devotion to God. This title is an encompassing term to include all the apostles, and with the amalgamated scripture citation, it would suggest a singular apostolic message. The reference is a jumbled quotation that alludes to Acts 15.20, 29; 1 Thessalonians 4.3; 1 Corinthians 6.18; and 2 Corinthians 7.1. Either the author assumed these were written by different authors, or was advocating a singular apostolic message as Kaler has suggested. The author continues this discussions and exegeses the injunction from the apostles. The author writes,

They were speaking of that prostitution not only of the body, but more the soul. Because of this the apostles wrote to the churches of God in order that such prostitution would not happen down in us. But the greatest struggle occurs because the prostitution of the soul. From in it, it causes the prostitution of the body as well to happen. Therefore, Paul, when he wrote to the Corinthians, he said, “I wrote you in the letter saying, “Do not mix with a whore by no means, the whore of this world or the greedy, or the thieves, or the servants of idols, as then you would be counted to come out from in the world. This way, he speaks spiritually. “For our struggles happen not against body and blood.” According to this way, he also says, but against world powers of this darkness with the spirits of prostitution to

Kaler, “Nag Hammadi Paulinism,” 310.

Kaler, “Nag Hammadi Paulinism,” 310.
The author understands the warning from both the apostles and from Paul in a pedagogical manner and explains that Paul and the apostles wrote letters for the purposes of education and clearly understands them to be teachers. Paul, then noted specifically in this context, is regarded as an exemplar teacher as he is identified individually where the others are only understood as a group. The author then explicitly mentions Paul, writing, “Therefore, Paul, when he wrote to the Corinthians, said…” and proceeds to quote 1 Corinthians 5.9-10 in which Paul says, “In my letter I wrote to you not to fraternize with sexually immoral people, not at all referring to the immoral people of this world, or the avaricious and rapacious, or idolaters, because you would have to go out of the world.” From this, Kaler observes,
There are two points that I would like to draw from this. The first is the clear distinction of Paul from the homogenous mass of the rest of the apostles. Unlike, say, in the *Apocalypse of Paul*, there is no explicit elevation of Paul over his fellow apostles, but still, he stands out, both because he is named and because he is attached to a specific historical context. The second point, on the other hand, has the opposite effect. By attributing citations from Paul’s texts to “the apostles of the savior” as a group, the author is making a claim for the fundamental unity of the apostolic message.\(^{188}\)

Kaler is correct in his recognition of the unity of the apostolic message and the elevation of Paul. While the Valentinians clearly understand Paul as the apostolic teacher, they still understand him to teach a message that all the apostles understood and recognize his connection to them. Furthermore, the jumbled quote from Acts, 1 Thessalonians, and 1 and 2 Corinthians – all Pauline texts or quotes – implies that Paul exemplifies the unity of the apostles.\(^{189}\) The attribution of this quote to the apostles in general, when they stem exclusively from Paul, centralizes Paul as the apostolic voice and teacher. Similar to what we saw in Ptolemy, there is a cohesive and apostolic authority to the message received from the apostles, and Paul is clearly recognized as a distinctive figure among them.

\(^{188}\) Kaler, “Nag Hammadi Paulinism,” 310.

\(^{189}\) Although Luke is typically understood to have written Acts, this particular passage is presented as a Pauline speech and thus would have been regarded as from Paul.
Prayer of the Apostle Paul

The third example comes from the Valentinian *Prayer of Paul the Apostle* that positions Paul as the primary figure through whom one may access the divine. The *Prayer* is a second century Valentinian text that was likely used in as a liturgical prayer within the community.¹⁹⁰ I quote the prayer in full here,

Redeemer, Ransom me; for I am yours; from you I have come.

It is you who are my mind: establish me.

It is you who are my treasure: open for me.

It is you who are my fullness: receive me.

It is you who are my fullness: receive me.

It is you who are my tranquility: give me the perfection that cannot be held.

I invoke you, the one who is and pre-existed in the name which is above every name, through Jesus Christ, the lord of lords, the king of aeons.

¹⁹⁰ The *Prayer* is the first text in the Nag Hammadi Codex and Kaler argues that in this position it likely governs the entire book. He writes, “By its contents, and by the fact that it introduces the codex as a whole, we are justified in seeing the Prayer as an invocation of some sort, applying to the entire codex. Its protagonist, Paul, is thus in some way invoked as the guiding spirit for the codex...Thus the situation is not so much that the codex is being offered up to Paul, as that it is being opened with his words. This tactic retains the sense of Paul’s protection, but also puts Paul in the position of model, rather than patron. Michael Kaler, "The Prayer of the Apostle Paul in the Context of Nag Hammadi Codex I," *Journal of Early Christian Studies* 16 no 3 (2008): 319-333., 324-325.
Give me your gifts which you do not regret through the Son of Man, by the spirit, the Paraclete of truth.

Give me authority, I request of you.

Give me healing for my body, as I request of you through the evangelist of the gospel; and redeem my eternally incandescent soul and my spirit. And reveal to my mind the first born of the fullness of grace.

Give what eyes of angels have not seen,

What ears of archons have not heard,

What has not come upon the hearts of human beings who have become angels, and is after the image of the psychic God when he was formed in the beginning;

For I have faith and hope.

And put me also in your beloved, chosen, blessed greatness: O first-born, O first-produced...the wonderful mystery of your house.

For yours is the great power and the glory and the praise and the greatness for ever and ever.

Amen.

A Prayer of Paul the Apostle. In peace. Holy is the Christ.¹⁹¹

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The *Prayer* is a liturgical text in which the participants would say the words aloud, and in so doing, appeal to the authority of Paul for divine revelation. Indeed, within the prayer itself the participant asks for healing on the basis of his prayer through Paul, “as I request of you through the evangelist of the gospel.” Layton argues that the prayer "does not indicate that Paul is the author of the prayer, but characterizes it as a prayer that invokes his authority as an early apostolic preacher of the gospel."\(^{192}\) A position held by Scopello as well, who recognizes that the prayer is used to invoke the apostolic power of Paul in order that the one speaking may similarly assume authority to ascend into the divine realm and hear, see, and know what humans have not yet heard, seen, and known.\(^{193}\) Not only does the *Prayer* appeal to the authority of Paul, but it does so specifically in order to gain knowledge. The apostolic authority of Paul is rooted in his understanding and teaching, and this prayer enabled the participant to imitate Paul in this regard, much like Ptolemy exhibited in his *Letter to Flora*. The prayer centers on gaining


authority and access, but builds in force to emphasize the request for divine knowledge.

As the text reads in the final stanza,

And reveal to my mind the first born of the fullness of grace.

Give what eyes of angels have not seen,

What ears of archons have not heard,

What has not come upon the hearts of human beings who have become angels, and is after the image of the psychic God when he was formed in the beginning. 194

The final thrust of the prayer is for privileged information such as what Paul himself received in his vision, and the formal request for revelation further appeals to the visionary episode of Paul and reinforces the imitative nature of the prayer. The Prayer not only elevates Paul as the means by which one may acquire divine knowledge to enable the correct interpretation of scripture, but also expresses the apostolic-teaching authority of Paul as the participants seek to gain the same knowledge and imitate Paul in this regard. The Prayer, similar to both Ptolemy and the Exegesis, constructed an image of Paul as the Apostolic-Teacher who had divine information, who taught, and who was the root of Valentinian apostolic knowledge.

Through all of these examples there is a clear understanding of apostolic authority, the lineage of apostolic instruction, and a particular emphasis as Paul as the

194 Prayer. Paul, 24-35. Νεχρίς αλλήλη πανούς. ἐπὶ χαρίζε ὅτα νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύνον καταφ σημεὶο νηπιευπεβελ ἦ ἄγγελος νεώ Δρα Σύ

Translation from Layton.
primary authoritative figure. Indeed, in book seven of his Stromateis, Clement records that the Valentinians holistically claim that Valentinus was taught by Theudas, who himself was a colleague (γνώριμος) of Paul. The primacy of Paul as the apostolic figure of authority and instruction is a fundamental aspect of the memory of Paul among the Valentinians. While this pedagogical lineage is important for the Valentinians, the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul takes this connection even further and suggests that both Paul and Valentinus similarly experienced a heavenly vision from a small child to further emphasize the authority of both figures.

**The Coptic Apocalypse of Paul**

The narrative of the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul begins with Paul en route to Jerusalem where he meets a child. After asking the child for directions, the child replies, “I know who you are Paul…. And I am the Spirit who accompanies you. Let your mind

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awaken.” The child then guides Paul through the heavens, providing not only direction but support and knowledge throughout the journey.

In the *Refutations*, Hippolytus records a similar account where Valentinus received a vision from a small child. As Hippolytus explains,

For Valentinus likewise alleges that he had seen an infant child lately born; and questioning (this child), he proceeded to inquire who it might be. And (the child) replied, saying that he himself is the Logos, and then subjoined a sort of tragic legend; and out of this (Valentinus) wishes the heresy attempted by him to consist.

According to Hippolytus’ account, after his encounter with the small child Valentinus added a story, his visionary experience, in the hope of creating a ‘sect.’ Much like the *Apocalypse of Paul* expounds upon the vision Paul received, this “added story” would

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197 This point will be developed further later, but in short, the child functions as the Holy Spirit who leads Paul through the heavens as one would expect after a Valentinian baptism and anointing.


199 Although some scholars may remain dubious (Jean-Marc Rosenstiehl and Michael Kaler, *L’Apocalypse de Paul* (Québec: Les Presses de L’Université Laval, 2005), 70-77), Layton has suggested the text may in fact be factually biographical from Valentinus (Bentley Layton, *The Gnostic Scriptures: A New Translation with Annotations and Introductions* (New York: Doubleday, 1987), 230).
have served the same function for Valentinus. That Hippolytus derisively omits the vision speaks only to his heresiological intent. What is significant, however, is that the Valentinians believed that Valentinus had a vision under the guidance of a small child where he learned divine knowledge. The Apocalypse of Paul depicts a similar episode for Paul.

The pattern of the small child as mediator would be a trigger for the audience to recall the revelation of Valentinus and map that authority onto Paul, which simultaneously, reaffirmed Valentinus. The circularity of this mapping serves to reinforce the authority of both Paul and Valentinus. This is what Le Donne refers to as the refracting effect in the process of narrativization where “two concepts are set together to reinforce one another.” The example he provides is taken from Lk 7.27//Mt 11.10 where Jesus says that John “is the one about whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face who will prepare your way before you.’” In applying this quote from Malachi 3.1 to John, who is already understood as a prophet, Jesus goes further and equates John with Malachi. Le Donne writes,

If one takes Malachi 3.1 as a category of significance, Jesus’ application of this passage to John demands that the passage itself be reinterpreted in light of the John’s significance. In Halbwachsian terms, we could say that John’s significance has been ‘localized’ within the framework of Malachi;


201 Le Donne, Historiographical Jesus, 68.
conversely, the significance of Malachi has been ‘reinforced’ within the new perception of John the Baptist. In both of these ways, the previous categories of significance have been mnemonically synthesized (refracted).  

Using this model, we can see how the framework of Valentinus’ revelation is incorporated, or localized, into the audience’s mental space of Paul’s revelation, which allows the audience to equate the means of Valentinus’ vision with that of Paul. Therefore, the visionary practices and authority of Valentinus are validated. These visionary practices are not just transmitted from Paul through Theudas to Valentinus. But because Valentinus received the vision through the same child-mediator as Paul, the vision must carry the same authority as if from Paul himself. Given the contested nature of Paul’s ascent in the early church, this visionary connection to Theudas would further serve to undermine the Apostolic-Catholic claims to interpretive authority because Paul is depicted as receiving his knowledge in the same manner as the Valentinians.

Paul’s ascent in 2 Corinthians 12.2-6 was a point of contention between the Apostolic-Catholics and Valentinians in the second and early third centuries. Both Irenaeus and Tertullian allude to Valentinian readings of the text and challenge their interpretation and use of the passage. Irenaeus considers the Valentinian understanding

202 Le Donne, The Historiographical Jesus, 70.

203 My intention is not to show an explicit connection between the heresiologists and the extant Apocalypse of Paul text, but rather to demonstrate the intensity of the debate between Apostolic-Catholics and Valentinians over the ascent of Paul. Additionally, I do not claim to construct definitive lines of allegiance or early Christian trajectories, I simply aim to show the debate over the ascent in the early Christian period between Apostolic-Catholics and Valentinians.
of the demiurge and pneumatic anthropology to argue that Paul could not be hindered by
the demiurge and therefore should have ascended directly to the highest realm of the
mother. Irenaeus argues,

For if it is true that he was becoming acquainted with that order of things
which is above the Demiurge, he would by no means have remained in the
regions of the Demiurge, and that so as not even thoroughly to explore
even these (for, according to their manner of speaking, there still lay
before him four heavens, if he were to approach the Demiurge, and thus
behold the whole seven lying beneath him); but he might have been
admitted, perhaps, into the intermediate place, that is, into the presence of
the Mother, that he might receive instruction from her as to the things
within the Pleroma. For that inner man which was in him, and spoke in
him, as they say, though invisible, could have attained not only to the third
heaven, but even as far as the presence of their Mother. For if they
maintain that they themselves, that is, their [inner] man, at once ascends
above the Demiurge, and departs to the Mother, much more must this have
occurred to the [inner] man of the apostle; for the Demiurge would not
have hindered him, being, as they assert, himself already subject to the
Savior.

Irenaeus’ critique is specifically targeted at their theological understanding of divine
ascent. The basic premise of his argument maintained that were Paul truly a pneumatic as
the Valentinians understand him to be, he should not have ascended through the various
heavenly realms but rather ascended directly to the mother and by-passed the lower

204 For a more complete treatment of Irenaeus and his understanding of Paul’s ascent, see
Michael Kaler, Louis Painchaud, and Marie-Pierre Bussières, “The Coptic Apocalypse of
Paul, Irenaeus’ Adversus Haereses 2.30.7, and the Second-Century Battle for Paul’s
Legacy,” Journal of Early Christian Studies 12.2 (2004), 173-193. This work not only
explores the dimensions of Irenaeus’ critique but also the similarities and differences
between Irenaeus and the extant Apocalypse manuscript.

realms. That Paul describes these other levels in any detail stands as a contradiction to their model of ascent. Furthermore, because the Valentinians practiced non-bodily ascents, Irenaeus argued that Paul’s confusion about his ascent shows it could not have been unembodied. He wrote,

And for this reason he added, “Whether in the body, or whether out of the body, God knoweth,” that the body might neither be thought to be a partaker in that vision, as if it could have participated in those things which it had seen and heard; nor, again, that any one should say that he was not carried higher on account of the weight of the body; but it is therefore thus far permitted even without the body to behold spiritual mysteries which are the operations of God, who made the heavens and the earth, and formed man, and placed him in paradise, so that those should be spectators of them who, like the apostle, have reached a high degree of perfection in the love of God.  

Irenaeus intends to undermine the Valentinian extrapolation of Paul’s ascent by showing its incongruity with their own anthropology and non-bodily ascent practices. Irenaeus attempted to discredit the very nature of their interpretation because it was – allegedly – inconsistent with their own theology. Significantly, he is not challenging their theology, but only the use of that theology in their interpretation of Paul’s second letter to the Corinthian Church.

In a more basic rebuke, Tertullian challenged the Valentinian interpretation because it was predicated on Paul sharing knowledge he learned that was not meant for human ears. As Tertullian argued,

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206 Irenaeus, Adv. Haer., II.30.7. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from ANF.
Now, although Paul was carried away even to the third heaven, and was caught up to paradise, and heard certain revelations there, yet these cannot possibly seem to have qualified him for (teaching) another doctrine, seeing that their very nature was such as to render them communicable to no human being. If, however, that unspeakable mystery did leak out, and become known to any man, and if any heresy affirms that it does itself follow the same, (then) either Paul must be charged with having betrayed the secret, or some other man must actually be shown to have been afterwards “caught up into paradise,” who had permission to speak out plainly what Paul was not allowed (even) to mutter.207

Tertullian referred to Paul’s own description in 2 Corinthians 12.4 where he writes that he “was carried into paradise and he heard sacred words which are not properly spoken to men.” Tertullian then challenged the very nature of their interpretation as it would require that either Paul, or “some other man” to have broken the divine commandment to not utter these words to another human. Similar to Irenaeus’ basic argument, Tertullian’s primary critique was over the very transmission of the story in itself because it stood in direct conflict with the scriptural injunction that these words are unutterable to humanity.208 Although writing against the Phrygians in his Refutations of All Heresies, Hippolytus holds a similar perspective as his fellow Apostolic-Catholics and argued,

207 Tertullian, De praescriptione haereticum, 24. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from ANF.

208 Although not significant for our present concern, it is of note that both Clement and Origen align more with the Valentinian perspective regarding the information Paul received than with Irenaeus or Tertullian. Clement of Alexandria, however, seems to counter Tertullian’s position as he offers a similar perspective to the Valentinians suggesting that Paul may reveal certain information to those who are worthy enough to hear it, “To these statements the Apostle will testify, saying, ‘I know a man in Christ caught up into the third heaven, and from there into Paradise, who heard unutterable words, which it is not lawful for a person to speak.’ This hints at the ineffability of God’s
Paul the apostle, he says, knew of this gate, partially opening it in a mystery, and stating ‘that he was caught up by an angel, and ascended as far as the second and third heaven into paradise itself; and that he beheld sights and heard unspeakable words which it would not be possible for man to declare.’ These are, he says, what are by all called the secret mysteries, ‘which (also we speak), not in words taught of human wisdom, but in those taught of the Spirit, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him.’ And these are, he says, the ineffable mysteries of the Spirit, which we alone are acquainted with.\(^\text{209}\)

Hippolytus, although not specifically writing against the Valentinians, nonetheless offers a similar defense of the hidden mysteries that Paul received. For the Apostolic-Catholic writers, what Paul heard in the heavens would not be repeated because it could not be articulated in human words.

Both Irenaeus and Tertullian attempted to invalidate the Valentinian interpretation of Paul’s ascent through theological and anthropological arguments. Tertullian even went so far as to deny the Valentinians’ right to read and interpret the passage at all because they were not properly permitted to share what knowledge they learned during their being. This transmission is not allowed to be given through law or fear, but by a holy power since the divine information is voiceless. If above the third heaven, he (Paul) begins to speak, (it is because it) is customary for them to initiate into the mysteries their elect souls.” (Strom. 5.12., Greek taken from J. P. Migne, Patrologiae Graeca, Volume 9. Biblothecae Cleri Universe, 1862., 117.) Origen likewise agrees with Clement and maintains that Paul has certain information that can only be given to those who have proven themselves worthy. (See Comm. Jn. 13.27-35, 20.304; Phil. 15.19; Hom.Jos. 23.4; Hom.Exod. 4.2; and On Prayer 1. For a complete discussion of Origen’s evaluation of the ascent of Paul see, James Buchanan Wallace, Snatched into Paradise (1 Cor 12:1-10): Paul’s Heavenly Journey in the Context of Early Christian Experience (New York: De Gruyter, 2011), 292-304.).

\(^{209}\text{Adv.Ref. V.3.}\)
ascent. As these interpretive acts of self-definition are reciprocal, the Valentinians challenged the Apostolic-Catholic viewpoint as well, and claim their own apostolic connection to Paul through Theudas, apostolic teaching, and the child-mediator typology.

**Paul the Mystagogue**

The revelatory nature of interpretation of the Valentinians had direct consequences into their liturgical behaviors. The Apostolic-Catholic rituals were communal in nature and structured to unify the congregation in the authority and direction of the church, whereas the Valentinian rituals were more individually oriented and designed to elicit revelatory episodes for the participants in the hope of gaining divine knowledge and the correct interpretation of the teachings of Christ. The *Coptic Apocalypse of Paul* is a liturgical text that was written for Valentinians and one that justified their imagistic ritual practices. The Valentinian participants, through Paul's first person account, learned how to ascend. They participated in Paul’s ascent through the heavens, overcame the demiurge and proceeded to the highest divine realm to the true God. The audience experienced what Paul the mystical guide, the Mystagogue, has gone through in the text.

Kaler argues that the *Coptic Apocalypse of Paul* should be understood as an appropriation of Jewish apocalypticism that has been melded with a gnostic cosmology for the purposes of conversion. As Kaler argues,
The goal of the work is to provide an explanation of Paul’s account of his ascension, and in so doing to promote a gnostic view of the cosmos, with ramifications in terms of soteriological, eschatological, and other beliefs of the author and her intended readership. To do this, the author of the work has utilized the ascensions apocalyptic genre, an accepted one for discussions of cosmology and theology in antiquity, drawing on both its form and on stereotypical elements of its content (which are often reinterpreted or parodied).  

While Kaler is certainly correct in recognizing the apocalyptic motifs of the Apocalypse, he does not explore completely the liturgical dynamic of the text. In the collected Excerpts, Theodotus identifies the cross of Christ as a sign that has power over the archons, “The Cross is the sign of the Boundary in the Pleroma, for it separates the unfaithful from the faithful as that separates the world from the Pleroma. Therefore, Jesus through the sign bears the Seed on his shoulders and guides them into the Pleroma.” Most significantly, Theodotus also maintained that this sign was transferred to humans through the baptismal sealing.

So long, then, they say, as the seed is yet unformed, it is the offspring of the female, but when it was formed, it was changed into a man and becomes the son of the bridegroom. It is no longer weak and subject to the cosmic forces, both visible and invisible,

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210 Kaler, Flora Tells a Story, 77.
211 Kaler, Flora Tells a Story, 206-208.
but having been made masculine, it becomes male fruit. He whom the Mother generates is led into death and into the world, but he whom Christ regenerates is transferred to life in the Ogdoad. And they die to the world but live to God, that death may be loosed by death and corruption by resurrection. For he who has been sealed by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is beyond the threats of every other power and by the three Names has been released from the whole triad of corruption.\(^\text{213}\)

The final line in the quotation describes the anointing that occurred after baptism that seals the catechumenate in the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and enables him or her to ascend beyond the “triad of corruption.” Following the description of Theodotus, the role of Paul in the Apocalypse suggests that he has been baptized and is now ascending through the heavens, having been sealed with the sign of the cross. Going further, DeConick observes the initiation ceremony of redemption and finds parallels in both the Gospel of Philip and in the writings of Irenaeus.\(^\text{214}\) For the Valentinians, the baptism and

\(^{213}\) Theodotus, *Excerpt* 79.1-80.3. Translation taken from Casey, *Excerpta ex Theodoto*, 88. Ἥς οὖν ἀμόρφοτον, φασίν, ἐπὶ τὸ σπέρμα, Θηλείας ἐστὶ τέκνον· μορφωθὲν δὲ μετετέθη εἰς ἄνδρα καὶ ὤψ Ὑμωρίου γίνεται· οὐκέτι ἁθανατὴς καὶ τὸς κοσμικὸς ὑποκείμενος ὁμοτὸς τε καὶ ἀνθρώπος, ἀλλὰ ἀναθεοθεὶς ἄρην γίνεται καρπός. Ὁ γεννᾶ ἡ Μήτηρ εἰς θάνατον ἀνέγεται καὶ εἰς κόσμον· δὴ ἀναγεννᾶ Χριστὸς εἰς ᾠδήν μετατίθεται, εἰς Ὑγιόδαδα. Καὶ ἀποθνῄσκουσιν μὲν τῷ κόσμῳ, ζῶσι δὲ τῷ Θεῷ, ᾗς θάνατος θανάτῳ λυθῇ, ἀναστάσει δὲ ἡ φθορᾶ. Διὰ γὰρ Πατρὸς καὶ Υἱοῦ καὶ Ἁγίου Πνεύματος σφραγισθεὶς ἄνεπιληπτός ἐστι πάση τῇ ἀλλῃ δυνάμει, καὶ διὰ τριῶν Ὀνομάτων πάσης τῆς ἐν φθορᾷ τριάδος ἀπολύτησε· "φορέας τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ χοίκου, τότε φορεῖ τὴν εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανίου".

\(^{214}\) April D. DeConick, “The True Mysteries: Sacramentalism in the ‘Gospel of Philip,’” *Vigiliae Christianae* 55 no 3 (2001): 225-261, 233-234. DeConick observes that, “through the baptismal ceremonies, which included anointing with holy oil, the initiate is reborn of the Holy Spirit and then is invested with this [holy] Spirit (64:23-27). Furthermore, the investment of the Holy Spirit through the initiatory rituals is connected to the investment with the redeeming Name of God. Indeed, in Philip the initiate not only gains the name of Christ through chrism (74:12-25), becoming a ‘Christian,’ but he now
anointing served to cloak the participant anew and to imitate the baptism and priestly investiture of Jesus.\textsuperscript{215} This imitation results in the investiture of the participant who then was then able to ascend to the heavenly Temple and Holy of Holies as Jesus did.\textsuperscript{216} As DeConick notes, “acquiring rebirth, the Name of God, and resurrection through the baptismal and anointing ceremonies is the beginning of the initiate’s transformative experience,”\textsuperscript{217} and,

Thus the baptismal and anointing ceremonies, according to Philip, first cleanse the initiate, allowing him access into the first of the three heavenly Temple chambers. Moreover, through this ceremony he is ritually reborn of the Holy Spirit, receiving the Name and the resurrection. As a consecrated priest and a child of the resurrection, he mystically enters the first and the sacred shrines and encounters the Holy Spirit face to face.\textsuperscript{218}

The connection between baptism and heavenly ascent is also seen in the Valentinian Liturgical Readings. These are un-dateable liturgical fragments from the Valentinians, but they were designed for early initiates and most likely spoken aloud during the

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\textsuperscript{215} DeConick, “True Mysteries,” 233-235.
\textsuperscript{216} In this sense, the Valentinian author is drawing upon Jesus as the heavenly priest in Hebrews and the common priestly-visionary motif of Jewish ascent. DeConick, “True Mysteries,” 234-235.
\textsuperscript{217} DeConick, “True Mysteries,” 237.
\textsuperscript{218} DeConick, “True Mysteries,” 238.
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baptismal, anointing, and Eucharistic rituals. In the following baptismal liturgy, there is a clear emphasis on the connection between baptism and knowledge and ascent.

This is the fullness of the summary of knowledge, this, which was revealed to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Son. These things are sure and necessary, so we may walk in the them. They are of the first baptism. …The first baptism is the forgiveness of sins…one who said, “I baptize you for the forgiveness of your sins.” This…is a symbol of the…work of Christ that is equal…in him…for the work of Jesus is…

The first baptism is the forgiveness of sins. Through it we are brought from people of the left to people of the right, from corruption to incorruptibility, which is the Jordan. But that place is of the world, so we have been brought from the world into the aeon. The meaning of John is the aeon, the meaning of the Jordan is the descent that is ascent, our exodus from the world into the aeon. …

From the world to the Jordan, from the things of the world to the sight of God, from the carnal to the spiritual, from the physical to the angelic, from creation to Fullness, from the world to the aeon, from enslavements to sonship, from entanglements to virtue, from wayfaring to our home, from cold to warmth…this is how we were brought from seminal bodies into a perfect form.

The cleansing is the symbol through which Christ has saved us through the gift of his Spirit. He delivered us who are in him. From this time forth souls will become perfect spirits. What is granted to us by the first baptism…since we have become eternal…we have received the salvation of Christ.


Valentinian Liturgical Readings, 40.30-43.19. 

\[\text{\footnotesize \text{\textsuperscript{219} The liturgical fragments follow a Valentinian exposition in Codex XI that bears a strong similarity to Thedotus and there has been some speculation that these texts reflect a second-century tradition. However, nothing more than speculation can be offered on the topic given the limited materials and their fragmentary state. Einar Thomassen, “Valentinian Exposition with Valentinian Liturgical Readings,” in The Nag Hammadi Scriptures: The International Edition, ed. Marvin Meyer, 663-678 (New York: HarperCollins, 2007) and Elaine Pagels, “A Valentinian Exposition (XI,2) with On the Anointing, On Baptism A and B, and On the Eucharist A and B,” in The Nag Hammadi Library in English, ed., James M. Robinson, 481-482 (San Francisco: Harper and Row Publishers, 1988).} \] \]
The focus of this baptismal liturgy was to not only transform the corrupted human into perfection, but to prepare him or her for a spiritual transformation and heavenly ascent in order to learn divine knowledge. The baptism has multiple stages, but the end result was that one was prepared for the sealing and heavenly ascent. When taken together with DeConick’s analyses of the *Gospel of Philip* and Irenaeus, and the comments by Theodotus, one can see how the initiatory aspects of the Valentinian baptismal imagery resonate with the role of Paul in the *Apocalypse of Paul*. The text itself is therefore best read as an initiatory text, following the theology of Theodotus, wherein the participants are guided by Paul through the heavenly realms.

The ritual memory theorist, Connerton, avers that “images of the past and recollected knowledge of the past are conveyed and sustained by (more or less) ritual
performances” is significant given the visionary nature of this text. Profound esoteric episodes, such as what was seen in the *Apocalypse of Paul*, fall under the rubric of what Whitehouse identifies as imagistic ritual practices. Whitehouse, a cognitive scholar of ritual, identifies a spectrum of religious ritual in which at the one end is doctrinal, and the other, imagistic.

The doctrinal end is a more structured ritual designed for social instruction. The meaning of the ritual is carefully monitored by the governing religious authorities and functions largely to instruct the community. These rituals are repeated frequently, almost to the point of routine, and rarely elicit a strong emotional response from the participants. The imagistic, however, operates through episodic memory and keys into the highly emotive nature of traumatic religious experience. In contrast with the doctrinal, the imagistic rituals are not structured for frequent repetition or instruction but rather to arouse a personal, emotional response.

Uro has applied Whitehouse’s model and observed a tendency towards more imagistic practices by the Valentinians and a stronger use of doctrinal ritual practice among Apostolic-Catholics. In his analysis of the baptismal ritual in the *Gospel of Philip* as compared with the more traditional Apostolic-Catholic texts of the *Didache*, Justin Martyr, and the *Apostolic Tradition*, Uro concludes,

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222 Whitehouse, *Modes of Religiosity*.

223 Although an unfortunate alliterative relationship, there is no connection between the image of Paul discussed in this work and the notion of imagistic ritual practices.
If the *Gospel of Philip* was used in the preparation for baptism, it hardly contributed to creating uniform ideas about the meaning of the sacraments in the minds of the catechumens. Instead, the gospel would probably have fostered an aura of secrecy and excitement with regard to the coming initiation. Equipped with impressionistic and rousing images, the neophytes would probably not end up having very similar religious experiences *after* the ritual either. The truth could then be more a matter of personal reflection on the shared ritual than a matter of confessing orthodox beliefs.224

I am not suggesting the Valentinians were exclusively imagistic, rather that the Valentinians emphasized the ecstatic religious experience over the more structured communal mass of the Apostolic-Catholics. Uro argues that "although the level of frequency or the form of ritual does not change when we move from the communities of Irenaeus to those of his opponents, it is possible to argue that Valentinians strongly intensified the imagistic aspects of the early Christian initiation."225 Uro highlights the secrecy and excitement of the ritual to show how it is different from the doctrinal baptism of the Apostolic-Catholics, especially in regard to the personal reflection over the orthodox instruction. In effect, then, in remembering Paul's ecstatic, non-bodily ascent through the ten levels of heaven - when the Apostolic-Catholics only accept three levels - the *Apocalypse of Paul* was using the personally imagistic experience of Paul's own ascent to justify their current practices of imagistic ritual against the more doctrinal


Apostolic-Catholic forms. The Valentinians, as a consequence of their interpretive authority, were challenging the intention, structure, and very nature of the Apostolic-Catholic ritual practices. While the two models are not necessarily incompatible, that one was designed to elicit revelatory and divine knowledge that was not governed by the religious authorities would suggest a direct transgression of the Apostolic-Catholic claims of interpretive jurisdiction. The Valentinians are discursively presenting a new ritualistic model in line with their theology and undermining the authority of the Apostolic-Catholics.

The imagistic aspects of the ritual are most clearly articulated in the shift to first person in the fourth heaven,

Then the Holy Spirit who was speaking with him caught him up to the on high to the third heaven, and he passed beyond to the fourth heaven. The Holy Spirit spoke to him saying, “Look and see your likeness upon the earth.” And he looked down and saw those who were upon the earth. He stared and saw those who were upon the …then he gazed down and saw the twelve apostles at his right and at his left in the creation; and the Spirit was going before them. But I saw in the fourth heaven according to class – I saw the angels resembling Gods.  

This shift in person positions the audience as Paul ascending through the realms. In Second Corinthians, Paul recounts his ascent to the heavens in the third person, “he was

\[\text{Cop. Apoc. Paul. 19.20-20.8.}\]

\[\text{Tote πιστίς ετούθας ετε νεωφάσε ήμιμαχ λατωρμι μον εφράι επισικε. οτεραί εμεθωμεντε μπε. Άνω λαγηφτε εφραί εμεθατο μπε. Άνωφι ενα προς πιστίς ετούθας ειλαιονός ήμιμαχ εξεθ ήμις ενα επεκεινε 21 χμ μπαλ ήμις εγκωμένε επεσχε δεινα εν ετε 21 χμ μπαλ. Άνω εμεθατε ενετε 21 χμ τε τοτε Άνω εμεθατε επεσχε δεινα εν επιμήνους έπιστολος 2α τεξούναμ δευ τα τεξελθαι 2惩罚 ǐν τεκτικις. Νερενιπτίξε λέ νεμοι ως 2αλώους. Άναυ λε 2α τεμεντο μπε και το γενος δεινα λε επιμηγέλος ευεινε νινούτε.}\]
carried into paradise and he heard sacred words which are not properly spoken to men." Yet in the *Apocalypse*, after leaving the fourth heaven, Paul says, “Then I gazed upward and saw the spirit saying to me, ‘Paul, come to me!’ Then as I went the gate opened and I went up to the fifth heaven.” No longer is the audience listening to the biblical account from a distant figure. The audience is now literally joining Paul in his ascent and advancing themselves through the realms. This liturgical preparation would serve to instill the memory of Paul’s words in the audience and prepare them for their initiatory ascent. Paul now assumes the role of guide and permits access, through his own ascent, for the community to attain to the highest heavenly realm. One enters heaven through imitation of, and participation with, Paul.

The recognition of Paul as a spiritual leader and Mystagogue was a common image in the Valentinian corpus. Clement records Theodotus' identification of Paul in the same spiritual capacity as Jesus when he writes,

> Those of Valentinus maintain that Jesus is the Paraclete, because he has become full of the Aeons, as he has come from the whole.... In the type of the Paraclete, Paul became the Apostle of the Resurrection. Immediately after the suffering of the Lord he was also sent to preach. 

227 2 Corinthians 12.4. ὅτι ἦρπαγε εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἡκούσεν ἄρρητα ῥήματα ἀ οὐκ ἔζην ἀνθρώπως λαλῆσαι


Theodotus explains that just as Jesus was the Paraclete for the aeons, so does Paul function as a Paraclete for humans, both bringing knowledge and enabling divine access. Adding to this there is also the Valentinian Prayer of Paul the Apostle discussed above that similarly positions Paul as the primary figure through which one may access the divine. The Apocalypse of Paul is reimagining the role of Paul, similar to what is depicted in both Theodotus and the Prayer of the Apostle Paul, as the means by which one may access the divine realm. Paul is the paragon and guide for the Valentinians, and the Apocalypse of Paul emphasizes the elevation of Paul even further, as it also identifies him as the leader of the apostolic contingent as well. Paul, who is individually accessed by the members of the congregation, has replaced the ecclesial authorities of the Apostolic-Catholics as the means of divine access. Connection with the divine is not found through doctrinal actions of the church, but rather through the personal imagistic practice of imitating Paul.

In the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul, Paul describes his encounter with the Spirit in the fourth heaven,

And I looked up and I saw the spirit and who spoke to me saying, “Paul, come! Pass through to me.” Then, as I moved the gate opened and I went up to the fifth heaven and I saw my fellow Apostles as they went through with me.²³⁰

Paul alone is identified by the Holy Spirit to ascend to the fifth heaven and the disciples follow him. As the primary guide, Paul is actively engaged with the surroundings and interacting with the Holy Spirit, while the disciples appear to simply be there. Paul is the efficacious individual leading the apostles through the divine realm. It is only through his actions and engagement that the entire group is able to proceed through the heavenly levels. Paul is the spiritual guide for both the Valentinian participants and the disciples.

Within the narrative Paul leaves the fifth heaven and again passes through the next level and the apostles travel with him. Once in the sixth heaven, Paul is forced to

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231 In the fifth heaven Paul watches as several angels are competing with each other and driving souls to judgment (22.5-22.10). “While the angel was moving with us, I saw a great Angel in the fifth heaven holding an iron rod in his hand. And there were three other angels with him and I gazed into their faces. And they were challenging each other with whips, driving the souls to judgment.”

engage an archontic power who intends to stymie his advance. Upon seeing him and the brilliant light he casts over the heaven, Paul says, “I spoke, saying, ‘Open to me and the Holy Spirit who is ahead of me.’” Remarkably, without any further comment, conversation, or even rejoinder from the presiding archon, Paul passes through the sixth heaven and up to the seventh. This abbreviated episode can only serve to further emphasize the power and authority of Paul as he is able to command the archons and guide his fellow travelers through the levels. This is an allusion to both the Pauline theology of salvation and to the internal reference of the text where the child identifies Paul as one who has power over the authorities and principalities.

The final example of Paul guiding the audience is in his exchange with the demiurge when he reveals how to bypass his authority and enter the highest heavenly realm. I include here the passage in full,

Then we went up to the seventh heaven and I saw an old man….Light. And his cloak was white, his throne, which is in the seventh heaven, was of light greater than the sun by seven times. The old man spoke to me, saying, “To where are you going Paul, he who is blessed and the one who was set part from the womb of his mother?” And I looked at the Spirit and he was nodding his head as he said to me, “speak with him.” And I said to the old man, saying, “I will go to the place from which I came.” And the old man replied, saying, “Where are you from?” I answered to him,

233 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 22.17-19. “And I gazed up above and I saw a great light which shone down over the sixth heaven.” ΑΥΘΛΙΘΡΗΕΠΙΧΕΛΗΝΑΤΗΣΕΗΝ ΕΥΝΟΩ ΠΟΤΟΙΝ ΕΠΙ ΟΥΟΕΙΝ ΕΠΙΩ ΟΥΟΕΙΝ ΕΠΕΣΧΤ ΕΤΑΡΑΙ ΕΩΗ ΤΗΕΕΚΟ ΜΠΙΕ.

234 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 22.21-23. ΧΕΔΟΥΩΝΝΑΙ. ΑΥΘΠΙΠΝΑΕΤΟΥΛΑΒΕΤΑΤΑΕΖΗ ΔΟΥΩΝΝΑΙ.

saying, “I will go down to the world of those who are dead so that I will
lead captive the captivity which was led captive in the captivity of
Babylon.” The old man replied to me, saying, “How are you able to escape
from me? Look and see the Principalities, and Authorities?” And the Spirit
interjected and said, saying, “Give to him the sign which you have, and he
will open for you.” And then I gave to him the sign, he turned his head
down to those who are his own authorities, and then, the seventh heaven
opened and we came to the Ogdoad.236

That the demiurge knows not only who Paul is but also that Paul has been pre-selected
speaks to the eminence of Paul. He is known even in the heavens as the renowned
individual who is able to approach the demiurge and speak. Paul is not there under the
protection of the Holy Spirit. Paul is there literally - and defiantly - engaging the
demiurge. When asked where he is going, Paul replies that he will first descend to the
world of the dead before returning to where he was from. This is a pedagogical moment
in the text that demonstrates Paul’s commitment to bringing others into the divine realm.
Eventually the Holy Spirit tells Paul to show him the sign. Once he does, the

236 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 22.23-23.20. ΤΟΤΕ ΑΝΕΙ ΕΕΡΑΙ ΕΤΜΕΣΚΑΨΧΗ ΜΠΕ ΑΙΝΑΛΥ ΕΥΞΕ ΆΛΟ ΠΡΩΜΕ ΜΠΟΥΟΕΙΝ. ΑΥΩ ΕΡΕΝΕΣΒΟΕΙΤΕ ΟΥΟΒΕΨ. ΝΕΡΕΝΕΘΡΟΝΟΣ ΕΤΖΝ
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conversation ends, leaving the demiurge dejectedly gazing upon his inadequate creation while Paul advances to the final heavenly realm. Significantly, it is Paul alone who advances leaving behind the other disciples. In effect, the advance of Paul shows unequivocally that the original twelve disciples, and their followers, are under the reign of the demiurge while Paul, and those who follow him, ascend above the demiurge to true divinity.

This action of Paul leaving the disciples behind with the demiurge is similar to Jesus’ actions in the contemporary Sethian Gospel of Judas where he leaves Judas within the realm, and executor of the will, of the demiurgic Nebro-Ialdabaoth. In her analysis DeConick observes,

Why is this counterpart correspondence between Judas and Nebro-Ialdabaoth so important to the Sethians? Because it turned on its head the teaching of the Apostolic Christians about the efficacy of Jesus’ death as an atonement sacrifice made to God. The Sethian Christians were offended by this doctrine...The Gnostics who wrote Judas take on the Apostolic Christians on their own turf, agreeing with them that Judas is a demon and that he is responsible for bringing about Jesus’ sacrificial death. But then they ask the obvious. If Judas was a demon, and he brought about Jesus’ sacrifice, was his sacrifice something that the demons desired? If so, the sacrifice must be evil, and so must the doctrine of atonement. In fact, they concluded, this is all a trick by the demon who rules this world, Judas’ celestial correspondence, Nebro-Ialdabaoth. Whenever Christians perform a Eucharist ceremony in which the sacrifice of Jesus is reenacted, they are unwittingly worshiping Nebro-Ialdabaoth.237

This analogy is then extended further and applied to the all disciples as they are regarded as *counterparts* of the twelve archons who exist below Judas. In effect, the entire apostolic contingent is understood to be under the rule of the demiurgic Nebro-Ialdabaoth and it is only the true Sethians who are able to ascend beyond this archontic level, not unlike Paul’s ability to abandon the twelve disciples at the demiurgic level in his own Valentinian ascent.

As we have seen, the *Apocalypse of Paul* expands Paul’s ascent from Second Corinthians to show that he ascended to the highest heavenly realm. In Paul’s account, he remarks twice that he does not know the nature of his ascent,

> Fourteen years ago I knew a man in Christ, either in the body I do not know, or outside of the body I do not know, God knows, such a one was carried as far as the third heaven. And I knew such a man, either in the body or apart from the body I do not know, God knows, because he was carried into paradise and he heard sacred words which are not properly spoken to men.  

Paul’s uncertainty has received much scholarship, and it is quite clear that Paul is emphasizing his own ignorance on the matter. For the Valentinians, however, Paul’s

238 2 Corinthians 12.2-4. οἶδα ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ πρὸ ἑτῶν δεκατεσσάρων, εἶτε ἐν σώματι οὐκ οἶδα, εἶτε ἐκτὸς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν, ἀρπαγέντα τὸν τοιούτον ἐως τρίτου οὐρανοῦ. καὶ οἶδα τὸν τοιοῦτον ἄνθρωπον, εἶτε ἐν σώματι εἶτε χωρὶς τοῦ σώματος οὐκ οἶδα, ὁ θεὸς οἶδεν, ὃτι ἡράγη εἰς τὸν παράδεισον καὶ ἠκουσεν ἄρρητα ρήματα ἃ οὐκ ἐξὸν ἄνθρώπῳ λαλῆσαι.

239 For a complete discussion of the orthodox and heterodox argument over Paul’s ascent, see Kaler, et al., “Coptic Apocalypse of Paul, Irenaeus’ *Adversus Haereses.*”
confusion was problematic for their ritual behavior, and they must account for his ignorance. To address this concern, the *Apocalypse* re-imagines his ascent to show, unequivocally, that Paul ascended in an un-embodied form. Kaler states,

If we look instead at the context in which, as I have suggested, the *Apocalypse of Paul* was written, namely, a dialogue between orthodox and heterodox Christians over the meaning and nature of Paul’s ascension in 2 Cor 12:2-14—then things become much clearer. It then becomes obvious that the first two heavens were omitted because they were also omitted in 2 Cor 12:2-4. As for the mere mention of the third heaven, both sides of the dialogue would have agreed that Paul went up this far, as Paul’s own account asserts. Since the third heaven was not a point of contention, no description of it was necessary, and accordingly, none was given.²⁴⁰

Kaler is right in his argument that levels one through three were omitted in the text because both the Apostolic-Catholics and Valentinians would accept Paul’s own account to the third heaven. The more detailed descriptions of levels four through seven are the contentious extrapolation of the Valentinians and exemplify their contemporary non-bodily ascent practices.

In the *Apocalypse of Paul*, once in the fourth heaven, Paul is instructed by the Holy Spirit to look down and see those who are beneath him on earth.

And the Holy Spirit spoke to him saying, “look and see your image upon the ground.” …Then he stared down and he saw the twelve Apostles to his right and to his left in the creation, and the Spirit was moving among them.²⁴₁

²⁴⁰ Kaler, *Flora Tells a Story*, 61.

In Second Corinthians Paul remarks twice that he does not know the nature of his ascent, and yet here he looks down and sees his body along with those of the disciples on earth. While Paul did not know how he ascended, there is no confusion among the Valentinians as the ascent is associated incorporeally with the mind.

In another second-century text, the *Gospel of Mary*, Mary, after describing a vision she received, asked Jesus, "Lord, now, he who sees the vision, does he see it in the soul or the spirit?"242 He replied, "He who sees does not see in the soul, nor in the spirit, but the mind, which is between the two."243 This reference to the mind recalls the instruction from the child-mediator for Paul to "open his mind"244 before he begins his ascent in the *Apocalypse*.

In the narrative of the *Apocalypse*, after departing from the fourth heaven there is another example where Paul observes an un-embodied soul.

But I saw in the fourth heaven, according to the race, I saw the angels who were in the image of Gods who were carrying a soul out of the land of the


243 *G. Mary* 10.20-22. Ενωναν τε Υχναν υδαι ενωνεαν δεκαπνα ετοιοιν ενωναν τε νεπνα Μπευθε Μνευπνα.

dead. They put it at the gate of the fourth heaven. And the angels were lashing it. And the soul pleaded, “What sin was it that I did on earth?”

This passage is delineating the heavenly realm from the earthly, and it describes the angels as carrying the soul, not the body, out of the “land of the dead.” The soul cries out, "Bring witnesses! Let them tell you in what body I committed this unlawfulness." The text here is showing the separation of body and soul and identifying the corporeal with the earthly realm. The three witnesses all recount sins the soul committed while embodied on the natural earth, and after judgment the soul is expelled from the heavenly realm. Witnessing this episode, Paul remarks, "And the soul which had been cast down came into a body that had been prepared for it." For the fifth time, the Apocalypse has described the ascent outside the body: first, Paul is given the path to the Jerusalem above the flesh; second, he ascends and sees himself and the apostles on earth; third, a soul

245 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 20.5-14. Αἰναγες εἰς ἡμέρα Μπό εἰς Κατά Πένος Αἰναγες εἰς Εις Πενος εἰς Κατά Πένος.


249 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 18.17-19. The notion of Jerusalem as a place without flesh will be explored in more detail in a later section.

is taken from earth into heaven and accused; fourth, the accused soul asks in what body the sins he committed occurred; and fifth, after judgment, the soul is expelled from heaven and thrown into another body. The realm of the heavens is a place without corporeality.

The blend of the second-century practices onto the Pauline experience serves to re-frame the memory of Paul’s ascent to include a definitive, and therein, legitimating, non-bodily ascent that challenges the Apostolic-Catholic practice of communal ritual. As Connerton has explained, “we may note that images of the past commonly legitimate a present social order.” The text serves to shift not only the frame of Valentinian theology as revealed to Valentinus but also the contemporary ritual practice of un-embodied ascent to the non-corporeal heavens onto the historical authority of Paul. There is no uncertainty for Paul in this narrative. Paul ascends un-embodied.

Paul as Valentinian

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251 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 20.8-11.
254 Connerton, How Societies Remember, Location 118.
We have discussed previously the debate over the ascent of Paul among early Christians, and I wish to return to that discussion and emphasize the Valentinian position against the Apostolic-Catholics. In the *Apocalypse*, the narrative begins with Paul walking on a road when he encounters a small child whom he asks, “Which path should I take up to Jerusalem?” and the child replies, “State your name, so that I might tell to you which path.” While a seemingly innocuous question, it reveals a great deal about the theology of this text and the image of Paul it creates. This introduction is directly challenging the Apostolic-Catholic interpretation of Paul’s vision because it serves as an allusion to Paul’s trip to Jerusalem as recorded by Paul in Galatians 1.15-18, and not the version told by Luke in Acts 22.

In privileging Paul’s account over Luke’s and connecting his ascent with his journey to Jerusalem over Damascus, the *Apocalypse* is challenging the Apostolic-Catholic memory of Paul in Acts. In writing to the Galatians, Paul states,

But when God, who set me apart from the womb of my mother and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son in me, in order that I might preach him to the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult flesh and blood nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were Apostles before me, but I went into Arabia and I returned again to Damascus. Then after three years, I went to Jerusalem to confer with Cephas and I remained with him fifteen days.

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255 *Cop. Apoc. Paul*. 17.4-5. Ἐναντίον Ἰωάννης ἔστι τῷ Δαυίδ ἐπετέλεσεν ἔναν τόθι τοῦ Ἰσραήλ.


257 Galatians, 1.15-18 Ὁτε δὲ εὐσκότησεν ὁ θεός ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν ὦν αὐτὸ ἐν ἐμοὶ, ἢν εὖ προσανέθηκαν αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς ἔσχεν, εὐθείας οὐ προσανεθεμένης σαρκὶ καὶ αἴματι οὐδὲ ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἰερουσαλήμ πρὸς τοὺς πρὸ ἐμοῦ ἀποστόλους, ἀλλὰ ἀπῆλθον εἰς Ἀραβίαν καὶ
In this story to the Galatians, Paul explains that after his conversion experience he returned to Damascus and stayed there for three years before continuing on to Jerusalem where he would meet with the Apostles. The passage concludes with Paul discussing his time with Peter and James before he eventually "went to the regions of Syria and Cilicia" where they glorified God in him. Luke, however, in intending to fill in the narrative gap of his story in Acts, writes that while en route to Damascus Paul received a vision from Jesus that instructed him to continue to Damascus where he would be taught. While there he received his instruction and learned about his new religious affiliation, and then Luke writes,

Now it happened, when I returned to Jerusalem and was praying in the temple, I went into a trance and saw Him saying to me, ‘Hurry, quickly get out of Jerusalem, for they will not accept your testimony concerning Me.’ ... Then He said to me, ‘Depart, for I will send you far from here to the Gentiles.’

Because of the trance and vision that Paul received one would expect a correlation between the *Apocalypse of Paul* and Acts. However, there are internal contradictions that

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πάλιν ὑπέστρεψα εἰς Δαμασκόν. Ἡ επείτα μετὰ ἔτη τρία ἀνήλθον εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα ἱστορήσας Κηφᾶν καὶ ἐπέμεινα πρὸς αὐτὸν ἡμέρας δεκαπέντε,

258 Acts, 22. 17-21. Ἔγενετο δὲ μοι ὑποστρέψαντι εἰς Ἱεροσαλὴμ καὶ προσευχομένῳ μου ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ γενέσθαι με ἐν ἑκτάσει καὶ ἰδεῖν αὐτὸν λέγοντα μοι· σπεύσας καὶ ἐξελθε ἐν τάχει εἰς Ἱεροσαλήμ, διότι οὐ παραδέχονταί σου μαρτυρίαν περὶ ἐμοῦ. κἀγὼ εἶπον· κύριε, αὐτοὶ ἐπίστανται ὅτι ἐγὼ ἤμην φυλακίζων καὶ δέρων κατὰ τὰς συναγωγὰς τοὺς πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ σέ, καὶ ὅτε ἐξεχύννετο τὸ αἷμα Στεφάνου τοῦ μάρτυρος σου, καὶ αὐτὸς ἤμην ἐρεστῶς καὶ συνεὐδοκόν καὶ φυλάσσων τὰ ἱμάτια τῶν ἀναρροῦντος αὐτόν. καὶ εἶπεν πρὸς με· πορεύου, ὅτι ἐγὼ εἰς ἔθνη μακρὰν ἐξαποστελῶ σε.
render this connection untenable. First, Luke records the vision occurring while Paul was in Jerusalem, whereas the Apocalypse depicts Paul’s vision on the way to Jerusalem. Second, that the ensuing violence against him is not evident in Paul's account to the Galatians, indicates that either these are two separate accounts of Paul in Jerusalem, or that Luke has interjected a conflict episode into his story. The Apocalypse of Paul bears more in line with Paul's own account in Galatians and is rejecting the “similar” account recorded in Acts. The Apocalypse is implicitly stating that the ensuing vision in the text is what Paul received en route to Jerusalem, and not the vision that Luke describes in Acts. The implication of this connection is a subtle argument that Paul’s vision recorded in Acts is incorrect and what follows is the true record of Paul’s vision. In this way, the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul demonstrates that the Apostolic-Catholic memory of Paul’s visionary episode is misunderstood and the Valentinians have the accurate information.

The rejection of the Apostolic-Catholic memory in the opening sequence serves to then validate the interpretive aspects of the vision and Paul in light of current Valentinian practices. In effect, the text is structured to justify their understanding of Paul as a Valentinian through their presentation of him as a pneumatic. In what the social memory theorist Zelizer identifies as the usability of communal memory, she argues that "rather than be taken at face value as a simple act of recall, collective memory is evaluated for the ways which it helps us to make connections - to each other over time and space, and to ourselves. At the heart of memory's study, then, is its usability, its invocation as a tool
to defend different aims and agendas." Applying Zelizer’s usability method, we can see that the text is situating Paul as an eminent figure in Valentinian tradition so that the invocation of this authority may prove to justify their practices and invalidate the interpretive authority and practices of the Apostolic-Catholics.

The *Coptic Apocalypse* imagines Paul’s ascent in an un-embodied form that validates the un-embodied ascent practices of the Valentinians. Kelber argues that memory,

> operates selectively, seizing on, modifying, and contextualizing topics, events, and subjects of the past in order to feed the needs and define the aspirations of the group...[that] recognizes both a regressive gesture toward the past, seeking to retrieve as much of the past as seems appropriate, and an orientation toward the present (and future), preserving what is deemed to be useful at present.  

Given that in 2 Corinthians Paul remarks twice that he does not know the nature of his ascent, the *Apocalypse of Paul* is selectively choosing the ascent of Paul and omitting his own confusion and significantly modifying and contextualizing the event to show that he ascended in a non-bodily fashion similar to the second-century Valentinians. Not only does this speak to the unique eminence of Paul, but his ascent to the inner chambers of the temple in the heavenly Jerusalem presents him as a pneumatic. His pneumatic status is important because it designates him exclusively as a Valentinian, simultaneously negating the Apostolic-Catholic connection to Paul and encouraging the Valentinians to

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259 Zelizer, "Reading the Past against the Grain, 226.

imitate him. Paul is not only a Mystagogue, he is a pneumatic, a Valentinian, and all Valentinians can follow his ascent to the Holy of Holies in heaven.

The Valentinians understood the anthropology of humanity in three natures: the pneumatic, psychic, and hylic. The contemporary second-century writing, *The Tripartite Tractate*, explains the divisions of humanity into three categories and identifies the final end for each group.²⁶¹

Now, humanity came to be in three kinds with respect to essence - pneumatic, psychic, and hylic…

The pneumatic type is like light from life and like spirit from spirit...It acquired knowledge through revelation.

The psychical kind, however, being light from fire...was taught, moreover, only through means of voice, it was content for in this manner it was not far from the hope given by the promise, having acquired, in the form of a pledge, the assurance the coming things.

The hylic type, however, is foreign in every manner: it is like darkness that avoids the shimmering light because it is destroyed by its manifestation. For it did not accept his coming, and is even...filled with ire against the Lord for he revealed himself.

Now, the pneumatic type will acquire perfect salvation in every manner. The hylic type will expire in every manner, as occurs with an enemy. The psychical type, as it is in the middle by virtue of the way it was brought forth as well as by virtue of its formation, is double, being disposed to good as well as to evil, and the end that is reserved for it is uncertain.²⁶²


Although using the same designations as Theodotus, Heracleon goes into greater detail and associates the physical locations in the gospel as allegories for the natural ends of particular natures.

According to Origen, Heracleon identified Capernaum with the material realm, the outer court of the temple with psychic, and the inner temple with the pneumatic. In commenting on John 2.12,263 Heracleon explains that Capernaum “means these most remote places of the cosmos, these material realms into which he descended. And because the place is unsuitable, he is not said to have done or said anything in it.”264

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263 “After this, he and his mother, his brothers, and his disciples went down into Capernaum and stayed there not many days.” Μετὰ τοῦτο κατέβη εἰς Καφαρναοῦμ αὐτὸς καὶ ἦ μήτηρ αὐτοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀδελφοί [αὐτοῦ] καὶ οἱ μαθηταὶ αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκεῖ ἐμείναν οὐ πολλὰς ἡμέρας.

Because the material realm is entirely foreign to the nature of Jesus, and this passage records no events taking place there, Heracleon interprets this passage as the departure and ascent of Jesus from the depths of the material realm. Heracleon continues this in his discussion of John 2.13-14, where Origen recounts Heracleon’s understanding of the psychic and pneumatic ends. Heracleon takes,

“the way up to Jerusalem” to mean “the ascent of the Lord out of the material realm to the spiritual realm, which happens to be an image of Jerusalem.” The statement “he found them in the sanctuary” and not “outside the temple” he understands to mean, “so that it not merely be deemed the ‘calling,’ separate from the Spirit who is aided by the Lord.” For he maintains on the one side that “the ‘sanctuary’ is the Holy of Holies, into which only the High Priest enters, where,” I believe he says, “the pneumatics go.” On the other side, there is the temple forecourt, also the place of Levites, which is a symbol of the psychics who find salvation outside the Pleroma.

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266 “Because the Passover of the Jews was near, Jesus went up into Jerusalem. And he found in the sanctuary sellers of oxen, sheep, and doves, as well as the money changers seated there.

267 Heracleon, Fragment, 13. Τὴν εἰς Ἰεροσόλυμα ἁνώνυμην σημαίνειν τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ὑλικῶν εἰς τὸν ψυχικὸν τόπον, τυγχάνοντα εἰκόνα τῆς Ἰερουσαλήμ, ἀνάβασιν τοῦ κυρίου. Τὸ δὲ Ἐδρέων ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ οὐχὶ προνάω, οἰς εἰρήσθαι ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ τὴν κλήσιν μόνην νοηθῆναι τὴν χωρὶς πνεύματος βοηθεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου ἤγεται γὰρ τὰ μὲν ἄγια τῶν ἁγίων εἶναι τὸ ἱερόν, εἰς ἄ μόνος ὁ ἄρχων ἄνεσε, ἐνθα οἴμαι αὐτὸν λέγειν τῶν πνευματικῶν χωρεῖν· τὰ δὲ τοῦ προνάου, ὅπου καὶ οἱ Λευιταί, σῦμβολον εἶναι τὸν ἐξὸ τοῦ πληρώματος ψυχικῶν εὑρίσκομένου ἐν σωτηρίᾳ.
Heracleon explicitly connects the temple with the Holy of Holies and states that only the pneumatic reside in this divine location. Pagels argues that “Heracleon intends to describe the present age, in which psychic believers and the pneumatic elect stand as distinctly different topoi in relation to God: the psychics remain in the forecourt ‘outside,’ while the pneumatics alone dwell within the ‘holy of holies.’”

The question Paul asks the child-mediator keys into the larger meaning of the Apocalypse because Jerusalem serves both as a physical location in the story and an allegorical reference to the highest order of the divine realm. In his letter to the Galatians, Paul writes about the heavenly Jerusalem and emphasizes how it is different from, and indeed better, than the current Jerusalem.

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one from a slave-girl and the other by a freewoman. But he of the slave-girl was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through what is promised, which is symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to slavery, that is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the Jerusalem of now, enslaved with her children— but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

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268 However, given its location within the psychic temple, Heracleon “must mean the psychic level of the cosmos where souls in general are located, including the souls of the spirituals.” Thomassen, Spiritual Seed, 112.


270 Gal. 4.22-26. γέγραπται γὰρ ὅτι Ἀβραὰμ δύο υἱοὺς ἔσχεν, ἕνα ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης καὶ ἕνα ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας. ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν ἐκ τῆς παιδίσκης κατὰ σάρκα γεγέννηται, ὁ δὲ ἐκ τῆς ἐλευθέρας δι’ ἐπαγγέλιας. ὅτινα ἐστὶν ἀλληγορούμενα: αὕτη γὰρ εἰσὶν δύο διάθηκαι, μία μὲν ἀπὸ ὅρους Σινᾶ εἰς δουλείαν γεννώσα, ἡτίς ἐστὶν Ἀγὰρ. τὸ δὲ Ἀγὰρ Σινᾶ ὁρὸς ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ Ἀραβίᾳ· συστοιχεῖ δὲ τῇ νῦν Ἰερουσαλήμ, δουλεύει γὰρ μετὰ τῶν τέκνων αὐτῆς. ἡ δὲ ἄνω Ἰερουσαλήμ ἐλευθέρα ἐστίν, ἡτίς ἐστὶν μῆτηρ ἡμῶν.
Paul delineates these two covenants in order to show that the Jerusalem of the promise is liberating, the mother of all, and located in heaven where there is no flesh.

In his *Refutations*, Hippolytus records a Valentinian interpretation that similarly explains the heavenly position and maternal nature of Jerusalem,

And there has been projected Sophia, which is, according to them, mother of all living creatures, and the 'Joint Fruit of the Pleroma,' (who is) the Logos, (and other aeons,) who are celestial angels that have their citizenship in Jerusalem which is above, which is in heaven. For this Jerusalem is Sophia, she (that is) outside (the Pleroma), and her spouse is the 'Joint Fruit of the Pleroma.'

As in Paul’s letter to the Galatians, so here, too, Jerusalem is found in the highest order of heaven and the mother of all. This connection is confirmed by Irenaeus who also records that the Valentinians associated Jerusalem as the Ogdoad, or Mother, in heaven.

Referring to the Valentinians, he writes,

They further affirm that his [i.e., demiurge] mother originated this opinion in his mind, because she desired to bring him forth possessed of such a character that he should be the head and source of his own essence, and the absolute ruler over every kind of operation that was afterwards attempted. This mother they also call Ogdoad, Sophia, Terra, Jerusalem, Holy Spirit, and, with a masculine reference, Lord. Her place of habitation is an intermediate one, above the Demiurge indeed, but below and outside of the Pleroma, even to the end.

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271 *Ref. Adv.* 6.34.3.

272 Irenaeus, *Ad. Haer.* 1.5.3.
As Kaler, Painchaud, and Bussières have observed, this Mother is similarly identified as the “home of the Apostles” in the Coptic Apocalypse of Paul which demonstrates the heavenly position of the city. The Apocalypse is specific in describing Paul’s ascent past the demiurge into the upper regions of heaven where the temple is located and the other spirits reside.

And then, the seventh heaven opened and we came to the Ogdoad. And I saw the twelve apostles and they greeted me and we went up to the ninth heaven. And I greeted all who were in the ninth heaven. And we went up to the tenth heaven. And I greeted my fellow spirits.

Although salvation and ascent are associated with the temple specifically, the connection to the temple in Jerusalem, the true Jerusalem, cannot be overstated. Jerusalem is actually understood by the Valentinians to be Sophia herself and a place of the aeons and angels, not a place of flesh. Origen quotes Heracleon’s second-century Commentary on the Gospel of John, and explains that explains Heracleon’s understanding of the natural ends of humans. According to Origen, Heracleon takes the phrase,

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273 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 23.29-24.1-2. “And then the seventh heaven opened and we came to the Ogdoad. And I saw the twelve Apostles.” ΑΥΩ ΤΟΤΕ ΑΧΟΥΟΝΗΝΙ ΤΙΜΕΣΑΔΨΗ ΜΠΕ ΑΥΩ ΑΝΕΙ Ε2ΡΑΙ ΕΤ 2ΟΓΔΑΟΣ ΑΙΝΑΥ ΔΕ ΕΠΙΝΗ ΤΣΧΟΟΥΣ ΙΝΙΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ.


275 Cop. Apoc. Paul. 23.29-24.8. ΑΥΩ ΤΟΤΕ ΑΧΟΥΟΝΗΝΙ ΤΙΜΕΣΑΔΨΗ ΜΠΕ ΑΥΩ ΑΝΕΙ Ε2ΡΑΙ ΕΤ 2ΟΓΔΑΟΣ ΑΙΝΑΥ ΔΕ ΕΠΙΝΗ ΤΣΧΟΟΥΣ ΙΝΙΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΟΣ ΑΠΡΑΣΠΑΖΕ ΜΜΟΙ ΑΥΩ ΑΝΕΙ Ε2ΡΑΙ ΕΤ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΜΠΕ ΑΠΡΑΣΠΑΖΕ ΝΝΗ ΤΗΡΟΥ ΕΤ 2Ν ΤΑΣ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΜΠΕ ΑΥΩ ΑΝΕΙ Ε2ΡΑΙ ΕΤ ΜΕΣΩΝ ΜΠΕ ΑΠΡΑΣΠΑΖΕ ΝΝΗ ΒΩΒΡ ΜΠΝΑ.
‘the ascent to Jerusalem,’ to mean ‘the ascent of the Lord from the realm of the material to the psychic place which is an image of Jerusalem.’ The statement “he found them in the sanctuary” and not “in the temple” is made,’ he [Heracleon] thinks, ‘so that it may not thought to be the mere “calling,” apart from the Spirit, which elicits help from the Lord.’ For he claims that ‘the “sanctuary” is the Holy of Holies, into which only the High Priest enters, into which’ - I think he says - ‘the pneumatics go. The temple forecourt, where the Levites also are, is a symbol of the psychics who attain a salvation outside the Pleroma.”

Both Thomassen and DeConick evaluate the salvific aspects of the temple in the Valentinian economy. In analyzing the salvation scheme of the *Gospel of Philip*, Thomassen has demonstrated the connection between the temple and specific ritual practices and argues "the layout of the temple in Jerusalem is used to illustrate salvation as a sequence of stages." Not only is Jerusalem a heavenly location, but within the temple reside further stages of heavenly advance. Similarly, DeConick has shown that the Valentinian ascent is mirrored on the Jewish apocalyptic ascent through the heavenly temple and details the paths one takes through the temple to the divine location within the Pleroma. This dual use of Jerusalem in the *Apocalypse of Paul* is significant as it (1)

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276 Heracleon, *Fragment 13*. Τὴν εἰς Ἴεροσόλυμα ἄνοδον σημαίνει τὴν ἀπὸ τῶν ύλικῶν εἰς τὸν ψυχικόν τόπον, τυγχάνοντα εἰκόνα τῆς Ἴερουσαλήμ, ἀνάβασιν τοῦ κυρίου. Τὸ δὲ Ἐὕρεν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ, καὶ οὕτω προνάω, οἵτινες εἰρήθησαν ὑπὲρ τοῦ μὴ τὴν κλήσιν μόνην νοηθῆναι τὴν χωρίς πνεύματος βοηθεῖσθαι ὑπὸ τοῦ κυρίου• ήγείτα γὰρ τὰ μὲν ἄγια τῶν ἁγίων εἶναι τὸ ιερόν, εἰς ὁ μόνος ὁ ἄρχερεις εἰσί, ἐνθα οἶμαι αὐτὸν λέγειν τοὺς πνευματικοὺς χωρεῖν• τὸ δὲ τοῦ προνάου, ὅπου καὶ οἱ Λευίται, σύμβολον εἶναι τῶν ἔξω τοῦ πληρόματος ψυχικῶν εὐρίσκομένων ἐν σωτηρίᾳ.


278 April D. DeConick, “Heavenly Temple Traditions and Valentinian Worship: A Case for First-Century Christology in the Second Century,” in *Historical Origins of the*
foreshadows Paul’s vision of heavenly ascent and (2) signals to the audience that Paul will ascend through the heavens where there is no flesh.

In their attempt to claim the authority of Paul for their movement, the Valentinians define his eminence in their own anthropology and present him as a pneumatic. In the *Apocalypse*, the child-mediator continues his observations of Paul and reveals more about both Paul and himself:

> You are the one who was blessed since in the womb of your mother. For I came to you that you will go up to Jerusalem to your fellow Apostles. And for the sake of this, you were summoned. I am the Holy Spirit with you. Let your mind be awakened Paul… For… whole which… among the principalities and these authorities and archangels and powers and the race of all the demons. … that one who exposes bodies to seeds of souls.\(^{279}\)

The title “blessed since the womb,” is a typical Pauline motif seen in the authentic writings of Paul.\(^{280}\) Not only is this a textual reference to Paul’s letters, but also a commentary on the spiritual stature of Paul. The text situates him as a pneumatic figure pre-destined by the Holy Spirit as a figure destined for the upper realms of heaven.\(^{281}\)

\(^{279}\) *Cop. Apoc. Paul.* 18.16-19.7. ἔρωκ ἐὰν γὰρ ὁ ἅγιος ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐπιλεγμένη αὐτῷ ἀνείπωσεν ἐρχόμενος πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἄγιον ἀποστόλον ἄφθασαν πάντες ἀναμονάζοντες ἐρήμωσεν· παντὶς ὁ θρόνος καὶ αὐτὸς ἀναφέρεται καθὼς σώζεται ἀνθρώποις πανίμους τὰς ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἀρχάγγελον καὶ ἑκάστην ἀρχήν.

\(^{280}\) For instance, Gal 1.15 quoted previously.

\(^{281}\) Kaler argues that this may also speak to Paul’s ignorance of himself, but this is unlikely as there is no reason to assume Paul did not know who he was nor does this add clarity to the progression of the narrative. Kaler, *Flora Tells a Story*, 182. The righteous ascent of Paul is similar to Jewish ascent narratives, such as in *1 Enoch*, where
The final phrase, “that one who exposes bodies to seeds of souls,” is a reference to Valentinian notions of the spiritual seed. Paul is then firmly identified as a pneumatic by not only his identification before the womb but also for his ascent to Jerusalem, and thus, Paul is a Valentinian, and not, an Apostolic-Catholic.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have argued that the Valentinians remember Paul in three specific ways: as the Apostolic-Teacher, as the Mystagogue, and as the Pneumatic ideal. For the Valentinians, their refracted memory of Paul is as the apostle of their church who is known for his teaching, and who speaks on behalf of all the apostles and with full apostolic authority. Paul is not equal to the other apostles, he stands above them as the visionaries are identified as righteous figures before they ascend to heaven. The superior status of Enoch is evident in the text alone: 1 Enoch, 1.2. “Enoch, a righteous man whose eyes were opened by God, who had the vision of the Holy one of Heaven, which he showed me. From the watchers and the holy ones, I heard everything; as I heard everything from them, I also understood what I saw.” This passage, and indeed the whole text itself, draws upon the ascension of Enoch in 5.24, who was believed to be righteous enough to not experience death. Translation from George W. E. Nickelsburg and James C. VanderKam, 1 Enoch: A New Translation, Kindle Edition (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2004). So in this way, the Apocalypse of Paul is keying Paul into the exemplary mental frame of figures like Enoch. That Paul has been chosen as a righteous individual who will ascend the levels of heaven over the divine population of principalities, angels, and aeons, and receive a vision, clearly positions Paul in the same vein of apocalyptic visionaries and Valentinian pneumatics.

Apostle and the authority. Paul is also remembered as a Mystagogue who guides the Valentinians through the heavens to the true God. He is the means by which Valentinians access the divine and receive knowledge, and it is through Paul that the Valentinians achieve deification. And finally, Paul is the Pneumatic ideal of the Valentinians. He is the image of their belief structure, both as a model to aspire to and as the example to learn from. Paul, is the apostolic authority, means of divine access, and Pneumatic ideal of the Valentinians.

This memory of Paul directly challenges the interpretive authority of the Apostolic-Catholics, and by extension, their liturgical behaviors and economy of salvation. The Valentinians reliance on Paul as the authority of their theology forces the Apostolic-Catholics to justify their interpretive practices and to challenge those of the Valentinians.
Chapter Three: The Memory of the Marcionites

Introduction

The only non-Apostolic-Catholic figure of the second century to rival the potency and significance of the Valentinian memory of Paul, is that of Marcion. A figure who towered in both intellect and ability in the early church, Marcion, similar to the Charismatics and Valentinians, taught a theology that relied on the teachings of Paul and the subjugation of the apostolic message. That said, his particular memory stands in stark contrast to the previous memories discussed and uniquely refracts the memory of Paul into a singular authority at the outright rejection of apostolic teaching. Though Marcion loomed large as an opponent of the early Apostolic-Catholics, his writings have not remained and we have precious little from his own followers. We are forced to reconstruct his life, teachings, and theology through the heresiological works of his Apostolic-Catholic detractors who sought to discredit him as both a teacher and biblical exegete. Caught in the simultaneous battle of transgressing the emerging dominance of second-century Apostolic-Catholicism and the established Jewish understanding of God
and scripture, Marcion forged a theology that fundamentally challenged the authority and integrity of each. Pivotal in his work was his understanding of Paul, whom he regarded as the sole figure capable of understanding the teaching of Christ and the revelation of the alien God. In a similar fashion to the Charismatics and Valentinians already considered, Marcion understood himself to be acting in the same manner as Paul. He viewed himself as the pioneer who could distill the true teachings of Christ and God from the Jewish interlocutions in the writings of Paul and the Gospel of Luke. In the mind of Marcion, just as Paul championed a new path to God and means of salvation, so too does he bring a new religious structure.

The pioneering action of Marcion and his followers, done in imitation of their own memory of Paul is significant in that it directly challenges the scriptural authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. Where the Charismatics challenged their ecclesial authority and structures, and the Valentinians the liturgical rites and salvation scheme, the Marcionites challenge the very essence of Apostolic-Catholic authority: scripture. By displacing the inclusive canon of the Apostolic-Catholics with their own limited version, they changed the nature of the debate regarding who can teach the interpretation of scripture, and who can interpret scripture, to what indeed is scripture at all. This alternative perspective forced the Apostolic-Catholics into not only a defense of the transmission of their own knowledge, but a justification of that very knowledge in and of itself.

The potency of Marcion over the Charismatics and Valentinians is that Marcion changed the nature of the debate and challenged the very foundations by which scriptural, theological, and ecclesial authority is derived. In this chapter I will consider the general life and theology of Marcion and his understanding of scripture; how Marcion constructs
his memory of Paul in his reading of Galatians; and how Marcion imitates this memory in his engagement with the Roman church and his interpretation of scripture in order to show the impact and influence of his transgression of the Apostolic-Catholic authority.

The Historical Marcion

We know very little of the historical Marcion, and what we learn from the heresiologists must be carefully considered in light of their polemical intentions. Generally accepted among scholars is that Marcion was born near the turn of the second century in Pontus to a Christian family, that he was a wealthy individual who had a profession associated with ships, that he arrived in Rome in the middle of the second century, and that he gave a large donation to the church there but was ultimately rejected and expelled from the community. I explore each of these assertions in detail below.

Justin Martyr, active in the early second century, describes Marcion’s activities in the present tense writing, “Then a certain Marcion of Pontus, who is even now teaching.” This stands in contrast to his past-tense description of Simon Magus and therefore indicates their contemporary engagement and locates Marcion in the second

According to Tertullian, Marcion arrived in Rome sometime around 144-145 CE. However, it is not clear how old he was when he arrived so postulating a birth date is rather difficult. Clement of Alexandria reports that Marcion was active during the time of Valentinus, though he was much older than him, and already dead by the reign of Marcus Aurelius. Although Harnack has asserted he was born circa 85, Moll is persuasive in his challenge of this date arguing that it is unlikely a roughly sixty year old man would launch the revolution he did. More likely, Moll argues, is for a date roughly between 100-110. Although we might be inclined to push the date earlier to accommodate Irenaeus’ tale of Polycarp encountering Marcion and calling him the “firstborn of Satan,” such a historical meeting is improbable. Therefore we must humbly accept the imprecise late first- or early second-century birthdate of Marcion and an active period in Rome between 140-160.

284 Justin Martyr, Apol., 26.5
285 Tertullian, Ad. Marcion, 1.1.5.
286 Clement of Alexandria, Strom., 7.17.
288 Harnack, Gospel of the Alien God, 15.
According to Justin he hailed from Pontus, and after Simon Magus and Menander, was the third person “who claimed to be Gods” after Christ and yet was able to avoid Roman persecution. Eusebius records that Rhodon referred to him as the “Pontic Wolf.” Tertullian compared him with the cynic Diogenes of Sinope, and from this it seems that Epiphanius and Philastrius developed a precise location of Sinope for his birth. Although there remains dispute over the authenticity of the account, there is evidence to suggest that Marcion was raised by Christian parents, but expelled from the Pontic community for inappropriate relations with a virgin. Ludemann suggests the possibility that Marcion would have come into contact with Paul’s letter to the Galatians if his father were a bishop, as it likely would have been stored within the church archives. This letter to the Galatians, as I will demonstrate below, is fundamental to Marcion’s theology and understanding of Paul.

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292 Justin, *Apol.*, 26.1 τινας λέγοντας ἑαυτοὺς εἶναι θεούς


295 Epiphanius, *Pan.*., 42.

296 Philastrius, 45.

297 Given the connection it has to Tertullian, and its location as a prominent sea-port, it is unlikely to be an independent tradition and therefore is better understood as a development of Tertullian’s original assertion. Judith M. Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic: God and Scripture in the Second Century* (Cambridge; University of Cambridge, 2015), 101.

298 Epiphanius, *Haer.*, 42.1.3; Pseudo-Tertullian, *Haer.*, 6.2.

Professionally, we have evidence from Rhodon that Marcion was a sailor (ναύτη) by trade, and Tertullian records that Marcion was actually a ship-owner (ναυάκληρος) of many ships. In the second century shipping was a well-respected, but at times suspicious, profession that was infamous for “false accounting, smuggling, ship-wrecking rocks,” and Tertullian often uses this unseemly reputation of the profession against Marcion. Scholars tend to favor Tertullian’s assertions of Marcion’s employment as the owner of a shipping operation over Rhodon’s assertion of merely working on a ship in large part because of the wealth he is reported to have possessed. Marcion was independently wealthy enough to donate over 200,000 sesterces to the Roman church. And although the money was ultimately returned to him, that he was able to donate that much speaks to his considerable wealth.

300 Eusebius, H.E., 5.13.3.
301 Tertullian, De. Prae. 30.1. The more general description employed by Rhodon is an all-encompassing term, not a specific designation, and therefore does not contradict Tertullian’s assertion. Lampe, From Paul to Valentinus, 242.
302 Tertullian, Adv. Marcion, 5.1.1. The ANF translation is misleading as it renders the plural “acatos tuos” as singular, “your small craft,” instead of the more accurate “your pirate ships” as rendered by Lampe, From Paul to Valentinus, 242 n. 7.
303 Lampe, From Paul to Valentinus, 242-243.
304 Lieu, Marcion and the Making of a Heretic, 57., citing Tertullian, AM 1.2.1; 7.7;18.4;5.1.2.
306 Tertullian, De. Prae. 30.1.
307 Lampe, From Paul to Valentinus, 242-246.
would not have given his entire wealth to the church in order to have the additional capital necessary to operate his business, suggesting he had additional wealth beyond the 200,000 sesterces.\textsuperscript{308} The considerable money donated by Marcion was ultimately returned to him in July of 144.\textsuperscript{309} This money, as Lampe notes, was “invested” in the growth of his own church such that by time of Tertullian’s writing at the end of the second century, Marcionism was known throughout the entirety of the Roman empire.\textsuperscript{510}

Though there have been many attempts to reconstruct whole aspects of Marcion’s life, the heresiological presentation itself is a muddled mess, rife with inconsistencies.\textsuperscript{311} With this in mind, we as scholars may only put forward with any confidence that Marcion was an eminently influential church teacher who hailed from Pontus, gained a considerable wealth from his shipping operations, and was active in the middle of the second century.

\textsuperscript{308} Moll, \textit{Arch-Heretic Marcion}, 30-31.

\textsuperscript{309} Tertullian, \textit{De Prae.}, 30.2.

\textsuperscript{310} Lampe, \textit{From Paul to Valentinus}, 250-251. As Lampe observes in his catalog of references to Marcion or his followers, there are references from all over the empire. He includes in this second-century enumeration of heresiologists engaged with Marcionism: Justin in Rome, Irenaeus in Gaul, an unnamed presbyter in Asia Minor, Hegesippus in Rome, Dionysius in Corinth, Theophilus in Antioch, Philip of Gortyna in Crete, Melito of Sardis, Rhodon in Rome, Clement in Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, and even the Anti-Christian writer, Celsus, was aware of Marcionism.

\textsuperscript{311} For a thoroughly detailed consideration of the different presentations of Marcion, see Lieu, \textit{Marcion and the Making of a Heretic}, 15-182.
The Theology of Marcion

Although Marcion has a highly developed and sophisticated theology, what I present here are the basic tenets and structure of his theology in order to permit a more intentional consideration of his memory of Paul. Marcion entered into the intellectual Christian world during the tumultuous early second century, engaging in a myriad of theological disputes and positions ranging from the Gnostic perspectives of the Baslideans and Valentinians, the strict focus on the Torah of the Ebionites and Jews, and the orthodox models of what would eventually be united under the umbrella of the Apostolic-Catholic Church, not to mention the scores of other approaches lost to history. Where these other models brought philosophical, nomistic, or social approaches to their theology, Marcion brought a thoroughly biblical foundation to his theological construction. In fact, Marcion might be the very first Pauline exegete to offer critical analysis and commentary on the corpus of Paul’s letters, reading them cohesively and formulating the foundation of later Christian biblical exegesis. Though clearly written


313 Judith M. Lieu, “‘As much my Apostle as Christ is mine,’: The Dispute over Paul Between Tertullian and Marcion,” *Early Christianity* 1 no 1 (2010): 41-59, 44.
with enthusiasm and appreciable fondness, Harnack nonetheless poetically encapsulates the biblical foundation of Marcion’s theological system. He writes,

Thus Marcion’s proclamation of Christianity is intended to be nothing but *biblical theology*, that is, religious teaching which on the positive side is exclusively based upon the *book* that consists of the Gospel and the letters of Paul and on the negative side, that other book, which also is actually truthful, the Old Testament….He is the first one in Christianity to find his support in two major collections of books; it is his contention, however, that they do not belong together but that the second refutes the first.\(^{314}\)

Marcion’s theology undeniably emerged from his synthetic reading of the Pauline corpus.\(^{315}\) To put the letters of Paul together as distinct collection driven by a singular theology irrevocably altered the discourse of early Christianity.\(^{316}\) Although Marcion’s period of influence precedes the canonization process of scripture, he was thoroughly entrenched in the division of the two covenants. Marcion understood the letters of Paul and the Gospel of Luke to be the only valid witnesses to the teaching of the true God, free from the obfuscation of the creator God of the Hebrew Scriptures. For Marcion, what is found in the writings of the Old Covenant is merely the incarcerated ramblings of those


\(^{315}\) Though important research, the specific influence of Paul on Marcion is not germane to our discussion. At this point, we need only accept that it was through his reading of Paul’s corpus that Marcion was able to construct the theology he did. For a more detailed analysis of his influences from Paul, see Hoffman, *Marcion: The Restitution of Christianity*, 75-101.

masked by guile and subterfuge. The message of Christ, of the God of love and liberation, must be viewed apart – holistically and unequivocally distinct – from the previous writings. For Marcion, there are in fact two testaments and one does not anticipate the other; the former is replaced by the latter.

**Marcionism Among the Valentinians**

For Marcion, the books of the Hebrew Bible and the Old Testament, what I will call the writings of the Old Covenant for the sake of simplicity, represent a capricious and selfish deity who promotes violence, hate, and self-indulgence. It was the real God, the true, alien God, of the New Testament who sent its son to teach love and the true path to salvation.317 The earliest witness to the theology of the Marcionites comes from the Valentinian Ptolemy, considered previously in the discussion of the Valentinians.318 In his letter to Flora, Ptolemy explains the origin of the law and remarks that,

> Some say it has been laid down by God the Father, while others take the opposite direction and strenuously insist that it was given by the Adversary, the pernicious devil, just as they attribute the creation of the world to him, saying that he is the father and maker of the university.319


318 See chapter two.

Although Ptolemy avers that Marcion held the creator God to be the devil, Marcion himself did not believe the creator God was evil or the devil. This teaching was later developed in his follower Apelles and it seems Ptolemy is arguing against his Marcionite perspective, rather than against Marcion himself. \(^{320}\) Regardless of the specific Marcionite author, the importance of this passage is to demonstrate the deific differences between the creator God and the just God among the second century Christians. In this passage Ptolemy is referring to both the Apostolic-Catholic and Marcionite positions regarding the giver of the law.

For Ptolemy and the Valentinians the true God is the *just* God and qualities of goodness or evilness do not properly apply, just as the lawgiver is the just God and creator, the one above the demiurge. For the orthodox Christians, the Apostolic-Catholics, the lawgiver is equivalent to the good God and Father of Jesus Christ. As Moll notes, “let us all be clear about this: the orthodox Christians, Marcion, and Ptolemy all agree that the creator of the world is also the lawgiver.” \(^{321}\) But for the Marcionites, however, the creator God is the unjust and judicial deity who formed all of material creation and stands in total opposition to the good God. \(^{322}\)

\(^{320}\) For a more detailed discussion of this argument see, Hoffman, *Marcion and His Influence*, 71-79.


Both the Apostolic-Catholic and Marcionite perspectives are implausible to Ptolemy, so he references them only to show his own perspective more clearly to his disciple in Flora. That he references them without qualified explanation suggests a general awareness of these positions and the popularity of these competing movements in Rome, and a specifically a recognition that Marcion and his followers preach a dual-deity system.\textsuperscript{323}

**Marcionism Among the Apostolic-Catholics**

Justin Martyr also records the dualism of Marcion’s theology and explains that, “there is Marcion, a man of Pontus, who is even at this day alive, and teaching his disciples to believe in some other God greater than the creator. And he, by the aid of the devils, has caused many of every nation to speak blasphemies, and to deny that God is the maker of this universe, and to assert that some other being, greater than He, has done greater works.”\textsuperscript{324} And although Lieu notes the imprecise and polemical nature of Justin’s

\textsuperscript{323} Moll, Arch-Heretic Marcion, 17.

\textsuperscript{324} Justin, 1 Apol. 26.5. Μαρκίωνα δὲ τινα Ποντικόν, ὃς καὶ νῦν ἔτι ἐστὶ διδάσκοντα τούς πειθομένους, ἄλλον τινὰ νομίζειν μείζονα τοῦ δημιουργοῦ θεόν’ ὃς κατὰ πᾶν γένος ἀνθρώπων διὰ τῆς τῶν δαιμόνων συλλήψεως πολλοὺς πεποίηκε βλασφημίας λέγειν καὶ ἀρνεῖσθαι τὸν ποιητὴν τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς θεόν, ἄλλον δὲ τινὰ, ὡς ὅντα μείζονα, τὰ μείζονα παρὰ τούτον ὁμολογεῖν πεποιηκέναι.
comments, the quotation still articulates clearly the inimical dualism of Marcion’s system.\textsuperscript{325}

Irenaeus more pointedly accuses Marcion and his followers of devising an evil God who is the creator of all. He writes, “indeed, the followers of Marcion do directly blaspheme the creator, alleging him to be the creator of evils, [but] holding a more tolerable theory as to his origin, [and] maintaining that there are two beings, Gods by nature, differing from each other,—the one being good, but the other evil.”\textsuperscript{326} The dualism of Marcion is well attested among early Christians who derisively record—though it would appear accurately so—that for Marcion the creator God of the Old Covenant did in fact create evil, though itself is not evil in nature.\textsuperscript{327}

As a further point of distinction between the two deities, Irenaeus states that Marcion specifically emphasized that the capricious God of the Old Covenant was the ultimate judge. A point on which Apostolic-Catholics and others would agree; however, for Marcion, this role as judge did not necessarily make this deity a just God. In fact, in his model, the creator God was decidedly unjust, rendering the given law all the more egregious. Irenaeus, clearly irritated with Marcion’s conception of these two Gods, scornfully remarks,

\begin{quote}

\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{325} Lieu, \textit{Marcion and the Making of a Heretic}, 23-25.
\textsuperscript{326} Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 3.12.12.
\textsuperscript{327} For example, see Rhodo (Eusebius, \textit{H.E.}, 13.2-7); Clement of Alexandria, \textit{Strom.}, 2.39.1; and Tertullian, \textit{Adv. Marc.}, 1.15.5.
Marcion, therefore, himself, by dividing God into two, maintaining one to be good and the other judicial, does in fact, on both sides, put an end to deity. For he that is the judicial one, if he be not good, is not God, because he from whom goodness is absent is no God at all; and again, he who is good, if he has no judicial power, suffers the same [loss] as the former, by being deprived of his character of deity. And how can they call the Father of all wise, if they do not assign to Him a judicial faculty? For if He is wise, He is also one who tests [others]; but the judicial power belongs to him who tests, and justice follows the judicial faculty, that it may reach a just conclusion; justice calls forth judgment, and judgment, when it is executed with justice, will pass on to wisdom. Therefore, the Father will excel in wisdom all human and angelic wisdom, because He is Lord, and Judge, and the Just One, and Ruler over all. For He is good, and merciful, and patient, and saves whom He ought: nor does goodness desert Him in the exercise of justice, nor is His wisdom lessened; for He saves those whom He should save, and judges those worthy of judgment. Neither does He show Himself unmercifully just; for His goodness, no doubt, goes on before, and takes precedence.\footnote{Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 3.25.3.}

Irenaeus’ main point of contention with Marcion is over the role of God, in effect taking the position that only a truly just God could serve as judge, otherwise the system would be unjust. A stance with which we would not likely find Marcion to be in disagreement.

Marcion did envision a dualistic system encompassing a good, just God and a capricious, judging God, and would certainly agree with Irenaeus that the judicial system of the Old Covenant is unjust.\footnote{Both Rhodo and Hippolytus, writing later, suggest a tripartite system that had developed among Marcion’s followers after his death that is confirmed by the word of Marcion’s disciple, Appelles, who states, “Marcion is wrong to speak of two principles: now I speak of one, which made a second principle.” Alastair H.B. Logan, “Marcellus of Ancrya (Pseudo-Anthimus), ‘On the Holy Church’: Text, Translation, and Commentary,” \textit{Journal of Theological Studies} 51 no 1 (2000), 81-112, 96.} The proper term of God is reserved for the good God
who is so far removed from material creation as to be understood as alien, whereas the lesser apppellations of God, creator, and judge are applied to the known God of the Old Covenant, here termed “creator.”

As noted above, Marcion’s theology is understood as thoroughly biblically-based, and it is through this scriptural foundation that he constructs his understanding of the creator God entirely from the descriptions of God in the Old Covenant. Coupled with his reading of these biblical passages, Moll also notes the disdain he held for the world adding that, “besides Marcion’s Biblicism, the only real premise of his theology is the fact that he had nothing but disgust and hatred for the world and life itself, hatred so huge that even refused to promote the continuation of mankind [sic].” Though vitriolic, this description speaks to prevalent aversion of materiality and material creation in the second century. This base perspective of the material world extended specifically to humanity, and Marcion maintained that the very soul the creator breathed into humanity is

330 Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, 4.6. “For it is certain that the whole aim at which he has strenuously labored even in the drawing up of his Antitheses, centers in this, that he may establish a diversity between the Old and the New Testaments, so that his own Christ may be separate from the creator, as belonging to this rival God, and as alien from the law and the prophets.” Hence the title for Harnack’s work, *Marcion: The Gospel of the Alien God*, 22-23.

331 Lieu, “As much my Apostle as Christ is Mine,” 51-52.


333 Though Marcion would reach different causes and solutions, contemporary thinkers like Basilides, Valentinus, Clement, and Tertullian held similar perspectives of materiality.
responsible for its evil nature.\textsuperscript{334} Humans, then, were by nature incapable of any action not rooted in evil for their essence is derived from the inadequacy of their creator. Thus, Christ was necessary to liberate humanity from this unjust imprisonment.

Although his ire was clearly directed at the creator described in the Old Covenant, Marcion’s theological discourse was not conceived on a social or ethnic level, but like Paul before him, in a purely theological distinction of the origin of evil and the access and knowledge of the true God for all of humanity. Significantly, Marcion’s construction is not born out of anti-Jewish polemic, but rather anti-creator polemic. The concerns of Marcion exceed the mundane considerations of humane polemic and are instead with the more significant question of salvation for humanity. In discussing the salvific economy of Marcion, Irenaeus refers to his description of the efficacy of Christ as it pertains to the figures of the Old Covenant in order to show the judicial power of the creator. Irenaeus writes,

\begin{quotation}
Salvation will be the attainment only of those souls which had learned his doctrine; while the body, as having been taken from the earth, is incapable of sharing in salvation. In addition to his blasphemy against God Himself, he advanced this also, truly speaking as with the mouth of the devil, and saying all things in direct opposition to the truth,—that Cain, and those like him, and the Sodomites, and the Egyptians, and others like them, and, in fine, all the nations who walked in all sorts of abomination, were saved by the Lord, on His descending into Hades, and on their running unto Him, and that they welcomed Him into their kingdom.\textsuperscript{335}
\end{quotation}

\textsuperscript{334} Tertullian, \textit{Adv. Marc.}, 2.9.

\textsuperscript{335} Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 1.27.4.
There are two observations of this passage that warrant discussion. First, that resurrection clearly occurs in an incorporeal manner, which should not be surprising given Marcion’s opinion of creation. Second, that those who were condemned by the creator have been specifically cited for salvation by Christ. In effect, those who were defiant to the covenantal God were worthy of salvation before the advent of Christ. Accordingly, however, those who bore allegiance to the creator, regardless of their intention, remain firm in their death. Within Marcion’s system,

Abel, and Enoch, and Noah, and those other righteous men who sprang from the patriarch Abraham, with all the prophets, and those who were pleasing to God, did not partake in salvation. For since these men, he says, knew that their God was constantly tempting them, so now they suspected that He was tempting them, and did not run to Jesus, or believe His announcement: and for this reason he declared that their souls remained in Hades. 336

These renown figures of the Old Covenant, even though they were suspicious of the creator, are prohibited from restoration.

For Marcion the line was clear: any support for the creator necessarily warranted eternal damnation for it was in the choice to follow the evil that one rejects the love of Christ and the true God. Christ, then, is the one through whom one achieves salvation and unity with the true God, bypassing the oppressive imprisonment of the creator. In this regard, Wilhite identifies the understanding of Christ as the pivotal distinction between

336 Irenaeus, Adv. Haer., 1.27.4.
Marcion’s theology and that of the Apostolic-Catholics. Cooper narrows this
distinction and more precisely notes that, “Tertullian and Marcion could agree that the
gospel is the power of God for salvation and that this message is made known through
the church. But which church that was, and what the relation of its proclamation to the
God and religion of Judaism was, were matters of profound disagreement and the chief
items in dispute.” Whether witnessed through arguments over the Christ, God, the
creator, or Judaism, the crux of their disagreement lies in the relation between humanity
and God and the means by which humanity participates in this divine salvation.

Marcion understood that Christ’s salvific role was to free humanity from the trap
of the judicial, creator God. Similar to the broad approach to Christ’s role among
contemporary gnostics, Marcion understood Christ’s primary function to be that of
revealer. According to Tertullian, the good God of “the Marcionites, although he did not
manifest himself from the beginning and by means of the creation, has yet revealed
himself in Christ Jesus.” In this regard, Marcion did not believe that any of the
prophets spoke to the arrival of Christ, because only he can reveal the true God.

337 David E. Wilhite, The Gospel According to the Heretics: Discovering Orthodoxy
through Early Christological Conflicts (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015), 27.
338 Stephen Cooper, “Communis Magister Paulus: Altercation over the Gospel in
Tertullian’s Against Marcion,” in Tertullian and Paul, ed. Todd D. Still and David E.
340 This is primary point of argumentation for Tertullian in book 3 of his refutation of
Furthermore, as the true God was not revealed until Christ, Christ would not have been prophesied because no prophets would have known him. The revelation of Christ then speaks to intervention of the just and true God into the deficient system of the judicial, creator God. In the model of the covenantal God, gentiles and non-elect figures are not afforded the opportunity of salvation, and it is response to this – and in an act of pure love – that the true, just God reveals itself through Christ to offer salvation to all of humanity. That said, however, Marcion still believed in the prophetic accuracy of those in the Old Covenant for Jews and those who adhere to the Old Covenantal teachings. Marcion did accept their prophecy of a messianic figure, known as the Christ, though their war-like figure is not the Christ who was sent from the true God.

The distinction in Christ figures between the Old and the New Covenants is significant on two counts. First, the prophets of the Old Covenant are only able to reveal the knowledge of the creator who would not know of the sending of the true Christ. These figures, though receiving divine information, do not know of the true God and could not have spoken to actions of this God. The second significant element of this theology lies in Marcion’s system of salvation and the role Christ plays. Curiously, Marcion’s true God operates within the structure of the creator to liberate humanity. The true God does not violate the nature of this created realm, nor assail the creator through


war or some other cosmic action, rather, the true God offers Christ as a pure sacrifice and ransom to dismantle the judicial system and the law of the creator. In Marcion’s salvation scheme, the salvific act of Christ is found in his death more than his resurrection. As Blackman explains,

In its soteriological aspect the death of Christ was regarded by Marcion as in the nature of a purchase. Mankind belonged by right to the creator, and therefore the good God could justify himself in freeing mankind from allegiance to the creator only if he had first purchased them in a lawful manner…This feature of Marcion’s Christology is a corollary to his doctrine that the good God is a stranger and completely unrelated to this world…The price paid was the blood of Christ. It is thus clear that for Marcion redemption derived from the death of Christ, not the Resurrection alone. The significance of the shedding of Christ’s blood on the view was not so much to make possible the forgiveness of sins as to cancel the creator’s claims upon his creatures.  

For Marcion, it was through the revealing act of Christ that humanity was able to bypass the imprisonment of the covenantal God and enter into the salvific bosom of the true, alien God. Christ literally freed them from the bondage of the creator God. Coupled with this, it was the revelation of the true God, the message of Christ, that permitted humanity to then pursue this path toward salvation. Once the path of salvation was revealed and made accessible, humanity now held the option of choice to attain to the true, alien God or to remain captive in the incarceration of the creator God. For Marcion, the law had been replaced by the message of Christ.

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The message of Christ and the proper, salvific knowledge of the true God, however, is only properly revealed in the unadulterated writings of Luke and Paul. To take such a position to limit the corpus of Christ’s message directly challenged the integrity and authenticity of the other Christian writings and undermined the theological authority of the other emerging churches who relied on a wider array of Christian texts. We see this briefly in Tertullian’s remarks about his use of Luke and Paul, and in particular how he critiques Marcion’s acceptance of Luke even though Luke is nowhere considered to be an apostle. Tertullian writes,

Now, of the authors whom we possess, Marcion seems to have singled out Luke for his mutilating process. Luke, however, was not an apostle, but only an apostolic man; not a master, but a disciple, and so inferior to a master—at least as far subsequent to him as the apostle whom he followed (and that, no doubt, was Paul) was subsequent to the others; so that, had Marcion even published his Gospel in the name of St. Paul himself, the single authority of the document, destitute of all support from preceding authorities, would not be a sufficient basis for our faith.

Although it is clear in Tertullian’s rebuke that Marcion was using the Gospel of Luke, Marcion himself did not name the work and connected the gospel to Paul and his teaching directly. The force of Tertullian’s reply is simply to counter this position and show how Marcion is accepting the work of those who were not properly recognized as apostles of Christ on two fronts.


Tertullian of course accepts the Gospel of Luke as the inspired word of God, along with the other three gospels, and his argument is therefore structured to demand Marcion’s defense of his own gospel, not his rejection of the other three. In likening the discussion to the earlier discourse between Apostolic-Catholics and Jews over possession versus correct interpretation, Lieu keys into the very underpinnings of the debate between Marcion and Tertullian over the legitimacy of Christian texts and explains that “the claim made by Tertullian points to a new and enduring facet of Christian self-definition, the struggle over an exclusive right to the specifically Christian tradition and over its textual form and interpretation – which are here represented by the figure of Paul and his letters.”346 Tertullian, as we have seen already in his engagement with the Valentinians, takes umbrage with the accusation that his collected scriptural writings are somehow deficient or improperly understood.347

Tertullian must include the other gospels and the letters of Paul because theologically he and the other Apostolic-Catholics understood the two covenants to complement each other, not one replacing the other. Using his own limited corpus, however, Marcion intended to show how the covenants did not harmonize with each other, but instead how the new replaced the old. For Marcion, the message of the true God cannot be witnessed in the writings informed by the creator and his followers and is therefore only accessible through the writings of Paul and Luke, once they have been

346 Lieu, “As much my Apostle as Christ is Mine,” 41-42.

cleansed of their contaminations. According to Tertullian, Marcion understood the Gospel of Luke, as the Apostolic-Catholics possess it, "had been falsified by the defenders of Judaism in order to form a unity with the law and the prophets." Irenaeus discusses the mutilation of Paul’s letters in Marcion’s *Apostolikon*,

Besides this, he mutilates the Gospel which is according to Luke, removing all that is written respecting the generation of the Lord, and setting aside a great deal of the teaching of the Lord, in which the Lord is recorded as most dearly confessing that the Maker of this universe is His Father. He likewise persuaded his disciples that he himself was more worthy of credit than are those apostles who have handed down the Gospel to us, furnishing them not with the Gospel, but merely a fragment of it. In like manner, too, he dismembered the Epistles of Paul, removing all that is said by the apostle respecting that God who made the world, to the effect that He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and also those passages from the prophetical writings which the apostle quotes, in order to teach us that they announced beforehand the coming of the Lord.

Marcion’s reliance on, and apparent alteration of, Paul and Luke is a well-known aspect of his religiosity, and there has been much scholarship given to the reconstruction of both Marcion’s canon and his actual manuscripts. Germane to our discussion, however, is that Marcion limited the canon to only two authors, and then further altered the texts

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removing what he believed to be Jewish interlocutions into the authentic writings of the apostles.

Though typically irascible anyhow, there is a particular venom to Tertullian’s response to the claims of Marcion about scripture. Where we saw the Charismatics and Valentinians challenge the Apostolic-Catholic authority as teachers and religious leaders, Marcion is challenging the very scriptural foundation of that authority. In rejecting the Old Covenant and other epistles, and even manipulating those he did accept, Marcion is destabilizing the revelatory foundation of Christian teaching. It is one thing for individual teachers to be inspired by the spirit, or for one to receive a hidden teaching from Paul, but Marcion is limiting the very means by which the true deity spoke to humanity at all. The crux of authority for the Apostolic-Catholics is directly transgressed by Marcion’s position. Tertullian, citing Marcion’s exclusionary use of his own manicured versions of Luke and the epistles of Paul, writes,

In the scheme of Marcion, on the contrary, the mystery of the Christian religion begins from the discipleship of Luke. Since, however, it was on its course previous to that point, it must have had its own authentic materials, by means of which it found its own way down to St. Luke; and by the assistance of the testimony which it bore, Luke himself becomes admissible. Well, but Marcion, finding the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians (wherein he rebukes even apostles for “not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel,” as well as accuses certain false apostles of perverting the gospel of Christ), labors very hard to destroy the character of those Gospels which are published as genuine and under the name of apostles, in order, forsooth, to secure for his own Gospel the credit which he takes away from them.\footnote{Tertullian, \textit{Adv. Marc.}, 4.3.}
Tertullian continues his attack on Marcion for excluding the other gospels, and explains he, Marcion, does so on the basis of Paul’s rebuke of Peter and James in his letter to the Galatians. Although Tertullian inherited much of his theology and understanding of Paul from the writings of Justin Martyr and Irenaeus, he nonetheless developed a curious relationship with Paul. For one, he does not seem to rely on Paul with the same theological regard as the other Apostolic-Catholic thinkers. And even though Tertullian quotes from the full catalog of the Pauline corpus, he more comfortably relies on other scriptural texts, in particular the gospels, in his writings.352 That said, however, Paul still serves the same apostolic function as defender of the faith and teacher of the apostolic message for Tertullian.

The second complicating aspect of Tertullian’s relationship with Paul is his understanding of right-of-access to scripture. As Lehtipuu has observed, Tertullian held a strict demarcation of those who are permitted to read and interpret scripture and those who are not based solely on how they interpret the scripture.353 In effect, and somewhat circularly, Tertullian maintains that only those who can interpret scripture correctly


should have the opportunity to interpret scripture. This is nowhere more evident than in his writings against the Valentinians, where he clearly distinguishes between their false beliefs and his own (self-perceived) correct perspective.\textsuperscript{354} For Tertullian, it is not that the Valentinians are reading Paul incorrectly, it is that they should not be reading him in the first place. Paul’s apostolic message is sound and clear and the alternative reading proposed, inherently presuming an alternative memory of Paul, is decidedly rejected.

With respect to the Marcionites, however, Tertullian has a different approach in which he grants the premise of their interpretation, and then works to show its deficiencies. The matter of discourse then seems to rely not in the interpretation of scripture, but rather in the harmony of the message that the Marcionites fail to see even in their own version of the gospel. For Tertullian it is the preservation of the authenticity of his own text that must first be established.

Before turning to Marcion’s understanding of Galatians, I wish to briefly summarize the relevant points of the previous discussion. First, Marcion had a dualistic cosmology in which there exist two deities. One deity, known as the creator, is the capricious and judicial God and the one responsible for all of creation who is testified to in the Jewish writings of the Old Covenant. The second God is the true God of love who sent God’s son to liberate humanity from the incarceration of the creator.

Second, Marcion believed that all Jewish teaching, in particular the law, was directly connected to the creator and is therefore evil and should be abolished. Thus, any support of teachings from the Old Covenant is to be rejected, and therefore, any Jewish

\textsuperscript{354} Bain, “Tertullian: Paul as Teacher,” 208.
sympathy among early Christianity was present only because it was born of adoration to the creator, not the true God. Marcion maintains that Christ revealed his teaching properly only to Paul, and the other disciples are really followers of the creator. And from this position, Marcion believes it is his responsibility to excise the teachings of the creator that have been interjected into the letters of Paul and the Gospel of Luke by the other Christians. Third, the nature of the debate between other Christians and Marcion centered on the means and process of salvation, but is primarily witnessed in their arguments over the authenticity and authority of scripture, the role and identity of Christ, and the relationship of the two covenants.

I now turn to Marcion’s analysis of Galatians to evaluate this argument between Marcion and the Apostolic-Catholics in more vivid detail in order to show how Marcion remembers Paul, and just as importantly, how he sees himself in the image of Paul transgressing the ecclesial and theological authority of those who follow the creator God of the Old Covenant.

**Marcion’s Memory of Paul as seen through Galatians**

One of Marcion’s central tenets is that there was a special teaching given directly to Paul from Christ that was not given to the apostles. With a sympathetic reading, Harnack beautifully described Marcionite appeal to Paul over the other apostles, writing, The choice of the twelve disciples proved right away to be a failure, adduced by the forbearance and patience shown to them. They fell back
more and more in to their old ways. Therefore, Jesus called Paul, through a special revelation, to be an apostle, and by this act the twelve were in fact divested of their status. In Paul the redeemer found the apostle, and from that time onward he was to be the only one, attest only by Christ, and lifted up to the third heaven to hear unutterable words. To him Jesus delivered the written gospel, for the oral apostolic tradition was steadily deteriorating, place the redeemer back in the legalistic context again. Like the apostle, the one gospel tolerates no rival alongside itself; Paul could call it ‘my gospel,’ for it was given to him, and he alone was authorized to explain by means of his epistles and to defend it.  

Harnack is keying to the explicit authority and singularity of Paul’s authority for Marcion who understood Paul to have received a special teaching from the risen Christ that served to rival the teaching of the apostles, prophets, and teachers of both Judaism and Christianity. At once, Marcion sees Paul as the revealer of the message of God and the sole individual capable of extricating the message of the true, alien God from the grasp of Judaizers and followers of the covenantal God. This action of Paul is attested no more clearly than in his letter to the Galatian church. Marcion saw Paul as one lifting the veil of the creator from over humanity and showing them the teachings and path presented by Christ to the true, good God.

The importance of Paul to Marcion was well known—among the second-century heresiologists, and frustrated with this popular connection, Tertullian sarcastically refers to Paul as the “Apostle of the Heretics.” Though a great line, Tertullian’s point is to discredit the primacy of Paul for Marcion and others and to show that Paul is of equal


status as the other apostles. Tertullian takes an interesting rhetorical approach against Marcion and challenges him not on the basis of his rejection of other apostles, but rather on his opinion of Paul’s apostleship directly. In book five Tertullian famously writes, “I’m not scared of you saying, ‘so you deny Paul was an apostle?’ I don’t defame the one I’m defending: I’m denying him to be an apostle to make you prove it.” Here Tertullian is deliberately baiting Marcion to demonstrate the apostleship of Paul while simultaneously denying the apostleship of the disciples. In effect, Tertullian is challenging the mental frame within which Marcion is operating.

Within social memory theory Le Donne argues that the process of forming memories is known as the mnemonic cycle, and it is a process by which an original memory is framed, refracted, interpreted, and localized to provide meaning within the contemporary situation or circumstances. The first stage in this cycle is what Le Donne refers to as the “mnemonic category of significance,” or what Halbwachs would identify as the mental frame. This is the current circumstance through which a memory is encountered. Once encountered, the memory is refracted and then interpreted through the mind(s) of the community to assume greater relevance. In order to be interpreted,

357 For more on Tertullian’s understanding of Paul, see chapter two. For a similar attack against the Valentinians, see chapter two.


360 Le Donne, Historiographical Jesus, 67.
however, one must be anchored within the contemporary culture to such a degree that there are familiar triggers and patterns through which one may engage the memory.

As Le Donne explains, “in order for [interpretation] to be categorized within a meaningful frame, it must have been given meaning by a mind composed of prior memories and therefore accustomed to certain patterns of refraction. Movement B (refraction) thus represents the necessary refracting process that renders a new perception intelligible to a socially and culturally conditioned context.”

So in this respect, both Tertullian and Marcion encounter the mnemonic cycle/mental frame of the authority of apostleship. Marcion, however, is refracting this frame of apostleship and, though accepting its authority as Tertullian does, is restricting its applicability to only Paul, thus altering the current memory of the original apostles for his contemporary community. Once refracted, Marcion and his community are then able to interpret the teachings of Paul as the sole apostolic authority, anchored within the networks of their own theology and social perspectives. Tertullian, however, rejects stage two of his mnemonic cycle and denies the refractive action of Marcion to limit the shared mnemonic category of apostolic authority to only Paul.

To present this situation differently: If there is a shared frame of apostleship among second-century Christians, how is it that Marcion is able to redefine this frame to suit his own lionization of Paul and yet not include the other apostles? For Tertullian, this is an untenable refraction and one that denies his social memory of apostolic succession.

and authority. Tertullian is specifically rejecting the refracted framework of Marcion because it does not align with other (i.e., his own) shared Christian framework regarding the authority of apostleship. This is the overarching theme of Tertullian’s engagement with Marcion, and we must first work through this in order to observe how Marcion constructs Paul’s apostleship. Tertullian’s main argument as relevant here is divided into three aspects: the status of Paul as apostle, the status of Paul as Jew, and the revelation of Christ after his death.

The first element of this argumentation challenges Marcion’s shifting of the mental frame of apostle and consequent rejection of the shared authoritative framework of the other apostles, gospels, and writings of other Christians. Tertullian begins the fifth book of his attack on Marcion with feigned humility asking his opponent why he has chosen to accept some parts of the Jesus story and yet reject others, without providing sufficient explanation as to why. Tertullian writes,

Since therefore I am brought, in the course of my little work, to this point, I require to know of Marcion the origin of his apostle even—I, who am to some degree a new disciple, the follower of no other master; who at the same time can believe nothing, except that nothing ought to be believed hastily (and that I may further say is hastily believed, which is believed without any examination of its beginning); in short, I who have the best reason possible for bringing this inquiry to a most careful solution, since a man is affirmed to me to be an apostle whom I do not find mentioned in the Gospel in the catalogue of the apostles. Indeed, when I hear that this man was chosen by the Lord after He had attained His rest in heaven, I feel that a kind of improvidence is imputable to Christ, for not knowing before that this man was necessary to Him; and because He thought that he must be added to the apostolic body in the way of a fortuitous encounter rather than a deliberate selection; by necessity (so to speak), and not voluntary choice, although the members of the apostolate had been duly ordained, and were now dismissed to their several missions.
Tertullian challenges Marcion’s sole reliance on Paul through a rather clever argument that basically asks, “Why didn’t Christ just get Paul in the first place?” That Marcion relies on a particular message of Paul that completely circumvents the teachings of both Judaism and Apostolic-Catholicism, it must necessarily entail a rejection of their authority and teaching.

In Le Donne’s language, the authority of Paul is being framed, and then refracted, within Marcion’s contemporary situation denying the authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. Just as Marcion and his community view themselves as the sole bearers of a true religion and teaching from God against the authority of the established Apostolic-Catholics, so too did Paul preach a message of the true God against the established dominance of the original Apostles. Paul is remembered in light of their own circumstances such that Paul functions almost as a mirror to their own situation to justify and reinforce their position. To put this perspective of Marcion and his followers in terms of a response to Tertullian’s charge, we can see that Marcion’s argument focuses more on discrediting the authority of the apostles and less on establishing the sole authority of Paul. In effect, it is much easier for Marcion to transgress and challenge the authority of the Apostolic-Catholics than it is to justify his personal authority.

The second prong in Tertullian’s argument considers Paul’s defense of his own relationship to Judaism as both a son of Jewish heritage and one who is well versed in Jewish teachings and the law, self-proclaimed righteous before all. In the next chapter of book five, Tertullian takes a different tact and aggressively confronts Marcion with
Paul’s own Jewishness as described in his own letters, and even goes further and rebukes Marcion for the denial of Paul’s depiction in the canonical Acts of the Apostles. The argument returns full circle to his position of asking why Christ would come at all if not to preach the same message to all of his apostles. At this point Tertullian makes a bold claim to the ownership of Paul, stating, “Take now from my point of view the apostle, in the same manner as you have received the Christ—the apostle shown to be as much mine as the Christ is.” Tertullian zeroes in on the fundamental point of contention here; namely, Marcion is misrepresenting Paul, and in doing so, misrepresenting the message and understanding of Christ.

However, before pursuing this argument in detail, he introduces the third element of this argument and challenges Marcion’s overall position that Christ came to the earth, taught, and died, but did not reveal the true message until his resurrection and encounter with Paul. Speaking of Jesus, Tertullian writes,

It is not at all likely that he would call men away from Judaism without showing them at the same time what was the God in whom he invited them to believe; because nobody could possibly pass from allegiance to the creator without knowing to whom he had to cross over. For either Christ had already revealed another God—in which case the apostle’s testimony would also follow to the same effect, for fear of his not being

\[\text{362} \text{Tertullian, } \text{Adv. Marc.}, \text{ 5.1 Should you, however, disapprove of these types, the Acts of the Apostles, at all events, have handed down to me this career of Paul, which you must not refuse to accept.}\]

\[\text{363} \text{Tertullian, } \text{Adv. Marc.}, \text{ 5.1.}\]

\[\text{364} \text{For a discussion of the nature of Christ as the central point of disagreement, see Wilhite, } \text{Gospel According to Heretics}, \text{ 35-39.}\]
else regarded as an apostle of the God whom Christ had revealed, and because of the impropriety of his being concealed by the apostle who had been already revealed by Christ—or Christ had made no such revelation concerning God; then there was all the greater need why the apostle should reveal a God who could now be made known by no one else, and who would undoubtedly be left without any belief at all, if he were revealed not even by an apostle. We have laid down this as our first principle, because we wish at once to profess that we shall pursue the same method here in the apostle’s case as we adopted before in Christ’s case, to prove that he proclaimed no new God; that is, we shall draw our evidence from the epistles of St. Paul himself.365

Tertullian is quite clear in his opinion that Jesus did not teach a new God, and Paul did not either. It is at this point in the book that Tertullian focuses specifically on Marcion’s understanding of Paul’s letter to the Galatians to show the inadequacies of his argument.

Similar to Irenaeus, Tertullian was forced to work within the accepted canon of Marcion in his refutation of him. With the Valentinians we saw a battle over a shared passage in 2 Corinthians and it was a matter of interpretive difference.366 Here, however, against Marcion Tertullian is forced to engage him differently. Where Tertullian was to deny the right of the Valentinians of interpret scripture on the basis of their incorrect interpretations, against Marcion, Tertullian is not afforded such an argument because they no longer share in the same scriptural frame of authority. Thus, Tertullian must work within the limited canon of Marcion to discredit Marcion’s position. Where the Charismatics challenged the ecclesial structure of the Apostolic-Catholics, and the Valentinians challenged their liturgical practices, Marcion goes much further and

365 Tertullian, _Adv. Marc._, 5.1.

366 See chapter one.
transgressively challenges the very scriptural and theological authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. Unlike the previous two churches, the disagreement with Marcion’s is not one of simple interpretative difference or liturgical praxis. By reframing the scriptural authority of Christianity, Marcion has literally forced the Apostolic-Catholics to justify their entire theological structure.

The authority of Paul for Marcion is witnessed most clearly in his critical analysis of Galatians.\(^{367}\) In his response to Marcion’s reading of Galatians, Tertullian rhetorically accepts the premise of Marcion’s argument that Paul speaks the same message as Christ. Once accepted, Tertullian then shows the consistency of Paul’s interpretation of Jesus’ role in Galatians that “it is office of Christ’s gospel to call men from the law to grace, not from the creator to another God.”\(^{368}\) His point is simple and clear. Within the epistle, Paul does not advocate for an alternative God. Tertullian even mocks Marcion’s position because it would be in the discussion of the purpose of the law where Paul would most profitably make such an assertion. He writes,

> Since also he makes mention of no other God (and he could have found no other opportunity of doing so, more suitable than when his purpose was to

\(^{367}\) Lieu, *Marcion and the Making of a Heretic*, 242. Although Hoffman offers a more cautious reading of Galatians and expressly denies any attack on the Jews specifically, he nonetheless acknowledges the importance of the text to Marcion. “Furthermore, it is doubtful that the polemical features of Gal in themselves would have warranted its priority in the Pauline canon. A more plausible explanation is that the Marcionites regarded Gal as a kind of introduction to Paul’s theology, the letter which most clearly represented the Apostle’s own claims for the singularity of his gospel.” Hoffman, *Marcion*, 75.

\(^{368}\) Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, 5.2.
set forth the reason for the abolition of the law—especially as the
prescription of a new God would have afforded a singularly good and
most sufficient reason), it is clear enough in what sense he writes, “I
marvel that ye are so soon removed from Him who hath called you to His
grace to another gospel”—He means “another” as to the conduct it
prescribes, not in respect of its worship; “another” as to the discipline it
teaches, not in respect of its divinity.**369**

Tertullian makes the persuasive argument from silence; namely, Paul does not speak of
two Gods. And following Marcion’s position that if Paul teaches the same message of
Jesus, then Jesus did not either. Continuing his argument, Tertullian declares that if Jesus
and Paul did not teach it, then neither did the other apostles. Tertullian is working within
the framework of Marcion to discredit Marion’s own theology, while at the same time, to
justify authoritative scriptural framework of the Apostolic-Catholics. Tertullian writes,

Now, since the Acts of the Apostles thus agree with Paul, it becomes
apparent why you reject them. It is because they declare no other God than
the creator, and prove Christ to belong to no other God than the creator;
whilst the promise of the Holy Ghost is shown to have been fulfilled in no
other document than the Acts of the Apostles. Now, it is not very likely
that these should be found in agreement with the apostle, on the one hand,
when they described his career in accordance with his own statement; but
should, on the other hand, be at variance with him when they announce the
(attribute of) divinity in the creator’s Christ—as if Paul did not follow the
preaching of the apostles when he received from them the prescription of
not teaching the law.**370**

Tertullian had accepted the position of Marcion that Paul and Christ taught the same
message. He then showed the message that Paul actually taught in the Epistle to the


Galatians, and, by the preceding premise that Paul taught the same message as Christ, then Christ must have preached a similar message. In reading Acts, Tertullian can demonstrate a consistency in teaching between Paul and the Apostles, and therefore if the Apostles agree with Paul, and Paul agrees with Christ, then the Apostles, Paul, and Christ teach the same message. Which, according to Tertullian’s reading, is precisely what Paul describes in seeking approval of this theology from the Pillars in Jerusalem in chapter two. As I will show in the final chapter of this work, the Apostolic-Catholics – and Tertullian included – held an apostolic understanding of Paul’s teaching that has the blessings and approval of the apostles. Tertullian is specifically rejecting the refracted figure of Paul as remembered by Marcion because it conflicts with his own authoritative scriptural framework and apostolic understanding of the transmission of knowledge and authority.

In chapter two of his Epistle to the Galatians, Paul recounts a journey he took to Jerusalem to engage with the disciples and later an exchange he had with the Peter and others over the inclusion of Gentiles at their dinners while in Antioch. In analyzing the

\[\text{Gal. 2.1-14. “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain. But even Titus, who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, though he was a Greek. But because of false believers secretly brought in, who slipped in to spy on the freedom we have in Christ Jesus, so that they might enslave us—we did not submit to them even for a moment, so that the truth of the gospel might always remain with you. And from those who were supposed to be acknowledged leaders (what they actually were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality)—those leaders contributed nothing to me. On the contrary, when they saw that I had been entrusted with the gospel for the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been entrusted with the gospel for the}\]
exchange between Tertullian and Marcion over Galatians, Cooper remarks that,

“Tertullian paraphrases the story of the Jerusalem visit in Gal. 2.2-9 to highlight Paul’s own desire to confirm his gospel with a prior authority. The way Tertullian writes of a gospel Paul ‘found’ suggests he thought Paul possessed a written gospel which the

circumcised (for he who worked through Peter making him an apostle to the circumcised also worked through me in sending me to the Gentiles), and when James and Cephas and John, who were acknowledged pillars, recognized the grace that had been given to me, they gave to Barnabas and me the right hand of fellowship, agreeing that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. They asked only one thing, that we remember the poor, which was actually what I was eager to do. But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood self-condemned; for until certain people came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But after they came, he drew back and kept himself separate for fear of the circumcision faction. And the other Jews joined him in this hypocrisy, so that even Barnabas was led astray by their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they were not acting consistently with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all, ‘If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?’” ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, κατ’ ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μὴ πῶς εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἔδραμον. ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ Ἰτίος ὁ σύν ἐμοὶ, Ἔλλην ὄν, ἰδικάκασθη περιηγηθήναι· διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἤμων ἢ ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἣν ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν, οἷς οὐδὲ πρὸς ὥραν εἶχαμεν τῇ ὑποταγῇ, ἢ ἤ άλλη γενεαὶ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου διαιμείνη πρὸς ὑμᾶς. Απὸ δὲ τῶν δοκοῦσιν εἶναι τις· ὥσποτὲ ἤσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει· ἢ ἡμᾶς ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει· ἢ ἡμᾶς ἦσαν οὐδὲν μοι διαφέρει· πρόσωπον [ὁ] θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει.
Jerusalem apostles later compared with their own declared authentic.” This observation is notable because in Tertullian’s reading Paul sought the approval of the Pillars in Jerusalem.

For Tertullian, and within the scriptural canon of Marcion, Paul does not rely on the sole message of Christ he received but instead seeks to validate and verify his teaching with the original apostles, the Pillars of Jerusalem. Cooper continues and notes that this exchange between Paul and Pillars “was interpreted by Marcion as indicating the incompatibility of Paul’s gospel with that of Jerusalem.” Through his interpretation of this important text for Marcion, Tertullian explains that Paul brought his message to the Pillars in Jerusalem to ensure the he was teaching the proper message. Tertullian uses this passage to re-establish his own authoritative framework and to discredit Marcion’s by showing that even in Paul’s own letters one can see Paul’s desire to teach a message approved by the apostles. He writes,

But with regard to the countenance of Peter and the rest of the apostles, he tells us that “fourteen years after he went up to Jerusalem,” in order to

372 Cooper, “Communis Magister Paulus,” 239.
373 Cooper, “Communis Magister Paulus,” 239.
374 Galatians 2.1-2. “Then after fourteen years, I went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also. I went in response to a revelation and, meeting privately with those esteemed as leaders, I presented to them the gospel that I preach among the Gentiles. I wanted to be sure I was not running and had not been running my race in vain.” Ἐπετει διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἐτῶν πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαραλαβόν καὶ Τίτον· ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὁ κηρύσσω ἐν τοῖς ἐθνεσιν, κατ’ ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μή πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἐδραμον.
confer with them about the rule which he followed in his gospel, lest perchance he should all those years have been running, and be running still, in vain, (which would be the case,) of course, if his preaching of the gospel fell short of their method. So great had been his desire to be approved and supported by those whom you wish on all occasions to be understood as in alliance with Judaism.\(^3\)

Tertullian mocks Marcion’s perspective when he points out that he sought the very approval of those whom Marcion rejects as Judaizers. Although Marcion does not include this full episode in his version of Galatians, that he omits it speaks to the significance of the rebuttal. Furthermore, and we may be granting too much awareness to Tertullian in this observation, but it would seem that he is accepting the imitative act of Marcion to Paul and presenting himself as the inheritor of the Pillars’ role. In effect he implies that just as Paul sought approval and accord with the Jerusalem Pillars, so too should Marcion seek the same verification with the contemporary authorities of the Apostolic-Catholics.

Tertullian, through the use of both Paul’s own letters and the Lukan account in Acts, operates within the authoritative scriptural framework of Paul and the apostles preaching a single, unified message. Paul did not receive, and did not teach, a hidden message from the true God, mediated through a limited corpus and free from Jewish obfuscation.

Although Paul and the Pillars do come to agreement, Tertullian still accounts for Paul and Peter’s disagreement and public argument over the interpretation of the law.\(^4\)

Although the argument was evidently quite contentious, Tertullian explains they were

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\(^3\) Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, 5.3.

\(^4\) See also Tertullian, *Adv. Marc.*, 4.3.
merely arguing over the application of the law, not whether or not the law was to be abandoned. Tertullian explains,

Rightly, then, did Peter and James and John give their right hand of fellowship to Paul, and agree on such a division of their work, as that Paul should go to the heathen, and themselves to the circumcision. Their agreement, also, “to remember the poor” was in complete conformity with the law of the creator, which cherished the poor and needy, as has been shown in our observations on your Gospel. It is thus certain that the question was one which simply regarded the law, while at the same time it is apparent what portion of the law it was convenient to have observed. Paul, however, censures Peter for not walking straightforwardly according to the truth of the gospel. No doubt he blames him; but it was solely because of his inconsistency in the matter of “eating,” which he varied according to the sort of persons (whom he associated with) “fearing them which were of the circumcision,” but not on account of any perverse opinion touching another God. For if such a question had arisen, others also would have been “resisted face to face” by the man who had not even spared Peter on the comparatively small matter of his doubtful conversation.377

In referencing this exchange between Paul and Peter in Galatians, Tertullian is showing that Marcion has misread the letter from Paul and incorrectly understood a rejection of Judaism, the creator, and that Paul received a private message from Christ. Rather, Tertullian argues, Paul and Peter received the same message from Christ who is truly the son of the creator and one who came to fulfill, rather than replace the law. Lieu summarizes their respective positions regarding the exchange in Galatians, and explains that,

377 Tertullian, Adv. Marc., 5.3.
Against him, Tertullian mocks the lack of prescience shown by a Christ who failed to avoid the need for a new apostle when he drew up the primary apostolic list recorded in the Gospel; he himself proposes the solution to be the supposed dilemma to be its anticipating in the Old Testament ‘prediction,’ and hence its anticipation by the creator. This sets the pattern for their conflicting interpretations of the first two chapters of the letter; for Marcion these establish Paul’s reception of the Gospel truth and his resolute defense of it against its dereliction by the other apostles, but for Tertullian they demonstrate not merely the harmony between them all but Paul’s readiness to make concessions to the others in order to maintain it.\footnote{Lieu, \textit{Marcion and the Making of a Heretic}, 243.}

Marcion uses Paul’s exchange with Peter and James in Galatians as evidence that Paul had received the true message of God (through his visit to heaven in the 2 Corinthians 12.2-4) and therefore stood in stark contrast to teaching of the false apostles.\footnote{Lieu, \textit{Marcion and the Making of a Heretic}, 243.} Tertullian must defend Peter and James against this accusation and ultimately concludes that Paul’s rebuke of them was related to their behavior, not their doctrine.\footnote{Tertullian, \textit{Adv. Marc.}, 4.3 “So that it was not on account of their preaching, but of their conversation, that they were marked by St. Paul.”} Lieu identifies three elements of this exchange that Tertullian is forced to defend against Marcion: (1), they were arguing over the specific practices of eating and circumcision, not which God the law came from; (2) Paul’s opponents did not edit the scripture to insert false passages; and (3) Paul did subject himself to the authority of the other apostles.\footnote{Lieu, \textit{Marcion and the Making of a Heretic}, 244-245.} As we have already considered her third point in detail, I turn to her first two observations.
With respect to the first point, Tertullian remarks in book four, “in like manner, if false apostles also crept in, their character too showed itself in their insisting upon circumcision and the Jewish ceremonies.” As he explains here, Marcion understands Peter and James to be representing a message of the creator, and therefore Paul is rebuking them for preaching the gospel of the covenantal God. To Lieu’s second observation, Tertullian must also defend against Marcion that followers of the covenantal God altered the writings of Paul and Luke to include favorably Jewish passages that praise the actions or theology of the creator. Tertullian questions Marcion’s stand on this asking, “If, then, the apostles, who are censured simply for inconsistency of walk, composed the Gospel in a pure form, but false apostles interpolated their true record; and if our own copies have been made from these, where will that genuine text of the apostle’s writings be found which has not suffered adulteration? Which was it that enlightened Paul, and through him Luke?” Tertullian answers his own question stating that there are only two possible solutions: “It is either completely blotted out, as if by some deluge—being obliterated by the inundation of falsifiers—in which case even Marcion does not possess the true Gospel; or else, is that very edition which Marcion alone possesses the true one, that is, of the apostles?”

382 Tertullian, Adv. Marc., 4.3.
383 Tertullian, Adv. Marc., 4.3.
384 Tertullian, Adv. Marc., 4.3.
Tertullian devotes much of his ire against Marcion within the epistolary argument over Galatians because Marcion understands the epistle to the Galatians to be the “definitive letter against Judaism,” and one in which he unequivocally equates the false-apostles with Peter and James. Marcion’s interpretation of the letter is a prism through which one may visit the larger scope, assumptions, and framework of Marcion; namely, the sole authority of Paul as a revealer of a true religion from the alien God against the false teachings of the apostles of Old Covenant creator.

**Conclusion**

Through the detailed analysis of this argument over Galatians, the image of Paul for Marcion emerges: namely, that the image of Paul remembered by Marcion is of one who stands against the Judaizers Peter and James who reflect the teachings and laws of the creator and not the message of Christ, a teaching delivered privately to Paul. Marcion, viewing himself in the same fashion as Paul, must too extricate the teachings of Christ and the true God from the Jewish interlocutions and followers of the creator. Marcion’s actions to manipulate the text of the Apostle and Luke demonstrate his anti-creator sentiment, the very sentiment he sees in the image of Paul. He parallels his actions of receiving the revealed message of Christ with that of Paul, and understands himself in the

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same light fighting the authority of the creator’s followers on earth, just as Paul himself was forced to do in engaging with Peter and James.

Through Marcion’s editorial work, antagonistic relations with the creator-allied Apostolic-Catholic Church, and his eventual expulsion from the Roman community. Marcion clearly imagined himself to be the same pioneer as Paul championing the message of Christ and the true God eliminating the need for the creator and the Old Covenant. Marcion, just as Paul before him, brings liberation from captivity and entrance into the spiritual salvation of the true, alien God. The discursive action of Marcion challenged the scriptural and theological authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. Marcion attacked the very framework by which the Apostolic-Catholics justify their ecclesial primacy, theological structures, and authority. He challenged their scriptural framework. He shifted the foundation of the transmission of knowledge and forced the heresiologists to defend their own scriptural canon, defend their theological interpretations, and ultimately, validate their role as the Church of the Christ of the true God.

Marcion’s teachings were a direct – and powerfully so – assault on the scriptural, theological, and ecclesial authority of the Apostolic-Catholic Church.
PART II:
Christian Responses to the Rise of Paul
Chapter Four: The Memory of the Ebionites

Introduction

As I have presented in the last three chapters, the Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionite communities were vying with the more established and hierarchically structured form of Apostolic-Catholic Christianity for authority, be it for ecclesial control, theological interpretation, or defining scripture. We now turn to our consideration of the simultaneous responses of the Ebionite and the Apostolic-Catholic churches to these transgressive communities. In this chapter I will explore the historical development and origins of the Ebionite movement as they fractured from the original Jerusalem Church movement in the first and second centuries and their engagement with both the Apostolic-Catholics and Pauline Churches. In this discussion I will confine my consideration primarily to the Pseudo-Clementine literature, however, I will reference other Ebionite materials as relevant. Ultimately, in this chapter I will show how the Ebionite’s rejection of Pauline authority eventually led to the decline of their influence
and presence as Pauline supporters won the argument of his apostleship and positioned him as the dominant figure among early Christians.

The Fracturing of the Jerusalem Church Church: The Emergence of the Ebionites

The critical analysis of the competing canonical Jewish-Christian and Pauline churches was originally pioneered by Baur and the Tübingen School in the nineteenth century, and further developed by more recent scholars such as Koester, Robinson, and Goulder.386 Posited in this scholarly model is that shortly after the death of Jesus two distinct Christian movements emerged: the Pauline and the Jerusalem Church.387 The Pauline movement was led by Paul and his followers and seems to have emerged from Antioch, where Paul stayed after his conversion experience.388


388 Ludemann’s analysis suggests that Paul’s theology was largely developed from his time in the Antiochene congregation where he worked as a preacher and missionary for over a decade. Gerd Ludemann, Paul: The Founder of Christianity (Amherst, NY: Prometheus Books, 2002), 22-65.
was most prominent within Asia Minor where Paul was active both in person and through written letter. This movement was characterized by a more inclusive, theologically-driven religious structure that was primarily concerned with salvation and resurrection. As the Pauline movement developed and grew, it gave way to the canonical traditions witnessed in the Gospels of Mark and Luke-Acts, the Pastoral Epistles, as well as the various forms of Christianity we have discussed in the previous three chapters; namely the Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionites.


390 I do not here suggest that these three all find their roots within a single movement, but only that the three find their primary source of apostolic authority through Paul. Scholars have tended to view Paul’s second letter to the Thessalonians, as well as his canonical epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians as pseudopigraphic in nature and to be representative of a second generation of Pauline churches. This is a commonly held perspective among some Pauline scholars and is clearly presented in Margaret Y. Macdonald, *The Pauline Churches: A Socio-Historical Study of Institutionalization in the Pauline and Deutero-Pauline Writings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), esp. 85-158. While there are some persuasive elements to this position, I follow the recent work of Campbell and view these letters authentically Pauline, and therefore hold they do not speak to a later form of early Paulinism (Douglas A. Campbell, *Framing Paul: An Epistolary Biography* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014). Though the authentic acceptance of Paul’s letters does problematize the scholarship of the trajectory of the first-century Pauline tradition, I do not think it compromises the integrity of the general argument for the development of Pauline churches. I find this to be especially so considering the later Pauline-oriented works of Mark, Luke, and the Pastorals who clearly represent distinctly different theological and ecclesial concerns than Paul, yet nonetheless remain staunchly within the Pauline trajectory of Christianity (Christopher Mount, *Pauline Christianity: Luke-Acts and the Legacy of Paul* (Leiden: Brill, 2002), esp., 163-180.).
The Jerusalem Church trajectory that followed the teachings of Peter, James, and others from Jerusalem who opposed the Pauline movement. This movement focused on the Jewish teachings of Jesus and adhered to the more traditional and conservative forms of Torah observance including dietary restrictions and ethnic isolation. This movement finds its epistolary roots in the letter of James and the contemporary mid-first century teachings of the Q material. The second generation of the Jerusalem Church movement has been recorded in the Gospel of Matthew, the closely related Gospels of the Ebionites, Nazoreans, and Hebrews, as well as the first-century instructional manual, the Didache, and the second-century Pseudo-Clementine literature. Eventually, the Jerusalem

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393 Patrick J. Hartin, *James and the Q Sayings of Jesus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991). Although the work is largely focused on the role of wisdom in both texts and their respective relationships to the historical Jesus, Hartin’s concluding analysis of the community from which both emerged is particularly illuminating as he shows the common themes and theology, but is careful not to present a monolithic model of the early Jewish-Christian (i.e., Ebionite) Church.

Church movement fractured as the liberal contingent coalesced with the early Pauline tradition into the Apostolic-Catholic model that Luke describes in Acts whereas the conservative Ebionites separated themselves and formed their own independent churches.\textsuperscript{395}

However, this was not a whole-sale unity and the conservative Jewish-Christians who rejected the Pauline movement split off from the Jerusalem Church and formed what has come to be known as the Ebionite Church.\textsuperscript{396} This group stood in firm opposition to the Apostolic-Catholics and other Pauline Christians, and maintained their devotion to the strict moral and ethical teachings of Peter and James. The Ebionites,

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\textsuperscript{395} The non-canonical evidence for this coalescence will be considered in the following chapter, with particular attention paid to motivations for such a cohering act. The argument from within the canon dates back to the work Baur and others discussed previously.

\textsuperscript{396} It is frequent for scholars to refer to the Jewish-Christians of this period as Ebionites (Petri Luomanen, \textit{Recovering Jewish-Christian Sects and Gospels} (Leiden: Brill, 2012). The designation of Ebionites was originally a self-assumed title, but later was used by heresiologists derisively to refer to those who still adhered to Jewish customs Hans-Joachim Schoeps, \textit{Jewish Christianity: Factional Disputes in the Early Church}, trans. Douglas R. A. Hare (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1964), 10-11. Although, as Schoeps observes, “There was no one named ‘Ebion’ who served as father or Godfather of the sect, as later Church Fathers (Hippolytus, Tertullian, Epiphanius, and others) mistakenly supposed.”
broadly conceived, followed the teachings of James, and the *Pseudo-Clementine*

literature in particular emphasizes the importance and authority of James over the
apostles, including Peter. In addition to their schism with the Apostolic-Catholics, the
Ebionite community was also heretically demonized by their Jewish communities in the
late first and early second- and third centuries as well. As Schoeps records,

> There remains in the Talmud and Midrash so much anonymous and pseudonymous polemic against the Ebionites that some of the factual material can be utilized. The Jewish Christians, or Ebionites, are included among the *minim* (heretics), of whom it was once said that they were worse than idolaters, for the latter deny God without knowing him while the former know him yet nevertheless deny him... Through their polemic these rabbis have also indirectly attest to a series of specific Ebionite doctrines.  

The Ebionites were engaged in issues of identity among both Christians and Jews, and
struggled to establish their own authoritative network within the networks of each
community.

Although the specific point of separation for these two movements is difficult to
isolate, as early as the middle of the second century Justin Martyr clearly distinguishes
between the two churches. Justin Martyr observes two kinds of Christians who follow the
teachings of both Jesus and Moses. In his exchange with Trypho, Justin writes,

> “There are such people, Trypho,” I answered; “and these do not venture to have any intercourse with or to extend hospitality to such persons; but I do not agree with them. But if some, through weak-mindedness, wish to observe such institutions as were given by Moses, from which they expect some virtue, but which we believe were appointed by reason of the hardness of the people’s hearts, along with their hope in this Christ, and [wish to perform] the eternal and natural acts of righteousness and piety,

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yet choose to live with the Christians and the faithful, as I said before, not inducing them either to be circumcised like themselves, or to keep the Sabbath, or to observe any other such ceremonies, then I hold that we ought to join ourselves to such, and associate with them in all things as kinsmen and brethren.”

Justin delineates between these two groups and explains that it is the observance of Torah that is their most distinguishing element. Although Justin clearly has a polemical voice to his writing, his acknowledgement that there are two strands is significant because it confirms that by the time the middle of the second century the Ebionite movement was distinctly present from the Apostolic-Catholics and recognized as such.

In the second century the Ebionites were competing with the other Christian movements to claim sole authority as the true church of God. Sometime in the latter half of the first century, after the destruction of the temple, the author of the Gospel of Matthew published the primarily Torah-focused treatise against the Gospel of Mark and developing Pauline Churches. Written roughly around the time of Luke, it was likely one of several steps taken against the Pauline churches, though likely still within the umbrella of the Jerusalem Church. Luke’s gospel, with its similar use of the Q material as Matthew, represents the first step towards blending the Jerusalem Church and Pauline

398 Justin Martyr, Dial. Tryp. 47.2. Εἰςιν, ἀπεκρινάμην, ὃ Τρύφων, καὶ μηδὲ κοινωνεῖν ὀμιλίας ἢ ἐστὶς τοῖς τοιούτοις τολμῶντες· οἷς ἐγὼ οὐ σύναινός εἰμι. ἂλλ' ἐὰν αὐτοὶ διὰ τὸ ἀσθενές τῆς γνώμης καὶ τὰ ὅσα δύνανται νῦν ἐκ τῶν Μουσέων, ἃ διὰ τὸ σκληροκάρδιον τοῦ λαοῦ νοούμεν διατετάχθαι, μετὰ τοῦ ἐπὶ τοῦτον τὸν Χριστὸν ἐλπίζειν καὶ τὰς αἰωνίους καὶ φύσει δικαιοπραξίας καὶ εὐσεβείας φυλάσσειν βουλόμεθα καὶ αἰρόμεθα συζήτησιν τοῦ Χριστιανοῦ καὶ πιστοῦ, ὡς προείπον, μὴ πείθοντες αὐτοὺς μὴ σαββατιζέων μὴ ἄλλα ὅσα τοιαύτα ἐστὶ τηρεῖν, καὶ προσλαμβάνεσθαι καὶ κοινωνεῖν ἄπαντων, ὡς ὁμοσπλάγχνους καὶ ἀδελφοῖς, δεῖν ἄποφαινομαι.
movements. It was not until the early second century that Luke published his Acts of the Apostles that completed this work and cohered both the Pauline and Jerusalem churches into one, Apostolic-Catholic Church. In this Lukan presentation, Jesus appointed both Peter and Paul to lead the church and therefore both were working in tandem and stand as the true leaders of the true Christian Church. So even though the Ebionites originally followed the figure of Peter, by the second century they had seen their pillar subsumed within the umbrella of the Gentile-focused, Apostolic-Catholic movement that incorporated Paul. In response to this, the Ebionites turned their attention to James and slowly began to construct a memory of him as the primary leader and adjudicator of Christian theology for the early church. Just as they rejected the authority of Paul, they too sought to undermine the Apostolic-Catholic claim to the authority of Peter. This transition and focus on James is most acutely seen in the second-century Pseudo-Clementine literature.

The Ebionites were engaged on issues of identity in two respects, one against the usurpation of Peter by the Apostolic-Catholics and the emerging authority of Pauline devotees in the second century. In this regard the Pseudo-Clementines were written against both groups simultaneously elevating the authority and righteousness of James over Peter and disparaging Paul. I will first consider their engagement with the Jerusalem Church’s memory of the Apostolic-Catholics for the sake of historical continuity and context, and then consider their dispute with the memories of Paul noting specific influences from the Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and the Marcionites as appropriate.
The Church Fractured: The Ebionite Church

The *Pseudo-Clementines* are a muddled mess of different stories rife with internal inconsistencies, chronological errors, and distinctly lacking overarching theological focus. As a result many scholars have disparaged the work and abandoned extensive examination of it as a result.\(^{399}\) Nonetheless, the text is a witness to the Ebionite perspective of the second-century arguments with both the Apostolic-Catholics and Pauline churches and therefore enables a more thorough consideration of these debates. The work itself consists largely of two treatises, the *Recognitions* and the *Homilies*, both of which are ascribed to Clement of Rome.

The narrative structure of the *Recognitions* follows the romance pattern of pagan novels where the protagonist loses family members, engages in a quest, and ultimately is reunited with the family.\(^{400}\) In the *Recognitions*, Clement follows Peter during his mission and records his engagement with various Christians, opponents, and attempts to recount the epic tale of Peter’s work in establishing the church. The text also places Peter and the rest of the disciples under the jurisdiction of James who was appointed by Christ as the bishop of Jerusalem and leader of the church. Because the text focuses on the actions of


James, Peter, and others, several scholars have understood this work to be written as anti-Acts that directly challenges the contemporary work of Luke’s Acts of the Apostles.401

**The Ebionites against the Apostolic-Catholics**

In the *Recognitions*, the Ebionites identify James as the appointed leader who was specifically selected by Jesus to be the bishop of Jerusalem.402 In describing the success of the early Jesus movement in Jerusalem, the second-century author recounts the historical significance and leadership of James,

> Nevertheless, the truth everywhere prevailed; for, in proof that these things were done by divine power, we who had been very few became in the course of a few days, by the help of God, far more than they. So that the priests at one time were afraid, lest haply, by the providence of God, to their confusion, the whole of the people should come over to our faith.


402 *Rec.*, 1.72. “‘Many therefore there are, O Peter,’ said James, ‘for whose safety’s sake it behooves you to go and to refute the magician, and to teach the word of truth. Therefore, make no delay; nor let it grieve you that you set out alone, knowing that God by Jesus will go with you, and will help you, and that soon, by His grace, you will have many associates and sympathizers. Now be sure that you send me in writing every year an account of your sayings and doings, and especially at the end of every seven years.’”
Therefore, they often sent to us, and asked us to discourse to them concerning Jesus, whether He were the Prophet whom Moses foretold, who is the eternal Christ. For on this point only does there seem to be any difference between us who believe in Jesus, and the unbelieving Jews. But while they often made such requests to us, and we sought for a fitting opportunity, a week of years was completed from the passion of the Lord, the Church of the Lord which was constituted in Jerusalem was most plentifully multiplied and grew, being governed with most righteous ordinances by James, who was ordained bishop in it by the Lord.  

James is identified as the leader of the community who governs the bishopric and who is responsible for spreading the teachings of Christ.  

Lukan, notion of Peter’s authority as the founder of the church has been completely replaced with that of James. The Lukan Acts of the Apostles was popular in the second century, and so by keying into this image of Peter as the leader of Jerusalem Community and reframing the leadership to actually be that of James – who was appointed directly by Christ no less – comes as a targeted shift from the common perspective of Peter. While the intended audience of the work is unknown, the Jerusalem Church’s paradigm regarding Peter would be a well-known motif both within and outside the Ebionite Community and so its rejection would resonate with either demographic. 

403 Rec., 1.43.  
404 For a general treatment of James as key figure in the early church, see John Painter, Just James: The Brother of Jesus in History and Tradition (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1997).  
405 Peter is the first named of the disciples as they return from the ascension of Jesus to pray in Jerusalem (Acts 1.13), and is the first to speak to the Jerusalem Community as the leader (Acts 2.14-41).
Furthermore, this identification of James also contradicts the story of Christ naming Peter as the Rock and leader of the church in the Gospel of Matthew.\(^{406}\) The Ebionite rejection of both the Lukan and Matthean memories of Peter as the leader of the church speaks to the severity of this separation because it shows how the Apostolic-Catholics had successfully identified themselves with Peter to the point that the Ebionites no longer felt an affinity for him as the selected leader of the community.

As Kelley notes, the prominence of James in the Clementine literature is significant in two respects:\(^{407}\) first, in his position as overseer of the Jerusalem church he assumes the sole authority to evaluate the authenticity of Christian teaching,\(^{408}\) and second, he commissions Peter to engage with Simon Magus and demands an accounting of the exchange and Peter’s teachings.\(^{409}\) In effect, both work in tandem to solidify the memory of James as the exclusive, dominant authority of the Christian church, and one who reigns over Peter and evaluates the legitimacy of new teaching.\(^{410}\)


\(^{407}\) Kelley, *Knowledge and Religious Authority*, 174-175. Although Kelley argues the text is from a later, fourth-century Syrian context, her remarks about the image of James remain relevant for our discussion.

\(^{408}\) *Rec.*, 1.40-70.

\(^{409}\) *Rec.*, 1.17.

Throughout the work James is repeatedly presented as the leader of the Christian community who engages with opponents and theological controversies. Clement’s first-person account describes disciples in the Jerusalem Community as working at the instruction of James, “But when we twelve apostles, on the day of the Passover, had come together with an immense multitude, and entered into the church of the brethren, each one of us, at the request of James, stated briefly, in the hearing of the people, what we had done in every place.”  

In addition to his role as leader in the narrative, James is also presented as somewhat of a spokesperson for the community who openly debates with a Samaritan, against the Pharisees, and is identified specifically as the bishop of Jerusalem in his exchange with Gamaliel. Taken together, the memory of James emerges as one of exclusive authority over both the teachings of Christianity as well as those who teach it. Indeed, as Kelley notes,

James, as bishop and head of the Jerusalem church, appears to be in a position of some authority over Jesus’ original twelve apostles. In their dispute with the Jewish leaders, Gamaliel and the high priest both address James as a representative of and spokesperson for the apostles. Moreover,

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411 *Rec.*, 1.44.

412 *Rec.*, 1.57.

413 *Rec.*, 1.59.

414 *Rec.*, 1.66-69.
the apostles report to James as if he is a supervisor, telling him what they have said and done while preaching Jesus’ message.\footnote{Kelley, \textit{Knowledge and Religious Authority}, 175.}

Kelley’s summary observations of the memory of James from these episodes is a helpful synthesis of these disparate images. In her analysis it is clear that James serves an administrative and public role for the community, and his authority is derived from the specific appointment to the post by Christ himself. Administratively, James is responsible for supervising the disciples and their work while also concerned with growing the Christian Church in Jerusalem. In addition to this, James has also assumed an adjudicator role in which he is responsible for verifying the theology and teaching of preachers. As the text reads,

\begin{quote}
Because of this, be very careful that you believe no teacher, except he who brings down from Jerusalem the testimonial of James the Lord’s brother, or of whoever may be after him. For unless he has gone up to that [place], and has been approved there because he is a suitable and faithful teacher for preaching the word of Christ – unless, I say, he brings down a testimony from there, he should absolutely not be accepted.\footnote{Rec., IV.35.}
\end{quote}

Similar to the Apostolic-Catholics, the Ebionites were developing a notion of apostolic succession for legitimating teachers. However, unlike the Apostolic-Catholics, it seems that James (and in the context of the second century we might assume the author(s) of the text), is final arbitrator of who may and may not teach in the name of Christ. The Ebionite memory of James imagines him as the chief administrator and theological

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\footnote{Kelley, \textit{Knowledge and Religious Authority}, 175.}
authority of Christian teaching, an authority that emerged through his righteous reputation.\textsuperscript{417} The authority of James is rooted in his righteousness, morality, and appointment from Christ as the bishop of Jerusalem.

In the context of inter-Christian discourse over ecclesial authority, Kelley’s remarks regarding the elevation of James emphasize the significance of the Ebionite reliance on the figure of James. In her discussion of Peter’s reporting to James, she writes,

I would like to suggest that this technique of invoking James as an authoritative figure is significant in terms of the larger rhetorical agenda of our text as well. As one who reads and approves Clement’s account of Peter’s preaching, James plays a crucial role in the verification and sanctioning of Peter’s authority. Moreover, the figure of James is invoked for another reason as well. Because the Recognitions presents itself as Clement’s compilation of Peter’s preaching, the rhetorical effect of this appeal to James takes on a new significance: James’ vigilant eye supervises and approves the Recognitions as a proper account of the True Prophet’s message. In other words, by repeatedly suggesting that James has sanctioned the record of Peter’s preaching contained within the Recognitions, our text effectively makes a claim about his own importance: it is an account of the True Prophet’s teaching that has been approved and endorsed by James, the highest human authority.\textsuperscript{418}

\textsuperscript{417} This reputation so pervaded early Jewish and Christian memories of James, that survive even to the writings of Eusebius in the fourth century. Eusebius, \textit{HE}, II.1.1. “Then James, whom the ancients surnamed the Just on account of the excellence of his virtue, is recorded to have been the first to be made bishop of the church of Jerusalem. This James was called the brother of the Lord because he was known as a son of Joseph, and Joseph was supposed to be the father of Christ, because the Virgin, being betrothed to him, was found with child by the Holy Ghost before they came together as the account of the holy Gospels shows.”

\textsuperscript{418} Kelley, \textit{Knowledge and Religious Authority}, 177-178.
The Ebionite memory of James is clearly structured to counter the authoritative claims of the second-century followers of Peter and Paul. In effect, this memory issues the challenge to both parties to subject their teaching to the scrutiny and approval of the Ebionite church.

The Ebionites against the Pauline Churches

Paul as Arch-Heretic

The elevation of James over Peter is an implied element of the text that speaks more to the concerns of the community establishing their authority over the growing Apostolic-Catholics. The polemic against Paul, however, is far more vociferous and intense. Within the story Paul is presented not only as the theological opposition to James and the teachings of Christ, but the actual person who prevents the growth of the church and who is responsible for the death of James. Paul is presented as the arch-heretic and chief opponent to Ebionite mission of Christ. As the text reads,

And when matters were at that point that they should come and be baptized, some one of our enemies, entering the temple with a few men, began to cry out, and to say, ‘What mean ye, O men of Israel? Why are you so easily hurried on? Why are ye led headlong by most miserable men, who are deceived by Simon, a magician?’ While he was thus speaking, and adding more to the same effect, and while James the bishop was refuting him, he began to excite the people and to raise a tumult, so that the people might not be able to hear what was said. Therefore, he began to drive all into confusion with shouting, and to undo what had been arranged with much labour, and at the same time to reproach the priests, and to enrage them with revilings and abuse, and, like a madman, to excite everyone to murder, saying, ‘What do ye? Why do ye hesitate? Oh
sluggish and inert, why do we not lay hands upon them, and pull all these fellows to pieces?’ When he had said this, he first, seizing a strong brand from the altar, set the example of smiting. Then others also, seeing him, were carried away with like readiness. Then ensued a tumult on either side, of the beating and the beaten. Much blood is shed; there is a confused flight, in the midst of which that enemy attacked James, and threw him headlong from the top of the steps; and supposing him to be dead, he cared not to inflict further violence upon him.\[419\]

As Pervo has noted, this presentation of Paul as the enemy of the Ebionites is drawn from the Matthean Parable of the Wheat and Weeds,\[420\]

He put before them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to someone who sowed good seed in his field; but while everybody was asleep, an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then went away. So when the plants came up and bore grain, then the weeds appeared as well. And the slaves of the householder came and said to him, ‘Master, did you not sow good seed in your field? Where, then, did these weeds come from?’ He answered, ‘An enemy has done this.’ The slaves said to him, ‘Then do you want us to go and gather them?’ But he replied, ‘No; for in gathering the weeds you would uproot the wheat along with the m. Let both of them grow together until the harvest; and at harvest time I will tell the reapers, Collect the weeds first and bind them in bundles to be burned, but gather the wheat into my barn.’”\[421\]

\[419\] Rec. I.70.

\[420\] Pervo, Making of Paul, 181.

\[421\] Matthew 13.24-30. Ἄλλην παραβολήν παρέθηκεν αὐτὸς λέγων· ὀμοιώθη ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν ἀνθρώπῳ σπείραι καλὸν σπέρμα ἐν τῷ ἄγρῳ αὐτοῦ. ἐν δὲ τῷ καθεύδειν τούς ἀνθρώπους ἦλθεν αὐτὸς ὁ ἑρμός καὶ ἐπέσπειρεν ζιζάνια ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ σίτου καὶ ἀπήλθεν. ὅτε δὲ ἐβλάστησαν ὁ χόρτος καὶ καρπὸν ἐποίησαν, τότε ἐφάνη καὶ τὰ ζιζάνια. προσελθόντες δὲ οἱ δούλοι τοῦ οἰκοδεσπότου ἔιπον αὐτῷ· κύριε, οὐχὶ καλὸν σπέρμα ἐσπειράς ἐν τῷ σῷ ἄγρῳ; πόθεν οὖν ἔχει ζιζάνια; ὁ δὲ ἔφη αὐτοῖς· ἑρμῶς ἀνθρώπος τοῦτο ἐποίησαν. οἱ δὲ δούλοι λέγουσιν αὐτῷ· θέλεις οὖν ἀπελθόντες συλλέξωμεν αὐτά; ὁ δὲ φησίν· οὐ, μήποτε συλλέγοντες τὰ ζιζάνια ἐκριζώσητε ἀμα αὐτοῖς τὸν σίτον. ἃρετε συναυξάνεσθαι ἀμφότερα ἐως τὸν θερισμὸν, καὶ ἐν καιρῷ τοῦ θερισμοῦ ἐρῶ τοῖς
The use of the Gospel of Matthew speaks to the coherence of the Ebionite movement against the Pauline.

Writing in the second century, the Ebionites would certainly be aware of the popularity and use of the Gospel of Matthew among their Apostolic-Catholic opponents, and this reframing of the parable against their own hero subverts their collective understanding of Jesus’ teaching. Indeed, Irenaeus uses this parable to speak to the insidious nature of the devil and importance of controlling sexual desire and lust.\(^422\) Tertullian similarly uses this parable to discuss the tempting nature of the devil upon the soul\(^423\) and the influence of the heretic Praxeas.\(^424\) Clement of Alexandria also reads this

\[\text{θερισταῖς· συλλέξατε πρῶτον τὰ ζιζάνια καὶ δήσατε αὐτὰ εἰς δέσμας πρὸς τὸ κατακαῦσαι αὐτὰ, τὸν δὲ σῖτον συναγάγετε εἰς τὴν ἀποθήκην μου.}\]

\(^422\) Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, V.10.1. “For as the good olive, if neglected for a certain time, if left to grow wild and to run to wood, does itself become a wild olive; or again, if the wild olive be carefully tended and grafted, it naturally reverts to its former fruit-bearing condition: so men also, when they become careless, and bring forth for fruit the lusts of the flesh like woody produce, are rendered, by their own fault, unfruitful in righteousness. For when men sleep, the enemy sows the material of tares; and for this cause did the Lord command His disciples to be on the watch.”

\(^423\) Tertullian, *Exp. Soul.*, XVI. “In perfect agreement with reason was that indignation which resulted from his desire to maintain discipline and order. When, however, he says, “We were formerly the children of wrath,” he censures an irrational irascibility, such as proceeds not from that nature which is the production of God, but from that which the devil brought in, who is himself styled the lord or “master” of his own class, “Ye cannot serve two masters,” and has the actual designation of “father;” “Ye are of your father the devil.” So that you need not be afraid to ascribe to him the mastery and dominion over that second, later, and deteriorated nature (of which we have been speaking), when you read of him as “the sewer of tares,” and the nocturnal spoiler of the crop of corn.”
parable as a warning against the insidious nature of heretical weeds, opponents in
teaching or action who would seek to defile the Apostolic-Catholic Church of God.\textsuperscript{425}
The Ebionites have keyed into this collective memory of heretics as “tares,” and shifted
the frame onto Paul and thereby categorized him in the collective consciousness as
“heretic” of the church.

**Simon the Heretic as the Root of Paul’s Theology**

The Ebionite response to Paul rests largely on the root of his authority. As I have
shown in the preceding chapters, the Pauline churches of the second century find their

\textsuperscript{424} Tertullian, *Adv. Prax.*, I. “But the tares of Praxeas had then everywhere shaken out
their seed, which having lain hid for some while, with its vitality concealed under a mask,
has now broken out with fresh life. But again shall it be rooted up, if the Lord will, even
now; but if not now, in the day when all bundles of tares shall be gathered together, and
along with every other stumbling-block shall be burnt up with unquenchable fire.”

\textsuperscript{425} Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* VII.15. “First, then, they make this objection to us,
saying, that they ought not to believe on account of the discord of the sects. For the truth
is warped when some teach one set of dogmas, others another. To whom we say, that
among you who are Jews, and among the most famous of the philosophers among the
Greeks, very many sects have sprung up. And yet you do not say that one ought to
hesitate to philosophize or Judaize, because of the want of agreement of the sects among
you between themselves. And then, that heresies should be sown among the truth, as
“tares among the wheat,” was foretold by the Lord; and what was predicted to take place
could not but happen. And the cause of this is, that everything that is fair is followed by a
foul blot. If one, then, violate his engagements, and go aside from the confession which
he makes before us, are we not to stick to the truth because he has belied his profession?
But as the good man must not prove false or fail to ratify what he has promised, although
others violate their engagements; so also are we bound in no way to transgress the canon
of the Church. And especially do we keep our profession in the most important points,
while they traverse it.”
authority in a particular knowledge not available to all. Whether through charisma, divine revelation, or a new and secret teaching, each church finds their authority through a secret knowledge that both subverts and rivals the ecclesial authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. The Ebionites, similar to the Apostolic-Catholic response to these alternative Pauline churches, reject this model of authority, and argue instead for a communally approved and apostolically verified teaching. Unlike the Apostolic-Catholics, however, the rubric of acceptable teaching is not through a succession of apostolic appointment from any of the original twelve apostles. No, for the Ebionites, approval is only found through the direct approval of James and his successive communities.

The most explicit condemnation of the Pauline-churches is found in *Homily XVII*, a second-century text that narrates a fictional first-century exchange between the Ebionite Peter and the Pauline Simon. In the homily, the character of Simon represents Paul. In using the figure of Simon as a stand-in for Paul, the author keys into the popular story of Peter’s argument with Simon Magus and offers a countermemory that reframes the theology and arguments of his Simonian opponent to align with Paul and his followers. In effect, by using Simon as the character rather than Paul, the author is able to rely on the collective memory of Simon as the opponent to the teaching of Peter, and therefore as

426 This is a well-attested perspective among *Pseudo-Clementine* scholars. See, Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 182., Schoeps, *Jewish Christianity*, 47.

the root of all heresy, to reframe the theology of the opposition to be specifically Pauline, and therefore, Pauline theology as heresy.

Although the narrative frame of the text is placed during the apostolic period of the first century, the theological dispute, disparaging remarks, and social cues belie the second-century reality of the narrative. In effect, the public exchange between these two figures represents the historical reality of the second-century Ebionites as they struggled to maintain their independent identity and ecclesial authority against the contemporary and prominent Pauline churches such as what I have already shown in the preceding chapters. And although the specific second-century opponent of this diatribe is not easily identified – though many have tried – the fictional Simon represents a common source for the Pauline heresies we have discussed in the Charismatic-Catholics, the Valentinians, and the Marcionites for the Apostolic-Catholic and Ebionite heresiologists. In what follows, I detail the exchange between Simon and Peter as recorded in Homily XVII and show the relevant second-century concerns they are addressing.

Within the narrative structure of Homily XVII, Simon Magus disparages Peter and issues a series of theological disputations and incendiary remarks to rile up the crowd who has gathered to witness the anticipated exchange. Simon Magus publicly accuses Peter of being a “servant of wickedness” and “magic,” and as one who, “charm[es] the


429 Hom. XVII. I.
souls of men in a way worse than idolatry.” He then proceeds to accuse Peter of playing mind-games and manipulating people to believe things that are not true by guile and subterfuge, for teaching a message antithetical to preaching of Christ, and that even the preaching of Christ himself was inconsistent.

After Simon’s public tirade against him, Peter goes to confront Simon and dispute his accusations and mischaracterizations. His first response to Simon is to counter the claims that he preaches a different message than Christ and that Christ himself was inconsistent. Peter addresses the community saying,

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the true prophet (as I shall prove conclusively at the proper time), made concise declarations in regard to those matters that relate to the truth, for these two reasons: first, because He was in the habit of addressing the pious, who had knowledge enough to enable them to believe the opinions uttered by Him by way of declaration; for His statements were not strange to their usual mode of thought; and in the second place, because, having a limited time assigned Him for preaching, He did not employ the method of demonstration in order that He might not spend all His limited time in arguments, for in this way it might happen that He would be fully occupied in giving the solutions of a few problems which might be understood by mental exertion, while He would not have given us to any great extent those statements which relate to the truth. Accordingly He stated any opinions He wished, as to a people who were able to understand Him, to whom we also belong, who, whenever we did not understand anything of what had been said by Him,

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430 Hom. XVII.II.

431 Hom. XVII.III.

432 Hom. XVII.IV.

433 Hom. XVII.V. The accusation is specifically aimed at Christ’s understanding of God as both just and good, and whether or not God is the true framer and creator of the world.
―a thing which rarely happened,—inquired of Him privately, that nothing said by Him might be unintelligible to us.\textsuperscript{434}

Peter justifies the lack of theological sophistication and complexity of Christ’s message on the premise that it was neither necessary nor expedient to do so. Speaking directly against the theological considerations of these second-century Pauline communities, the Ebionites are using the direct nature of Jesus’ preaching as justification for the narrow focus on morality and Torah-adherence over the salvific emphasis of the Pauline churches.

\textbf{The Form of the Divine}

Peter’s tone then shifts as he begins an abstract conversation regarding the corporeality of God. Though he is quick to remark that God does not possess a body in the material sense of humanity, God nonetheless does exist in an embodied form. This body is different and literally incomprehensible to humans as “he has shape, and he has every limb primarily and solely for beauty’s sake, and not for use.”\textsuperscript{435} He continues and describes the various functional – though not necessary – organs of God and how humanity was made in the specific and direct image of God. This argument of course

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{434} Hom. XVII.VI.
\textsuperscript{435} Hom. XVII. VII.
\end{flushright}
suggests a direct confrontation with the incorporeality of divine existence espoused by the Valentinians. As Peter explains,

For He Himself is the rest of the whole who grants Himself as a rest to those who imitate His greatness within their little measure. For He is alone, sometimes comprehensible, sometimes incomprehensible, sometimes limitable, sometimes illimitable, having extensions which proceed from Him into infinity. For thus He is comprehensible and incomprehensible, near and far, being here and there, as being the only existent one, and as giving a share of that mind which is infinite on every hand, in consequence of which souls breathe and possess life; and if they be separated from the body and be found with a longing for Him, they are borne along into His bosom, as in the winter time the mists of the mountains, attracted by the rays of the sun, are borne along immortal to it. What affection ought therefore to arise within us if we gaze with our mind on His beautiful shape! But otherwise it is absurd to speak of beauty. For beauty cannot exist apart from shape; nor can one be attracted to the love of God, nor even deem that he can see Him, if God has no form.436

For the Ebionites, God incomprehensibly exists in form, which is a direct refutation of the second-century Valentinian claims to the incorporeal nature of the heavens that can be witnessed only through the mind. As I presented in chapter two, the Valentinian Gospel of Mary records an exchange between Jesus and Mary where Jesus says that, “He who sees does not see in the soul, nor in the spirit, but the mind, which is between the two.”437 In the Apocalypse of Paul, the child-guide consistently encourage Paul to “open his mind,”438 and in the Prayer of the Apostle Paul, the congregation asks for revelation

436 Hom. XVII. X.
437 G. Mary 10.20-22. Εἰναίδαι τὴν τευχὴν οὐδὲν ημίπνιξαλλὰ πνεύμα χωρὶς τὴν τευχήν τευχήνα.`
of the divine in their “minds.” Peter specifically addresses the claims of the Valentinians who say they see God in their own minds, proclaiming,

But some who are strangers to the truth, and who give their energies to the service of evil, on pretext of glorifying God, say that He has no figure, in order that, being shapeless and formless, He may be visible to no one, so as not to be longed for. For the mind, not seeing the form of God, is empty of Him. But how can anyone pray if he has no one to whom he may flee for refuge, on whom he may lean? For if he meets with no resistance, he falls out into vacuity.439

This explicit attack on the foundation of the Valentinian means of divine access serves to subvert their authoritative claims to the true teachings of God. In effect, Ebionites are suggesting that one cannot access God through one’s own mind, and therefore the Valentinian claim to know the true message of God is false because they only receive through mindful revelation.

The Simonian, or rather the Pauline, response is one bore out of a common accusaion against Paul; namely, how can you claim to preach a message of a man whom you never met? Flipping this around, Simon asks Peter,

I know against whom you are making these remarks; but in order that I may not spend any time in discussing subjects which I do not wish to discuss, repeating the same statements to refute you, reply to that which is concisely stated by us. You professed that you had well understood the doctrines and deeds of your teacher because you saw them before you with your own eyes, and heard them with your own ears, and that it is not possible for any other to have anything similar by vision or apparition. But I shall show that this is false. He who hears any one with his own ears, is not altogether fully assured of the truth of what is said; for his mind has to

439 Hom. XVII. XI.
consider whether he is wrong or not, inasmuch as he is a man as far as appearance goes. But apparition not merely presents an object to view, but inspires him who sees it with confidence, for it comes from God.\footnote{Hom. XVII. XIII.}

Simon’s Pauline response to Peter’s accusation seeks to justify their esoteric authority and undermine the claims of the Ebionites on two counts: first, by challenging the Ebionite assertion for first-hand knowledge on the grounds that those who converted after the death of Christ (i.e., the Ebionites in the second century) would not have first-hand experience either. Second, averring that knowledge of the divine acquired without revelation relies exclusively on human reasoning, and therefore is unreliable and unverifiable. Whereas the knowledge acquired through divine revelation is assured of its legitimacy and authority.

**The Apostleship of Paul**

Simon’s argument against Peter is consistent with the first-century aspersions of the Ebionites towards Paul’s apostleship and one witnessed even within the Apostolic-Ebionite argument. As Schoeps has argued, this exchange recalls the episode in Galatians 2 discussed in the previous chapter, as well as the Christ party of 1 Corinthians.\footnote{Schoeps, *Jewish Christianity*, 47.} In both of these canonical episodes, it appears that the apostleship and authority of Paul was
challenged by the Ebionite contingent.\textsuperscript{442} Justin Martyr similarly expresses a frustration with the Ebionite rejection of ethnic inclusion deemed acceptable by both the Pauline and Apostolic-Catholic churches.\textsuperscript{443} As Justin explains to Trypho,

“But if, Trypho,” I continued, “some of your race, who say they believe in this Christ, compel those Gentiles who believe in this Christ to live in all respects according to the law given by Moses, or choose not to associate so intimately with them, I in like manner do not approve of them. But I believe that even those, who have been persuaded by them to observe the legal dispensation along with their confession of God in Christ, shall probably be saved. And I hold, further, that such as have confessed and known this man to be Christ, yet who have gone back from some cause to the legal dispensation, and have denied that this man is Christ, and have repented not before death, shall by no means be saved. Further, I hold that those of the seed of Abraham who live according to the law, and do not believe in this Christ before death, shall likewise not be saved, and especially those who have anathematized and do anathematize this very Christ in the synagogues, and everything by which they might obtain salvation and escape the vengeance of fire. For the goodness and the loving-kindness of God, and His boundless riches, hold righteous and sinless the man who, as Ezekiel tells, repents of sins; and reckons sinful, unrighteous, and impious the man who fails away from piety and righteousness to unrighteousness and unGodliness. Wherefore also our Lord Jesus Christ said, ‘In whatsoever things I shall take you, in these I shall judge you.'\textsuperscript{444}

\textsuperscript{442} As a short summary of the Galatian passage: Paul recounts how Peter was among Paul’s community in Antioch, and after the arrival of “some people of James,” Peter was no longer was willing to dine with the gentiles of Paul’s church. Paul publically rebukes him for his actions and blames those who of James who came from Jerusalem for turning Peter. The situation speaks to the likely historical episode that demonstrates the strict divide between the Pauline and Ebionite movements.

\textsuperscript{443} Save, of course, perhaps the Marcionites who likely expressed little interest in formal interaction with the Jewish communities.

\textsuperscript{444} Justin Martyr, \textit{Dial. Tryp.} 47.3-5. ἐὰν δὲ οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους τοῦ ὑμετέρου πιστεύειν λέγοντες ἐπὶ τοῦτον τὸν Χριστὸν, ὁ Τρόφων, ἔλεγον, ἐκ παντὸς κατὰ τὸν διὰ Μωσέως διαταχθέντα νόμον ἀναγκάζοντας ζήν τοὺς ἔξ ἔθνων πιστεύοντας ἐπὶ τοῦτον τὸν Χριστὸν ἢ μὴ κοινωνεῖν αὐτοῖς τῆς τοιαύτης συνδιαγωγῆς αἴρονται, ὁμοίως καὶ τοῦτους οὐκ
The thrust of Justin’s argument against Trypho recalls the debate recorded by Paul in Galatians and alluded to in this section of the Homilies. The ethnic intermingling of Jews/Jewish-Christians and Gentiles is clearly still of major concern in the second century as we have evidence of this debate occurring in both Ebionite and Apostolic-Catholic literature. And although the argument is concerned with the inclusion of Gentiles into the community, the underlying point of contention between the two is who has the apostolic authority to make such a decision.

Accounting for this second century focus on apostolic authority, and drawing from Luke 6.13, Schoeps argues that the primary rubric of apostleship was a first-hand witness to the human Jesus.

445 Luke 6.13-16. “And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.” Καὶ ὅτε ἐγένετο ἡμέρα, προσεφώνησεν τοὺς ἀποδέχομαι. τοὺς δὲ πειθομένους αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὴν ἔννοιον πολιτείαν μετὰ τοῦ φυλάσσειν τὴν εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν τοῦ θεοῦ ὤμολογίαν καὶ σωθήσεσθαι ἵσως ὑπολαμβάνοι. τοὺς δὲ ὤμολογήσαντας καὶ ἐπιγνόντας τοῦτον εἶναι τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ ἠτίνιον αἰτία μεταβάντας ἐπὶ τὴν ἔννοιον πολιτείαν, ἀρνησαμένους δὴ οὐτὸς ἔστιν ὁ Χριστὸς, καὶ πρὶν τελευτῆς μὴ μεταγνώντας, οὐδ’ ὀλος σωθήσεσθαι ἀποφαίνομαι. καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τοῦ σπέρματος τοῦ Ἀβραάμ ζῶντας κατὰ τὸν νόμον καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦτον τὸν Χριστὸν μὴ πιστεύοντας πρὶν τελευτῆς τοῦ βίου οὐ σωθήσεσθαι ὀμοίως ἀποφαίνομαι, καὶ μάλιστα τοὺς ἐν ταῖς συναγωγαῖς καταθεματισθέντας καὶ καταθεματίζοντας τοὺς ἐπ’ αὐτὸν τοῦτον τὸν Χριστὸν πιστεύοντας ὅπως τύχωσι τῆς σωτηρίας καὶ τῆς τιμωρίας τῆς ἐν τῷ πυρὶ ἀπαλλαγόσιν. ἢ γὰρ χριστότης καὶ ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τὸ ἀμετρον τοῦ πλοῦτον αὐτοῦ τὸν μετανοοῦντα ἀπὸ τῶν ἀμαρτημάτων, ὥς δὴ Ἰεροσολύμη μηνύει, ὡς δίκαιον καὶ ἀναμάρτητον ἔχει· καὶ τὸν ἀπὸ εὐσεβείας ἢ δικαιοπραξίας μετατιθέμενον ἐπὶ ἀδικίαν καὶ ἀθεότητα ὡς ἀμαρτολόν καὶ ἀδικον καὶ ἀσεβῆ ἐπίσταται. διὸ καὶ ὁ ἡμέτερος κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ἐπεν τὰ εἰς ἣν ὑμᾶς καταλάβω, ἐν τούτοις καὶ κρίνω.
It is quite clear that the title of apostle, indicating the highest status in primitive Christianity, was reserved for the Twelve by the Synoptic authors. It is my opinion that this Synoptic viewpoint reflects the oldest view of what constitutes a Christian apostle. The apostles are those who stood closest to the historical Jesus and who must therefore be regarded by believers as the authentic eyewitnesses of the events of his life and everything that happened after this death. Even Paul seems to grant at least the fact that where those in Jerusalem who had been apostles ‘before him’ (Gal. 1.17). It was a closed circle, composed of those witnesses who had been associated with the teaching of the early Jesus and who alone had eaten and drunk with the risen Christ (Acts 10.41). In contrast with these, Paul, by virtue of his Damascus encounter, became one of the witnesses of the Resurrection, and not a witness of the early life of Jesus.\footnote{Schoeps, *Jewish Christianity*, 47-48.}

This first century designation of apostleship would prove to be a sticking point of accusations against Paul and his followers for generations. Understood in the context of the second-century, the Ebionites were rehashing this very debate over Paul’s legitimacy in an attempt to undermine their opponent’s entire framework of authority. Paul, as they argue, never saw the human Jesus and therefore has no credible status as an authority of his teaching and therefore according to the Ebionites, Paul is a charlatan who preaches a false gospel and all those who follow him do likewise.

The ire of their opinion of Paul is rooted in the reformulation – literally the reframing – of the notion of apostleship. Just as Tertullian took umbrage with the new...
frame of apostle by Marcion, so too do the Ebionites disapprove of Paul and his successor’s reframing of apostle. Schoeps describes Paul’s alteration of apostle as one that still recognizes the authority of the original twelve, but one that certainly grants him a special location. He writes,

Paul those advocates an expanded idea of apostleship which also includes those who have received a special commission from the risen Christ. For Paul, the apostolic circle evidently included others beyond the Twelve, James, and himself…Although Paul thus understood the apostolate to be something quite different from what those in Jerusalem saw it to be, he nevertheless recognized the Jerusalem apostles as “pillars.” The battle over his apostolic prestige in Galatia and Corinth, however, finally led him to claim that he was the last and decisive member of the apostolic circle. He made this claim over against the tradition of the primitive church, which apparently maintained that the appearances of the risen Christ had ceased with the appearances to the Twelve and James. 

Paul’s mental shift of the designation of apostle was demonstrably upsetting to the Jerusalem Church church in the first-century historical context, and with the Ebionite response to the followers of Paul in the second century, the frustration does not appear to have subsided. The Ebionite venom towards the Pauline churches of the second century is fundamentally a matter of ecclesial and theological authority as the very premise of Paul’s apostolicity is rejected. Unlike the Apostolic-Catholics who will subsume Paul within their umbrella, the Ebionites demand total and unmitigated capitulation of the Pauline churches to their authority. As it reads in the Recognitions,

447 See Chapter three.

448 Schoeps, Jewish Christianity, 50.
Wherefore observe the greatest caution, that you believe no teacher, unless he brings from Jerusalem the testimonial of James the Lord’s brother, or of whosoever may come after him. For no one, unless he has gone up thither, and there has been approved as a fit and faithful teacher for preaching the word of Christ, —unless, I say, he brings a testimonial thence, is by any means to be received. But let neither prophet nor apostle be looked for by you at this time, besides us. For there is one true Prophet, whose words we twelve apostles preach; for He is the accepted year of God, having us apostles as His twelve months. But for what reason the world itself was made, or what diversities have occurred in it, and why our Lord, coming for its restoration, has chosen and sent us twelve apostles, shall be explained more at length at another time. Meantime He has commanded us to go forth to preach, and to invite you to the supper of the heavenly King, which the Father hath prepared for the marriage of His Son, and that we should give you wedding garments, that is, the grace of baptism; which whosoever obtains, as a spotless robe with which he is to enter to the supper of the King, ought to beware that it be not in any part of it stained with sin, and so he be rejected as unworthy and reprobate.  

There is only one Church and path of God, and it is through the Twelve who are led by James, not Paul.

**The Mystical Authority of Paul**

The second point of Simon’s response avers that the Ebionite message is inconsistent and formulated entirely through material acquisition. The counter from Peter is poignantly charged at the matter of authority of teaching and one clearly intended for his second-century Valentinian opponents. Not one to mince words, Peter replies to ___________

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449 *Rec. IV.35.*
Simon’s charge stating, “You alleged that, on this account, you knew more than I do, because you heard his words through an apparition.” Peter proceeds to justify the prophetic nature of Jesus as a teacher, one confirmed by God and prophet alike, who recognize the inherent authority and message of Christ. Peter also challenges his assertion for the confidence in visionary revelation because it cannot be evaluated. He counters, arguing that when an instruction is heard in person, one is able to question the teaching if something is unclear for clarification and deeper understanding. Furthermore, he disparages his opponents for the passive receiving of muddled knowledge through dreams and finally asserts that, “he who trusts to apparition or vision is insecure. For he does not know to whom he is trusting. For it is possible either that he may be an evil demon or a deceptive spirit, pretending in his speeches to be what he is not.”

The focus of the argument now becomes quite detailed as the two argue over whether or not an impious individual will receive a true vision from the divine. Simon’s argument relies on the premise that God will only provide true revelation to those who are worthy of such an experience. Peter, almost humorously, rejoinders asking, “you were right. But who is just, if he stands in need of a vision that they may learn what he ought to learn, and do what he ought to do?” Peter then takes a different tact and approaches the argument in anthropological terms contending that the material nature of humanity

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450 Hom. XVII. XIV.
451 Hom. XVII. XIV.
452 Hom. XVII. XV.
necessarily prevents one from seeing God in any respect, because the dividing of God would quite literally obliterate the created human. Save for Jesus, it is only through the material transformation into heavenly corporeality that one may encounter the divine without perishing. As Peter explains,

> For I maintain that the eyes of mortals cannot see the incorporeal form of the Father or Son, because it is illumined by exceeding great light. Wherefore it is not because God envies, but because He pities, that He cannot be seen by man who has been turned into flesh. For he who sees God cannot live. For the excess of light dissolves the flesh of him who sees; unless by the secret power of God the flesh be changed into the nature of light, so that it can see light, or the substance of light be changed into flesh, so that it can be seen by flesh. For the power to see the Father, without undergoing any change, belongs to the Son alone. But the just shall also in like manner behold God; for in the resurrection of the dead, when they have been changed, as far as their bodies are concerned, into light, and become like the angels, they shall be able to see Him. Finally, then, if any angel be sent that he may be seen by a man, he is changed into flesh, that he may be able to be seen by flesh. For no one can see the incorporeal power not only of the Son, but not even of an angel. But if one sees an apparition, he should know that this is the apparition of an evil demon.

In sum, Peter’s rejection of Simon’s argument relies on the total rejection of visionary episodes whatsoever. The incomprehensible awesomeness of God is literally unfathomable by humanity and therefore cannot be encountered without precaution and explanation. The very claim to a revelatory granted knowledge or authority is impossible for Peter and the Ebionites. The only plausible explanation is that the vision came from a demon who sought to lead the person astray with false teachings. The total rejection of

453 *Hom. XVII. XVI.*
visionary authority serves collectively to undermine the authority of the second-century opponents, both Jewish and Christian.

**The Mystical Authority of Apocalyptic Judaism**

Although this debate takes place between Simon and Peter in the context of the legitimacy of Paul, it also occurs within the larger framework of the legitimacy of visionary episodes at all. This concern for visionary episodes and the secretive teaching associated with it is also witnessed in other second-century Jewish circles. For instance, in the contemporary late first- or second-century text *4 Ezra*, there is a similar advocacy for receiving a visionary episode and only disseminating that information within a select group, here identified as the wise.\(^{454}\) In the narrative, Ezra has been told to take five scribes and to separate himself from everyone in order to write down the knowledge that he is going to receive.\(^{455}\) The narrative picks up with him speaking in the first person and following these instructions,

So I took the five men, as he commanded me, and we proceeded to the field and remained there. And it came to pass, on the next day, behold, a voice called me saying, “Ezra, open your mouth and drink what I give you


\(^{455}\) *4 Ezra* 14.23-27.
to drink." Then I opened my mouth, and behold, a full cup was offered to me; it was full of something like water, but its color was like fire. And I took it and I drank; and when I had drunk it, my heart poured forth understanding, and wisdom increased in my breast, and my spirit retained its memory; and my mouth was opened, and was no longer closed. And the Most High gave understanding to those five men, and by turns they wrote what was dictated in characters they did not know. They sat forty days, and wrote during the daytime, and ate their bread at night.

The scene presented above clearly depicts a visionary episode that is induced by the drinking of fire-like beverage. In this visionary state, Ezra receives a secret knowledge from the divine that he has been instructed to write down and share with his community. However, the secretive nature of the visionary experience is emphasized even more in the next passage, as Ezra is then instructed to only share certain books with the people, but to keep the final seventy books to the “wise” among him. As the text reads,

And when the forty days were ended, the Most High spoke to me, saying, “Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first and let the worthy and unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people. For in them are springs of understanding, the fountains of wisdom, and the river of knowledge.” And I did so.


In effect, the vision given to Ezra is to be limited to only a certain group within the selected people of Judaism. The message of God in this text is not only revealed exclusively through vision, but it even comes with specific stipulations about how, and to whom, the text may be shared. So just as we see Peter’s condemnation of visionary episodes relevant to his Pauline opponents, so here too would it apply to his Jewish compatriots as well.

Furthermore, in conflating the two opposing groups through one shared action – secretive, visionary knowledge – Peter and the Ebionites are blending the two opponents in the minds of the reader. All those, regardless of the specific religious affiliation, who rely on divine revelation as their source of knowledge are not legitimate and should not be recognized as authoritative teachers of divine wisdom. The Charismatic Catholics relied on the spiritually informed theology of itinerant teachers, the Valentinians on the knowledge acquired through ecstatic visionary episodes, and the Marcionites on Paul’s visionary experience with the risen Christ. To reject the very premise of all three is to reject the very premise Pauline authority in any respect, and to conflate these groups with Jewish opponents of a similar practice, is all the more a denial of visionary authority. Simply put, for the Ebionites, there is no question: Paul was not an apostle, has no claims to apostolic authority, and therefore has no legitimate right to preach a divinely approved Christian message.

459 The secretive element of this teaching was anticipated in God’s instructions to Ezra in 14.26. “And when you have finished, some things you shall make public, and some you shall deliver in secret to the wise; tomorrow at this hour you shall begin to write.”
Peter does grant the possibility for divinely given knowledge, however, this occurs not through passive visions or dreams but rather through the divine confirmation of teaching. Peter recounts his exchange with Jesus when he is asked, “who do you say I am?” and Peter replies, “You are the son of the living God.” Peter justifies this knowledge as a moment of revelation and explains that he “learned that revelation is knowledge gained without instruction, and without apparition and dreams.” He continues and argues that the soul is where the knowledge of God resides in humanity, but that knowledge is only developed through the hand of God who guides the individual to understanding. Furthermore, in appealing to God’s own words regarding revelation, Peter exclaims that God clearly stipulated that revelation alone only comes to those with whom God is displeased. As Peter says,

Finally, then, it is written in the law, that God, being angry, said to Aaron and Miriam, ‘If a prophet arises from amongst you, I shall make myself known to him through visions and dreams, but not so as to my servant Moses; because I shall speak to him in an outward appearance, and not through dreams, just as one will speak to his own friend.’ You see how the statements of wrath are made through visions and dreams, but the statements to a friend are made face to face, in outward appearance, and not through riddles and visions and dreams, as to an enemy.

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460 Matt. 16.15-16. λέγει αὐτοῖς· ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι; ἀποκριθεὶς δὲ Σίμων Πέτρος εἶπεν· σὺ εἰ ὁ χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος.

461 Hom. XVII. XVIII.

462 Hom. XVII. XVIII.
For Peter, revelation is simply an unreliable means of receiving divine knowledge. The Ebionites intend to undermine the entire apparatus of Pauline authority because it derives exclusively through visionary experiences.

**Asserting the Authority of James**

Similar to the Apostolic-Catholics, Peter also asks the very simple question, “If, then, our Jesus appeared to you in a vision, made Himself known to you, and spoke to you, it was as one who is enraged with an adversary; and this is the reason why it was through visions and dreams, or through revelations that were from without, that He spoke to you. But can anyone be rendered fit for instruction through apparitions? And if you will say, ‘It is possible,’ then I ask, ‘Why did our teacher abide and discourse a whole year to those who were awake?’” This is a similar tact taken by both Irenaeus and Tertullian in engaging the Valentinians and the Marcionites who claim that Paul was given a special, true teaching, that was not given to the other disciples.  

Peter concludes his rebuke of Simon by questioning the legitimacy of his claims. Then, in an implied appeal to the story of Galatians, Peter encourages Simon and his compatriots to submit to the authority of his governance. He declares, “But if you say that I am condemned, you bring an accusation against God, who revealed the Christ to me,  

463 See chapters two and three respectively.
and you inveigh against Him who pronounced me blessed on account of the revelation. But if, indeed, you really wish to work in the cause of truth, learn first of all from us what we have learned from Him, and, becoming a disciple of the truth, become a fellow-worker with us."\(^{464}\) Clearly speaking to the historical reality of their inability to persuade their opponents, Simon responds, “Far be it from me to become his or your disciple.”\(^{465}\) He then concludes, affirming their Valentinian or Marcionite perspective, “And now, tomorrow, I shall come to your opinions in regard to God, whom you affirmed to be the framer of the world; and in my discussion with you, I shall show that he is not the highest, nor good, and that your teacher made the same statements as I now do; and I shall prove that you have not understood him.”\(^{466}\)

**Conclusion**

The Ebionite Church was originally part of the Jerusalem Church formed after the death of Christ. However, through the rise in the Pauline churches of the Charismatic Catholics, the Valentinians, and the Marcionites, the Jerusalem Church was confronted with alternative forms of Christian fellowship that rooted their authority in the revelation.

\(^{464}\) *Hom. XVII. XIX.*

\(^{465}\) *Hom. XVII. XX.*

\(^{466}\) *Hom. XVII. XX.*
teaching, and authority of Paul. As a response, the Jerusalem Church fractured as liberal elements of this group sought to incorporate the growing power of the Pauline church with their own, while the more conservative Ebionite group splintered and rejected the authority of Paul entirely. The schism of the Jerusalem Church proved a fundamental witness to early Christian factionalism as it provides a window into the debates between the conservative Jewish-Christian Ebionite community, the Apostolic-Catholics, Pauline Churches, and Jewish communities. Ultimately, these debates centered around authority. With the Apostolic-Catholics the Ebionites were concerned with matters of ecclesial structure and jurisdiction, with the Pauline Churches their issues centered around apostolicity and divinely-granted authority, and with the Jewish communities they contended over the validity of esoteric practices.

The Ebionite rejection of these Pauline elements forced their ultimate isolation – and eventual demise – as they were no longer equipped to participate in the theological debates of Late Antique Christianity that hinged upon the Pauline authority they denied.
Introduction

The second-century writers who would later become the foundational thinkers of the Catholic Church, and who are here referred to as the Apostolic-Catholics, conceived of Paul as one who spoke with the full apostolic authority of the other apostles, but is not himself the architect of the apostolic teaching. Formulated through their engagement with the other communities already discussed, Paul, in this collective memory, is the teacher of knowledge received and verified by the apostles and is but a medium of a shared, apostolic, teaching. The early Christians consistently emphasized the image of Paul as Teacher, however, what this specifically meant was not uniformly understood. For the Apostolic-Catholics, the role of teacher for Paul was not rooted in his authority, but rather in the authority of the apostolic teaching.

In the second century, these Apostolic-Catholics were attempting to organize a church of one teaching that was governed by a single ecclesial authority, and imagined Paul in a position that mirrored their own assumed breadth of authority over all
Christians. Quite remarkably, the early thinkers who remember Paul in this fashion were from different communities and had little formal interaction with each other, yet they all held a similar perspective. In response to the transgressive memories of Paul, they argued for a model of the apostolic succession of knowledge and scripture that informed and defended their theology and justified their ecclesial structure, as they imagined themselves behaving in a similar manner as Paul did in sharing that same message.

In the late first and second centuries, these writers independently of each other began to organize their churches as one drawn from a single teaching that was governed by a single scriptural and ecclesial authority. DeConick, although speaking specifically to gnostic opposition, explains the historical impetus for constructing the apostolic-succeesion model. She writes,

In the second century, there was no agreement among Gnostic leaders, no formal ties or connections, and no official mode to transmit leadership from one generation to the next within their groups. Tertullian says that each teacher put forward his own opinions or interpretations of scripture, with none of them agreeing on anything. Some teachers would say “this is not so,” while another would remark, “I take this in a different sense,” or “I don’t admit that.” This vapid diversity and leadership vacuum resulted in decentralized power structures that were unable to sustain their communities intra-generationally….By the middle of the second-century, the Apostolic-Catholic Christians had started to build a network of churches across the Mediterranean that connected their congregations to each other in terms of leadership, doctrine, and ritual. They even began centralizing control around the Roman see, which traced its authority back to the teachings of both Peter and Paul.\textsuperscript{467}

\textsuperscript{467} DeConick, “Gnostic Spirituality,” 179.
DeConick highlights the interplay between gnostic communities and the Apostolic-Catholics whereby community formation occurs due to the interaction with the other. This process of self-definition by opposition results in mutual identity construction. The Apostolic-Catholics were responding to the popularity of Paul among their second-century Charismatic, Valentinian, and Marcionite opponents who advocated for secretive and inspired knowledge and decried formal ecclesial structures. The Apostolic-Catholic response to these movements was to create an even more formalized structure of authority and control. As DeConick explains,

They [Apostolic-Catholics] understood their beliefs and procedures to have a history – a tradition – that connected them directly to Jesus and the apostles. They began promoting their tradition as “apostolic” and “scriptural” in their publications, and they distributed these publicly, writing to Roman politicians as well as fellow Christians. This meant that in their widely distributed print media, they grounded themselves in a Jewish past of piety and scripture, something which gave their “new” religion an aura of ancestry and merit, along with a built-in set of assumptions about YHWH and the human being.468

DeConick helpfully speaks to the broad response of the Apostolic-Catholics and their more public response to these transgressive communities. These actions were a public statement to claim the historical connection to, and thereby claim assumption of, the authorities of the true teachings of the divine; namely, the Patriarchs, Jesus, Peter, and of course, Paul.

What I include below is a survey of these thinkers, writers, and texts in order to demonstrate the scope of this position across the Mediterranean in the second century.

Given that these movements would eventually cohere as the Catholic church in Late Antiquity, it is not surprising that we would possess more examples of this perspective as the “winners” of history are more apt to keep a record of themselves than to propagate the history of their opponents. With this in mind, I have confined my consideration to the most prominent non-canonical examples of this memory in order to emphasize the geographical lengths, theological development, and coherence of this memory. These memories were formed through the mutual process of identity construction from interacting with the other communities and memories already discussed. In each of the previous chapters I have provided significant examples of the exchanges between these different communities, so here I focus on the individual memories of the Apostolic-Catholic thinkers to emphasize the consistency and development of the memory.

**Clement of Rome**

Clement of Rome, as *I Clement* is attributed to, was known quite extensively in the early church and was consistently associated with the apostles, and in particular, Peter and Paul in Rome.\(^{469}\) Irenaeus has a list of Roman bishops that include Linus, Anacletus,

\(^{469}\) The attribution to Clement is first made by Hegesippus, whom Eusebius records describing a letter from Clement to the Corinthian church during the persecution of Domitian in 96 CE (Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, 3.16; 4.22.1). The most recent full treatments of *I Clement* are Andreas Lindemann, *Die Clemensbriefe*, HNT 17 (Tübingen: Mohr
and Clement, who apparently were in office “after the apostles,” and Clement of Alexandria often refers to 1 Clement as either from the Church of Rome, or Clement specifically. 470 Both Tertullian and Eusebius record that Peter had ordained Clement as bishop of Rome, although this is unlikely as there is no evidence of a monarchical episcopate in the late first or early second century when Clement was active. 471 Regardless of his official title, he was certainly a figure of some eminence in the Roman community who wrote to the Church in Corinth intending to end their discord and reunite them.

In his letter to Corinth, he encourages his audience to “set before [their] eyes the good apostles.” 472 He first lists Peter and remarks briefly upon his witness to Christ and how he now resides in the “place of glory.” 473 After Peter, he then discusses Paul and writes,

Because of jealousy (ζηλον) and strife Paul pointed the way to the prize for endurance. Seven times he bore chains: he was sent into exile and

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470 Irenaeus, Adv. Haer., 3.3.3.

471 Tertullian, Praescr. 32; Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., 3.4.10. For historical analysis of this assertion see, Stewart, Original Bishops, 20-26., and Lampe, From Paul to Valentinus, 206-217.

472 1 Clement, 5.3. Unless otherwise noted, all translations and Greek taken from Ehrman. λάβωμεν πρὸ ὁφθαλμῶν ἡμῶν τοὺς ἀγαθοὺς ἀποστόλους.

473 1 Clement, 5.4. τόπον τῆς δόξης
stoned; he served as a herald in both the East and the West; and he received the noble reputation for his faith. He taught righteousness to the whole world, and came to the limits of the West, bearing his witness before the rulers. And so he was set free from this world and transported up to the holy place, having become the greatest (μέγιστος) example of endurance.  

Although there is a clear emphasis on the martyrdom of Paul, an issue that will be addressed in a later section, there is also a specific mention of his role as teacher. Paul is not only identified as teacher, but explicitly as the one who “taught righteousness in both the East and the West.” Clement keys into the widely accepted mental frame of Paul as teacher evidenced in the other Pauline churches already discussed, and then refracts the image to apply the model of orthodox teacher to himself. This refraction serves to justify his own intervention in the Corinthian Church in a move that appeals to the proliferation of apostolic message across the Mediterranean. As a supplement to

474 1 Clement, 5.5-7. διὰ ζηλοῦν καὶ ἔριν Παύλος ὑπομονής βραβεῖον ὑπέδειξεν, πτάκις δεσμὸν φορέας, φυγαδευθεὶς, λίθασθεὶς, κήρυξ γενόμενος ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει, τὸ γενναῖον τῆς πίτεως αὐτοῦ κλέος ἔλαβεν. δικαιοσύνην διδάξας ἔν τοῖς κόσμοις, καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ τέρμα τῆς δύσεως ἐλθὼν καὶ μαρτυρήσας ἐπὶ τῶν ἱκουμένων, οὕτως ἀπήλλαγη τοῦ κοσμοῦ καὶ εἰς τὸν ἄγιον τόπον ἀνελήμφθη, ὑπομονής γενόμενος μέγιστος ὑπογραμμός.

475 Pervo suggests that Paul was more important for Clement because he lists his hardships and only states that Peter suffered. While this may be the case, with the consistent emphasis on apostolic equality and unity, it is unlikely that Clement advocated Paul over Peter. It is more probable that Clement was appealing to the Corinthian knowledge of Paul that may or may not have had of Peter. Pervo, Making of Paul, 130-134.

476 1 Clement, 5.6. κήρυξ γενόμενος ἐν τῇ ἁγίᾳ καὶ ἐν τῇ δύσει,

477 Pervo observes Clement’s adoption of the Pauline model of church unity. As he explains, “In the Pauline tradition, although not necessarily exclusively so, the text
this shift, Clement also equates both Peter and Paul in this section in an attempt to show the unity of the apostolic message between both figures. Clement is building a case that Paul and Peter taught the same message, which he now himself teaches, and thereby maps the authority of Peter and Paul onto himself.

Clement extends his theological authority even further and suggests that the apostolic succession model is greater than the disciples and Jesus and goes directly to God. He thus makes the divine connection of the apostolic authority of the disciples and their successors. As he explains,

The apostles were given the gospel for us by the Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Chris was sent forth from God. Thus Christ came from God and the apostles from Christ. Both things happened, then, in an orderly way according to the will of God. When, therefore, the apostles received his commands and were fully convinced through the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and persuaded by the word of God, they sent forth proclaiming the good news that the kingdom of God was about to come, brimming with confidence through the Holy Spirit. And as they preached throughout the countryside and in the cities, they appointed the first fruits of their ministries as bishops and deacons of those who were about to believe, testing them by the spirit. And this was no recent development. For indeed, bishops and deacons had been mentioned in writings long before. For thus the scripture says in one place, "I will appoint their bishops in righteousness and their deacons in faith." 478

assumes that Christians at both Rome and Corinth constitute a single organization. This is debatable for Rome and may not have been the case at Corinth, but the assumption represents the importance of the concept of unity. Like Paul, I Clement does not wish the house-based communities to consider themselves independent, but as part of the same local community.” Pervo, Making of Paul, 127.

478 I Clement, 42.1-5. Οι ἀπόστολοι ἤμων εὐχαριστήσαν ἀπό τοῦ κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Ἰησοῦς ὁ Χριστὸς ἐξ ὕπατο θεοῦ ἐξεπέμφθη. ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ θεὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἀπὸ τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐγένοντο οὐν ἀμφότερα εὐτάκησε ἐκ θελήματος θεοῦ. παραγγελίας οὐν λαβόντες καὶ πληροφορηθέντες διὰ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ κυρίου ἤμων Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ πιστωθέντες ἐν τῷ λόγῳ τοῦ θεοῦ, μετὰ πληροφορίας πνεύματος
Clement explicitly discusses the notion of apostolic succession and explains to the Corinthians that the apostles appointed heirs for themselves as leaders because they could anticipate the difficulties of ecclesial management. As Clement continues, he further explains the importance and significance of the apostolic selection of leaders for the church. He writes,

So too our apostles knew through our Lord Jesus Christ that strife would arise over the office of the bishop. For this reason, since they understood perfectly well in advance what would happen, they appointed those we have already mentioned; and afterwards they added a codicil, to the effect that if these should die, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. Thus we do not think it right to remove from the ministry those who were appointed by them or, afterwards, by other reputable men, with the entire church giving its approval. 479

άγιον ἐξῆλθον εὐαγγελιζόμενοι, τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ θεοῦ μέλλειν ἐρχεσθαι. κατὰ χώρας οὖν καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες καθίσταν τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, κοκιμᾶσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τὸν μελλόντων πιστεύειν. καὶ τοῦτο οὐ καίνος· ἐκ γὰρ δὴ πολλῶν χρόνων ἐγέρσατο περὶ ἐπισκόπων καὶ διακόνων. οὕτως γὰρ ποιεῖ ἡ γραφὴ. Καταστήσω τοὺς ἐπισκόπους αὐτῶν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ καὶ τοὺς διακόνους αὐτῶν ἐν πίστει.

479 1 Clement, 44.1-3. Καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι ἠμόν ἔγνωσαν διὰ τοῦ κυρίου ἠμόν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὅτι ἔρις ἔσται ἐπὶ τοῦ ὅνοματος τῆς ἐπισκοπῆς. διὰ ταύτην όμον τὴν αἰτίαν πρόγνωσι εἰληφότες τελείαν κατέστησαν τοὺς προερημένους, καὶ μεταξὺ ἐπινομῆς διδάσκασιν, ὡς, ἐὰν κοιμήθοσι, διαδέχεται ἐτεροὶ δοκιμασμένοι ἄντρες τὴν λειτουργίαν αὐτῶν. τοὺς όμοι κατασταθέντας ὑπὸ ἐκείνων ἢ μεταξὺ ὑπὸ ἐτέρων ἐλλογίων ἄνδρων συνεισφέρεσθε τῆς ἐκκλησίας πάσης, καὶ λειτουργήσαντας ἅμεσως τῷ πατρὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ μετὰ ταπεινοφροσύνης, ἡσύχως καὶ ἀβανᾶς, μεμαρτυρήμενος τε πολλοὶς χρόνοις ὑπὸ πάντων, τούτους όμοι δικαίως νομίζομεν ἀποβάλλεσθαι τῆς λειτουργίας.
This passage is most likely to be read in his present circumstance of attempting to create unity among the Corinthians. His argument for the authority of “reputable” men would of course speak to his current situation so removed from the historical and original apostles. Clement constructs a divine connection of the apostles, explains their ability to select leaders, and argues that the community should recognize whom they appoint. What is significant about this argument is how he employs it to justify his use of Paul in his letter. Attempting to end their discord, he encourages the Corinthians to look at the letter Paul sent because Paul was appointed by the apostles and therefore should be recognized as a leader and authority in the church. As he explains,

Take up the epistle of that blessed apostle, Paul. What did he write to you at first, at the beginning of his proclamation of the gospel? To be sure, he sent you a letter in the Spirit concerning himself and Cephas and Apollos, since you were even then engaged in partisanship. But that partisanship involved you in a relatively minor sin, for you were partisan towards reputable apostles and a man approved by them.

Although Clement does not emphasize the pedagogical authority of Paul, it is implied with the reference to his letter and how they should abide by its teachings. Furthermore,


481 Clement’s explicit reference to Paul in this quote is the first historical witness to his authority by a follower in a different situation. Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 129.

482 1 Clement, 47.1-4. Ἀναλάβετε τὴν ἐπιστολὴν τοῦ μακαρίου Παύλου τοῦ ἀποστόλου. τί πρῶτον ὑμῖν ἐν ἀρχῇ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγραφεν; ἐπ’ ἀληθείᾳ πνευματικῶς ἐπέστειλεν ὑμῖν περὶ έαυτοῦ τε καὶ Κηφᾶ τε καὶ Απολλῶ, διὰ τοῦτο τὸ προσκλίσεις ὑμᾶς πεποίησαν. ἀλλ’ ἡ πρόκλησις ἐκείνη ἦττονα ἀμαρτίαν ὑμῖν προσήνεγκεν· προσεκλίθητε γάρ ἀποστόλοις μεμαρτυρημένοις καὶ ἀνδρὶ δεδοκιμασμένῳ παρ’ αὐτοῖς.
in this passage Clement is using the authority of apostolic succession to justify the authority of Paul as teacher and show that Paul represents a message that was approved by, and therefore endorsed by, the original apostles. Clement maps the authority of Paul and the disciples as teachers over himself in order to legitimate his intercessory actions among the Corinthians and to demonstrate that Paul is recognized as a teacher who represents the singular message of the apostles.

Clement’s emphasis on the apostolic authority of the contemporary ecclesial authorities in Corinth belies an endorsement of the Apostolic-Catholic ecclesial structure. The purpose of his letter is to ameliorate the factionalism of the church in Corinth and unify them under the umbrella of the apostolically approved church leaders. In other words, Clement is specifically responding to the interjection of “non-approved” or visiting teachers. Clement must appeal to the authority of Paul in the city, as his memory looms large for the respective factions, but he must also map the authority of Paul onto those who follow the teachings of Peter and others in order to cohere to the church into a single, unified entity. Clement’s approach of apostolic-succession respects the memory of Paul of the city and is thoroughly informed by the charismatic situation of the city. In response to this intrusion into the church Clement constructs a memory of Paul that is inclusive, rather than exclusive, to unify the community.

Clement formulates his memory of Paul through his response to the charismatic influence on the church in Corinth. He writes to the church with the intention of ending their discord and uniting them under a single umbrella of Apostolic-Catholic ecclesial authority, and does so by mapping the authority of Paul as teacher and church-founder onto the message he himself brings. He must appeal to the authority of Paul both for the
region and for the interjecting charismatic teachers who purposefully seek to undermine the authority of the Apostolic-Catholics. It is in response to this situation and this transgressive community that Clement articulates his memory of Paul.

Clement understands Paul to have been a teacher who represents the single message of the united apostles. Although Paul is not venerated over the other apostles he is clearly associated with the governance and authority figures of the early churches and remembered for his teaching and apostolic authority and unity. Clement has keyed into the popularity of Paul in the Corinthian community and attempted to temper, to domesticate, the charismatic components of Paul’s teaching and place him in line with the apostolic message of Peter and the other disciples. That he goes even further and connects Paul’s apostolicity and authority with that of God clearly shows his intent to construct a single church, with a single message, and align Paul with that message.

Clement was literally stripping Paul of his charismatic authority and brandishing him as divinely selected, apostolically approved, Apostolic-Catholic who taught a message of unity, order, and ecclesial structure. And though I do not assert a historical connection between the two, it should be noted that this conflation of Peter and Paul as teachers occurs before the publication of Acts of the Apostles. The move to domesticate Paul as a teacher of the same apostolic message had begun non-canonically in the late first century with Clement of Rome.
Papias of Hierapolis

The first non-canonical writer at the turn of the century in Asia Minor for whom we have evidence is Papias of Hierapolis. Papias was an active teacher and preacher during the time of Trajan and Hadrian, and Irenaeus describes him as one “who had heard John, was a companion of Polycarp, and an old man.” At the turn of the first century he was recognized as the bishop of Hierapolis, known for his interaction with the presbyters of the disciples, and renowned as a figure in the transition from the original apostles to the next generation. Papias wrote extensively about the lives and times of the apostles, although none of these writings remain and only anecdotes are recorded in his extant Fragments. We know little else of his life and teachings, except that Eusebius, Jerome, John of Scythopolis, Stephan Gobarus, and Photius all identify and condemn Papias for his millenarian views; and given he mentions of the 1,000 year period when the saints will rule with Christ in the Fragments, and his familiarity with the Jewish apocalyptic literature, his millenarian position was certainly probable.

483 First non-canonical figure within the umbrella of orthodox Catholicism.


485 Eusebius, Hist. Eccl., 3.36.2; 39.4. Stewart suggests that this role was more communal in effect, and that Papias would have been one of many e0piskopoi= in the region who were responsible for communal governance, maintaining the lines of orthodoxy, and for preaching to the community. Stewart, Original Bishops, 297.

Papias’ first fragment was likely the introduction to his collective works that are no longer extant.\(^{487}\) In this section, he introduces his method and approach, and explains how he will transmit the information he received from the original disciples. He writes,

But I shall not be unwilling to put down, along with my interpretations whatsoever instructions I received with care at any time from the elders, and stored up with care in my memory, assuring you at the same time of their truth. For I did not, like the multitude, take pleasure in those who spoke much, but in those who taught the truth; nor in those who related strange commandments, but in those who rehearsed the commandments given by the Lord to faith, and proceeding from truth itself. If, then, anyone who had attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings,—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord’s disciples: which things Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say. For I imagined that what was to be got from books was not so profitable to me as what came from the living and abiding voice.\(^{488}\)

Papias is intentionally constructing a model of the Apostolic Succession of teaching.

Although comfortable enough in his relationship with the disciples that he was willing to add his own interpretations to the information, he still rooted the authority of his teaching in the ‘elders’ from whom he was taught, even though he does not mention Paul.\(^{489}\) With


\(^{488}\) Papias, frag., 1. Unless otherwise noted, all translations from ANF.

\(^{489}\) Papias, frag., 1. “If, then, anyone who had attended on the elders came, I asked minutely after their sayings,—what Andrew or Peter said, or what was said by Philip, or by Thomas, or by James, or by John, or by Matthew, or by any other of the Lord’s disciples: which things Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say.”
his personal relationship with John and the associated Johannine Federation of Asia Minor, it should not be surprising that this list excludes Paul, whom he likely never met. However, in his fifth fragment, he does name Paul specifically and quotes from him under the designation, “the apostle.” In this fragment, he discusses the sequence of those who will enter heaven and refers to 1 Corinthians 15. Papias writes,

The presbyters, the disciples of the apostles, say that this is the gradation and arrangement of those who are saved, and that they advance through steps of this nature; and that, moreover, they ascend through the Spirit to the Son, and through the Son to the Father; and that in due time the Son will yield up His work to the Father, even as it is said by the apostle, “For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” For in the times of the kingdom the just man who is on the earth shall forget to die. “But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He is excepted which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all.”

Papias further develops his understanding of apostolic authority in this fragment in two significant ways. First, he argues for a clear notion of apostolic succession by justifying the presbyters’ salvific teachings as coming from the original apostles. He even plays a word association to describe the current presbyters as “disciples” of the original apostles

490 There is substantial evidence for a Johannine Federation(s) around the city of Ephesus at the time of Papias, and given the explicit connection made between Papias and John, we can conclude that Papias likely referring to this historical community. For more on the Johannine Federations, see Stewart, Original Bishops, 28-31, 297.

491 There is no record of Paul returning to Asia Minor after his trip to Rome, and given his intentions to visit the Church in Spain, it is unlikely that he met Papias in person.

492 Papias, frag., 5.
(οἱ πρεσβύτεροι οἱ τῶν ἀποστόλων μαθηταί), keying into the more familiar epithet of disciples for the original twelve. This shift in frame would transfer the authority of the original disciples to the presbyters, and thus position the teaching as if from the original disciples both in origin and authority. Second, his inclusion of Paul suggests a singular apostolic message for which Paul is also an advocate.

Similar to the approach from Clement, Papias is implicitly suggesting that there is a united teaching from the original apostles, shared with their disciples (the contemporary presbyters of Papias’ time), that was also witnessed and attested by Paul. The translation in the ANF is somewhat misleading with the “even as it is said by the apostle,” because it connotes an unexpected confirmation of Paul. The Greek word translated as “even as” is καθὼς, which while accurate, in this context would be better rendered as “just as” or “similarly so.” The phrase would then read, “and it is said similarly so by the Apostle,” thereby not confirming Paul, but rather reinforcing the original message by Paul. Thus, for Papias, there is a clear and distinct apostolic teaching that is taught from one generation to the next, that is corroborated by writings of Paul the Apostle.

Although Papias does not leave a robust memory of Paul in his extant fragments, he does participate in the larger memory constellation of the second century that remembers Paul as one who taught a message conferred and approved by the apostles. Similar to Clement, Papias was responding to the intrusions of Charismatic Catholics who were attempting to undermine the governing authority of the Apostolic-Catholics.

Given the emphasis that Papias placed on the unity of the teaching and that Paul taught is as well, we can see how he was responding to those communities who relied on Paul’s authority to preach a secret teaching of Paul. Whether this is specifically the Valentinians or Marcionites cannot be determined, but his attention to the unity of the teaching suggests this alternative message was fundamental to his opponents.

His usurpation of Paul into his own apostolic authority was an attempt to strip the notion of secretive teaching from the memory of Paul. In effect, Papias reframed the memory of Paul as one who taught an apostolic memory, and not, one that remembered Paul as a Charismatic teacher of a hidden knowledge.

**Ignatius of Antioch**

Ignatius was the Bishop of Antioch in Syria, who for unknown reasons had been condemned to death in Rome in roughly 140.\(^{494}\) During his journey to Rome he wrote to six churches in Asia Minor, as well as one letter to the church in Rome, and evidently engaged the local communities to some degree during his travels.\(^{495}\) The memory of Paul

\(^{494}\) There is much scholarly speculation as to the motivation for his arrest and execution; however, this need not concern our present inquiry. For a detailed treatment see, Allen Brent, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Martyr Bishop and the origin of Episcopacy* (London: T&T Clark International, 2007), 14-22.

\(^{495}\) He is the first writer from Antioch to reference Paul and present him in a favorable light. Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 134. Although there is much debate over the dating of Ignatius’ letters, scholars agree it was in the early- to mid-second century based on the
in Ignatius is difficult to specifically isolate as he does not refer to Paul often and only explicitly mentions him by name twice.\textsuperscript{496} That said, we can still see how Ignatius understood Paul to unite his churches and how he revered him for both his preaching and martyrdom. Despite Ignatius’ own charismatic actions to engage the disconnected churches of Asia Minor under their respective bishops, he still attempted to reframe memory the Paul in these Asia Minor communities.

Ignatius is primarily known for his advocacy of the monepiscopacy among the Asia Minor churches.\textsuperscript{497} According to both Stewart and Trevett, Ignatius was responding to legitimate situations of discord and conflict, and his epistolary record speaks to the historical reality of these ecclesial arguments of authority.\textsuperscript{498} In the case of Ephesus, for instance, Trebilco has shown that Ignatius was writing against a small group who were meeting in prayer without the authority of the bishop and were no longer attending the general church gatherings.\textsuperscript{499} Ignatius understood the details of the situation and

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\textsuperscript{496} Ignatius, \textit{Eph.}, 12.2., and Rom. 4.3.

\textsuperscript{497} For a detailed discussion of this ecclesial model see Stewart, \textit{Original Bishops}, 268-298.


\textsuperscript{499} Trebilco, \textit{Early Christians in Ephesus}, 648-651.
identified the bishop by name, Onesimus, and even remarked on how blessed they are to have him.\(^{500}\) He writes,

For since I was able to establish such intimacy with your bishop so quickly (an intimacy that was not human but spiritual), how much more do I consider you fortunate, you who are mingled together with him as the church is mingled with Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ with the Father, so that all things may be symphonic in unison. Let no one be deceived. Anyone who is not inside the sanctuary lacks the bread of God. For if the prayer of one or two persons has such power, how much more will that of the bishop and the entire church? Therefore, the one who does not join the entire congregation is already haughty and passes judgment on himself, for it is written, ‘God opposes the haughty.’ And so we should be eager not to oppose the bishop, that we may be subject to God.”\(^{501}\)

Similar to Clement’s response to the Corinthian Church, here too we see Ignatius reframe the significance of their separation in divine terms. Ignatius describes the office of the bishop as one found in divine selection, keying into the authority of the divine, and thus reframing their denial of the bishop’s authority as though they were outright denying the divine commandment. Their rejection of the authority of the bishop then stands out all the more starkly as they are rejecting a divinely approved figure.

\(^{500}\) Onesimus is specifically named as the bishop in Ignatius, *Ep. Ephesians*, 6.2.

\(^{501}\) Ignatius, *Ep. Ephesians*, 5.1-3. Unless otherwise noted, all Greek and translations from Ehrman. Εἰ γὰρ ἑγὼ ἐν μικρῷ χρόνῳ τοιαύτην συνήθειαν ἔσχον πρὸς τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὑμῶν, οὕτως ἀνθρωπινῇ οὔσιν, ὀλλὰ πνευματικῆς, πῦρ ἐπάλλον ὑμᾶς μακαρίζω τοὺς ἐγκεκραμένους οὕτως, ὡς ἡ ἐκκλησία Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ὡς Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς τῷ πατρί, ἵνα πάντα ἐν ἑνὸτητι σύμφωνα ἢ; μηδεὶς πλανᾶσθον· ἐὰν μὴ τίς ἢ ἔντος τοῦ θυσιαστηρίου, ὑπερείται τοῦ ἄρτου τοῦ θεοῦ, εἰ γὰρ ἑνὸς καὶ δευτέρου προσευχῆ τοσαυτὴν ἐσχόν ἔχει, πῦρ ἐπάλλον ἢ τε τοῦ ἐπισκόπου καὶ πᾶσι τῆς ἐκκλησίας; ὡς οὖν μὴ ἐρχομένως ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ οὕτως ἢ ἐπερηφανεὶ καὶ ἐαυτὸν διέκρινεν. γέγραπται γὰρ· ‘Ὑπερηφάνοις ο θεός ἀντιτάσσεται, σπουδάσωμεν οὖν μὴ ἀντιτάσσεσθαι τῷ ἐπι-σκόπῳ, ἵνα ὁμοῖος θεῷ ὑποτασσόμενοι.'
Just as Clement before him – though it is unlikely Ignatius ever read the epistle from Clement – Ignatius too equated the authority of the apostolically-selected ecclesial leaders as an extension of a divine instruction. The authority of the bishop, the Apostolic-Catholic leader, is found not in his interpretation, charismatic leadership, or even in what he identifies as scripture. No, his authority is rooted in his very selection to be bishop in the first place. Authority, then, is apostolically constructed by selection against any other claim to ecclesial control.

Governing this ecclesial structure, and replacing the more common first-century model of the house-church, Ignatius advocates for the sole authority of the bishop over the church. In his model, the bishop would serve as the theological authority who alone could mitigate through alternative teachings to ensure the church maintained its allegiance to the apostolic message and unity. This is seen most clearly in his letter to the Ephesians were he remarks, “And so we should be eager not to oppose the bishop, that we may be subject to God…and so we are clearly obliged to look upon the bishop as the lord himself.”

In the opening of the same letter, and similar to Clement’s understanding of the divine influence upon the church, Ignatius likens the church’s adherence to the bishop as a holy subjection to Jesus. He writes,

502 Pervo, Making of Paul, 137.

503 Ignatius, Ep. Ephesians, 5.3-6.1. σπουδάσωμεν οὖν μὴ ἀντιτάσσεσθαι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ, ἵνα ὦμεν θεό ὑποτασσόμενοι… τὸν οὖν ἐπίσκοπον δήλον ὅτι ὡς αὐτὸν κύριον δεῖ προσβλέπειν. It is of note that this is the same justification used by the Ebionites in their memory of James as the bishop of the Jerusalem church.
For it is fitting for you in every way to give glory to Jesus Christ, the one who glorified you, so that you may be holy in all respects, being made complete through a single subjection, being subject to the bishop and the presbytery.\textsuperscript{504}

Ignatius is framing the ecclesial authority of these Apostolic-Catholic churches as if from a divine edict and keying into the authority of apostles as agents of the divine. Ignatius understands this ecclesial authority to be rooted in the apostolic unity his generation inherited.

However, whether this ecclesial structure of authority was already established in Ephesus at the time of the letter is difficult to ascertain. Stewart points out that Ignatius may not have known the ecclesial structures in Asia Minor intimately, and was likely responding from his understanding of the Antiochene ecclesial structure.\textsuperscript{505} Alternatively, Trebilco has suggested that there was a small contingent in Ephesus who were responding to the shift in ecclesial structure to the monepiscopate model, and were instead clinging to their previous structure that did not necessitate ecclesial authority and oversight.\textsuperscript{506}

Regardless of his knowledge of the particular ecclesiology of the Asia Minor churches, that he viewed the structures as interchangeable between the Antiochene

\textsuperscript{504} Ignatius, \textit{Ep. Ephesians}, 2.2. ρέπων οὖν ἑστίν κατὰ πάντα τρόπον δοξάζειν Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν τὸν δοξάσαντα υμᾶς, ἵνα ἔν μιᾷ ὑποταγῇ κατηρτισμένοι, ὑποτασσόμενοι τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ καὶ τῷ πρεσβυτερίῳ, κατὰ πάντα ἦτε ἡγιασμένοι.

\textsuperscript{505} Stewart, \textit{Original Bishops}, 269.

\textsuperscript{506} Trebilco, \textit{Early Christians in Ephesus}, 660-661.
churches and what he experienced on his journey speaks to his understanding of the unity of the apostolic churches. In this regard, Ignatius details the apostolic authority of the ecclesial leadership in the churches he writes, stating,

So too let everyone respect the deacons like Christ Jesus, and also the bishop, who is the image of the Father; and let them respect the presbyters like the council of God and the band of the Apostles. Apart from these a gathering cannot be called a church… but I have not thought that I, a condemned man, should give you orders like an apostle.\textsuperscript{507}

Ignatius’ final remark of humility, the disassociation of himself with the apostles, actually serves to emphasize his apostolic authority. In firmly delineating himself from the apostles, but showing that he still teaches the same, unified message, Ignatius is appealing to this collective memory of Paul as teacher of the apostolic message.\textsuperscript{508}

Indeed, as Pervo has observed,

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{507} Ignatius, \textit{Ep. Trallians}. 3.1.3. Ὅμοιος πάντες ἐντρεπέσθωσαν τοὺς διακόνους ὡς Ἱησοῦν Χριστὸν, ὡς καὶ τὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὄντα τύπον τοῦ πατρὸς, τοὺς δὲ πρεσβυτέρους ὡς συνέδριον θεοῦ καὶ ὡς σύνδεσμον ἀποστόλων. χωρὶς τούτων ἐκκλησία οὐ καλεῖται… οὐκ εἰς τοῦτο φήμην, ἵνα ὁν κατάκριτος ὡς ἀπόστολος ὑμῖν διατάσσωμαι.
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{508} Stewart suggests that Ignatius may be appealing to the reconciling act of Christ between Jews and Gentiles that Paul articulates in his (Paul’s) letter to the Ephesians. Stewart writes, “I may note that, as a reader of Paul, Ignatius shows particular knowledge of the Letter to the Ephesians, the import of which is the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles through Christ’s death. It is possible that, as he sees himself as an imitator of Paul both in his journey to martyrdom in Rome and in his writing activity, he is also an imitator of Christ, whom Paul likewise imitated in seeing his life poured out like a sacrifice, seeing the reconciliation that, I suggest, had taken place in Antioch as the result of his own impending death, sealing agreement between the Jewish and Gentile factions of Antiochene Christianity like a \textit{synthesisia} (a sacrifice jointly made by two parties in order to unite them)? Like the reconciliation to which the canonical Ephesians refers, moreover, it is reconciliation between Jew and Gentile in Christ, not between presbyteral and episcopal forms of governance. Thus, the third positive result is that we may cease to
\end{quote}
Ignatius viewed himself as the bishop who imitated, rather than formally succeeded, the apostles, in particular Paul, whose practice of writing letters to various communities, in both their and his interests. Like 1 Clement, he viewed Paul as both model and authority, but Ignatius developed a consistent theology with a Christological center and basis, inspired by and rooted in Paul, although not exclusively so.\footnote{Pervo, Making of Paul, 139.}

The image of Paul thus constructed here is one of church unifier and teacher of the apostolic message that is reinforced through Ignatius’ memory of Paul as an apostolically endorsed teacher and unifier for the Apostolic-Catholic Church. Whether he was appealing to the common opinion of his audiences or speaking from his own circumstances, or more likely a combination of the two, he also keyed into the memory of Paul as Martyr.

In second-century Asia Minor, the idea of martyrdom was a pervasive element witnessed in several authors and writings.\footnote{Though Paul as Martyr was quite popular in Asia Minor, Clement of Rome actually provides the first historical witness to the martyrdom of Paul (David Eastman, Paul the Martyr: The Cult of the Apostle in the Latin West (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 18.). Writing at the end of the first century, Clement appeals to his martyrdom in his attempt to reunite the Corinthian church. In a passage discussed previously with regard to Paul’s apostolic authority, we now see its inclusion of Paul’s martyrdom as well. After discussing Peter’s death, Clement writes, “Because of jealousy (zh=lon) and strife Paul pointed the way to the prize for endurance. Seven times he bore chains: he was sent into exile and stoned; he served as a herald in both the East and the West; and he received the noble reputation for his faith. He taught righteousness to the whole world, and came to the limits of the West, bearing his witness before the rulers. And so he was see the fundamental theological dispute underlying Ignatius’ formation as being a dispute regarding ecclesiastical governance and may be brought to see instead that it (sic) something more profound.” Stewart, Original Bishops, 292-293.} This notion is first identified in Paul’s letter...
to Colossae when he writes, “I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in
my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the sake of his body,
that is, the church.” The author of the Book of Revelation likewise encourages his
readership in Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Philadelphia, and Laodicea to

set free from this world and transported up to the holy place, having become the greatest
(me/gistoj) example of endurance.” (1 Clement, 5.5-7. Ehrman Translation). As Eastman
notes, the text provides very little information regarding the actual circumstances of
Paul’s death, except to note that it occurred after bearing “witness before the rulers” and
his trip to the “limit of the West,” presumably Spain. It is possible that Clement assumed
his Corinthian readers would know the details of Paul’s martyrdom and therefore chose
not to elaborate. While this is certainly a possibility, Eastman also notes the possibility
that this story is fulfilling the words of God regarding Paul in Acts (Eastman, Paul the
Martyr, 19.). This brief canonical account occurs immediately after Paul’s conversion
when, according to Luke, God tells Ananias to find Paul and to teach him. Luke writes
that “the Lord said, ‘Go, for this man is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name
before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites, and I will show him what he will have to suffer for
my name.’” (Acts 9.15-16.) Although very little information may be gleaned from
Clement’s discussion of his martyrdom, that he recognizes Paul as such, and even
connects him with Peter in this regard, demonstrates the popularity of this memory in the
early church and speaks to the apostolic authority gained from the act.

511 Colossians 1.24. Νῦν χαίρω ἐν τοῖς παθήμασιν ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν καὶ ἀνταναπληρῶ τὰ
ὑστερήματα τῶν θλίψεων τοῦ Χριστοῦ ἐν τῇ σφικί μου ὑπὲρ τοῦ σώματος αὐτοῦ, ὃ ἐστιν
ἡ ἐκκλησία.

512 Revelation 2.11. “Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the
churches. Whoever conquers will not be harmed by the second death.” Ὁ ἔχων οὐς
ἄκουσάτω τι τὸ πνεῦμα λέγει ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις. Ὁ νικῶν οὐ μὴ ἀδικηθῇ ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου
tοῦ δευτέρου.

513 Revelation 2.17. “Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the
churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will
give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows
except the one who receives it.” Ὁ ἔχων οὐς ἄκουσάτω τι τὸ πνεῦμα λέγει ταῖς
ἐκκλησίαις. Τῷ νικῶντι δόσω αὐτῷ τὸ μάννα τοῦ κεκρυμμένου καὶ δόσω αὐτῷ ψήφον
λευκήν, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν ψήφον ὁνόμα καινὸν γεγραμμένον ὃ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν εἰ μὴ ὁ λαμβάνων.
remain obedient to God in order to receive a heavenly reward. The author of 1 Peter also writes to an Asia Minor audience and says,

Revelation 2.26-28. “To everyone who conquers and continues to do my works to the end, I will give authority over the nations; to rule them with an iron rod, as when clay pots are shattered—even as I also received authority from my Father. To the one who conquers I will also give the morning star. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches.” Καὶ ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τηρῶν ἀχρὶ τέλους τῆς ἐργας μου, δόσω αὐτῷ ἐξοσιάν ἐπὶ τῶν ἐθνῶν καὶ ποιμανεῖ αὐτούς ἐν ῥάβδῳ σιδήρῳ ὡς τὰ σκεύη τὰ κεραμικὰ συντρίβεται, ὡς καγὼ εἴληφα παρὰ τοῦ πατρὸς μου, καὶ δόσω αὐτῷ τὸν ἀστέρα τὸν πρωίνων.

Revelation 3.12. “If you conquer, I will make you a pillar in the temple of my God; you will never go out of it. I will write on you the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem that comes down from my God out of heaven, and my own new name.” Ό νικῶν ποιῆσω αὐτὸν στῦλον ἐν τῷ ναῷ τοῦ θεοῦ μου καὶ ἔξω οὐ μὴ ἐξέλθῃ ἐπὶ καὶ γράψω ἐπ’ αὐτὸν τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ θεοῦ μου καὶ τὸ ὄνομα τῆς πόλεως τοῦ θεοῦ μου, τῆς καινῆς Ἰερουσαλήμ ἡ καταβαίνουσα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ μου, καὶ τὸ ὄνομα μου τὸ καινόν.

Revelation 3.17-21. “For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. Therefore, I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire so that you may be rich; and white robes to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen; and salve to anoint your eyes so that you may see. I reprove and discipline those whom I love. Be earnest, therefore, and repent. Listen! I am standing at the door, knocking; if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you, and you with me. To the one who conquers I will give a place with me on my throne, just as I myself conquered and sat down with my Father on his throne.” Ὄτι λέγεις ὅτι πλούσιος εἰμί καὶ πεπλούτηκα καὶ οὐδὲν χρείαν ἔχω, καὶ οὐκ οἶδας ὅτι σὺ εἶ ὁ ταλαίπωρος καὶ ἐλεημόνας καὶ πτωχὸς καὶ τυφλὸς καὶ γιμνός, συμμισθεῖσα σοι ἀγοράσαι παρ’ ἐμοῦ χρυσὸν πεπλωμένον ἐκ πυρὸς ὑπὸ πλούτησης, καὶ ἱματία λεικα ἱνα περιβάλη καὶ μὴ φανερωθῇ ἡ αἰσχύνη τῆς γυμνότητάς σου, καὶ κολλ. [ὁ]ύριον ἐγχρίσαι τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς σου ἢν βλέπῃς. ἐγὼ ὅσοις έναν φιλὸν ἐλέησα καὶ παιδεύω· ἤσθενος οὖν καὶ μετανόησαν. Ἰδοὺ ἐστήκα· ἐπὶ τὴν θύραν καὶ κρούω· εὰν τις ἀκούσῃ τῆς φωνῆς μου καὶ ἀνοιξή τὴν θύραν, [καὶ] εἰσελθόμοι οἱ πρός αὐτόν καὶ δειπνήσω μετ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ αὐτὸς μετ’ ἐμοῦ ὁ νικῶν δόσω αὐτῷ καθίσαι μετ’ ἐμοῦ ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ μου, ὡς καγὼ ἐνίκησα καὶ ἐκάθισα μετά τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἐν τῷ θρόνῳ αὐτοῦ.
Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice insofar as you are sharing Christ’s sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.\(^{517}\)

There is a first-century tradition of suffering for Christ in Asia Minor that the second-century authors connected to martyrdom. As Moss has shown, Christians at this time were not persecuted nearly as much as the written record would suggest.\(^{518}\) However, these texts were used to encourage Christians against persecution, in any degree, and so their import is not found in their historical accuracy, but exhortative aptitude.\(^{519}\) As Moss explains,

Even before the historical Christians started to die, therefore, there was a very strong sense both that death was inevitable and that these deaths would be connected to the greater affairs of the cosmos: either because they served an instrumental purpose in the divine plan, or because they were the result of demonic intervention. There was, therefore, from the beginnings of the Christian mission in Asia Minor a demonstrable interest in theologizing violence.\(^{520}\)

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\(^{517}\) 1 Peter 4.12-14. Ἀγαπητοί, μη ξενίζεσθε τῇ ἐν ύμιν πυρώσει πρὸς πειρασμὸν ύμίν γινομένῃ ὡς ξένου ύμίν συμβαίνοντος, ἀλλὰ καθὼς κοινωνεῖτε τοῖς τοῦ Χριστοῦ παθήμασιν, χαίρετε, ἵνα καὶ ἐν τῇ ἀποκαλύψει τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ χαρῆτε ἀγαλλιώμενοι. εἰ ονειδίζεσθε ἐν ὀνόματι Χριστοῦ, μακάριοι, ὅτι τὸ τῆς δόξης καὶ τὸ τοῦ θεοῦ πνεῦμα ἐφ’ ύμᾶς ἀναπαύεται.


This is the tradition that anticipated the second-century writer of Ignatius who would use this theologized violence motif to valorize Paul and encourage their churches against persecution.

Ignatius wrote his letters in route to his own martyrdom in Rome to the various churches of Asia Minor. While he was primarily focused on influencing the ecclesial structures of these churches, he was gravely concerned with the martyrdoms and sufferings of himself and his readership. In viewing himself as somewhat of an apostolic leader he keyed into the authority of Paul through imitating his letter writing. As Moss explains, “the practice of writing letters to the churches in Asia Minor seems to have been for Ignatius a kind of imitatio Pauli, a way of casting himself as a deuteropauline martyr.” In addition to this imitative aspect, Ignatius also emphasized the communal nature of martyrdom and linked the practice with the Eucharist. In his letter to the Roman church he used clear Eucharistic and sacrificial language, writing,

But grant me nothing more than to be poured out as a libation to God while there is still an altar at hand, that by becoming a chorus in love, you may sing forth to the Father in Jesus Christ, saying that God has deemed the bishop of Syria worthy to be found at the setting of the sun, after sending him from where it rises. For it is good for me to set from the world to God, that I may rise up to him.

521 Moss, Ancient Christian Martyrdom, 55.

522 Although he seems to view Ignatius as a social scapegoat, Brent offers a helpful description of the Eucharistic elements of Ignatius’ understanding of martyrdom. Brent, Ignatius of Antioch, 71-94.

523 Ignatius, Ep. Romans, 2.2. πλέον μοι μὴ παράσαχησθε τοῦ σπονδισθῆναι θεῷ, ὡς ἐτι θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμόν ἐστίν, ἵνα ἐν ἀγάπῃ χορὸς γενόμενοι ἄσπιτε τῷ πατρί ἐν Χριστῷ
Ignatius encouraged his readership to bind together in unison in their prayer over him. Just as Paul suffered for Christ for the benefit of the church, so too here is Ignatius going to suffer for their church. Ignatius is assuming the role of church unifier through his own martyrdom similar to how Paul presented himself to the Colossian Church in his letter, thereby keying the authority of Paul and mapping that authority upon himself. This is what Moss referred to as the “theologized violence,” in which the brutal death of one serves the larger, theological function of unifying Christians under the umbrella of the Apostolic-Catholics.

Ignatius puts a further spin on this interpretation and subtly advocates for the liturgical behaviors of the Apostolic-Catholics. In chapter two we saw how the Valentinians’ liturgical practices were imagistic and designed to elicit ecstatic experiences and divine knowledge for the individual, and oppositely how the Apostolic-Catholics were more concerned with doctrinal liturgies for the community under the governance of the ecclesial authority. In framing his own martyrdom in relation to Paul, Ignatius also appeals to the communal aspect of the Eucharistic liturgy and shows how his martyrdom, done in imitation of Paul, actually serves to unite the entire church in a single action. This emphasis served to directly challenge the individualistic rituals of the Valentinians and show that Paul, in his own martyrdom, died not for the Valentinians, but rather for the Apostolic-Catholics.

Ἰησοῦ, ὃτι τὸν ἐπίσκοπον Συρίας ὁ θεὸς κατηξίωσεν εὑρεθῆναι εἰς δύσιν ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς μεταπεμψάμενος. καλὸν τὸ δύναι ἀπὸ κόσμου πρὸς θεόν, ἵνα εἰς αὐτὸν ἀνατείλω.
The Eucharistic language of this passage is unmistakable as he speaks of being “poured out as a libation to God while there is still an altar at hand.” A few paragraphs later Ignatius identifies himself as the “bread for the wild beasts” and it is through them that he is able to be “wheat of God” and “found to be the pure bread of Christ.” Ignatius was not only representing himself as a contemporary iteration of Paul, but by specifically keying into that memory, he also identified himself as the Eucharistic sacrifice through the imagery of libation and bread.

Ignatius is drawing upon Paul’s own writings in his letter to the Philippians where he writes, “But even if I am being poured out as a libation over the sacrifice and the offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you—and in the same way you also must be glad and rejoice with me.” Ignatius was intentionally connecting himself to Paul through his words, imagery, and role as sacrificial unifier of the church through suffering. As Moss explains,

The framing of Ignatius’ death using a blend of imitative language and liturgical imagery overlays the passion narrative, martyrdom, and the Eucharist. Both martyrdom and the performance of the Eucharist function as imitations of the passion of Jesus and provide access to this

524 Ignatius, Ep. Romans, 2.2, πλέον μοι μὴ παράσπησθε τοῦ σπονδισθῆναι θεῷ, ὡς έτι θυσιαστήριον ἔτοιμον ἔστιν

525 Ignatius, Ep. Romans, 4.1. Ἐγὼ γράφω πάσας ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις, καὶ ἑντέλλομαι πᾶσιν, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἐκών ὑπὲρ θεοῦ ἀποθνῄσκω, ἐάνπερ ὑμεῖς μὴ κωλύσητε. παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς, μὴ εὔνοια ἄκαρος γένησθε μοι. ἀρετῆ με θηρίον εἶναι βορᾶν, δι’ ὃν ἐνεστὶν θεοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν. στός εἰμι θεοῦ καὶ δι’ ὄδόντων θηρίων ἀλῆθος, ἵνα καθαρὸς ἄρτος εὑρεθῶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

526 Philippians 2.17-18.
communion. The use of liturgical language in turn ties the suffering and
death of Ignatius to broader systems of community construction and
sustenance. As a Eucharistic sacrifice Ignatius’ death is set within the
framework of community regulation, and, like the Eucharist, it serves as a
means to maintain and reinforce church unity.  

From the analysis of Moss, one can see the underlying image of Paul emerge that Ignatius
likened himself to; namely, the image of Paul as martyr. This image of martyr is then one
which served to unite the churches, just as Ignatius imagined himself to do. So the image
of Paul as martyr operated in the same functional capacity of church unity and apostolic
authority, in that one must imitate the apostle Paul, who imitated Jesus, in his sacrifice.
Ignatius placed himself in this apostolic tradition and subtly presented himself as a
contemporary sufferer in the same manner as Paul.

In the opening paragraphs of his letter to the Ephesians, Ignatius speaks to the
reality of martyrdom in both the city and larger region and writes,

Now that I have received in God your greatly loved name, which you have
obtained because of your upright nature, according to the faith and love
that is in Christ Jesus our Savior – for you are imitators of God and have
rekindled, through the blood of God, the work we share as members of the
same family, and brought it to perfect completion. For you were eager to
see me, since you heard that I was being brought in chains from Syria
because of the name and hope we share.  

527 Moss, Ancient Christian Martyrdom, 56.

528 Ignatius, Ep. Ephesians, 1.1-2. Ἀποδεξάμενος ἐν θεῷ τὸ πολὺ παγάπητόν σου ὄνομα, ὃν ἡ
κέπτησε φύσει δικαιὰ κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀγάπην ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, τῷ σωτῆρι ἡμῶν; μιμηταὶ ὄντες θεοῦ, ἀναζωπυρήσαντες ἐν αἰματι θεοῦ τὸ συγγενικὸν ἐργὸν τελείως ἀπηρτίσατε: ακούσαντες γὰρ δεδεμένον ἀπὸ Συρίας ὑπὲρ τοῦ κοινοῦ ὄνοματος καὶ ἑλπίδος, ἐλπίζοντα τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν ἐπιτυχεῖν ἐν Ὁ Ῥώμη ἂνομαχῆσαι, ἵνα διὰ τοῦ ἐπιτυχεῖν δυνηθῶ· μαθητής εἶναι, ἰδεῖν ἐσπούδασατε:
In this sequence Ignatius is not only placing himself in the context of the apostolic name and hope, but also identifying himself as figure destined to martyrdom. It is immediately after this passage where he encourages his audience to stay in unity under their bishop, Onesimus.\textsuperscript{529} Ignatius first keys into their own understanding of martyrdom and the role it plays in the church, then imitates Paul both as a sufferer and teacher in an attempt to unify the church in both ecclesial authority and liturgical practice. Ignatius is appealing to the dual memory of Paul as teacher and martyr in this context, and thus there is an equivocation between the images of teacher and martyr for Paul, as they are both used towards the same end: church unity. As Moss has noted, for Ignatius, “the rhetorical function of suffering martyrdom is everywhere tied to notions of church unity, sacrifice, and imitation” of Paul.\textsuperscript{530}

For the Apostolic-Catholic Ignatius, the martyrdom of Paul and image of Paul as teacher and martyr were both understood in the context of church unification. For Ignatius, Paul is a teacher who embodies, quite literally it would seem, the ability to unite the apostolic churches in the true teaching of righteousness against the factionalism of

\textsuperscript{529} Ignatius, \textit{Ep. Ephesians}, 1.3. “Since, then, I have received your entire congregation in the name of God through Onesimus, who abides in a love that defies description and serves as your bishop in the flesh – and I ask by Jesus Christ that you love him, and that all of you be like him. For blessed is the one who has graciously granted you, who are worthy, to obtain such a bishop.” ἐπεὶ οὖν τὴν πολυπλήθειαν ὑμῶν ἐν ὑμνῷ ὑμῶν ὑμᾶς ἐπείληφσα ἐν Ὑσίαμῳ, τῷ ἐν ἀγάπῃ ἀθηηγήτῳ, ὑμὸν δὲ ἐπισκόπῳ, δὲν εὐχομαι κατὰ Ἰησοῦν Χριστὸν ὑμᾶς ἀγαπᾶν καὶ πάντας ὑμᾶς ἄγερῳ ἐν ὑμνῷ ὑμῶν ἐπισκόπον κεκτῆσαι. εὐλογηθῦς γὰρ ὁ χαρισάμενος ὑμῖν ἄξιος οὕς τοιοῦτον ἐπισκόπον κεκτῆσαι.

\textsuperscript{530} Moss, \textit{Ancient Christian Martyrdom}, 57.
rejecting the ecclesial authorities and individualistic liturgical practices. The memory of
Paul for Ignatius, witnessed most acutely in his imitation of this memory, serves to
reinforce the unity of the Apostolic-Catholic Church and its authority derived from the
apostolic selection of ecclesial leaders and the communal nature of their liturgical
practices.

Clement, Papias, and Ignatius all key into to the apostolic unity espoused and
exemplified by Paul to map onto their contemporary ecclesial, theological, and liturgical
concerns, which direct confronts the discursive and transgressive memories of the
Charismatics and Valentinians.

**Polycarp of Smyrna**

Polycarp was a second-century writer who lived roughly from 70 CE to the mid-
first century.\(^{531}\) According to Irenaeus he was converted, baptized, and appointed as
bishop of Smyrna by the original apostles.\(^{532}\) He also was a contemporary and colleague
of Papias, corresponded with Ignatius, and even visited Rome at one point to help settle a

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\(^{531}\) Pervo, *Making of Paul*, 139. For a complete discussion of the life of Polycarp see,
Kenneth Berding, *Polycarp and Paul: An Analysis of their Literary & Theological
Relationship in Light of Polycarp’s use of Biblical & Extra-Biblical Literature* (Leiden:
Brill, 2002), 8-12.

dispute over the date of Easter.\textsuperscript{533} He was martyred as an old man in the mid-second century.\textsuperscript{534} Only his letter to the Philippians remains extant, although a letter from Ignatius to Polycarp and an account of his martyrdom has been preserved as well.\textsuperscript{535}

In his letter, Polycarp was writing to the church in Philippi to encourage them to remain moral and to spread the teachings of Christ. There was evidently some publicly tumultuous social or religious unrest in Philippi that Polycarp was attempting to ameliorate as well. Polycarp’s approach was similar to what was seen as emulation of Paul in Clement and Ignatius; that is to say, Polycarp keyed into the collective memory of Paul as teacher and defender of righteousness to map that authority upon himself and encourage his readers to do likewise. Polycarp still imagined Paul as an extension of the apostles, and did advocate a similar apostolic succession model as seen already among the Apostolic-Catholics, but Polycarp’s unique contribution to this constellation was his

\textsuperscript{533} Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 5.33.; 3.3.4.; Eusebius, \textit{Hist. Eccl.}, 4.14.1; 5.24.16.

\textsuperscript{534} Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 3.3.4.

\textsuperscript{535} There are manuscript errors with the extant versions of his letter; namely, Polycarp’s use of Ignatius’ martyrdom as an example in chapter nine and his request for information about what happened to Ignatius in chapter thirteen. Most of the secondary discussion of this text has focused on whether or not Polycarp knew of Ignatius’ death at the writing of this letter, and therefore, which chapter is an interpolation in to the text. However, for the purposes of this consideration, we need only consider what has been generally accepted as part of the original letter of Polycarp. (Berding, \textit{Polycarp and Paul}; Paul Hartog, \textit{Polycarp’s Epistle to the Philippians and the Martyrdom of Polycarp: Introduction Text, and Commentary} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013); Charles E. Hill, \textit{From the Lost Teaching of Polycarp: Identifying Irenaeus’ Apostolic Presbyter and the Author of Ad Diognetum} (Tubingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006); Michael W. Holmes, “Paul and Polycarp,” in \textit{Paul and the Second Century}, ed. Michael F. Bird and Joseph R. Dodson, 57-70. (New York: T&T Clark, 2011).
extreme emphasis on the *imitatio Pauli* because he also explicitly encouraged his readers to imitate Paul as well.

Polycarp imagined Paul as an extension of the apostles and connected him with his contemporary circumstances. In his discussion of righteousness, he writes,

> Therefore I urge all of you to obey the word of righteousness and to practice all endurance, which you also observed with your own eyes not only in the most fortunate Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus, but also in others who lived among you, and in Paul himself and the other apostles.⁵³⁶

Polycarp here provides two examples of righteousness for the Philippians. The first are the recently martyred and contemporary examples of Ignatius, Zosimus, and Rufus, who were known by the Philippians, and the second is the historical example of Paul and the apostles. In this pairing, Polycarp localizes the contemporary martyrs within the framework of the historical paragons of Paul and the apostles. Furthermore, in naming Paul specifically – and exclusively – Polycarp shows a particular recognition of his authority and teacher of righteousness even as he remains a member of the apostles.⁵³⁷

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Polycarp is more explicit elsewhere when he directly appeals to the wisdom of Paul’s teaching and how it unites the whole church. He writes,

For neither I nor anyone like me is able to replicate the wisdom of the blessed and glorious Paul. When he was with you he accurately and reliably taught the word of truth to those who were there at the time. And when he was absent he wrote you letters.

His remarks recall the letters of 2 Peter and 1 Clement. In 2 Peter, the author encourages his readers to follow Paul’s written teachings against those who interpret them in ignorance. He writes,

And regard the patience of our Lord as salvation. So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do other scriptures. You therefore, beloved, since you are forewarned, beware that you are not carried away with the error of the lawless and lose your own stability.

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538 Polycarp’s mention of his inability to replicate the wisdom of Paul likely suggests that the church in Philippi asked him to write a letter as Paul had done. Berding, Polycarp and Paul, 60.

539 Polycarp, Ep. Phil., 3.2. οὕτω γὰρ ἐγὼ οὕτω ἄλλος ὅμοιος ἐμοί δύναται κατακολουθῆσαι τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ μακαρίου καὶ ἐνδόξου Παύλου, δὲ γενόμενος ἐν ὑμῖν κατὰ πρόσωπον τὸν τότε ἀνθρώπων ἐδίδαξεν ἄκριβῶς καὶ βεβαιῶς τὸν περὶ ἀληθείας λόγον, δὲ καὶ ἀπὸν ὑμῖν ἔγραψεν ἐπιστολάς

540 2 Pet 3.15-17. καὶ τὴν τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν μακροθυμίαν σωτηρίαν ἤγείσθε, καθὼς καὶ ὁ ἁγαπητός ἡμῶν ἀδελφός Παύλος κατὰ τὴν ὁδηγεῖσαν αὐτῶν σοφίαν ἔγραψεν ὑμῖν, ὥς καὶ ἐν πάσαις ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς λαλῶν ἐν αὐταῖς περὶ τούτων ἐν αἷς ἐστίν δυσνόητα τινα ὧν οἱ ἁμαθεῖς καὶ ἀστήρικτοι στρεβλώσουσιν ὡς καὶ τὰς λοιπὰς γραφὰς πρὸς τὴν ἰδίαν αὐτῶν ἀπόλειαιν. Ὡμαίης οὖν, ἁγαπητοί, προφητικοὶ πνευμάτως φυλάσσεσθε, ἵνα μὴ τῇ τῶν ἄθεσμων πλάνῃ συναπαχθέντες ἐκπέσῃτε τοῦ ἱδίου στηριγμοῦ.
To be clear, I am not suggesting a literary relationship between the two, but rather that both authors were employing memories of Paul in a similar fashion in a similar situation. Both authors were writing to a community in discord, and both authors appealed to the “wisdom” and “letters” of Paul. Paul was understood to be authoritative in his own right as a wise teacher whose writings remain relevant for the present community for each author. In Polycarp and 2 Peter, we see a model in which Paul received and taught a wisdom that is “mother to us all,” that remains relevant for the present community and should govern their interpretation of Paul’s letter.

Furthermore, this teaching of Paul that governs humanity was not privately given or secretly understood. In a direct response to those who remember Paul for teaching a secrete knowledge to a select group, Polycarp maintains that Paul’s apostolic message was freely and publically given for all. This understanding and use of Paul was also seen in 1 Clement 47 discussed previously, where Clement was writing to a fractured community and told them to look at Paul’s letter because Paul was appointed by the apostles and was therefore an authority. Clement used the notion apostolic knowledge to justify the authority of Paul and show that Paul represents a message approved by, and therefore endorsed by, the original apostles.

Polycarp was participating in a tradition that knew and revered the letters of Paul as wise, authoritative, and eminently relevant to present circumstances of discord. He appealed to the public nature and accessibility of Paul’s teaching of unity in order to discredit those who held to a secretive or personal interpretation of Paul. So similar to Clement, Papias, and Ignatius, Polycarp presented the image of Paul as one of teacher and defender of the apostolic faith, as a figure who represented the apostolic teaching of
God. Polycarp reframed the memory of Paul to emphasize that his authority lies in his public, not private, wisdom, and as proof cited his written letters as both the author of 2 Peter and 1 Clement did.

Polycarp also encouraged his readers to be like Paul in their roles as teachers and teachers of righteousness. In his discussion of money, he alludes to 1 Timothy 6.10, which reads “for avarice (φιλαργυρία) is the root of all evils,” and slightly altered the wording to write,

Avarice (φιλαργυρία) is the beginning of all difficulties. And so, since we know that we brought nothing into the world and can take nothing out of it, we should arm ourselves with the weapons of righteousness and teach one another, first of all, to walk in the commandment of the lord. Then we should teach our wives to walk in the faith given them and in love and purity: to be affectionate towards their own husbands in all truth; to love everyone equally, with all self-restraint; and to discipline their children in the reverential fear of God.  

Polycarp’s reference to 1 Timothy implicitly draws upon the authority of Paul as it would key into the memory of Paul’s corpus already well established among the churches in Asia Minor. Paul is an authority in his own right as a teacher, and Polycarp is now invoking him as an example that his audience should aspire to emulate. Polycarp’s explicit injunctions to his readers to become teachers – and teachers in righteousness no

541 Polycarp, Ep. Phil., 4.1-2. Ἀρχῇ δὲ πάντων χαλεπῶν φιλαργυρία. εἰδότες οὖν ὅτι οὐδὲν εἰσηνέχαμεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ἀλλ’ οὐδὲ ἐξενεχθήμεν ἰδοὺ ἔχομεν, ὕπλισόμεθα τοῖς ὀπλοῖς τῆς δικαιοσύνης καὶ διδάξομεν ἕως καὶ ἀνθρώπους πρὸς ἐν τῇ ἐντολῇ τοῦ κυρίου ἐπείτα καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ δοθείσῃ αὐταῖς πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ καὶ ἀγνείᾳ στεργοῦσας τοὺς ἑαυτῶν ἄνδρας ἐν πάσῃ ἀληθείᾳ καὶ ἀγαπόσας πάντας ἐξ ἢσου ἐν πάσῃ ἐγκρατείᾳ, καὶ τὰ τέκνα παιδεύειν τὴν παιδείαν τοῦ φόβου τοῦ θεοῦ.
less – is evidence of an *imitatio Pauli* at work in Polycarp’s thinking. Just as Paul
inherited an apostolic teaching and taught it properly and publicly to others, so should the
current generation of Christians likewise teach a similar message, just as he does himself.

Providing more detail into the specific occasion for his letter, Polycarp laments
that one of the presbyters in Philippi succumbed to avarice, and exhorted his readers to
remain vigilant. He writes,

I am extremely sad for Valens, once a presbyter among you, that he should
so misunderstand the office that was given him. Thus I urge you to abstain
from love money and to be pure and truthful. Abstain from every kind of
evil. For if someone cannot control himself in such things, how can he
preach self-control to another? Anyone who cannot avoid the love of
money (avaritia) will be defiled by idolatry and will be judged as if among
the outsiders who know nothing about the judgment of the lord. Or do we
not realize that “the saints will judge the world?” For so Paul teaches. But
I have neither perceived nor heard that you have any such thing in your
midst, among whom the most fortunate Paul labored and how are found in
the beginning of his epistle.⁵⁴²

Polycarp’s connection between avarice and idolatry recalls Paul’s letters to the Ephesians
and Colossians. To the Ephesians Paul wrote, “Be sure of this, that no fornicator or
impure person, or one who is greedy (that is, an idolater), has any inheritance in the
kingdom of Christ and of God”⁵⁴³ and to the Colossians, “Put to death, therefore,

Cor 6.2

⁵⁴³ Eph. 5.5. τούτο γὰρ ἵστε γινώσκοντες, ὅτι πᾶς πόρνος ἢ ἄκαθαρτος ἢ πλεονέκτης, ὃ
ἐστίν εἰδωλολάτρης, οὐκ ἔχει κληρονομίαν ἐν τῇ βασιλείᾳ τοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ.
whatever in you is earthly: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed (which is idolatry).”

Regardless of which specific letter Polycarp was drawing, the allusion to Paul’s own writing is clearly evident. Polycarp was keying into the memory and authority of Paul, implicitly associating the teachings of Paul with his own, that he might assume the authority of Paul in his letter to unite the Philippians in the single, apostolic teaching. This is not a malicious appropriation, but rather a strategic move to remind his audience of Paul’s teachings, which are then mapped on to himself, which then enable his remarks to carry the same authority as if from Paul himself. In a single move he reinforces the public knowledge of Paul’s teaching, the apostolic coherency and legitimacy of Paul’s teaching, and that he too is justified as a teacher of the apostolic knowledge like Paul.

This blend of Paul and Polycarp both relied on, and emphasized, the acceptance of Paul as an authority and teacher of apostolic truth. The direct quote from Paul, and specific reference to Paul, reinforces this move as Polycarp explicitly connected the writings and teachings of Paul with himself. His reference to Paul’s Letter to the Philippians further emphasizes the apostolic authority of Paul and challenges the memory of him within Asia Minor. Although the line is probably an allusion to 2 Thessalonians

544 Col. 3.5. Νεκρώσατε οὖν τὰ μέλη τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, πορνεῖαν ἀκαθαρσίαν πάθος ἐπιθυμίαν κακὴν, καὶ τὴν πλεονεξίαν, ἢτις ἔστιν εἰδωλολατρία,

545 The line, “the saints will judge the world?” is a quotation from 1 Corinthians 6.2 which reads, “Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?” ἢ οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι οἱ ἄγιοι τὸν κόσμον κρίνουσιν; καὶ εἰ ἐν ὑμῖν κρίνεται ὁ κόσμος, ἀνάξιοι ἔστε κριτηρίων ἐλαχίστων;
rather than Philippians, the point remains that Polycarp is identifying himself with Paul as teacher.\textsuperscript{546}

The imitation of Paul is carefully explored and detailed by Berding, who summarizes his observations remarking,

\begin{quote}
The cumulative effect of these arguments supports the contention that Polycarp desires to imitate Paul, both literally and ethically. Polycarp writes a letter which is \textit{like} Paul’s and brings to mind Paul’s letter writing activity to the Philippian church. Thus, Polycarp makes conscious connections to Paul throughout his letter in many different ways. His purpose is to work within a narrow generic convention – not simply within a Hellenistic letter genre, nor even merely within a Christian letter genre, but within a Pauline letter genre.\textsuperscript{547}
\end{quote}

Polycarp intentionally imitated Paul as both a teacher and emblem of righteousness whose authority resides in his apostleship and divinely-given wisdom. Paul taught an apostolic message that Polycarp received and similarly taught in an effort to unite the Philippian church against false teaching and discord. As a figure true to his teaching, it is not surprising given Polycarp’s emphasis on imitating Paul that we should find external recognition of this in the \textit{Martyrdom of Polycarp}.

In the \textit{Martyrdom of Polycarp}, the author specifically identified Polycarp as the Teacher of Asia. At this point in the narrative, Polycarp has already been arrested and accused, and confessed to be a Christian. The story continues,

\textsuperscript{546} For a complete discussion of this idea and possible solutions, see Berding, \textit{Polycarp and Paul}, 111-113.

\textsuperscript{547} Berding, \textit{Polycarp and Paul}, 140. For a complete discussion of Polycarp’s imitative style, see Berding, \textit{Polycarp and Paul}, 126-140.
When the herald said this, the entire multitude of both Gentiles and Jews who lived in Smyrna cried out with uncontrollable rage and a great voice, “This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians, the destroyer of our own Gods, the one who teaches many not to sacrifice or worship the Gods.\textsuperscript{548}

In his own letters, Polycarp presented an image of Paul as a wise teacher who inherited the apostolic knowledge and preached a message of unity. In the memorial of Polycarp’s own martyrdom, the image of Paul as teacher was a well-articulated model that Christians were to imitate, which was then mapped on to Polycarp, further solidifying the Apostolic-Catholic connection between the two. Not only was Paul recognized as a paragon, so too is Polycarp, and they both represent the public and true teaching of Christianity through the Apostolic-Catholic Church.

Similar to Papias, Clement, and Ignatius, Polycarp understood Paul to teach a singular apostolic message that was to be preserved within the church of the apostles. Further, as seen in both Clement and Ignatius, Polycarp imitated Paul in his writing and teaching, though he goes further in this image, and encouraged his readers to similarly imitate Paul as the teacher of righteousness as well. His emphasis on the apostolic

\textsuperscript{548} \textit{Mart. Pol.}, 12.2. Following the Greek of Irenaeus’ account. τοῦτον λέγειντος ὑπὸ τοῦ κήρυκος, ἢπαν τὸ πλῆθος ἐθνῶν τε καὶ Ἰουδαίων τῶν τῆς Σμύρνης κατοικοῦντων ἀκατασχέτω θυμῷ καὶ μεγάλῃ φωνῇ ἐπεβόα. Οὕτως ἐστιν ὁ τῆς Ἀσίας διδάσκαλος, ὁ πατὴρ τῶν Χριστιανῶν, ὁ τῶν ἡμετέρων θεόν καθαιρέτης, ὁ πολλοὶς διδάσκον ὕπ θύειν μὴ δὲ προσκυνεῖν. ταῦτα λέγοντες ἐπεβάλλον καὶ ἱρώτων τῶν Ἀσιαρχῆς Φίλιππον, ἵνα ἐπαρφῇ τῷ Πολυκάρπῳ λέοντα. ὁ δὲ ἔφη, μὴ εἴναι ἔξων αὐτῷ, ἐπειδὴ πεπληρώκει τὰ κυνηγέσια.
message and unity of the teaching belie a critical engagement with those who advocate for a secretive teaching of Paul not accessible to all Christians.

Similar to the Apostolic-Catholic writers before him, Polycarp was attempting to mitigate the memory of Paul that imagined him as a charismatic figure who taught a secretive message. His presentation of Paul as an apostolic figure, united with the church and concerned with unity, diminished his charismatic authority and domesticated him to an accessible figure within the ecclesial structures of the Apostolic-Catholic Church. Paul, as Polycarp has shown, was a figure accessible to all, an example for all, and a preacher to all, and one who was properly understood through the approved teaching of the ecclesial hierarchy of the Apostolic-Catholic Church.

Irenaeus of Lyons

Irenaeus was born in Smyrna in 132 and studied with Polycarp before he became the Bishop of Lugdunum (modern day Lyons) in Gaul until his death in 202. He was a prolific writer and well-known heresiologist who wrote the famous *On the Detection and Refutation of Knowledge Falsely So Called* (more commonly known as *Against Heresies*) in 180 CE in opposition to various “heresies,” most notably different forms of gnosticism

and Marcionism. Although not a highly systematic thinker himself, he ultimately laid the basic framework of what would become Catholic Orthodox theology, and his understanding of Paul became the dominant narrative in the Paulinism that follows the second century.

With the benefit of historical hindsight, we should not be astonished that it is Irenaeus who assumes this pivotal role among the Apostolic-Catholics. In addition to his well-informed writings against various gnostic groups, he also collected writings from Papias, Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Hermas, Justin Martyr, and Theophilus of Antioch who represented churches from Asia Minor, Rome, Antioch, and Gaul and who all dealt with influences from Charismatic Catholics, Valentinians, and Marcionites. More precisely, it was his participation in the mental frame of Paul as the teacher of the apostolic message, a memory forged through the century-long engagement with alternative memories of Paul and various forms of authority, that Irenaeus pieced together the dominant image of Paul for the later Catholic church.

Blackwell, “Paul and Irenaeus,” 190. Although there is much scholarship on Irenaeus and his writings against gnostics, far too much to include here, I do note the more influential and recent works: Vallée, Anti-Gnostic Polemics; John Behr, Irenaeus of Lyons: Identifying Christianity (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014); and Robert M. Grant, Irenaeus of Lyons (New York: Routledge Press, 1997).

Although he does not credit Irenaeus exclusively, for more on the emergence of Paulinism in the late antique church, see Mark W. Elliot, “The Triumph of Paulinism by the Mid-Third Century,” in Paul and the Second Century, ed. Michael F. Bird and Joseph R. Dodson, 244-256 (London: T&T Clark International, 2011).

For Irenaeus, Paul was simply, the Apostle. In fact, that is the most common reference to Paul in the Irenaean corpus, “The Apostle.” He did offer some description of him as the Apostle to the Gentiles when referring to the comments in Galatians 1.15-16 where Paul wrote, “But when God, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, so that I might proclaim him among the Gentiles, I did not confer with any human being.” Irenaeus quoted this passage directly in both 5.12.5 and 5.15.3 in Against Heresies and in book 4.24.1., he quoted from 1 Corinthians 15.15 and argued that Paul had a more difficult task than the other apostles because the Gentiles to whom he preached did not know the scriptures. He writes,

Wherefore also Paul, since he was the apostle of the Gentiles, says, “I laboured more than they all.” For the instruction of the former, [viz., the Jews,] was an easy task, because they could allege proofs from the Scriptures, and because they, who were in the habit of hearing Moses and the prophets, did also readily receive the First-begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the life of God, —Him who, by the spreading forth of hands, did destroy Amalek, and vivify man from the wound of the serpent, by means of faith which was [exercised] towards Him. As I have pointed out in the preceding book, the apostle did, in the first place, instruct the Gentiles to depart from the superstition of idols, and to worship one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and the Framer of the whole creation; and that His Son was His Word, by whom He founded all things; and that He, in the last times, was made a man among men; that He reformed the human race, but destroyed and conquered the enemy of man, and gave to His handiwork victory against the adversary. But although they who were of the circumcision still did not obey the words of God, for they were despisers, yet they were previously instructed not to commit adultery, nor fornication, nor theft, nor fraud; and that whatsoever things are done to our neighbours’ prejudice, were evil, and detested by God. Wherefore also

they did readily agree to abstain from these things, because they had been thus instructed.\footnote{Irenaeus, \textit{Adv. Haer.}, 4.24.1.}\footnote{DeConick, “Gnostic Spirituality,” 179.}

As evidenced in the quote above, Irenaeus maintained that as Apostle to the Gentiles he had to work harder because they were not familiar with God as the Jews were. This is an example of what DeConick referred to as the Apostolic-Catholic claim to the ancient teaching of Judaism.\footnote{DeConick, “Gnostic Spirituality,” 179.} Rather cleverly, Irenaeus is able to simultaneously claim ownership over the teaching of Judaism \textit{and} make it relevant to his second-century audience (and opponents), while still presenting Paul as a prominent preacher of the apostolic message. This is a direct challenge to the Marcionite, and to a lesser degree the Valentinian, memory of Paul, which eschewed any connection to the teachings of the Old Covenantal God. Irenaeus is tempering the secretive, new teaching imagery of Paul to show that he just had to be more creative in teaching because he had to explain the scriptures that were not well-known to his gentile audience. Not only did Paul \textit{not} teach a secretive message, nor did he teach a \textit{new} message, no, Paul taught an ancient, apostolic teaching of the one, true God.

Irenaeus, as we have consistently seen in this constellation, established Paul’s authority in his ability to teach the apostolic message. As White has rather convincingly shown, Irenaeus appealed to the Jerusalem Council episodes in the canonical Acts and Paul’s letter to the Galatians, in order to show that that although he was \textit{the} Apostle, he
was not greater than any other.\textsuperscript{556} Using the canonical writings of Galatians and Acts, and with the followers of both the Valentinians and Marcionites in mind, Irenaeus emphasized the unity of Peter, James, and Paul.\textsuperscript{557} As White explains, Irenaeus uses both accounts to demonstrate that “approval from the Jerusalem apostles, however, was not enough. Irenaeus reminds his readers, citing Galatians 2.5, that from Paul’s side there was willing subjection to them,”\textsuperscript{558} and so “portrays an apostle who is more than ready to subject his own ministry to the Jerusalem Church.”\textsuperscript{559} Paul did not teach \textit{new} things to the gentiles, but rather taught the same apostolic message, approved by Peter and the other apostles, to non-Jews. As White has also alluded to, Irenaeus specifically informs his readership that,

Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successes of all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; [we do this, I say,] by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its pre-eminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere,

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{556} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 139-142.
\textsuperscript{557} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 140-142.
\textsuperscript{558} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 140.
\textsuperscript{559} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 141.
\end{flushleft}
Irenaeus definitively connects the church as one united body that inherited a single message of God, which was mediated through all the apostles. There is one apostolic message, one apostolic body, and Paul is an apostle, just as Peter, in this collection. Furthermore, it was the efforts of both Paul and Peter that established the presence of Christ in Rome. Irenaeus identifies him as the founder of both the Church in Ephesus and, along with Peter, the Church in Rome. In this way, the memory of Paul extended beyond just teacher and apostle, and now moves into a third dimension, Paul as the Founder of Churches. This move was a direct challenge to the memories of Paul that spoke of secret teachings and hidden knowledge. In emphasizing that Paul founded churches, public communities, he is supplanting the image of Paul as a secretive teacher. Paul was a public figure who founded communal centers of worship throughout the empire, and as the Apostolic-Catholics were similarly forming churches, they were the church correctly emulating the work of Paul. In a subtle, but important move, Irenaeus


561 Irenaeus, *Adv. Haer.*, 3.3.4. “Then, again, the Church in Ephesus, founded by Paul, and having John remaining among them permanently until the times of Trajan, is a true witness of the tradition of the apostles.”

562 I employ this additional terminology not to challenge the apostolic model developed here, but rather to highlight Irenaeus’ particular contribution to the apostolic authority of Paul. This image of Church Founder is also attested in *1 Clement*, Ignatius, and Polycarp.
like those Apostolic-Catholics before him, domesticated Paul to an accessible figure who sought unity with all people, not just some.

Significantly, Paul was remembered for his teaching and founding of the church, but done within the context of the other apostles. The specific mention of Peter speaks to the unity of the message and the apostles. As Blackwell explains, “The consistent pairing of Peter and Paul shows them to be the key apostles in his construction (though John is clearly not ignored). Thus, while Paul is ‘the apostle,’ Irenaeus does not use this to lower the status of the other apostolic leaders of the church.”563 Irenaeus must maintain an equality among the apostles for his model of apostolic succession, as that was his primary argument against heresy.

Irenaeus remembered Paul as the proclaimer and founder of the true Christian church and rooted his authority in the canonical account of his “historical” actions. Irenaeus did not elevate Paul above his apostolic colleagues, and frequently referred to him in tandem with both Peter and John. Significantly, Paul was remembered as the apostle because it served the function of legitimating Irenaeus’ understanding of apostolic succession. Because Paul was an authority in his own right, recognized and remembered through the biblical letters and stories, and because he founded churches on his own, those who follow in those historical connections are already legitimated. Irenaeus, then, need not appeal to the mental framework of Jesus, nor to the habit memory of ritual, for legitimacy and authority. Rather, he only needs to appeal to the memory of Paul as

mediated through the New Testament corpus of letters and Acts. This is what Assman refers to as the *cultural memory construction* within cultural mnemotechnics, as this memory is governed and controlled by Irenaeus’ presentation in what he filters from the New Testament corpus.\(^564\) This is not to suggest that Irenaeus was intentionally manipulating a memory of Paul for his community, but rather that he, as a social authority, was remembering Paul in such fashion that would have a profound impact on his present community and directly challenge the scriptural canon of the Valentinians and Marcionites.

In comparing Irenaeus’ memory of Paul with that found in *3 Corinthians*, White remarks, “These near identical portrayals of Paul and rules of faith suggest that the two works were products of the same developing trajectory of the Pauline tradition.”\(^565\) And furthermore,

> The fact that both texts portray the same Paul, yet differ in the exact way that they get there, suggests that they are independent witnesses to this broad stream of proto-orthodox memory of the Apostle in Asia Minor in the latter half of the second century.\(^566\)

As I mentioned at the outset of this chapter, I would add to this growing trajectory and argue that Irenaeus’ memory of Paul as the Apostle is the final synthesis of the Apostolic Constellation that would prove to be the dominant memory of later Catholicism, as his

\(^{564}\) Assman, *Cultural Memory and Early Civilization*, 15-146.


\(^{566}\) White, *Remembering Paul*, 168.
ecclesiology of apostolic succession would validate and unify all the churches founded by apostles.

Irenaeus understood that the genesis of apostolic succession and authority had to be rooted in the blending of the Jerusalem Church and Pauline teachings into a single gospel, just as Clement in the first century and as Luke presented it in his canonical Acts of the Apostles.

Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successions of all the Churches, we do put to confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil self-pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness and perverse opinion, assemble in unauthorized meetings; [we do this, I say,] by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; as also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the successions of the bishops. For it is a matter of necessity that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the tradition has been preserved continuously by those [faithful men] who exist everywhere.\(^{567}\)

Unlike Luke and Clement, Irenaeus explicitly took this blend of Peter and Paul and used in anti-Marcion and anti-Valentinian polemic as he fought over church authority and ecclesial structures. Irenaeus built upon the developing Apostolic-Catholic memory of Paul as teacher of the apostolic knowledge and augmented it with church founder.

This was a small addition with significant consequences as it undercut the subversive connection to Paul premised on his secretive teaching. Paul was a public

\(^{567}\) Irenaeus, Adv. Haer. 3.2.
teacher of the apostolic message, no different than the other apostles, and he founded churches. The work of the apostles, the work of the heirs of Christ and followers of the true church, found their connection to Paul through the communal and unified Apostolic-Catholic Church. Irenaeus, rather brilliantly, keyed into the heart of the matter and shifted the reference point for his audience. In effect, he altered the paradigm of disputation from the validity of Paul’s secretive teaching completely, and instead emphasized the public nature of his preaching.

Paul, within the memory of Irenaeus, was a figure who taught an apostolically coherent message publically while establishing churches throughout the Roman world. The Apostolic-Catholics were merely following in the footsteps of Paul.

**Third Corinthians**

The *Third Letter to the Corinthians*, pseudepigraphically ascribed to the hand of Paul, was a second-century text, likely written in Asia Minor, that later enjoyed circulation with the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* and *The Martyrdom of Paul*. The letter

was quite popular among early Christians as there are five Latin bibles that include the text,\textsuperscript{569} and it was particularly prominent in the east and found in Armenian bibles following 1 and 2 Corinthians until the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.\textsuperscript{570} The text was likely combined with the \textit{Acts of Paul and Thecla} in the early third century to help assuage orthodoxy concerns of the \textit{Acts}, such as with Tertullian.\textsuperscript{571}

The letter itself has four distinct sections: first, the introduction; second, the short letter to Paul from the Corinthian church asking for help; third, the narrative of the letter’s delivery to Paul; and fourth, Paul’s response to the church.\textsuperscript{572} Each of these will

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{569} The text is typically paired with Paul’s letter to the Ephesians; however, Pervo, \textit{Making of Paul}, 99; Hovhanessian, \textit{Third Corinthians},

\textsuperscript{570} Pervo, \textit{Making of Paul}, 99. The extant manuscripts preserve the letter in Armenian, Latin, Coptic, and Greek, and although there is some variance in their content, they are largely consistent in vocabulary, theme, and structure. Although the Greek is complete, what remains extant is consistent in content with the other preserved manuscripts. However, it is coupled with the Nativity of Mary and the Ode of Solomon in P. Bod. X, rather than the Acts of Paul and Thecla. Although the manuscript itself has a complicated history and several misspellings, it still is likely the most accurate translation. For a complete analysis of the manuscript and history of the epistle see Hovhanessian, Third Corinthians, 3-36. Third Corinthians was not made critically accessible to western scholars until the early 19th century with its publication by Zohrapian. Zohrapian constructed the text from a catalog of Armenian bibles available in Rome and included it as an appendix to the New Testament with several comparative footnotes highlighting alternative renderings in the different manuscripts. The text was not translated into English until 1842 by Lord Byron (Rowland E. Protheros, \textit{The Works of Lord Byron. Letters and Journals, IV} (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1904), 429-433).

\textsuperscript{571} Pervo, \textit{Making of Paul}, 102. This discussion will be explored in more detail in the next chapter considering the \textit{Acts of Paul and Thecla} and \textit{Martyrdom of Paul} in more detail.

\textsuperscript{572} It is worth noting that Smith’s recent publication refers to the text as the \textit{Apocryphal Correspondence between Paul and the Corinthians} in an attempt to recognize the presence of both letters contained within the document. Geoffrey S. Smith, \textit{Guilt by
be explored in more detail, but they seem to have circulated in blocks as most of the extant versions include some combination of these four sections, but in terms of vocabulary and construction they remain largely consistent.\footnote{573}{Hovhanessian, Third Corinthians, 1-10. Though the different versions the surrounding passages from the Acts of Paul and Thecla, these four sections are the most consistent elements of the epistle.}

There is limited scholarly interest in the text, but what does exist has been largely concerned with identifying the particular heresy the letter is opposing.\footnote{574}{See for instance A.F.J. Klijn, “The Apocryphal Correspondence Between Paul and the Corinthians,” Vigiliae Christianae 17 (1963): 2-23.} In 1942, and before the publication of the Greek manuscript, Martin Rist suggested the opponent in the epistles was specifically Marcion and his followers because of their theological continuity.\footnote{575}{Martin Rist, “Pseudepigraphic Refutations of Marcionism,” Journal of Religion 22 (1942): 39-62., and III Corinthians as a Pseudepigraphic Refutation of Marcionism,” The Iliff Review 26 (1969): 49-58.} Rist argued on the basis of Marcion’s duality and rejection of the prophets that the opposition is most likely Marcion.\footnote{576}{Rist, “Pseudepigraphic Refutations,” 49.} Additionally, because the text explicitly connects Paul’s teaching as coming from the disciples, he suggests that their opponents argued that Paul received personal revelation for his teaching that the disciples did not possess.\footnote{577}{Rist, “Pseudepigraphic Refutations,” 49.} And finally the opposition is cited for believing the world was created by

angels, and Apelles, whom Tertullian says was a follower of Marcion, argued that the world was created by a fiery angel (Tertullian, De Pres. XXXIV). From this Rist concludes,

> It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that *III Corinthians* was composed as a refutation of Marcionism. The method employed, it is scarcely necessary to note, is that of pseudepigraphy. The author trusts his readers to have the perspicacity to realize that while the doctrines of the Catholic Church are identical with those affirmed by Paul and the other apostles, the doctrines of Marcion are the same as the false teachings of Simon and Cleobius which were condemned by the very apostle the Pontic heretic claimed as his authority and guide.

Rist equated the teachings of Marcion with those of Simon and Cleobius and therefore concludes that the opponent in this epistle must be none other than the followers of Marcion in the second century. In 1963, Klijn proposed a likely candidate in the specifically identified Simon Magus. He argues for agreement between the position of Pseudo-Paul and the canonical epistles, gospels, and Acts regarding a pneumatic Christology; and furthermore, because Marcion did not teach the world was created by angels, and according to Irenaeus Simon Magus did Klijn suggests that the specific opposition is the named opponent of Simon Magus. However, he is careful to note, “Nevertheless, it is hazardous to think that the correspondence was written against his

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578 Rist, “Pseudepigraphic Refutations,” 49.
ideas only. This means that we are not able to say that the correspondence was written against one kind of heresy.\(^{581}\)

It was not until recently scholars began to consider alternative figures or groups as the opposition. Mackay, in 1986, argued that the heresy is actually that of Saturninus, who held a docetic view of Jesus.\(^{582}\) Similarly, in 2000 Dunn contended that the heresy is that of Saturninus as well, though he does so on the basis that all six points mentioned in the epistle agree with Irenaeus’ description of Saturninus (\textit{Adv. Haer.} I.XXXV. 1-2.).\(^ {583}\) In terms of context, he argues that the letter would be more persuasive in the second century if it connected the heresy with the Arch-Heretic, Simon Magus, a figure whom Paul specifically rebuked in Acts. Furthermore, he argues, the theology of Saturninus lacked the complexity and sophistication of both Marcion and the Valentinians which is consistent with the presentation of the epistle.

However, challenging this perspective and written in the same year, Hovhanessian identified particular tenets of Marcionism that other second-century heresiologists attacked, such as Marcion’s own canon or views on marriage and procreation, which the

\(^{581}\) Klijn, “Apocryphal Correspondence,” 22.


text does not refer to and therefore makes such a connection unlikely. Hovhanessian concludes that letter was written against a Valentinian opposition. Although the specific references to Valentinian theology are limited and must be extrapolated from the text, he also includes under the umbrella of Valentinianism the Naasenes and Ophites, and argues that collectively there is enough theological similarity and veneration of Paul to make the connection tenable.

While there are persuasive arguments in all of these, each fails to fully encapsulate the simplicity of the letter and the general points of Apostolic-Catholic agreement over explicit heretical distinction. A more probable solution – and the one accepted here – is that the text was written against all of these heresies that included not only Marcionite followers, but general opponents with Charismatic and Gnostic tendencies as well of any specific affiliation. The epistle was likely structured as a “catch-all” for heresy, and with the explicit identification of Simon and Cleobius, the author intends to associate all heresy with the famed arch-heretic, thus implying all orthodox thought lie with the Apostolic-Catholics who were taught by Paul.

In the summary section of his work, Benjamin White explains the similar images of Paul in Third Corinthians and Irenaeus, writing,

584 Hovhanessian, Third Corinthians, 29.
585 Hovhanessian, Third Corinthians, 29-30.
586 For a more detailed assessment of this position see, Penny, “Pseudo-Pauline Letters,” 310; Pervo, Making of Paul, 104; and White, Remembering Paul, 111.
These near identical portrayals of Paul and rules of faith suggest that the two works were products of the same developing trajectory of the Pauline tradition. It is possible, if not likely, that the “Paulinism” of these two texts reflects a developing constellation of authorized memories of the Apostle among proto-orthodox communities in western Asia Minor in the second half of the second century – communities that, as Paul Trebilco has shown, were familiar with numerous Pauline letters, including the Pastoral Epistles and Acts by the early second century, and that continued to honor the Apostle’s work in their region (cf. Ignatius; Polycarp).  

As White notes and I have demonstrated throughout this chapter, there was a developing constellation of texts and thinkers in the second century that remembered Paul as an apostolic authority teaching the same message as the disciples. And similar to the other images of Paul examined in this section, Third Corinthians intended to present Paul as not only a teacher of this message, but in particular as a teacher of orthodoxy the hunter of heresy.

The pseudepigraphic use of Paul’s name in this letter is telling in its own right in this regard as it further emphasizes the heretical-hunting memory of Paul. In his detailed consideration of heresy, Smith notes,  

That pseudepigraphers preferred to write in the name of Paul is unsurprising since, unlike Jesus, Peter, or any other first-generation teacher, Paul was known to have used letters as part of his teaching ministry. Letter writing was such an important component of his community-building enterprise that it became one of the hallmarks of his ministry for later generations of Christians. Paul was thus the natural choice for anyone interested in writing an epistle in the name of an authoritative apostle. But later authors chose to compose epistles in the name of Paul not simply because he was a prolific letter writer; many also found in his multiple confrontations with competing missionaries a  

587 White, Remembering Paul, 167.
powerful rhetoric of reproach that could be easily adapted for use against rival teachers active in their own time.\textsuperscript{588}

As Smith observes, the pseudepigraphic use of Paul subliminally reiterates the anti-heretical authority of the author and reinforces the notion of a coherent and apostolic orthodoxy. To write in the name of Paul did more than simply recall his authority as a writer – though that was significant in itself – but what Smith keys into here is the memory of Paul has an anti-heretical writer. The recorded disputes of Paul in his own corpus speak to a contentious relationship with those opposed to his teaching, a very useful image for second-century writers as they themselves were embroiled over debates of theology. In this way, alluding to the authority of Paul by acting as Paul would grant one the implicit connection to Paul’s authority. It was an action of frameshifting that permitted the second-century authors to assume a level of legitimacy over their opponents as they were cast as outsiders to the church of Paul’s legacy and castigated for their errant theology. This practice of appealing to the anti-heretical prowess of Paul is witnessed clearly in the letter from the church in Corinth to Paul in \textit{Third Corinthians}.

In the initial letter the Corinthians sent to Paul as part of this document, they implore him for guidance as they were dealing with an unwanted heretical presence in their community. The letter affirmed their allegiance to Paul and his teachings, detailed the nature of the heretical opinions, and then asked Paul to visit them. I quote the letter in full here.

\begin{flushright}
\textit{Third Corinthians}
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushleft}
\text{\textit{To the Church in Corinth:}}
\end{flushleft}

\begin{flushleft}
\text{\textit{Beloved in the Lord:}}
\end{flushleft}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{We are in the middle of a conflict with those who are opposed to our teaching.}
\item \textit{We are seeking your advice and guidance.}
\item \textit{We have heard rumors of a heretical group in our community.}
\item \textit{We want to know if they are correct in their teachings.
\item \textit{We want you to visit us and settle the matter.
\item \textit{We have heard that you have dealt with similar issues in the past.
\item \textit{We want you to be our representative in this matter.
\item \textit{We are confident in your ability to handle this situation.
\item \textit{We look forward to your visit.}}}
\end{itemize}

\textit{Sincerely,
\textit{The Corinthians}}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{III Corinthians}
\end{flushright}

\textsuperscript{588} Smith, \textit{Guilt by Association}, 21-22.
The Corinthians to Paul

Stephanus and with him the elders Dahnos, Eubulus, Theophilus, and Xenon, to Paul who is in Christ, greetings. Two men arrived in Corinth, a certain Simon and Cleobius, who overturned the faith of some with corrupted words, which you shall examine. For we have not heard such words ever from you or from the others. But, that which we received from you and them, we preserve. Therefore, the Lord had mercy upon us that we may hear from you again, while still in your flesh. Either come yourself; for we believe as it was reviled to Theonoe that the Lord has delivered you out of the hand of the lawless one, or write to us.\(^{589}\)

For such is what they say and teach: We must not, they say, make use of the prophets, and that God is not almighty, and that there is no resurrection for the flesh, and that the creation is not by God, and that the Lord did not come in the flesh nor was he born of Mary, and that the world is not of God but of the angels. Therefore, brother, make haste to come here, so that the church of the Corinthians may remain unblemished, and that the folly of these men may become clearly manifest.\(^{590}\)

Farewell in the Lord.\(^{591}\)

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\(^{589}\) ΚΟΡΙΝΘΕΙΟΙ ΠΡΟΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΝ ΣΤΕΦΑΝΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝ ΑΥΤΩ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΙ ΔΑΦΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΥΒΟΥΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΦΙΛΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΞΕΝΩΝ ΠΑΥΛΩ ΤΩ ΕΝ <ΚΩ> ΧΕΡΕΙΝ | ΠΑΡΑΓΕΓΟΝΑΣΙΝ ΕΙΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΟΝ ΑΝΓΙΣΤΡΕΣ ΔΥΩ ΣΙΜΩΝ ΤΙ<Σ> ΒΙΟΣ ΟΙΤΙΝΕΣ ΤΗΝ ΤΙΝΩΝ ΑΝΑΤΡΕΠΟΥΣΙΝ ΦΘΟΡΕΙΜΕΟΙΟΙ ΛΟΓΟΙΟΙ | ΟΥΣ ΣΟΙ ΔΟΚΕΙΜΑΣΟΝ | ΟΥ ΓΑΡ ΣΟΥ ΗΚΟΥΣΑΜΕΝ ΠΟΤΕ ΤΟΙΟΥ ΤΟΥΣ ΛΟΓΟΥΣ ΟΥΔΕ ΤΩΝ ΑΛΛΩΝ | ΑΛΛΑ ΤΑ ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΑΜΕΝ ΠΙΑΡΑ <ΤΕ> ΣΟΥ ΚΑΚΕΙΝΩΝ ΤΗΡΟΥΜΕΝ | ΟΥΣ ΟΥΝ Ο <ΚΣ> ΗΛΕΗΣΕΝ ΗΜΑΣ ΟΝΑΤΟΣ ΕΤΙ ΕΝ ΣΑΡΚΕΙ ΣΟΥ ΙΝΑ ΠΑΡΑ ΣΟΥ ΠΑΛΙΝ ΑΚΟΥΣΩΜΕΝ | ΟΥΑΤΟΣ ΠΑΡΑΓΕΝΟΥ | ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΜΕΝ ΓΑΡ ΩΣ ΑΠΕΚΑΛΥΨΗ ΘΕΟΝΟΗ ΟΤΙ ΕΡΥΣΤΕ ΣΕ <ΚΣ> ΕΚ ΧΕΙΡΟΣ ΑΝΟΜΟΥ Η ΑΝΤΙΓΡΑΨΗΝ ΗΜ<Ι> Unless otherwise noted, Greek taken from M. Testuz, *Papyrus Bodmer XXII* (Geneva: Bibliotheca Bodmeriana, 1959), 30–44.

\(^{590}\) ΕΣΤΙ ΓΑΡ Α ΛΕΓΟΥΣΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΟΥ ΣΙΝ ΤΟΙΑΥΤΑ | ΟΥ ΔΕΙΝ ΦΗΣΙΝ ΠΡΟ ΦΗΤΕΣ ΧΡΗΣΘΑΙ | ΟΥΔΕ ΕΙΝΑΙ <ΘΝ> ΠΙΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑ | ΟΥΔΕ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΙ <Ι> ΕΙΝΑΙ ΣΑΡΚΟΣ | ΟΥΔΕ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΠΙΛΑ ΣΙΝ ΤΗΝ ΤΩΝ <ΑΝΝΙΝ> ΤΟΥ <ΘΥ> | ΟΥΔΕ ΟΤΙ ΕΙΣ <> ΑΡΚΑ ΗΛΘΕΝ Ο <ΚΩ> ΟΥΔΕ ΟΤΙ ΕΚ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΕΓΕΝΝΗΘΗ | ΟΥΔΕ ΕΙ<ΝΑΙ> ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ <ΘΥ> ΑΛΛΑ ΑΓΓΕΛΩΝ | ΔΙΟ ΑΔΕΛΦΕ ΠΑΣΑΝ ΕΙΣΗΓΗΣΕ ΣΙΟΥ ΔΗΝ ΠΑΡΑΓΕΝΕΣΟΙ ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ΟΠΩΣ ΑΖΚΑΝΑΛΑΙΣΤΟΣ ΜΕΙΝΗ Η ΚΟΡΙΝΘΩΝ ΕΚΛΗΣΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΤΩΝ Η ΑΝΟΙΑ ΕΚ’ΔΗΛΟΣ ΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ
The fabricated epistle to Paul was written in the fashion as one writing to a learned and authoritative figure. This fictional community in Corinth identified Paul as the guardian of their teachings and they were seeking his presence to clarify their own theological stance against the intrusion of another group. There are subtle allusions in this letter to the canonical authority of Paul, which are designed to remind the readership of the accepted authority of Paul and the unified orthodoxy of the Apostolic-Catholic churches through him and his teaching. This teaching, of course, and as emphasized throughout the entire letter, is the same teaching of the apostles. And although Paul does stipulate he received this teaching from the apostles, the explicit mention of known Pauline associates from both the canonical Pauline Epistles and Luke’s Acts of the Apostles suggests an attempt to present Paul as operating completely within the nexus of apostolic thought and to remind the contemporary audience of his authority.

A similar pattern of authorial use was employed in the pseudepigraphic apocalypses of Judaism, as Henze explains, “the biblical ancestors came to be associated with a wealth of interpretive traditions, and the post-biblical authors who adopted their names became heirs not just to the biblical text but to a distinct and, at times, rather extensive discourse that was linked to these names.”

Employing a blend of the

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591 Unless otherwise noted, all translations from Hovhanessian, Third Corinthians, 76-77.

592 Matthias Henze, Jewish Apocalypticism in Late First Century Israel: Reading Second Baruch in Context (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 87. Although Henze’s aim is to
scholarship of both Winter and Nora, and working through a contemporary late first or early-second century Jewish apocalypse, *Second Baruch*.\(^{593}\) Henze explores the collective memory of the text and shows how the author recalls, and in some respects reinterprets, the Hebrew Bible to address his or her present circumstances.\(^{594}\) The text itself was written sometime after the destruction of the temple in 70CE, yet sets the narrative framework of the story in 587 BCE after the original temple was toppled by Nebuchadnezzar. The selection of Baruch as the primary character is not without justification; however, all that concerns us here is the identification of a historical figure within the community who was being remembered as an authority figure to speak to a present circumstance for the community.\(^{595}\)

show the development of a new identity of Baruch through the writings attributed to him, there still remains a consistent image of Baruch as a scribal and prophetic authority that the authors of the later writings are keying into, much as they were in the second century with Paul. For a complete consideration of the use of Baruch see pages 87-112.

\(^{593}\) For a more detailed consideration of the dating of *Second Baruch*, see, Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 25-32.


\(^{595}\) For a complete analysis of both the character and use of Baruch see, Henze *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 87-126.
Baruch was a scribe of Jeremiah the Prophet at the destruction of the temple, and *Second Baruch* tells of the visions and teachings of Baruch apart from Jeremiah during this calamitous period.\(^{596}\)

Henze elaborates on this use of Baruch and the similar tumultuous period in Israel’s history and identifies what Winter and Nora refer to as “sites of memory” within *Second Baruch*. These sites of memory serve to recall elements of the Hebrew Bible relevant to the first century experience.\(^{597}\) As he explains

I argue that 2Bar is a text filled with “sites of memory.” By “sites” I mean specific points in the past around which memories converge and coalesce, the foci of collective remembrance... The sites comprise, therefore, a specific *event* in the history of ancient Israel, the Babylonian sacking of Jerusalem. They also include specific *people*, as we noted above, most prominently Baruch but also Jeremiah, Moses, and Ezekiel, all figures who lived in their distant past (they are figures of memory), yet who are vitally important in their contributions to the text. And, finally, the sites include several specific *places*, all well-known to the reader, which the author of 2Bar reinvests with significance, including Mount Zion, Jerusalem, the temple ruins where Baruch mourns, and the Kidron Valley, places with deep biblical connotations.\(^{598}\)

Most significantly, Henze argues, “Events, people, and sites are all remembered in 2Bar: they are brought together in 2Bar’s recollection of the Babylonian invasion and its aftermath. By telling their story anew, the author of 2Bar intended his text to become a ‘site of memory’ itself, a memorial text capable of generating and shaping Israel’s’

\(^{596}\) For a more detailed summary of the text, see Henze, *Jewish Apocalypticism*, 43-52.


collective memory.” While it cannot be argued that the author of *Third Corinthians* was speaking to the collective memory of Israel, what is similar is the author’s use of sites in his or her memory construction of Paul, namely: events, people, and geographical locations. Just as the author of Second *Baruch* relied on the collective memory and authority of Baruch in his story-telling, so too does the author of *Third Corinthians*, who similarly aimed to both recall and shape the memory of Paul and his or her community in the same manner as noted by Winter and Nora and evidenced in Henze’s analysis of *Second Baruch*. At this point, I turn to these specific sites of memory within *Third Corinthians* to present this dimension and intentionality of the text more clearly, and to fully articulate the depth of the memory recollection and reconfiguration within the text.

The event of the text is the constructed scenario in which Paul’s community in Corinth writes to him for guidance concerning the intrusion of heretical teachers. While not an isolated event within the memory of Paul, it does recall the general ethos of Paul as teacher and heresy hunter as he regularly engages theological opponents in his letters, perhaps none as prominently as seen in his canonical Corinthian correspondence. In his analysis of the social memory of Paul in *Third Corinthians*, White highlights the reliance of *Third Corinthians* on 1 Corinthians 11.23 and 15.3, as well as its similarity to the

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Pastoral Epistles who also employ an image of Paul as heresy hunter.\textsuperscript{601} As White notes, the canonical precedent for Paul as a heresy hunter is readily available and most easily witnessed in Romans 3.8; 2 Corinthians 2; Galatians 1.6-9; Philemon 3.2; Colossians 2.16-23; and 1 Thessalonians 1.15-16.\textsuperscript{602} In each of these letters Paul in some form refutes challengers to his authority or teaching, and thus collectively can be seen to be a defender of the orthodox and apostolic teaching. While in the historical reality of the mid-first century he was certainly a defender of his own teaching, by the second century the Apostolic-Catholics were blending the teachings of Paul and the other apostles and presenting a singular message and authority. The “event” then, to which Third Corinthians is recalling, is the consistent action of Paul refuting his opponents and disrupters of his communities.

The people specifically mentioned by name in Third Corinthians similarly draw from the breadth of the Pauline corpus, and even extend into the canonical Acts of the Apostles.\textsuperscript{603} There is a continuity understood between the letters of Paul and the later narrative of his actions in this letter that speaks to a growing perspective of apostolic unity in the second century, as well as an acceptance of both as scripture among second-

\textsuperscript{601} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 114-129.

\textsuperscript{602} White, \textit{Remembering Paul}, 116.

century writers and canon lists. That the letter refers to figures known in both the Pauline and Lukan corpuses suggests an acceptance of both as authoritative as well.

Stephanus is mentioned three explicit times in Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians. In 1.16 Paul writes, “I baptized the household of Stephanus also; beyond that I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.” In the closing of his letter he mentions Stephanus again,

I urge you, brothers – you know that the household of Stephanus is the first fruits of Achaia and that they have devoted themselves to the service of holy ones – be subordinate to such people and to everyone who works and toils with them. I rejoice in the arrival of Stephanus, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, because they made up for your absence, for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. So give recognition to such people.605

Stephanus is evidently a leader in the Corinthian community and one with whom Paul was evidently quite close. Not only did he baptize him and his family, but he specifically identifies him as a leader and one who should be respected and recognized in the


605 1 Corinthians 16.15-18. Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί· οἶδατε τὴν οἰκίαν Ἐναργᾶ, ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀχαίας καὶ εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἐταξάμενοι· ἣν καὶ ὑμεῖς ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις καὶ παντὶ τῷ συνεργοῦντι καὶ συνεργόντι, χαίρω δὲ ἐπὶ τῇ παρουσίᾳ Στεφανᾶ καὶ Φορτουνάτου καὶ Ἀχαίκοδ, ὅτι τὸ ὑμέτερον ὑστέρημα οὗτοι ἀνεπλήρωσαν· ἀνέπαυσαν γὰρ τὸ ἐμὸν πνεύμα καὶ τὸ ὑμῶν. ἐπιγινώσκετε οὖν τοὺς τοιούτους.
community. Furthermore, that Paul mentions Stephanus’ visit to him suggests they continued in regular contact after Paul’s original visit to Corinth. To pen the letter under the name of one who was already known to correspond with Paul keys into the memory of that figure and grants legitimacy to the second-century letter. Additionally, the mention of Theophilus recalls the addressee of both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles and further emphasizes the coherence of their teachings and orthodoxy.\(^{606}\)

In a passage not found in the Greek P. Codex there is a reference to Eutychus, which would illicit the memory of this story from the audience and then correlate Paul’s healing of this man to his devotion to Paul. The name Eutychus also recalls Paul’s healing episode from Acts.

Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight. There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered together. And in a window sat a certain young man named Eutychus, who was sinking into a deep sleep. He was overcome by sleep; and as Paul continued speaking, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. But Paul went down, fell on him, and embracing him said, “Do not trouble yourselves, for his life is in him.” Now when he had come up, had broken bread and eaten, and talked

\(^{606}\) Luke 1.1-4., “Since many have undertaken to set down an orderly account of the events that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed on to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, I too decided, after investigating everything carefully from the very first, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, so that you may know the truth concerning the things about which you have been instructed.” Acts 1.1-2., “In the first book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus did and taught from the beginning until the day when he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen.”
a long while, even till daybreak, he departed. And they brought the young man in alive, and they were not a little comforted.\(^{607}\)

In addition to Paul’s ability to heal, this story also recalls his teaching and would subtly serve to remind the audience of Paul’s role as teacher and instructor, traits for which the present letter is intending to emphasize.

The specific mention of Stephanus, Theophilus, and Eutychus recalls these figures in the minds of the audience and their canonical significance. Stephanus was a known colleague and associate of Paul who had a consistent correspondence with him, Theophilus was the addressee of both of Luke’s writings, and finally, Eutychus’ was healed by Paul. Furthermore, the response written in the hand of Paul further reinforces this canonical heresy-hunting. As Smith notes,

Paul’s genuine letters reveal that his tenure as apostle to the gentiles was characterized by repeated clashes with competing missionaries over theology, authority, and ritual practice. He opposes “super apostles” in Corinth, Jewish missionaries from the Jerusalem Church in Galatia, and unnamed adversaries in Philippi, Rome, and Thessaloniki. Given Paul’s bellicose reputation, it is unsurprising that later authors chose to adopt his persona when confronting rival teachers of their own. Writing letters in the name of Paul gave pseudepigraphers the chance to condemn rivals with the authority and rhetorical punch of the agonistic apostle.\(^{608}\)

\(^{607}\) Acts 20.7-12.

\(^{608}\) Smith, *Guilt by Association*, 22.
These references collectively suggest a coherence between the writings of Paul and those of Luke, and all again act as a site of memory and emphasize the authority of Paul as teacher and hunter of heresy.

The identification of Simon and Cleobius is also significant as they suggest the heretical opponents with whom the Corinthians are engaged. According to Eusebius both Simon and Cleobus were well known figures of fomenting heresy. Eusebius writes,

Therefore, they called the Church a virgin, for it was not yet corrupted by vain discourses. But Thebuthis, because he was not made bishop, began to corrupt it. He also was sprung from the seven sects among the people, like Simon, from whom came the Simonians, and Cleobius, from whom came the Cleobians, and Dositheus, from whom came the Dosithians, and Gortheus, from whom came the Gorthenians, and Masbotheus, from whom came the Masbothaeans. From them sprang the Menandrianists, and Marcionists, and Carpocratians, and Valentinians, and Basilidians, and Saturnilians. Each introduced privately and separately his own peculiar opinion. From them came false Christs, false prophets, false apostles, who divided the unity of the Church by corrupt doctrines uttered against God and against his Christ.609

609 Eusebius, H.E., IV. 22.4-6 διά τούτο ἐκάλουν τὴν ἑκκλησίαν παρθένον, οὕτω γὰρ ἐφθαρτο ἁκοῖς μεταίμης: ἄρχεται δὲ ὁ Θεσβοῦθις διά τὸ μὴ γενέσθαι αὐτὸν ἐπίσκοπον ὑποφείρειν ἀπὸ τὸν ἐπὶ αἱρέσεων, ὅν καὶ αὐτός ἦν, ἐν τῷ λαῷ, ἀρ ὁν Ἔμων, ὃθεν Σιμωνιανοὶ, καὶ Κλεόβιος, ὃθεν Κλεοβιηνοί, καὶ Δοσίθεος, ὃθεν Λοσιθιανοί, καὶ Γορθανίς, ὃθεν Γοραθηνοί, καὶ Πασίβοθεος. ἀπὸ τούτων Μενανδριανιστα καὶ Μαρκιανιστα καὶ Καρποκρατιανοὶ καὶ Οὐαλεντιανοὶ καὶ Βασιλειδιανοὶ καὶ Σατορνιλιανοὶ ἔκαστος ἰδίως καὶ ἐτεροίῳ ἰδίῳ δόξαν παρεισηγάγοσαν, ἀπὸ τούτων ψευδόχριστοι, ψευδοσκηνία, ψευδαπόστολοι, οἰτίνες ἐμέρισαν τὴν ἐνώσιν τῆς ἑκκλησίας φθοριαίας λόγοις κατά τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ κατα τοῦ Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ.
A similar perspective of Simon is also articulated by Justin Martyr,\textsuperscript{610} Hippolytus,\textsuperscript{611} and the Acts of Peter, however all three record Simon’s activities in Rome not Corinth. In Luke’s account Peter engages with Simon Magus, although this event takes place in Samaria, and his heresy is only the attempt at simony not false teaching.\textsuperscript{612} Regardless of the specific incongruities of the texts, the point remains that specific canonical figures associated with Paul are employed in Third Corinthians to recall the figure and image of Paul as a heresy-hunter relevant to the second-century circumstances that necessitated the composition in the first place.

The final site of memory requiring exploration is that of geographic location, and while the short text does not have the robust geography of Second Baruch, it nonetheless does appeal to known locations of Paul and his contemporaries. Although the text does refer to Israel,\textsuperscript{613} Galilee,\textsuperscript{614} and Nineveh,\textsuperscript{615} all stories associated with both the Old Covenant and the story of Jesus, the obvious reference to Corinth is the most significance reference as it recalls specific engagement with heretical discord in Corinth. Corinth is specifically named four times in the text, two superscripts introducing each letter and

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{610} Justin Martyr, First Apology, 26.
\item \textsuperscript{611} Hippolytus, Philosophumena, VI, vii-xx.
\item \textsuperscript{612} Acts 8.9-25.
\item \textsuperscript{613} Third Corinthians, 2.10.
\item \textsuperscript{614} Third Corinthians, 2.13.
\item \textsuperscript{615} Third Corinthians, 2.28-29.
\end{itemize}
twice in Paul’s response. In 2.1 Paul writes, “Paul the prisoner for Christ Jesus, who is in many failures, to the brothers in Corinth, greetings,” and again in 2.26 Paul writes, “For, indeed, men of Corinth, they do not know the sowing of wheat, and of other seeds, which you throw naked upon the earth and perishes below, and is raised by God’s will in a body and clothed.” While the greeting itself is a typical introduction to in the Pauline corpus, the discussion of resurrection keys into 1 Corinthians 15. Although there is a theological disagreement regarding resurrection between the two texts, the allusion to the discussion in Paul’s original and authentic letter further marks the geographic location as a site of memory for the audience.

The event, people, and geographical location serve as “sites of memory” for the text that recall the heretical-hunting Paul, his canonical colleagues and opponents in both his letters and the Acts of the Apostles, and his specific engagement with the Corinthian community. Taken together, these key into a specific memory of Paul as heresy hunter

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616 Third Corinthians, 1.1 and 2.1.

617 ΠΑΥΛΟΣ Ο ΔΕΣΜΕΙΟΣ <ΧΡΥ> <ΙΗΥ> ΤΟΙΣ ΕΝ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΩ ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙΣ ΕΝ ΠΙΟΛΑΟΙΣ ΩΝ ΑΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ ΧΑΙΡΕΙΝ

618 ΟΥ ΤΕ ΓΑΡ ΑΝΔΡΕΣ ΚΟΡΙΝΘΕΙΟΙ ΟΙΔΑΣΕΙΤΟΝ ΕΠΕΙ ΤΟΥ ΠΥΡΟΥ ΣΠΟΡΟΝ Η ΤΩΝ ΑΛΛΩΝ ΣΠΕΡΜΑΤΩΝ ΟΤΙ ΓΥΜΝΑ ΒΑΛΛΕΤΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΓΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΦΘΑΡΕΝΤΑ ΚΑΤΩ ΗΓΕΡΘΗ ΕΝ ΘΕΛΗΜΑΤΙ <ΘΥ> ΕΝ ΣΩ ΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΗΜΦΙΕΣΜΕΝΑ

619 Luttikhuizen, “Apocryphal Correspondence,” 91-98.

620 For a thorough discussion of the resurrection in the two texts, see, White, Remembering Paul, 121-129.
and theological authority, but permit the present author to alter the memory to ensure the coherence of Paul’s teaching and that of the disciples. However, to do this the author must first detail the theology of the fictitious opponents who are disrupting the Corinthian community.

Regarding the historical and theological impetus for the document, we must first consider the Corinthian’s letter to Paul. The errant theology Simon and Cleobius are purported to preach is too general to be specifically identified with one particular heresy.\textsuperscript{621} In the letter the authors explain the teaching of their opposition as follows:

For such is what they say and teach: We must not, they say, make use of the prophets, and that God is not almighty, and that there is no resurrection for the flesh, and that the creation is not by God, and that the Lord did not come in the flesh nor was he born of Mary, and that the world is not of God but of the angels.\textsuperscript{622}

When broken down there are seven distinct and identifiable points of disagreement between the church in Corinth and the visiting heretical teachers. They are as follows:

1. The prophets should not be considered in contemporary theological discourse as they, presumably, are without divine endorsement or authority.

\textsuperscript{621} See the introduction to this section for a more detailed discussion of possible heretical opponents.

\textsuperscript{622} ἜΣΤΙ ΓΑΡ Α ΛΕΓΟΥΣΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΟΥ ΣΙΝ ΤΟΙΑΥΤΑ | ΟΥ ΔΕΙΝ ΦΗΣΙΝ ΠΡΟ ΦΗΤΕΣ ΧΡΗΣΘΑΙ | ΟΥΔ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΘΝ ΠΑΝΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΑ | ΟΥΔΕ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙ | ΕΙΝΑΙ ΣΑΡΚΟΣ | ΟΥΔ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΠΙΛΑ ΣΙΝ ΤΗΝ ΤΩΝ | ΟΥΔ' ΟΤΙ ΕΙΣ | ΑΡΚΑ ΗΛΘΕΝ Ο | ΟΥΔ' ΟΤΙ ΕΚ ΜΑΡΙΑΣ ΕΓΕΝΝΗΘ | ΟΥΔ' ΕΙ<ΙΝΑΙ> ΤΟΝ ΚΟΣΜΟΝ <ΘΥ> ΑΛΛΑ ΑΓ'ΓΕΛΩΝ |
2. God is not the almighty God, and from this we must assume there is an alternative deific structure in which another deity who reigns supreme in the universe.

3. There is no resurrection of the flesh. This is a frequent debate among second-century Christians and there were several groups who advocated this position. Furthermore, with the nuance of interpretation many Christian groups were unable to agree on what precisely the resurrection of the flesh actually meant in practice.

4. The act of creation was not by God, but rather some other figure. Again this assumes an alternative deific structure in which the God of the Old Testament is not identified as the architect of the universe. However, whether this assumes a higher, second deity or a lower demiurgical character is not clear.

5. The lord, presumably Jesus in this context, was not of the flesh. In the second century there were several debates over the nature of Jesus, and with such limited information as what is found here, one is unable to precisely identify the particular group from which this perspective emerged.

6. Jesus was not born of Mary. By simple logic, it serves that if Jesus were not of flesh he would not have been born through flesh. Beyond this obvious connection there is not much to glean from this comment as there is little record of debates over the Marian maternity of Jesus in the second century.

7. The world does not belong to God but rather the angels. Again, there were several groups in the second century that advocated for such a cosmological structure and to identify this with one particular group is unfortunately untenable.

The final line of their letter appealed for him to “make haste” to them “so that the church of the Corinthians may remain unblemished, and that the folly of these men may become clearly manifest.” Here again there is a direct appeal to Paul to address the issue within the community. Paul is called to identify theological problems of their opponents so that the Corinthian community may remain united.

623 ΔΙΟ ΑΔΕΛΦΕ ΠΑΣΑΝ ΕΙΣΗΓΗΣΕ ΣΠΟΥ ΔΗΝ ΠΑΡΑΓΕΝΕΣΘΑΙ ΕΝΘΑΔΕ ΟΠΩΣ ΑΣΚΑΝΔΑΛΙΣΤΟΣ ΜΕΙΝΗ Η ΚΟΡΙΝΘΩΝ ΕΚΛΗΣΕΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΤΩΝ Η ΑΝΟΙΑ ΕΚ’ΔΗΛΟΣ ΓΕΝΗΤΑΙ
in their beliefs. Paul was then understood not as the force against their opposition, but rather the source and authority of their unity. The community, as depicted in this letter, is then far more concerned with the preservation of their own theology and unity than with the evangelistic or aggressive alteration of their opposition. It is an inwardly focused community that rejects in the intrusion of this alternative theology. And as was argued previously, the theology of their opponent does not specifically align with any particular heresy, and this coupled with the inwardly focused message, suggests the text functions as a general anti-heretical document, rather than the specific engagement with a particular opposing movement.

The focus on community preservation resonates with the position of MacDonald, who argued that there were three phases to the development of Pauline Churches: Community-Building Institutionalization by Paul; Community-Stabilizing Institutionalism evidenced by Colossians and Ephesians; and Community-Protecting Institutionalization as witnessed in the second-century Pastoral Epistles. Although I do not share her position on the inauthentic authorship for Colossians and Ephesians, this does not mitigate her work nor her sociological research on the second century community preservation. Her ultimate conclusion of the third phase, as witnessed in the Pastoral Epistles, she summarizes thusly,

624 MacDonald, *Pauline Churches*.

625 The arguments for or against the authenticity of the so-called Deutero-Pauline letters is not relevant to this discussion of second-century Christianity.
The struggle against false teaching in the Pastorals is not purely doctrinal; it involves a complexity of social factors related to the position of the church in its Greco-Roman environment. In the Pastorals, it is the behavior of the proponents of the false teaching that appears to be causing the greatest alarm. The conflict is related to the formation of structures to stabilize community life. The authority of officials is reinforced and the way one should act in community life is more clearly defined. The labeling of others as “heretical” contributes to the process of self-definition. Development in the Pastorals cannot be attributed to a conflict of ideas or to an awareness of the delayed Parousia.\textsuperscript{626}

In her argument she relies on the Pastoral’s engagement with social structures such as slavery, wealth, and women, and theological understandings of salvation and resurrection.\textsuperscript{627} And while these items may not be addressed specifically in \textit{Third Corinthians}, White has demonstrated the theological and social parallels between the two that permit MacDonald’s understanding of community-preservation to apply to the non-canonical epistle.

The Corinthians identify the authority of proper teaching in Paul, and justify their writing to him on the basis the teaching espoused by Simon and Cleobius they “never hear from [Paul] or the others.” This attribution to Paul makes it clear that he is the authority of proper teaching. While the use of the term “the others” is unclear, and given the scant references to the twelve apostles in other contemporary Asia Minor texts, we may only conclude that these would refer to other colleagues of Paul. Even in a fictitious letter such as this, there is no reason to assume that the text does not refer to a presumed

\textsuperscript{626} MacDonald, \textit{Pauline Churches}, 234.

\textsuperscript{627} Her specific treatment of the third phase is found in MacDonald, \textit{Pauline Churches}, 159-234.
historical reality of Paul’s colleagues such as those he names in his epistles like Timothy or Barnabas. Their invitation for him to visit or write is a clear indication of their reliance on his authority for distinguishing right from wrong in terms of theology. Their desire for him to weigh in, as it were, in their discussion assumes the collective recognition of his authority among their community. They are not calling upon Paul to engage the newly arrived Simon and Cleobius, but rather to set the theological record straight among their own Corinthian community. Paul is envisioned as the champion of the faith within the community, and he is called only to correct the wayward theological understandings of the Corinthian community.

The reply from Paul reveals more about his own understanding of this authority. In the first line of his reply Paul writes, “Paul the prisoner for Christ Jesus, who is in many failures (ἈΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ), to the brothers in Corinth, greetings.”628 English translations of this passage of typically render ΑΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ to suggest Paul’s weakness, physical or otherwise, and as White contends, are too reliant on later traditions of the Acts of Paul.629 Both Schneemelcher and Rordorf translate it as “tribulations,” Elliot offers the more specific “afflictions,” and more recently, Ehrman agrees with Hovhanessian’s use of “failures,” as seen above, while Pervo prefers the more ambiguous, “numerous misfortunes.”630 Danker, in his analysis of ΑΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ offers

628 Third Corinthians, 2.1. Hovhanessian translation

629 White, Remembering Paul, 112.

an alternative translation of this verse rendering it “since I must deal with numerous errors (in teaching).” Expanding on this version White proposes a more precise rendering of ΑΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ in a context that parallels its use in Plutarch, *The Didache*, and the Pastorals where it is employed to address faults, failures, or errors. Thus, White argues to take ΑΣΤΟΧΗΜΑΣΙ as “deviant views,” and translates the opening of Paul’s reply as “Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus, in the midst of many deviant views – to the brothers in Corinth – Greetings.” White’s rendering of this passage speaks more specifically to Paul’s image as heresy-fighter as he is depicted as currently embroiled in the defense of orthodoxy. As White explains,

Read with 2.1, it is an existential description of Paul’s situation. When read with 2.2, as Danker has suggested, it has a causal sense: because Paul finds himself amidst many theological opponents, he is not surprised that the Corinthians are as well. Either way, Paul is pictured as one who is currently surrounded by numerous “errors” or “deviations” from the faith. He is the defender of proto-orthodox theology against every kind of teaching is “not” (α+) “on target” (στόχος), including those gaining influence at Corinth. His response to Simon and Cleobius is a cure-all for many (πολλοί) heresies that found their origin in the figure of Simon Magus.

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631 White, *Remembering Paul*, 112.


The translation offered by White and Danker better reflects the heresy-fighting image of Paul that is reflected elsewhere in the letter. While the physically or emotionally suffering Paul may key into the present persecution of the church, this is an unlikely focus because this persecution is not emphasized elsewhere in the letter.\(^6\) Therefore, following the work of White and Danker, there is yet another example of this image of Paul as the champion of orthodoxy evident in pseudepigraphical Corinthian correspondence.

Although the letter focuses primarily on clarifying the theological discord (particularly related to physical resurrection), it has two revealing statements regarding the Paul’s own theological authority. The first seems rather self-protective as he declares that all that he has taught he received from the disciples.\(^6\) His particular mention of their role with Jesus before him oddly places him in an apostolic succession that seems to suggest the disciples are of greater import than he. Paul, or rather one writing as Paul, says “For I delivered to you first of all what I received from the apostles before me who

634 Although the Papyrus Bodex does offer the subscript “Concerning the flesh,” to open Paul’s reply, this refers to the salvation of the flesh and the spirit. Furthermore, there are still no physical or emotional maladies discussed elsewhere in the letter to suggest any form or persecution or ailment.

635 Perhaps alluding to his own explanation in Galatians 2.1-2. “Then after fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along with me. I went up in response to a revelation. Then I laid before them (though only in a private meeting with the acknowledged leaders) the gospel that I proclaim among the Gentiles, in order to make sure that I was not running, or had not run, in vain.” “Ἐπειτα διὰ δεκατεσσάρων ἔτων πάλιν ἀνέβην εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα μετὰ Βαρναβᾶ συμπαραλαβών καὶ Τίτον· ἀνέβην δὲ κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν· καὶ ἀνεθέμην αὐτοῖς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ὃ κηρύσσει ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν, κατ’ ἰδίαν δὲ τοῖς δοκοῦσιν, μή πως εἰς κενὸν τρέχω ἢ ἐδραμον.”
were always with Jesus Christ.”

In similar texts Paul represents a message that is consistent with the disciples, or at times even one that was verified by the disciples, but here the author indicates that Paul received his entire teaching from the disciples. They are the source of knowledge, and through this knowledge, he has authority. His ecclesial and theological power then resides in his subservient connection to the disciples. Paul is the defender of orthodox thought, though this role was not given to him directly. Paul continues and admonishes those in the community who are rejecting this very teaching he received from the disciples. He writes,

And whoever accepts this rule which we have received by the blessed prophets and the holy gospel shall receive a reward, but for whomsoever deviates from this rule, fire shall be for him and for those who preceded him therein, since they are Godless people, a generation of vipers.

The line of demarcation is clearly drawn by Paul. He is the authoritative figure who stipulates who is on the correct theological side and who is not. Though he is clear to note the final ends of those who believe in either perspective, he curiously does not offer the

636 Third Corinthians, 4. ΕΓΩ ΓΑΡ ΕΝ ΑΡΧΗ ΠΑΡΕΔΩΚΑ ΥΜΙΝ Α ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΟΝ ΥΠΟ ΤΩΝ ΠΡΟ ΕΜΟΥ ΑΠΟΣΤΟΛΩΝ ΓΕΝΟΜΕΝΩΝ ΤΟΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΧΡΟΝΟΝ ΜΕΤΑ <ΙΗΥ> <ΧΡΥ>

637 Third Corinthians, 36-38. ΚΑΙ ΕΙ ΤΙΣ Ω ΠΑΡΕΛΑΒΕ ΚΑΝΟΝΙ ΔΙΑ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΚΑΡΙΩΝ ΠΡΟΦΗΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΩΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΡΟΟΔΥΠΟΡΟΥ ΕΧΕΙΝ ΤΑΙΝΙΑ, ΕΙ ΤΙΣ ΠΑΡΑΒΕΝΕΙ ΤΑΥΤΑ ΤΟ < הו> ΕΣΤΙ ΜΕΤ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΟΥ ΤΩΣ ΠΡΟΟΔΥΠΟΡΟΥ ΕΧΕΙΝ ΤΑΙΝΙΑ ΟΥΣ ΑΠΟΤΡΕΠΕΙΣΘΕ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΤΟΥ < כ> ΔΥΝΑΜΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΤΩΜΕΘ ΥΜΩΝ ΙΡΗΝΗ
injunction to correct the theology of others or two address their opponents directly. Paul is presented as a figure who supports their self-concern for unity.

While there is clearly far too little information here to responsibly construct their ecclesiology, one can see similarities with other second century writers in nearby regions who advocate their own ecclesial authority over those of traveling prophets. The community which authored these texts was certainly not interested in the conversion, reformation, or engagement with other communities or perspectives as they sought primarily to preserve their own theological structure, un tarnished by the influence of others not already in agreement with their own beliefs. And furthermore, these beliefs are transmitted through Paul, and by Paul’s own words, which can be traced back to the original apostles, who were with Jesus before him. In effect, this community believes itself to be following the direct teachings of Jesus through the disciples and then through Paul, to themselves.

_Third Corinthians_, as a witness to second-century Apostolic-Catholicism, imagined Paul as a figure who preached an apostolically approved message of unity. Paul was their primary apostle, to be sure, but his message was still transmitted and verified via the original apostles who learned from the physical Jesus on earth. Paul did not preach a secret message of mystical practices or a new God for this community. Instead, Paul taught a message of coherent, apostolic unity.
Conclusion

First seen with Clement of Rome, the Apostolic-Catholics of the late first and early second centuries began a pogrom against the Pauline Churches and their memories of Paul. Forced to engage with the popularity of the Pauline theology and practices, these figures reframed the public memories of Paul from those that emphasized his charisma, secretive teaching and mystical practices, and understanding of a dual-deity system, to a more domesticated and accessible memory for all. These Apostolic-Catholic writers collectively over the course of a hundred plus years constructed a memory that exemplified the coherence of their theology, the authority of their ecclesial structures, and the unity of their churches. These new memories of Paul, slowly overtime, morphed in the memory of Paul who was to be imitated and learned from. He was a figure who no longer preached a secret message to a select few, no, he taught the same message as the other apostles and did so publicly. He recognized the authority of Apostolic-Catholic ecclesiology, and he understood the importance their Jewish roots.

By the beginning of the third century Paul had become fully subsumed within the Apostolic-Catholic framework. He was an apostle, he was even the apostle, but he taught the same apostolic message of unity and ecclesial authority. Paul’s rise to prominence within Apostolic-Catholicism is the result of a centuries-long engagement with transgressive Pauline churches, and the debates over who Paul is and what he represents resulted in the mutual identity formation of all the churches. The arguments over Paul
forced the Apostolic-Catholics to define themselves by their apostolic roots, unity, and ecclesiology.
Conclusion

It was the discursive efforts of the Charismatic Catholic, Valentinian, and Marcionite churches that propelled Paul to prominence in the Catholic Church of Late Antiquity. Their memories of his charisma, secretive and mystical teachings, and revelation of the true God forced the Apostolic-Catholics to reimagine their own identity and to construct one that emphasized their apostolic unity, ecclesial authority, and Jewish roots. It was these transgressive memories of Paul that forced the separation of the Ebionites from the Apostolic-Catholics to form their own, more Torah-focused forms of Christian devotion.

Through these disputes over the memory of Paul, the Apostolic-Catholics stripped Paul of his secretive tendencies, tempered his individual religiosity, and made him universally accessible to Christians everywhere. The memory of Paul, the memorialized Paul, had been domesticated from the privileged few with advance knowledge, to the quotidian Christian who participated in the public rituals, followed the approved theology, and adhered to the ecclesial authoritative structures.
The Rise of Paul, the genesis of Catholic Paulinism, was due to the popularity and influence of his memories among the transgressive Pauline movements of the second century.

Through this Domestication of Paul approach, we have seen more clearly how the early Christian communities were engaged with each other. Each of the churches discussed here used similar terminology, motifs, and scriptural passages and yet each understood them differently. These differing perspectives are often left unnoticed by the religious historian who is not privy to the psychological and cultural assumptions of second-century Christians. In the analysis of the social memories of Paul one can see how the arguments between these different churches were often about assumed and well-understood distinctions. Distinctions so well-known to these authors of antiquity that they did not warrant explicit mention.

For instance, the disputes between Charismatic Catholics and the Apostolic-Catholics largely circled around theological authority, not ecclesial authority, even though that is often the assumed dispute by scholars. This work has shown that the major distinction between the Valentinians and Apostolic-Catholics had more to do with alternative ritual practices and secretive teaching, than with alternative theologies of the divine realm. It was the sociality of the religious expression that these churches argued over because they had ramifications for salvation, ecclesial authority, and theological teaching, but the point of friction was in the individualism of mystical experiences against the communality of ecclesial ritual. The Marcionites and Apostolic-Catholics similarly differed over much, but in investigating their competing memories of Paul, we can see their primary point of distinction lie not in editing the works of Paul or which
God is real, but rather the relationship between Christianity and Judaism and how one understands the scriptural authority of the Old Covenantal texts. The Ebionites broke away from the Apostolic-Catholics because of their inclusion of Paul, but did so on the basis of authority. Not in terms of ecclesial structures or church governance, but rather in their statement that religious authority cannot be found through revelation. The Ebionites rejected the very premise of revelatory authority and instead relied exclusively on the communal teaching of their leaders.

Collectively, we can see how the Apostolic-Catholics were engaged in critical disputes over theological interpretation, communal practices, community identity, and the root of authority. Pieced together, the Apostolic-Catholic writers were attempting to build a religion that was theologically sophisticated, textually authoritative, yet accessible to the average person. Unlike their opponents, the Apostolic-Catholics were concerned to build a church that could reach the breadth of human experience and appeal to the wealthy and poor, intellectual and mundane, zealous and lackadaisical alike. In essence, their engagement with the memories of Paul in the second century forced the Apostolic-Catholics to articulate a socialized religion that could transcend economic, political, and ethnic boundaries.

The Apostolic-Catholic response to the Rise of Paul was to domesticate him so that he was accessible, that he could be imitated, and that he represented the entire Apostolic-Catholic Church. As DeConick has noted, the Apostolic-Catholics were concerned with building a religion that carried authority from one generation to the next, and a key component of this consideration, was the socially-lived elements of the religion. That is to say, the Apostolic-Catholics responded to the exclusionary practices
of their opponents with inclusivity and with an eye towards the communality of their religion.

Although this work has done much to illuminate Paul’s popularity among early Christians, it has also revealed avenues that warrant further consideration. For instance, this work has relied heavily on the assumed knowledge of the canonical narrative and thus intentionally avoided consideration of second-century canonical texts like the Gospel of John, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Pastoral Epistles. Though these have been referenced throughout this work, their own specialized treatment with the Domestication of Paul model in mind would yield much with respect to the development of Pauline memorialization in the early church. The Pastorals themselves are a particularly curious case as they neither completely align nor directly disagree, with the Apostolic-Catholic thinkers examined here. They represent a separate category of Pauline memory that opposed the same Pauline Churches as the Apostolic-Catholics opposed, but demonstrate no direct affiliation with, nor interest in, the other apostles and their authority. Their memory of Paul is one of exclusivity. How this fits in within the development of Apostolic-Catholicism and what accounts for their canonical inclusion is certainly worthy of advanced analysis. In a similar vein, little treatment here has been given to the Apostolic-Catholic Christians in Egypt during the second century such as Athenagoras, Clement, and the early third-century Origen.

A second avenue illuminated by this work is the consideration of the Apostolic-Catholic network. These thinkers, mostly independent of one another, constructed remarkably similar memories of Paul and it was not until the writings of figures like Irenaeus and Tertullian that they were coalesced into a single narrative. Tracing these
individual memories, even in terms of geography, would reveal much about the particular concerns of developing churches as well as the larger process of Apostolic-Catholic unification. As scholars, in large part due to the general professional distinction between Biblical or New Testament Studies and the Patristic Period, often to do not explore the coherence between the two historical periods. Consideration of the memory of Paul, and indeed other apostles as well, in this regard would offer much in understanding the socio-historical development of Christianity in the first, second, and third centuries.
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