

# I'm okay, you're not okay: Constancy of character and Paul's understanding of change in his own and Peter's behaviour

## Author:

Eric Stewart<sup>1,2</sup>

## Affiliations:

<sup>1</sup>Department of Religion,  
Augustana College,  
United States

<sup>2</sup>Department of New  
Testament Studies,  
University of Pretoria,  
South Africa

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Prof. Dr Eric Stewart, Augustana College, Rock Island, Illinois, USA is participating in the research project of Prof. Dr Ernest van Eck, Department of New Testament Studies of the Faculty of Theology at the University of Pretoria, South Africa. This article was initially presented as a paper at the International Meeting of the Context Group that was held at the University of Pretoria on 02–05 August 2010. The author is grateful for funding provided by the University of Pretoria and from the William A. Freistat Center at Augustana College in Rock Island, Illinois.

## Correspondence to:

Eric Stewart

## Email:

ericstewart@alumni.plu.edu or estewart40@gmail.com

## Postal address:

Augustana College, 639  
38th Street, Rock Island,  
Illinois 61201, United States

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Paul argues in Galatians 2:11–14 that Peter was guilty of hypocrisy because he had withdrawn from eating with Gentiles in Antioch. Paul's argument is best understood through the social and rhetorical conventions related to the encomium. The problem for Paul is that his own behaviour is inconsistent, and the Galatians know of his changed behaviour (Gl 1:13). Paul, then, is at pains to explain how his own changed behaviour, as a result of a commissioning from God, is different from Peter's changed behaviour, as a result of fear of those from the circumcision. Paul's concern for explaining his own change in behaviour as positive and Peter's as negative is related to his overall concern to prevent future changes in the Galatians' behaviour given that they are, as Paul himself is, commissioned by God for a new freedom.

## Introduction

Paul's confrontation with Peter in Antioch, described in Galatians 2:11–14, has long been considered a key episode for understanding the early Jesus movement. Apart from Paul's description of the event, though, no other 1st century source describes this encounter. Part of the reason for this lack, of course, is that, so far as we know, Peter himself wrote nothing (Elliott 2000:121–25). Paul, by contrast, wrote several letters and mentions Peter specifically in two of them, Galatians and 1 Corinthians. Only in Galatians, however, does Paul indicate that the two of them ever met or spent any time together. In Galatians, moreover, their situation seems to go from a friendly encounter to hostility. Paul relates his first encounter with Peter, or Cephas as Paul calls him in Galatians 1:18, some three years after his 'calling' a second encounter 14 years after the first and a third (and final?) encounter coming in Antioch some time after the second meeting in Jerusalem. In this third encounter, mentioned in the letter to the Galatians, Paul opposes Peter to his face (2:11) because of his inconsistent behaviour. Paul's description of Peter in Galatians 2:11–14 uses vituperative rhetoric to castigate Peter for acting in opposition to what Paul considers right or normative.

For Paul, it is Peter's changed behaviour that is the problem at Antioch. This contention fits well within the overall message of Paul's argument in Galatians that the Galatians ought not to revert to prior forms of behaviour or any behaviour that deviates from Paul's understanding of the gospel (Gl 1:8–9; 4:8–10; 5:1, 7–8; 6:15). According to Paul, Peter has violated this principle and reverted to a form of behaviour that is not consistent with the gospel as Paul understands it. Paul, however, is not able simply to address the changed course of Peter's behaviour without taking into account the fact that his own behaviour has changed radically, seeing as Paul believes that the Galatians know of his radical change in behaviour (Gl 1:13). Paul, then, must explain why his own change in behaviour is acceptable, when Peter's is not. The difference for Paul is in the motivation for change. Paul contends that his own change in behaviour in Galatians 1–2 is justified as a result of his commissioning by God, whereas Peter's change in behaviour, a result of fear of those of the circumcision (Gl 2:11–14), is not justified. For Paul, the point of the rhetoric about change and commission is that his own experience parallels that of the Galatians. They, too, have been changed by a divine call, and any further change of behaviour dishonours the divine patron who called them. Paul's concern about Peter's behaviour in Antioch is that it involves compulsion for Gentiles to 'Judaize' (Gl 2:14). Compulsion, in Paul's view, is also the major threat to the Galatians.

## Prior readings of Galatians 1–2

The discussion of Cephas or Peter in Galatians 1:11–2:14 is generally considered part of a dynamic between 'Judaic' and 'Hellenic' forms of Christianity, with Peter caught in the middle of a battle between Paul and James over the correct course of action when 'Jewish' followers of Christ and 'Gentile' followers of Christ are at odds over how to participate in common meals. There are

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numerous interpretive difficulties in understanding the issue or problem(s) lying behind Paul's description in Galatians 1:11–2:14. The type of meal from which Peter has withdrawn is unknown, the outcome of the situation is lost to modern scholars and the purpose of Paul's writing has been subsumed in an understanding of Christianity that opposes the 'law' and the 'gospel' and assumes Paul is normative for understanding not only the historical, but also the theological reality of the situation in Galatia in the 1st century of the common era.<sup>1</sup>

## Recent interpretations of Galatians 1–2

### Hans Dieter Betz

Betz has set the context for much of the modern understanding of Galatians with his *Hermeneia* commentary on the letter (Betz 1979). Betz says that Galatians 2:1–10 and Acts 15:1–29 describe the same historical event (1979:81–83). The conference at Jerusalem occurs because 'conservative Jewish Christians ... arrived in Antioch to demand the circumcision of all Gentile Christians' (Betz 1979:82). In response, the *ekklesia* [congregation, church] in Antioch sent a delegation including Paul, Barnabas and Titus. When they arrived in Jerusalem:

... negotiations took place between three factions: the delegation from Antioch (headed by Paul and Barnabas), the leaders at Jerusalem (James, Cephas, and John), and a third group of conservative Jewish Christians whom Paul calls the 'false brothers'.

(Betz 1979:82)

After fierce debate, the Antioch delegation and the leaders at Jerusalem reached agreements that showed 'that the delegation from Antioch had reached their goal and that the conservative faction was defeated' (Betz 1979:82). This agreement resulted in a dual mission with two gospels (Gl 2:7), but the 'conservative Jewish Christians' still tried to stir up difficulties for Paul (Betz 1979:82). Betz lists several 'facts' concerning the incident at Antioch:

- For an unknown reason, Peter came to Antioch, took up eating with Gentile Jesus followers and 'perhaps even the Gentile way of life altogether' (1979:104).
- No one in Antioch took issue with Peter's practice until 'a delegation of "men from James" arrived' (1979:104).
- This intervention caused Peter and others to withdraw from eating with Gentiles.
- Instead, they 'took up again the Jewish way of life, especially the part of ritual separation from the unclean' (1979:104).

Betz thinks one possible rendering of the Jerusalem agreement is that Peter's mission to the Judeans should not involve violation of cultic purity laws (1979:108). Paul, for Betz, is not concerned with whether Peter practices Judean religion in such a way as to enforce purity rules on Judeans, but is troubled that 'Cephas had explicitly or implicitly made a demand upon the Gentiles to become partakers of the Torah covenant' (1979:112). In other words, Peter violated the agreement that had been made at Jerusalem by insisting the 'Gentiles' behave like 'Jews'.

There are some difficulties with Betz's proposed understanding of the situation. Several of the details of Betz's reconstruction are known only from Acts. These include the group of conservative Jewish Christians to which Betz appeals, as well as the idea that Paul and Barnabas were sent as a delegation from Antioch to Jerusalem. In the first case, Acts 15:1 says only that 'some having come down from Judea were teaching the brothers and sisters, "if you are not circumcised by the custom of Moses, you are not able to be saved"' [τινες κατελθόντες ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας ἐδίδασκον τοὺς ἀδελφοὺς ὅτι, εἰ μὴ περιτμηθῆτε τῷ ἔθει τῷ Μωϋσείως, οὐ δύνασθε σωθῆναι]. The text of Acts does not identify these 'some' as being Judean<sup>2</sup> followers of Christ, and they could be Judeans who are not followers of Christ as a result of the series of conflicts between Paul, Barnabas and Judeans that are narrated in the preceding chapters of Acts. If that is the case, then Betz's proposal for the context for Paul's arrival in Jerusalem with Barnabas and Titus goes by the wayside. Further, there are several difficulties with suggesting that Galatians 2:1–10 and Acts 15 are two versions of the same incident.<sup>3</sup> I assume here that the two accounts cannot be reconciled

1. Paul's status as 'normative' on this question is certainly witnessed in the dispute between Augustine and Jerome in the 4th century. On this point and other readings of Galatians 2 by the church fathers, see Carriker (1999) and McHugh (1991).

2. I use the phrase 'Judean religion' instead of 'Judaism' to indicate both that 'Judaism' as it is known in the modern world is a development of rabbinic traditions that arose later than the middle of the 1st century CE and to indicate the fact that the Greek word Ἰουδαϊσμός contains a geographic and ethnic meaning in the 1st century CE. All the practices that make up Ἰουδαϊσμός are practices of Ἰουδαῖοι, that is, people of Judean ancestry. This usage is similar to using the word 'Greek' to translate Ἕλλην. For more on these terms and their meanings in antiquity see J.H. Elliott (2007).

3. For a fuller discussion of the relationship between Galatians 1–2 and Acts 15 see (Betz 1979; Knox 1987; Lüdemann 1984; Jewett 1979; Achtemeier 1986; Leppä 2006; Morgado Jr. 1994; Hall 1991).

and am concerned exclusively with Paul's rhetoric in Galatians 2.

### Judean religion, the inclusion of Gentiles, and the Jesus movement

Three recent studies address purity or *halakhic* concerns and their significance for understanding the issue in Antioch. (Frederiksen 2002; Dunn 2002; Nanos 2002). Frederiksen claims that, as a result of the presence of God-fearers within the synagogue communities of the Diaspora, inclusion of Gentiles into the practices of Judean religion was already widespread. Such God-fearers were neither full converts to Judean religion, nor were they 'idolatrous' Gentiles. Rather, they existed in an in-between state in which they were 'free to observe as much or as little of Jewish customs as they chose' but they 'were not expected to abandon their ancestral observances if they chose to assume certain Jewish ones' (Frederiksen 2002:247). As Gentile God-fearers were part of Judean Diaspora synagogue communities, Frederiksen suggests that 'from its inception, the Christian movement admitted Gentiles without demanding that they be circumcised and observe the Law' (2002:255). The matter of when and under what circumstances to admit Gentiles into the *ekklesia* was the one that had not been resolved. It is this issue that is at stake in Galatians 1–2, and rather than being a conservative regression to past practice, the position of the 'false siblings' (Gl 2:4) was, in reality, the 'startling novelty' (Frederiksen 2002:256). It is the members of the *ekklesia* who introduce the problem, and the inclusion of Gentiles is only a problem for the emerging Jesus groups.

Dunn (2002) goes further to suggest that:

Many God-fearers attracted by the Jewish law quite naturally would have observed the law in the way that native born Jews did—that is, in the way that the developed customs and developing tradition dictated.

(Dunn 2002:217)

Dunn notes that elsewhere, in Josephus' *Jewish War* 2.17.10 for example, that the word ἰουδαίειν [to make Judean], occurs without the meaning of full conversion. Instead 'it denotes rather the range of possible assimilation to Jewish customs' (2002:220). Dunn understands the difference between ἐθνικῶς and ἰουδαϊκῶς in Galatians 2:14–15, then, to be the 'antithesis between what we may call a Noahic life-style and a Sinaitic life-style' (2002:220). Ultimately, for Dunn, the problem in Antioch lies in the fact that when Paul and his companions, particularly Titus, were in Jerusalem, they had 'observed a high standard of table purity' (2002:227) and the men from James would have assumed the same degree of observance at Antioch. When they arrived, Peter was placed in a difficult position for several reasons:

- he 'could not deny the logic of Jerusalem's demand, that a Jew live like a Jew' (Dunn 2002:227)
- he would have been sensitive to protecting 'Judaism' from outside threats by observing more diligently the requirements of the law
- he was a missionary to fellow Judeans (Gl 2:7–8) and did not want to risk offending them.

Paul stepped into the situation after Peter had abandoned eating with the Gentiles who would not agree to be circumcised. Dunn (2002) contends that it is at this point that Paul, for:

... the first time, probably ... had come to see the principle of 'justification through faith' applied not simply to the acceptance of the gospel in conversion, but also to the whole of the believers' life.

(Dunn 2002:230)

The conflict arose because the Jerusalem delegation was not prepared to accept Gentiles who were not full converts and Paul, through this incident, began to realise the implications of the theology of 'justification through faith'.

According to both Dunn and Frederiksen, the issue at Antioch is how to include Gentiles within essentially Judean religious groups. The issue of table fellowship itself is not the main problem. For Frederiksen, the main problem involves the creation of a distinct subgroup within the synagogue at Antioch and the membership of that subgroup. For Dunn, the problem is that the Jerusalem group and the Diaspora Antiochene group would not have observed the law the same way, with the Jerusalem group having a much more stringent observance of the law as it related to Gentiles and Judeans eating with one another. Both of these studies argue that the centrality of Jerusalem is taken for granted by the Antiochene *ekklesia*.

Similarly, Mark Nanos assumes that the 'food conformed to prevailing Jewish dietary practices to which they [i.e. the ones advocating circumcision] subscribed' (Nanos 2002:316). Nanos rejects the notion that the food eaten and the space in which it was eaten were primarily oriented toward Gentile practices. His basic argument is that the Judeans were eating with the Gentiles, but that the Gentiles were not being treated according to the prevailing customs for interaction between themselves and Judeans. Ordinarily, Gentiles would fit into one of two categories, guests or potential proselytes. Instead, at Antioch, the Judean Christ followers were eating with Gentiles:

... as though these Gentiles and Jews were all equals, although these Gentiles were not Jews; in fact, they were—on principle—not even on their way to becoming Jews, meaning proselytes.

(Nanos 2002:301)

The problem with Peter and the 'rest of the Judeans', then, is not that they used to eat food that was impure for Judeans, but that they used to eat with the Gentiles as equals and had ceased from that practice. Peter's hypocrisy, then, is:

Behaving as though there is still a difference of standing before God and each other on the basis of Jewish or Gentile identity amongst Christ-believers – even though he believes otherwise and has in the past publicly demonstrated his commitment to the gospel of Christ by the way he was 'eating with the [i.e., these] Gentiles'.

(Nanos 2002:303)

When Peter and the other Judeans withdraw from table fellowship, the Gentiles naturally conclude that they should go further in their observance of Judean customs and be

circumcised. It is not that Peter has actually told them to do so. 'Thus Paul approaches Peter's behavior here as exemplifying *hypocrisy*, not apostasy or heresy, which would be the case if Peter were actually *advocating* that these Gentiles become proselytes, Judaize' (Nanos 2002:310). Nanos still does not address adequately, however, how Peter might be accused of 'living like a Gentile' (Gl 2:14), and he assumes at face value Paul's accusation that Peter withdrew from table fellowship as a result of fear.

The interpretations that take seriously how Judeans and Gentiles interacted in 1st century Antioch offer a much needed element of the picture that is missing in traditional interpretation of the passage. Traditional interpretations are influenced heavily by the anti-Judaism of the early Christians of the late 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th centuries. Frederiksen and Dunn attempt to provide some sense of why Peter might have withdrawn from table fellowship that makes Peter look more sympathetic than earlier interpretations of Galatians 2:11–14. Nanos' interpretation does not make Peter look more sympathetic as he still insists that Peter's motivation for his behaviour was fear; however, what Nanos does make clear is that Paul's critique of Peter has less to do with the inclusion of Gentiles than it does with his rebuke of Peter for his inconsistent behaviour.

## Social-scientific approaches

Social-scientific approaches to Galatians 1–2 can offer insights not yet evident in other types of approaches. Three recent studies have employed the social sciences in order to understand Galatians 1–2. These studies highlight details of the text that have gone unnoticed by other interpreters and aid in understanding the dynamic of Paul's interaction with Peter. In order to understand the meaning of Paul's description of himself and of Peter in Galatians 1 and 2, it is necessary first to recognise that Antioch was, like other Mediterranean cities in the 1st century CE, an honour-shame society. Understanding the nature of honour-shame societies has significant impact for understanding the interaction between Paul and Peter both in Jerusalem and in Antioch. Paul uses rhetoric to praise himself and shame Peter when he describes the situation in Antioch.

### Esler and honour and shame

Esler reads Galatians 2 as a series of honour challenges. Paul's trip to Jerusalem was an honour challenge, 'a claim to enter into the social space of the Jerusalem church' (1995:293). Esler also reads Paul's bringing Titus, an uncircumcised male, as an act of aggression. Whilst Paul claims the meeting between himself and the pillars in Jerusalem occurred 'in private' [κατ' ἰδίῳ], Esler argues that it must have been known publicly because of his arrival with Titus. Esler (1995) concludes:

With respect to Titus, Paul is trumpeting the fact that, having starkly challenged his opponents by bringing this uncircumcised Gentile to Jerusalem in the company of himself and Barnabas, he has got away with it.

(Esler 1995:295)

The agreement to entrust Paul with the gospel to the uncircumcised means that:

... their communities in the cities of the diaspora would be able to include Jews and Gentiles in complete fellowship with one another without the latter having to become Jews through circumcision.

(Esler 1995:296)

Paul's statement that the pillars 'gave the right hand of fellowship to me and Barnabas' [δεξιὰς ἔδωκαν ἔμοι καὶ Βαρναβᾶ κοινωνιάς] is 'virtually' a 'technical' phrase 'in the Septuagint and refers to the institution of peace after hostilities' (Esler 1995:298). The problem for Paul is that the agreement was not bound by an oath (Esler 1995:302) and that he:

... left behind him a group in the church of that city who were actuated by powerful malice toward him and who would seek in some way to injure him or his mission.

(Esler 1995:305)

These 'strict Jewish Christians', having been defeated publicly in the first round of the challenge:

... found an effective way of restoring this slight to their honour by bringing to bear on James (and Peter as well) some kind of threat significant enough to have them renege on the agreement they had reached with Paul.

(Esler 1995:306)

The influence of Paul's slighted opponents on Peter in Antioch is the cause of his changed behaviour, which Esler reads as withdrawing from Eucharistic fellowship with Gentile Christ followers (1995:300). As a result of the lack of an oath, Paul could not accuse Peter of violating the agreement secured at Jerusalem and instead could accuse him only of hypocrisy (Esler 1995:309–310).

Esler's study certainly addresses neglected elements in the studies examined above. In the first place, several 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th century interpreters read the encounter in Antioch between Peter and Paul as an honour challenge (though Origen and others read it as a feigned challenge; see Lightfoot 1885 and McHugh 1991). In that sense, these later Christian authors recognised the honour and shame elements, living as they were in the Roman Empire which was itself an honour and shame culture. Paul publicly challenges Peter's honour. Esler's study, however, does not discuss the way in which Paul's accusation of inconsistent behaviour explains Paul's rhetoric in Galatians 1:11–24, nor does it explain how this episode relates to the wider concern of Paul in his letter to the Galatians.

### The *encomium* and Paul's self-description in Galatians 1:11–24

Malina and Neyrey used ancient rhetorical practices to evaluate descriptions of Paul made by Paul himself and by other early Christ followers (1996). Their understanding of Paul's description of himself is based on the model of the *encomium*. The *encomium* is a practice described in ancient rhetorical handbooks known as the *progymnasmata*. *Encomia* cover several main categories (Malina & Neyrey 1996:23–24):

- origin [γένος] and birth [εὐγενεία]
- conduct [ἀναστροφή]
- habits [ἐπιτηδεύματα] and deeds [πράξεις]
- comparison [σύγκρισις].

Paul describes himself in Galatians 1–2 in terms of these categories.

In Galatians 1:13–14, Paul refers to his ‘conduct’ [ἀναστροφή] in Judean religion. He describes himself as ‘zealous for the things handed on by my ancestors’ (Gl 1:14) and his origin in terms of his ethnic group [γένει μου; Gl 1:14]. Paul also says that he ‘surpassed many of his peers in Judean religion’ [προέκοπτον ἐν τῷ Ἰουδαϊσμῷ ὑπὲρ πολλοὺς σινηλικιώτας]. He mentions his birth in Galatians 1:15. There are clear parallels here to the calls of Jeremiah (Jr 1:5) and Isaiah (Is 49:1). The major surprise in Galatians 1:15–16 for an ancient audience would be the radical change in Paul’s life. ‘Normally adult persons were portrayed as living out the manner of life that had always characterized them’ (Malina & Neyrey 1996:39). Indeed, one purpose of narrating the origins and birth of people in the *encomium* was to suggest that what they were to become was already present in them at birth. Paul, however, insists that his change is as a result of two factors. Firstly, it is because of the fact that God was ‘pleased’ to ‘call me through his grace’ [καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ] and ‘reveal his son in me’ [ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί]. This calling means that his new ethos is given to him by God (Malina & Neyrey 1996:40). Secondly, Paul’s appeal to his having been set aside ‘out of his mother’s womb’ [ἐκ κοιλίας μητρός μου], combined with the description of his receiving a commission to ‘proclaim him amongst the Gentiles’ [εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν], means that his new ethos is the one with which he was actually born:

With the hindsight accompanying his new point of view, he could clearly see that his previous way of life was itself in marked contrast to what God had originally intended for him.

(Malina & Neyrey 1996:40)

Paul uses *synkrisis* to compare himself and Peter in Galatians 2:11–14. Paul accuses Peter of having changed as a result of fear from those for circumcision (Gl 2:12), whilst Paul’s change was as a result of a calling from God (Gl 1:15–16):

Peter ... acted out of ‘fear’ of the circumcision party (v. 12). Fear is one of the cardinal vices, a term sure to draw blame upon Peter. In contrast, Paul demonstrated ‘courage’ by boldly challenging Peter in public and by steadfastly defending the truth.

(Malina & Neyrey 1996:50)

## Patronage and conversion

The final element that needs to be taken into account in order to locate properly Paul’s description of himself and subsequent comparison with Peter is the role of ‘conversion’ in antiquity. Crook has written an important study that illuminates both the language and the social reality of conversion in the 1st century Mediterranean world (2004a). Crook argues that ‘conversion’ in antiquity should not be conceived primarily in emotional terms, but is part of a larger pattern of benefaction (2004a:91–150). Crook notes four major aspects of patronage

that are relevant for understanding Galatians 1. The first of these elements is the ‘call’ of the patron (2004a:97–100). A call from a divine patron clearly establishes a relationship between unequal parties, a patron-client relationship (Crook 2004a:99). When a divine patron called a client, that client typically responded in two ways. The first is through prayer and praise designed to call public attention to (and hence increase the honour rating of) the patron (Crook 2004a:108–112). Secondly, the client might begin ‘spreading the good news of a divine patron’s wonderful deeds, and thus attracting clients and increasing the number of worshippers, in effect “patron evangelisation”’ (Crook 2004a:112). Such efforts to increase the number of the patron’s clients was also an attempt to increase the patron’s honour rating. It was further typical of clients, when describing the patron’s benefactions, to engage in what Crook has termed ‘patronal *synkrisis*’ (2004a:117–132). This type of comparison is not between two people, but rather ‘the “before-and-after” state of the client’ including ‘the claim that a patron’s benefactions have changed the client’s life’ (Crook 2004a:119). Finally, Crook calls attention to the terms designated in Greek by the ‘χάρ-’ root: χάρις, χαρίζομαι, χάρισμα’ (2004a:145). These words refer to beneficence, concrete benefaction, or gratitude when they are used in Paul’s letter (Crook 2004a:133–148). That is, they are language in order to describe either general or concrete things provided by God to God’s clients.

In his analysis of Galatians 1, then, Crook outlines Paul’s description of himself in terms of the rhetoric of patronage. Crook notes that Paul saw a vision which he understood as a ‘divine benefaction’ since it occurred διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ (Crook 2004a:171; Gl 1:15). The content of the revelation was that Paul came to the:

... realisation that his divine patron was, in fact, *not* honoured by his behavior. Paul, as any conscientious client would have done, altered his behavior upon making the discovery that what he thought expressed loyalty and honour in fact reflected the opposite.

(Crook 2004a:174)

Further, Paul clearly expresses that he was ‘called’ by God (Gl 1:15; Crook 2004a:175). Galatians 1:13–16 ‘contain a modest *synkrisis*’ (2004a:171). Paul compares his old way of life [ἀναστροφή] with his new one. The purpose of the patronal *synkrisis* in Galatians, for Crook, is in order for Paul to show ‘the source of the gospel he preaches’ (2004a:182).

Crook’s discussion of conversion within the context of patronage or benefaction helps explain the description of Paul in Galatians 1:13–16 especially. Paul’s comparison of his previous manner of living and his new way of life fit well into the pattern of patronal *synkrisis*. Further, to understand his ‘call’ as part of the larger pattern of divine benefaction, a common way of describing benefits from the gods, locates Paul within an ancient discourse of interaction between gods and humans that eliminates the need for probing into Paul’s psychological depths or interior motivations. Paul, as any good client would, responded with loyalty toward a patron who had clearly benefited him (see also Crook 2004b). Paul’s description of himself in Galatians 1:11–17 still retains the

elements of the *encomium* highlighted by Malina and Neyrey, but they serve the purpose of describing exactly how and why Paul came to change his behaviour.

## Galatians 1–2, Paul’s changed behaviour and his relationship to Peter

Paul’s use of the pattern of the *encomium* and his description of his before and after state on the pattern of patronal synkrisis help show why Paul challenges Peter, but not how this challenge fits within the overall pattern of Paul’s argument in Galatians. In the first place, Paul challenges Peter because he has changed his behaviour. As Paul has also radically altered his behaviour, his change in behaviour must be explained. Paul’s overarching concern in the letter to the Galatians, moreover, is that the Galatians will change their behaviour in a manner similar to Peter’s change. Paul writes the letter in order to prevent, or attempt to prevent such a change from happening.

Ancient conceptions of virtuous behaviours involved both ‘knowing one’s place’ (see Plutarch, *Mor.* 49B) and behaving in consistent ways (see Cicero, *De Off.* 1.69, 86; Seneca, *De Const.* 3.4–5). Honourable behaviour involved consistency (Malina & Neyrey 1996:39). Paul’s contention against Peter is that he has behaved in an inconsistent way by first eating with Gentiles and then withdrawing from table fellowship with them (Gl 2:11–14). Nanos notes that the food itself is never an issue within the letter, and he maintains that both the food and the manner in which it was eaten were observant of Judean custom (Nanos 2002:316). If Paul was concerned about the food or the manner in which it was eaten, it seems likely that he would have addressed such concerns, as he does in 1 Corinthians 8 and 10, where he addresses both the type of food and the contexts in which it was eaten. Paul’s challenge to Peter (and to Barnabas and the ‘other Judeans’) clearly is about their altered behaviour rather than the type of food they eat.

Paul, however, is not able to express only that Peter has behaved inconsistently given that Paul himself, first a persecutor (Gl 1:13) of the *ekklesia* of God, had also radically altered his behaviour to support of the Jesus movement. If Paul is right in assuming that the Galatians had heard of his former way of life (Gl 1:13), this datum indicates why, at *this point in this letter*, Paul feels compelled to explain the change in his ethos. Crook (2004a) is surely correct in suggesting that both Paul’s behaviour prior to his vision and afterward was, in Paul’s mind, to honour God. Paul uses the language of commissioning to explain his change in behaviour (Gl 1:15–16). A superior agent, in this case God (Gl 1:16), commanded him to change his behaviour.

After explaining his own changed behaviour, Paul describes his new manner of living (Gl 1:16–17). It is, perhaps, odd that Paul does not report anything beyond those whom he saw (Peter and James) when describing the first visit to Jerusalem after his conversion. Reading between the lines, it seems likely that Peter showed hospitality to Paul (Gl 1:18)

in a situation where he may have felt it was a threat to do so (Gl 1:23). Whether the fact that Paul ‘remained’ [ἔπέμεινα] with Peter for 15 days means that someone had provided an introduction of Paul to Peter or a letter on his behalf is unknown; however, it is odd, if Paul had a reputation for harassing or otherwise ‘persecuting’ Christ followers (Gl 1:13), that Peter would so willingly receive him. That he stayed with Peter for 15 days on this first trip makes Esler’s suggestion that Paul’s second narrated trip to Jerusalem was an aggressive action less likely, as Peter and James do not seem to be opponents in Paul’s description.

In the narration of the second trip, Paul suggests three things that are of significance for understanding the Antioch incident. Firstly, Paul went up by revelation (2:2). According to his account, he was neither summoned by the Jerusalem pillars nor was he commissioned by the *ekklesia* at Antioch (contra Acts 15:2?) or anywhere else to go there; he went because his patron told him to go. Secondly, he attempted to meet privately with the pillars at Jerusalem. This account, of course, may be tendentious. Paul may not accurately report either the context of the meeting or its outcome; however, according to Paul’s account, it was as a result of the ‘false brothers and sisters’ (Gl 2:4) who were ‘snuck in’ [παρεισάκτους] that the meeting became public. If the meeting had remained private, it would not have been an honour challenge, because such a challenge required a public audience (see Rohrbaugh 2010). Thirdly, the pillars (who ‘added nothing’ [2:6] to Paul) agreed in principle with Paul’s commission when they extended the ‘right hand of fellowship’ (2:9). Paul’s lack of acknowledgement of the honour these pillars had amongst the group (2:6) is a bit overblown. Paul claims that ‘God shows no partiality’ [πρόσωπον ὁ θεὸς ἀνθρώπου οὐ λαμβάνει; Gl 2:6]. Certainly there must be an element of disingenuousness here, given that Paul had already claimed that God had, indeed, shown special favour to himself. In any case, it is precisely because of God’s patronage that Paul claims to be unconcerned with the honour status of the Jerusalem pillars (Gl 1:10–12; 2:8).

The difference between Peter and Paul, according to Paul’s rendering, amounts to one thing; Paul was commissioned to change his behaviour by a divine patron and he kept the same ethos from the time of his conversion. Peter, on the other hand, initially accepted Paul’s work amongst the uncircumcised (Gl 2:7–8), eating with uncircumcised followers of Jesus (Gl 2:12a). When men from James came to Antioch, Peter withdrew from the table fellowship, ‘being afraid of those out of the circumcision’ (Gl 2:12). He and the rest of the Judeans acted with ‘extreme hypocrisy’ [συνυπεκρίθησαν] in this matter (Gl 2:13). Paul concludes the recounting of the tale by offering the honour challenge to Peter regarding his inconsistent behaviour (Gl 2:14). The accusation that Paul makes against Peter is that he ‘compels the Gentiles to judaise’ [τὰ ἔθνη ἀναγκάζεις ἰουδαΐζειν; Gl 2:14]. Being ‘compelled’ is the very thing that Titus had avoided because he was ‘with’ Paul in Jerusalem (Gl 2:3). For Paul, compulsion implies a submission and a forfeiture of freedom (Gl 2:4–5). During the second trip to Jerusalem, Cephas *had not compelled* Titus to be circumcised, but now he *would compel* Gentiles to ‘Judaise’.

The analyses of Malina and Neyrey and Crook aid in understanding the challenge that Paul presents to Peter in Galatians 2:11–14. Crook's description of patronal synkrisis makes clear how and why Paul describes his before-and-after ethos as he does in Galatians 1:13–16. Malina and Neyrey make clear how the pattern of the encomium illuminates the entire discourse of Galatians 1:10–2:21; however, what neither of these analyses provides is an indication of why Paul uses *these* rhetorical elements at *this* juncture in the letter to the Galatians. Paul uses the story of his own call and conversion to parallel the story, as he understands it, of the Galatians.

## Galatians, freedom, compulsion and change

Paul notes several items of comparison between his own experience and that of the Galatians. Like Paul, the Galatians are 'called' (Gl 1:6; 5:8; 5:13). Like Paul (Gl 1:15), the Galatians are granted a benefaction from God (Gl 1:6). Similarly, in Galatians 5:7–8, the Galatians are described as 'running well' [ἐτρέχετε καλῶς], reminiscent of Paul's 'running' in Galatians 2:2. Finally, like Paul (Gl 2:4), the Galatians have 'freedom' to act in such a way as to honour the patron because they were 'called to freedom' (Gl 5:13).

Paul is concerned, however, that the status of the Galatians will change. In Galatians 1:6, Paul says that the Galatians are 'quickly changing from the one calling you by beneficence' [μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι]. Although Paul himself obeys the truth (Gl 2:5, 14), the Galatians are 'thwarted not to obey the truth' [ἐνέκοψεν ἀληθεία μὴ πείθεσθαι; Gl 5:7]. Further, those who persuade the Galatians to stop running well and not to obey the truth are not representative of their divine patron (Gl 5:8). Unlike Paul, who behaves only according to the directives of his divine patron, the Galatians are persuaded by human beings. Finally, Paul advises the Galatians to be concerned about those who would 'compel' [ἀναγκάζουσιν] them to be circumcised (Gl 6:12). This root, ἀναγκ- ['to compel'] reminds the reader that Titus was 'not compelled' (Gl 2:3), but that Peter had tried to 'compel' Gentiles to 'Judaize' (Gl 2:14).

Like he did of himself, Paul also uses a patronal synkrisis to compare the Galatians' former state (Gl 4:8–10) to their present state (Gl 4:28; 5:1). In the first instance, the Galatians were 'enslaved by ones not by nature divine' [ἐδουλεύσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὐσιν θεοῖς], but now they have 'freedom' [ἐλευθερία]. Like Paul, they have been changed by a divine patron. Paul insists that they live with a constant ethos to honour this new divine patron rather than 'turning back' (Gl 4:9) and becoming 'cut off from Christ' (Gl 5:4) because in Christ they are a 'new creation' [καινὴ κτίσις; Gl 6:15]. This new creation is given shape by the one and only gospel of Christ (Gl 1:7), which neither human nor divine beings can change or annul (Gl 1:8). Paul's advice to the Galatians, the advice he has adopted for himself in Galatians 1–2, is to stay the course as loyal clients to the divine patron who has called them into the new ethos by which they now live.

## Conclusion

In pointing out Peter's inconsistent behaviour and the reason for it (fear), Paul is challenging Peter's 'freedom' to behave as an honourable person. Paul's lack of consistency, on the other hand, involves honourable behaviour because he was commissioned by a divine patron. He is 'free' in relation to his new patron (Gl 2:4), though others try to restrict that freedom. As he was called by a divine patron to his new way of life, Paul is able to justify his own change in behaviour in contrast to Peter's. In a similar way, the change of behaviour in the Galatians when they received the gospel is justified by virtue of their being 'called' to freedom by a divine patron. Any subsequent change in their behaviour is not authorised by this same patron (5:8) and is a return to enslavement. For the Galatians, then, the choice is to imitate Paul (4:12) in choosing to stay the course in honouring the divine patron who has called them.

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