Mission and ethics in Galatians

In this article, it is investigated how the concepts identity, ethics and ethos interrelate, and how the ethics of the Pauline communities in Galatians functioned against the background of the missionary context of the early church. The author argued that the missionary dimension originated in the context of the missio Dei, and that God called Paul as a missionary to be taken up in the latter. The missionary process did not end with Paul, but was designed to be carried further by believers who should be, by their very nature, missionary. In the process, the author investigated how the transformation of identity (the understanding of self, God and others) leads to the creation of ethical values and how it is particularised in different socio-religious and cultural contexts in the development of the early church. The author argued that there is an implicit missionary dimension in the ethics of Paul in Galatians. In the process, it is argued that those who want to speak of ethics should make something of mission, and those who speak of mission in Galatians, should speak about the role of identity, ethics and ethos in the letter.

Introduction

Recently, the Mo Ibrahim index revealed that South Africa, when one compares the amount of violent deaths and rape, that take place daily, statistically compares to countries that are in a state of war (see Van der Watt & Kok 2010). In September 2009, the minister of police, Nathi Mthethwa, revealed the latest crime figures in parliament, in which no less than 2.1 million cases of crime have been reported in South Africa during the last year.1 Elsewhere, Kok (2010:1) has argued that South Africa is not only experiencing a moral crisis, but that after the transition into the New South Africa the mainline churches (and some members in that church) also experienced an identity crisis in the period. According to others, like the American scholar Campbell (2005:25), ‘the global cultural shift and global phenomenon of postmodernity forced fundamental changes in the Western worldview’, to the extent that ‘the core beliefs, values and institutions of Western culture have been challenged’ significantly in the last few decades. Campbell (2005:25) argues that ‘we no longer have a cohesive system to explain reality’ and that everything is becoming pluralistic and increasingly uncertain, ‘accompanied by an increasing degree of social unrest’. In our zeitgeist questions like ‘who am I’ seems to be a fundamental question people ask, which is nothing less than a question about identity (Campbell 2005:25). Against this background of the growing context of crisis and disorientation concerning morality and ethics, a growing number of scholars are endeavouring research into ethics and/or morality and the way Christian ethics should be applied in a postmodern context (see Burridge 2007; Wolter 2009; Zimmermann & Van der Watt 2010; Kok 2010; Du Plessis, Orsmond & Van Deventer 2009). Burridge (2007:1) rightly argues that controversies about how to apply Biblical material to moral and ethical issues have always been a matter of debate within the history of the Christian church. Some of these issues relate to the prophetic role and self-understanding of the church in the pluralistic post-modern, post-Christian context of our multicultural world. As a Biblical scholar, I recognise the potential and need for deeper scientific reflection on ethics in the New Testament, with specific reference to the dynamics between ethics and mission and the resulting formation of moral agents and moral communities. It is not possible to suggest a constructive answer to the moral crisis in South Africa and the appropriate way to address the problem within the scope of this article. I would, however, like to argue that a scholarly and Biblical study of ethics in the New Testament is of utmost importance for contemporary society. Well known scholars in New Testament ethics like Burridge (2007:1–2), agree that the study of New Testament Ethics and the way we interpret scripture should be an ongoing process of academic reflection. Burridge (2007:1–2) rightly refers to an example within the context of the Dutch Reformed Church in South Africa, in which human relations were understood (within a scripturally based church) to support the doctrine of ‘separate development’, better known as apartheid. The General Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church accepted the doctrine of apartheid in 1976 and justified it ethically. A few decades later, after deep reflection and changes in the South African context, the same church confessed that the doctrine of apartheid was unethical and could no longer be justified on a scriptural basis. Burridge

---

mission, as well as Newbigin (1995:6) for a discussion on the domination of the western world in Christian mission, as well as Newbigin (1995:6) for a discussion on the domination of the western world in Christian mission.

Firstly, it is necessary to define the terms ‘Identity’, ‘Ethics’ and ‘Ethos’ (Van der Watt 2006c:v–ix). The term ‘Ethics’ is to be understood as a generic term referring to the moral codes, values, principles and norms in a particular society based on the systematic reflection upon the latter (Van der Watt 2006c:v–vii). I agree with Zimmermann (2009:399–400) that the term ‘ethos’ could thus be defined as the ‘systematic-theoretical examination’ of a lived ethos, in which he follows Aristotle (An. Post. 1.33–89b 9). Ethics is thus concerned with the ‘rational analysis of morals, the critical examination of ethos and the subsequent questioning of the motives of morality’ (Zimmermann 2009:400).

‘Identity’ relates to the question of who we are, the values we live by on the basis (motivation) of how we understand ourselves, our relationship to God and the world and the values, rules and principles we defer from that.

‘Ethos’, on the other hand, is to be understood as the practical
dsensitive to the errors that have been made in the past with reference to mission to indigenous cultures: in the process of missional endeavours from the developed world, it more than often happened that the ethical values of the developed world have been imposed on indigenous cultures. The social values of the developed world were seen as ‘gospel’, and in the process, missionaries have not always been sensitive to the social ethics of indigenous cultures as Dana L. Robert expresses it well:

Mission at its worst ran the danger of cultural imperialism, of imposing western lifestyles and values to the destruction of indigenous ones. Critics have charged that the modern missional movement was little more than a sustained attempt to impose Euro-American culture on the peoples who came under its sway. To be sure, the missionary drama was played out on the same stage as the powerful political and economic developments of the period; missions were stained by its association Western imperialism. By virtue of its global reach the movement became a primary carrier of modernity and the artifacts and institutions associated with modernity early became hallmarks of missions. (Robert 2005:412)

We have indeed learned from mistakes made in the past, but also need to keep on learning and exploring new horizons on an ongoing basis. In this article, the dynamics between mission and ethics and ultimately what we could learn from Paul’s missional approach, will be investigated. How, in other words, is the dynamics between mission and morality in Paul, in the course of the missionary process, to be understood in a post Christian, post modernistic and cultural pluralistic context against the background of mission?

Mapping the field: Clarification of important concepts identity, ethics, ethos and mission

Firstly, it is necessary to define the terms ‘Identity’, ‘Ethics’ and ‘Ethos’ (Van der Watt 2006c:v–ix). The term ‘Ethics’ is to be understood as a generic term referring to the moral codes, values, principles and norms in a particular society based on the systematic reflection upon the latter (Van der Watt 2006c:v–vii). I agree with Zimmermann (2009:399–400) that the term ‘ethos’ could thus be defined as the ‘systematic-theoretical examination’ of a lived ethos, in which he follows Aristotle (An. Post. 1.33–89b 9). Ethics is thus concerned with the ‘rational analysis of morals, the critical examination of ethos and the subsequent questioning of the motives of morality’ (Zimmermann 2009:400).

‘Identity’ relates to the question of who we are, the values we live by on the basis (motivation) of how we understand ourselves, our relationship to God and the world and the values, rules and principles we defer from that.

‘Ethos’, on the other hand, is to be understood as the practical
way we live out our ethics (Lebensstil),
practical life style) in a
given socio-historical and cultural context (Van der Watt
2004:2–3), the way we do things in our society or group, the
institutionalised practices.

As Christians, the basis or motivation of our being should
be built on the basis of a particular understanding of God,
the world and God’s story9 for and/or with the world,10
which by implication includes the missionary dimension
and Universal Godly Narrative (UGN).11 Accordingly, it
could be argued that there exists a dynamic inter-relational
correspondence between identity, ethics and ethos on the one
hand. On the other hand, that the inter-relational dynamics
thereof are always implicitly imbedded and particularised
within a specific socio-historical context has to be taken
into consideration. This was the case in Paul’s missionary
endeavours, and will also be the case today, when we do
mission.

This brings us to the question as to what we understand
under the term ‘mission’. In most cases one will find that
the denotative, associative and connotative meanings of
‘mission’ are understood in a centrifugal way. That is at least
the case in my native language, Afrikaans. The Standard
Afrikaans Dictionary defines ‘Sending’ (mission) as follows
(Odendal 1994: ad loc):

- handeling van te send, te stuur [Action of sending
someone]
- opdrag, taak wat elders verrig moet word: op ‘n
diplomatieke sending in Moskou wees. Vredesending
[A task that has to be done somewhere else: To be on a
diplomatic mission in Moscow]
- al die werksaamhede van Christen-sendelinge en
die administrasie daarvan: Die binne- en buitelandse

Gruppe oder Gesellschaft’ [The life style of a group or community].

10.When referring to the plan of God or God’s story of the world, my presupposition
is that there exists a strong relationship between the Old and New Testament, with
reference to the covenant. As a result, the sending of Jesus is to be seen as the
fulfilment of, not only OT scripture, but also of the Jewish Messianic expectations.
I therefore do not agree with some scholars like Schnelle (2009), who stand upon
a stronger discontinuity between the Old and New Testament. According to me, Paul
at least, interprets the Christ event as fulfilment of the Old Testament expectations
and within the framework of the OT covenant [for a similar approach, see
Wright (2003)].

11.In John’s gospel for example, God loved the world (3:16), which is caught up in
darkness, sin and blindness (5:24; 9:41; 12:40), and in essence became evil children
of the devil (8:44). For this reason, God sent him only Son so that those who believe
in him could have eternal life (3:16; 20:30–31), become part of a new family, and
be the children of God (1:12). It could thus be argued that in John for instance,
soteriology implies re-socialisation and entrance into a new social reality, which
also serves as the basis for the formulation of the believer’s ethics. This also true
for Paul in Galatians, the believer becomes part of a new family [cf. Gl 3:21–4:7,
4:28; εκκλησία [children]]. Therefore, a fundamental inter-relation correspondence
exists between ethics and ethos. Conduct is a result of identity and therefore ethos
is always a result of, and related to, ethics, rooted in a particular understanding
of the Universal Godly Narrative. Ethics is, in other words, the Lebensstil
or conduct of those who share a common identity. The understanding of Ethics
and Ethos is a dynamic social process as a result of its realisation within a specific
socio-historical context. Van Rensburg (2004:3) explains it as follows: ‘The basis
motivates the ethics, which in turn is practiced as ethics, which receives approval
and/or disapproval from society. This may result in the ethos being reconsidered
in the light of the basis, and this either reinforces or reconstitutes specific behavior
(ethos), etc.’ The term ethos also has a heuristic function, in the sense that it refers
to the ethics. In other words, to develop a missional-incarnational ethos, we have
to have a particular view of ethics, which is based on a particular understanding
of God and his story/plan with the world.

12.With the term Universal Godly Narrative (from now on UGN) the Story of God and
his plan for the world, as articulated in the New Testament Literature is referred to
(cf. In 3:16, etc).

sending. Die sending onder die Jode, Islam. [All the
duties of Christian missionaries and the administration thereof].

These kind of centrifugal definitions are enormously
problematic, in the sense that they tend not only to pacify
congregations and believers as such, but also that ‘mission’
comes something that someone else does, somewhere far
away. I concur with scholars like Keifert (2006:167–168), that
the Pauline understanding of mission is far removed for
the latter definition and understanding that prevail in some
curches today. Mission, rather, is something far greater than
the church, a dimension in which the missional church is to
be taken up into, and carry out God’s mission (cf. also Bosch
1999). A missional church is rather a church that does not
simply do mission, but that focuses on being missional (Keifert

The dynamics of mission in Paul
The origin of the missionary dimension: God’s
plan in action

In Paul and in the New Testament per se, it is clear that
the totality of the missionary dimension originates from God
(cf. Gl 1:4). It is, in other words, not the story of people
doing missionary work, but of people being taken up in the
missionary dimension or story13 of God and his Son (missio
Dei), with the implication that the definition of mission
should, in the first instance, reflect the missio Dei. This
becomes clear in the opening verses of Galatians, where Paul
clearly states that the fact that he is an apostle (missionary)
is not as a result of men (Gl 1:1 Παῦλος ἀπόστολος σῶν ἀπ’
ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δ’ ἀνθρώπου [Paul, Apostle not of man or
through man]), but because of God (cf. also Gl 2:8), who
raised Jesus from death (Gl 1:1 άλλα διὰ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ
πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραις αὐτὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν [but through or because of
Christ and God the father who raised him from death]).
The life-transforming message that Paul preaches thus has as
its origin the revelation of God, Paul argues, and not merely
that of men (Gl 1:11–12).

Furthermore, Paul’s sending as an apostle is not seen as
something that takes place in isolation, but realises against
the background of the UGN, according to which God has

13.In recent debates in political theory and also in contemporary discussions in
Christian Ethics, there is a difference between the view of the so-called liberals and
the communitarians. The former are in favour of a rational basis for a democratic
public morality in which every person chooses their own way of life and view
of that which is good. Communitarians, on the other hand, argue that people’s
identity and ethical values are formed in the context of communities. I agree with
Hauwert (1983:99–100), who argues from a Christian communitarian point of view,
that the community of faith is called to be a particular kind of people, based on a particular story
[that has God as the main character], a story which not only shapes their identity as children of God, but also sustains it [See also The Significance of Paul’s story (Longenecker & Horrel 2002:210–211)]. This
however, does not mean that the ethical norms and ethical action of the church is
necessarily different to that of the world. In many cases it would correspond to the
ethical norms of other traditions. The difference would be the motivation thereof.

14.See Bosch (1999:389–392) for a discussion on Mission as missio Dei. The latter
could be described in the following way: ‘Mission is understood as being derived
from the very nature of God. It is thus put in the context of the Trinity, not of
ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine of the missio Dei as God the
Father sending the Son, and God the Father sending the Spirit is expanded to
include yet another “movement”: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church
into the world’ (Bosch 1990:390).
sent his Son to deliver or save ([ἐξέληται [rescue!]) the world (Gl 1:4). In Galatians, Paul states that the whole world is captured up in the grip of sin (Gl 3:22 ἀλλὰ συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν [the whole world is a prisoner of sin]). The fact that Jesus gave himself to save the world (δόντος ἑαυτὸν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, ὅπως ἐξέληται ἡμᾶς ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστώτως πονηροῦ [who gave himself for our sins, to rescue us from this evil age]) is, according to Paul, based on the will of God (Gl 1:4 κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν [according to the will of God our father]). There where people are subsequently saved from this evil age (Gl 1:4) or where the transforming message is preached or lived, there is very often an important part of the missionary process, of God’s mission, which is already taking place. When the missionary dimension in Paul is discussed, in other words, one should not make the mistake to limit the scope thereof to a mere focus on the end result of the missionary process, but rather start with its origin. In most books and articles on the subject, one will find that the authors focus more on the result of the missionary process than on the origin and motivation thereof. 15 The implication of the former approach is that the focus of the missionary dimension falls more towards the result of the missionary process, where conversion has taken place, or where a missionary takes the action to go out and convert. The pendulum moves more towards the result of the missionary process than towards the origin thereof, with the result that not much is made of the theological (and ethical) dimension that serves as the motivation for the mission. The further implication is that only that which refers to the end result of mission is regarded as mission. In the process an important dimension of the missionary process is not discussed or recognised as part of the missionary dimension, with the result that much of the implicit missionary dimensions in the New Testament are not taken into consideration. 16

God the sender sends Paul the missionary

Paul is well-known as the planter and founder of communities of faith (cf. τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως [the house of faith]). We know the ‘dass’ of the fact that he found new communities of faith but have little historical evidence of the ‘wic’ or how he went about in forming these communities. Paul’s missionary endeavours obviously entailed a particular sociological process that could be divided in different stages. The first stage would be his contact with a particular community or a group of individuals, to which he preached the Gospel, and the second entail the process of forming a community that naturally followed. Lietaaert Peerbolte (2003:204) rightly asks whether Paul purposefully went out to create a new community when he visited a town or city, or whether the reality of group formation was an unforeseen result of the process of Paul’s preaching. Here it is best to investigate, as far as possible, Paul’s own way of describing his missional activities. Pesce (1994:12) argues that we do not have available historical evidence, or literary sources for that matter, that explicitly refer to the so-called first stage of group formation, where Paul met individuals or a group of individuals and the way he went about the missionary process. We have only the second stage of evidence, in which the community has already been formed, and in which Paul writes to an existing faith community. Therefore, Paul’s letters ‘do not offer direct access to Paul’s preaching of the gospel and the subsequent formation of the communities that resulted from this activity’ (Lietaaert Peerbolte 2003:205).

Nevertheless, we do have textual witnesses of how Paul described his own work in retrospect, for instance in Galatians 1:8–11 as a εὐηγγελιζόμεθα [we preached] (cf. Mt 11:5; Lk 2:10; 3:18; Ac 5:42; 10:36; Rm 1:15; 10:15; Gl 1:8; Eph 2:17; 1Th 3:6; Heb 4:6; 1Pt 4:6; Rv 10:7; 14:6), or the telling of the good news. Here εὐηγγελίζομεθα [we preached] (cf. εὐαγγελίζεται [he should preach]; εὐηγγελιζόμεθα [we preached]; εὐαγγελίζεται [he is preaching] in Gl 1:8–11) is written in the aorist medium voice, indicating that the faith community in Galatia received the gospel as it was preached unto them by Paul when he made the Gospel known (cf. Gl 1:7) to them. Paul is thus the instrument that told them about the good news that God revealed (cf. Gl 1:11 δι’ ἀποστόλους [by or through a revelation of Jesus Christ]) to him. In Galatians 1:11 Paul uses the passive form (εὐαγγελίζηται ὑπ’ ἐμοῦ [he is preaching]) to emphasise the fact that this good message was not received by men (δι’ ὑμῶν οὐκ ἔστω κατὰ άνθρωπον [it is not from or according to men]), ἀλλὰ δι’ ἀποστόλους [but through or by revelation] (Gl 1:12). The source of this gospel, or good news is the same God who, within his original plan, sent not only his Son, but also the apostle Paul. The message Paul preaches and embodies thus comes not from Paul, but from God, δι’ ἀποστόλους [by or through a revelation] [revelation]. This undoubtedly presupposes the fact that as Paul ‘passively’ received the gospel through revelation from Jesus Christ, it nevertheless derives from God and from his will, and is therefore part of his plan and ultimately originates (in the language of mission) from the missio Dei. Every element of the missionary dimension thus has as its origin the original plan of God. For this reason, Paul can also argue that he was not appointed by any man, but by Jesus Christ and by God the Father who raised Jesus from death (Gl 1:1 οὗ ἔστιν ἀπ’ ἀνθρώπων οὐδὲ δι’ ἀνθρώπου ἄλλα δι’ Ἱησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ θεοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἐγείραντος αὐτούν ἐκ νεκρῶν [not from men nor by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised him from death]). The construction, διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ καὶ...
Paul, in other words, understood his εὐαγγελίζωμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν ([the work of God] ) and as such, something that God will bring to maturity (Phlp 1:6 δὲ ἐναρξάμενος ἐν ὑμῖν ἔργῳ ἡμῶν ἐπετελέσει [he who began a good work in you will perfect or complete it]).

In the introductory part of the letter (Gl 1:4), Paul gives indication of his understanding of the εὐαγγελίζω ([gospel]) that he is called (cf. Gl 1:15 καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ [who called me through or by his grace]) to preach:

κυρίως Ἱησοῦ Χριστοῦ - τοῦ δόγματος εὐαγγελίου [Lord Jesus Christ - who gave himself]

σάρκι τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν, [for our sins]

dιὰ τῆς ἐνθυμήσεως ἡμῶν ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος πονηροῦ [that he might deliver us out of this evil world]

κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ πατρὸς ἡμῶν [according to the will of our God and Father]

(1 Gl 1:4)

From the aforementioned text we could infer that in Paul’s mind and theological understanding, his mission is be interpreted as part of something God is doing, or which God is up to in the world, namely that it is the will of God (cf. κατὰ τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ [will of God]) that people might be delivered (cf. ἐλλεῖπῃ [delivered]) out of or from this present evil age (cf. ἐκ τοῦ ἁμαρτίων τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος πονηροῦ [from this evil age]).

In reality, the whole world, Jews and Gentiles alike, are caught up in the grip of sin (Gl 3:22 τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ ἁμαρτίαν and spiritual slavery (cf. Gl 2:4 [καταδουλώσωμαι [bring into bondage]]); 4:3, 4,8 (ἐδουλεύσατε [you were in bondage]); 4:9 (δουλεύσασθε [to be in bondage or a slave])); 24–25). Those who do not believe are in other words not free, they are caught up and inevitably part of the αἰῶνος τοῦ ἐνεστῶτος πονηροῦ [this evil age], and although they might not realise it, they are desperately in need of deliverance from this bondage to sin (see Gl 3:22). God not only called Paul by grace (Gl 1:15), he also called him with a very definite purpose, namely to reveal his Son in him (cf. Gl 1:16 ἀποκαλύπτω τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἐμοί [to reveal my son in me]), so that (Ἰνα [so that]) Paul would proclaim and preach him amongst the nations (Ἰνα εὐαγγελίζωμας αὐτόν ἐν τοῖς ἔθνεσιν [to preach him in or amongst the nations]). Paul, in other words, understood his calling as mission and his missional preaching as a calling with universalistic implications (Nissen 2007:60).

An ontological transformation with universalistic implications

Before his conversion to Christ, Paul was a zealous Pharisee following the law,18 living a life characterised by an extremely high Jewish morality (cf. Phlp 3:4–5), but nevertheless a slave to the law. Accordingly, there existed for him a compelling irreconcilable difference between Jew and Gentile (and Christian) and he zealously persecuted the followers of Christ (Gl 1:13). After his conversion,19 Paul’s identity was radically redefined (Cromhout 2009:135). Although he retained much of his Jewish faith elements (Cromhout 2009:126; Burridge 2007:107; Kok 2010b:1; Gager 2000; Sanders 1977, 1983; Wright 2003:1–2; Dunn 2008:5–9; Hawthorne, Martin & Reid 1993:306), and was still on an ethical level aligned with some of the elements that are to be interpreted as typically Jewish and Pharisaic (cf. his sexual ethics [1 Cor 5], his use of Old Testament (OT) Scripture, covenant, etcetera [Wright 2003:6]), it was nevertheless reinterpreted through his experience of the Christ event (cf. Phlp 3:7). Paul realised his identity by making the Christ-event metaphorically part of his self understanding. He soon understood, however, that Christ was sent (Gl 4:4) to redeem us all from the curse of the law20 (Gl 3:10), that had become a curse for us (Gl 3:13).21 This newly found freedom changed Paul’s identity, ethics and ethos and his paradigm of God, people and life. This new paradigm called forth a reevaluation of his whole outlook on life. In Galatians 2:19–20, Paul states that he has been crucified with Christ (Χριστῷ συνεσταύρωμαι [crucified with Christ]), and it is no longer he that lives, but Christ living in him (Ἰὸ δε ὑπὸ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ [I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God – Gl 2:20]), who loved him and gave himself up for him. In Paul’s conversion or calling, he was radically transformed from the inside out. Paul himself was delivered from this evil age and from bondage and experienced the freedom (and χάρις [grace], cf. Gl 1:6, 15; 2:9; 21; 5:4; 6:18) in Christ that he later would wholeheartedly proclaim.22 The message of

(Notes 17 cont.) so much about soteriology as about ecclesiology; not so much about salvation as about the church.


19. See Du Toit (2007:57–76). See also Dunn (2008:20–39) who makes the Damascus experience of Paul a very important element in the transformation of Paul’s life and subsequently his view on grace, works of the law, etc.

20. See Cromhout (2009) who discusses the various arguments about Paul’s ‘Jewishness or Judeanness’ as a follower of Jesus Messiah, for instance that Paul essentially remained to be ‘Jewish or Judean’ and after his conversion fully operated within the world of ‘Judaism’. Cromhout investigates these claims by answering three sets of questions derived from a proposed general model of ethnicity theory. He comes to the conclusion that Paul ‘continued to see himself as an Israelite, but who belonged to his ‘Israel’, which, at least for the moment, was radically transformed, with (mostly) Gentiles being grafted in and (mostly) traditional Israelites placed without’ (Cromhout 2009:135).

21. For a positive view of the law and Paul’s view that the will of God is also to be found in the law, see Rm 2:14. According to Wright (2003), Paul was not against the law, just the wrong understanding of the law.

22. See Breytenbach (2005:163–185) who argues that Paul took over the tradition that Christ ‘died for our sins’ and consequently developed his interpretation of Christ’s death in four ways, namely by personalising it (making it part of his identity); universalising it; and by making it an expression of God’s love and by highlighting that this death resulted in salvation.

23. Breytenbach (2005:183) is correct in arguing that ‘Paul understands Christ’s

http://www.hts.org.za
DOI: 10.4102/hts.v67i1.896
deliverance and freedom from bondage and spiritual slavery became intrinsically part of his missionary message, the good news that had the potential to radically transform the world and bring vertical (God-humans) and horizontal (humans-humans) reconciliation.

For Paul, his missionary calling and the preaching of the gospel is to be seen as in direct opposition to the powers of this world. Hahn (1965:99) goes so far as to say that the powers of this world (cf. also Gl 4:3: στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου [rudiments of the world]; Col 2:15 ἄρχοι καὶ τὰς ἐξουσίας [principalities and powers]) are overcome by the preaching and spreading of the gospel, and Paul is led in a triumphal march through the countries whilst propagating the savour of Christ (cf. 2 Cor 2:14ff; see Col 2:15). This is true when the high Christology of Paul (cf. Phlp 2:5–10; Rom 10: 9–13; 14–18; 15:7–13) is taken into account. Hahn (1965) argues that:

On these presuppositions (of the high Christology) the mission to the gentiles can no longer be for Paul an exceptional phenomenon. From the concept of the exaltation he realised, as no one before him, the all-embracing reality of the Christian message, and he understood that the gospel itself, with its universal claim, demands that the mission should be to all human beings, including the ‘Greeks and barbarians’.

(Hahn 1965:99)

From this high Christology as the point of departure, Paul could thus proclaim boldly that, through faith, all who believe have been clothed in Christ (Gl 3:27 Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε [to put on Christ]) and receives a new identity (cf. Gl 6:15–16). This new identity is also expressed in kinship language. Paul uses the metaphor of a family and argues that believers are no longer slaves but have become (freed) children of God (Gl 3:26 Πάντες γὰρ ήμεῖς θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ ήσυχοι [For you are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus]), spiritual heirs of God’s testament of inheritance (cf. Gl 3:21–4:7). They have been changed from one state of being (bonded slaves) into a new one (freed children of God), which comes down to nothing less than being new creatures (cf. Gl 6:15–16 καταρτίζετε [new creation]). As newly created children of God, they are thus taken up in the family of God and have received a new identity. Soteriology, in other words, implies a particular re-socialisation and entrance into a new social reality, which also serves as the basis for the formulation of the believer’s ethics (Van der Watt 2005:124). The fact that believers have all become children of God, naturally implies that there is no difference between Jew or Greek, slave or free person, or even men and woman: In Christ they are one (Gl 3:28 πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰσραήλ [for you all are one man in Christ Jesus]). It could thus be argued26 that the concept of freedom in Christ belongs just as much as universality to the Gospel. In other words, from the high Christology as point of departure all socio-cultural and religious barriers between people dissolve,27 which inevitable opens up the missionary (universal) dimension.

According to Galatians 4:8, at least some members of the faith community Paul is writing to were people who previously did not know God, and who worshipped pagan idols. In due time (within the missionary process) they came to know God, or rather God came to know them (Gl 4:9). The word ‘know’ (γνώσεις) is to be understood as much more than intellectual knowledge. It refers to relational interaction, mutual participation and intimate communication. It thus denotes the idea of people who journeyed together with God, and experienced God journeying with them (cf. Gl 5:25). It creates the picture of a faith community that grew ever deeper into their relationship with God. Therefore, it could be argued that the missionary impulse that brought them to Jesus Christ continued to grow like a seed (see Gl 6:8 σπείρων … θεριστήν [to sow…. to reap]).

The missionary impulse is thus not to be seen as a once off moment of a missionary preaching the gospel, but the ongoing process of faith formation and community building. The missionary process thus does not end in the act of proclamation but continues as the word of God and the message of salvation takes root and grows to perfection.28 It is certainly within the faith community itself that the new paradigm for life is lived, where life is shared and where the effects of the transformative missional message are particularised.29 The missional message, thus, should naturally live on (Longenecker 2009:205–221):

28. When the theological relativation of socio-cultural barriers are interpreted within the framework of identity, ethics and ethos, it would implicate that the followers of Christ should never be those who establish or maintain socio-cultural barriers that would prohibit the missionary process or inter-communal relationships. This mistake has been made in the past in some parts of the world like South Africa in the ‘apartheid’ system where church unity between different socio-cultural groups was not accepted.

29. Our understanding of mission should not be limited to the mere proclamation of the good news message, without acknowledging the ongoing process of faith formation and community building as fundamental part of the missional process. If the definition of mission is thus broadened to include the process of faith formation, long after the original missionary message was received, the faith community itself becomes the locus of where the effects and working of the missionary dynamics are to be found. In this sense Bosch (1999:168) is correct when he argues that that not only is the church to be taken up in the missio Dei, but that it also should be sent into the world as the redeemed creation, to be in the world, for the world. Kritzinger (1994:41) agrees and argues that mission is to be defined as the church’s participation of God’s work in the world. In the latest research on Mission, scholars like Kritzinger (2007), Robb (2006), Keffer (2007:167–168) and Hirsch (2006) agrees that mission is nothing less as to be taken up in Gods mission, and that it strongly is to be integrated with the ongoing process of faith formation and to have an impact on the world.

27. See, however, 1 Corinthians 5 (1 Cor 5:2; cf. also 5:5,7,11,13), where Paul urges the congregation to distinguish themselves from those who live ‘unethically’ by ἕξει μένουσιν ὅ τι ἐξ οὐκούν τοιχάς [that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you]. Here it could hardly be spoken of as a missionary dimension. When this point of view is fully developed and lived out concretely, it would lead to a distancing from all of those that live contra the core values of the congregation. On the other hand, in Galatians 6:1 Paul urges the community of faith to restore (καταρτίζετε [to restore]) a fellow believer who has fallen in sin (κλαύρικα καὶ προλημφάδει ἄνθρωπον ἐν τινι παραπτώματι - ἐν συνέχειᾳ τρισκέλεσθαι [Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any trespass/sin, you who are spiritual, restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness]), in a spirit of gentleness, but in the process to be careful not to fall in sin themselves. Here, according to Tolmie (2005:208–209), the focus shifts from the brother who has transgressed to the rest of the community of faith, who has the responsibility to restore the fallen brother in a gentle way into their former situation.


25. In the act of proclaiming this message of freedom and reconciliation, Paul deconstructed and challenged the prevailing world view and paradigm of both Jews and gentiles. Some opposed him, whilst others were taken up by the radicality of this new paradigm of faith. For them the message of good news changed their paradigms, their identity, their ethics and their ethos.

24. Clearly in 2 Corinthians 5:17 and onwards, we see that God claims the world as his creation by ἐνεδύσατο [to put on Christ] and receives a new identity (cf. 2 Cor 5:19, 21).

(Footnote 23 cont...) beneficiary death “for” us as a prolepsis of the eschatological judgment in which the old existence was terminated. This opens the possibility for a newly created humanity in Christ.

27. See, however, 1 Corinthians 5 (1 Cor 5:2; cf. also 5:5,7,11,13), where Paul urges the congregation to distinguish themselves from those who live ‘unethically’ by ἕξει μένουσιν ὅ τι ἐξ οųκούν τοιχάς [that he that had done this deed might be taken away from among you]. Here it could hardly be spoken of as a missionary dimension. When this point of view is fully developed and lived out concretely, it would lead to a distancing from all of those that live contra the core values of the congregation. On the other hand, in Galatians 6:1 Paul urges the community of faith to restore (καταρτίζετε [to restore]) a fellow believer who has fallen in sin (κλαύρικα καὶ προλημφάδει ἄνθρωπον ἐν τινι παραπτώματι - ἐν συνέχειᾳ τρισκέλεσθαι [Brethren, if a man be overtaken in any trespass/sin, you who are spiritual, restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness]), in a spirit of gentleness, but in the process to be careful not to fall in sin themselves. Here, according to Tolmie (2005:208–209), the focus shifts from the brother who has transgressed to the rest of the community of faith, who has the responsibility to restore the fallen brother in a gentle way into their former situation.

29. Our understanding of mission should not be limited to the mere proclamation of the good news message, without acknowledging the ongoing process of faith formation and community building as fundamental part of the missional process. If the definition of mission is thus broadened to include the process of faith formation, long after the original missionary message was received, the faith community itself becomes the locus of where the effects and working of the missionary dynamics are to be found. In this sense Bosch (1999:168) is correct when he argues that that not only is the church to be taken up in the missio Dei, but that it also should be sent into the world as the redeemed creation, to be in the world, for the world. Kritzinger (1994:41) agrees and argues that mission is to be defined as the church’s participation of God’s work in the world. In the latest research on Mission, scholars like Kritzinger (2007), Robb (2006), Keffer (2007:167–168) and Hirsch (2006) agrees that mission is nothing less as to be taken up in Gods mission, and that it strongly is to be integrated with the ongoing process of faith formation and to have an impact on the world.

26. Horrell (2009:207) is accurately argues that ‘the indicatives express the terms in which the identity of the community is defined, while the imperatives call for action to reflect and sustain that identity’.
According to Horrell (2009:208–209) fall into sin, actually show by their lifestyle that they are not really children of God. The original mission impetus thus becomes an inherent part of the life-movement of the community. The community, who once were the mission field, becomes the carrier of the transformative missional message, with the implicit potential to influence those around them.

**Regression into old thinking patterns**

Unfortunately, this was not always the case. In Galatians, we see a clear indication of a particular situation in the faith community where some have been led off the true spiritual path, leading directly to specific moral issues. Some members in the congregation regressed and fell back into (Gl 4:9) their formal spiritual state (and identity), when they were slaves of no good idols (Gl 4:8), by again adhering to or were influenced by religious regulations (cf. Gl 4:10 ἡμῖν παραπταχθέντα καὶ μήνας καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἐνιαυτούς) of weak and pitiful powers (cf. Gl 4:9 πῶς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσθενή καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα [how turn you back again to the weak and beggarly rudiments]). Some members did not act in love towards the others and, metaphorically speaking, almost devoured (ἀναλωθῆτε) each other (cf. Gl 5:15). Clearly, they did not walk in the Spirit (Gl 5:16) and did not let themselves be led by the Spirit. Those who belong to Christ, are supposed to have crucified their sinful nature (Gl 5:24) and should be living a new life in the Spirit (Gl 5:16 καὶ κτισμόν [new creation]), and walk in line accordingly (Gl 5:25). By falling back into their former state of being (or former identity), these members are living contra the recreated identity they have received, which inevitable leads to an embracing of certain elements of their former state of thinking (identity and ethics) and living accordingly (ethos). For Paul this is destroying the work that God began in them (Gl 3:5; 4:11).

Therefore it is not strange that we see Paul the missionary morally encouraging the community of faith, with rhetorical force, to adhere to the right conduct (ethos), based on the right understanding (ethics) of who they are in Christ (identity). Who they are, and should be in Christ goes back to the original plan of God when he sent his Son (Gl 1:4), and afterwards the apostle Paul (Gl 1:15; 2:2). This is the core of Paul’s rhetorical purpose of the letter (Tolmie 2005:152–155), namely to remind the believers not to regress back into their old form of identity and by so doing become spiritual slaves again. In his rhetorical argumentation, Paul takes them back to a renewed understanding of their spiritual identity in Christ. According to Paul, they should realise the implications of the fact that they were transformed from slaves of idols and slaves of the law to children of God (Gl 4:1–7), and having the Spirit of the Son of God in their hearts (Gl 4:6), they are immersed and clothed in Christ (Gl 3:26–27). Those who let their lives (increasingly) be guided by the Spirit are those who not only understand their identity, but also those who are free from the law (Gl 5:18). Their spiritual maturity should result in spiritual fruit (Gl 5:22ν). They are nothing less than a community of faith made free of all forms of bondage. The faithful freedom of this community is the compelling sign of those who belong to the heavenly Jerusalem over and against those who are still enslaved (cf. Gl 4:21–31) (Hahn 1965:101). Therefore, any approach denying or undermining the faithful freedom of the faith community is to be rejected, for it again enslaves the believers who have been set free and imposes a certain cultural group’s socio-religious ethical demands on that of another. For this reason any approach that would lead to the restoration of the letter of the law and divisions amongst people is to be rejected (Rm 10:4; Gl 3:28), for believers are set free from the law that could not set them free from sin and death (cf. Gl 3:19f). With the dawn of Christ’s redemptive work on the cross (Gl 6:14), a life of new possibilities within the family of God (Gl 3:26–27) has been opened.

**Ethics of freedom: Missionary by nature**

It is, however, important to note that for Paul, men are not exempt from all forms of law or ethics, for judgment according to works still remain, but its outworking springs forth from another inherent source and motivation, namely...
πίστες δέ ἀγάπης ἐνεργοῦμεν [faith working through love] (cf. GL 5:6) based on the _Gesetz Christi_ (way or law of Christ), who showed the ultimate form of life in dying for us (cf. GL 2:20).

Without a holy life, in other words, without a high ethical life that results in spiritual fruit (GL 5:22), the gospel would be nullified as liberating message of salvation and righteousness (Hahn 1965:103). Within the context of relational faith formation, the new life in Christ is guided by the Spirit (GL 5:25), but lived in freedom (see Bornkamm 1961:1, 166) and in its scope and implication is directed universally (GL 6:10) and inclusively in the context of love (cf. GL 5:6) (see Watson 2007:213). According to Wolter (2009:146–150), love, within the context of egalitäre Reziprozität (egalitarian reciprocity) (cf. ἀλλήλων [each other]) is to be seen as the Leitprinzip der Christlichen Ethik [leading principle of Christian ethics] and ultimately based on and motivated by the way or law of Jesus ( _Gesetz Christi_) who died for us as an act of love (cf. GL 2:20)⁴. The theological category of freedom and good works (GL 6:10), that have to be done in the context of love (GL 5:6) within the context of the faith community (τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως [the house of faith]), is nothing less than the result of Paul’s missionary message that he received from God (cf. GL 1:12) and that reflects the will of God (GL 1:4). Long after Paul had preached his missionary message, the effect thereof (should) still live on in the context of the faith community as such. In other words, by understanding their freedom, and living from that freedom they are to be carriers of the missional message. They thus are to carry the same inclusive, universal message they have received from the apostle — that same message that ultimately and intrinsically relates back to the original missional plan of God. This message has to be lived out in concrete ways and thus has an implicit performative, missio-ethical dimension. The characteristic of this ‘living the message’ will then carry with it the same sense of inclusiveness and the same sense of freedom. By living this way, the faith community, as incarnation of the message, in reality becomes nothing less than missionaries, as a result of the fact that every word and every action should inherently reflect the original missionary message that they have received. Paul often, in his letters, encouraged the faith communities to follow his example, that is modeled after that of Christ (cf. Rm 12:10; 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1; Philp 3:17; 1 Th 1:6; 1:7; 2 Th 3:7; 3:9; 1 Tim 1:16; 4:12; 2 Tim 1:13; Tit 2:7). Following his example (in which he follows Christ), denotes a certain way of life (ethics and ethos), based on a certain understanding of their identity. The missionary process thus did not stop with Paul, but was intended to be continued in the ethical realisation of the life of the faith community. Therefore the faith community should by implication not only become the message, but also fundamentally missional in their being.⁴³ They should be missional in the sense that the will of God, and the effects of that which God planned when he sent his Son and called (and sent) Paul, resulted in and relationally speaking between them. By becoming the embodiment of the message, they were taken up within the power of the message and were themselves nothing less than a light to others.⁴⁴

In Galatians 6:10, Paul encourages the community to ἀρὰ σὸν ὡς καιρὸν ἔχομεν, ἐφαρμόζομαι τὸ ἀγάπην πρὸς πάντας, μάλιστα δὲ πρὸς τοὺς οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως [As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are part of the household of faith]. The construction ἐφαρμόζομαι τὸ ἀγάπην πρὸς πάντας [let us do good unto all men] has as its scope more than just the οἰκείους τῆς πίστεως [household of faith]. Longenecker (2002:282) argues correctly that the inferential particle ἄρα [then], strengthened by the transitional particle οὖν [therefore], appears frequently in Paul’s letters. Here, according to him, it certainly signals the conclusion or main point of a discussion.⁴⁵ The implication is that this particular verse is to be seen as the conclusion and main point not only of the directives given in 6:1–10 but also of all that has been said in 5:13–6:10:

_In effect, the exhortations of 5:13, ‘through love serve one another’, and 6:10, ‘do good to all people’, function as an inclusio for all that Paul says against negative tendencies among the believers of Galatia in 5:13–6:10._

(Longenecker 2002:282)

Betz (1987) (cf. also Horrell 2005:264) also points to Paul’s use of πάντα [all] in 2:16; 3:8, 22, 26–28 and remarks:

_The universal character of God’s redemption corresponds to the universality of Christian ethical and social responsibility. If God’s redemption in Christ is universal, the Christian community is obliged to disregard all ethnic, national, cultural, sexual, and even religious distinctions within the human community._

⁴⁴In the source documents we do not have evidence of the actual missionary endeavours of the missional congregation. This obviously limits the discussion and has the danger of putting it within the context of speculation. We do, however, have very important heuristic categories that direct the reader towards a missional hermeneutic understanding of the earliest congregations. Furthermore, from the perspective of speech act theory, it could be argued that Paul not only spoke certain words in the missional direction, but did something with those words. His words were aimed at moving the congregation, of inspiring them to action and, as we have proved, this certainly included a persuasion towards at least some sort of missional action. This is seen for instance in Galatians 6:9–10.

⁴⁵ Cf. the same train of thought in Philippians 2:15 and in the Pauline tradition of _Ephesians 5:8_: ἔτε γὰρ ποτε σκότος, νῦν δὲ φῶς ἐν κυρίῳ· ὡς τέκνα φωτὸς περιπατεῖτε [For you were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk therefore as children of light] (cf. the present imperative active).


On the other hand, Rohde (1989:268–268) does not mention the missionary dimension in his discussion of Galatians 6:10.

⁴⁷ Cf. also Romans 5:18; 7:3, 25; 9:16, 18; 14:12, 19; Ephesians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 5:6; and 2 Thessalonians 2:15.

⁴⁸ See Wolter (2009:143), who also agrees and argues: ‘Heidenchristen und Judenchristen trotz ihres unterschiedlichen Ethos ein und dieselbe Identität haben’ [Pagan and Jewish Christians share the same identity despite their different Ethos], but on the other hand, ‘Es ist mithin das “Ethos” des Glaubens (Gn. epexegeticus), das die Christen nach Aussen abgrenzt und dadurch die Identität ihrer Identität repräsentiert. Das ist möglich, weil eben der Glaube, der bei Paulus natürlich immer pietis Kristou ist und durch seine Wegweisung auf Jesus Christus definiert wird, eine Gemeinschaftshilfe darstellt, die die Differenz zwischen Juden und Heiden umgreift [vgl. Röm 1,16; Gal 5,6] und die Christen von den nichtchristlichen Juden und Heiden signifikant unterscheidet’ [It is, therefore, the “ethos” of faith (Gn. epexegeticus), which defines and separates the Christians to the outside and thereby representing the exclusiveness of their identity. This is possible precisely because the faith that is in Paul of course, is always pietis Kristou (faith in Christ) and defined by the believer’s relationship to Jesus Christ which creates a common bond, which encompasses the difference between Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rm 1:16; Gl. 5, 6) and significantly differentiates Christians from non Christian Jews and pagans alike].
Since before God there is no partiality, there cannot be partiality in the Christian’s attitude towards his fellow man. (Betz 1987:311)

This is probably one of the most obvious negative implications for those in Paul’s day who forced a particularistic ethnic Jewish ethic on the socio-cultural diverse community of faith. This would have worked directly against the dynamics of the missionary process because of the fact that it might again reaffirm traditional exclusivist practices. Paul never did this in his missionary approach. In the context of Galatians 6:10, Paul rhetorically persuades the community of faith to not only realise their identity, ethics and ethos but also to do that *inter alia* within a centrifugal (πρὸς πάντας [towards all]) frame of reference. In other words, a frame of reference directed also towards those outside of the faith community and not only centripetally to those inside. Here Paul is not referring to mission as something that someone does somewhere, or is sent to do, but something essential to being a Christian. Being missional is thus part and parcel of being a Christian, it is sent to do, but something essential to being a Christian. Being missional is thus part and parcel of being a Christian, it is existentially part of the ‘missional’ is thus part and parcel of being a Christian. Being missional, right there where we are in everything we do (Guder & Barrett 1998:1–17).

**Conclusion**

From the preceding discussion, we could infer that there is not only a dynamic inter-relational relationship between identity, ethics and ethos, but also between the latter and the missionary movement of the early church (with reference to Paul’s letter to the Galatians). It is clear that the implication of Paul’s rhetorical approach in Galatians should lead to the reality of the faith community becoming the embodiment of the missional message preached by the missionary Paul. Paul’s personal transformation of his identity, ethics and ethos becomes not only the message he preaches, but also the *tipos,* the ἱκανὸς γόνη [become like me] (Gl 4:12) to be followed by the congregations that he found on the missionary field. His *tipos* is again related to that of Christ, who has been sent by God and thus is understood to represent something of the missional plan of God. In times of crisis and delineation from the right path of life Paul encourages the congregation by *inter alia,* rhetorically taking them back to a reaffirmation of their true identity, and the ethical dimension that flows from that.49

In the dynamics of Paul’s missionary work, we clearly see a focus on the elements of identity, ethics and ethos, which fundamentally relates to the symbolic universe of the missionary. Thus, when we speak of mission in Galatians, we have to acknowledge the fact that, from a rhetorical point of view, it was the apostle’s wish that the missional movement did not stop with his missional preaching,50 but continued in process as the faith community becomes the carrier and embodiment of the missionary message. We have argued earlier that Paul, rhetorically, tries to move the congregation to realise their identity (as well as ethics and ethos) not only within a *centripetal* (inwards, towards themselves) but also a centrifugal (cf. Gl 6:10 πρὸς πάντας [towards all]) frame of reference, directed *inter alia* towards those outside of the faith community. Thus, their transformed identity in Christ should not only lead to a new ethics, but also to a new ethos, in the form of a new lifestyle, that should impact society around them. In this way the faith community becomes missional by implication, because they embody the missional message and its impact potentiality. We could, in other words, infer from this that it is possible to broaden the scope of missional hermeneutics and speak of missional congregations in the early church and that being missional is inseparable from ethics, and ethics inseparable from the missional dimension. Those who want to speak of mission should also speak of ethics, and those who speak of ethics should make something of mission. As I have stated in the beginning of the article, we could concur with scholars like Keifert (2006:167–168), that the Pauline understanding of mission is that mission is to be understood as something far greater than the church, a dimension in which the missional church is to be taken up into and to carry out God’s mission (cf. also Bosch 1999). A missional church is, in other words, a church that does not simply do mission, but focus on being missional (Keifert 2006:168).

**References**


Cromhout, M., 2009, ‘Paul’s “former conduct in the Judean way of life” (Gal 1:13... or not?),’ *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies 65*(1), Art. #127, 12 pages. DOI: 10.4102/hts.v65i1.127.


49 See Horrell (2009:208) for a similar argument.

50 Koester (1989:185–186) argues: ‘Doesn’t his theology lead to passivity rather than concern for action? Paul’s own autobiography issues a resounding “No” to these questions. Paul himself was anything but passive. The gospel he preached was not “an opiate for the people,” but an “adrenaline for mission.” The gospel moved him beyond the bounds of his Jewish heritage into the world around him’.

51 It is clear, when one has a clear look at Philippians 4:15; 2 Corinthians 11:7–11; and Acts 16:14–15, that some congregations supported Paul financially with reference to the missionary work he was doing. Clearly, from this it could also be argued that some congregations in the early church had sensitivity towards the missional dimension (Lietaat Peerbolte 2003:222).
Hahn, F., 1965,
Hirsch, A., 2006,
Koester, C., 1989,
Kritzinger, J.J., Meiring, P .G.J., & Saayman, W.A., 1994,