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A Deliberative Rhetorical Critical Approach to the Structure and Argument of 1 Corinthians

Abstract: This article argues that when 1 Corinthians is read in light of first century deliberative rhetoric, a logical path of development for the individual hearer and the community is recognized. The order and structure of argumentation reflects Paul's vision for the church in Corinth, a vision for sanctification. The argumentation follows a logical path from birth or entry into »the body of Christ« through until glorification and final consummation of sanctified believers. While unity is seen as a significant issue, reading 1 Corinthians (loosely) as deliberative rhetoric will demonstrate that unity is in submission to sanctification; rather unity results out of the sanctification of believers.

Key words: deliberative rhetorical criticism, structure, 1 Corinthians, Paul, sanctification

Povzetek: **Deliberativnoretorični pristop k strukturi in argumentaciji 1. pisma Korinčanom**

Povzeteke: Članek zastopa stališče, da če 1. pismo Korinčanom beremo v luči deliberative retorike iz 1. stoletja po Kr., prepoznamo v njem logično pot razvoja za individualnega poslušalca ali skupnost. Vrstni red in struktura argumentacije odsevata Pavlovo vizijo za Cerkev v Korintu, vizijo posvečenja. Argumentacija sledi logični poti od rojstva ali vstopa v »Kristusovo telo« prav do poveljanja in končnega použitja posvečenih vernih. Edinost je sicer prikazana kot pomembno vprašanje, vendar (ohlapno) branje 1. pisma Korinčanom kot deliberative retorike pokaže, da je edinost podrejena posvečenju. Ali bolje: edinost izhaja iz posvečenja vernih.

Ključne besede: deliberativnoretorična kritika, struktura, 1. pismo Korinčanom, Pavel, posvečenje

1. Introduction

The structure, integrity, and main theme of 1 Corinthians have individually long been the source of scholarly discussions, yet a clear consensus had failed to emerge. This lack of scholarly consensus has prompted a further investigation. It is the purpose of this short paper to examine the relationship that the first cen-

ture deliberative rhetoric has upon the structure and purpose of first Corinthians. Mitchell has completed a thorough rhetorical study of 1 Corinthians as first century deliberative rhetoric, however several unanswered concerns compel a revisiting. Fitzmyer is unconvinced that the *probatio* is successful in achieving the goal of the *narratio* (Fitzmyer 2008, 55). Anderson argues against forcing a rhetorical structure too rigidly upon the letter and doubts the arguments can be sustained (Anderson 1998, 264–265). Mitchell has argued that the thesis of 1 Corinthians is unity, however logically unity would need to be in submission to sanctification (Ciampa and Rosner 2006, 214).

This small study will employ rhetorical model common in first century circles as shown and used by Kennedy, Betz and Mitchell.¹ Much of the attention of this work will be to focus on 1:30 as the thesis statement of the letter, a revisiting of the *narratio*, which this work identifies is established in 1:10–2:16. Close examination will identify Paul's use of familiar rhetorical techniques to establish transitions and thus identify five *probatio*'s to support the *prothesis*. A rhetorical reading of 1 Corinthians in relationship to structure and theme of the letter will remove lingering doubts about its integrity, the unity of the correspondence and theme.

2. Rhetorical criticism

Epistolographical, rhetorical, textual approaches and others have been used in attempts to discover a discernable structure of 1 Corinthians. Kennedy, Betz's and Mitchell have all analyzed deliberative structures in Paul and recognize the ancient rhetorical patterns.² Paul borrows from historical rhetorical critical methodology in presenting his arguments, yet he actually combats a Greco-Roman world view.³ Paul defends this right to borrow from rhetorical devices yet retain

¹ A summary of the rhetorical methodology as recorded by Kennedy: 1) *Determine the Rhetorical Unit*, 2) *Define the Rhetorical Situation*, 3) *Determine the Rhetorical Problem or stasis*: a. *judicial* (accusation and defense), b. *deliberative* (persuasion and dissuasion), and c. *epideictic* (praise and blame). 4) *Analyze the Invention, Arrangement and Style*: a. *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. b. The various components such as i. *exordium* (introduction), ii. *narratio* (statement of facts) iii. *probatio* (main body or proofs), iv. *peroratio* (conclusion). 5) *Evaluate the Rhetorical Effectiveness*. In classical Aristotelian rhetoric: 1) *exordium*, serves as to introduce the discussion. 2) *narratio*, establishes contexts. 3) *prothesis (conformatio)*, defines what is to be proven. 4) *probatio (refutatio)*, the basis of argumentation (*logos*, *pathos*, or *ethos*). 5) *peroratio*, the conclusion (Kennedy 1984, 33–38; Betz 1975, 353–379; Betz 1979, 16–24; Aristotle 1937, 3.13.1; Mitchell 1991, 184–185).

² Wuellner has argued that 1 Corinthians is actually an *epideictic* kind of speech. Dahl has attempted to show 1:10–4:21 is an example of *forensic* rhetorical speech. Kennedy also notes that 1:13–17 and 9:1–27 are examples of *forensic* rhetoric. Moreover Kennedy in the same analysis finds that all of 1 Corinthians is an example of *deliberative* rhetoric, although there is disagreement with Mitchell over methodology (Mitchell 1991, 8 fn 24, 19; Wueller 1979, 177–188; Dahl 1977, 40–61; Kennedy 1984, 87).

³ Wimbush questions that by Paul accepting Greco-Roman linguistic and rhetorical devices is suggestive of him accommodating similar meaning or worldview. Mitchell reasons that Paul must be read on »own terms« and argues that Paul himself defines the problem (which Mitchell labels as factionalism) (Wimbush 1994, 558–559; Mitchell 1991, 302–303).

his own independent world view.⁴ This allows him to describe the problem being addressed by the correspondence and at the same time provide exhortations for a modification in behavior.

2.1 Prothesis, 1 Cor 1:30, The thesis statement

This work will argue that Paul uses sanctification in 1:30 as the *prothesis* or theme to 1 Corinthians, in doing so he demonstrates an example of inverted parallelism that can be read as follows: 1:30

ἐξ αὐτου	A
δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε	B
ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ὃς ἐγενήθη σοφία	C
ἡμῖν	B'
ἀπὸ θεοῦ, δικαιοσύνη τε καὶ ἁγιασμός καὶ ἀπολύτρωσις	A'

By Him

You are

In Christ Jesus, who became wisdom

To us

From God, and righteousness, and sanctification and redemption.

The triplet of δικαιοσύνη (righteousness), ἁγιασμός (sanctification), and ἀπολύτρωσις (redemption), reflect the work of Christ in the life of the believer. We can separate ἁγιασμός (sanctification) from the δικαιοσύνη (righteousness) in the sense that to be »in Christ« refers to a state of having been acquitted; δικαιοσύνη (righteousness) is an objective past. Furthermore this is a forensic term rather than an ethical one, highlighting the believer's new standing before God (Fee 1987, 86). ἀπολύτρωσις (redemption) refers to participation »in Christ« when the final reality is consummated and liberation is complete, which refers to a future event. While these are part of the »in Christ« and Paul's focus, what this paper argues is that ἁγιασμός (sanctification or holiness) is the here and now and thus is the emphasis of Paul's writing to Corinth.

Paul's term for the church as those ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (sanctified in Christ Jesus) in 1:2 carries the Old Testament expression of a holy people,⁵ it is used in various forms significantly throughout the correspondence.⁶ Moreover the idea of being sanctified or saints is encapsulated in the word which Paul greets

⁴ Paul defends this right: 1) Paul defines the opposition: Jew, Greeks, natural men (those outside the body), and the unrighteous. 2) Paul explains that he – they – have the mind of Christ. 3) Paul explains that he becomes all things to all people that he might win some (9:19–23).

⁵ Daniel refers to the saints as those who belong to God or are separated unto God and have his inheritance, Daniel 7:18,22.

⁶ Paul uses the word 17 times in various forms: ἡγιασμένοις 1:2; ἅγιοις 1:2, 16:15; ἁγιασμός 1:30; ἅγιος 3:17; ἁγίων 6:1, 14:33; ἅγιοι 6:2; ἡγιασθητε 6:11; ἁγίου 6:19; ἡγιασται 7:14 x2; ἁγία 7:14, 7:34; ἁγίω 12:3; 16:20; ἁγίους 16:1.

the church in 1:2 »saints in Christ Jesus, saints by calling«. Obviously as we read 1 Corinthians we discover that the listeners were not acting at times like saints, but it is representative of Paul's vision and purpose for the church and it should act accordingly. In addition the proposition that »sanctification« functions as a thesis statement for 1 Corinthians is further strengthened when we understand that 1:10–2:16 is actually laying the *narratio*. In establishing the facts and context (*narratio*) Paul lays out the problem 1:10, »there are divisions among you«. The solution is provided in 1:30, as believers you are »in Christ« thus »sanctified«, which is consummated at the section summary 2:14–16, where believers are identified as »spiritual people«, those who have the »mind of Christ«. ⁷

Translating ἐξ αὐτοῦ δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (1:30) into English creates difficulties. ἐξ αὐτοῦ (of him) clearly points to the last words of the previous sentence, when added to the δὲ ὑμεῖς ἐστε (but you are) reflects a forceful expression of action and could be read as follows: »But because of him you are in Christ Jesus,« or slightly more forceful »but you owe to Him that you are in Christ Jesus,« thus the soteriological motive is a natural conclusion to Paul's train of thought. ⁸ This reading of course hinges upon the understanding and interpretation of wisdom. Clearly wisdom is recognized here as Jesus. Fee has argued that »Paul transformed wisdom«, from a philosophical rhetorical term into an historical soteriological one (1:24.30). ⁹ Thus the basis of the life »in Christ«, the basis of life in »the body of Christ« is established through the appropriation of what God has done in Christ, in the life of the believer.

In 1:31 the argument is complete and brought to an interim conclusion with the invocation of Scripture (Jeremiah 9:23–24) which »...contains five explicit references to God as the acting subject of salvific activity and therefore as the appropriate object of one's boasting« (Heil 2005, 41). Boasting is possible because it means that one is relying on Jesus, believers are saved, are being saved and will be saved in the future (final judgment), because Jesus has become our wisdom from God (Heil 2005, 43). Paul concludes that human boasting is vanity but one may boast only of *knowing*¹⁰ God, to boast in Christ's redemptive work. Moreover

⁷ This work reads 1:30 as the main pivotal statement which underpins the entire 1 Corinthians, it buttresses the correspondence in such a way that all discussion can be projected from it in either three aspects: i. What Christ has done (righteousness), ii. What Christ is doing (sanctification), and iii. What Christ will do (redemption), or the results of being in »the body of Christ«.

⁸ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ represents a soteriological motif referring to objective act of justification in history, the subjective act of being reckoned dead to sin, thus being sanctified, and the future course of action whereby redemption is complete (Dunn 1998, 396-401).

⁹ Divine wisdom is the proclamation of Christ crucified, in opposition to human efforts to discover God. One should not read in here a »wisdom Christology«, in the sense that Christ is personified wisdom, this would fall prey to the Arian controversy. Neither would it be correct to read Paul as in a Jewish wisdom tradition. »Paul neither knew nor articulated anything that might resemble a Wisdom Christology.« (Fee 2007, 102-105; 595-619) Dunn disagrees here when he says »But it is the preexistence of Wisdom now identified by and in Christ« (Dunn 1998, 292). Scripture identifies Christ as wisdom, not as an abstract concept.

¹⁰ Knowing here is not spoken of as intellectual assent, but an intimate acquaintance as a relationship to revelation. In the sense that when one knows Christ, s/he has entered into a covenantal relationship, they have responded to the understanding of Christ with faith to God. (Thiselton 2000, 271)

a common rhetorical technique is used by Paul as he effectively summarizes previous discussions (1:30–31). In this way it is argued from the text that »sanctification« is the *prothesis*.¹¹

To this juncture we have argued that sanctification is the *prothesis* which has a significant relationship to »the body of Christ«. Following Aristotle's simplified description of a thesis statement this work calls for a single proposition, »sanctification«, *partitio* and *enumeratio* elements are not required (Mitchell 1991, 199).

2.2 Epistolary prescript, vv. 1:1–9

As dictated by culture and custom the normal epistolary opening is completed with address, greetings and thanksgiving, introducing Paul and his correspondence.

2.3 Narratio, vv. 1:10–2:16, Basis and purpose for the body

Here we argue that after the epistolary prescript and thanksgiving (1:1–9) Paul uses the first two chapters to lay the foundation from which he will launch his arguments in so doing he establishes the basis and purpose for »the body« or the Corinthian church. In ancient Greco-Roman rhetoric the *narratio* is intended to act as an initial statement of facts necessary to establish context from which the orator is able to launch his arguments.¹²

2.3.1 Narratio 1, vv. 1:10–31, Basis for the body

This work identifies 1:10–31 as a distinct subsection of the *narratio*, firstly identifying the problem 1:10 and secondly the solution 1:30. Scholarship has predominately read these verses connected with a larger portion ending at 4:21, with only a few dissenters,¹³ while Fitzmyer and Fee include this as a subsection within a larger section to 6:20. Paul is writing to a believing community which he established, thus as he restates the gospel, he is not identifying proof, he is simply restating what they would have already known. The *contradictio* in 1:17 allows Paul to identify the nature and instigator of his mission (Collins 1999, 85), – sent by Christ, to proclaim Christ – the basis for the Corinthian church.

¹¹ »Paul's big goal is not unity, but the sanctification of Gentiles believers that they may glorify God. As Rom 15:5-6 show, unity is not the goal, but is the prerequisite for the Gentiles to 'glorify God with one mind and voice.'« (Ciampa and Rosner 2006, 214) Sanctification will produce unity, as believers learn to live out what it means to be a »New Creation« (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). The confrontation between Paul and the church is therefore an exhortation to live out the new life in Christ.

¹² »I shall relate the facts to you from the beginning as well as I can. Well, all the facts in the case I have told you as accurately as I could« (Isocrates, in: Long 2004, 84).

¹³ Most scholars read this as a distinct section; Bailey however argues this section ends at 4:16, with the remainder of chapter 4 being included in a section 4:17-7:40 (Bailey 1983, 160–65).

2.3.2 Narratio 2, vv. 2:1–16, Purpose for the body

It is clear that the whole of chapter 2 is at a minimum discussed in two sub sections,¹⁴ and 2:15–16 is a summary of what Paul has been discussing earlier (Fee 1987, 117). The question is whether or not this section belongs to the *probatio* or the *narratio*. Does this section contribute as a proof for Paul's thesis statement or is it simply the laying out the facts of the Gospel to the church? It is the contention of this paper that to this point (2:16), Paul simply explains the Gospel which is the wisdom of God and the Corinthian church are participators with God or πνευματικός (spiritual ones) who »have the mind of Christ«.

Paul's message here is one of facts and information, which must be comprehended before he is able to launch into his appeals. »For I declared to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified.« (2:2) The entire chapter builds on this twofold concept of knowing Christ and identifying with his crucifixion. The use of Isaiah (52:15; 64:4; 65:17) and Jeremiah (3:16) in verse 2:9 is intended to elaborate on the soteriological motive in the previous section. The wisdom of man is contrast with the wisdom of God, Jesus is identified as the wisdom of God, which is brought to a conclusion in 2:14–16 with a summary of what has been said to this juncture, and »We (Corinth Christians and Paul) have the mind of Christ« (2:16). When such a heading »Purpose for the Body« is included, what is meant is that here Paul demonstrates his purpose »to know Christ and him Crucified« latter in the correspondence Paul urges readers to imitate him (4:16), thus at least it is subtly implied that Paul's purpose is identical to the Corinthians. As the section is drawn to its conclusion he contrasts the »natural man« with the »spiritual man«, with the clear implication that the »spiritual man« is the desired state and the one who has the »mind of Christ«.

Paul's opening statement of facts, which concludes at 2:16 form the context or foundation for the arguments which will follow. Firstly, the rhetorical devices employed shows a clear transition as the theme of discussion is brought to its conclusion in the form of a summary. Secondly, while on a semantic level there can be some continuance of thought, as Paul previously contrasts the »natural man« with the »spiritual man«, the contrast in 3:1 is between »spiritual man« and »fleshly man«. The separation in rhetorical units is made more clear when we understand that in the earlier rhetorical unit Paul is contrasting those who are outside »the body of Christ« (natural man) with those who are incorporated into »the body of Christ« (spiritual man). The next rhetorical unit (3:1–5) establishes a contrast between people within »the body of Christ«, namely the »spiritual men« (mature believers) are contrast with the »fleshly men« (immature believers). Thirdly, analysis of the chiasmic structure implemented by Paul shows verse 14 »ABBA,« verse 15 and 16 repeat this »ABBA« pattern (Fee 1987, 117); how-

¹⁴ God's folly (2:1–5) and God's wisdom (2:6–16) (Fee 1987, 21; Kistemaker 1993, 71–95). Paul's mission (2:1–5), and God's Wisdom (2:6–16) (Collins 1999 115–138). Paul's Experience (2:1–5) and a Redefinition of Wisdom (2:6–16) (Thiselton 2000, 204–286). Human Wisdom versus the Spirit and Power of God (2:1–5) and The Spirit's Revelation of God's Wisdom (2:6–16) (Garland 2003, 81–103).

ever a noticeable change in the preceding rhetorical unit (3:1–4) is recognized.¹⁵ The subject is recognized in the first line as Corinth believers who are not spiritual. The key message here appears is verse 3, γὰρ σαρκικοί ἐστε (for fleshly you are). The argument is made, that they are not spiritual, but fleshly, this is attested to by the fact that there is division among them.

Fourthly, the section 3:1–5 demonstrates a significant move in conversation starting firstly with the addressees. The central point being made here is that the recipients of the letter are fleshly (unspiritual, babes in Christ, mere men), which is positioned symmetrically in the center of the rhetorical unit. Fifthly, the kind of argument transitions from *logos* to *ethos*. In verses 2:6–16 the appeal is from *logos* however in chapter 3 Paul reasons with his readers based on *ethos* where he attempts to persuade his readers with emotive language. Sixthly, the »I-You«, language of verse 3:1 is contrast sharply with the »we« pronouns used in the previous rhetorical unit. The second person pronoun in the plural is used five times (ὕμᾱς (2:1, 3), ὑμῖν (2:1, 2) ὑμῶν (2:5)) in the early part of the section, as Paul simply introduces his coming. As the main focus of the rhetorical unit is emphasized, the second person pronoun is replaced with a contrast with the third person pronoun αὐτῶ (2:14) and αὐτός (2:15).¹⁶

An argument for the rhetorical unit 1:10–4:16 is supported by the reading of παρακαλῶ (I appeal, exhort) in 1:10 and 4:16 as an *inclusio*, pointing also to use in 16:15 as further support (Mitchell 1991, 207 fn 113). Παρακαλῶ (I appeal, exhort) is used eleven times within the authentic Pauline corpus, Romans indicate a similar usage, while 2 Corinthian, Philippians and Philemon do not reflect the intention to transition or as an *inclusio*.¹⁷ On the weight of information, this concludes a major transition point at 2:16, a point from which Paul is able to launch into his arguments, a lack of unity caused by the Corinthians failing to live out the sanctified life.

2.4 Probatio, vv. 3:1–15:58

In this section we want to argue that Paul uses five main proofs (*probatio*) to firstly convince his listeners to modify their behavior towards the sanctified life. Secondly, the relationship of each proof identifies the structure.

¹⁵ Bailey demonstrates in his work that the chiasmic structure or symmetrical parallelism is different in the section 1:17–2:16 than that established in 3:1–4:21. Section 3:1–4:21 incorporates an ABCDC'BA' pattern. (Bailey 2008, 35–36).

¹⁶ Paul uses the first person pronoun and construction of verbs when he is seeking to establishing himself as an example, which the hearers are exhorted to follow e.g. 9:14–27, the personal pronouns and all the verbs are constructed in the first person singular. Also in chapter 13 a strong exhortation to good behavior is written all in the first person singular. Conversely when Paul is exhorting hearers to improved behavior he tends to use the second person pronouns and construction of verbs in the second person, however noticeably they are seen as believers. In those occasions where Paul clearly identifies those outside the »body« he employs pronouns and verbs constructed in the third person. A good example of this is in 2:14–16 where the »natural man« is identified as those outside the believing community.

¹⁷ Παρακαλῶ (I appeal, exhort), Romans 12:1, 15:30, 16:17, 1 Corinthians 1:10, 4:16, 16:15; παρακαλῶ 2 Corinthians 2:8, 10:1, Philippians 4:2, Philemon 1:9, 1:10.

2.4.1 Probatio 1, vv. 3:1–4:21, Sanctification requires individual standards (humility)

The first proof is addressed to individuals and calls for humility as a foundational building block for the life »in Christ«. The direct address to ἀδελφοί (brothers) indicates Paul is transitioning slightly as he comes to his teaching (4:6–13).¹⁸ The center of this discussion, and first *probatio* is clearly identified when Paul urges them in 4:6 that »one should not be φυσιοῦσθε (conceited or puffed up) against one another«. Writing in the first person, Paul establishes himself as the example as he is inclined to do throughout his correspondence. 4:14–21 Paul urges them as their father in the faith to μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε (imitate me you become). What exactly the readers are required to imitate was not specified, however from examination of Paul’s writings we are able to conclude several things. Fee quotes Philo understands from the term used: »For the practiser must be the imitator of a life, not the hearer of words, since the latter is the characteristic mark of the recipient of teaching, and the former of the strenuous self-exerciser« (Fee 1987, 186). In 11:1 Paul says »Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.« In the earlier part of the letter Christ is identified as wisdom, however Paul is not simply interested in changing what they believe, he also wants to see a change in behavior – thus we see that principally ethics are in view (Fee 1987, 187). The essential standard for individuals as part of »the body of Christ« is thus humility; with a heart of humility one is able to apply the ethical teachings in a daily life. Baird finds that the prominent feature of the Corinthian’s character was actually that of pride (Baird 1990, 131). There is a rhetorical transition identified here as Paul rounds out this discussion by using the »father« image in 4:15 with »rod« used in 4:21, which is the image of sever discipline.

The first section of proof Paul utilizes elements of first century deliberative rhetoric in order to construct his argument. Moreover in this first section there is a clear call to an individual quest for growth or maturity (sanctification), this is not only represented by what Paul says but also by the imagery used. Not only is this invocation of the father image 4:15 consistent with first century deliberative rhetoric, it also brings into the frame this image of »the body of Christ« as it is only in a spiritual sense that Paul could be understood as their father. Agricultural and building metaphors imply that something beyond those who are being addressed is being built.

2.4.2 Probatio 2, vv. 5:1–7:40, Sanctification requires community standards (purity)

The second proof argues that Paul is now addressing the community as a whole, rather than individuals, exhorting them to standards of purity. In corroboration

¹⁸ ἀδελφοί (brothers) used by Paul 18 times in First Corinthians 1:10, 26; 2:1; 3:1; 4:6; 7:24, 29; 10:1; 11:33; 12:1; 14:6; 14:20; 14:39; 15:1; 15:50; 15:58; 16:15; 16:20. On ten occasions Paul uses the word to switch direction in his argument, 1:10, 26; 2:1; 3:1; 4:6; 10:1; 12:1; 14:6; 15:1; 15:50. On five occasions Paul uses the term to close out his argument before switching directions, 7:24; 11:33; 14:20; 14:39; 15:58. Thus the appearance of ἀδελφοί (brothers) is often indicative of transitions in Paul thought.

rating a link with Old Testament texts, a call to purity is read as pure living (no immorality) and pure devotion (no idolatry) are called for, a clear inference to the community »in Christ«.

While a clear consensus has not yet been reached on the problems facing the Corinthian community, Peder Borgen notes in his work that when he contrasts the Christian life with the pagan life in Gal 5:19–21 and 1 Cor. 6:9–11, that sexual immorality and idolatry are the only two in common (Borgen 1996, 245). Because they occur also in Col. 3:5, Eph. 5:5, Acts 15:20, 29, 21:25, and Rev. 22:15 we see that Paul in his address to the Corinthians is particularly highlighting them. Firstly in 1 Cor. 4:18–40 Paul deals with sexual immorality and in 1 Cor. 8:1–11:34 it continues to feature. Moreover »These two vices are central in Jewish characterizing of the pagan way of life.« (Borgen 1996, 245) It should not be missed that Paul's Jewish heritage and training is evident here, idolatry is identified as a key problem of the Hebrew people. Midway through the section Paul recalls Old Testament texts (6:16) and then introduces the concept of body as temple (6:19). In such a way Paul is not just identifying sexually immorality (adultery) as a sin, he is also interpreting it through the Decalogue from a Jewish frame. Loader has argued from translations of LXX, from the Hebrew Nash papyrus dating from 2nd century B.C., Romans 13:9, Luke 18:20 and James 2:11 that adultery has been raised above murder in the order of the Decalogue. Therefore sexual sin is raised to the level of idolatry which places it at the top of the first tablet on the Decalogue, adultery to the top of the second tablet (Loader 2004, 5–7). Thus we can link this unit together as a call to sanctification or purity within the community.

This idea of purity within the body is reinforced by allusions or references with a purity background. »Clean out the leaven« (5:7), »Remove the wicked man from among yourselves« (5:13).¹⁹ Sexual sin is to be avoided because the body (temple) is considered the dwelling place for the Holy Spirit (6:19). The holiness or the status of the family is related to the holiness of the believing spouse (7:14). Paul is addressing the community as opposed to individuals in the previous section. Paul does identify the individual with the »Temple«, however there is a call for radical purity (standards) within the community of believers and it is communal relationships which are being addressed. There is an overarching idea that idolatry is related to sexual immorality and not intended to be part of the activities of those within »the body of Christ«.²⁰

While it is conceded that there are allusions or recalls as Meeks puts it, »you are inflated« in 4:6, 18, and 19, is recalled in 5:2 (Meeks 2003, 128), there is clear-

¹⁹ This is a common theme in Old Testament as Paul recalls Deut. 13:5, 17:7, 12, 21:21, 22:21.

²⁰ Jacob Neuser discusses the prominence of sexual immorality and idolatry suggesting that there is a parallel between sexual faithfulness and faithfulness to the relationship of believers with God. »The third application of purity as a sign of moral blamelessness and of impurity as a sign of moral evil comes in reference to sexual relations. This closely relates to the foregoing, for, particularly in prophetic literature, loyalty to God is compared to marital fidelity« (Neuser 1973, 14). Judith Lieu continues this thought that fornication is often presented in scripture as »unfaithfulness to God« (Lieu 2004, 137).

ly a different subject being raised here and a different context.²¹ The sexual sin identified does not occur in isolation, there were two parties at least giving accent to this sin. Moreover there was shock expressed by Paul that the community did not purge this from among them. »Since Paul directs all of his commands to the church body, we can infer that he is more vexed with the congregation than he is with the culprit.« (Garland 2003, 153)

A call to corporate purity is recognized here as Paul identifies the *πορνεία* (*por-nia*) as the offending issue, and *καὶ ὑμεῖς πεφυσιωμένοι ἐστέ* (»and, you are puffed up« in 5:2). It should not be missed that the Old Testament imagery of leaven is used here to identify with sin and a lack of righteousness. A »new lump« is imagery for a purified community and supported by the invocation of Deut 13:5, 17:7.12. Having recognized the basis for community living, chapters 6 and 7 establish standards for the community as it functions in »the body of Christ«. Paul's temple imagery and the idea of community purity connect the argument to his key image »the body of Christ«.

2.4.3 Probatio 3, vv. 8:1–11:34, Sanctification requires maturity

Proof three is a discussion on the key issues required to exhort maturity among believers. Paul's arguments are related back to Christ in that »we have knowledge« (8:1) allusions to having »the mind of Christ« (2:16) thus mature behavior is to be expected. The previous exhortation is concluded with Paul's »I think I also have the Spirit of God«. Commencing the third main proof with *Περὶ δε* (now concerning), which is a familiar and recognized introductory formula (Mitchell 1991, 204; Garland 2003, 363, 561). Sections are encased within the *inclusio* *περὶ δε* (now concerning) in 8:1 and the next major subjects 12:1. »Paul treats the issue of idol meats, not just as a behavioral issue, but as a case which requires the proper definition of Christian freedom...« (Mitchell 1991, 126)

Interpreters are divided over how to treat this lengthy section; however the guiding purpose of bringing sanctification to »the body of Christ« permits Paul to discuss four underlying issues:

- 1) 8:1–11 Personal liberties are not to be used to cause others to stumble.
- 2) 9:1–27 Paul's personal example undergirds his own use of liberty.
- 3) 10:1–31 Avoid Israel's mistakes in liberty and idolatry.
- 4) 11:1–33 Order in the public worship service.

The traditional view reads Paul (8:1–10:31) addressing an internal squabble between the strong and the weak. However when the guiding purpose of »unity« is replaced by »sanctification« it is a call to higher ground, to a deeper level of maturity. Paul's appeals are characterized by *logos* as he exhorts his beloved audience to higher standards, using Exodus 32:4 (10:7) to buttress his arguments.

²¹ One should also note that the verb forms are substantially different in each use mentioned, as are supporting pronouns. The existence of pride is the basic human problem, it is therefore reasonable Paul addresses it individually and then corporately.

The motive of Paul's argumentation is driven to the direction of maturity. Paul starts off his discussion, »we know that we all have γνώσιν (knowledge)«, here Paul is praising and exhorting his readers for having the mind of Christ, they are believers and wise, before he crushes them with his statement that »...knowledge makes arrogant...«(8:1). Paul alludes back to 1:24, 30 and the summary 2:14–16 where the basis and purpose for believers »in Christ« is established. The progression of discussion reveals that the image of »the body of Christ« is reflected in Paul's thinking and thus the ideas are developing.

2.4.4 Probatio 4, vv. 12:1–14:39, Sanctification requires appropriate use of spiritual gifts in community

The fourth proof is commenced with περι δὲ (now concerning) signaling that a new subject is to be taken up (Mitchell 1991, 204; Garland 2003, 363, 561). It seems that from 4:6 the Corinthians had become »puffed up« in addition there was clearly a lack of knowledge of the gifts and misuse. Moreover in the history of interpretation this section has often been cited by the partition theorists as lacking coherences. Chapter 13 is far from a displaced hymn (Weiss 1959, 569–571; Conzelmann 1975, 217) constructed in order to praise love as a virtue, but rather it destroys the Corinthians self-centered and grandiose perception of their spirituality (Fee 1987, 627). These three chapters form a unit connecting Paul's teaching about πνευματικῶν (spiritual gifts), within the larger text, which can be well subdivided.

- 1) 12:1–31 the variety and unity of the gifts in community
- 2) 13:1–13 the basis for the gifts – love²²
- 3) 14:1–40 the order of gifts in community.

The syllogism between γνώσις (knowledge) and ἀγάπη (love) with οἰκοδομέω (edify) established in 8:1 features again in chapter 14, thus linking the discussion in chapter 14 in with chapter 13 at a rhetorical level (Mitchell 1991, 270). Furthermore the section is linked by Paul's use of spiritual gifts of γνώσις (knowledge), γλώσσαι (tongues), and προφητεία (prophecy) used throughout chapters 12, 13 and 14 (Mitchell 1991, 270; Hurd 1965, 112–13, 189–90). To earnestly desire the gifts of the Spirit to build up and encourage »the body of Christ« is how love operates in context.

In addition to the rhetorical evidence linking the three chapters the logical and practical nature of Paul's discussion also supports the thesis statement of sanctification. The use of the »spiritual gifts« within the assembly requires that the foundational issues of being united in Christ are addressed prior. Individual and corporate maturity and the issues of worship and glorifying God are embarked upon in a logical sequence before Paul's use of *charismata*. These preceding matters act as prerequisites for the gifts operating in a sanctified »body of Christ«.

²² Love is often described as a motivation, thus one may be tempted to think of love as an abstract quality. Firstly, it is a concrete expression of being »in Christ« those who are in Christ are dead to sin and alive to Christ (Rom. 5:6-8, 6:2, 8:9–10, Gal. 5:24 also see Eph. 5:1–2), love is therefore is an expression of this new reality. Secondly love is an action, it is a behavior (Fee 1987, 628).

2.4.5 Probatio 5, vv. 15:1–58, Sanctification will be consummated in the future for the body

The final proof of the thesis statement is that sanctification will be completed when those »in Christ« will be raised in a glorified heavenly body, to the glory of God. The message of Corinthians is portrayed effectively with the consummation of »the body of Christ«, which stands complete. Resurrection is the final goal of the believer and the consummation of ἀπολύτρωσις (redemption) in 1:30.²³

Paul must respond to the Corinthian's obvious confusion over the nature of the resurrection. Therefore Paul approaches the misunderstanding and confusion in a logical and progressive way. A careful reading will discern four subsections of discussion:

- 1) 15:1–11 the basis for Christ's resurrection, introduction of subject followed by creedal formula and Paul apostolic credentials
- 2) 15:12–34 proof of the resurrection is provided in a chiasmic pattern: A (v 12–19), B (v 20–28), A' (v 29–34)
- 3) 15:35–49 the resurrection of the body
- 4) 15:50–58 the mystery and triumph of the resurrection

There is evidence here of a general underlying theme in 1 Corinthians that the purpose of man is to glorify God.²⁴ Particularly this is why idolatry and immorality are detestable practices to God. For Paul glorifying God is only possible »in Christ« for Christ is the fulfillment of God's purpose. As the final consummation, the salvation of humanity results in the complete glorification of God in the life of believers. »But God gives it a body« this heavenly body is a gift from God, (15:38), »...but the glory of the heavenly body...« (15:40) »it is raised in glory...« (15:43) »...it is raised in power...« (15:43), »it is raised a spiritual body...« (15:44), »...we will bear the image of the heavenly...« (15:49). »(T)hanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ« (15:57). In arguing his case Paul uses the »body of Christ« as central to his teachings and thus on a logical and practical level the teaching is concluded with the »heavenly body«.

2.5 Peroratio, vv. 16:1–24, Final exhortation

Paul provides for a variety of epistolary matters, the collection, travel itineraries, notice about co-laborers, exhortation, and closing to round out his correspondence.

²³ ἀπολύτρωσις is used in the sense of being set free for a ransom and is used in relationship to prisoners of war, slaves, and criminals. It is used in the LXX in Daniel 4:34 in relation to Nebuchadnezzar's release from madness. Importantly it is used in connection with eschatology in Rom. 8:23, Eph. 1:14, 4:30, but it is redemption in the body not from the body. Notice that this redemption is only available »in Christ« Eph. 1:7, Col. 1:14 (Buchesel 1967, 341–356).

²⁴ Echoes of an Old Testament picture of a future time when the worship of Yahweh is to be extended to the nations universally is seen in 1:2, 6:20b, and 10:31b (Ciampa and Rosner 2006, 216–217).

3. Conclusion

This study recognizes the deliberative rhetorical tool available to and employed by Paul in relationship to the structure of 1 Corinthians. Using an historical rhetorical critical methodology we have shown 1 Corinthians is a unified text, with a clear discernable structure, shaped around the goal of sanctification.

A rhetorical critical analysis of 1 Corinthians demonstrates that it was strongly influenced by the patterns established in deliberative rhetoric. However we must recognize the influence of deliberative rhetoric upon the structure and argument, but not force the correspondence tightly into a deliberative pattern. When the image of »the body of Christ« is recognized it allows the Old Testament teaching and Paul's fundamental Jewish character to bear witness to the audience in Corinth. The unity of text, the structure of Paul's argumentation, and the theme gain clarity when read in relationship to »the body of Christ«. In the first two chapters Paul establishes the basis for the life »in Christ« and the context necessary from which to launch is arguments to the believing church. Each argument shows a logical progression from immaturity (babes in Christ) to those in Christ whose salvation is consummated and God is ultimately glorified through the resurrection.

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