The Influence of 1 Corinthians on the Acts of Paul

by

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According to Tertullian (bapt. 17), an Asian Presbyter (henceforth, “the Presbyter”) wrote the *Acts of Paul* (*APl*) and later resigned his office because of the scandal which his writing had caused. The general reaction in the early church, however, seems to have been much more favorable, for the *APl* enjoyed widespread dissemination and acceptance. Its story of Paul is fascinating, portraying him as a wandering missionary and wonder-worker who creates disturbances everywhere he goes, though he always manages to convert not a few and escape, until his martyrdom at the hands of Nero. In the most celebrated section of the *APl*, known as the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* (*AThl*), Paul turns a certain Thecla away from her fiancé, Thamyris, to embrace Christianity and chastity. Thamyris takes his revenge by stirring the mobs and the authorities against both his fiancée and the Apostle.

Scholars often consider this very vivid image of the Apostle to be a gross deviation from the historical Paul. In the first critical monograph on the *AThl*, C. Schlau set the tone for how scholars would treat the Paulinism of the *APl*. He could detect only a single phrase which was reminiscent of the authentic Paul:

> Bezeichnen schon die Reden des Apostels Paulus in der Apostelgeschichte des Lucas, verglichen mit seinen Briefen, eine gewisse Neutralisirung der specifischen Gedanken des Apostels, so ist in unsern Acten diese Neutralisirung in einem Grade fortgeschritten, dass die dem Paulus in dem [sic] Mund gelegten Reden, abgesehen von dem einmal (c. 4) vorkommenden Ausdruck καρποῦ δικαιοσύνης, auch nicht an einen einzigen ihm eigenthümlichen Gedanken mehr erinnern.  

More recent studies generally concur with Schlau’s judgment of the Paulinism of the *APl*. A. F. Findlay, whose treatment of the *APl* is the most harsh, exclaims concerning the teaching of ἐγκράτεια and the resurrection: “There is in all this a very grave falling away from the Pauline conception of salvation.” A. Lindemann assesses the *APl* as follows: “Der Paulus der

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1This paper is largely gleaned from my dissertation, “The *Acts of Paul* and the Pauline Legacy in the Second Century,” accepted for the degree of PhD at the University of Cambridge (1996) and done under the supervision of Willy Rordorf (Prof. Emeritus of the University of Neuchâtel). I use Rordorf’s Greek text of the *APl* which is in preparation for the *Acta Pauli*, CChr Series Apocryphorum (Turnhout: Brepols, forthcoming). I have used a numeration for certain episodes which will be first introduced in W. Rordorf, “Les *Actes de Paul*,” in *Écrits apocryphes chrétiens*, eds. F. Bovon and P. Geoltrain, La Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, forthcoming). Note also the following symbols: cop\(^1\) = Heidelberg Papyrus; cop\(^B\) = Bodmer Papyrus; \(B^1\) = Hamburg Papyrus. Biblical citations in English are from the RSV.


3According to Schlau, even this expression deviates from its original Pauline sense (*Akten des Paulus*, 55).


Dahinter steht keine besondere Tradition und auch kein besonderes gerade Paulus betreffendes Anliegen; ...” E. Dassmann judges the APl as “ein ausdrückliches Eintreten für den Apostel bei Unkenntnis seiner Theologie (Acta Pauli).”7 Thus, the Paul of the APl is seen as a distortion conforming more to the tastes of second-century readers than to the Pauline epistles.8 D. R. MacDonald even tries to explain why the APl, among other Pauline acts,9 neglects the Pauline epistles.10 But there is a consistent failure in all of these studies of the APl: They lack a text by text analysis of the use of the Pauline epistles in the APl on which a fair judgement of its Paulinism might be based.

This paper will limit itself to analyzing the influence of 1 Cor on the Presbyter’s depiction of Paul’s life, his teaching, Christians in action and the worship of the church. The influence is nowhere more profound than in APl III, 5-6, the very passage which scholars so frequently cite as a litmus test to show how far the Presbyter has digressed from the true Paul.

But before we begin, it is necessary to set out an important assumption concerning the relationship of the APl and 3 Corinthians (3 Cor).11 Both the external and the internal evidence suggests that 3 Cor was probably a document which arose independently of the APl. It is my opinion that it was a source which the Presbyter used in his original edition of the APl. In appropriating 3 Cor, the Presbyter must have agreed with both its theology and its portrayal of Paul.12 So I will also treat the influence of 1 Cor on 3 Cor, bearing in mind that it may not be by the Presbyter who wrote the APl.


9 MacDonald takes the following Pauline Acts into consideration: Acts, the APl, the Acts of Peter, the Acts of Andrew and Paul, the Acts of Peter and Paul, the Acts of Xanthippe and Polyxena.


1. The Influence of 1 Cor on the API's Portrayal of Paul's Life

1 Cor appears to have influenced the Presbyter's depiction of Paul's life in the Ephesian (API IX) and the Corinthian (API XII) episodes. In the light of a recent paper in this seminar by R. I. Pervo, it will also be necessary to examine the possible influence of the Book of Acts on these two episodes.

1.1 Paul at Ephesus (API IX)

Because of a very successful mission in Ephesus, Paul is condemned to the beasts. The ferocious lion which meets him in the arena, however, greets him with a human voice, being the very animal which Paul baptized in an earlier account. A sudden hailstorm saves both Paul and the lion.

Pervo lists some parallels between this account of Paul's stay in Ephesus and that in Acts 19:

Common to both are Priscilla and Aquila, Ephesus, a mission of vast success, opposition to Paul related to a critique of idolatry, an angry crowd in a theater, including metallurgists, intimations of a riot, and an official who suggests that discussion is not in order. These themes and motifs are, to be sure, common enough, but the accumulation in this setting demands attention. Such coincidences, however, may not signify literary dependence, for most of these elements appear in other episodes of the API where dependence on Acts is by no means evident. The theater is a typical place for persecution (API VI [cop 38:24]; API III,20). Hermogenes is depicted as a smith (API III,1), and so opposition to Paul from metallurgists is a motif which is already present. As for the official stating that the discussion is out of order, in Acts 19:40, it is the riot which is unlawful, but in the API, Paul's teaching is not to be heard, as Jerome states, "Ανδρες Ἄρτεμις ἀδελφαὶ μαθεῖν οὐκ ἔστιν. Jerome calls instead for an immediate judgement in Paul's case. Pervo sees parallels which may either be explained as common motifs in the API or are not really parallels at all.

There are significant differences as well. The riot in Acts is much more acute as the Ephesians cry out in defense of Artemis and risk sanction from higher authorities (19:40). The town clerk (γραμματεύς) persuades them to quiet down and bring lawful charges later, whereas in the API, Paul receives a sentence of death from the governor (ἡγεμόν). In Acts, the Asiarchs dissuade Paul from entering the theater, so that he is not condemned, and there is, above all, no lion. Dependence on Acts does not seem to adequately explain the API IX, as Rordorf states: "Andererseits sind die Unterschiede zwischen den Berichten auch so charakteristisch, daß

15 "Hieronymus" in English editions. Following Rordorf (Acta Pauli), I have preferred “Jerome” which is a more familiar name in English.
unmöglich die *Paulusakten* direkt von der Apostelgeschichte abhängig sein können.“16

Certain passages from the Pauline epistles provide a broader base of comparison. In 1 Cor 15:32, Paul questions: “What do I gain if, humanly speaking, I fought with beasts at Ephesus? If the dead are not raised, ‘Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die.’”17 Paul also mentions a lion from which he narrowly escapes (2 Tim 4:17): “But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength to proclaim the message fully, that all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion’s mouth.” R. Bauckham18 contends that the Presbyter believed these two hints to refer to the same event and so imaginatively filled in the gaps. Finally, Bauckham also suggests that the Lion episode corresponds with 2 Cor 1:8-10:

For we do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, of the affliction we experienced in Asia; for we were so utterly, unbearably crushed that we despaired of life itself. Why, we felt that we had received the sentence of death; but that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead; he delivered us from so deadly a peril, and he will deliver us; on him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.19 Likewise, in the *API* IX, Paul receives the death sentence, despairs for his life and is miraculously delivered.20 Thus, far from creating the lion story from pure imagination, the Presbyter would appear to have cleverly woven into his story details from 1 and 2 Cor and 2 Tim, as well as to have drawn ideas from the story of Androclus and the lion.21

Bauckham also observes that Aquila and Priscilla have a church in their house at Ephesus in both 1 Cor 16:19 and 2 Tim 4:19. Likewise, in the *API*, when Paul arrives at Ephesus, he stays


17 D. R. MacDonald believes that a lion story must have circulated during Paul’s own day. He argues further that the Apostle himself rejects this story in 1 Cor 15, but to do so, he must make a conjectural emendation of the text which is not very convincing (“A Conjectural Emendation of 1 Cor 15:31-32; or the Case of the Misplaced Lion Fight,” *HTR* 73 [1980] 265-76).


20 Rordorf suggests that 2 Cor 1:8-10 testifies to the same event which is the historical basis for both the *API* IX and Acts 19 (*Verhältnis* 233).

at the house of Aquila and Priscilla, where the church meets. Acts 18-19, on the other hand, never mentions that they own a house in Ephesus. According to Bauckham, the Presbyter would have also read that Paul planned to stay in Ephesus until Pentecost (1 Cor 16:4-9):

I will visit you after passing through Macedonia, for I intend to pass through Macedonia, and perhaps I will stay with you or even spend the winter, so that you may speed me on my journey, wherever I go. For I do not want to see you now just in passing; I hope to spend some time with you, if the Lord permits. But I will stay in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a wide door for effective work has opened to me, and there are many adversaries.

Likewise, in the *API*, the persecution against Paul at Ephesus breaks out at Pentecost (*API* IX, 11), “And there was a fame of the grace and much blessing between ... [sic] and Pentecost.”

Paul’s intention to leave Ephesus and to go through Macedonia before visiting the Corinthians corresponds to the itinerary of the extant *API*. Though Paul does not expressly stay the winter in Corinth, the *API* XII, 1 states that Paul preached the word of perseverance for forty days, and this could correspond to the “some time” which Paul hoped to spend there. 1 Tim 1:3 also indicates Paul traveled from Ephesus to Macedonia, and 2 Tim 4:20 would suggest that Paul traveled through Corinth, where he left Erastus, on his way to Rome.

Thus, it is clear that the Pauline itinerary in the *API* from Ephesus to Corinth corresponds with certain passages in 1 and 2 Cor and 1 and 2 Tim, but not at all with Acts.

1.2 Paul at Corinth (*API* 12)

Paul stops in Corinth and spends forty days with the Corinthian Christians on his way to Rome. He stays in the house of Stephen for forty days. How we arrive at the reading “Stephen” instead of C. Schmidt’s “Epiphanius” will require an explanation below. When Paul is about to depart, the Corinthians are distressed about when they shall see him again; three prophetic messages predict the Apostle’s martyrdom in Rome, increasing their grief. There are certain similarities between this episode and Acts 20:17-21, where the Ephesian elders are saddened because Paul predicts they will not see his face again. Pervo suggests that the Presbyter has rewritten Acts 20:17-21:14 to better suit his liking:

In both texts the mood changes as Paul prepares to embark on his fateful journey. Prayer, prophecy, and pathos color the scenes, ... Oral tradition is not a likely source for a blend of

22The Lukan form of her name (Priscilla) instead of the Pauline form (Prisca) is not very telling (contra Bauckham, “Sequel,” 220; and Pervo, “Hard Act,” 10, n. 42). It is not certain that the form in cop is original or a scribal variant. Nor is it certain that the Presbyter did not already possess copies of the Pauline epistles which contained the Lukan form of the name (cf. variants in NA at 1 Cor 16:19 and Rom 16:3).


such disparate material. The presence of a similar complex at the comparable narrative juncture in the APl is best explained as a revision or imitation of the written text of Acts.\textsuperscript{25} On the other hand, no verbal dependence is detectable. Neither is the scene’s “similar complex” convincing evidence of the Presbyter’s rewriting of Acts 20:17-21:14. Paul’s own instructions in 1 Cor 12-14 provide a more convincing literary model for the prophetic messages which Paul, Cleobius, and Myrta utter in the Corinthian assembly (see § 4.2 below). In addition, the Corinthians have displayed distress over Paul’s situation in Philippi (3 Cor 1), so that the narrative has already depicted their great concern over his well-being and their desire for his presence (3 Cor 2:6, 16). Even Paul himself speaks of the Corinthians’ feelings for him (2 Cor 7:6-7):

“But God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us by the coming of Titus, and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted in you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.” Moreover, “prayer, prophecy, and pathos” are not at all disparate elements: Polycarp prayed for a number of days, received a vision, and predicted his own passion to the brethren.\textsuperscript{26} Pervo overstates his case. The Presbyter seems to be drawing upon the Pauline epistles (including 3 Cor), upon his own characterization of the Corinthians, upon the expectation that visions and prophetic messages precede martyrdom, not to mention the common literary scene of great sadness at the departure of a loved one.\textsuperscript{27}

Now concerning the reading of Stephen in the place of Epiphanius, we must look first at the greeting in Corinthians’ letter to Paul (3 Cor 2:1): Στέφανας\textsuperscript{28} καὶ σὸν αὐτῷ πρεσβύτερον Δάφνος καὶ Εὐβούλος καὶ Θεόφυλος καὶ Ξένων Παύλω τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἐν κυρίῳ χαιρεῖν. This address is remarkably like Polycarp, Phil. (greeting): Πολύκαρπος καὶ οἱ σῶν αὐτῷ πρεσβύτεροι τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ τῇ παροικίᾳ Φιλίππους (Lake, 1912:1.282). Ignatius calls Polycarp a bishop (ἐπίσκοπος; Ign., Pol., greeting), as does the Mart. Pol. 16:2, though Polycarp himself never employs the word. But he does set out requirements for presbyters (Phil. 6:1). Polycarp may have only considered himself first among peers in the presbyterial ranks. Whatever the case may be, the author of 3 Cor has formulated this salutation in such a way as to make Stephanas appear to be the bishop of Corinth or at least the leading presbyter. This is particularly interesting

\textsuperscript{25}Pervo, “Hard Act,” 12

\textsuperscript{26}Mart. Pol. 5; In Mart. Perp. 4 and 7 (ca. AD 200; H. Musurillo, ed. and trans., The Acts of Christian Martyrs [Oxford: University Press, 1972] xxvii) prayer and visions play a role in the prelude to Perpetua’s martyrdom (cf. Mart. Pion. 2).

\textsuperscript{27}In addition to Acts 20:17f. and the APl XII, one may easily add to this list: APr 1-3; AIn 58-59; E. Junod and J.-D. Kaestli study the common elements in some detail (Acta Iohannis. CChr Series Apocryphorum [Brepolis: Turnhout, 1983] 2:431, n. 1). Xenophon of Ephesus’ Ephesian Tale 1:10 shows that the “scene of departure” is by no means limited to Christian literature.

\textsuperscript{28}Rordorf (Acta Pauli) will prefer Στέφανας in agreement with the versions. But as he will suggest in his introduction, his task is to make a critical edition of the APl not of 3 Cor. Given the unanimous agreement of the versions against the Greek, it is probable that the Presbyter made this change when incorporating 3 Cor into his APl. Στέφανας, however, should be retained as the original reading of 3 Cor.
in light of what Paul writes to the Corinthians concerning Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15-18):

Now, brethren, you know that the household of Stephanas were the first converts in Achaia, and they have devoted themselves to the service of the saints; I urge you to be subject to such men and to every fellow worker and laborer. I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence; for they refreshed my spirit as well as yours. Give recognition to such men.

Paul enjoins the Corinthians to be subject to and to honor Stephanas as an important convert and the leader of a household. The author would appear to have seen these exhortations concerning Stephanas and to have recognized the ministerial offices of ἐπίσκοπος and πρεσβύτερος which existed in his own time.

3 Cor 2:1 is not alone in this interpretation of Stephanas. Clement of Rome states concerning the apostles: κατὰ χώρας ὅν καὶ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες καθίστανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τὸ πνεῦμα, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν. 29 Clement, who knows 1 Cor (see 1 Clem. 47:1-4), borrows the word ἀπαρχὴ from 1 Cor 16:1530: Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὅτι εἰς τὴν οἰκίαν Στεφανᾶ, ὅτι ἠτείνη ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Αχαίας καὶ εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἄγιοις ἔταξαν ἐαυτούς. The use of the word διακονία tends to confirm that 1 Cor 16:5 was the inspiration for 1 Clem. 42:4. Clement would probably consider Stephanas to belong to the first category, ἐπίσκοπος, as in 3 Cor.

Paul similarly commends Onesiphorus who serves as the example of a faithful man to whom Timothy may entrust the Pauline teaching (2 Tim 1:16-2:2), and in the API he appears as the local leader of the church at Iconium. Like Stephanas, Onesiphorus is the head of a household (cf. 2 Tim 4:19). The Presbyter repeats this kind of exegesis in his treatment of Priscilla and Aquila:

1 Cor 16:19
The churches of Asia send greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord.
Rom 16:35
Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I but also all the churches of the Gentiles give thanks; greet also the church in their house.

In the API IX, 1f., they are the leaders in the house church at Ephesus in keeping with 1 Cor 16:19, and Aquila should probably be understood as the bishop. Moreover, in the extant episodes of the API, the leadership situation appears to confirm this trend. Each locale has one leader; in

30Cf. Rom. 16:5. See Dassmann (Stachel, 97) and Lindemann (Paulus, 192), who states: “Falls der Vf tatsächlich an beide Stellen gedacht hat, müßte er sie freilich betont uninterpretiert haben: Während bei Paulus ἀπαρχὴ einfach die ersten Christen meint, ist in 1 Clem offenbar an eine hierarchische Spitzenstellung gedacht, die auf die Apostel zurückgehe (καθίστανον τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν).” But Paul clearly endows these “first converts” with hierarchical authority when he tells the Corinthians to submit to them!
addition to Stephanas at Corinth and Onesiphorus at Iconium, there are Hermias at Myra (APl IV, 16) and Claudius in Italy (APl XIII, 3-4). Judas, the brother of Jesus, appears as the dominant Christian in Damascus, but is not a resident leader. The Damascene church apparently meets in the house of the widow Lemma (APl IX). Judas is probably an itinerant in keeping with 1 Cor 9:5, and his designation as a “blessed prophet” may indicate a wandering ministry as in the Didache 11f.

Epiphanius as the correct reading of the APl XII, 1 would contradict this trend in the APl of one city-one leader (APl XII, 1; B¹ 6:2). Why is it not Stephanas? Does the Presbyter have two leaders at Corinth in view? The photographs of B¹ may provide the answer to this question. Schmidt transcribes the letters as Επ[ι]φαν[ιού]. However, there are some problems with this reading. The letters are not particularly legible, for the MS has suffered some wear and tear in addition to soiling. The second vertical stroke of what Schmidt saw as a “Π” is not connected to the rest of the letter, so it could instead be part of a letter which follows. The letter “Ι” would have had to have been completely smudged out. Finally, what Schmidt read as the top line of the “Ε” is also not joined to the rest of the letter. Thus, the best he could have read was ΕΠΙΦΑΝΙΟΥ, for the letters “Ε” and “Π” are reconstructed. It is equally possible to read ΤΕΦΑΝΙΟΥ. The scribe tended to write “Τ” very small and sometimes to join or overlay it with a following “Ε”. The internal evidence must fall towards the reading “Stephen”, who was a known figure connected with Paul and the church at Corinth, not only from 1 Cor but also from 3 Cor which the Presbyter has used as one of his sources. In my opinion, this passage would not contradict the rule of one city-one leader but confirm it.

Thus, we see that the Presbyter’s portrayal of Paul’s itinerary from Ephesus to Rome appears to follow that set out in 1 Cor 16:4-9 and 2 Tim 4:20. His struggles in Ephesus are inspired by 1 Cor 15:32, 2 Cor 1:8-10 and 2 Tim 4:17. The leaders with whom he comes in contact in Ephesus and Corinth, Aquila, Priscilla and Stephen, appear to be derived from 1 Cor 16:15-18. In all of this, it is often impossible to reconcile details with the Book of Acts. It would appear, therefore, that 1 Cor and other Pauline epistles have strongly influenced the Presbyter’s portrayal of Paul’s life.

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32I wish to thank Prof. Rordorf for allowing me to see photographs which he acquired recently from the Hamburg University Library. Unfortunately, B¹ has suffered further corruption at 6:2 so that we are now wholly dependent upon the photographs in C. Schmidt and W. Schubart, ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΥ: Acta Pauli nach dem Papyrus der Hamburger Staats- und Universität-Bibliothek (Glückstadt and Hamburg: J. J. Augustin, 1936)–.
33B¹ 6:2; Schmidt-Schubart, ΠΡΑΞΕΙΣ ΠΑΥΛΟΥ, 44.
34If the Presbyter is responsible for the change in 3 Cor 2:1 from Stephanas to Stephen, it is reasonable to conclude that the reading here would also include the more common name. But no doubt in the Presbyter’s mind, this Stephen is the same person as the Stephanas of 1 Cor.
2. The Influence of 1 Cor on the API's Portrayal of Paul's Teaching

2.1 A Treatise on the Resurrection (3 Cor 5:24-28)

3 Cor 5:24-32 vehemently defends the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh. 3 Cor 5:26-28 apparently draws from Paul’s teaching in 1 Cor 15:35-37:

3 Cor 5:26-28

Οὐ τε γὰρ, ἀνδρεῖς Κορινθιαῖοι, οἴδασι τὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυροῦ σπόρον ἡ τῶν ἀλλῶν σπερμάτων, ὅτι γυμνὰ βάλεται εἰς τὴν γῆν καὶ συμφαρέντα κάτω ἐγείρθη ἐν θελήματι θεοῦ ἐν σώμα καὶ ἠμφιεσμένα, ὅτε εἰ μόνον τὸ σῶμα ἐγείρεται τὸ βλήθην ἀλλὰ πολλοστὸν ὀρθῶν εὐλογημένων. Εἰ δὲ δεῖ ἡμᾶς καὶ ἀπὸ τῶν σπερμάτων μὴ ποιεῖσθαι τὴν παραβολήν.

1 Cor 15:35-37

'Αλλὰ ἐρεί τις: Πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροὶ; ποίο δὲ σῶμα ἔρχονται; ἄφρον, σὺ δ σπείρεις, οὐ ξυποιεῖται ἐὰν μὴ ἀποθάνῃ· καὶ ὁ σπείρεις, οὐ τὸ σῶμα τὸ γενησόμενον σπείρεις ἀλλὰ γυμνὸν κόκκον εἰ τύχῃ σῖτον ἢ τῖνος τῶν λοιπῶν· ὥς δὲ θεὸς δίδωσιν αὐτῷ σῶμα καθὼς ἥξελθεν· καὶ ἐκάστῳ τῶν σπερμάτων ἱδιὸν σῶμα.

The author of 3 Cor does not cite 1 Cor 15:35-37—he paraphrases it. But Rordorf, taking the cue of Vetter, argues that 3 Cor 5:24-32 depends instead upon a Jewish source which is also reflected in b. Sanh. 90a-b. B. Sanh. 90a is interesting, for like 3 Cor 5:24-25, it excludes from the resurrection those who deny it:

BUT THE FOLLOWING HAVE NO PORTION THEREIN [i.e., the life to come]: HE THAT SAYS THAT THERE IS NO RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD PRESCRIBED IN THE LAW, ... A Tanna taught: Since he denied the resurrection of the dead, therefore he shall not share in that resurrection, ...

Then, b. Sanh. 90b cites the parable of the seed, in order to answer the question if those who are resurrected will be clothed or nude—i.e., with or without a body:

‘But when they arise, shall they arise nude or in their garments?’—He [Rabbi Meir] replied, ‘Thou mayest deduce by an a fortiori argument [the answer] from a wheat grain: if a grain of wheat, which is buried naked, sprouteth forth in many robes, how much more so the righteous, who are buried in their raiment!’

The “grain of wheat” corresponds directly with τὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ πυροῦ σπόρον, though 3 Cor adds ἡ τῶν ἀλλῶν σπερμάτων, which shows that it corresponds better with 1 Cor 15:37, εἰ τύχῃ σῖτον ἢ τῖνος τῶν λοιπῶν. Both the Rabbinic text and 3 Cor say that the nude seed is raised “clothed”,

35In this paper, I have used boldface text to indicate verbal agreements with the API or 3 Cor. Underlining indicates agreement which is not as exact.

36“Hérésie,” 53-56.


38Cf. Pirqe R. El. 33(17c)=b. Ketub.111b.


40Rordorf, “Hérésie,” 54-55.

41Epstein, Nezikin, 3:607.
an element missing in 1 Cor 15:35-37. To be clothed, however, is indeed a Pauline metaphor for the resurrection of the body (2 Cor. 5:4), though Paul employs the word ἐκρατεύειν not ἐμφανίζει (3 Cor 5:26). On the other hand, only 3 Cor and 1 Cor mention the will of God and the dying or perishing of the seed (cf. John 12:24). Furthermore both 3 Cor and 1 Cor literally refer to the body, not simply through a metaphor, “clothing”. I think it imprudent to rule out 1 Cor 15:35-37 as part of the inspiration of 3 Cor 5:26-32.42 One or more Jewish sources43 have probably also influenced the composition of 3 Cor 5:24-32, which incorporates two further illustrations from the OT, Jonah and Elisha,44 and twice uses the Jewish exegetical method a minori ad maius.45 But it is extremely unlikely that the author does not also know 1 Cor.46 I suggest that he created a new treatise on the resurrection by combining his Jewish sources and 1 Cor 15:35-37. In 3 Cor 6:34-36, the author draws from two recognizable sources, Phil 3:7-11 and Gal 6:14-18, to create a new composition. Thus, he may have similarly combined 1 Cor 15:35-37 with one or more Jewish sources.

2.2 Paul and Ἐγκράτεια

In the API III, 5-6, Paul teaches the word of God concerning continence and the resurrection.47 In the epistles, the use of Ἐγκράτεια and its derivatives is infrequent but significant. In Gal 5:23, it appears in a list of Christian virtues, the fruit of the Spirit. In 1 Cor 9:25, the Christian practises Ἐγκράτεια for an imperishable crown: πᾶς δὲ ὁ ἀγωνιζόμενος πάντα ἐγκρατεύει, ἐκεῖνοι μὲν ὑπὸ ἰδία φθαρτών στέφανον λάβοσιν, ἡμεῖς δὲ ἀφθαρτον. Thus, the practice of Ἐγκράτεια wins an eschatological reward, as in the API. Finally, to practise sexual Ἐγκράτεια is better than to marry according to 1 Cor 7:9: εἰ δὲ οὐκ ἐγκρατεύονται, γαμησάτωσαν, κρείττον γάρ ἂστιν γαμήσαι ἢ πυρόσθα. Moreover, a beatitude expresses the

43 I disagree with Vetter who said that there must be a single, written source (“Quelle,” 632-33). He considered the author of 3 Cor a stupid, unimaginative forger who simply pieced two sources together—parts of the API and the alleged Jewish source on the resurrection. The use of the API, however, is no longer possible to maintain; the MS evidence now evinces the conclusion that the Presbyter used 3 Cor. In addition, there is no way of knowing what Jewish sources were available to the author in oral form, who may have even been a Jewish Christian.
45 See 3 Cor 5:31, 32b [and 33b]; Rordorf, “Hérésie,” 55. However, both Jesus (Matt 6:26-30; 7:9-10; 10:29-30) and Paul (Rom 11:24) use this method, and early Christians may have simply learnt it through imitating them.
46 H. E. Lona reasons that the author would more likely know 1 Cor 15:35-37 than a Jewish source whose antiquity is uncertain (Über die Auferstehung des Fleisches, BZNW 66 [Berlin: De Gruyter, 1993] 163, n. 440).
47 The Presbyter is not alone in this characterization of Paul’s essential teaching. According to Luke, Paul taught Felix and Drusiana περὶ δικαιοσύνης καὶ ἐγκρατείας καὶ τοῦ κρίματος τοῦ μίσθου του (Acts 24:25), themes which recur in the API.
better choice (1 Cor 7:40): μακαριωτέρα δὲ ἐστιν ἕν ὁυτός μείνῃ, κατά τὴν ἔμην γνώμην-δοκό δὲ κάγιο πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἔχειν. In Clement of Alexandria (strom. 3.80.1) and P⁴⁶, the absolute μακάριο stands in the place of the relative μακαριωτέρα, illustrating a tendency to intensify Paul’s position on ἐγκράτεια in a way not unlike the API.

2.3 The Teaching of Ἐγκράτεια and the Resurrection

The following five out of thirteen beatitudes (i-xiii) in the API III, 5-6 have direct contact with the Pauline epistles, especially 1 Cor:

(ii) Μακάριοι οἱ ἁγιόν τὴν σάρκα τηρήσαντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ναὸς θεοῦ γενήσονται. First of all, the word “flesh” presents a problem. For the Presbyter, σάρξ is interchangeable with σῶμα, for it is impossible to discern a difference in usage between the two terms.⁴⁸ With this minor difference in terminology, the beatitude derives from 1 Cor 6:19-20 (cf. 1 Cor 3:16-17; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:21):

η̑ οὐκ ἦσαν ὅτι τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν ναὸς τὸν ἐν ύμίν ἁγίον πνεύματός ἐστιν οὗ ἔχετε ἀπό θεοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἠστε ἐμαυτοίς: ἠγοράσθητε γάρ τιμής: δοξάσατε δὴ τὸν θεὸν ἐν τῷ σῶμα ὑμῶν.

In the Pauline epistles, the image of the believers as the temple of God is always a present reality. Correct behavior follows as the direct, logical conclusion of this reality. Thus, the indicative precedes the imperative. But in Beatitude II, the indicative follows the imperative. The formal constraint of beatitudes may have necessitated this shift, since, for example, Jesus promises future rewards in seven out of nine beatitudes in Matt 5:3-11. The form of the beatitudes has imposed certain changes in verb tense, causing the Pauline ethic to resemble Jesus’ own teaching to a greater degree.

(iv) Μακάριοι οἱ ἀποταξάμενοι τῷ κόσμῳ τοῦτο, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἐσπαρατήσοσιν τῷ θεῷ.

(v) Μακάριοι οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες, ὅτι αὐτοὶ κληρονόμοι τοῦ θεοῦ γενήσονται.

(xi) Μακάριοι οἱ δὶ ἁγιασμὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ἐξελθόντες τοῦ σχήματος τοῦ κοσμικοῦ, ὅτι αὐτοὶ ἄγγελος κρινοῦσιν καὶ ἐν δεξιᾷ τοῦ πατρὸς σταθήσονται. Beatitudes iv, v, and xi form a group since their direct inspiration derives from 1 Cor 7:29-33:

τοῦτο δὲ ἡμι, ἀδελφοί, ὁ καιρὸς συνεσταλμένος ἐστιν· τὸ λοιπὸν, ἵνα καὶ οἱ ἔχοντες γυναῖκας ὡς μὴ ἔχοντες [v] ἀδελφοί καὶ οἱ κληρονόμοι τοῦ θεοῦ γενήσονται.

The Presbyter shows a marvelous grasp of the Pauline motivation for sexual continence. The form of this world is passing away; it will be burned in the final eschatological fire—a recurrent theme in the API. The continent person, therefore, will deny this passing age to be pleasing to God (iv), just as the unmarried person in 1 Cor is free to please the Lord, not an earthly spouse. Those who leave the form of this world will judge the angels (xi), as in 1 Cor 6:3: οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ἄγγελοι κρινοῦσιν, μήτε γε βιοτικά; It may seem incongruous that one reward for renouncing this world is to be blessed at the right hand of the Father (xi), which in Paul is the place that the exalted Jesus occupies (Rom 8:34; Col 3:1; Eph 1:20). But Paul also considers the saints as

Thus, Beatitudes ii, iv, v, xi, and xiii are expositions of 1 Cor 6-7. Four other beatitudes emerge is 1 Cor 6-7 is hardly by accident.

The Presbyter himself, though not without Pauline inspiration.

The virgin, who does not have worldly concerns, will be pleasing to God, not a husband, by being holy both in body and in spirit. This person can expect to receive a special reward on the day of Christ according to the Presbyter. The narrative will henceforth recount how Thecla takes Paul’s teaching to heart, breaks off her engagement with Thamysis—who is in any case a pagan, and Paul only permits the Christian to marry “in the Lord” (1 Cor 7:39). In reward for her piety, she receives baptism, salvation in the arena, and eternal rest (beautiful sleep—μετὰ καλού ὑπνου ἑκομήθη; APl IV, 18).

Thus, Beatitudes ii, iv, v, xi, and xiii are expositions of 1 Cor 6-7. Four other beatitudes take direct inspiration from Jesus’ beatitudes, displaying dependence on Matt.49 The remaining four relate to the theme of continence and the resurrection, and would appear to be inventions of the Presbyter himself, though not without Pauline inspiration.50 The frequency of allusions to 1 Cor 6-7 is hardly by accident. The Presbyter’s purpose for recounting Thecla’s story emerges—he wishes to give narrative embodiment to Paul’s teaching in 1 Cor 6-7.

3. The Influence of 1 Cor on the APl’s Portrayal of Christians in Action

3.1 The Actions of Married Christians

Scholars very often allege that the APl is encratite, forbidding sexual intercourse even in the bounds of marriage. Yet if we focus on Onesiphorus and Lectra, and not on Thecla, we see a married couple held in high esteem, whose sons complain of hunger during a fast, suggesting that they are young and no longer able to bear the rigor (APl III, 2, 23). Thus, the APl by no means forbids procreation within marriage, though it states, “Blessed are they who have wives as if they had them not, for they shall be heirs of God.”51 This beatitude may simply be advocating a

49Beatitudes i and xii are word for word the same as Matt 5:8 and 5:7 respectively, though xii adds a second apodosis; the apodosis in vii equals that in Matt 5:4; the apodosis in viii resembles that in Matt 5:9.

50Cf. Beatitude iv and 2 Cor 5:11 (the fear of God); Beatitude viii and 1 Cor 1:30 (the wisdom of Jesus Christ); Beatitude x and Eph 3:4 (the understanding of Jesus Christ).

51APl III, 5; Schneemelcher, NT Apocrypha, 2:239; cf. 1 Cor 7:29.
temporary abstinence for prayer, in agreement with 1 Cor 7:1-5. Origen understands it as teaching the necessity to abstain from marital intercourse before the Eucharist. Indeed, by holding up Onesiphorus’ family as a model, the API affirms the orthodox position that the purpose of sex and marriage is procreation.  

In 1 Cor 7:12-13, Paul writes that the believer must not separate from a non-Christian spouse who is willing to continue in the marriage. This may help clarify Paul’s dismissal of Artemilla to her husband: API 9:21 (P 4.5): ἄπέλυσεν πρὸς τὸν ἄνδρα αὐτῆς. Artemilla, the believing woman, returns to her husband in order to live out this Pauline policy. This is another strong indication that the API is not encratite.

3.2 The Actions of a Virgin

Modern research has reached an impasse concerning the meaning of 1 Cor 7:36-38:

Εἰ δὲ τις ἁσχημονεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν παρθένον αὐτοῦ νομίζει, ἐὰν ἦ ὑπέρακμος, καὶ οὕτως ὀφείλει γίνεσθαι, ὁ θέλει πουεῖτο, οὐχ ἀμαρτάνει, γαμεῖτωσαν. ὃς δὲ ἐστικεν ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ ἐδραίος μη ἔχον ἄναγκην, ἐξούσιαν δὲ ἔχει περὶ τοῦ ἱδίου θελήματος καὶ τοῦτο κέκρικεν ἐν τῇ ἴδιᾳ καρδίᾳ, τηρεῖν τὴν ἐαυτοῦ παρθένον, καλῶς ποιήσει. ὅστε καὶ ὃ γαμίζων τὴν ἐαυτοῦ παρθένον καλῶς ποιεῖ καὶ ὃ μὴ γαμίζων κρείσσον ποιήσει.

According to the ancient exeges, this passage refers to the father who does not know if he should marry off his virgin daughter—γαμίζω is taken in its natural, causative sense. In recent times interpreters have seen engaged couples as the recipients of Paul’s advice, arguing from evidence that γαμίζω may signify simply “to marry”. Many others have followed the cue of H.  


53See, e.g., Justin, apol. 1.29.1; cf. 1 Tim 2:15.


Achelis,\textsuperscript{56} who argued that the passage concerns a couple living together, but who have not consummated their marriage. Such spiritual marriages are known to have existed at the time of Irenaeus, albeit among the Valentinians.\textsuperscript{57}

The conclusion made above is that the *AThl* is a narrative interpretation of 1 Cor 6-7. If so, the Presbyter understands 1 Cor 7:36-38 as referring to the engaged couple. Thecla hears the teaching of Paul and chooses to break off her engagement to Thamyris in order to remain pure. God confirms her decision by saving her from execution and baptizing her. Therefore, one cannot rely on the *AThl* as an example of *virgines subintroductae* in the second century.\textsuperscript{58}

4. **The Influence of 1 Cor on the *APl*'s Portrayal of the Church at Worship**

4.1 **An Angel Speaking in Tongues**

While the Ephesian Christians meet in the house of Aquila for a night of prayer, an angel of the Lord appears and startles them. The angel speaks to Paul in tongues (*APl* IX, 3). This scene is immediately reminiscent of 1 Cor 13:1, where Paul says that if he speaks in the tongues of men and of angels but has not love it profits him nothing, though we know that Paul can speak in tongues because he thanks God that he speaks in tongues more than all the Corinthians (1 Cor 14:18). Evidently the Presbyter considers speaking in tongues to refer to a heavenly language used among the angels. When the angel ceases to speak in tongues, Paul “interprets” for the Ephesians (*APl* IX, 3) in keeping with 1 Cor 12:10 and 14:26f. The message is prophetic, predicting a severe trial which would fall upon Paul and the Ephesian church at Pentecost.

4.2 **Three Prophetic Messages at Corinth**

This final scene at Corinth (*APl* XII, 2-5) depicts the anguish that the Corinthians experience because of Paul’s departure for Rome. For this reason, they hold a fast during which the Holy Spirit speaks to the congregation three times, through Paul, Cleobius, and Myrta. The fast follows a liturgical pattern, for at one point Paul offers a sacrifice (*APl* XII, 4, προσφορά), which could be understood as the preparation for the Eucharist, and after Myrta’s prophetic message, the group shares bread and rejoices through the singing of psalms of David and odes “according to the custom of the fast” (*APl* XII, 5): μεταλαβεὶν ἵκαστον τοῦ [ἀ]ρτου καὶ ἐνωρθῆσθαι αὐτοὺς κατὰ τὴν συνήθειαν τῆς νηστείας ὑπὸ αὐτῶν ψαλμῶν τῷ Δ(αουί)δ καὶ φόδον.”

A liturgy of fasting may have developed quite early in the church. Paul is leaving the Corinthians, who fast so as to commission him for his trip to Rome. A similar fast occurs in Acts 13:2-3 (cf. Acts 14:23), where the prophetic word also plays an extremely important role:

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{56}*Virgines subintroductae* (Leipzig: Hinrichs, 1902).
\textsuperscript{57}Irenaeus, *haer.* 1.6.3; Achelis, *Virgines subintroductae* 19.
\textsuperscript{58}Fee (*1 Corinthians*, 327) points to the *APl* III, 5-6 as evidence of the practice of *virgines subintroductae*, relying on Seboldt (“Spiritual Marriage” 177) who states that the ascetic ideal of virginity “becomes apparent in the apocryphal Acts of Apostles, which probably dates [*sic*] from the second and early third centuries …” Seboldt proceeds to quote from the *AThl* and the *Ath* as if they were a single document with a common *Sitz im Leben*! \end{quote}
Now it is important to note that the API XII, 2-5 represents a liturgy of fasting in order to understand fully the influence of Pauline texts. In 1 Cor 14:26-33 Paul corrects the Corinthians’ abuse of speaking in tongues by limiting a meeting to at most three messages in tongues which must be interpreted. He also stipulates that no more than three prophets may utter prophetic messages. We have seen that Paul interprets for the Ephesians the angel’s prophetic message in tongues (API IX, 3), in keeping with 1 Cor 14:26f. The API XII, 2-5 presents a gathering in Corinth with three prophets, not more, who utter their prophecies in succession and in an orderly manner. Their message is followed by the singing of psalms (cf. 1 Cor 14:26). In agreement with 1 Cor 13, Paul teaches concerning love, "Ω ἄνδρες ἀδέλφοι σπουδάζετε ἐπί τὴν νηστείαν καὶ τὴν ἀγάπην ... (API XII, 2). Thus, 1 Cor 13-14 plays an important role in the Presbyter’s conception of Christian liturgy. He shows the Corinthians obeying to the letter Paul’s admonishments to them.

4.3 A Woman Prophesying in the Assembly

A woman, Myrta, prophesying during the liturgy raises an important question concerning the text of 1 Cor 14:34-35, which is often considered an interpolation by textual critics. In the Majority Text, this passage follows immediately after Paul’s instructions on how prophecy must be conducted in the church, thereby giving the impression that women are excluded from such prophetic activity. The Presbyter, in my opinion, could not have had 1 Cor 14:34-35 in his copy, for he depicts a woman prophesying in the assembly, when otherwise he seems quite determined to show that the practice of the Corinthians follows Paul’s teaching to the letter.

The interpretations of Origen and Tertullian confirm that the natural understanding of 1 Cor 14:34-35 in its context is to consider it not simply a prohibition against women speaking but especially against women prophesying in church. In a catena, Origen uses this passage

59Other passages concerning Thecla praying and testifying in the houses of Hermias (API IV, 16) and Onesiphorus (IV, 17) are more ambivalent, since they do not say whether Thecla’s speaking occurs during a church gathering. 3 Cor 2:7 mentions a revelation given to Theonoe concerning Paul. But it likewise gives no indication that she recounted this revelation in church.

60See the thorough discussion of Fee, 1 Corinthians, 699-708. MacDonald also argues that a scribe modelled the interpolation of 1 Cor 14:33b-36 on 1 Tim 2:11-13 (Legend, 86-89); he thus extends the limits of the interpolation with substantial justification. See NA27, UBS3, and TCGNT 565. While the internal contradiction between this passage and 1 Cor 11:3-16 places the text in doubt, the Western witnesses (D F G et al.) which transpose vs. 34-35 to the end of the chapter, set the limits of the interpolation.


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against the Montanists, stating that women do not have the right to prophesy in the assembly as
did Priscilla and Maximilla.\(^{62}\) Furthermore, Tertullian, a Montanist himself, agrees with this
interpretation, considering it improper for women to speak in the assembly,\(^{63}\) so that when a
woman does prophesy, it is in private after the meeting when most of the people have been
dismissed (\textit{anim}. 9:4). Irenaeus apparently interprets 1 Cor 11:4-5 to mean that a woman may
prophesy in church (\textit{haer}. 3.11.9). This combined with his silence about 1 Cor 14:34-35 in his
extant corpus\(^{64}\) suggests that his copy of the epistle also lacked these verses.

This leads to the following speculation: Could it be that 1 Cor 14:34-35 is an anti-
Montanist interpolation?\(^{65}\) Neither the Presbyter nor Irenaeus seem to have had it in their copies
of 1 Cor. The earliest definite attestation to this variant is from the end of the second century
(Tertullian and \textsuperscript{P}\textsuperscript{46}). Therefore, it could date from the second half of the second century, leaving
it enough time to infiltrate the Alexandrian text and that of Tertullian, but insufficient time to
reach the Presbyter or Irenaeus of Lyon.

\textbf{Conclusion: 1 Corinthian as Paul’s Most Important Epistle}

Both the author of 3 Cor and the Presbyter draw from 1 Cor more frequently than from
the other Pauline epistles, especially in their portrayals of Paul’s teaching. W. Bauer in his oft
cited \textit{Orthodoxy and Heresy in Earliest Christianity}\(^\textsuperscript{66}\) observes that 1 Cor is the favorite epistle
of the Christian writers of the second century. His judgment is harsh: Having left behind the
heart of Paul, these authors opted for 1 Cor “which is so meager in didactic content.”\(^\textsuperscript{67}\) It is my
contention that scholars have similarly belittled the Paulinism of the \textit{API} because it strays from
what they, as Protestants, consider the center of Paul—his teaching of justification by faith,
especially as it is found in Romans and Galatians. It is precisely here where the Presbyter and the
author of 3 Cor diverge from modern scholarship—they do not consider it necessary to elaborate
on the theme of justification by faith. This does not mean that it is completely lacking in their
understanding of Paul. By the second-century, the debate with would-be Judaizers has subsided,
and so Paul’s teaching against such opponents also falls from the frontline of attack. In its place
we find themes from the Pauline epistles which are meaningful in a second-century context,
interpreted from a second-century point of view.

The \textit{API} is concerned with exhibiting the behavior of Christians both in the assembly and
in everyday situations. This is precisely why the Presbyter finds so much of his inspiration from
1 Cor. In 1 Cor Paul does not expound upon God’s grace in the face of those who would replace
it with observance of ritual law. He is concerned rather to guide believers in the Christian life, in

\(^{62}\)In C. Jenkins, “Documents: Origen on I Corinthians. IV,” \textit{JTS} 10 (1909) 41-42
(§ LXXIV); ET in Gryson, \textit{Ministry} 28-29.

\(^{63}\)See, \textit{bapt}. 17; \textit{virg}. vel. 9:1; \textit{adv. Marc.} 5.8.11. The first document originates from his
pre-Montanist days, the last two are usually considered Montanist. Thus, his Montanism had no
effect on his interpretation of 1 Cor 14:34-35.

\(^{64}\)I depend on \textit{Biblia Patristica} (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la recherche
scientifique, 1975) 1:467.

\(^{65}\)Cf. MacDonald, \textit{Legend}, 88


\(^{67}\)Bauer, \textit{Orthodoxy}, 219.
worship and in everyday relationships, and this in opposition to some who appear to be motivated by ideas which prefigure second-century gnosticism. The Presbyter’s concerns seem to be similar.

But does the APi constitute a grave falling away from the Pauline conception of grace, as Findlay contends? Only if one presses the teaching of sexual continence and the resurrection to mean that only the sexually continent will attain the resurrection. Such would agree, perhaps, with Demas’ and Hermogenes’ misrepresentation of Paul’s teaching to Thamyris (API III, 12). Two observations are important here: (1) No Christian besides Thecla makes a vow of continence explicitly in the API; this includes those who receive baptism (Artemilla, Longus and Cestus). Apparently, then, the vow of continence is not requisite for baptism. (2) Thecla has apparently made a vow of continence, but Paul refuses her request for baptism (API III, 25). Evidently, the Presbyter did not consider the vow of chastity sufficient proof of a person’s readiness for Christian initiation.

Let me make two observations about the teaching of continence and the resurrection. Firstly, it is eschatological. It describes life in the future age. Sexual chastity, in keeping with the teaching of Jesus (Luke 20:27f.), is the condition of the angels. Onesiphorus and Lectra, however, are not thereby excluded because their marriage and child-rearing ties them down to this age. Rather, they can experience the future through momentary retreats in prayer and fasting, as in the six-day fast at the open tomb of Daphne (API III, 23). Secondly, the teaching is not intended for unbelievers, as are the many speeches before the authorities. The Presbyter presents it as a Christian teaching for those already in the fold. What goes on inside those houses where the Christians meet? Far from practise incest and ritual cannibalism, as pagans often accused Christians, they were learning about the beatific continent life. Thecla, while yet an unbeliever, overhears the teaching through the neighboring window and is enthralled by it. She shows the special grace which God has given to her by embracing the deeper Christian message before learning the basics. In my opinion, the theme of sexual continence and the resurrection was a “meat” of early Christian teaching, while the theme of justification by faith constituted the “milk”.

But was it legitimate for the Presbyter to interpret Paul from a second-century perspective? I think so. Each Christian generation has the right to look again to the Scriptures to find answers to the questions which confront it. To deny the Presbyter this right would be to force his Paulinism to be irrelevant to his generation. This in itself would be un-Pauline, for Paul insisted (1 Cor 9:22), “I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.” So the Presbyter has reacted in a Pauline fashion. He remains faithful to the spirit of Paul, by adapting the message to changing circumstances yet adhering to themes in the epistles, especially 1 Cor.

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68I argue in ch. 4 of my dissertation (“Acts of Paul,” 69-88) that the API is not encratite but wholly orthodox in its understanding of sexual chastity, marriage and procreation.