The Significance of the Spirit of Adoption to Christian Life:
An Exegetical Study of Romans 8:12-30

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Abstract

Works abound in investigating Paul’s pneumatology and the background of Paul’s usage of ἴδοθεσία (“adoption,” see Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5) respectively. Nevertheless, studies are quite few in examining the combination of the ἴδοθεσία imagery and τὸ πνεῦμα (“the Spirit”), especially in exploring the significance of the phrase πνεῦμα ἴδοθεσίας (Rom 8:15) within the context of Romans. The purpose of this thesis is to look into the significance of the phrase “the Spirit of adoption” to Christian life as the crucial idea in Rom 8:12-30, particularly in its context of the mainly doctrinal section of the letter, namely, Rom 1-8.

Our methodology is to utilize the historical-critical exegetical criteria, and the principles of rhetorical analysis. The former is an appropriate tool for reconstructing the multifaceted relationship between the biblical texts and their socio-cultural world, as well as for exegetical explanation. The latter makes it clearer to understand the logic development of Paul’s argumentation in the texts.

The exploration of the historical context and the OT background of ἴδοθεσία reveals these contexts and backgrounds are helpful but also confined with some limitations in expressing Paul’s concept of adoption. Paul’s experience on the Damascus road and his life experience afterwards seems to be a more important factor for his employment of the adoption phrase.

Prior to Rom 8:12 Paul actually has explicated in his letter what God has accomplished regarding the salvation in Christ for all who believe. Within the exposition Paul has also displayed the believers’ inner struggle after justification in which the Spirit is the key person to make God’s promise come true in them, including the content of the Spirit’s work (what) and the reason behind it (why). However, it is only in the passage Rom 8:12-30 that Paul does begin to elucidate the way (how) the Spirit works in the believers to make them experience the authenticity of salvation.

The central point of Rom 8:12-30 is that the Spirit is at work practically and always present in the believers’ life through the performing pattern of motivating correct behavior through full awareness of identity. In other words, the deeper they realize their status in Christ, the more dynamically the believers will live despite the interminable sufferings in their life. The very core concept of the Spirit’s work is entailed in the imagery of adoption. In Paul’s mind, if the Spirit’s role is to be the door through
which the believers can pass from suffering to glory, their adoption as God’s children is the key given by God to open the door. In Rom 8:12-17 Paul presents the very practical works of the Spirit through His leading and bearing witness that confirm the loving, filial and intimate relationship instead of a master-slave relationship between God and His adopted children. Coming to Rom 8:18-30, Paul manifests that the Spirit demonstrates His very personal presence through His guarantee and intercession which assure of God’s ultimate accomplishment of adoption and timely help during the long-term and arduous process of waiting for final redemption.

Paul’s argument clearly indicates that believers’ internal transformation will not happen automatically after justification. Moreover, the believers are not immune from the threat and aggression of the power of sin and death during their lifetime. The only way to overcome the sinful flesh is their absolute reliance on the indwelling Spirit. Many scholars believe that the concept behind Paul’s description of the task of the Spirit is the Exodus narrative, and that the perception behind the anguish of the creation is taken from the Jewish apocalyptic literature. Our study suggests that Paul’s conversion/calling experience and the message of the Prophets are more central motifs and tradition elements drawn upon by Paul in his exposition in Rom 8:12-30.

Although Paul encourages his recipients to have a long view in face of present sufferings, he does not highlight the details of future glory and current tribulations (of humankind or creation) which are treated more likely as the backdrop of his argument. As regards God’s eternal plan of salvation and the involvement of the believers, Paul lays his emphasis on the temporal rather than the spatial dimension, as seen in the all-encompassing, incredible vision of God’s grand five-fold task of salvation in perpetuity expressed in Rom 8:29-30. More importantly, Paul’s exposition focuses on the way the believers rightly prepare themselves for the present pain and suffering while they are awaiting the final redemption with perseverance. In such a process, the believers’ solidarity with Christ in status and being conformed to the image of Christ in renewal are highly emphasized. Paul’s way of exhortation has striking parallels in Jesus’ speech regarding His Parousia (e.g., Matt 24-25), and in God’s oracles about the Sabbath in the OT. In conclusion, the Spirit of adoption is the Spirit who makes the believers fully aware of the significance of their privileged identity as God’s adopted children at the present and in the future, and who becomes the blessed assurance of the believers’ hope in their daily life.
### Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Anchor Bible (Commentary) = Anchor Yale Bible Commentary (AYBC) since 2007. Edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman. 86 vols</td>
</tr>
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<td>ABD</td>
<td>Anchor Bible Dictionary = Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary (AYBD) since 2007. Edited by David Noel Freedman. 6 vols</td>
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<td>ABR</td>
<td>Australian Biblical Review</td>
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<td>AcT</td>
<td>Acta Theologica</td>
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<td>AnBib</td>
<td>Analecta Biblica</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANTC</td>
<td>Abingdon New Testament Commentaries</td>
</tr>
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<td>AUSS</td>
<td>Andrew University Seminary Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBR</td>
<td>Bulletin for Biblical Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBC</td>
<td>Blackwell Bible Commentary</td>
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<td>Believers Church Bible Commentary</td>
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<td>BECNT</td>
<td>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEvT</td>
<td>Beiträge zur evangelischen Theologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bib</td>
<td>Biblica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bijdr</td>
<td>Bijdragen: Tijdschrift voor filosofie en theologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BPTh</td>
<td>Biblica et Patristica Thoruniensia</td>
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<tr>
<td>BRJ</td>
<td>British Reformed Journal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BSac</td>
<td>Biblica Sacra</td>
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1 Most abbreviations for the primary sources and the secondary sources are taken from sections 8.3 and 8.4 respectively in Patrick H. Alexander et al., eds., The SBL Handbook of Style: For Biblical Studies and Related Disciplines, 2nd ed. (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2014).
**BTB**  
*Biblica Theology Bulletin*

**BTCP**  
*Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation*

**CBQ**  
*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

**CE**  

**CEB**  
*Common English Bible*

**Christian Reflection**  
*Christian Reflection*

**CJ**  
*Concordia Journal*

**ClAnt**  
*Classical Antiquity*

**CiRe**  
*Classics Ireland*

**ConBNT**  
*Coniectanea Neotestamentica or Coniectanea Biblica: New Testament Series*

**CTJ**  
*Calvin Theological Journal*

**CP**  
*Classical Philology*

**CTM**  
*Concordia Theological Monthly*

**CTQ**  
*Concordia Theological Quarterly*

**CurBR**  
*Currents in Biblical Research* (Formerly *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* [CurBS])

**DBI**  

**DCCSEAC**  

**DCG**  

**DGRA**  
http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ACL4256.0001.001

**Dict. Biogr. Myth.**  
http://name.umdl.umich.edu/ACL3129.0003.001

**Direction**  
*Direction: A Mennonite Brethren Forum*

**DLNT**  

**DNTB**  
and Stanley E. Porter. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2000


**EAJET**  *East African Journal of Evangelical Theology*


**ECL**  Early Christianity and Its Literature


**EDBW**  Richards, Lawrence O. *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1985


**EHPhR**  Études d’histoire et de philosophie religieuses

**ESV**  English Standard Version

**EvQ**  *Evangelical Quarterly*

**ExAud**  Ex Auditu

**ExpTim**  *Expository Times*

**GNS**  Good News Studies

**GTJ**  *Grace Theological Journal*


**HBT**  *Horizons in Biblical Theology*

**HCS**  Hellenistic Culture and Society
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<tr>
<td>HNTC</td>
<td>Harper’s New Testament Commentaries</td>
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<td>HSCP</td>
<td><em>Harvard Studies in Classical Philology</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IBS</td>
<td><em>Irish Biblical Studies</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Int</td>
<td><em>Interpretation</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IVPNTC</td>
<td>IVP New Testament Commentary Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAAR</td>
<td><em>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JB</td>
<td>Jerusalem Bible</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td><em>Journal of Biblical Literature</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JDFM</td>
<td><em>Journal of Discipleship and Family Ministry</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jdm</td>
<td><em>Judaism: A Quarterly Journal of Jewish Life and Thought</em></td>
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<td>JDTh</td>
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<tr>
<td>JETS</td>
<td><em>Journal for the Evangelical Theological Society</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Jew Soc Stu</td>
<td><em>Jewish Social Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JGRChJ</td>
<td><em>Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JLE</td>
<td><em>Journal of Lutheran Ethics</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JPT</td>
<td><em>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td><em>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNTSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td><em>Journal of Theological Studies</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>KJV</td>
<td>King James Version</td>
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<tr>
<td>LASBF</td>
<td><em>Liber Annuus Studii Biblici Franciscani</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>LCL</td>
<td>Loeb Classical Library</td>
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<tr>
<td>LEC</td>
<td>Library of Early Christianity</td>
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<td>LNTS</td>
<td>Library of New Testament Studies</td>
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<td>Abbreviation</td>
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<tr>
<td>LQ</td>
<td>Lutheran Quarterly</td>
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<td>Lutheran Theological Review</td>
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<td>Modern Judaism</td>
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<tr>
<td>MSJ</td>
<td>The Master's Seminary Journal</td>
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<td>MT</td>
<td>Masoretic Text</td>
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<tr>
<td>NA&lt;sup&gt;28&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Novum Testamentum Graece, Nestle-Aland, 28th ed.</td>
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<td>NAB</td>
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Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974-2014


**NIGTC** New International Greek Testament Commentary

**NIV** New International Version


**NKJV** New King James Version

**NLCNT** The New London Commentary on the New Testament

**NovT** *Novum Testamentum*

**NovTSup** Supplements to Novum Testamentum

**NRSV** New Revised Standard Version


**NTS** *New Testament Studies*

**NWE** *New World Encyclopedia.* [http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Info:Main_Page](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Info:Main_Page)

**OBT** Overtures to Biblical Theology


**OTL** Old Testament Library

**OUP** Oxford University Press


**PLAL** Perspectives on Linguistics and Ancient Languages

**Pneuma** *Pneuma: Journal for the Society of Pentecostal Studies*

**PNTC** Pillar New Testament Commentary. 15 vols. Grand Rapids:
Eerdmans, 1988-2015

Pop Stud-J Demog  Population Studies-a Journal of Demography
P & P  Past and Present: a Journal of Historical Studies
PRSt  Perspectives in Religious Studies
PSB  Princeton Seminary Bulletin
PTR  Princeton Theological Review
QJS  Quarterly Journal of Speech
ResQ  Restoration Quarterly
RevExp  Review and Expositor
RHAW  Routledge History of the Ancient World
RSV  Revised Standard Version
SBET  Scottish Bulletin of Evangelical Theology
SBLAcBib  Society of Biblical Literature Academia Biblica
SBLDTS  Society of Biblical Literature Dissertation Series
SBT  Studies in Biblical Theology
SBV  Studium Biblicum Version
Semeia  Semeia
SJT  Scottish Journal of Theology
SMAC  Studies in Mediterranean Antiquity and Classic
SNTSMS  Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
SP  Sacra Pagina
StBibLit  Sociological Studies in Roman History
Studies in Biblical Literature
SVTQ  St. Vladimir’s Theological Quarterly
TGST  Tesi Gregoriana, Serie Teologia
Thomist  The Thomist: a Speculative Quarterly Review
TJ  Trinity Journal
TNTC  Tyndale New Testament Commentaries
TTH  Translated Texts for Historians
TynBul  Tyndale Bulletin
USFISFCJ  University of South Florida International Studies in Formative Christianity and Judaism
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<td>Vill. L. Rev.</td>
<td>Villanova Law Review</td>
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<td>WBC</td>
<td>Word Biblical Commentary</td>
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<tr>
<td>WTJ</td>
<td>Westminster Theological Journal</td>
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<td>WUNT</td>
<td>Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<td>WW</td>
<td>Word and World</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZECNT</td>
<td>Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZNW</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde der älteren Kirche</td>
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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 The reason why this topic is studied

Romans 8:12-30 is of great importance for a full comprehension of Paul’s epistle to the Roman Christians. In the passage Rom 8:12-30, it seems that Paul proposes unexpectedly and in quantity the terminology of the Spirit of adoption to be his main conception near his conclusive argument (Rom 8:31-39) of the mainly doctrinal section of Romans (i.e., chapters 1-8). Here Paul intends to communicate that facing the powerful invasion of sinful nature into Christian life through the flesh, keeping focusing one’s mind on the identity as God’s adopted children is the key to overcome the flesh and live in hope. The purpose of this thesis is to study why and how Paul combines the Spirit and the concept of adoption as the key concept in Rom 8:12-30 to develop his conclusion of the doctrine argument on Christian life in Romans (esp. Rom 6:1-8:30).2

The first occurrence of the Christians being called “sons of God” in Romans appears in Rom 8:14. Following Rom 8:14, Paul repeatedly uses terms belonging to this theme or to its related, semantic field. For example, “adoption” (υἱοθεσία, or “sonship”) occurs in the following passages: Rom 8:15, 23, and 9:4, and the related terms “sons of God” (υἱοὶ θεοῦ) in Rom 8:14, 19, and 9:26; “God’s children” (τέκνα θεοῦ) in Rom 8:16, 17, 21, and 9:7, 8; “heirs” (κληρονόμοι) of God in Rom 8:17 (twice); and “fellow heirs” (συγκληρονόμοι) in Rom 8:17.3 Among them, our greater concentration will be on υἱοθεσία. Noticeable cases of υἱοθεσία are virtually non-existent in other authors’ documents in the New Testament;4 and neither the Old Testament

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1 The abbreviations related to all referential sources and the format of footnote of this thesis are mainly made in accordance with the style suggested by Alexander et al., eds., The SBL Handbook of Style, 2nd ed.
2 For a further explanation, see sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39.”
3 In this thesis, the Greek quotations are according to NA28, and the English translations are quoted from the New American Standard Bible (NASB), unless otherwise indicated. Italics in the NASB text are used to denote a complementary implication without the exactly corresponding original text.
4 There are only two other appearances of υἱοθεσία in the New Testament, viz., in Gal 4:5 and Eph 1:5. Scholars are used to grouping Paul’s letters in the New Testament into two categories: undisputed letters and disputed letters. The former one comprises of 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Philemon, and Romans (in chronological order, cf. Stanley B. Marrow, Paul: His Letters and His Theology: An Introduction to Paul’s Epistles [New York: Paulist, 1986], 18, 48–49); The latter one is composed of Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus. The first category is widely acknowledged as authentic or genuine epistles written by Paul himself, the second category (further divided into two sub-groups as deutscher-Pauline epistles [Col, Eph and 2 Thess] and pseudo-Pauline epistles [1-2 Tim, Titus] by some scholars, ibid., 51) is normally labeled as “deutero-Pauline epistles,” which are assumed to be written in the late first century or the early second century by the Pauline ‘school’ comprised of the followers of the apostle Paul (for a further introduc-
Hebrew and Aramaic or in Greek (the so-called Septuagint [LXX]), nor the Hellenistic Jewish writers (e.g., Philo and Josephus) and any rabbinic literature, nor the Jewish pseudepigrapha and the Dead Sea Scrolls, present official νἱοθεσία practice. W. F. Moulton and A. S. Geden also claim that νἱοθεσία is not only absent from the LXX or other Greek versions of the Old Testament, including the Apocrypha, but also missing in the works of the Greek writers before the Christian era.

Besides, the high-density appearance of Paul’s reference to the Holy Spirit in Rom 8 is particularly curious and worth attention. We can be fairly certain that the abundant and multifaceted work performed by the Holy Spirit is the emphasis Paul places in Rom 8. If the Spirit’s role is to be the door through which the believers can pass from suffering to glory, their adoption as God’s children is the key given by God to open the door. The adoption metaphor functions in Paul’s argument as a concrete evidence which avoids an abstract or theoretical understanding to the Spirit’s indwelling. This is the reason why the argument of the legitimate status of God’s adopted children appears constantly in Rom 8. Many scholars have studied Paul’s pneumatology in Rom 8, and his usage of νἱοθεσία respectively; yet, the topic which has been touched from time to time but not explored enough is the Spirit-adoption relationship, especially from the perspective of Paul’s thought in Romans as a whole. As a result, how adoption combined with the Spirit acts in Paul’s mind as the key in a Christian’s

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6. Cf. MG, xii and 966.
8. Cf. sec. 1.2 “Previous research on adoption (νἱοθεσία) in Paul.”
9. Tim Trumper summarizes the reasons why the theme adoption was not taken seriously in six points as follows: 1. Only Paul uses the term νἱοθεσία in the Bible. 2. Paul uses it only in five occasions (Gal 4:5; Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; Eph 1:5). 3. Of the occurrences Eph 1:5 is usually regarded as the work of some pupil of Paul, also this word in Rom 8:23 is omitted in some textual witnesses. 4. There is no same usage of νἱοθεσία in the LXX and other Jewish literature works. 5. The term νἱοθεσία is not the only one term used by Paul to denote a filial relationship between believers and their God. 6. ‘Adoption’ as the translation of νἱοθεσία is controversial; cf. Tim Trumper, “The Metaphorical Import of Adoption: A Plea for Realization. I: The Adoption Metaphor in Biblical Usage,” SBET 14 (Autumn 1996): 129-45, here 131. For a more detailed analysis regarding the neglect of the treatment of adoption doctrine in church history, see Tim Trumper, “The Theological History of Adoption. I: An Account,” SBET 20 (Spring 2002): 4-28; and his “The Theological History of Adoption. II: A Rationale,” SBET 20 (Autumn 2002): 177-202, in which Trumper summarizes the main reasons in two points: 1. “The church’s preoccupation with other disputed doctrine.” 2. “The propensity of some of her theologians to turn a blind eye to adoption” (p. 179); also cf. Angus Stewart, “Adoption: A Theological Exposition of a Neglected Doctrine,” BRJ 25. (Jan. - March 1999): 1-19.
fight against the flesh and sufferings is an area of research yet to be mined with deeper analysis.

Paul’s emphasis on the nature and work of the Spirit does not begin with Rom 8. The discussions of the Spirit in Galatians and 1-2 Corinthians vary in length, predominantly drawing attention on the reason (why) and the content (what) of the Spirit’s performance; yet much less on the way (how) the Spirit accomplishes His work. Seeing that there is a fundamental misunderstanding about the work of the Spirit in the Galatian and Corinthian communities, which has brought a highly negative impact on them, Paul meticulously makes some adjustments to his explanation of the truth of the gospel in his letter to the Roman believers, particularly in the combination of the Spirit and adoption. In Rom 8:12-30 the effect of the adjustments becomes apparent specifically, thereby it is well worth examining. Moreover, Paul’s expounding on the interrelationship between the Spirit and adoption in Rom 8:12-30 is more comprehensive and profound than in Gal 4:5, Rom 9:4 and Eph 1:5.

As a matter of fact, surrounding the topic of the Spirit of adoption, there are some other important and connected sub-issues worthy to be investigated at the same time. For instance, why does Paul introduce such concepts to explain the relationship between God and believers after their reconciliation (cf. Rom 5:1-11)? What is his motivation when they appear in the context of the Holy Spirit in contrast to the flesh? How does it relate to the immediate, surrounding context? How does Paul help his recipients to face the tension between present suffering and future hope? What is the Spirit’s achievement that Paul describes? And more importantly, what is the place of Rom 8:12-30 in the argument of Romans on the whole, especially in Paul’s train of thought in Rom 1-8? Finally, what impact has the theme of the Spirit of adoption on the overall Christian life?

1.2 Previous research on adoption (υἱοθεσία) in Paul

As this study concentrates on Rom 8:12-30, recognition of and interaction with the scholarly literature on this Pauline text is most crucial. Hence, research contributions found in major commentaries on Romans as well as in essays and monographs related to this passage in Romans will be appreciated and discussed. Further, any expositions of the term “adoption” (υἱοθεσία) in exegetical and theological lexica will be considered and assessed. Finally, the treatment of the topic of adoption in scholarly works on New Testament theology or specifically Pauline theology, with a special attention to how they ‘situate’ this locus within the theological universe of the apostle, will be addressed. However, in the following introductory presentation of the research on adoption, we will limit ourselves to six contemporary studies of monographic design and
size. In the following chapters, especially chapter 4 with the detailed exegetical analysis of Rom 8:12-30, we will closely interact with all categories of relevant scholarly contributions.

The motif of the Spirit of adoption is a crucial concept in Pauline theology. Comparing to the other themes in Pauline theology, the study of the concept of the Spirit of adoption has not been taken seriously until the latest four decades. Many scholars have offered their contributions on the investigation of this concept, but few have presented a comprehensive analysis of its significance to Christian life in the context of Romans as a whole. Most of them focus their study on the terminology of adoption or sonship, emphasizing its systematic study or the varied dimensions to its historical background. The six treatises most deserving notice in modern critics represent several distinct (mainly Jewish or Roman) perspectives of comprehending Paul’s thought regarding the concept of adoption. These six authors try to examine how and why ἱοθεσία and its related concepts are used by Paul. Following is a brief review of the six representative works in chronological order.

1.2.1 Brendan Byrne, S.J. (1979)¹⁰

Brendan Byrne argues that Paul’s reference to ἱοθεσία should be understood against its Jewish background. Byrne contends all through his book that Paul employs ἱοθεσία to indicate the Jewish concept of sonship. He lays particular stress on the investigation of intertestamental literature which accounts almost a quarter of the main content of this book (53 of 226 pages).¹¹ Byrne’s argument leads to three conclusions: 1. “Sonship of God is the privilege of Israel alone.” It is a status from God’s election and calling. 2. The “sonship of God” theme occurs quite frequently in the eschatological context, implying its high applicability to the ideal Israel of the end-time. 3. “Around sonship of God there hovers the idea of immunity from death.” Although suffering is inevitable in earthly life for God’s sons, the “ultimate destiny to preservation, to life with God” is assured.¹²

At the ending part of his book Byrne repeats his viewpoint, insisting that ἱοθεσία “is best translated as ‘sonship’ or ‘instatement as son(s),’ ” which connotes a privilege of abiding status. It is acquired not through a juridical process of adoption which is alien to the Jewish tradition, but through “aggregation ‘in Christ’ to the people of God … in the eschatological era.”¹³

¹¹ Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’, 18-70.
¹² Ibid., 62-63.
¹³ Ibid., 215.
Byrne makes a detailed exegetical study of sonship of God in Rom 8-9 and Galatians. Furthermore, he extends his study to Paul’s view of Christ as “Son of God” as well as two isolated sonship passages in Philippians and 2 Corinthians with brief comments. Neither the setting of the wider context of Rom 8-9 and Galatians nor the aim for Paul to write these letters escape Byrne’s notice. He tries to delineate the significance of sonship of God through Paul’s flow of thought in Rom 1-11 and Gal 1-4. Due to Paul’s presentation of his gospel with amplification and careful consideration in Romans, Byrne attempts to interpret Galatians in light of Romans. He supposes that in methodology many ambiguous viewpoints in Galatians could be understood with the help of the longer Romans.

Crucial to Byrne’s examination of biblical passages is his deduction to ὅθεσις on two aspects. On the one hand, sonship is one of the privileges of Israel who enjoys a filial relationship with God (Rom 9:4). Paul’s contribution is mainly in making a radical extension of the “purely national prerogative of the Jew” to the Christian community, which is composed of Jews and Gentile sinners long detested. Both sides come into true possession of their inheritance through the grace and mercy of God alone.14

On the other hand, in Paul’s mind the title “Son of God” for Christ is related “primarily and properly to the exalted status of Christ.” This sublime position corresponds completely to the way in which Paul speaks of Christians as “sons.” According to the “sending formula” in Gal 4:4-5: “God sent his Son…, that we might receive ὅθεσις,” ὅθεσις signifies the “ultimate design” of God for the chosen, and the fulfillment of it begins with the sending of the Son. The glorious “pre-existent state” of Christ was hidden from the world due to his earthly humbleness. Only in his resurrection and exaltation is Christ’s real dignity as Son of God vindicated and revealed (Rom 1:4; Gal 1:16). Likewise, Christians are confirmed to Christ in his suffering during earthly life (Rom 8:17), but the eventual purpose for the elect, the magnificent status of sonship—the redemption of body, will be displayed in their resurrection (Rom 8:23).15

Byrne approaches the theme of ὅθεσις from the perspective of the Jewish/Old Testament worldview. His study is characterized with painstaking efforts and detailed information. However, ὅθεσις cannot be found in all documents mentioned above by notes 5 and 6.16 Therefore, his obvious exclusion of the examination of potentially available materials in Greco-Roman customs or systems makes his argument flawed. Just as Robin Scroggs criticizes: “In what way, then, it is possible to derive the meaning and context of huiothesia from a culture in which neither the word nor the practice appears?”17

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14 Ibid., 219.
15 Ibid., 213-16.
16 See 2nn5, 6 and the related explanation.
17 Robin Scroggs, review of ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’: A Study of the Idea of the Sonship of
Generally speaking, Byrne provides abundant information with many details regarding the Old Testament and Jewish backgrounds of ἱοθεσία. However, it seems that he abstains from what is within reach and seeks after something distant in studying the thought behind Paul’s use of ἱοθεσία. As far as the exegetical investigation of the term in Romans is concerned, from the dimension of literary context, Byrne emphatically refers to intertestamental literature rather than the Old Testament and Paul’s train of thought in Romans as a whole. Even though he widens the context of Rom 8, the space for discussing Rom 1-7 and 9-11 is relatively small, let alone Rom 12-16. The role of the Spirit and the inner struggle described in Rom 7 which connects closely with Rom 8 are given little attention. Byrne’s readers might gain knowledge about the significance of ἱοθεσία in Romans, but the reason why Paul applies it for the purpose of writing Romans still remains ambiguous to them.

From the dimension of historical context, the contemporary backgrounds with regard to the recipients of Romans and the legal system of adoption in the Greco-Roman society are obviously overlooked by Byrne. Considering the Gentile believers as the majority members of the Roman church, and their educational training, their immediate understanding of the implications deeply dug from post-biblical Judaism is questionable.

1.2.2 James M. Scott (1992)

Similarly, Scott examines adoption especially in the Old Testament and early Judaism, accentuating that 2 Sam 7:14 is the most important Jewish origin for the use of adoption language in the Pauline corpus. It is evidenced by the “Adoption Formula” contained in this verse (אֲנִי אֶהְיֶה־לּוֹ לְאָב וְהוּא יִהְיֶה־לִּי לְבֵן “I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me”). In accordance with the Jewish traditional pattern of Sin-Exile-Restoration, the “Adoption Formula” of 2 Sam 7:14 could be applied to the Messiah and the people of God. Scott believes that this understanding of ἱοθεσία against the background of the 2 Sam. 7:14 tradition provides the logical and necessary starting point for any further investigation of the sonship of believers in Paul.

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God of All Christians in Paul against the Jewish Background, by Brendan Byrne, S.J., JBL 100 (December 1981): 662-63, here 662.


James M. Scott, Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the Background of ἱοθεσία in the Pauline Corpus, WUNT, II/48 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).

Hebrew quotations are taken from MT in this thesis, unless otherwise indicated.

Scott, Adoption as Sons of God, 116.

Ibid., 269.
Scott begins his discussion on the Pauline usage of ἴηθεσία with Gal 4:5, the first appearance of the word in Paul’s letters. Against the conventional interpretation of Gal 4:1-7 which regards vv. 1-2 as a legal illustration and vv. 3-7 as its application, Scott proposes that Gal 4:5 is placed within a harmonious unit implying “Exodus typology.” This passage is composed of “First Exodus” (Gal 4:1-2) and the “Second Exodus” (Gal 4:3-7), two-Exodus forming a type and antitype relationship. The former refers to Israel’s redemption from the enslavement in Egypt to the divine adoptive sonship at the previously appointed time of the Exodus (cf. Rom 9:4). The next refers to the believers’ redemption to divine adoptive sonship at the messianic time of the second Exodus. Hence, the adoption in Gal 4:5 relates to Jewish eschatological expectation which combines covenantal and Davidic adoption based on the 2 Sam 7:14 tradition.

With a detailed exegetical analysis of 2 Cor 6:14-7:1, Scott endeavors to demonstrate the apt application of 2 Sam 7:14 in 2 Cor 6:18 and its correlation with ἴηθεσία in Gal 4:5. Due to the only citation of 2 Sam 7:14 in Paul in 2 Cor 6:18, Scott believes that Exodus typology is the unifying line passing through all the quotations of the Old Testament in 2 Cor 6:16-18. Therefore, 2 Cor 6:18 and Gal 4:5 correlate each other because of the same “theme of divine adoptive sonship set within the context of the Second Exodus.” Moreover, their correlation extends to the fact that believers participate in Christ who fulfills the Davidic promise of divine adoption and the Abrahamic promise of universal sovereignty.

The similar explanation of ἴηθεσία in Gal 4:5 applies to the usage of the term in Rom 8:15, 23. In other words, Scott observes that Rom 8 contains similar components of Exodus typology, and those who receive adoption as sons of God share with the messianic Son in the Abrahamic promise based on the “Adoption Formula” of 2 Sam 7:14. Different from Gal 4:5, Scott finds that there is not only a present aspect of ἴηθεσία of the believers’ participation in the sonship of the messianic Son of God by divine adoption (Rom 8:15), but also a future aspect of the believers’ participation in Jesus’ resurrection to messianic sonship by means of the Spirit (Rom 8:23). The latter is substantiated by his exegetical treatment of Rom 1:3-4. Scott arrives at the conclusion that the present and the future aspects of ἴηθεσία in Rom 8 are associated with one another as successive parts of participating in the Son by the Spirit, and make ways that believers share with Christ in the Davidic promise.

23 Ibid., 186.
24 Ibid., 212.
25 Ibid., 213.
26 Ibid., 263-66.
27 Ibid., 244.
28 Dennis M. Sweetland, review of Adoption as Sons of God: An Exegetical Investigation into the
In the main, Scott follows a way similar to that of Byrne in the investigation of literary and historical background in the Old Testament and Jewish materials of υἱοθεσία. Although Scott examines the possibility of a Greco-Roman origin for Paul’s usage of adoption, he adopts the position which claims an exclusive Old Testament and Jewish background of the term. Put differently, he fails to consider that the Gentile recipients may not comprehend so much about the extra-canonical Jewish works as he narrates. This might be evidenced by very few explicit citations of the Jewish documents around υἱοθεσία when Paul uses it. As the title of his book suggests, Scott’s intention is to identify the background of υἱοθεσία in the Pauline corpus by the means of an exegetical investigation. Nevertheless, Scott seems to prefer 2 Sam 7:14 and 2 Cor 6:18 to the immediate context of the adoption passages in Paul. Regarding the connection between 2 Sam 7:14 and 2 Cor 6:18, the continuity and discontinuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament seems to be ignored by Scott. Scott claims that God not only adopted King David as His child, but also the whole nation as His son, which is explained by 2 Sam 7:24 (“‘the formula of national adoption’ [the Covenant Formula]”). As a matter of fact, the Israelite status of being the adopted son of God is merely a privilege (cf. Rom 9:4), namely a priority over other nations given by God to be God’s children by faith which was demonstrated by Abraham as a representative (cf. Gal 3:9; Rom 4:13). However, a double meaning is implied in such a priority. One is that there is no equivalence between priority and superiority. The priority in receiving God’s grace for Israelites does not represent that they are relatively high in moral quality (Deut 9:5-6) or in quantity of population (Deut 7:7) compared with other nations that are not thereby regarded as inferior. The other is that there is no close identity between priority and inevitability. For each Israelite, it is not unavoidable to be God’s adopted child. The identity as children adopted by God will not belong to them spontaneously. That is why Paul establishes the example of Abraham’s faith in Rom 4 (esp. vv. 3, 13 and 16), and emphasizes the authority of God’s selection in Rom 9 (esp. vv. 6-8). The urgent admonition in 2 Cor 6:17, cited partially from LXX Isa 52:11 and Ezek 20:34 (cf. Ezek 20:41; Zech 10:8), proves that the Israelites need to demonstrate their faith in God by their obedience (cf. Jas 2:21-23). The continuity in Paul’s reasoning regarding the reception of God’s salvation in the eras of the Old Testament and the New Testament is the unchanging principle of justification by faith. God’s election and redemption in both


29 Scott, *Adoption as Sons of God*, 100.

30 For a further analysis, see sec. 4.3.2.3 “A suggestion from another observation of the Old Testament.”

eras are unconditional. The discontinuity is the invalidity of the priority of the Jewish people after Jesus’ coming (Gal 3:23-24). Therefore, to apply the corporate selection to the Gentiles by connecting 2 Sam 7:14 and 2 Cor 6:18 fails to understand the individual adoption in Rom 8. Likewise, the remark by Herman Ridderbos, “It is this peculiar privilege of Israel as nation that, in conformity with the Old Testament promises of redemption (cf. 2 Cor 6:16-18), passes over to the church of the New Testament and there receives a new, deepened significance,” is a typical confusion and misunderstanding.\textsuperscript{32} In addition, the concentrated use of the Spirit in Rom 8 is relatively diluted in comparison with Scott’s emphasis on the Exodus typology.\textsuperscript{33} Most importantly, Scott does not examine the reason why Paul uses the concept of adoption to deal with the conflict brought by law and the flesh as well as the occasional problems in the Roman church.

1.2.3 David B. Garner (2002)\textsuperscript{34}

Garner’s research is more like a systematic theological investigation.\textsuperscript{35} Strictly speaking, he writes a dissertation regarding the “doctrine of adoption” from the standpoint of reformed theology instead of a work oriented towards exegesis of Pauline passages of adoption. Therefore, Garner intends to do a comprehensive survey of adoption in biblical theology and compares his observations of Paul’s sonship and Johannine sonship.\textsuperscript{36} Relating to the historical background, Garner rejects the view of Francis Lyall who denies Jewish adoptive procedure and ardently advocates the standpoint that “the Pauline usage of adoption reflects a Roman legal concept over and against Jewish procedure and Greek law that might be possible alternatives.”\textsuperscript{37} Garner inclines to the view of Scott that “Paul’s dependence upon the Old Testament


\textsuperscript{33} For an advanced discussion of the unsuitability of the Exodus typology as the background of adoption in Rom 8, see sec. 4.2.3.2 “Not based on the Exodus event in discussing the Spirit’s work.”

\textsuperscript{34} David B. Garner, “Adoption in Christ” (PhD diss., Westminster Theological Seminary, 2002). A closely related book concerning the issue of adoption by Garner is forthcoming: \textit{Sons in the Son: The Riches and Reach of Adoption in Christ} (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, forthcoming), which is not within our review.

\textsuperscript{35} As Garner acknowledges: “Concluding that biblical theology provides the primary content for adoption, we will lay the methodological groundwork for perusing the Pauline texts and for considering the doctrine in systematic theology.” See Garner, “Adoption in Christ,” 23.

\textsuperscript{36} Cf. ibid., 127-57.

\textsuperscript{37} Ibid., 33-34. Actually, Garner’s standpoint of historical background of adoption is ambiguous. On the one hand, he admits that “it is probably most accurate to perceive a Greek and Roman (Greco-Roman) contemporary context for Pauline ζυγοθεσία, with the Greek term embracing the Roman legal and familial nuances;” on the other hand, he claims that “[b]ecause of his biblically-theological perspective, Paul’s choice of the term, while undoubtedly connected to his Roman cultural setting, must not be interpreted exclusively or even primarily in view of his \textit{Sitz im Leben}, but rather must derive from his redemptive-historical and theological orientation.” See ibid., 36, 38.
was the primary influence upon the adoption motif, and that 2 Sam 7:14 is a part of that influence.\textsuperscript{38} However, to Garner the \textit{locus classicus} for the Old Testament sonship is Exod 4:22-23 in preference to 2 Sam 7:14.\textsuperscript{39} Generally speaking, his methodology is based on Scott’s conclusions, and Garner considers biblical theology in the Pauline adoption as the “foundational element” in Paul’s thinking.\textsuperscript{40} With regard to which part of biblical theology appears as Garner’s point of application, he quotes the view of Richard B. Gaffin Jr. as his principle of research: “eschatology is not only the goal of soteriology but also encompasses it, constituting its very substance from the outset.”\textsuperscript{41} It is the orientation of eschatology as the main focus of the redemptive history that leads Garner to analyze Pauline adoption passages in his time-order: Rom 8:23; Eph 1:5; Rom 9:4; Gal 4:5 and Rom 8:15.\textsuperscript{42} Garner’s purpose is to demonstrate that eschatology informs the true nature of soteriology, of which realized or unrealized privilege is nothing less than fully eschatological.\textsuperscript{43} Garner fervently proves that adoption includes the judicial and the renovative dimensions, signifying justification and sanctification respectively; both sides are brought together by the power of the Holy Spirit, in order to be in union with the Son of God.\textsuperscript{44}

Undoubtedly, Garner’s macro analysis of adoption from the eschatological dimension and his inclusion of Johannine sonship study is a contribution to research on adoption in Paul. Nonetheless, his large-scale investigation and systematic theology oriented preference sacrifice the detailed contextual exegesis of each one of the Pauline adoption passages which are supposed to be shown their unique characteristics. Moreover, backwards from consummation to present, Garner can establish a redemptive-historical, progressive development within the five Pauline adoption passages, ignoring their distinctiveness, which indicates that he might read too much into the texts.\textsuperscript{45} The most obvious weakness is likely to be the absence of clarity of the role of the Holy Spirit in his examination. No matter in Johannine sonship or Pauline sonship, the Holy Spirit, according to Garner, is intimately associated with the work of the resurrected Son, empowering and energizing the believers to be renewed and renovated. Unfortunately, the further explanation regarding \textit{how} the Holy Spirit achieves

\textsuperscript{38} Ibid., 37 and n. 44.
\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 89.
\textsuperscript{40} Ibid., 37 (emphasis Garner’s).
\textsuperscript{42} Garner, “Adoption in Christ,” 41-126.
\textsuperscript{43} Ibid., 32
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., 117-18.
such missions and how the Holy Spirit helps the believers to suffer with Christ is lacking. Among the five Pauline adoption passages, only in discussing Rom 8:15 he gives slightly more space dealing with the Holy Spirit. In fact, the importance of the inseparable relationship between the Spirit and adoption cannot be overemphasized. Allen Mawhinney observes that four of five υἱοθεσία instances in the New Testament are used by Paul closely related to the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:14-15, 23; Gal 4:4-6; cf. Eph 1:3-14). After careful examination, the neglected one occurring in Rom 9:4 also appears to be linked by Paul with the Spirit. In Rom 9:1 Paul claims with particular emphasis, “I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit.” Its following verses mention his great sorrow for the unbelief of his Jewish countrymen although they had been granted many privileges including adoption by God. Paul puts the word ἐν πνεύματι ἀγίῳ in Rom 9:1, for he knows that συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεως μου ("my conscience bearing me witness"). The witness comes from the conscience of Paul’s mind which has been renewed and enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Essentially, the indicative form (συμμαρτυρέω, “support by testimony”) of συμμαρτυρούσης is used contextually by Paul in Rom 8:16 which reveals a crucial function of the Spirit (cf. sec. 4.2.5 “The witness of the Spirit and adoption”). Additionally, Garner’s distinction between justification and sanctification as forensic and renovated aspects respectively is a misreading of Paul (cf. sec. 4.3.1 “A further investigation of the main theme and the structure of Romans 8:18-30”).

1.2.4 Trevor J. Burke (2006)

With a view to avoid a theological misunderstanding of the Pauline metaphor for adoption and too narrow scholarly interests in it, Burke explores the soteriological significance of adoption and looks at the origin and background of adoption from the Old Testament, Greek and Roman dimensions. Burke, nevertheless, situates the background for the implication of adoption in the Roman social-legal context rather than in the Old Testament/Jewish conditions or Greek legal backgrounds.

The reasons for his consideration are: 1. Paul’s usage of the υἱοθεσία metaphor on-

\[\text{\textsuperscript{46}}\text{Ibid., 125, 145.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{47}}\text{Allen Mawhinney, “Baptism, Servanthood, and Sonship,” \textit{WTJ} 49 (1987): 35-64, here 45 and n. 24: “It is significant that in all four NT instances in which υἱοθεσία is used with regard to Christian sonship the Holy Spirit is also mentioned: Rom 8:14-15; 8:23; Gal 4:4-6; Eph 1:3-14.” Cf. also Burke, \textit{Adopted into God's Family}, 125.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{48}}\text{Emphasis mine.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{50}}\text{BDAG, s.v. “συμμαρτυρέω.”}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{51}}\text{See n. 4 of this chapter.}\]
ly occurs in epistles where the readers are directly under Roman law (Galatians, Romans and Ephesians). 2. Roman law is the law governing Paul’s citizenship and familial relationship. 3. At the time of Paul, adoption in Roman mode is becoming more widespread in every part of the Roman Empire. 4. Adoption is considered to be the primary legal custom that safeguards this institution which regards the family as “the fundamental bedrock of ancient Roman society.” When the family is threatened by the possibility of extinction, adoption is a “lifeline.”\textsuperscript{52} According to his study, Burke found that the Roman adoption procedure of *adoptio* is most relevant with what is discussed in Paul’s application of adoption.\textsuperscript{53}

Additionally, Burke appeals to the influence of the foundational social values in the first-century culture and society, focusing on the binary aspects of honor and shame, to interpret Pauline ethics.\textsuperscript{54} Burke shows that after inheriting all the rights and responsibilities of the new family, the adoptee is supposed to bring honor and blessing rather than shame and dishonor upon the *paterfamilias* (head of the household) and the new family,\textsuperscript{55} thus reflecting the motive for Christian good behavior in church.\textsuperscript{56}

Nevertheless, Burke’s deliberate dismissal of a Jewish background behind Paul’s usage of the adoption metaphor might affect and weaken his argumentative advantage. As the comment stated in the *DBI*:

> It is clear, however, that the sociolegal practice does not fully explain the Pauline usage. An equally powerful shaper of the image was the OT and later Jewish belief that God was a Father who had called and redeemed, and who would bless, his children (Deut 32:6; 2 Sam 7:14; Ps[s] 68:5 [MT 68:6]; 89:26 [MT 89:27]; 103:13; Is[a] 63:16; 64:8; Mal 2:10).\textsuperscript{57}

Burke refers to the fact that in the Old Testament and Early Judaism the linguistic evidence is lacking and it is difficult to identify one specific text. Besides, he points out that when the authors of the Old Testament mention Israel’s relationship to God as son, their preferable expression is related to “*redemptive* (Isa 63:16) and *elective* (Deut 7:7) terms rather than in terms of adoption.”\textsuperscript{58} Although Burke describes some facts, he could not deny his own remark concerning Paul’s employment of the term *υἱοθεσία* as one of the privileges granted to Israel in Rom 9:4. Accordingly, in Paul’s

\textsuperscript{52} Burke, *Adopted into God's Family*, 60-66.
\textsuperscript{53} Ibid., 68-70.
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 152.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 152-59.
\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., 175-76.
\textsuperscript{57} *DBI*, s.v. “Adoption” (insertions by square brackets mine).
\textsuperscript{58} Burke, *Adopted into God's Family*, 70-71, here 71 (emphasis Burke’s).
lines of thought, “Israel is clearly God’s son by adoption.”

Burke spends lots of space on the exposition of the biblical passages of Paul’s adoption metaphor and the Sitz im Leben (situation in life) of the recipients of Paul’s letters. He intends to explore the theological implications of adoption by addressing three aspects: its Trinitarian nature, corresponding ethics, and eschatological tension. Burke observes very truly that adoption is a Trinitarian action which relates to God the Father as the sole initiator and authority in salvation, to Jesus the Son as the redeemer with whom the believers’ union makes adoption possible, and to the Spirit as the witness and intercessor who is an eschatological gift. On the basis of his discussion, Burke points out that adoption is always reserved for Christians and never for Christ because He is the unique Son of God by nature. Adoption belongs to family language; it signifies a transfer through a legal act from a foreign family into the family of God. Therefore, Paul employs it to underscore the complete new household of God and to deal with tensions and division within the Roman church.

Besides, Burke notices the relation between the Spirit and adoption. With an annotation borrowed from James D. G. Dunn, he states that the expression of adoption emphasizes a double gulf between son and slavery, namely “the believer’s status has been changed not only from slave to freedman, but also from freedman to adopted son.” Regrettably, Burke does not follow up this insightful finding with further investigation. Nonetheless, he develops the connection between the Spirit and the moral imperative in Romans, regarding the role of the Spirit as God’s honorable approval and assurance of adopted children. However, he refrains from a more detailed investigation of the relation between the Spirit in Rom 8 and the preceding chapters which describe the strife due to the invasion of the power of sin into the believers through the law and the flesh.

As a result, we see that Burke mentions the ethical implication of adoption, and rightly points out that the Spirit makes believers aware of this identity so as to behave in a manner worthy of their membership of God’s family. Even so, Burke falls short in demonstrating how the indwelling Holy Spirit inculcates the status of adoption into

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59 Ibid., 70.
60 Ibid., 84.
61 Ibid., 122-23.
62 Ibid., 131, 148.
63 Ibid., 105-6.
64 Ibid., 27 (emphasis Burke’s).
65 Ibid., 165.
66 Burke, Adopted into God’s Family, 141, cited and slightly revised from James D. G. Dunn, Romans 1-8, WBC 38a (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 452; cf. 323n55 of this thesis.
67 Ibid.
68 Ibid., 172.
the believers to promote their identity awareness. The Jewish people have owned both the identity of adoptive sonship of God and high moral consciousness for a long time, but they have failed in attaining the law of righteousness (cf. Rom 9:31). Furthermore, the Christians of the Galatian churches have received the Holy Spirit to become God’s adopted children, yet they are still caught in the serious crisis of morality and faith. The same crisis also happens to the Corinthian church. The Corinthian Christians are spoken of as men of flesh, as babes in Christ (cf. 1 Cor 3:1), despite their identity as “those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling” (1 Cor 1:2). These latent crises within the Christian church deserve a careful examination.

1.2.5 Edward W. Watson (2008)\textsuperscript{70}

Compared with the scholars presented so far, Watson’s study has a different focus. Whereas the prior studies sought to identify the Jewish or Roman background of Paul’s thinking or focused on the text itself, Watson lays his emphasis on the authorial audience of Romans, examining “what the audience would have heard.”\textsuperscript{71} Watson chooses a dimension which few scholars have explored.\textsuperscript{72} He claims that his methodology is based on the reader-response criticism, on which the viewpoints of the scholars (i.e., Charles Cosgrove, Peter J. Rabinowitz and Susan R. Suleiman) related are highly dependent.\textsuperscript{73} Dissimilar to the focus of contemporary theory inclined to narrative literature and the implied reader, Watson gives emphasis to epistle genre and its ancient first readers, and the interaction between author and his intended audience. He adopts Cosgrove’s opinion that the authorial audience in Romans at least includes three groups: Paul and his missionary party, the Gentile Christians in Rome, and the Jewish Christians in Rome.\textsuperscript{74}

Therefore, Watson spends a great effort to elaborate on the heritage of adoption in both the Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts of Paul’s authorial audience, that takes up almost two-thirds of the whole book (137 out of 208 pages). Only one-third of its space is attributed to the exegesis of the related texts of Romans (Rom 1:1-4; 8:14-17, 19-23, 29; 9:4). Watson’s contribution is to explore the socio-cultural background of the adoption custom of Roman recipients, trying to find “a specific set of presuppositions that are shared with the author.”\textsuperscript{75} He concludes that “[a]doption was a very


\textsuperscript{71} Watson, \textit{Paul, His Roman Audience}, 15.

\textsuperscript{72} For a similar methodology applied to a similar topic, see Benjamin Evans Holdsworth, “Reading Romans in Rome: A Reception of Romans in the Roman Context of Ethnicity and Faith” (PhD diss., Durham University, 2009), http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/214/.

\textsuperscript{73} Watson, \textit{Paul, His Roman Audience}, 12-18.

\textsuperscript{74} Ibid., 15.

\textsuperscript{75} Ibid., 18.
common and widespread act in the ancient world.” Accordingly, Watson concentrates on the Roman setting, and his assumption is that “Paul’s authorial audience, living in the heart of the Roman empire, would have interpreted the adoption metaphor and surrounding familial language through the exclusive lens of Jewish notions of adoption” will be unjustified. However, Watson’s methodology reveals some disadvantages.

His method is basically to look at the text and the expanded context, searching a common concept between reader and author which would enable the audience to understand the text, and hence their communication will be bridged. Nonetheless, any social system used as a metaphor to express spiritual truth has its limitations, adoption is no exception (cf. sec. 4.2.4.1 “The first antithesis in Rom 8:15”); Watson seems to overlook these problems. Besides, Paul’s usage of adoption is combined with the concept of slavery for highlighting the contrast between the audience’s status in the past and in the present, and this is lacking in Watson’s analysis. Moreover, for Paul as an author, the purpose is not only to find a bridge to convey some understandable concepts, but also to inspire and renew the authorial audience so that they can live in a manner worthy of their calling. The strong orientation of reader-interpret-text of the reader-response criticism will weaken Paul’s intention of enhancing his audience. An obvious instance is Paul’s statement to the Corinthian church in 1 Cor 1:21-24 as follows (underlining mine):

1 Cor 1:21-24

21 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ οὐκ ἔγνω ὁ κόσμος διὰ τῆς σοφίας τοῦ θεοῦ, εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς διὰ τῆς μορίας τοῦ κηρύγματος σώσαι τοὺς πιστεύοντας. 22 ἐπειδὴ καὶ Ἰουδαῖοι σημεῖα αἰτοῦσιν καὶ Ἑλληνες σοφιὰν ζητοῦσιν, 23 ἡμεῖς δὲ κηρύσσομεν Χριστὸν ἐσταυρωμένον, Ἰουδαίοις μὲν σκάνδαλον, ἠθνεῖς δὲ μωρίαν, 24 αὐτοῖς δὲ τοῖς κλητοῖς, Ἰουδαίοις τε καὶ Ἑλληνες, Χριστὸν θεοῦ δύναμιν καὶ θεοῦ σοφίαν.

21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not come to know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe. 22 For indeed Jews ask for signs, and Greeks search for wisdom; 23 but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block, and to Gentiles foolishness, 24 but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

Ironically, if Paul’s wording is excessively determined by the conceptual model of

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76 Ibid., 136.
77 Ibid., 91.
his Corinthian audience, they will never hear or read Χριστὸς ἐσταυρωμένος (“Christ crucified”), who is contemptuously regarded as a stumbling block by Jews and foolishness by Greeks for they are accustomed to accept miracles and philosophical wisdom. Although the authorial audience in the Corinthian church is already called saints by God (1 Cor 1:2), they still need to learn how to transform the secular viewpoints.

1.2.6 Robert Brian Lewis (2016)78

In contrast to previous studies, there is no deep exploration of Jewish customs in Lewis’s study of Paul’s Spirit of adoption (Rom 8:12-17). For obvious reasons, Lewis analyzes Paul’s usage of “Spirit of adoption” in Rom 8:12-17 against the Roman imperial context. These reasons at least include: 1. The explanation of the adoption system from the dimension of Jewish antecedents is found less than convincing. 2. The connection between Paul’s pneumatology and his adoption metaphor remains unclear. 3. Research contributions which combine “Paul and his letter to the Romans, Roman Imperial politics, and Roman religion” are rare.79 For that reason Lewis spends a lot of effort on examining of the overlapping impact of Roman politics and religion on Roman believers. In other words, Lewis attaches greater importance to the discovery of the socio-political context of Roman imperialism, which accounts for half of the whole book (chs. 1-3, 95 of 196 pages). His study of the literary context occupies one quarter (chs. 4-5, 55 pages), and he contributes the last quarter of space to elucidating the passage of Rom 8:12-17.

Due to the dominating influence of his historical context research, Lewis’s exegesis is not guided by the inductive detection of Paul’s train of thought, but rather almost exclusively by his historical discovery and its application in Romans. Lewis’s contribution is in digging out the influence of Roman religion on Roman believers through Roman political achievement and system. Whether in adoption practice or in the worship of Roman emperors and their individual genius, Lewis maintains that Roman people in the first century are familiar with and deeply affected by the adoption practice in elite and Roman worship in their daily life, which perceptibly have an effect on Paul’s usage of “Spirit of adoption.”80

Under such circumstances, Paul’s vision behind the concept of “Spirit of adoption,” especially the influence of the gospel on all humankind is lacking in Lewis’s historic-oriented examination. For example, Lewis emphasizes the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s family as children. Hence, he holds that “[e]thnic identity plays a major role in

79 Cf. Ibid., 19.
80 Ibid., 43-95, esp. 71-78.
understanding just what Paul had in mind when he used the word ‘flesh’ in Romans.” Moreover, Paul’s treatment of the flesh with its personification as a hostile power against God disappears in Lewis’s analysis. So the inner struggle description in Rom 7:7-25 is viewed by Lewis as not concerning Paul, but “what Paul imagines might be the final hurdle that a Gentile God-fearer might have, given the new information they have received.” Lewis seems to place too much emphasis on the ethnic connotation of the flesh, claiming that the flesh itself is not morally negative in Paul’s view, ignoring that the victims under the bondage of the flesh include Jews and Gentiles. Paul’s letter to the Romans also deals with the pervasive problem of the power of sin on all humankind, not only on the people in Rome. Lewis is supposed to analyze the condition of Roman believers from this aspect. Generally speaking, his interest in socio-cultural issues is much higher than the exploration of the nature of the gospel. What Paul emphasizes is the comprehension of the essentials of the gospel on which is based his solution of all the occasional problems the Roman believers face, such as ethnic conflict, social and political ethics, and the future of Israel etc., not vice versa. In conclusion, history repeats itself; both Lewis and Watson underscore the weight of the historical context. It is useful, but the finite nature of secular tradition and system is not seen to be discussed in their works.

1.2.7 Summary

The six works listed above not only represent the contributions of scholars in recent decades to the study of Paul’s employment of the adoption metaphor, but they also demonstrate how a variety of theoretical and methodological considerations are employed in these investigations. By and large, the approach of most of them, namely Byrne, Scott, Burke, Watson and Lewis, basically belongs to the historical-critical method, though in varying degrees.

If we take John Barton as our guide, there are four basic features of the historical-critical study of the Bible, namely, genetic questions, original meaning, historical reconstructions and disinterested scholarship. Regarding the second and the third of these attributes, different authors interpret the biblical texts with various supplements. Byrne puts his emphasis on the finding of the original meaning; his historical supplementary documents come from intertestamental literature, such as 1 Enoch.

81 Ibid., 144.
82 Ibid., 16.
83 Ibid., 144.
85 Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’, 20.
lees,\textsuperscript{86} Joseph and Asen[e]th,\textsuperscript{87} 2 Baruch\textsuperscript{88} and Philo.\textsuperscript{89} Scott follows steps similar to Byrne, but applies the contribution of linguistic research to his study.\textsuperscript{90} His examination includes the following words: εἰσποιεῖν,\textsuperscript{91} ἐκποιητος,\textsuperscript{92} παυεῖσθαι, νισποιεῖσθαι, τίθεσθαι.\textsuperscript{93} Burke, Watson and Lewis evidently employ a sociological approach in discovering the social world and practices of biblical time (esp. Roman Imperial time) in their studies.\textsuperscript{94} Due to the emphasis of Watson’s reader-response approach on the authorial audience instead of the modern readers, his method is supposed to be a type of historical criticism. Lewis’s investigation is obviously accompanied by the reconstruction of the ideology of Roman political and socio-environment setting.\textsuperscript{95} Finally, Garner’s approach for interpreting the biblical texts is essentially distinctive of the reformed theological heritage, signifying that his primary focus seems to be on “the subjects who read, not the object that is read.”\textsuperscript{96}

1.3 Methodology

Varying approaches of biblical criticism have distinct advantages and weaknesses. The approach of this thesis will predominantly be in accordance with typical historical-critical exegetical criteria and standards. Such a historical-critical approach will help us to reconstruct the complex relationship between our passage, Rom 8:12-30, and its social-cultural world, as well as the original meaning of the biblical texts.

However, considering that Paul writes Romans with characteristic reasoning and passion,\textsuperscript{97} we want also to learn and profit from the contribution of rhetorical analysis. Such an approach facilitates the clarification of Paul’s train of thought, not only finding the process of his logical argument in “arranging words and viewpoints to the best persuasive effect,”\textsuperscript{98} but also depicting his deliberative way to make that effect hap-
pen. According to Aristotle, there are three modes of artistic proof: ethos, pathos, and logos (Rhet. 1.2.3). Ethos is the character perceived as the credibility/authority that the author or speaker intends to build in his discourse. Pathos is the emotional reactions the audience is inspired to experience by the presenter. Logos is the logical argument or concept in the discourse itself. Through two forms of rational argument, the audience’s understanding is appealed to. An inductive way points to a general conclusion after observing a series of analogous facts. A deductive way is to draw a conclusion from affirmative or negative premises. Aristotle uses examples (παράδειγματα, “paradigms”), which are subdivided into comparisons (παραβολαί) or fables (λόγοι), to illustrate induction and indicates it as the first principle of knowledge (Rhet. 2.20.2). Besides, Aristotle relates the deductive mode of persuasion to syllogism (συλλογισμός) in dialectic, and calls a rhetorical syllogism an enthymeme (ἐνθύμημα) (Rhet. 1.2.8). Kennedy mentions that the examples in inductive reasoning are always “drawn from myth or from nature or other sources.” He finds that in the New Testament they are primarily “taken from Jewish history or from everyday life and nature.”

Greco-Roman rhetorical theory providing more perceptive understanding to New Testament has been exemplified by numerous biblical scholars. In his book on this topic Ben Witherington III writes that rhetoric is “the ancient art of persuasion used from the time of Aristotle onwards through and beyond the NT era in the Greek-speaking world to convince one audience or another about something.”

Such a civic art of public speaking indeed has a great impact on the shaping of early Christian discourse. The widespread saturation of rhetoric into the social-cultural structure influences every aspect of public discourses in the Greco-Roman time. Its imitative nature in culture and education permeates deeply the early Christian oratorical discourses. Therefore, the public nature of oratory seems to have provided a model for early Christians. For these reasons the method of rhetorical analysis is

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100 The Greek reads: δῶμεν γὰρ ἑπαγωγῇ τὸ παράδειγμα, ἢ δὲ ἑπαγωγὴ ἀρχή (“for the example resembles induction, and induction is a beginning” [Freese, LCL]), see Aristotle, Rhetoric, 272-73, 273nb.

101 Kennedy, New Testament Interpretation, 16.


widely used by biblical scholars to analyze Paul’s letters. It includes the recognition of the kind of the proof Paul uses (inartificial or artificial), the classification of Paul’s letters in keeping with the three major types of oratory (deliberative, forensic, or epideictic), and the determination of rhetorical structure of the classical division (exordium, narratio, probatio and peroratio). Our reflection of rhetorical analysis will be primarily on the demonstration of the mode of logos, especially on the application of enthymeme and the logic.

1.4 Three key considerations regarding the approach of this study

There have been considerable debates for years regarding whether Jewish or Greco-Roman background decides Paul’s usage of adoption imagery. As noted earlier, the most evident viewpoint of those who argue in support of Greco-Roman background is the absence of υἱοθεσία from the Septuagint and any other ancient Jewish written works, including the works of Josephus and Philo. Nevertheless, the proponents of the Jewish source of adoption mainly emphasize its employment in Romans 9:4 which shows that there must be some Old Testament events or ideas that Paul had in mind. In addition, as Cranfield states, “in view of Gen 15:2-4; Exod 2:10; Esth 2:7; and also Exod 4:22f; 2 Sam 7:14; 1 Chr 28:6; Ps 2:7; 89:26f; Jer 3:19; Hos 11:1, it is unwise to claim that the background of the metaphor is exclusively Greco-Roman.”

Before determining the most possible material source of adoption, the identity and living circumstances of Roman Christians are our first concern. After all, their char-

104 Deliberative (i.e., advisory) rhetoric deals with persuading or dissuading a policy-determining group to take some action, particularly in the political arena. Such kind of oratory is always concerned about the future. Forensic (i.e., judicial) rhetoric deals with accusation and defence and is used usually at a court of law. Such kind of oration is always concerned with events occurring in the past. Epideictic (i.e., ceremonial, demonstrative) rhetoric deals with orations given in commemoration, praise, or blame in order to celebrate or denounce some people or quality. Such kind of oratory is concerned primarily with the present. For a detailed analysis and comment of Aristotle’s threefold types theory of rhetoric, see Jon Hesk, “Types of Oratory,” in The Cambridge Companion to Ancient Rhetoric, ed. Eric Gunderson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 145-77.


106 Cf. sec. 4.2.2.2 “The connotation of Romans 8:12-13a” and sec. 4.2.3.1 “A closely connected structure of Romans 8:13b-15.”

107 Cf. sec. 4.2.6.4 “Suffering and glory.”


acteristics and life experience will affect how Paul communicates with suitable language. The second essential concern will be Paul’s situation when he wrote the letter, that is, his writing date, place and motive, which we will discuss first. The third concern will be Paul’s conversion/call experience that deeply affects his worldview regarding salvation.

1.4.1 Date, place and purpose of Paul’s letter to the Romans

That Romans was written by the Apostle Paul between AD 55 and 58 from Corinth is widely accepted among New Testament scholars.\(^{110}\) Some parts of Rom 15-16 and Acts 19-20 are helpful to locate the date and place of Paul’s writing of Romans. In Rom 15:14-33 the recipients are told forthrightly by Paul his main motive behind composing this letter and what he has been planning lately. When Tertius wrote Romans at Paul’s dictation (Rom 16:22), Paul was about to embark on his way to the Jerusalem church with the contribution he had collected from the Christians of Macedonia and Achaia (Rom 15:25-26). Paul’s plan is to preach the gospel in Spain when the Jerusalem visit is completed. In order to accomplish this ambition, the Roman church is expected to give support (Rom 15:23b-24). Paul has never been in Rome, where the Christian community has been built up without him. For acquiring their trust and full assistance, Paul might assume that it is indispensable for the Roman believers to understand what he has been proclaiming as well as what he preaches means to the world and the Roman believers, Jews and Gentiles included. This is the reason why the letter contains a long and elaborate explanation of Paul’s message regarding God’s gospel before he comes to speak about his new mission expectation and request.

Paul mentions that there is no further place for him to preach in the eastern part of the empire (Rom 15:23a), implying that the date of Romans is near the end of his third missionary journey. According to what Paul encountered at Corinth during his second missionary journey described by Luke, there are two things that deserve attention: 1. Paul finds and approaches a Jewish couple Aquila and Prisca who recently arrived there due to the Emperor Claudius’ expulsion of the Jews from Rome (Acts 18:2). 2. Paul’s trial before the counsel Gallio (Acts 18:12). Paulus Orosius (ca. AD 390-418), befriended and instructed by St. Augustine of Hippo, composed the book Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri VII (Seven Books of History Against Pagans),\(^{111}\) in which a passage (7.6.15-16) regarding Claudius’ edict reads:

\(^{110}\) Arland J. Hultgren, Paul’s Letter to the Romans: A Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011), 3-4; for a more detailed list of the scholars reaching similar opinion, see its n. 7.

In the ninth year of the same emperor’s reign, Josephus tells us that the Jews were expelled from the City by Claudius. However, I am more interested by Suetonius who speaks as follows: ‘Claudius expelled the Jews from Rome as they were continually rioting because of Christ.’ It is not at all clear whether he ordered the Jews to be restrained or suppressed because they were rioting against Christ, or whether he wished to expel the Christians at the same time on the ground that they had a related religion.\textsuperscript{112}

Actually, Orosius makes a little modification of his quotation from Suetonius’ text which reads: “\textit{Iudaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantis Roma expulit}” (\textit{Divus Claudius} 25.4). J. C. Rolfe’s translation is as follows: “Since the Jews constantly made disturbances at the instigation of Chrestus, he expelled them from Rome” (\textit{The Life of Claudius} 25.4).\textsuperscript{113} \textit{Chresto} is widely interpreted as the historical Christ whose gospel is proclaimed by Christians to incite riot within the Roman Jewish community. Some scholars believe that only a fractious group was expelled by Claudius, Luke’s usage of \textit{χωρίζωθεν πάντας τοὺς Ἰουδαίους ὀπό τῆς Ρώμης} (“all’ the Jews to leave Rome”) in Acts 18:2 is likely a hyperbole.\textsuperscript{114}

Therefore, the expulsion of Jews and Jewish Christians from Rome by Claudius (AD 41-54) is usually dated to AD 49, the ninth year of his ascending the throne as the Roman emperor (\textit{imperator}). Precisely speaking, Claudius was first acclaimed emperor on January 25, AD 41.\textsuperscript{115} In addition, a part of the text of the Gallio Inscription found at the Apollo Temple of the Greek city of Delphi depicts more information:

\begin{quote}
(1) Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus, invested with tribunician power
(2) [for the 12th time, acclaimed Imperator for the 26th time, Father of the Fatherland…sends greetings to…].
(3) For a long time have I been not only well-disposed toward the city of Delphi, but also solicitous for its prosperity, and I have always guarded the cult of the Pythian Apollo. But (5) now since it is said to be destitute of citizens, as L. Junius (6) Gallio, my friend and proconsul,\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{115} Ralph Martin Novak, Jr., \textit{Christianity and the Roman Empire: Background and Texts} (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001), 21-22.
[recently reported to me, and being desirous that Delphi] (7) should retain [intact its for[mer rank, I] ord[er you (pl.) to in]vite wellborn people also from (8) [ot]her cities [to Delphi as new inhabitants, and to] (9) all[ow] them [and their children to have all the] provi[leges of the Delphians (10) as being citi[zens on equal and like (basis)]. For i[f] so[me…] (11) were to trans[fer as citi]zens [to these regions…].\textsuperscript{116}

In lines five and six a proconsul named Lucius Junius Gallio is referred to by Claudius. Most scholars believe that this Gallio was the proconsul of Achaia, possibly inaugurating his office in July AD 51, who was reluctant to take up the religious indictment laid against Paul by the Jewish group in Corinth (Acts 18:12-16).\textsuperscript{117} Consequently, in agreement with line two of the Gallio Inscription, the letter of Claudius could be written in the first half of AD 52. Owing to his poor health, Gallio did not finish his normal one-year term of office, and probably ended before October AD 51.\textsuperscript{118} Thus Paul’s stay in Corinth for one year and six months (Acts 18:11) is most presumably dated between the second half of AD 50 and the first half of AD 52.\textsuperscript{119}

The calculation of the chronology of Paul’s second missionary journey is helpful to make certain the period when he wrote the letter to the Roman Christian community. After his expeditious visit to Jerusalem and Antioch Paul launches his third missionary journey (Acts 18:22-23). Paul seems to stay not long in the area of Central Asia Minor before he arrives in Ephesus (Acts 18:23; 19:1). However, on account of the fact that the duration of Paul’s missionary labor in Ephesus might be nearly three years (Acts 20:31), the three-month period he stayed in Greece after leaving Ephesus could be located somewhere between AD 55 and 58 (Acts 20:1-2; cf. Rom 15:25-26).\textsuperscript{120} The place he writes this letter is supposed to be Corinth because Phoebe

\textsuperscript{116} The text within square brackets is the possible text restored by scholars to fill gaps between the fragments, and the numbers in round brackets represent the lines of the original Greek text on the inscription. The English translation is from Joseph A. Fitzmyer (“Paul,” in The New Jerome Biblical Commentary, ed. R. E. Brown et al. [New York: Prentice Hall, 1990], §79), cited by Jerome Murphy-O’Connor, St. Paul’s Corinth: Text and Archaeology, 3rd rev. and enl. ed., GNS 6 (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002), 161. For the Greek version in minuscule, see Murphy-O’Connor’s appendix, 219. For a somewhat different text restoration, see Wilhelm Dittenberger ed., Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum, 3rd ed. (Leipzig: Hirzel, 1915), note 801 D, abbreviated as “SIG 801.”

\textsuperscript{117} Among others, Riesner, Paul’s Early Period, 208-11; F. F. Bruce, “Paul in Acts and Letters,” in DPL, 679-92, here 685.

\textsuperscript{118} Cf. Riesner, Paul’s Early Period, 202-7; Murphy-O’Connor, St. Paul’s Corinth, 164-69.

\textsuperscript{119} Novak, Christianity and the Roman Empire, 22; also F. F. Bruce, The Book of the Acts, rev. ed. NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 351. Murphy-O’Connor dates Paul’s arrival at Corinth almost a year earlier (i.e., AD 50) than Gallio’s tenure, see St. Paul’s Corinth, 158-60. Gallio’s encounter with Paul (Acts 18:12-17) might take place between July and October AD 51. After this event, Paul continued to live in Corinthian for around six months (cf. Acts 18:18) before he left in early AD 52 for the following three reasons: 1. Gallio dismissed the charges brought by the hostile Jews against Paul (Acts 18:12-16); 2. God’s promise to protect Paul from any harm caused by his enemies in Corinth (Acts 18:9-10); 3. The Mediterranean Sea was closed to sea travel in winter in ancient time due to danger (cf. Acts 27:9; 1 Cor 16:6).

\textsuperscript{120} Considering the possibility of Paul’s voyage safety, the three months may refer to the spring of
who might carry Paul’s letter to Rome is a deaconess at the church of Cenchrea (Rom 16:1), a port-town five miles east of Corinth. Moreover, the identification of Corinth as the place of writing Romans is also supported by Gaius as the host of a house church and of Paul during his time of writing (cf. Rom 16:23; 1 Cor 1:14).

Rome in the time when Paul wrote the letter to the Romans was under the reign of a young and ambitious emperor Nero (Emp. AD 54-68). All that glitters may not be gold. In that era, the ostensible achievement of the emerging Roman Empire seems in its heyday, but inherently hidden crises remain. Similar difficulty also exists in the newly rising Roman Christian community.

1.4.2 Recipients: composition and situation of the Roman Christian community

There is a coexistence of encouraging and worrisome phenomena in the Roman Christian community. As the Christian groups in the imperial capital, their constructive influence should not be underestimated. Paul thanks God in his prayer for them because their faith is being proclaimed throughout the whole world (Rom 1:8). Cranfield cautiously notes that ἐν ὅλῳ τῷ κόσμῳ (“throughout the whole world”) is doubtlessly to be identified as a hyperbolic illustration (cf. 1 Thess 1:8). Nothing in it implies that their faith is extraordinarily strong or that they have a better devoutness. The fact that they have faith and there is a church in the capital city is being well known widely and far. This actuality is enough to draw forth his thanksgiving.

These remarks though are not false; Paul’s pure intention without exaggeration seems to be ignored by us. The Roman church does not get their reputation for no reason. Paul has never visited Rome before, but he is familiar with some of his addressees: πᾶσιν τοῖς ὁσίοις ἐν Ῥώμῃ ἄγαπητοῖς θεοῖ, κλητοῖς ἁγίοις (“all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints” (Rom 1:7a). Not a few of those Roman Christians must have impressed Paul before he wrote this letter. What is noteworthy is the couple Aquila and Prisca, leaders of a house church in Rome (Rom 16:3, 5a), who are long-term coworkers of Paul at Corinth and Ephesus where Paul has been staying much longer than in other cities during his first three mission journeys (Acts 18:11; 19:10; 20:31). In Romans, Paul expresses the gratitude from him and all the churches of Gentiles (πᾶσαι αἱ ἐκκλησίαι τῶν ἐθνῶν) to this couple because of their risking their own necks for Paul’s life (ὑπὲρ τῆς ψυχῆς μου τῶν ἐκαύτων τράχηλον ὑπέθηκαν, Rom 16:4). Their reliance on tent-making for a living creates opportunities for evan-

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121 Douglas J. Moo, “Romans,” in NBC 1115-60, here 1158.
122 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 75 and n. 2; also see Douglas J. Moo, The Epistle to the Romans, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 57; and Leon Morris, The Epistle to the Romans (1988; pbk., Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 56-57.
gelical contacts (Acts 18:3), they even set up a house church in Ephesus and keep in touch with Corinthian believers (1 Cor 16:19). With their help, the very influential Apollo was received and instructed so that “he helped greatly those who had believed through grace” (συνεβάλετο πολὺ τοῖς πεπιστευκόσιν διὰ τῆς χάριτος, Acts 18:27), and “powerfully refuted the Jews in public, demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ” (εὐτόνος γὰρ τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις διακατηλέγχετο δημοσίᾳ ἐπιδεικνύος διὰ τῶν γραφῶν εἶναι τὸν χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, Acts 18:28). Just as A. F. Walls observes, “Romans 16:3 shows how widely this peripatetic and ever-hospitable Jewish couple were known and loved in the Gentile churches.”

Furthermore, according to Peter Lampe’s research, there are at least twelve persons of the 26 whose names are listed in Rom 16 who have travelling experiences between Rome and the east: Prisca and Aquila (Paul’s fellow workers, Rom 16:3), Epaenetus (the first convert to Christ from Asia, Rom 16:5), Andronicus and Junia (Paul’s kinsmen and fellow prisoners, Rom 16:7), Urbanus (Paul’s fellow worker in Christ, Rom 16:9), Ampliatus (Paul’s beloved in the Lord, Rom 16:8), Stachys (Paul’s beloved, Rom 16:9), Persis (the beloved, who has worked hard in the Lord, Rom 16:12), Apelles (the approved in Christ, Rom 16:10), and Rufus and his mother (a mother to Paul also, Rom 16:13). Paul believed that these believers who have been serving or suffering with his mission team must have affected favorably the Gentile churches.

Besides the good reputation of Roman saints, the convenient transportation system net-woven by its well-constructed roads, together with its geographic and political significance, provide outstanding possibilities for missionary work in the first-century Mediterranean society. As ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος (an apostle of Gentiles, Rom 11:13), Paul’s anxious desire to visit the Roman church and obtain their support for his next missionary stage to Spain demonstrates the guiding influence that the Roman church carries in the Roman imperial world. Living in the advantageous city from the perspective of political, economic, or socio-cultural impact, the Christians in Rome will not be unfamiliar with what Paul explains in legal metaphors, such as adoption, slavery, heir, inheritance, and the like.

Nevertheless, the Roman believers also lived in a situation exposed to direct threat from ruthless regime. The edict of forcing Jews to leave Rome by Claudius in AD 49 is a pernicious example to Roman Jewish Christians who would have an intense feeling when Paul mentions τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ (“the sufferings of this present time, Rom 8:18a). Not only so, but the majority of Roman Christians are in the status

of slavery. In Lampe’s analysis, there are ten out of 26 persons in Rom 16 most probably related to the background of slave or freed(wo)man: Nereus (v. 15), Hermes (v. 14), Persis (v. 12), Herodion (v. 11), Tryphosa (v. 12), Tryphena (v. 12), Ampliatus (v. 8), Julia (v. 15), Junia (v. 7), and Mary (v. 6).\footnote{Lampe points out that the last three are freedwomen or descendants of freed(men/women), see Lampe, “The Roman Christians of Romans 16,” 228.}

With the exclusion of Urbanus (v. 9), Prisca (v. 3), Aquila (v. 3), and Rufus (v. 13), whose names do not show close similarity to people born of slaves, the juridical or social positions of the remaining twelve persons, Asyncritus (v. 14), Patrobas (v. 14), Philologus (v. 15), Andronicus (v. 7), Olympas (v. 15), Apelles (v. 10), Phlegon (v. 14), Hermas (v. 14), Stachys (v. 9), Epaenetus (v. 5), Nereus’ sister (v. 15), and Rufus’ mother (v. 13), cannot be identified with certainty.\footnote{Ibid., 227-28. Aristobulus and Narcissus (see vv. 10, 11) are regarded as non-Christians by Lampe due to the different way of greetings sent by Paul, see ibid., 222.} However, John G. Nordling argues that Hermes (v. 14) is supposed to be of servile root.\footnote{John G. Nordling, “A More Positive View of Slavery: Establishing Servile Identity in the Christian Assemblies,” BBR 19 (2009): 63-84, here 77.} Wayne A. Meeks assumes that Philologus (v. 15) and Epaenetus (v. 5) are likely to have slave origins.\footnote{Wayne A. Meeks, The First Urban Christian: The Social World of the Apostle Paul, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003), 57.} Thereby Lampe makes a brief conclusion: “And looking at the first two centuries as a whole, we discover indeed plenty of Christian slaves and freed(wo)men in Rome.”\footnote{Lampe, “The Roman Christians of Romans 16,” 228.} No matter what situation they are in, their slavery background makes them belong to the bottom group in Roman society. Slaves are looked upon as property, a res, under Roman law and have no legal personality. With the exception of the few who get freedom, most Roman slaves are subjected to drudgework, exploitation, sale, torture, even sexual abuse.\footnote{Lyall, Slaves, Citizens, Sons, 27-46; also Jennifer A. Glancy, Slavery in Early Christianity (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 9-10; for a further explanation, see sec. 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves.”} That is why in his argumentations Paul employs many slavery related expressions which give his audiences easier access to comprehension.

What deserves notice is the Jewish background of Roman Christians. Except for four, the ethnical origins of the believers listed in Romans 16:3-16 cannot be identified. Aquila is a Jew as stated in Acts 18:2, but his wife Prisca is considered a native of Rome, whose name indicates non-Jewish descent and a more eminent social position,\footnote{C. C. Kroeger, “Women in the Early Church,” in DLNT, 1215-27, esp. 1217.} though it also implies that the Jewish couple might not be Roman citizens because they were required to leave Rome under Claudius’ decree.\footnote{Cf. Bruce, Acts, 368.} The other three persons Andronicus, Junia, and Herodion are called συγγενεῖς μου (“my relatives,” Rom 16:7, 11[sg.] NRSV) by Paul, which discloses the possibility of their same Jew-
Lampe points out that συγγενής (“kinsman”) never appears in the other Pauline epistles, but in Romans after chapters 9-11, “Paul has a **special interest** in emphasizing the Jewish origin of Christians” (Rom 16:7, 11, 21). Paul’s emphasis is due to its presentation of living evidence as God’s grace rather than rejection toward Israel. Many records reveal that the Roman Christian community was most likely established by Jewish Christians. Wolfgang Wiefel calls attention to the fact that the derivation of Roman Christianity can only be illuminated with taking into consideration what has been happening connected to Judaism in Rome. Since the second century BC onwards, when Jews began to immigrate into Rome, discrimination and misunderstanding have always been imposed on them because of their special conventions and strong cohesion or exclusivity. Jewish religion was disdained in the work of Cicero (106-43 BC):

But to resist this **barbarous superstition** were [sic] an act of dignity, to despise the multitude of Jews, which at times was most unruly in the assemblies in defense of the interests of the republic, was an act of the greatest wisdom (**For Flaccus**, 28.67 [C. D. Yonge]).

Cicero is the first Roman writer to call Judaism a barbarous superstition, his viewpoint of anti-Semitism thus leads to inspire many later Roman authors, such as Horace (65-8 BC), Seneca (ca. 4 BC-AD 65), Quintilian (ca. AD 35-90s), Tacitus (ca. AD 56-118), Suetonius (ca. AD 70-130) and so forth. Moreover, generally speaking, the five Roman emperors of the Julio-Claudian dynasty (Augustus-Nero, 27 BC-AD 68) are apt to take a negative or passive stance to foreign rituals and practices which are simply allowed to exist when law and order are under control in the eyes of the Roman regime. Once the law and order of Roman society are seriously threat-

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136 Ibid. (emphasis original).
137 Ibid.
140 See Bezalel Bar-Kochva, *The Image of the Jews in Greek Literature: The Hellenistic Period*, HCS 51 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 305 and n. 103; also Wiefel, “The Jewish Community,” 88. The data of the Roman authors’ birth and death are from *OCD*. See Figure 2.1 in sec. 2.2.1.1 “Securing property.”
ened by political turmoil, as under Tiberius in AD 19 and under Claudius in AD 49, legal and administrative means as expulsions are used to suppress unrest. Although Roman government does not make obvious some organized plan of anti-Semitism on which its political system is based, Jews often become the victims of the repression of political disturbance.

When Jews came back to Rome successively after the death of Claudius, some of them as Aquila and Prisca were Jewish Christians who were part of the banished Jews under Claudius’ expelling edict. There had been great changes for the Christian community in Rome by the time these Jewish Christians returned. During the years of their absence, non-Jewish Christianity obtained its dominant position. The leading role of the past Christian congregation which had its background and basis in the synagogue institute had been shifted to the house congregation organized mainly by Gentile Christians. In contrast to earlier, Jewish Christianity was now only a minority both with regard to the number of members and with regard to theological weight. Such scenario constitutes the background of Romans, implying the reason why the specified disharmony in Romans 14 occurs among Roman Christians, and Paul correlates the Roman congregation with his ministry to Gentiles in Rom 1:5b-6a: ἐλάβομεν χάριν καὶ ἀποστολήν εἰς ὑπακοήν πίστεως ἐν πᾶσιν τοῖς ἑθνεσιν, ἐν οἷς ἔστω καὶ ὡμέζ.. (“we have received grace and apostleship to bring about the obedience of faith among all the Gentiles, among whom you also are…”).

1.4.3 The most likely material source of the adoption imagery in Paul: his Damascus road experience

With respect to the historical background of ὑιοθεσία, past studies remain in the dichotomy of choosing a Jewish or a Greco-Roman position. There is room for further investigation. First, the main difficulty might be the absence of any explicit explanation by Paul himself for why he employs the designation ὑιοθεσία. One inference that can be drawn from this is that the meaning of ὑιοθεσία is presupposed to be known by the recipients of Paul’s letters, who are composed of Jewish Christians and

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144 Rutgers argues that the real reason why the Jews were chosen to be expelled from Rome for reasons of law and order is impossible to tell, see Rutgers, “Roman Policy,” 74.
146 Wiefel, “The Jewish Community,” 96.
147 With the exception of Watson who takes an eclectic position that the authorial audience of Romans “would have likely read and understood Paul’s metaphor in light of both the Jewish understanding of the adoption of Israel and the Roman legal concept of adoptio,” see Watson, *Paul, His Roman Audience*, 199.
Gentile Christians. On this background, a balanced approach to identifying Paul’s motives for applying the υἱοθεσία term should allow for both Jewish and Greco-Roman factors as possible influences. On the one hand, as a diaspora Jew Paul has an experience of long-term living outside Israel which has made him capable of employing the common language of the life experience also of the Gentiles among his audience (cf. Acts 21:39; 22:3a). On the other hand, being a Hebrew and a Pharisee (Phil 3:5), and having been brought up in Jerusalem and educated under Gamaliel (cf. Acts 22:3), Paul must have received a far-reaching impact of Jewish traditions on his worldview, which helps him to find communicable approaches to Jewish readers (Phil 3:5-6; cf. Acts 22:3b). Paul’s mastery of both Gentile and Jewish socio-cultural traditions, further, his competence in reinterpreting them is due to τὸ ὑπερέχων τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰσραὴλ τοῦ κυρίου μου (“the surpassing worth of personal acquaintance with Christ Jesus our Lord” [Phil 3:8]), which can be discussed from the dimension of his experience on the road to Damascus.

Secondly, Paul’s Damascus road experience deserves explicit emphasis because of his own recurrent references to this event while his message or ministry is given special importance (e.g., Gal 1:15-16; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:8 and 2 Cor 4:4-6). Take Gal 1:15-16 for example (underlining mine):

Gal 1:15-16

15 Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς ὁ ἀφορίσας με ἐκ κοιλίας μητρὸς μου καὶ καλέσας διὰ τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ ἀποκαλύψαι τὸν υἱόν αὐτοῦ ἐν ἑμοί, ἵνα εὐστηκεῖμαι αὐτὸν ἐν τοῖς θενείσιν, εὐθέως οὖ προσανέθημη σαρκὶ καὶ αἵματι
16 But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, was pleased to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,

Paul’s Damascus road experience is well known as either his conversion or call experience. However, what is the appropriate characterization of this incident has been debated intensely for several decades since Krister Stendahl published his book: Paul among Jews and Gentiles and Other Essays. The most provocative viewpoint of Stendahl is that Paul does not undergo a conversion or a change of “religion,” but experiences a Gentile-missionary calling. Scholars have been holding widely diver-

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149 For a further analysis, see sec. 4.2.2.3 “The influence of Paul’s conversion on his understanding of the Spirit’s work” and esp. 160n257.
150 The important point to note is that in Gal 1:11-12 Paul highlights the fact that the gospel he preached is received through a revelation of Jesus Christ.
gent opinions on two most controversial issues: 1. Paul’s Damascus road event belongs to a conversion or a call experience. 2. The similarities and differences between the Paul of Acts (Luke’s portrait of Paul) and the Paul of letters (Paul’s own comments). The second issue is more arguable because it involves the possibility that Luke, as a later composer, could shape his theology by using Paul’s letters. Nevertheless, Acts is viewed in this thesis as a trustworthy source in reference to Paul’s conversion and career as an Apostle to the Gentiles (Rom 11:13; Gal 2:8) for two reasons: 1. Luke is “the first Christian historian” (der erste christliche Historiker), 152 who writes history not only based on the confident eyewitnesses, but also on his careful investigation from the beginning (ἀνωθεν, 153 Luke 1:2-3). 2. As C. K. Barrett states: “The author of Acts is so evidently a partisan of Paul’s that this can only have been worked out in the interests of Paul.” 155 Accordingly, although Acts came out almost three decades after Romans, 156 being filled with Luke’s personal theological view, Acts has its authentic value as a historical document describing the development of the early church and Paul’s vocation, especially the three times portrayal of the calling of Paul in chapters 9, 22 and 26 in Acts.

Due to limited space, to undertake a detailed discussion of the two debatable issues is not possible. Yet a broadly accepted perspective is the stance of this thesis: Paul’s Damascus road experience of his conversion and call is considered as occurring at the same time. 157 Additionally, Paul’s experience of conversion and call on the road to Damascus is a starting point of his long process of theological reflection which exerts a strong influence on his ministry and letters writing. 158

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154 Cf. Ibid., 28.


156 Bruce proposes “a date in the late 70s and early 80s of the first century” for the publication of Acts as most likely, see ibid., 18.

157 Regarding Paul’s experience of conversion this thesis concurs with the main points of the analysis of Marrow: 1. Paul’s conversion is different from some kind of desperate struggle out of personal past transgression or guiltiness. 2. The starting point of Paul’s conversion is his “unexaggerated and accurately assessed position of moral integrity and spiritual achievement.” 3. “What Paul grasped, or rather what took hold of him in his conversion, was precisely the new understanding of salvation made necessary by the death and resurrection of Christ.” See Marrow, Paul, 11-44, esp. 31, 34-35 and 41. We should not overlook that it is this new comprehension of salvation that makes Paul clear that he was a sinner (cf. Rom 5:8; 1 Tim 1:15-16), and that his past moral accomplishments were like ‘loss’ or ‘rubbish’ (Phil 3:7-8), cf. our brief discussion in sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39,” esp. in p. 88.

awareness of the work of the Holy Spirit must be included in the transformation of his life.\(^{159}\)

Thirdly, so far little attention has been given to the influence of Paul’s conversion and call experience on Romans.\(^{160}\) In his defense speech addressed to King Agrippa II and the Roman governor Festus, Paul expresses that in all his life after the conversion on the way to Damascus he has obeyed the heavenly vision in which Jesus appointed him to a witness of the Lord’s revelation.

Moreover, Luke’s account is regarded as being in harmony with Paul’s own references in his letters, thereby what Paul delivers in Acts 26:18, 20 and 23, quoted below, could be viewed in its entirety as a condensed version of the gospel of God which is presented in Romans. In short, Luke’s narration is a mirror of Paul’s viewpoint (underlining mine):

Acts 26:18

ἀνοίξας ὅψαλμυς αὐτῶν, τοῦ ἔπιστρέψαι ἀπὸ σκότους εἰς φῶς καὶ τῆς ἔξοψίας τοῦ σατανᾶ ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, τοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτούς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ κλῆρον ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ.

to open their eyes so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the dominion of Satan to God, in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me.

Acts 26:20

ἄλλα τοῖς ἐν Δαμασκῷ πρῶτον τε καὶ Ἰεροσολύμοις, πᾶσιν τε τὴν χώραν τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ τοῖς ἐθνεῖς ἀπῆγγελλον μετανοεῖν καὶ ἔπιστρέψειν ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν, ἦγε τῆς μετανοίας ἐργα πράσσοντας.

but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.

Acts 26:23

eἰ παθήσω ὁ χριστὸς, εἰ πρῶτος ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν φῶς μέλλει καταγγέλλειν τῷ τῆς λαοῦ καὶ τοῖς ἐθνεῖσιν.

that the Christ was to suffer, and that by reason of His resurrection from the dead

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\(^{159}\) Cf. sec. 4.2.3.3 “The influence of Paul’s conversion on his understanding of the Spirit’s work.”

He should be the first to proclaim light both to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.  

These excerpts from Paul’s speech in Acts 26 contain the grace granted, the transfer of status (Acts 26:18), the ethical admonition (Acts 26:20), and the key Christ-event (Acts 26:23). All are key themes in Romans within which adoption is employed by Paul to make his argument more comprehensible. It is worth noting that κληρονομός (“heir”) in Acts 26:18 is semantically related to κληρονόμος (“heir”) which is closely connected to adoption and occurs twice in Rom 8:17. We will find more in the following analysis.

Finally, many scholars are inclined to maintain that the passage Rom 8:12-30 implies the typology of Exodus. At first glance, such an analogy seems reasonable, but a careful examination will prove it untenable. A more detailed explanation will be given in Section 4.2.3.2 of chapter 4: “Not based on the Exodus event in discussing the Spirit’s work.” Likewise, in dealing with the groaning of the whole creation, not a few scholars claim that the passage Rom 8:18-25 contains abundant Jewish apocalyptic features which can be traced from the Old Testament and many Jewish apocalyptic writings. The analysis of this thesis will demonstrate that the main background of Paul’s connotations in Rom 8:18-25 is drawn from the Prophets in the Old Testament, where the creation functions differently from what it does in Jewish apocalyptic sources (see sec. 4.3.3.2.1 “The groaning of the creation [Romans 8:19-22]”).

1.5 The structure of the thesis

What Paul depicts regarding the work of the Spirit in Rom 8:1-30 not only further delineates the summary remark of Rom 7:6, but it also does it in a well-structured way. Traditionally, Rom 8 is frequently viewed as Paul’s demonstration of the

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161 Regarding the Greek text, most other English versions view πρῶτος (“first”) as an adjective modifying the one who is ἐξ αναστάσεως νεκρῶν (“to rise from the dead”) instead of καταγγέλλειν τῷ (“to proclaim light”), see NIV, NKJV, NRSV.


164 For a further explanation, see sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh.”
work of the Spirit who actualizes or internalizes the objective work of Christ in believers’ lives. In other words, scholars’ main focus in Rom 8 (esp. in Rom 8:1-30) is usually on “what” the Spirit does. Roger L. Hahn even remarks that due to scarce appearance of the Spirit (only four times after Rom 8:17) “Paul’s train of thought has passed from a major concern with the Spirit on to the consideration of hope in the Christian life.” However, none of these similar views has complete insight into Paul’s description of the well-organized process of “how” the Spirit works to effectuate the grace of Christ in the life of the believers, in which the identity of adoptive sonship becomes the crucial element through which the Spirit works. Only by utilizing the principle of investigating the context can Paul’s viewpoint in Rom 8:12-30 be correctly manifested, which also explains the reason why Paul’s statement in Rom 8:31-39 can be so resolutely affirmed.

On the whole, this thesis will be proceeding in a way from context to text, from breadth to specificity. There are two kinds of context, the historical and the literary, which will be investigated respectively. These investigations are preceded by a brief review of related studies in recent decades and the presentation of some premises for this study.

Accordingly, this thesis is divided into five chapters. As readers by this point probably already have observed, the first chapter introduces basic information and propositions relating to the thesis. There are five parts in chapter one. After a brief introduction describing the reason and motivation for choosing this topic (sec. 1.1), six contemporary works (in recent four decades) related to our topic are selected as representatives and reviewed for our reference (sec. 1.2). The third part makes known the methodology of this thesis, characterized by historical-critical exegetical and rhetorical approaches (sec. 1.3). There follows the fourth part comprised of three key considerations concerning the approach of this study, including: 1. the date, place and purpose of Paul’s letter to the Romans; 2. a succinct analysis of the recipients of the letter in Rome; and 3. some basic stances of Paul in writing Romans, especially the influence of the Damascus road experience on his viewpoint (sec 1.4). The structure of this thesis is presented concisely as well in the final part (sec. 1.5).

Due to the occasional characteristic of Paul’s letters, the historical reconstruction of the original situation that Paul addresses is a matter of priority, especially the practices regarding Roman adoption. This accords with the principle stated by Peter Stuhlmacher, “historically speaking, the message of the New Testament must be un-

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165 Among others, see Hahn, “Pneumatology in Romans 8,” 77-78, 86.
166 Douglas J. Moo, Encountering the Book of Romans: A Theological Survey (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 132-41, Moo even proposes as follows: “The Spirit, although the constant motif in Romans 8, is not really Paul’s topic. That is, Paul does not actually tell us much about the Spirit as such; he tells us about what the Spirit does” (emphasis mine), ibid., 132.
167 Hahn, “Pneumatology in Romans 8,” 83-84.
understood primarily as Christian faith testimony to the Greco-Roman world of the first and second centuries A.D.”\(^{168}\) Besides, “[t]he more clearly their social and spiritual life situation stands before us, the more exactly the texts can be understood.”\(^{169}\) Thus, **chapter two** copes with the historical, legal, and socio-political background and context of the adoption imagery in the Greco-Roman world. In addition to introduction (sec. 2.1) and conclusion (sec. 2.5), the emphasis is placed on three main topics: adoption (sec. 2.2), slavery (sec. 2.3), and heir (sec. 2.4). The information of the historical context of Romans provides a practical basis for our analysis.

Historical context is fundamental, but a more decisive element in understanding Paul’s logical argument is to discover his train of thought in Romans. Put differently, to find in what way the passage of Rom 8:12-30 is connected by Paul with its immediate literary context and with the whole letter becomes critical because it relates to how Paul interprets the objective historical information. Hence, before a detailed exegetical examination of Romans 8:12-30 is presented, a literary-formal analysis of this passage within the context of close paragraphs and the whole letter in **chapter three** is indispensable. After a short introduction (sec. 3.1), we put the emphasis on the analysis of Paul’s train of thought in Romans, which is divided into seven parts for a more comprehensive survey (sec. 3.2). Such a survey of how the logic of Paul’s argument develops throughout the letter will hopefully help avoid failing to see the forest for the trees in studying Romans 8:12-30. The significance of the Spirit of adoption manifests itself more clearly only in connection with Romans in its entirety. For that reason, after the survey of the train of thought of the whole letter, the main theme of Rom 8:12-30 is highlighted (sec. 3.3), and it is followed by a brief presentation of the structure of Paul’s thought in Rom 8:12-30 (sec. 3.4) for our grasping its point and the integral picture before entering into details.

The principle of thinking contextually in literary dimension will be continuously applied in the following analysis of Rom 8:12-30. With the groundwork prepared above, the next step in **chapter four** is to proceed with the detailed exegetical analysis of Rom 8:12-30. This thesis will look more closely at the work of the Spirit, especially the role of the Spirit in Rom 8 and the tension between the Spirit and the flesh shown in the immediate literary context. Therefore, the focus on the Holy Spirit in Rom 6-8 will be first studied in this chapter (sec. 4.1); the thorough examination of Rom 8:12-30 will follow thereafter. The passage of Rom 8:12-30 is divided into two main parts for advanced investigation: the very practical work of the Holy Spirit


\(^{169}\) Ibid., “Je deutlicher ihre soziale und geistige Lebenssituation vor Augen steht, desto genauer lassen sich die Texte verstehen!” (ET by Daniel P. Bailey).
(Rom 8:12-17) (sec. 4.2), and the very personal presence of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:18-30) (sec. 4.3). Such a separation is dissimilar to the common division into the present and future work of the Holy Spirit. Our investigation will argue that Paul’s emphasis is the perseverance of believers in the long-term process, awaiting final redemption with the help of the Spirit’s own lasting presence. In other words, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to be conscious of the status or identity as the children of God helps believers to confirm God’s promise and to overcome the suffering they will encounter in life. By means of a detailed structural analysis, a systematic inquiry of the main points of each part of Rom 8:12-30 and the mode how Paul presents these points will be made obvious.

The last part of this thesis will provide a summary of our examination and to assess whether this thesis has reached the purpose of the study set in the first chapter. Further, it has special meaning in making a contextual reflection or application on the situation of the author of this study. Consequently, chapter five will present a conclusive and summary review of the end results of this study, evaluating our achievement by restating the points Paul intends to indicate through the works of the dominant Spirit of adoption (sec. 5.1). Besides, we will make a summary of chapters two to four in a precise way (sec. 5.2), in which there are three parts summarize chapters two and three (sec. 5.2.1), sections 4.1 and 4.2 (sec. 5.2.2), and sections 4.3 (sec. 5.2.3) respectively. The last section of this chapter will be arranged to conclude the significance of the Spirit of adoption to Christian life according to Rom 8:12-30 (sec. 5.3).

Chapter 2: Historical, legal, and socio-political background and context of the adoption imagery

2.1 Introduction

The Greek word υἱόθεσια, "adoption," is composed of υἱός ("a son") and θέσις ("a placing, position"). The latter Greek term shares a common origin with τίθημι ("to put or place in a particular position"). Hence υἱόθεσια "signifies the place and condition of a son given to one to whom it does not naturally belong." However, as one of the legal technical expressions used by Paul, the metaphorical sense of adoption speaks much more volumes than its literal does. Few rhetorical devices stir up provocative thought better than metaphor. If metaphors come from the sphere of connections between human beings, a distinctive character arises, to borrow G. B. Caird’s phrase, "because they lend themselves to a two-way traffic in ideas." Actually, there is a cluster of words in figurative usage around adoption concentrated in Rom 8:12-30: ἀδελφός ("brother," 8:12), ὀφειλέτης ("debtor," Rom 8:12), υἱός ("son," 8:14, 19, 29), δουλεία ("slavery," 8:15, 21), τέκνον ("child," 8:16), κληρονόμος ("heir," 8:17), ἀπολύτρωσις ("redemption," 8:23). Paul does not make any advanced interpretation every time when he uses words in a metaphorical sense. This indicates that his recipients in Rome know these imageries well. James C. Walters notices that "only because communicating partners share certain underlying ideas," can an author employ adoption as one of the pertinent imagery. Hence it is crucial to clarify some significant dimensions regarding the backgrounds of the believers in Rome. After a general presentation of the mixed Jewish-Greek composition of the Roman community in sec. 1.4.2, a specified presentation of the social realities of the adoption term, as well as two closely related metaphors, namely slavery and heir (inheritance), will be studied in this chapter.

According to Paul’s argument in Rom 8:12-30, the adoption of believers signifies not only a change of status from non-children to children, but also an elevation of social class form slavery to royal children. These adopted children are going to inherit glory from God as co-heirs with Christ. Someday in the future when the adoption is fulfilled ultimately, the redemption of their bodies will be accomplished simultane-
ously, implying a dramatic transformation of body owing to resurrection. An investigation of the background of some of the imageries applied in the passage of Rom 8:12-30 will expand and deepen our understanding of Paul’s argumentation in this passage.

### 2.2 Adoption according to Roman legal practice

Only given the probability that his audiences have very similar thoughts of adoption can Paul make use of this term to communicate a certain imagery. Thus, to avoid that modern concepts regarding adoption will influence our analysis unduly, a discovering of the characteristic and purpose of adoption in the first-century Greco-Roman world is of crucial necessity. For Paul as a writer born with Roman citizenship writing a letter to the Christians in Rome, the most possible intersection of his and the addressees’ understanding could be on the Roman legal system. Francis Lyall cites three reasons for taking into account Roman law as the foundation of the usage of adoption in Paul’s epistles: 1. Adoption is only found in Paul’s letters with “Roman” correlation. 2. The Roman law was the law of Paul’s citizenship, as is his claim in Acts 22:28 to be a Roman by birth: ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ γεγέννημαι. 3. The concept of adoption in Roman legal device was known to non-Roman areas and readers, especially linking to the Roman emperors and influential Roman families.

#### 2.2.1 Reasons for adoption

In the early Empire adoption was a device based on a legal system by which a person was taken out of his original familia (household) and placed into another, under the potestas (authority) of its paterfamilias (father or head of a household). This legal technical term ιοθεσία, corresponding to Latin terms adrogatio and adoptio (their precise meanings will be explained below in sec. 2.2.2), indicates a new family relation with all the rights, privileges and responsibilities. According to the Roman law, once a person was adopted, the connection between him and his original family would cease. All his past debts would be cancelled (capitis deminutio, “loss of status,” Gaius, (italics original). For the references to authenticate Paul’s Roman citizenship, see Peter van Minnen, “Paul the Roman Citizen,” JSNT 17, no. 56 (April 1995): 43-52, here 48-52; A. N. Sherwin-White, The Roman Citizenship, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 273; William M. Ramsay, St. Paul the Traveler and Roman Citizen (1897; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker Book, 1979), 29-34; and Martin Hengel in collaboration with Roland Deines, The Pre-Christian Paul, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM; Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1991), 6-15.

Lyall, Slaves, Citizens, Sons, 82-83. Burke also holds similar viewpoints; see his Adopted into God’s Family, 61-63.

Inst. 1.162). The adopted son would have a new family name entitled to an inheritance, acquiring the same status as the natural children of the adoptive father (Gai. Inst. 1.97). The main purpose of adoption in Roman society was to stop a family from extinction, finding an heir to take the dead paterfamilias’ place and continue the familia with its sacra (religious rites). In this regard Scott offers a more complete expression:

A person who was not by birth part of the family was made son of an adoptive father, in order that he might carry on the nomen (name), the pecunia (estate), and the sacrum (sacred rites) of a family which might have otherwise died out.

Several clearly different features of familia in Roman culture from the modern conception of “family” are noted by Walters: first, not only relatives but also slaves were included in the Roman familia; secondly, the lineage and legal membership of a family were reckoned legally only by birth from the father’s side (agnatic) instead of bilineal (cognatic descent); finally and most significantly, the control power of the paterfamilias authorized by law on the familia was absolute and would not be terminated until his decease. It means that those who were under patria potestas (authority of the paterfamilias), including biological and adopted children, married sons and daughters, as well as wives under manus, were unable to own any property if their paterfamilias was alive. Theoretically, the paterfamilias even had power to force his children to marry or divorce. Hugh Lindsay cites an example of Tiberius who was forced by Augustus to divorce his first wife Vipsania Agrippina and marry Julia the Elder, Augustus’s daughter (Suetonius, Tib. 7.2).

What has to be noticed is that the legal system of adoption did not advocate maintaining or protecting the benefit of the adoptee, but it served the greatest advantage of the adopter and adopting family. The legal system had nothing to do with the child welfare, or providing children with dependable homes, but the secure future of the adoptive father by confirming the continuation of his family line.

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9 Walters, “Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance,” 52.
10 Scott, Adoption as Sons of God, 9, cited by Lewis, Paul’s ‘Spirit of Adoption’, 56 (italics and translations in brackets Lewis’s); also cf. 41n17.
11 Ibid.
12 Hugh Lindsay, Adoption in the Roman World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 98. Manus: a marriage under which a woman is legally under the patria potestas of husband, in the same position as a daughter, see ibid., 224. For a brief introduction of the power of Roman paterfamilias, see Watson, Paul, His Roman Audience, 119-22.
13 Lindsay, Adoption in the Roman World, 98.
property. In his speech addressed to the priests who were the judges in the cases relating to religion, asking for rebuilding his house at public charge, Cicero argues in *De domo sua* (*On His House*) that the adoption of the ex-tribune Clodius, who destroyed Cicero’s house and built a temple on it to Liberty, was illegal, nor could he have legally been voted tribune, nor have legality to consecrate anything:

What? why should all the sacred rites of the Clodian family perish, as far as it depends on you? And that must have been the idea of all the priests when you were adopted. Unless, perchance, the question was put to you in this way, --whether you were intending to disturb the republic by seditions, and whether you wished to be adopted with that object, not in order to become that man’s son, but only in order to be made a tribune of the people, and by that means utterly to overthrow the state? You answered, I presume, that your object was only to be made a tribune. That appeared to the priests to be a sufficient reason. They approved of it. No questions were asked about the age of the man who was adopting you; as was done in the case of Cnaeus Aufidius and Marcus Pupius, each of whom, within our recollection, when extremely old, adopted as sons, the one Orestes, and the other Piso. And these adoptions, like others, more than I can count, were followed by the *inheritance of the name and property and sacred rites of the family*. You are not Fonteius, as you ought to be, nor the heir of your new father; nor, though you have lost your right to the sacred ceremonies of your own family, have you availed yourself of those which belong to you by adoption. And so, having thrown the ceremonies of religion into confusion, --having polluted both families, both the one which you have abandoned and the one which you have entered, --having violated the legitimate practices of the Romans with respect to guardianships and inheritances, you have been made, contrary to all the requirements of religion, the son of that man of whom you were old enough to be the father. (*On His House* 13.35 [Yonge], emphasis mine)

### 2.2.1.1 Securing property

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Accordingly, Trevor J. Burke also states that there are three reasons provided by Cicero for adoption: the maintenance of *nomen* (name), *pecunia* (property), and *sacrum* (religious rites). However, after his observation on Greek law and Roman law James C. Walters concludes that issues of succession rights to property almost completely occupy the Roman jurists’ discussion of adoption. Owing to the priority of the succession of *familia* under Roman inheritance law, adoption and inheritance were closely related in Roman law. Jane Gardner emphasizes that the Roman legal discussions reveal mostly the consequences of membership of a *familia* brought by adoption. Material consideration such as keeping property in succession rights was actually the *paterfamilias’* foremost concern in selecting an heir. Roman adoption was basically connected with property entitlement. Given the verification of Gardner, the first two reasons afforded by Cicero, the maintenance of name and of property, could be viewed as one.

The Julio-Claudian imperial family set a vivid example in this regard (see Figure 2-1). Augustus (Emp. 27 BC-AD 14) was the great nephew of Julius Caesar and his posthumously adopted son. Tiberius (Emp. AD 14-37) was Augustus’ stepson and formally adopted by him in AD 4. Caligula (Emp. AD 37-41) was the great nephew of Tiberius and his adopted grandson. Nero (Emp. AD 54-68) was the great nephew of Claudius (Emp. AD 41-54) and his adopted son. The cases of adoption in the Julio-Claudian line ensured the continuation of the name and inheritance of the emperors. Burke discovers a most noteworthy case among the imperial families. The marriage of Nero and Octavia (the natural daughter of Claudius, Nero’s sister in law) forced a special legislation to be passed to make their marriage viable, on account of a fact that Nero has been considered as a biological son of Claudius after his adoption. An adopted son has exactly the same status and privileges as a son related by blood in Roman law. Gaius (ca. AD 130-180) explains briefly: “Adoptive children, so long

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17 Burke, *Adopted into God’s Family*, 66n37; also cf. 39n10.
18 Walters, “Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance,” 52.
20 The reigning periods of the Julio-Claudian imperial family are according to *OCD*.
21 The adoptive relationship (indirect) is shown in Fig. 2.1.
22 See *OCD*, under each name of emperor, the data of Caligula is found under s.v. “Gaius (I).”
23 For a brief introduction of the relationship between the Julio-Claudian emperors and the early Christianity, see Burke, *Adopted into God’s Family*, 62.
24 Ibid.
25 Gaius is one of the most eminent Roman jurists. Little is known about his life. Probably he was both a foreigner by birth and a Roman citizen. His works are extensive, showing an interest in legal history, Greek philosophy, and the classification of laws. In post-classical times, he was popular and his authority was officially built by the Law of Citation (AD 426) which ranked Gaius’ works equal authority with those of Papinian (Aemilius Papinianus, died in AD 212), Paulus (Iulius Paulus, fl. ca. AD 200), Ulpian (Domitius Ulpianus, died in AD 223), and Modestinus (Herennius Modestinus, fl. ca. AD 250). His main work *Institutes* (*Institutionum commentarii quattuor*, ca. AD 161) is a complete composition of the elements of Roman Law, comprising four books dealing with legal status of persons (the first); property rights, including inheritance (the second and third); and forms of legal actions (the fourth)
as they continue in the power of the adoptive father, have the rights of his natural children” (*Inst. 2.136 [Poste]), and “Brother and sister, indeed, are prohibited from intermarriage whether they are born of the same father and mother or have only one parent in common” (*Inst. 1.61 [Poste]).

![Julio-Claudian Family Tree](http://www.ancientworlds.net/aw/Post/831109)

Figure 2-1 Julio-Claudian Family Tree


²⁸ The Julio-Claudian family tree, http://www.ancientworlds.net/aw/Post/831109. The time of Nero’s reign in this figure (AD 51-68) is slightly different from what *OCD*¹ records (AD 54-68), which is gen-
2.2.1.2 Securing family cult

Since the Roman notion of adoption was embedded in the long-existing religious basis of the Roman household, another importance for adoption was interrelated to the family cult, *sacra*. Ancestor worship and other domestic worship were of critical significance in each Roman family. A Roman *pater*, who must be also a citizen, with no legitimate children means an extinctive crisis of his family inheritance and family cult. The ancient Roman world was filled with variant gods that were revered in compliance with ancestral traditions. The prominent objects of Roman family worshiped usually were the *Vesta* (the hearth-goddess), the *Penates* (the numina [guardian-spirits] of the store-cupboard or larder), and the *Lar Familiaris* (family guardian). The term *numen* (sg. of *numina*) is used by Cicero to symbolize the “divine will” of a Roman god in his *On Divination*: “how much easier it is for such results to be accomplished by a god, whose divine will all things obey,” Div. 1.120 [Falconer, LCL]). Through the cultic veneration, usually by sacrifice and prayer, undertaken by the *paterfamilias*, these kinds of *genii* (tutelary deities) or *numina* of the family were considered having duty of caring for the welfare and prosperity of the Roman household. They were even believed to be a kind of conceptualization of a procreative power existing in a male human being, and an individual *genius* can be ascribed to an exalted personality, such as Augustus (*Genius Augusti*) and his successors. The genius as the life-force of the family, was always in the guardianship of the *paterfamilias* temporarily and passed at his death to his heir. In the worship of the *sacra* the father of the household acted as priest whose position shaped his authority over his family. The adoptee was the person supposed to keep on the household cult. Therefore, the continuation of the cult in the Roman household was so vital that the necessity of adoption was a direct result of the problem of the childless male.

2.2.2 Legal ruling

One may notice that unlike the adoptees in modern society always being children, the adopted objects in Roman society were normally legal adults (male: 15 years old, fe-
male: 14) rather than young children or infants who might die before growing up or prove incompetent in another way. Not only so, but a male adoptee usually was the oldest son in his original family, proving his survival ability and trustworthiness.\textsuperscript{35} Michael Peppard states as another reason for adopting an adult that the adoptive father could assure his inheritable property and status with certainty.\textsuperscript{36} As mentioned above, it is none other than the \textit{paterfamilias} of the adopting family who is the major concern under adoption. By way of controlling the entry of new members into the family, adoption ensures the new \textit{familia} with perpetuity. Socially, the name, estates and religious rites of the heirless \textit{paterfamilias} could continue after his death once he adopted a male. Politically, the adoption system serves to bind the beneficiary relationship between adopting families, creating close alliances. Such economic and political incentives had as a consequence that it was carried out more by Roman elite classes.\textsuperscript{37}

According to Gaius’ definition, there are two ways of performing adoption in Roman society:

Adoption is of two forms, adoption by authority of the people and adoption by the executive command of a magistrate, as of the praetor. (\textit{Inst.} 1.98 [Poste])\textsuperscript{38}

The former procedure is called \textit{adrogatio} (or \textit{ arrogatio}), and a certain condition of the adoptee is highlighted as stated:

Authority of the people is required for the adoption of an independent person, and this form is called adrogation. (\textit{Inst.} 1.99 [Poste], emphasis mine)\textsuperscript{39}

The other one is known as \textit{adoptio} (or spelled as \textit{adoptatio}).\textsuperscript{40} Gaius differentiates between \textit{adrogatio} and \textit{adoptio} on the basis of law enforcement agencies. It was entitled \textit{adrogatio} if the procedure was enforced by the authority of the people (\textit{populi auctoritate}) or by vote of people (\textit{per populum [Inst. 1.100]}) in \textit{comitia curiata}.\textsuperscript{41} The process was called \textit{adoptio} if it was enforced by the authority of a magistrate (\textit{imperio

\begin{footnotes}
\footnotetext{36}{Peppard, \textit{The Son of God in the Roman World}, 52.}
\footnotetext{38}{The Latin text reads: “Adoptio autem duobus modis fit, aut populi auctoritate, aut imperio magistratus, ueluti praetoris” (\textit{Inst.} 1.98); Gaius, \textit{Institutes of Roman Law}, 62.}
\footnotetext{39}{Ibid.; the Latin text reads: “Populi auctoritate adoptamus eos qui sui iuris sunt; quae species adoptionis dicitur adrogatio” (\textit{Inst.} 1.99, emphasis mine).}
\footnotetext{40}{Burke, \textit{Adopted into God's Family}, 66.}
\footnotetext{41}{\textit{Comitia curiata} denotes assembly of the \textit{curiae} (thirty voting units, ten from each of three ancient Roman tribes), which in the late Republic was replaced by thirty lictors and presided over by the \textit{Pontifex Maximus}, confirmed by \textit{lex curiata} (a law passed by the assembly of \textit{curiae}) power for minor magistracies, as well as adoptions and wills, see Lindsay, \textit{Adoption in the Roman World}, 222; and Poste’s commentary in Gaius, \textit{Institutes of Roman Law}, 64-65.}
\end{footnotes}
magistratus). The distinction between them is portrayed by Gardner as public adoption (adrogatio) which requires a legislative act, and private adoption (adoptio) respectively.42 However, serving as an alternative distinction, Alan Mawhinney observes that the major difference is on the role of paterfamilias in prompting the procedure: the process was called adoptio if the adoptee was under the authority of a paterfamilias, and adrogatio if the adoptee was himself the paterfamilias of his original family.43

2.2.2.1 Adrogatio

As indicated by Gaius, adrogatio (public adoption) was indispensable if the adopted person was already sui iuris (“legally independent”), that is, a head of a familia. Gellius (ca. AD 130-180) provides its process divided into two steps; to begin with, due to “the takeover by one family of another,”44 some considerations and investigations have to be proceeded carefully under a meeting summoned by pontiffs:

When outsiders are taken into another’s family and given the relationship of children, it is done either through a praetor or through the people. If done by a praetor, the process is called adoptatio; if through the people, arrogatio. Now, we have adoptatio, when those who are adopted are surrendered in court through a thrice repeated sale by the father under whose control they are, and are claimed by the one who adopts them in the presence of the official before whom the legal action takes place. The process is called adrogatio, when persons who are their own masters deliver themselves into the control of another, and are themselves responsible for the act. But arrogations are not made without due consideration and investigation; for the so-called comitia curiata are summoned under the authority of the pontiffs, and it is inquired whether the age of the one who wishes to adopt is not rather suited to begetting children of his own; precaution is taken that the property of the one who is being adopted is not being sought under false pretences; and an oath is administered which is said to have been formulated for use in that ceremony by Quintus Mucius, when he was pontifex maximus. (Gellius, Noct. att. 5.19.1-6 [Rolfe, LCL])45

42 Gardner, Family and Familia, 126, so does Lindsay, Adoption in the Roman World, 74.
43 Allen Mawhinney, Huiothesia in the Pauline Epistles: Its Background, Use and Implications (Baylor University, 1982), 29.
45 The Latin text reads: “Cum in alienamiam familiam inque liberorum locum extranei sumuntur, aut per praetorem fit aut per populum. Quod per praetorem fit, ‘adoptatio’ dicitur, quod per populum, ‘arrogation.’ Adoptantur autem, cum a parente, in cuius potestate sunt tertia mancipatione in iure ceduntur atque ab eo qui adoptat apud eum apud quem legis actio est vindicantur; adrogantur hi qui, cum sui iuris sunt, in alienam sese potestatem tradunt eiusque rei ipsi auctores fiunt. Sed adrogationes non temere nec
Then, a person could be adrogated only if he was already sexually mature (vesticeps),\textsuperscript{46} and after a law passed by the assembly as a proposal (rogatio) put to the people:

But no one may be adopted by adrogatio who is not yet ready to assume the gown of manhood. The name adrogatio is due to the fact that this kind of transfer to another’s family is accomplished through a rogatio or “request,” put to the people. (Noct. att. 5.19.7-8 [Rolfe])\textsuperscript{47}

Gellius offers the formula of the rogatio specifying that the adopted person was lawfully regarded as a filius familias, subject to natural paternal power in the following section:\textsuperscript{48}

The language of this request is as follows: “Express your desire and ordain that Lucius Valerius be the son of Lucius Titius as justly and lawfully as if he had been born of that father and the mother of his family, and that Titius have that power of life and death over Valerius which a father has over a son. This, just as I have stated it, I thus ask of you, fellow Romans.” (Noct. att. 5.19.9 [Rolfe], emphasis mine)\textsuperscript{49}

Nevertheless, Gardner specifies the fact of the uncommonness of adrogationes in application due to its four main drawbacks: (1) involving extinguishment of a familia, surrendering of one’s legislative self-determination, and assimilation of one’s possessions into the adopter’s patria potestas; (2) unavailability for adrogating women, even though they are already sui iuris; (3) a serious geographical limitation makes it difficult to arrange in other provinces because of the vote in comita which can only be enacted in Rome; (4) the necessity of a cautious examination inquiring about the age of the adopter, the potentiality of his fertility, the admissibility of the adoptee, and the

\textsuperscript{46} Lindsay, Adoption in the Roman World, 75.
\textsuperscript{47} The Latin text reads: “Sed adrogari non potest nisi iam vesticeps. ‘Adrogatio’ autem dicta, quia genus hoc in alienam familiam transitus per populi rogationem fit” (Noct. att. 5.19.7-8); Gellius, Attic Nights, 1:436-39.
\textsuperscript{48} Walters, “Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance,” 53; also Gardner, Family and Familia, 127.
\textsuperscript{49} The Latin text reads: “Eius rogationis verba haec sunt: ‘Velitis, iubeatis, uti L. Valerius L. Titio tam iure legeque filius siet, quam si ex eo patre matreque familias eius natus esset, utique ei vitae necisque in eum potestas siet, uti patri endo filio est. Haec ita uti dixi, ita vos, Quirites, rogo’ ” (Noct. att. 5.19.9, emphasis mine); Gellius, Attic Nights, 1:438-39.
possibility of a conspiracy to take over the property of the adoptee.\textsuperscript{50}

\subsection*{2.2.2.2 Adoptio}

Relative to \textit{adrogatio}, it is more available and acceptable for the adoptive process of \textit{adoptio} which dealt with the adoptee who was still \textit{in potestate}. No \textit{familia} with its \textit{sacra} will be ended under such circumstances. As a private adoption, its procedure consists of two parts. The first was a repeated three-time emancipation of the would-be adoptee from the \textit{potestas} of the original father who performed it. There is a more detailed description regarding the process by Gaius:

Emancipation also liberates children from the power of the parent, a son being liberated by three mancipations, other issue, male or female, by a single mancipation; for the law of the Twelve Tables only mentions three mancipations in the case of the son, which it does in the following terms: IF A FATHER SELL A SON THREE TIMES, THE SON SHALL BE FREE FROM THE FATHER. The ceremony is as follows: the father mancipates his son to some one; the alienee manumits him by fictitious vindication, whereupon he reverts into the power of his father; the father again mancipates him to the same or a different alienee, usually to the same, who again manumits him by fictitious vindication, whereupon he reverts a second time into the power of his father; the father then mancipates him a third time to the same or a different alienee, usually to the same, and by this third mancipation the son ceases to be in the power of the father even before manumission, while still in the status of a person held in mancipation. \textit{(Inst. 1.132 [Poste], cap. original)}\textsuperscript{51}

The result of three times of mancipations (a short-term bondage bound as a slave under the alienee to work off something owed) was to cut the son’s connection with his natural father who then no more had authority on the son. Gaius cites proof from the Twelve Tables (the earliest Roman code of laws, drawn up by the second Decemviral [ten men] Commission in 451-450 BC) which documents succinctly the following provision as above: “If father thrice surrender son for sale, son shall be free

\textsuperscript{50} Gardner, \textit{Family and Familia}, 127-28.

\textsuperscript{51} The Latin text reads: “\textit{Praeterea emancipacione desinunt liberi in potestate parentum esse. sed filius quidem tribus mancipationibus, ceteri uero liberi siue masculini sexus siue feminini una mancipatione exeunt de parentum potestate; lex enim XII tabularum tantum in persona filii de tribus mancipationibus loquitur his uerbis SI PATER FILIVM (TER) VENVM DVIT, A PATRE FILIVS LIBER ESTO.eaque r es ita agitur: mancipat pater filium alicui; is eum uindicta manumittit; eo facto reuertitur in potestatem patris; is eum iterum mancipat uel eidem uel aliui (sed in usu est eidem mancipari) isque eum postea similiter uindicta manumittit; eo facto rursus in potestatem patris reuertitur; tertia pater eum mancipat uel eidem uel aliui (sed hoc in usu est, ut eidem mancipetur), eaque mancipatione desinit in potestate patris esse, etiam si nondum manumissa sit sed adhuc in causa mancipii” (Gai. \textit{Inst. 1.132}, cap. and ital. original); Gaius, \textit{Institutes of Roman Law}, 80-81.
from father” (The Twelve Tables 4.2 [Warmington, LCL]).

Burke argues that the law was intended to keep the son from becoming “a kind of familial football,” yet Gardner suggests that it was established to “punish fathers who abused the power, and humiliated their sons” by selling them into mancipation (in mancipio) many times.

More information about the second part of adoptio is provided by Lyall. According to his portrayal, up to this point the emancipated son was technically a slave in the power of the alienee who functioned as an intermediary in the adoptive process. And thence the father intending to make adoption brought an invented claim of ownership against the alienee, officially claiming the adoptee’s sonship to him. If there was no defense, opposition or disagreement from the alienee or the original father (who was usually not a petitioner to the case), the magistrate will proclaim a favorable judgment consistent with the claimant who accordingly became the new paterfamilias of the son.

It must be noted that mancipation belongs to a part of Roman civil law. Therefore, without witnesses by seven legal adults any Roman document will not be certified (e.g., Gai. Inst. 1.29, 106, 137, 147). During mancipation at least five witnesses of Roman citizens were required. If the libripen (balance holder) and the familiae emptor (estate purchaser) were included, there were seven witnesses, as Gaius states:

Mancipation, as before stated, is an imaginary sale, belonging to that part of the law which is peculiar to Roman citizens, and consists in the following process: in the presence of not fewer than five witnesses, citizens of Rome above the age of puberty, and another person of the same condition, who holds a bronze balance in his hands and is called the balance holder, the alienee holding a bronze ingot in his hand, pronounces the following words: THIS MAN I CLAIM AS BELONGING TO ME BY RIGHT QUIRITARY AND BE HE (OR, HE IS) PURCHASED TO ME BY THIS INGOT AND THIS SCALE OF BRONZE. He then strikes the scale with the ingot, which he delivers to the mancipator as by way of purchase money. (Inst. 1.119 [Poste], cap. original, emphasis mine)

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53 Burke, Adopted into God's Family, 68.
54 Gardner, Family and Familia, 11, 17.
57 The Latin text reads: “Est autem mancipatio, ut supra quoque diximus, imaginaria quaedam uenditio; quod et ipsum ius proprium ciuium Romanorum est, eaque res ita agitur: adhibitis non minus quam quinque testibus ciuiibus Romanis puberibus et praeterea alio eiusdem conditionis, qui libram
2.2.2.3 Restrictions on adoption

Some other restrictions regarding adoption are noteworthy. Women were not allowed to adopt by any form of adoption, for even the children they gave birth to were not subject to their authority (Gai. Inst. 1.104). 58 Slaves were excluded from the Roman adoptive system unless they were manumitted. According to Lex Aelia Sentia (established by Augustus in AD 4 to regulate manumissions of slaves), slaves could be released only over 30 years old, and the owner of a slave has to be at least 20 years of age (Gai. Inst. 1.13ff.). No minimum age limit for the adoption of someone in potestate was documented. Roman citizenship was required for the adopters, for they were supposed to have power over their household (Gai. Inst. 1.55). 59

2.3 Slavery

In Romans Paul uses a variety of slave-related words as positive or negative metaphors. 60 In one of the positive applications, Paul claims for himself the status of a slave of Jesus Christ (δοῦλος Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ, Rom 1:1). 61 In light of the fact that his master is the Son of God, Paul figuratively connects his ministry to a status of imperial slave. As a slave of the emperor, he can speak on behalf of his master whose word was supported by the Roman military system, and becomes a powerful agency. 62 In his survey on Paul and the background of slavery, John Byron also discovers that the way Paul uses slavery language could be positive, and not all modes in which slavery existed were judged negatively, but “the vast majority of them probably were.” 63 Apart from many cases in Rom 6, “slavery” is employed, in a negative way, to con-

59 Ibid., 5.
60 Such as δοῦλος (“slave”) in Rom 1:1; 6:16-20 (7 times); δουλόω (“enslave”) in 6:18, 22; δουλεία (“slavery”) in 8:15, 21.
61 Regarding other positive examples, see especially Rom 6:18 “δοῦλοι ωθήσετε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ” (“you became slaves of righteousness”), and 6:19 “παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν” (“present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification”). Also see Dale B. Martin, Slavery as Salvation: The Metaphor of Slavery in Pauline Christianity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 60-62.
trast strikingly with adoption in Rom 8:15 and with freedom in 8:21 with regard to the status as God’s children. The former occurrence is linked to the subservient state of human being who is led to fear again, the latter associates the servile condition of the creation with corruption. Both imageries are apt allusions from the life of slaves in the first-century Mediterranean world with which the recipients of Romans were familiar. S. Scott Bartchy points out that without such historical understanding, a sound exegesis of the New Testament texts dealing with slaves and slave-owners or using slavery-related metaphors would be difficult to reach.64 In Gaius’ *Institutiones*, a definition of the status of slaves is found:

> Slaves are in the power of their proprietors, a power recognized by jus gentium, since all nations present the spectacle of masters invested with power of life and death over slaves; and (by the Roman law) the owner acquires everything acquired by the slave. (*Inst. 1.52 [Poste]*)65

### 2.3.1 Sources for slaves

Slaveholding had been very widespread in Roman society for a long time before Paul composed his letter to the Romans. In his book on the Greco-Roman world of the New Testament era James S. Jeffers makes a statement that once the slaves of a society reach at least the size of 30 percent of the total population, it is defined as a slave society. By the time of Augustus and Jesus, Italy had become a slave society due to her huge amount of 2 to 3 million slaves of the 7.5 million residents of Italy.66 Orlando Patterson’s estimation of the proportion of slaves of the Roman Italy was between 30 to 35 percent during the period of 100 BC to AD 300.67 Slavery was an indispensable part of the social-economic life in the Greco-Roman society. Owing to the cheapness and exceedingly unfair use, slaves were very profitable to their owners.68 According to M. I. Finley’s observation, slavery becomes the most influential mode of labor if three prerequisites are realized: 1. There must be a large area of land in private ownership demanding much more manpower than normal family employ-

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65 The Latin text reads: “In potestate itaque sunt serui dominorum. quae quidem potestas iuris gentium est: nam apud omnes peraeque gentes animaduertere possumus dominis in seruos uiae necisque potestatem esse, et quodcumque per sermon adquiritur, id domino adquiritur” (*Inst. 1.52*); Gaius, *Institutes of Roman Law*, 36; also see *Institutiones Iustiniani* 1.8.1.
ment. 2. A commercial trade system is required to exist because the acquisition of slaves is operated through regular commodities trading. 3. Domestic supply of labor force is infeasible. To put it clearly, the central parts of the Greco-Roman world, Greece, Italy, and Sicily, meet these conditions. 69

As indicated by E. A. Judge, the main ways by which human beings were enslaved at the time of the New Testament were birth of slaves, raising abandoned children, sale of children into slavery, voluntary sale into slavery, penal slavery, kidnapping and piracy and the traffic across the Roman frontiers. 70 Patterson, for his part, lists the following eight categories as main sources for recruiting slaves: capture in war, kidnapping, tribute and tax payment, debt, punishment for crimes, abandonment and sale of children, self-enslavement, and birth which is the most essential means of enslavement. 71 Although Patterson identifies slavery as the foundation of the socio-economic structures in the ancient Greco-Roman world and investigates the connection of slavery and high development as well as the heavier dependence of Rome on slavery than before, his assertion that birth was of the main source of slaves for the early Roman Empire seems controversial. 72

Most scholars agree that before the New Testament period capture of prisoners was the main source, or at least one decisive source, of slavery. 73 Nevertheless, there are different viewpoints about the primary sources on slavery during the early Empire. Apparently, due to the establishment of pax Romana (“peace of Rome”) by Augustus Caesar, the function external warfare played as the main role in supplying new slaves lost its significance. 74 John Madden suggests that foundlings were the main source in the replenishment of slaves as a result of a widespread phenomenon of child exposure across the Roman world. 75 K. R. Bradley is opposed to the generally perceived dichotomy of warfare during the Republic and breeding during the Empire because of the incomplete information for both periods. He, consequently, adopts a more balanced perspective of the sources of Roman slave supply that warfare and breeding are not viewed “as alternative but as mutually supportive strategies.” Moreover, slave trade has been a major source of labor force since the Republic. 76 Walter Scheidel

71 Patterson, Slavery and Social Death, 105.  
72 Ibid., 30.  
75 Madden, “Slavery in the Roman Empire,” 128.  
assesses the pattern of demand and supply of slave with modern economic theory, advancing an interpretation that a persistent high-equilibrium of slave price during the early Imperial period implies encouragement of natural breeding, the enslavement of impotent natives, import from outside sources, and slightly limitation in manumission.\textsuperscript{77}

\textbf{2.3.2 The treatment of slaves}

S. Scott Bartchy enumerates some distinctive features of first century slavery different from those in the New World. These include irrelevance of racial and ethnic factors, encouragement of more education due to enhancement of slave value, highly influential and accountable civil employments, ownership of property, same cultural and religious traditions as the freeborn people, allowance for public assembly, and legitimate anticipation of manumission by the age of thirty for most urban and domestic slaves.\textsuperscript{78} Theoretically slaves in the Greco-Roman world could be granted freedom or the rights listed above, but in view of the absolute control of slave-owners over slaves’ life, body, and so-called family, the treatment of slaves varied widely. Though Alan Watson considers that there is a lack of Roman public-law dimension to limit the activities of slaves or demand punishment on wrongly behaving slaves from masters, he notes that nor is there much state interest in preventing masters from maltreating their slaves.\textsuperscript{79} While allowing certain autonomy for a minority of slaves, the Greco-Roman society created various kinds of restrictions governing and managing the servile custom always to protect the best interests of slave holders.\textsuperscript{80} The slave was regarded by the Romans as both a person and an instrument, which can be seen by the definition of Varro (Marcus Terentius Varro, 116-27 BC) in his \textit{De re rustica (On Agriculture)}:

\begin{quote}
Now I turn to the means by which land is tilled. Some divide these into two parts: men, and those aids to men without which they cannot cultivate; others into three: the class of instruments which is articulate, the inarticulate, and the mute; the articulate comprising the slaves, the inarticulate comprising the cattle, and the mute comprising the vehicles. (\textit{On Agriculture} 1.17.1 [Hooper and Ash])\textsuperscript{81}
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{78} S. S. Bartchy, “Slave, Slavery,” \textit{DLNT} 1098-99.

\textsuperscript{79} Alan Watson, \textit{The Spirit of Roman Law} (Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1995), 47.


\textsuperscript{81} The Latin text reads: “Nunc dicam, agri quibus rebus colantur. Quas res alii dividunt in duas partes, in homines et adminicula hominum, sine quibus rebus colere non possunt; alii in tres partes, instrumenti
By law slaves were viewed as *instrumenti vocale* (articulate instruments), just in a higher place than the master’s cattle. Being a subject and an object at the same time, Kathleen McCarthy translates its singular as “speaking tool” (*instrumentum vocale*), reflecting the main attitude of Romans to slavery. In Patterson’s analysis, a slave was simply “a vocal instrument, a human tool” to be utilized for the advantage of the slaveholders. Sam Tsang further highlights that the Romans took for granted the view of simultaneous identity of a *homo* (“men”) and a *res* (“thing”) for a slave, which might be paradoxical to the modern mind.

With the expansion of the Roman Empire, slaves were increasingly needed in public domains and in private households. Works done by slaves covered almost the whole range of socioeconomic structure of the Greco-Roman society. In regard to workplace, from imperial court to rural farms, from cities to mines or factories, from aristocratic families to citizens’ houses, and from official departments to street markets, slaves were broadly exploited. Their occupations varied greatly from upper stratum as royal assistants to the lowest stratum as workers in mines or quarries, and the slaves can be approximately classified into five groups: household or domestic slaves, imperial or public slaves, urban crafts and services slaves, agriculture slaves, and mining slaves. Slaves with skills or knowledge could be architects, doctors, musicians, philosophers, teachers, artisans, mechanics, accountants, administrators, managers, smiths, carpenters, sculptors, and painters. Unskilled male slaves were sent to do almost all the physical labor and menial works, no matter in wealthy families or owned publicly, being city slaves or rural slaves. Some slaves were trained to be gladiators who could die any time in brutal fighting with wild beasts or opponents in arenas. The largest proportion of slaves worked in farms up to the time of death. Slaves owned by government worked in mines and quarries or at the oars of ships and they suffered the most degrading and dehumanizing treatments. Most of them were “worked into an early grave.” Diodorus Siculus (ca. 80-20 BC) wrote forty books of

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84 Tsang, *From Slaves to Sons*, 46-47; also see Westermann, *The Slave Systems of Greek and Roman Antiquity*, 104.

85 Peter Hunt, “Slavery: Slavery in Rome,” *OEAGR* 6:318-30, here 323; however, such classification mixes workplace and type of slavery occupations, leading to some confusions.


world history (Βιβλιοθήκη Ἰστορική, “Library of History”), one of them conveying the cruelty of life for slaves in Spanish mines:

But to continue with the mines, the slaves who are engaged in the working of them produce for their masters revenues in sums defying belief, but they themselves wear out their bodies both by day and by night in the diggings under the earth, dying in large numbers because of the exceptional hardships they endure. For no respite or pause is granted them in their labors, but compelled beneath blows of the overseers to endure the severity of their plight, they throw away their lives in this wretched manner, although certain of them who can endure it, by virtue of their bodily strength and their persevering souls, suffer such hardships over a long period; indeed death in their eyes is more to be desired than life, because of the magnitude of the hardships they must bear. (Library 5.38.1 [Oldfather], emphasis mine)\(^{88}\)

Mines and quarries were usually located in hinterlands. The mining workers were comprised mainly of slaves, criminals, prisoners of war, who were damnati in metallum (“those condemned to the mine”), not only lost their bona (“property”) and libertas (“freedom as citizens”), but also became servi poenae (“slaves as a legal penalty”).\(^{89}\) They were overseen by their foremen slaves who could always inflict even more harshness on these miners than their master did. There would be penalty or demotion on the foremen if they failed to fulfill their duties. A similarly cruel picture is presented in the book of W. W. Tarn and G. T. Griffith who cite the description of Agarthacides (ca. 116 BC) to reveal the miserable conditions of slaves who “welcomed death when it came” in the Nubian gold mines of Ptolemaic Egypt.\(^ {90}\)

By contrast, most female and children slaves worked in domestic households as servants. Works performed by female slaves were more restricted than those performed by male slaves. The jobs open to them could be ladies’ maids, midwives, infirmary attendants, wet nurses, child nurses, cooks, weavers, clothes makers, hairdressers and prostitutes. Generally speaking, without possessing their own property, legal marriage and family, slaves can be described as “the machine of their day.”\(^{91}\)

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\(^{91}\) Lyall, Slaves, Citizens, Sons, 27.
C. S. Keener refers to the fact that their condition was “degrading and difficult,” and half the females enslaved in imperial household died before they reached the age of thirty. Female slaves owned by poor Roman families generally died younger. In agreement with the law, Roman masters had absolute power over the lives, bodies, and properties of their slaves, that is, holding the life-and-death authority over every aspect of the slaves. A master could force his slaves to do the humblest and the cruellest things.

Dio Cassius (Cassius Dio ca. AD 150-235) in his Historiae Romanae (“Roman History”) depicted how a merciless Roman general Vedius Pollio ordered a slave to be thrown alive into a pond to feed huge lampreys due to the slave’s mistake:

This same year Vedius Pollio died, a man who in general had done nothing deserving of remembrance, as he was sprung from freedmen, belonged to the knights, and had performed no brilliant deeds; but he had become very famous for his wealth and for his cruelty, so that he has even gained a place in history. Most of the things he did it would be wearisome to relate, but I may mention that he kept in reservoirs huge lampreys that had been trained to eat men, and he was accustomed to throw to them such of his slaves as he desired to put to death. Once, when he was entertaining Augustus, his cup-bearer broke a crystal goblet, and without regard for his guest, Pollio ordered the fellow to be thrown to the lampreys. (Roman History 54.23.1-2 [Cary and Foster])

Fortunately, Pollio’s malice failed due to Augustus’ denial after the slave’s supplication to him (Roman History 54.23.3). To put it the other way around, Roman slaves were awfully exploited by their masters. Physical punishments like whipping, crippling, eye-gouging and branding were frequent practices. Even crucifixion or burning alive were allowed if slaves committed crime punishable by death. Bradley cites the words of Propertius, “Fear in slave produced greater loyalty,” to underline that a prevailing condition of fear over slaves must be made was a widely accepted principle in Roman society. According to the Senatusconsultum Silanianum, enacted under

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94 Propertius was best known as a Roman love poet, born between 54 and 47 BC, died by 2 BC, see OCD”, s.v. “Propertius.”
95 The Latin of the quotation reads: “maioremque timens seruus habere fidem” (Prop. 3.6.6), see K. R. Bradley, Slaves and Masters in the Roman Society: A Study in Social Control (New York: Oxford
Augustus in AD 10, when a master was murdered, all his slaves under the same roof were subjected to torture and might be executed. Such as the consequence of the murder of Pednius Secundus, done by his slave, all the slaves living in the household were to be killed. All four hundred slaves “residing under the same roof” (sub eodem tecto mansitaverat) were executed immediately after Secundus, the deputy of the Roman emperor Nero, was murdered by his slave in AD 61. No matter how innocent, faithful or high-positional were the slaves, and the possible protest, the Roman Senate determined to show her judicial action to a mastercide. Besides flogging, or burning with iron, fugitive slaves if captured would be exposed to more dehumanizing torture, being branded on the forehead with FUG (fugitivus, meaning “a runaway slave”). More noteworthy is that the bodies of slaves were subjected to the master’s sexual abuse because they had no right to refuse their master’s sexual advances. Those slave victims even had to face the mistress’s revenge. Finley acutely points out that the Roman slaves’ answerability with their body was demonstrated by their unlimited availability in sexual exploitation by their masters and the master’s family and friends. Jennifer A. Glancy studies the problem further and finds that enslaved girls, women, boys and young men were commonly sexual targets of their masters. One of her observations is that most people living in the Greco-Roman world regarded varied sexual relationships between masters and slaves as “acceptable and ordinary.” In brief, sexual misuse and bodily ill-treatment of slaves were the most thorough manifestation of the rightlessness and deprivation of slaves in Roman society.

Keith Hopkins propounds a theory that Roman slaves very likely always had fears for mistreatment, and such dread “must have affected even more than those who actually suffered.”

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University Press, 1987), 113; Sextus Propertius, Propertius, trans. H. E. Butler, M.A. (London: William Heinemann, 1929), 192-93, Butler’s translation is as follows: “and a slave should be all the truer by reason of his fear” (193).
96 Cf. EDRL, 699.
99 J. Albert Harrill, Slaves in the New Testament: Literary, Social, and Moral Dimensions (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2006), 147; however, Harrill supposes that such a number is too high to be historical.
101 Finley, Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology, 93-96.
102 Glancy, Slavery in Early Christianity, 50-57.
103 Ibid., 67.
2.3.3 Manumission

Under Roman law, a slave could become a freedman and Roman citizen by manumission from legal slavery (libertini qui ex iusta seruitute manumissi sunt, Gai. Inst. 1.11).\(^{106}\) In order to set official standards or criteria for the practice of slave manumission which became increasingly prevalent in the early Roman Empire due to the uncertain political conditions of the late Republic, Augustus instituted at least two related acts to control it.\(^{107}\) Another reason for manumission control under Augustus was his consideration of preserving “the moral respectability of the citiitas (‘citizenship’),” or the qualitative requirements for citizenship, which could create a potential compatibility between ruling and non-ruling classes by offering an incentive and reward for slaves to work hard and reduce resistance.\(^{108}\)

2.3.3.1 Various types of manumission

In 2 BC the Lex Fufia Caninia was established to confine the number of slaves, who were manumitted by testamentary disposition, within a proportion between the number of slaves the testator could enfranchise in his last will and the number of slaves belonging to him. The more slaves a master owned, the smaller was the ratio of manumissions allowed (Gai. Inst. 1.42-43).\(^{109}\) In AD 4 the Lex Aelia Sentia was formulated for limiting the manumission by age. A slave under the age of 30 was not permitted to be manumitted, neither was a master under 20 allowed to emancipate any slave. Exceptions are very strict.\(^{110}\) In AD 19 the Lex Iunia (Norbana) was legislated to regulate the informal manumissions of slaves.\(^{111}\) Slaves manumitted under such

\(^{106}\) In this study, “freedman” is used as a shorthand for both male and female, it represents freed man (libertus) and freed woman (liberta) unless otherwise indicated. Likewise, these terms “slave,” “master,” “slaveowner,” “slaveholder,” “client,” or “patron” cover both genders, thus the grammatical masculine derived from them is only for the sake of writing convenience.

\(^{107}\) For an advanced analysis of the cause for the prevalence of manumission, see Bradley, *Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire*, 81-87.

\(^{108}\) Ibid., 88-94, quotation from page 88, translation mine.

\(^{109}\) Cf. Inst. 1.43. “An owner who has more than two slaves and not more than ten is allowed to manumit as many as half that number; he who has more than ten and not more than thirty is allowed to manumit a third of that number; he who has more than thirty and not more than a hundred is allowed to manumit a fourth; lastly, he who has more than a hundred and not more than five hundred is allowed to manumit a fifth: and, however many a man possesses, he is never allowed to manumit more than this number, for the law prescribes that no one shall manumit more than a hundred. On the other hand, if a man has only one or only two, the law is not applicable, and the owner has unrestricted power of manumission” (Poste).

\(^{110}\) *EDRL*, s.v. “Lex Aelia Sentia.”

circumstances would become Junian Latin who belonged to a class of citizens but were devoid of political rights and *ius conubii* (“right of marriage”) with Roman citizens. They only held private right of *ius commercii* (“right of trade”), obtaining possessions by business deals or owning property through a will as legatees, but they were not allowed to make a will.\(^\text{112}\) A slave could be manumitted when he reached 30 years of age if he met the two necessary conditions of being owned by his master and going through the legal ceremony, as Gaius states:

A slave in whose person these three conditions are united, thirty years of age, quirity ownership of the manumitter, liberation by a civil and statutory mode of manumission, i.e. by the form of vindicta, by entry on the censor’s register, by testamentary disposition, becomes a citizen of Rome: a slave who fails to satisfy any one of these conditions becomes only a Latin. (*Inst. 1.17* [Poste])\(^\text{113}\)

According to Gaius’ text, a slave could be manumitted and obtain Roman citizenship through three formal modes, *vindicta, censu, testamento*. Edward Poste refers to the fact that all three modes involved various forms of intervention of the state.\(^\text{114}\)

(1) *Manumissio vindicta* (i.e., by the form of *vindicta* [“a rod,” the symbol of dominion]): The master allowed his slave to be in the presence of the praetor or magistrate who represented the state. In a liberal case the slave as a defendant was supported by a *vindex* or an *adsertor*, represented by the praetor’s lictor. With one of his hands seizing the slave who was touched with the *vindicta*, the *vindex* asserted the slave’s freedom. After the master’s ceding the slave by keeping silent to the assertion, the magistrate pronounced the slave free.\(^\text{115}\) *Vindicta* mode was proceeded as a fictitious lawsuit.\(^\text{116}\)

(2) *Manumissio censu* (i.e., by entry of the censor’s register). In this regard the state was represented by the censor who manumitted the slaves at the quinquennial census at Rome when they entered a census declaration as Roman citizens under the instructions of their master (Ulpian, *Rules 1.8*).\(^\text{117}\) Nonetheless, Poste doubts its practicality due to two ambiguities in this mode. The first is the uncertainty regarding the starting point of the slave’s freedom by his alluding to Cicero’s narration in his *De oratore*:

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\(^{112}\) *EDRL*, s.v. “Latini Juniani.”

\(^{113}\) The Latin text reads: “Nam in cuius persona tria haec concurrunt, ut maior sit annorum triginta, et ex iure Quiritum domini, et iusta ac legitima manumissione liberetur, id est uindicta aut censu aut testamento, is ciuis Romanus fit; sin vero aliquid eorum deerit, Latinus erit.”


\(^{115}\) Du Plessis, *Borkowski’s Textbook on Roman Law*, 96.


\(^{117}\) Gardner and Wiedemann, *The Roman Household*, 145.
It is a question of civil law, when a slave is registered with his owner’s sanction, whether his freedom dates from the actual inscription on the register or from the close of the censorial period (De or. 1.40.183 [Poste]).

The second is his doubt about the persistence and periodicity of the census system which was a republican institution and had long been discontinued when Gaius documented. In addition to the census held in 8 BC (Augustus, Res Gestae 8.2), according to Poste the only three censuses that had been implemented since the Christian era are to be dated in AD 14 (Augustus, Res Gestae 8.4) under Augustus, AD 48 under Claudius (Tacitus, Annales 11.25), and the last one carried out under Vespasian (Emp. AD 69-79) and Titus (Emp. 79-81) in AD 74.

(3) *Manumissio testamento* (i.e., by testamentary disposition): Slave owners could decide to manumit their slaves after their death in two forms of testamentary manumission. The slave owner could either make a direct bequest of liberty (Gai. Inst. 2.267), or arrange a trust of manumission (Gai. Inst. 2.263-66). In the former case, a slave was declared to be free in the master’s will, the manumission became effective immediately after one of his selected heirs entered on the estate. In the alternative case, a slave was bequeathed by the testator as the property to his heir or another appointed person who was going to manumit the slave.

One may notice that freed slaves who failed to meet any of the three requirements would become Junian Latin.

There were some informal manumissions of slaves, as well (Gai. Inst. 1.22):

(1) *Manumissio per epistulam*: The master could choose to write a letter to the slave he was going to free if the slave did not live at the same place with the master, specifying the manumission of his slave, with a valid formula such as “N.N. is free,” or “I order that N.N. be free.”

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121 “A direct bequest of liberty, such as: ‘Be my slave Stichus free,’ or, ‘I order that my slave Stichus be free,’ makes the slave the freedman of the testator. A direct bequest of liberty can only be made to a slave who is the testator’s quiritarian property at both periods, both at the time of making his will and at the time of his decease,” Gaius, *Institutes of Roman Law*, 259 (Poste).

122 “Where a slave is ordered to be free by a will, he immediately becomes free just as soon as one of several appointed heirs enters upon the estate” (Dig. 40.4.11.2 [Scott]), https://droitromain.univ-grenoble-alpes.fr/Anglica/D40_Scott.htm#IV.

123 See EDRL, s.v. “Manumissio per epistulam;” R. H. Barrow, *Slavery in the Roman Empire* (New York: Dial, 1928), 185; Alan Watson, *Roman Law and comparative Law* (Athens, GA: The University of Georgia Press, 1991), 42; contra to Harrill who proposes that the master’s letter was addressed to a friend of the master, see Harrill, *The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity*, 54.

124 M. Barth and H. Blanke, *The Letter to Philemon: A New Translation with Notes and Commentary*
(2) *Manumissio inter amicos:* Alternatively, the master could emancipate his slave by oral declaration before friends who functioned as witnesses. If the procedure took place at a banquet before the guests of the slave’s master, it was called *manumissio in convivio.*

(3) *Manumissio per mensam:* The slave was invited to share the master’s table and proclaimed free by the master.

Slaves liberated through informal procedures belonged to *Latini Juniani* who were offered limited citizen rights, including that their property and possessions acquired by their efforts went back to their previous masters at their death.

Various reasons existed for slave manumission, including as a reward to a faithful servant (*servus fidelis*) for loyal work, a slave’s uncommon skill, and the purchase of freedom by the slave’s own money (*peculium*). Gellius records that a slave named Diogenes was bought by Xeniades and set free due to his knowledge of governing free men (*Noct. att. 2.18.9-10*). Gaius also mentions his observation, nonetheless, that the main concern is for the slave owner’s advantage, such as releasing his own kins-man/woman, extending the contribution of the slave, or obtaining a slave wife:

> There is an adequate motive of manumission if, for instance, a natural child or natural brother or sister or foster child of the manumitter’s, or a teacher of the manumitter’s child, or a male slave intended to be employed as an agent in business, or a female slave about to become the manumitter’s wife, is presented to the council for manumission. (*Inst. 1.19 [Poste]*)

In a similar way, Bartchy provides two instances of the motivation behind manumitting a slave: 1. Fearing the possibility that too much regarding the master’s secrets and weaknesses would be revealed by a slave under torture in the court (allowed legally), the master could set the questionable slave free. 2. If an older slave could offer more economical benefits to the master with the identity of a freedman than in a slave status, the slave could be manumitted. The practice of emancipating slaves maintained the slavery system operative in an effective way. Slaves could be heartened to

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125 See EDRL, s.v. “manumissio inter amicos.”


127 The English translation reads: “Diogenes the Cynic also served as a slave, but he was a freeborn man, who was sold into slavery. When Xeniaides of Corinth wished to buy him and asked whether he knew any trade, Diogenes replied: ‘I know how to govern free men.’ Then Xeniaides, in admiration of his answer, bought him, set him free, and entrusting to him his own children, said: ‘Take my children to govern’” (trans. John C. Rolfe).

128 The Latin text reads: “Iusta autem causa manumissionis est ueluti si quis filium filiamue aut fratrem sororemue natualem, aut alumnunm, aut paedagogum, aut seruem procuratoris habendi gratia, aut ancillum matrimonii causa, apud consilium manumittat.”

work in a more positive attitude with a confidence that they could expect to be able to buy their freedom in a predictable future.\textsuperscript{130} Nevertheless, Bartchy also calls attention to the case that the owners’ purpose in granting manumission was to improve their many different private and commercial interests and to keep the system functioning.\textsuperscript{131}

2.3.3.2 Risk and cost for being manumitted

Slaves paid the same amount of money for freedom as their master had paid for them. Only those slaves who had skills or opportunities to earn and save their income, hence belonged to urban slaves, had the chance to buy their freedom. Emancipation was almost impossible for those slaves who did not earn money for their service. There was no limit on the amount of freed slaves when the owner was alive (Gai. \textit{Inst.} 1.44). However, some limits were set on the number and proportion of slaves who could receive testamentary manumissions, the freed slaves in no case could exceed one fifth of a maximum of 100.\textsuperscript{132} Although the emancipated slaves automatically came to be Roman citizens on manumission, the level of citizenship would be different in accordance with the condition of their manumission as mentioned in \textit{Inst.} 1.17 (see the first quotation in sec. 2.3.3.1 “Various types of manumission”). In his book Jeffers indicates without further explanation that “slaves freed by Roman citizens frequently became half citizens or quarter citizens, depending on the nature of their manumission.”\textsuperscript{133} Yet Poste’s additional comment after his translation of \textit{Inst.} 1.12 regarding the doctrine of status helps to clarify some of the ambiguities described in Jeffers’s description:\textsuperscript{134}

Freedmen, again, are divided into three classes, citizens of Rome, Latins, and persons on the footing of enemies surrendered at discretion. Let us examine each class in order, and commence with freedmen assimilated to enemies surrendered at discretion.

Three heads are related to status: liberty (\textit{libertas}), citizenship (\textit{civitas}), and domestic position (\textit{familia}). People were divided into free (\textit{liberi}) and slaves (\textit{servi}) under the first head. The free ones consisted of free by birth (\textit{ingenui}) and by manumission (\textit{libertini}). Moreover, people were initially classified into citizens (\textit{cives}) and aliens (\textit{peregrini}) under the second head. A third class of people, \textit{Latini}, was inserted be-

\textsuperscript{130} Jeffers, \textit{The Greco-Roman World}, 230.
\textsuperscript{131} Bartchy, \textit{ABD} 6:71.
\textsuperscript{132} See 57n109.
\textsuperscript{133} Jeffers, \textit{The Greco-Roman World}, 206 (emphasis mine).
\textsuperscript{134} Gaius, \textit{Institutes of Roman Law}, 18-19. The following description is based on Poste’s comments here and to the further references to Gaius’ text given in the next paragraph.
tween cives and peregrini (cf. Gai. Inst. 1.17 and 1.22). Here Poste gives a more concise account of the rights of Roman citizens which were grouped into two parts: political and civil. The former refers to the right of vote and enactment of laws (jus suffragii) as well as the right for office (jus honorum); the latter concerns property (commercium) and marriage (connubium). Although aliens had the benefit of related rights under the international law (jus gentium), they were excluded from all political and civil rights because they belonged to nations with which Rome did not establish relations. It seems that the quarter citizens were the Latini group who were devoid of all political rights of citizenship and only enjoyed a part of the private rights of citizenship, commercium without connubium. In other words, they had capacity of Quiritary ownership (i.e., bare possession as opposed to possession by title in an estate)135 with its incidents, but were forbidden to own civil marriage, hence incapable of patria potestas (the power of paterfamilias; Inst. 1.22 and 1.131).136 The group called “half citizens” must be the freed slaves under formal manumission performed by a magistrate. They were granted Roman citizenship except the right to hold public office or state priesthoods; neither could they become senators. Only their children born after formal manumission, regarded as freeborn, could enjoy full rights of citizenship, including political and civil rights.137

According to Lex Aelia Sentia, slaves with moral illegalities would be classified as dediticii after manumission, although they were unlikely to be released. Such slaves included those who had been convicted for unlawful acts, undergone tortuous interrogation on a criminal charge, punished by their master with chains or brands, delivered to fight with wild beasts or men, sent into a gladiatorial school, or put into custody. They only acquired by manumission the status of enemies who surrendered unconditionally (Gai. Inst. 1.13-15). Their civil standing was lower than Latini Juniani’s, as the lowest grade of freedom without any right of commerce and marriage, let alone political rights. They were incompetent to act as heirs or legatees or make wills; neither were they allowed to live within one hundred miles of the city of Rome, under penalty of enslavement with subsequent manumission deprivation (Gai. Inst. 1.25-27). Worse still, their possessions belonged to their manumitter when they died (Gai. Inst. 1.13-15).138 Various stringent restrictions were intended for excluding “the undeserving and undesirable from achieving citizen status.”139

135 Harrill, The manumission of Slaves, 55n186.
Even though Roman government legislated for the practice of manumission, this did not mean that the forthcoming freedom could be taken for granted when the requisites to slaves were being met. In fact, to obtain the conditions required for release was highly difficult for most Roman slaves. Before achieving the target of manumission, lots of uncertainties remained. Most slaves were unable to live to the age of thirty due to their adverse living and working environment. Overcrowded housing, poor medical and health facilities, excessive work, low quality food, unsanitary drinking water, and other unfortunate experiences in life, not to mention that they were subject to natal alienation and permanent, violent domination, led to a life expectancy of no more than twenty years. An estimation of the average life expectancy at birth of the Roman imperial population as a whole in the range of 20 and 30 years is widely accepted among scholars. Hence, taking into account the inhuman and degrading treatments slaves received, a lower average life expectancy for slaves than for the rest of the population is quite reasonable.

Bruce Frier investigates Roman demography according to Ulpian’s life table, indicating that the average life expectancy at birth of the Roman Empire is only 21.11 years. R. Duncan-Jones even claims that the subjects of Ulpian’s estimation were most likely slaves or freed slaves.

Besides, by no means was the granting of freedom an entitlement for slaves. Roman slaves always lived with radical uncertainties surrounding them. The feasibility of manumission eventually depended on the master’s willingness to authorization which could be withdrawn anytime without legal binding. Capricious masters made releasing conditions harder due to their unpredictability. Slaves who expected to get released must show their loyalty and earn their master’s favor without fail. Another

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140 Patterson, Slavery and Social Death, 13.
141 Bradley, Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire, 96.
143 Bradley, Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire, 96.
144 Ulpian’s life table, presented by the Roman jurist Domitius Ulpianus (ca. AD 170-228), was used in calculating the tax value of annuities at different ages, cited by Aemilius Macer (3rd c. AD) and preserved in Justinian’s Digesta (35.2.68). Ulpian’s table was viewed as estimating actually Roman life expectancy due to its close connection to the life expectancy of annuitants. See Bruce Frier, “Roman Demography,” in Life, Death and Entertainment in the Roman Empire, ed. David S. Potter and David J. Mattingly (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 87-88; Bruce Frier, “Roman Life Expectancy: Ulpian’s Evidence,” HSCP 86 (1982): 213-51, here 245-49; Bruce Frier, “More is Worse: Some Observations on the Population of the Roman Empire,” in Debating Roman Demography, ed. Walter Scheidel (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 139-59, here 146. For a further analysis regarding the Ulpianic evidence, see Parkin, Demography and Roman Society, 27-41.
145 Duncan-Jones, Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy, 100, 103.
predicament slaves had to face was the irregularity of the appearance of the Roman official if they lived in provinces without long-term stationed state representatives. Both slave and master were required to be present before a Roman official at the formal procedure of emancipation if the slave expected to be released during the period the master was alive. The Roman official involved might be a procurator, a proconsul, or an imperial legate, who must make himself and the related personnel of manumission available to be accessible for masters and slaves requesting formal manumission.\footnote{Bradley, Slaves and Masters in the Roman Empire, 95-112.}

Furthermore, since \textit{Lex Manlia} was enacted (357 BC), a tax of 5 percent of the slave’s value (\textit{vicesima}) had been imposed by the Roman government on all manumissions (Livy, \textit{History of Rome} 7.16). If the manumission was done by purchasing, the slave was responsible for the \textit{vicesima}. The manumission tax levied on the slave owners “gave a slight discouragement to the practice of freeing slaves.”\footnote{Duff, Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire, 77.}

\subsection*{2.3.3.3 Life after manumission}

After manumission the relationship between masters and freed slaves became a patron-client type (\textit{patronus-clientela}), a new connection based on debt and gratitude for the favor of freedom.\footnote{Henrik Mouritsen, \textit{The Freedman in the Roman World} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 36.} Basically the former masters no longer provided food and shelter for their clients. The clients had to make a living by themselves, usually carrying on their old occupation. The patrons were supposed to offer their clients with advice, assistance and protection; relatively, the clients were obligated to continue to provide service and loyalty to their former owners. Both sides were still remaining closely related and their relationship started to be mutually advantageous. Nonetheless, the freedom of ex-slaves was restricted by their duties to their patrons and their status as Roman citizens was tarnished by the disadvantages in which their past slavery implicated them.\footnote{Lauren Hackworth Petersen, \textit{The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History} (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 1.}

\subsubsection*{2.3.3.3.1 Restrictions derived from duties}

The master’s authority over his slave never vanished; it still continued to be operative one way or another even after manumission. In principle the \textit{liberti} were free men or women, enjoying partial political and civil rights; in reality they were tied by various and unspecific obligations to their former masters. The legal, social and cultural requirements for freed slaves were expressed in the terms \textit{obsequium} (“respectful be-
behavior and submissive attitude toward the patron”), *officium* (“services performed according to the patron’s demand”), and *operae* (“a certain number of dutiful working days per year for the patron”).

Duff specifies that the connotation of *obsequium* was “more a negative than positive,” consisting mainly of a number of vague prohibitions for which the freed slaves in case of a violation will be punished severely.

Under legal protection, it was not regarded illegal for an ex-master to use insulting language or give non-severe beating to his freedman (*Dig.* 47.10.7.2). On the authority of *Lex Aelia Sentia*, anyone can accuse a freedman of ingratitude as long as he remains his patron (*Tamdiu autem accusare quis poterit, quamdiu perseverat patronus; Dig.* 40.9.30.3). Broadly speaking, violation of *obsequium* by ungrateful freed slaves was threatened by the punishment from their patron or the state, which included temporary exile, flogging, and confiscation of partial property or, even worse, loss of freedom. Accordingly, freedmen were forbidden to make any criminal accusation against their patrons by whom they were offended.

The only exception was *maiestas* (lit. “majesty,” a shorter form of *maiestas minuta populi Romani*, “the diminution of the majesty of the Roman people”) committed by the patrons. In the time of the early Roman Empire, it comprised not only treason and conspiracy, but also vilification and calumny, with the case presented to the Senate.

Patrons had rightful claim to their clients’ labor on varied services. Owing to long-term relations of dependency and their skilled background, many freed slaves rather continued a dependent living, associating their work tightly with their former masters, as their domestic servants, such as steward, guardian, teacher, companion, accountant, or as agents for their patron’s businesses (*procurator*).

To support the patrons if they experienced difficult times was part of the clients’ *officium*. Duff points

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151 Harrill, *The Manumission of Slaves in Early Christianity*, 90. For a further analysis, see also Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 36-49.

152 Ibid., 37-40.

153 Hayley Steptoe, “Foreign Citizens: Freedmen, Identity, and Cultural Belonging in the Early Empire,” *SMAC* 2, no. 1, art. 4 (2008): 1-14, here 2, http://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/classicsjournal/vol2/iss1/4. As indicated by Ulpian: “ceterum levem cohercitionem utique patrono adversus libertum dabimus nec patietur eum praetor querentem, quasi iniuriam passus sit, nisi atrocitas eum moverit: nec enim ferre praetor debet heri servum, hodie liberum conquerentem, quod dominus ei convicium dixerit vel quod leviter pulsaverit vel emendaverit. sed si flagris, si verberibus, si vulneravit non mediocriter: aequissimum erit praetorem ei subvenire” (*Moreover, we allow a patron to inflict a light punishment upon his freedman; and the Praetor will not receive his complaint as having sustained an injury, unless he is impressed by the atrocity of the act. For the Praetor should not permit the slave of yesterday who is the freedman of today to complain that his master has insulted him, or struck him lightly, or corrected him. It will, however, be perfectly just for the Praetor to come to his relief, if his master has scourged him, or severely beaten him, or seriously wounded him* [Scott, 1932]).


155 Cf. *OCD*, s.v. “*maiestas.*”

156 Bradley, *Slavery and Society at Rome*, 79-80. As stated by Ulpian: “*Procurator est qui aliena negotia mandatu domini administrat* (*Dig.* 3.3.1 pr.; “An agent is one who transacts the business of another by the direction of his principal” [Scott]).
out that it was a widely accepted tradition.157

Another claim the patron might have on freed slaves was called *operae*. It was set up through contract and the corresponding oath taken by the slave at manumission. These contracts usually stipulated more specific duties, working places and working days per year required of ex-slaves.158 Some responsibilities under *operae* were made to last to the death of the freed slaves. To those urban freedmen who had professional skills and were longing to manage their own businesses, *operae* were an inexorable load.159

2.3.3.2 Legal and social position

Trimalchio’s story is a reminder of how vulnerable freedmen could be in what was still basically a slave owner’s world.160 Despite his hard work through which he accumulated for himself wealth and power, he could not stop the Roman elite from viewing him with resentment, contempt, and ridicule due to his background of a servile past. Petersen discerningly points out that “Trimalchio might well function as a sign for the anxieties Romans may have felt in defining and presenting themselves to others.”161 The same can be true for Narcissus who was deemed meanly of suspicion and hostility by the freeborn citizens regardless of his influence.162 No matter how great their achievement, the Roman freedmen were marginalized as foreigners and outsiders. By comparison with the free born (*ingenii*), the legal status and social position of freed slaves were manifestly on a more inferior level. Once being a slave, this indelible stain lingered on them for their whole life.

Freedmen usually took the *praenomen* and *nomen* of their former owner, retaining their servile name as *cognomen*. A slave Tiro was renamed Marcus Tullius Tiro after he had been freed by his master Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC).163 Duff summarizes the negative impact of the freedman nomenclature into three points. First, any freedman was prohibited from recording the name of the clan to which he originally

157 Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 42.
159 For a more detailed depiction of *operae*, see Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 44-49.
158 Trimalchio is a rich freedman in Petronius’ (ca. AD 27-66) novel *Satyricon*. For a further analysis of this fictional character, see Steptoe, “Foreign Citizens,” *SMAC*, 5-10; and Petersen, *The Freedman in Roman Art and Art History*, 123-83.
161 Ibid., 124.
163 The name of a Roman male citizen is comprised of three parts in order as *praenomen* (first name), *nomen* (surname, name of the clan [*gens*] to which the man belonged), and *cognomen* (name of the family or branch of the clan to which the man belonged); e.g., Marcus Tullius Cicero stands for a member of the “Ciceronian” branch of the “Tullian” *gens*. See *OCD*, s.v. “Names, Personal.”
belonged. Secondly, a freedman’s name revealed his patron’s name and the fact of his ex-slave identity which caused him to be despised. Thirdly, many freedmen renamed their children’s *cognomen* with Latin name instead of their Greek one which disclosed their servitude origin. The reality that freedom and equality were not obtainable by manumission alone is proved by the effort of many freedmen parents bearing Greek names who gave their children Latin names which were displayed on the inscriptions (e.g., Proculos’ father was Philodoxus, CIL XIV 407). Having no legitimate lineage and flaunting riches deliberately made freedmen objects of ridicule of Roman writers such as Martial (AD 40-104) and Petronius (ca. AD 27-66). The disdain, as Joshel puts it, “extended to ex-slaves’ attempts to live as Romans in society.”

Nor was there fair treatment in regard to intermarriage between freeborn citizens (*ingenui*) and freedmen (*libertini*). Most of freedmen could conduct an acceptable marriage by law. Augustus’s *Lex Julia et Papia* (AD 9) recognized all marriages between *ingenui* (except senatorial family members) and *libertini*. However, the unions between *libertini* (freed men) and *ingenuae* (freeborn females) were not encouraged, especially between freedmen and female patrons. Legal marriages between senatorial families and freed women were forbidden, but concubinage between them was allowed, as Ulpian’s comment: “[I]t is more honorable for a freedwoman to be the concubine of a patron than to become the mother of a family” (trans. Scott).

Much discrimination against ex-slaves existed in the process of their assimilation into Roman society. Freedmen were rejected the exemption from torturous penalty, a privilege in Roman criminal law only for freeborn citizens. Under the provisions of *Senatus Consultum Claudianum* (Senate Resolution enacted in the reign of Claudius, AD 52), if the master was murdered, “punishment must also be inflicted upon slaves who have been manumitted by will, just as upon other slaves” (trans. Scott). Their endeavor to rise in the public field was hindered by legal and social disabilities, or various traditional prejudices. The recruitment of military and the appointment of governmental officials were constantly reserved for freeborn citizens with noble ancestors, without which freedmen were reduced to a disadvantaged group. Joshel observes very truly that their slavish past was a social stigma.

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164 Duff suggests that in Rome 70 percent of the slaves had Greek names. See Duff, Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 55-58.


167 The Latin text reads: “De his quoque servis, qui testamento manumissi sunt, perinde atque servis supplicium sumendum est” (*Dig.* 29.5.3.16). Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 63-64.

168 Duff, *Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire*, 66-71

2.4 Heir

Another imagery which is employed by Paul and closely related to adoption and slavery in Rom 8:12-30 is “heir” (κληρονόμος). In the New Testament Paul is the author who most frequently uses “heir” (8 out of 15 times) and “co-heir” (or “fellow-heir,” συγκληρονόμος) (2 out of 4 times). Under Roman law, the law of succession is one of the most complicated parts; numerous required conditions were needed to be fulfilled for a legally effective will.171

2.4.1 Institution of an heir

The main purpose for a Roman testator was to choose an heir (heres). A will without a designation of a competent and qualified heir, who must have Roman citizenship and accept the inheritance, would be invalid. The institution of an heir (heredis institutio) is the most crucial component of a will. Due to its essentiality from which everything regarding succession develops, Gaius highlights its importance in making a will as follows:

A legacy bequeathed before an heir is instituted is void, because a will derives its operation from the institution of an heir, and accordingly the institution of an heir is deemed the beginning and foundation of a will. (Inst. 2.229 [Poste])

Legal appointment of an heir with a prescribed form (solemnis more) was necessary, for example formulated as follows: “N.N. shall be (my) heir” (N.N. heres esto) or “I order that N.N. be my heir” (N.N. heredem esse iubeo). Such an institution must be expressed at the beginning of the will (caput et fundamentum testamenti). If there was anything written diminishing the rights of the heir before the institution of an heir, such as manumission of slaves, legacies for other beneficiaries, or appointment of guardians, it would be invalid. Besides, Du Plessis observes an indispensable re-

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170 In Paul’s epistles, “heir” (κληρονόμος) appears in Rom 4:13, 14; 8:17 (twice); Gal 3:29; 4:1, 7 and Titus 3:7; “co-heir” (συγκληρονόμος) in Rom 8:17 and Eph 3:6. As regards “inheritance” (κληρονομία), 5 of 14 occurrences in the New Testament are found in Paul’s works: Gal 3:18; Eph 1:14, 18; 5:5 and Col 3:24; “inherit” (κληρονομέω) occurs 6 times (18 times in the NT) in Paul’s works: 1 Cor 6:9, 10; 15:50 (twice) and Gal 4:30; 5:21.
171 Johnston, Roman Law in Context, 44.
quirement that “the heir should be named or sufficiently identified.”

There was no limitation on the number of heirs. All qualified heirs (heredes) shared the inheritance in equal portions, not being affected by whether the deceased died testate or intestate, unless the testator divided otherwise in testamentary succession.

2.4.2 Universal succession

The implication of being an heir in Roman law was to be a universal successor who succeeded to the universitas juris, that is, the totality of the rights and liabilities of a decedent, called jointly as the inheritance (hereditas). Henry S. Maine provides a more detailed definition as follows: “A universitas juris is a collection of rights and duties united by the single circumstance of their having belonged at one time to some one person.”

Rather than an aggregate of any rights and any duties, as well as the occurrence of succession at different periods, Maine stresses the succeeding to all the rights and all the duties of a particular person and its occurrence at one time (uno ictu), that is, at one single occasion of an individual’s death.

2.4.2.1 Indebtedness to Roman inheritance conception

Although universitas juris is not a Roman term, Maine argues that it suitably expresses the denotation of universal succession since “universal succession is a succession to a universitas juris.” Moreover, the basic concept of universal succession was apparently indebted to the conception of inheritance under Roman law. At least three illustrations could be found:

1. In Gaius’ remark in his On the Provincial Edict, Book 6: “The term ‘inheritance’ means nothing else than the right to succeed to everything which the deceased possessed” (Dig. 50.16.24 [Scott]).
2. In Pomponius’

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175 Du Plessis, Borkowski's Textbook on Roman Law, 220; Buckland, A Text-Book of Roman Law, 294-95.
176 For a further description on sharing the inheritance, see Du Plessis, Borkowski's Textbook on Roman Law, 220-21 and Buckland, A Text-Book of Roman Law, 296-300.
178 Ibid. (emphasis Maine’s).
179 The Roman law set forth in terms such as in universum ius (“to the entire right”), in eam damtaxat rem successerint (“they have succeeded merely to it”) (Dig. 21.3.3.1); per universitatem rem (“by them an aggregate of rights [is required]”) (Gai. Inst. 2.97); in omne ius (“to every right”), singularum rerum dominium succedit (“succeeds not only to the ownership of certain property”) (Dig. 29.2.37); in universa bona (“to all of it”) (Dig. 39.2.24); cf. DGRA, s.v. “successio.”
180 Maine, Ancient Law, 159.
181 The Latin text reads as follows: “Nihil est alius ‘hereditas’ quam successio in universum ius quod defectus habuit” (Gaius 6 ad ed. provinc.). Maine presents the Roman definition as follows: “Hereditas est successio in universum ius quod defectus habuit” (“an inheritance is a succession to the entire legal position of a deceased man”). Maine does not make known the source of his quotation; his translation is not very literal either. See Maine, Ancient Law, 161.
On Sabinus, Book 5: An heir succeeds to every right of the deceased, and not merely to the ownership of certain property, for any liabilities which were contracted also pass to him” (Dig. 29.2.37 [Scott]). 3. In Paulus’ On the Edict, Book 12: “No one can leave to his heir any rights which he himself does not possess” (Dig. 50.17.120 [Scott]).

2.4.2.2 A continuation of legal personality

The principle of the Roman succession law was that the heir or heirs not only represented the complete legal personality of the decedent; they were also viewed as a continuation of the paterfamilias’ personality, not as an independent entity in law. One became an heir not because of the father’s death but as a result of one’s own birth or adoption. Du Plessis figuratively describes the meaning of the rule of universal succession to be that “the heir stepped into the shoes of the testator for all legal purposes, taking the inheritance subject to the provisions of the will.” The heir in reality became a recipient of estate and administered it as the deceased.

It was the totality of rights and obligations contained in the power of the head of a household over his members (patria potestas) that was transferred from the deceased to the heir in the universal succession. Its devolution and continuation was based not only on economic value but also on social and religious motives which manifested a more prominent significance in its contribution to perpetuate the family rites (sacra). The ceremonies of domestic worship of gods or ancestors would be maintained; hence the sacredness of the family association was preserved.

Yet a noteworthy fact is that not every respect of the legal personality of the testator was merged in that of the heir; the political, social and family rights of the deceased, such as marriage, were not inheritable. Buckland assumes that the expression such as hereditas in plerisque personae defuncti vicem sustinet (“an estate usually represents the person of the defunct,” Inst. Iust. 3.17pr. [Scott]) was a convincing support for the limitation on personality.

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182 Pomponius was a Roman lawyer of the 2nd c. AD.
183 The Latin text reads: “Heres in omne ius mortui, non tantum singularum rerum dominium succedit, cum et ea, quae in nominibus sint, ad heredem transeant” (Pomponius 5 ad sab.).
184 Paulus was a celebrated Roman lawyer at the end of the 2nd c. to the early 3rd c. AD, see OCD, s.v. “Iulius Paulus.”
185 The Latin text reads: “Nemo plus commodi heredi suo relinquit, quam ipse habuit” (Paulus 12 ad ed.).
187 Du Plessis, Borkowski’s Textbook on Roman Law, 223.
188 Maine, Ancient Law, 169-70.
2.4.2.3 Once an heir, always an heir

More than this, Poste also provides another basis for grounding universal succession in the Greco-Roman context by two Latin aphorisms. One was “Nemo pro parte testatus, pro parte intestatus decedere potest” (“No person can die partly testate and partly intestate”), which could capture the characteristic of the Roman testament.190 One could not die leaving partially one’s property by testate rules and partially by intestate regulations at the same time. Roman succession was uno ictu (at once) and universal. A dying person can only choose one of the two ways: testacy or intestacy.

The other principle was “Semel heres, semper heres” (“Once an heir, always an heir”). The hereditas was an entirety with a timeless quality, it was permanent.191 As said by Iulianus (an important lawyer of the 2nd c. AD) in his Digesta, Book 29: “It has been established by a rule of the Civil Law that an estate once granted cannot be taken away” (Dig. 28.2.13.1 [Scott]).192 One person who had become an heir of a decedent would remain in this status for all time; for that reason, an appointment of an heir for a limited period would be invalid.193

2.4.3 Three different types

Heirs were classified into three different types, necessarii heredes (lit., “necessary heirs”), sui et necessarii heredes (lit., “own and necessary heirs”), and extranei heredes (lit., “outside heirs”) which represented different legal position (Gai. Inst. 2.152).194 The necessary heirs were slaves appointed as heirs and manumitted in their master’s will. They were called “necessary” due to their inability to refuse the inheritance. Gaius defines it as following:

A necessary successor is a slave instituted heir with freedom annexed, so called because, willing or unwilling, without any alternative, on the death of the testator he immediately has his freedom and the succession. (Inst. 2.153 [Poste])195

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190 Gaius, Institutes of Roman Law, 194.
191 Ibid., 222.
192 The Latin text reads: “Regula est iuris civilis, qua constitutum est hereditatem adimi non posse” (Iulianus 29 Dig.).
193 EDRL, s.v. “Semel heres semper heres.”
194 The Latin text reads: “Heredes autem aut necessarii dicuntur aut sui et necessarii aut extranei.”
195 The Latin text reads: “Necessarius heres est seruus cum libertate heres institutus, ideo sic appellatus, quia siue uelit siue nolit, omni modo post mortem testatoris protinus liber et heres est.”
If there were more than one slave under the testator, only one could be designated as heir; if more than one were nominated, only the first-nominated was heir. The *sui et necessarii heredes* type was referred to as *sui heredes*, that is, those who became *sui iuris* (legally independent) after the death of the testator who usually possessed the paternal power over them, such as sons, daughters and the widow of the decedent. They were described as “own and necessary” because they could not refuse the inheritance and became heirs immediately on the *paterfamilias’s* death whether it be willing or unwilling, both in testacy and intestacy.

All successors other than the two categories mentioned above were extraneous heirs who were also termed voluntary heirs. Such outsiders were not subject to the testator’s *patria potestas* at his death, including emancipated children, the children instituted by their mother in her will (a mother had no *potestas* over her children), and slaves appointed as heirs and set free in the testament but manumitted by their master after the testament was made while he was still alive.

There was no certain granting of the deceased’s inheritance to the outsiders at his death; they were given an opportunity to consider carefully whether to accept or refuse to enter on an inheritance (Gai. *Inst.* 2.162). Consequently, if the *extraneus* wanted to take the inheritance, a formal declaration of determination to accept an inheritance (*cretio*) was required to be made before witnesses within a stated period (usually 100 days). The prescribed form demonstrated by Gaius was as follows: “Whereas Publius Mevius in his will has made me his heir, that inheritance I hereby accept and adjudge to myself” (*Inst.* 2.166 [Poste]).

### 2.4.4 Legal capacity required to make a valid will

In addition to the appointment of an heir, the other two key elements that determined the validity of a Roman legal will were a testator with required capacity (*testamenti factio*), and the legitimate execution of a will, as expressed by Gaius:

> Accordingly, to determine the validity of a will, we must first ascertain whether the testator had *testamentary capacity*; next, if he had, whether he conformed to the requisitions of the civil law in its execution. (*Inst.* 2.114 [Poste], emphasis added)

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198 Cf. Gai. *Inst.* 2.161; also EDRL, s.v. “Extraneus heres.”
200 The Latin text reads: “QVOD ME P. MEVIVS TESTAMENTO SVO HEREDEM INSTITVIT, EAM HEREDITATEM ADEO CERNOQVE” (capital original, emphasis mine).
201 The Latin text reads: “Igitur si quaeamus an ualeat testamentum, imprimis aduertere debemus an is qui id fecerit habuerit testamenti factionem; deinde si habuerit, requiremus an secundum iuris ciuilis regulam testatus sit” (emphasis mine); also cf. *Dig.* 28.1.4.
More specifically, *testamenti factio* is the legal ability to complete official agreements or arrange valid business transactions. The legal capacity of a person to make a will was pertinent to three parties involved in making and executing a will: 1. The testator needed to have ability to make a will (*testamenti factio activa*). 2. The beneficiary of the will, that is, the heirs must have capacity to be appointed heir, the legatees should have capacity to be rewarded with a legacy (*testamenti factio passiva*). 3. The witnesses should have capacity to witness a will of the testator. 202

2.4.4.1 Concerning the testator

Only mentally healthy Roman citizens above the age of puberty could make a will. Generally speaking, Roman girls completed puberty by the age of twelve, boys by the age of fourteen. 203 Unqualified testators included those who were below the age of puberty, slaves (*Dig. 28.1.20.7*), those under paternal power, those in an insane state all the time, women, those declared to be convicted of public libel (*intestabiles*) (*Dig. 28.1.18.1*), those legally prohibited from managing their own property (*Dig. 28.1.18pr.*), some physical impaired individuals, such as dumb or deaf (*Dig. 28.1.6.1*), and foreign citizens, Latini Iuniani. The persons who were dumb or deaf could make a will only under permission from the Emperor (*Dig. 28.1.7*). Such competence was required for the testator when the will was made and at his death; besides, the testator must have estate to leave after death. 204

2.4.4.2 Concerning the heir

In regard to the heir or legatee, legal capacity was less limited by official rules because the ability needed to receive estate was less demanded than to settle it. There is a broader qualifying list found in Pomponius’ *Rules*:

It is held that a son under paternal control, the slave of another, a posthumous child, and a deaf person, have the right to take under a will; for, although they cannot execute one, still they can acquire property by a will, either for themselves or for others. (*Dig. 28.1.16pr. [Scott])* 205

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Nevertheless, some qualifications were indispensable for being an heir. In general, only those persons who had Roman citizenship could be named, who had to be amply identified, as heirs in a legal Roman will. A slave, if he belonged to the testator, could become an heir and inherit estate through his master’s manumission in the will; if he belonged to another, he could receive the property only with his master’s consent.

It is noteworthy that some restrictions regarding heirs were legislated by Augustus. In order to improve the rate of marriage and fertility, Augustus enacted the Lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus and the Lex Iulia et Papia Poppaea in 18 BC and AD 9 respectively. Some penalties were imposed accordingly on unmarried persons (coelibes) and childless married persons (orbi). Unmarried men aged between 25 and 60, and unmarried women between 20 and 50 were entirely excluded from inheritance. Married persons without children were prohibited from taking a half succession or legacy (Gai. Inst. 2.111). Additionally, the Lex Junia (Norbana) (AD 19) disabled the Latini Juniani to take an inheritance or legacy directly, but allowed them to receive it by a trust (fideicommissoum).

### 2.4.4.3 Concerning the witness

Almost all those who were incompetent to make wills were also disqualified from acting as witnesses. The Roman law prescribed as obligatory the testifying of seven witnesses, including the libripens and the familiae emptor, who had to be above the age of puberty and a citizen of Rome, in making a will (Gai. Inst. 2.104). A witness must not be under the power of the testator, or the heir, or the heir’s father. These witnesses present at the making of a testament (testes ad testamentum adhibitus) were supposed to be invited, not forced; however, it was not necessary for them to know the contents of the will. They were witnesses to the whole formal procedure and to the testator’s last will (usually written on wood or wax tablets), as well as to the authenticity of the will at the opening occasion after the testator’s death. Two actions of witnesses in the procedure were essential: the sealing of the will by making a mark with their own seal ring (anulus signatorius) and the subscription of the will with their own hand, as Ulpian stated in his On the Edict, Book 39:

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206 For more detailed restrictions, see Gaius, Institutes of Roman Law, 184-85.
207 Cf. Gai. Inst. 2.275: “Latini quoque qui hereditates legatae directo iure lege Junia capere prohibentur ex fideicommisso capere possessum” (“And Latini Juniani, who are disabled by the lex Junia from taking an inheritance or legacy by direct bequest, can take it by means of a trust;” trans. Poste).
208 Librepens was the man who held the balance when a will was made; familiae emptor was a trustee to whom a testator transferred his estate through a testamentum per aes et libram (lit., will by bronze and balance) and gave oral instructions as to the distribution of the estate after his death. See EDRL, s.vv. “Librepens” and “Familiae emptor.”
Where one of the witnesses did not sign his name, but, nevertheless, attached his seal, it is the same as if he had not been present; and if he signed it (as many do) without attaching his seal, we hold that the same rule applies, (Dig. 28.1.22.4 [Scott]).

Both their seals and signatures were on the outside of a will which was tied up according to a prescribed form.

2.5 Conclusion

There was an inextricable dependency between the Roman legal system and the Roman social-political environment. Due to its unique social-political development the Roman Empire created her special legal system which maintained her social structure, culture, and values, reflecting how Roman people’s life operated. Jeffers reminds us of the danger of reading into the Scriptures our own cultural viewpoints and values if we attempt to comprehend the Bible without knowledge of the people who were involved in the text and of the society in which they lived. Accordingly, in view of Paul’s employment of adoption-related imageries to express the core issue of the gospel of Christ and an absence of advanced explanation for these figurative speeches, in this chapter we have investigated relevant aspects of Roman law and their historical background in order to establish a basis for recognizing how the Roman addressees of Paul’s letter most likely interpreted and applied these adoption-related imageries.

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209 The Latin text reads: “Si quis ob carmen famosum damnetur, senatus consulto expressum est, ut intestabilis sit: ergo nec testamentum facere poterit nec ad testamentum adhiberi” (Ulpianus 1 ad sab.). See also Paulus 3 sent.: “Singulos testes, qui in testamento adhibentur, proprio chirographo adnotare convenit, quis et cuius testamentum signaverit” (Paulus, Opinions, Book 3: “It is proper for every witness to a will to sign his name in his own hand, as well as that of the party to whose will he attached his seal,” Dig. 28.1.30 [Scott]).

210 DGRA, s.v. “Testamentum.”

Chapter 3: Literary-formal analysis of Romans 8:12-30 within the context of the whole letter

3.1 Introduction

Biblical scholars hold widely divergent opinions regarding the literary genre of Romans, though Romans is a recognized Greco-Roman epistle. Its genre has been identified as a type of epideictic (i.e., demonstrative) letter (Wuellner, Kennedy),\(^1\) deliberative discourse (Witherington III),\(^2\) ambassadorial letter (Jewett),\(^3\) protreptic letter or a *Logos Protreptikos* (lit., “persuasive word;” Aune, Stowers, Guerra, Bryan, Longenecker),\(^4\) diatribe (Bultmann, Stowers),\(^5\) letter-essay (Stirewalt, Fitzmyer),\(^6\) or tractate letter (Moo).\(^7\) Some even argue that the uniqueness of Romans’ characteristic is much more important than its similarity with contemporary literary or rhetorical tradition.\(^8\)

The features of Romans display that Romans is a real letter written to a peculiar community on a particular occasion (1:1-15; 15:14-16:27); its practical exhortations are applied on a distinctive Roman church context (12:1-15:13). Furthermore, the main theological issues which the largest part of Romans (1:16-11:36) addresses have a timeless quality. The fact that it includes a series of persuasive discourse with rhetorical insight is broadly accepted.\(^9\)

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\(^2\) Witherington, Romans, 16-22.

\(^3\) Robert Jewett, “Following the Argument of Romans,” in Donfried, The Romans Debate, 266.


\(^7\) Moo, Romans, 14.

\(^8\) Dunn, Romans 1-8, lix.

\(^9\) Bryan, A Preface to Romans, 19.
Paul writes this letter mainly for preparing his visit to Rome and requesting the Roman church to be supportive of his mission to Spain in the future (cf. sec. 1.4.1 “Date, place and purpose of Paul’s letter to the Romans”). In order to persuade them to trust in him, Paul makes this letter an exposition of his gospel to Gentiles and Jews as well as a clarification of the critical judgment which the Roman church might have on Paul. Apparently, there are Jewish dissenters who have been opposing the method and content of Paul’s preaching and mission (cf. Rom 3:8, 31; 16:17-18). The damages caused by them may possibly have threatened the Roman church’s confidence in Paul and their future missionary cooperation. Moreover, through practical exhortation, Paul explains how the gospel of justification could be applied to their distinct context and for the unity of Gentile and Jewish Christians.

According to Aristotle, the deliberative kind of rhetoric is divided into persuasion (προτροπή) and dissuasion (ἀπροτροπή), “for both those who give advice in private and those who speak in the assembly invariably either exhort or dissuade” (Rhét. 1.3.3). Hence, when Ben Witherington III suggests that “Romans is a deliberative discourse which uses an epistolary frame, and in some ways comports with a protreptic letter,” his succinct summary offers a more perceptive insight into the style of Romans. Nevertheless, strictly speaking, Romans is difficult to fall into one single genre because Paul employs all three species of rhetoric in Romans. The dominant kind of rhetoric used by Paul is the deliberative one (in doctrinal or theological issues, mainly in Rom 1-11); the forensic rhetoric (in defending the gospel and his mission against some imaginary opponents, mainly in Rom 2-11) and the epideictic rhetoric (mainly in Rom 12-16) are based on his deliberative argument.

3.2 The role of the passage Romans 8:12-30 in Paul’s argument of Romans

3.2.1 The division of Romans 1:1-8:39

Traditionally, the main body portion (probatio) of Romans (i.e., 1:18-15:13) is di-
vided into four parts, that is, 1:18–4:25; 5:1–8:39, 9:1–11:36, 12:1–15:13.\textsuperscript{15} The sections 1:1-17 and 15:14-16:27 are usually regarded as \textit{exordium} and \textit{peroratio} of Romans respectively.\textsuperscript{16} Generally speaking, the content of Romans is categorized into a doctrinal/theological part regarding the gospel (chs. 1-11) and a practical/ethical part regarding Christian ethics (chs. 12-16).\textsuperscript{17} Richard N. Longenecker observes that the basic characteristics of ancient rhetoric, consisting of \textit{ethos} (the credibility the author intends to establish in his audience), \textit{pathos} (the power to stir emotions of the readers), and \textit{logos} (logical argument or concept in the discourse), are most obviously reflected in Rom 5-8.\textsuperscript{18} In fact, compared to Rom 5-8, such noticeable features are no less present in Rom 1-4 and 9-11.\textsuperscript{19} Nevertheless, there is evidence in favor of the division of Rom 1:18-8:39 into three parts as follows: 1:18-3:20, 3:21-5:21, and 6:1-8:39 (see the analysis below, esp. sec. 3.2.4 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 3:21-5:21”).\textsuperscript{20} It is noteworthy that the passage Rom 8:12-30 functions as the conclusive part of Rom 6:1-8:30 with logical statement before Rom 8:31-39, which serves as both the culmination of Paul’s argument in Rom 1-8 and the anticipation of his exposition of God’s faithfulness in the next part of the letter. On the one hand, a general survey of Paul’s train of thought in Romans would explain why the reasoning in Rom 8:12-30 is at the core of his argument of Christian life and provides the foundation of a strong conviction that future redemption is assured despite suffering. On the other hand, a deeper observation of Rom 8:12-30 is helpful to build a more convincing theory of Paul’s


\textsuperscript{16} The passage of Rom 1:16-17 is generally regarded as an overarching statement of Romans, functioning as a bridge to unite with the first exposition of the gospel in Rom 1:2-4 and with 1:18f., hence for the convenience of discussion here it is placed as a part of the \textit{exordium}.


\textsuperscript{18} Longenecker, \textit{Introducing Romans}, 374.

\textsuperscript{19} R. Dean Anderson, Jr., \textit{Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul}, rev. ed. (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 205-44.

\textsuperscript{20} A similar division can be found among others, in Dunn, \textit{Romans} 1-8, vii-ix; Charles B. Puskas, \textit{The Letters of Paul: An Introduction} (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993), 77; Everett F. Harrison and Donald A. Hagner, “Romans,” in \textit{Romans-Galatians}, EBC 11, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 19-237, here 32. However, none of these three books share the same view regarding the division of Rom 3:21-8:39 as ours that regards Rom 4 as a further explanation of Rom 3:27-31 and Rom 5 of Rom 3:23-26; further, we hold the passage of Rom 3:23-31 to be an extended clarification of preceding verses Rom 3:21-22. Besides, the section of Rom 6-8 provides the details and reasons of Rom 5. Structurally, it is more suitable to see Rom 5 in combination with preceding passages than with following chapters, though it is close to both sides semantically. It is interesting to note that Puskas changes the original division into a more popular one, that is, Rom 5:1-8:39 is combined to form a section in his revised book; see Charles B. Puskas and Mark Reaoner, \textit{The Letters of Paul: An Introduction}, 2nd ed. (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), 74.
argument of Romans (see sec. 3.3 “The main theme of Romans 8:12-30”). The reciprocal tracing of Paul’s thought development contributes to our better understanding of the essence of Rom 8:12-30.

### 3.2.2 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 1:1-17

Paul does not plainly state his ultimate expectation for Roman Christians about his further westward missionary plan before the concluding section (Rom 15:14-16:27) is reached. In fact, in Rom 1:10-15, Paul has expressed explicitly his intention of visiting the Roman church, imparting some spiritual gift and preaching the gospel to them. However, Paul believes that the assistance to his plan from the Roman church could be fully received only after their relationship based on trust and understanding is built. Under such circumstances, a detailed and systematic elucidation of the gospel of God and its application to the Roman social context and to the unique situation within their church become indispensable. The effort required for this purpose occupies most of Romans, especially of the main body portion.\(^{21}\)

In the *exordium*, Paul not only expresses his salutation to the Roman church, attempting to establish a closer relationship (Rom 1:1, 6-7, 8-15), but also presents the gospel in a condensed form in Rom 1:2-5 and 1:16-17. Paul puts the main focus of God’s gospel on Jesus Christ who is the Son of God (Rom 1:3-4), and maintains that the gospel is “the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek, for in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith” (Rom 1:16b-17a). Namely, to believe in Jesus Christ is the only way to the righteous status before God and to live a righteous life. Paul’s statement in these verses sets up the letter’s theme which will be elucidated in the following sections.\(^{22}\)

### 3.2.3 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 1:18-3:20

The main theme is proved by Paul in the first instance from a negative viewpoint about all humankind. Before immediately expanding on what God’s righteousness is, Paul clarifies why all humankind, including Gentiles and Jews, needs the righteous-

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ness of God (Rom 1:18-3:20). Paul points out the fact that “the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness” (Rom 1:18). Gentiles are supposed to know God through the creation of the world, but they worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator. Not only so, the sinful condition in the gentile world continued in an aggravated form due to God’s giving the Gentiles over to depraved passions for punishment (Rom 1:19-32).

Jewish people are also under God’s wrath and judgment (Rom 2:1-3:8). They are cautioned by Paul against their smug self-righteousness. The independence and impartiality of God’s judgment is unquestionable. Though there is a difference in sequence when Jews and Gentiles will face judgment, there is no difference between God’s judging principle for both sides (Rom 2:1-11). Neither the Gentiles without the law nor the Jews who are under the law receive any favoritism from God. Only doers of the law will be justified. If the Jews sin under the law, they will be judged by the law. In the same standard, the Gentiles will be judged by the law written in their hearts (Rom 2:12-16). Paul argues further that Jews, even though owning the knowledge of God’s will and moral insight as leaders and teachers from the law, are not immune from God’s judgment for the reason that they violated the law knowingly (Rom 2:17-24). Most of all, the unique mark of circumcision in the flesh is not a Jewish charm protecting them against the judgment on their breaking the law. Even an uncircumcised person who obeys the law could judge a Jewish transgressor of law. A God-praising Jew is a Jew with circumcision of the heart, that is, observing the law (Rom 2:25-29). Paul’s identical criticism of the Jews and of the corruptive Gentiles regarding their moral level must have provoked objections.

An imagined interlocutor is arranged in Paul’s argument to propose four possible queries and accusations of God’s faithfulness and righteousness (Rom 3:1-8). On the one hand, Paul defends God’s faithfulness in His interaction with the Jews in spite of their unbelief through the first two questions (Rom 3:1-4). On the other hand, through another two sets of sophist questions, the objectors accuse God of His righteousness, justifying their unrighteousness which contributed to the demonstration of God’s righteousness (Rom 3:5, 7-8b). However, without further explanations, their indictments are deemed slanderous by Paul, even more their condemnation is deserved (Rom 3:6, 8c).

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23 Moo, Romans, 91-94.
24 Schreiner, Romans, 81-82; BDAG, s.v. “παραδίδωμι,” 1. b.
25 Ibid., 102-3.
26 For a clearer analysis of these four questions and Paul’s answers, see John E. Toews, Romans, BCBC (Scottdale, PA: Herald Press, 2004), 88-92; Colin G. Kruse, Paul’s Letter to the Romans, PNTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 158-64. Nevertheless, both authors include Rom 3:9 as the fifth question and response in their discussion.
In the ending passage of the first main part of Romans, Paul concludes that both Jews and Gentiles are under the power of sin (Rom 3:9-20). The proofs added to his statement are quoted from the Scripture, most are from Psalms and Isaiah, proving that there is none righteous under the law; Jews are not better than Gentiles. Accordingly, the whole world is liable to the judgment from God (Rom 3:9-19). The ending comment Paul makes on the sinful situation of the human world is that no one will be justified before God by doing what the law requires. The law’s function is to bring the consciousness of sin (Rom 3:20).

3.2.4 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 3:21-5:21

After having captured the wicked status quo of human life which reveals why all humanity needs God’s justification, Paul proceeds to explicate from a positive outlook how God has prepared His salvation for the whole human race and how they could be granted the righteousness of God, in other words, how the righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel and experienced by believers (3:21-5:21). In a concise form these key points are stated in the first section of this part (Rom 3:21-31), of which the first subsection encapsulates the extremely important truth in two verses (Rom 3:21-22). Paul at first proclaims that God’s righteousness has been manifested apart from the law, which is attested by the law and the prophets, connoting its accordance with God’s revelation in the Jewish Scriptures (Rom 3:21). The next verse makes it clear that God’s righteousness is offered to all who believe in Jesus Christ (Rom 3:22). Consequently, the two facts Paul points out, the object of belief must be Jesus Christ who alone is the medium of God’s salvation as well as only by faith one can be granted God’s righteousness, not only maintain the continuity of God’s way of redemption since past, but also are interwoven throughout the whole epistle, forming the spine of Romans.

The following two subsections are organized by Paul to give some further explanations of these two essences respectively (Rom 3:23-26, 27-31). Jesus Christ is the focus of the subsection Rom 3:23-26, in which is elucidated how and why God through Jesus Christ completed His redemption, granting sinners His justification. Jesus was set forth by God as ἸΗΛΑΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ (“the place of atonement” or “mercy seat” [cf. Heb 9:5]) through his death (v. 25a). God’s purpose is to demonstrate His righteousness, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who believes in Christ (vv. 25b, 26). Faith becomes the center of attention in the next subsection Rom 3:27-31. The key proclamation appears at Rom 3:28: “For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from works of the Law.” Both Jews and Gentiles, the circumcised and the uncircumcised, are justified by faith (Rom 3:29-30). As a result, Paul ensures that the law is not invalidated by this faith, but to the contrary it is established (Rom 3:31).

Chapters 4 and 5 of Romans are a well-argued expansion on the emphasis presented in the preceding passage, showing a chiastically literary structure. In chapter 4 Paul continues to clarify what he introduces in Rom 3:27-31, supporting with conclusive evidence from the Old Testament his stand that justification by faith is a principle set by God and has never been changed since long before the law was given. Abraham was the first man called a Hebrew in the Scripture (cf. Gen 14:13). As the ancestor of the Jews, his life and close interaction with God serves as the best example of justification by faith, which can nullify Jewish boast based on the works of the law and contrasts sharply with Gentile disobedience. Paul expounds it from five aspects.

First, Abraham was justified by his faith not by his deeds (Rom 4:1-8). Genesis 15:6, “and Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness,” is a key proof showing that Abraham was justified by faith alone, not by works or flesh, so there was nothing to speak about proudly before God (Rom 4:1-3). Genesis 15:6b is quoted four times in Rom 4 for emphasis (vv. 3, 9, 22, 23). Besides, Abraham was justified with the identity of being a sinner, hence his justification is a blessed

31 Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 65-68.
grace, just as David describes in Ps 32:1-2 (Rom 4:4-8).

Secondly, it is not circumcision, but Abraham’s faith which was reckoned to him as righteousness. God’s reckoning occurred before Abraham received circumcision which afterwards became a seal of the righteousness of faith he had while in uncircumcision. In this way, Abraham started to be the father of all who have faith in God irrespective of whether they have received circumcision (Rom 4:9-12).

Thirdly, not through the law, but the righteousness of faith Abraham and his descendants inherited God’s promise. To depend on the law would make faith and the promise invalid, further, only produce God’s wrath. Therefore, it is of faith and thus of grace God’s promise applies to all people who have the faith of Abraham, Jews and Gentiles included (Rom 4:13-16).36

Fourthly, Paul defines further the outstanding quality of Abraham’s faith, including whom and what he believed in, as well as how he responded to God so as to be the father of us all (Rom 4:17-22). Abraham believed in God who gives life to the dead and calls those who do not exist into existence (v. 17), and was fully convinced that “God was able to do what he promised” (v. 21). Abraham demonstrated his faith when his wife and he were too old to have a child (vv. 18-20); his faith hence was credited to him as righteousness (v. 22).

Finally, Paul enlightens how ἐλογίσθη α Pistons ἡ αὑτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην (“it was reckoned to him as righteousness”) could be applied to us just as to Abraham (Rom 4:23-25). After all, the promises God made to Abraham were not to the Roman readers, like, for instance, that “your descendants will be as numerous as the stars of the heavens” (cf. Rom 4:18; Gen 15:5), or having a baby even far exceeding childbearing age (cf. Rom 4:19; Gen 17:16). Nevertheless, the faith-principle does not change. In addition, God’s promise has been transformed into “God raised our Lord Jesus from the dead” (Rom 4:24).37 Paul makes a further explanation that Jesus’ death was for our sins and his resurrection was for our justification (Rom 4:25).38 It is this promise that makes our faith valid and Christ’s redemption effective.

Not only does Paul transfer his argumentative accent to Jesus in Rom 4:24-25, but from here his exposition of the result and influence of “God raised Jesus from the dead” occupies the most prominent position in Romans. These two verses function as a hinge, concluding chapter 4 and introducing a new but interrelated topic. What has to be noticed is that Paul uses much more first person plurals in his argument from now on.

37 For a comparison of the faith-principle and its application on God’s promise for Abraham and us, see Diagram 4-2 “The principle of being reckoned as righteousness” (p. 189), and its related discussion.
38 Matera, Romans, 117-18.
In Rom 5 Paul resumes and expands on the key point of Rom 3:23-26. Chapter 5 is divided into two subsections, discussing the great influence of Jesus’ redemption on the status and the life of believers as well as all humanity respectively (Rom 5:1-11, 12-21). Moreover, the discussion here paves the way for a more thorough argument on the life of believers with characteristic status-behavior-correlated structure.

Romans 5:1-11 is comprised of two paragraphs (vv. 1-5, 6-11). The first one develops the grace and assured blessings the believers could obtain after justification through Jesus Christ, including a new position and life experience with hope. Paul indicates that through Christ a new relationship of reconciliation between God and us was created owing to our status of justification. Furthermore, we enter into a status favored by God and boast in hope of God’s glory; even in afflictions we can boast. In addition to all new status and relationship, Paul’s intention is to convey the transformation the believers could enjoy, including an experience of facing tribulations with joy. The reason for the boasting is having a confident and not disappointing hope as well as that many maturely spiritual attributes will be produced in facing sufferings with such a hope. Most of all, this is so because the Holy Spirit has poured out God’s love into our hearts.

The second paragraph of Rom 5:1-11 deals with God’s love which is displayed emphatically through Jesus’ death (vv. 6-8), and the assertion of present life and future salvation (vv. 9-11). In verses 6-8, Paul gives further details about God’s undeserved love. By comparison with the human best but rare deed which manifests itself in giving life for a just or good person, God demonstrates his love to us through Christ’s dying for us while we were still weak, godless, and hopeless sinners. In verses 9-10, Paul employs a rhetorical way of opposite a minori ad maius (“from the minor to the major”) to prove that since God has done the hardest thing, granting justification and reconciliation to us through the death of His Son, He would complete the easier thing, our future salvation. Judging from the above, Paul’s main concern in Rom 5:1-11 is set on the persevering of Christian life with the assurance of the ultimate salvation rather than only on “the certainty of Christian hope.” The subsection’s conclusion in verse 11 proves this. In reality, Paul always describes more details on how to depend on God’s grace for living in struggle than the exhaustive information of eschatological rescue. We will see that Paul’s argumentation appears likewise in Rom 8:18-30.

Observably, in the subsection of Rom 5:12-21 Paul deals with a continuous and

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40 According to NA28, there are two very long sentences in the subsection of Rom 5:1-11; each one forms an integral paragraph.
41 Moo, Romans, 309-10; Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 265-66.
42 Contra Moo, Romans, 309.
broader issue concerning the influence of Christ’s salvation on all humankind. A natural division of this subsection on semantics is in accordance with the three long sentences which it comprises (vv. 12-14, 15-17 and 18-21). Syntactically, verse 12 functions as the protasis, followed by verses 13-14 for an advanced explanation which is fully elaborated on in verses 15-17. Verses 18-21 serve as the apodosis and summary of the comparison between Adam and Christ.

To begin with, Paul discloses the tragic situation of the human race from the time of Adam through whom sin entered into the world and henceforth death reigned over all humanity. Besides, Adam prefigures Christ who is the coming one (vv. 12-14). Next, Paul centers the contrast between Adam and Christ on the completely contrary influence on humanity. Both have dominant effects, Adam’s personal transgression caused universal devastation, resulting in condemnation. However, the grace of God comes to many people through Jesus Christ in great abundance, resulting in justification. No matter how serious the destruction Adam brought, it was thoroughly restored by the far surpassing grace of Jesus Christ (vv. 15-17). Finally, the comparison between Adam and Christ is summarized and focused on their representativeness of all humanity; yet, Adam alone brought sin and condemnation, Christ alone brought life and justification (vv. 18-19). Paul concludes this subsection in a vivid way, stating that wherever law, sin, and death attempt to reign, grace might abound more and reign instead (vv. 20-21). Romans 5:20-21 also works as a hinge which launches an in-depth analysis regarding how grace could reign in the believers’ life.

More noteworthy is that the first person plural heavily used in Rom 5:1-11 is replaced by the third person singular and plural in this passage, suggesting the content as a discourse of objective fact with theological and doctrinal feature. In addition, sin, death, and grace are personified as rulers with reigning power over those who are subordinate to them. The status of the believers in Christ has been transferred from the sinners doomed to eternal judgment to the righteous before God. Only with such an unparalleled and well-founded accomplishment of Jesus on salvation in human history, Paul’s exhortations to godly life and ethnic reconciliation become possible.

The faith-principle and the salvific achievement of Jesus Christ expressed in greater detail in Rom 4 and 5 respectively are two crucial strings of Paul’s thought, entwined together throughout the whole letter hereafter. Nonetheless, the “(main) part” of

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43 Nygren believes that this passage “is actually the high point of the epistle,” where all the flows of Paul’s thought converge and on which a comprehensive understanding of the whole book depends, see Anders Nygren, Commentary on Romans, trans. Carl C. Rasmusen (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1949), 20, 206-9.


Rom 6-8 immediately offers a further and detailed explanation for Rom 5 regarding the dramatic impact of the achievement of Christ’s salvation on humanity in general, especially on the believers. Without the grace of faith which is human response to God’s salvation, and Christ’s redemption which is the conclusive evidence of God’s mercy, it would be impossible to be granted justification, to experience the power of the Holy Spirit, or to live a God-pleasing life in the world, not to mention to achieve multi-racial reconciliation in the Roman Christian community.

3.2.5 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39

In the following chapters of Romans Paul presents meticulously how to apply the principle God revealed in the Scripture, that is, faith in Jesus Christ, to all powers and problems the believers confront which have been summarized in Rom 4-5. A universal and also the most fundamental crisis related to all creatures, especially all humanity, is dealt with in Rom 6-8. The crisis was caused by the most deadly enemy of humanity, sin and death.

We should not overlook that the form of reasoning Paul employs in Romans is to contend his viewpoints after denying an allegation or suspicion of a hypothetical interlocutor, which is evoked by Paul’s preceding statement. Furthermore, in Rom 6-8 Paul proceeds with bilateral arguments and forms them in a virtuous circle. In other words, Paul would make known the spiritual value of the believers’ identity or status as long as he demands worthy behaviors from the believers and vice versa. It looks like a model that combines indicative with imperative (cf. sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator”). One of the foremost experiences the believers will have after justification by faith would be a life of breaking away the power of sin and death; therefore the believers should not continue in sin (Rom 6).46 Paul clarifies his insight by way of a two-stage demonstration (Rom 6:1-14, 15-23).47 At the beginning of the two subsections, Paul firmly rejects the distorted deduction of the imagined interlocutor to his conclusion in Rom 5:20 and 6:14.

In Rom 6:1-14 Paul explains by the significance of baptism that, on the one hand, we have been united with Christ in the likeness of his death and burial, signifying our new status which is no longer subject to the power of death. On the other hand, we are assured of being empowered to live a new life, that is, to walk in newness of life, because we are promised to be united with Christ’s resurrection (καὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως ἑσόμεθα, “we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection,” Rom 6:5b; cf. Eph 2:5-6), just as Jesus was raised from the dead by God’s glory (Rom 6:1-5, 8).48 Paul

46 Moo describes that Paul is using “realm transfer” language here, see Moo, Romans, 354.
47 Schreiner, Romans, 298-301.
uses an indicative aorist passive verb συνετάφημεν (“we were buried with,” Rom 6:4) to express God’s complete action of saving us from death. Further, Paul employs a subordinating conjunction ἵνα and a subjunctive aorist (i.e., indicative future) active verb περιπατήσωμεν (“we might walk,” Rom 6:4) to confirm our union with Christ’s resurrection on status and God’s enabling us to live a manner of new life.49 A further enlightenment is given by using the metaphor of master-slave relationship. Here from the perspective of ownership, Paul pushes believers to recognize who their master is now. Paul emphasizes that on status our old man was crucified with Christ, so sin and death is no more the master over us, and we can consider ourselves dead to sin, yet alive to God (Rom 6:6-11, 14). For this reason, on the corresponding deed Paul asks believers not to allow sin’s reign in their body, nor put their members at sin’s disposal as unrighteous instruments, but rather present themselves to God, and put their members at God’s disposal as righteous instruments (Rom 6:12-13). Paul sets a pertinent example of status-encourage-behavior model in Rom 6:11-13. It seems that Paul purposely uses λογίζομαι ἐαυτὸς εἶναι (“reckon yourselves to be,” Rom 6:11a), reminding believers how God justified Abraham (cf. Rom 4).50 The believers are supposed to perform their recognition of transformed status in faith which promotes moral behavior.51

Moreover, since we are no longer under sin but under grace, Paul claims that we should not sin (Rom 6:15). In Rom 6:15-23, Paul examines the master-slave imagery from the viewpoint of submission, pushing the believers to be aware of whose slaves they are now.52 All occurrences in Romans of the related slave terms δοῦλος (noun, 5 times), δοῦλος (adjective, twice) and δουλέω (verb, twice [in passive voice]) are found in this passage with the exceptions of the appearance of the noun (δοῦλος, in Rom 1:1) and the alternative verb (δουλεύω, 7 times). One more time Paul reminds believers of the changed status from slaves of sin to obedience and righteousness (Rom 6:16-18, 20). Subsequently, their behavior should be followed by a corresponding transformation, though they are still in the condition of being slaves (Rom 6:19). Paul further reminds them of the big difference between the ultimate outcomes as

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49 The purpose/result clause after ἵνα “indicates both the intention and its sure accomplishment,” see Daniel B. Wallace, Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 473 (emphasis author’s); with regard to the aorist subjunctive verb, Robertson argues that “[i]t is quite probable that the future indicative is just a variation of aorist subjunctive,” see A. T. Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research, 4th ed.(Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1934), 924; Wallace, Greek Grammar, 566n1, 571; also cf. 295n790.

50 BDAG, s.v. “λογίζομαι.”

51 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 315.

slaves of sin or of God, namely, death or eternal life (Rom 6:21-23).

There are quite a few instances of Paul’s evaluation of the law before Rom 7; most of them convey a negative impression. For example, to own the law for Jews does not create protection from judgment (Rom 2:12-16); no one will be justified by the works of the law, for by the law comes the knowledge of sin (Rom 3:20); the promise to Abraham or his posterity to inherit the world is not through the law (Rom 4:13); the law brings about wrath (Rom 4:15); sin is not taken into account when there is no law (Rom 5:13); the law came in as a side issue that the sin might increase (Rom 5:20); and believers are not under the law but under grace (Rom 6:14b, 15a). These seemingly unfavorable standpoints scatter through previous chapters without systematical analysis. Now is an appropriate opportunity to make a statement regarding the relationship between the law and the believers, especially on the account of Paul’s sharpened announcement in 6:14b, “you are not under the law, but under grace.” In Rom 7 Paul intends to clarify the law’s spiritual importance (Rom 7:7, 12, 14a), despite the believers’ freedom from the law’s dominion (Rom 7:1-6). But from another viewpoint, he tries to make plain how the law is exploited by sin and becomes its instrument of bringing death to human beings (Rom 7:7-13). Such a role of the law results in intense inner conflict faced by the believers for a lifetime (Rom 7:14-24), which only can be overcome through Jesus Christ (Rom 7:25a).

Besides breaking off the authority of sin and death over humans, another crucial change of status the believers could experience is breaking away from the condemnation of the law. By providing an example of the law of marriage, Paul applies the wife’s freedom after her husband’s death to the believers’ freedom from the law’s condemnation because of Jesus’ death (Rom 7:1-4). However, the analogy between marriage and Christ-believers is not very symmetrical, the focal point is the fact of death which changes the formerly subordinate relationship, causing the person who is alive to enter into another new relationship (wife’s remarriage, believers’ joining to Christ and bearing fruit for God).53 Here we find that the status-behavior model is practiced again by Paul in Rom 7:4, a new spiritual status is supposed to result in bearing fruit to God. Paul gives a further clarification of his emphasis on the preceding analogy in Rom 7:5-6, which functions as a hinge, not only concluding this subsection, but also introducing an amplification of how and why the believers can serve God in new Spirit after releasing from the law’s control, even facing sin’s deceit through the flesh.

Three aspects of the believers’ life experience which emphasize the struggle be-

between the believers and the influence of sin are expounded by Paul in Rom 7:7-8:30.  

To start with, Paul asserts that the law is not sin but holy, just and good, however, the law is used unfairly by sin to arouse sinful desires within the human mind and cause humans to die, Paul himself included. Romans 7:7-13 confirms the fact described in Rom 3:20. Three special features in Rom 7:7-13, that is, presenting mainly in first person singular, domination of aorist tense (15 out of 21 verbs), and death as the only ending, collectively imply that this passage illustrates the classic life before conversion to Christ which is experienced by Paul (sinning action in the past) and all who are in Adam (sinning action as a whole). Under the reign of the power of sin through the holy law, human beings show their total defenselessness against sin; they have no other choice but being brought to death (cf. Rom 7:11, 13).  

Paul’s description, especially in Gal 1:14 and Phil 3:5-6, regarding his achievement in fulfilling the righteousness of the law, makes many believe that Paul is proud of his past faultless achievement, thereby does not have any personal reflection here. However, the context of his boast-about-past text (e.g., Gal 2:16, 20; Phil 3:7-9) proclaims that what is beneficial to him in the past is considered by him to be disadvantageous because of Christ. Paul is one of those whom he calls “sinners” (ἁμαρτωλοί, e.g., Rom 5:8, cf. 1 Tim 1:15). Although Paul did not repent of his self-pride and self-righteousness before believing in Christ, he finds himself a true sinner after knowing Christ, in spite of having had impressive accomplishments in the law in the past.  

Paul expresses his tormented apprehension of internal struggle even to the extent that ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμί πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin,” Rom 7:14b), implying a possibility of returning to the similarly weak situation as before even after justification. Paul acutely points out that another reason why sin brings death to humankind is the flesh which becomes a willing instrument of provoked sinful passions. Such an assault of sin on the believers will not disappear after justification by faith. On the contrary, the power of sin produces a severer predicament for the believers due to the extreme fighting between wishful good and present evil (Rom 7:14-24, 25b). The inner conflict will occur without cease as long  

54 The inner conflict of the believers caused by the flesh will be discussed in more detail in sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh” and sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator.”  
55 Positions and views regarding the identity of the “I” in Rom 7:7-25 are divergent among scholars; this thesis takes a view similar to that of Hultgren in thinking that “Paul speaks of what it means to live under the law in order to be righteous, taking insights from his own life experience in the past under the law as paradigmatic, and seeing all from the perspective of one who is now ‘in Christ,’ ” see Hultgren, Romans, 275. In other words, Paul not only expresses his life experience, past and now, but speaks as a corporate identification with the people before and after justification.  
56 Cf. Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 342-44; Cranfield provides six suggestions for interpreting Rom 7:7-13, and sums a conclusion similar to ours, unfortunately, he seems not to emphasize the human powerlessness and being doomed to death under the authority of sin, see ibid., 347-55.  
57 Ibid., 356-58.
as the believers live. Its intensity is demonstrated for emphasis by two parallel descriptions of the conflict (Rom 7:14-17, 18-20) and an annoying summary (Rom 7:21-23). Nevertheless, Paul deeply believes that only by relying on Jesus Christ can the believers extricate themselves from this miserable situation (Rom 7:25a). Although many scholars do not regard Rom 7:7-25 as an autobiographical reflection of Paul, Hultgren rightly concludes that “Paul is able to mine insights from his own experience.”

Then, immediately after Rom 7:25 Paul is going to explain why he gives thanks to God for saving him from the body of death, and what has been done through Jesus Christ. He illustrates the new life brought about by the indwelling of the Spirit of God. Not only does it free believers from the law of sin and death, it also makes it possible for the requirements of the law to be fully satisfied in them (Rom 8:1-4).

More to the point, Paul also expands in Rom 8:5-11 the Spirit vis-à-vis flesh antithesis summarized at the end of Rom 8:4. The flesh, which represents a self-oriented values system against God, here is personified as an oppressor with evil power bringing hostility toward God and death to those who set their minds on the flesh. Quite to the opposite, the Spirit brings the hope of resurrection and eternal life to the believers. The work of the Spirit plays the most vital role in the process of Christians’ experiencing the reality of justification by faith and reconciliation with God.

Paul makes a striking contrast between the life-style and outcome of living according to the flesh and the Spirit. Normally, the believers will not live a righteous life automatically after justification. Whenever the believers allow the members of their body to be used by sin as fatal tools, they become sinful flesh that would continue to haunt the believers as slaves under sin. Only by choosing to set their minds on the Holy Spirit can the believers experience the life given by the Spirit because of righteous status. God also assures our future resurrection through the Spirit’s work. Nonetheless, so far Paul does not give details about how to live according to the Holy Spirit.

Following is a brief flow diagram which summarizes the main concepts Paul develops in Rom 6:1-8:11.

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62 Dunn provides a diagram to depict the struggle in Rom 7:7-25 only, he does not follow with the
Noticeably, a non-Christian, just like a slave of a tyrant, is destined to death. This is so because there is no weapon against the power of sin and evil, which controls him by the law and through the flesh. However, the believers who are justified by faith, though under the threat of sin and evil, have two choices. They can live according to the flesh, which leads to death, or live according to the Spirit, which leads to life and peace. Even in the storm of a continued battle due to the impact of sinful nature, there is always a way to victory if the believers act according to the Spirit in their life.

Finally, Paul’s argument comes to the crucial passage Rom 8:12-30 which makes clear how the believers might overcome the flesh through the indwelling Holy Spirit in the daily battle. Not only does Paul exemplify how the Holy Spirit works in God’s children who are always faced with the very difficult choice of living in accordance with the Spirit or the flesh, but he also explicates how their awareness of the identity as God’s children plays a decisive role between present suffering and future glory. To recognize confidently the status of God’s adoptive children becomes the most powerful and beneficial way to counter the authority of sin when they are hoping for ultimate redemption. If Rom 7:7-25 displays the struggle the believers face for all of their life, then Rom 8:1-11 directs the believers to the right principle. But only Rom 8:12-30 demonstrates the specific method to prevail over the flesh.

Romans 8:31-39 is a victorious assurance of God’s eternal love in Christ, with a rhetorical four-question-and-answer structure, reaching a climax of Paul’s reasoning as an overall peroration of Rom 1-8. As a conclusion, seeing that many scholars are inclined to consider this passage only “to cap Paul’s many-sided discussion of Chris-

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Diagram 3-1 The life before and after justification

(\textit{non-Christian})

\begin{align*}
\text{Law} & \quad \downarrow \\
\text{Flesh} & \quad \downarrow \\
\text{Sin} & \quad \downarrow \\
\text{Flesh} & \quad \uparrow \\
\text{Law} & \quad \uparrow \\
\end{align*}

(\textit{Christian})

\begin{align*}
\text{(good vs. evil) only one choice} & \quad \downarrow \\
\text{I (according to the flesh)} & \quad \downarrow \\
\text{Death} & \\
\text{(good vs. evil) two choices} & \quad \uparrow \\
\text{I (according to the Spirit)} & \quad \uparrow \\
\text{Life/Peace} & \\
\end{align*}

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64 Michael Paul Middendorf, \textit{The "I" in the Storm: A Study of Romans 7} (St. Louis: Concordia, 1997), 233.
tian assurance in chapters 5-8 as a whole,” Cranfield’s observation is more suitable to depict the position of this passage: “[T]his sub-section serves not only as the conclusion of section V. 4 underlining the certainty of the Christian hope…, but also as a conclusion to the whole course of the theological exposition up to this point.” Actually, there are several corresponding key words (or presented in cognate form) between Rom 1:1-17 and 8:31-39, which constitute an inclusio, such as God’s son (ὁ υἱός αὐτοῦ, “his son,” Rom 1:3a; ὁ Ἱσοῦς υἱός “his own son,” Rom 8:31), our Lord Jesus Christ (Ἰησοῦς Χριστός ὁ κύριος ἤμων, “Jesus Christ our Lord,” Rom 1:4; 8:39), Jesus’ resurrection (ἐξ ἀναστάσεως νεκρῶν, “by the resurrection from the dead,” Rom 1:4b; Χριστὸς Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἄποθανὼν, μᾶλλον δὲ ἐγερθείς, “Christ [Jesus] is He who died, yes, rather who was raised,” Rom 8:34b), love (ἀγάπητοι θεοῦ, “beloved of God,” Rom 1:7; ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ θεοῦ, “the love of God” Rom 8:39), righteousness (δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ, “the righteousness of God,” Rom 1:17; θεοῦ ὁ δικαίων, “God is the one who justifies,” Rom 8:33b) and as it is written (καθὼς γέγραπται, “as it is written,” Rom 1:17b; 8:36). Evidently, the comparable expressions fit both extremes. Therefore, the passage Rom 8:31-39 marks a culmination of Paul’s long argument of Rom 1-8.

The four questions which begin with τίς (“who?” Rom 8:31b, 33, 34 and 35) and Paul’s response to them comprise the main body of Rom 8:31-39. The first question, “If God is for us, who is against us?” (Rom 8:31b), announces the confirmation of God’s proactive protection for our interest. Paul’s immediate answer is another question (Rom 8:32) which states the most crucial part of the gospel, making up the solid basis of his pronouncement in Rom 8:31b. The responses of the second question, “Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? (Rom 8:33a) and the third one, “[W]ho is the one who condemns? (Rom 8:34a), have a common feature, pointing out the unassailable status granted by God, because in Christ God has defeated the power of sin, death and the law (Rom 8:33b, 34b). The last question, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” (Rom 8:35), induces the ultimate accomplishment God achieves: the most profound love of God shall be experienced through Christ by His children in any circumstance; no power in the temporal field or in the spatial creation can separate us from God’s love.


66 Cranfield refers to Rom 5:1-8:39 as section V. 4 in his outline of Romans, see Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 434.

67 Ibid., Cranfield immediately elaborates the scope of the conclusion of the words ‘God is for us’ in Rom 8:31b: “not only of vv. 28-30, but also of 1:16b-8:30 (or, at the least, of 3:21-8:30),” ibid.; for a similar view, see A. H. Snyman, “Style and Meaning in Romans 8:31-9,” Neot 18 (1984): 94-103, here 97.

68 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “οὐ̄π.” BDAG considers it to be “a marker indicating that an activity or event is in some entity’s interest.”
3.2.6 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 9:1-11:36

The concept of adoption also paves the way for Paul to investigate another critical and interrelated issue, the position of Israel in God’s eternal plan of salvation for humanity (Heilsgeschichte) in Rom 9-11. There were some hardened Israelites, but the faithful God never fails. In previous passages some negative appraisals of Paul regarding the response of the Israelites to God are easily found. There is no guarantee that their deeds, law, circumcision, or identity will lead to salvation (cf. Rom 2:12-3:8). God’s salvation is not a privilege which belongs to the Jewish people alone, but rather is for all Jews and Gentiles who share the faith of Abraham (cf. Rom 4). A fact simply undeniable is that in Paul’s days more and more Gentiles had faith in Jesus Christ, yet Jewish Christians were relatively few, implicating that most of the Jews were rejected at the door of salvation. Does it mean that God’s promise to the Jewish ancestors had failed? If God was unable to keep his promise to the Israelites in the past, how can the Gentiles be convinced that they can trust God’s promise now? Suppose God could not make the covenants He made with the Jewish people effective, will God’s promises in Christ that Paul assures the Gentiles of, including justification by faith, the status as God’s children, outpouring grace through the Holy Spirit, inseparable love in Christ, and redemption of our body, be without effect someday? What is more, how does God deal with the impact derived from the Israelite resistance to the gospel of Christ? If these dilemmas Paul faces cannot be resolved, will God’s faithfulness be questionable? Will Paul’s effort in demonstrating the gospel be for naught?

Before applying the conclusive truth to the believers’ life, especially to the context of Roman Christians, it is necessary for Paul to establish the authenticity of the faithful God and the position of Israel in Rom 9-11. Paul claims that God has absolute sovereignty over his election of people, which is grounded in his promise and calling. God has mercy on or hardens anyone whom he desires, and his work in this respect is irresistible. On the one hand, the objects to whom God shows his mercy include Jews and Gentiles, foretold by the prophets (Rom 9:1-29). On the other hand, Paul believes that Israelites have only themselves to blame for their being rejected by God; hence, they are without excuse. He points out the Israelite self-righteousness that they renounced what was within reach by faith and sought their own unreachable

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71 Morris, Romans, 343-45. Some imaginary opponents are arranged in Rom 9:14-26, see Longenecker, Romans, 816-22.
righteousness instead. Furthermore, all possible methods used by God to communicate His messages to the Israelites had been spurned by them since ancient times (Rom 9:30-10:21). Although most Jews lost their salvation, Paul asserts that God did not repudiate His people Israel because there have been remnants chosen by grace. Unexpectedly, Israelite hardening contributes to the coming of salvation to the Gentiles, which is going to make Israel jealous. As long as Israel manifests their belief in Christ, God’s re-acceptance will arrive immediately. In addition, Paul reveals a mystery that there will be a great number of Jews who believe in Christ when the full number of Gentiles comes, because the invitation to salvation given to Israel by God is irrevocable (Rom 11:1-32). Many seemingly contradictory and inexplicable events in history were led by God Himself to a glorious completion (Rom 11:33-36).

The argument after Rom 5 is supposed to be understood in terms of the crucial principle Paul expounds in Rom 4-5. The only way to accept a justified status before God and to live a righteous life with dynamic power is through faith in Jesus Christ. The correct method plus the right object, namely, to be fully assured what God has done, does and will do through Jesus Christ result in the coming of God’s righteousness to the believers. Without it the believers cannot counteract the power of sin and death. Lack of both the two elements is the major cause of Israel’s failure.

3.2.7 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 12:1-15:13

Romans chapters 9-11 solidify the contents relating to the doctrinal argumentation in Rom 1-8, and prepare the way for the practical application of the gospel to Roman circumstances in Rom 12-16. Now the ethnical and national boundaries have been blurred by the gospel, the ethical function of the truth of salvation brought by Jesus Christ as Savior is required to be redefined and implemented.

Romans 12:1-15:13 surveys the challenges Roman Christians face in their social surroundings, with special emphasis on the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christians. As the scope of time-space each main part referred gradually narrows down, Paul’s ethical exhortations are more practical and specific in application. At the beginning, Paul’s exhortation in Rom 12:1-2 is that the merciful and faithful God is worthy of the believers’ presentation of their bodies as a living sacrifice. In the past the believers were under the authority of sin and death, but they are justified freely due to Christ’s grace nowadays, hence are supposed to live out a glorious life deserving the status of being God’s children. Besides, the identity as heirs of God and the fact of the indwelling of the Spirit become the best foundation for not being con-

73 Cranfield, Romans II, 9-16, 503-6.
74 Schreiner, Romans, 617.
75 James D. G. Dunn, Romans 9-16, WBC 38b (Waco, TX: Word, 1988), 716.
formed to this world, but experiencing the transforming of mind and compliance with God’s will in the believers’ daily life. Moreover, the truth of the gospel is never only confined to the individual category by Paul, but rather shall be practiced within community surroundings. Paul encourages the Roman believers to exercise their own gifts and serve together in church. They are supposed to be bound together, and expected to show their true love and harmony in a hostile society (Rom 12:3-21). Under Roman government, they are required to be subject to the governing authorities, fulfilling their duties (Rom 13:1-7). “Love your neighbor as yourself” is the general rule guiding their relationships to people. Additionally, an urgent appeal is proposed by Paul that in a dark age they should put on the Lord Jesus Christ so as to behave with propriety (Rom 13:8-14). Paul then concentrates on solving the conflict between the so-called “weak” and “strong” in faith within the Roman church (Rom 14:1-15:13). The main disagreement between the two groups is over religious festivals and especially over food. Apparently it is related to the difference between Jewish and Gentile cultural traditions which has caused deep division inside the Roman Christian community. Paul asks them not to judge, but rather accept those who have contradictory opinions and pursue mutual edification (Rom 14:1-23). The common focal point Paul advises with emphasis for both sides is the Lord Jesus Christ who has set a good example by his sacrifice of self-interest. Paul especially exhorts the strong-in-faith group not to please themselves so that harmony and unity among the believers could glorify God (Rom 15:1-6). On these grounds Paul asks them to accept one another as Jesus accepted them all and comes to the conclusion of some main themes of Romans that through Christ God has demonstrated His faithfulness in Israel, acted out mercy among the Gentiles, and brought glorious hope for all His people (Rom 15:7-13).

3.2.8 Paul’s train of thought in Romans 15:14-16:27

Paul’s main purpose of writing this letter is not revealed until Rom 15:14-33 which consists of his missionary vision and ambition, as well as his expectation to the Roman church to support him in his next endeavor to expand his mission to Spain. This passage gives more details about his earlier longing to visit Rome expressed in Rom 1:8-15. Usually after demonstrating the salvation God has accomplished through

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77 Joseph A. Fitzmyer, Spiritual Exercises Based on Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 202-3.

78 Bruce, Romans, 240.

79 Schreiner, Romans, 752-53.
Christ, Paul would express further how he commits himself to preaching this gospel. Romans 15:14-19 looks like an expanded edition of Rom 1:5. Being a servant of Christ to the Gentiles, Paul aspires to preach the gospel where Christ has not been named. Spain, the farthest west area of the Roman Empire, is hence on his list after his upcoming visit to Jerusalem with the collection. Without earnest prayer and full support from the Roman church, Paul realizes that his visit and westerly mission plan would be in tremendous difficulties. This letter is written with the aim of obtaining that the Roman Christians will join together with Paul and strive for the gospel of Christ (Rom 15:20-33).

As can be seen from Rom 16, there is a large number of nominations with praising greetings which is rare in other letters. Through these common acquaintances, Paul reveals his intense desire to bridge the trustworthy relationship between the Roman church and himself (Rom 16:1-16). Furthermore, the last warning about the dangers of false teachers extends to the earlier trail of thought of building a relationship based on mutual confidence and understanding (Rom 16:17-27).

3.2.9 Conclusion

The importance of Rom 8:12-30 cannot be overemphasized in Paul’s argument of Romans. The Spirit of adoption is the embodiment of the concepts Paul develops in Rom 6-8 to nullify the flesh behind which sin exercises its control. Simultaneously, family-related terminology induced by Paul in Rom 8:12-30 is used throughout Rom 9-16. Likewise, the work of the Holy Spirit in the believers’ life is always supposed to be dominant. The key point of Rom 8:12-30 becomes an essential clue to comprehend God’s eternal plan for His children and Paul’s exhortation to God’s children living in Rome.

3.3 The main theme of Romans 8:12-30

In the analysis of Rom 8, many commentators consider Rom 8:12-17 to be connected more closely to Rom 8:1-11 than to Rom 8:18-30. The passage Rom 8:1-17 is usu-

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80 See Rom 1:2-5; 2 Cor 5:17-20; and cf. Eph 3:2-12; 2 Tim 1:9-11.
83 Cf. Rom 8 (20 times); 9:1; 12:11; 14:17; 15:13, 16, 19, 30.
ally classified as a demonstration of the *present* life in the struggle between the Spirit and the flesh, and Rom 8:18-30 as the *future* hope of glory in interminable sufferings.\footnote{Among others, Witherington, *Romans*, 207-35; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*, 116-37; Tobin, *Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts*, 273-98; Longenecker, *Introducing Romans*, 405-6.} A main reason for such a demarcation is that the unit Rom 8:12-17 is viewed as the conclusion on the basis of what Paul explicates in Rom 8:1-11.\footnote{Witherington, *Romans*, 217.}

The introductory phrase ἄρα οὖν (“so then”) at Rom 8:12, frequently used by Paul (Rom 5:18; 7:3, 25; 9:16, 18; 14:12, 19; Gal 6:10; 1 Thess 5:6), draws a decisive conclusion from the preceding passage.\footnote{Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 673-74.} Obviously, Paul is employing an inductive way of rhetoric, namely, deriving a general principle from a particular set of facts or ideas (*Rhet. 1.2.8-9*). This conclusion is further defined by the following verses. Paul intends to exhort the readers (“So then, brothers”) after his explanation of the importance of the Spirit’s indwelling in Rom 8:1-11. Central to this issue is how and why Paul makes the exhortation. The way and the reason he persuades determines the length of his conclusion.

There is sufficient evidence to prove that Paul continues his focus on the function of the πνεῦμα which appears 21 times in Rom 8.\footnote{The πνεῦμα appearing in πνεῦμα δουλείας (v. 15a) and in τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν (v. 16) is generally not considered as the work of the Holy Spirit; however, this thesis has a different viewpoint regarding the πνεῦμα in πνεῦμα δουλείας (v. 15a), see sec. 4.2.4.1 “The first antithesis in Romans 8:15.”} The Holy Spirit’s dwelling in the believers characterizes the whole chapter.\footnote{For a further analysis, see Cranfield, *Romans I, 1-8*, 370-444.} Since the life indwelled by the Spirit is by far superior, Paul explains, for the believers, the pivotal point in living according to the Spirit is to comprehend that they are God’s children.\footnote{Ridderbos, *Paul*, 197.} Simply speaking, the main theme of Rom 8:12-30 is the Spirit of adoption. Say differently, through the Spirit’s work in leading, witnessing, verifying and interceding, He arouses the believers to recognize their identity of being adopted children of God in order that they can overcome the sinful flesh in the enduring and agonizing process of awaiting the final redemption. The awareness of being sons of God brings believers a more sturdy will to live in the way of the Spirit. This identity enables believers to overcome the temptations and lusts of their flesh in the daily struggle. The conquering over the authority of sin and death from now to eternity will be experienced. Furthermore, to be conscious of the status as the children of God helps believers to confirm God’s promise and to overcome the suffering they will encounter in life.

In other words, Paul exploits the comprehension of identity or status to arouse the obedient willingness and executing power of the believers so that they may behave accordingly. A closer observation of Rom 8:12-30 will find that most of its content is
not dealing with the details of eschatological hope, but rather the right attitude of living in this suffering world with hope (cf. table 4.1 in pp. 207-8 and table 4-2 in pp. 209-10). That is why Rom 8:12-30 is bound together by the thought of believers as sons or children of God, not only forming an *inclusio* (8:14, *ὑιοὶ θεοῦ,* “sons of God;” 8:29, *τοῦ ὑιοῦ αὐτοῦ, “of the son of him”), but also constituting a solid conclusion.  

3.4 The structure of Paul’s thought in Romans 8:12-30

Given that the Spirit of adoption is the main subject of Rom 8:12-30, Paul explains it through the two stages of Rom 8:12-17 and Rom 8:18-30 respectively. The former passage focuses on the very practical way the Spirit works. Through His leading and bearing witness, the Spirit helps believers to be fully aware of and to confirm the authenticity of their identity as God’s adopted children. The latter’s emphasis is placed on the extraordinarily personal presence the Spirit demonstrates. Through His guarantee and intercession, the Spirit empowers believers to be assured of their final status of adoption in God’s family, namely ultimate redemption, and to be strengthened in the face of the long-enduring tribulations. Seen from the point of structure type, Rom 8:12-17 and 8:18-30 appear as a synonymous parallelism; the latter provides advanced elucidation of the Spirit’s work for the former along the same axis of thought.

In a very succinct way Paul describes in Rom 8:12-17 how believers could live *κατὰ πνεῦμα* (“according to the Spirit”). The believers should put the misdeeds of the body to death, and know that they are *God’s children* due to the Holy Spirit’s work. A thorough understanding of *this superior position* will help believers to overcome the sufferings and the flesh and will assure them of the promise of future glory shared with Christ. However, if we analyze its sentence structure and syntactical relationships, putting the emphasis on the comparisons and the statement-explanation relationship, Paul’s thought development in this section could be simplified as below in Diagram 3-2.

In Paul’s mind, the works performed by the Holy Spirit might be considered abstract by his audience. Therefore he uses metaphors, such as adoption, slavery and witness, in order to give a well developed explanation regarding how the Spirit leads Christians. For the first time in Romans, we see this title “sons of God” used by Paul to show the believers’ status and relationship with God (Rom 8:14). Since they belong to this glorious family, Paul wishes the believers to behave well in their status of being God’s children. From Paul’s argument, we find that the real means to put to death

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91 Dunn, *Romans 1-8,* 447.
the deeds of the body is not a rigorous asceticism but a true and right understand-
ing—to understand fully their status as adopted sons of God.

Adoption, slavery and witness are familiar identities in Greco-Roman society, even
to those who are of Jewish background.\textsuperscript{93} When Paul makes a contrast between slav-
ery and adoption, appealing to the witness bearing of the Spirit to our heart,\textsuperscript{94} his au-
dience must have been impressed by these metaphors. The Greco-Roman society is
known to put a high value on having offspring. Under Roman law, adopted children
have the same statutory right and obligation as biological children.\textsuperscript{95} Actually, Rom
8:12-17 is a full paragraph in Greek, consisting of five sentences (vv. 12-13, 14, 15,
16, 17).\textsuperscript{96} At the end of Rom 8:17b, Paul emphasizes the blessed assurance for the
believers by connecting their status with present suffering and the future glory,
providing a hinge to the following passage of his argument.

8:12a (We are still debtors)
↑8:12b (not to flesh)
↑8:13a (the flesh brings death)
↑8:13b (the Spirit brings life)
↑8:14 (Sons of God led by God’s Spirit)
↑8:15a (received not the Spirit of slavery)
↑8:15b (but the Spirit of adoption)
↑8:16 (We are God’s children testified by the Holy Spirit)
↑8:17a (children→[God’s]heirs→co-heirs)
↑8:17b (co-suffering→co-glorification)
↑8:18-30 (present sufferings are nothing in hope)

Diagram 3-2 Development of thought in Romans 8:12-17\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{93} For a further analysis of the Greco-Roman background of these identities, see our discussions in the sections of 2.2.1.1 “Securing property,” 2.2.1.2 “Securing family cult,” 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves,” and 2.4.4.3 “Concerning the witness;” also Walters, “Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance,” 42-55; Lindsay, Adoption in the Roman World, 35-78; Burke, Adopted into God’s Family, 46-71; Scott, Adoption as Sons of God, 221-66.

\textsuperscript{94} For a detailed explanation, see sec. 4.2.5 “The witness of the Spirit and adoption.”

\textsuperscript{95} Regarding the same position of adopted children and biological sons under Roman law, see our analysis especially in the section of 2.2.1 “Reasons for adoption;” also cf. Burke, Adopted into God’s Family, 37-44.

\textsuperscript{96} The first word of Romans 8:12-17 is capitalized according to NA\textsuperscript{28}. However, Cranfield, deviating from what is usual among scholars, sets 8:17 apart to the next passage, failing to keep the syntactical and semantic completeness. See Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 403-8.

\textsuperscript{97} In the diagrams of thought analysis or text analysis in this thesis, there are arrows (pointing upwards or downwards) signifying that the text beside the arrow provides further explanation (as cause, result, purpose, medium, contrast, comparison, apposition etc.) for the object the arrow pointing to. The arrangement of text refers to Fee, New Testament Exegesis, 41-58.
Romans 8:18-30 is not only a more detailed elaboration of Rom 8:17, extending this conclusive paragraph, but also functions as the climax to Rom 6-8, picking up the recurring topics or meaning-relating words summarized in the concluding part. We can expect how dynamic persuasion the repeated words and concepts would produce. These recurrent terminologies are as follows:

1) *suffering* (πάθημα, 8:18; 7:5 [passion]; συμπάσχω, suffer with, 8:17; θλιψίς, tribulation, 5:3 [twice]; ταλαίπωρος, miserable, 7:25; συνοδίνω,\(^{98}\) suffer agony together, 8:22; συστενάζω, groan with, 8:22; στενάζω, groan, 8:23; στεναγμός, groaning, 8:26);
2) *slavery* (δουλεία, 8:15, 21; δοῦλος, slave, 6:16-20 [n. 4 times; adj. twice in v. 19]; δούλο, be subjected 6:6; 7:6, 25; δουλοῦ, enslave, 6:18, 22; φόβος, fear, 8:15);
3) *weakness* (ἀσθένεια, 6:19; 8:26; ἀσθενέω, to be weak, 8:3);
4) *corruption* (φθορά, 8:21; ματαιότης, futility, 8:20; θνητός, mortal, 6:12; 8:11; ἀπόθνῃσκω, to die, 5:6-15 [5 times]; 6:2-10 [6 times]; 7:2-10 [4 times], 8:13; θάνατος, death, 6:3-23 [7 times]; 7:5-24 [5 times]; 8:2, 6; νεκρός, dead, 6:4, 9, 11, 13; 7:4, 8; 8:10, 11 [twice]; άμαρτία, sin, 6:1-23 [16 times]; 7:5-25 [15 times]; 8:3 [3 times], 10);
5) *body* (σῶμα, 6:6, 12; 7:7, 24; 8:10, 11, 13, 23; σάρξ, flesh, 6:19; 7:5, 18, 25; 8:3-13 [13 times]);
6) *son* (υἱός, 8:3, 14, 19, 29; νιοθεσία, adoption, 8:16, 23; τέκνα, children, 8:16, 17, 21; κληρονόμος, heir, 8:17; συγκληρονόμος, inheriting together with, 8:17);
7) *brother* (ἀδελφός, 7:1, 4; 8:12, 29);
8) *likeness* (ὁμοίωμα, 6:5; 8:3; σύμμορφος, similar in form, 8:29; εἰκών, image, 8:29);
9) *set free* (ἐλευθερώσω, 6:18, 22; 8:2, 21; ἐλευθερία, freedom, 8:21; ἀπολύτρωσις, redemption, 8:23; ζῶο, live, 6:2-13 [5 times]; 7:1-9 [4 times]; 8:12, 13 [twice]);
10) *justify* (δικαιώ, 6:7; 8:30 [twice]);
11) *hope* (ἐλπίς, 5:2, 4, 5; 8:20, 24 [3 times]; ἐλπίζω, expect, 8:24, 25; ἀποκαραδοκία, eager expectation, 8:19; ἀπεκδέχομαι, await eagerly, 8:19, 23, 25);
12) *glory* (δόξα, 6:4; 8:17, 18, 21; δοξάζω, glorify, 8:30; συνδοξάζω, glorify with, 8:17);
13) *spirit* (πνεῦμα, 7:6; 8:2-27 [21 times]).

Some interpreters argue that the emphasis of Rom 8:18-30 is Paul’s eschatology.

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\(^{98}\) The Greek συνοδίνω is a compound verb from σύν (with) and δοῦ (suffer birth-pains, Gal 4:19, 27; Rev 12:2), denoting ‘be in travail with’ or ‘suffer agony together,’ commonly seen in classical Greek literature, see BDAG, s.v. “συνοδίνω.”

\(^{99}\) Cf. our discussion in 113n34 and its related explanation.
that is, the culmination of salvation when the return of Christ happens.\textsuperscript{100} Such a characterization might lead to the misunderstanding that what Paul is concerned about are the ultimate things. In keeping with the word groups listed above, Paul in fact puts his focal point on what the believers would encounter and should rely on in the present world until their future resurrection. Stuhlmacher rightly makes a summary of this passage with the title “suffering in hope,”\textsuperscript{101} laying the stress on the process that has already been going on for a long time against the background of the future hope (cf. ἐγκριτὸν, Rom 8:22). Such an assumption can be explained by the following concise diagram which reveals the train of Paul’s thought behind Rom 8:18-30.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8:17b</th>
<th>(co-suffering with Christ)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>↑8:18</td>
<td>(Present sufferings are nothing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑8:19-25</td>
<td>(Suffering of the whole creation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑8:26-27</td>
<td>(The Spirit’s help)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑8:28-30</td>
<td>(The consummation of God’s purpose)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↑8:23-25</td>
<td>(The groaning of God’s children)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 3-3 Development of thought in Romans 8:18-30

Romans 8:18-30 consists of three full paragraphs in Greek (vv. 18-25, 26-27, 28-30),\textsuperscript{102} marking semantic divisions of this passage based on v. 18 which reiterates v. 17b with the contrast between the present suffering and the future glory, and declares the theme of this passage as an entity.\textsuperscript{103} Most key words and most of the contents relate to facing the unavoidable sufferings during an already-but-not-yet period.\textsuperscript{104}

There is a formidable tension existing in the whole creation due to the impact of the power of sin and death. Such tension falls into two categories. In the first place, Paul manifests vividly through a rhetorical quartet the reluctant victim who is personified by the sub-human nature and can do nothing but wait eagerly the revealing of the sons of God (Rom 8:19-22).\textsuperscript{105} It includes waiting for the revealing of God’s sons, reluctant subjection to futility, expecting to be set free from bondage to glory, and groaning and suffering together. The quadruple description deepens the impression of the crea-

\textsuperscript{100} Cf. Tobin, \textit{Paul’s Rhetoric in Its Contexts}, 288-89. Tobin assumes that Paul’s framework in this passage is developed from his inclusive concept in 1 Cor 15:20-28, 42-49, and 50-57. Nevertheless, such an opinion seems to make a wrong direction regarding Paul’s emphasis. The language of future glory is not Paul’s focus here but rather the basis of his discussion of the present life in struggle.

\textsuperscript{101} Stuhlmacher, \textit{Romans}, 137-41.

\textsuperscript{102} To put it another way, this passage is made of nine Greek sentences: vv. 18, 19, 20-21, 22-23, 24, 25, 26-27, 28, 29-30.

\textsuperscript{103} Cranfield, \textit{Romans I: 1-8}, 410.

\textsuperscript{104} James D. G. Dunn, \textit{The Theology of Paul the Apostle} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 466-72.

\textsuperscript{105} Moo, \textit{Romans}, 514.
tion’s groaning. The only hope for the natural world is the glorious freedom of God’s children whose status is the key to an understanding of God’s salvation.106

In the second place, Paul points out the fact that the identity as God’s children does not excuse Christians from sharing the groaning of every creature (Rom 8:23-25). Another rhetorical trio is used by Paul to make prominent the conflict between present struggle and future deliverance. The trio contains awaiting eagerly the redemption of the body, hoping for a salvation unseen, and waiting with patience.107 Here another metaphor appears when Paul states τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντος (“having the first fruits of the Spirit,” v. 23).108

Moreover, Paul acutely refers to another fact that the Christians’ weakness has been plaguing their prayer (Rom 8:26).109 Here Paul uses for the third time a word belonging to the semantic field of “groaning” (στεναγμοῖς ἀλαλήτως, “with unexpressed groans,” cf. vv. 22, 23), characteristic for rhetorical παρονομασία (“words that sound like”).110 The parallel threefold groaning reflects that the passage from suffering to glory is full of struggling, but not fatal.111 In addition to guaranteeing future adoption (v. 23), the Spirit’s help through interceding for Christians is the vital element for their perseverance due to God’s comprehension of what the Spirit urges and desires (Rom 8:27).112

Although the life during the period of waiting the fulfillment of adoption is characterized by conflict, groaning and travail, Paul ensures his readers about their status and future glory as God’s beloved children. Romans 8:28-30 reveals God’s sovereignty, providence and eternal plan for the saints.113 Paul points out that not only can all things, even hardships, become beneficial to the believers due to God’s divine purpose (v. 28), but also through a fivefold action, that is, foreknow, predestine, call, justify, and glorify, He assures His children a glorious destiny (vv. 29-30). In a similar way to the method of demonstration in Rom 5:3-5, here Paul builds an argumentative chain by repeating the principal word of each clause in the next, bringing the passage to a rounded end which is expressive of assurance.114

108 For a discussion of the relationship between first fruits and the Spirit, see Moo, Romans, 520.
110 Longenecker, Introducing Romans, 187.
113 Witherington, Romans, 226-27.
114 R. Dean Anderson, Jr., Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), s.v.
More noteworthy is the use of aorist for these five verbs. Strictly speaking, God’s glorification of His children is still a not yet completed object in hope. Nevertheless, in Paul’s thought the decision to glorify the believers, made by God, is promising its consummation.

The segmentation of Rom 8:18-30 we display above (e.g., in Diagram 3-3) is commonly seen. Even so, another dimension of observation is helpful to enhance our knowledge of Paul’s train of thought here. If οὐκ ἄξιος (“not worthy,” v. 18) could be regarded as an attitude towards present sufferings taken by the believers who are helped by the dominant Spirit through His personal presence, then the threefold focus of Rom 8:18-30 could be portrayed in three simultaneous and interwoven flows of thought as illustrated in Diagram 3-4 at the end of this section.

In rough, such a classification is not an absolutely clear division, for instance, the prepositional phrase δι᾽ ὑπομονῆς ἀπεκδεχόμεθα. (“with perseverance we wait eagerly for it,” Rom 8:25b) could imply the distress faced by the believers, and the attitude they display in their awaiting God’s final adoption. We can see that Paul lays his emphasis on the depictions of the proper attitude taken by the believers to present sufferings which include the ones faced by the creation, and especially on the right awareness or full certainty of what God has done and is carrying on up to the ultimate redemption through Christ or the Spirit. Accordingly, the sufferings of this present age and the future glory prepared for His children mainly function as the backdrop of Paul’s argumentation in Rom 8:18-30.

We can be fairly certain that the multifaceted work performed by the Holy Spirit is the emphasis Paul places in Rom 8. If the Spirit functions as a guide, leading the believers through present tribulations into future glory, their identity as God’s adopted children is the pivot on which the Spirit activates His task. In sum, Paul emphasizes in Rom 8:1-11 that the indwelling Spirit fulfills the profound and positive impact on believers. Furthermore, he elaborates the way the Spirit accomplishes it through a four-fold performance of the Spirit in Rom 8:12-30 (guidance, witness bearing, guarantee and intercession). The key concept proposed to link up all the Spirit’s work is adoption, through which the believers are continually renewed and strengthened in the face of present sufferings till their ultimate redemption.

“ἐποικοδόμησις” (“building on”), 57-58; Anderson, Ancient Rhetorical Theory, 233.
115 Here the aorist “views the action as a whole … It describes the action in summary fashion;” see Wallace, Greek Grammar, 557 (italics author’s).
116 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 433.
117 Cf. sec. 4.3.1 “A further investigation of the main theme and the structure of Romans 8:18-30.”
118 For a more detailed analysis, see sec. 4.3 “The very personal presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:18-30).”
119 Anderson, Ancient Rhetorical Theory, 233.
8:17b (co-suffering with Christ) → co-glorification with Christ

↑8:18 (18a2) Present sufferings (18a1) are nothing → (18b) in hope

↑τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ
↑οὐκ ἄξια
↑πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν

dόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς

Rom 8:18

18a1 Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι
↑οὐκ ἄξια 18a2 τὰ παθήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ
↑πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν
↑ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς.

18b For I consider that
↑18a2 the sufferings of this present time 18a1 are not worthy

to be compared with the glory↑

↑that is to be revealed to us.

Present sufferings: Rom 8:18a2, 20a, 20b, 21a, 22a, 22b, 23b, 25b, 26b.

Attitude and awareness presented by the believers during the period of awaiting final redemption: Rom 8:18a1, 19a, 19c, 21b, 23a, 23b, 23c, 24a, 24b, 24c, 25a, 25b, 26a, 26c, 27a, 27b, 28a, 28b, 28c, 29a, 29b, 30a, 30b.

Future glory: Rom 8:18b, 19b, 20c, 21b, 25a, 30c.

Diagram 3-4 Three flows of thought in Romans 8:19-30 based on 8:18120 (underlining mine)
Chapter 4: Detailed analysis of Romans 8:12-30

The purpose of this long chapter is to explicate the exegetical significance of Rom 8:12-30. Our detailed explanation falls into three main sections. Due to the central and integral role of the Holy Spirit in Rom 8:12-30, Paul’s description of the Holy Spirit in the preceding context, especially the antagonistic relationship between the Holy Spirit and the flesh, will be first discussed (sec. 4.1 “4.1 Prologue: The focus on the Holy Spirit in Romans 6-8”). Then, the text of Rom 8:12-30 will be expounded through the following two main sections (sec. 4.2 “The very practical works of the Holy Spirit [Romans 8:12-17]” and 4.3 “The very personal presence of the Holy Spirit [Romans 8:18-30]”).

4.1 Prologue: The focus on the Holy Spirit in Romans 6-8

4.1.1 Introduction

After the macro-structural analysis of Rom 8:12-30 and its role in Romans in the previous chapter, a more detailed analysis of the immediate literary context and its relationship with this passage will now help us to grasp what Paul is going to explain in this passage. In Rom 8:1-11 Paul has proved clearly and unambiguously that the Holy Spirit is the most crucial key for the believers to experience what Christ has accomplished for them. Especially in overcoming the destructive effect the flesh brings, the Holy Spirit’s role is irreplaceable. Not only does Paul note the present work of the Holy Spirit (e.g., to make the requirement of the law fulfilled in the believers [Rom 8:4], or to help the believers to hold life and peace [Rom 8:6]), but also he states the Holy Spirit’s future achievement (bodily resurrection of the believers [Rom 8:11]). However, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a metaphorical expression which does not indicate a spatial relationship measured by physical terms but rather an intimate life relationship built on God’s grace.¹ Paul needs to provide more concrete explanations if the Holy Spirit’s life-transforming power could be felt practically instead of being discussed in the abstract. If Rom 8:1-11 makes known what the Spirit does and the reason why, Rom 8:12-30 is a further elucidation of how the Spirit works. Since the main opponent of the Holy Spirit has shifted onto the flesh in place of sin, death or the law in Rom 8, some character of the flesh needs to be clarified before entering specifically into the exegesis of Rom 8:12-30.

¹ Moo, Romans, 489-90.
4.1.2 The influence of the flesh

Douglas J. Moo propounds a theory that Rom 7:7-25 and 8:1-30 are advanced elaborations of Rom 7:5 and 7:6 respectively. Nevertheless, what he observes is only partially right. More precisely, Rom 7:5 and 7:6 receive their further explanation in Rom 7:7-13 and 7:14-8:30 correspondingly. Verse 7:5 describes the typical performance of a person who was not yet justified by faith in Christ. Both the imperfect tenses of ἦμεν (“we were”) and ἐνηργεῖτο (“were at work”) portray a state of the sinful passions’ effect in progress in past time from the viewpoint of Paul. When human beings are under the control of the flesh, death is the irrevocable consequence of its dominion over them. There is no possibility at all to defend oneself against the work of τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν (“the sinful passions,” Rom 7:5). However, at least in the passage Rom 7:14-25 we see Paul’s narration of the intense inner conflicts in the “I,” who expresses: συνήδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἐσω ἄνθρωπον (“For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man” [v. 22]), and ὁ δύτος ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοὐ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ (“I myself with my mind am serving the law of God” [v. 25b]). Such experiences apparently would not happen to a person in the flesh (cf. Rom 8:7). Another essential element is Paul’s extensive employment of present tense and first person singular subject in this passage that depict his present experience. Cranfield’s comment is to the point:

Paul’s use of the first person singular throughout vv. 14-25 reflects not only his desire to state in a forceful and vivid manner what is generally true—in this case, of Christians—but also his sense of his own deep personal involvement in what he is saying.

Cranfield believes that in drawing out the common truth Paul is making known publicly the truth connected with himself. Nevertheless, many scholars do not accept the theory that the “I” in Rom 7:7-13 and 7:14-25 could be a description of the general experience of the regenerate believers before and after justification respectively as well as of Paul’s autobiographical reflection. The major objections are based on

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2 For a general analysis of Paul’s train of thought regarding Rom 7-8, see sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39.”
3 Moo, Encountering the Book of Romans, 132. Such an understanding of the structural function of Rom 7:5 and 7:6 is shared by many other scholars; see, e.g., Stuhlmacher, Romans, 104, who suggests that Rom 7:5 and 7:6 are further explained by Rom 7:7-25a and 8:(1)2-17 respectively.
4 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 543; Jewett, Romans, 437. The Greek text of Rom 7:5 reads: ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τῇ διά τοῦ νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς ἐμέσις ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ καρποφορήσας τῷ θανάτῳ (“While we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.”) (underlining mine).
5 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 347.
6 Ibid., 344.
7 Among others, see Jan Lambrecht, S.J., The Wretched “I” and Its Liberation: Paul in Romans 7 and
their recognizing the pervasive spirit of defeatism all over this passage, especially in Rom 7:14-25, of which the failure-oriented consciousness is not supposed to be applied to the redeemed Christians. Besides, some of Paul’s statements cannot be true of real Christians. Paul claims that ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινος εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν (“but I am of flesh, sold into bondage to sin” [v. 14b]), αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας (“making me a prisoner of the law of sin” [v. 23]), and Ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν νοῦ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας (“So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin”[v. 25b]). Paul’s descriptions are apparently contradictory to his portrayals of the believers in Romans 6:5-7; 7:6 and 8:2. However, the proponents of these opinions mentioned above seem to ignore the fact that πλειονῶς (singular in Romans, see Romans 12:1 and 13:12) and living a new life will be a natural process. That is why his indication of new status Nor does he sin’s power through the law and the human flesh (προς ἀποκατάστασιν καὶ ἁγιάσματι, as to salvation and sanctification) are granted by God in Christ and behavior. According to Paul’s argument, Christian spirituality is not supposed to the redeemed Christians. Besides, some of Paul’s statements cannot be true of real Christians. Paul claims that σάρκινοι (“fleshly,” pl.) and νήπιοι ἐν Χριστῷ (“childlike [pl.] in Christ”) are used in a parallel manner by Paul as his evaluation for the immature believers in the Corinthian church (1 Cor 3:1). Paul’s following elucidation in 1 Cor 3:3 clearly indicates that he is admonishing the Christian addressees for their disappointing behavior. There he uses σαρκικοί (the variant reading of σάρκινοι) twice to describe them. What deserves notice is that the negation adverb οὐχί that Paul uses in the question of this phrase is to expect an affirmative answer to his judgment about the secular behavior of the Corinthian believers. Therefore, to say Christians are of flesh is not without precedent for Paul.

In fact, the disagreement among scholars about the definition of the first person Paul uses in Rom 7:7-25 most likely comes from the confusion over Christian status and behavior. According to Paul’s argument, Christian spiritual positions such as justification and sanctification are granted by God in Christ by grace through faith only. Such spiritual statuses guarantee that sin and death, being originally the dominating power over human beings, were replaced by grace and righteousness after conversion. However, Paul never promises the vanishing of the threat and attack of sin’s power through the law and the human flesh (σάρξ) after justification by faith. Nor does he assume that the believers’ refusing to obey the passions of their bodies and living a new life will be a natural process. That is why his indication of new status

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8 (Leuven: Peeters, 1992), 84-85. For a more detailed analysis concerning Paul’s use of the first person singular in Romans, see Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 342-47.

8 The Greek text reads: Κλείσω, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἠδυνήθην λαλήσαι ὡς ἡμῖν ὡς πνευματικοῖς ἀλλὰ ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ (“And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babies in Christ” [1 Cor 3:1], emphasis mine).

9 The Greek text reads: ἔτι γὰρ σαρκικοὶ ἐστε, ὅπως γὰρ ἐν ὑμῖν ἐξελθεῖ τοῖς ἐρωτικοῖς, σαρκικοὶ, ἐστε καὶ κατὰ ἀνθρώπων παραπάτετε (“for you are still fleshly, and you are not walking like mere men?” [1 Cor 3:3], emphasis mine).

10 Ibid.; also see BDAG, s.v. “σαρκικός,” 2.

11 Cf. BDF §427.(2).

12 The Roman Christians were called saints (κλητοί ἁγίοις) by Paul in Rom 1:7 (also cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 2 Cor 1:1; Phil 1:1; 4:21-22; and Phlm 1:5).
is always immediately followed by the pattern of his earnest exhortations. The fact is that so long as the human body exists, it becomes the instrument of sin and is a way of forcing humans to be subjected to sinful nature; even the most mature believers are not immune to such temptation. As soon as the physical flesh is utilized by sin, it becomes sinful flesh. The flesh mentioned in Romans 7:5, 18 and 25 has such special reference. In brief, the life Paul describes in Rom 7:7-13, in which sin easily becomes the dominant ruling power through some agency (the law and the flesh), will continue to happen to the believers, if they do not always live a Spirit-empowered life, as it is described in Rom 7:14-25.

Before conversion to Christ humans cannot help but obey the flesh through which all humanity like slaves are completely controlled by their single cruel master sin. There is no other choice, the only end of this kind of obedience is death (cf. Rom 6:21). An intense conflict between the willingness to do good and the act in obedience to the body’s desire inside the ungenerated persons would be rare. To most humans, the conflict, if any, will soon be replaced by submitting to powerful sin without a fight, for the weakness of the flesh brings that result (cf. Rom 6:19b). Human failure at resisting sin is depicted by Paul with εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ (“to bear fruit for death,” Rom 7:5), ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον (“and I died,” Rom 7:10) and ἀπέκτεινον (“it killed [me],” Rom 7:11). These aorist tenses indicate that death is a foregone conclusion to any person under sin’s dominion. Even the prohibitions of Jewish law and Gentiles’ relying on their conscience cannot withstand the attack by sin (cf. Rom 2:14, 15). In the process of the utilization of the flesh by sin the law is jointly misused, functioning as an accomplice, even though it is holy, righteous, and good (Rom 7:12). The significance conveyed in Rom 7:5 is elucidated further in Rom 7:7-13. Most notably, Paul points out that sin is the real culprit behind the misuse of the members of the human body and the misapplication of the commandments of God, revealing its sinfulness beyond measure (γένηται καθ’ ὑπερβολὴν ἀμαρτωλός, lit., “it might become utterly sinful,” Rom 7:13c).

4.1.3 Simul justus et peccator

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13 For example, there are five imperatives in the exhortative passage of Rom 6:11-14. More noteworthy is that 32 out of all 48 imperatives of Romans appear in the exhortatory part of chapters 12-15 of this epistle.

14 BDAG provides an insightful explanation: “In Paul’s thought especially, all parts of the body constitute a totality known as σῶμας or flesh, which is dominated by sin to such a degree that wherever flesh is, all forms of sin are likewise present, and no good thing can live in the σῶμας,” see BDAG, s.v. “σῶμας,” 2. c. a (emphasis mine).

15 Cf. R. J. Erickson, “Flesh,” DPL 303-6. In theological issues Erickson divides the significance of flesh into two distinct groups: the flesh as a natural aspect of creation and the flesh as opposition to God.

16 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 372.
Sin is more than simply an irresistibly evil ruler for the unbelievers. After conversion to Christ the believers are still under threat of the power of sin. However, the believers do not have to comply with the authority of sinful desire, they may live an alternative lifestyle due to their new status. When “may” is stressed, it means that the believers may choose to be obedient to the order of the flesh, relapsing into the old way of living, or to serve the law of God, doing what is good. An inner conflict between the willingness to do good deeds and to satisfy the fleshly desire is bound to arise and will last for life. Its tension becomes a frequent occurrence within the believers, the present tense employed by Paul through Rom 7:14-25 confirms it. Moreover, the more mature the believer is, the more intense the conflict will be. Paul does not intend to sugarcoat the condition of the believers. Considering the power of sin, there can be little expectation of the believers to be victorious in the conflict without God’s help. During constant struggles, Paul realizes that apart from our Lord Jesus Christ, the believers’ hard situation will be the same as the situation of the unbelievers, and that only by relying on Christ can the believers be delivered from their body which is subject to death (Rom 7:24b-25a). Yet, how Christ helps the believers to overcome the misdeeds of the flesh will not be made known until Rom 8.

Martin Luther realizes the truth of what is described in Rom 7:14-25 and provides a discerning perspective: *simul justus et peccator* (“at the same time a righteous and a sinner”). His observation reflects the reality that even Christians are inclined to do something to sin against God despite their justified status before God. In Rom 7:14-25 Paul gives a very vivid description of such fighting within ordinary believers, including himself, to reveal that its underlying pessimism is out of the sense of powerlessness to the power of sin when believers are not empowered by the Holy Spirit. Moo correctly suggests that if Rom 7:5 speaks about the past situation from which the believers are freed, 7:6 tells of the new condition the believers enjoy resulting from that freedom. In Rom 7:5, Paul states that our past unredeemed situation was characteristic of the active work of sinful passions through the law and hence bearing fruit that led to death. Being released from the law and its negative influence is Paul’s emphasis in Rom 7:6a, which affirms a radical shift of the status of the believers. However, the interpretation of the infinitive phrase δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος (“we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter”) following ὀστε (“so that”) in Rom 7:6b is debatable. Takamitsu Muraoka considers that either of its two possibilities of final (purpose, e.g., NEB: to

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18 Moo, *Encountering the Book of Romans*, 123.
serve) and consecutive (result, e.g., RSV: so that we serve) expression would be acceptable.\textsuperscript{20} C. F. D. Moule also considers the dividing line between purpose and consequence for the ὧστε clause in Rom 7:6 to be vague.\textsuperscript{21} Nevertheless, many scholars believe that the connotation of the ὧστε infinitive construction in Rom 7:6 belongs to actual result.\textsuperscript{22} Despite their consensus, a further definition of what “actual result” really means has been lacking. Besides, some scholars’ interpretation tends toward an intended result, which is regarded as purpose by Ernest D. Burton,\textsuperscript{23} making Rom 7:6b known as imperative mood.\textsuperscript{24}

Generally speaking, the ὧστε clause of Rom 7:6b is considered as an actual performance of the believers’ life or a requirement and anticipation to them rather than their transformation of status after being made free from the law’s condemnation. Moo assumes that it means that “believers are now actually serving ‘in newness of Spirit and not in oldness of letter.’”\textsuperscript{25} According to his understanding of the contextual argument, including Paul’s awareness of the fact of the believers’ continued sinning in Rom 7:7-25 and their need to be exorted to live by faith in Rom 12:1-15:13, Cranfield supposes that Rom 7:6b depicts Paul’s urging believers to walk according to the Spirit in view of their Christian identity. Furthermore, Cranfield presumes that Paul’s insight in Rom 6:15-23 is reflected in Rom 7:6b, which indicates a Spirit-dominated life style of slavery under God.\textsuperscript{26} In other words, Cranfield interprets Rom 7:6 through the indicative (statement of reality)-plus-imperative (statement of command) pattern that is deemed to be the basic structure of Paul’s ethics.\textsuperscript{27} NKJV

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\item \textsuperscript{23} Ernest de Witt Burton, \textit{Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek}, 3rd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1898), 150.
\item \textsuperscript{24} Some scholars who support such an interpretation will be introduced in the following paragraph.
\item \textsuperscript{25} Moo, \textit{Romans}, 421n65 (emphasis added).
\item \textsuperscript{27} Michael Parsons defines this pattern as follows: “By ‘indicative’ we have in mind the fact that the new life in Christ is a work of God; it finds its origin in the death and resurrection of the Lord and comes into being through the work of the Holy Spirit. The believer is thus a new creation; a member of Christ; a temple of the Holy Spirit; he is regenerated, and so on. By ‘imperative’ we mean that the apostle also indicates that the new life thus given is to be continually manifested and worked out by the Christian Believer,” see Michael Parsons, “‘Being Precedes Act: Indicative and Imperative in Paul’s Writing,’” in \textit{Understanding Paul’s Ethics: Twentieth–Century Approaches}, ed. Brian S. Rosner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 217-47, here 217, 234. For a more detailed development of the indicative-plus-imperative pattern in Pauline thought, see William D. Dennison, “Indicative and Imperative: The Basic Structure of Pauline Ethics,” \textit{CTJ} 14 (1979): 55-78; Volker Rabens, “‘Indicative and Imperative’ as the Substructure of Paul’s Theology-and-Ethics in Galatians?” in \textit{Galatians and Christian Theology: Justification, the Gospel, and Ethics in Paul’s Letter}, ed. Mark W. Elliot et al. (Grand Rapids: Eerd-
even uses imperative mood “so that we should serve” to make an anticipated purpose explicit.\textsuperscript{28} Not surprisingly, Karl Barth calls Rom 7:6b “the imperative of grace (Rom 6:22);”\textsuperscript{29} and Günther Bornkamm regards it as “the new conduct” which has been included with the new being.\textsuperscript{30}

Though “the imperatives grounded in indicative” model could be applied suitably to explain many Pauline texts,\textsuperscript{31} there are textual evidences to suggest that Rom 7:6 is an exception to this model. The infinitive δουλεύειν in Rom 7:6b is used by Paul in imagery, denoting that the new status of the believers results from the change of their master.\textsuperscript{32} NRSV properly conveys the believers’ entirely new position: “so that we are \textit{slaves} not \textit{under} the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit” (Rom 7:6b, emphasis mine). Jewett takes a similar view in his comment on Rom 7:6b: “Paul employs the language of slavery to depict \textit{the status of believers}: ὡστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς (‘that we might serve as slaves’).”\textsuperscript{33} In addition, the other two cognate forms of the verb δουλεύω in the immediate context express a comparable concept respectively (Rom 6:6; 7:25b).\textsuperscript{34} The conjugated forms of the verb δουλεύω occur seven times in Romans (6:6; 7:6, 25; 9:12; 12:11; 14:18; 16:18); five of them (i.e., except 12:11; 14:18) express the status or relationship to which the humans are related as slaves. Indeed, a double indicative pattern of Rom 7:6 is more consistent with Paul’s train of thought.

Romans 7:5 recapitulates the situation of the believers before their conversion, bracketing together the law and the main culprits, the flesh, sin and death, which doom all humans to destruction definitely without any exception. The strong contrast represented by ὅτε γὰρ..., νῦν δὲ... (“for while…” [Rom 7:5], “but now…” [Rom 7:6]) indicates a revolutionary change of the believers’ position before God through the body of Christ (cf. Rom 7:4). The new status is characterized by a broken relationship with the law in which the believers had been kept captive, and by a new standing on which the believers could choose an alternative servitude in the new way of the Holy Spirit rather than serve the obsolete letter of the law. Before making ur-

\textsuperscript{28} The translation reads: “so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not \textit{in} the oldness of the letter” (Rom 7:6b NKJV, italics original).
\textsuperscript{29} Karl Barth, \textit{The Epistle to the Romans}, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (1933; pbk., London: Oxford University Press, 1968), 239.
\textsuperscript{32} See BDAG, s.v. “δουλεύω,” 1. b.
\textsuperscript{33} Jewett, \textit{Romans}, 438 (emphasis mine).
\textsuperscript{34} The text reads: τὸῦ μηκέτι δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ (“that we should no longer be slaves to sin,” Rom 6:6c); Ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοῒ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας (“So then, with my mind I am a slave to the law of God, but with my flesh I am a slave to the law of sin,” Rom 7:25b NRSV; “So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin,” Rom 7:25b NIV). Cf. BDAG, s.v. “δουλεύω,” 2. b.
gent appeals for action, namely imperatives, Paul intends to clarify the actual situation of the believers. A transforming lifestyle is not an inevitably normal result after justification for the believers. As a matter of fact, a furious struggle will be lasting a lifetime between choosing to be submissive to the Spirit and to the flesh. The space of the text devoted further to depict the flesh (and the power behind it) versus Spirit conflict (Rom 7:7-8:30) highlights its significance and clarifies the impact of the new status stated in Rom 7:6 on believers. Even more striking is the extent of the description of the struggle which occurs on the believers (Rom 7:14-8:30). Paul only dedicates a short paragraph to portray the inescapable death for all who are not in Christ due to the deception of sin, even though the law is beneficial for them in nature (Rom 7:7-13). The double description of the contradiction between wishing to do what is right and the actual doing (Rom 7:14-17, 18-20) as well as its closer analysis (Rom 7:21-25) is the longest and most in-depth account on this issue found in the Pauline letters. To unbelievers, death is the inevitable consequence under the absolute dominance of sin. Yet, to the believers, death is not the necessarily ultimate result. During the process of struggling between the mind and the flesh, no matter how frustrating the believers might experience their situation, there is still hope of subduing the law of sin (Rom 7:25a). In Rom 7:6, Paul points out the new status of the believers, nevertheless anticipating a continuing conflict in their choice of serving between the past master and the present one (Rom 7:6b). Paul reminds his readers of this unavoidable fact in Rom 7:25b by the antithesis between the law of God and the law of sin. The present tense of the Greek verb δούλευω has demonstrated a repeatedly necessary strife in the believers’ life. Paul does not reveal the decisive factor in overcoming the inner fight until Rom 7:25a where he specifies and identifies it: it is Jesus Christ, our Lord. In addition, the details of the key to rescuing the believers from τὸ σῶμα τοῦ θανάτου τοῦτου (“the body of this death,” Rom 7:24) are presented only in Rom 8.

4.1.4 The antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit

After employing marked contrasts between sin and righteousness (or God [Rom 6:13], obedience [Rom 6:16]), law and grace (Rom 6:14, 15), death and righteousness as well as lawlessness and sanctification (Rom 6:19), Paul begins to utilize widely in Rom 8:1-30 the antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit. Not only does Paul sum up all previous antitheses in such a direct opposition between the flesh and the Spirit, but he also fully explores the way that the Spirit prevails over the flesh and its application on Christian life. Entering into Rom 8, Paul maintains his argument on the im-

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35 James W. Thompson, _Moral Formation according to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics_ (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 146
36 Jewett, _Romans_, 436.
pact of the renewed position of Christians. Interestingly, there are only thirteen occurrences of imperative mood found in the first twelve chapters (Rom 3:4; 6:11, 12, 13 [twice], 19; 11:9, 10 [twice], 18, 20 [twice], 22), accounting for only nearly 21 percent out of a total of 62 similar type occurrences in Romans. Four of them refer to God’s work (Rom 3:4; 11:9, 10 [twice]). Another four relate to the attitude of Gentile Christians to Jews (Rom 11:18, 20 [twice], 22). Only the five examples appearing in Rom 6 deal with Christian behavior, but those imperatives are regarded as general exhortations in preference to particular ones. None of the imperative instances appears in the discussion of the flesh versus Spirit issue. It implies that Paul’s emphasis in Rom 7-8 is still on the indicative perspective, to be exact, the nature of the new life resulting from God’s redemptive work in Christ through the Holy Spirit.37

Romans 8:1-30 responds directly to Rom 7:25a. Paul gives the reason in Rom 8:1-30 for his deep gratitude to God for experiencing deliverance through Jesus from the mortal body, which is subject to sin and death. What this paragraph makes clear is that the Holy Spirit takes the main role, whose major opponent is the personified flesh. Paul’s argumentation consists of two parts: 1. The passage of Rom 8:1-11 gives a grand picture of what the Holy Spirit accomplishes and his explanation of the reason why the Spirit can overcome the flesh. 2. The passage of Rom 8:12-30 presents his elucidation of the way that the Spirit triumphs over the flesh in the long-running struggle of the believers. Paul’s emphasis in Rom 8:1-30 is that the Spirit brings about the effects of God’s soteriological accomplishment through Christ within the lives of the believers.38 In fact, Rom 6-7 have set the stage for introducing the role of the Holy Spirit in Rom 8:1-30. In Rom 5:12-21 Paul contends that through His act of righteousness Christ has saved all the believers from the status of condemnation under the tyranny of sin and death, which was caused by Adam, to the position of justification under the reign of grace. The accomplishment has historic and theological significances to all humankind. Paul further clarifies such a positional transformation in Rom 6-8 from various angles, but one coherent thought prevails: the resurrection of Christ from the dead ensures the believers the salvation status and future resurrection, but not a life with automatically renewed behavior. When Paul exhorts the believers not to let sin reign in their mortal body to make them obey its lusts (Rom 6:12), he is implying that they “stand before the choice between two modes of existence.”39 Under the ravages of the power of sin and death it is never an easy task to make the right choice, furthermore, as the believers’ life is continuously accompanied by struggles

39 Thompson, Moral Formation, 153.
and failures (cf. Rom 7:14-25). Nevertheless, Paul affirms that their decision depends on how aware they are of their new status or identity. The more superficial the recognition of the new status or identity is, the greater the possibility of failure is in their struggling. On the contrary, the deeper the appreciation of the new relationship between God and the believer, the higher is the likelihood of overcoming the flesh. It is with this background of his train of thought Paul brings in the role of the Holy Spirit who can lead the believers to victory in fighting against the flesh and the destructive power behind it.

In Rom 8:1-11 Paul encapsulates what he has emphasized in chapters 6-7 and provides his insight to solve the Christian plight of struggling out of the sinful flesh. Paul characterizes the Holy Spirit as a life-giver with ruling power (ὁ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς) in Rom 8:2, which serves as a key verse, extending the statement of Rom 7:6 and anticipating a summary expression of the main points from Rom 8:3-30. The life-giving ministry of the Holy Spirit is grounded in Christ’s atoning work portrayed concisely by Paul in Rom 8:3, which picks up the redemptive work of Christ that Paul defines in Rom 3:24-25; 4:25; 5:6-10; 6:3-10 and 7:4. Putting together the main opponents of Christ (incapable law, sinful flesh and sin) that belong to the old era under God’s condemnation, Paul seems to manifest again that where sin increased, grace presented in greater abundance (cf. Rom 5:20b). Not only so, but Paul also apparently uses Rom 8:3 to remind the believers of their complete break with the old master and of their new identity united with Christ’s death and resurrection. Christ’s achievement realized on the believers through the Holy Spirit has a strong influence over them. The empowering of the Holy Spirit set the believers free from the enslavement to sin and death. The aorist verb ἠλευθέρωσεν (set free) denotes a new status and reality that has resulted from the Spirit’s life-empowerment (Rom 8:2). Furthermore, the fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law becomes possible for those who live not according to the flesh but according to the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:4). The conjunction ἵνα and the subjunctive verb πληρωθῇ in Rom 8:4 express both the divine purpose and the result.

4.1.5 The fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law

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42 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 473.
Two issues in Rom 8:4, what the just requirement of the law (τὸ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου) is and how it might be fulfilled in us (πληρωθῇ ἐν ᾐμῖν), have long been a focus of debate among scholars.\(^ {43} \)

Following the conclusion of the research of H. W. M. van de Sandt,\(^ {44} \) Richard W. Thompson maintains that the just requirement is supposed to be “defined as love of neighbor.”\(^ {45} \) His main argumentation is based on the “striking similarities” between Rom 8:4 and Gal 5:13-16 as well as their very immediate context, proving that love of neighbor (in the Galatians text) is the fulfillment of the law (in the Romans text).\(^ {46} \) To add to its credibility, Thompson cites another text from Rom 13:8-10 as evidence that the singular “requirement” connotes love of neighbor instead of a general exhortation.\(^ {47} \) J. A. Ziesler and Francis Watson even identify the δικαίωμα as one particular ordinance of the law: “You shall not covet,” quoted from Exod 20:17 by Paul in Rom 7:7.\(^ {48} \) John A. Bertone considers their explanations “overly restrictive” due to lack of contextual clues that could attest Paul’s intention to make such applications in the believers’ life.\(^ {49} \) However, Schreiner supports those who read the term δικαίωμα as a connection to the law of loving neighbor or the command against covetousness because the former one “summarizes the moral norms of the law” and the latter one “embraces the moral norms of the law.”\(^ {50} \) Another solution comes from E. P. Sanders who suggests that τὸ δικαίωμα means a reduced law excluding “three of its requirements: circumcision, days and seasons, and dietary restrictions.”\(^ {51} \) The reason behind Sanders’ interpretation is his emphasis on Paul’s identity of the apostle to the Gentiles, who attempts to remove the commandments that differentiate Jews from Gentiles.\(^ {52} \)

Nonetheless, Paul does not confine his readers to Gentile converts only; his urging is for all Christians, Jewish Christians included. Sanders’ argument will create an im-

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\(^ {44} \) H. W. M. van de Sandt, “Research into Rom. 8:4a: The Legal Claim of the Law,” \( \text{Bijdr} \) 37 (1976): 252-69; here 267-69.

\(^ {45} \) Thompson, “How is the Law Fulfilled in Us?” 33; cf. also Jan Lambrecht and Richard W. Thompson, Justification by Faith: The Implication of Romans 3:27-31 (Wilmington, DE: Glazier, 1989), 62-64.

\(^ {46} \) Ibid., 32-33. The similarities, including the important notion of “spirit,” a high frequency of the spirit/flesh antithesis, same concepts of freedom, fulfillment, walking according to the spirit, and the negative views of the flesh, justify their being considered together.

\(^ {47} \) Ibid.


\(^ {49} \) John A. Bertone, The Law of the Spirit: Experience of the Spirit and Displacement of the Law in Romans 8:1-16, \( \text{SiBibLit} \) 86 (New York: Lang, 2005), 231. Dunn also remarks that the term δικαίωμα referring to the law of coveting appears “unnecessarily restrictive;” see Dunn, Romans 1-8, 423.

\(^ {50} \) Schreiner, Romans, 407.

\(^ {51} \) E. P. Sanders, Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 98-104.

\(^ {52} \) Ibid., 102-3. Dunn holds a similar viewpoint; see Dunn, Romans 1-8, 423.
pression that Paul seems to care more about Gentiles than about Jews. An alternative explanation given by Cranfield deserves consideration. He believes that Paul’s use of the singular δικαίωμα is to reveal a fact that the law’s requirements are fundamentally a unity, “the plurality of commandments being not a confused and confusing conglomeration but a recognizable and intelligible whole, the fatherly will of God for His children.”53 Nevertheless, the examples given in his footnote (Lev 19:18b; Deut 6:4f; Mic 6:8; Mark 12:28-34; Rom 13:9) reveal that in Cranfield’s mind there appears some categorical command, which can encapsulate or represent all the law’s requirements.54

Yet, these scholars provide no explanation of the reason why Paul does not specify what the single δικαίωμα is here if he has the same in mind as in Rom 13:8-10 or Gal 5:14. Besides, nor do they explain why Paul only emphasizes the second part of the double commandment of love (cf. Matt 22:37-40: Love God and love your neighbor), and never mentions the first part of it when he refers to fulfillment of the law.55 Even though they literally equate τὸ δικαίωμα with the command to love one’s neighbor, which is assumed to sum up the whole law, there is some missing link in need of clarification. When Paul stresses repeatedly his gospel message as the crucified Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:23 “but we preach Christ crucified;” 2:2 “I determined to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified”), this does not really mean that only the crucifixion is made known, excluding His resurrection and Second Coming.

One may notice that Paul is arguing for the overall relation between the Mosaic Law and the believers; hence, it is quite unlikely that he limits his argument to a particular demand. The tenth commandment forbidding covetousness quoted in Rom 7:7 deemed as an instance would be preferable to be considered as an exemplary representative of the law. Moreover, in view of the similar meaning in Paul’s usage of the singular phrase τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου (“the work of the Law,” Rom 2:15) and the plural phrase ἔργα νόμου (“the works of the Law,” Rom 3:20, 28), the terms singular τὸ δικαίωμα (Rom 1:32; 8:4) and plural τὰ δικαιώματα (Rom 2:26) are very likely interchangeable for Paul.56 Therefore, it would be more suitable to interpret τὸ δικαίωμα

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54 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 384n2.
56 BDAG sees the ἔργον in Romans 2:15 as a practical manifestation of action, similar to the ἔργα in Romans 3:20, 28, which denotes exhibition of moral character in deeds; nor does BDAG distinguish between the meaning of the singular and the plural of δικαίωμα; see BDAG, s.vv. “δικαιώμα,” “ἔργον.” Also see Stettler, “Paul, the Law and Judgement by Works,” 211. Stettler even states further that “the things of the law” (Rom 2:14), “the work of the law” (Rom 2:15), “the just requirement of the law” (Rom 2:26; singular in Rom 8:4) and “the commands of God” (1 Cor 7:19; cf. Rom 13:9) imply exactly the same: “They all refer to the Torah of Moses as it has been interpreted and fulfilled in its true meaning by the Messiah. Hence they mean an active doing of the Torah as it is summarized by the commandment to love God and one’s neighbour [sic].”
τοῦ νόμου as the righteous requirement of the law, which denotes in a collective sense the righteousness behind the timeless moral principles of the Mosaic Law, including its moral, civic and ceremonial parts.

Regarding the issue of the fulfillment of the law’s requirement, scholars are divided over whose obedience, Christian or Christ’s, could fulfill the righteous requirement of the law. Traditionally, the supporters of the side of Christ’s obedience are in a majority. Since many scholars regard πληροφορία as a divine passive due to the subject God and His work in the previous verse, they emphasize the divine agency behind the fulfillment of the law’s requirement. Byrne clarifies the “passivum divinum” by pointing out that the fulfillment Paul discusses here is “in no sense something achieved by Christians themselves, it is something which God, the author of all, works in us through the Spirit as a consequence of the Christ-event.”

Moo suggests that the passive form of πληροφορία (“might be fulfilled”) refers not to “something that we are to do” but to “something that is done in and for us.” Further, Moo indicates that owing to the flesh Christian defective obedience does not satisfy the perfect requirement of the law, which can occur only through Christ’s perfect obedience. By God’s mercy, the righteous obedience Christ earned is transferred to the believers through Christ’s work on the cross. Moo uses “interchange” to describe the transfer of righteous position between Christians and the crucified Christ.

Schreiner rigorously rejects such a fulfillment concept defined in forensic terms. He believes that the exclusion of Christian actual obedience is a wrong conclusion although “Paul does not envision believers keeping the law in their own strength.”

There are three reasons behind his insistence. First, the passive form of πληροφορία and the prepositional phrase ἐν ἡμῖν do not preclude human responsibility, even when God’s work is visualized. Secondly, the clause in Rom 8:4b with its participle

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57 cf. Thayer, s.v. “δικαίωμα.” Byrne’s definition is worth considering; he believes that the phrase refers to “what the law, in its totality, required of human beings, namely, righteousness, a life lived in faithful conformity to God’s will;” see Byrne, Romans, 237.


60 Thompson, “How is the Law Fulfilled in Us?” 34-35. The divine passive form is also called “theological passive.” In both opinions God is assumed as the obvious agent; see Wallace, Greek Grammar, 437; and Fitzmyer, Romans, 487.

61 Byrne, “Living out the Righteousness of God,” 569; also cf. Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’, 94.

62 Moo, Romans, 483 (italics author’s).

63 Ibid., 483-85.

64 For more explanation of “interchange,” see Moo, Romans, 483n63.

65 Schreiner, Romans, 404-5.

66 Schreiner draws a comparison between the passive of πληροφορία in Rom 8:4 and in 2 Cor 10:6, concluding from their similarity that “the use of πληροφορία embraces the idea of human obedience and at the same time stresses that such obedience is due to God’s work within believers;” see ibid., 405.
περιπατοῦσιν (“walking”) shows that the real Christian obedience is in Paul’s mind. Thirdly, the immediate context of Rom 7-8 supports the standpoint of the activity and obedience of the believers. Schreiner rightly points out that Paul is stressing not forensic realities but the result of the Spirit’s work in Christian life. In addition, the participial clause in Rom 8:4b further describes the character of ἡμῖν (“us”). Yet, he seems to analyze περιπατοῦσιν as an adverbial participle instead of an adjectival one, which actually functions as a substantive here due to its articular construction (τοῖς … περιπατοῦσιν, “those who … walk”). It must be noted that Paul is used to applying the substantival use of the adjectival participle, as he does in Rom 4:24b (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, “those who believe”) and Rom 8:5a (οἱ γὰρ κατά σάρκα δντεῖς, “for those who are according to the flesh”). Besides, a substantival participle will not lose its verbal aspect. Hence, Paul follows the status (e.g., Rom 8:3)-inspire-behavior (e.g., Rom 8:4) model which often appears in Romans from chapter 5 onwards, promoting Christian obedience as a result of Christ’s salvation. In other words, Paul argues that from the aspect of status the believers are reckoned by God to have completely fulfilled the law’s requirement because of Christ’s obedience on their behalf (Rom 8:3). From the aspect of deed the believers are strongly encouraged to live a life commensurate with their status (Rom 8:4a). We should notice that Paul likes to use the Greek verb περιπατέω (“walk”) figuratively to convey “the idea of how people conduct themselves.” Additionally, such an aim is achievable because of the leading role of the Holy Spirit who is fully participating in Christian life (Rom 8:2, 4b), just as the statement of Fleming Rutledge that “the new life in Christ, is only possible through the power of the third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit.”

Given that the accent of Rom 8:4 is on Christian conduct rather than the righteousness in juristic status terms, Paul does not refer to Christian perfectionism in per-

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67 Ibid., 405-6.
68 In Schreiner’s interpretation, the participle is defined as descriptive. Though semantically it is close to its substantival usage, Schreiner’s examining of the nuanced differences between his own understanding and that of other scholars (Moo, Fitzmyer, and Cranfield) shows a grammatical mistake in their analysis. This participle phrase is understood as conditional for Fitzmyer (provided we walk...), instrumental for Cranfield (by our walking...), they both apparently consider περιπατοῦσιν adverbial. Moo holds a similar view as Schreiner in this regard; they both do not specify that περιπατοῦσιν actually is a substantival participle. See ibid.; Fitzmyer, Romans, 488; Moo, Romans, 484; Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 385.
69 Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 619-20; BDF §413.
70 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 620.
71 Cf. McFadden, “The Fulfilment of the Law’s Dikaiōma,” 488-89. However, Christian status is more highlighted in Rom 5-8 than Christian behavior, which is Paul’s emphasis in Rom 12:1-15:13.
73 Fleming Rutledge, The Crucifixion: Understanding the Death of Jesus Christ (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015), 553 (emphasis original); besides, she makes an insightful explanation regarding Rom 8:3-4: “The righteous requirements of the Law have been met in him in order that the righteous requirements of the Law might be met fully in us” (553, emphasis original).
forming the law’s requirement.⁷⁴ The fulfillment of the law in the life of the believers should be interpreted as “bring to full expression,” that is, the believers carry out the law according to its true meaning.⁷⁵ Considering Paul’s insistence that justification by faith does not nullify the law but rather establishes it (Rom 3:31) as well as his exposition on the law of Christ (Gal 6:2), Paul’s perspective of the law must be well grounded in Jesus’ teaching concerning the law (cf. Matt 5:17-20).⁷⁶ Stuhlmacher believes that Paul’s encounter with the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus is the key to Paul’s radical change of his view of the law (cf. Gal 1:13-16; Acts 9:1-9; 22:1-10; 26:1-18).⁷⁷ In actual fact, Paul’s experience of the Holy Spirit during and after the Damascus event is also very crucial (Acts 9:17; cf. Acts 13:1-4, 9).⁷⁸ It is the work of the Holy Spirit that enables the believers to fulfil the righteous requirement of the law. Only when the believers live according to the Holy Spirit rather than the flesh (i.e., ὁ παλαιῶς ἄνθρωπος “the old self” Rom 6:6; cf. Eph 4:22; Col 3:9), the fulfillment of the law becomes assured.

### 4.1.6 The indwelling Spirit

Paul further makes clear in Rom 8:5-11 why such a fulfillment is certain, focusing on the role of the Spirit who brings the surpassing grace if the Spirit is dominant in Christian life. Strictly speaking, Paul does not yet elucidate here how the Spirit works in Christian life so that the believers can carry out the true meaning behind the requirements of the law. He places his emphasis on why, instead of how, such fulfillment is attainable,⁷⁹ expressing that his logic of argument refers to a positional concept rather than a behavioral one.⁸⁰ His way is to continue to expound the antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit introduced in Rom 8:2-3 and presented in verse 4b. To begin with, Paul states the sharp contrast between the living patterns, together with their results, of living according to the flesh and to the Spirit (Rom 8:5-6). Next, he gives further details respectively for the reason why the serious consequence of setting the mind on the flesh (Rom 8:7-8) and the blessed outcome of fixing the mind on the Spirit (Rom 8:9-11) will occur.

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⁷⁴ Harrison and Hagner, “Romans,” 131; Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 384.
⁷⁵ Cf. BDAG, s.v. “πληρόω,” 4. b.
⁷⁶ For a more detailed analysis of the close relationship between Paul’s conception of the law and that of Jesus, see Stuhlmacher, Romans, 122-28.
⁷⁷ Ibid., 126.
⁷⁸ For a further discussion about the relationship between Paul’s conversion/call and the Holy Spirit, see Finny Philip, The Origins of Pauline Pneumatology: The Eschatological Bestowal of the Spirit upon Gentiles in Judaism and in the Early Development of Paul’s Theology (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2005), 166-203; also cf. sec. 1.4.3 “The most likely material source of the adoption imagery in Paul: his Damascus road experience.”
⁷⁹ Cf. Ridderbos, Paul, 253-58; Matera, Romans, 194-96.
⁸⁰ Moo, Romans, 486.
By employing a variety of expressions, Paul portrays the special meaning of connection when the believers submit themselves to the ruling power of the flesh or the Spirit. Overall, Paul makes his point that the believers must be fully conscious of their redeemed identity, and that how the believers orientate their life will shape their future days and their eternal destiny. If they are according to the flesh as they were in the unregenerate situation, setting their mind on what is mortal and corruptible, eternal death will be the certain consequence of their life (Rom 8:5a, 6a). Paul points out the reason is that the fleshly way of thinking is hostility towards God, which will make them unwilling and unable to be subject to God’s law (Rom 8:7); nor can people with a carnal mind set please God (Rom 8:8). On the contrary, if the believers are according to the Spirit, being intent on what relates to the realm of the Spirit, namely to be spiritually minded, eternal life and peace surely will be theirs (Rom 8:5b, 6b). Besides, in Rom 8:9-11 Paul identifies the Spirit as the Spirit of God, who raised Christ Jesus from the dead (Rom 8:9a, 11a), and as the Spirit of Christ, to whom the ones who possess His Spirit belong (Rom 8:9b). The Holy Spirit’s residing in the believers is considered equivalent to the indwelling of Christ and God. “Spirit of God,” “Spirit of Christ,” “Christ” and “Spirit” are used interchangeably here. Paul communicates again a Trinitarian reality in Christian salvation and living as he does in Rom 1:2-4; 5:5-8; 7:4-6; 8:1-4, 12-17, 26-30; 14:16-18, and 15:16-19, 30. On the one hand, Paul describes that the Spirit dwells inside the believers (Rom 8:9a, 11c); on the other hand, the believers can own the Spirit (cf. Rom 8:9b). Both expressions are metaphorical in style, signifying a very close relationship between the Spirit and the believers. Physical death is inevitable for all human beings due to sin (cf. Rom 8:10b). However, on account of the Spirit’s indwelling the spiritual status of belonging to Christ is definite for the believers (Rom 8:9). Moreover, the indwelling of Christ guarantees the Spirit’s life-giving power demonstrated in the believers because of their position of justification (Rom 8:10ac). Not only so, but the believers also possess a promise of an eschatological resurrection granted by God who raised Christ Jesus from the dead, and will give life to the mortal bodies of the believers through his Spirit (Rom 8:11).

There is some controversy over the interpretation of πνεῦμα (human or divine) and δικαιοσύνη (forensic or ethical implication) in Rom 8:10. In this first class conditional verse, Paul states a real situation of the indwelling of Christ in contrast to that
without Christ’s Spirit limned in Rom 8:9b. The protasis-apodosis relationship of Rom 8:10 is a partial cause-effect one.85 Structurally, its apodosis is composed of two syntactically symmetrical clauses: τὸ μὲν σῶμα νεκρόν διὰ ἀμαρτίαν τὸ δὲ πνεῦμα ζωή διὰ δικαιοσύνην (lit., “though the body [is] dead because of sin, yet the spirit [is] life because of righteousness”). The μὲν … δὲ paired conjunctions seem to suggest that both σῶμα and πνεῦμα refer to an anthropological reading.86 Yet its context supports a Holy Spirit reading of τὸ πνεῦμα. For one thing, the focus of the passage of Rom 8:1-11 is on the role of the Holy Spirit, especially on the life-giving power of the Spirit which overcomes the influence of the flesh. Romans 8:10 continues this emphasis from verse 2 onwards.87 The Spirit is always closely connected with life by Paul (also cf. Rom 8:6b; Gal 6:8b), who never calls human spirit life.88 What is more, a “human body” reading does not necessarily correspond to a “human spirit” reading. If a human spirit understanding is preferable, then σῶμα νεκρόν (“body [is] dead”) in text is likely to match with πνεῦμα ζωήν (spirit [is] alive) in preference to πνεῦμα ζωή of the text, as Paul presents it in Rom 6:11.89 Most importantly, in Rom 8:11 a further elaboration of the connection between Jesus’ resurrection and the believers’ being made alive confirms a Holy Spirit viewpoint. It is through the indwelling Spirit that the promise of bodily transformation of the believers is concretized. Not only does the Spirit serve as an agent of God,90 but the Spirit shows his role focusing on the originator of the divine activity in life-giving, as the crucial role the Holy Spirit plays in


85 Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 682-83. Strictly speaking, “if Christ is in you” does not cause “the body [is] dead.” Just as Bruce’s note that “the Spirit is life because of righteousness” is the real apodosis to the conditional clause “if Christ is in you,” see Bruce, Romans, 164.

86 Among others, NASB; RSV; NAB; R. C. H. Lenski, The Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans (Minneapolis: Augsburg, [1961]), 512; Fitzmyer, Romans, 490-91.


88 Grant R. Osborne, Romans, IVPNTC 6 (Downers Grove, IL: InterVasity Press, 2004), 201.

89 The Greek text reads: ἡμᾶς λογίζεσθε ἐναργῶς [ἐναργῶς] νεκροῖς μὲν τῇ ἀμαρτίᾳ ζῶντας δὲ τῷ θεῷ … (“consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God…”); Rom 6:11, emphasis mine.

90 Some scholars oppose the agency role view of the Spirit, adopting the variant reading with the accusative διὰ τὸ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα (“because of his Spirit who dwells,” Rom 8:11), instead of the genitive διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεῦματος (“through his Spirit who dwells”). Among others, see Fee, God’s Empowering Presence, 543n205, 552. Usually, when different readings have similarly strong external evidence, internal evidence becomes crucial in determining how the original text was formulated. In this case, Fee regards the internal evidence, Paul’s habitual use of the genitive when διὰ modifies a verb for resurrection (Rom 6:4; 1 Cor 6:14), as the reason why the original reading with the accusative was deliberately altered to the genitive, see ibid. It seems that Fee applies excessively the principle: the more difficult reading is to be preferred. However, Cranfield provides an argument with detailed points, which are more reasonable and convincible, to support the reading with the genitive, though there is “no other Pauline passage explicitly ascribing to the Spirit a role in the resurrection of the dead,” see Cranfield, Romans I, 391-92, 392n2. Metzger believes that the textual evidence of the genitive with the combination of widespread text-types is strong enough to be considered as original by UBS4, see Bruce M. Metzger, A Textual Commentary on the Greek Testament, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2001), 12*-14*, 456.
pouring God’s love into the hearts of Christians in Rom 5:5.\textsuperscript{91}

As regards the interpretation of the prepositional phrase διὰ δικαιοσύνην in Rom 8:10, “because of righteousness [God granted]” compared favorably with “for the sake of righteousness [demonstrated by moral behavior].”\textsuperscript{92} The logic of Paul’s argument in Rom 8:5-11 is not to make a contrast between the life according to the flesh and the Spirit, but to focus on explaining why the believers are able to walk in newness of life (Rom 6:4) and fulfill the righteous requirement of the law (Rom 8:4) even under threat from the flesh. The point at issue is whether the believers are quite certain about the fact that their status has been transformed because of Christ’s redemption, which results in the Spirit’s indwelling.

We should not overlook the Old Testament background behind the Spirit’s role in the believers’ life. Although there is no text of the Old Testament directly quoted in Rom 8:1-11, many of Paul’s expressions can trace their roots back to predictions of the prophets. The group of words, including “the Spirit of life” (Rom 8:2a), “the mind set on the Spirit is life” (Rom 8:6b), and “the Spirit is life” (Rom 8:10b NRSV), denote that the Spirit brings or means life. They echo Ezek 37:14a:

Ezek 37:14a

καὶ ἔδωκαν ὑμῖν τὴν ζωὴν (LXX)
And I will put My Spirit within you, and you will come to life.

καὶ δόσω τὸ πνεῦμά μου εἰς ὑμᾶς καὶ ζήσεσθε. (LXX)
And I will give my spirit into you, and you shall live (NETS).

Likewise, the concept of Rom 8:4 regarding obedience to the law’s requirement thanks to the Spirit finds its expression in Ezek 36:27:

Ezek 36:27

καὶ ἐθέσατε ὑμᾶς εἰς τὰ νόμον καὶ νόμους (LXX)
And I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.

καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα μου δόσω ἐν ὑμῖν καὶ ποιήσω ἵνα ἐν τοῖς δικαιώμασιν μου πορεύθησαι καὶ τὰ κρίματά μου φυλάξησθε καὶ ποιήσητε. (LXX)

\textsuperscript{91} Cf. BDAG, s.v. “διὰ,” 4. b. β.

\textsuperscript{92} Contra Bertone who insists that διὰ δικαιοσύνην should be understood in an ethical or a purposive sense, because in Rom 8 “Paul underscores the role of the Spirit in the behavioral aspects of the believer’s life.” Nonetheless, Bertone does not explain why there is not any imperative in chapter 8; see Bertone, \emph{The Law of the Spirit}, 246-53.
And I will give my spirit in you and will act so that you walk in my statutes and keep my judgments and perform them (NETS).

The theme of the indwelling Spirit in both verses of Ezekiel mentioned above is also manifested in Rom 8:9-11. The Spirit God places within his people becomes the indispensable impetus to Torah obedience.93 The way God built his people in the past occurs in a renewed manner (i.e., “sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh” Rom 8:3b) in the Roman believers as a confirmation that His Spirit continues to play a vital role in them.94

Viewed in this light, the Holy Spirit is a life-giver who empowers believers to lead a life in a manner worthy of their status granted by God. Moreover, God through the indwelling Spirit confirms the hope of future resurrection of the believers. After Paul has provided a challenging but hopeful perspective for the believers from now on to eternity, he is ready to demonstrate how the Holy Spirit puts God’s promise into practical effect in the believers’ life. It is the details of the implementation of the Holy Spirit’s work we will turn to in the subsequent sections.

4.1.7 Prospect of the following examination

A strongly interrelated connection between the role of the Spirit and the passage of Rom 8:12-30 emerges after our analysis of its immediate context. The passage of Rom 8:12-30 not only makes a powerful conclusion for Rom 6:1-8:30 and plays a vital role in the mainly doctrinal part of Romans (chs. 1-8),95 but also provides a solid theological foundation for the following issues Paul is going to deal with. Up to this passage, what Paul intends to solve is the crisis that the justified believers are still facing a potential failure in life under the inducement of sin through the flesh. His main solution is to demand obedience from Christians to the indwelling Spirit due to their being granted crucial identity and status as God’s beloved children. It is this awareness of dignity from adoption that can really bring them strength and willingness to follow the Spirit even in great struggling. The contents of such awareness is similar to what Samuli Siikavirta calls “cognitive language” in Rom 6-8,96 which is more than the rationalism indicates. Siikavirta borrows from Rabens’ remark, pro-

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94 Gordon D. Fee, Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 15-17, 42-44.
95 For a more detailed division of Rom 1-8, see sec. 3.2.1 “The division of Romans 1:1-8:39.” For a review of Paul’s argumentation in Rom 6-8, see sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39.” Besides, Rom 8:31-39 functions as the conclusion of Rom 1-8, forming a very important immediate context, but will be not investigated in detail, see sec. 3.2.5.
posing that for Paul the cognitive knowledge signifies “knowing Christ intimately and by direct acquaintance (Phil 3:8; 2 Cor 2:14; 4:6; cf. 4:4; 5:16).” Accordingly, Siikavirta claims: “Likewise, the knowledge of the identity as sons of God is not merely something cognitive, but is also existential and, therefore, empowering.”

In order to make his reasoning more persuasive and coherent, Paul utilizes lots of argumentative techniques which permeate Rom 8:12-30. Beginning with an inductive conclusion which is composed with flesh/Spirit antithesis style, Paul uses the juxtaposition of contrasting concepts in parallel structure to illustrate the decision making of the believers in a prominent way (Rom 8:13). Besides, in the figure of speech in Rom 8:12 (ὁφελέσαται ἐσμέν τι σαρκί, “we are under obligation, not to the flesh”), Paul uses the rhetorical “litotes” to give more importance to the new identity. The Greek γάρ, appearing twice afterwards (Rom 8:14, 15), shows that Paul applies a deductive way of enthymeme to make further explanation. In Rom 8:15 another antithetical expression, of adoption versus slavery, with a metaphorical function appears for enhancing the impression of contrast. In Rom 8:12-17, Paul also combines a number of familial language terms concerning sonship to enhance the significance of its main theme. We can see that Paul even arranges such key words to create a cumulative effect of climax in Rom 8:17.

The main theme of adoption and the employment of familial terms in the preceding passage are carried forward in Rom 8:18-30. This passage develops thoroughly the

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98 Ibid., 128.
100 Ibid., 404, *litotes* (λιτότης, “simplicity”) is a form of meiosis, denoting understatement used ironically, especially using a negative to affirm the opposite or to give emphasis (cf. Acts 21:39; Rom 1:16).
101 The Greek γάρ is a “conjunction used to express cause, inference, or continuation or to explain.” Cf. BDAG, s.v. “γάρ.”
102 See Corbett and Connors, Classical Rhetoric, 52-60. When Paul expresses: “If by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God” (Rom 8:13b-14, emphasis mine), it implies that the missing premise is “those who are sons of God will live.” Likewise, when Paul argues: “All who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you have not received the Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, Abba! Father!” (Rom 8:14-15, emphasis and the ET with underlining mine), the missing premise is “those who cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ are sons of God.” Deductive and inductive reasoning belong to rational appeal, one kind of skillful arguments. For a further discussion, see sec. 4.2.3.1 “A closely connected structure of Romans 8:13b-15.”
104 Corbett and Connors, Classical Rhetoric, 393-94, in which climax is defined as “arrangement of words, phrases, or clauses in an order of increasing importance,” as well as “a scheme of repetition…. it is a continued anadiplosis involving three or more members” (italics original). Also cf. Anderson, Glossary, s.v. “ἀνάδιπλωσις.”
105 Jewett, Romans, 506; Watson, Paul, His Roman Audience, 166-73.
implication of Rom 8:17b and 8:18 which are structurally parallel. In dealing with the
tension between present sufferings and future hope in Rom 8:18-30, Paul further il-
ustrates with personification style which is reserved for texts designed to stir emotion
and applied on creation (Rom 8:19-22) and the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:26). 106 Another
metaphor, “the first fruits,” is used about the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:23). Three times the
style of *polyptoton* is found when groaning is mentioned in Rom 8:22, 23, and 26. 107
Finally, Paul concludes Rom 8:12-30 with a sequence of God’s five actions in Rom
8:29-30 which summarize the process of salvation history and invent another glorious
climax. Throughout the whole argument of Rom 8:12-30 the main line is the Spirit’s
fourfold sensible work centered on adoption. By way of the Spirit’s leading and wit-
nessing, which manifests the Spirit’s practicality, the believers experience that as
God’s adopted children they can overcome the flesh and enjoy God’s promise in
Christ (Rom 8:12-17). By means of the Spirit’s confirmation and intercession, which
exhibits the Spirit’s enduring presence, the believers can go through the suffering with
hope during the long-term process of awaiting redemption (Rom 8:18-30), because
“the presence of the Holy Spirit signifies the presence and power of God himself.” 108
It is to these meticulous argumentations of Paul in detail that this study now turns.

4.2 The very practical works of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:12-17)

A close look at what Paul argues in previous passages leads to the conclusion that the
Holy Spirit is the only one on whom the believers can depend to overcome the flesh
(cf. esp. sec. 4.1.6 “The indwelling Spirit”). One of the main reasons is that the Spirit
is God’s transforming power or, to borrow Gordon D. Fee’s phrase, God’s empowe-
ing presence. 109 In fact, Paul demonstrates realistically that the Spirit makes “walking
in newness of life” (cf. Rom 6:4b) possible and available for the believers. He tries
hard to avoid the readers’ misunderstanding of the Spirit’s work, which might be seen
as abstract or difficult to experience, or even wrongly regarded as occasional, ecstatic,
or surreal. 110 For one thing, Paul portrays the reality of the Spirit’s setting free, in-
dwelling in and giving life to the believers, which is the crucial reason why the be-
lievers are able to live according to the Spirit as opposed to the flesh. What is more,

106 Corbett and Connors, *Classical Rhetoric*, 402, personification denotes “investing abstractions or
inanimate object with human qualities or abilities.”
107 Ibid., 395, *polyptoton* implies “repetition of words derived from the same root.”
Rapids: Eerdmans, 2016), 80.
Jerry L. Sumney (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2012), 139-56, here 142-43; Jervis observes
very truly that “Paul wants the Roman believers to be aware that the Spirit shapes their existence so that
God’s kingdom is actualized” (142).
Paul’s argumentation reveals that to live according to the Spirit does not happen without thinking to the believers, who will always face the challenging choice of mindset on the flesh or on the Spirit in their life.\footnote{Contra Bertone who argues that in Rom 8:4-8 “Paul is simply depicting two different groups of people, those oriented towards the ‘flesh’ and those oriented towards the ‘Spirit;’” see Bertone, The Law of the Spirit, 185.} James D. G. Dunn makes a pertinent comment on understanding Paul’s antitheses as an implication that walking according to the flesh “is still an option” for Paul and his readers.\footnote{Dunn even provides a further explanation: “Paul’s more immediate concern, however, is to spell out in stark terms the full reality of that option, the character of life according to the flesh and its grim consequences, so that his readers can be in no doubt of the seriousness of the decisions they all must continue to make, of the life-and-death character of the eschatological tension in which they find themselves caught;” see Dunn, Romans 1-8, 441 (emphasis added).}

Indeed, Paul explains what God has done and why He has done so and that He will continue to accomplish these things through the Spirit among the believers. However, there is lack of specific and feasible details regarding how the Spirit works on the believers, making them realize the Spirit’s authenticity. To be precise, Paul states firmly that the Spirit has set them free (Rom 8:2), can make them walk willingly according to Himself (Rom 8:4) and keep setting minds on Himself (Rom 8:5-7). Likewise, he exhibits clearly the Spirit’s indwelling certainty (Rom 8:9, 11). The Spirit becomes life to them (Rom 8:6b, 10), reassures them that the eternal life will be given to their mortal bodies (Rom 8:11), and even helps them experience the outpouring of God’s love on them (Rom 5:5). Erik Konsmo rightly observes that Rom 8 “does not focus on issues about the Spirit, but rather on issues of what the Spirit does.”\footnote{Konsmo, The Pauline Metaphors of the Holy Spirit, 90 (emphasis original). Unfortunately, Konsmo does not give further explanation of the difference between “about the Spirit” and “what the Spirit does.”} Nevertheless, how these promises become facts actually experienced by the believers needs further corroboration. Therefore, Paul is going to introduce the very practical way the Spirit works so that the believers can know better what accomplishment God has done, and are willing to follow the Spirit. In the section Rom 8:12-17 (cf. its text analysis in Diagram 4-1 below), especially in Rom 8:13b-17, Paul clearly points out that there are two very real dimensions the Spirit works in the believers.\footnote{Colin G. Kruse also finds that there is a lack of how-dimensional discussion here regarding the Spirit’s work in the believers. Unfortunately, he does not view the following text as Paul’s answer to the “how-question,” see Kruse, Romans, 336.} The first is the leading task of the Spirit among the believers illustrated in Rom 8:14-15. The second is the Spirit’s witness-bearing mission in the believers explained in Rom 8:16-17. Both aspects make the children of God a central issue of attention.
Ἄρα ὦν, ἀδέλφοι,

†οφειλέται ἐσμέν

†οὐ τῇ σαρκὶ

†τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν.

†εἰ γὰρ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆτε,

†μέλλετε ἀποθνῄσκειν.

†εἰ δὲ πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος θανατοῦτε.

†ζήσεσθε.

†δοσιν γὰρ πνεύματι θεοῦ ἄγονται,

†οὔτωι οἱ θεοῦ εἰσιν.

†οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα δουλείας

†πάλιν εἰς φόβον

†ἀλλὰ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα νοοθεσίας

†ἐν ὃ κράζομεν· αββα ὁ πατήρ.

†αὐτὸ τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ

†τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν

†ὅτι ἐσμὲν τέκνα θεοῦ.

†εἰ δὲ τέκνα,

†καὶ κληρονόμοι·

†κληρονόμοι μὲν θεοῦ,

†συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ,

†εἶπερ συμπάχομεν

†ίνα καὶ συνδόξασθομεν.

12a)

12b)

13a)

13b)

14a)

14b)

15a)

15b)

16)

17a)

17b)
So then, brethren,

we are under obligation,

not to the flesh,

to live according to the flesh—

for if you are living according to the flesh,

you must die;

but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body,

you will live.

For all who are being led by the Spirit of God,

these are sons of God.

For you have not received the Spirit of slavery

leading to fear again,

but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons

by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

The Spirit Himself bears witness

to our spirit

that we are children of God,

and if children,

heirs also,

heirs of God and

equal heirs with Christ,

if indeed we suffer with Him

in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Diagram 4-1 Text analysis of Romans 8:12-17

For the meaning of the arrows in this diagram, see 100n97 (the ET with underlining mine).
4.2.1 Confirmation of the believers’ new identity

4.2.1.1 The significance of the initial ἀρα ὅν

Romans 8:12 begins with ἀρα ὅν (“so then”), a combination of these two particles in the New Testament found only in Paul’s letters (12 times, all appear at the beginning of the sentence), mainly in Romans (8 times), indicating Paul’s preference for using it in the argument of Romans. Taken separately, both ἀρα and ὅν are coordinating conjunctions, can function as a marker of inference, drawing a consequence, result or summary from what is dealt with before, usually translated as “so, then, therefore, or consequently.” They both are described by A. T. Robertson as “inferential paratactic particles,” and by BDF as “consecutive (inferential) co-ordinating conjunctions.” Nevertheless, the differences between them are also indicated. The particle ἀρα is the more logical or conclusive, yet ὅν the more connective or continuous. Besides, ὅν also performs a transitional role, that is, it introduces new (distinct) material which continues and develops the previous main issue being processed by the author. According to S. Levinsohn, ἀρα “constrains what follows to be interpreted as a consequence of what has already been stated in context,” and ὅν “constrains what follows to be interpreted as a distinct point that advances an argument in an inferential way;” so that he argues that these two inferential connectives have connotations of “+Inferential +Consequence” as well as “+Inferential +Distinctive” respectively. Accordingly, Levinsohn characterizes the mixture of ἀρα and ὅν as “+Inferential +Consequence +Distinctive.” In reality, in an earlier work,

116 Romans 5:18; 7:3, 25; 8:12; 9:16, 18; 14:12 (variant reading; although ὅν is bracketed here, indicating its doubtful authenticity due to its absence in some manuscripts, the witnesses support its authenticity as they are more in numbers and wider in geographical distribution, see NA28, 510), 19; Gal 6:10; Eph 2:19 (variant reading; no bracket on ὅν, signifying that the amount of supporting witnesses consistently cited are more than the witnesses without ὅν, which might enhance the certainty of its existence); 1 Thess 5:6; 2 Thess 2:15; MG, 1104-9; A. Horstmann, “ἀρα,” EDNT 1:148; Stanley E. Porter, Idioms of the Greek New Testament, 2nd ed. (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1999), 207.
117 BDAG, s.vv. “ἀρα,” 1, 2, “ὅν,” 1, and BDF §451.(1), (2); Wallace, Greek Grammar, 673.
119 BDF §451.
123 Levinsohn, “ ‘Therefore’ or ‘Wherefore,’ ” 333 (the plus sign and the boldface the author’s).
Levinsohn defines οὖν as a “marked development conjunction,” and makes a suggestion that all the eight categories of the meaning of οὖν listed in MG could be “interpretable as further development of the main topic or event line.” Levinsohn defines οὖν as a “marked development conjunction,” and makes a suggestion that all the eight categories of the meaning of οὖν listed in MG could be “interpretable as further development of the main topic or event line.”

Iver Larsen considers that “the basic relationship expressed by οὖν is consequence,” supposing this definition could cover most functions of οὖν.

Levinsohn and Larsen seem to think that οὖν plays a more important part in the combination of ἀρα οὖν. BDAG renders the combination ἀρα οὖν “so then,” assuming that here ἀρα signifies the inference and οὖν the transition. BDF simply notes that ἀρα is strengthened by οὖν, an explanation which is not quite understandable. By contrast, Margret Thrall’s assumption that the intention of ἀρα οὖν is “to provide an emphatically inferential connective” is notable. Moreover, she provides an additional explanation for her remark:

Both particles in the combination are intended to imply logical connection, the one simply reinforcing the other. It is several times used by Paul to sum up the argument of a whole section (rather than merely indicating the logical consequence of the immediately preceding sentence considered in isolation), Rom. v 18; vii 25; viii 12; xiv 19; Gal. vi 10.

Thrall’s view is cited by David H. Wenkel in an article focusing on the investigation of the definition of the construction ἀρα οὖν. Wenkel concludes from his analysis that ἀρα οὖν should be seen as a single particle, functioning as a precise inferential marker.

Unfortunately, regarding the implication of the combination ἀρα οὖν and its context, these scholars do not offer any sufficient elucidation, especially in the context of Rom 8:12. The content of Paul’s main thought here and the approach used by Paul to strengthen it have not been specified, nor has the distinctive information been indicated. In view of the development of Paul’s train of thought, Levinsohn’s analysis

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124 Levinsohn, Discourse Features, 126n26. The eight categories of the meaning of οὖν and their corresponding verse containing ἀρα οὖν in Romans listed in MG, 1104 are as follows: (1) Inference (Rom 9:14, 16; 14:12); (2) Consequent command or exhortation (Rom 14:19); (3) Consequent effect or response (Rom 5:18; 7:3; 8:12); (4) Inferential question; (5) Summary (Rom 7:25); (6) Adversative (but); (7) Continuation or resumption of narrative; (8) Continuation of discussion.


126 BDAG, s.vv. “ἀρα,” 2. b and “οὖν,” 2. d.

127 BDF §451.(2).


129 Ibid., 11.

130 David H. Wenkel, “A Component Based Definition of the Inferential Construction ἀρα οὖν in the Greek of the NT,” LASBF 58 (2008): 185-94, here 192-93. Wenkel’s conclusions are as follows: the construction ἀρα οὖν is (1) a single particle, both parts of which reinforce each other; (2) a conjunction; (3) inferential or illative; (4) a marker of precision which emphatically draws a conclusion; see ibid., 194.
seems more pertinent to the context. Romans 8:12 is not, as Levinsohn points out, “preceded by strengthening material introduced with γάρ, but the material following ἀρα ὄν may readily be interpreted as a distinct point of the theme that follows as a logical consequence of what has been stated.” Nevertheless, Levinsohn neither specifies what the distinct information of the theme Paul offers is, nor how far the logic consequence extends to. Actually, not only does Paul demonstrate a continuous argument by reaching some conclusions based on what he reasons before, but he also introduces a new passage (see sec. 3.3 “The main theme of Romans 8:12-30”).

Paul’s argumentative recapitulation and continuity are displayed by his employment of ὀφειλέται (“debtors,” Rom 8:12) and the antithesis between the consequences of living according to the flesh and the Spirit (Rom 8:13). What the context makes clear is that Paul’s distinct point is the Spirit-related task through an identity-awakening method.

A preliminary observation of Rom 8:12-17 may well come to a view that Paul prepares to draw some definite conclusion from the preceding passages, especially Rom 8:1-11. However, broadly speaking, the preceding context could be widened to Rom 6 (see sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39”). Schreiner is correct in pointing out that Paul’s “specific conclusion” of Rom 8:12-17 expressed clearly “relates to the indicative” rather than to the imperative, though Paul’s admonition and encouragement is implicit in Rom 8:12-17. As our discussion in sec. 3.2.5 has shown, Paul’s conclusion could be extended to Rom 8:30. Hence, not only the passage of Rom 8:12-17, but Rom 8:18-30 also provides the confirmation of the believers’ new identity and status at present and in eternity. With the corroboration and help from the Holy Spirit, the believers become able to overcome the destructive power that the flesh brings on them, though their life is full of struggle and plight. Therefore, we find that the model of identity awareness on incentivizing correct behavior continues to appear in Paul’s argument here. Essentially, Rom 8:12-13 is a presentation of this kind of example. Paul employs metaphorically the plural of ὀφειλέτης (“debtor”) to sum up the identity of the believers in Rom 8:12. Having such a specified identity, the believers are expected to make a right choice to live according to the Spirit rather than the flesh (Rom 8:13).

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131 Levinsohn, “‘Therefore’ or ‘Wherefore,’” 334.
132 Levinsohn gives an example of the distinct point of the theme following the combination ἀρα ὄν by citing Moo’s comment on Rom 7:25b as follows: “For the first time in this context, Paul contrasts his two responses, or situations, in terms of ‘serving;’” ibid., 334. However, he does not specify what the distinct point is for any other ἀρα ὄν used by Paul; see ibid., 333-34; and Moo, Romans, 467.
133 Dunn, Romans I-8, 447-48; Morris, Romans, 311. Garner notices that Paul’s argument after ἀρα ὄν “is linked to the previous discussion,” see Garner, “Adoption in Christ,” 110.
134 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 394.
135 Schreiner, Romans, 419.
136 Some scholars are inclined to attach Rom 8:12-13 to Rom 8:1-11 instead of Rom 8:14-17, and to
4.2.1.2 A new sibling relationship

Before exploring how the Spirit works through the identity cognition of the believers, we should notice the connotation of the vocative address ἀδελφοί (“brethren”) in Rom 8:12. Undoubtedly, it does not mean that Paul is a sexist when he uses it in masculine plural to call his readers, who actually include all males and females of the Roman Christian community. The believers are called “my sons and daughters” by God (cf. 2 Cor 6:18). The designation “sons of God” (υἱοὶ θεοῦ) appears four times in Paul’s letters (Rom 8:14, 19 [οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ]; 9:26; Gal 3:26). Additionally, Paul uses the expression “children of God” (τέκνα θεοῦ) four times (Rom 8:16, 21 [τα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ]; 9:8 [ταῦτα τέκνα τοῦ θεοῦ]; Phil 2:15). Some English Bible versions such as NIV and NRSV translate ἀδελφοί into “brothers and sisters,” as BDAG suggests. The occurrence of direct sibling address is highly frequent in Paul’s undisputed letters (64 out of 92 times in NT letters), reflecting the existing of a close “spiritual brotherhood” relationship in Christ between his audience and him, as the other nine occurrences illustrate in Romans (cf. Rom 1:13; 7:1, 4; 10:1; 11:25; 12:1; 15:14, 30; 16:17). W. A. Meeks observes that the usage of familial terms to relate to members of a religious community was not uncommon in Paul’s time, especially in Rome. He believes that the early Christians used the sibling language as belonging language to find the difference between Christian community and “the outsiders,” as well as derived their expression from Jewish tradition. That fellow-Israelites call each other brothers is easily found in the Old Testament (e.g., Exod 2:11; Lev 19:17; Deut 3:18; 24:7; Josh 22:3-4), and in the documents of Qumran (e.g., 1QS 6:10, 22; 1QSa 1:18; CD 6:20). However, Philip A. Harland argues that Paul is more likely to express Christian identity in terms drawn from Greco-Roman cultural context, including view these two verses as a conclusion in terms of ethical dimension. Among others, see Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’, 97; Fitzmyer, Romans, 492-93; Moo, Romans, 493-96; Kruse, Romans, 334-36.

137 Cf. Morris, Romans, 313.
138 Cf. ibid., 317.
139 Also cf. BDAG, s.v. “ἀδελφός,” 1.
140 According to NA28, ἀδελφοὶ appears in vocative case up to 62 times in Paul’s undisputed letters, including Rom 15:30 and 1 Cor 15:31, where ἀδελφοὶ is lacking in Ἑρ. 46; their existence in the text is controversial; cf. the comment in Metzger, A Textual Commentary, 501; there are two times the sibling address appears in masculine singular (ἀδελφός, Philm 1:7, 10). For a detailed analysis of its distribution among NT letters, see Aasgaard, “ ‘My Brothers and Sisters!’: Sibling Address in Paul,” in ‘My Beloved Brothers and Sisters?’, 261-84, here 268-74, and appxs. 1 and 2.
144 Ibid., 225nn75-76; Dunn, Romans 1-8, 31.
the use of fictive familial terminology to convey a sense of belonging and solidarity in a close-knit community or association.\textsuperscript{145} According to Harland’s examination of evidence from epigraphic material and papyri, “Judean and Christian practices of employing family language reflect common modes of formulating and communicating identity or belonging within certain groups in the ancient Mediterranean.”\textsuperscript{146} In the Greco-Roman world it is a common phenomenon that the fellow-members of associations and cultic organizations use brother terminology to call each other.\textsuperscript{147}

Basically, the two viewpoints are not necessarily contradictory. Because the Roman church consists of Jewish and Gentile Christians, it is natural for Paul to collect the concept well known to both groups. Moreover, as Harland admits, “whether Paul derives his usage solely from Judean (e.g., synagogue) or from Hellenistic (e.g., associations) contexts” is an “unanswerable question.”\textsuperscript{148} Trailing this custom, Paul is demonstrating his sincere sibling-like relationship with the Roman church and making an earnest appeal for their closer attention to and comprehension of his elaboration that follows.\textsuperscript{149} More significant is, as Reidar Aasgaard claims, that though metaphorical usage of sibling address is commonly seen in Hellenistic-Greek sources, the high frequency of Paul’s sibling address is striking and unusual.\textsuperscript{150} As Aasgaard states:

[S]ibling relationships were important in antiquity, with a central place in the family structure, carrying out vital tasks within the family and so linked to expectations of shared responsibility, loyalty, positive emotions, diversity, tolerance, forgiveness, concern for honor, and harmony.\textsuperscript{151}

When the sibling address occurs together with some transition indicator (e.g., δέ, ἀρα οὖν, ὀστε, etc.), the sibling address serves as “a structural ‘glue,’ ” allowing attention attract, a temporal stop, a development, or a stress in the addressee’s flow of thinking.\textsuperscript{152} What is more, such a combination performs more important functions according to its context.\textsuperscript{153} Put differently, by using such a sibling address in a vigorous

\textsuperscript{145} For a more detailed research, see Philip A. Harland, \textit{Dynamics of Identity in the World of the Early Christians: Associations, Judeans, and Cultural Minorities} (New York: T&T Clark, 2009), 63-81.
\textsuperscript{146} Ibid., 63.
\textsuperscript{147} Ibid., 68-74.
\textsuperscript{148} Ibid., 66.
\textsuperscript{149} Runge, \textit{Discourse Grammar}, 120.
\textsuperscript{150} Aasgaard, ‘\textit{My Beloved Brothers and Sisters!}’, 267-68.
\textsuperscript{152} Aasgaard, ‘\textit{My Beloved Brothers and Sisters!}’, 275n53.
\textsuperscript{153} Aasgaard lists six main functions of the sibling address in various types: (1) A firm appeal to sibling: the request formula; (2) Sharing a secret knowledge; (3) Approving with Paul: the ‘therefore, my
sense, not merely does Paul evoke his addressees’ pathos and concentration, but he also intends to reveal a very important truth as well as influence their thoughts and deeds.\(^{154}\)

### 4.2.1.3 No longer be the debtors to the flesh

Next to a combination of coordinating conjunctions and a familial vocative, Paul begins his concluding statement with an emphatic expression of identity which implies a transformed status and condition: ὀφειλέται ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ τῆς σαρκί (“we are debtors, not to the flesh,” Rom 8:12a NRSV). The subject complement ὀφειλέται put in the first place in Paul’s statement shows his emphasis. It appears that Paul intends to remind his fellow believers of what he has stated in Rom 6:1-8:11 concerning the changed correlation between the believers and their old/new master. In this long section Paul repeatedly speaks about that a markedly renewed status of the believers has been granted because of Christ’s redemption. Precisely speaking, all the believers are still remaining their slave status, but they are no more obligated to serve their former master, that is, the authority of sin (Rom 6:6, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22; 7:14, 25; 8:2; cf. 5:21), death (Rom 6:9; 8:2; cf. 5:14, 17), and the law (Rom 6:14, 15; 7:4, 6).\(^{155}\) even the flesh (Rom 6:19; 7:5, 14, 18, 25; 8:3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9). The text of Rom 7:6b can be said to be a representative echo of Paul’s reminder: the believers are slaves no more under the old written code but in the new life of the Spirit (cf. the translation of NRSV).\(^{156}\)

Through the term ὀφειλέτης (“debtor”), Paul underlines the obligation in a moral sense that the believers are still under.\(^{157}\) There are four occurrences of this word in Paul’s letters; three of them appear in Romans (Rom 1:14; 8:12 [pl.]; 15:27 [pl.]; Gal 5:3). Paul is used to joining ὀφειλέτης with the linking verb ἐίμι (“to be”) as a predicate nominative,\(^{158}\) denoting the obligation to perform in a particular way.\(^{159}\) According to the Roman law, the concept of obligation is defined as follows: “An obli-

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\(^{154}\) Ibid., 274-83. In Aasgaard’s discussion, Rom 8:12 is unfortunately not referred to in any function mentioned above, however, according to Aasgaard’s analysis, the sibling address in Rom 8:12 appears to have the combined functions of numbers (2), (4) and (6).


\(^{156}\) BDAG glosses δουλεύω in Rom 7:6b as “be a slave, be subjected,” and “in imagery: of a change in masters,” see s.v. “δουλεύω,” 1. b. For a further analysis of Rom 7:6b, see sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et pecator.”

\(^{157}\) Cf. BDAG, s.v. “ὀφειλέτης,” 2.


cation is a legal bond, with which we are bound by a necessity of performing some act according to the laws of our State” (Inst. Iust. 3.13pr. [Scott]). The legal bond (iuris vinculum) implies tying creditor and debtor together; the right of the creditor is the duty of the debtor. A jurist Paulus, three centuries earlier than Justinian (Emp. AD 527-65), has made a clear explanation of obligation in his Institutes, book 2:

The nature of obligations does not consist in the fact that they render some property or some servitude ours, but that they require us to give something, to do something, or to be responsible for something. (Dig. 44.7.3pr. [Scott])

In actuality, the nature, classification, cause and performance of obligation have been fully discussed earlier in Gaius’ Institutiones. Though Gaius lays his emphasis on a social-economic perspective with which the Romans are familiar, Paul applies it figuratively on an ethical way of thinking, lending a fresh perspective to this application. Jewett explores the social background of Paul’s expression of the combination of the plural of “ὀφειλέτης + εἰμί,” remarking that it reveals “a social status of having received patronage and being required to render reciprocal service.” Furthermore, Jewett believes that the formula of gradus officiorum (“gradation of duties”) taught by Roman ethicians shapes the obligation extent of Roman citizens; the obligations the Romans owe are to the immortal gods first, the country second, to parents third, etc. Hence, to be obligated to the flesh means to live according the flesh as a “regulative principle,” which involves the whole range of social and religious obligations in the Roman surroundings. Jewett maintains that Paul is asking his Roman audience to redefine their social obligations by replacing the flesh with the Spirit of

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160 S. P. Scott, ed., The Civil Law, trans. S. P. Scott (Cincinnati: The Central Trust, 1932), 2:109. Another translation version is as follows: “An obligation is a tie of law, by which we are so constrained that of necessity we must render something according to the laws of our state,” see Thomas Collett Sandars ed., The Institutes of Justinian with English Introduction, Translation, and Notes, (London: Longmans, Green, 1917), 319. The Latin text reads: “Obligatio est iuris vinculum, quo necessitate adstringimur alcius solvendae rei, secundum nostrae civitatis iura” (Inst. Iust. 3.13pr.).

161 Buckland, A Text-Book of Roman Law, 405-6; Du Plessis, Borkowski’s Textbook on Roman Law, 249.

162 Iulius Paulus (fl. ca. at the end of 2nd c. to the early 3rd c. AD), cf. 41n25, 70n184.

163 Scott, The Civil Law, 10:78. The Latin text reads: “Obligationum substantia non in eo consistit, ut aliquod corpus nostrum aut servitutem nostram faciat, sed ut alium nobis obstringat ad dandum aliquid vel faciendum vel praestandum” (Dig. 44.7.3pr.), http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/justinian/digest44.shtml.

164 Cf. Gaius, Institutiones, Book III, §§ 88-225; for a general commentary in this regard by Edward Poste, see ibid., 315-22. Gaius (ca. AD 130-180) was active at least between AD 160 and 178, for his main achievement, cf. 41n25.

165 Jewett, Romans, 493.

166 Ibid.

Christ as the regulative principle. As stated by Jewett, Roman Christians’ love feast resulted in their withdrawal from family food-eating patterns, provoking severe disagreement with their patrons. Being the family members of God, they are not supposed to live under the obligatory patterns of the society which had been put to an end by Christ. Jewett views the flesh as a living way, which should be redefined by the Spirit of Christ in place of the aggressive endeavor for “individual and familial and national honour.”

His main reason is that the Spirit expresses a complete type of honor through God’s grace and shows a way to new types of obligation inspired by love. Jewett seems to follow the argument offered by Paul S. Minear who connects every ὀφειλέτης in Romans directly with gratitude which results from Christ’s sacrifice.

Nevertheless, contextual evidences show that Jewett’s argument is quite unsatisfactory. Jewett seems to lose some important insight when he defines Paul’s usage of ὀφειλέτης in a general social perspective without considering the literary context of this verse and the historical context of the Roman church. Indeed the “gradation of duties” exists in Roman social life. In considering the degrees of social relationship of citizenship, kinship, friendship and love of country, Cicero gives several different ranking lists of degrees of duty. His analysis reveals that these conventional rules appear to apply to Roman citizens rather than slaves who do not own legally recognized marriage, civil right and property (cf. sec. 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves”). The emancipated slaves are still living in the shadow of obsequium and humiliation with the demand to serve their old master (cf. sec. 2.3.3.3 “Life after manumission”). According to Harrill’s description,

the term obsequium alludes to a legally enforced act of servile deference that in addition to specific work duties (operae) Roman freedpersons had to perform for their former masters, now patrons. The image is one of weakness, self-debasement, and cowardice, the loss not only of manhood but also of humanity, reflecting the literal meaning of the Latin term for flattery (adulatio), which means the fawning or cringing of a dog.

As mentioned in section 1.4.2 “Recipients: composition and situation of the Roman

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168 Jewett, Romans, 494.
169 Ibid.
170 See ibid., n. 208 and Paul S. Minear, The Obedience of Faith: The Purposes of Paul in the Epistle to the Romans, SBT II/17 (1971; repr., Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2003), 102-10. In his discussion of the three ὀφειλέτης passages of Romans, Minear concludes that the motive behind Paul’s mission is the close relationship between his sense of obligation and thanksgiving for Christ and God. However, his application of this connection in Rom 8:12 is a bit far-fetched. Not only does he admit that there are merely few appearances of thanksgiving in Romans, but he also gives less examining space to Rom 8:12 than the other passages in Rom 1 and 15. Above all, Minear does not explain why Paul does not remark explicitly that we are debtors to the Spirit if this point is Paul’s emphasis in Rom 8:12.
171 See Cicero, De Officiis, 1.51-59, 160.
Christian community,” a large part of the members of the Roman church are linked to slave origins. The obligations that not a few of the members of the Roman church might need to bear are mainly from their master rather than their family or country. As indicated by Buckland, the obligation of the slaves to their former owner remains natural even after their manumission. There is no reciprocal benefit within their relationship, but compulsory obligations are more often seen on slaves. It is very likely that Paul picks up his elaboration of the transformation of believers’ status in Rom 6, where his extensive use of master-slave metaphor for it must be very provocative to his audience. John K. Goodrich applies the commercial/monetary sense and slavery implication of some key words (e.g., καρπός [“product”]; τέλος, [“result”]; όψων [“wages”]) in Rom 6 to make a theological reflection and a comparison of the status between past slavery to sin and present slavery to God of the Roman recipients: “The uses, then of the terms καρπός, τέλος, όψων suggest that as the slavery metaphor continues into Rom 6:21-23, Paul employs the notion of physical slavery there in order to inform the reader about the contrasting outcomes of slavery to sin and slavery to God.”

Through this figure of speech, Paul gives explicit statement that sin and death no longer have dominion over believers like master over slaves in Roman society (Rom 6:1-14, cf. sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39”). In addition, believers currently are not, as they used to be, the slaves of sin (Rom 6:15-23). Instead, God becomes the new master who is supposed to rule over believers (Rom 6:14b); and believers are slaves of God (Rom 6:22). Nevertheless, because the threat to con-

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173 Lewis, Paul’s ‘Spirit of Adoption’, 167-69; however, Lewis focuses on the general comparison of gentiles and Jews when he discusses the audience of Romans, yet ignoring the names clearly listed in Romans 16, and giving no attention to the obligation for the members of slave origins in the Roman church. He only emphasizes the obligation in financial aspect, which is unable to reflect the great contrast between the debtor and the creditor as between human beings and the flesh. This makes his analysis of ὀφειλέτης less persuasive; actually his explanation of the life of Roman slaves in 178-79 is more pertinent to his discussion here, see 97-115.

174 Joshel, Slavery in the Roman World, 44.

175 Buckland, Roman Law of Slavery, 697-99; Du Plessis, Borkowski’s Textbook on Roman Law, 250-51.

176 John K. Goodrich, “From Slaves of Sin to Slaves of God: Reconsidering the Origin of Paul’s Slavery Metaphor in Romans 6,” BBR 23 (2013): 509-30, here 526-30, quotation from 529. Goodrich adapts a table from Keck’s Romans (170), comparing the results of two conditions of slavery, which (528) is worthy of reference as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>Immediate Outcome (καρπός)</th>
<th>Final Result (τέλος)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Past slaves of sin; free regarding righteousness</td>
<td>shameful things</td>
<td>death</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Present slaves of righteousness/God; free regarding sin</td>
<td>sanctification</td>
<td>eternal life</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
trol believers from the former master still exists, the conflict between “to be” (or doing, what I do) and “ought to be” (or willing, what I should do) of believers becomes intense and lasts a lifetime (cf. esp. Rom 7:14-25). It is in effect a struggle between living according to the flesh and the Spirit, as what Paul demonstrates in Rom 8:5-11.

Therefore, when Paul states that we are debtors, he is declaring a fact: all human beings are debtors all their life, being never in a fully independent position. Apparently, the flesh, which represents the power of sin and death, is the creditor of the entire world (cf. Rom 3:19b; 5:12, 17a, 18a, 19a). Yet due to justification, the believers still are debtors, but no more to the flesh, to live in conformity with it. Using τοῦ ζῆν (a genitive articular infinitive) as adnominal in Rom 8:12b, Paul denies the flesh as the object with which the believers live in accordance. Furthermore, the combination of τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν functions as epexegetic (explanatory) or appositional to ὃ φειλέται τῇ σαρκί (Rom 8:12). Some scholars believe that Paul manifests the negative side of this declaration in Rom 8:12 by using a rhetorical device of meiosis, an understatement for the sake of emphasis, where less is expressed than is meant. Only the first line of the supposed antithetical couplet, “οὗ τῇ σαρκὶ τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν,” occurs after ὃ φειλέται ἐσμέν. Paul’s previous reasoning model, such as in Rom 8:4, 5, 6, and 9, suggests that it seems to be followed by a second line like ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ κατὰ πνεῦμα ζῆν (“but to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit”). However, he interrupts this kind of argumentation after Rom 8:12 to bring in a solemn warning against the final outcome of living according to the flesh as grounds for his statement just issued. The fact that Rom 8:13 starts with γὰρ proves this point. This verse changes the subject of its indicative verbs from first person plural in verse 12 to second person plural, which reveals the urgency of Paul’s exhortation. There is an em dash at the end of Rom 8:12 in the translation of NASB, NRSV and RSV, showing their support for the viewpoint of interruption.

4.2.2 Choice between two options

Paul intentionally continues to amplify the negative side of being indebted to the flesh in Rom 8:13a rather than to finish the theoretical antithetical couplet at the end of

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181 Fee notes that it echoes the language of Rom 8:6; see Fee, God’s Empowering Presence, 556.
Rom 8:12. Romans 8:13 consists of two first class conditional sentences, which form a sharp contrast between two different life styles. This verse functions as a microcosm of Paul’s previous account of the tension the believers face, illustrating that there are two options of living mode open to the believers and the quite opposite outcomes of their choices. If believers choose to live in accordance with the flesh, as in unregenerate days, they will die (Rom 8:13a). The apodosis of Rom 8:13a is composed of two present verbs, the indicative μέλλετε with the infinitive ἀποθνῄσκειν, which denote the action to die an inevitable result from a divine decree: you must die. The consequent death signifies physical death without Christ’s redemption and the hope of resurrection. By comparison, if believers decide to live in a different way, knowing that their identity as still debtors yet to the Spirit, their life will be totally different. Once they rely on the Spirit of God to put to death the deeds of their body, they will live (Rom 8:13b). Yet the different status signified by the two conditional sentences in Rom 8:13 is especially worthy of consideration. Semantically the relation of the protasis and apodosis in Rom 8:13a is a cause-effect one. That is to say, if the protasis (if you are living according to the flesh) is accomplished, the apodosis (you will die) is true. If believers choose an unregenerate life as a long-lasting living style, their end result will be the same as for unbelievers. However, the conditional sentence of Rom 8:13b should not be understood literally as a causality construction which indicates an eternal life is obtained only if an effort to obey the Spirit is fulfilled. On the contrary, its semantic significance shows that the relation the protasis has to the apodosis is evidence/ground to inference. Put another way, Paul is telling that believers are experiencing the eternal reality of salvation already granted through the evidence of their progressive reliance on the Spirit.

4.2.2.1 Confusing grammatical structure of Romans 8:12

With regard to the argument of the absence of the expected ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ κατὰ πνεῦμα ζῆν (“but to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit”) in Rom 8:12, Andrzej Gieniusz, C. R. examines the syntax of this verse, the semantics of some key words, and the construction of Rom 8:12-14, concluding that it is Paul’s deliberate

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183 BDAG, s.v. “μέλλω,” 2. a.
184 Paul is not confirming the theory of “saved and lost,” regarding which it is beyond the scope of this thesis to discuss the details. Rather, he is making a strong warning and assumption that wrong choices will produce sad consequences.
185 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 682.
186 Ibid., 683.
application of rhetorical *anacoluthon* as a figure of speech. Paul even avoids any implication of “we are debtors to the Spirit” in his statement. In order to refute a theory of communicative accident, failure or succinctness, Gieniusz provides three reasons to support his analysis of the lack of “debtors to the Spirit.” First, using the connection between debtors and God to illustrate the new relationship between believers and God will give the wrong impression. There is no supportive example in the NT except for the parables in Matt 18:23-35, Luke 7:41-43 and Luke 13:4, where ὀφειλέται is rendered as sinners. The status as debtors to God shows a possibility and obligation to repay a debt to God for the believers, which will twist God’s abundance and human absolute dependence. Secondly, the intentionally grammatical irregularity implied by *anacoluthon* actually performs the purpose of persuasion. Thirdly, the negative description of the bygone reliance upon the flesh (Rom 8:12-13a) works sharply “as a dark background” compared to the positive portrayal of the renewed status of the believers who are led by the Spirit and called sons of God (Rom 8:13b-14). Furthermore, Gieniusz observes that there exists a noticeable progression of argumentation inside the contrast.

Nevertheless, Gieniusz’s explanation is not entirely compelling. *TDNT* and *NIDNTTE* give more examples of men as debtors to God than Gieniusz, including Matt 6:12; 23:16, 18; and Luke 11:4, in addition to the “exceptions” Gieniusz gives. Gieniusz does not explain why the possibility of twisted understanding of “men as debtors to God” in Paul’s readers is not applicable to the audience of Jesus, who describes plainly sinners as debtors to God. If the absence of “debtor to the Spirit” in Paul’s writing means that “debtor” will signify negative conceptions, such as its connection with sin, and its inability to portray the real condition of believers versus God, Gieniusz does not explicate why Paul illustrates the new identity of believers with “slaves,” for instance, δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ (“and enslaved to God,” Rom 6:22), which might cause stronger negative impression in their social context of slave society.

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187 Andrzej Gieniusz, “‘Debtors to the Spirit’ in Romans 8.12? Reasons for the Silence,” *NTS* 59 (2013): 61-72. W3 glosses *anacoluthon* "syntactical inconsistency or incoherence within a sentence; esp.: the shift from one construction, left incomplete, to another, sometimes for rhetorical effect (as ‘you really ought – well, do it your own way’)" (italics original), see s.v. "*anacoluthon*.”

188 Ibid., 64-65.

189 Ibid., 68.

190 Ibid., 71.

191 Ibid.


When Jesus uses the figure of speech of the ὀφειλέτης to depict the relationship between believers and God, he “links the concept not with achievements and demands concerning payments of arrears, but with forgiveness.” 194 In other words, the believers are impelled to experience the remission of their enormous debt God has already granted through their forgiving those who indebted to them (cf. Matt 6:14-15; 18:35; Luke 7:41). Gieniusz seems reluctant to believe that the perception behind the teaching of Jesus continues to exist in Paul’s statement. 195 The lack of “debtors to the Spirit” in Rom 8:12 does not justify Gieniusz’s view that the Bible uses ownership instead of debt to express the believers’ complete dependence on God. Actually, Paul has not avoided using debt/obligation-related language to discuss the relationship between God and humans. Romans 6 explicates Paul’s thought on the divine-human relations before and after justification from master-slave dimensions. Romans 6:1-14 focuses on the aspect of ownership, that is, “Who is our master?” Yet, Rom 6:15-23 on submission, “Whose slaves are we?” (cf. sec. 3.2.5). Gieniusz notices that regarding the grammatical structure of Rom 8:12a Paul chooses the controversial one: ὀφειλέται ἐσμέν οὐ τῇ σαρκί (“we are debtors, not to the flesh”) in preference to a “neutral” one: οὐκ ἐσμέν ὀφειλέται τῇ σαρκί (“we are not debtors to the flesh”). 196 Moreover, Gieniusz claims that the shift of the negative form from οὐκ ἐσμέν (“we are not”) to οὐ τῇ σαρκί (“not to the flesh”) will “strongly require that an expression such as: ‘but to the Spirit’ (ἄλλα τῷ πνεύματι) be added immediately after,” as the similar argument mode nearby displays. 197 Apparently Gieniusz’s opinion has its shortcomings.

Gieniusz seems to ignore the fact that the emphasis of Paul’s claim is very much on ὀφειλέται ἐσμέν, which means a never-changing identity for believers, regardless of their life situation. Yet the flesh, representing the power of sin and death, will be no more the object to whom the believers are obligated once they are saved through Jesus Christ (cf. Rom 5:21). In reality, Gieniusz’s so-called “neutral formulation” of Rom 8:12a, οὐκ ἐσμέν ὀφειλέται τῇ σαρκί, is debatable. Grammatically speaking, the combination of οὐκ and ἐσμέν is supposed to be οὐκ ἐσμέν. 198 We do not know whether Gieniusz’s putting the acute on οὐκ is to emphasize it or a grammatical error. However, there is no such a same example as οὐκ ἐσμέν in the NT. Besides, even if “οὐκ ἐσμέν ὀφειλέται τῇ σαρκί” becomes an alternative syntax, it would still demand an antithetical phrase as “ἄλλα τῷ πνεύματι.” An illustrative case is what Paul states in

194 NIDNTTE 3:576.
195 Cf. TDNT 5:564; Hauck’s comment on the NT apostolic teachings referring to ὀφείλω is noteworthy: “In the main the obligation in these apostolic references is an obligation towards men which is deduced and which follows from the experienced or preceding act of God.”
196 Gieniusz, ‘Debtors to the Spirit,” 61.
197 Ibid., 62; Gieniusz only mentions the examples in Rom 8:4, 9, 15 and 20.
198 According to Greek grammar, when the enclitic ἐσμέν is preceded by the proclitic οὐκ, ἐσμέν still retains its accent, see D. A. Carson, Greek Accents: A Student’s Manual (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1985), 49-50.
Gal 4:31: διό, ἀδελφοί, οὐκ ἐσμὲν παιδίσκης τέκνα ἄλλα τῆς ἐλευθέρας (“So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman”). When Paul connects the negation directly with the εἰμί verb as οὐκ ἐσμὲν, he lays emphasis not on children themselves (i.e., ἐσμὲν), but rather on claiming that believers are children of the free woman by the contrast between two kinds of women/mothers. Another example is in Rom 6:15, ἁμαρτήσωμεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ νόμον ἄλλα ὑπὸ χάριν; (“Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace?”). By contrasting two types of power, Paul lays great stress not on the believers (i.e., ἐσμὲν), but on the real authority of grace to which believers are under obligation.

Nonetheless, there is a shift of emphasis from the supposed object of comparison to the identity of “ἐσμὲν” when the negation is linked to the flesh as what happens in Rom 8:12. Though Paul does not present a complete contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, his expression of “οὐ τῇ σαρκὶ τοῦ κατὰ σάρκα ζῆν” indeed implies that the antithetical phrase “ἄλλα τῷ πνεύματι τοῦ κατὰ πνεύματι ζῆν” is highly anticipated. Its absence in Rom 8:12 denotes that Paul does not intend to continue to highlight the contrast between the flesh and the Spirit, which after all has been stressed intensively in Rom 8:1-11. Given Paul’s train of thought, one more contrast between the flesh and the Spirit in Rom 8:12 seems superfluous. The preceding argument, especially in Rom 8:1-11, leads up to the concluding proclamation of v. 12, demonstrating an inductive reasoning. It paves the way for condensing the negative depiction of the flesh and giving details regarding how the Spirit works in believers. The combination of the “inference and continuation marker” ἄρα οὖν of Rom 8:12 proves this observation. Such a combination particle signifies that the following argument relates closely with the previous content and explains it further from some distinctive aspect. Therefore, Rom 8:12 functions as a proclamatory thesis in the conclusive position, meanwhile in the initial position, followed by the supportive argument Rom 8:13a, which begins with the reason marker γάρ, demonstrating a deductive reasoning. Before we can explore the details of its deductive logic, the semantic expression of Rom 8:12 needs clarification.

4.2.2.2 The connotation of Romans 8:12-13a

It is more than likely that in Rom 8:12 Paul employs the figure of speech called litotes

199 By comparison, the translation of NRSV is different from other English versions, placing emphasis on children: “So then, friends, we are children, not of the slave but of the free woman” (Gal 4:31 NRSV).
200 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “ὀπό,” B. 2.
201 See 126n101.
rather than an anacoluthon to express the believers’ spiritual status. Paul uses double negative “οὐ τῇ σαρκὶ” (not to the flesh [emphasis mine]) to make a positive statement, which equals the implicit “ἀλλὰ τῷ πνεύματι.” There is a similar expression in Paul’s claim: “Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον” (“For I am not ashamed of the gospel,” Rom 1:16a, emphasis mine). Another example is recorded by Luke, “ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος μὲν εἰμὶ Ἰουδαῖος, Ταρσεῖς τῆς Κιλικίας, οὐκ ἀσήμιον πόλεως πολίτης” (“I am a Jew of Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no insignificant city,” Act 21:39, emphasis mine). Hence, this is why it is unnecessary to state the implied “to the Spirit” for Paul. Properly speaking, Rom 8:12 does not show a breaking away from the sequence of Paul’s thought, nor should Rom 8:12-13a be regarded as “a dark background” against the following affirmative account of Rom 8:13b-14. In the present case, Paul confirms the identity of the believers as debtors (Rom 8:12a), on the one hand, and makes a summary of their relationship with the power to which they are subordinating (Rom 8:12b), on the other hand. A better way is to see Rom 8:13a as a gloomy setting of the confirmatory v. 12. Yet curiously enough, Paul supports a positive statement through a negative wording. There are two ways to comprehend the connotation of the initial γὰρ of Rom 8:13 and the interrelationship between Rom 8:12 and 13a (RSV):

1. Verse 12 is irresistible even if v.13a might happen (emphasis mine):

   12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh --
   13a despite the fact that if you live according to the flesh you will die.

2. Verse 13a is an unavoidable reality even if v. 12 exists (emphasis mine):

   12 So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh --
   13a despite this, if you live according to the flesh you will die.

Considering Paul’s confirmation comes first (Rom 8:12), the conditional clause of Rom 8:13a functions as a presentation of a fact, which might have happened to prevent the truth of v. 12, rather than as an illustration of an inevitable reality, even if v. 12 exists. Hence, the former viewpoint (1) is more tenable. Even so, it seems that the link between Rom 8:12 and 13a is not immediately obvious. Seeing that Rom 8:12-13a presents a form of deductive argument, it could be identified as an enthymeme through the rule of thumb (“a truth claim supported deductively or out of necessity by a rationale statement”).

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203 See 126n100. W3 renders litotes as “understatement in which an affirmative is expressed by the negative on the contrary,” see s.v. “litotes.”
Opinions have diverged greatly as to the definition of *enthymeme* for a long time. Though the impression of the *enthymeme* as “a truncated or abbreviated syllogism” is problematic and denotes a development that happens after Aristotle, we assume this view tentatively for practical reasons rather than formal ones. Besides, *enthymeme* is frequently used by Paul in his letters, hence to use it properly will be useful in assessing the mind of Paul.

In the *enthymeme* of the unit Rom 8:12-13a, while Rom 8:12 is the deductive conclusion, Rom 8:13a would function as the major premise because the predicate part of the conclusion (the debtors to live according to the flesh) is the same as the subject part of Rom 8:13a. Thus, the missing minor premise could be inferred as “we the believers who have debtor status will not die” from the preceding statement in Rom 8:9-11. In order to examine its validity through the standard form of a categorical syllogism, first the argument of Rom 8:12-13a could be paraphrased as follows:

Major premise (stated) 1: All the debtors to the flesh, *are mortal* (will die) (Rom 8:13a).

Minor premise (assumed) 1: All of us believers who have debtor status *are not mortal* (will not die) (cf. Rom 8:9-11).

Conclusion (stated) 1: Therefore, all of us believers who have debtor status are not the debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh (Rom 8:12).

The next step is to identify its major, minor and middle term shown below:

\[
\begin{align*}
P_1 &: \text{the predicate of the conclusion (major term)}, \\
S_1 &: \text{the subject of the conclusion (minor term)}, \\
M_1 &: \text{the middle term}; \\
M_2 &: \text{the major premise}, \\
m_1 &: \text{the minor premise}, \\
\text{Con}_1 &: \text{the conclusion of the first } \textit{enthymeme} \text{ in this thesis, and so forth; the subscript number denotes the sequence of the } \textit{enthymeme} \text{ in this chapter to which the statement belongs.}
\end{align*}
\]
P₁: the debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh
S₁: we believers who have debtor status
M₁: those who are mortal (those who will die)

Then after obverse of the minor premise, the syllogistic argument form presents as following AEE-2 (Camestres):²¹³

\[
\begin{align*}
M₁ \text{ (stated):} & \quad \text{All } P₁ \text{ are } M₁ \quad \text{All } P₁ \text{ are } M₁ \quad (8:13a) \\
M₁ \text{ (assumed):} & \quad \text{All } S₁ \text{ are not } M₁ \quad \rightarrow \text{ Obv. } \rightarrow \quad \text{No } S₁ \text{ are } M₁ \quad (\text{cf. 8:9-11}) \\
Con₁ \text{ (Stated):} & \quad \text{All } S₁ \text{ are not } P₁ \quad \text{No } S₁ \text{ are } P₁ \quad (8:12)
\end{align*}
\]

What this syllogism denotes is valid and proved by sound logic as follows:

Major premise (stated) 1: All the debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh, are mortal (will die) (Rom 8:13a).
Minor premise (assumed) 1: No believers who have debtor status are mortal (will die) (cf. Rom 8:9-11).
Conclusion (stated) 1: Therefore, no believers who have debtor status are the debtors to the flesh, to live according to the flesh (Rom 8:12).

One of the significant advantages of the missing premise in an enthymeme is that a joint co-operation between the speaker and the audience will take place. When the audience are encouraged to fulfill the reconstruction of the proof from their familiar views, they will be more easily persuaded.²¹⁴ With the aim to maintain the function and the integrity of the enthymeme, Paul omits the “but to the Spirit, to live according the Spirit” phrase after Rom 8:12. If this phrase is joined to Rom 8:12 as v. 12c,²¹⁵ not merely is the structure of the enthymeme disrupted, but some part of Paul’s reasoning logic will become invalid.

When v. 12c is added, verse 13b will be identified as its corresponding statement. These three short verses (vv. 12a, 12c, 13b) seemingly make up an enthymeme. Its argumentative validity could be determined through a standard categorical syllogism

²¹³ AEE-2 is one of the 15 unconditional valid forms of the syllogism; see Hurley, A Concise Introduction to Logic, 242-45.
²¹⁵ The text and the structure of Rom 8:12-13 will be as follows:

So then, brethren, we are debtors,
not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh,
but to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit.

For if you live according to the flesh, you will die;
but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body you will live.
form. To begin with, verses 12a, 12c, and 13b could be translated into categorical sentences and the three categorical propositions could be identified as below:

Major premise (stated) 2: All the debtors to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit (showing their putting to death the deeds of the body), are immortal (will live) (8:13b).

Minor premise (assumed) 2: All of us believers who have debtor status are immortal (will live) (cf. Rom 8:9-11).

Conclusion (assumed) 2: Therefore, all of us believers who have debtor status are the debtors to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit (added to Rom 8:12 as 12c).

Then, to recognize the three categorical terms (the major [P₂], the minor [S₂], and the middle [M₂]), we have:

\[ P₂: \text{the debtors to the Spirit, to live according to the Spirit} \]
\[ S₂(=S₁): \text{we believers who have debtor status} \]
\[ M₂: \text{those who are immortal (those who will live)} \]

Finally, the syllogistic argument form shows as AAA-2:

\[ M₂ \text{ (stated): All } P₂ \text{ are } M₂ \quad (8:13b) \]
\[ m₂ \text{ (assumed): All } S₂ \text{ are } M₂ \quad (\text{cf. } 8:9-11) \]
\[ Con₂ \text{ (assumed): All } S₂ \text{ are } P₂ \quad (8:12a, 12c) \]

Unfortunately, such an argument form is logically invalid, for the middle term is undistributed both in major and minor premises.²¹⁶ The supplement of Rom 8:12c (cf. 147n215) seems to be semantically correct, but causes a logical fallacy. Though the validity of a syllogistic argument depends exclusively on the form rather than the content of the argument, it is likely that Paul deliberately passes over the “but to the Spirit” phrase with the purpose to avoid the audience’s confusion over the argumentative logic. Since Paul plans on elucidating fully the very pragmatic work of the Spirit, a more appropriate way to assess the role of Rom 8:12-13a in Paul’s argument is to consider it a “foil” provided for the leading work of the Spirit in Christian life emphasized from Rom 8:13b onwards.²¹⁷

²¹⁶ Cf. Hurley, A Concise Introduction to Logic, 262: “The middle term must be distributed at least once.”
²¹⁷ Cf. Elizabeth Harris, Prologue and Gospel: The Theology of the Fourth Evangelist, JSNTSup 107 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 86; as her comment in discussing about Moses in John 6:
4.2.2.3 The very practical way the Spirit works

In Rom 8:13b we find that Paul begins to introduce the practical way the Spirit works in the believers. Paul’s purpose is to manifest the vital and positive role of the Spirit in Christian life in contrast to the destructive effect the flesh brings.218 The very challenging task believers must face in their lifetime, to annihilate the disgraceful actions, can only possibly be achieved by the Spirit by reason of two driving forces: specifically, first, under the guidance of the Spirit (Rom 8:14-15), and secondly, through the Spirit’s witness (Rom 8:16-17). Its core element for the first way is that all those who are led by the Spirit will be aware of their identity as God’s children. By recognizing the status as God’s adopted children and by motivating believers to cry out to God, “Abba! Father!” the Spirit presents guidance to overcoming the flesh. “While Christ makes adoption possible, the Holy Spirit makes it real in the lives of believers.”219 For the second way the central part of the Spirit’s witness is to have real knowledge of the blessing in God’s family.220 To be precise, Paul is used to highlighting the affirmative proposition of his argumentation after refuting its negative-side statement. For example, Paul draws attention to the righteousness of God in Rom 3:21-31 after his elaboration on God’s wrath and judgment on sinful humankind in Rom 1:18-3:21. In addition, Paul underlines the necessity of presenting believers’ members to God which results from their new status in Rom 6:13b after his rebuttal of the legitimacy of the reign of sin over believers in Rom 6:12-13a.

Paul repeatedly illustrates the tension between the old self and the new one even after justification (cf. Gal 5:17; 6:8). This makes clear the fact that there exist two conflicting possibilities of living manner. The continuing influence of the flesh on the believers is still real and never disappears.221 Therefore, to choose to live according to the Spirit is not a self-regulating mechanism for believers. Paul is acutely aware that determining to live out a Spirit-controlled life needs training. That is why in Rom 8:13b there are fourfold emphases presented by Paul. First, only by the power of the Spirit the certainty of living a new life can be established. Grammatically, πνεύματι appears as an instrumental dative (cf. Gal 5:16, 25), but the Spirit is not regarded as the means in Christian hands by which the extirpation of the disgraceful deeds of the

“Rather do the references to Moses and manna serve as a foil. As in 1:17 the reference to Moses and the law would seem to be made en route to the main point, which is the grace and truth already in existence through Jesus Christ, so here the reference to Moses and the manna is thrown up as a foil to an exposition of Jesus as God present among human beings for their eternal sustenance” (emphasis mine).

218 Cf. Fee, God's Empowering Presence, 898: “[The] Spirit’s major role in Paul’s view of things lies with his being the absolutely essential constituent of the whole of Christian life, from beginning to end” (emphasis Fee’s).


220 Diagram 3-2 “Development of thought in Romans 8:12-17” makes it clear at a glance.

221 Moo, Romans, 494.
body is accomplished (cf. Col 3:9). In actual fact, the Spirit leads the work; Rom 8:14 confirms this opinion. Secondly, the present verb θανατοῦτε (“you put to death”) indicates a progressive Aktionsart, that is, the effort by means of the indwelled Spirit to cause cessation of the evil deeds of the body should be continuous and become habitual. Thirdly, since our members and body are still subject to sin and death even after conversion (cf. Rom 6:12; 7:14b, 23, 24; 8:10), Paul uses the phrase τὰς πράξεις τοῦ σώματος (“the deeds of the body”) to refer to the sinful acts of the flesh which are the object to be eradicated. Charles Hodge further indicates that the phrase is “a metonymical expression for sinful deeds in general;” that is, because a part represents a complete thing, the deeds done by the body as the instrument of sin signify the sinful acts of the entire person. On the surface, this phrase does not display a negative meaning. The Greek noun πρᾶξις does not necessarily have a connotation of bad side. The main reasons why most commentators would add negative adjectives before it are that, for one thing, σῶμα can really be used by Paul in place of σῶμα (Rom 6:6; 7:24; 1 Cor 15: 44; Phil 3:21; cf. Col 2:11); for another, its context justifies its explanation. Here Paul connects the genitive τοῦ σώματος to the preceding κατὰ σάρκα, which makes τοῦ σώματος a genitive of quality, specifying the head substantive (τὰς πράξεις) “an attribute or innate quality” (fleshly). Lastly, not only does the verb ζήσεσθε (“you will live”) promise a transcendent life which can be experienced by believers in this world and in eternity, but it also strings together the true life Paul refers to in this letter ever since Rom 1:17. The considerable difference in ultimate outcome between these two lifestyles has showed obviously the direction of Paul’s exhortation, but Paul still has more to say.

4.2.3 The leading work of the Spirit

After giving a sharp contrast between the serious consequence of the life of obedience

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222 BDAG. s.v. “πράξις,” 4, b.
223 Constantine R. Campbell, Basics of Verbal Aspect in Biblical Greek (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008), 142-43; Dunn, Romans 1-8, 449; Fanning, Verbal Aspect, 360; Loane, The Hope of Glory, 48.
224 Hodge, Romans, 265.
225 However, NIV translates τὰς πράξεις into “the misdeeds.”
226 BDAG s.v. “σῶμα,” 1, b.
227 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 86-87. Lewis proposes that the negative significance of πράξις is associated with the vice list in Rom 1:18-32, where the corresponding verb πράσσω is used in Paul’s warning in “οἱ τὰ τουθαύτα πράσσοντες ἄξιοι θανάτου εἰσίν” (those who practice such things are worthy of death, 1:32). Nevertheless, Lewis seems to overlook another appearance of πράξις in Rom 12:4, where it denotes “function” without a negative sense; and the πράσσειν appearing in Rom 2:25 denotes “do” in a positive way. Therefore, context rather than association is supposed to be the key to appropriate remark, see Lewis, Paul’s ‘Spirit of Adoption,’ 170.
228 Cranfield’s interpretation is that the Christian life is the true life, which the believer begins to enjoy here and now, even will enjoy in its fullness in the eschatological future, see Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 101.
to the flesh and the eternal assurance resulted from the life of dependence on the Spirit, Paul focuses his argumentation more on the leading of the Spirit. In Rom 8:14 Paul points out that all who are led by the Holy Spirit are sons of God (cf. RSV). He introduces first time in Romans the concept of God’s children regarding the identity of believers. Such a proclamation further enhances Paul’s discussion to the very central part of the manner in which the Spirit works on the believers. In other words, not until Rom 8:14 does Paul reveal how the Spirit actually helps believers to destroy the morally wrong doings of their body and brings life.

The conjunction γάρ appearing at the beginning of Rom 8:14 marks a close correlation between especially Rom 8:13b and 14. The latter provides a further explanation of the former and launches a series of crucial arguments which surround the theme of God’s children. Romans 8:15 also starts with the conjunction γάρ, providing the reason why the concept in Rom 8:14 is made.

However, semantically it is not easy to see instantly the connection between Rom 8:13b and verse 14, and likewise between Rom 8:14 and verse 15. A further discovery of Paul’s employment of two consecutive enthymemes (sorites) reveals that Rom 8:13b is well connected to its following verses Rom 8:14-15, forming a complete argument. Some premises seem to be assumed between the verses. It is worthwhile to examine its concatenation more closely.

4.2.3.1 A closely connected structure of Romans 8:13b-15

All these three verses of Rom 8:13b-15 refer to the work of the Spirit. It seems reasonable to suppose that “by the Spirit we put to death the deeds of the body” (v. 13b), “our being led by the Spirit of God” (v. 14), and “receiving the Spirit of adoption and by whom we cry out, ‘! Father!’ ” (v. 15) are closely related expressions. An alternative observation is that verse 14 displays the grounds to accomplish verse 13b, and verse 15 demonstrates the details of the Spirit’s leading work of verse 14. As a matter of fact, these two enthymemes connect and partially overlap. The first enthymeme in Rom 8:13b-15 consists of verses 13b-14; verse 13b is its conclusion, verse 14 is the stated minor premise. Then the implied major premise is supposed to be “all who are sons of God will live” according to the previous section Rom 8:1-11.232

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229 See 126n101.

230 Howard renders “sorites” as “a chain of building claims or reasons;” see Gregory T. Howard, Dictionary of Rhetorical Terms (Xlibris, 2010), 198. Hurley’s definition is “a chain of categorical syllogisms in which the intermediate conclusions have been left out;” see Hurley, A Concise Introduction to Logic, 280. Likewise, Debanné glosses it as “a chain of enthymemes where the conclusion of the one enthymeme is the rationale statement of the previous enthymeme: e.g., A is true, for B is true, for C is true, etc.” Debanné’s definition best matches the form of Rom 8:13b-15, see Debanné, Enthymemes, 46.

231 For a brief analysis, see 126n102.

232 Since the people led by the Spirit are those who set their mind on the Spirit, the former people who
We can paraphrase Rom 8:13b-14 into categorical statements and identify the three terms in a standard categorical syllogism as follows:\textsuperscript{233}

Major premise (assumed) 3: All who are sons of God are immortal (will live).
Minor premise (stated) 3: All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (8:14).
Conclusion (stated) 3: All who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their putting to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit) are immortal (will live) (8:13b).

\( P_3 \): those who are immortal (those who will live)
\( S_3 \): those who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their putting to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit)
\( M_3 \): sons of God

Then the syllogistic argument form presents as AAA-1 (\textit{Barbara}) which is unconditionally valid:\textsuperscript{234}

\[
\begin{align*}
M_3 \text{ (assumed):} & \quad \text{All } M_3 \text{ are } P_3 \\
m_3 \text{ (stated):} & \quad \text{All } S_3 \text{ are } M_3 \quad (8:14) \\
Con_3 \text{ (stated):} & \quad \text{All } S_3 \text{ are } P_3 \quad (8:13b)
\end{align*}
\]

Romans 8:14-15 comprises the second \textit{enthymeme} of the unit Rom 8:13b-15. Verse 14 functions simultaneously as the minor premise of the former \textit{enthymeme} and the conclusion of the latter \textit{enthymeme}. Under such circumstance, the assumed major premise of the second \textit{enthymeme} is supposed to be “all who cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ are sons of God.”\textsuperscript{235} Likewise, Rom 8:14-15 could be paraphrased into categorical propositions, and the three terms could be identified as below:\textsuperscript{236}

\begin{itemize}
\item are called the sons of God will live as the latter ones who have life (cf. esp. Rom 8:6, 11).
\item Following categorical syllogism based on Rom 8:13b-14 is the one suggested by Debanné (explanations in brackets mine):
  \[
  \begin{align*}
  \{M & \quad \text{Any son of God is destined to eternal life.} \} \quad (\text{major premise}) \\
  m & \quad \text{Any person led by the Spirit of God is a son of God.} \quad (\text{minor premise}) \\
  \Rightarrow & \quad \text{Any person led by the Spirit of God is destined to eternal life.} \quad (\text{conclusion})
  \end{align*}
  \]
\end{itemize}

See Debanné, “Appendix E2,” 26. Debanné’s disregard in this \textit{enthymeme} for the Spirit’s work of helping believers in putting death the deeds of the flesh makes his suggestion less convincing.

\textsuperscript{234} See Hurley, \textit{A Concise Introduction to Logic}, 242-45.

235 Those people who call God, “Abba! Father!” demonstrate a parent-child relationship between God and themselves, hence are supposed to be sons of God. In fact, especially in the beginning greeting of his letters Paul often addresses God as “our Father,” (Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3, 4; Eph 1:2; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thess 1:3; 3:13; 2 Thess 1:2 [variant reading]; Philm 3;) or “Father” (1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4). Paul’s audience is familiar with such a relationship.

236 In Debanné’s demonstration the \textit{enthymeme} is constituted by Rom 8:14-16, and forms a \textit{sorites}
Major premise (assumed) 4: All who cry out, “Abba! Father!” are sons of God.
Minor premise (stated) 4: All who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their having received not the Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but the Spirit of adoption), are those who cry out, “Abba! Father!” (8:15).
Conclusion (stated) 4: All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (8:14).

P₄: sons of God
S₄: those who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their having received not the Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but the Spirit of adoption)
M₄: those who cry out, “Abba! Father!”

After paraphrasing the categorical sentences, we have another argument form AAA-1 (Barbara):

\[ M₄ \text{ (assumed): All } M₄ \text{ are } P₄ \]
\[ m₄ \text{ (stated): All } S₄ \text{ are } M₄ \text{ (8:15)} \]
\[ Con₄[m₃] \text{ (stated): All } S₄ (=S₃) \text{ are } P₄ (=M₃) \text{ (8:14)} \]

Finally, the combined form and the whole argumentative correlation of the chain of successive enthymemes in Rom 8:13b-15 could be presented as follows:

together with the previous enthymeme Rom 8:13b-14. His approach is to view Rom 8:16 as “the topic of the sure sign (τεκμήριον): A is B if it demonstrates the sure sign of being B.” Therefore, “the testimony of Spirit of God to our spirit that we are sons of God is the sure sign that we are sons of God.” He translates Rom 8:14-16 into a categorical syllogism as below:

[M All people to whose spirit the Holy Spirit bears witness of sonship are sons of God.]
[m All those lead [sic] by the Spirit (we) receive witness from the Holy Spirit in their spirit that they are sons of God.]
=> All those lead [sic] by the Spirit (we) are sons of God.

Debanné’s enthymeme analysis above is problematic. In this enthymeme Debanné considers the major term to be “sons of God;” the minor term “those lead [sic] by the Spirit;” and the middle term “those whose spirit receive the witness of sonship from the Holy Spirit.” Obviously, the major premise (M) is paraphrased from Rom 8:16, hence it should not be regarded as a “supplied silent premise,” which is signified by the symbol { } in his analysis. In addition, the middle term in the minor premise (m) is more paraphrased from Rom 8:16 than 8:15; Debanné seems to only highlight the difference between “bear witness to whose spirit” and “receive witness in their spirit,” ignoring the other content of verse 15. Finally, because of the lacking marker of reason “γάρ” at the beginning of Rom 8:16, it is debatable whether the relationship between Rom 8:16 and 15 or 14 is causality. See Debanné, “Appendix E2,” 26.
$M_4$ (assumed): All $M_4$ are $P_4$

$m_4$ (stated): All $S_4$ are $M_4$ (8:15)

$Con_4 (m_3)$ (stated): All $S_4 (=S_3)$ are $P_4 (=M_3)$ (8:14)

$M_3$ (assumed): All $M_3$ are $P_3$

$m_3$ (stated): All $S_3$ are $M_3$ (8:14)

$Con_3$ (stated): All $S_3$ are $P_3$ (8:13b)

$M_4$ (assumed): All who cry out, “Abba! Father!” are sons of God.

$m_4$ (stated): All who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their having received not the Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but the Spirit of adoption), cry out, “Abba! Father!” (8:15).

$M_3$ (assumed): All who are sons of God will live.

$m_3$ (stated): All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God (8:14).

$Con_3$ (stated): All who are led by the Spirit of God (being demonstrated by their putting to death the deeds of the body by the Spirit), will live (8:13b).

By such a densely verbalized reasoning Paul flexibly interchanges the connotation of the Spirit’s leading work in order to invite his audience to participate in his argumentation. Both the two assumed premises ($M_3$, $M_4$) are evident for Paul’s readers, though they are not stated. Once they are required to fulfill Paul’s way of thinking, not only Paul’s intention on logos, but his intention on ethos and pathos also becomes more convincing. Paul declares in a very concise and effective way that believers’ complete destruction of the flesh results from the leading work of the Spirit, and the most crucial leading work of the Spirit is to make the believers be aware of their adoption status. To eradicate the deeds of the flesh is the concrete target for all the believers. Its possibility can only be attained by the Spirit’s lead. But why and how the Spirit’s leading work can make that target capable of happening needs more explanation. Romans 8:14 provides an important clue, signifying that the leading role of the Spirit makes the status of sons of God become real to the believers. Verse 14 functions as a hinge of this sorites; it is the specific statement of the initial enthymeme and the conclusion of the latter one.

As can be seen from the similar statements in Gal 3:26: “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (Πάντες γὰρ νῦν θεοὶ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ) and Gal 5:18: “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law” (εἰ δὲ πνεύματι ἄγεσθε, οὐκ ἐστε ὑπὸ νόμου), in Paul’s mind being led by the

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Spirit of God is the equivalent of having faith in Christ, on the one hand, and being sons of God is regarded as no more being under the law, on the other hand. Viewing from another angle, when Paul employs the plural passive form of ἄγω in πνεῦμα θεοῦ ἄγονται, he involves some essential concepts regarding the status of the believers which he has expounded and experienced before. But here Paul integrates all of them into the new concept of adoption proposed in the following verse. Romans 8:15 becomes the best explanation of verse 14.

4.2.3.2 Not based on the Exodus event in discussing the Spirit’s work

Some scholars claim that there exists a Pauline typological understanding of the Exodus event in Rom 8, especially in the connection between the leading role of the Spirit and the sonship of Israel, which is reflected in Rom 8:14-15. Such an understanding seems to ignore some easily confused conceptions that have not been clarified by its proponents. Whether the transformation of the believers’ status is described as the antitype of its type, the process of the Israelites saved from Egypt, is open to question. There are four facts that are often overlooked:

1. A different identity at the beginning on each side: At first glance, there seems to be an obvious similarity of the status transforming process between Exodus and Romans. Remaining in the state of slavery and bondage under Pharaoh for the Israelites is usually deemed to be the spiritual state of slavery under the power of sin and death for unbelievers. Both sides change their identity from slaves to adoptive sons of God under an exhortation to fearlessness because of God’s saving initiative (cf. Exod 6:6-8; Acts 2:38-39). However, the real identity of the Israeliite people in Egypt is essentially different from that of the believers in Romans. Before God’s deliverance, the Israelites are already God’s people or children in God’s eyes, though they are physical slaves under Pharaoh’s control in Egypt (cf. Gen 17:7-8; Exod 4:22-23a; 6:7; Hos 11:1). Prior to God’s redemption, the members in the Roman church are unbelievers; they are slaves of sin and death regardless of their ethnicity. God’s action of saving the Israelis from Egypt is to restore their sonship of God, yet the believers in Romans receive an utterly new identity as God’s children.

2. Different processes and results for both sides: In the Exodus event, even though the Israelites are saved from the Egyptian slavery, paradoxically they are nominally God’s children, not all real believers. God saves Israel on His own initiative, but the

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eternal salvation will not belong to the Jewish people automatically, nor will the transformation experience of life be forced on them. They have to respond to God’s salvation with faith which will be displayed by their subsequent proper behavior like their forefather Abraham does (cf. Rom 4:16-22). Paul states clearly in Rom 2:28-29: “For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.” George Carraway states clearly that the privileges listed in Rom 9:4 are considered by Paul to be “further reason to lament their unbelief.” Furthermore, in Rom 9:6b-8, Paul repeats the similar thought: “For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel; neither are they all children because they are Abraham’s descendants, but: ‘through Isaac your descendants will be named.’ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.” In reality, the adult generation of the Israelite people out of Egypt almost died in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:5; cf. Num 32:10-13), which signifies that most of them lost both the privilege of entering the promised land and the eternal salvation owing to their unbelief (cf. Heb 3:16-19). Even the entering of the younger generation into the promised land does not mean that all of them are genuine believers. The following generations who occupied the promised land showed their unbelief and disobedience still in an aggravated form (cf. Judg 2:11-13; Rom 2:17-24). Paul’s quotation from the words of Hosea and Isaiah in Rom 9:27b ironically reveals the fact: ἐὰν ἦν ὁ ἄριθμος τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ ὡς ἡ ἡμετεροτος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται (“Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved;” emphasis added). Nevertheless, the audience in Romans to whom Paul addresses his words are those “who are called to belong to Christ Jesus” (Rom 1:6 NRSV), and “God’s beloved, who are called to be saints” (Rom 1:7a NRSV). Paul makes it clear that their identity of being saved is assured through the statement of Rom 5:1: “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” In the Exodus event the Israelites are demanded by Moses to obey God’s commandments by choice, that is, to be believers and followers of God. If the Israelites choose disobedience, they will take the consequences of losing salvation and being punished (Deut 30:15-18). In Romans the audience are

240 George Carraway, Christ is God over All: Romans 9:5 in the Context of Romans 9-11, LNTS 489 (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 27-31, here 27.
241 Compared to original Isa 10:22a (LXX), a relatively noticeable difference in Paul’s citation of it is that the first subject, ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραήλ (“the people of Israel”) is replaced by ὁ ἄριθμος τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ (“the number of the sons of Israel”) quoted from Hos 2:1 (LXX). For a further explanation, see Moo, Romans, 614-16.
saved believers who are exhorted by Paul to persevere in living a life worthy of their salvation and to believe that their final triumph in Christ is for sure (cf. Rom 8:31-39).

3. Lack of direct quotations from the Exodus event in Rom 8:12-17: There is no direct citation of Exodus text or reference to the Exodus event in Rom 8:12-17 as Paul’s recounting in Rom 9:15-18; 10:5-8; 1 Cor 5:7b; 10:1-11 or 2 Cor 3. Though the lack of direct citation of the Exodus event does not mean that no assumption of Exodus typology exists in Paul’s mind, we still wonder why he cannot explicitly express its Exodus connection if it is so significant, as assumed by scholars claiming the Exodus typology, in correspondence with his argument in Rom 9-10 or in 1 Cor 10:1-11. The reason why the Exodus incidents are cited in Rom 9-10 is that Paul there clarifies the reality of losing salvation for most Israelites, which results from their unbelief and cannot be blamed to their exclusion from God’s divine election. In 1 Cor 10:1-11 Paul admonishes the Corinthian Christians not to repeat the similar mistakes the Exodus generation made; he states explicitly that οὐκ ἐν τοῖς πλείουσιν αὐτῶν εὐδόκησεν ὁ θεὸς, κατεστράφησαν γὰρ ἐν τῇ ἐρήμῳ (“with most of them God was not well-pleased; for they were laid low in the wilderness,” 1 Cor 10:5; emphasis added). The failures of the people of the Exodus generation become negative examples (τύποι, 1 Cor 10:6) for the Corinthians as opposed to the ancient types which are corresponding to any antitype in the Corinthian spiritual experience. E. Kenneth Lee indicates explicitly that the “τύποι” in 1 Cor 10:6 refers not to “the Red Sea, the Rock, the Manna, and the water regarded as material spiritual antitypes (that is, the Christian Sacraments), but to the judgements inflicted upon sinful Israel,” which turn out to be examples deterring the Corinthian believers from craving evil things as the Israelite did.²⁴² Paul further lists the evil things the Israelite coveted and their disastrous death in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:7-10), which serve as a warning (cf. the corresponding adverb τοπικὸς, 1 Cor 10:11) to the Corinthian believers.²⁴³ However, Paul does not put his emphasis on the point that the Corinthian true believers will lose their salvation if they crave the evil things (especially concerning idolatrous misbehavior) as the wilderness generation did (cf. 1 Cor 10:6-7). The vast majority of the slaughtered Israelites in the wilderness are not true believers in essence even though they experienced God’s deliverance and blessing. They lost their salvation because of their unbelief (Heb 3:19). However, by relating Israel’s tragic exodus history, Paul is not threatening the Corinthians with the loss of salvation if they keep committing the sin of idolatry, though logically the possibility exists (cf. 1 Cor 6:9). Some Corinthian believers are falling into the danger of being involved in idolatrous activities, which belong to the conducts of the unbelievers, that is, “those who are in the flesh cannot please God”

Paul implies that the Corinthian believers may discard their salvation, but they will not. Concerning the issue of perseverance, Millard J. Erickson offers an insightful comment as follows: “God does this, not by making it impossible for believers to fall away, but by making it certain that they will not.” As long as there is danger and risk of losing salvation, urgent warning is necessary for the believers (1 Cor 10:11b-12). Nevertheless, Paul is more confident that through His faithfulness God will preserve the believers from whatever temptation may cause them to fall away from His salvation (1 Cor 10:13).

4. Only partial correspondence exists in the Exodus paradigm: Traditionally, the first Exodus event is regarded by many scholars as a paradigm of God’s redemption or salvation. However, they claim an almost exclusive importance to the side of God’s work, paying no attention to the side of the response of God’s people. There are two dimensions of the Exodus paradigm: God’s saving action and the reaction of the people he rescued. In time to come after the Exodus, the Exodus paradigm is valid only when it relates to God’s renewed salvation of His people, but invalid when it refers to the Israelites who responded to God’s salvation with a quite wrong attitude, as our discussion above has shown. Even though after their deliverance from the Babylonian captivity which is so called “Second Exodus,” the Jewish people still used erroneous ways to respond to God’s calling (cf. Mal 3:5-15; Matt 15:8; Mark 7:6; Acts 7:51-53; Rom 10:21), resulting in their scattering among the nations. Furthermore, what Paul discusses here is primarily the manner in which the true believers experience God’s redemption. The way the Exodus generation and most of their descendants responded to God’s rescue has never been a paradigm for future generations. Strictly speaking, only God’s action and the response of very few Israelites in the first Exodus could be regarded as the paradigm. Using the first Exodus event (a successful

244 Note that in the negative sentence of 1 Cor 10:5 Paul uses εὐδοκέω (“be well pleased with”), a synonymous verb of ἔρισκο ("to please," Rom 8:8), to express God’s judgmental attitude against the Israelites.


246 A further detailed discussion, see Gundry Vol, *Paul and Perseverance*, 70-74.


political liberation coupled with a failed spiritual deliverance) as the typological background of the accomplished spiritual redemption will confuse the Roman believers.

In summary, the theory that Rom 8:12-17 is to be understood on the background of Exodus typology mainly lacks the “historical plausibility,” and hence is unable to produce “satisfaction” to Paul and his readers. As an analogy or a typology, the Exodus experience of the Israelites actually fails to reflect the prototype of a redeemed process from slavery under sin to spiritual freedom. Moreover, the issue Paul investigates in Rom 8 is not the reason why most Israelites are not saved, or the similar spiritual problems and serious immorality resulting from secularization in the Corinthian church, or the possibility of apostasy as that among the readers of Hebrews, but the power of the gospel leading to the awareness of assured identity and status in Christ. Therefore, if there is any intertextuality in Rom 8:12-17, an alternative explanation from the perspective of Paul’s conversion experience will be more pertinent.

William N. Wilder believes that in Paul’s mind there is a typological connection between the guiding cloud pillar in Exodus and the leading Spirit in Rom 8:14. In other words, being led by the Spirit is regarded as the cloud-like guidance in the Exodus narrative. Nevertheless, throughout his clarification Wilder disregards the investigation of the pillar of fire, which functions as God’s guidance and protection with the pillar of cloud in the wilderness journey of the Israelites (cf. Exod 13:21-22). Wilder’s obvious neglect of discussing the role of the pillar of fire makes his argument faulty. Besides, Wilder’s Spirit-cloud identification also confines the work of the Holy Spirit and God. When he recognizes the pillar of cloud as the Spirit, he indirectly denies the possibility of the operation of the Spirit’s or God’s power through other agents (cf. through an angel: Exod 23:20-21, 23a; through fire: Exod 40:36-38). Nor does he perceive that it is God Himself rather than the Spirit that can be present in cloud, manifesting His divine guidance for the Israelites (cf. Exod 16:10; 33:7-11a).

Regarding the feature as well as the origin of the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire, various explanations have been provided. Though the composite phrase “a pillar of fire and cloud” (עַמַ֥וּד אִֵ֖ש וְעָנֶָָ֑֑ן) appears only once in Exod 14:24, most scholars tend to propose that the expressions of separate phrases “pillar of cloud”

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in the Pentateuch suggest one pillar, that is, one pillar with two different aspects which exhibit in different time, cloud by day, fire by night. Carol Meyers even assumes such a description to "be understood as a figure of speech, merism (two opposites that together denote a totality)." No matter what the numbers of the pillar, none of their reviews refers the cloud to the embodiment of the Holy Spirit. The texts clearly indicate that the pillar of cloud and fire is a theophanic manifestation of Yahweh (Exod 13:21, 22; Num 12:5; 14:14; Deut 1:33; 31:15). Wilder’s insistence on connecting the pillar only with the Holy Spirit as well as his ignorance of the fire-related aspect of the pillar make his argument not comport with the immediate context of the texts he alludes to. In addition, in light of the ambiguity of the large-scale work of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times, a direct association of the leading pillar with the Holy Spirit will make his argument unconvincing.

4.2.3.3 The influence of Paul’s conversion on his understanding of the Spirit’s work

Compared with Wilder’s Spirit-cloud recognition, the elucidation of the impact of the Spirit since Paul’s conversion on his argumentation provides a more apposite background. There are at least three reasons in support of it.

1. Paul’s conversion, especially the experience of being led by the Holy Spirit,

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would be a positive example to the Roman Christians. Paul rarely describes the process of his own conversion in his letters. However, when he touches upon it (e.g., 1 Cor 15:8-10; Gal 1:13-16; Phil 3:4-11; 2 Cor 4:4-6), he seldom refers to the Holy Spirit.²⁵⁸ Nevertheless, as Fee states, “Paul’s understanding of the Spirit himself—including his role as the key element to the whole the Christian life—almost certainly had its origin in his experience of the Spirit at the time of his conversion.”²⁵⁹ Unlike the experience of the Exodus generation, Paul’s conversion experience is more appropriate to function as a paradigm for Roman believers because of Paul’s positive response to God’s salvation. In comparison with the failed spiritual transformation of the Exodus generation, Paul’s life-transforming veracity has a real constructive impact on the Roman believers (Gal 3:13-16; cf. 1 Tim 1:12-16). Despite the fact that the wilderness generation is mainly comprised of political freedmen after their departure from Egypt, most of them still are spiritual prisoners, succumbing to the power of sin and death. Yet Paul’s conversion experience expresses that his spiritual position has been set free from sin and death (Rom 6:18, 22; 8:1), would no longer be enslaved to sin (Rom 6:6), nor under the power of Satan (Acts 26:18, cf. our short analysis of the accounts in Acts as a source for Paul’s conversion in sec. 1.4.3 “The most likely material source of the adoption imagery in Paul: his Damascus road experience”). As Robert Pyne confirms, “Unless unbelievers are given particular insight through the Holy Spirit, they are not capable of properly evaluating the gospel message.”²⁶⁰ Only through the guidance of the Holy Spirit can unbelievers comprehend rightly the gospel and surrender to Christ in repentance and faith (Acts 22:16; 2 Cor 3:16-17). Luke’s description also attests Paul’s obedience to the Holy Spirit after Ananias had laid hands on him (Acts 9:17-18).²⁶¹

²⁵⁸ Gordon D. Fee, “Paul’s Conversion as Key to His Understanding of the Spirit,” in Longenecker, The Road from Damascus, 166-83, here 167. Kim lists the following Pauline texts, which are concerned with Paul’s conversion/call: Rom 1:1; 10:2-4; 12:3; 15:15; 1 Cor 1:1; 3:10; 9:1, 16-17; 2 Cor 3:4-4:6; 5:16-21; Gal 1:1, 13-17; 2:9; Eph 1:1; 3:1-13; Col 1:1, 23c-29; 1 Tim 1:11-14 (only underlined texts refer to the Holy Spirit), see Seyoon Kim, The Origin of Paul’s Gospel (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 3-31. Everts focuses his discussion on the following passages: Gal 1:11-17; Phil 3:3-17; 1 Tim 1:12-17; Rom 7:7-25 (not accepted as conversion text after discussion); and the Acts accounts (9:1-20; 22:1-21; 26:2-23), see DPL 157-59. Churchill refers the Damascus road encounter to Gal 1:1-17; 1 Cor 1:1, 17; 9:1; 15:1-11; 2 Cor 1:1; 10:8, 13; Rom 1:1-6; 11:13; 15:15-20; Phil 3:4-14; regrettable, Churchill does not investigate the role of the Holy Spirit in Paul’s DRE (Damascus road experience), see Timothy W. R. Churchill, Divine Initiative and the Christology of the Damascus Road Encounter (Eugene OR: Pickwick, 2010), 252.

²⁵⁹ Fee, “Paul’s Conversion as key,” 166.


Paul of the risen Christ “who is indeed the Messiah promised to Israel”\(^{262}\) (1 Cor 9:1; 15:8; Gal 1:12, 16), and the reshaping of Paul’s life, mission and value resulting from his being united with Jesus’ death and resurrection (Phil 3:7-11; Rom 6:5-8), then it comes as no surprise to learn that Paul’s confirmation, comprehension and assurance of salvation are clearly seen between the lines.\(^{263}\) Paul grasps that Jesus Christ our Lord “was declared the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead, according to the Spirit of holiness” (Rom 1:4). Furthermore, he realizes the redemptive value and implication of the cross of Jesus, which becomes the very central core of his gospel (1 Cor 1:23; 2:2).\(^{264}\)

Therefore, Paul’s explanation of salvation results from his experience of encountering the risen Lord on the Damascus road. In J. G. Gager’s final additional summaries regarding Paul’s conversion, there are at least two points related to our text:

- His repeated statements that salvation results in a new creation, a new definition of humanity, a transformation in which our lower physical nature is supplanted by a higher nature;
- And finally, his tendency to divide history into two stages, and to characterize these stages as opposites – body/spirit, law/grace, law/spirit, death/life, sin/love, loss/gain.\(^{265}\)

Not only does Paul use the antithetical language of flesh/spirit (Rom 8:12-13) to reflect his change through the contrast between his past achievement under the law

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and the renewed life in Christ after conversion (Gal 1:13-16; Phil 3:2-21), but he also employs the metaphor of transformed position as “from slavery to adoption as children” (Rom 8:15) or “from the slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God” (Rom 8:21) to express the connotation of “from darkness to light, and from the dominion of Satan to God” (Acts 26:18a; 2 Cor 4:4, 6). What he was intensely proud of according to the flesh was considered as loss and rubbish and hence was replaced with Christ who has been known by Paul through the Spirit of wisdom and revelation (Gal 1:12, 16; Phil 3:4-9; cf. Eph 1:17). The usage of sonship (or adoption, “υἱοθεσία,” Rom 8:15, 23) can be understood as Paul’s reflection on his soteriology after conversion. Deriving from Paul’s Damascus experience, Seyoon Kim contends that “Paul connects our adoption as sons of God with the Spirit and with the theme of freedom.” Besides, the suffering due to Paul’s conversion and calling (Acts 9:16; 26:17, 21; Phil 3:10; cf. Col 1:24) echoes through his emphasis on the description of suffering with Christ (Rom 8:17), the current misfortune owing to the threat from the power of sin and death (Rom 8:18), and the resulting groaning and weaknesses within the believers (Rom 8:23, 26). In addition, the forceful testimony of the Spirit to our spirit (συμμαρτυρέω, “to bear witness with,” cf. sec. 4.2.5 “The witness of the Spirit and adoption”) on the assurance of our status of being children of God (Rom 8:16) communicates the impact of his mission as a witness for Christ from the Damascus road experience ([μάρτυς, ‘a witness’] Acts 22:15, 20; 26:16; [μαρτυρία, ‘testimony’] Acts 22:18; [μαρτύρομαι, ‘to testify’] Acts 26:22; [μαρτυρέω, ‘to bear witness’] Rom 3:21; 1 Cor 15:15; [μαρτύριον, ‘testimony’] 1 Cor 1:6; cf. 2 Thess 1:10; 1 Tim 2:6; 2 Tim 1:8). As to the noun μαρτύριον, it is worth noting L. Coenen’s suggestion that Paul is most likely the first to give it “a new meaning and content.” Instead of denoting “a document, or a piece of evidence or recollection giving encouragement or warning,” it signifies “the gospel, the proclaimed message of salvation in Christ.” Likewise, when Paul applies the term κληρονόμος (“heir”) in expounding the certainty of future salvation, it conveys the further significance of the status of God’s children inspired by the Damascus road event (cf. Rom 4:13-14; Gal 3:29; 4:1, 7; Titus 3:7; [κληρος, “inheritance”] Col 1:12; [κληρονομία, “inheritance”] Gal 3:18; Eph 1:14, 18). The phrase in Rom 8:17a συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ (“fellow heirs with Christ”) is associated with the purpose of Paul’s call to

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267 For a further analysis, see Kim, The Origin of Paul’s Gospel, 315-29.
268 Ibid., 317.
269 Ibid., 271.
271 BDAG, s.v. “κληρονομία,” 2.
272 BDAG, s.v. “κληρονομία,” 3.
the gentile mission on the Damascus road: τοῦ λαβεῖν αὐτοῦ ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν καὶ κλῆρον ἐν τοῖς ἡγιασμένοις πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμὲ (“in order that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among those who have been sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18b). The last word of Rom 8:17, συνδοξασθῶμεν (“we may be glorified with”), apparently delineates the vision of Christophany Paul saw on the road to Damascus (Gal 1:12, 16; 1 Cor 9:1; 15:43; 2 Cor 4:4, 6; cf. Acts 9:3-6; 22:6-8; 26:13-15; Rom 5:2; 8:29; 2 Cor 3:18; Phil 3:21). An influence of Paul’s Damascus road encounter reveals that for believers the future glory through Christ is always highly anticipated in present sufferings (Rom 8:17-18, 23; Phil 3:10-11).275

3. The Holy Spirit plays a more crucial and obvious role in Paul’s conversion than in the Exodus. Unlike the reaction of the Exodus generation, that displays their reluctance to obey God’s commands, whose pilgrimage is full of resentment and complaints and in which even the leading work of God’s Spirit is not obvious,276 Paul’s response to God’s guidance through the Spirit is obedience and compliance. Though there is lack of a “specific linguistic link” between Paul’s original experience of the Spirit on the occasion of his conversion and his comprehension of spiritual life, Fee’s analysis regarding this issue affords a perspective insight:

My concern in all of this is to point out that not only does Paul regularly remind his converts of their reception of the Spirit at their entry point into the Christian faith, but that he also regularly and consistently includes himself along with them as a recipient of the Spirit when theological argument turns into Christian confession.277

Using the texts related to the conversion experience of believers as a basis Fee draws his inductive conclusion that Paul is highly affected by the Spirit in his own conversion. The way he finds the connection is to divide the pertinent texts into two categories. The first one, the conversion texts, includes Paul’s reminders of how believers experienced the work of the Spirit at the very early stage of believing in Christ (i.e., 1 Cor 2:4-5; 6:11; 2 Cor 3:3; Gal 3:1-5) and his words of incentivizing believers to live a Christian life worthy of their status (1 Thess 1:4-6, 9-10).278 The second one, the confessional texts, consists of Paul’s various assertions of soteriology pertaining


275 Christopher R. Little, Mission in the Way of Paul: Biblical Mission for the Church in the Twenty-First Century, StBibLit 80 (New York: Lang, 2005), 55-56.


277 Fee, “Paul’s Conversion as Key,” 180-81.

278 Ibid., 172.
to the Spirit, which are full of pre-Pauline creedal formulations (i.e., Rom 3:21-26; 5:1-5; 8:15-17; 2 Cor 1:21-22; Gal 3:13-14; 4:4-7; cf. Eph 1:11-14; 2 Thess 2:13-14; 2 Tim 1:6-7; Titus 3:3-8). The purpose of the former is to demonstrate that only on the background of a similar conversion experience in the Spirit can Paul’s reminders and encouragement be of immediate concern to his converts. The function of the latter group is to make obvious how “Paul includes himself along with his readers (mostly his own converts) at the key point of ‘receiving the Spirit.’” That the first-person plural, which denotes a joint community between Paul and his converts, is widely used by Paul especially in the confessional texts, proves Fee’s viewpoint. Judging from the above, given that the role of the Spirit has been very crucial and dynamic in Paul’s life and ministry since his conversion, the appropriate background for his elucidation of the role of the Spirit in Christian life would be his own experience influenced by the Spirit rather than the history of the Exodus event.

4.2.4 The relationship between the leading of the Spirit and adoption

Related to the Spirit’s leading of believers in Rom 8:14, there is a variety of different opinions regarding its implications. Among the interpretations, Jewett is inclined to the view of taking an “ecstatic” or “charismatic” quality into account:

It is therefore appropriate to explain Paul’s formulation of being led by the Spirit as “being constrained by a compelling force, of surrendering to an overpowering compulsion,” which implies divine intervention into the decision-making process of the community, led by inspired leaders, and tested by inspired and transformed minds of the members (Rom 12:1-2).

However, his exposition that stresses its happening in particular Christian groups seems to be detached from the immediate context, which shows that the struggle in Rom 8:13 is also faced by every individual believer. Besides, the ability to make a right choice is built through a long process of spiritual training. It means that surrendering to an overmastering compulsion is less likely a typical phenomenon. By contrast, Moo’s explanation of “led by the Spirit” as “in Gal 5:18, to have the direction of one’s life as a whole determined by the Spirit” is more contextually oriented.

Moo rightly points out that there exists a relationship of imperative and indicative

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279 Ibid., 172, 177.
280 Ibid., 180.
281 Ibid., 177-81.
282 This coincides with the view of Dunn and Käsemann, see Jewett, Romans, 496; his citation (and adaptation) is from Dunn, Romans 1-8, 450.
283 Moo, Romans, 498.
between Rom 8:13b and 14.\textsuperscript{284} Burke also claims that “for Paul there is a clear difference between acknowledging that one is a son of God and acting like a child of God.”\textsuperscript{285} Specifically, if Rom 8:13b implies imperative quality, Rom 8:14 will be the related indicative (what God has done and continues to do for us in Christ) behind it.\textsuperscript{286} To be precise, the passage Rom 8:14-17 forms a joint indicative to Rom 8:13b.\textsuperscript{287} Paul is accustomed to expressing his viewpoints with the imperative-indicative pattern, which prevails among his letters (cf. sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator”).\textsuperscript{288} We shall find later in the following examination that the Spirit of adoption is at the core of the whole argument.

Semantically, the connection between “all who are being led by the Spirit of God” and “sons of God” is absent. The explicit reasons why those led by the Spirit become sons of God, or why this statement (Rom 8:14) becomes the supportive evidence of Rom 8:13b, or why those who by the Spirit put to death the deeds of the body will live, will not become known until Rom 8:15 is examined. Through the study of enthythemes 3 and 4 mentioned above we can uncover the missing links. The missing link between Rom 8:13b and 14 is the major premise ($M_3$) “all who are sons of God are immortal (will live).” Another missing link between Rom 8:14 and 15 is the major premise ($M_4$) “all who cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’ are sons of God.”\textsuperscript{289}

Five out of seven occurrences of the Greek verb ἄγω in Paul (Rom 2:4; 8:14; 1 Cor 12:2; Gal 5:18; cf. 2 Tim 3:6; 4:11) are rendered as “lead/guide morally or spiritually” by BDAG.\textsuperscript{290} BDAG further classifies this verb in Rom 8:14 and Gal 5:18 as permissive passive, denoting it as “be led, allow oneself to be led.”\textsuperscript{291} Wallace explains the signification of permissive passive as “consent, permission, or cause of the action on the part of the subject.”\textsuperscript{292} When Rom 8:14a is interpreted as “all who allow themselves to be led,” and is connected to Rom 8:13b, Wallace’s proposition provides support to what Moo remarks regarding Rom 8:13: “Holiness of life, then, is achieved neither by our own unaided effort…. nor by the Spirit apart from our participation…. but by our constant living out the ‘life’ placed within us by the Spirit who has taken up residence within.”\textsuperscript{293}

Since the guidance of the Spirit occupies the most crucial role in defeating the

\textsuperscript{284} Ibid., 498-99.
\textsuperscript{286} Cf. Moo, Romans, 495.
\textsuperscript{287} Burke, Adopted into God’s Family, 143-48.
\textsuperscript{288} Matera, Romans, 161-63.
\textsuperscript{289} Cf.126n102 and pp. 151-54.
\textsuperscript{290} BDAG, s.v. “ἄγω,” 3.
\textsuperscript{292} Wallace, Greek Grammar, 440.
\textsuperscript{293} Moo, Romans, 495-96.
power of the flesh over believers, Paul’s special train of argument here should not be disregarded. The method Paul draws on is not law-oriented, that is, to make an effort physically on moral actions, but gospel-oriented, to make every effort mentally to know the Spirit’s intention and respond positively to it. At the end of Rom 8:13 and 14 the missing links are probably left intentionally by Paul to be perceived by his readers. In effect, it is not intricate to achieve in keeping with the literary context.\(^{294}\) Paul’s deductive conclusion in Rom 8:14, ὠντοι υἱοί θεοῦ εἰσιν (“these are sons of God”), paves the way to his core clarification in Rom 8:15. Though this is the first time the term υἱοί θεοῦ appears in Romans, the recipients of the letter are not unfamiliar with such a status. To look upon God as Father of all believers has been done by Paul in Rom 1:7 and 6:4.\(^{295}\) Now Paul is ready to explicate clearly the way to experience the reality of God’s redemption with the relationship between father and son, the most well known and central one in the Roman household.

The significance of Paul’s designation of believers as “sons of God” consists in two certainties. The first certainty is that they are sons of God (θεοῦ). Grammatically, there are double relationships between the genitive and the substantive. One is ownership relationship, the other is familial relationship.\(^{296}\) In Roman society, for someone to be a son means to be part of his father’s properties (cf. sec. 2.2.1 “Reasons for adoption”). Being a father, the Roman paterfamilias possesses and dominates all in his household, including all animate members (family, slaves and animals), inanimate belongings, decision making, and religious issues.\(^{297}\) To present a dual purpose by using θεοῦ, Paul not simply recapitulates what he has exposed in Rom 6:1-14 regarding the believers’ submission to the new owner, but he also places the absolute dominion a father has over his sons in the Roman social environment, making the Roman believers easier appreciate his points. Indeed, after his survey Richard P. Saller claims that “the most common meaning of paterfamilias is ‘estate owner’ without reference to familiar relations.”\(^{298}\) Saller’s review proves that in his usage of υἱοί θεοῦ, Paul attempts to exceed cultural limits, implying a more fundamental sense which goes “beyond mere possession.”\(^{299}\) This beyond-culture implication is the second certainty manifested by υἱοί θεοῦ, they are sons of God. Its strong overtone will

\(^{294}\) See our discussion above in sec. 4.2.3 “The leading work of the Spirit.”

\(^{295}\) To call God Father also appears in the introductory greetings in all 13 Pauline letters; Marianne Meye Thompson, “‘Mercy upon All’: God as Father in the Epistle to the Romans,” in Romans and the People of God, 203-16, here 207n12.

\(^{296}\) Wallace, Greek Grammar, 81-84; BDF classifies such a type as genitive of origin and relationship, see BDF §162.


\(^{299}\) Wallace, Greek Grammar, 82n30.
be presented in Rom 8:15 from the aspect of filial relationship.

4.2.4.1 The first antithesis in Romans 8:15

Turning to Rom 8:15, Paul immediately introduces the real status of the υἱοί by combining the Spirit’s work with a set of antitheses of the metaphor of slavery (δουλεία) and adoption (υἱοθεσία). According to Martin Luther, he regards Rom 8:15 as a demonstration of a comparison: “The apostle sets up an antithesis…. In this way the spirit of slavery is contrasted with the spirit of sonship, and servile fear with filial love.” To put it exactly, Luther’s one antithesis consists of two. The first one is between slave and son (Rom 8:15a1 and b1); the second one is between their consequences, namely fear and affectionate outcry (Rom 8:15a2 and b2). It is the first appearance of both nouns (δουλεία and υἱοθεσία) in Romans. There are two standpoints signified by Paul’s painstaking effort:

1. A transformed identity and position: By making a stark contrast between slavery and adoption, Paul displays his first antithesis in this verse, namely, the changed position of believers from unsaved to saved. As Lewis’s examination proves, the status of being a slave and an adopted son placed under the background of the Roman Imperial context will be better apprehended than in the context of Greek cities and in the context of Israel in Old Testament times. As our discussion in chapter 2 has shown, the legal institution of slavery is quite familiar to Paul’s Roman recipients, due to their background and social-economic environment. Likewise, Paul’s audience is familiar with the legal institution of adoption, especially due to the fact that most emperors of the Roman Julio-Claudian dynasty (from Augustus to Nero) have become the successors of their predecessors through the procedure of adoption. Adoption represents that the adoptee is granted by his adoptive father all the same privileges, rights, and responsibilities in the new family as the adopter’s natural son. The main reasons for adoption to the adopter are to secure a successor of the adopter’s heritage, and to obtain a sustainer of the sacral cult for the adopter’s family. Lewis further advocates that the idea behind Paul’s application of adoption into God’s family reflects the deification of those early Roman emperors and the method of how they selected their successor. Nonetheless, Paul’s employment of the imagery of adoption and slavery

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301 Cf. Diagram 4-1 Text analysis of Romans 8:12-17.
302 Lewis, *Paul’s Spirit of Adoption*, 34-37, 95; also Burke, “The Origin and Background of Paul’s Adoption Metaphor,” in *Adopted into God’s Family*, 46-71.
303 Cf. sec. 2.2.1.1 “Securing property.”
304 Cf. sec. 2.2.1 “Reasons for adoption;” Lewis, *Paul’s Spirit of Adoption*, 182-83.
305 This means the succession of inheritance and preservation of family cult; ibid., 44-56.
contradicts with more facets of Roman convention. First, in Roman society seldom does an adopter select a freedman, namely, an emancipated slave, or a total foreigner to be his adoptee. Kyu Seop Kim observes that to choose an ex-slave as the adoptee is not conducive to adoption. The main adverse facts include marriage restriction, political engagement limitations, obligations to ex-master remained, incapacity to make a will or inherit directly as heirs, and no freedom of residence.\(^{306}\) Put differently, an ex-slave adoptee simply has the lowest degree of freedom, far less than a freeborn adoptee. Secondly, if there is a biological heir in the adopter’s family, to adopt another person as an heir is atypical, not to mention a person with past servitude background. Thirdly, adoptees almost always come from the family of close relatives and friends of similar social-economic position and political status.\(^{307}\) Therefore, most adoptions appear among political upper-class families, serving a purpose to establish closer political interest relationships. In reality, the adoptee does not absolutely cut his relation with his original family, but rather enjoys the privileges in both families. Adoption in Roman society usually implies the retention and combination of vested interests. More exactly, the primary motivation behind adoption is for the benefit and needs of the adopter.\(^{308}\) Lastly, a major restriction of adoption is the exclusion of almost all women from adoptive arrangement, regardless their status of freeborn or freedwomen.

For conveying the transformed status and identity of believers, Paul borrows the imagery of slavery and adoption from the Roman practice context, which evidently has its limitations, and is unable to express the whole picture of his perspective on God’s salvation. Nonetheless, despite its limitations it could be transformed by Paul’s insight.\(^{309}\) As God’s adopted children, the believers are manumitted by God (not by the ex-master) from the enslavement of the former horrible master, the power of sin and death; the bond between the believers and their ex-master is completely cut off. They are fully accepted into God’s family, becoming God’s adopted sons and daughters, though God has already his only begotten Son Jesus Christ. The believers were entire strangers to God, but now have the same advantage of being God’s legitimate heirs (cf. Rom 8:17). In Rom 6, Paul uses the slave-master relationship to demonstrate both the relationship between their former master and the believers as well as the relationship between their present master and them (cf. sec. 3.2.5 and 4.2.2.1). At present, Paul changes their relationship with God into a filial one, which is a transformed, upgraded and more intimate one.


\(^{307}\) Ibid., 140.


\(^{309}\) Ibid., 137: “[T]he apostle borrowed *huiothesia* from the language of the Graeco-Roman world, but poured into it fundamentally Old Testament content.”
2. Out of utter grace of God: Paul uses the verb ἐλάβετε (“you [pl.] received”), indicating that the believers are sheer receivers of God’s grace under the Spirit’s leading. The gift of a renewed position and identity results from the work of the triune God. God begins the salvation on His own initiative (Rom 8:3a), Christ completes it (Rom 8:3b), and the Spirit makes the effect available on believers (Rom 8:4).310 Therefore, Lewis’s statement is to the point: “The Spirit functions to validate the status of believers as ‘children of God’ (τέκνα θεοῦ, 8:14). The Spirit that brings freedom (8:2) also effects adoption (8:15).”311 What the believers need to do is to respond to the accomplishment of the triune God with reception in faith (cf. Rom 4:23-24). Their receiving is an action of response out of faith and thanksgiving for God’s utter grace, not a behavior or work for boasting (cf. Rom 3:27). The gift is not the Spirit of slavery, but the Spirit of adoption. Paul obviously emphasizes the action of receiving, which appears twice at the beginning of the two clauses of Rom 8:15. Compared to other Pauline sentences, as found in 1 Cor 2:12, and 2 Tim 1:7,312 some similarities and differences emerge (underlining mine).

Rom 8:15 (shading my translation)

οὐ γὰρ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα δουλείας πάλιν εἰς φόβον ἄλλ’ ἐλάβετε πνεῦμα υἱόθεσιάς ἐν ὧν κράζομεν· αββα ὁ πατήρ.

For you have not received the Spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’

1 Cor 2:12

ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου ἐλάβομεν ἄλλα τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ ἵνα εἰδούμεν τὰ ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαρισθέντα ἡμῖν.

Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God,

2 Tim 1:7

οὐ γὰρ ἐδοκεῖν ἡμῖν ὁ θεὸς πνεῦμα δειλίας ἄλλα δυνάμεως καὶ ἁγάπης καὶ σωφροσύνης.

For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.

311 Lewis, Paul’s ‘Spirit of Adoption’, 163.
312 If 2 Tim was not written by Paul himself, the letter clearly belongs to a Pauline school and is as such still representative of his language, taken up in the deutero-Paulines, cf. 1n4.
Both these verses, which we draw upon for comparison, seem to make a contrast between a non-divine spirit and God’s Spirit, and describe the outcome of the believers’ receiving of God’s Spirit. First Corinthians 2:12 presents a traditional structure, omitting the recurring verb ἐλάβομεν when the subject is same. Likewise, 2 Tim 1:7 skips over both the repeated verb ἐδώκεν and the head noun πνεῦμα, implying the πνεῦμα is same to four moral qualities. It is not difficult to decide the identity of the double “πνεῦμα” in 1 Cor 2:12. The first πνεῦμα is followed by τοῦ κόσμου, which is an attributive genitive, because the phrase could be rendered as “worldly spirit.” In a likely manner, the second πνεῦμα followed by τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, shows “τὸ πνεῦμα” is the divine Spirit. But the phrasing in Rom 8:15 is somewhat special. Paul leaves out the subject ὑμεῖς, repeats the main verb twice and articulates their end results respectively, which is the second antithesis of the introducing imagery. Both items of the first antithesis occur in genitive form after πνεῦμα, causing various interpretations among scholars.313 Most scholars reach a consensus on the “πνεῦμα” of πνεῦμα δουλείας, rendering πνεῦμα as the spirit, approximating to what BDAG denotes, “an activating spirit that is not from God.”314 But concerning the meaning of the “πνεῦμα” in πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, both a rendering as “the spirit” and a capitalizing rendering “the Spirit”, referring to the Holy Spirit, have many supporters. In fact, the denotation of πνεῦμα is ambiguous when it is judged in isolation; its pertinent meaning is supposed to be defined by its following genitive.315 BDAG apparently regards the πνεῦμα in πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας as “the Spirit;” yet, this lexicon does not clarify the implication of its opposite πνεῦμα δουλείας. Similarly, BDAG deems the omitted πνεῦμα in 2 Tim 1:7 as “the Spirit,” not noting the identity of the contrary πνεῦμα δειλίας.316 According to the context of the πνεῦμα in Rom 8:15 and 2 Tim 1:7, the definition of one of Wallace’s categories in genitive, genitive of product (which produces), is applicable to make their connotation clear.317 Accordingly, the translation of 2 Tim 1:7 in the NASB version could be rephrased as “For God has not given us the Spirit who produces timidity, but the Spirit who produces power and love and discipline.”

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313 For a brief discussion, see Moo, Romans, 500.
314 BDAG, s.v. “πνεῦμα,” 7.
315 Ibid., 5. e.
316 Ibid.
317 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 106-7. William E. W. Robinson, *Metaphor, Morality, and the Spirit in Romans 8:1-17*, ECL 20 (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2016), 136, construes υἱοθεσίας as “a qualitative genitive,” following the opinions of Scott (*Adoption as Sons of God*, 261n143) and Bryne (*Romans*, 252); for that reason, “the Spirit accompanies believers’ adoption as sons/children or indicates their adoption” (Robinson, 136, emphasis mine). Although Paul has claimed that Christ is the real agent who accomplished the mission to make believers the adopted children of God (Gal 4:4-5), he argues that the Spirit leads them into the full cognition of this status and relationship. The importance of the Spirit here appears to be greatly diluted in the views of Robinson et al.
lation as “the Spirit.” There are plenty examples of such a model in Paul’s letters (e.g., Rom 8:4; 1 Cor 6:17; 12:13; Gal 3:3; 5:5, 16, 18; cf. Eph 2:22; 3:5; Phil 2:1; cf. Col 1:8).\footnote{BDAG, s.v. “πνεῦμα,” 5. d. β.} In the same way, the translation of Rom 8:15a in the NIV version exhibits a felicitous paraphrase: “The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship” (emphasis added).\footnote{See also Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 397: “He has proved Himself to be the Spirit of adoption, that is, the Spirit who brings about adoption, uniting men with Christ and so making them sharers in His sonship” (emphasis mine); Jewett, Romans, 498: “you received a Spirit producing sonship” (emphasis mine), yet, Jewett regards the genitive construction as “one of purpose.”} Therefore, πνεῦμα δουλείας is not a rhetorical usage of Paul for creating a “hypothetical antithesis.”\footnote{Contra Moo, Romans, 500.} Here Paul claims a reality that the leading Spirit is not the Spirit that makes believers slaves, thereby driving them to quail as in the past, but the Spirit who plays a critical role through leading them into God’s family to become God’s adopted children (i.e., πνεῦμα υἱόθεσιας), to enjoy the loving relationship between God and His only begotten son for all eternity.\footnote{Ellis W. Deibler, Jr., A Semantic and Structural Analysis of Romans (Dallas: Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1998), 185.}

Another similar case of πνεῦμα followed by a genitive of thing can be found in Eph 1:17 (underlining mine).

Eph 1:17

ἐνα ὁ θεός τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, ὁ πατὴρ τῆς δόξης, δόχη ὑμῖν πνεῦμα σοφίας καὶ ἀποκαλύψεως ἐν ἐπιγνώσει αὐτοῦ, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

Comparing to Rom 8:15, more Bible versions render πνεῦμα into “a spirit” (e.g., NASB, NRSV), signifying something like human inner quality. Wallace translates it into “spiritual”, viewing σοφίας and ἀποκαλύψεως as attributive genitives.\footnote{Wallace, Greek Grammar, 90-91; however, if “spiritual” is preferable, he does not explain why Paul does not use πνευματικός just as he does nearby (cf. Eph 1:3 ἐν πάσῃ ἐνθύμησι πνευματικῆς “with every spiritual blessing!”)).} Nevertheless, it is more proper to treat them as genitives of production as the previous examples,\footnote{BDAG, s.v. “πνεῦμα,” 5. e, g; BDAG groups the four occurrences discussed above (Rom 8:15; 1 Cor 2:12; 2 Tim 1:7 and Eph 1:17) into the same catalogue, i.e., 5. e.} namely, the πνεῦμα-phrase could be rendered as “the Spirit who produces wisdom and revelation (of truth).” On Eph 1:17 Max Turner provides a precise remark: “The prayer in v. 17 for a Spirit of wisdom and revelation represents a typically Jewish way of speech; it means Paul prays that the Spirit they have already received will be experienced granting these things\footnote{Max Turner, “Ephesians,” in NBC, ed. D. A. Carson et al., 4th ed. (Downers Glove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2008) 318.} (cf. Deut 34:9; Isa 11:2).
A similar opinion regarding Rom 8:15 offered by C. K. Barrett is worthy of reference. Barrett proposes that a ‘spirit of bondage’ does not exist in Paul’s perception; “the phrase is a rhetorical formation based upon ‘Spirit of adoption.’” Accordingly, his translation of Rom 8:15 is as follows: “For the Spirit you received was not one which brings into bondage and reduces you again to a state of fear. No, it was the Spirit which anticipates our adoption as sons, the Spirit in which we cry out, Abba (Father).”

4.2.4.2 The second antithesis in Romans 8:15

Two contrasting consequences resulting from the first antithesis of Rom 8:15, πάλιν εἰς φόβον (“leading to fear again”) versus ἐν ὧ ν κράζομεν· αββα ὁ πατήρ (“by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’”), compose the second antithesis which is also Paul’s emphasis. What Paul means to say is that the Spirit whom the believers receive does not make their servitude status under the power of sin and death happen again; they will not be drawn back in fear as before. Paul employs the word φόβος (“fear”) to sum up what slaves experience in their entire life and uses it to parallel the feeling under the authority of sin and death (cf. sec. 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves”). A major part of Paul’s audience would not forget their slavish experience, no matter what their identity is in the Roman society at that time. Yet, if they fall into the hands of the spiritual ex-master once again, the consequence will be far more terrible (cf. Rom 6:16b, 20-21, 23a; 8:6a, 13a).

Contrary to the dreadful ending of the previous life, Paul illustrates a very emotional and amiable image created by the work of the Spirit of adoption. By the Spirit the adopted children cry out to God, “Abba! Father!” In this relative clause of Rom 8:15b, the prepositional phrase, the main verb and the content of its action deserve to be noticed. In the beginning prepositional phrase ἐν ὧ ν the relative pronoun actually represents “the Spirit,” which is not uncommon in Paul’s letters. In view of the Spirit’s dominating role in the immediate context (cf. Rom 8:9-11, 13-14), and the closely referential verse Gal 4:6 where the Spirit is the subject who acts, the Spirit does not function as a means or instrumentally, as the traditional translation “by whom” (ESV, NET, NKJV), “by which” (NAB, NASB), “by him” (NIV), or “[w]ith this Spirit”
(CEB) seems to imply. Rather, linking to the cases of “in Christ” (ἐν Χριστῷ, ἐν κυρίῳ etc.) often used by Paul, BDAG lists a definition of ἐν as a marker designating “a close personal relation in which the referent of the ἐν-term is viewed as the controlling influence: under the control of, under the influence of, in close association with,”328 which is applicable to express the Spirit’s position in Rom 8:15b. Hence, what is stated is that under the Spirit’s influence the believers utter an outcry, “Abba! Father!” W. Grundmann notes that “the subject of the prayer ‘Abba, our Father’ is thus the man who is apprehended by the Spirit.”329

Paul’s use of the phrase “Abba! Father!” in representing the content of the believers’ loud crying in prayer is remarkable. A combination of a word (αββα) in vocative form transliterated from an Aramaic word (אבה) and a Greek equivalent (ὁ πατήρ) in nominative case is peculiar for Paul. It appears only three times in the New Testament (Gal 4:6; Rom 8:15; Mark 14:36, in chronological order).330 Many scholars believe that the Aramaic αββα, a term of expression of affection used in prayer and in family relations, conveying intimacy and respect, is taken over by Greek-speaking Christians as a liturgical formula.331 Their ceremonial practice is considered closely related with the Lord’s Prayer.332 Dunn stresses that the Abba prayer was remembered in Christian circles as a characteristic feature of Jesus’ own prayer.333 C. M. Kempton Hewitt indicates that Joachim Jeremias is the first scholar who “pointed out how rich are the ideas imbedded in the early church’s use of the word.”334 Jeremias at least indicates five points concerning the significance of Abba or Father as an address to God for Jesus’ prayers and sayings.335 First, there is no evidence in the literature of Jewish prayer of the vocative Abba as a personal address to God.336 Hence Jesus’ usage of

328 BDAG, s.v. “ἐν,” 4. c (italics BDAG’s). Ibid.; “The use of ἐν πνεύματι as a formulaic expression is similar” to ἐν Χριστῷ, which “is used with verbs and nouns of the most varied sort, often without special emphasis, to indicate the scope within which something takes place or has taken place, or to designate something as being in close association with Christ, and can be rendered, variously, in connection with, in intimate association with, keeping in mind” (italics BDAG’s).

329 W. Grundmann, “κραυγάζω, ἀνακραυγάζω, κραυγή, κραυγάζω,” TDNT 3:893-903, here 903 (emphasis mine); also cf. Richard N. Longenecker, “Prayer in the Pauline Letters,” in Into God’s Presence: Prayer in the New Testament, ed. Richard N. Longenecker (Grand Rapids/Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2002), 203-27, here 224: “And when Paul speaks to his addressees about their relationship to God, he urges them to recognize their more intimate relation as God’s children, which has been brought about by God’s Spirit, and so to pray to God more consciously in terms of ‘Abba, Father’ (cf. Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:6-7)” (the first three italics mine, the last one original).


333 Dunn, The Theology of Paul, 193.


335 Cf. Longenecker, Romans, 702-3.

Abba represents a particularly characteristic mode of his relationship with God; it is the *ipsissima vox Jesu* (“the very voice of Jesus”).  

Secondly, Jesus’ colloquial employment of *Abba* as a title of God “reveals the heart of his relationship with God” due to its familiar, intimate, and confident characteristics in the relationship between a son and his father. Thirdly, it expresses his complete and trustful obedience to his Father as a Son. Fourthly, it implies his possession of the whole divine revelation granted by his Father. Finally, it suggests his entire authority of giving his disciples “a share in his relationship with God.”

Mark preserves the tradition in his narrative of Jesus’ prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane (Mark 14:36, cf. Matt 26:39, πάτερ μου, “my Father [vocative];” Luke 22:42, πάτερ, “Father [vocative]”). Paul applies it in believers’ prayer inspired by the Spirit. Therefore, S. Vernon McCasland suggests that the phrase ἀββα ὁ πατήρ is supposed to be translated as “O God, my father” or “O God, our Father” because the definite article ὁ could be used as a possessive pronoun “my.” With regard to the reason why Paul alludes to the phrase, Sigve Tonstad suggests that the evidence on its link to baptism makes the assumption of such a connection preferable, especially because of the familiarity of the phrase to both Jewish and Gentile churches. Based on such a fact, Tonstad assumes:

In the context of baptism, the past experience of coming to faith in response to Paul’s preaching (Galatians), the figurative dying and rising with Christ in the waters of baptism, and the indwelling of the Spirit all would come together in the sharply focused and deeply etched memory of the baptismal experience.

However, Tonstad’s viewpoint is issued from the perspective of his investigation of Galatians. When Paul makes use of the same phrase in both Galatians and Romans, the context of Rom 8:15 still has its own characteristic different from that of Galatians. To evoke the baptismal experience (cf. Rom 6:1-14) might be one of Paul’s motives, but there are more crucial ones behind. Burke in addition introduces various interpretations of scholars, but it seems that they do not consider the clause ἐν ὧν κράζομεν-

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337 Ibid., 108-15.  
338 Ibid., 62.  
341 Ibid., 63.  
342 Cf. David Wenham, *Paul: Follower of Jesus or Founder of Christianity*? (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 276-80; Wenham puts his emphasis on the connection of asking for support and strength in emergency and suffering.  
The verb Paul uses to express the believers’ exclamation is a present indicative κράζομεν (“we cry out”), basically indicating that the believers’ vehement calling out is a continuously processing activity. The form of the verb appearing in Gal 4:6, κράζον, is a present active participle, indicating a similar idea. The employment of present tense also reveals that Paul encourages his audience always to act in this way. To recollect the baptismal significance is much, but to master practically the key to living a new life is more (cf. ἡμεῖς ἐν καινότητι ζωῆς περιπατήσομεν, “we might walk in newness of life,” Rom 6:4c). The former has been explained by Paul in Rom 6:1-11, but after that Paul keeps articulating the importance of knowing their transformed status and identity in facing the threat from the power of sin and death. That is why Paul narrates in Rom 7:7-25 the struggling mentality of believers, Jews and Gentiles and even himself included, under an increasing pressure to surrender to the authority of sin (cf. sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh”). At this juncture, Paul shows his recipients that only the power behind the status of God’s children founded on the Spirit’s leading can help them counter the pressure succumbing to the former master who tries to regain control over them. Their exclamation betrays their confidence, which from their sonship awareness is comparable to that of Jesus. As Tonstad puts it: “Not only has the believer become the adopted and obedient son of the Father, but he has also adopted Jesus’ view of the Father,” which without doubt is the crucial part Paul intends to convey to his recipients.

Besides, though the verb κράζω appears seldom in Paul’s letters (only in Rom 8:15; 9:27; Gal 4:6), there is an unnoticed but important meaning behind it. In the second occurrence of κράζω in Romans Paul uses it to describe Isaiah’s proclamation from Isa 10:22-23 (underlining mine):

Rom 9:27-28

27 Ἡσαίας δὲ κράζει ὑπὲρ τοῦ Ἰσραήλ· ἐὰν ἦ ὁ ἄριθμὸς τῶν υἱῶν Ἰσραήλ ὡς ἡ ἁμοιος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ ὑπόλειμμα σωθήσεται. 28 λόγον γὰρ συντελὼν καὶ συντέμνων ποιήσει κύριος ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς.

27 And Isaiah cries out concerning Israel, “Though the number of the sons of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that will be saved; 28 for the Lord will execute His word upon the earth, thoroughly and quickly.”

Isa 10:22-23 LXX

22 καὶ εἶπεν γένηται ὁ λαὸς Ἰσραήλ ὡς ἡ ἁμοιος τῆς θαλάσσης, τὸ κατάλειμμα

345 Burke, “Adoption and the Spirit in Romans 8,” 320-21.
And if the people of Israel become like the sand of the sea, the remnant will be saved, for he is completing and cutting short a reckoning with righteousness, because God will perform a shortened reckoning in the whole world (Isa 10:22-23 NETS).

Observably, Paul does not cite verbatim from the LXX. He makes a slightly-succinct version, retaining the certainty that God will keep his promise to save the remnant in the short term. Therefore, Isaiah’s exclamation is not out of agony, pain, fear or sadness, but out of assurance, trust, and faith. Interestingly, if the verb κράζω occurs in the Gospels with Jesus as its subject, it displays the same message (Matt 27:50; John 7:28, 37; 12:44). The first example (Matt 27:50) describes that on the cross Jesus cried out again loudly before yielding his Spirit. According to Luke, Jesus called out, “Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit” (Luke 23:46). John’s parallel narration is a more truncated one, “It is finished!” (John 19:30). In the three above mentioned occurrences of κράζω in John’s Gospel (John 7:28, 37; 12:44) the verb is applied to Jesus’ public preaching. The multitude is exhorted to believe in Him and to know the One who sent Him. All these words come out of Jesus in certainty, determination, and calmness. Even on the cross, Jesus’ last word is not cried out of dreadful pain, but of affirmative assurance. As reported by Luke, Stephen cried out with a loud voice (ἐκραξεν φωνῇ μεγάλῃ), “Lord, do not hold this sin against them!” (κύρει, μὴ στήσῃς αὐτοῖς τὰ τις τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, Acts 7:60) before he died. Actually, prior to this, Stephen added that “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” (κύρει Ἰησοῦ, δέξαι τὸ πνεῦμά μου, Acts 7:59). As a victim of persecution for faith, the suffering and response of Stephen in some ways parallel those of Jesus. Stephen’s exclamation is not out of fear and desperation, but of the same kind as with Jesus and Isaiah. Through a relatively late material recorded in Acts 22:20, Luke also testifies the importance of Stephen’s martyrdom in his account of Paul’s reminiscences about his own conversion.

In Paul’s mind the interactive relationship between Jesus as the Son of God and His Father is the best analogy to the one between believers and God. Joseph Grassi intends to demonstrate the distinctive meaning of Abba in Mark 14:36 by the story of the planned sacrifice of Isaac by Abraham in Gen 22. Seeing that Isaac spoke to

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347 Though from Paul we do not know anything about the particular case about Stephen, only generally that he persecuted the church of God (1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13), the observation of intertextuality provides a second material that probably the attribute of the verb κράζω reminds Paul of what he heard and saw when he was at the scene of the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:58). Stephen’s witness might become a part of Paul’s conversion experience, which is made known in Paul’s self-description in Gal 1:13.

Abraham and said “Abba” in the Targums of Onkelos, and displayed the way of devotion and obedience, hence Isaac reflects Jesus’ “trust and obedient to God as Abba.” Nevertheless, Grassi might be influenced by early Judaism, especially by the development of the aqedah (biding of Isaac) tradition; his comparison is not in accord with the Christian understanding of the focus of the story in Gen 22, which is intended to be Abraham’s faith (cf. Heb 11:17). Isaac has never been described by the authors of the Bible acclaiming for his faith or trust in his father in his binding. Isaac is enlisted as one of examples of faith in Heb 11 because of his faith displayed in blessing his twin sons. In truth, Isaac’s conversation with his father is filled with suspicion (Gen 22:7). Furthermore, Grassi assumes that there is “horror and anguish before the prospect of an imminent sacrificial death” for Isaac, whose mentality bears no comparison to that of Jesus.

Accordingly, Paul uses the clause ἐν ὧν κράζομεν ἀββα ὁ πατήρ to express the affectionate and mature exclamation given by the believers to God the Father. Living in a sin-terrified world, Paul demonstrates the loving security and profound reliance believers could own as a result of their privilege of the sonship from God. The Fatherhood of God is aroused by the Spirit in the trustful, respectful, and intimate prayer of the believers. Unlike slaves who simply suffer fears, anxieties and horrors under their masters, believers under their adoptive Father can experience both intimacy and reverence. Not only by the Spirit is God’s love poured out within the believers’ heart (Rom 5:5b), but the Spirit gives life because of the righteousness of God (Rom 8:10), which is granted to all believers through faith in Jesus Christ, and there is no distinction between Jews and Gentiles (cf. Rom 3:22). Put another way, through the Spirit, God assues all believers that “they will have life that will be fully realized at the end of the age” (cf. Rom 8:11). God’s sovereign authority and reigning power ensures its accomplishment (cf. Rom 5:12-21). In this regard, Dunn summarizes in three points on Rom 8:15: 1. It is the Spirit which effects the new relationship and status of adoption. 2. The triune relationship of Father, Son, and Spirit is noticeable for “the Son as pattern and pioneer of a sonship to God as Father, effected by the Spirit.” 3. The character of the existence of the sonship, and its close connection to the pattern displayed by Christ’s sonship and to the sharing with Christ is manifested by “the

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349 Ibid., 450, 455.
350 Ibid., 455, cited by Tonstad, “The Revisionary Potential,” 10-11; Tonstad claims that the emphasis should be on the trustworthiness of the father.
352 BDAG, s.v. “δικαιοσύνη, ” 2.
353 D’Angelo, “Abba and ‘Father,’ ” 617-22.
354 Dunn, The Theology of Paul, 436.
355 Ibid., 437.
Spirit-inspired ‘Abba! Father!’.”

Such affirmative confidence, intimate security, and even urgent expectancy are revealed by the speech or exclamation of Isaiah, Stephen, and Jesus. As for now, the Roman believers can also enter into this line.

4.2.5 The witness of the Spirit and adoption

No conjunction is found at the beginning of Rom 8:16, and this indicates that Paul does not intend to connect it to the previous verse with some kind of immediate causality as in Rom 8:14-15. Romans 8:16 presents the other aspect of the work of the Spirit. What makes it more special is that Paul uses a combination of αὐτό and the specified name τὸ πνεῦμα as the subject, denoting “the Spirit Himself.” The reflexive pronoun αὐτό functions as an intensive marker, here setting a specified object, the Spirit, off “from everything else through emphasis.”

Such a mixture only occurs twice in Paul’s letters (Rom 8:16, 26 [will be discussed later]). Paul’s highlighting of the Spirit shows his intention to parallel the Spirit’s witness work to the Spirit’s leading work, and to introduce a series of perspectives about the Spirit’s witnessing work. As Burke states, “the Spirit is sent by the Father to assure men of the new position of sonship which they have in Christ.”

If the guidance of the Spirit brings to the believers the awareness and confirmation of their adopted status in God’s family, then the testifying of the Spirit brings them the corroborating evidence from eternal hope and persevering power to live a life worthy of the status they have received. Seeing that the implication of the Spirit’s leading work points to the dimension of soteriological and Christological significance, the connotation of the Spirit’s witnessing task will be filled with eschatological quality.

In our previous discussion we have already seen that the Roman adoption system has its limitations as an imagery to express Christian salvation (cf. sec. 4.2.4.1, esp. 168-69). The eschatological meaning of the Spirit of adoption is another aspect which the contemporary adoption practice indeed cannot display. In Roman society only the emperors are deified and assumed to be immortal; all others are mortal, not to mention the underclass people. However, Paul clearly states, αὐτό τὸ πνεῦμα συμμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν ὅτι ἐσμέν τέκνα θεοῦ (“The Spirit Himself bears witness to our spirit that we are children of God,” Rom 8:16 [the ET with underlining mine]). Generally speaking, there exist sharply divided views regarding the translation of the verb

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356 Ibid.
357 BDAG, s.v. “αὐτός,” 1. a.
358 A similar combination without the article before the Spirit, “τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα,” occurs four times in Paul’s letters (1 Cor 12:4, 8, 11; 2 Cor 4:13); here the reflexive pronoun αὐτό denotes “the same;” cf. BDAG, s.v. “αὐτός,” 3. a.
359 Burke, “Adoption and the Spirit in Romans 8,” 323.
συμμαρτυρέω, namely, denoting “to bear witness with” or “to bear witness to.”\textsuperscript{360} A large majority of scholars approve of the “bear witness with,” regarding τὸ πνεῦματι ἡμῶν as a dative of association (with our spirit) rather than a dative indirect object (to our spirit). Their main reasons are as follows:

1. Support from the law of witnesses: Although the number of witnesses is not specified, in Roman law regarding the criminal cases or suits involving money, the judge can regulate it; they must at least be two.\textsuperscript{361} At the scene of testifying will, seven witnesses are obligatory (cf. sec. 2.4.4.3 “Concerning the witness”). The Mosaic Law requires two or three witnesses to confirm a legal decision related to crime or iniquity dispute (Deut 19:15; cf. Matt 18:16; John 8:17; Heb 10:28).\textsuperscript{362} Besides, the actual cases in Paul’s life apply the same rule (2 Cor 13:1; cf. 1 Tim 5:19). These backgrounds provide direct support of historical context for Paul.

2. Support from morphological meaning and literary context: A Greek verb combined with a prefix σῦν always denotes togetherness or close association with what it connects which usually is a dative of association. Moreover, Paul intensively uses compound words with the prefix σῦν in the nearby context (σῦμφημι, “to agree with,” Rom 7:16; συνήδαμα, “to joyfully concur with,” Rom 7:22; συγκληρονόμος, “inheriting together with;” συμπάσχο, “to suffer together;” συνδοξάζω, “to honor together with,” Rom 8:17; συστενάζω, “to groan together; συνῳδίω, “to suffer agony together;” Rom 8:22; συναντλαμβάνω, “to help in,” Rom 8:26; συνεργάζο, “to work together,” Rom 8:28; σῦμμορφος, “similar in form,” Rom 8:29; συμμαρτυρέω, “to bear witness with,” συνείδησις, “consciousness,” Rom 9:1; συγγενής, “kin, [belonging to the same people group],” Rom 9:3; συντελέω, “to complete;” συντέμινο, “to limit,” Rom 9:28). Inasmuch as two occurrences of συμμαρτυρέω (8:16; 9:1) appear among the high frequency of σῦν-prefixed terms in the immediate context, their denotation is expected to be consistent.\textsuperscript{363}

However, there are several arguments proving the dative indirect object view preferable.

1. The two-witnesses rule is not a necessary condition but a sufficient condition in support of the dative of association view. To place emphasis on two witnesses seems to imply that the Spirit’s witness is not enough. In fact the Spirit as the single powerful witness or demonstration is not difficult to see in the New Testament (John 15:26;

\textsuperscript{361} Cf. Dig. 22.5.1, 12; Code 4.20.8.
\textsuperscript{362} Cf. Watson, Paul, His Roman Audience, 162n512.
\textsuperscript{363} For a more detailed analysis of the associative significance and solidarity of σῦν-prefixed terms, see sec. 4.2.6.3 “The solidarity with Christ.”
Acts 20:23; Rom 1:4; 1 Cor 2:4 [with the demonstration of the Spirit’s power NIV]; Heb 10:15; 1 Pet 1:11; 1 John 5:7). One of the supporters of the indirect object opinion, Cranfield, even strongly argues: “What standing has our spirit in this matter? Of itself it surely has no right at all to satisfy to our being sons of God.”

2. Similar interpretation of συμμαρτυρέω in Romans: The verb συμμαρτυρέω occurs only three times in the New Testament, all of them to be found in Romans. According to their context, they seem to have a closely related meaning in all cases.

In Rom 2:15, the related dative of συμμαρτυρέω is absent in Paul’s explication of the Gentiles’ consciousness (underlining mine):

Rom 2:15
οἵτινες ἐνδείκνυται τὸ ἔργον τοῦ νόμου γραπτὸν ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν, συμμαρτυρούσης αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως καὶ μεταξὸς ἀλλήλων τῶν λογισμῶν κατηγοροῦντων ἢ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them,

Because the context refers to the principle of God’s judgment of the Gentiles (Rom 2:12, 16), Paul explains how the basis is built for God’s judgment on the Gentiles who do not live according to the law. Paul’s attitude is that the law still brings the Gentiles its effect on their hearts (ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν) to which their inward faculty (αὐτῶν τῆς συνειδήσεως) will present its reasoning to testify (συμμαρτυρούσης) their right and wrong, thereby bringing their thoughts (τῶν λογισμῶν) to accuse (κατηγοροῦντων) or defend them (ὁ καὶ ἀπολογουμένων). BDAG comments that in Athenian times, “the prefix συν- has in the highest degree the effect of strengthening.” A pertinent view is to consider συμμαρτυρέω as an intensified verb of μαρτυρέω, the object to which the Gentiles’ conscience testifies is not presumed to be God who knows everything (Rom 2:6), but the Gentiles themselves (cf. NRSV).

The third appearance of συμμαρτυρέω is in Rom 9:1, where a similar meaning is presupposed (underlining mine).

Rom 9:1
Ἀλλήλων λέγω ἐν Χριστῷ, οὐ ψεύδομαι, συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεως μου ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ,

364 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 403 (emphasis original), cited by Wallace, Greek Grammar, 160.
365 BDAG, s.v. “συμμαρτυρέω.”
366 Contra Cranfield, Romans I:1-8, 162.
367 “They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts, to which their own conscience also bears witness; and their conflicting thoughts will accuse or perhaps excuse them” (Rom 2:15 NRSV, emphasis and underlining mine).
I am telling the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit,

Many English Bible versions render συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς as “my conscience bearing me witness.” (ESV, KJV, NASB, NKJV, RSV) without pointing out whether μοι is a dative of association (“with me”) or a dative of interest (advantage, “for me”). At the beginning of Rom 9 Paul shifts his attention to the way the faithful God accomplishes His salvation on Israel. However, he is going to express straightforwardly why most Jewish people fell away in history. Therefore, the indirect object to whom Paul’s conscience confirms by testimony is presumed to be his brothers (and sisters) as well as his countrymen according to the flesh, mentioned in Rom 9:3 (τῶν ἀδελφῶν μου τῶν συγγενῶν μου κατὰ σάρκα). So the dative μοι is a dative of advantage, Paul’s honesty is the content of the testimony of his consciousness. It is still suitable to regard the verb συμμαρτυρέω in Rom 9:1 as a strengthened verb of μαρτυρέω. The clause συμμαρτυρούσης μοι τῆς συνειδήσεώς can be translated into “my conscience bearing witness for me,” (cf. NJB [my conscience testifies for me], underlining mine). His tone sounds like it does over against the Corinthian believers in 2 Cor 1:12.368

Concerning the implication of the clause συμμαρτυρέω τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν in Rom 8:16a, a natural and apposite interpretation is to consider συμμαρτυρέω as an intensifying verb of μαρτυρέω and τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν as a dative of indirect object. When “our spirit” becomes the object of the Spirit’s witness, “we are children of God” is the content of the Spirit’s testimony. Otherwise, if “our spirit” becomes the partner of the Spirit, it seems very incongruous to think of God or any other theoretical reality. That is why BDAG essentially deems all three occurrences of συμμαρτυρέω as a highly strengthening verb of μαρτυρέω.369

David A. Gundersen, one of the strong supporters of the joint-witness theory, is quite right in claiming:

The internal testimony of the Holy Spirit in Romans 8:16 is the simultaneous testimony of the indwelling Holy Spirit and the human spirit heard in the adopted child’s instinctive cry of ‘Abba! Father!’ It is a recurring expression that issues from deep within the redeemed soul, providing constant subjective assurance that the believer is indeed a

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368 Η γὰρ καύχησις ἡμῶν αὐτῆς ἐστιν, τῷ μαρτύρων τῆς συνειδήσεως ἡμῶν, ὅτι ἐν ἀπλότητι καὶ εἰλικρινείᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ, [καὶ] ὑπὲρ τῆς σοφίας σαρκικῆς ἀλλ᾽ ἐν χάριτι θεοῦ, ἀνεστράφημεν ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ, περισσοτέρως δὲ πρὸς ὑμᾶς. “For our proud confidence is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in holiness and godly sincerity, [and] not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God, we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially toward you” (2 Cor 1:12, underlining mine).

369 BDAG, s.v. “συμμαρτυρέω.”
child of God.\textsuperscript{370}

Nevertheless, his overemphasis on the internal, subjective, and personal characteristic of the Spirit’s testimony makes the role of reasoned conviction and empirical examination inconsequential, thereby causing an unbalanced understanding of the Spirit’s practical works.\textsuperscript{371} Moreover, although plenty proofs are provided for strengthening Gundersen’s joint-witness stance, some inconsistency is exposed in his argument. On the one hand, he claims the very adequacy of the human spirit to testify by listing nine σώv-prefixed words in its immediate context, and highlighting the harmonization of Gal 4:6-7 with Rom 8:15-16 regarding the outcry which has two sources of the Spirit and the believers respectively.\textsuperscript{372} On the other hand, Gundersen devalues the effectiveness of the human spirit’s testimony by arguing: “This does not make the Holy Spirit and the human spirit equal in witness-value. The verb\textit{ summartureō} does not require exact equality between the witnesses.”\textsuperscript{373} Gundersen admits that “there is no stated recipient of the testimony;” therefore “the believer is the implied beneficiary of the testimony.”\textsuperscript{374} Gundersen’s insistence on joint-witness reveals an apparent inclination to single-witness view after all.

Paul does endow more spiritual significance to the Roman adoption practice. From Rom 8:16 onwards, Paul begins to employ τέκνα (“children,” 8:16, 17, 21; 9:7, 8 [three times]) to interchange with υἱοί (“sons,” Rom 8:14, 19; 9:26, 27),\textsuperscript{375} indicating that in God’s family there is no race, class, sex and age discrimination which is popular in the Roman society.\textsuperscript{376} Paul’s extensive usage of family terms since Rom 8:12 has been revealing that he emphasizes the unity of the believers, especially that Jews and Gentiles could become partakers of God’s promise in Christ through the gospel. Paul’s highlighting of such union is reflected in the observation that he has changed the subject from second person plural (you) to first (we) since Rom 8:15b. However, their state of being joined together is very vulnerable in the Greco-Roman secular world. Paul puts his emphasis on the Spirit’s witness in order to encourage the community of the believers to stay close and live a new life in the throes of persecution and under threat of the power of sin and death. Both the Spirit’s leading and bearing witness work are internal spiritual construction. In the believers’ mind, the former one

\textsuperscript{370} Gundersen, “Adoption, Assurance,” 32.
\textsuperscript{371} Ibid., 29-30.
\textsuperscript{372} Ibid., 22-23.
\textsuperscript{373} Ibid., 26.
\textsuperscript{374} Ibid., 28, emphasis original.
\textsuperscript{375} Before Rom 8:12, υἱός never appears in plural form (cf. Rom 1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3). Zerwick notes that compared with υἱός (“son”), τέκνον (“child”) basically implies the same meaning, yet with little more intimacy, see Zerwick, A Grammar Analysis, 476. However, as stated by Paul’s argument in Romans, he does not seem to present such a difference (even in plural form).
establishes the core perspective of adoption as God’s children and keeps the awareness fresh, whereas the latter one testifies the eschatological significance of their adopted status and assures them the Spirit’s presence in their perseverance in the face of suffering. Therefore, it is necessary for Paul to explicate the far-reaching meaning of the position as God’s children. Before entering into details, Paul enhances his audience’s understanding of the depth of “God’s children,” and provides the main points for the following argument in Rom 8:17.

4.2.6 Suffering children and glorified heirs

In a succinct and comprehensible way Paul further develops the term τέκνα emphasized in Rom 8:16. Paul uses two corresponding concepts to present the extension of the connotation of God’s children in time and its impact on their present life and eternal destination. The first concept could be called heirs for short (Rom 8:17a, see below), the second one is suffering and glory (Rom 8:17b). The whole verse 17 belongs to the first class condition, being composed of two conditional clauses (i.e., protasis, Rom 8:17a1 and 17b1), and one main clause (i.e., apodosis, Rom 8:17a2). The relation between both protases and the apodosis is an evidence-inference relationship. The main clause is arranged between two conditional clauses, and the second conditional clause is followed by a ἵνα clause (i.e., purpose/result clause). The structure of Rom 8:17 is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Rom 8:17} & \\
\text{17a1 (evidence, protasis)} & \uparrow \text{εἰ δὲ τέκνα, (“and if children,”)} \\
\text{17a2 (inference, apodosis)} & \text{καὶ κληρονόμοι (“heirs also,”)} \\
& \uparrow \text{κληρονόμοι μὲν θεοῦ,} \\
& \uparrow \text{συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ,} \\
& \text{“(heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ,”)} \\
\text{17b1 (evidence, protasis)} & \uparrow \text{ἐἴπερ συμπάσχομεν (“if indeed we suffer with Him’’)} \\
\text{17b2 (purpose/result)} & \uparrow \text{ἵνα καὶ συνδοξάσθωμεν} \\
& \text{“(in order that we may also be glorified with Him.’”)}
\end{align*}
\]

According to James L. Boyer, the main clause related to Rom 8:17b1 is merely part of Rom 8:17a2, namely συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ (“[We are] fellow-heirs with Christ”). Jewett’s viewpoint seems similar to Boyer. Cranfield indicates that the

\[377\] Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 682-83; Wallace only confirms the first relationship.  
\[378\] Ibid., 473-74.  

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whole Rom 8:17b “confirms what has just been said,” but he does not clarify how far it confirms. Both Jewett and Cranfield propose that the subordinating conjunction εἰπερ does not function as traditional conditional, denoting “if.” Instead, “since indeed,” or “seeing that” are better expressions, “strengthening the ascensive force.”

Furthermore, both concepts “heirs” and “suffering and glory” are fundamentally full of indicative instead of imperative implication, because Paul mainly declares what status God has granted to believers in Christ rather than requesting believers to live in a specific way. Although the emphasis of suffering with Christ here does not signify the union with Christ in the likeness of His death (cf. Rom 6:5), “nor to our having suffered (sacramentally) in baptism,” the participation in Jesus’ sufferings in daily life (cf. 2 Cor 4:11), or the “sharing Christ’s sufferings” (cf. Phil 3:10), the central argument of Paul here is still very indicative oriented (cf. our classification of Rom 8:18-30 in Table 4-1). Besides, the second main concept (suffering and glory) refers a long-term process in which believers will experience the struggle due to a salvation reality of “already begun, but not yet being completed.” Paul will continue his exposition on this issue in the passage Rom 8:18-30, where he also draws conclusions from the main issues presented from Rom 6:1 onwards.

4.2.6.1 Heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ: syntactical and grammatical investigation

Using a combination of a conditional marker εἰ and a particle δέ, Paul begins his deepening interpretation in Rom 8:17. Here the particle δέ (“and”) functions as a marker not only calling for attention, but also connecting what is mentioned above with the following series of narrative. Yet the initial conditional marker εἰ (“if”) relates more closely to the subsequent καί (“then” or “also”). Though the protasis of the first conditional sentence states truth, it is better not to render εἰ as “since,” because that would make Paul’s argument weaker, becoming “a lecture rather than a di-

380 Jewett, Romans, 502.
381 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 407.
382 Jewett, Romans, 502, “just as in 8:9.”
383 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 407, “and is roughly equivalent to γάρ.”
384 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 694. For a further discussion, see sec. 6.2.6.4 “Suffering and glory” and 197nn421-23.
385 Ibid., 408.
386 Jewett, Romans, 503.
388 BDAG, s.v. “δέ,” 1.
aologue.” For highlighting the imagery he puts into use, Paul simplifies the conditional sentence, which is supposed to be: εἰ δὲ (ἐσμὲν) τέκνα, καὶ (ἐσμὲν) κληρονόμου (”if [we are] children, then [we are] heirs”). A noteworthy fact is that Paul uses a correlative conjunction μὲν … δὲ to link his additional interpretation, denoting “on the one hand, … on the other hand.” It looks like a staircase parallelism, namely, the following phrases repeat one main term in the previous phrase and so develop the thought from various angles. By using such a literary composition in Rom 8:17a, Paul tries to impress his audience with overlapping key words and extensive inspiration as follows (underlining mine):

17a1 and ↓if (we are) children,
17a2 ↑then (we are) heirs,
”↑on the one hand heirs of God,
”↑on the other hand fellow heirs with Christ.

Similar expressions can be found elsewhere in Paul’s letters, such as Rom 14:4-5 and 1 Cor 12:7-8 (underlining mine).

Rom 14:4-5

4 σὺ τίς εἰ ὁ κρίνων ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην; τῷ ἰδίῳ κυρίῳ στήκει ἢ πίπτει· σταθήσεται δὲ, δυνατεὶ γὰρ ὁ κύριος στήσαι αὐτόν. 5 Ὁς μὲν [γὰρ] κρίνει ἡμέραν παρ᾽ ἡμέραν, δὲ δὲ κρίνει πᾶσαν ἡμέραν· ἐκαστὸς ἐν τῷ ἰδίῳ νοῦ πληροφορεῖσθω.

Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand. On the one hand one man regards one day above another, on the other hand another regards every day alike. Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.

Paul’s emphasis is on the verb κρίνω (“to judge,” or “to decide”). Its meaning in verse 4 is “to pass unfavorable judgement” or “to criticize,” which is different from that (“to select, to prefer”) in verse 5. By producing an effect of repeating and expansion, Paul creates a contrast between verse 4 and verse 5. The Roman believers are required by Paul not to judge each other negatively as a master for their own cultural

390 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 683.
392 Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 129.
393 BDAG, s.v. “μὲν,” 1. c notes: “the combination μὲν … δὲ does not emphasize a contrast, but separates one thought from another in a series, so that they may be easily distinguished.”
394 BDAG, s.v. “κρίνω,” 1.
or religious tradition which is not a necessary requirement for salvation. God is the master who will judge everyone on the judgment day (cf. Rom 14:10). Do not regard cultural relativity (religious dietary law and feasts) as moral absolutes and thus destroy the harmony in church (cf. Rom 14:19; 15:5), is Paul’s imperative (cf. the last clause of verse 5). Later he reminds the Roman believers that “the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit” (Rom 14:17, emphasis mine). Another example of using μέν … δέ is as follows:

1 Cor 12:7-8

7 ἐκάστῳ δὲ δίδοται ἡ φανέρωσις τοῦ πνεύματος πρὸς τὸ συμφέρον. Ὑ μέν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδοται λόγος σοφίας, ἀλλὰ δὲ λόγος γνώσεως κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα.

7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For on the one hand to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, on the other hand to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

In fact, 1 Cor 12:7-8 is a further clarification of 1 Cor 12:4 with reference to the Spirit who is the only source of various gifts in the church. Diverse gifts granted to different believers to bring benefit for the church is “the basic thesis” for 1 Cor 12.395 Paul gives examples from verse 8 onwards, referring to the Spirit repeatedly by using the μέν … δέ construction to generate an impression of the Spirit’s dominance.

Therefore, Paul immediately adds his supplementary explanation to heirs. To become God’s children means to become God’s heirs, on the one hand, and co-heirs with Christ, on the other hand. For the double extra exegeses, the second one does not seem to appear exactly in apposition to the first one, but rather seems to be a further elucidation. Interestingly, Paul does not explicitly state what the inheritance God’s children are going to acquire is, but he focuses on the status of heirs. He utilizes the identity of “co-heirs with Christ” to explain “heirs of God”, trying to release more information, which could be examined again in the following structure (underlining mine):

17a1 ↓ εἰ δὲ τέκνα,
17a2 καὶ κληρονόμοι.
↑ κληρονόμοι μὲν θεοῦ,
↑ συγκληρονόμοι δὲ Χριστοῦ.

The first genitive θεοῦ in the third line could be regarded as possessive, denoting

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that the heirs belong to God, or as objective for the reason that in the Old Testament God is depicted as the inheritance of His people (Ps 16:5), especially of the priests and Levites (Num 18:20; Deut 10:9; 18:2; Josh 13:33). By contrast, the people chosen by God usually become a part of His priestly kingdom, as God claims in Exod 19:6a (ὑμεῖς δὲ ἔσεσθε μοι βασιλείου ἱεράτευμα καὶ ἑδυνατί δὴν ἐγὼν, LXX, “and you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation”). Maybe both thoughts are in Paul’s mind, but apparently Paul puts his key in the phrase συγκληρονόμοι Χριστοῦ, which is a συν-compound followed by a genitive of association. As co-heirs with Christ, the believers have their share in the same inheritance as Christ. Accordingly, there are two ways to know what believers will inherit. One is to find what Christ, God’s only begotten Son, will inherit; then, also the inheritance of the co-heirs can be known. The other is to investigate what God has promised to give the believers as inheritance in Christ and with Christ, and how God arranges, announces and applies that promise in His plan of salvation. Owing to lack of unequivocal account of the inheritance Christ will receive as an inheritor, the second way seems to be preferable. In Paul’s train of thought in his letters, in principle he emphasizes rather the aspect that “God’s plan has joined us together with the destiny of Jesus Christ.”

4.2.6.2 Heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ: semantic and contextual investigation

At this point Paul again introduces Roman legal practice into his argument, this time through the conception of succession. Legal designation of the heir and its relationship with making a valid will are arranged very prudently under Roman law (cf. the description in sec. 2.4 “Heir”), and briefly mentioned in Mosaic Law (Num 26:52-56; Deut 21:15-17). Paul’s employment of such imagery leads his audience to catch his point quickly. However, a legal organization has its limitations on demonstrating spiritual truth. Unlike the common Roman adoptive fathers, God appoints his adopted children as heirs not because of His mortality, but His grace. Whether in Roman law or in Mosaic Law, the right to share in the inheritance for females, daughters, slaves, non-direct descendant sons is marginalized or deprived (cf. Num 27:8-11). Paul’s central point is not in the knowledge the Roman social context can provide, but in the spiritual depth and breadth with which the imagery is associated. The heir-related

396 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 129.
397 DBI, s.v. “Legal Images,” under the subsection of “Heirs, Heirship and Inheritance, Guardian.”
398 Cf. Isa 61:6; 1 Pet 2:5, 9 and Rev 1:6; 5:20; 20:6; such a thought is inherent in the Bible.
399 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 129.
concepts are not unfamiliar to the Roman recipients, who are expected to understand their implications. In practice, Paul has paved the way for discussion of the issue in Rom 4, where heritage-correlated terms appear intensively, such as πατήρ (“father,” 6 times), μακαρισμός (“blessedness,” twice), μακάριος (“blessed,” twice), κληρονόμος (“heir,” twice), νόμος (“law,” 5 times), σπέρμα (“offspring,” 3 times), ἐπαγγέλια (“promise,” 4 times), βέβαιος (“valid,” once), ἐπαγγέλλομαι (“to promise,” once), κόσμος (“world,” once), and μήτρα (“womb,” once).

The designation κληρονόμος (“heir”) appears twice in Rom 4, in verses of 13 and 14, respectively. It does not occur again until Rom 8:17. Paul makes the points in Rom 4:13-14 that God’s promise to Abraham or his spiritual descendants is that he would be the heir of the world not through the law, but through the righteousness of faith, and, further, that if the adherents of the law are the heirs, both faith and promise would be invalidated. In reality, Rom 4:13-14 should be observed with Rom 4:15-16, which further exposes the negative effect of the Mosaic Law in justification. The whole chapter Rom 4 stresses the life of Abraham, who becomes the apotheosis of faith in God.401 Yet up to Rom 4:17 Paul does not state what words of God form the content Abraham believes. Paul’s citation of Gen 15:6 in Rom 4:3 implies that what is reckoned to Abraham as righteousness is his believing God’s promise that his descendants will be as many as innumerable stars. Nevertheless, the scene of the promise of God connected with the belief of Abraham recounted in Gen 15:5-6 is not the only one in Abraham’s life. There are more similar episodes related to Abraham before and after the age of ninety-nine. The promises God made to Abraham could be grouped into three categories:402

1. Countless offspring: including to be a great nation, to be the father of many nations; nations and kings will come from Abraham’s family (Gen 12:2a; 13:16; 15:5; 17:2, 4-6, 16; 22:17bc).


3. Blessing: Abraham has a great name, becomes a blessing; all peoples and nations on earth will be blessed through Abraham, status of the righteous, making a covenant to establish an eternal relationship with Abraham and his offspring (Gen 12:2b-3; 15:6; 17:7; 18:18; 22:17a, 18).

In the latter part of the previous passages Rom 4:1-8 and 4:9-12, Paul firmly confirms that the blessing Abraham receives from God, namely, his believing in God was

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401 For a brief survey of Paul’s flow of thought in Rom 4, see sec. 3.2.4 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 3:21-5:21.”

reckoned to him as righteousness, will apply to all who follow his believing response, including all sinners and those who are uncircumcised. (cf. Rom 4:4-8, 11-12). Due to faith in God, they are granted the blessing of forgiveness of sin. Coming to Rom 4:13, Paul uses the word κόσμος (“world”) in preference to κληρονομία (“inheritance,” Gal 3:18) to stand for all the promises God will grant Abraham and his offspring. Moreover, Paul intentionally expands God’s blessing from righteousness to all promises Abraham receives and applies them to all who follow in the steps of the faith of Abraham (cf. Rom 4:16b). Because of God’s grace, all those who imitate the faith of Abraham become his offspring who will inherit the promises granted to him (Rom 4:16a, cf. Gal 3:7, 9).

Nonetheless, Paul’s argument that the believers obtain God’s promise with Abraham by faith may cause confusion about the faith. On the one hand, Abraham certainly does not know the details regarding the messianic prophecy. On the other hand, God’s promise to Abraham has its temporal and geographical characteristics, especially to the Gentile believers. The promises of incalculable descendants and the land of Canaan would seem inappropriate and unnecessary to the Gentile believers. That is why Paul needs to expound his perception of Abraham’s faith in God, and to discover the matching part the believers can apply to themselves. Unlike the way Paul argues in Gal 3-4, where he tries to connect God’s foreseeing in His promise to Abraham with the fulfillment in Christ (Gal 3:8, 13-14a, 16, cf. sec. 4.2.6.3 “The solidarity with Christ”), in Romans Paul explicates the quality of Abraham’s faith based on his experience in the process of waiting for his son, born of Sarah, when they are too old to have a child. Paul points out two aspects of Abraham’s faith. One is that Abraham’s faith stands the test of time without any supporting evidence. The other is the object of his faith. They appear as two sides of the same coin.

Two quotations from Genesis are used by Paul to indicate that Abraham has been waiting for almost fourteen years before the promise of offspring is fulfilled. The citation in Rom 4:18, “οὐτὼς ἔσται τὸ σπέρμα σου,” (“So shall your descendants be”), is from Gen 15:5b, when Abraham is nearly eighty-five years old (cf. Gen 12:4; 16:3). The other one in Rom 4:17, “πατέρα πολλῶν ἔθνων τέθεικά σε,” (“A father of many nations have I made you”) comes from Gen 17:5, when Abraham is at the

403 “As righteousness” (εἰς δικαιοσύνην, [Rom 4:3]) is a substitution for predicate nominative, the subject is “Abraham believed God” (ἐπίστευσεν Ἀβράαμ τῷ θεῷ); Wallace, Greek Grammar, 47-48.

404 Some scholars are inclined to the view that the world in Rom 4:13 represents the entire world based on real land, see Moo, Romans, 274; Mark Forman, The Politics of Inheritance in Romans, SNTSMS 148 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 63-72; Benjamin Schliesser, Abraham’s Faith in Romans 4: Paul’s Concept of Faith in Light of the History of Reception of Genesis 15:6 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007), 365-68.

405 Though after receiving this promise of God, Abraham has a son born of Hagar, an Egyptian maidservant of Sarah, at the age of eighty-six (Gen 16:15-16), Paul seems to think that Abraham is still waiting for his son born of his wife Sarah, despite Abraham’s word to God: “Oh that Ishmael might live before Thee! (Gen 17:18),” implying that he has already experienced the fulfillment of God’s promise.
age of ninety-nine (Gen 17:1). Even more critical is that at that time his wife Sarah is already nearly a nonagenarian whose womb is typically considered dead (Rom 4:19b). In spite of the impossibility, Paul brings out that Abraham does not doubt God’s promise in unbelief, but grows strong in belief and gives glory to God (Rom 4:20). These two corresponding promises are made to Abraham fourteen years apart to each other. In Paul’s mind Abraham endures waiting during this period, despite the fact that he and Sarah are an old couple without fertility.

Related to Abraham’s consistent faith is his correct understanding of God. More accurately, the object Abraham believes in is God rather than the promise. Paul indicates this point clearly: “Abraham believed God” (Rom 4:3a), who makes the dead (like aged Abraham himself and Sarah) alive and calls into existence what does not exist (Rom 4:17). For this reason Abraham is fully convinced that God is able to accomplish whatever He promises (Rom 4:21). Therefore, Abraham’s righteous status comes not from any deed of his, but from his right response to God’s act or promise, no matter what it is (cf. Rom 4:3, 9b, 22).

Now this principle of being reckoned as righteousness applies to all who believe that God raised up Jesus from the dead (Rom 4:24). Thus, an application of inheriting the blessing with Abraham is induced as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>person</th>
<th>respond to</th>
<th>God and His promise</th>
<th>result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abraham</td>
<td>believes in God who promised to give countless descendants and other promises</td>
<td>it is reckoned to Abraham as righteousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We</td>
<td>believe in God the One who raised Jesus, our Lord, from the dead</td>
<td>it is reckoned to us as righteousness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 4-2 The principle of being reckoned as righteousness

At the end of his exposition of Rom 4, Paul sums up by specifying that “Jesus was delivered up because of our transgressions, and was raised because of our justification” (Rom 4:25). It must be noted that Paul highlights the “for us believers” dimension of

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407 It is noteworthy that Abraham only a number of years after the birth of Isaac understands (because of Gen 21:12) that the promise of countless offspring will be fulfilled through Isaac only, not through Ishmael. Abraham wrongly assumes that God fulfills His promise of granting countless descendants when Ishmael is born. Even so, Paul still thinks that Abraham’s faith is still not weakening.

408 Schliesser, Abraham’s Faith in Romans 4, 387-90.
Jesus’ sacrifice and resurrection in Rom 4:25. The whole chapter 4 of Romans does not mention Jesus Christ until the last two verses, which means that the most crucial foothold in God’s granting His righteousness is Jesus’ being raised from the dead by God. In reality, Paul is announcing the greatest and most important promise God grants due to its universal applicability. The renewed promise suits all human beings who would like to imitate the faith of Abraham to make a receiving response.

Abraham’s example establishes the right way by which the believers’ faith in God can be credited to them as God’s righteousness. The manner to receive God’s righteousness has been transferred from Abraham to all the following believers, including Jews and Gentiles, who believe in God’s new promise. God’s promise to His chosen people may change in different periods, but the principle of receiving the status of righteousness never changes. Literally speaking, God’s promise to Abraham only suits his family and descendants. God repeats and transfers the promises He gave to Abraham also to Isaac (Gen 26:3-4), Jacob (Gen 28:13-15; 48:4) as well as other descendants (e.g., Exod 2:24; 3:6; Deut 1:8). However, gradually the descendants place their emphasis on the land (e.g., 1 Chr 16:16-18; Ps 105:9-11). The last occurrence of the relatedness between God and the combination of “Abraham, Isaac and Jacob” in the Old Testament, signifying Yahweh is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is in Jer 33:26. In the history of the Old Testament, there are other promises God bestows, such as those in the Mosaic Law or in God’s oracles conveyed by prophets. Though the messianic prophecies are hidden inside, most confined promises and blessings only belong to the Jewish people who really believe in God (Rom 9:4; cf. Eph 2:11-12). All Gentiles are strangers from God’s righteousness and promises until the occurrence of the event that “God raised Jesus our Lord from the dead” (Rom 4:24), which encapsulates all what God has done and will do in Christ. Hence Rom 4:25 functions as the turning point, indicating the access to the Father all believers can have in Christ (cf. Rom 5:2; Eph 2:17-18), with whom all believers, including Jews and Gentiles, become partakers of all God’s promises.

Viewed in this light, we may say that one of the purposes of Paul’s employment of the imagery of adoption is to “give nuance to what he wishes to communicate about inheritance.” However, according to the context of Rom 8:17, Paul actually puts more emphasis on heirs (status and identity) than inheritance (physical reality).

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409 Ibid., 390.
410 It is a general impression when reading the Old Testament that it pays more attention to the promised land. Although the promise of the offspring/great nation is considered as fulfilled by the Pentateuch in Exod 1:7, and the promise of the land is considered as fulfilled in Josh 21:43-45, the Prophets mention the land more often than the offspring (e.g., Neh 9:23-25; Jer 32:22; Ezek 47:13-22), for which the reason might be the long-standing loss of the promised land.
411 Walters, “Paul, Adoption, and Inheritance,” 55; his observation of the relationship between adoption and inheritance is mainly on the basis of Gal 3:6-4:7 (55-65).
412 For a further discussion, see sec. 4.3.2.1 “The constant presence of the Spirit.”
Express differently, the believers’ inheritance must be comprehended from the spiritual dimension: The believers are beloved children of the Father in heaven, and because they indeed are, they own the assurance and promise of life in the Spirit both now and to the day of eternity.

4.2.6.3 The solidarity with Christ

Without the death and resurrection of Christ, it would be impossible to become fellow partakers with Christ of God’s salvation. Since the beginning of Rom 5, Paul has laid great emphasis on the believers’ close association with Christ; to experience the reality of this association is extremely important in Christian life. Accordingly, Paul often employs the preposition σύν and σύν-compound words to express the intimacy and united status between the believers and Christ up to the end of Rom 8, such as συνιστημι (“to demonstrate, show”, Rom 5:8), συνθάπτω (“to bury together with,” Rom 6:4), σύμφωτος (“be identified with,” Rom 6:5), συσταυρώ (“to crucify together with,” Rom 6:6), ὀποθνήσκω σὺν Χριστῷ (“to die with Christ,” Rom 6:8), συζάω (“to live together with,” Rom 6:8), σύμφημι (“to concur with,” Rom 7:16), συνήδομαι (“to joyfully agree with,” Rom 7:22), συμμαρτυρῶ (“to bear witness to,” Rom 8:16), συγκληρονόμος (“inheriting together with,” Rom 8:17), συμπάσχω (“to suffer with,” Rom 8:17), συνδοξάζω (“to honor with,” Rom 8:17), συσυναντιλαμβάνομαι (“to help,” Rom 8:22), συνωδίνω (“to suffer together,” Rom 8:22), συναντιλαμβάνομαι (“to help,” Rom 8:28), συμμορφος (“be similar in form,” Rom 8:29), and πῶς οὐχὶ καὶ σὺν αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα ἡμῖν χαρίσεται (“how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?” (Rom 8:32). Before turning to Rom 8, Paul has prepared a favorable situation for deepening the discussion of the unity with Christ. Among the employments of σύν and σύν-compound terms, Rom 6:8 is very typical (underscoring mine):

Rom 6:8

εἰ δὲ ὄπεθάνομεν σὺν Χριστῷ, πιστεύομεν ὅτι καὶ συζήσομεν αὐτῷ.

Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him.

In a concise way, Paul recapitulates the transformed status that the believers are granted through being baptized into Christ. Truly, Paul could have used correspond-
ing verb like συναποθνήσκω to replace ἀποθνήσκω σύν, as he does in 2 Cor 7:3 (and cf. 2 Tim 2:11); or he could have used ζάω σύν in place of συζάω, as he does in 2 Cor 13:4 and 1 Thess 5:10. If 2 Tim 2:11 is an allusion to an early tradition (πιστός ὁ λόγος εἰ γὰρ συναπεθάνομεν, καὶ συζήσομεν. “It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him.” [underlining mine]), then the expression “σύν Χριστῷ” in Rom 6:8 is probably a deliberate modification, which stresses the association of the preposition σύν with its object Χριστῷ. Not only so, but Paul also puts in πιστεύομεν ὅτι, which occurs only here in Romans. The verb πιστεύομεν in first person plural present active form combined with the conjunction ὅτι implies “a shared faith ‘that’ something is true,” as Paul expresses in 1 Thess 4:14. All the three verbs in Rom 6:8 clearly convey the perspective in Paul’s mind that believers, including the entire Roman church, own the same status with Christ of being liberated from the power of sin and death, and that they are experiencing a closely corporate life with Christ, being capable of conducting themselves in a God-pleasing way (cf. Rom 6:4, 9).

It is very impressive when the Roman community reverberates with the sound of σύν and its compound words, which signify the blessed assurance of God’s promise to the believers through Christ, even if they may suffer distress or persecution in their life. A. J. M. Wedderburn advocates a predominantly instrumental or causal meaning of the preposition ἐν in the phrase “in Christ” in Paul, due to the influence of the Hebrew ל, which always implies “by means of.” Wedderburn is inspired by Paul’s usage of ἐν combined with Abraham in Gal 3, where sufficient examples of such a usage appear. His understanding can be summarized into three points. First, the preposition ἐν in Paul’s allusion, ἐνευλογηθήσονται ἐν σοί πάντα τὰ ἔθνη (“all the nations shall be blessed in you”) in Gal 3:8, echoing Gen 12:3 and 18:18, even 22:18 (ἐν τῷ σπέρματί σου, “through your offspring”), shows the strong influence of Hebrew ל. It expresses a similar meaning to the σύν in σύν τῷ πιστῷ Ἀβραὰμ (“with believing Abraham,”) in Gal 3:9. Secondly, the preposition ἐν in Gal 3:14 followed by Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦς is under the same influence. Accordingly, there is little difference between ἐν Χριστῷ (“in Christ,” cf. Rom 8:2; 1 Cor 1:2; Gal 2:4) and the other comparable phrases suggesting that something is done to believers by means of Jesus, like διὰ Χριστοῦ (“through Christ,” cf. Rom 5:21; 2 Cor 5:18) and σύν Χριστῷ (“with Christ,” cf. Rom 6:4-6; Gal 2:19). Thirdly, both Abraham and Jesus are regarded as a “corporate personality,” which means that they are considered as very “representative figures

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415 Jewett, Romans, 406. The text of 1 Thess 4:14 reads as follows: εἰ γὰρ πιστεύομεν ὅτι Ἰησοῦς ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἀνέστη, οὕτως καὶ ὁ θεὸς τοὺς κοιμηθέντας διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ ἔξει σὺν αὐτῷ (“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus” [underlining added]).

through whom God acts toward the human race.” Yet in reference to the association with Christ, the emphasis put by Paul is not on imitating faith, but rather on a more thoughtful conforming to the model of Christ’s life (cf. Rom 8:17; 2 Cor 4:10-11).

In a larger context Wedderburn’s logic behind his argument could be paraphrased as follows: Between Gal 3:8 and 9, there are supposed to be two links. One is the principle of faith. The other is the object or content of faith. The former one has been mentioned in Gal 3:7, “those of faith” (οἱ ἐκ πίστεως) are those who believe in God (Jewish and Gentile believers) in the same way as Abraham does/did. The latter one is depicted in Gal 3:13-14a where it is stated that the Gentiles receive the blessing of Abraham due to faith in Christ Jesus, who became a curse for believers, thereby redeeming them from the curse of the law. In order to make the thought of Gal 3:13-14a a link, Paul connects Gal 3:8 to the key word “seed” of Gen 22:18a (that is, Gen 22:18a could be paraphrased as “and by means of your seed all nations of the earth shall be blessed,” connecting Gal 3:8 with 3:16), who is identified with Christ, and claims fulfillment in Gal 3:16.

If we use the first five letters of the English alphabet to stand for the key verses mentioned above respectively, the slightly paraphrased verses and the flow chart will be as follows (underlining mine):

A: It is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham (cf. Gal 3:7).
B: All nations shall be blessed by means of Abraham (cf. Gal 3:8).
C: All those who are of faith are blessed with the believing Abraham (cf. Gal 3:9).
D: Abraham’s blessing might come to the Gentiles by means of Christ (cf. Gal 3:14a), because Christ is the seed, and redeems believers from the law by becoming a curse for them (cf. Gal 3:13).
E: The promises to Abraham and to his seed, not saying “to seeds” as to many, but “to your seed,” that is, Christ (cf. Gal 3:16).

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417 Ibid., 91.
418 Contra Betz, Galatians, 156-57, who suggests that Gen 17:1-11 (LXX) “has the terms all coordinated” with Gal 3:6-14, thus becoming a preferable basis to discuss. However, Betz seems to ignore one key element, which is the lack of ἐνευλογέω or εὐλογέω (both denote “to bless”) in Gen 17:1-11. Paul emphasizes how all nations are blessed through τὸ σπέρμα σου ("your seed") in Gal 3:16. Genesis 22:18a points out the complete thesis, being more suitable to be the background of Gal 3:16. Another reason for selecting Gen 22:18a rather than Gen 12:3 is that Paul uses “nations” instead of “peoples,” and his emphasis shifts to offspring, which is lacking in Gen 12:3. Unfortunately, NA does not list Gen 22:18 in its margin references to Gal 3:8 (only Gen 12:3 and 18:18 from the OT) and Gal 3:16 (only Gen 13:15; 17:8 and 24:7).
Diagram 4-3 From “Blessed in Abraham” to “Blessed with Abraham” in Galatians 3

Comparing to the explication in Rom 4, where Paul puts more stress on the depiction of the outstanding characteristic of Abraham’s faith, in Gal 3 Paul focuses more on exposing the incompetence and circumscribed function of the law in receiving God’s righteousness. By contrast, if the viewpoints Wedderburn provides are utilized as an observing basis, a conclusion emerges that Paul indeed makes the solidarity and unity of the believers and Christ more obvious in Romans, especially in Rom 5-8. Abundant examples of the phrases in the form of Jesus Christ or Lord preceded by the preposition διά (esp. Rom 5), ἐν (esp. Rom 6; 8), or σὺν (cf. Rom 6; 8) will suffice to illustrate the quality of the union with Christ in Romans. Accordingly, the union with Christ is more emphasized in Romans than in Galatians. Furthermore, the union with the Spirit (cf. the more frequent occurrences of the phrases “with/in the Spirit” in Romans) is as strongly emphasized in Romans as the union with Christ is. Although Paul is clearly aware of the difference between Christ and the Spirit, in his argumentation “in Christ” and “in the Spirit” are always considered as being equivalent (e.g., Rom 8:2, 9, 10).419

4.2.6.4 Suffering and glory

The last summary point from Wedderburn’s reasoning provides a germane introduction of Rom 8:17b. An intimate association with Christ on status signifies a reflective recognition of the earthly life pattern according to Christ Jesus (κατὰ Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, Rom 15:5), as Paul says: ζῶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγώ, ζῆν δὲ ἐν ἔμοι Χριστός (“and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me,” Gal 2:20).420 Consequently, Paul continues to employ σὺν-compound verbs to lead his recipients to face squarely their life and ultimate future as God’s adopted children and heirs with Christ. His proclamation in Rom 8:17b is very summarizing (underlining mine):

εἶπε δὲ συμπάσχομεν
↑ ἵνα καὶ συνδοξασθῶμεν.

420 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 408.
if indeed we suffer with Him
↑ in order that we may also be glorified with Him.

Paul combines two subordinating conjunctions εἰπερ and ἵνα together to construct his sentence of Rom 8:17b, forming a reference-purpose/result relationship. Such a mixture only occurs here and could not be found in other books of the Bible. The first subordinating conjunction εἰπερ is an emphatic form of the conditional particle εἰ, usually being rendered as “since, if indeed, if after all.”421 It appears six times in the New Testament, all in Pauline epistles, typically being “with a reference to a further condition (or fact),”422 and conveying that the condition it demonstrates will be followed by its consequent effect. The second conjunction ἵνα initiates the consequent effect, meaning “in order that” or “so that,” thereby implying “both the intention and its sure accomplishment.”423 Owing to the divine plan under consideration, BDAG’s comment is of note:

In many cases purpose and result cannot be clearly differentiated, and hence ἵνα is used for the result that follows according to the purpose of the subject or of God. As in Semitic and Gr[eco]-Rom[an] thought, purpose and result are identical in declarations of the divine will.424

Apparently, Paul uses such a construction deliberately to proclaim an important message: Since we are suffering together with Christ (a further condition of “we are co-heirs with Christ”), so that we may be glorified together with Christ. The fact of the condition guarantees the occurrence of the consequence. Hence the first verb συμπάσχομεν becomes the sufficient condition for the second one συνδοξάσθωμεν. Cranfield’s paraphrasing of Rom 8:17b makes known its connotation:

for the fact that we are now suffering with him, so far from calling the reality of our hardship in question, is a pledge of our being glorified with Him hereafter.425

Likewise, Jewett also identifies the point of the relationship between the two clauses of Rom 8:17b: “By sharing suffering with the dishonored Christ, believers receive

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421 Cf. LSJ, s.v. “εἰπερ,” BDAG, s.v. “εἰ,” 6. 1; also see a brief discussion in sec. 4.2.6 “Suffering children and glorified heirs,” and 185nn382-84.
422 BDF §454(2); the six occurrences are Rom 3:30; 8:9, 17; 1 Cor 8:5; 15:5; 2 Thess 1:6; only in Rom 8:9, 17, εἰ and εἰπερ are neighbors to each other.
423 Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 473 (emphasis original).
424 BDAG, s.v. “ἵνα,” 3; an earlier and slightly different version in BAGD (1979) is cited by Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 473.
the promise of a divine reversal, sharing in his glory.”

Dunn makes a comment concerning the initial conjunctions of the two conditional clauses in Rom 8:17. As in Rom 8:9 Dunn draws a clear difference between εἰ and εἴπερ. As in Rom 8:9a. In other words, according to Dunn the statement “(we are) children” is the sufficient and necessary condition simultaneously for “(we are) heirs,” whereas the statement “we suffer together (with Christ)” is the necessary condition for “we may be glorified together (with Christ).” If we use the first four letters of the English alphabet to stand for these four theses, my understanding of Paul, based on the analysis above, and Dunn’s interpretation of Rom 8:17 could be expressed in equations as follows:

A: “(we are) children”
B: “(we are) heirs”
C: “we suffer together (with Christ)”
D: “we may be glorified together (with Christ)”

Paul (according to my interpretation):
Rom 8:17a: If A, then B (A→B); that is, if non-B, then non-A (¬B→¬A)
Rom 8:17b: If C, then D (C→D) which equals “if non-D, then non-C” (¬D→¬C).

Dunn’s interpretation of Paul:
Rom 8:17a: If A, then B (A→B); that is, if non-B, then non-A (¬B→¬A);
if B, then A (B→A); that is, if non-A, then non-B (¬A→¬B)
Rom 8:17 b: If D, then C (D→C), which equals “if non-C, then non-D” (¬C→¬D).

Obvious in Dunn’s comments is that he claims too much about Rom 8:17a, and mistakenly reverses the relationship between C and D. Paul emphasizes simply “if A, then B” (that is, if non-B, then non-A), our status as God’s children guarantees our position as God’s heirs. But he does not imply that if we are not children, we are not heirs (¬A→¬B). The recipients of Romans are believers, hence it is not necessary for Paul to state a negative reality as a law (i.e., if not children, then not heirs, ¬A→

426 Jewett, Romans, 503 (emphasis mine).
427 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 456; “Here again a distinction between εἰ and εἴπερ is evident: in 17a εἰ denotes a necessary and sufficient condition fulfilled = ‘since’; but εἴπερ denotes a condition not yet fulfilled and therefore a consequence dependent on the fulfillment of the condition (see also on 8:9).” However, Dunn in fact only analyzes the meaning of εἴπερ in Rom 8:9, see ibid., 428-30.
—B), but it is needed to claim a promise to encourage them (i.e., if children, then heirs, A→B). Similarly, Paul does not state that if we are going to be glorified together with Christ, we should suffer together with Him (D→C). For the reason that if Paul says so, then the requirement of suffering with Christ will become a law to earn merit. In this regard, Moo apparently makes a similar mistake in interpreting Rom 8:17b by stating: “Participation in Christ’s glory can come through participation in his suffering.” This would mean that without a participation in suffering, there will be no share of glory (−C→−D).

On the contrary, Paul’s viewpoint in Rom 8:17b signifies that the reality of “we suffer together (with Christ)” (i.e., C) guarantees the occurrence of “we may be glorified together (with Christ)” (i.e., D). Precisely speaking, C is supposed to be the sufficient condition of D, namely, if C, then D (C→D) and if non-D, then non-C (−D→−C). What Paul implies is that if we are not glorified together with Christ, then we do not suffer together with Him. Besides, the functions of εἰ and εἴπερ (a strengthened form of εἰ) in Rom 8:17 are similar, both assert that the statement following them respectively is true, however, εἴπερ indicates a further condition of the result compared to the result brought by εἰ conditional sentence, so is their function in Rom 8:9. Since Dunn points out that εἰ and εἴπερ in Rom 8:17 repeat their function in Rom 8:9, it is necessary to show that Dunn’s explanation by analogy in Rom 8:17 might display his misreading of the logical relation in Rom 8:9. Dunn’s view could be assessed by the text structure of Rom 8:9 and what the letters of the English alphabet stand for as follows (underlining mine):

Rom 8:9a

 ámbēz dé oúk éstē én sarqí állass én pneúmati,

↑ εἴπερ pneúma òtheó oikeî én ámbēn.

Rom 8:9b

↓ εἰ dé tîs pneúma Xristou oúk éxei,

óutos oúk éstîn autôv.

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428 In a similar way, when Paul in Col 1:24 indicates that he is completing in his flesh what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions for the church, he is not saying that only through filling up the deficiency of the tribulations of Christ in his flesh, that is, his sufferings for the church, due to the incompleteness of Christ’s redemption, can he obtain τὸ πλοῦτος τῆς δόξης (“the riches of the glory,” Col 1:27). Likewise, Paul never treats “suffering with Christ” as a necessary condition for “being glorified with Christ” (cf. Phil 3:10-12). If the “necessary condition” is true, then Paul is claiming that it is impossible to have “being glorified with Christ” without “suffering with Christ.” Put differently, the absence of “suffering with Christ” guarantees the absence of “being glorified with Christ.” In such circumstances, “suffering with Christ” will become a law by which to earn God’s salvation.

429 Moo, Romans, 506.

430 As the citations taken from Cranfield and Jewett just mentioned above (197n425 and 198n426).

431 See our discussion above and 197nn421-22.

432 For a further explanation, see 202n438 and the discussion it refers to.
However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, (then) B

↑ if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. ↑ if A

But ↓ if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ. ↓ if non-C

he does not belong to Him. (then) non-D

A: “the Spirit of God dwells in you” (premise 1)
B: “you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit” (consequence 1)
C: “anyone does have the Spirit of Christ” (premise 2)
D: “he does belong to Christ” (consequence 2)

Paul (according to my interpretation):
Rom 8:9a: If A, then B (A→B: A is a sufficient condition for B; B is a necessary condition for A).
Rom 8:9b: If non-C, then non-D (¬C→¬D), that is, if D, then C (D→C: D is a sufficient condition for C; C is a necessary condition for D).

Dunn’s interpretation of Paul:
Rom 8:9a: If B, then A (B→A), that is, if non-A, then non-B (¬A→¬B).
Rom 8:9b: If D, then C (D→C) ?

Dunn expresses clearly that in Rom 8:9a the dependent clause led by εἰπερ (A) is a necessary condition for the preceding main clause (B). Moreover, he argues that “the criterion of belonging to Christ (D) for Paul is possession of the Spirit (C).” The reason why Dunn proposes is that he is very likely to change Rom 8:9b (¬C→¬D) into the inverse of it: “But if anyone does have the Spirit of Christ (C), he does belong to Christ (D),” that is, C→D (i.e., take the negation of both the premise 2 and the consequence 2 in the same order). Besides, according to Dunn’s logic, he is used to taking mistakenly the premise in the if-clause as a necessary condition, as he does in Rom 8:9a, thus the possession of the Spirit (C) becomes the criterion of (i.e., a necessary condition for) belonging to Christ (D), which means C is a necessary condition for D (D→C).

Accordingly, Dunn’s logical equation of Rom 8:9a is supposed to be “if B, then A, (B→A)” which is contrary to Paul’s statement of “if A, then B (A→B).” Dunn’s expression of Rom 8:9b “if D, then C (D→C)” happens to coincide with what Paul argues, the real reason seems that his reasoning of Rom 8:9b two times goes through

433 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 428.
434 Ibid., 429 (the brackets with the letters D and C are my insertions).
negative processes (1. Falsely changing \(-C \rightarrow -D\) into the inverse \(C \rightarrow D\), 2. Falsely taking C as a necessary condition for D), resulting in the contrapositive of logical expression \((D \rightarrow C)\),\(^{435}\) not being deduced from Paul’s double negative statement: “if non-C, then non-D,” which equals “if D, then C.”\(^{436}\) In reality, Dunn is taking the viewpoint of the inverse \(C \rightarrow D\). Therefore, his interpretation of Rom 8:9a and 8:9b is logically wrong. Thereby, according to his logic, Dunn’s explanation of Rom 8:9 will be as follows:

Rom 8:9a: If you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, then the Spirit of God dwells in you \((B \rightarrow A)\).
Rom 8:9b: If anyone does have the Spirit of Christ, he does belong to Christ \((C \rightarrow D)\).

To our surprise, Dunn’s logical fallacy does not affect the correct understanding of Rom 8:9, but when he applies the same logic concept to Rom 8:17, the deviant interpretation appears (see the discussion above).

A closer observation of the context indicates that both two clauses C and D of Rom 8:9b could be viewed as sufficient and necessary conditions for each other, seeing that God’s Spirit, the Spirit and the Spirit of Christ are synonymous.\(^{437}\) Besides, it is a fact that those who have the Spirit working in them could prove that they belong to Christ (that is, \(C \rightarrow D\), cf. Rom 8:1, 16-17). As the case stands, all the logical equations, “if A, then B;” “if B, then A;” “if C, then D;” and “if D, then C,” make sense. Nonetheless, the context of Rom 8:17 does not support the converse of their premises and consequences.

In sum, Dunn’s misunderstanding of the logical relationship of Paul’s conditional sentences (due to his confusion between the sufficient and the necessary condition) is consistent. Therefore, his analysis of Rom 8:9 is open to criticism. Yet luckily, the immediate context of Rom 8:9 buttresses the converse of conditional statements within it, thereby Dunn’s opinion regarding Rom 8:9 remains true. Moreover, concerning the conditional conjunctions \(\varepsilon i\) and \(\varepsilon i\pi e\), there is a major similarity of their function in Rom 8:9 and 8:17 overlooked by Dunn. Although \(\varepsilon i\) and \(\varepsilon i\pi e\) appear in opposite order in Rom 8:9 \((\varepsilon i\pi e \ldots \varepsilon i)\) and 8:17 \((\varepsilon i\ldots, \varepsilon i\pi e)\) respectively, the strengthened \(\varepsilon i\pi e\) indeed refers to an advanced condition or fact compared to what \(\varepsilon i\)

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\(^{435}\) The contrapositive is to take the negation of both the premise and the consequence, and interchange them.

\(^{436}\) Dunn holds that the statement of Ridderbos regarding Rom 8:9b (“To be of Christ, to belong to him, means therefore to ‘have’ the Spirit”) is a reversal of Paul’s point. In fact, Ridderbos’s understanding agrees with Paul’s (if D, then C); it is Dunn who misreads it. See Ridderbos, Paul, 221; Dunn, Romans 1-8, 429.

\(^{437}\) Dunn indeed mentions this point, but he connects his observation more to the discussion of the Christian life, not to his logical analysis of these two conditional sentences (i.e., Rom 8:9a and 9b), see ibid., 429-30.
refers. In Rom 8:9 the positive statement of “if [the Spirit’s indwelling], then [belonging to Christ] (v. 9a)” is a further account of the negative statement of “if [without the Spirit of Christ], then [not belonging to Christ] (v. 9b).” Similarly, in Rom 8:17 the declaration of “if [co-suffering with Christ], then [co-glorification with Christ] (v. 17b)” is a further vision of “if [children], then [heirs, heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ] (v. 17a).”

Our discussion of Dunn’s analysis of Rom 8:9 and 8:17 above has a beneficial effect on improving our understanding of Paul’s thought. The reasoning behind his declaration cannot be examined in isolation; the way and the content of his thinking always interrelate contextually. At first glance, Rom 8:17b seems too short to express the profound thinking behind Paul’s concept of adoption. However, Paul actually has created a solid foundation for the investigation of the process and prospect of the believers’ union with Christ from Rom 5 onwards. The implication of the indicative present active verb συμπάσχομεν in the protasis connotes that the suffering is a present situation and will be going on for a lifetime. By comparison, the subjunctive aorist passive verb συνδοξασθῶμεν after ἵνα does not indicate any uncertainty about the realization from the author’s perspective, when the divine will is involved, but rather “answers the implicit deliberative question,” on the one hand, and can be substituted for the infinitive result, on the other hand. Actually, the aorist subjunctive often indicates the same meaning as the future indicative.

Paul combines these two verbs in the last part of Rom 8:17, encapsulating two central themes beginning to develop from Rom 5 (cf. δόξα, “glory,” Rom 5:2; θλῖψις, “tribulation,” Rom 5:3).

Roughly speaking, one theme (suffering) is well represented by the verb συμπάσχομεν, containing predominantly the explicit and implicit argumentations on the “imperative” dimension of Christian life. The other theme (glory) is suitably typified by the verb “συνδοξασθῶμεν,” holding chiefly the depiction and elaboration of the “indicative” aspect of Christian status. Paul does not mince his words, describing the life of believers which will be filled with suffering, lasting for the whole of their life. Such sufferings come from the attack or threat of the power of sin and death, the old master of the believers. The dramatic conflict uncovered in Rom 7:7-25 provides vividly the internal fact all believers are facing anytime. Certainly, the external tribulations experienced and enumerated by Paul in Rom 8:35; 2 Cor 6:3-4 and 11:23-30 due to his conversion and ministry must be in his mind. Likewise vital for the believers to be aware of is the totally renewed status and identity granted by God owing to

438 Cf. 199nn431-32.
441 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 472.
442 Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 924; and cf. 88n49, 295n790.
the redemptive sacrifice and resurrection of Christ. Paul never treats the future glory and the transformed status as static realities, but rather as the vision and firm base believers can rely on as the guiding principle and driving power of life. Just as David B. Garner’s insightful statement as follows:

The Spirit’s affirming ministry occurs within the context of filial sanctification, in which the Spirit of renewal draws and enables the adopted sons to pursue holiness and to participate in the sufferings of the Son *par excellence* in the pathway of obedience (Rom 8:16-17).

Paul keeps emphasizing that the Spirit is dedicating Himself to reminding and assuring believers of the salvation of “already but not yet.” All these exhortations and lines of reasoning are concentrated in Paul’s insight of the Spirit of adoption, of which the influence is too significant to end the discussion here, hence there remains more to be expounded by Paul in Rom 8:18-30.

4.3 The very personal presence of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:18-30)

Not only does Rom 8:17 function as a conclusion of the passage of Rom 8:12-17, but v. 17b also has a transitional function, introducing an expanding discussion of suffering and glory in Rom 8:18-30. In this regard, Jewett’s remark is very insightful: “This sets the theme for the next pericope while bringing to a ringing climax this discussion of what it means to walk by the Spirit and to enjoy the imparted dignity of adoption as the children of God.”

Traditionally Rom 8:18-30 has been regarded as an eschatologically oriented passage, focusing on the future glory or eschatological hope. Among others, Moo holds that the focus of Rom 8:18-30 is eschatological glory, stating that glory “is the overarching theme of this passage.” His main reason is that δόξα as a key word appears in the beginning and the end of the passage, forming an “inclusio.” As a key concept, glory in Rom 8:18 and 30 frames the other verses, letting the whole unit appear as logical and well organized. Cranfield incorporates verse 17 into this passage, assuming the subject of Rom 8:17-30 to be the Christian hope. So does Olle

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444 Cook, “The Concept of Adoption,” 141-42.
446 Jewett, *Romans*, 503.
447 Moo, *Romans*, 508.
448 Ibid., 508, 510; Moo marks in p. 510 that glory appears as a noun in Rom 8:18, 21, as the corresponding verb “glorify” in Rom 8:30.
449 Cranfield, *Romans I*: 1-8, 404.
Christoffersson view Rom 8:17 as a transition, which also supplies the basis for Rom 8:17-30.\textsuperscript{450} Nevertheless, in analyzing Rom 8:17b, Christoffersson makes the same misapprehension as Dunn, who considers co-suffering as necessary for co-glorification, and without co-suffering future co-glorification would not be fulfilled (see our discussion in sec. 4.2.6.4 “Suffering and glory”).\textsuperscript{451} If Dunn’s reasoning is true, Paul’s statement would become as follows: If we are co-glorified with Christ, then we co-suffer with Him. Dunn’s logical fallacy in fact reverses what Paul states: if co-suffering, then co-glorification, which means that the co-suffering guarantees the co-glorification, it is impossible to have co-suffering without co-glorification. Co-suffering is actually a sufficient rather than a necessary condition for co-glorification. At most, Paul’s argument could be rephrased as follows: if we are not co-glorified with Christ, then we do not co-suffer with Him. Christoffersson is contradictory in his proposition: “union with Christ’s suffering is necessary for a future glory together with Him. This statement can also be understood in another way: union with Christ in suffering guarantees a union with Him in His glory.”\textsuperscript{452} His statement combines the false first half with the true second half.

4.3.1 A further investigation of the main theme and the structure of Romans 8:18-30

According to the observation of Christoffersson, Theodor Zahn’s viewpoint of “three concentric circles” of groaning regarding the analysis of the structure of Rom 8:19-27 has influenced later exegetes strongly.\textsuperscript{453} Christoffersson’s comments on Zahn’s examination can be summed up into the following points. First, Paul’s purpose of writing this passage is to comfort the Christians in distress, owing to their incompetence in reaching Paul’s requests in Rom 8:12-17. Secondly, Rom 8:18 depicts the theme of the passage: the greatness and significance of the expected glory (“die Größe und Bedeutung der Herrlichkeit [wird] begründet”). Thirdly, a threefold groaning evidenced respectively by the creation (Rom 8:19-22), God’s children (Rom 8:23-25), and the Spirit (Rom 8:26-27) compose the core of this passage. Finally, the remaining three verses function as a conclusion, signifying the assurance of future glory

\textsuperscript{450} Christoffersson, \textit{The Earnest Expectation of the Creature}, 142.

\textsuperscript{451} Dunn, \textit{Romans 1-8}, 456; “The implication is again clear: suffering with Christ is not an optional extra or a decline or lapse from the saving purpose of God. On the contrary, it is a necessary and indispensable part of that purpose. Without it future glory would not be attained” (emphasis mine).

\textsuperscript{452} Christoffersson, \textit{The Earnest Expectation of the Creature}, 142.

Christoffersson goes on to compare some scholars’ view of the structure of this passage with Zahn’s, and provides his own opinion after a long background investigation of the Flood tradition in Gen 6-8 and 1 Enoch 6-11. Christoffersson’s structure maintains the position of verse 18 as the thesis and underlines the role of the Spirit as the turning point of this passage as follows:

- Transition from the preceding and basis for the thesis (v. 17)
- Thesis: The present suffering is nothing as compared with the future glory (v. 18)
- A. The present suffering (vv. 19-25)
  a. Testimony from Creation (vv. 19-22)
  b. Testimony from the believers (vv. 23-25)
- B. The turning-point at the Spirit’s intercession (vv. 26-27)
- C. The coming glory (vv. 28-30)

Harry A. Hahne concurs with Christoffersson’s modification of Zahn’s structure, which underlines groaning. Hahne correctly points out that Zahn’s parallel comparison of groaning is problematic, because the positive groaning in the Spirit’s intercession is different from the helpless groaning in anxious awaiting future outcome. Moreover, Hahne believes that Zahn’s emphasis on groaning is a deviation from the fact of dual recurring themes of suffering and glory. Hahne assumes that a more circumspect way to analyze the structure of Rom 8:18-30 is to take account of the topic of suffering and the hope of glory. Though Christoffersson presents the dual topics of suffering and glory, he does not show them “in each of the major subsections,” especially in Rom 8:19-25. Therefore, Hahne presents his structure of Rom 8:17-30 as follows:

0. Transition: believers share in the present suffering of Christ and will share in the future glory of Christ (v. 17).
1. Thesis: the present suffering is insignificant compared with the future glory of believers (v. 18).
2. Hope of future glory amidst present sufferings:

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454 Theodor Zahn, “Die seufzende Kreatur, Röm. 8, 18-23: mit Rücksicht auf neuere Auffassungen,” JDTh 10 (1865): 511-42, here 515-16 (the German quotation above is from p. 515); Christoffersson, The Earnest Expectation of the Creature, 29.
455 For a detailed examination, see ibid., 28-137.
456 Ibid., 142-43.
458 Ibid., 174-75 (emphasis original).
a. All creation groans in suffering, yet looks forward with hope to future glory (vv. 19-22).

b. Believers groan as they await in hope the future redemption of their bodies (vv. 23-25).

c. The Spirit’s groaning in intercession helps believers in this age of suffering (vv. 26-27).

3. Confident assurance of the coming glory (vv. 28-30).

Hahne’s structure seems to be well-rounded with regard to the main theme and throughout each subsection, but loses the succinctness a structure analysis is supposed to illustrate. Besides, as Cranfield, their unanimous grouping Rom 8:17 together with this passage violates the natural literal understanding. Strictly speaking, the meaning of Rom 8:17 is closer to the preceding passage than the following. Nonetheless, the most crucial consideration is that the suffering and the future glory of believers are the predominant, dual themes for Paul in the passage Rom 8:18-30.

In the beginning verse 18, Paul indeed outlines what he would be expounding in the whole passage concerning the suffering and the coming glory of the believers, which is accepted as the main thesis in general consensus among almost all scholars in various presentations. Yet a more careful observation reveals that such a view is quite likely to be a usual understanding regarding the literal sense of the text. An ordinary way is to classify what Paul expresses into different categories, comparing their similarities and differences; then the real focus will be figured out through an inductive reasoning.

As mentioned previously in sections 4.1.3 and 4.2.4, Paul frequently provides a detailed explanation of his viewpoints by using the model of indicative-imperative in Romans. William D. Dennison is fairly right in pointing out that the indicative and the imperative is not only the basic structure of Pauline ethics, but also the one “of the whole Biblical ethics, whether under the rubric of the old covenant or the new covenant.” It is not Paul’s own new invention; it is found in, for example, Exod 20, Deut 5 and 7 and in the teachings of Jesus. Despite its familiarity in the Bible, Paul appears in his employment of this model as a master highly skilled in relating believers with the two distinct concepts, thereby providing ethical motivation and dynamic. Paul establishes the principles of the indicative and the imperative solidly in the historical events of Christ, especially His death and resurrection, and depicts that the

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460 Cf. sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator,” and sec. 4.2.4 “The relationship between the leading of the Spirit and adoption.”

461 Dennison, “Indicative and Imperative,” 55n72.

462 Ibid.
Spirit unifies the two principles in the believers. However, Dennison emphasizes that the relationship of the indicative and imperative is altogether determined by the “present redemptive-historical situations,” which is “the eschatological situation of living in the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet.’” Strangely enough, Dennison makes a distinction between the indicative and imperative, associating the indicative with the “already,” and connecting the imperative to “not yet.” The former consists of all which the believers have “in the historical fulfillment of the person and work of Jesus Christ,” and the scope of the latter covers the doing and walking of believers in obedience to God’s demands until Christ comes again to “consummate His kingdom.”

One disadvantage of Dennison’s division of contents between indicative and imperative by the frame of “already but not yet” is that he divides them (God’s promises and the behavior of believers) into two different groups in a chronological order rather than an overlapping and parallel relationship. As a matter of fact, both God’s promises and the due behavior apply to both aspects, to “already” and to “not yet,” respectively. For instance, the stage of the adoption is an identity that the believers have already received, but it is also an ultimate expectation unfulfilled until the redemption or resurrection of the body (Rom 8:15, 23). Paul encourages his recipients to love each other, because “love never ends” (ἡ ἀγάπη οὐδέποτε πίπτει, 1 Cor 13:8a, cf. 1 Cor 13:13); some day the believers will see what they believe, and obtain what they hope. In 1 Cor 13:8a Paul uses double negative (litotes), overlapping a present verb to highlight that the action to love should continue eternally. Therefore, a reasonable alternative is to relate the indicative with the new status, identity or relation, and to connect the imperative to the performance of the believers’ conduct and attitude. As stated by Parsons, the imperative is based on the indicative, manifesting itself the natural result of the indicative.

Another weakness of Dennison’s analysis is that he incorporates justification and sanctification, as well, into his category of the connection of the indicative and the “already” stage of God’s work: “This is a total redemption of the believer including both justification (Rom 5:16) and the concept of definitive sanctification (Rom 6:2-6; 1 Cor 1:2; 6:11; Phil 3:15).” In George E. Ladd’s understanding, the stages of “already” and “not yet” are at the same realm, being equivalent to the overlapping sphere of this age and the age to come. He regards the early church as a typical paradigm: “The early church found itself living in a tension between realization and expecta-
tion — between ‘already’ and ‘not yet.’ The age of fulfillment has come; the day of consummation stands yet in the future.”

Both justification and sanctification represent God’s salvific grace granted to believers in Christ, and both belong to the overlapping area of ‘already/not yet’ characteristics rather than solely with ‘already.’

Dennison’s misconception appears as typical for those who assess God’s salvation from simply certain dimension. Justification is often considered merely as a righteous status, being instantaneously declared by God due to faith in Him. By contrast, sanctification is frequently regarded as a process of transformation in the life of believers who are gradually renewed according to the image of Christ. Nevertheless, both professions are only half-right. John Murray ardently explains that the status dimension is also included in the connotation of sanctification. He gives further details about the reality of the sanctified identity of believers (1 Cor 1:2; 6:11; cf. 2 Tim 2:21; Eph 5:25-27). Besides, he explicates that sanctification represents a decisive, irreversible, and definitive breach with the power of sin and death for the believers, signifying an irrevocable transition of position and identity; in this manner “the person begotten of God, does righteousness, loves and knows God, loves those who are begotten of God, and keeps the commandments of God (1 John 2:3-6, 29; 4:7, 20, 21; 5:2, 3).”

Unfortunately, Murray does not use a similar approach to prove the process side of justification, leaving the impression of the role of justification as the foundation of sanctification. In actual fact, it seems that the one-side understanding of those scholars who ignore the transforming implication of justification frequently expressed in biblical texts (see, e.g., Matt 5:13, 20; Acts 24:25; Rom 6:16, 20; 2 Cor 6:14; Heb 5:13; 11:33; Jas 1:20; 1 Pet 3:14), is typical of a post-Reformation development of an inappropriate distinction between justification and sanctification. Alister E. McGrath’s investigation unpacks an earlier consensus:

Luther and Augustine concur in understanding justification as an all-embracing process, subsuming the beginning, development and subsequent perfection of the Christian life.

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470 Ladd, A Theology of the New Testament, 368. Ladd provides a diagram to illustrate his viewpoint in ibid., 67, but his diagram is slightly more complicated than the one suggested by Geerhardus Vos which is cited and adapted by Ladd on the previous page 66; see also Geerhardus Vos, The Pauline Eschatology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), 38.
473 Ibid., 12. Actually, there are many examples signifying the believers’ saint-identity which do not appear in Murray’s narration (e.g., “saint” [ἁγιός]: Acts 9:13; Rom 1:7; 15:25, 31; 2 Cor 1:1; Eph 1:1, 18; 3:5; 5:3; Phil 1:1; Col 1:2, 26; 2 Thess 1:10; “sanctification” [ἁγιασμός]: 1 Cor 1:30 [here used christologically, only indirectly about the believers], 1 Pet 1:2; “holiness” [ὁσιότης]: Luke 1:75; Eph 4:24).
474 Ibid., 13-14.
This is one of the clearest *differentiae* between Luther and later Protestantism, and places Luther closer to the position of the Council of Trent than is generally realised.⁴⁷⁶

Given the unfeasibility of separating justification from sanctification, now we apply the mode of indicative-imperative in analyzing what Paul describes in Rom 8:18-30 by a table, which is divided into two main parts of imperative (left side) and indicative (right side). Each part is subdivided into two columns; the former part comprises the columns of facing present suffering and facing future glory, the latter one comprises the columns of what God has done or is doing, and of what He will accomplish. Owing to its close association with humankind, especially its future liberation depending on the believers’ redemption, the description of the creation will be included as a part of the imperative to believers.⁴⁷⁷ After filling in the different columns with the text of Rom 8:18-30 according to its order (from left to right, from top to bottom) and particular attributes, we obtain the outcome as Table 4-1 displays.

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⁴⁷⁷ Except Rom 8:20 and part of v. 21 (*ἡ δουλεία τῆς φθορᾶς*, “the slavery of corruption”), due to their obvious connection to God’s work (cf. sec. 4.3.3.2.1 “The groaning of the creation [Romans 8:19-22]”). Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 318; “The destiny of the whole creation is also bound up with this destiny of the children of God (Rom 8.17-25).” Though there is not any imperative in Rom 8:18-30, we view semantically all depictions of the present and future situations faced by the believers as the conditions with which they are required by God to deal.
Table 4-1 Text classification of Romans 8:18-30 (NA^28,478)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative (order to believers)</th>
<th>Indicative (work of God)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facing present suffering (36; 16.6%)</td>
<td>Facing future glory (24; 11.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  God has done or is doing (107; 49.3%) |  
  God will accomplish (50; 23%) |
| 18a Ἄγιοπατήματα τοῦ νῦν καιροῦ |  
  19a ἣ γὰρ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως |  
  20a τῇ γὰρ ματαίωτητι ἢ κτίσις ὑπετάγη,  
  20b οὐχ ἐκούσα ἄλλα διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, |  
  18b πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς,  
  19b τὴν ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν του θεοῦ |  
  20b ἐφ᾽ ἐλπίδι  
  21a ὅτι καὶ αὐτὴ ἢ κτίσις ἑλευθερωθῆσεται ἀπὸ τῆς δούλειας τῆς φθορᾶς  
  21b εἰς τὴν ἑλευθερίαν τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ, |
| 22a οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει  
  23b ήμεῖς καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐν ἐαυτοῖς στενάζομεν |  
  23a οὐ μόνον δὲ, ἄλλα καὶ αὐτοὶ τὴν ἀπαρχήν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντες,  
  23c υἱὸθεσίαν τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν. |  
  24a ἐλπὶς δὲ βλεπομένη οὐκ ἐστιν ἐλπὶς,  
  24b ὁ γὰρ βλέπει τις ἐλπίζει; |  
  24b τῇ γὰρ ἐλπίδι ἐσώθημεν. |

478 The numbers in brackets of the table represent the word count and the ratio of each part to total respectively. Reading order is from left column to right one. Moreover, subdivisions within some verses do not follow the syntactical structure of the text, but are included here in order to distinguish and identify elements located in different columns and discussed in the following exegetical analysis.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative (order to believers)</th>
<th>Indicative (work of God)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facing present suffering</td>
<td>Facing future glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26b τὸ γὰρ τί προσευξόμεθα καθὸ δὲι οὐκ οίδαμεν,</td>
<td>25a εἰ δὲ ἐλπίζομεν, 25b δὲ ὑπομονὴς ἀπεκδεχόμεθα.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Imperative (order to believers)</td>
<td>Indicative (work of God)</td>
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<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facing present suffering</td>
<td>Facing future glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Face present suffering</td>
<td>Face future glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18a For I consider that the</td>
<td>18a to be compared with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sufferings of this present</td>
<td>the glory that is to be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time are not worthy</td>
<td>revealed to us.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19a For the anxious longing</td>
<td>20b the revealing of the</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of the creation waits eagerly</td>
<td>sons of God.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20a For the creation was</td>
<td>20c in hope</td>
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<tr>
<td>subjected to futility, not</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>of its own will, but because</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>of Him who subjected it,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>21a And not only this, but</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>also we ourselves, having</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>the first fruits of the Spirit,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23a waiting eagerly for</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>23c for why does one also hope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24b but hope that is seen is</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>not hope; 24c for why does</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one also hope for what he sees?</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>24d For in hope we have been</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25a for our adoption as sons,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25b the redemption of our body.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2 Text classification of Romans 8:18-30 (NASB)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Imperative (order to believers)</th>
<th>Indicative (work of God)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facing present suffering</td>
<td>Facing future glory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26b for we do not know how to pray as we should,</td>
<td>25a But if we hope for with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.</td>
</tr>
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<td>26b</td>
<td>25b</td>
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479 Here NASB presupposes the insertion of ὁ θεός between συνεργεῖ and εἰς; see the apparatus of NA28 and cf. our analysis in pp. 297-300.
Overall speaking, the text classification of Rom 8:18-30 demonstrated by Table 4-1 indicates the following observations. First, out of a total of 217 Greek words of this passage, the four columns from left to right comprise 36 (16.6%), 24 (11.1%), 107 (49.3%), and 50 (23%) words respectively. The imperative part consists of 60 words (27.6%), and the indicative 157 words (72.4%). Secondly, nearly three-quarters of the passage portrays the indicative aspect, that is, God’s work in Christ or in the Spirit, of which more than two thirds (107/157=68.2%) of the space is devoted to the work God has done or is doing. The numbers speak for themselves. Paul focuses on expounding the identity or position that the believers have received from God, as well as the work of God that the believers are experiencing rather than eschatological events or the prevailing suffering. Such an examination proves the point of C. Clare Oke, who calls attention to the fact that “the context has to do quite definitely with status and condition” when he studies Rom 8:23.⁴⁸⁰ Oke’s enumeration only contains six instances (Rom 8:17, 18, 19, 21, 23, 29); actually, there are more to be found. Thirdly, the words signifying future expectation in the rightmost column account for only less than one quarter of the passage. Consequently, the prevailing understanding of this passage as eschatology-oriented is in need of revision, if eschatology here refers to the state of affairs of the final days of human history instead of the age from Jesus’ birth to His coming again. Finally, Paul in reality devotes more space to portraying what God has done since Jesus’ resurrection and continues doing until His second coming than to delineating the details of present suffering or future glory. Whereas the former makes up the main points Paul strongly encourages his recipients to ponder while they are awaiting the ultimate redemption, the latter most likely forms the background of Paul’s contention. To put it another way, on the basis of the full awareness of God’s work through Christ or the Spirit, including the assurance of the identity as God’s children and the future redemption, the believers are inspired to prepare themselves for the tribulations of this present time during the long-term period of awaiting the eventual salvation.

Accordingly, after getting Paul’s priorities right we could sort out the main theme and a more tenable structure of Rom 8:18-30 as follows:

- Theme: Waiting for the adoption through the Spirit’s presence (Rom 8:18-30)
- A. Introduction: Suffering is inconsequential compared with the future glory (Rom 8:18)
- B. Awaiting the freedom in groaning (Rom 8:19-25)
  1. The groaning of the creation (Rom 8:19-22)
  2. The groaning of God’s children (Rom 8:23-25)

• C. Awaiting God’s will done through the Spirit (Rom 8:26-27)
• D. Awaiting being glorified along with inner renewal (Rom 8:28-30)

4.3.2 Two considerations with regard to Paul’s thought

Before we come to the more detailed interpretation of this passage, two macro analyses especially regarding Paul’s argumentation in Rom 8:18-30 need to be undertaken in order to avoid not seeing the forest for the trees. One refers to the way Paul perceives the passage holistically, whether from a spatial dimension or a temporal dimension, which will be discussed in sections 4.3.2.2 and 4.3.2.3. The other is connected to Paul’s point of view about creation, pertaining to a cosmological-christological or an anthropological-soteriological stance, which will be investigated in sections 4.3.2.4 and 4.3.2.5.

4.3.2.1 The constant presence of the Spirit

Compared with the previous argument, the discussion of these wide-ranging perspectives is almost ignored. Scholars have been trying to figure out the scope and reality of suffering, the range of creation’s victimization for humankind’s sin, the contents of the wordless groans of the Spirit, the exact situation of resurrection and the clarity of future glory. Though, as remarked by Clark H. Pinnock, “perfect clarity” in the realm of resurrection “cannot be expected” in Paul’s epistles, many exegetes still attempt to work out the characteristics of the physical reality of the believers’ resurrection body, or even the chronological order of the eschatological resurrection. Without much detailed or consistent information provided by the authors of the Bible, their research results usually in a display of uncertain presumptions, despite the fact that “a coherent picture of Pauline eschatology” might be found. Forman actively claims that the promise of inheritance in Rom 4:13 relates to “a this-worldly geographical reality, not to a spiritualized blessing and that it simultaneously conveys ideas of universal sovereignty and political themes because of the way it deals with the question of who will inherit the world.” His further inference drawn from Rom 8:17-39 is that in Paul’s argument the whole physical universe will be renewed, the entire earth restored, which will be permanently inherited by believers who in the end belong to a “physically transformed” world. Unfortunately, Forman is unable to explain clearly

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483 Forman, The Politics, 62 (italics original).
484 Ibid., 102-35, 223, esp. 131-35, the quotation is from p. 223.
the actual condition of the renewed world, let alone the exact extent of the transformed believers. The true facts in regard to the future glory provided by scholars commonly remain as a supposition or a vague impression.

An article written by Moo dealing with the implication of creation and new creation also betrays same problem.\footnote{Douglas J. Moo, “Creation and New Creation,” BBR 20 (2010): 39-60.} Owing to the inclusion of Rom 8:19-22 in his discussion of cosmic restoration (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15), his definition of the phrase “new creation” is enclosed here for our reference. Moo contends that “the phrase is best understood as a broad description of the ‘new state of affairs’ inaugurated through Christ’s first coming and to be consummated at his second coming. This interpretation fits with the usual meaning of the phrase in Jewish literature and makes best sense in both contexts where it occurs.”\footnote{Ibid., 39.} In effect, Moo’s definition of new creation follows the concept of the eschatological kingdom theory advocated by Geerhardus Vos and Ladd.\footnote{Geerhardus Vos, “The Structure of the Pauline Eschatology,” PTR (1929): 403-44, here 438-41. Ladd, The Gospel of the Kingdom, 13-23.}

Moo seems to reject the traditional explanation of new creation, which prefers the denotation of the transformed person or the renewed Christian community.\footnote{Despite his claim that he refers “new creation” to the transformed Christian, the transformed community of Christ, and the transformed universe, see Moo, “Creation and New Creation,” 42.} He stresses that the typical conception behind new creation is “turn of the ages,” that is, “the ‘old age,’ ruled by Adam, sin, and death, has been replaced by a ‘new age,’ ruled by Christ, righteousness, and life.”\footnote{Ibid., 53.} Notwithstanding, his interpretation of new creation shows an intense ethical implication, as he states: “The transformation of the universe that Isaiah and apocalyptic Judaism expected in the last day, Paul announces in dramatic style, is already here—with all its revolutionary implications.”\footnote{Moo, “Creation and New Creation,” 59 (emphasis original).}

As for the real situation of the “new state of affairs” in the end-days, Moo’s account is lacking in clarity. A possible reason why the scholars’ views regarding the future are always divergent and uncertain is that “we are merely affirming, therefore, that in Scripture God has given us all we need, but not necessarily all that we want.”\footnote{Fee, How to Read the Bible, 83 (emphasis original).}

Moo’s argumentation is not unique. J. Louis Martyn is another scholar, regarded as one of the supporters of the cosmological view,\footnote{See T. Ryan Jackson, New Creation in Paul’s Letters: A Study of the Historical and Social Setting of a Pauline Concept, WUNT II/272 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 5n13.} who advances the theory of “new creation as the eschatological turn of the ages.”\footnote{Ibid., 129.}

Martyn claims that an apocalyptic war is caused due to an invasion of God’s son and the Spirit sent by God. Consequently, the old cosmos will be replaced by a new cosmos.\footnote{J. Louis Martyn, Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, AB 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 565.} Though Martyn uses
such apocalyptic antimony to counter Marcion’s ontological dualism, the reality of his apocalyptic war is a struggle between the two opposite powers of the Spirit and the flesh, which are the two main antithetical powers conflicting with each other within believers. Strictly speaking, Martyn’s view is still framed in the eschatological kingdom theory, which highlights the complete change resulting from Jesus’ death and resurrection. Martyn’s spiritualization of his cosmic war does not show much difference between his view and the view of the anthropological camp.

In contrast to the vagueness of future state which Paul seems to leave his recipients deliberately, Paul expresses the certainty and conviction of the future glory revealed to believers in the most evident sense. Not only so, but Paul places his utmost emphasis on the life of the long-lasting preparation in the process awaiting the future glory, especially on the role of the Spirit. In brief, Paul intends to highlight the right life in the Spirit on earth. Romans 8:18-30 is entitled “The Spirit as Firstfruits” by Dunn, but he does not exert his exposition accordingly. Many scholars consider the function of the Spirit in Rom 8:18-30 to be limited and subordinate due to the few occurrences of τὸ πνεῦμα (only in Rom 8:23, 26-27), thereby being unable to take the central role. To expand the context will be helpful in grasping Paul’s flow of thought. As our analysis in the preceding section 4.1 has indicated, the Spirit indeed serves as a unifying principle in Rom 8:1-30. Romans 8:1-11 presents what God has done and is doing through the Spirit in the believers as well as the reason why the Spirit can accomplish them; Rom 8:12-17 demonstrates how God practically works in the believers through the Spirit, helping them in experiencing what God has accomplished and promised. Above all, under the threat from the power of death and sin, and all the sufferings it causes, the Spirit leads the believers, inspiring them with the awareness of being God’s children. Moreover, the Spirit bears witness to the believers about their identity as children of God and its eternal significance. In Rom 8:18-30 Paul continues his exposition by describing the way God works in the believers through the divine presence of the Spirit, whose guarantee and intercession make Him the constant companion from the past, to present until forever (cf. ἵνα λάβομεν ἔλεος καὶ χάριν εἴρομεν εἰς εὐκαρπον βοήθειαν, “that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help in time of need,” Heb 4:16b).

Yet the permanent assurance and intercession of the Spirit is not a believers-oriented but a God’s-will-oriented mission. In the lengthy and difficult process of fervent waiting for adoption or the redemption of their body, the believers do not passively receive the help when facing their own weakness and the sufferings ahead, but

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495 John Riches, Galatians through the Centuries, BBC (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2008), 299-301; Martyn, Galatians, 570-74.
496 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 464-95.
they are rather invited to respond to the Spirit’s transforming work. If we take the significance of Rom 8:26-27 into account, we find that the description Paul presents is really the contents of the believers’ thinking during the course of their renewal. What Paul exhorts in Rom 12:2 has already been applied in this passage.

Rom 12:2 (underlining mine)

καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινόσει τοῦ νοὸς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

Although there is no verbatim correspondence of key words between Rom 8:18-30 and 12:2 except for ἀγαθός, and κατὰ θεόν (τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ), the perceptions of the passage Rom 8:18-30 have parallels in Rom 12:2. Both mention the negative influence of sin on the world (physical or spiritual dimension), and refer to the heart or mind of believers, which is the vital part God values for their renewal. Most importantly, both emphasize that God’s will is the underlining basis of the Spirit’s work and the ultimate target believers should discern and accept. God’s purpose (πρόθεσις) or will is clearly delineated in Rom 8:23 and 28-30. Thus, all-important to Paul is the work of the Spirit according to God’s will in the believers during the long period awaiting the final resurrection rather than obtaining knowledge of the details of the restored physical creation in the future. Through reviewing what God has promised and accomplished, experiencing the timely help from the Spirit’s intercession and presence, the awareness of being God’s adopted children will be enhanced, and the confidence and strength needed in everyday life will be inspired, since the believers are convinced that God is able to accomplish what he has promised. As Paul claims in Rom 4:20-21 in regard to Abraham’s faith (underlining mine):

Rom 4:20-21

εἰς δὲ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ θεοῦ οὐ διεκρίθη τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ ἀλλ’ ἐνεδυναμώθη τῇ πίστει, δοὺς δόξαν τῷ θεῷ καὶ πληροφορηθεὶς ὅτι ὁ ἐπήγγελται δυνατὸς ἔστιν καὶ ποιήσαι.

498 See BDAG, s.v. “κατά,” B. 5. a. α denotes “according to whose will, pleasure or manner something” is done when the preposition is succeeded by the accusative of persons (cf. Rom 15:5; 2 Cor 7:9-11; 11:17); Dunn, Romans 1-8, 480.

499 BDAG connects πρόθεσις (“divine purpose,” Rom 8:28) with προγινώσκω (“choose beforehand,” Rom 8:29), see BDAG, s.v. “πρόθεσις,” 2. b.
yet, with respect to the promise of God, he did not waver in unbelief, but grew strong in faith, giving glory to God, and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform.

Obviously Paul makes this passage resonate with the life experience of Abraham, which is full of faithful and patient long-term waiting. A passage of comment given by Benjamin Schliesser in his article as follows deserves our further discussion.

I think that a ‘spatial dynamic’ thinking is not only at the root of Paul’s ‘in Christ’ terminology, but also of his language of faith: as Christians we are ‘in faith’ (2 Cor 13:5), live ‘in faith’ (Gal 2:20), and stand ‘in faith’ (Rom 11:20; 1 Cor 16:13; 2 Cor 1:24), just as we are ‘in Christ,’ live ‘in Christ’ (Rom 6:11), and stand ‘in Christ’ (Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 3:8). Faith for Paul not only serves two functions, ‘one individual and one communal,’ but three: one individual, one communal, and one salvation-historical. For Paul, πίστις is not only a ‘disposition’—individual or corporate—but also a salvation-historical ‘dispensation,’ the signature of the new phase of God’s dealing with humanity, which transforms the conditions of human existence and which draws human beings into its sphere of influence (cf. esp. Gal 3:23-26). Its opposite, ἀπιστία, stands for the sphere of ungodliness and depravity, in which God’s wrath and human sin are effective. Abraham is described by Paul as the ‘pre-existent’ or ‘primordial’ member of the realm of faith, as both τύπος and example of those ground their existence ‘in faith,’ of those who are ἐκ πίστεως.

Different from Moo’s usage, in defining τῇ ἀπιστίᾳ (Rom 4:20), Schliesser prefers the angle of a dative of sphere to a causal one. Nevertheless, Schliesser’s assumption that the sphere-view is equivalent to the “spatial-dynamic” thinking could be misleading. Without defining his sphere-view (or realm-view) as a figurative implication of spiritual status or position, Schliesser’s employment of the “spatial” idea could be mistakenly regarded as representing the literal or physical sense, making his argumentation incongruous due to his indication of the salvation-historical function of faith in his following reasoning. Abraham’s example in faith is highly regarded by Paul for that Abraham’s insistence in the spiritual realm and patience in the divine-oriented sphere is exhibited in his expecting God’s long-awaited promise. As a matter of fact, in Paul’s treatment of the spatial terms, the context usually points to an applicable meaning. For instance, when Paul urges that τὰ ἀνοι ἐρονεῖτε, μή τὰ ἐπὶ
τῆς γῆς (“Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth, Col 3:2”), he is not saying that only the state of affairs related to the heavenly above in the spatial position is spiritual and sacred which is the aim of the believers’ mindset, and that the habitation of humankind related to the earth in spatial sense is secular and profane which is supposed to be declined by believers. Unfortunately, the contrary denotation which forms the famous spiritual-worldly dualism has never vanished in church history. What Paul indicates regarding the realm of the believers’ mentality is a metaphorical wording. The object on which they are intent depends on who the real master dominating them is. Is it the power of sin and death (cf. Rom 6:9, 12, 20-21)? Or is it Christ and righteousness (cf. Rom 6:11, 13, 18)? To put it more precisely, Paul strongly encourages the believers to make right response by faith when God shows them His salvation in history. Therefore, by situating his sphere (realm)-view in the salvation-historical dispensation of God, Schliesser indeed evaluates the believers’ faith from the temporal rather than the spatial dimension.

An alternative way for extinguishing the sphere between above and on earth is, to borrow phrases from Albert M. Wolters, to make use of the theory of “structure” and “direction.” Structure is connected to “the order of creation,” containing all kinds of vocational spheres, identities, and realms of human development. Direction refers to the position “either toward or away from God” when humankind is involved in the creation of God, in other words, being “directed either in obedience or disobedience to his law.” Wolters’s method is useful in clarifying fallacious “dualistic” thoughts, such as viewing a relatively cultural value as an absolutely moral one. Nevertheless, Wolters seems to think highly of mankind’s creation or culture, of which the inherent goodness is of the same value as God’s creation and vice versa. Such an idea will be untenable when it is examined by Paul’s viewpoints, especially in Romans. In fact, Paul has pointed out what the kinds of “the things on earth” are in Col 3:5-9 (esp. two fivefold lists of vices in vv. 5 and 8) and “the things above” in Col 3:12-17 (esp. v. 12, a fivefold list of virtues) respectively. Clearly, Paul differentiates between the old self (ὁ παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος, cf. Col 3:9) and the new self (ὁ νέος, cf. Col 3:10) with the same standard as he does in Rom 6 and 8.

4.3.2.2 A model similar to Jesus’ teaching

503 Though Colossians is not one of Paul’s undisputed letters, its value is still highly regarded as a source of the theology of historical Paul, see 1n4.
505 See ibid., 59.
506 Ibid., 135-40.
508 Cf. 220n503.
Under careful comparison, we find that the mode in which Paul urges his recipients is not unique, because Jesus uses the same way in teaching His disciples in Matt 24-25. The contrast of space and time in Matt 24:1-3 does not escape Craig S. Keener’s notice. His emphasis on the introduction to Jesus’ discourse on the Mount of Olives is worthy of reference (emphasis mine):

First, Jesus is not impressed with splendid buildings and other monuments that impress others (24:1-2)…. Second, God himself would bring swift judgement against the religious establishment (24:2)…. Third, this chapter will address two questions: (1) the time of the temple’s destruction and (2) the sign indicating his coming and the close of this age (24:3)…. Indeed, the language of this course, though thoroughly Palestinian Jewish, is not apocalyptic revelation in the strictest sense, but exhortation based on some end-time motifs characterizing both prophecy and apocalyptic texts.509

In his comment on Mark 13, the parallel passage of Matt 24-25, Cranfield expresses a comparable opinion regarding Jesus’ discourse (emphasis mine):

But this discourse differs radically from typical Jewish apocalyptic. While the language of apocalyptic is indeed used, the purpose for which it is used and even the form of the discourse are different. While it is characteristic of Jewish apocalypses that the seer is himself addressed or else relates in the first person what he had seen and heard, this discourse is marked throughout by its use of second person plural imperative. It is in fact exhortation, not ordinary apocalyptic. Its purpose is not to impart esoteric information but to sustain faith and obedience.510

G. R. Beasley-Murray even further observes that Jesus utilizes imperative at the beginning (βλέπετε, “beware,” Mark 13:5 NRSV) and at the end (γρηγορεῖτε, “keep awake,” Mark 13:37 NRSV) of the discourse; “between them no fewer than sixteen imperatives are scattered”511 (actually, nineteen in total). He cannot imagine that “any apocalypse could be adduced in which teaching and exhortation are so completely mixed.”512

Leon Morris’s supplementary statement to Mark 13 is perceptive and to the point

509 Craig S. Keener, A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 559-65.
The fact must be faced that in this chapter we have an urgent exhortation to true discipleship rather than a typical specimen of apocalyptic speculation. There is much about the last things, it is true. But the emphasis is not there. The emphasis is on a true and loyal following of Jesus, on being faithful disciples no matter what the trials.\footnote{Morris, Apocalyptic, 89.}

When the disciples ask Jesus when the temple will be destroyed and what the sign of His coming and the end of the age will be (Matt 24:3b), Jesus’ response is insightful and inspiring. As it happens, there are amazing similarities between Jesus’ response and Paul’s contention in Rom 8:18-30. Jesus’ response to His disciples could be classified into four parts. The first part refers to a series of horrible disasters before His coming; there will be natural and man-created calamities unparalleled in history as well as religious persecution and deceits (Matt 24:4-22, 255 words). The second part deals with the three features of His coming (Matt 24:23-41, 336 words), including a. publicity: His advent in glory will be recognized universally, not to be deceived by false messiahs and false prophets (Matt 24:23-31, 171 words); b. inevitability: His coming is the inevitable and coming result of His promise (Matt 24:32-35, 64 words), and c. unexpectedness: no one including angels and Himself knows the exact date of His coming except God the Father (Matt 24:36-41, 101 words). The third part demonstrates the right way to prepare the ground for His coming (Matt 24:42-25:30, 634 words), consisting of four parables: keep vigilant on theft (Matt 24:42-44), the faithful servant and the wicked one (Matt 24:45-51), the ten virgins in wedding process (Matt 25:1-13), and the servants entrusted with the master’s possessions (Matt 25:14-30). The last part illustrates the final judgement executed by Jesus (Matt 25:31-46, 280 words).

Deserving to be noticed is the fact that the ratio of the length of the description of Jesus’ personal parousia (comprising mainly Matt 24:23-31) to the whole of teaching is only 11.4 percent. Even if the account of the part of judgement is included (Matt 25:31-46), the ratio simply rises to 30 percent (451[171+280]/1505 words). More noteworthy is Jesus’ emphasis on the unpredictability of his coming. Not only does he make an introduction (Matt 24:36-41), but, what is unusual, he gives further explanations with four successive parables (Matt 24:42-25:30), making obvious the positive attitude and behavior exhibited in normal life when his disciples await his coming again in uncertain time;\footnote{John Nolland, The Gospel of Matthew: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Bletchley, UK: The Paternoster Press, 2005), 956.} the word count of these two parts accounts for 48.8 percent of the whole discourse (735 [101+634]/1505 words). Undoubtedly, Jesus stresses...
the correct manner of life in the long-term waiting process rather than the calculation or conjecture of the date of His coming and the precise delineation of His advent.\textsuperscript{515}

Two general principles can be drawn from Jesus’ four consecutive parables. The first parable and the third one form up a group, highlighting the principle to “be watchful” (Matt 24:42, 43; 25:13),\textsuperscript{516} and the other group is composed of the second parable and the fourth one, accentuating the conduct to “be faithful” (Matt 24:45; 25:21, 23). It must be noted that almost two-thirds of the final judgement parable is related to the ordinary life (Matt 25:35-40, 42-45), of which the encouraging part is expected to correspond to the behavior of the believers (Matt 25:35-40). If the content of the description of the behavior of the judged people pronounced by Jesus (Matt 25:35-40, 42-45) is included in the life type of waiting for the unanticipated coming, the ratio of Jesus’ emphatic point to the whole section will rise to 59.8 percent (900 [735+165]/1505 words) from 48.8 percent.

Regarding the final stage of eschatology, the resemblance between Paul’s contention and Jesus’ teaching is not a mere coincidence. Both attach great importance to the temporal dimension in preference to the spatial dimension. Both of them lay emphasis on the long-term preparation along with the lasting training, and on building groundwork through constant review and renewal. In his First Letter to the Thessalonians, Paul simply deals with the coming of the Lord Jesus in 4:13-18, of which the length comprises merely 8.1 percent of the whole letter. Besides, there is no parallel passage in Paul’s letters which could shed new light on so called “rapture of the saints.” How are the bodies caught up alive to the cloud transformed so that they can stay in the clouds and be with the Lord forever (1 Thess 4:17)? What condition and appearance are the resurrected believers restored to, so they can know and communicate with each other? Even though Paul offers more explanations concerning resurrected bodies in 1 Cor 15:35-54, the information he provides can be considered as general principles or overall observations rather than detailed elucidations; and Paul’s clarification tends towards spiritual transformation instead of physical renovation. Most of the content of 1 Thessalonians is closely related to the purpose of Paul’s exhortation, consolation and urging that their conduct is worthy of the word of God (λόγος θεοῦ, 1 Thess 2:13) that they have received: εἰς τῷ περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἀξίως τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐαυτοῦ βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν (“so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the

\textsuperscript{515} Grant R. Osborne, \textit{Matthew}, ZECNT (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010), 901-2. In Osborne’s analysis, Matt 24:36-41 is included in the first parable, emphasizing the need for spiritual vigilance, which makes the first parable group too complicated. The example of Noah’s time is a warning and does not belong to parable type; and verse 42 begins with an imperative (Γρηγορεῖτε, “be watchful”) and is more related to v. 43 than v. 41. However, Osborne’s inductive observation of Matt 24:36-41 indicated in the main idea is worth reference: “be continually vigilant and live lives of readiness for the Master’s return,” see ibid., 901.

\textsuperscript{516} Leon Morris, \textit{The Gospel according to Matthew} (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans; Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 619-20.
God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory,” 1 Thess 2:12). Not only does Paul witness in 1 Thess 2-3 that he behaves devoutly, uprightly and blamelessly (ὁσίος καὶ δικαίως καὶ ἀμέμπτως, 1 Thess 2:10) toward the recipients, but he also strongly encourages them in 1 Thess 4-5 to live in the same way during the unanticipated length of time before Jesus’ return.  

4.3.2.3 A suggestion from another observation of the Old Testament

In truth, the pattern behind Paul’s and Jesus’ instruction can be traced to its origin in the Old Testament. Being faced with the uncertainty of the future, God’s people in the old covenant time are taught to rely on God’s promise and be obedient to His commandments. The method God uses is to command Israel to observe the Sabbath day. No one is allowed to do any work on this holy day (cf. Exod 20:10). In his book which mainly refers to the Jewish Sabbath, Abraham J. Heschel uses the antithesis of time and space to deeply demonstrate Judaism through the sanctity of the Sabbath.  

Judaism and the Sabbath are defined by Heschel as follows:

Judaism is a religion of time aiming at the sanctification of time. Unlike the space-minded man to whom time is unvaried, iterative, homogeneous, to whom all hours are alike, qualitiless, empty shells, the Bible senses the diversified character of time. There are no two hours alike. Every hour is unique and the only one given at the moment, exclusive and endless precious.  

The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world.

Heschel provides his readers meaningful insights into Jewish festivals. Instead of being closely linked with natural seasons, Heschel argues that Jewish agricultural festivals are associated with historical events, in which the God of Israel manifests Himself rather than in things or places. Accordingly, in Heschel’s mind Sabbath is completely irrelevant to month and moon; its value is not decided by events in nature,

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519 Ibid., 8 (emphasis original).
520 Ibid., 10 (emphasis original).
521 Ibid., 7-8.
but by the act of creation.\footnote{Ibid., 10.} Therefore, to observe the Sabbath is to celebrate the creation of the world and to create “the majesty of holiness in time,”\footnote{Ibid., 19-20; cf. further, Abraham Joshua Heschel, God in Search of Man: A Philosophy of Judaism (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1955), 417.} because the Sabbath gives observers “the opportunity to sanctify time, to raise the good to the level of holy, to behold the holy by abstaining from profanity.”\footnote{Heschel, The Sabbath, 75.} Heschel’s contention is very thought-provoking, especially his reflection on the significance of the temporal dimension through the Sabbath, and his emphasis on commemoration of historical events and the God of Israel in time-oriented festivals.

Despite his deep understanding of the meaning of the Sabbath, Heschel’s viewpoints are more a Jewish philosophical interpretation than a biblical or theological one.\footnote{Timothy Watson, “Is Heschel’s Sabbath Biblical?” AUS$ 40 (2002): 265-72, here 269.} According to the observation of Timothy Watson, two of Heschel’s views are obviously controversial. First, “by keeping the Sabbath holy humans are sanctifying time.”\footnote{Ibid., 270.} Secondly, “through this process of participating with holy time humanity achieves holiness for itself.”\footnote{Ibid., 270-71.} One of Heschel’s weaknesses is his exaltation of time itself instead of God the creator Himself to holiness. Sanctity comes from God’s blessing and consecrating rather than from human nature or time itself (Gen 2:3). Another contentious view is Heschel’s dualistic opposition of time and space. Compared to space, the absolute value of time is far superior, since Heschel contends that the creation takes place in space during the first six days and is called good, whereas the Sabbath is created in time, and is pronounced holy.\footnote{Ibid., 269.} Heschel’s standpoint of the taking priority of time over space because of its medium position of attaining holiness is doubted by Watson and Mary Minty. Watson observes that the terms of “holy” and “most holy” nearly completely pertain to “things or places.”\footnote{Ibid., 270.} Minty is outspoken in her criticism of Heschel’s statement that “Jews lived and created almost exclusively in the dimension of time.”\footnote{Mary Minty, written communication, 2004, cited by Charlotte Elisha Fonrobert and Vered Shemtov, “Introduction: Jewish Conceptions and Practices of Space,” Jew Soc Stud 11.3 (Spring/Summer, 2005): 1-8, here 4 and 8n14.}

It needs to be cut free from the stunning idea that Judaism is first and foremost shaped and governed by the dimension of time. Jewish texts of all periods contain countless descriptions of concrete places where Jews comfortably practiced their rituals, struggled to do so, or were prevented from doing so. This history of Jewish text and ritual is inseparable from the history and nature of such places.
Minty believes that related disciplines, such as anthropology and geography, have long demonstrated that neither individual nor community can experience time in this world without claiming, occupying, naming, shaping, negotiating, and losing “real” places.

Heschel mistakenly views the relative value as an absolute value, though he disagrees with the disparagement of space and the blessing of things of space. Actually the Sabbath is holy due to God’s setting it apart and consecrating it, a distinctive value granted by God for being dedicated to the service of God. There is basically a difference of relative value between time and space owing to various functions which do not represent any disparity of absolute value between them. Israel is chosen by God not because they are stronger or more excellent than other people; on the contrary, they are in fact a minority race among all nations, being loved by God who keeps his promise, as Moses says to them in Deut 7:6-8 (shading and underlining mine):

Deut 7:6-8

6 For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth. 7 The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any of the peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples, 8 but because the LORD loved you and kept the oath which He swore to your forefathers, the LORD brought you out by a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of slavery, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

Another example is the election of the Levites who are separated from other Israelites to serve God at the tabernacle not because they are particular outstanding among the twelve tribes of Israel, but God demonstrates His sovereignty to designate them to replace all the first-born, as He says to Moses in Num 8:14-16 (shading and underlining mine):

Cf. HALOT, s.v. "קדש" denotes that it “can only with difficulty be traced back to a root כּ (‘to cut’), if this is the case the basic meaning of כּ would be ‘to set apart.’” However, its real meaning still depends on its context.
Thus you shall separate the Levites from among the sons of Israel, and the Levites shall be Mine.

Then after that the Levites may go in to serve the tent of meeting. But you shall cleanse them and present them as a wave offering; for they are wholly given to Me from among the sons of Israel. I have taken them for Myself instead of every first issue of the womb, the first-born of all the sons of Israel.

The ancestor of the Levites, Levi, had committed a heinous crime with his brother Simeon, killing every male of the Shechem city and capturing all their women, children, cattle and possessions for avenging their sister Dina (Gen 34). In terms of the essence of character, Levi is not superior to his brothers, but his blood-stained mass murder crime does not impede God’s election of his descendants to serve Him as priests (cf. 2 Tim 1:9).

As a matter of fact, there are more grounds than those mentioned by Heschel which can justify an emphasis on time at the expense of space. Space indeed has more limitations than time. In Jewish history, holy things, places, buildings, even land and people, when they lose the association with or the essence of holiness granted by God, destruction, disappearance, or loss are common consequences. But God’s accomplishments in past events could be remembered and honored at any time and place in daily life. The interpretation of the Sabbath that Heschel promotes in his book seems, on the one hand, to be so abstract that he is seldom capable of displaying how to make full use of the time of the seventh day to experience God’s holiness; on the other hand, the biblical texts he links mostly to be relevant to God’s creation (e.g., Gen 2:2-3; Exod 20:11), confine to the field of commemoration, ignoring some other passages closely related to the establishment of the Sabbath. Nevertheless, Heschel’s contribution to Jewish Sabbath reception in providing “a visual capacity to see beyond material things to their spiritual wonder” is admirable. As Ken Koltun-Fromm’s comments on Heschel’s book The Sabbath: “But if the text calls for an experiential commitment to wonder, a reawakening to spiritual plenty in everyday life, then it also de-
mands a new mode of seeing that transforms material sight into spiritual perception."

We can follow the mode Heschel proposes, and make more known the Jewish vision and authenticity behind the Sabbath. There are clearly three passages in which Moses records the reason why God establishes the Sabbath. First, as Heschel mentions, in Exod 20:8-11 Jewish people are required to remember the day (shading and underlining mine):

Exod 20:11

For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

Secondly, in Exod 31:13-17, just before Moses’ coming down from the mountain where he for the first time has received the two tables of testimony from God, God reminds him to ask the Israelites to keep the Sabbath. An additional reason is assigned to the original one in following two verses (shading and underlining mine):

Exod 31:13b

for this is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations, that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you.

Exod 31:16

So the sons of Israel shall observe the sabbath, to celebrate the sabbath throughout their generations as a perpetual covenant.

Thirdly, in Deut 5:12-16 when Moses repeats the fourth commandment to the Israelites before his death, one more additional reason is found (shading and underlining mine):

Deut 5:15

Ibid. (emphasis mine).
And you shall remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out of there by a mighty hand and by an outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to observe the sabbath day.

Broadly speaking, the purposes assigned for keeping the holy Sabbath include both humanitarian and theological aspects.\textsuperscript{534} If the Israelites do observe God’s command, the Sabbath will be a period of their physical rest and spiritual refreshment.\textsuperscript{535} His people will surely benefit from keeping it. Therefore, on the Sabbath Jewish people do not stay in static meditation or keep empty in mind, but through resting from secular labor, they can actively concentrate their efforts and time on praising God and reviewing His accomplishments in their history and life. The three passages in the Pentateuch at least provide three dimensions respectively for the direction of the Israelite cultic celebrations manifested by worship, adoration, and remembrance.\textsuperscript{536}

First, the people of Israel are forbidden to do any work on the Sabbath for remembering the day is a testimony to God the Creator, who rests after his six days of shaping the whole universe (Exod 20:11). For that reason God is indeed the real source and the provider of all the needs of His children who are only the receivers (cf. Ps 23:1). God is the only object who has the power to supply and sustain the Israelites, and for this reason they can rely on Him (Neh 9:19-23). Such an awareness and understanding will make Jewish people more dependent on God and recognize that how they live in the world.

Secondly, the Sabbath is a symbol of Israel’s covenant relationship with God who is their Sanctifier and becomes the sign reminding the Israelites of their particular value and function in this world (Exod 31:13b, 16). They are elected and separated from all the other peoples, being sanctified by God for witnessing His mercy, wisdom, holiness and righteousness (cf. Isa 43:10-12; Matt 23:23c). The unique mission makes the existence and identity of the Israelites significant and purposeful. Such a comprehension and knowledge will enhance their willingness to follow God’s word, since they do know why they live on earth. Bernard Och’s analysis deserves emphasis:

Israel is not only chosen by God to serve as the mediator of blessing to humanity; it is, in fact, created by God for this purpose. Israel’s creation is its election. This is the uniqueness of Israel: a people whose essence precedes its existence; a people which has

\textsuperscript{534} J. C. McCann, Jr., “Sabbath,” ISBE 4:247-52.
a reason for being before it has a being; a people that can never take its existence for granted, but must always evaluate its existence by its essence.\(^\text{537}\)

Israel is required to remember the most unique purpose of its being set apart and sanctified: “For I am the LORD, who brought you up from the land of Egypt, to be your God; thus you shall be holy for I am holy” (Lev 11:45).\(^\text{538}\) The Sabbath is established for this reminding.

Finally, the Sabbath is a reminder of the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt by God’s mighty hand.\(^\text{539}\) For more than four hundred years they have been slaves under Pharaoh; now they are God’s people, children of God due to the LORD’s powerful redemption, owning unprecedented freedom and dignity. Reviewing God’s mercy and salvation in the Exodus will increase their thanksgiving and reverence to God who is their Redeemer, because they know whom they live for in their life.

Though the Old Testament specifies little about the compulsory activities on the Sabbath\(^\text{540}\) and speaks more about forbidden affairs besides the cessation of physical work,\(^\text{541}\) the three passages depicting God’s image of the Creator, the Sanctifier, and the Redeemer provide discerning perspectives on how the Israelites view their life and situation. The Israelites are forced by God to observe the Sabbath not without reason. Their constant spiritual renewal is the top priority. As Jesus claims that the Sabbath was established for man’s benefit, not man for the Sabbath (Mark 2:27), he gives a unique insight into time and Israelite festival.

It is somewhat curious that this commandment is singled out by God with supplementary explanation for reminding the Israelites at the last moment before Moses leaves Mount Sinai after God’s imparting decrees for forty days (Exod 24:18; 31:12-18; 32:15). Moreover, an edict of death penalty for the violator of the Sabbath appears first in the Old Testament, being restated even up to three times in two verses (Exod 31:14, 15). The seriousness of desecrating the Sabbath is highlighted in particular. J. C. McCann assumes that these three passages concerning the reasons of establishing the Sabbath (Exod 20:11 belongs to the “E” source; Exod 31:12-17 to “P;” Deut 5:15 to “D”) are expansions done by priests and prophets in late preexilic time as a result of theological reflection on preserving the Sabbath tradition:

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\(^{538}\) See the reference to the verse in ibid., 237 and 240.

\(^{539}\) *EDBW*, s.v. “Rest.”

\(^{540}\) E.g., remaining in one’s place, Exod 16:29; humbling oneself, Lev 16:31; gathering for a holy assembly, Lev 23:3.

\(^{541}\) E.g., plowing and harvesting, Exod 34:21; kindling a fire, 35:3; gathering wood, Num 15:32-35; commercial transactions, Neh 10:31; 13:15-19; doing evil, Isa 56:2; bearing a burden, Jer 17:21-22; following idols, Ezek 20:16.
What can account for the extensive theological reflection on the sabbath \[sic\] in the late monarchial period? We cannot be sure, but it is likely that the new emphasis on the sabbath \[sic\] should be understood as a part of the larger effort made by priestly, Levitical and prophetic circles to maintain a uniquely Yahwistic identity in a period of strong Assyrian and later Babylonian influence.542

McCann’s supposition represents the viewpoint of the documentary hypothesis. On this basis, the curses and blessings pronounced by Moses in Deut 27-33 could be considered as an expansion by some Deuteronomists in the late period of the Kingdom of Judah. The context of Deut 27-33 reveals that when Moses issues his exhortation of choosing life or death to the Israelites, and his songs, he is very well aware of Israel’s rebellion in the days ahead. The appeal of Moses in Deut 30:11-14 is cited by Paul in Rom 10:5-8. As a matter of fact, the severe words of warning in Exod 31:14-15 disclose God’s consciousness of the truth that failing to fix a breach on the surface of the wall (i.e., violation of the Sabbath), will eventually cause the entire wall to collapse (i.e., destruction of Israel). According to God’s will, to force Israel to keep the Sabbath holy actually means to compel them to cultivate a habitual long-term lifestyle, thereby experiencing spiritual and substantial benefit. To observe the Sabbath on a regular basis signifies that the spiritual crack will be repaired in time. Unfortunately, in accordance with the history of Israel and the judgement of (the Matthean) Jesus to Jewish leaders, the Israelites were too late to recognize the importance of observing the Sabbath and used the wrong way to correct their past ignorance. In Matt 12:6-7 Jesus defends the disciples’ provocative behavior on the Sabbath against the opposition of the Pharisees with a principle: τοῦ ἱεροῦ μετίζὸν ἑστίν ὡδε (“something greater than the temple is here,” Matt 12:6), and with a proof verse from Hos 6:6a: ἔλεος θεῶ καὶ οὐθησίαν (“I desire compassion, and not a sacrifice,” Matt 12:7). The comparative adjective μετίζόν in neuter singular form does not refer to Jesus, but a thing, or a principle which is greater than the temple543 because the citation of Hos 6:6a immediately manifests it. Jesus’ response claims what God wants is not hollow religious activities as Pharisaic legalism shows, but rather to be fully aware of God’s blessing through rest and spiritual restoration on the Sabbath. The key word of Jesus’ quotation, ἔλεος, reflects the essence of God’s blessing. Actually, in the text of Hos 6:6a the original Hebrew word תְּשׁוֹם can imply faithfulness, goodness, graciousness etc.,544 belonging to the blessed qualities God bestows on the Sabbath observers. Jesus’ declaration justifies the deed of eating showbread of David and his followers, the busy temple activities of the priests, and consequently, the disciples’ behavior of

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542 McCann, ISBE 4:250.
544 HALOT, s.v. “תְּשׁוֹם,” 2.
plucking, all of it occurring on the Sabbath. The activity of the priests is under God’s orders for leading people’s observance of the Sabbath (Num 28:9-10). David and Jesus’ disciples are justified in what they do because physical satisfaction is necessary for the Sabbath to be a delight and joy of offering spiritual refreshment (Isa. 58:13). Ulrich Luz correctly argues that “mercy is the center of the will of God which Jesus proclaims and is more than the temple,” but his emphasis seems to deviate from Jesus’ understanding to “the Pharisees should have been merciful toward the hungering disciples,” which is supposed to be the effect but reversed by Luz as the cause.

In sum, what the last three sections (sections 4.3.2.1-3) make clear is that Jesus’ and Paul’s statements and teaching regarding the attitude of the believers to the eschatological events actually correspond with and continue how God educates the Israelites during Old Testament times. Especially through observing the Sabbath God demands (out of His mercy) His people to renew periodically their awareness of His nature and His work in history. Instead of speculating on their or the world’s future, they are admonished to prepare for the future by continuing to live their ordinary life in obedience to God’s commandments, with the assurance of God’s presence, no matter what situation they are facing.

4.3.2.4 Opposing views of the anthropological and the cosmological understanding of Paul’s new creation

Though the unique term καινὴ κτίσις (“a new creation,” appearing only in 2 Cor 5:17 and Gal 6:15) does not appear in Rom 8:18-30, most discussions concerning the new creation contain this passage, especially Rom 8:18-25 due to its profound reference of the renewed creation. John Bolt claims that Rom 8 contains the most explicit statements of Paul on the subject of the relation between creation and redemption. For a long time, the topic of καινὴ κτίσις has been debated along with various viewpoints. Two opposite perspectives, which can be called anthropological-soteriological and cosmological-christological, can be observed. The former one belongs to traditional consensus, arguing that the new creation is the status or position of the regenerated believers who have been granted a totally new identity and life by God through participating in the death and resurrection of Jesus, and are indwelled with the Spirit. In God’s plan of salvation, the redemption of humankind is a top priority; by contrast, the destiny of creation which is dependent on humankind is insignificant. The latter one has become apparent with the rise of environmental protection awareness since World War II, contending that creation “must be regarded as having its own, intrinsic

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546 Bolt, “The Relation between Creation and Redemption,” 34.
worth and rights independent of human interest and concern."\textsuperscript{547}

Among the views of the anthropological-soteriological type, G. W. H. Lampe’s can be reckoned as representative.\textsuperscript{548} In Lampe’s mind, the doctrine of creation in the New Testament actually passes by inheritance from the Old Testament:

In the Old Testament nature forms the setting for the drama of man’s creation and redemption, and it is itself involved in man’s fortunes as the drama unfolds, just as the scenery of a play has to be changed. So also in Paul’s thought the whole of creation is the stage and scene of man’s adoption into sonship and it is involved in man’s transformation since man is both a physical being himself and also the head of creation.\textsuperscript{549}

According to Lampe, there are several features of the theory he claims. First, the Old Testament view of creation is quite anthropocentric: mankind is placed at the center of the creation; the nature (consisting of the sub-human animate and inanimate world) is the setting or backdrop for human history. Secondly, to God’s chosen people, the knowledge of God as redeemer/covenant-maker is made known prior to God as creator. By way of recognizing that God initiates redemption and establishes the covenant with Israel, Israel acknowledges God’s sovereignty over the whole universe which is created and sustained by Him. Thirdly, humankind is appointed to have dominion over the nature as the steward and agent of God due to man’s divine image of the Creator. Among the creatures, only humankind owns the ability to respond consciously to God and to be in fellowship with Him. The world and its destiny is regarded as the attachment or accompaniment to God’s plan for humanity. Fourthly, mankind and nature are inseparable, yet man alone falls, nature does not fall but is cursed with consequent futility and corruption due to humankind’s sin. Only after humankind experiences God’s forgiveness of sins and the redemption of the body in Christ, can the creation be set free from its bondage to decay. The ultimate renewal of the creation hinges on the salvation of humanity. After considering of the new creation of humankind in Christ, the creation is comprehended.\textsuperscript{550}

By contrast, John C. Gibbs, one of the scholars dedicated to advocate the cosmological-christological view, asserts that the scope of the Lord’s redemption is cosmic.\textsuperscript{551} His statement is as follows:

\begin{quote}
Investigation of the relation between creation and redemption according to the corpus
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{547} Ibid., 35.
\textsuperscript{549} Ibid., 77.
\textsuperscript{550} Ibid., 72-75.
Paulinum has shown that the nexus between God’s creation and redemption is Christ’s mediatorship in the dual works of creation and redemption. According to Pauline thought there are two foci of Jesus’ Lordship: He is exalted Lord of the cosmic totality and present Lord of His Church.\textsuperscript{552}

Accordingly, Gibbs counters the views of “opposition of redemption and creation” as well as of “creation subordinate to redemption.”\textsuperscript{553} Instead, he argues that in keeping with Paul creation and redemption form a relation of in-coordination under the lordship of Christ,\textsuperscript{554} who arrests Paul’s attention on the Damascus road, thereby leading Paul to experience the Lord’s cosmic and soteriological works at the same time.\textsuperscript{555} In view of establishing his affirmation of Jesus’ sovereignty over the creation and the church, Gibbs cites evidences from Paul’s letters, including Rom 5:12-21; 8:19-23, 38-39; 1 Cor 8:6; 15:21-22, 45; Phil 2:6-11 (cf. Eph 1:3-10; Col 1:15-20). Nevertheless, on the basis of these texts, Gibbs contends that both creation and redemption are directly subjected to Christ’s dominion respectively; neither is dependent on the other. Therefore, “Christ’s lordship over creation does not depend on his lordship in redemption.”\textsuperscript{556} In his book review, Carroll Stuhlmueller remarks on Gibbs’ theory, as follows: “Christ’s lordship, in this theory, extends over two parallel domains, humanity and the cosmos, each with its own relationship to Christ the redeemer.”\textsuperscript{557} But Gibbs denies Stuhlmueller’s conclusion, repeating his point “that Pauline thought begins with the lordship of Jesus, with the result that it sees the relation between creation and redemption;” that is, “the interaction between creation and redemption of man.”\textsuperscript{558}

Not only does Gibbs stress the independence of creation from its traditional subordination to an anthropological-soteriological interpretation, but also he, like the critics in the same camp, gives prominence to the intrinsic value of creation, which is supposed to have its worth for its own sake because of God’s proclamation of “good” to His first creation (Gen 1:4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25). In Gibbs’ mind, creation holds the corresponding status under Christ’s lordship as humanity, even with self-consciousness, awaiting God’s redemption, as he states: “Creation was not made, then for man alone, nor is it self-sustaining. Creation is of value rather, in its eschato-

\textsuperscript{553} Ibid., 3-8.
\textsuperscript{554} Ibid., 10.
logical ‘waiting’ and ‘hoping,’ as it depends on Christ’s lordship.” With reference to the consciousness of creation, actually, in another article discussing the relation between creation and redemption, Gibbs reveals his contradictory position by citing Oscar Cullmann’s examination that creation does not have consciousness to know its sovereign Lord. Yet Gibbs might neglect Cullmann’s more forthright remark in the immediate context: “The members of the Church, who know that Christ is Lord, belong consciously to his lordship, and this is how they are distinguished from the other members of that lordship, who serve him only unconsciously.” In contrast to Cullmann, Adolf Schlatter believes that the expressions used to describe creation depict the consciousness of humanity in Paul’s view of creation:

The comprehensive sense of kτιςις, however, which is possible in itself, is determined by two verbal expressions. “Eager longing” (apokaradokia) and “to await expectantly” (apekdechethesthai) represent personal actions, conscious volitional motivations.

Likewise, Bolt further confirms it as indicated by the personification of creation in Paul’s account in Rom 8:

[T]he anthropological-soteriological reading of κτιςις in Romans 8 is a twentieth-century aberration. Classic commentators such as Calvin in the sixteenth century, Godet in the nineteenth, Zahn in the early twentieth century all considered the nonhuman, nonrational creation to be the referent of κτιςις. Calvin speaks of Paul ascribing ‘hope to irrational creatures’ and ‘by personification’ representing ‘all the world as being endowed with sense.’

Bolt continues to allude to the similar personified expressions of the nature, such as the land “mourning” (Isa 24:4, 7; Jer 4:28; 12:4), in biblical and intertestamentary literature to prove his literal reading. Clearly, Bolt ignores the context of Calvin’s comment on Rom 8:20-21 (where he cites), skipping over Calvin’s evaluation of crea-

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559 Gibbs, “Pauline Cosmic Christological and Ecological Crisis,” 472.
561 Cullmann, The Christology, 231 (emphasis mine).
564 Ibid., 39 and n. 23; Bolt’s citations are as follows: Isa 11:6-9; 65:17, 25; 66:22; Ezek 34:25-28; Hos 2:18; 1 En. 45:5, 51:4 ff.; 72:1; 91:16ff.; 2 Bar. 3:7-4:1; 31:5-32:6; 44:12; 51:3; 57:2; 73:6-74:4; 4 Ezra 11:45ff.; 7:75; 13:26, 29.
tion (e.g., lifeless, undergoing punishment for man’s sin, it is blameless due to no fault in its own capacity), which is a victim of mankind’s condemnation, reflecting that the hope of creation’s transformation is reliant on the exaltation of the excelling glory of the sons of God.\(^{565}\) The common phenomenon of the faulty treatment of personification of all created things with surface understanding (i.e., regarding personified as really human) in cosmological scholars makes their theory unconvincing.

### 4.3.2.5 Clarification of some controversial points

A clear definition of κτίσις, which occurs four times in Rom 8:18-30 (narrowly, vv. 19-22), will be helpful to clarify some controversies. Following Cranfield’s way, who lists eight possibilities,\(^{566}\) Hahne uses an elimination approach from a universal area to find the most suitable possibility. Among most scholars Cranfield’s interpretation seems to become the consensus, which refers to “the sum-total of sub-human nature both animate and inanimate.”\(^{567}\) Hahne’s suggestion for the denotation of κτίσις in Rom 8:19-22 is similar to Cranfield’s; he regards it as referring to “the subhuman material creation, roughly equivalent to the modern term ‘nature.’ ”\(^{568}\) Considering the apocalyptic background of Rom 8:19-22, Susan Eastman argues that “an inclusion of all creation and all unbelieving humanity, including most particularly Israel” should be implied in Paul’s use of κτίσις.\(^{569}\) In order to highlight the key role of Rom 8:19, and connect it with Rom 1:16-17 (the ἀποκάλυψις of God’s righteousness) and Rom 11:32 (God has shut up all in disobedience), Eastman holds that the unbelieving Jews are supposed to be included in “all creation.”\(^{570}\) Eastman’s suggestion is too far-fetched to be convincing. She seems to ignore that the unbelieving Jews are descendants of Adam who does not belong to what is οὐχ ἐκοῦσα (“not of its own will,” Rom 8:20), and that Rom 9-11 explains the position of the unbelieving Jews. If they constitute one group belonging to ἡ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως (“the anxious longing of the creation,” Rom 8:19a, cf. sec. 4.3.3.2.1), they will not be still considered a λαὸς ἀπεθανόν καὶ ἀντίκεισθαι (“disobedient and obstinate people,” Rom 10:21b).

Nonetheless, in defining the scope of Christ’s lordship, Gibbs insists on cosmic

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\(^{565}\) Just as Calvin’s statement claims as follows: “He shows the object of expectation from what is of an opposite character; for as creatures, being now subject to corruption cannot be restored until the sons of God shall be wholly restored; hence they, longing for their renewal, look forward to the manifestation of the celestial kingdom;” see John Calvin, Commentaries on the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, trans. and ed. John Oven (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), 304.

\(^{566}\) Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 411-12.


\(^{568}\) Hahne, The Corruption and Redemption of Creation, 180.


\(^{570}\) Ibid., 264.
sovereignty of Jesus and applies it to the redemption of the whole creation, which includes all principalities, rulers and authorities, as a result, “the scope of the Lord’s redemption is cosmic.”\footnote{Gibbs, “The Cosmic Scope,” 29.} Observably, Gibbs deduces a wrong conclusion from a right precondition. Unlike Cranfield and Hahne, Gibbs assumes that the implication of creation is the same in Rom 8:19-23 and 38-39, including the various powers.\footnote{Gibbs, “Pauline Cosmic Christological and Ecological Crisis,” 468.} Christ does indeed exercise His lordship directly in two realities, “namely in ‘the children of God’ and in creation.”\footnote{Ibid.} However, it does not imply that everything under Christ’s lordship is intended to be redeemed. At least, Cranfield excludes unbelievers and angels from the list of the options of the interpretation of creation in Rom 8:19-22. Demons and heaven are excluded from Hahne’s choices. Many scholars representing the cosmological view of new creation seem to overlook that the author of Hebrews confirms that the angels, whether good or fallen, obtain no redemption of Jesus, οὐ γὰρ δῆσιν ἄγγελον ἐπιλαμβάνεται ἀλλὰ σπέρματος Ἀβραὰμ ἐπιλαμβάνεται (“For assuredly He does not give help to angels, but He gives help to the descendant[s] of Abraham,” Heb 2:16).\footnote{Underlining and the pl. of descendant mine.} The marker of emphasis δῆ in the adverb δῆσιν lays bare the truth that the only object who is granted Jesus’ redemption is the descendants of Abraham. Additionally, the indicative present main verb ἐπιλαμβάνεται (denoting “he is concerned with/about”) uncommonly occurs again in the second clause, depicting that the destiny of angels is not Jesus’ constant interest at all; on the contrary, the believers’ destiny is His concern.\footnote{BDAG, s.v. “ἐπιλαμβάνομαι,” 5.} If there are angels of transcendent power who disobey God’s commandment, two consequences await them. One is that God “cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment” (2 Pet 2:4).

The other is that Satan and his (grammatical gender) army will be completely eliminated by God’s fire in the end times (Rev 20:7-10), though they are allowed to own temporary permission to act nowadays. Once angels or any spirit-being fall, they will never have the opportunity to repent.

4.3.2.5.1 Being renewed does not mean being redeemed for creation

In consequence, there are two more critical issues ignored in the controversies between anthropological and cosmological views of creation. One is whether the renewed creation is simultaneously a redeemed creation. The other one is whether the fact that the subordination of creation to humankind represents an indirect, mediated and restricted lordship of Christ over creation. The following exposition and discus-
sion will suggest that the answers to both questions are negative.

At no point, the authors of the Bible explicitly validate that creation will be redeemed by Christ. There are many confirmations and promises of the transformation, renovation, renewal, and restoration of creation (the sub-human animate and inanimate world) in the coming new age in biblical and Jewish apocalyptic literature.\(^{576}\)

Nowhere do the biblical authors state that creation sins against God, falling away from God’s grace, and that it for this reason must be repentant of its transgressions and respond to Jesus’ sacrificial death in faith in order to receive the forgiveness of sin and redemption of God. In consideration of the usage of the related word groups of ἀπολύτρωσις,\(^{577}\) there are four characteristics of redemption.

First, in the Bible, wherever the text deals with God’s redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) of sins, the object of such a grace is always humanity, narrowly speaking, believers. The following four examples demonstrate this (underlining mine).

Dan 4:34

καὶ ἐπὶ συντελεία τῶν ἑπτά ἐτῶν ὁ χρόνος μου τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως ἦλθε καὶ ἀι ἁμαρτίαι μου καὶ ἀι ἁγνοίαι μου ἐπληρώθησαν ἐναντίον τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ ὀφρανοῦ καὶ ἐδεήθην περὶ τῶν ἁγνοίων μου τοῦ θεοῦ τῶν θεῶν τοῦ μεγάλου καὶ ἵδου ἁγγέλος εἰς ἐκάλεσε με ἐκ τοῦ ὀφρανοῦ λέγων Ναβουχοδονόσορ δούλευσον τῷ θεῷ τοῦ ὀφρανοῦ τῷ ἁγίῳ καὶ δόξ δόξαν τῷ ὑψίστῳ τῷ βασίλειον τοῦ ἐθνοῦς σου σοι ἀποδίδοται (Dan 4:34 LXX)

And at the completion of seven years my time of redemption came, and my sins and my ignorances were fulfilled before the God of heaven, and I entreated the great God of gods concerning my ignorance, and lo, one angel called me from heaven: ‘Nebouchadnezzar, be subject to the holy God of heaven, and give glory to the Most High. The dominion of your nation is being given back to you.’ (Dan 4:30c NETS).

Here is the only occurrence of ἀπολύτρωσις in LXX. Due to his conceit and self-arrogance, the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar (Emp. ca. 605-562 BC) is punished by God, losing his sanity and power, living in the wild for seven years. After his entreating God concerning his sins and redeeming his iniquities with alms, his throne is restored (cf. Dan 4:27).\(^{578}\) Creation is not God’s redemptive concern, but the place within which redemption takes place.


\(^{578}\) Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching*, 18; Dan 4:24 NETS.
Rom 3:23-24 (underlining mine)

23 πάντες γὰρ ἤμαρτον καὶ ύπερεβόνται τῆς δόξης τοῦ θεοῦ 24 δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῇ αὐτοῦ χάριτι διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ·

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus;

The subject in Rom 3:23 is in masculine plural, implying all humans, who are able to sin against God consciously. The subject has nothing to do with κτίσις (“creation, creature, or world”) which is a feminine noun, or with κόσμος (“world”) which is a masculine noun but never occurs in Greek plural form.

Eph 1:7 (underlining mine)

Ἐν οἷς ἔχουμεν τὴν ἀπολυτρώσιν διὰ τοῦ άματος αὐτοῦ, τὴν ἁφεσιν τῶν παραπτωμάτων, κατὰ τὸ πλούτος τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

The people who own God’s redemption through Jesus’ death are those believers whose sins are forgiven, Paul himself included. The subject is irrelevant to the non-human or irrational world.

Heb 9:15 (underlining mine)

Καὶ διὰ τοῦτο διαθήκης καινῆς μεσίτης ἐστὶν, ὡς θανάτου γενομένου εἰς ἀπολυτρώσιν τῶν ἐπὶ τῇ πρώτῃ διαθήκῃ παραβάσεων τὴν ἑπαγγελίαν λάβωσιν ὁι κεκλημένοι τῆς αἰωνίου κληρονομίας.

And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.

Christ’s redemption has retroactive effect, being able to save those called in the Old Testament times. Again, the created world is inapplicable to the scope of Jesus’ redemption here.

Secondly, a broad examination of God’s redemption illustrates that it consists of two inseparable dimensions of realities. One is the act of redemption in Old Tes-

579 James Orr, “Ransom,” DCG 2:468-69; Orr’s view of two aspects of redemption is noteworthy: “If, therefore, St. Paul knew the saying of Jesus recorded in Matthew and Mark, there can be little doubt how he would have interpreted it. Alike in his thought and that of St. Peter (cf. 1 Pet 1:18-19), the idea of a
tament times which always signifies that with His mighty power God delivers his people from their enemies (cf. Exod 13:14; 15:13; Deut 7:8; 9:26); Jer 50:34 is a good instance (shading and underlining mine):

Jer 50:34

בֹּאֲלִם חָזָּק יְּהוַֽה צְּבָֽאוֹת שְּמָ֤ו רֵי יָרָּב אֲתָרִים לְמֵּֽן הָֽאָרָּב לְיֹּשְּבֵֽי בָבֵֽל׃

Their Redeemer is strong; the LORD of hosts is his name. He will surely plead their cause, that he may give rest to the earth, but unrest to the inhabitants of Babylon.

In keeping with his heartbreaking understanding (due to invalid appealing for national repentance to avoid judgement), Jeremiah asserts that redemption is entirely the accomplishment of God, “as permanent as creation itself (Jer 31:27-37).” In New Testament times the powerful deliverance is through Jesus’ resurrection (cf. Luke 24:21; Rom 1:4, 16; 10:9; 1 Thess 1:10); under such circumstances, the objects redeemed are completely helpless to deliver themselves. The other dimension is that the deliverance involved in redemption is particular due to an indispensable ransom (λύτρον, Matt 20:28; Mark 10:45), especially in the New Testament, which points up the substitutionary death of Jesus, as the following viewpoint of Morris indicates:

[B]oth inside and outside the New Testament writings the payment of a price is a necessary component of the redemption idea. When the New Testament speaks of redemption, then, unless our linguistics are at fault, it means that Christ has paid the price of our redemption. To the extent that the price paid must be adequate for the purchase in question this indicates equivalence, a substitution.

Morris further confirms that whenever the verb redeem (λύτρον) is used with a subject especially God Himself, the deliverance must entail “redeem with a price.” The statement in 1 Pet 1:18-19 clearly demonstrates the relation between the hidden subject, God the redeemer, the object and the act of redeeming (passive second person

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λύτρον is involved in the conception of ἀπολύτρωσις. Redemption has two aspects, which can never be separated—redemption by ‘ransom,’ i.e. from sin’s guilt and condemnation; and redemption by power, from sin’s bondage and other evil effects. The Apostolic gospel comprehended both.” Part of this citation is cited in Morris, *The Apostolic Preaching*, 48n1-49.

580 Jeremiah Unterman, “Redemption (OT),” *ABD* 5:650-54, here 653-54; Jeremiah’s decree manifests that compared to redemption, creation indeed becomes the backcloth of salvation history, esp. see Jer 31:35-37.


583 Ibid., 61, part of the quotation is cited in Marshall, “The Development,” 153.

plural), and the ransom blood of Christ (underlining mine):

1 Pet 1:18-19

18 εἰδότες ὅτι οὐ φθαρτοὶς, ἀργυρίῳ ἢ χρυσίῳ, ἐλυτρώθητε ἐκ τῆς ματαίας ύμῶν ἀναστροφῆς πατροπαραδότου 19 ἀλλὰ τιμῶν αἴματι ώς ἀμώδου ἀμώμου καὶ ἀσπίλου Χριστοῦ.

18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.

Since there is no sin committed by creation, creation does not become the direct object of God’s redemption, though it is a victim of humankind’s fall.

Thirdly, redemption at all times signifies the change of ownership. The old masters who mercilessly enslaved the believers’ old self and are mentioned especially in the New Testament include the authority of darkness (ἐκ τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σκότους, “from the domain of darkness,” Col 1:13), the power of sin and death (ὦτε δούλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας, “you were slaves of sin,” Rom 6:17; τῷ τοῦ ἐνός παραπτώματι ὁ θάνατος ἐβασιλεύσεν διὰ τοῦ ἑνός, “by the transgression of the one, death reigned through the one,” Rom 5:17), the imprecation of the law (ἐκ τῆς κατάρας τοῦ νόμου, “from the curse of the law,” Gal 3:13 [underlining and lower case mine]), the condemnation of the flesh (τῷ γὰρ φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς θάνατος, “for the mind set on the flesh is death,” Rom 8:6a), Satan’s power (ἀπὸ … τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ σατανᾶ, “from … the dominion of Satan,” Act 26:18), false gods (ἐδουλεύσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὐσίν θεοῖς, “you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods,” Gal 4:8), the evil spirit unseen (κατὰ τὸν ἄρχοντα τῆς ἐξουσίας τοῦ ἀέρος, τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ νῦν ἐνεργοῦντος ἐν τοῖς υἱῶν τῆς ἀπειθείας, “according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience,” Eph 2:2), and the futile way of life inherited from ancestors (1 Pet 1:18).585 The evil old master disguised in various forms, like a roaring lion, is prowling around to seek someone to devour (1 Pet 5:8). Naturally, the prey it locks on is humanity. To regard unconscious creation as the target of slavery of the evil power or the object of divine redemption does not make sense. Through God’s redemption, the believers belong to a new master, namely, their redeemer, and enjoy a new status and privilege (cf. Rom 5:21).

Fourthly and finally, all those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ are all the time required to live a life worthy of the redemption of Jesus Christ (e.g., Rom 12:1-2; Eph 2:10; 4:1; Phil 1:27; Col 2:6-7; 1 Thess 2:12).586 The model of the indicative

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585 Shogren, “Redemption (NT),” 5:655-56.
followed by the imperative occurs frequently. Titus 2:13-14 (underlining mine) is a typical presentation and representative example, manifesting the necessity of living a life consistent with the granted status resulting from Christ’s redemption while we simultaneously are awaiting the final appearance of the glorious Christ who will make our ultimate redemption complete:

Titus 2:13-14

13 looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus; 14 who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

Paul’s urgent appeal to live a life corresponding to the divine redemption might display the biggest difference between humanity and creation. There exists the overlapping stage of eschatological “already but not yet” period. During this period from Jesus’ birth to His return all believers in whom the Spirit dwells, wait for the redemption of the body when Jesus comes again (cf. Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14), while they at the same time live with integrity on earth. The senseless creation is never aware in its capacity of redemption that the heavenly gift (Heb 6:4) or the kindness of the Lord (Ps 34:9 [ET 34:8]; 1 Pet 2:3) is just a foretaste of what is coming. Its only opportunity is to wait until the manifestation of the glory of God’s children, when its bondage of corruption will be broken (Rom 8:21).

By alluding to the hymns in Paul’s letters to the Colossians (cf. 1:15-20, especially 1:20) and the Philippians (2:6-11, especially 2:9-11), Gibbs claims that creation participates in God’s redemption through Christ’s ministry of reconciling all things, whether on earth or in heaven, to God Himself. Therefore, the creation could “respond affirmatively (and to its own ‘good’) to the redemptive lordship of Christ.” Gibbs even considers the κόσμος in 2 Cor 5:19 to be the material world which is reconciled to Christ by Himself. At least, Gibbs falls victim to two misunderstandings. The verb ἀποκαταλλάσσω (“to reconcile”) used by Paul in Col 1:20 also appears in Col 1:22 and Eph 2:16, where the reconciliation between God and believing humanity is expounded. Likewise, the verb ἔλευθερος (“to set free”) employed in Rom 8:19

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588 Ibid., 280 and 283.
589 Ibid., 283.
occurs as well in Rom 6:18, 22 and Gal 5:1, where Paul makes known the free status of the believers from the dominion of sin or the law. Such a connection without a close examination of its context will be mistakenly used to support the view of universal salvation. Nevertheless, through His sacrifice on the cross and resurrection (Phil 2:7-8; cf. Col 1:20), Jesus triumphs over the power of sin and death (cf. 1 Cor 15:55-57), the most hostile power against God in the universe, and is exalted to the highest place, having the supremacy in all things (Phil 2:9-11; cf. Col 1:18). As Charles H. Talbert argues, “all things may be reconciled, but in Pauline thought the powers are reconciled through subjugation (1 Cor 15:24-28; Phil 3:21; cf. Col 2:15).”

Universal reconciliation results from Christ’s sovereign pacification rather than His universal redemption. All things, including everything created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, subhuman nature, are under Christ’s reign. At the end of human history, the subhuman nature will be restored, all powers or groups antagonistic to God will be destroyed; only the obedient ones will be kept. The privilege of the redemption, being the children of God and granted a resurrected body, merely belongs to human believers. Moreover, on account of the context in which human sin (παράπτωμα: denoting a violation of moral standards, 2 Cor 5:19b) is specified, the κόσμος in 2 Cor 5:19a is supposed to mean humanity in general in preference to the world as the habitation of humanity.

With regard to the relation between creation and redemption, Gibbs’s biggest problem probably concerns the logical inconsistency. On the one hand, Gibbs maintains that the twofold lordship of Christ over creation and the redemption “implies that redemption presupposes and includes creation and that only as Jesus exercises His lordship over the entire creation will evil within the cosmic totality be overcome.” Besides, Gibbs insists that his major emphasis is that “according to Pauline theology, redemption cannot be adequately understood independent of creation,” and not vice versa. If we paraphrase Gibbs’ expression in terms of logic relation, Gibbs is saying that it is impossible to understand redemption (Christ’s lordship in redemption)

590 Charles H. Talbert, Ephesians and Colossians, Paideia (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007), 196. Talbert adapts the background of the peace resulting from the Roman military conquest of the other powers to interpret the acceptability of Paul’s expressions to his recipients. However, the Roman imperial understanding of peace has its limitations due to the opposite ways of the conquest between Christ and the Roman Empire; also cf. Peter T. O’Brien, Colossians, Philemon, WBC 44 (Waco, TX: Word, 1982), 56-57.


592 BDAG, s.v. “παράπτωμα.”

593 See BDAG, s.v. “κόσμος,” 5, 6.


without creation (Christ’s lordship in creation). Creation is a necessary condition for redemption. The logical relation could be expressed as: “If R, then C, or if non-C, then non-R” (equivalent to R→C, or ¬C→¬R).

What Christ redeems must be what he creates.

On the other hand, Gibbs emphasizes that Jesus’ sovereignty is over the creation, which results in the scope of Jesus’ redemption being cosmic. Such an expression could be paraphrased as follows: That the presence of “Jesus’ sovereignty is over the creation” guarantees that “the scope of Jesus’ redemption is cosmic.” Accordingly, Gibbs makes creation a sufficient condition for redemption, between which its logical relation could be shown as: “If C, then R, or if non-R, then non-C” (i.e., C→R, or ¬R→¬C). Gibbs is supposing that it is impossible to have “Jesus’ cosmic sovereignty in creation” without “Jesus’ cosmic sovereignty in redemption.” Clearly, this part has been proved wrong at the beginning of this sub-section. However, Christ’s lordship over the whole creation is to be affirmed. Gibbs’s contradiction has its roots in viewing Christ’s lordship over redemption and Christ’s lordship over creation as formal equality, making them become the necessary and the sufficient conditions for each other.

4.3.2.5.2 Christ’s direct lordship over creation does not exclude human stewardship

There is another controversy between the anthropological camp and the cosmological camp surrounding the role of humanity in God’s lordship over creation. The insistence of the cosmological scholars that Christ’s direct lordship over creation can only be manifested without any mediator between them is an unwarranted assumption. The anthropological scholars claim that the designation of human beings as God’s agency to rule over the creation does not affect the immediate lordship of Christ over creation. Since the mode of humans’ having dominion over creation is established by God Himself, the intrinsic value of creation will be maximized according to its created nature if humanity governs it in accordance with their responsibility towards God. In the circumstances, humanity functions as God’s stewardship to govern the subhuman nature world, of which God still is the owner. In God’s original arrangement before Adam’s fall, mankind is granted glorious status and enormous ability to master the natural world, as depicted in Gen 1:27-30 and Ps 8:5-9 (shading and underlining

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596 R stands for “Christ’s lordship in redemption,” S stands for “Christ’s lordship in creation.”
597 Ibid., 13, 17, 29.
598 Such an outcome might be the reflection of Gibbs’s emphatic, yet unexplained “interaction between creation and redemption,” or “connection of ‘dynamic ontology;’” see Gibbs, “The Cosmic Scope,” 28.
And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

And God blessed them; and God said to them, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.'

Then God said, 'Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you; and to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has life, I have given every green plant for food'; and it was so.

Ps 8:5-9

What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him?

Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty!

Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet.

All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field,

The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas (Ps 8:4-8 NASB).

Genesis 1:27-30 puts more emphasis on God’s blessing and mission assignment to
humanity whose authority exercising range is the whole earth. Psalm 8:5-9 (ET 8:4-8) highlights mankind’s magnificent position and commensurate capacity received from God; their power is mainly over the world of animate animals. Under God’s initial design, humanity owns a higher position than the natural world, but in essence there is no distinction of superiority and inferiority between them.600 Being humankind, they are not superior to creation, nor is inferior to them. Similarly, humanity has greater power than nature, yet there is no inequality regarding nobility and lowliness between humans and nature. Although a prior order in subduing the earth is given to humankind instead of to nature, there is no disparity of intelligence and foolishness between them. Position, power and priority are from God’s endowment due to the necessity of governing the creation, owning those privileges does not represent human superiority to other creatures. Unfortunately, mankind loses such a modest comprehension after falling from God’s salvation and promises. In addition to the tragic fate of a victim subordinate to futility (cf. Gen 3:17-18), another main cause of the groaning of the creation is the exploitation of nature by humankind for selfish or illegal intentions. The power of sin makes humankind mistakenly deem their stewardship responsibility in controlling the whole creation as the dictatorial ownership of the entire natural world. The solution to recover the inherent significance of creation is not to make creation independent of any human dominion over it, as the cosmological scholars claim, but rather to restore the awareness of human stewardship in exploring and safeguarding the worth of creation. Only if humankind and creation are reinstated in the interdependent relationship firstly established by God, can both parties create and develop their utmost importance in fulfilling God’s purpose.

Indeed, such anticipation is unattainable before Jesus’ second coming. On the one hand, the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden due to their disobedience to God’s command is irreversible (Gen 3:23-24). All the ground is under divine condemnation; not only will it not yield its strength as easily as before – through painful labor man can get food from it –, but also the chaos of the vegetarian diet for human beings and animate animals formerly formulated by God (Gen 1:29-30) is caused. On the other hand, Genesis does not provide a full description regarding the manner according to which human beings and the subhuman nature live harmoniously together, nor does it offer a complete account of the way Adam gains power over the animals and his circumstances, except naming some animate beings (cf. Gen 2:15, 19). Even renewed humankind is not able to transform the creation into its original features; this can be achieved alone by its creator. Properly speaking, the expectation of creation is similar to the one of the Jewish people, who awaits the Messiah to end the

600 Cf. Gen 1:31a (shading and underlining mine):

And God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good.
present age and inaugurate a new age concurrently when he comes. Creation belongs to a part of God’s plan for human redemption, but not in the same way. Hence, what humankind can do is to reduce the damage to creation, not to restore it, let alone there is no record of the operation of the original creation left. Consequently, the renewed humanity does not have the original blueprint to explain how the renewed creation might be rebuilt. Because the break with the life of the garden of Eden is irretrievable, Paul’s emphasis in Rom 8:18-30 is not on the possibility of enhancing the innate meaning of creation. He rather emphasizes the prospect of the new man to live in a world where the power of sin still is rampant and ready to endanger any new creation in Christ and make the creation irreparable. No one knows the details of the mode the initial creation runs, but many believers have seen the resurrected Christ, knowing that “[the Lord Jesus Christ] will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself” (ὁς μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σύμμορφον τὸ σώματι τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἑνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα, Phil 3:21, underlining mine). What the believers look forward to becoming is beyond comparison. Under such expectation, Paul exhorts his recipients to rely on the Spirit to live through the tough days ahead. Philip H. Towner’s comments are worth pondering:

The idea of a [sic] new heavens and earth or of a renewal of the universe may be behind Paul’s concept. If there is a direct relationship, what we have is Paul's anthropological and soteriological application of the broader future promise to the life of individuals in the present age. New creation status implies newness of life and a new manner of life that accords with God’s will. The two thoughts are inseparable.

4.3.3 Further analysis of Romans 8:18-30

After having exposed Rom 8:18-30 to a macro observation in section 4.3.2, some generalized principles can now be derived inductively from our analysis. Paul is more concerned about the events regarding God’s work for human redemption in time rather than the transformation of space. More emphases are placed on the believers ra-

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603 Usually, “new heavens and a new earth,” cf. 2 Pet 3:13 NIV, ASV, NASB and NRSV.
ther than the subhuman creation. Paul has more interest in how the believers are to live in the Spirit in the present world than how the natural world changes during the eschatological period. Paul gives more attention to the attitude of the believers’ life in enduring sufferings on the earth than the details of what they will receive or change into in the future. Paul’s viewpoint in this passage is evidently more anthropological-soteriological than cosmological-christological.

4.3.3.1 Introduction: strong tension (Romans 8:18)

To begin his reasoning in Rom 8:18 Paul uses a vigorous verb λογίζομαι (“to consider”), which occurs 19 times in various forms in Romans. Altogether 33 of the 40 occurrences in the New Testament appear in undisputed Paul’s letters, of which almost half are scattered in Rom 3-9 (16 times). H. W. Heidland divides its usage into four categories: (1) thought taken captive to Christ (including λογισμός); (2) in the ministry of the apostle; (3) in the life of the community and (4) as the saving act of God. The instances of Romans are distributed in groups 2 and 4. Through λογίζομαι Paul expresses God’s absolute grace, including the imputation of faith as righteousness (e.g., Rom 4:3-5) and non-imputation of sin (e.g., Rom 4:6-8), almost concentrated in Rom 4 (a total of 11 times). Heidland accurately specifies the link between “justify” and “reckon”:

If δικαιοῦν presents God as Judge, λογίζεσθαι presents Him as Father. Hence the two words necessarily complement one another, and only from this twofold standpoint is the cross fully presented as both judgment and grace.

Another usage of λογίζομαι is on the side of the believers’ response, which is described as “judgment by faith” by Heidland. Heidland argues that there are two features of the “judgment by faith.” One is the “unconditional validity” of the object of faith, which is a fact and is supposed to direct the faith towards it. BDAG describes it “to hold a view about something,” glossing “think, believe, be of the opinion.” The other is obedience, which is the consequence of judgment to the reality. Heidland refers to Rom 6:11 as an example:

Andrej Gieniusz, C.R., Romans 8:18-30: “Suffering Does Not Thwart the Future Glory,” USFISFCJ (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 185: “As he announced in the propositio in v. 18, Paul’s point of interest in the entire unit (18–30) is the believers” (italics original).


In Heidland’s group 4, see ibid., 289-92.

Ibid., 292.

Ibid., 288; in Heidland’s group 1.

BDAG, s.v. “λογίζομαι,” 3 (italics original).
[T]he obedient apprehension of the reality of faith in λογίζεσθαί poses the demand that life should be subordinated to this reality. The imperative of Rom 6:11: λογίζεσθε yourselves to be dead to sin and alive to God, implies, then, that conduct should be in conformity with this judgment.

It is somewhat regrettable that Heidland does not broaden his context to connect the λογίζεσθαί of believers in Rom 6:11 and 8:18 with the faith example of Abraham and God’s action of “λογίζεσθαί” in Rom 4. Paul applies this verb to believers, clearly intending to reflect the way Abraham responds to God’s promise, not only to recognize the assured reality of the right status before God and the future glory resulting from this status (Rom 4:24; 6:11; 8:18b), but also to face the present afflictions and live a life pleasing to God in a state of preparedness (Rom 5:1-5; 6:12-13; 8:18a). Heidland restates Rom 8:18 with a question: “How are we to think of present sufferings in the light of the glory of the τέλειον (Rom 8:18)?” Honestly speaking, the questioning way of Heidland appears to undermine the weight of his “judgment of faith.” Richard N. Longenecker believes that Paul’s λογίζομαι ὅτι (“I consider that”) in Rom 8:18 expresses a conviction, focusing on the Christ event:

More specifically, however, it is a conviction that became focused for Paul as a believer in Jesus and a proclaimer of the Christian gospel. For the message of the earliest Jewish believers in Jesus had at its core the proclamation that through suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension, Jesus of Nazareth was accredited by God as Israel’s promised Messiah and humanity’s glorified Lord—with the result that all who believe in him, though they die, will themselves experience resurrection, immortality, and eternal glory.

It is such a strong conviction by which Paul endeavors to convey to the Roman believers to live their life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ as God’s children during the eschatological tension. As the introduction to the theme of Rom 8:18-30, Rom 8:18 demonstrates two kinds of strong tension, one between present and future, the other between sufferings and the glory to be revealed to us.

Oscar Cullmann’s suggestion of “the continuous redemptive line” with linear and teleological feature is helpful to display the tension between present and future, namely, “already fulfilled” and “not yet completed.” Cullmann proposes that “sal-
vation is bound to a **continuous time process** which embraces past, present and future. Revelation and salvation take place along the course of an ascending time line."\(^{616}\)

This time line of “redemptive history” (**Heilsgeschichte**) is described by Cullmann as a connected and upward sloping line.\(^{617}\) Additionally, Cullmann argues that “all points of this redemptive line are related to the **one historical fact** at the mid-point, a fact which precisely in its unrepeatable character, which marks all historical events, is decisive for salvation. This fact is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.”\(^{618}\)

Cullmann is not the first scholar defining **Heilsgeschichte**,\(^{619}\) yet his time line division is noteworthy. Cullmann suggests a threefold division of time: before Creation, from Creation to Parousia, and after Parousia, which is overlaid by a two-part time line: this age and the coming age, divided by the mid-point.\(^{620}\) The mid-point falls on the middle of the second section of the threefold division, namely between Creation and Parousia, thereby creating a tension between “already fulfilled” and “not yet fulfilled.”\(^{621}\)

Cullmann’s conception could be displayed as follows:

![Diagram 4-4 Cullmann’s timeline of redemptive history](https://example.com/diagram.png)

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\(^{616}\) Ibid., 32 (emphasis Cullmann’s).

\(^{617}\) Ibid., 59; however, Cullmann obviously does not explain why and how the time line of redemptive history is carried through as an ascending or upward sloping line; also see C. K. Barrett, review of *Christ and Time*, by Oscar Cullmann, *ExpTim* 65 (Sept. 1954): 369-72, here 369n2, 3; so Paul S. Minear, review of *Christ and Time*, by Oscar Cullmann, *JBL* 70 (Mar. 1951): 51-53, here 53: “His description of time as an upward sloping line is too neat and too geometric to be wholly convincing.”

\(^{618}\) Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 32-33.


\(^{620}\) Cullmann, *Christ and Time*, 82-83.

\(^{621}\) Ibid., 86.

\(^{622}\) This diagram is a combination of Ladd’s drawing of his understanding of Cullmann’s time line
As determined by such an understanding of time and history, Cullmann emphasizes that the entire redemptive history should be interpreted from the decisive Christ-event (the cross and resurrection of Christ) at the mid-point.\textsuperscript{623} The final resurrection of the body of believers on the "Victory day" is assured by the occurrence of the decisive battle, though the tension of 'already and not yet' exists.\textsuperscript{624}

Cullmann is quite right in highlighting the significance of Christ event and the role of the Spirit as the resurrection power in the process of redemptive history.\textsuperscript{625} However, his analysis has two main shortcomings. One is his ambiguity in describing the tension. Actually, Cullmann more often mentions the tension between already and not yet than specifies the details of the tension. There is a lack in the description of the negative impact on believers and creation resulting from the power of sin and death during the tension period. Without the delineation of the tension, including the struggle, groaning and the suffering which is experienced by the believers (cf. Rom 8:18-28), his portrayal of the expectation of the final resurrection seems to lose force. The other shortcoming is the inaccuracy and ambiguity in defining the twofold division time line. Cullmann points out that "the mid-point between ‘this’ and the ‘coming’ age does not coincide with a division point of the three-part line, but falls in the middle of the second section, where it creates a new division point;"\textsuperscript{626} and "the part that follows the mid-point already belongs to the new age."\textsuperscript{627} Nevertheless, this (present) age is supposed to continue to the Parousia, rather than stops at the mid-point. There is an overlap of two lines of this age and the coming age in the period between the mid-point and the Parousia. Cullmann’s failing to notice the overlapping character of this age line and the coming age line in the section between the mid-point and the Parousia makes his following argument seemingly contradictory.

In another way, James D. G. Dunn’s diagram sheds more light on the significance of the overlapping age zone by locating a mid-point (cross/resurrection) and an end-point (parousia) with two time lines: this age line (old creation/world) ends forwards at the end-point with a starting point in the unlimited past, the coming age line (new creation) backwards ends at the mid-point with a starting point in the unlimited future as follows:

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{625} Cullmann, \textit{Christ and Time}, 231-42.
\item \textsuperscript{626} Ibid., 82-83.
\item \textsuperscript{627} Ibid., 83.
\end{itemize}
Dunn’s remark is well worth considering: “Paul’s gospel was eschatological not because of what he still hoped would happen, but because of what he believed had already happened.”

Paul ironically portrays the sufferings making tension happen as being οὐκ ἄξιος (“not worthy”). BDAG considers ἄξιος to be pertaining “to having a relatively high degree of comparable worth or value,” and denotes it “corresponding, comparable, worthy.” Because the sufferings can cause the whole creation, including humanity and the sub-human nature, to groan in long-term distress, they must not be underestimated. The assessment of the combination of an adjective with a negative adverb (οὐκ ἄξιος) is through comparison. Paul’s feeling of calamities is relatively considered insignificant; it is not an absolute value, but a sensation relative to the glory about to be revealed to us. For that reason Paul does not claim that the present afflictions are merely negligible, but rather the future glory is beyond measure. In truth, Paul’s introduction of considering the present sufferings of the believers not worth mentioning in Rom 8:18 is clearly explicated through three interwoven strands of thinking throughout Rom 8:19-30 (the coordinating conjunction γάρ as a marker of reason at the beginning of Rom 8:19 depicts the explanatory relation). Two kinds of present sufferings are delineated respectively by Paul, including the intense pains and distress of the creation in the helpless condition of eager waiting the revealing of the glory of the sons of God, as well as the trials and tribulations happening to the believers during the lengthy, tough whereas expectant process of their waiting for the final redemption. The future glory of God’s children and its related status and identity are emphasized but no details are given. On the basis of these two important backdrops, Paul actively describes the constant presence of the Spirit through His confirmation and interces-

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628 Taken from Dunn, The Theology of Paul, 465.
629 Ibid. (emphasis Dunn’s).
630 BDAG, s.v. “ἄξιος,” 1 (italics original).
631 Cf. Diagram 3-4 “Three flows of thought in Romans 8:19-30 based on 8:18 and its brief explanation.”
sion. The believers are supposed to be correspondingly living in an attitude and awareness worthy of God’s salvation.

That is the reason why Paul, for his further clarification of suffering and glory, regarding space expands his scope of discussion to all creation on earth with a cosmic background, whereas he regarding time extends the period from Genesis to the end of human history through apocalyptic language. Here it is apt to quote the conclusion made by John Duncan in his article:

Paul’s attribution of deep yearning and agonised groans to the personified creation reflects his conviction that the incursion of Sin and Death into the world in the wake of Adam’s transgression has had catastrophic consequences not only for humanity, but for the rest of the Creator’s handiwork as well.\(^{632}\)

Besides, it is a common conviction among scholars that the sources of Paul’s view of the pains and groaning of all creation is taken from the apocalyptic prophecies in the Old Testament and other works of apocalyptic or sectarian Judaism.\(^{633}\) Nevertheless, there is a common weakness hidden behind their dealing with the interpretation of Paul’s concept. Observably very few scholars distinguish the difference between the sufferings of the believers which result in their groaning, on the one hand, and the birth pains or afflictions the creation order suffers, on the other hand.\(^{634}\) Exceptionally, Gieniusz mentions in his analysis of Rom 8:19: “The suffering in midst of which creation awaits (v. 19) differs from the sufferings of the present time (v. 18) in one essential point at least. Namely, it is not any general suffering experienced by anybody/anything, but creation’s suffering.”\(^{635}\) Unfortunately, he does not examine their disparity any further; he only provides his remark that “suffering is as mysterious as ever.”\(^{636}\) As stated by Paul, it is actual and can be lived through. The creation has been cursed by God since Adam’s time due to human sin. Such tragedy will not receive any improvement at all up to the ultimate completion of human redemption, though some humans have been justified before God. Facing the destructively spoiling authority of sin, the creation, like unregenerate people (cf. Rom 7:11), has no capability to encounter or reject. However, the believers’ groaning comes not from the

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\(^{635}\) Gieniusz, _Romans 8:18-30_, 186.

\(^{636}\) Ibid., 187.
irresistible power of sin, but from its constant attack through the law or the flesh, which makes the firm rejection of sin’s subjection uneasy. The believers’ groaning in fact results from the regret that they can counter the power of sin according to the Spirit but choose to be subjugated to it (cf. Rom 7:14-25).

4.3.3.2 Awaiting the freedom in groaning (Romans 8:19-25)

4.3.3.2.1 The groaning of the creation (Romans 8:19-22)

Paul’s further elucidation of suffering and glory mentioned in Rom 8:18 should be investigated in the light of his previous discussion of suffering together and being glorified together with Christ in Rom 8:17, which is a microcosm of Paul’s train of thought in Rom 6-8. Put differently, both the creation and the believers are suffering the devastating damage caused by the power of sin and death, but the creation suffers more than humankind, and to a worse extent than the believers in particular. In Rom 8:19-22 Paul uses the language of slavery to describe the condition of all the creation in order to contrast its impotence and pains with the privilege of the sons of God, namely, the believers.

Romans 8:19-22 is comprised of three sentences (vv. 19, 20-21, 22); each begins a postpositive conjunction γάρ, indicating a close connection within them. Paul begins his further explication of v. 18 with a general description of the creation (the first γάρ in v. 19a is a marker of cause or reason), depicting its eager awaiting the revealing of God’s children. Verse 20-21 provides additional explanation of v. 19 through the second γάρ (also a marker of cause or reason) in v. 20a. In the second sentence of Rom 8:19-22, the main clause (v. 20) and the first half (v. 21a) of the dependent clause (v. 21) reveal the plight of the creation behind its anxious longing and waiting. The second half (v. 21b) of the dependent clause refers to the glorious future of God’s children. As a dependent clause, v. 21 initiates with ὅτι, which is inaptnly rendered as “because” by some scholars. Judging by the context, the ὅτι-clause should function “to introduce a noun clause,” clarifying the content of the hope (ἐλπίς) just appears before it. In other words, the ὅτι here functions as a marker of explanatory

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638 Cf. ibid.
639 Among others, Dunn, Romans 1-8, 471; Jewett, Romans, 514; Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 414-15; KJV, NKJV, RSV. Jewett and Cranfield favor the variant διότι instead of ὅτι. However, as Moo argues, “the stronger external support for ὅτι and the more natural reading it gives to the text make ὅτι the preferable reading,” see Moo, Romans, 506, and Metzger, A Textual Commentary, 456.
640 See Moo, Romans, 516; also cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 453-59.
clause ("that") rather than a marker of causality ("because") which might cause a misunderstanding of the independent clause (v. 21) as the reason for the main cause (v. 20). And then Paul uses the third γάρ, which performing more like a marker of clarification ("for, you see"), to specify a long-term situation of the creation in groaning and suffering (v. 22).

The structure of Rom 8:19-22 demonstrates the stark contrast between the continuous vulnerability of the creation (vv. 19a, 19c, 20a, 20b, 21a, 22a, 22b) and the future glory of the sons of God (vv. 19b, 20c, 21b). Apparently, in this contrast, more emphases are placed on the creation, which is personified by Paul in Rom 8:19-22 as a powerless victim, groaning in labor pain and waiting eagerly for the freedom of God’s children.  

Some descriptions of the personification of the creation are worth mentioning. The subject of Rom 8:19 is limned by Paul as ἡ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως, which literally seems absurd as a subject ("the eager expectation of the creation," or "the creation’s eager expectation"). If the head noun ἡ ἀποκαραδοκία is converted to an attributive participle, the subject becomes ἡ ἀποκαραδοκοῦσα κτίσις ("the eagerly awaiting creation"), and this seems more reasonable. There are two probable explanations why Paul formulates otherwise. First, the connotation of the combination of a noun and a genitive will be more forceful than an adjective and a noun. The main subject τῆς κτίσεως functions as an attributed genitive here, the form of ἡ ἀποκαραδοκία presents the issue more emphatically than ἡ ἀποκαραδοκοῦσα κτίσις would have done. A similar example is found in Rom 7:6b: ὡστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος ("so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter" [underlining mine]). The combination of καινότητι πνεύματος ("newness of the Spirit" = "new Spirit") and παλαιότητι γράμματος ("oldness of the letter" = "old letter") have a more forceful mood than καινόν πνεῦμα ("new Spirit") and παλαιὸν γράμμα ("old letter"). Secondly, Paul’s usage reflects Hebrew custom that such structure “compensates for the nearly non-existent adjective.” Indeed the participle ἀποκαραδοκοῦν is not found in the Bible.

Besides, it is arguable whether the noun ἀποκαραδοκία denotes anxiety or confidence. This compound noun is often understood as a figurative expectation with

641 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “ὅτι,” 2, 3 (italics BDAG’s).
642 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “γάρ,” 2 (italics BDAG’s)
643 Contra Byrne who argues that the passage Rom 8:19-22 is pervaded by “the positive side of creation’s hope,” see Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—’Seed of Abraham’, 107.
644 NASB has chosen another rendering (see Table 4-2) than the one we prefer (here), in correspondence with BDAG, s.v. “ἀποκαραδοκία.”
645 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 89-90.
646 BDF §165.
stretching head, which is regarded by many scholars as eager longing with assured certainty. But some insist that the implication of uncertainty and disturbance behind waiting is conveyed in it. Owing to only two occurrences of ἀποκαραδοκία in the Bible (Rom 8:19; Phil 1:20), Gieniusz compares the two opposite opinions with reference to some classic and Hellenistic texts and adopts the view tending towards G. Bertram (i.e., negative sense). However, Gieniusz argues that “the most important connotation of the expectation denoted by the term consists not in uncertainty of the result but in the painful character of the situation in which the expectation takes place.” Compared to Gieniusz, E. Hoffmann’s viewpoint is more affirmative. He argues that the Greek fathers did not denote the noun with any negative feeling as “intense anticipation” or “strong and excited expectatio.” Besides, he indicates that “[h]ope does not remove the tension from ἀποκαραδοκία, but frees it from fear and uncertainty.”

Both views are appropriate, yet Gieniusz attaches importance to the waiting process, Hoffmann focuses on the outcome. In the strong yearning of the creation for the time when God’s children will be revealed in their glorified status lies deep and sorrowful longing. Romans 8:20 immediately provides the reason behind it. However, in Paul’s expounding, the pivotal thought hidden in the background of Rom 8:18-30 is hope instead of pain, because ἀποκαραδοκία and ἐλπίς are put together in Phil 1:20, of which the context shows that Paul knows for certain his coming salvation.

Moreover, the object to which the prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι in Rom 8:20c is related is controversial. John Duncan ardently proves his viewpoint that ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι should be linked directly to ἀπεκδέχεται at the end of Rom 8:19, so that its basic meaning “on the basis of hope” would be retained and the ἐλπίς could be ascribed to the creation in preference to God. Correspondingly, Duncan paraphrases the text of Rom 8:19-21 in the following way:

19 For the earnest expectation of creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God - for the creation was subjected to futility (not voluntarily, but because of the one who subjected it) - in hope that the creation itself might be set free from the slavery of corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

Duncan precisely observes that the believers are not included in ἡ κτίσις, there is an

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649 Gieniusz, Romans 8:18-30, 180-83.
650 Ibid., 289, cf. 183-87.
651 E. Hoffmann, “Ἀποκαραδοκία,” NIDNTT 2:244-46, here 244-45.
obvious differentiation between them, which should not be viewed as thorough separation, because “their current situations and future destinies are inextricably intertwined.”

Also Duncan correctly interprets that the verb in τῇ γὰρ ματαιότητι ἡ κτίσις ὑπετάγη (“for the creation was subjected to futility,” Rom 8:20a [underlining mine]) is a divine passive, indicating “an authority act of God;” its aorist tense expresses “a decisive instance of subjection,” reflecting the fact of the curse placed on the earth by God due to human disobedience recorded in Gen 3:17. Laurie J. Braaten maintains that the aorist ἀπετάγη could be regarded as a collectively repeated action; in other words, the subjection of creation is not a onetime event, but a repeated occurrence, like Paul’s usage in Rom 3:23, in which πάντες ἠμαρτον (“all have sinned”) is not a onetime event long time before.

Braaten’s suggestion appears to be reasonable, but she might ignore that the aorist could denote onetime action and cause long-time influence. God does not keep cursing the earth. Its subjection is unalterable, like δι᾽ ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἀμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἀμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος ὑπόταξεν, ἐφ᾽ ὧν πάντες ἠμαρτον (“through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned,” Rom 5:12, [underlining mine]). In view of the universal impact of sin and death, the aorist here, as above three aorists in Rom 5:12, takes the sense of past action with continuing results.

Accordingly, compared to Braaten’s repeated occurrence theory, Duncan’s on-going state theory will be more tenable.

Besides, Rom 8:20bc: οὐχ ἐκοῦσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, ἐφ᾽ ἐλπίδι (“not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope” [underlining mine]) is deemed by Duncan to be an advanced clarification of the creation’s identity of being a victim of circumstance. Related to the subjugation of creation by emptiness is the contrast between ἐκοῦσα and διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, which further demonstrates its situation of no choice but being forced to be submissive to what God decides. However, with the aim of displaying that the inherent hope of creation is present in its awaiting the revelation of God’s children, and paralleling its hope in Rom 8:19-21 with the hope of the believers in Rom 8:24-25, Duncan supposes that ἐφ᾽ ἐλπίδι is required to be associated with ἀπεκδέχεται of Rom 8:19. To put this in perspective, Duncan’s

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653 Ibid., 414.
654 Ibid., 415.
656 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 503.
657 Duncan, “The Hope of Creation,” 415n16: “In light of the emphasis that Paul places on the sweeping cosmic effects of the actions of the ‘one man’ [Rom 5.12], however, it seems better to see creation’s subjection as an on-going [rather than repeated] state that nevertheless has a definitive point of origin in Adam’s transgression and the resultant divine decree” (emphasis original).
658 Ibid., 416.
viewpoint is debatable. First, the position of ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι is unquestionable. Though its unique style (a rough breathing mark above the initial vowel of the dative, thereby ἐπί changes into ἐφ’) is different from other appearances in the New Testament (ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι; Acts 2:26; 26:6; Rom 4:18; 5:2; 1 Cor 9:10; Titus 1:2), its existence at the end of Rom 8:21 has strong external evidence. Semantically, to shift it to the end of Rom 8:19 is unnatural. Secondly, it is not necessary to alter its association to define ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι as the action of the agent creation. The comma after τὸν ὑποτάξαντα at the end of Rom 8:20 demonstrates its closer relation with Rom 8:21, which supports that the subject is the creation. What is more, to begin a sentence with a prepositional phrase functioning as a reason or basis followed by an ὅτι clause is not unusual in Paul’s letters. Paul’s proclamation in Phil 1:20 is a good example (underlining mine):

Phil 1:20

κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαραδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου, ὅτι ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχρονθῆσομαι ἀλλ’ ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθῆσαι Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματι μου, εἶτε δὲ ζωῆς εἰτε διά θανάτου.

according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Thirdly, though Duncan rightly denotes ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι as causal dative (on the basis of), the hope Paul mentions here most likely refers to Christian hope instead of creation’s, which would make the changing linkage of ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι even more unnecessary.

Finally, what Duncan reflects is a typical perspective many scholars fervently advocate. Regarding the personification of the creation, especially in the metaphorical suffering from labor pains and mourning, or even “redemption of creation,” there are abundant resources in the Old Testament and other early Jewish apocalyptic literature, which are regularly referred to by many scholars to support their explanation for Paul’s apocalyptic perspective. Some put their emphasis on the hope behind the painful subjugation and eager expectancy of creation; some deny the hope inside the

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660. The prepositional phrase ἐφ’ ἐλπίδι is read by the best and earlier witnesses ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without asmooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts ὂς ἐπ’ ἐλπίδι (without a smooth breathing above ἐπι, and with an initial smooth breathing above ἐλπίδι) is read by slightly inferior texts. 661. It means that the editors of Nestle-Aland support its closer connection to Rom 8:21. 662. Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 376; BDF §235.2. 663. BDAG, s.v. “ἐλπίς,” 1. b. a. 664. In reference to a broad examination of prophetic books, see Katherine M. Hayes, The Earth Mourns: Prophetic Metaphor and Oral Aesthetic, SBLAcBib 8 (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2002); for a more detailed analysis of early Jewish apocalyptic literature, see Hahne, The Corruption and Redemption of Creation, 35-168.
anxious anticipation of creation, as mentioned above. Such materials are voluminous. Nevertheless, if evidence is plentifully available, why does Paul not allude to any one of them? The most commonly alluded part in the Old Testament is Isaiah, but if it is a powerful support, why is there no reference at all in this passage as Paul’s frequent citations of Isaiah in Rom 9-11?

The most likely explanation of the scarcity of Paul’s references to or quotations of Jewish apocalyptic works is the lack of symmetrical application. Take the Prophets as an example, there is no lack of descriptions of creation groaning in mourning, suffering from toils, pangs in childbirth, and various hardships, etc.

The anguish and pains issued by the creation are usually expressed by prophets in exaggerated and metaphorical ways. The purpose of these prophets is to announce an extremely serious fact: if the nonrational, inanimate, and unconscious creation can feel strongly the agony, torment and distress caused by Israelite sin and divine judgment coming upon it, the Israelites themselves are more required to be aware of its severity and respond with deep remorse and repentance. Physically, the created order would not be in response to any judgment or misery. But it has been all the time used as an anthropomorphic role to express the emotion and demand of the prophets or God Himself. There are diverse passages in the Prophets with different foci. Some narratives are about the mourning and lamenting of creation (Isa 33:7-9; Jer 4:23-28; Joel 1:15-20), some about birth pangs (Isa 26:17; Jer 4:31; 30:6; Mic 4:9-10), some about the coming salvation of God (Isa 27:1-5; 33:4-6; Jer 30:7; 31:17; Joel 2:18), some include more than one focus. Nonetheless, the key purpose of all these cursing-dominated descriptions of creation must be the prophets’ earnest and solemn call to the Jewish people to repent, turning away from their evil to God (Isa 26:4-7; 31:6; 33:6-7; Jer 4:1, 14; 31:18; Joel 1:13-14; 2:12-14), as exemplified in the following texts (shading and underlining mine):

Isa 31:6

מָנָ֖א לָא־אָדָּמָּה יָאְמָֽה׃

Return to Him from whom you have deeply defected, O sons of Israel.

Jer 4:14

בָּשָׁם מַעֲשֵׂה לְךַלָּאָֽם לְמִלְמָֽא לְשׁוֹפֵֽר׃


Wash your heart from evil, O Jerusalem, That you may be saved. How long will your wicked thoughts Lodge within you?

Joel 2:12-14

Yet even now,’ declares the LORD, ‘Return to Me with all your heart, And with fasting, weeping, and mourning;

And rend your heart and not your garments.’ Now return to the LORD your God. For He is gracious and compassionate, Slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, And relenting of evil.

Who knows whether He will not turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him, Even a grain offering and a libation For the LORD your God?

Note that all the prophets Isaiah (שְׁבֵב [qal masculine plural, “return”]), Jeremiah (כִּשְׁבֵּס [piel feminine singular, “wash”]) and Joel (שֻּב [qal masculine plural, “return,” 2:12], כָּרְעֵש [qal masculine plural, “rend,” 2:13], שְׁבֵב [qal masculine plural, “return,” 2:13]) use imperative to pronounce their demands with the most urgent and sincere words. Braaten states that “Israelite mourning customs require that the entire community join the mourner in order to restore the mourner to the proper place in the social order.”  

Braaten applies the Jewish traditional mode to the creation’s groaning, which performs non-penitential rites as a blameless victim, inviting the guilty human to join in mourning and to enact the rite penitentially. Under such circumstances, God will get involved in restoring creation and once more bless His people. Braaten’s opinion seems to romanticize the prophetic (or God’s) intense exhortation and caution to the chosen Jews. In Braaten’s expression, guiltless creation becomes an active mourner, and on the contrary, human mourning is passive to join the innocent mourning rite, pushing God to reinstate creation first, then human beings. Such an explanation considers the creation an independent personality who leads the process of repenting, highlighting the position of creation and marginalizing the role of prophets and God’s people, which is untenable.

Analogous examples to the prophets are not uncommon in the New Testament. Let us consider two cases as examples. One is the warning of John the Baptist in Matt 3:9

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Responding to the Jewish religious leaders who are coming for baptism (Matt 3:7), John the Baptist requires from them: “Therefore bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance” (ποιήσατε οὖν καρπὸν ἀξίων τῆς μετανοίας, Matt 3:8 [underlining mine]). He is demanding from them a really penitent life which can save them from God’s judgement (Matt 3:7-8). In John the Baptist’s mind, their presumption of relying on the oral repentance, being overshadowed by ancestors, or the identity of God’s people according to the flesh cannot help them fleeing from the future wrath of God. Put exactly, their abuse of religious privilege will not be immune from God’s indignation.669 Even without their existence, God can raise up his pleasing children from the stones laid before them. Matthew 3:9b is normally understood as connoting the emphasis of God’s sovereignty and liberty “not to be constrained by the limits of natural possibility.”670 An alternative explanation is that these stones are regarded as witnesses to the hardened and disobedient heart of the Jewish religious leaders. If these inanimate, unconscious rocks could sense God’s will and be submissive to be His children, how can they, the religious heads of God’s people, behave so indifferently and unconcernedly? The object of the nature is once more employed satirically to contrast its sensitive emotion with Jewish unresponsiveness.

The other case occurs in Luke 19:40, in Jesus’ response to the Pharisees when they criticized His disciples for praising Him (underlining mine):

Luke 19:40
καὶ ἀποκριθεὶς εἶπεν· λέγω ὡμίν, ἐὰν οὐτοὶ σιωπήσουσιν, οἱ λίθοι κράξουσιν.

And He answered and said, ‘I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!’

Jesus reproves the Pharisees for their ignorance and unbelief with the willingly crying out of the stones (Luke 19:40). He implies that if there is absence of laudatory

670 Ibid., 145.
extolling Himself as “the Representative and Messiah of God at his entry,” these lifeless, inactive stones before them would be shouting exultantly. The vehemently screaming stones provide a sarcastic foil for the stony heart of the Pharisees. Such a conversation is in effect the outcome of Jewish rejection to Jesus’ lasting admonition for repentance. Correlated to such conflicting scenes in which repentance warning is repeatedly refused, is Jesus’ hard rebuke to the cities he often visits, such as Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum (Matt 11:21-23). These cities are severely reprimanded for their continuing refusal to turn in repentance to God and contrasted with some of the most evil gentile cities in the past which are assumed to repent by way of the most humiliating themselves if they hear the same message as the Jewish cities do. By employing non-human objects in the created order, John the Baptist and Jesus, like the prophets before them, demand the genuine repentance and turning to God from the Jewish people.

Considering the distinctive background of Jewish apocalyptic materials which are mainly directed against the unrepentant Jewish people, who own the nominal status and privileges according to their flesh (cf. Rom 2:17-29; 9:4), and are required to repent of their sins for entering God’s new kingdom, it will be a deviant research direction to apply the Jewish apocalyptic resources (biblical or non-biblical) to the backdrop investigation of Paul’s perspective in Rom 8:19-30. Paul’s recipients are composed of believing Jews and Gentiles; they are already God’s children, and there is no need for them to learn from nature’s experience. Instead, the creation is in a completely passive position compared to the believers. Paul’s description of the powerlessness of creation offers a sharp contrast with the confidence of believers in the ultimate redemption. Paul strongly suggests that if the creation is formulated with consciousness and emotion and will, it will be eagerly awaiting its renewal, despite its subjection to corruption. Compared to the creation, the believers are totally distinct from unsaved creatures; they should cherish the status of adopted children and wait for their final salvation patiently.

Through the last verse of the subsection Rom 8:19-22 Paul appears to express his general assessment of the role of creation in God’s salvation plan. Paul begins verse 22 with οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι, indicating that he intends to utilize a well known and widely accepted reality to make a short conclusion. The reality is that “the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now” (πᾶσα ἡ κτίσις


672 Hahne is a typical representative who considers that in Rom 8:19-23 “the worldview, the theology, and many expressions are very similar to those in Jewish apocalypses from the same period,” see Hahne, “The Whole Creation,” 20.

673 BDAG remarks that “[t]he formula οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι is frequently used to introduce a well-known fact that is generally accepted,” see BDAG, s.v. “οἶδα,” 1. e.
συστενάζει και συνωδίνει ἀχρὶ τοῦ νῦν). Though the creation is looking forward to being set free, its accomplishment depends on the timetable of revelation enacted on humans. Its vulnerability and the sense of helplessness make it fall into enduring groaning and suffering in birth pains. A detail regarding the two verbs in the reality often overlooked is noticed by Braaten. She believes that the unit of two verbs linked with καί, “συστενάζει καί συνωδίνει,” which are normally understood as a hendiadys, meaning ‘groaning in travail,’ or, ‘groaning in labor pains,’ should be translated as two separate terms,674 because “Paul uses the terms separately elsewhere without connection to the other.”675 Actually, more important to Paul’s recipients is how Paul treats them here. There are five indicative verbs in Rom 8:19-22 used by Paul to modify the subject creation: ἀπεκδέχεται (“it awaits eagerly,” Rom 8:19), ὑπετάγη (“it was subjected,” Rom 8:20), ἐλευθερώθησεται (“it will be set free,” Rom 8:21), and συστενάζει καί συνωδίνει (“it groans and suffers the pains of childbirth,” Rom 8:22). That no participle is applied here results in an impression that Paul seems to keep the five verbs abreast intentionally, portraying a general sense of impotence of the creation. Even so, Paul’s emphasis in this passage is not on ecology, of which the proper treatment is a deductive application of the texts here.676 His concern is rather that the believers are required to think over their Christian life when the adverse objective conditions are accompanied by a personified creation that is seemingly desperate for freedom and restoration.

674 Braaten, “All Creation Groans,” 132-33, citation from p. 133.
675 Ibid., 133.
For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.

For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth together until now.

Diagram 4-6 Text analysis of Romans 8:19-22 (underlining mine)
4.3.3.2.2 The groaning of God’s children (Romans 8:23-25)

Paul begins Rom 8:23 with οὐ μόνον δέ (“and not only this”), indicating his unbroken train of thought, following the preceding verse 22, which functions as a summary of Rom 8:19-22. Paul is patently the author who uses οὐ μόνον with ἀλλὰ (καί) most in the New Testament. There are 27 occurrences of οὐ μόνον in the New Testament altogether, and 19 of these appear in Corpus Paulinum, of which eight in Romans, the letter with the highest frequency.\(^{677}\) The formula denotes that there is more to be depicted in addition to what immediately precedes.\(^{678}\) Whether the supplementary content is positive-oriented or negative-oriented, must be judged from the context. According to the usage in the other 18 instances in the Pauline letters, the supplement usually moves towards the same direction as what is preceded, that is, both elements signify simultaneously either a positive or a negative statement. Interestingly, only two cases belong to a negative description, namely Rom 1:32 (the deterioration of human transgressions) and 1 Tim 5:13 (more misbehavior of young widows). All the other 16 accounts are positive enhancements (the case in Rom 8:23a included), especially concerning the related description of God’s salvation, for example, Rom 5:3 (tribulation produces perseverance), Rom 5:11 (to rejoice after receiving reconciliation), Rom 9:24 (God calls from Jews, also from the Gentiles), and Eph 1:21 (God’s power is more mighty than everything in this age and the coming one).

Observably, the common basis for connecting “not only this” with “but also” is the action of groaning (Rom 8:22, 23),\(^{679}\) which misleads many readers into believing that the believers are “included in the suffering of creation.”\(^{680}\) Actually there is significant difference between the suffering the believers are exposed to and the suffering of the creation. Hence, Moo’s remark that Paul “shows how believers share this same eager hope” is a more appropriate characterization.\(^{681}\) As far as the Bible is concerned, Moo provides a general review of στενάζω and its cognate, στεναγμός, which appear more often in the LXX (27 times and 28 times respectively) than in the New Testament (6 times [Mark 7:34; Rom 8:22; 2 Cor 5:2, 4; Heb 13:17; Jas 5:9], and twice [Acts 7:34; Rom 8:26] respectively). His overall comment is as follows: “Paul, therefore, has chosen a word that very aptly conveys both the sense of frustrated longing occasioned by the continuing pressures of ‘this age’ and the sense of entreaty

\(^{677}\) Cf. Rom 1:32; 4:16; 5:3, 11; 8:23; 9:10, 24; 13:5; 2 Cor 7:7; 8:10, 19, 21; 9:12; Eph 1:21; Phil 1:29; 1 Thess 1:8; 2:8; 1 Tim 5:13; 2 Tim 4:8.

\(^{678}\) BDF §479.(1); BDAG remarks that the formula “οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καί” implies “ellipsis with supplementation of what immediately precedes,” see BDAG, s.v. “μόνος,” 2. c. a.

\(^{679}\) BDAG considers στενάζω in Rom 8:23 to express oneself involuntarily in the face of an undesirable circumstance, and glosses it “sigh, groan;” see BDAG, s.v. “στενάζω,” 1.

\(^{680}\) Jewett, Romans, 518.

\(^{681}\) Moo, Romans, 519.
to God for deliverance from that situation.”

Besides, BDAG glosses στενάζω “sigh, groan,” which is inclined to show oneself reluctantly as a result of an adverse situation. Obviously, the verb στενάζω and its cognate στεναγμός communicate a strong negative implication, which easily makes readers mistakenly believe that Paul is making a negative statement about the believers’ expectation. Moo is careful enough to see the difference, indicating that believers’ anticipation does not entail nervousness about the possibility of their future redemption, yet the physical and mental afflictions tied with the awaiting process is unavoidable.

Moo points out a partial reason, but does not explain the broader thinking of Paul.

A cursory observation on Paul’s description of the believers’ transformation, which is attributable to justification by faith in Rom 3-8, depicts that the contents regarding the depth, length and clarity of the status and identity they now own and the challenges they are facing occupy much more space than the portrayal of their future glory, inheritance, and renewed circumstances. In Rom 5-8 Paul prefers to employ the master-slave imagery to describe the relation of believers to sin or God for the reason that once the master-slave relation is formed, it will never change or vanish in Roman society. Only can a good master improve the treatments or fates of his slaves, who are unable to change their own destiny. Therefore, an evil master such as the power of sin will be the worst nightmare for slaves throughout their life. The only opportunity for slaves to improve their life is to change their wicked master into a kind one, which is also beyond their capability. Nevertheless, in the spiritual field the expectation could become reality through God’s grace alone. The new master, God, the heavenly Father, not only liberates believers from the bondage of sin, but He also gives them adoptive sonship. The completely renewed status yet does not make the believers totally immune to the influence or attack from their evil old master. Thereby the most likely reason for the groaning uttered by believers in Rom 8:23 is their being assaulted by the power of sin. That is why Paul would take the trouble to delineate his dramatic struggle in Rom 7:14-25, the passage filled with Paul’s deep sigh and frustrated defeat in resisting the power of sin. Spiritual failure is enormous, but spiritual hope is greater. Romans 8:1-11 reveals the secret which the believers can depend on to help themselves overcome the power of sin and the reason why.

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682 Ibid., 519n59.
683 See 265n679; similarly, BDAG considers στεναγμός as an involuntary expression of great concern or stress, see s.v. “στεναγμός.”
684 Moo, Romans, 519.
685 cf. sec. 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves.”
687 Cf. sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh.”
For that reason, the combined picture of the twofold υἱοθεσία imagery in Rom 8 can be regarded as the epitome of Rom 7:14-8:12. As Erin Heim remarks:

Thus, the emotional content evoked by the two υἱοθεσία metaphors in Romans 8 expresses the existential tension of the present ambiguity, and gives the believers a space to groan under an intense emotional burden for God’s final action, while they simultaneously rest in the assurance of their identity as sons of God.\(^{688}\)

The blessed assurance of believers far outweighs their frustration caused by the bitter conflict with the sinful flesh in the inner man. In Rom 8:23 Paul summarizes his experience and makes a comparison with the anthropomorphic creation in order to emphasize the incomparability of the Christian salvation. The believers and the creation share the same eventual aim of glorious freedom of God’s children (Rom 8:19, 21). Channing L. Crisler describes it as follows: “The sons of God, like creation, participate in the lament of hope.”\(^{689}\) Crisler distinguishes between lamentation and lament, claiming that lamentation “looks backwards in despair,” but “lament looks forward in hope.”\(^{690}\) Nevertheless, Crisler does not point out the difference between the sons of God and creation in the attitude and basis of hope. When both are assailed by the power of sin, the personified creation has no choice but suffers in groaning and pains like a Roman slave without independent right. Its awaiting in hope in essence is helplessly passive. However, the believers can choose to fight against rather than surrender to the tyranny of sin, though there is inevitable groaning due to sin’s unceasing attack. It is entirely fair for Paul to state that if the insensible and irrational creation, being totally helpless against the power of sin, is personified as a reasonable creature, it will show its most earnest attitude of waiting for the glory which shall be revealed to God’s children. Under the circumstances, how could the children, having the firstfruits of the Spirit, not wait for the adoption, the redemption of body, more eagerly?

Paul manifests the particular knowledge needed for believers to overcome the authority of sin from two dimensions. One is the believers’ identity of having the first fruits of the Spirit (τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεῦματος ἐχοντες), the other is that the ultimate adoption eagerly awaited is assured, which signifies the redemption of the believers’ body (ἡ ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν). The more the believers are aware of the

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\(^{690}\) Ibid., 97.
significance of both status and identity, the more urgent their awaiting is. Paul is in fact continuing his manner of elucidation from Rom 8:12-17. The full consciousness of divine identity is illuminated to motivate believers to live more assertively. Regarding the groaning of believers, Judith M. Gundry Volf provides a similar remark: “Their groaning is not an expression of hopelessness, for they have the Spirit as an ἀπαρχή (v. 23), a ‘firstfruits’ of the salvation yet to be completed.”

Moo argues “the fact that Paul refers to ‘the first fruits of the Spirit’ rather than simply the Spirit shows that he is thinking of the Spirit’s role in anticipating and pledging the completion of salvation rather than as the agent of present blessing.” His interpretation that the eschatological tension, groaning in assuredly awaiting, will be eased due to having the Spirit as the first installment and pledge of future salvation is a consensus of most scholars. Such an interpretation and form is similar to ὁ ἀρραβών τοῦ πνεύματος (“first installment or deposit of the Spirit,” 2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; cf. Eph 1:14). Likewise, the Spirit (τοῦ πνεύματος) in the circumstances is usually taken in the sense of genitive of apposition; the Spirit is in apposition to the first fruits.

BDAG paraphrases the formula “ἡ ἀπαρχὴ τοῦ πνεύματος” as “as much of the Spirit as has been poured out so far and a foretaste of things to come,” stressing the experiential knowledge in Christian life. Jewett takes ἔχοντες in the simple attributive meaning of believers “having” charismatic gifts endowed by God, but not of an enthusiastic kind. He considers Paul’s point to be that “no matter how charismatically they may be endowed, believers continue to participate in the suffering to which the entire world has been subjected as a result of sin.” BDAG also provides another interpretation of ἀπαρχή, birth-certificate, which seems more noteworthy if Paul’s flow of thought here is considered. BDAG remarks that this denotation suits the context of Rom 8:23, but does not explain why. C. Clare Oke’s provision of explanation is worthy of reference. He cites the work of George Milligan who finds that Stuart Jones’s discovery on a papyrus casts light on the clarification of “ἡ ἀπαρχὴ τοῦ πνεύματος” in Rom 8:23. Jones examines some official documents of Roman Egypt concerning finances edited by W. Schubart in 1919, in which he finds that the word “ἀπαρχὴ” is the technical term for the birth-certificate of a free person, just as

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692 Moo, *Romans*, 520.
693 The participle ἔχοντες is denoted as causal relation, see ibid.
695 BDAG, s.v. “ἀπαρχή,” 1. b. β (emphasis mine).
697 BDAG, s.v. “ἀπαρχή,” 2.
οἰκογένεια is for that of a slave.”

Thereby Jones expresses his commentary regarding Rom 8:23 as follows:

When we read the passage which begins at verse 16, we see that St. Paul is here arguing that our claim to spiritual freedom is based on the witness of the Spirit to our sonship, just as in Egypt the μαρτυροποιήσεις of the parent was among the documents put in evidence in the procedure of ἐπίκρισις by which claims to the privileged status were judged; and that in spite of this—in spite of the fact that we have, as it were, obtained through the mediation of the Spirit the certificate which entitles us to be registered as the Sons of God—we are still awaiting our formal release from the bondage of the flesh and the law.

Depending on Jones’s standpoint, Oke carries on with the emphasis of the believers’ status and condition. Oke maintains that the interpretation of ἀπαρχή as a phenomenon or experience implies a relatively passive or quiescent position. Instead, the alternative reading of “the certification or birth-certificate of the Spirit” denotes a more active role and corresponds with the Spirit’s dynamic work in context. Unfortunately, Oke does not associate well the status of believers with the Spirit, simply stating, “if also certification of the children has been made by both parents, citizenship is retained for the children” as a conclusion, from which it is hard to see the Spirit’s empowering presence. Oke does insightfully point out that Paul’s portrayal of the believers in Rom 8:16-30 is heavily orientated towards status, standing or rank, as evidenced in the following phrases: “we are God’s children” (Rom 8:16), “heirs of God, joint-heirs with Christ” (Rom 8:17), “the glory destined as coming to us” (Rom 8:18), “the appearing of the sons of God” (Rom 8:19), “the freedom of the glorified state of the children of God” (Rom 8:21), “full adoption,” or “adoption as sons” (Rom 8:23), and “conformation to the image of God’s Son and brotherhood with Christ” (Rom 8:29).

Nonetheless, the believers would not be inspired to live voluntarily a life worthy of God’s calling by these references to status or condition without the Spirit’s present work. Noticeably in the process of increasing the depiction of the believers’ status Paul intensifies the role of the Spirit. The indwelled Spirit, whose presence works faith within the believers, motivates the believers to put every grace God gives freely into effect. It comes to a crescendo in the narrative of suffering, believers’ identity, and the task of the Spirit in Rom 8:12-30. In Rom 8:12-17 the Spirit functions as a

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700 Ibid., cited by Milligan, Here and There, 100; and Oke, “A Suggestion,” 455.
702 Ibid., however, Oke’s argument that nature itself needs redemption is debatable, see ibid.
mentor or a motivator, leading and bearing witness in the life of the believers. In Rom 8:18-30, the Spirit performs the role as an eternally present guarantor and intercessor, assuring the believers’ adoption in every adverse circumstance, and providing all the hope and help they desperately need. In the combination of πνεῦμα υἱόθεσίας (genitive of product), adoption is a product produced by the Spirit (Rom 8:15).\footnote{Wallace, Greek Grammar, 106; cf. sec. 4.2.4.1 “The first antithesis in Romans 8:15.”} Now in the collocation ἡ ἀπαρχή τοῦ πνεῦματος (genitive of apposition),\footnote{Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 97-99.} the two nouns ἀπαρχή and πνεῦμα are equivalent to a convertible proposition; thereby their combination can be denoted as “the birth-certificate, which is the Spirit,” like Paul’s description of ὁ ἀρραβῶν τοῦ πνεῦματος (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5).

Compared to the slightly pessimistic but potentially hopeful atmosphere in Rom 8:19-22, Paul actually offers an obviously confident explanation in Rom 8:23-25. Here his proclamation expresses a stimulating message. The participle ἔχοντες implies a closely associated relation between the believers and the Spirit;\footnote{BDAG considers ἔχω “to stand in a close relationship to someone;” see BDAG, s.v. “ἔχω,” 2.} it means for the believers to possess the Spirit is equal to owning their birth-certificate. R. Taubenschlag even denotes the “ἀπαρχή” as an “identification card.”\footnote{R. Taubenschlag, “Citizens and non-Citizens in the Papyri,” in Opera Minora II (Warsaw: The Hague, 1959), 211-22, here 220-21, cited by BDAG, “ἀπαρχή,” 2.} Within the Roman imperial context, the certification means citizenship. Within the spiritual field, the documentation is identical to the membership of the heavenly kingdom. Hence, it will be natural for Paul to refer again to the preceding theme of adoption, of which the believers not only are already in possession, but they also eagerly await its final accomplishment. Paul assigns υἱόθεσία more abundant significance. The believers’ identity, besides membership of God’s family, is citizenship in heaven (cf. Phil 3:20a). As Moo remarks, “Christians, at the moment of justification, are adopted into God’s family; but this adoption is incomplete and partial until we are finally made like the Son of God himself (v. 29).”\footnote{Moo, Romans, 521 (emphasis original).} Thus, there exists an eschatological tension between accomplishment and awaiting completeness. Moreover, Paul conciseley provides a concrete picture for the fervently awaited goal, “the redemption of our body” (ἡ ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν), which is a similar expression of future resurrection as the one specified in Rom 8:11. The adoption imagery must be particularly attractive to gentile believers who are confirmed to be adopted into God’s family, acquiring the same position as those of Jewish affiliation (cf. Rom 2:29). Now Paul further considers adoption and redemption as synonymous, enriching the significance of adoption in the context of suffering for awaiting the redemption.\footnote{Segal, “Romans 7 and Jewish Dietary Laws,” in Paul the Convert, 224-53, here 249-50.}

Paul’s way of expressing his concern by these two metaphors definitely pulls at the
recipients’ heartstrings, especially of those with slavery background, which in all probability improves the emotive effect of the metaphors they hear.\footnote{Cf. Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language*, pbk. ed. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987), 26-31; Williams, *Paul’s Metaphors*, 64-66, 122-24.} BDAG renders the phrase ἡ ἀπολύτρωσις τοῦ σώματος ἡμῶν as “the freeing of our body from earthly limitations” or “redemption of our body.”\footnote{BDAG, s.v. “ἀπολύτρωσις,” 2. a.} For Roman believers with a past servitude setting, the earthly limitations might include not only human susceptibility to the power of sin and death, but also the uncertainty of the future; not only physical exploitation, but also mental mistreatment; not only compulsory responsibilities to the present master, but also continuing obligations to the former owner. The promise of redemption of our body connotes that the believers’ life has been redeemed, for which the redeemer Jesus Christ has paid the price and becomes their new master, who brings them to God’s family as God’s adopted children, and promises that believers’ body will be transformed into a new one as His resurrected body when He comes again. The reason why Paul’s proclamation could be so inspiring to Roman believers is the authenticity of his coming across with Christ on the Damascus road. Amongst all the spiritual blessings in heavenly places with which God blesses the believers in Christ (cf. Eph 1:3), the only one that can be visualized on earth is the resurrected body, as he states in 1 Cor 15:20: “But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep” (Νῦν δὲ Χριστὸς ἐγέρθη ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀπαρχὴ τῶν κεκοιμημένων). Here the noun ἀπαρχὴ is denoted as “the first portion;”\footnote{BDAG, s.v. “ἀπαρχὴ,” 1. b. a.} it means that the body of the resurrected Christ is the first real achievement of God’s power manifested in giving eternal life to the physical body and becomes the assurance of the believers’ resurrection. On the basis of his experience of conversion and calling, Paul encourages Roman believers in waiting for their final redemption. As Kim observes, “the Damascus Christophany contributed also to Paul’s conception and imagery of the Church as the Body of Christ and the true Israel.”\footnote{Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 268.} It follows that Paul’s Damascus road experience also contributes in exhortation. Paul’s statement in Phil 3:21 is another representative example of his encouragement to believers, and it fits the context here (underlining mine):

\begin{quote}
Phil 3:21

δόξας μετασχηματίσει τὸ σῶμα τῆς ταπεινώσεως ἡμῶν σώματος ἡμῶν δόξης αὐτῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὐτῶν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα.

who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body
\end{quote}
of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself.

Surprisingly, the apostles and other disciples seldom provide detailed information of Jesus’ resurrected body. Even those who personally encountered the resurrected Jesus (cf. 1 Cor 15:4-7) and may have been at a very short distance to him (e.g., Matt 28:17; Luke 24:30-31, 36-43, 44-50; John 20:14-17, 19-23, 26-30; 21:4-22; Acts 1:6-8) or further may have had physical contact (e.g., Matt 28:9; 1 John 1:1), do not give enough information regarding the physicality of the resurrected body. First John 3:2 can be cited as a good example (underlining mine):

1 John 3:2
ἀγαπητοί, νῦν τέκνα θεοῦ ἐσμεν, καὶ οὐπώ ἐφανερώθη τί ἐσόμεθα. οἴδαμεν δὴ ἐὰν φανερωθῇ, ὁμοίοι αὐτῷ ἐσόμεθα, δὴ ὅπως ἐστὶν καθὼς ἐστίν.
Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is.

Similar to the style of Paul, John merely passes on vague facts about Jesus’ resurrected body, and points out that what we will be has not yet been revealed, only “we will be like Him when He appears” is confirmed. In contrast, the apostle Paul, who only once saw the resurrected Jesus Himself, offers more details concerning the resurrected body (cf. 1 Cor 15). However, Paul’s purpose is not to satisfy his readers’ curiosity, but to ensure his audience as follows:

Rom 15:13
Ὁ δὲ θεὸς τῆς ἐλπίδος πληρώσαι ὡμᾶς πάσης χαρᾶς καὶ εἰρήνης ἐν τῷ πιστεύειν, εἰς τὸ περισσεύειν ὡμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἐλπίδι ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος ἁγίου.
Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (underlining mine).

Probably there are some unknown realities reserved as a mystery which will not be made known until the revealing of God’s children. Therefore, Paul calls the believers’ attention to the hope of salvation in the following two verses (Rom 8:24-25), in which the noun ἐλπίς and its cognate ἐλπίζω occur three times and twice, respectively. The initial conjunction γάρ of v. 24 indicates that Paul is making a further explanation for the preceding statement, especially v. 23b (cf. Diagram 4-7). Cranfield notices that the dative τῇ ... ἐλπιοῦ at the beginning of v. 24 is not supposed to be viewed as equiva-
lent to ἐφ᾽ ἐλπίδι in v. 20 (causal dative), nor as of means, but rather as a dative of manner (modal, “with hope”) to qualify ἐσώθημεν.\(^{713}\) Moo makes an effort to justify the denotation of τῇ ἐλπίδι as “with hope” (associative dative).\(^{714}\) Both they take ἐσώθημεν in the natural sense of “we were saved” with hope,\(^{715}\) that is, believers were granted salvation at conversion; the rescuing work of God has already happened, but its accomplishment is in the future, hence the “expectant and patient waiting is going to be necessary.”\(^{716}\) A more probable explanation is that the aorist verb ἐσώθημεν is a proleptic aorist, which is used to envisage “an event yet future as though it had already occurred,” because it involves a “rhetorical transfer.”\(^{717}\) Likewise, Paul uses an aorist verb ἐδόξασεν (“He glorified,” Rom 8:30) to describe an event guaranteed to be completed by God in the future.\(^{718}\) Wallace calls such kind of aorist as proleptic (or futuristic) aorist (cf. Mark 11:24; John 13:31; 1 Cor 7:28; Rev 10:7).\(^{719}\)

In Rom 6-8 the verb σώζομεν only appears in Rom 8:24, its indicative aorist passive form ἐσώθημεν is relatively peculiar. Regardless, another auxiliary proof supporting Paul’s future intention of ἐσώθημεν is the consistence of the usage of future tense in Romans. All the seven other occurrences of this verb in Romans, are formed as future tense.\(^{720}\) Besides, such a shift of emphasis on future aspect of salvation is compatible with the context of hope-orientation. Therefore, the argument of Barclay Newman and Eugene Nida that JB’s translation of ἐσώθημεν as “we shall be saved” is wrong is highly contentious.\(^{721}\) It is precisely because Paul sets the goal of salvation on God’s achievement in the ultimate future, he can reiterate in various ways that the hope is not to be seen. The verb βλέπω (“to see”) is used three times in Rom 8:24-25 by Paul, who seems deliberately to make a contrast with hope.\(^{722}\) As a result of the unperceived future, the believers’ eager awaiting the fulfillment of hope is indispensable. Owing to the possibly extended process of waiting, Paul makes them notice that steadfastness is crucial (Rom 8:25).


\(^{714}\) Moo, *Romans*, 521n72-522.


\(^{716}\) Moo, *Romans*, 521.

\(^{717}\) Fanning, *Verbal Aspect*, 269-74, citations are from p. 269, the latter is cited by Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 564. Wallace considers the proleptic aorist to be used to “describe an event that is not yet past as though it were already completed,” see Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 563.


\(^{719}\) Wallace, *Greek Grammar*, 563-64.

\(^{720}\) Cf. Rom 5:9 (σωθησόμεθα, “we shall be saved”); 5:10 (σωθησόμεθα, “we shall be saved”); 9:27 (σωθήσεται, “it [the remnant] will be saved,” supplement in square brackets mine); 10:9 (σωθήσῃ, “you shall be saved”); 10:13 (σωθήσεται, “the person will be saved”); 11:14 (πόνος, “I may save,” NIV, NKJV); 11:26 (σωθήσομαι, “it [all Israel] will be saved,” supplement in square brackets mine).


\(^{722}\) BDAG, s.v. “βλέπω,” 1.
Paul’s usage of ἀπεκδέχομαι (“eagerly await”) and υπομονή (“patience, perseverance, steadfastness”) is not accidental. His handling of the two words shows his preference in making use of them for delineating Christian life positively. There are eight occurrences of ἀπεκδέχομαι in the New Testament, of which six appearances are in Paul’s letters, and three of them in Rom 8:19-25. As to these three occurrences of ἀπεκδέχομαι, one is used to describe the creation (Rom 8:19); the other two are used for portraying the believers (Rom 8:23, 25). Paul’s emphasis on the attitude of believers to live in hope with certainty is self-evident in line with our analysis above. Out of all the thirty-two occurrences of ὑπομονή in the New Testament, sixteen appear in Paul’s letters, of which six in Romans, evenly distributed throughout the whole letter (Rom 2:7; 5:3, 4; 8:25; 15:4, 5). All Paul’s employments of ὑπομονή are for depicting the characteristic of Christian personality except for the two references to God and Christ (Rom 15:5; 2 Thess 3:5).

According to Paul’s usage of ὑπομονή in relating to believers, it is always deemed as a quality of a mature Christian, including a quality required to live a life to be pleasing to God (Rom 2:7), a feature can be used to turn affliction to good turn resulting in character and hope (Rom 5:4; 8:25; 12:12; 15:4), a noticeable quality of love (1 Cor 13:7) and serving other believers (2 Cor 1:6), a typical characteristic of God’s servant (2 Cor 6:4; 12:12), a part of the contents of Paul’s prayer to God for believers (cf. Col 1:11; 1 Thess 1:3), a reason for his boasting among God’s churches (cf. 2 Thess 1:4), an important quality of God’s workers (cf. 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 3:10), and the elderly (cf. Titus 2:2), a quality could influence prospective believers (cf. 2 Tim 2:10), and a precondition of future reigning with Christ (cf. 2 Tim 2:12).

The passage Rom 8:23-25 in fact functions as a hinge if it is observed as a whole, especially when some key words, like πνεῦμα, ἀπεκδέχομαι, ἐλπίς, σοφία, ὑπομονή, are grouped together. Not only does this unit correspond to what Paul verifies in Rom 5:1-11 (πνεῦμα [v. 5], ἐλπίς [vv. 2, 4, and 5], σοφία [v. 11], ὑπομονή [vv. 3, 4]), inheriting the preceding themes, but it also establishes a solid basis for the following practical exhortation in Rom 15:1-13 (πνεῦμα [v. 13], ἐλπίς [vv. 4, 13], ὑπομονή [vv. 4, 5]), ushering believers into a well-founded Christian life.

Furthermore, the other Pauline letters containing such themes group also reveal the same inspiring encouragement to Christian life, as illustrated in the following examples (underlining mine):

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723 The other three occurrences are in 1 Cor 1:7; Gal 5:5 and Phil 3:20 respectively.
724 The other nine occurrences of ὑπομονή in Paul are in 2 Cor 1:6; 6:4; 12:12; Col 1:11; 1 Thess 1:3; 2 Thess 1:4; 1 Tim 6:11; 2 Tim 3:10; Titus 2:2. Its cognate verb ὑπομένω appears in Paul’s letters in Rom 12:12; 1 Cor 13:7; 2 Tim 2:10, 12.
Gal 5:5

ἡμεῖς γὰρ πνεῦματι ἐκ πίστεως ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης ἀπεκδεχόμεθα.

For we through the Spirit, by faith, are waiting for the hope of righteousness.

Phil 1:19-20

οὐδὰ γὰρ ὑπὸ τοῦτο μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαραδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου, ὅτι ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχρονθῆσομαι ἀλλ᾽ ἐν πάσῃ παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθῆσεται Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματί μου, εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε διὰ θανάτου.

19 For I know that this shall turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

Although σώζω and ὑπομονή are not found in Gal 5:5, the verb ἐλευθερόω ("to set free") related to σώζω, occurs in the immediate context of Gal 5:1, where Paul uses it to express how believers are saved by Christ from the slavery of the law (cf. Rom 6:18, 22 [free from sin]; 8:2 [free from sin and death], 21 [creation set free from corruption]). In Gal 5:11 Paul mentions that he is persecuted (διώκομαι "I suffer persecution") due to proclamation of the truth, hence he may often be forced to cultivate perseverance. In the whole passage of Gal 5:1-12 Paul expresses firmly that the believers’ freedom and righteousness before God is ultimately assured through the Spirit and faith rather than the law; thereby they should “maintain the good gospel course they have already embarked on.”

In the same way, πνεῦμα, ἀπεκδέχομαι and ἐλπίς appear in Phil 1:19-20, where Paul expresses his conviction that his witness for Christ will be verified by God, whether he will be released or executed. The purpose of his life is to glorify Christ. Though σώζω and ὑπομονή are not found in this unit, σωτηρία, the cognate of σώζω comes into sight and θλῖψις, which is closely related to ὑπομονὴ ("patience or endurance"), occurs in Phil 1:17.

In general, a common feature of these passages is that the Spirit undertakes the task of leading the believers through the lengthy process of waiting, and gives them confidence in suffering. On the surface, Paul seemingly puts his emphasis on the hope in Rom 8:23-25 (occurring five times in verb or noun form), but he essentially emphasizes more strongly on how to live in the course of waiting. There is every indication that where there are long-suffering believers, there must be the long-standing presence

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726 Douglas J. Moo, Galatians, BECNT (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013), 332.
of God through the Spirit. All the anxieties and hardships are not from the insecurity of unknown ultimate salvation – rather, the final redemption of believers’ body and life is for sure –, on the one hand, but from the uncertainty of the length of the awaiting time, and the threat posed by the power of sin as well as their suffering for Christ’s name’s sake at all times, on the other hand (cf. Acts 9:16). Through a series of questions and magnificent declarations in Rom 8:31-39, Paul reveals, to all intents and purposes, that all the potent enemies against believers throughout their life will be defeated. That is why Paul does not specify the details of the believers’ ultimate hope here. Instead, he stipulates the ineluctable challenges faced by believers during the process of waiting for eventual redemption.

\[727\] Cf. the last two paragraphs of sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39.”
And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit,
even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons,
the redemption of our body.

For in hope we have been saved,
but hope that is seen is not hope;
for why does one also hope for what he sees?
But if we hope for what we do not see,
with perseverance we wait eagerly for it.

Diagram 4-7 Text analysis of Romans 8:23-25 (underlining mine)
4.3.3.3 Awaiting God’s will done through the Spirit (Romans 8:26-27)

In Rom 8:26-27, Paul’s focus markedly returns to the Spirit. In scholarship there are still many controversies without consensus regarding this focus, such as the object of the preceding connection to which ὡσαύτως is related, the meaning of “our weakness” (ἀσθένεια ἡμῶν) and of the phrase “with unexpressed groanings” (στεναγμοίς ἀλαλήτοις) as well as the nature of the intercession of the Spirit.

As regards the antecedent in association with the comparative adverb ὡσαύτως at the beginning of Rom 8:26, Geoffrey Smith suggests that due to the function of ὡσαύτως in “connecting two similar actions to a single subject,” it jumps backwards to link Rom 8:16. An additional piece of evidence provided by Smith is the high similarity of synthetical structure (same subject + compound verb + dative substantive + first person plural possessive pronoun) between Rom 8:16 and 26:729

8:16 τὸ πνεῦμα σωμαρτυρεῖ τῷ πνεύματι ἡμῶν
8:26 τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνεται τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ ἡμῶν
8:16 The Spirit bears witness with our spirit.
8:26 The Spirit helps us in our weakness (NRSV).

Consequently, Smith paraphrases Paul’s statement as follows: “Just as the Spirit is at work within our hearts to confirm to us our adoption (8:16), so in the same way also the Spirit is at work within our hearts to bear up our weakness (8:26).”730

In a slightly different way in an earlier article, Robert Boyd offers a broader examination of Rom 7-8, and proposes that the Spirit’s work of helping and interceding in Rom 8:26, which belong to the work of God’s sanctification, should be read together with the Spirit’s work of bringing believers the divine sonship in Rom 8:15, which converges with the work of God’s justification. Boyd considers the antecedent reference of the ὡσαύτως in Rom 8:26 to be the hope in Rom 8:24.731 Therefore, his implication is as follows: “Just as hope (v. 24) sustains the Christian in his helplessness and despair, so also does the Holy Spirit lend a hand in the struggle.”732 What is of note is his comprehensive observation of the work of the Spirit, focusing on the ordinary life of believers, presented as follows:733

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729 Ibid., 33-34.
730 Ibid., 32 (emphasis original).
732 Ibid., 37.
733 Ibid., 38-39.
How manifold are the Spirit’s gracious acts! He speaks to the heart of the sinner to convict him of his need of the righteousness of God, and sweetly persuades him to yield himself to the sovereign grace of God. He descends into the hearts of believers as the Spirit of life in Christ; he dwells in the hearts of the redeemed as the Guide of the sons of God, and as the Spirit of Adoption he teaches believers to cry, ‘Abba, Father;’ he bears witness with their spirits that they are children of God. But this does not by any means exhaust the list of the gracious activities of the Spirit in the life of the Christian. In these verses before us (Romans 8:26 f.) we find ourselves almost overcome by weakness both in body and in spirit.

Despite Boyd’s providing an insight into linking the Spirit’s work in Rom 8:26 to the preceding passage (Rom 8:12-17) as the background of the Spirit’s action in Rom 8:26, his skipping over the Spirit’s work in Rom 8:23 is strange. Likewise, Smith’s suggestion of the connection of the adverb ὡσούτως with the Spirit’s work in Rom 8:15-16 has a similar problem. The viewpoints of Murray, Hodge, and Moo are similar to Boyd in suggesting the proposition of linking ὡσούτως to hope (ἐλπίς) in preceding verses, thereby the construction will be as Moo gives: “in the same way [as this hope sustains us], the Spirit also comes to our aid.” By contrast, Cranfield insists that the intended comparison is required to be “between the creation’s and our groaning (vv. 22, 23) and the Spirit’s groaning.” Yet he does not provide sufficient evidence; and the fact that in Paul’s argument believers’ help comes from the Spirit’s intercession instead of the groaning makes Cranfield’s view unjustified. Morris comes close to the opinion of Boyd, but he recognizes that “as the Spirit is at work in the time of hope, it is better to see the meaning as joining one work of the Spirit to another.” Compared to the positions mentioned above, Dunn’s stance is relatively closer to justifiability. He points out that the similar identity ὡσούτως approximates is “clearly to v. 23, πνεῦμα being the immediate link word.” However, Dunn’s reason for the link with πνεῦμα in Rom 8:23 is that “the construction does imply that in v. 23 the groanings are part of the expression of the Spirit’s presence (that is, a fundamental feature of the eschatological tension) and not simply a regrettable or accidental by-product.” Smith mistakes Dunn’s reason for “the first fruits of the Spirit,” being critical of the genitive form of πνεῦμα that it presents the Spirit as being passive in-

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734 Murray, Romans, 310-11; Hodge, Romans, 430; Moo, Romans, 522-23; cf. Smith, “The Function,” 30 and 30n2.
735 Moo, Romans, 523.
736 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 421.
739 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 476.
stead of active.\textsuperscript{740} That is why Smith’s connection skips over Rom 8:23 to Rom 8:15-16, and why he treats Rom 8:18-25 as a parenthetical paragraph inserted between the two main paragraphs of Rom 8:12-17 and Rom 8:26-30.\textsuperscript{741}

Regrettably, both Dunn and Smith get out of focus in dealing with the ὡσαύτως in Rom 8:26. The nearest antecedent reference of it is indeed to be located on “τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος” in Rom 8:23; such a connection accords with the fact that “the subject of the comparison is the Spirit and his work.”\textsuperscript{742} In Paul’s expression of ἡ ἀπαρχὴ τοῦ πνεύματος the Spirit acts as the believers’ birth-certificate, denoting a special identification to confirm their identity as God’s children. In correspondence to the phrase in Titus 2:13, σωτήρ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (“our Savior, namely, Christ Jesus”) which states that salvation is performed by Jesus Christ, Paul’s mixture does not detract from the initiative of the genitive noun at all.

Such an understanding can follow Paul’s train of thought of the Spirit’s role in the preceding passages. Just as the Spirit becomes our official document, authenticating our status as God’s adopted children in eternity, the Spirit also becomes our help in our weakness. Boyd holds that the way ἁσθένεια is used in Rom 8:26 “reveals the fact that invariably the sense of the word is ‘the sinner’s spiritual incapacities or limitations.’ ”\textsuperscript{743} BDAG considers it to be lack of spiritual insight.\textsuperscript{744} Both seemingly concentrate more on mental or spiritual infirmities. In view of the fact that Paul’s employment of ἁσθένεια (12 times, e.g., Rom 6:19; 2 Cor 11:30) and its cognate verb ἁσθενέω (16 times, e.g., Rom 8:3; 2 Cor 11:29; Phil 2:26) or adjective ἁσθενής (15 times, e.g., Rom 5:6; 1 Cor 9:22; Gal 4:9) are commonly seen in describing physical, mental and spiritual weakness, it is unnecessary to exclude the first field, since all facets are constantly entwined and affecting each other, though in the last two areas believers suffer the most due to the attack and accuse of the power of sin.\textsuperscript{745} Similarly, Bertone’s claim that weakness for Paul refers to “suffering or illness in present physical existence that is subjected to decay,” appears too narrow.\textsuperscript{746}

Judging from the structure of Rom 8:26-27 (cf. Diagram 4-8), the most accurate explanation of what “weakness” here refers to is found in the continuation of the verse: “we do not know how to pray as we should” (Rom 8:26b). The overall weakness results from the continuous and hard fight with the power of sin during the prolonged process of awaiting in a fallen world. Immediately, Paul continues by stating, “the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Rom 8:26c), to

\textsuperscript{740} Smith, “The Function,” 32
\textsuperscript{741} Ibid., 36.
\textsuperscript{742} Ibid., 31.
\textsuperscript{744} BDAG, s.v. “ασθένεια,” 3.
\textsuperscript{745} BDAG, s.vv. “ἀσθενέω” and “ἀσθενής.”
\textsuperscript{746} Bertone, “The Function of the Spirit,” 87.
make clear how the Spirit helps us. Further, Paul depicts the reason why the Spirit’s intercession is surely heard and comes to God’s dwelling place in heaven (cf. 2 Chr 30:27). It is because God and the intercessor, the Spirit, know each other very well. God is the One who searches the heart; He understands the way of the Spirit’s thinking (Rom 8:27a), because the Spirit entreats for the saints according to the will of God (Rom 8:27b). And more than this, the Spirit is renewing and transforming the believers according to God’s will, exceeding the limit of their weakness to see God’s achievement in eternity.

Such a pattern of reasoning is in fact not strange for Paul. We have to do with a statement followed by brief explanations, and then followed by clearer reasons. Let us look at two passages of Romans as examples (shading and underlining mine):

Rom 1:16-17

16a Οὐ γὰρ ἐπαισχύνομαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον.
16b ἕνωμεν γὰρ θεοῦ ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν πάντες τῷ πιστεύοντι.
17a ὑποκαλύπτεται ἐπὶ χάριν τοῦ Ιουδαίου τῷ πρώτῳ καὶ Ἑλληνι.
17b καθὼς γέγραπται· ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται.

16a For I am not ashamed of the gospel.
16b for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.↑
17a For ↓in it ↑the righteousness of God is revealed ↑from faith to faith;
17b as it is written, “But the righteous man shall live by faith.”

As an apostle who is called and set apart to proclaim the gospel of God (cf. Rom 1:1), Paul declares his reflection on such a status and ministry that he is not ashamed of the gospel (Rom 1:16a). Further, Paul immediately clarifies his shamelessness regarding the gospel through God’s power. As Cranfield aptly comments: “The apostle’s function is indeed to serve the gospel by an authoritative and normative proclamation of it.”747 Not only is Paul aware of his fearlessness in carrying out the preaching mission, but he also understands the gospel perceptively. Hence, after his courageous statement, Paul instantly gives a concise explanation of the essence of the gospel from

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747 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 53.
the perspective of God’s power and purpose (Rom 1:16b). Moreover, Paul provides a further elucidation of the gospel from the facet of God’s righteousness and emphasizes the reason why the gospel can be received by those who believe (Rom 1:17a). The whole plan of God’s salvation is confirmed by Hab 2:4b (Rom 1:17b). The conjunction γάρ at the beginning of v. 16b and v. 17a intensifies the close connection between these verses.

Rom 8:1-4

1. Οὐδὲν ἀρα νῦν κατάκριμα τοῖς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.
2. Γάρ νόμος τοῦ πνεύματος τῆς ζωῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ ἠλευθέρωσεν σε ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τῆς ἀμαρτίας καὶ τοῦ θανάτου.†
3. Τὸ γὰρ ἀδύνατον τοῦ νόμου ἐν οἷς ἦσαν διὰ τῆς σαρκός. ὁ θεὸς δὲ ἔπεμψε τὸν ἐαυτοῦ γινόμενον τῆς ἀμαρτίας καὶ τῆς σαρκός, ἐν ᾧ ἦμεν ταχύτερον τοῖς μὴ κατὰ σάρκα περιπατοῦσιν.†
4. Τὰ δὲ δικαίωμα τοῦ νόμου πληρωθέν ἐν ᾧ, τοῖς Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἀλλὰ κατὰ πνεύμα.†

1. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
2. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.†
3. For what the Law could not do. weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.†

Similarly, the conjunction γάρ appearing at the start of Rom 8:2 and 3 demonstrates that Paul’s reasoning in Rom 8:1-4 is consistent and compendious. Paul’s pronouncement of no condemnation in Rom 8:1 is followed by a succinct explication of the way the law of the Spirit sets the believers free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2).
Meanwhile, Paul expands his argumentation to present the grounds for freedom from sin, death and the flesh. The crucial element is “God’s decisive deed in Christ.”

Paul clearly explains how God sends His Son in human likeness, and condemns sin, destroying the power of sin on human flesh; thereby making it possible for believers to experience the fulfillment of the requirement of the law through the Spirit’s guidance (Rom 8:3-4).

Since there is evidence to follow the manner of Paul’s reasoning, Paul’s point in Rom 8:12-30 could be recognized as the very practical work and personal presence of the Spirit. Bertone applies “signal, sustainer, and surety” to portray the Spirit’s work in Rom 8.

The first two verbs συναντιλαμβάνομαι (“to help”) and ὑπερεντυγχάνω (“to pray”) used by Paul to describe the Spirit in Rom 8:26-27 are hapax legomena in Paul’s letters. After separating the compound verb συναντιλαμβάνομαι into three parts and checking their individual meaning (two prepositions [σύν, ἀντί], and a verb [λαμβάνειν]), Boyd adds up their meanings to “a taking hold of in turn and along with.” Boyd’s acceptance of the analysis of Robertson seems to commit an exegetical misleading notion of “the root fallacy,” which assumes that the meaning of a word is the adding up of its components. So does Bertone who holds that “the verb συναντιλαμβάνομαι means to offer support or assistance through cooperation (συν-) and simultaneously be a representative aid (‒αντι-)”.

Robertson’s interpretation based on the occurrence of ἀντιλαμβάνομαι in Acts 20:35 rather than on 1 Tim 6:2 seems too far-fetched. Besides, the only other appearance of συναντιλαμβάνομαι in the New Testament is in Luke 10:40, but it does not look like that Robertson’s explanation is the statement that Martha asks of Mary.

Put simply, BDAG glosses ἀντιλαμβάνομαι “take part in, devote oneself to, practice” which proposes that the implication of σύν + ἀντιλαμβάνομαι is to commit oneself wholeheartedly to something together with someone. Accordingly, the Spirit

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748 Ibid., 318.
749 For a more detailed analysis of Rom 8:1-4, see sec. 4.1.4 “The antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit” and sec. 4.1.5 “The fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law.”
750 Bertone, “The Function of the Spirit,” 77: “[T]he Spirit is the signal of God’s redemptive plan enacted, the Spirit is the sustainer in the concurrence of his redemptive plan enacted but not yet culminated, and the Spirit is the surety of his redemptive plan to be culminated” (emphasis original).
753 D. A. Carson, Exegetical Fallacies, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 28; “the root fallacy presupposes that every word actually has a meaning bound up with its shape or its components” (emphasis original).
754 Ibid., 56.
755 Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 573: “In the double compound συν-ἀντι-λαμβάνειν τῇ ἀνθρωπίᾳ ἡμῶν (Rom 8:26; cf. Luke 10:40) the fundamental meaning is obvious. The Holy Spirit lays hold of our weakness along with (σύν) us and carries his part of the burden facing us (ἀντί) as if two men were carrying a log, one at each end. Cf. ἀντι-λαμβάνομαι in Acts 20:35.”
756 BDAG, s.v. “ἀντιλαμβάνομαι,” 2 (italics original).
commits Himself completely to bear our weakness with us (Rom 8:26a). As regards the display of the believers’ bearing of their weakness, the meaning of τὸ τί προσευχόμεθα καθό δεῖ is “how to pray as we should” (NASB, NRSV) or “what to pray as we should” (NIV, NKJV, NET) (Rom 8:26b). According to its context, it is barely distinguishable. Both these meanings are possible. Paul’s emphasis is on the way the Spirit comes to the aid of the believers.

The most controversial issue in Rom 8:26-27 might be what the unequivocal implication of στεναγμός ἀλάλητος is. Fee is a typical representative of those who ardently claim that the Spirit’s intercession is through inarticulate groanings which are expressed in glossoletic utterance, and perfectly intelligible to God, though unintelligible to humans. In contrast, both Cranfield and Dunn maintain that the unexpressed groanings are the Spirit’s own language, not a way of expression comparable to tongues speaking. Cranfield states that “it is surely much more probable that the reference is to groanings imperceptible to the Christians themselves.” Dunn even takes Paul’s location at the time of writing Romans into consideration: “To that extent Paul may have had in mind the ecstatic excesses of the church in Corinth from where he was writing…; but had he wished his readers to think of glossolalia he would have written with greater care.”

After having reviewed both sides’ standpoints, we observe that an important dimension seems to be ignored by both. When most scholars pay their attention to the “sighs too deep for words,” and presume that the Spirit’s groanings must be unable to be discerned by believers, whether referring to “tongues speech” or not, its interpretation has an evident tendency for mystical or ecstatic experience (cf. 1 Cor 13:1). Under such circumstances, Paul’s viewpoint on the Spirit’s role of inspiring the believers’ mind (νοῦς, cf. Rom 12:2) and his Jewish background might have been disregarded. There is no parallel text of ἀλάλητος for reference due to its feature of hapax legomenon. Nonetheless, “unexpressed” or “wordless” groanings might be a surface phenomenon; they are neither necessarily silent, nor being uttered in tongues, nor referring to non-human language. Rather, the intercession of the Spirit Himself is most likely uttering in a low sounding, indistinct but meaningful and according to the

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757 Cranfield maintains that the meaning of the prefix συν- “is simply intensive,” and the verb συναντιλαμβάνεται in its context simply means that “the Spirit helps our weakness” (emphasis mine), see Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 421.


759 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 423.

760 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 479.

761 Fee, God’s Empowering Presence, 586.

762 BDAG, s.v. “ἀλάλητος.”
will of God. If the Spirit’s assistance is only to let believers sense “emotional alignment”\textsuperscript{763} between them and the Spirit without understanding His words, such a sustaining effect would not last long. Concerning the mission of the Spirit, Jesus’ statements in John 14:26-27, 16:13 and 16:33 are the most representative ones, which provide the work of the Spirit in very practical and rational dimension. Let us now turn to them (underlining mine):\textsuperscript{764}

John 14:26-27

\begin{quote}
26 ὁ δὲ παράκλητος, τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὁ πέμψει ὁ πατὴρ ἐν τῷ ὅνωματί μου, ἐκεῖνος ὑμᾶς διδάσκει πάντα καὶ ὑπομνήσει ὑμᾶς πάντα ὥσπερ ἐγώ ἔδωκα ὑμῖν [ἐγώ].
27 Εἰρήνην ἤρθη με ὑμῖν, εἰρήνην τὴν ἐμὴν δίδωμι ὑμῖν· οὐ καθός ὁ κόσμος δίδωσιν ἐγώ δίδωμι ὑμῖν. μή ταρασσόμεθα ὑμῖν ἢ καρδιά μηδὲ δειλιτῶ.
\end{quote}

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. \textsuperscript{27}

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

John 16:13

\begin{quote}
ὅταν δὲ ἐλθῇ ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἁληθείας, ὁδηγήσει ὑμᾶς ἐν τῇ ἁληθείᾳ πάσης· οὐ γὰρ λαλήσει ἡμῖν ἢ ἐαυτοῦ, ἀλλὰ ὡσα ἄκουσεις λαλήσει καὶ τὰ ἑρχόμενα ἀναγγέλει ὑμῖν.
But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.
\end{quote}

John 16:33

\begin{quote}
ταῦτα λελάληκα ὑμῖν ἵνα ἐν ἐμοὶ εἰρήνην ἔχετε, ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ὀλίγην ἔχετε· ἀλλὰ θαρσεῖτε, ἐγὼ νενίκηκα τὸν κόσμον.
These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.
\end{quote}

Jesus’ words are very inspiring. Not only does the Spirit function as a teacher and a reminder of Jesus’ words, but also the outcome of His work is the promised peace.

\textsuperscript{763} Bertone, “The Function of the Spirit,” 91.

\textsuperscript{764} The purpose of appealing to the statements in the Fourth Gospel is not to solve the puzzles of Pauline pneumatology, which probably makes the fallacy of semantic anachronism occur (see Carson, \textit{Exegetical Fallacies}, 33-35), but to demonstrate that the major and prevalent work of the Sprit (even in the narrative of the Johannine Jesus) is to lead the believers to be aware of God’s will and words, so that by which the believers can cope with various difficulties. To guide believers into contact with some kinds of mystical or indescribable experience is not supposed to be the Spirit’s main task.
With regard to the “cogent” work of the Spirit, Paul has a similar expression: “In the church I desire to speak five words with my mind, that I may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue” (1 Cor 14:19). When believers do not know how (or what) to pray, it does not mean they really have no idea in their mind. The thought in human mind always runs faster than words, and it is not uncommon that they become unspoken due to heavy stress and grief. However, when that happens, the most opportune moment has come for the Spirit to offer His help. The expression “do not know how (or what) to pray as we should” means, in all probability, “do not know how (or what) to pray with an organized and detailed content” (cf. Phil 4:6). Therefore, these promises and instructions from Jesus would be the best content of prayer induced and motivated by the Spirit in the believers’ heart. The most appropriate prayer is commonly God’s own promise and assurance. The believers are not unfamiliar with such tasks of the Spirit, in Him they have been crying out, “Abba! Father!” (Rom 8:15b). The Spirit can lead believers into the truth (John 16:13), because the Spirit Himself is the truth (τὸ πνεῦμα ἐστὶν ἡ ἀλήθεια; 1 John 5:6), as Christ makes a way for believers to enter into the holy place (Heb 10:19-20), because He is the way (John 14:6). When the Spirit intercedes for believers, He Himself becomes the prayer of believers.

In addition, one of the manifestations of Jewish prayer is wordless, like the prayer of Hannah, who is in deep anguish in praying and presenting her supplication of 1 Sam 1:10-13 (shading and underlining mine):

1 Sam 1:10

וְּהָיָה מִרְּתָּ֔ה לְּהָתְפֹלָ֖ל עַל־יְּהוָָ֖ה וּבָכֹּ֥ה תְּבֹֽכָה׃

10 And she, greatly distressed, prayed to the LORD and wept bitterly.”

1 Sam 1:12-13

וְּהָיָה כִּ֣י הָרְבָּתָ֥ה לְּהָתְפֹלָל לְּפָנֵ֖י יְּהוָָֽה וְּעָלַ֣י שָמְרָ֜ה אֲשֶׁר־אֲרָצֵיהֶ֗ם:

12 Now it came about, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli was watching her mouth.”

13 As for Hannah, she was speaking in her heart, only her lips were moving, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought she was drunk.”

Hannah’s bitter weeping is emphatically presented in 1 Sam 1:10 by the infinitive absolute הבכה (“to weep”) and an immediate following imperfect verbal form הבכה.

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765 The reason for referring to Hebrews is same as to the Fourth Gospel, see the previous note.
(“she wept”) of the same root (ָֽמּוֹש, “weep”).

Compared to her well organized prayer after her asking is granted in 1 Sam 2:1-10, her prayer in 1 Sam 1:11 is very brief, instinctive and desperate. Her prayer proceeds in an inarticulate way, being unable to be perceived by others. Though Hannah’s silence mainly results from her sorrowful spirit (1 Sam 1:14), very likely it is affected by her ordinary practice. Traditionally, the Israelites are taught by Joshua as follows (shading and underlining mine):

Josh 1:8

This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it; for then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have success.

καὶ οὐκ ἀποστῆσαι ἢ βιβλίος τοῦ νόμου τούτου ἐκ τοῦ στόματός σου καὶ μελετήσεις ἐν αὐτῷ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἵνα συνήσῃς παντὰ τὰ γεγραμμένα τότε εὐδοκθήσῃ καὶ εὐδοκίας τὰς ὁδοὺς σου καὶ τότε συνήσεις (Josh 1:8 LXX).

And the book of this law shall not depart out of your mouth, and you shall meditate on it day and night so that you may understand how to do all that is written. Then you shall prosper and make your ways prosperous, and then you shall be perceptive (Josh 1:8 NETS).

It is significant that Joshua highlights that the law shall not keep away from their mouth. The major reason comes from the verb הגה, which is denoted by HALOT as “to moan” (Isa 16:7), “to read in an undertone” (Josh 1:8; Ps 1:2), “to mutter while meditating” (Ps 63:7 [ET 63:6]; 77:13 [ET 77:12]; 143:5; Isa 33:18). Put another way, the Israelites learn the law not through theoretical speculation, but through reiterating in meditation and reflection with an undertone day and night. The same pattern appears in Ps 1:2 (“But his delight is in the law of the LORD, And in His law he meditates day and night”), and Ps 77:13 (“I will meditate on all Thy work, And muse on Thy deeds” [ET 77:12]). Marvin R. Wilson provides a more insightful observation regarding Jewish meditation as follows: “Meditation is the outward verbalizing of

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767 HALOT, s.v. “ָֽמּוֹש,” 2, when it functions as a qal verb, there are six kinds of meanings, here we list three kinds of them related to our discussion.
768 K&D, 4:30.
769 Underlining mine.
one’s thoughts before God, of the poring over his teachings and works. It means to articulate, in a low tone, thoughts of worship, wonder, and praise.\(^{770}\)

Sadly, the Greek translation of \(\pi\)\(\gamma\) in LXX (\(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\)) and the rendering in most English versions (meditate or ponder) seemingly reflect only partially the meaning of its Jewish milieu, and easily leads to a misapprehension. BDAG glosses \(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\) into three groups of meaning: “take care, endeavor,” “practice, cultivate, take pains with,” and “think about, meditate upon.”\(^{771}\) Obviously, LXX’s usages are closer to the third category, deeming it to fix one’s mind on something,\(^{772}\) which seemingly shows an inclination to static thinking. Moreover, \(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\) only appears twice in the New Testament in Acts 4:25 and 1 Tim 4:15. The verb occurs in Acts 4:25 due to the citation of Ps 2:1, where the corresponding \(\pi\)\(\gamma\) is denoted as “to plot with.” The other one occurring in 1 Tim 4:15 is glossed by BDAG as the second meaning mentioned above. Both occurrences of \(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\) seem unlikely to be linked to the three types of usages of \(\pi\)\(\gamma\) we refer to. Hence, the Greek verb \(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\) is indeed inadequate in demonstrating the traditional Jewish way of pondering God’s words.

Likewise, BDAG denotes \(\sigma\)\(\tau\)\(\epsilon\)\(\nu\)\(\alpha\)\(\gamma\)\(\iota\)\(\mu\)\(\omicron\)\(\omicron\)\(\zeta\) “sigh, groan, groaning,” considers it to be “an involuntary expression of great concern or stress,”\(^{773}\) which apparently is viewed as a negative wording. Nonetheless, once the Spirit intervenes on behalf of the believers, in the manner of intercession according to God’s will, it is highly probable that His groaning-like uttering in an undertone actually demonstrates to the believers an attitude that is well-pleasing to God. Paul obviously echoes here his exhortation in Rom 8:13 regarding the method of relying on the Spirit to eradicate the misdeeds and thoughts of the flesh, especially in our weakness. Paul also makes here a contrast between believers and creation. Both parties are in eschatological tension, under threat from the power of sin and death, yet only believers possess the privilege of being assisted by the Spirit. The support given by the Spirit is important for the reason that the Spirit’s help with His intercession will change the believers’ crisis into a turning point.

Accordingly, an appropriate understanding of the Spirit’s intercession differs from the majority understanding, expressed representatively by Moo: “it is preferable to understand these ‘groans’ as the Spirit’s own ‘language of prayer,’ a ministry of intercession that takes place in our hearts (cf. v. 27) in a manner imperceptible to us.”\(^{774}\) Rather, it is the Spirit whose indwelling effects confidence in us, which in turn encourages us to pray with the Spirit-inspired words which are from God’s own promise, in undertones but understandable content, maybe agonizingly but confidently. In fact,

\(^{771}\) BDAG, s.v. “\(\mu\)\(\lambda\)\(\varepsilon\)\(\tau\)\(\acute{\iota}\)\(\omega\)” (italics original).
\(^{772}\) Ibid., 3.
\(^{773}\) BDAG, s.v. “\(\sigma\)\(\tau\)\(\epsilon\)\(\nu\)\(\alpha\)\(\gamma\)\(\iota\)\(\mu\)\(\omicron\)\(\omicron\)\(\zeta\)” (italics original).
\(^{774}\) Moo, \textit{Romans}, 525-26 (emphasis added).
a potent and internal evidence comes from Paul’s parallel argument between Gal 4:6 and Rom 8:15. In Gal 4:6 the person who cries out: “Abba! Father!” is the Spirit Himself. Yet in Rom 8:15 the subject of the verb κράζωμεν is the believers who are crying out ἐν δό ("by whom"). This relative pronoun (δό) in the form of dative neuter singular apparently refers to the Spirit. Thus it can be seen that Paul deliberately equates the Spirit’s work with the believers’ work empowered or enlightened by the Spirit, not making a clear distinction. Paul immediately provides his main reasons in Rom 8:27. First, God knows what the mind of the Spirit is (Rom 8:27a). Secondly, the Spirit intercedes for believers according to the will of God (Rom 8:27b). The second half of the verse is a further explanation of the first half due to the subordinating conjunction ὅτι (“because,” or “that”).

Paul uses ὁ δὲ ἐραυνῶν τὰς καρδίας (“He who searches the hearts,” Rom 8:27a) to describe God, implying that “since God searches the secrets of men’s heart, He must a fortiori be supposed to know the unspoken desires of His own Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 2:10f, where it is the Spirit’s knowledge of God’s secrets that is referred to).”

It is noteworthy that Paul’s wording τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος (“the mind of the Spirit,” NASB or “the way of the Spirit’s thinking,” cf. BDAG) reminds his readers of what he explicates in Rom 8:6-7, where the mindset of the Spirit is strikingly contrasted with the mindset of the flesh. In both Rom 8:6b and 27a, the “genitive substantive” τοῦ πνεύματος “functions semantically as the subject of the verbal idea implicit in the head noun” τὸ φρόνημα, thereby τὸ φρόνημα τοῦ πνεύματος denotes the way the Spirit thinks. Paul further states that the reason why God knows the mindset of the Spirit is that the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to God’s will. In Rom 8:27b the prepositional phrase κατὰ θεόν is emphatically put at the beginning of the clause, proving that the Spirit’s intercession is effective due to the Spirit’s precise consent and cooperation with God rather than the Spirit’s own tongue of prayer. BDAG describes κατὰ as a “marker of norm of similarity or homogeneity,” which denotes “according to whose will, pleasure or manner…,” when it is followed by the accusative of persons (cf. Rom 15:5; 2 Cor 7:9-11). In other words, once believers are empowered by the Spirit to be spiritually minded, their prayer is actually the Spirit’s intercession, especially when they are plagued by their weaknesses.

An emphasis on God’s will as the criterion for the assessment of the Spirit’s work is

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775 Dunn is right in stating that “the ὅτι could be taken either as causal (‘because’ …) or as explicative (‘that’ …) … both senses make sense, and nothing much hangs on the choice,” see Dunn, Romans 1-8, 480. Moo, Romans, 527, favors the causal understanding.
776 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 424.
777 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “φρόνημα.”
778 Cf. sec. 4.1.6 “The indwelling Spirit.”
779 Wallace, Greek Grammar, 113.
780 Cf. BDAG, s.v. “κατὰ,” 5. a. a.
not scarce in Paul. In 1 Thess 5:19-22, regarding the application of God’s will for His people, Paul gives his recipients two prohibitions against quenching the Spirit and despising prophetic utterances (τὸ πνεῦμα μὴ σβέννυτε, προφητείας μὴ ἐξουθενεῖτε, 1 Thess 5:19-20), as well as three positive commands of testing all things, holding fast to the good and holding themselves away from all kinds of evil (πάντα δὲ δοκιμάζετε, τὸ καλὸν κατέχετε, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ ἀπέχεσθε, 1 Thess 5:21-22). Jeffrey A. D. Weima proposes that the context of 1 Thess 5:16-22 refers to “doing God’s will in congregational worship.”

In the Spirit-inspired circumstance, Paul provides a divine principle for judgment: “τὸ γὰρ θέλημα θεοῦ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ εἰς ὑμᾶς (“for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus,” 1 Thess 5:18), in which τὸ γὰρ θέλημα θεοῦ (“this is the will of God”) is best perceived to look backward, namely to πάντοτε χαίρετε, διαλείπτως προσεύχεσθε, ἐν πάντι εὐχαριστεῖτε (“rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks,” 1 Thess 5:16-18a). Put exactly, if the words or activities in their worship coincide with the direction the passage 1 Thess 5:16-18a stakes out, then they are supposed to be held fast. Paul’s special emphasis here is that the Spirit demonstrates His presence (guarantee, intercession) on His own initiative and according to God’s will when believers are overwhelmed by a feeling of weakness and helplessness. The empowering presence of the Spirit will bring to the Roman believers the blessing Paul granted the Thessalonian believers in the verses following immediately after the passage 1 Thess 5:16-22: “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is He who calls you, and He also will bring it to pass” (1Thess 5:23-24).

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781 Weima, 1-2 Thessalonians, 398.
782 Ibid.
783 Regrettably, Weima does not point out that the passage 1 Thess 5:16-18a can function as the best testing criterion. Weima lists three discerning principles of Paul according to his own general observation: upbuilding, apostolic tradition as well as the prophet’s character and conduct; see ibid., 409.
And in the same way, the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, according to the will of God.
4.3.3.4 Awaiting being glorified along with inner renewal (Romans 8:28-30)

The discussion above will lead us further into a consideration of Paul’s reflection here of the essence of his theologia crucis ("the theology of the cross"), which simultaneously manifests why God could demonstrate his power in the weakness of His believers (2 Cor 12:9). There are some opponents of Paul among the recipients in the Corinthian church, they not only despise the content of his gospel of the crucified Christ (cf. 1 Cor 1:17-18, 23; 2:2-5) and his rejection of Greek rhetoric and philosophical wisdom (1 Cor 1:12, 22; 2:1, 6; 3:4), but they also are suspicious of Paul’s authority as an apostle (2 Cor 11:5, 21; 12:11), because he apparently lacks powerful recommendation from Jerusalem (2 Cor 3:1-2) and miracles demonstration (1 Cor 1:22; 2 Cor 12:22). Paul is criticized as a person being inconsistent in his words (2 Cor 1:18), preaching a superficial message (2 Cor 3:4-18), being unimpressive in appearance and contemptible in speech (2 Cor 10:10), feathering his own nest (2 Cor 8:20), taking advantage of others (2 Cor 7:2; 12:16-17) and having a lack of heavenly revelation and vision (2 Cor 12:1-4). There are more external sufferings of Paul recounted in 2 Cor 11:23-33, including imprisonment, being beaten with whip and rod, being stoned, being in dangers from robbers, countrymen, Gentiles and false brethren, experiencing the perils of staying in city, wilderness and on journey, experiencing hardships, sleeplessness, hunger and thirst, in cold and exposed to political persecution. Moreover, there are internal anxieties caused by the concern for all the churches, in which some believers are weak in truth or led astray (cf. 1 Cor 1:10-11; 2 Cor 12:20-21).

In various sufferings, Paul does not deny his incapability and weakness. Rather, he considers them to be proper places and occasions for the demonstration of God’s mighty strength. Paul takes his weakness as experience of the suffering and the death of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 4:9-13; 2 Cor 4:7-12). Even facing the hostility and frustration on all sides, Paul reaffirms the core of his gospel, the crucified Christ, who is God’s power and wisdom (1 Cor 1:22-25), calling him to be His apostle (1 Cor 1:1; Rom 1:1-4). Link’s analysis is worthy to be introduced as follows:

Christ was crucified in (lit. from) weakness and in this Crucified One the weakness of God comes to light, which to men’s eyes appears to be powerlessness and folly (1 Cor 1:25, 27). Since, however, God has demonstrated his might in weakness, i.e. in the death of Christ, by raising him from the dead (2 Cor 13:4), it is in the very sufferings of his followers that God’s creative, life-giving power is revealed. Paul regards his own weak-

ness, which is under severe attack from his opponents in Corinth, as a mark of discipleship and fellowship in Christ’s sufferings (1 Cor 2:2 f.; 4:10; 2 Cor 13:4).  

It is in Paul’s statement regarding Jesus and Him crucified that “[a] theology of the cross calls the thing what it actually is,” in which God reveals Himself in the most horrible and miserable place, thereby through Jesus’ death and resurrection His “strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Cor 12:9). The weakness which is supposed to destroy any mortal human being becomes the exhibition of God’s power (2 Cor 12:10b). That is why Paul is so confident as his confirmation in 2 Cor 4:16-18 testifies (underlining mine):

2 Cor 4:16-18

16 Διό οὖκ ἐγκακοῦμεν, ἀλλὰ εἰ καὶ ὁ ἐξω ἡμῶν ἀνθρώπος διαφθείρεται, ἀλλὰ ὁ ἐξω ἡμῶν ἀνακαινοῦται ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα. 17 τὸ γὰρ παρατικὰ ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως ἡμῶν καθ’ ύπερβολὴν εἰς ύπερβολὴν αἰώνιον βάρος δόξης κατεργάζεται ἡμῖν, 18 μὴ σκοποῦντων ἡμῶν τὰ βλεπόμενα ἀλλὰ τὰ μὴ βλεπόμενα· τὰ γὰρ βλεπόμενα πρόσκαιρα, τὰ δὲ μὴ βλεπόμενα αἰώνια.

16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

It is amazing to find that Paul’s perspectives in 2 Cor 4:16-18 have high equivalent to his statement in Rom 8:18-30. At the same time, the reason for Paul’s proclamation that “all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28 NRSV), is revealed. The striking contrast between διαφθείρεται (“is decaying”) and ἀνακαινοῦται (“is being renewed”) in 2 Cor 4:16 also appears in Rom 8:18-30. Both verbs are hapax legomena in Paul’s letters, and are presented in indicative present passive, depicting that decay and renewal are enacted concurrently on believers, who are subject to both phenomena that are in conflict with each other. But the seemingly conflicting event is a blessing from God to the believers, for whom the renewal (Rom 12:2 [ἀνακαίνωσις, a cognate of ἀνακαινόω]) is experi-

785 Link, _NIDNTT_ 3: 995 (emphasis mine).

enced day by day,\textsuperscript{787} in order to know God’s will and that the final redemption shall be assured (Rom 8:23). In contrast, the creation is made subject to corruption (φθορά, a cognate of διαφθείρω) the whole time without any renewal until the revealing of the glory of God’s children (Rom 8:19, 21).

Another antithesis displayed in 2 Cor 4:17 between present insignificant affliction (ʔיָ֣וַ֗דַּס) and future eternal glory (דֹּ֛צַ֖א) is reflected in Rom 8:18, reverberating through Rom 8:18-30. Paul’s contrast here conveys a more dramatic disparity between now and future, as well as between distress and glory. In 2 Cor 4:17 the present hardship is intensified by a combination of an adverb (παραυτάκα, “immediately, for the present”) and an adjective (ἐλαφρός, “light, insignificant”). And more than that, the future glory is heightened by a series of descriptions of combinations. First, the adverbial phrase καθ᾽ υπερβολήν εἰς υπερβολήν (“beyond all measure and proportion”) appears only here in the Bible, showing the multiplying effect of the ordinary expression καθ᾽ υπερβολήν (“beyond measure, utterly,” e.g., Rom 7:13; 1 Cor 12:1; 2 Cor 1:8).\textsuperscript{788} Secondly, the phrase αἰώνιον βάρος (“eternal” + “weight”) employs “a built-in paronomasia since δόξα, on its Semitic groundplan (תְּבִיָּא, kāḇōḏ), speaks of ‘heaviness,’ ‘weight.’”\textsuperscript{789} Not only is the quality of heavy glory far above light suffering, but also the length of eternal splendor is much greater than transitory affliction. That is why Paul is so certain that our present pains are puny compared to the magnitude of future glory revealed to us (Rom 8:18).

Paul seems never to be tired of highlighting his point in antithetical way. One more contrast appears in 2 Cor 4:18, where the transient things which are seen are contrasted with the eternal things which are not seen. Such exhortation of not allowing our worldview to be determined by what we perceive in our sight, but instead keeping our eyes on what cannot be seen, which is God’s glory in the invisible kingdom, is echoing in Rom 8:25. Before writing Romans, Paul has deeply experienced how his personal weaknesses could be transformed into God’s strength, how the harsh situations could be utilized by God, and thereby producing benefit to God’s children. Three main statements of his argumentation in the context of 2 Cor 4:16-18, which has a high similarity with Rom 8:18-30, reveal the secret of his transformation. Next, let us look at these statements in 2 Cor 4:7, 10-11 and 5:5.

2 Cor 4:7(underlining mine)

\textsuperscript{787} In 2 Cor 4:16 Paul’s usage of the Greek form of ἡμέρα καὶ ἡμέρα might be influenced by Hebrew expression of a distributive adverb by duplication of a noun (i.e., יָמִּים יָמִים, “daily,” Isa 58:2); cf. Nigel Turner, A Grammar of New Testament Greek, V. 4: Style (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1976), 92.

\textsuperscript{788} BDAG, s.v. “ὑπερβολή.”

\textsuperscript{789} Ralph P. Martin, 2 Corinthians, WBC 40 (Waco, TX: Word, 1986), 92.

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δυνάμεως ἢ τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ μὴ ἥξ ἡμῶν.
But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the surpassing greatness of the power may be of God and not from ourselves.

Paul’s line of reasoning in juxtaposing paradoxical entities appears again in 2 Cor 4:7, where he refers to the clay jars versus the extraordinary power of God. Using “earthen vessels” to symbolize the fragility and weakness of the believers’ body, which is also implied in Rom 8:23 and 26, Paul intends to show that our weak body will become a place demonstrating the extraordinary quality of God’s power once we possess this treasure. “This treasure” points towards “the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ” (τὸν φωτισμὸν τοῦ εὐαγγελίου τῆς δόξης τοῦ Χριστοῦ, 2 Cor 4:4), which is what the unbelievers cannot see. To die with Jesus means to live with Him. Paul continues to demonstrate that this paradox in 2 Cor 4:10-11 (underlining mine) is true not only in the united status, but also in practical life.

2 Cor 4:10-11

always carrying about in the body the dying of Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body. [11] For we who live are constantly being delivered over to death for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

The gospel and its light are exhibited through Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection. Paul views his sufferings as συμπάσχομεν (“we suffer together,” Rom 8:17) with Christ, that is, carrying about the dying of Jesus in our body, owing to our being delivered to death constantly. As a result, the fact that συνδοξασθῶμεν (“we might be glorified together,” Rom 8:17)790 with Christ will become true and can be experienced in advance in this life. In accordance with this, Forde claims that “it is only through suffering and the cross that sinners can see and come to know God.”791 Our mortal flesh, which is synonymous with weakness, can be turned into the stage of the manifestation of the life of Jesus (cf. Rom 6:12; 8:11). At the same time, Paul particularly notices the role of the Spirit in the believers’ transformation as well. Besides the

790 Robertson, A Grammar of the Greek New Testament, 924-25; cf. 88n49, 202n442; similar cases (i.e., the aorist subjunctive is regarded as the future indicative), cf. e.g. Rom 3:4 (δικαιωθῆς, "you might be justified"); 10:9 (οἰκολογήσης, “you might confess,” and πιστεύσῃς, “you might believe”).
791 Forde, On Being a Theologian, 86 (emphasis original).
strong arguments for the ministry of the Spirit who performs the renewing work in the believers’ mind (2 Cor 3:3-18), Paul longs for (ἐπιποθεῖν, “to desire”) and affirms the occurrence of the resurrected body because of the guarantee of the Spirit (2 Cor 5:1-5).

Though there is groaning (στενάζω, “to groan,” 2 Cor 5:2, 4) in the earthly body, τὸ οἰκητήριον τῷ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ (“the dwelling from heaven,” 2 Cor 5:2), namely, “the glorified body of a transfigured Christian,”792 will be owned without doubt (2 Cor 5:1-4).

The reason why Paul claims such a conviction is as follows (underlining mine):

2 Cor 5:5

ὁ δὲ κατεργασάμενος ἡμᾶς εἰς αὐτό τούτο θεός, ὁ δοῦς ἣμῖν τὸν ἄρραβόνα τοῦ πνεύματος.

Now He who prepared us for this very purpose is God, who gave to us the Spirit as a pledge.

A similar point of view to see the Spirit as a first installment or guarantee of future salvation is expressed also in 2 Cor 1:22 and Eph 1:14. Through the Spirit’s function as a pledge, God prepared us for our confirmation of “this very thing” (αὐτό τούτο), which is the point of 2 Cor 5:1-4, the glorified body of a redeemed believer. The double aorist participles κατεργασάμενος (“prepared”) and δοῦς (“gave”) convey a sturdy message that God has done His renewed work, of which the influence is still operating in the lifelong process of awaiting.793 Therefore, Paul can state firmly, “for we walk by faith, not by sight” (διὰ πίστεως γὰρ περιπατοῦμεν, οὐ διὰ εἰδοὺς, 2 Cor 5:7). Paul’s confidence in Rom 8:18-30, especially in 8:23-25, is a mirror of his insight here.794

Based on the discussion above, the interpretation of Rom 8:28 must be provided in the light of Rom 8:18-27 semantically, though lexically it is more closely related to Rom 8:29-30. As Cranfield observes, “the purpose of vv. 28-30 was to underline the certainty of that hope of which vv. 17-27 had spoken. This certainty is indicated by the first part of v. 28.”795 Put otherwise, Rom 8:28b (πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἁγαθόν) functions as a hinge, connecting Rom 8:18-27 with 8:28-30; the phrase (τοῖς ἁγαπητοῖς τὸν θεόν, “those who love God,” in Rom 8:28a) is a summarized designation of God’s children, who are the beneficiary of Rom 8:28b (“all things work together for good,” NRSV); Rom 8:28c (τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὕσιν, “to those who are called according to His purpose”) is a further clarification of Rom 8:28a. Fi-

792 BDAG, s.v. “οἰκητήριον.”
795 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 431.
nally, the unit Rom 8:29-30 extends the interpretation of Rom 8:28 (especially v. 28c) and makes a conclusion of the whole passage of Rom 8:18-30 (cf. Diagram 4-9 Text analysis of Romans 8:28-30).

Like Rom 2:2 and 3:19, Rom 8:28 begins with οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι (“now we know that”), not only does the combination of οἴδαμεν and ὅτι imply that a widely familiar reality is acknowledged as true, but also the coordinating conjunction δὲ indicates a close reasoning linkage of the following statements to the preceding texts. In particular, the well-known and accepted fact starts with τοῖς ἁγαπῶσιν τὸν θεόν (“for those who love God”); the forward position of this phrase displays its prominence in Paul’s mind. Paul uses the verb ἀγαπάω, which expresses most fully the relationship between family members, to describe the relationship between the believers and God. Such a loving relation not only summarizes the God-pleasing response of the believers to God, but also reveals the reason why the believers become the recipient of πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἁγαθόν. Besides, owing to the believers’ love to God, which manifests the earlier love of God (cf. Rom 5:5), Paul is paving the way for his final conclusion of the first eight chapters of Romans, in which God’s all-surpassing love is the focus (cf. Rom 8:31-39).

Cranfield lists and compares eight possibilities of the interpretation of πάντα συνεργεῖ. Other scholars mostly divide all alternatives into three main categories. The first category is to see πάντα as the subject, then Rom 8:28b can be translated as “all things work together for good” (e.g., ASV, NKJV, NRSV, KJV, Barrett, Cranfield, and Moo). The second category is to adopt the long reading or view God as the real subject behind the action of συνεργεῖ. Under these circumstances, there are two options: one is to read συνεργεῖ as transitive, thereby Rom 8:28b can be rendered as “God causes all things to work together for good” (e.g., NASB); the other is to take Rom 8:28a as an associative dative, συνεργεῖ as transitive, πάντα as an accusative of respect, resulting in the following rendering of Rom 28b: “in all things God works for good with those who love him” (e.g., JB, NJB, NIV, TEV, RSV, Dodd, Gieniusz). The second grouping “represents the majority opinion

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796 Cf. 262n673.
797 BDAG, s.v. “δὲ,” 2.
800 Barrett, Romans, 169.
802 Moo, Romans, 528.
803 The long reading means an insertion with additional ὁ θεός after συνεργεῖ, supported by the witnesses of Ῥ 28. A B 81 sa, see NA, 497.
among translators and scholars about the verse.”

The third category is to read Rom 8:28 in close connection to the preceding verses 26-27, where it has been stated that the Spirit “helps” (συναντιλαμβάνεται) and “intercedes” (ἐντυγχάνει) and identify the Spirit as the subject of συνεργεῖ. Other conditions being equal as above, Rom 8:28b can be denoted as “in all things God’s Spirit works for good with those who love him” (e.g., NEB807, Jewett808).

Generally speaking, Cranfield’s reasoning is relatively more cogent. First, he accepts “the shorter reading and take(s) πάντα as the subject of συνεργεῖ” due to stronger external evidence,809 which is supported by the committee of the United Bible Societies, that considers the witnesses of the long reading to be “too narrowly supported to be admitted into the text,” and the ones of shorter reading to be more “diversified.”810 Secondly, regarding the internal evidence, Cranfield grasps the principle of “the more difficult and shorter reading is to be preferred”811 and provides an explanation corresponding to its context, making his stance of adopting “πάντα as the subject of συνεργεῖ” more compelling, and avoiding being criticized as “evolutionary optimism” in terms of Dodd’s phrase.812 Thirdly, Cranfield points out that what is expressed in Rom 8:28b “is a truly biblical confidence in the sovereignty of God.”813 The context has indeed demonstrated the fact of God’s dominion through His work in God’s children (vv. 19, 21), God’s creation (vv. 19-22), God’s Spirit (vv. 23, 26-27), God’s will (v. 27), God’s love (v. 28), and His eternal plan of salvation in His Son (vv. 29-30). Fourthly, Cranfield indicates that “the primary reference of πάντα is to ‘sufferings of the present time’ (v. 18), to what Calvin in his comment calls ‘adversities’ or ‘the cross.’ ”814 If we follow Paul’s line of reasoning, the inner struggle with sin in the lifetime of the believers is certainly included (cf. Rom 7:14-25). Luther’s description of a Christian being as “simul justus et peccator” (“simultaneous righteous and sinner”) is a more apposite remark.815 Finally, Cranfield is inclined to translate

805 Gieniusz, Romans 8:18-30, 255-59.
807 NEB’s translation of Rom 8:28ab is as follows: “and in everything, as we know, he (the Spirit) co-operates for good with those who love God” (explanation in brackets mine).
809 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 425 (citation; the addition of [s] after take is mine), 427-28.
810 Cf. Metzger, A Textual Commentary, 458; The witnesses for the shorter reading are more significant in date and geographical distribution: א C D F G K L P Ψ 33 104 630 1175 1241 1505 1739 1881 2464 25 latt sy bo; CI (see NA28, 497).
812 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 427.
813 Ibid.
814 Ibid., 428.
815 Winger, “Simul Justus et Peccator,” 94-95; and cf. sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator.”
συνεργεῖα as “assist, help on, and profit,” and correctly identifies that “all things, even those which seem most adverse and hurtful, such as persecution or death itself, are profitable to those who truly love God.”\textsuperscript{816} Cranfield does not forget to specify that εἰς ἀγαθὸν is not that “all things serve the comfort or convenience or worldly interests of believers,” but rather “assist our salvation.”\textsuperscript{817} This concurs with Kolb’s observation that “Luther’s theology of the cross focuses our attention on trust in the God who loves us and promises his presence in the midst of afflictions.”\textsuperscript{818}

Regrettably, two auxiliary interpretations of Cranfield seem to be weak. One is his reference to the εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν in Rom 13:4 in commenting on εἰς ἀγαθὸν.\textsuperscript{819} Considering the relevance and suitability of Paul’s argument, Rom 13:4, due to its dealing with the application of the gospel in social ethics, is less appropriate to be an assisting enlightenment. Instead, the εἰς τὸ ἀγαθὸν in Rom 15:2 is a better alternative. Here believers are exhorted by Paul to be self-sacrificial for their neighbor’s benefit. The indicative behind the imperative of Rom 15:2 is the example of Christ, as seen in the following verses (underlining mine):

\begin{quote}
Rom 15:3-4

3 καὶ γὰρ ὁ Χριστὸς οὐχ ἔαυτῷ ἤρεσεν, ἀλλὰ καθὼς γέγραπται· οἱ ὄνειδισμοί τῶν ὄνειδιστῶν σε ἔπέσεσαν ἐπ’ ἐμέ. 4 διὰ γὰρ προεγράφη, εἰς τὴν ἡμετέραν διδασκαλίαν ἐγράφη, ἵνα διὰ τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ διὰ τῆς παρακλήσεως τῶν γραφῶν τὴν ἐλπίδα ἔχωμεν.

4 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached Thee fell upon Me.” 4 For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.
\end{quote}

The citation in Rom 15:3 comes from LXX Ps 68:10b (MT 69:10b [ET 69:9b]), in which the suffering righteous is identified by Paul as Christ, who, for the sake of loving God and loving His people, is willing to bear the sinners’ reproach to God. Christ’s example is definitely appropriate to be the content of the intercession of the Spirit so that the believers can keep waiting in hope and in perseverance (cf. Rom 8:26-27).

The other weakness of Cranfield’s clarification has to do with the subject of Rom 8:28. He provides his reason for suggesting that the subject of Rom 8:28 is to be all things instead of God is that Paul

\textsuperscript{816} Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 428.
\textsuperscript{817} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{818} Kolb, “Luther,” 456.
\textsuperscript{819} Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 428.
wants to draw attention to the transcendent power of Him who helps us. His power, His authority, is such that all things, even the actions of those who are disobedient and set themselves against Him, must subserve His will. To say that all things assist believers is thus—in a biblical context—a heightening of the statement that God assists them; for it is to assert not only that He assists them, but also that His help is triumphantly and utterly effective.\(^{820}\)

Under such exposition Cranfield’s view in essence tends towards the second category, as represented by the translation of NASB: “God causes all things to….” However, there is an important clue overlooked not only by Cranfield but by most scholars. In Rom 8:19-22 Paul employs the method of personification to describe the mental and the physical performances of creation. Since the whole creation in the Old Testament, especially in the Prophets, can be conceived as a victim to prompt Jewish people to repent,\(^{821}\) and under Paul’s phrasing in Rom 8:19-22 to urge the believers to show patience in waiting for their redemption, then all things, even the adversarial powers or authorities listed in Rom 8:35-39 included, can be personified as the subject of its action in God’s sovereignty to produce benefits to the believers. God does not change the essence of “all things” and cause them to become pleasant to the believers, but rather He renews the mind of the believers, who are deeply influenced by God’s love (cf. Rom 5:5; 2 Cor 5:14; Gal 2:20), to experience advantage regarding redemption when they undergo “all things.” Paul describes that the elevation of the hardened Pharaoh by God becomes God’s tool to demonstrate His power and to show mercy on the Israelites (Rom 9:17-18). Paul’s proclamation in 2 Cor 12:10, “therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong,” is a straightforward representation of his assertion here. Among the two roles of the creation in the Old Testament and in Rom 8:19-22, the dominant power behind it has been strongly implied to be God, as clearly expressed by Paul in Rom 8:20: διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντά (“because of Him who subjected it”). Therefore, to add a supplementary “God” as subject when translating Rom 8:28b would appear superfluous, as the redundant concern of “an Alexandrian editor.”\(^{822}\)

Using Rom 8:28c as an apposition to the clause of 8:28a (cf. Diagram 4-9), Paul further describes those who love God as “those who are called according to His purpose.” In investigating the omitted possessive case related to πρόθεσιν (cf. Rom 9:11), Cranfield rightly rejects the suggestion of most ancient Greek commentators who re-

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\(^{820}\) Ibid., 428-29 (emphasis original).

\(^{821}\) Cf. sec. 4.3.3.2.1 “The groaning of the creation (Romans 8:19-22).”

\(^{822}\) Metzger, A Textual Commentary, 458.
fer πρόθεσις to the believers and interpret κατὰ πρόθεσιν as according to the choice by which the called respond to God’s call.\textsuperscript{823} Cranfield believes that the possessive case should refer to “God’s.” He seeks supports for his analysis from a similar usage of Paul in Rom 9:11 (the only other occurrence of πρόθεσις in Romans), and the implication of πρόθεσις in Rom 8:28 is defined by προέγνω (“he foreknew”) and προώρισεν (“he predestined”) in Rom 8:29. Because of the connotation of effectual calling in κλητοίς, Cranfield maintains that “κατὰ πρόθεσιν is added simply in order to bring out the meaning of κλητοίς.”\textsuperscript{824} In conclusion, Cranfield realizes that behind the love which the believers have for God is “God’s prior choice of them.”\textsuperscript{825} Cranfield’s dealing with Rom 8:28c results in putting it into a causal relationship to v. 28a. Luther Poellot provides a similar treatment as well.\textsuperscript{826} Poellot’s translation of Rom 8:28 is as follows: “All things work together for good to them that love God, being the called (that is, because they are the called) according to His purpose.”\textsuperscript{827} The participle οὖσιν in Rom 8:28c, ignored in Cranfield’s analysis all the time, is recognized as being of causal implication; hence, Rom 8:28c gives the reason why Poellot’s translation of 8:28ab makes sense.\textsuperscript{828} However, referring to Paul’s usage of dative participle (οὖσιν) instead of finite verb (εἰσίν[v]) as the equative verb with a predicate dative (τοῖς … κλητοῖς), the participle is “in reality an emphatic kind of simple apposition in the dative,”\textsuperscript{829} such as Paul’s phrasing in Gal 4:8 (underlining mine):

Gal 4:8

Ἀλλὰ τότε μὲν οὐκ εἰδότες θεόν ἔδουλεύσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὖσιν θεοῖς.

However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods.

With an emphatic tone, Paul admonishes that since the Galatians are already God’s children, they are required not to be enslaved to those beings which by nature are not gods at all,\textsuperscript{830} namely, to “the elementary forms of religion, Jewish and polytheistic (τὰ ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα, lit. ‘the weak and worthless elemental things,’ Gal 4:9), which have been superseded by the new revelation in Christ.”\textsuperscript{831} Paul uses Gal 4:9-10 to clarify the emphatic “no gods” in the preceding verse, which are demanded

\textsuperscript{823} Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 429.
\textsuperscript{824} Ibid., 430 (italics original).
\textsuperscript{825} Ibid., 431.
\textsuperscript{827} Ibid., 344 (emphasis mine).
\textsuperscript{828} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{829} Wallace, Greek Grammar, 152 (emphasis original).
\textsuperscript{830} Cf. BDAG, s.v. “φύσις,” 2.
\textsuperscript{831} BDAG, s.v. “στοιχεῖον,” 2 (insertion in brackets mine).
with force to be rejected by Galatians. Back to Rom 8:28-30, Paul’s trace of thought is similar to Gal 4:8-10; there are two reasons for Paul’s emphasis on τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὖσιν. One is the salvific significance of calling, as Newman and Nida state: “In biblical thought the idea of ‘calling’ has reference to the realization of God’s purpose within history. That is to say, the salvation event is never something that is looked upon as being by accident or chance; it is always related to the eternal purpose of God.” The other is the contextual connection of calling. Roman recipients are not unfamiliar with the calling status which has been emphasized on Paul himself (Rom 1:1) and the recipients themselves (Rom 1:6, 7). Besides the identity of being called to belong to Jesus Christ (Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, Rom 1:6), Roman recipients are beloved by God (ἀγαπητοῖς θεοῦ), being called to be saints (ἁγίοις, Rom 1:7). For that reason Paul’s portrayal of them here in Rom 8:28 as οἱ ἀγαπώντες τὸν θεόν and οἱ κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοὶ οὖντες not only serves as a consequential reminder, but also coheres with his surrounding arguments, making them hold together to form a consistent whole.

Romans 8:29 begins with the conjunction ὅτι, which functions as a marker of causality, because the following fivefold description of divine action in Rom 8:29-30 summarizing God’s work on His children provides a solid grounds for Rom 8:28. Before a more detailed examination of Rom 8:29-30, some observations concerning the so-called “golden chain” should come to our notice. In four parallel clauses Paul lists five aorist verbs in sequence: προέγνω, (“foreknew,” Rom 8:29), προώρισεν (“predestined,” Rom 8:29), ἐκάλεσεν (“called,” Rom 8:30), ἐδικαίωσεν (“justified,” Rom 8:30), and ἐδόξασεν (“glorified,” Rom 8:30). Newman and Nida are correct in observing that Paul does not build up a theological theory of predestination here, but reflects on the experience of the believers in the light of God’s everlasting intention which demonstrates the complete initiative and grace of God and the achievement beyond any human effort. At the end of his argumentation, Paul provides his audience a panoramic view of God’s masterpiece of salvation in eternity, namely, in the dimension of time. The five aorist verbs signify their completion in history, of which

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832 Newman and Nida, Romans, 166 (emphasis added).
834 As Scott observes, “Rom. 8:29 provides a convenient point of departure for discussing this future aspect of υἱοθεσία, for there the relationship between the Son and the sons of God is stressed in a way that brings the theme of sonship in Rom. 8:12-30 to a decisive climax,” see Scott, Adoption as Sons of God, 245.
835 Ibid.; the issue regarding whether the parallelism in Rom 8:29-30 is a citation of a part of liturgical form will not be discussed here.
836 Newman and Nida, Romans, 167.
the first two are connected to God’s purpose before the foundation of the world (cf. Eph 1:4), whereas the other three verbs deal with the accomplishment of God’s salvation in human history. Though the believers’ glorification is in the future, it is viewed as already completed by Paul.838

Besides, some familiar verbs regarding God’s salvation which Paul frequently uses are absent here, such as “save” (σώζω, e.g., Rom 5:9), “sanctify” (ἁγιάζω, e.g., Rom 15:16), “redeem” (λατρέω, cf. Titus 2:14; ἐξαγοράζω, e.g., Gal 4:5), “reconcile” (καταλλάσσω, e.g., Rom 5:10; 2 Cor 5:18-20), “deliver” (ἐξαιρέω, e.g., Gal 1:4), “set free” (ρύομαι, e.g., Rom 7:24), “choose” (ἐκλέγομαι, e.g., 1 Cor 1:27; αἱρέω, cf. 2 Thess 2:13) and “give freely” (χαρίζω, e.g., Gal 3:18) etc. It can be clearly seen that Paul is simply making a general summary of the proposition which he has been developing and expounding from Rom 6:1 onwards. Though Cranfield is right that Rom 8:29-30 is understood rather as “supporting v. 28 as a whole than as explaining just the last five words of it,”839 its relation with v. 28 is not clearly shown only by the causal conjunction ὅτι. For the verb καλέω, a cognate of κλήτος, does not appear until Rom 8:30,840 being arranged in the middle rather than at the beginning of the chains of salvation with its five elements. Judging from Paul’s train of thought, Rom 8:28 is more easily interpreted by means of preceding reasoning and parallel texts than by Rom 8:29-30. Obviously, Paul needs a representative idea to serve as a hinge to introduce his conclusion, and κλήτος is chosen, which does not indicate its superiority but simply its eligibility, compared to other salvation-related concepts as mentioned above. At the beginning of Romans, the word κλήτος has tightly bound together Paul (κλητὸς ἀπόστολος, “called as an apostle,” Rom 1:1), his audience in evangelizing (ἐν οίς ἐστε καὶ ὑμεῖς κλήτοι Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, “among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ,” Rom 1:6), and the Roman recipients in particular (κλητοῖς ἀγίους, “called as saints,” Rom 1:7).

Paul’s focus in his conclusion of Rom 8:29-30 is on the presentation of a long-term process in which the ultimate redemption is assured; patient awaiting, enduring perseverance and constant renewal are more indispensable. About the certainty of Rom 8:28a, Cranfield’s remark that “had Paul said no more, its fullness would not have been expressed,” seems to be satisfactory because he highlights the interpretation of the purpose of the second verb, namely the believers’ growing conformity to Christ.841

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838 Cf. Wallace, Greek Grammar, 564, “The glorification of those who have been declared righteous is as good as done from Paul’s perspective.” Also cf. the discussions which 273n720 refers to.
839 Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 431; cf. Moo, Romans, 531.
840 Actually, the verb καλέω already appears in Rom 4:17, but there with another meaning than in Rom 8:30, cf. BDAG, s.v. “καλέω,” 4.
Nevertheless, Moo is clearer in delineating the significance of the long-lasting process of waiting in his conclusion after the comment of Rom 8:30:

But Paul, ever the realist, knows that that ultimate victory may lie many years ahead — years that might be filled with pain, anxiety, distress, and disaster. Thus he also encourages us by reminding us that God sends his Spirit into the heart of everyone he justifies. The Spirit brings power and comfort to the believer in the midst of suffering; and he brings assurance in the midst of doubt. Christians who are unduly anxious about their relationship to the Lord are failing to let the Spirit exercise that ministry.  

Although no explicit subject related to these five verbs appears in Rom 8:29-30, the recipients have no doubt in identifying God as the subject due to the clear implication of “τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ” (“his son,” v. 29a). Strictly speaking, theses five verbs are not arranged in a chronological sequence in the New Testament though there is a beginning and an ending. The first two (προηγοῦσκω and προορίζω) are normally interchangeable. In Acts 4:28 προορίζω is used to describe Jesus’ suffering, and in 1 Pet 1:20 προηγοῦσκω is employed to depict Jesus’ being chosen, which occurs yet earlier. Moreover, in Rom 9:24 both Jews and Gentiles are called (καλέω is used) by God, whereas in Rom 11:2 Paul restates that those belong to His people whom God foreknew (προηγοῦσκω is utilized) and did not reject. God’s calling and his own glory are often connected, as the following examples show (underlining mine):

1 Thess 2:12b
   εἰς τὸ περιπατεῖν ὑμᾶς ἁξίως τοῦ θεοῦ τοῦ καλοῦντος ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐαυτοῦ βασιλείαν καὶ δόξαν.
   so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

1 Pet 5:10a
   Ὅδε θεός πάσης χάριτος, ὁ καλέσας ὑμᾶς εἰς τὴν αἰωνίαν αὐτοῦ δόξαν ἐν Χριστῷ,
   the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ,

2 Pet 1:3
   Ὁς πάντα ἡμῖν τῆς θείας δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ τὰ πρὸς ζωὴν καὶ εὐσέβειαν διδοθυμενής διὰ τῆς ἐπιγνώσεως τοῦ καλέσαντος ἡμᾶς ἵδια δόξη καὶ ἀρετή,
   seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and

842 Moo, Romans, 536.
godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.

In a similar way, Paul applies another set of terms (ἀγαπάω, “love;” αἴρέω, “choose;” ἀπαρχὴ εἰς σωτηρίαν, “the first fruits to salvation;” ἀγιασμός, “sanctification;” καλέω, “call;” δόξα, “glory”) to illustrate God’s plan of His eternal salvation as follows:

2 Thess 2:13-14 (underlining mine)

13 ἡμεῖς δὲ ὄρφεῖμον εὐχαριστεῖν τῷ θεῷ πάντοτε περὶ ὑμῶν, ἄδελφοι ἠγαπημένοι ὑπὸ κυρίου, ὅτι εἰλατο ὑμᾶς ὁ θεὸς ἀπαρχὴν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐν ἁγιασμῷ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας. 14 εἰς ὅ [καὶ] ἐκάλεσαν ὑμᾶς διά τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ὑμῶν εἰς περιποίησιν δόξης τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἡσυχ Ἑρατοῦ.

13 But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 14 And it was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

If the related terminology, such as the Spirit, faith, truth, gospel and Lord Jesus Christ are taken into account, to let 2 Thess 2:13-14 substitute for Rom 8:29-30 would not be inappropriate.

Therefore, in Paul’s mind, sanctification could be viewed as justification (ἀλλὰ ἀπελούσασθε, ἀλλὰ ἠγίασθε, ἀλλὰ ἐδικαιώθητε, “but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified,” 1 Cor 6:11). God’s calling is equivalent to His choosing before the creation of the world; and God’s glory could be at the same time the cause and the purpose of His predestination. Upon closer examination, the first verb προγινώσκω in Rom 8:29 occurs in the New Testament only five times (Acts 26:5; Rom 11:2; 1 Pet 1:20; 2 Pet 3:17) and its cognate noun πρόγνωσις twice (Acts 2:23; 1 Pet 1:2). Among these occurrences, every verb that takes God as its subject (Rom 11:2; 1 Pet 1:20) denotes “to choose beforehand” or “to predetermine,” signifying God’s omniscient wisdom and intention, instead of intellectual cognition. Interestingly, all the six occurrences of προορίζω in the New Testament (Acts 4:28; Rom 8:29, 30; 1 Cor 2:7; Eph 1:5, 11) have God as their subject and believers as

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843 NASB’s translation “from the beginning for salvation” is based on the reading of “ἀπ’ ἀρχῆς” witnessed by κ Θerdem B F G P etc., which are considered by the committee of the United Bible Societies to be less convincing than the reading of ἀπαρχὴν εἰς σωτηρίαν (“as the first fruits for salvation,” NRSV) witnessed by B F G P etc.; the reasons for their preference for ἀπαρχὴν, see Metzger, A Textual Commentary, 568.

844 BDAG, s.vv. “πρόγνωσις,” 2; “προγινώσκω,” 2.

845 Moo, Romans, 532.
object (except Acts 4:28). BDAG glosses it “predetermine,” which suggests that the subject decides upon beforehand.\textsuperscript{846} In the translation of NASB, NIV, NKJV, and NRSV both appearances of προορίζω in Rom 8:29-30 are translated as “predestine.” As Schreiner aptly remarks, the two occurrences of προορίζω in Eph 1:5 and 11 fully reflect Pauline connection of adoption, inheritance and predestination:

God elected his people by predestinating them to adoption as sons. Predestination means that God has marked out his people beforehand for salvation. We know that salvation is in mind since adoption (hyiothesian) is simply another way of speaking of the eschatological inheritance of believers.\textsuperscript{847}

Evaluating from Paul’s usages, it is not easy to distinguish any evident difference between προγνώσκω and προορίζω. Paul might simply want to express the perspective of “sola gratia.” The differentiation made by Cranfield, “[w]hereas προέγνως denoted God’s gracious election, προώρισεν denotes His gracious decision concerning the elect, the content of which is indicated by the words which follow,”\textsuperscript{848} seems somewhat ambiguous.

A better alternative way is to view the first two verbs of the chain as a synthetical parallelism, like in Rom 5:1 where Paul utilizes the dimension of reconciliation as an expanded explanation of justification, and Rom 5:2-5 becomes “the words which follow” to develop the positive impact of justification and reconciliation. Here Paul places his emphasis on God’s Son, the only begotten Son: He is the core of the gospel (Rom 1:2-5); by believing in Him we are justified (Rom 3:22-24); in Him we are set free from the law of sin and death (Rom 8:2); through His Spirit we are adopted into God’s children (Rom 8:9, 15); together with Him we become God’s heirs (Rom 8:17); and He dwells in us so we can have the assurance of the redemption of the body (Rom 8:10, 23). Although the reality of Christ’s glorious body is completely beyond our comprehension (cf. Phil 3:21a), Paul clearly points towards the image of God’s Son according to which we are elected to be conformed. This fact is clearly stated by Thomas A. Smail: “Christ is not only the means of our adoption, he is the definition of all that sonship means and we were chosen in order to become like him.”\textsuperscript{849} Consequently, the only Son “could not be the Messiah of [Jewish] expectation, a new and final lawgiver, but the firstborn among many brothers, the beginning of a totally new order.”\textsuperscript{850} In Paul’s thinking, the image of God’s Son must be closely connected to his

\textsuperscript{846} BDAG, s.v. “προορίζω” (italics original).
\textsuperscript{847} Schreiner, Paul, 240.
\textsuperscript{848} Cranfield, Romans I: 1-8, 432 (italics original).
\textsuperscript{849} Smail, The Forgotten Father, 132.
experience at the Damascus road, where the resurrected Christ appeared to him (1 Cor 15:3, 8), changed his life values and worldview (Phil 3:7-8), and ever since transforms his inner nature daily (cf. Rom 12:2; 2 Cor 4:16; Eph 4:23-24; Col 3:10). The image of Christ is a combination of the perfect saint and the righteous (1 Cor 1:30b). Paul exhorts his Roman recipients to be renewed by the Spirit’s practical work and personal presence so that they can become more mature believers in the process of perfection (Rom 5:3-5; 2 Cor 13:9, 11). Christ is the firstfruits of all believers, whether they have fallen asleep or not (1 Cor 15:20, 23). The reason why all believers can be so confirmed of their resurrection is revealed by Paul’s proclamation in Rom 8:11 (underlining mine):

Rom 8:11

εἰ δὲ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ ἐγείραντος τὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐκ νεκρῶν οἶκεῖ ἐν ὑμῖν, ὁ ἐγείρας Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ζωοποιήσει καὶ τὰ θνητὰ σώματα ὑμῶν διὰ τοῦ ἐνοικοῦντος αὐτοῦ πνεύματος ἐν ὑμῖν.

But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you.

The fact that Jesus’ resurrection is intimately associated with the believers’ redemption of the body is frequently reiterated. Paul’s focus of concern is not only the similar appearance, but rather the inner transformation and renewal during the progression of expecting final adoption, being accomplished κατὰ τὴν ἐνέργειαν τοῦ δύνασθαι αὑτὸν καὶ ὑποτάξαι αὐτῷ τὰ πάντα (“by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself,” Phil 3:21b, underlining mine).

Paul’s fivefold chain seems to be broken by the fourteen words that follow after the first occurrence of προώρισεν, which in fact enlighten the crucial undertaking the believers are supposed to be committed to. What might appear as an interruption in Paul’s presenting a panoramic view of God’s salvation actually is an insertion, functioning as a reminder of the core belief of the gospel of God—περὶ τοῦ νικοῦ αὐτοῦ…, Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν (“concerning His Son…, Jesus Christ our Lord, Rom 1:3-4”). More importantly, the interpolation puts a confirmation in his readers’ mind that not only does ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὑτοῦ (“the power of His resurrection,” Phil 3:10a) cause every individual believer to be similar in form to His glorious body, but it also unites all believers as a family in which His Son becomes the firstborn of all God’s adopted children (Rom 8:29). This is duly expressed in G. Braumann’s comment on Rom 8:29:

The passage presupposes that Christ is the image of God. In Christ God is really present. Again *symmorphos* means that we shall not only be similar to or like Christ but that we shall come into the same realm of power as he. We shall be identified with the same substance as he, and enter into the same essential nature as Christ.\(^\text{852}\)

In Paul’s phrasing on the topic of exhortation of inner transformation, most verbs are in passive form, as the following familiar verses exemplify (underlining mine):

**Rom 12:2**

καὶ μὴ συσχηματίζεσθε τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ, ἀλλὰ μεταμορφοῦσθε τῇ ἀνακαινώσει τοῦ νοὸς εἰς τὸ δοκιμάζειν ὑμᾶς τί τὸ θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ, τὸ ἀγαθὸν καὶ εὐάρεστον καὶ τέλειον.

And do not be **conformed** to this world, but be **transformed** by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.

**Col 3:10**

καὶ ἐνδυσάμενοι τὸν νέον τὸν ἀνακαινομένον εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν κατ’ εἰκόνα τοῦ κτίσαντος αὐτόν.

and have put on the new self who is **being renewed** to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.

Another noteworthy instance is 2 Cor 4:16.\(^\text{853}\) Paul’s intention is to signal that believers’ internal transformation neither happens automatically, nor occurs through deliberate endeavor on the part of the believers themselves, but rather by submitting themselves to the power of the Spirit who indwells and leads them to overcome the flesh (Rom 8:9, 13-14). A synonymous expression is that it is God himself who works in us, enabling us to will and be active for His good pleasure (Phil 2:13). The way exercised by the Spirit is to make the believers powerful through awaking their awareness of their status and identity in Christ. For that reason Paul doubtlessly reminds the believers of what God has done, is doing, and will accomplish, or rather, the indicative dimension of His will. Romans 8:29-30 is one of the fullest demonstrations of Paul’s intention concerning what has just been mentioned. Not only does Paul provide an all-purpose picture of God’s salvation, but he also offers five representative aspects in terms of its time-spectrum. Romans 8:30 resumes Paul’s chain which starts in Rom

\(^{852}\) G. Braumann, “μορφή,” *NIDNTT* 1:705-8, here 707 (italics original).

\(^{853}\) Cf. the discussion in pp. 293-94 above.
8:29 with the second fold προορίζω, followed by καλέω, a cognate of κλητός, the hinge mentioned above. The demonstrative pronoun τούτος occurs three times in Rom 8:30, exhibiting Paul’s strong emphasis that since these believers are known and chosen by God, He is able to save to the utmost (cf. Heb 7:25). As stated by Schreiner, in Paul’s mind,

[c]alling is performative, in which the call accomplishes what is demanded. … in Romans 8:30 … all of those who are called are also justified. No exception intervenes so that only some of those who are called are justified. Every single person who is called is also justified. 854

Actually, Paul expresses a comparable statement in 1 Cor 1:8-9 to the Corinthians, “who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling” (ἡγιασμένοις ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, κλητίς ἁγίοις, 1 Cor 1:2): 855

1 Cor 1:8-9

8 ὁ πατήρ μου ὃ δέδωκέν μοι πάντως μισθωσίν, καὶ ἡμῶν ἀνεγκλήσωσεν ἐν τῇ ημέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ [Χριστοῦ]. 9 πιστὸς ὁ θεός, δι᾽ οὗ ἐκλήθητε εἰς κοινωνίαν τοῦ νεότου αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Here, Paul confirms that God will keep his children steadfast until the end. We have the most impressive parallel or counterpart to these statements of Paul in John 10:27-29 (underlining mine):

John 10:27-29

27 ὁ πατήρ μου ὃ δέδωκέν μοι πάντως μισθωσίν, καὶ ἡμῶν ἀνεγκλήσωσεν ἐν τῇ ημέρᾳ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

28 ἦν αὐτὸς καὶ ἐμὸς, καὶ ἐμὸς ἦν οὗ ἄρπάσατε τις αὐτὰ ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς μου.

29 ὁ πατήρ μου δέδωκέν μοι πάντως μισθωσίν, καὶ οὐδὲς δύναται ἄρπασαι ἐκ τῆς χειρὸς τοῦ πατρὸς.

27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; 28 and I give eternal life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father’s hand.

854 Schreiner, Paul, 241.
855 Underlining mine, same below.
The sheep hear the Lord’s voice and follow Him. It is worth noting that the subject of the verb γινώσκω is the speaker Jesus. Morris’s remark is perceptive: “It is the knowledge Christ has of the sheep that is important, and accordingly it is this that receives the emphasis.” Continuously, Morris observes a feature of time dimension in Jesus’ wording: “The result of this knowledge is that they follow him, the present tense denoting a habitual following.” The utterance Jesus gives to his disciples is full of promises with eternal value. Johann Albrecht Bengel even notices two facts. One is that Jesus uses a middle voice verb ἀπόλογονται in John 10:28b: οὐ μὴ ἀπόλογονται εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα (“they shall never perish”), denoting “they shall not destroy themselves, internally.” The other one is the future tense verb ἀρπάγασε in John 10:28c which implies that Jesus will not suffer His sheep to be snatched out of His hand by “any eternal enemy.” Besides, the auxiliary verb δύναται (“can”) and the infinitive ἀρπάζειν (“to snatch”) also show a similar implication, because δύναται “is included in the future.”

These promises will go along with the believers for all their life. The fourth aspect Paul chooses is described in Rom 8:30 by the verb δικαιοσύνη in preference of ἁγίασθαι (“to sanctify”). Cranfield remarks on the reason of the absence of sanctification between justification and glorification, considering the full discussion of sanctification to be found in Rom 6 and 12:1-15:13, hence deeming it “unnecessary to refer to it again here explicitly.” Furthermore, Cranfield indicates that there is already an implicit reference present, “since, according to what has already been said in the epistle, sanctification is both the natural sequel to justification and also the earthly road which leads to the heavenly glory.” It is regrettable that Cranfield’s opinion above is a long-standing misunderstanding. Viewed from Paul’s perspective, justification is not only a legal status of righteousness before God (Rom 3:24), but also a transforming process in which we present ourselves to obedience in faith, resulting in righteousness (Rom 6:16). Sanctification is not only a moral renewing development into maturation (Rom 6:19, 22), but also a holy status before God (Luke 1:75, ἐν

857 Ibid., Morris is referring to the verb ἀπολογονται (indicative present active 3rd person pl.) in John 10:27.
860 Ibid.
862 Ibid. (emphasis mine).
863 McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, 233; cf. 208n475 and 209n476.
ὅσιότητι καὶ δικαιοσύνη ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ, “in holiness and righteousness before Him;” Rom 1:7, κλητῖς ἁγίοις, “who are called to be saints); 864 not to mention Paul’s statement that God makes Jesus our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption (1 Cor 1:30b). Whether status or transforming process, grace is granted or experienced through our faith in Christ (cf. Eph 2:8), which is made effective by the indwelling Spirit. Porter’s astute discernment in this regard is worth attention as follows:

Justification and sanctification are used by Paul to describe overlapping (but not contiguous) theological concepts…. Thus justification emphasizes the initial, or “conversion,” experience of the believer, but it is larger than this, including the believer’s life “in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 6:23). Sanctification, although it may include initiation (Rom 6:22) is the end (telos) toward which the justified strive, eternal life (Rom 6:22, 23). 865

To divide distinctly the essence of Christ into status and process is un-Pauline. “Justification and sanctification must be grasped as a dynamic unity in the light of God’s eschatological act that brings new life from death.” 866 Justification here is more likely intended as a representation of Christian life during the period of eager expectation of God’s glorification. Believers are justified by faith in Christ, they are glorified with Jesus by faith as well (Rom 8:17, 30). The children of God will be clothed in splendor, a state of participation in Christ’s glory which will surely come in the life to come. 867 “It is paradoxically a divine quality that is remote from human finitude and yet is held out to believers as something they will share.” 868 In a similar way, Byrne provides a highly perceptive conclusion in this regard:

The present possession of glory by the Christian is well understandable when we consider that Paul shared the Jewish tendency to associate δόξα with δικαιοσύνη on the one hand, with ‘likeness to God’ (εἰκών) on the other. 869

It would be no exaggeration for Ridderbos to say that “the adoption of sons represents the new state of salvation that has come with Christ in its all-embracing and

864 See 109n12 and the related discussion in sec. 4.3.1 “A further investigation of the main theme and the structure of Romans 8:18-30.”
867 BDAG, s.vv. “δόξα,” l. c. β; “δοξολογοῦμεν,” 2.
868 DBI, s.v. “glory.”
869 Byrne, ‘Sons of God’—‘Seed of Abraham’, 121.
eternal destination.”

What is more, according to Ridderbos, with the Spirit’s active involvement organized by God, “it is just in these sonship pronouncements that personal and intimate character of the reconciled relationship with God finds expression.”

A similar view is provided by Robert A. Peterson who claims: “Adoption is an overarching way of viewing the Christian faith. Adoption pertains to the beginning of salvation, the Christian life, and the resurrection of the dead.”

Paul demonstrates that God manifests His presence with His beloved children through His life-giving and life-empowering Spirit in the long-lasting period of their awaiting the ultimate redemption.

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871 Ibid., 201.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>Greek Text</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>28a1</td>
<td>Οἶδαμεν δὲ ὅτι</td>
<td>And we know that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b</td>
<td>τοῖς ἁγαπῶσιν τὸν θεὸν</td>
<td>God causes [sic] all things</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28c</td>
<td>†πάντα συνεργεῖ εἰς ἁγαθόν,</td>
<td>†to work together for good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28a2</td>
<td>†τοῖς κατὰ πρόθεσιν κλητοῖς οὕσιν.</td>
<td>†to those who love God,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29a</td>
<td>†ὅτι οὐς προέγνω.</td>
<td>†For whom He foreknew,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29b</td>
<td>†καὶ προώρισεν</td>
<td>†He also predestined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29a1</td>
<td>†συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνος τοῦ ὑιοῦ αὐτοῦ,</td>
<td>†to become conformed to the image of His Son,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29b</td>
<td>†εἰς τὸ εἶναι αὐτὸν πρωτότοκον</td>
<td>†that He might be the first-born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28b</td>
<td>†ἐν πολλοῖς ἁδελφοῖς</td>
<td>†among many brethren;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30a</td>
<td>†οὗς δὲ προώρισεν,</td>
<td>†and whom He predestined,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30b</td>
<td>†τούτους καὶ ἐκάλεσεν</td>
<td>†these He also called:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30c</td>
<td>†καὶ οὗς ἐκάλεσεν,</td>
<td>†and whom He called,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30a</td>
<td>†τούτους καὶ ἔδικαιος</td>
<td>†these He also justified:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30b</td>
<td>†οὗς δὲ ἔδικαιος,</td>
<td>†and whom He justified,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30c</td>
<td>†τούτους καὶ ἔδοξασεν.</td>
<td>†these He also glorified.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 4-9 Text analysis of Romans 8:28-30 (underlining mine)
Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion

5.1 The Spirit of adoption as the dominant force in Romans 8:12-30

Paul’s phrase “the Spirit of adoption” (πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας) appearing in Rom 8:15b, is definitely one of the most encouraging and comforting words directed to Christian life to be found in biblical argument. Not only does this phrase appear here for the first and only time in the Bible, but it is also a key concept, applied by Paul as the dominant force in Rom 8:12-30, a passage followed by the conclusion (Rom 8:31-39) of the mainly doctrinal section of Romans (i.e., chapters 1-8). Numerous works have been written on Pauline pneumatology and Paul’s usage of υἱοθεσία (“adoption”) respectively. Besides, these previous studies concerning the adoption metaphor have generally been more comprehensive investigations, namely taking all five occurrences of the term υἱοθεσία in the New Testament (Rom 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal 4:5; Eph 1:5) into account and trying to make an overall assessment of Paul’s usage. Nevertheless, the combination of the Spirit and adoption is relatively rare to be studied, especially in the passage of Rom 8:12-30 and the context of the whole of Romans. It is this importance and particularity that draw our attention to do a deeper investigation.

Before introducing our own study, we found it appropriate and necessary to present the past contributions of scholars in recent decades to the study of Paul’s employment of adoption metaphor with their merits and deficiencies. Six representative works were selected for reviewing. Compared to them, our methodology is to take the historical-critical exegetical criteria, which are similar to most of the reviewed works, and the contribution of rhetorical analysis, which is helpful in explicating Paul’s train of thought behind text.

Our brief review of the previous research on Paul’s usage of υἱοθεσία revealed that the historical background exploration of it (Jewish or Greco-Roman oriented) occupies a quite large space in the writings of the selected scholars (with the exception of David B. Garner’s). Due to the strong influence of the Roman legal and socio-political system on the Roman church and lack of the explicit adoption practice in Jewish heritage, this thesis supports to view the Greco-Roman background as the probable basis of Paul’s employment of adoption. We provided our first evidence through clarifying two considerations: a concise study of the date, place and purpose

1 Cf. sec. 1.2 “Previous research on adoption (υἱοθεσία) in Paul.”
2 See sec. 1.1 “The reason why this topic is studied.”
3 See sec. 1.3 “Methodology.”
4 Cf. sec. 1.2, esp. sec. 1.2.3 “David B. Garner (2002).”
of Romans, and Paul’s recipients of Romans (their composition and situation). However, we simultaneously pointed out the third consideration that a more important basis for Paul to utilize the adoption imagery is his conversion/call experience on the road to Damascus where the risen Christ appeared to Paul (cf. 1 Cor 15:8).

The reconstruction of the historical scene is difficult to some degree due to the distance in time. Hence the dependence of historical materials or non-biblical sources cannot be pushed to the limit. Besides, the result of historical, socio-cultural and legal observations depicts that the secular convention or system has their limitations in expressing spiritual concepts. Basically there is no worldly system that could adequately express any divine organism. What is more, the thesis proposes that the crucial element directing Paul’s reasoning in Rom 8:12-30 is not the realization of the Exodus typology, but rather Paul’s life experience and his comprehensive reinterpretation of the Old Testament since his encounter with the resurrected Christ on the road to Damascus.

In order to facilitate our readers to glance over this thesis, and to trace the argument of our research, we offer a short section in the end of chapter one to introduce the structure and the main content of this thesis.

5.2 Summary of chapters 2-4

5.2.1 Historical and literary contexts of the adoption imagery in Romans 8:12-30

Research of historical and literary contexts is indispensable in studying Rom 8:12-30, especially because of a quantity of Roman legal imageries are employed by Paul in this passage, which is closely connected to its literary context, and because this passage takes a crucial position in Paul’s train of thought in Romans. In addition to adoption, the other two closely related imageries, slavery and heir, are also included in our investigation into their historical, legal, and socio-political background in the first-century Greco-Roman world.

It is not without reason that the adoption metaphor is used by Paul to communicate

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5 See sec. 1.4.1 “Date, place and purpose of Paul’s letter to the Romans,” and sec. 1.4.2 “Recipients: composition and situation of the Roman Christian community.”
6 See sec. 1.4.3 “The most likely material source of the adoption imagery in Paul: his Damascus road experience.”
7 Cf. our discussion in sec. 4.2.4.1 “The first antithesis in Romans 8:15” and sec. 4.2.6.2 “Heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ: semantic and contextual investigation.”
8 Boers, “The Meaning of Christ’s Resurrection in Paul,” 118-19, 136-37; also cf. sec. 1.4.3 “The most likely material source of the adoption imagery in Paul: his Damascus road experience.”
9 Cf. sec. 1.5 “The structure of the thesis.”
10 See sec. 2.1 “Introduction.”
the new relationship between God and believers. A deeper examination of Roman legal adoption practice depicts that adoption signifies a complete new relationship of the adopted child with his new adoptive father (paterfamilias) in all the rights, privileges and responsibilities. Its purpose is to maintain the existence and continuity of the name, property and sacred rites of his adopting father whose household is hence prevented from extinction. Among the varied adoption practices, the one called adoptio is more available due to no wiping out of any family or its religious cult. Roman adoptive procedures are strictly regulated and supervised to ensure the succession of Roman families.

The second imagery explored by us is slavery; the terms associated with it are found throughout Romans, especially in chapters 6-8. Among those listed in Paul’s greetings in Rom 16, ten of 26 are related to slavery background. Slavery is an inseparable part of the first-century Greco-Roman daily life, containing many common impressions and phrases shared between Paul and his recipients. Our research reveals a rather negatively oriented picture of Roman slavery, including the sources for slaves, their treatment, their possibility and cost of being manumitted. Even after manumission, the condition of their life is still under strict constraint; their legal and social position continues to be subject to much discrimination.

With regard to the third imagery, heirs, the Roman legal regulations in relation to it are complex and stringent. Among the New Testament authors Paul is the one who most frequently employs the heir-related language to express spiritual truth. The institution of a qualified heir is the most crucial element of a valid will in Roman law, because the heir is supposed to inherit all the rights, responsibilities and liabilities of the deceased. Not only this, but the heir also is regarded as a continuation of the paterfamilias’ personality. Once the heir is instituted, his qualification is permanent. Although there are three different types of heir, what matters to them all is the required capacity to make a valid will, which involves three parties: the testator,

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11 See sec. 2.2 “Adoption according to Roman legal practice.”
12 Cf. sec. 2.2.1 “Reasons for adoption.”
13 Cf. sections 2.2.2 “Legal ruling,” 2.2.2.1 “Adrogatio,” and 2.2.2.2 “Adoptio.”
14 Cf. sec. 3.4 “The structure of Paul’s thought in Romans 8:12-30.”
15 See sec. 1.4.2 “Recipients: composition and situation of the Roman Christian community.”
16 Cf. sec. 2.3 “Slavery.”
17 See sections 2.3.1 “Sources for slaves,” 2.3.2 “The treatment of slaves,” and 2.3.3 “Manumission.”
18 Cf. sec. 2.3.3.1 “Restrictions derived from duties.”
19 Cf. sec. 2.3.3.2 “Legal and social position.”
20 See sec. 2.4 “Heir.”
21 Ibid. and 68n170.
22 See sec. 2.4.1 “Institution of an heir.”
23 See sec. 2.4.2 “Universal succession,” and sec. 2.4.2.1 “Indebtedness to Roman inheritance conception.”
24 Cf. sec. 2.4.2.2 “A continuation of legal personality.”
25 Cf. sec. 2.4.2.3 “Once an heir, always an heir.”
the heir and the witness.\textsuperscript{26}

Paul borrows a lot of conceptions from the Roman legal and socio-political environment to express the central subject of the gospel without further explanation. Thus, our investigation of their historical background will prevent us from reading into the texts our own viewpoints.\textsuperscript{27}

We can hardly emphasize enough the importance of precisely tracing Paul’s train of thought in the literary context of Rom 8:12-30. Although the literary genre of Paul’s letter to the Romans is too unique to be confined to any sole one type because all three species of rhetoric are applied in Romans, we are inclined to regard it as a mainly deliberate discourse with an epistle form.\textsuperscript{28}

In an attempt to grasp the position of Rom 8:12-30 in Paul’s argument of Romans, an inductive presentation of Paul’s flow of thought in the main divisions of Romans is needed. The structure of the letter favored in this thesis is, except from the exordium (Rom 1:1-17) and the peroratio (Rom 15:14-16:27), to divide it into five main parts (1:18-3:20, 3:21-5:21, 6:1-8:39, 9:1-11:36, 12:1-15:13).\textsuperscript{29} In the instruction Rom 1:1-17, Paul not only expresses his salutation to the Roman church, intending to build a more intimate relationship (Rom 1:1, 6-7, 8-15), but he also presents the gospel in a concise way in Rom 1:2-5 and 1:16-17, which become the foremost basis of his elucidation throughout the whole letter.\textsuperscript{30}

The first part Rom 1:18-3:20 is grouped into three sections (1:18-32, 2:1-3:8; 3:9-21) to demonstrate the ungodliness and unrighteousness of Gentiles, Jews, and all humankind respectively. Romans 1:18 is the main theme of this part. Paul’s purpose is to prove the necessity of God’s justification for all humankind due to their sinful situation. In Paul’s argument, a hypothetical interlocutor is introduced in Rom 3:1-8.\textsuperscript{31}

Entering into the second part Rom 3:21-5:21, Paul’s clear explication of his argument is based on Rom 3:22a that God’s righteousness is offered to all who believe in Jesus Christ. Two crucial elements (faith and Jesus Christ) of this proclamation are further explained, first in Rom 3:27-31 and Rom 3:23-26, then in Rom 4 and 5 respectively. Not by works, nor by the law, only by faith can a human being be justified by God. Abraham is the model of faith for all people. The object of human faith must be Christ, whose death reconciles believers to God, showing God’s mercy and love. Not only that, Christ’s salvation also has an all-encompassing impact on all humankind, completely restoring the destruction caused by Adam.\textsuperscript{32}

\textsuperscript{26} Cf. sec. 2.4.4 “Legal capacity required to make a valid will.”
\textsuperscript{27} See sec. 2.5 “Conclusion.”
\textsuperscript{28} Cf. sec. 3.1 “Introduction.”
\textsuperscript{29} Cf. sec. 3.2.1 “The division of Romans 1:1-8:39.”
\textsuperscript{30} Cf. sec. 3.2.2 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 1:1-17.”
\textsuperscript{31} Cf. sec. 3.2.3 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 1:18-3:20.”
\textsuperscript{32} Cf. sec. 3.2.4 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 3:21-5:21.”
As the immediate literary context of Rom 8:12-30 in the mainly doctrinal part (Rom 1-8), the third part Rom 6:1-8:39 not only provides an additional explication of Paul’s argument in Rom 4-5, but it also deals with the way to overcome a widespread and the most essential crisis related to all humankind, which was caused by the power of sin and death. Paul proclaims an important truth which can be presented by the principle of status (indicative)-encourage-behavior (imperative). In other words, once the status of believers has been changed due to their union with the death and resurrection of Christ, they are supposed to live a new life. In terms of status, the dominion of the power of sin and death over the believers has been broken off (cf. Rom 6:1-14); the believers are no longer subject to the authority of sin and death (cf. Rom 6:15-23). In contrast, God becomes their new master; they are enslaved to God, and promised to own the gift of eternal life. Furthermore, the condemnation of the law has been taken away from believers, thereby they can serve God in the new life of the Spirit (cf. Rom 7:1-6). However, Paul further pronounces the reality that the believers with the status of justification are not immune to the power of sin, death and the law who (personified) will continue to cause dramatic struggle inside them and destroy them (cf. Rom 7:7-25). The only way to overcome the sinful flesh is their unconditional reliance on the indwelling Spirit. Romans 8 presents what the Spirit can accomplish and why He does so (cf. Rom 8:1-11), and how the Spirit of adoption achieves this mission (Rom 8:12-30). Romans 8:31-39 is Paul’s conclusive proclamation of Rom 1-8 regarding God’s never-ending love and mercy in Christ.

The faithful God is manifested in the fourth part Rom 9:1-11:36 through Paul’s coping with the position of Israel in God’s everlasting plan of salvation for humankind, which has been paved by Paul’s argument in previous chapters concerning that the privileges of the Jews do not necessarily mean salvation. On the one hand, Paul emphasizes that God has His sovereignty over selection of people, not based on human descent or behavior, but His own promise and calling (cf. Rom 9:1-29). On the other hand, Paul states that the people of Israel have only themselves to blame for their being cast off by God, which results from their attitude of self-righteousness (Rom 9:30-10:21). Nevertheless, God has His own way to save Israel according to His time, because God’s gifts and calling are irrevocable (cf. Rom 11:1-32). All ostensibly paradoxical and incomprehensible events in salvation history are led by God to an awesome finality (cf. Rom 11:33-36).

The fifth part Rom 12:1-15:13 presents the way Paul applies the renewed life expe-

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33 For a further explanation of Rom 7 and Rom 8:1-11, see sections 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh,” 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator,” 4.1.4 “The antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit,” 4.1.5 “The fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law,” and 4.1.6 “The indwelling Spirit.”
34 Cf. sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39.”
35 Cf. sec. 3.2.6 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 9:1-11:36.”

In the conclusion Rom 15:14-16:27, Paul begins to express clearly his intention to visit Rome and to launch the westward mission which he has been planning for some time inside his mind. The letter is written with the purpose of getting the wholehearted assistance from the Roman church (cf. Rom 15:14-33). The last chapter of Romans exhibits Paul’s strong desire to build a mutually trustworthy relationship with the Roman Christian community through his cordial greetings and reminder.37

After we had surveyed Paul’s train of thought in the whole letter, an explanation of the main theme and the structure of Paul’s thought in Rom 8:12-30 was presented so as to avoid not seeing the forest for the trees. The connotation of the Spirit of adoption will be more elucidated when Rom 8:12-30 is closely connected with Romans in its entirety. Briefly speaking, the main theme of Rom 8:12-30 is the Spirit of adoption. Put another way, through His guidance, witness, confirmation and intercession, the Spirit helps the believers to be fully aware of their identity as God’s adopted children so that they can overcome the flesh in the long-term, painful process of awaiting the ultimate redemption.38 In terms of structure, Paul gives details of the main theme through two synonymously parallel steps of Rom 8:12-17 and Rom 8:18-30. The Spirit shows His very practical works in the believers in Rom 8:12-17, and demonstrates His exceptionally personal presence with the believers in Rom 8:18-30. The decisive idea built to connect the whole work of the Spirit is adoption.39

5.2.2 The confirmation of the Spirit of adoption

Since the Spirit plays a crucial role in Rom 8 in Paul’s argument, Paul’s portrayal of the Spirit and the relevant elaboration to the Spirit in the foregoing context of Rom 8:12-30, namely Rom 6-8 are worthy of further examination. While we focus on investigating the truth of the Spirit, we should also understand the essence of the flesh. As the major opponent of the Spirit in Rom 8, the flesh apparently has an enormously negative influence on the believers. Paul has implied from Rom 6 onwards that the renewal of the believers’ status will not automatically result in the transformation of their behavior. Quite to the contrary, their physical flesh still easily continues to become the target of the power of sin through the law, hence turns into the sinful flesh.

36 Cf. sec. 3.2.7 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 12:1-15:13.”
37 Cf. sec. 3.2.8 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 15:14-16:27.”
38 Cf. sec. 3.3 “The main theme of Romans 8:12-30.”
39 Cf. sec. 3.4 “The structure of Paul’s thought in Romans 8:12-30.”
which is hostile toward God.\textsuperscript{40}

Our discussion suggests that the inner conflict Paul illustrates in Rom 7:14-25 is supposed to belong to the regenerate believers, Paul himself observably included. Their internal struggles are unavoidable, because the old master never fades away. Unless the believers actively rely on the Spirit to defend themselves against the flesh, their life will be even as the life of the unbelievers, which is symbolized by Rom 7:5 and 7:7-13. Though in status the believers are justified by God, in behavior they often walk according to the flesh; as Martin Luther puts it, we are \emph{simul justus et peccator} (“at the same time a righteous and a sinner”).\textsuperscript{41}

Paul unmistakably recognizes that the degree of dependence on the Spirit determines the believers’ possibility of overcoming the flesh they could experience in the opposition and conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. Further, the degree of their awareness and confirmation of their status and identity decides the intensity of their dependence on the Spirit.\textsuperscript{42} Paul employs many antitheses in Rom 6-7 to pave the way for stating that the Spirit is the key person who can help the believers to fulfill the righteous requirement of the law, that is, to carry out the law according to its true meaning (cf. Rom 8:1-4).\textsuperscript{43} Moreover, the vital reason for such a fulfillment in the believers is assured is the indwelling of the Spirit in the believers. Not only does the indwelling Spirit effectuate the grace and salvation Christ accomplished for the believers, but He also serves as a mediator connecting Christ’s resurrection to the believers’ being given life (cf. Rom 8:5-11).\textsuperscript{44}

Evidently, in Rom 8:12-30 Paul does not yet deal with the practical crisis or some upsetting events unresolved in the Roman church; his emphasis is still on the detailed explanation of the nature of the gospel. All socio-cultural or legal terms are taken for better communication (e.g., debtor, slavery, adoption, son, child, heir and witness).\textsuperscript{45} After demonstrating ardently what the Spirit is able to accomplish in believers, including the fulfillment of the just requirement of the law (Rom 8:4), the promise of bringing life and peace (Rom 8:6b, 10b), and the guarantee of the resurrection of the body (Rom 8:11b), Paul manifests from two dimensions the way the Spirit can make God’s promises effective in the believers’ life.\textsuperscript{46} From Rom 6:1 onwards, Paul exhibits that the believers are not immune against attacks from the power of sin and death. On the contrary, in their status of being believers, they will experience unprecedented

\begin{flushleft}
\textsuperscript{40} Cf. sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh.”
\textsuperscript{41} Cf. sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator.”
\textsuperscript{42} Cf. sec. 4.1.4 “The antithesis between the flesh and the Spirit.”
\textsuperscript{43} Cf. sec. 4.1.5 “The fulfillment of the righteous requirement of the law.”
\textsuperscript{44} Cf. sec. 4.1.6 “The indwelling Spirit.”
\textsuperscript{45} Cf. sec. 2.1 “Introduction.”
\textsuperscript{46} That is: 1. The very practical works of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:12-17); 2. The very personal presence of the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:18-30). See sec. 3.4 “The structure of Paul’s thought in Romans 8:12-30.”
\end{flushleft}
inner struggle between their will and action. Prior to their conversion, the result of struggle must be a thorough submission to the power of sin in helplessness. After their conversion, believers experience an intensified internal conflict with possibility of overcoming the power of sin; they are neither faced with the inevitability of victory against the flesh, nor are they exposed to a blind obedience to God without any possibility to reject. Precisely speaking, to prevail over the power of sin and death is not a programmed result of the justification of believers. In order to defeat the threat from sin’s power in a long struggle they need constant training. Such training aims at the enhancement of mental understanding of their new status and identity instead of the improvement of behavioral ability. One of Paul’s important reminders is that the believers are still debtors (actually to God), but not to the flesh any more.

On the basis of such preconditions, Paul begins his demonstration of the way the Spirit works in the believers. In the first place, Paul presents the very practical works of the Spirit in Rom 8:12-17. In the second place, he delineates the very personal presence of the Spirit in Rom 8:18-30. The core concept throughout the whole passage of Rom 8:12-30 is that the Spirit is at work practically and always present in the believers’ life through the operating pattern of incentivizing appropriate behavior by profound identity cognition. In other words, the deeper in realizing their status in Christ, the more vigorously the believers will live during the phase of the lasting strife between the Spirit and the flesh. There are two main aspects from which the Spirit realistically performs the tasks God predetermines in respect of the believers. One is the Spirit’s work of leading which is not based on the Exodus typology but Paul’s Damascus experience. The other is the Spirit’s witness to our heart.

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47 See our analysis in sec. 3.2.5 “Paul’s train of thought in Romans 6:1-8:39,” and sec. 4.1.2 “The influence of the flesh.”
48 See our analysis esp. in sec. 4.1.3 “Simul justus et peccator;” also cf. sec. 4.2.2 “Choice between two options.”
49 Cf. sec. 4.2.1 “Confirmation of the believers’ new identity.”
50 We employ the method of enthymeme to explain why Paul does not clearly point out this reality, but simply implies it, see sections 4.2.2.1 “Confusing grammatical structure of Romans 8:12,” and 4.2.2.2 “The connotation of Romans 8:12-13a.”
51 Cf. sec. 4.2.1.3 “No longer be the debtors to the flesh.”
52 Cf. sec. 4.2.1.1 “The significance of the initial ἄρα οὖν.”
53 Cf. sections 4.2.3.2 “Not based on the Exodus event in discussing the Spirit’s work,” and 4.2.3.3 “The influence of Paul’s conversion on his understanding of the Spirit’s work.” Four reasons are given for our disagreement with the pro-Exodus event when we make a comparison between the salvation of the Israelites and the believers: 1. A different identity at the beginning on each side; 2. Different processes and results for both sides; 3. Lack of direct quotations from the Exodus event in Rom 8:12-17; 4. Only partial correspondence exists in the Exodus paradigm (in sec. 4.2.3.2). Besides, three explanations are provided for our suggestion that Paul’s Damascus experience is the foundation of his understanding of the Spirit’s work: 1. Paul’s conversion, especially the experience of being led by the Holy Spirit, would be a positive example to the Roman Christians; 2. There are many viewpoints which are comparable to Christian experiences and related to Paul’s conversion that appear in Rom 8:12-17, even in
leading and witnessing (Rom 8:14, 16), the Spirit helps believers to experience their salvation very realistically, that is, to feel and recognize their being as God’s adopted children, belonging to the same family under the affectionate God Father. Paul utilizes the law and custom that he and his recipients are familiar with to help the Roman readers appreciate their new identity and status, so that they can live their life in a manner worthy of the righteousness of God (cf. Phil 1:27; 1 Thess 2:12; Eph 4:1). Of all the identities Paul employs, the most critical one is adoption, emphasizing the eternal identity as the adopted children of God. This is well expressed in a remark made by James D. G. Dunn in his commentary:

The use of υἱοθεσία rather than υἱός at this point actually increases the contrast with ὀδολεχία since it emphasizes the double gulf between the two: the believer’s status has been transformed not only from slave to freedman … but also from freedman to adopted son…

But more than that, several other striking contrasts are exhibited in Rom 8:12-17. Besides the antitheses between the flesh and the Spirit and between death and life, as their respective consequences, there are two antitheses in Rom 8:15. In addition to the one Dunn mentions above (i.e., slave versus adopted child), the other is the end result of owning the two different statuses, namely fear and love. The crying out of the believers: “Abba! Father!” intensifies the marked contrasts. Another work exercised by the Spirit Himself is to bear witness to the believers that they are God's children. Romans 8:16 begins with the intensive pronoun ἀὐτό and without conjunction, “giving this sentence extra weight and solemnity.” In this regard, Cranfield claims that “the knowledge that we are God’s children … is something which we cannot impart to ourselves: it has to be given to us from outside and beyond ourselves—from God.” The emphatic characteristic of God’s granting us the identity of his adopted children is proved forcefully by the Spirit’s witness.

The connotation of the status as God’s children is expanded by Paul in Rom 8:17 with two related concepts: heirs and suffering-glory, which are closely connected to the Spirit's bearing witness to our adopted identity. The structure of Rom 8:17, which is composed of two conditional clauses and one main clause, and its semantic im-

8:18-30; 3. The Holy Spirit plays a more crucial and obvious role in Paul's conversion than in the Exodus (in sec. 4.2.3.3).

55 Cf. sec. 4.2.5 “The witness of the Spirit and adoption.”
56 Dunn, Romans 1-8, 452; cited and adapted by Thompson, “‘Mercy upon All’,” 214.
57 Cf. sec. 4.2.4 “The relationship between the leading of the Spirit and adoption.”
58 Cranfield, Romans 1: 1-8, 402.
59 Ibid.
60 Cf. sec. 4.2.5 “The witness of the Spirit and adoption.”
61 Cf. sec. 4.2.6 “Suffering children and glorified heirs,” and sec. 4.2.6.1 “Heirs of God, co-heirs with
lication continue to release the message of indicative as opposed to imperative.\textsuperscript{61} Not only does the reality of the status as God’s adopted children promise the presence of their identity of being God’s heirs and co-heirs with Christ, but also the existence of their suffering with Christ guarantees the actuality of being glorified with Christ in the future. Paul highlights the importance of the believers’ solidarity with Christ.\textsuperscript{62} Further, he enhances the field of his readers’ vision to a level far beyond the present afflictions in their life, seeing the certainty and an overview of their salvation, so – to speak with the author of Hebrews – that they can respond with πόρρωθεν αὐτὰς ἰδόντες καὶ ἠσπασάμενοι (“having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance,” cf. Heb 11:13b).\textsuperscript{63} Speaking from another perspective, Paul obviously intends his recipients to identify with his thought, that is, to appreciate their belief from the temporal rather than the spatial perspective. Such an intention is illustrated specifically by Paul in Rom 8:18-30. Moreover, some scholars maintain that suffering together with Christ is a necessary condition for being glorified with Him, but this is actually a misinterpretation of Paul’s thinking.\textsuperscript{64} Another misunderstanding seen commonly is the undiscriminating treatment of the three groanings (vv. 22, 23, 26) in Romans 8:18-30.

5.2.3 The accomplishment of the Spirit of adoption

Paul’s argumentation centered on the Spirit of adoption does not stop at Rom 8:17. Instead, hinging on Rom 8:17b, Paul expands his reasoning to the whole new horizons expressed in Rom 8:18-30. Not only does God’s salvation have a universal impact on the world in the spatial dimension, but it also has an effect on human history in the temporal dimension, in which the accomplishment of the redemption of God’s children is Paul’s focus in particular. Paul starts this passage with his thesis of Rom 8:18, which displays two antitheses: present versus future, and insignificant sufferings versus the glory which will be revealed to God’s children.

In view of avoiding not seeing the forest for the trees, and preventing a deviation of

\textsuperscript{61} “The schema is not without its problems, but is justifiable so long as it is not taken as suggesting interchangeable motivations and purely formal ethical statements, but as a shorthand way of referring to substantial assurances of salvation and substantiated injunctions for action;” see Wolfgang Schrage, The Ethics of the New Testament, trans. David E. Green (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 167; also cf. sec. 4.2.6.2 “Heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ: semantic and contextual investigation.”

\textsuperscript{62} Cf. sec. 4.2.6.3 “The solidarity with Christ.”

\textsuperscript{63} Underlining mine. The Greek adverb πόρρωθεν denotes temporal sense here (cf. Jer 38:3 LXX), being different from spatial usage in most cases it occurs (e.g., Isa 13:5, 39:3 and 46:11 in LXX; Luke 17:12), cf. Thomas R. Schreiner, Commentary on Hebrews, BTCP (Nashville: B&H, 2015), 354: “They may feel in their current distress that God isn’t fulfilling his promises, but a long view reveals that God is always faithful to his word” (emphasis added).

\textsuperscript{64} Cf. sec. 4.2.6.4 “Suffering and glory.”
the discussion from Paul’s flow of thought, two considerations are supposed to be clarified.

First, Paul’s real emphasis is more on how to wait for our redemption by the help of the Spirit during the lingering process of afflicting life than on the creation (the spatial change or transformation), the sufferings (whether of the creation or of humankind), and the details of the future world (whether the physical universe or the spiritual kingdom). The table 4.1 which shows the text classification of Rom 8:18-30 plainly illustrates the tendency. Accordingly, we suggest that the thesis of Rom 8:18-30 is “Waiting for the adoption through the Spirit’s presence.” The way Paul perceives holistically God’s salvation and the interaction between God and His children is from a temporal rather than a spatial aspect. Paul’s stance on this regard is not unique. For instance, we observe a corresponding pattern in Jesus’ teaching. Facing the inquiry of his Parousia by the disciples, Jesus puts the emphasis on His exhortation on how to prepare with right attitude and behavior during their ordinary life, not on any speculation or fluky mentality. In fact, the law God gives to the Israelites also reveals the emphasis of His order, in which God asks His people to review His creation, selection, and redemption in their history during their ongoing daily life so that their strength could be renewed, their obedience aroused, and their thanksgiving shown, especially through the establishment of the Sabbath. Likewise, Paul admonishes his recipients to apply the same principle to their life, yet the best helper is the Holy Spirit.

Secondly, Paul’s viewpoint in regard to the creation (i.e., the subhuman nature world) tends towards the position of the so-called anthropological-soteriological side at the expense of the so-called cosmological-christological one. The characteristic of the former one includes: 1. Mankind is the center of God’s creation, and the nature is the setting for human history. 2. Humankind is appointed to have control over the creation as the steward and agent of the Creator due to their divine image of the Creator. 3. Mankind and the nature are inseparable; the fallen mankind caused the creation to be cursed by God with consequent futility and corruption due to humankind’s sin. Only when mankind experiences God’s final redemption, can the whole creation be set free from its bondage to decay and experience restoration. 4. The creation does not own its intrinsic value independent of humankind, and will not receive the redemption of Christ, which is the privilege merely belonging to the believers.

Furthermore, redemption (ἀπολύτρωσις) in the Bible is a terminology only for the believers, due to four reasons as follows: 1. Whenever the Bible mentions redemption,
the object of this grace is always humanity, never the creation. 2. Redemption must entail an indispensable ransom, and the objects who are redeemed are completely vulnerable, being unable to save themselves. 3. Redemption always implies the change of ownership. 4. All the believers redeemed by Christ’s blood are strongly required to live a life worthy of God’s salvation. 69

With application to and relevance for the believers, a sharp contrast between present inconsequential sufferings and the revealed glory in the future stated in Rom 8:18 goes through the whole passage of Rom 8:18-30. Given that believers’ afflictions are relatively negligible, the creation is personified by Paul to express its birth-pain-like groaning and the hope in its desperation (Rom 8:19-22). The only hope to the creation is the glorious freedom of God’s children. Many scholars believe that Paul’s description of the creation is based on the apocalyptic materials in the Old Testament or non-biblical Jewish writings. Such a perspective fails to see that the function of the moaning of the anthropomorphous creation is urgently to call the Israelites to repentance, turning from their transgressions to God, which is unsuitable to form an analogy to Paul’s portrayal here. That is why there is no direct citation of Jewish apocalyptic literature in this regard. 70

Compared to the creation, the groaning of the believers expressed in Rom 8:23 in reality is highly different. The status as God’s adopted children does not exempt the believers from the constant attack from the power of sin and death, which causes their groaning, yet the believers are assured that the final adoption, namely the resurrection of the body will be granted, not only due to the resurrection of Christ, but also owing to the Spirit’s confirmation. 71 Of the assurances Paul depicts, the most crucial one is the first fruits of the Spirit, which denotes the birth-certificate that guarantees the membership of the believers in God’s family. Due to the incredible presence of the Spirit, with hope the believers can be guided by the Spirit to undergo the lengthy process of waiting and suffering (Rom 8:24-25). 72

Not only can the believers experience the living and ever-present Spirit’s encouragement to remain faithful to God in eager waiting for the ultimate redemption, but the Spirit also helps the believers when they are plagued in their praying, which reveals their weakness (Rom 8:26-27). The assistance of the Spirit is manifested in the Spirit’s intercession with groanings too deep for words. Such groanings are less likely to be glossolatic utterances or panic emotion with inarticulate words; more likely they are an expression of the Hebrew traditional way of reciting God’s words with an un-

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69 Cf. sec. 4.3.2.5 “Clarification of some controversial points.”
70 Cf. sec. 4.3.3.2.1 “The groaning of the creation (Romans 8:19-22).”
72 Cf. sec. 4.3.3.2.2 “The groaning of God’s children (Romans 8:23-25).”
The prayer of the Spirit is effective because it is according to God’s will, using God’s own promises which signify that His will be done in the long-time and strenuous process of the believers’ awaiting the final salvation.73

Provided that the Spirit helps the believers through His leading, witness, guarantee, and intercession, as well as God’s assurance of the future redemption, Paul is confident that hardship and tribulation in life will not become stumbling blocks, but rather, an approach of advantage for those who love God, namely those who are called in agreement with His purpose. In Rom 8:28 we see that “all things” are personified as a co-worker of God by Paul, functioning as the mourning creation in the Prophets to serve for His purpose. God’s purpose is manifested in the process of His children’s renewal and transformation in which they are more and more conformed to the image of His son, Jesus Christ. In conclusion, Paul sketches out a general picture of God’s eternal salvation for His children’s review and building prospect of their belief (Rom 8:29-30). The panoramic view of God’s salvation is presented from the temporal perspective, being represented by five actions of God (foreknow, predetermine, call, justify, and glorify), centering on God’s calling (cf. κλητός [“called,” adj.], Rom 1:1, 6, 7; 8:28; καλέω [“call,” v.], Rom 4:17; 8:30; 9:7, 12, 24, 25, 26), and demonstrating an eventual outcome that His Son becomes the firstborn of all God’s adopted children who are similar to Christ in glorified form.74 It is the picture containing the vital status and identity of believers often utilized by the Spirit to change the believers’ mind inwardly day by day when they await their final redemption.

The author of 2 Timothy provides a perceptive remark which fully reflects what Paul states regarding our God in Rom 8:12-30, and, consequently, might serve as a sturdy summary (underlining mine):

2 Tim 1:9-10

9 τοῦ σώσαντος ἡμᾶς καὶ καλέσαντος κλήσει ἁγία, οὐ κατὰ τὰ ἔργα ἡμῶν ἀλλὰ κατὰ ἱδίαν πρόθεσιν καὶ χάριν, τὴν δοθεῖσαν ἡμῖν ἐν Χριστῷ ᾿Ιησοῦ πρὸ γρόνων αἰώνιων, 10 φανερωθεῖσαν δὲ νῦν διὰ τῆς ἐπιφανείας τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Χριστοῦ ᾿Ιησοῦ, καταργήσαντος μὲν τὸν θάνατον φωτίσαντος δὲ Ἴων καὶ ἡφαρσίαν διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου

9 [God] has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10 but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

73 Cf. sec. 4.3.3.3 “Awaiting God’s will done through the Spirit (Romans 8:26-27).”
74 Cf. sec. 4.3.3.4 “Awaiting being glorified along with inner renewal (Romans 8:28-30).”
Therefore, with a sense of confirmation of the ultimate salvation in Christ, the Roman believers can feel afresh the presence and empowering of God among them through the Spirit.

5.3 The significance of the Spirit of adoption to Christian life according to Romans 8:12-30

Romans 8:12-30 is significant for at least three reasons: 1. This passage specifies the positioning of life in eternity for every individual believer, indicating unambiguously his or her identity and status as one of God’s adopted children in Christ. 2. This passage makes known the way in which the close community of God’s children can live out the life of “suffering in hope” due to their certainty of redemption as well as the guidance, witness, assurance, and supplication of the Spirit during the long awaiting process, even in times of arduousness, struggle and suffering. 3. The Spirit of adoption has a controlling influence on Christian life in Paul’s argumentation of Rom 8:12-30. As a Lutheran theologian Lennart Pinomaa states:

The Spirit alone can create justifying faith in us. He alone is responsible for the fact that in the whirlpool of afflictions we do not run away from God but rather cry, “Abba, Father.” Not until he is under the Spirit does man become active in his relationship to God, and then he shares God’s activity toward the world.

Not only so, Pinomaa claims, but the Spirit’s work also dominates our preaching of the gospel when facing the hatred of the world, and our mortification of the old self resisting us in our hearts. His reasoning is based on two realities. The first one is: “The Spirit is no impersonal power but God himself in his sovereignty majesty.” The second one is: “We are recreated in Christ’s image and our life is set within the frame of the eschatological event, which points to a future fulfillment.” Interestingly, Pinomaa does not cite any long text of Rom 8:12-30, but his expounding on the work of the Holy Spirit is an honest reflection of Paul’s elucidation in Rom 8:12-30. It can be seen that Pinomaa grasps two essential understandings of Luther regarding the work of the Spirit: the provoking of the believers’ awareness of their new status

75 Stuhlmacher, Romans, 131-37, here 131.
77 Ibid.
78 Ibid., 82.
79 Ibid., 83.
80 Ibid., 79-88.
and identity, and God’s initiative in saving and transforming believers through the Spirit.

The breadth and depth of Paul’s insight and assurance regarding the Spirit of adoption in Rom 8:12-30 is too abundant for words. Nevertheless, not only is Paul’s message meaningful to the first-century audience, but it also is significant to the readers in the twenty-first century. Especially precious is that Paul’s perception functions as timely exhortation and reminder. Generally speaking, secular humanism promotes disciplined behavior and self-cultivation, by which churches are affected to be more tending to focus on the teachings of “God’s expectations for his people’s performance, whether called ‘law,’ ‘command,’ or ‘gospel imperative.’” Comparative tendencies are observable in many Christians’ weak grasp of the dimension of Paul’s indicative statements, and in the danger of changing the imperative statements into moral legalism. Consequently, it brings out two kinds of thought patterns which are against the gospel. One is to judge whether a Christian is really saved or not by behavior. The other is to consider law to be gospel, and vice versa. According to the pronouncement of C. F. W. Walther, many churches might close the eyes to the two most important doctrines. One is the doctrine of justification; the other is the distinction of law and gospel. Without proper understanding of the former one, the common fallacy is to divide the life of faith into two stages as justification (beginning) and sanctification (process and completion). The danger of lacking the ability to tell the latter is that “neither the Law and the Gospel can be understood, and consciences must perish in blindness and terror.” This is just the point of Luther’s warning against those who do not know the right way to distinguish law and gospel. These thinking models are most easily reflected when cultural and ethical issues are argued, resulting in misconstruing occasional relativity as eternal absolutes, and the opposite also occurs frequently. We hope that this thesis can make a positive contribution to avoiding such a deviation from the holistic gospel, helping Christians to recognize that correct identity and status before God always has a much higher priority than perfect behavior.

In modern society, another crisis has been appearing in the Christian communities. The competitive and success-oriented atmosphere promotes these thinking types of departure from the gospel with a shift of emphasis from behavior to growth and prosperity. Essentially, the thought behind such an observable fact is the same as the behavior-oriented one; both intend to manifest God through mankind’s achievement and

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successful performance. Whether they are Christian communities or individuals, both are encouraged to ask boldly for blessing and affluence from God. Health, wealth, prosperity, growing and strong church, big and influential Christian organization, harmonious family, and prosperous career are regarded as the best witnesses of God to the world, and the best way to glorify Him. By contrast, if there exist conflict, suffering, misery, misfortune, serious sickness, failure, or anguish in the believers’ life, it is always considered to be better to keep them from showing through, because these tribulations stand for a life not blessed by God. What Paul emphasizes in Rom 8:12-30 on the co-suffering with Christ and the expectation of redemption with perseverance are seemingly despicable and easily ignored. The Christ-centered gospel obviously gives ways to moral/prosperity-oriented thought. Such phenomena coincide with the thinking and action of the first kind of believers of what Luther reminds us on the subject of being two kinds of theologians, namely the theologian of glory and the theologian of the cross. The former is described by Luther as: “Although the works of man always seem attractive and good, they are nevertheless likely to be mortal sins.” And the latter as: “Although the works of God are always unattractive and appear evil, they are nevertheless really eternal merits.”64 Luther’s sketch provides a perceptive insight into Paul’s argumentation which we can apply to discover what we can adhere, irrespective of whether we are located in traditional or in modern world, as he states:

So listen to St. Paul, who teaches you that you have to come up higher than the question of being circumcised or not, etc…. You must come to faith in Christ, through whom we become children of God and are saved forever.85

Most importantly, the word of Christ assures all God’s children of God’s permanent love and presence, so that we can live in the hope and renewal that His promises produce. Besides, the Spirit of Christ is present and active among the adopted children and heirs of the gracious God, comforting them with the blessed assurance, strengthening their faith with the authenticity of Himself in their daily life.

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85 Luther, “The Distinction Between the Law and the Gospel,” 160 (emphasis added).


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