

Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976),

Paul lived his life among Jews and Gentiles. As a Jew he had grown accustomed to dividing humankind into those two parts – the world of dichotomy. In Acts, Paul is portrayed as the Jew, the ex-Pharisee who brings the gospel to the Gentile world and the book does not end until Paul has made it all the way to Rome, the seat of power in the Gentile world.¹

Paul's presentation of justification by faith has such a role; to some this serves not only as the key to Pauline thought, but as the criterion of the really true gospel as it is to be found in the whole New Testament, the whole Bible, and the long and varied history of Christian theology. As the Apostle to the Gentiles he defended the rights and freedom of *Gentile* converts. Paul has provided full documentation in Galatians.²

On what ground, on what terms, are we to be saved? We think that Paul spoke about justification by faith, using the Jewish-Gentile situation as an instance, as an example. But Paul was chiefly concerned about the relation between Jews and Gentiles. ... He wrote the Epistle to Romans, as the Apostle Paul among Jews and Gentiles, to introduce his mission to the significant, but to him unknown, church in Rome. He wants to make clear to them how his mission fits into God's total plan and scheme.³

Paul was called not converted: Paul's experience on the Damascus Road is usually referred to as his conversion. However, it appears that a Jew, so strong in his Jewish faith that he persecutes Christians, himself becomes a Christian through a sudden and overwhelming experience. Yet a closer reading of these accounts [Acts 9:1-19; 22:4-16; 26:9-19; Gal. 1:11-17], both those in Acts and those by Paul himself, reveals a greater continuity between "before" and "after." Here is not that change of "religion" that we commonly associate with the word *conversion*. Serving the one and the same God, Paul receives a new and special calling in God's service. God's Messiah asks him as a Jew to bring God's message to the Gentiles. The emphasis in the accounts is always on this assignment, not on the conversion. Rather than being "converted," Paul was called to the specific task –made clear to him by his experience of the risen Lord –of apostleship to the Gentiles, one hand-picked through Jesus Christ on behalf of the one God of Jews and Gentiles.⁴

In Gal. 1:12, Paul said, *13 for you heard of my former life in Judaism, how I persecuted the church of God violently and tried to destroy it; and I advanced in Judaism beyond many of my own age among my people, so extremely zealous was I for the traditions of my fathers. But when he, who had set me apart before I was born and called me through his grace, was pleased* ¹⁶*to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the Gentiles* (Gal. 1:13-16). In Philippians, he stresses that he is "a Hebrew born of Hebrews, as to the law a Pharisee, as to zeal a persecutor of the church, as to righteousness under the law blameless" (Phil. 3:5-6).⁵ He lost all these to become an apostle to the Gentiles saying, "I count everything as loss because of my surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I suffered loss of all things and count them as refuse in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own, based on law, but that which is faith in Christ, the righteousness of God that depends on faith ..." (Phil. 3:7-9). .. His call brings him to a new understanding of his mission, a new understanding of the law which is otherwise an obstacle to the Gentiles. His ministry is based on the specific conviction that the Gentiles will become part of the people of God without having to pass through the law. There were those, possibly in the Jerusalem church, who would reject his direct apostolic authority and demanded that such apostleship must be granted him by higher human authorities. He asserted that the gospel he preached came from a revelation of Jesus Christ.⁶

¹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 1.

² Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 2.

³ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 3.

⁴ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 7.

⁵ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 8.

⁶ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 9.

Justification by faith alone:

Scholars of the West are shocked to find that for at least three hundred years after its writing and distribution the basic insight of Paul's theology –justification by faith (alone), without the works of the law –seems to have been more or less lost in the teaching and thinking of the church. Paul was certainly quoted –after all, he was an apostle, and he was accepted by the church in the canon of sacred Scripture. He was cited with veneration, but as a sort of collection of “golden sayings” which can be found in any decent religious literature. Seldom if ever, however, do we find anyone who had grasped Paul's doctrine of justification.⁷

It was not until Augustine, more than three hundred years after Paul, that a man was found who seemed to see, so to say, what made Paul “tick,” and who discerned the center of gravity in Pauline theology: justification. The reason for this strange state of affairs is that the early church seems to have felt that Paul spoke about what he actually spoke about, i.e. the relationship between Jews and Gentiles –and that was no problem during those centuries. There was no communication, no ongoing debate of any serious and open kind that touched upon the matter of Jews and Gentiles, and hence Paul's sayings were, in a way, irrelevant. This was the time when the very perspective from which Paul saw this relationship was swallowed up in self-serving Christian anti-Judaism, if not anti-Semitism –ie., the victory of the very attitude which Paul began to detect and combat in the eleventh chapter of Romans.⁸

Augustine who has perhaps rightly been called the first truly Western man, was the first person in Antiquity or in Christianity to write something to self-centered as his own spiritual autobiography, his Confessions. It was he who applied Paul's doctrine of justification to the problem of the introspective conscience, to the question: “On what basis does a person find salvation?” And with Augustine, Western Christianity with its stress on introspective achievements started. It developed in the Middle-Ages – with penitential practice and guidance for self-examination coming increasingly to characterize both monastic and secular life –and man become more and more clever in analyzing his ego.⁹ Martin Luther, an Augustinian, he picked up Paul and found in him God's answer to his problem – how God is working in the innermost individual soul – the problem of the West, and the problem of the late medieval piety of the West. Once the introspective conscience came into the theological bloodstream of Western culture, it tended to dominate the scene far beyond its original function. It reached its theological climax and explosion in the Reformation, and its secular climax and explosion in Sigmund Freud. But Paul himself was never involved in this pursuit.¹⁰

A classic example of the use or, indeed misuse of Paul may be seen in a comparison of two English translations of Galatians 3:24 –both quite permissible from the Greek, yet one obviously biased theologically, and hence for years uncontested since it could be well used in the service of the problem of the introspective conscience. The King James Version of Galatians 3:24 reads “..the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ ...” This translation renders the Greek *paidagogos* as “schoolmaster” (often quoted as “tutor”), and use *eis (Christon)* as a spatial preposition, “unto.”¹¹ Theologically this is a very useful way of demonstrating that the law inducing guilt by its fierce commands makes one seek the grace and forgiveness of new life by coming to Christ. Yet the same Greek can be translated in a different way and, indeed, more accurately in terms of the use of *paidagogos* in and before Paul's time. Thus the Revised Standard Version reads, “... the law was our custodian until Christ came...” The *paidagogos* did not mean schoolmaster, tutor or teacher but rather a “slave” or “strict custodian” who protected a child on the way to school to see that he came to no harm and was not molested. And *eis Christon* could be translated temporarily, i.e., until Christ came. Thus, although the Greek allows for both, the translations reflect very different theological stances. It is also to be noted that in the King James Version *our* custodian seems to imply Paul and all the Galatian Christians, while the RSV clearly intends *our* to apply to Paul and his fellow Jews. This, we have two radically, drastically, and absolutely opposed understanding of the same Greek phrase, and the RSV

⁷ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 16.

⁸ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 16.

⁹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 16.

¹⁰ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 17.

¹¹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 17.

doubtlessly right both on the basis of the older meaning of the Greek and on the basis of the context of the passage (see especially verse 23 with reference to “before”).¹²

Now let us examine this passage in its whole context because it bears precisely on the issue at hand. The context is the situation in Galatia, concern over the question whether Gentiles could join the church without first being circumcised. Circumcision is at the center of the discussion (2:3; 5:2; 5:11; 6:2). Paul’s argument is that one does not need to go through Judaism into Christianity, but there is a straight and direct way to Christ for the Gentiles apart from the law. So far I think Paul’s argument is a familiar one. Perhaps the issue also dealt with dietary laws, but it came to its climax in the matter of circumcision. And this is very important. We must constantly look for what Paul is really discussing, because whenever laws or feast days or calendars, we say, “Oh, he is dealing with the problem of legalism.” But it is very clear that Paul solves the problem of circumcision in a much more radical way than in his treatment of the problem of dietary laws.¹³ The circumcision of Gentiles is under no circumstances to be accepted. In regard to food laws, however, if the weaker brethren must have some restrictions in or not to stumble, the issue should not be pushed too far. And if we, in our protestant mood, simply see all these issues as examples of legalism in a general sense, we just do not get the message. This, indeed, might be the reason why we differ so much in Christendom when we face the matter of legalism.

In order to make his point clear Paul must say something about the law. He does so from the perspective of traditional Jewish thought as it was known to him. In that strand of Jewish teaching the law was eternal at both ends, it existed prior to creation and was to last for eternity. In this passage of Galatians Paul seems to take special pains in proving from the law (quoting only the Pentateuch) that this view is incorrect. Torah for Paul means both the Pentateuch, the first five books of Moses in the Old Testament, and also the law in a more general sense. It is instructive to note that in Galatians 3 and 4 almost all the scriptural passages on which he bases his arguments against the eternal validity of the Torah are taken from the Pentateuch itself. Paul is proving *with* the law something about the law. He is proving with the Torah something about the Torah. And what is he saying? He is saying that the law came in 430 years after the promise to Abraham, so it is quite clear that the Torah is not eternal. First came the promise to Abraham and his seed – and Paul held that this “seed” refers to the Christ who was to come. The thrust of Paul’s argument is that the law came 430 years after the promise and that that promise was given when the testament or covenant with Abraham was irrevocably signed. Thus the promise stands and the law was added later.¹⁴

Paul follows this in Galatians 3:19 by enumerating a great many points which belittle the law. First, it was added for transgression’s sake. Secondly, the law was given with a time limit –until the coming of the seed. Thus it is not eternal. Thirdly, it was ordained by angels – so there had been middlemen. Therefore, this law is seen as something other than the ultimate, absolute and immediate manifestation of the salvation. Further, this law was not given in order to give life (Gal 3: 21). If a law had been given which would give life, then of course we would be justified by the law. But that is not what the law came for, according to Paul’s argument. The law came, says Paul, as a harsh baby sitter to see to it that children of Israel did not raid the refrigerator before the great party at which the Gentiles should also present.¹⁵ Or to speak in more biblical language, “Now before faith came, we (Jew) were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed” (Gal. 3:23). In other words, Scripture put everything under lock and key –under sin –in order that the promise should depend on faith in Jesus, the Messiah, and should be given to those believe in Jesus Christ. The expressions “until faith should be revealed” (3:23) and “but now that faith has come” (3: 25) show an interesting use of the word “faith.” We could just as well read “Christ,” i.e., “until Christ should be revealed” or “until Christ has come.” Thus the law was our *paidagogos* until Christ came. “Pedagogue” for us is a super teacher, but in ancient Greek and to Paul it was a person less than a teacher. In ancient Greece or Rome it was a sort of ambulant baby sitter, a slave who took children to school, taught them onward manners, saw to it that they did not fall into sin and difficulties. Thus “custodian” is a more adequate and accurate translation than “tutor.” – until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith (3:24). To be justified by faith is a possibility only in Christ. But now that faith (Christ) has come, we are no longer under a

¹² Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 18.

¹³ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 18.

¹⁴ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 19.

¹⁵ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 20.

custodian.¹⁶

Paul concludes that all are one in Christ and that there can be no divisions between Jew or Greek, slave or free, male or female; all are heirs to the promise to Abraham (3:28-29). The whole history of Western tradition, since Augustine, this passage has been read to mean absolutely the opposite of what Paul said. We mean that every Christian, to become a Christian, has to be tutored by the law in order to recognize his shortcomings, his guilt, so that he might thus really recognize that he needs a Christ, a Savior, a Messiah. But this is really to turn the whole thing upside down. When Paul says that the law has come to an end, he is arguing for the possibility of coming straight to Christ, not through the tunnel and funnel of the law.¹⁷ [So a person cannot be saved by the law which cannot give life].

Paul's doctrine of justification by faith has its theological context in his reflection on the relation between Jew and Gentiles, and not within the problem of how man is to be saved or how man's deeds are to be accounted, or how the free will of individuals is to be asserted or checked. Among passages about justification by faith, two are most commonly cited: Romans 3:28 and 1:17.¹⁹ The RSV translation of Romans 3:28 reads: "... a man is justified by faith apart from works of law." Romans 1:17, *There will come a time when the righteous will live by faith.* Those two passages from Romans are the two classical ones, but there are many others. When such passages concerning justification by faith occur in Paul's letters they most probably are to be found in the same verse as or at least adjacent to a specific reference to Jew and Gentiles. Thus Romans 3:28-29: For we hold that a person is justified by faith apart from works prescribed by the law.²⁰ *Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also [NIV].* Similarly, Romans 1:16-17: For I am not ashamed of the gospel; it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.¹⁷ *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed through faith for faith; as it is written, 'The one who is righteous will live by faith.'*
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[According to Stendahl,] Paul's doctrinal principle or insight has a very specific function. His guess is that the doctrine of justification originates in Paul's theological mind from his grappling with the problem of how to defend the place of the Gentiles in the Kingdom –the task with which he was charged in his call. It is significant that it is in the Epistle to the Romans where much of this material on justification by faith is found. What is the Epistle to the Romans about? It is about God's plan for the world and about how Paul's mission to the Gentiles fits into that plan.¹⁹ Therefore, Paul's justification by faith more likely has to do with his relationship with the poor homeless (Gentiles) in his days.

The real center of gravity in Romans is found in chapters 9 –11, in the section about the relation between Jew and Gentiles (Rom. 11:25 and Gal. 1:12; cf. Rom. 16:25). The mystery God revealed to Paul is well summarized in Ephesians; *"the Gentiles are fellow heirs [with the Jews], members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel"* (Eph. 3:6). In Romans 9 -11 Paul frequently cites Old Testament promises of Messiah. If all Israel believed in the promised Messiah, then everyone –including the Gentiles –would be saved. But the secret that was revealed to Paul, the Jewish apostle to Gentiles was that God had changed his plans. Now it was "No" to Jews, their non-acceptance of the Messiah, which opened up the possibility of the "Yes" of the Gentiles. In Romans 11 Paul points out that ultimately when the full member of Gentiles have become God's people, they by jealousy (Rom. 11:11) the Jews will also be saved (11:15, 25-27). The central issue claiming Paul's attention is that of the inclusion both of Gentiles and Jews.²⁰

Paul's strategy:

Whenever Paul went to a new city, he went to synagogue to preach. Paul's message was generally rejected by the Jew (Acts 13:43-45, 14:1 f., 17:1-7), and consequently from the synagogue he went out to market place to preach to

¹⁶ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 21.

¹⁷ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 22.

¹⁸ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 26.

¹⁹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 27.

²⁰ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 28.

the Gentiles. He used the synagogue, to which he had access, as a starting point from which he could then broaden his activities. Paul had to register “No” of the Jews before he was allowed to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. Romans 1 – 8, Paul argues that since justification is by faith it is equally possible for both Jews and Gentiles to come to Christ. In the preface he does not deal with the question of how man is to be saved –be it by works or law or by something else. He is simply pointing out in a very intelligent and powerful theological fashion that the basis for a church of Jews and Gentiles has already been set forth in Scripture where the prime example is Abraham: “Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness” (Gen 15: 6 as cited in Rom. 4:3). In Romans 1 – 8 both Gentiles and Jews are found equally culpable [guilty] (Rom. 3:9ff.), yet also equally capable of being saved through justification (Rom. 3:21-30).²¹

Why does Paul use the term righteousness/justification? The same Greek word is involved (*dikaiosune*) –but the term seems peculiar, unnatural and difficult to understand. The background [of the term] is Hebrew. The Hebrew word is found in what Old Testament scholars consider to be the most ancient part of the Bible –not in Genesis 1 but in Judges 5, the Victory song of Deborah. A literal translation of Judges 5:11 reads, “There shall they rehearse the (*tsidhqoth*) righteousness of Yahweh ...” The KJV reads “righteous acts;” The RSV, “triumphs;”the NEB, “victories” or “triumphs;” the JB, “blessings;” and the NAB “just deeds” of the Lord. Of course, they are all correct –in a way –but some tend more toward a literal meaning of the word and others perhaps toward a more correct or easily understandable interpretation. The fact is that Judges 5:11 refers to a situation, a time, or a mood in which a group of people, a nation, or tribe is absolutely convinced of its identity as God’s people. Any manifestation of God’s righteousness must therefore mean that this people is exalted and triumphant and that its enemies are defeated. If this people is God’s people, then, when righteousness comes, it must mean salvation, triumph victory, blessing, and the destruction of the enemy. This is plain and simple, because God’s righteous act means that God is putting things right –and that is *tsedaqah*, the righteousness of God. In the Old Testament, it also takes on another meaning: For example, when Amos is not so sure that that the so-called people of the Lord are true Israelites, truly keeping their covenant responsibilities, God’s righteousness cannot or does not mean vindication, but rather condemnation. The Day of the Lord can be dark with no light (Amos 5:18) and he predicts judgment, a punishment for an iniquitous people who have broken God’s covenant.²²

Temptation: Jesus did *not* teach us to pray “Strengthen us in the moment of temptation,” but “See to it that we do not fall into temptation.” In the Lord’s Prayer, we read, “And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil”(Matt. 6:13 cf. Luke 11:4b). Were we to hold that an Aramaic original stands behind the Greek of this prayer as transmitted in the New Testament, the verb “to lead” might possibly have a form in Hebrew and Aramaic which could be rendered “Do not cause us to be led into temptation.” The more recent translation of the Lord’s Prayer are right in preferring the word “test” rather than “temptation” –the Greek *peirasmon* has both meanings. A paragraph would then be: “Do not let such a situation come to pass in which we find ourselves put to the ultimate test,” is more in keeping with the Gospels, since a Christian is there portrayed as knowing that when Satan, the Evil One, pulls out all the stops there is no chance that a person can stand (Mark 13:20, par. Matt.,24:22). In the Gospel there is nothing heroic about fighting Satan as far as the followers of Jesus are concerned. The only help is divine intervention –that for the sake of the elect the time of ultimate testing be shortened since no human being could otherwise be saved (Mark 13:20 and par.).²³ To the Corinthians Paul sounds the same note: “God is faithful and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide *the way of escape*, so that you can endure it” (I Cor. 10:13).²⁴

Love

“Love” is a particularly formidable term in that it often is used to sum up the whole gospel, the whole meaning of the life, suffering, and death of Christ, the whole content of the Christian message. The classical text where Paul

²¹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 29.

²² Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 31.

²³ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 49.

²⁴ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 50.

speaks about love is I Corinthian 13 –the hymn of love, to love, for love.²⁵ The term “charity” has come to mean condescending almsgiving, the self-serving gift of the rich to the poor –and that dimension is certainly not what Paul had in mind. It rather seems as if that was what he was criticizing, “If I give away all I have, and if I deliver my body to be burned, but have not love (KJV: charity), I gain nothing” (1Cor. 13:3). Paul saying that without love no deeds –not even the greatest deed of giving oneself to be burned as a martyr or as a sacrifice on the altar –would count for anything, would be of any ultimate use. The Greek word in 1 Corinthians is *agape*, the unmotivated love of God, so totally different from what the world usually calls “love,” i.e. *eros*, the aspiring self-seeking love of human beings. In Corinthian 13, Paul asserts that any works or deeds, any spectacular manifestations of spiritual power in prophecy or speaking in tongues, are of no avail unless they flow out of that non-self-serving, real, unmotivated fountain of love.²⁶ One cannot love by willpower alone. No one can tell himself, “Now I will love,” and then proceed truly to love. Love is beyond our control...²⁷ True love

My conclusion is that

[Paul always seemed to have Gentiles in mind. The whole argument and his whole mission was for and with Gentiles, as my whole heart is on the homeless and even ended up developing homeless theology.] How can we relate Paul’s care about the Gentiles to his concern for the poor and homeless? The Gentiles as described above belong to the category of “the poor/homeless” in Jewish society. He treats them as equal and same children of God just as the Jews are. We treat the poor and homeless in our days the same way. They, in Paul’s days and today deserve God’s love and blessing as much as anyone else deserves. In my volume 1, I described who are the homeless and how they are being treated in our society today. I relate the condition of the poor and homeless in our day to the condition of the Gentiles in Jesus’ days. As Jesus and Paul cared about them, love them, brought them Jesus’ love we do the same for our homeless of our day. While I dig out Jesus’ and Paul’s relationship to the poor I would like to challenge ourselves with the concern how we must develop our relationship with the poor and homeless today. This must become the supreme task of Christian churches today instead of focusing on personal salvation, sleep in that complacency regardless of what’s happening around us – exploiting, discriminating, oppressing the poor which push them into cold deadly homelessness. The “charity” model of helping the needy does not work because it is not “love” as long as the ego wants to remain in command, to call the shots, to be in control. True love demands that neither the giver nor the receiver be conscious of giving or receiving.²⁸

Corinth: The general context of the epistle [Corinthians] is the problem which Paul had in Corinth about the excitement, the enthusiastic extremism, and the magnificent achievements which some Corinthians seemed to experience. The church of Corinth was actually a glorious church, but it was far from an ideal church. **Corinth** was a seaport, a city, a metropolitan area not dissimilar to other cities of the Hellenistic world in to which Christianity made its way. The image of Corinth as a sinful city is often epitomized in commentaries and sermons by reference to the fact that the Greek verb *korinthiazesthai*, “to live as in Corinth,” came to mean “to practice fornication” because Corinth was famous for its courtesans. .. But there is no indication that Paul’s Corinth as especially wicked. His city was totally new, founded as a Roman colony in 44 B.C.; the old Corinth had been destroyed a century earlier. It was in this great and confused city that Paul preached his gospel, and there it took hold. And while there were many problems, it was never dull. The Corinthians really excelled –in all kinds of things: in speaking in tongues, in prophecy, in shouting, and in all manner of sins as well. Paul’s First Epistle to the Corinthians address itself to this problem. The chapter immediately preceding the one on love deals with the Spirit, the one Spirit which has many gifts (I Cor. 12). In this chapter Paul strangely affirms that speaking in tongues is no more a gift of the Spirit than is teaching or even administration. That there is nothing more spiritual in speaking in tongues or prophesying than in sitting behind a good and responsible administrator’s desk is an interesting statement. Paul seems to be trying

²⁵ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 53.

²⁶ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 54.

²⁷ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 55.

²⁸ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 56.

somehow to show that all these go together. Thus when he refers to *agape*, love, he is actually saying that ²⁹any spiritual achievement, any Christian deed, any Christian virtue apart from *agape* can be detrimental, dangerous and threatening to the well-being of the church. There is a wonderful passage in Colossians which gives a summary of this thought: “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience, forbearing one another ... and forgiving each other ...” (Col. 3:12–13). “And above all these put love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony (Col. 3:14). Love, then, is not the “super-virtue.” Love, to Paul, is constant concern for the church, for one’s brothers and sisters. This is the point: concern for the church, for one’s fellow Christians is what love is about. Thus Paul finally says, “So faith, hope, love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love” (I Cor. 13:13). ³⁰

[Paul seems to deal with love the same way he did with justification. As he had Gentiles in mind when he talked about justification, now he had church and members –brothers and sisters – in mind when he talks about love. Therefore, Paul’s concept of justification or love is relational – with others.] To be fair to everyone and to win everyone he said, “*To the Jew I became a Jew, in order to win Jews.... To the Gentiles I became as one outside the law, so that I might win the Gentiles .. To the weak I became weak, that I might gain the weak ... I have become all things to all men ...* (I Cor. 9:19–22). ³¹

The Last judgment: The ultimate importance of love is also evident in the Gospels. In Matthew 25:31–46 there is the grandiose image of the last judgment, the separation of the sheep from the goats when the Son of man comes in his glory –the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Jesus there provides an interesting criterion for those who will be judged to be at the right hand: “Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdomfor I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me ... Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me (Matt. 25: 34-40). The usual way of preaching on this text is to say that Jesus here pictures what will happen at the final judgment so that people can behave accordingly. At this level, however, an interesting theological problem arises as to how such a criterion accords with the doctrine of salvation by grace, since here salvation seems to depend on works. Perhaps we could hold, as some do, that this refers to judgment within the church alone, and not all humanity. And as we read on to the end of chapter 25, we might get a psychological kick out of the fact that those who did the right thing did so without knowing it, and those who did the wrong things also did so without knowing it; those who were remiss did not see Christ, those who showed concern also did not see Christ. This can be cleverly exploited –“This is the way it is with really good deeds. They are done unknowingly –from *quellende liebe*, love that simply wells up and overflows –much as that unmotivated love, *agape*.” Such an interpretation of Matthew 25:31–46 may be correct, but I doubt it. I think, rather, that these words about the last judgment are thought of by Matthew as a farewell speech of Jesus. Our Lord is not saying, “You, my followers, are interested and concerned with the last judgment, so I shall give you instructions as to how you will be saved.” Rather, he is saying, “Friends, I am going away; and now I shall show you that I make the little ones, your brothers and sisters in the church, my representatives, my stand-ins. It may be that you would like to serve me out of gratitude, but I tell you to put that service to the community and particularly to those who are the least in it.” That is why the dialogue: “When did we see you hungry and thirsty and in prison and came or did not come to you? Truly, I say to you, as you did it/did not do it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me.”Such an interpretation dovetails with a principle of love in which the whole religious effort is directed to the community.³² When I stress love rather than integrity I also stress a widened, broadened conscience so that we can see all our brothers and sisters, indeed all humanity as objects of our loving concern. We must look around and see what is to the benefit of the community. Our ethic must aimed toward the totality of the church rather than toward depraved and self-directed ego. “Other-directedness,” self-denying love succeeds better at being the main element in Christian life. ³³

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²⁹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 57.

³⁰ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 58.

³¹ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 62.

³² Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 63.

³³ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 64.

Good Samaritan: The point is that it is the Samaritan, the outsider, who proves truly to be a neighbor. It is the Samaritan who is not anxious about keeping apart from one he is supposed to despise, who is not anxious about his integrity. The Samaritan acts out of love, not heeding special interest and thus being free to be a neighbor to anyone in need. This is love rather than integrity [truth, honor].³⁴

The famous words which appear in the context of passage on the celebration of the Lord's Supper (I Cor. 11:29), "*For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves.*" 주의 몸을 분변치 못하고 먹고 마시는 자는 자기의 죄를 먹고 마시는 것이니라 This text is to be understood in terms of love, true concern for the other. This text has held a place of tremendous importance in the history of the Eucharist, the Lord's Table. Exegetes in our time are more or less in agreement that the way to understand the text must be in the context of the whole passage. The problem, then, concerns the celebration of the evening meal in Corinth, a city which was marked by a very wide sociological spread in its constituency. Upper class people came to the supper with elaborate meals –at least fancy sandwiches –but the slaves could not sneak out until very late, and then they could not bring any food unless they had stolen it.³⁵ So Paul says to the rich, "Do you not have house to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who have nothing? (I Cor. 11:22). Now to that mundane issue he adds, "For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you ..." (I Cor. 11:23-26). The bread and wine are described as given to the disciples, and the words of institution are placed after Paul's rebuke of those who did not heed the poor. Then Paul returns to this issue and the thrust of judgment is put in terms of *not discerning the body*, something which is terrible. The Christian who by such behavior does not recognize the community of the church is liable to condemnation, and this so serious that some are weak and ill and some even died (I Cor. 11:30). This is a breaking of love, of *agape*. It is interesting that those passages about eating the bread or drinking the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner so as to profane the body and blood of the Lord (I Cor. 11:27), and not discerning the body and thus bringing judgment upon oneself (I Cor. 11:29), are passages which have been tragically divisive in the history of the Eucharist. We might paraphrase: "*How can you practice segregation at Communion? Do you not recognize that you cut the body of Christ in pieces if there is segregation of any kind or for any reason at the Eucharist? Church or ethical problems are really group or community problems, because Christianity is not a principle to be followed with utter clarity or precision. Christianity is an experiment in living together –and with a certain flexible ability to take differences into account without being divided.*"³⁶

As we have wandered through various demonstrations of Paul's principle, *love rather than integrity*, we many now be ready to rephrase it, and sharpen it by saying: love allows for not insisting on one's own integrity at the expense of the unity of the community. Love, as Paul understands it, urges us to respect fully the integrity of those who think and feel otherwise. In Romans Paul expresses it well when he says, "Welcome and accept the one who is weak in faith –and not for purpose of arguing ... Let everyone be convinced in his own mind" (Rom. 14: 1, 5). Love allows the full respect of the integrity of the other, and overcomes the divisiveness of my zeal for having it my way in the name of my own integrity [honesty, truth, honor, truthfulness].³⁷

³⁴ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 65.

³⁵ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 65.

³⁶ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 66.

³⁷ Krister Stendahl. *Paul among Jews and Gentiles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press. 1976), 67.

