[*JGRChJ* 19 (2023) 104-27]

NO LONGER A PEOPLE-PLEASER: NARRATIO AND DEFENSIVE REFUTATION IN GALATIANS 1.10–2.21

Kennedy K. Ekeocha
West Africa Theological Seminary, Lagos, Nigeria

Introduction

Ever since the landmark work of Hans Dieter Betz on Galatians,[1] there has been renewed interest in the rhetorical analysis of Paul's letters. Galatians represents perhaps the 'most obviously rhetorical of all of Paul's letters',[2] evincing his acquaintance with Greco-Roman rhetoric. Yet there is no consensus on the rhetorical genre of the letter.[3] Additionally, the place of 1.10 and, by extension, the nature and function of the *narratio* in chs. 1–2 continue to be disputed.[4]

1. Hans D. Betz, *A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979).

2. Ben Witherington III, *New Testament Rhetoric: An Introductory Guide to the Art of Persuasion in and of the New Testament* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2009), p. 124.

3. It has been taken as forensic or apologetic rhetoric (Betz, *Commentary*), deliberative rhetoric (George A. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation through Rhetorical Criticism* [Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984]), a combination of both forensic and deliberative rhetoric (Richard Longenecker, *Galatians* [WBC, 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990]) or epideictic rhetoric (James D. Hester, 'The Rhetorical Structure of Galatians 1.11–2.14', *JBL* 103 [1984], pp. 223-33).

4. In place of *narratio*, I will use the terms 'narration' (*diegesis*) and 'narrative' (*diegema*). This is purely stylistic. The latter two terms are often used interchangeably, although 'narrative' deals with one event while a 'narration' deals with many events pulled together (see George A. Kennedy [trans. and notes],

This study partially follows the analytical method outlined by George A. Kennedy,[5] while considering discussions on narratives in ancient rhetorical theory. It is argued in this article that, rather than limiting the *narratio* to 1.13–2.14, as many interpreters do, we should consider the entire section of 1.10–2.21 to constitute a coherent rhetorical unit that functions to demonstrate Paul's self-understanding. The unit portrays Paul as one who now only seeks to please God rather than people, and it represents his self-defensive refutation of a false narrative by which the Galatians are being persuaded against the true gospel. In other words, the *narratio* is an expansion and explication of 1.10 upon which the section depends for meaning.

Various Rhetorical Analyses of Galatians 1–2

Galatians 1.10, its relationship to the *narratio*, and how the latter functions are crucial for determining the rhetorical burden of the letter. Scholars have neither adequately appreciated this nor given it due consideration.

First, for many interpreters, Gal. 1.10 is only loosely appended to the preceding material with little or no rhetorical significance for what follows. According to Longenecker, most recent translators and commentators treat this verse as an emotional outburst that is to be related in some manner to the curses of vv. 8-9; it is to be set off as a separate paragraph or regarded as parenthetical within the paragraph.[6] Betz takes it as a mere literary transition between the *exordium* and the *narratio* (1.12–2.14) although he embeds it within the *exordium*.[7] This way of delineating the section is closely followed by many, as the following outlines show:

Progymnasmata: Greek Textbooks of Prose Composition and Rhetoric [Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003]).

5. Kennedy articulates a five-step procedure for analyzing New Testament letters rhetorically: (1) determine the rhetorical unit; (2) determine the rhetorical situation of the unit; (3) determine the species of rhetoric (forensic, deliberative or epideictic); (4) proceed to consider the arrangement of material in the text; and (5) evaluate or review the success of the rhetorical unit in meeting its rhetorical exigence and what its implication may be for the speaker or audience (*New Testament Interpretation*, p. 38).

6. See UBSGNT, RSV, NEB and NIV (Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 18).

7. Betz, *Commentary*, p. 16.

Betz	Hester	Kennedy[8]	Witherington	Longenecker
Epistolary Prescript 1.1-5		Salutation 1.1-5	Epistolary Prescript 1.1-5	Salutation 1.1-5
Exordium 1.6-11	*Exordium* 1.6-10	Proem 1.6-10	*Exordium* 1.6-10	*Exordium* 1.6-10
Narratio 1.12–2.14	*Stasis* 1.11-12	Proof 1.11–5.1	*Narratio* 1.11–2.14	*Narratio* 1.11–2.14
	Transitio 1.13-14	1st Heading 1.11-12 Narrative 1.13–2.14		
	Narratio 1.15–2.10			
	Digressio 2.11-14			
Propositio 2.15-21		*Epicheireme* 2.15-21	*Propositio* 2.15-21	*Propositio* 2.15-21
		2nd Heading 3.1		

In his 1984 article, James Hester challenged Betz's separation of 1.11 from 1.12. He argued that the presence of γάρ in vv. 11 and 12 serves to unite the two verses which, as he claimed, represent the stasis of the *narratio*.[9] Yet Hester assigned 1.10 to the *exordium*, separating it from v. 11, and failed to see how the γάρ of v. 11 could equally unite it to v. 10. Hester's case at this point is, therefore, as flawed as the one he rejects. It is even more flawed because he separates vv. 13-14 and vv. 11-12 from the *narratio* which he only limits to 1.15–2.10. Hester's insistence on this structural move is based on the assumption that the only general guidelines laid down for *narratio* are that it be lucid, credible and brief.[10] It is unclear how 1.10 will impinge on lucidity and credibility if it were taken as part of the *narratio*. Hester's

8. Culled from Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, pp. 147-51.
9. Hester, 'Rhetorical Structure', pp. 225-27.
10. Hester, 'Rhetorical Structure', p. 228.

assumption, however, is not accurate. Credibility was certainly required, but ancient rhetors advised sacrificing brevity, for example, in difficult cases.[11] As will be explained shortly, lucidity and brevity were not qualities on which ancient rhetoricians agreed.

Further, Hester's labeling of 2.11-14 as *digressio* lacks merit.[12] Nothing in these verses interrupts the structure or linear progression of the narration. Nor do these verses conform to Quintilian's definition of digression (*par-ekbasis*).[13] In fairness, Hester later adopted a different view on 2.11-14, calling it a *chreia* instead, saying, 'I now believe that 2.11-14 is not a digression but a chreia, slightly expanded by Paul, and 2.15-21 the elaboration of the chreia.'[14] Still, 1.10 remains irrelevant to the *chreia*.

Kennedy simply describes 1.10 as 'a written aside which contributes to his [Paul's] ethos by its candor'.[15] Kennedy locates it in the *exordium* as do Ben Witherington and Richard Longenecker. Apart from the observation made by Robert G. Hall that 'most ancient rhetoricians would probably prefer to call the first heading (Gal. 1.10–2.21) a narration',[16] the strict exclusion of 1.10 from the *narratio* has not been seriously challenged. Hall agrees with Hester that 1.11-12 is the thesis of the *narratio* but suggests that v. 10 be included. In Hall's words, 'Paul wants to show that his gospel did not come from human beings but from God (Gal. 1.11-12) and that he does not seek human approval but divine (Gal. 1.10). Both these theses develop Paul's ethos, the overriding purpose of the narration in Galatians.'[17] This recognition is important, and yet it has been ignored by interpreters of the letter. Even so, Hall does not proceed to demonstrate it. By switching the order of 1.10-12, giving priority to vv. 11-12 ('concern for the gospel's divine origin') over against v. 10

11. See Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, p. 29.
12. Hester, 'Rhetorical Structure', pp. 230-33.
13. This is *egressus* in Latin (see Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.13-15). For further critique of Hester, see Robert G. Hall, 'The Rhetorical Outline for Galatians: A Reconsideration', *JBL* 2 (1987), pp. 277-87.
14. Hester, 'Placing the Blame: The Presence of Epideictic in Galatians 1 and 2', in D.F. Watson (ed.), *Persuasive Artistry: Studies in New Testament Rhetoric in Honor of George A. Kennedy* (JSNTSup, 50; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1991), pp. 281-307 (282).
15. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, p. 148.
16. Hall, 'Rhetorical Outline', p. 286.
17. Hall, 'Rhetorical Outline', p. 285.

('concern for Paul not being a human approval seeker'), he misses the crux of Paul's rhetorical burden. Apart from Hall's attempt, the wisdom of including v. 10 in the *narratio,* as constituting the thesis or, at least, as part of it, has won only a few advocates.

The second issue concerns the nature and function of the narration in Gal. 1–2 as a whole. Interpreters tend to follow two general paths.[18] First, a large majority of scholars argue that Paul is on the defensive. However, there is no consensus on what he is defensive about. The narration is taken to be (a) Paul's defence of his apostolic authority,[19] (b) Paul's defence against several other accusations or charges,[20] or (c) Paul's defence of his gospel.[21] Secondly, other scholars argue that the narration functions not as a defence but as Paul's presentation of himself as a paradigm in light of 4.12 where he appeals to the Galatians to imitate him.[22]

Each of these interpretations has merit, but they are also fraught with problems. For example, in the first category, the view that Paul is defending himself against charges is problematic because it usually depends on the mirror reading of several passages. According to George Lyons, 'The designation "mirror reading" arises from the presumption that what Paul

18. For a discussion of the views, see Debbie Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People? Defending the Gospel in Galatians 1–2', *Bib* 91 (2010), pp. 24-49; Justin K. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2 without a Mirror: Reflections on Paul's Conflict with the Agitators', *TynBul* 65 (2014), pp. 275-303.

19. J.B. Lightfoot, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians: A Revised Text with Introduction, Notes, and Dissertations* (repr., Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995), pp. 23, 71. See also F.F. Bruce, *Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), pp. 24-27; J.D.G. Dunn, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1993), p. 67; and Longenecker, *Galatians*, p. 24. Galatians 1.1 is usually taken as an indicator of this view.

20. Interpreters in (a) are most likely to be found here also.

21. D.J. Verseput, 'Paul's Gentile Mission and the Jewish Christian Community: A Study of the Narrative in Galatians 1 and 2', *NTS* 39 (1993), pp. 36-58; J.S. Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation in Galatians 1–2', *HTR* 87 (1994), pp. 1-16. Vos describes the narration as 'apologetic in the sense of defending the truth of the gospel but not apologetic in the sense of taking a defensive position' (p. 15).

22. Proponents of the paradigm view include George Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography: Toward a New Understanding* (SBLDS, 73; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1985), pp. 96-105; Beverly R. Gaventa, 'Galatians 1 and 2: Autobiography as Paradigm', *NovT* 28 (1986), pp. 309-26.

denies, his opponents have asserted and/or that what he asserts, they have denied.'[23] Mirror reading as a hermeneutical approach has been under attack since the 1980s.[24] Debbie Hunn contends that one problem with mirror reading is that a given response may be provoked by more than one cause. For example, 1.10 may be Paul's response to a charge that he pleases people, not God, or it may be a veiled charge that his opponents are themselves people-pleasers.[25] Similarly, the view that Paul is defending the gospel, as argued by J.S. Vos, is problematic because it bases Paul's genuineness and that of the gospel on the content and tone of 1.6-9.[26] But these verses in themselves do not demonstrate that the gospel is genuine,[27] and, as will become clear shortly, the narration that follows is primarily concerned with Paul's ethos and, only secondarily, with the gospel.

The absence of any motif of *imitatio Pauli* within the narration itself detracts significantly from the claim that Paul is presenting himself as a paradigm for imitation as argued by Lyons and Beverly Gaventa. As Vos notes, Gal. 4.12 is in a different context and only a few elements in 1.13–2.14 have paradigmatic force.[28] Vos further adds that a great deal of Gal. 1.13–2.14, including details of Paul's journeys and his relation to the pillar apostles, would be irrelevant to the purpose of presenting himself as a paradigm.[29] Justin K. Hardin judges that 4.12 is too far removed from the narration to be an interpretative lens and concludes that the view that the narration is providing an example for the Galatians to emulate is un-successful.[30]

Considering these difficulties, Hunn and Hardin both start from the presupposition that mirror reading, as an interpretative method, cannot be trusted

23. Lyons, *Pauline Autobiography*, pp. 80-81.

24. See John M.G. Barclay, 'Mirror-Reading a Polemical Letter: Galatians as a Test Case', *JSNT* 31 (1987), pp. 73-93; Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?'; Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2'; Nijay K. Gupta, 'Mirror-Reading Moral Issues in Paul's Letters', *JSNT* 34 (2012), pp. 361-81.

25. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 27.

26. See Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation', pp. 9-10.

27. For a critique of Verseput and Vos, see Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', pp. 293-95.

28. Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation', p. 15.

29. Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation', p. 15.

30. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', pp. 292-93.

and therefore should be abandoned, although Hunn believes that a total jettisoning of the approach is unlikely to happen.[31]

Hunn's 2010 article is based on the understanding that Gal. 1.10 and 1.11-12 are inextricably connected. She notes that, while exegetes generally understand that Paul argues for the divine origin of his gospel on the basis that he sought to please God and not humans, they have not recognized the critical role of v. 10 in 1.10–2.21.[32] In other words, Hunn belongs to the category of interpreters who take the narration as defensive. She argues that the narration functions as proof of the divine origin of Paul's gospel, which is substantiated by the fact that Paul, after his conversion, only sought to please God rather than humans.[33] Hunn construes 1.10 as consisting of two mutually exclusive categories—pleasing people, on the one hand, and pleasing God, on the other. Thus, to make clear that his gospel is divine (vv. 11-12), Paul demonstrates that he seeks to please God (1.10) rather than people (1.10, 13-14). The demonstration begins at 1.15-17 and continues until 1.24.[34]

As Hunn argues, 'verses 13-24 … establish v. 10 [i.e.] that Paul no longer seeks to please people but God, and v. 10 gives the grounds for vv. 11-12 that his gospel is from God.'[35] But Paul must not only show that his gospel is divine, he must also show that he defended it when it was threatened, hence his reminiscence of the incidents in ch. 2.[36]

The important contribution of Hunn's work lies in the recognition that, rather than being a mere addendum to a rebuke, 1.10 serves as a foundational component in support of Paul's message.[37] However, Hunn's argument exhibits two important shortcomings. First, as Hardin rightly points out, the claim that 1.10 is a proof for 1.11-12 gets the logic backward.[38] Indeed, Hunn must have read the text in the reverse order to arrive at the logic she perceives. Read linearly, vv. 11-12 and what follows serve to substantiate the point made in v. 10, not the other way round. Secondly, like Hester's claim that 1.11-12

31. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 29.
32. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 34.
33. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 34.
34. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 37.
35. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 38.
36. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', pp. 42, 47.
37. Hunn, 'Pleasing God or Pleasing People?', p. 48.
38. See Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', p. 296.

is the thesis of the entire narration, and thus, that this narration functions to demonstrate the divine origin of Paul's gospel, Hunn's view fails to convince because, again, the narration is primarily about Paul himself not the gospel.

Hardin rejects taking Gal. 1–2 as Paul's defence of himself, his gospel, or anything else,[39] suggesting instead that the narration functions as Paul's self-contrast with the agitators in light of 6.12-14 where Paul indicts his opponents as people-pleasers. As Hardin puts it, 'Paul presents himself as a foil for the agitators so the Galatians would realize the folly of chasing after their Judaizing tactics.'[40] In other words, in relation to 1.10, the agitators, rather than Paul, are the ones guilty of being people pleasers.[41]

Hardin, like Hunn, recognizes 1.10 as crucial for understanding the narration. Nonetheless, Hardin's interpretation suffers from at least three weaknesses. First, Hardin does not clearly show how 1.13–2.21 portrays Paul as a God-pleaser, and his arrangement of 1.15–2.21 as a tenuous chiasm does not support his claim.[42] Secondly, Hardin is inconsistent when he condemns the narration-as-a-paradigm view as unsuccessful and yet, referencing 4.12, later claims that Paul's aim in 1.10 and the narration as a whole were to persuade the Galatians, not to follow the agitators but to become like (i.e. imitate) him.[43] Thirdly, Hardin's claim that Paul is not on the defence but on the attack represents an unnecessary and invalid dichotomy. Self-contrast can also be a form of self-defence. In this case, it clearly is. Hardin's appeal to Witherington's comment that 'Paul sees himself as in competition with the agitators over the hearts and minds of the Galatian converts'[44] does not help his case that the narration is not defensive. Witherington himself admits that 'the tone of this material [Gal. 1–2] is somewhat polemical and even

39. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2'.
40. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', pp. 298-99.
41. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', p. 299.
42. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', p. 300.
43. Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', pp. 292-93 (cf. 299).
44. Ben Witherington III, *Grace in Galatia* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), p. 130; quoted in Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', p. 299.

defensive'.[45] In fact, even Gaventa, who privileges the narration-as-a-paradigm view, upholds the defensive character of the material.[46]

Suffice it to say that a valid understanding of Gal. 1–2 must include the notion of self-defence. Further, any assessment of Gal. 1–2 that insists on excluding self-defence faces substantial problems. This article contends that Gal. 1.10–2.21 functions as a self-defensive refutation of a false narrative or notion that impinges on Paul's credibility and ethos.

Galatians 1.10–2.21 as a Rhetorical Unit

Taking Gal. 1.10–2.21 as a rhetorical unit requires clear demonstration, given that only 1.13–2.14 appears to be properly narratival. First, let us recall Hall's point: 'Most ancient rhetoricians would probably prefer to call the first heading (Gal. 1.10–2.21) a narration.'[47] This assertion is supported by ancient rhetorical handbooks. Narration is one of the six parts of a rhetorical speech in the order: *exordium*, *narratio*, *partitio*, *confirmatio*, *refutatio* and *peroratio*.[48] A narrative or 'Statement of Facts'[49] is more prominent in the forensic genre of rhetorical speeches.[50] As Cicero pointed out, much narration is not needed in deliberative cases.[51] Cicero defines it as 'an exposition of events that have occurred or are supposed to have occurred' (*Inv*. 1.27).[52] Quintilian echoes this definition, 'A Narrative is an exposition, designed to be persuasive, of an action done or deemed to be done' (*Inst*. 4.2.31).[53] In other words, a narrative does not necessarily recount factual events but they

45. Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric,* p. 125. This negates a previous claim that 'the rhetorical function of this material is not defense' (*Grace in Galatia,* p. 184).

46. See Gaventa, 'Galatians l and 2', p. 326.

47. Hall, 'Rhetorical Outline', p. 286.

48. Cicero, *Inv*. 1.14.19. In his more mature discussion, Cicero identifies only four divisions: the first (*exordium)* and the last (*peroration*) for arousing emotions, and the second (narrative) and third (proof) for procuring belief in what is said (*Part. or*. 27).

49. *Rhet. Her*. 1.12.

50. Narration is discussed mainly in this genre.

51. Cicero, *Part. or.* 13.

52. Cicero, *Inv*. 1.27 (Hubbell, LCL).

53. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.31 (Russell, LCL).

must be narrated as though they actually happened.[54] Ancient rhetoricians permitted the invention of fictitious events. However, they advised that such inventions must be believable and not contradictory.[55] According to Quintilian, 'We must … make just as much effort to make the judge believe the true things we say as to make him believe what we invent' (*Inst.* 4.2.34-35).[56]

Cicero identifies three forms of narrative: (1) a narrative which concerns just the case and the whole reason for the dispute; (2) a narrative in which a digression is made beyond the strict limits of the case for the purpose of attack, comparison, amusement or amplification; and (3) a narrative wholly unconnected with the issue but meant 'solely for amusement'.[57] The author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium* identifies three types: (1) a type in which every detail is set for one's advantage; (2) a type which aims at winning belief or incriminating adversaries; (3) a third type which is only composed for practice in the form of *progymnasmata*.[58] This third type, in turn, consists of two kinds—one based on the facts and the other based on the persons. The treatises of classical *progymnasmata* are agreed on the six 'elements' (στοιχεῖα) that constitute a narrative: the person(s), action done, place, time, manner and cause of the action done by the person(s).[59] Here, the implication is that whether a narrative is factual or fictional, historical, or legendary, it revolves around a person(s) or an actor(s).

There is also a significant degree of consensus on the requirements for a narrative. Three basic virtues of a narrative are brevity (avoiding any detail that would detract from the case), clarity (chronological organization), and plausibility (credibility).[60] To achieve credibility, one must maintain the

54. See Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, p. 28.

55. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.88-97. For further discussion on this, see Robert G. Hall, 'Historical Inference and Rhetorical Effect: Another look at Galatians 1 and 2', in Duane F. Watson (ed.), *Persuasive Artistry* (JSNTSup, 50; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), pp. 308-20.

56. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.34-35 (Russell, LCL).

57. Cicero, *Inv.* 1.27 (Hubbell, LCL, p. 55).

58. *Rhet. Her.* 1.12.

59. See Kennedy, *Progymnasmata*, pp. 28, 96-97, 137, 184.

60. According to Quintilian, some add grandeur (*megaloprepeia*) and vividness (*enargeia*). Quintilian does not favour the former, but he would prefer to include the latter with clarity (see Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.61-65 [Russell, LCL]; *Rhet. Her.* 1.14).

characters' proper qualities, provide plain reasons for their actions, and ensure that the story fits the nature of the actors and the habits of ordinary people.[61]

However, not all classical rhetoricians necessarily agreed on all theoretical points regarding narration. For example, Aristotle ridiculed the rule of brevity, and the followers of Theodorus rejected the rules of brevity and clarity.[62] Quintilian, in his more extensive discussion, rejected the rule of chronological arrangement,[63] only requiring, 'I want written Narrative to be as carefully composed as possible' (*Inst*. 2.4.15)[64]—that is, with the aim to persuade. Against Cicero's many types, Quintilian subscribed to only two narrative types in forensic cases—one involving the exposition of the Cause itself, the other the exposition of matters relevant to the Cause.[65]

In fact, there are even variations in what a narrative is and does. According to Apollodorus, a narrative 'is a speech instructing the hearer on what is in dispute'.[66] Some nuances can be observed as we move from Cicero to the first century. For example, Quintilian writes, 'In our day … speakers take the narrative as offering, as it were, a free field, and choose this as the best moment to flex the voice, throw back the head, thump the sides, and indulge in every possible play of ideas and words and composition' (*Inst*. 4.2.39).[67] He further states,

> It will be useful also to sow some seeds of the proofs, but in such a way that we never forget that this is still the narration and not the proof. We may however sometimes confirm an assertion by some Argument, but it must be a simple, short one … We can, in fact, give a taste in the narration of everything that we shall be treating in the proof: person, motive, place, time, means, opportunity (*Inst*. 4.2.54-57).[68]

61. Cicero, *Inv*. 1.29 (Hubbell, LCL).
62. See Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.32-33 (Russell, LCL).
63. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.83-84 (Russell, LCL).
64. Quintilian, *Inst*. 2.4.15 (Russell, LCL).
65. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.11 (Russell, LCL).
66. Cited by Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.31-32 (Russell, LCL).
67. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2 (Russell, LCL).
68. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.54-57 (Russell, LCL).

Quintilian also notes that a narrative is a preliminary statement of proof but it should not include argumentation.[69]

This brief overview shows one aspect of the fluidity of ancient rhetorical theory.[70] However, several critical points emerge from the survey. While narrative may be used in deliberative speeches, it is not typically present or necessary, since narrative deals with the past, while deliberative speeches deal with the future.[71] A narrative must be believable even if it is not factual. It does not simply recount events; it is an exposition of them, elucidating reasons and relevant matters of the dispute, including elements of proof and argument. Perhaps, more importantly, narratives focus mainly on persons, their actions, circumstances and rationales for those actions.

Viewing the first two chapters of Galatians in light of the observations made above leads to at least two implications. First, considering the emphasis on persons and their actions in rhetorical theory, at least from the standpoint of classical *progymnasmata*, the narration properly expands on 1.10. This verse sets the autobiographical tone of the narration, leading all the way to 2.21. In this case, Paul is the central figure, and every other component of the narration (including the origin of the gospel) serves to accentuate his ethos. Secondly, 2.15-21 is not a digression. Rather, it directly flows out of v.14, reflecting Paul's theological reason for resisting Cephas.

It should be noted that the term Ἰουδαῖοι in 2.15 immediately picks up and extends the Jewish (Ἰουδαῖος, Ἰουδαϊκῶς, ἰουδαΐζειν) identity theme in 2.14. Similarly, the first person plural ἡμεῖς in its emphatic (vv. 15-16) and inflectional uses (ἐπιστεύσαμεν ['we have believed'], δικαιωθῶμεν ['we may be justified'] [v. 16]; εὑρέθημεν … αὐτοί ['we ourselves have been found'] [v. 17]) continues the emphasis on Jewish identity from v. 14. This thematic continuity makes a demarcation between v. 14 and v. 15 improbable. Nor must 2.15-21 necessarily be designated *propositio* rather than *narratio*. As the survey above shows, the *narratio*, which is an exposition of events and actions of a person(s), includes the reason(s) for such events or actions. A

69. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.79, 108-109.

70. As Margaret M. Mitchell rightly observes, such 'fluidity and variety of possibilities of rhetorical composition in Greco-Roman antiquity can be brought to bear on … analysis' (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation: An Exegetical Investigation of the Language and Composition of 1 Corinthians* [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991], p. 9).

71. Cicero, *Part. or.* 13.

narration could also include elements of the disputed issue and even argument, all of this without ceasing to be narration. Thus, the disconnection of 1.10 from 1.11-12, on the one hand, and the exclusion of 2.15-21 from the narration, on the other, are unwarranted. Against such demarcations, as seen in the outlines above, 1.10–2.21 coheres as a rhetorical unit and should be taken as such.[72]

A few things need to be pointed out here following Kennedy's third step:[73] While Galatians as a whole is pragmatically deliberative, the narration exhibits a forensic tone. Also, while all species of rhetoric may make use of a narrative for different purposes and in different ways,[74] the epideictic genre rarely needs a narrative,[75] and the deliberative genre requires a narrative only in particular situations. Quintilian made a distinction between a private deliberation and a public one, saying, 'A narrative is never needed in private deliberations … In public assemblies, a narrative explaining the order of events is often essential' (*Inst.* 3.8.10-12).[76] Galatians 1–2 fits into Quintilian's second category,[77] but it is also true that the defensive tenor of this section gives it a forensic character without implying a juridical *Sitz im Leben*.

Rhetorical Situation

The false narrative against which Paul is reacting is discernible from the text. First, Paul's opponents were persuading the new Gentile followers of Jesus to submit to the Mosaic law of circumcision.[78] Paul describes these op-

72. De-emphasizing mechanistic structuring, Mitchell decries what she calls the 'quest for "divisions" of a text as specified in a frozen model, without attention to the varied requirements of genre, content, and rhetorical situation' (*Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, p.11).

73. See n. 5 above.

74. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, p. 145.

75. Mitchell, *Paul and the Rhetoric of Reconciliation*, pp. 9-11.

76. Quintilian, *Inst.* 3.8.10-12 (Russell, LCL).

77. For a cogent discussion favouring the deliberative genre, see Hall, 'Rhetorical Outline', pp. 278-82; Witherington, *New Testament Rhetoric*, pp. 124-25.

78. On this, many interpreters agree. See John M.G. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth: Paul's Ethics in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), pp. 65-66; G.W. Hansen, *Abraham in Galatians: Epistolary and Rhetorical Contexts* (JSNTSup, 29;

ponents as τινές ... οἱ ταράσσοντες ὑμᾶς καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ ('certain men confusing you and wishing to pervert the gospel of Christ' [1.7]) and οἱ ἀναστατοῦντες ('the agitators' [5.12]) who desire to put up a good showing in the flesh to avoid persecution (6.12). They are probably the same ψευδαδέλφους ('false brothers') mentioned in 2.4, or those sharing the same or similar views.[79]

Secondly, while the protest against mirror reading should be taken seriously, we do gain a reasonably accurate understanding of what the issue is by considering Paul's language, especially the rhetorical questions he employs. Ancient rhetoricians recognized the importance and use of rhetorical questions. Quintilian, for example, identified two types of question—a simple question that asks for a response and a figured [rhetorical] question asked not to acquire information but to emphasize a point.[80] When a speaker uses this second device, no answer is usually required, although sometimes the speaker himself or herself may provide a response.[81] A rhetorical question is also used to add force to a point; using rhetorical questions, 'Demosthenes forces his listener into a sort of corner, so that he seems to be cross-examined and unable to reply' (Demetrius, *Eloc*. 279).[82] In this sense, it might appear that rhetorical questions only make hypothetical points from the perspective of the speaker. However, it has been demonstrated that rhetorical questions are used to pre-empt an opponent's argument and refute it before it is made. They can also serve for defensive rebuttal of an opposing argument that has already been made.[83] This usage appears to be the case in

Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1989), pp. 158-60; Douglas J. Moo, *Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013), pp. 19-20; Dunn, *Galatians,* p. 11.

79. Dunn (*Galatians*, p. 11) describes them as '*Christian-Jewish missionaries* who had come to Galatia to improve or correct Paul's gospel and to "complete" his converts by integrating them fully into the heirs of Abraham through circumcision and by thus bringing them "under the law".'

80. Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.6-7 (Russell, LCL).

81. Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.14-15 (Russell, LCL).

82. Demetrius, *Eloc*. 279 (Innes, LCL).

83. See David Sansone, *Greek Drama and the Invention of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), pp. 180-84. For a discussion on how rhetorical questions in ancient writers are connected to the disputed issue (i.e. stasis), see Deborah Thompson Prince, '"Why Do You Seek the Living among the Dead?" Rhetorical Questions in the Lukan Resurrection Narrative', *JBL* 135 (2016), pp. 123-39;

Galatians.[84] Two pivotal rhetorical questions used by Paul illuminate the false perspective that some Galatians have adopted, which are 1.10 and 5.11:

Gal 1.10	Gal 5.11
Ἄρτι γὰρ ἀνθρώπους πείθω ἢ τὸν θεόν; ἢ ζητῶ ἀνθρώποις ἀρέσκειν; εἰ *ἔτι* ἀνθρώποις ἤρεσκον, Χριστοῦ δοῦλος οὐκ ἂν ἤμην.	Ἐγὼ δέ, ἀδελφοί, εἰ περιτομὴν *ἔτι* κηρύσσω, τί *ἔτι* διώκομαι;
For do I now persuade people or God? Or do I seek to please people? If I were *still* pleasing people, I would not be a slave of Christ.	But I brethren, if I am *still* preaching circumcision, why am I *still* persecuted?

In context, these two passages indicate that Paul was refuting a rhetorical logic by which the Galatians were being persuaded to embrace circumcision, namely, *that Paul is a people-pleaser and that his double-standard with respect to circumcision is proof enough*.[85] One may allege a case of mirror reading here. However, the thematic manner in which 5.11 re-enforces 1.10 and the ensuing narration lends credence to the assertion. So, what we have may properly be identified as an exegetical or text-warranted mirror reading as opposed to mere presumptive mirror reading.

Considering the 'pleasing' theme in 1.10a, the words πείθω and ἀρέσκειν should be understood as parallels, both having the idea of seeking to please or win favour. Cicero recommended such parallels, repetitions or restate-

Wilhelm H. Wuellner, 'Paul as Pastor: The Function of Rhetorical Questions in First Corinthians', in A. Vanhoye (ed.), *L'Apôtre Paul: Personnalité, style et conception du ministére* (BETL, 73; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1986), pp. 49-77.

84. Arguably, Paul was also knowledgeable on the Old Testament use of rhetorical questions for stating an opinion or presupposition meant to be refuted. For an example of such use, see Walter A. Brueggemann, 'Jeremiah's Use of Rhetorical Questions', *JBL* 92 (1973), pp. 358-59.

85. Cf. Acts 16.3; Paul's circumcision of Timothy likely occurred before Galatians was written. If not, this account at least indicates that Paul's tendency or practice was well-known. Here, in a missional context, Paul allowed the circumcision law clearly to please the Jews.

ments as an effective rhetorical style.[86] The crux of the matter is whether Paul pleases people or God. In other words, the point is not that Paul no longer persuades men, let alone God, as R.D. Anderson claims.[87] As regards how 1.10 relates to its context, although no complete separation from what precedes can be argued, this verse is logically conjoined to the preceding verses by γάρ. This is so because the adverb ἄρτι in 1.10a defines not literary immediacy but time in Paul's life—the present as opposed to his former career in Judaism (1.13 [cf. v. 23]).

The link between v. 10 and the preceding material is further buttressed by the next adverb ἔτι in v. 10b, which indicates that Paul has in mind a juxtaposition between his former and present life. Thus, we have no reason to expect the tone or content of 1.6-9 to provide a demonstration either that Paul does not please people but God or that his gospel is genuine.[88] In other words, 1.10 is not necessarily 'calling attention to the fact that the proem [1.6-9] does not seek favor with the audience'.[89] The conditional clause in v.10b is an indirect denial calling for substantiation. Paul must demonstrate, in practical terms, that he pleases none other than God and therefore is a slave of none other than Christ, hence the rest of the section culminating in 2.21. Only by demonstrating his own ethos as one approved of God could the question of the validity of his gospel be settled.

Not only do we have the theme of 'pleasing' (ἀρέσκειν [1.10]; εὐδόκησεν [1.15])[90] in the narrative, but we also have explicit references to the theme of circumcision (2.3, 7, 8, 9, 12). The significance of this becomes clear when we consider Paul's comment in Gal. 5.11, which reveals that circumcision is central to the problem that necessitated the writing of this letter. Considering the adverb ἔτι ('still'), 5.11 suggests a real crisis of confidence instigated by the ψευδαδέλφους. They promoted the false notion that Paul's allowance of circumcision to please people is evidence of their claims. Thus, it is not simply that Paul's apostolic authority was being questioned (although this can hardly be excluded), it is that Paul's ambivalence regarding circumcision provided the Galatians enough ground to consider it a requirement to make

86. See Cicero *Part. or.* 21-22, 72.

87. R.D. Anderson Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), p. 127.

88. Contra Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation', p. 10.

89. Contra Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation*, p. 148.

90. Cf. ἵνα θεῷ ζήσω ('in order that I might live to/for God' [2.19]).

their faith complete. Only by manipulating the Galatians to think that Paul himself preached circumcision could the agitators' false narrative persuade the Galatians.[91] Paul's description of the deceptive argument of the agitators as bewitchment (βασκαίνω [3.1]) makes sense in this light.

Paul not only denies any suggestion that he *still* either pleased people or preached circumcision, but he also demonstrates that he is not a people-pleaser by recalling how he vehemently resisted the circumcision of Titus (2.3) and the circumcision party (2.12) to safeguard the gospel. Galatians 6.11-17 supports this understanding in such a way as to sum up the essential elements of the narration.[92] There, Paul turns the case against the agitators, characterizing them as the actual people-pleasers. These agitators are the actual people-pleasers because they seek to make a good showing in the flesh and thus to avoid persecution (6.12-13, 15). In contrast, Paul shows how he not only resisted the circumcision agenda without fear of those who would insist on it (2.3, 5, 11-14), but also boasts in the cross of Christ without fear of persecution (6.14 [cf. 2.20]). One who does such things cannot be accused of being a people-pleaser (per 1.10). The contrast between Paul and his opponents in Gal. 6.11-17 serves to strengthen the defensive character of the narrative in chs. 1–2. It also suggests that the rhetorical situation described above is not a product of conjectural mirror reading.

Demonstrating Paul's Ethos as No People-Pleaser in Galatians 1.11–2.21

In the foregoing, I have laid a broad foundation for the thesis of this article. In what follows, I highlight three aspects of Gal. 1.11–2.21 that compel strict connection to 1.10 and substantiate the argument that 1.10–2.21, taken together as a cohesive rhetorical unit, (1) serves to demonstrate Paul's self-understanding as no longer a people-pleaser and (2) represents his self-defensive refutation of the claims of his opponents.

1. *Galatians 1.11-14 as Substantiation for 1.10*

The relationship between 1.10 and the *narratio* is key to the thesis of this article. Hester argues that γνωρίζω in v. 11 is a disclosure formula and

91. See Bruce, *Galatians*, p. 27.

92. Witherington (*New Testament Rhetoric*, p. 126) rightly designates 6.12-17 as *peroration.*

therefore signals a division point.[93] However, the conjunction γάρ pragmatically indicates 'substantiation' or 'support' in relation to what precedes.[94] In this case, what follows from v. 11 is meant to provide support for Paul's implied claim that he is no longer a people-pleaser in v. 10. Galatians 1.1 already sets the stage for the claim—neither Paul's calling nor his gospel originates in humans. In Paul's view, this makes pandering to people inconceivable for him. The divine calling of Paul and the divine origin of Paul's gospel exclude any obligation to seek human approval. Paul is no longer in that business.

But why is Gal. 1 not primarily about the gospel and its divine origin? Undoubtedly, the gospel's origin δι' ἀποκαλύψεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (1.12)[95] is a major motif in the chapter. This notwithstanding, the thrust of Paul's rhetorical argument is autobiographical from start (1.10) to finish (2.21). The inflectional point for this autobiographical emphasis is in 1.10. Thus, despite the fact that a substantiating γάρ opens the verse and connects it to the preceding verses, a demarcation from this point is justified, especially considering the frequency of the first-person plural (pronominal and verbal forms) in vv. 8-9. The autobiographical shift is further accentuated in 1.13-14, which highlights Paul's history, with the implication that what he used to be, he no longer is.

Moreover, 1.24 coheres with this autobiographical emphasis because it says that it was on account of Paul, not of the gospel, that God was glorified. The self-referential character of the passage clearly puts Paul at the center of the narrative. Paul seems to understand the rhetorical axiom expressed by Quintilian to the effect that a speaker does the best service to his Cause if his

93. Hester, 'Presence of Epideictic', p. 298. For a discussion of disclosures in the New Testament, see T.Y. Mullins, 'Disclosures: A Literary Form in the New Testament', *NovT* 7 (1964), pp. 44-50.

94. Stephen H. Levinsohn (*Discourse Features of the New Testament: A Course on the Information Structure of the New Testament* [Dallas: SIL International, 2nd edn, 2003], p. 91) notes, 'the presence of γάρ constrains the material it introduces to be interpreted as strengthening some aspect of the previous assertion, rather than as distinctive information.'

95. This construction is a subjective genitive, by which Paul means not the revelation given by Jesus but the revelation whose content is Jesus himself, as 1.16 shows.

character lends it credibility.[96] Thus, just arguing for the divine origin of the gospel would have no persuasive effect if Paul's credibility were in question.

2. *Galatians 1.15–2.17 as Further Evidence That Paul Does Not Please People But God*

Paul presents ample evidence that he is not a people-pleaser. The first evidence for this is that he did not confer with anyone to validate his apostolic call. This claim moves from general to particular—'I did not consult with flesh and blood' (1.16) to 'nor did I go up to Jerusalem, to the apostles before me' (1.17). 'Even when, after three years, I went to Jerusalem to acquaint myself with Cephas', Paul seems to say, 'I did not see [any] other of the apostles except James' (1.18-20). Paul seals this denial with an oath, 'That which I am writing to you, before God, I am not lying' (1.20). As regards this oath, Paul is probably aware of the permission to invent fictitious narratives as we saw in the survey above.[97] This oath would thus amount to a denial of this practice on his part; the issue in question evokes anything but amusement. It also indicates that Paul senses a contradiction in saying that he did not consult with flesh and blood but became acquainted (just three years later) with Cephas and even saw James—the key leaders of the church. The oath, therefore, offsets any notion of contradiction or inconsistency.[98]

When Paul finally goes to Jerusalem, fourteen years after, it is not to consult with flesh and blood for clarification or tutoring, but to 'set forth' or 'present' (ἀνατίθημι**)** his gospel before the esteemed apostles (2.1-2, 6, 9).

96. See Quintilian, *Inst*. 6.2.18.

97. See Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.88-97; Cicero, *Inv*. 1.27, divides an amusement narrative into two: events (*fabula* [untrue], *historia* [remote recollection], *argumentum* [fictitious but could have occurred]), and persons.

98. While Paul's oath gives a sense of accuracy, it is debated whether Paul's letters, especially Gal. 1–2, represent an accurate chronology of Paul's life as opposed to the account in Acts. Some scholars think so. See, for example, John Knox, *Chapters in a Life of Paul* (repr., Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), p. 19; Robert Jowett, *A Chronology of Paul's Life* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979); Gerd Lüdemann, *Paul, Apostle to the Gentiles: Studies in Chronology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984). For a critique of this view, see Hall, 'Historical Inference'. Hall argues that narratives do not necessarily require facts, only persuasion. Thus, Paul is not under any obligation to report all the times he visited Jerusalem, especially if doing so will detract from his case.

Paul is careful to point out that it was κατὰ ἀποκάλυψιν ('by revelation' [2.2]) that he went to Jerusalem. This information would be unnecessary except to highlight the fact that going to Jerusalem was not an obligation he owed anyone such as the apostles, to please them. He owed it to God alone.

The second evidence lies in Paul's stance with respect to circumcision itself. Recall the proposed thesis regarding the issue in Galatians: *a notion was being purveyed by certain agitators that, in allowing circumcision sometimes, Paul not only pleases people but also approves it as a valid law for Christians*. Paul demonstrates the falsity of this idea by narrating how vehemently he resisted the circumcision of Titus to preserve the sanctity of the gospel (2.3-5). Paul intends to show that he no longer pleases people, whoever they may be. Even the reputed apostles cannot claim Paul's allegiance because 'they contributed nothing to me' (ἐμοὶ … οὐδὲν προσανέθεντο [2.6]). They only saw (ἰδόντες [2.7]) and realized (γνόντες [2.9]) God's grace in Paul and gave him a hand of fellowship.

Paul's third evidence that he sought to please no one but God is in 2.11-17. Notice here that the word εὐαγγέλιον ('gospel') occurs four times (vv. 2, 5, 7, 14), but we hear nothing of its origin. Instead, the narrative remains autobiographical.[99] Galatians 2.11-14 portrays Paul *contra mundum*—not, in the least, a people-pleaser. It represents a syncrisis, that is, a contrast or antithesis: Cephas and 'the rest of the Jews' (v. 13) of Antioch act hypocritically to please certain men from James, but Paul acts with the integrity of a non-people-pleaser. Paul's rebuke of Cephas is further grounded in vv. 15-17. As shown in the table above, many interpreters demarcate vv. 11-14 from vv. 15-21, designating the latter as the *propositio*. However, such separation and designation are questionable. Galatians 2.15-21 includes details of the debated matter, especially in vv. 15-16, yet such details do not nullify it as part of the narration.[100] As shown above, Quintilian allows seeds of the proofs in the narration as well as 'a taste of everything that we shall be treating in the proof' (*Inst*. 4.2.54-57).[101] In fact, according to Quintilian, it is not always

99. Lyons (*Pauline Autobiography*, p. 171) considers the whole of 1.13–2.21 as autobiographical.

100. Witherington (*Grace in Galatia*, p. 171) rightly points out six key terms that are introduced in these verses: δικαιοσύνη, δικαιόω, νόμος, ἔργον, πίστις and ζάω.

101. Quintilian, *Inst*. 4.2.54-57 (Russell, LCL).

essential to make use of a *propositio*.[102] From Quintilian's perspective, the narration in Gal. 1–2 would be Paul telling the story not as a witness but as an advocate.[103] It is no wonder, therefore, that Chrysostom (350–407 CE) did not consider 2.15-21 a *propositio*.[104] Kennedy, apparently following Quintilian (*Inst.* 4.4.1-2), describes it as an *epicheireme* ('argument with the parts fully stated') which provides the conclusion to the first heading (i.e. 1.11-12). He objects to calling it a *propositio* on the basis that it is argumentative.[105] If by 'argumentative', Kennedy means quarrelsome or extended argument, 2.15-21 is hardly such. The passage, in line with

102. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.4.2. However, it does seem that the climactic statement that concludes this narrative (i.e. 2.21) represents the *propositio* since it sufficiently meets the criteria of brevity, completeness, and conciseness as recommended by Cicero. Cicero discusses proposition under the *partition*, which takes two forms: one which shows points of agreement, and the other which is a methodical statement of topics to be discussed. This second form must have the qualities of brevity, completeness, and conciseness (*Inv*. 1.22.31-32). According to Richard A. Lanham (citing Peacham), 'Sometimes *propositio* is used simply as a figure, rather than the part of an oration, to indicate a brief proleptic summary "which compriseth in few words the sum of that matter, whereof we presently intend to speak"' (*A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2nd edn, 1991], p. 122). Galatians 2.21 also adequately sets the agenda for the next section in the same way that 1.10 does for what follows up to that point.

103. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.109. This comports well with Hall's view that 'most ancient rhetoricians would probably prefer to call the first heading (Gal. 1.10–2.21) a narration' ('Rhetorical Outline', p. 286).

104. For an extensive discussion of Chrysostom's view and a critique against the designation of 2.15-21 as a proposition, see J. Fairweather, 'The Epistle to the Galatians and Classical Rhetoric: Parts 1 and 2', *TynBul* 45 (1994), pp. 1-38. Fairweather adduces two reasons for why 2.15-21 does not constitute a proposition: 'First, the phrase, ἡμεῖς φύσει Ἰουδαῖοι καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἐθνῶν ἁμαρτωλοί, makes good sense as a continuation of Paul's address to Cephas, a fellow Jew: it makes no sense at all as a way of addressing Galatian congregations which certainly included Gentiles. Secondly, if we had the opening of a *propositio* in Galatians 2.15, one would expect the beginning of this major new rhetorical paragraph to be signaled in some way: by a particle at least, or alternatively by some form of address to the recipients of his letter, or an indication in the preceding sentence that a paragraph has just been concluded' (p.14).

105. Kennedy, *New Testament Interpretation,* pp. 148-49.

Quintilian's view, represents only 'some seeds of the proofs' or full-scale argument that Paul begins to make from ch. 3. Moreover, defensive reasoning is not strictly prohibited in a narrative. Quintilian makes this point when he further states, 'Argumentation in Narrative … we shall never use; Argument we shall sometimes' (*Inst*. 4.2.108-109).[106]

3. *Galatians 2.18-20 as the Climax of Paul's Claim of Pleasing God*

Historically, Gal. 2.19-20 has been regarded as a summary of Paul's teaching on justification and the spiritual life.[107] Most interpreters easily read Rom. 6–7 into this passage. Those who take the narration as paradigmatic consider Gal. 2.20 as what it means to imitate Paul based on 4.12.[108] Witherington regards it as an example of how the Galatians should interpret their conversion experience.[109] However, it is not clear that Rom. 6 and 7 should be superimposed upon Gal. 2.19-20. Betz seems to caution against such an interpretative move, although he regards it as an *expositio* of the elements of Paul's theological position with himself as a prototypical example of what applies to all Pauline Christians.[110] For the many reasons laid out above, the paradigmatic view of the narrative is not convincing.[111]

This paper contends that this final part of the narration represents the climax of Paul's demonstration of his personal ethos—a rousing portrayal of himself as a God-pleaser. What Paul rhetorically claims in 1.10 is grounded in 1.11-14, demonstrated in 1.15–2.17 and amplified in 2.18-20. While 2.18 is Paul's final, albeit indirect, rejection of the opponents' 'claim' that he legitimized circumcision and/or only hypocritically shied away from it, vv.19-21 represents the climactic *peroration* of the whole narration. The

106. Quintilian, *Inst.* 4.2.108-109 (Russell, LCL).

107. Philip A. McClendon, 'Galatians 2.20 as a Corrective to Selected Contemporary Views of Christian Spirituality' (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2012), p. 23.

108. See Gaventa, 'Galatians l and 2', p. 322.

109. Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, p. 188.

110. Betz, *Commentary*, pp. 121, 123.

111. Again, see Vos, 'Paul's Argumentation', p. 15; Hardin, 'Galatians 1–2', pp. 292-93; Brian J. Dodd, 'Christ's Slave, People Pleasers and Galatians 1.10', *NTS* 42 (1996), pp. 90-104 (n. 28); Karl O. Sandnes, *Paul—One of the Prophets? A Contribution to the Apostle's Self-Understanding* (WUNT, 2/43; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), pp. 49-50.

latter apparently forms an *inclusio* with 1.10 and thus represents Paul's final self-defensive refutation of the notion that he is a people-pleaser:

Gal 1.10	Gal 2.19-20
I please God	I live for God
I am a slave of Christ	I am crucified with Christ

These two ends of the passage complement and illuminate each other. What is claimed on the one hand is affirmed on the other. Paul's death to the law enables him to live for God (2.19), that is, to please God. The expression, 'crucified with Christ', is to be understood as Paul's idea of what it means to be a slave of Christ. Paul's depiction of himself in 2.20 as one in whom Christ lives out his life (ζῇ δὲ ἐν ἐμοὶ Χριστός [cf. 1.16]) implies identification with Christ. Indeed, for Paul, this is what slavery to Christ means. By identifying with Christ in this way, Paul portrays himself as a God-pleaser, just as Christ was, in his life and ministry. This understanding may be verified by Paul's own claims in Galatians, and 1.15-16 is particularly instructive in this regard.

First, it is not simply that Paul now pleases God, it is also that God himself affirmed his pleasure in him by revealing his Son in him. Notice that the word εὐδόκησεν ('he was pleased') in 1.15 is synonymous with ἀρέσκειν ('to please') in 1.10. Secondly, Paul's declaration that God was pleased to reveal his Son in him (1.16) may properly be taken to mean that Paul himself is 'Christ' revealed. Thus, the idea is that it pleased God to make Paul an express epiphany of Christ. This comports well with the argument that Gal. 1.11-24 is not merely about the content of the gospel, understood as divinely disclosed to Paul (although 1.11-12 implies this), but especially about Paul being the embodiment of the gospel/Christ from God. This would explain why he does not say that God revealed his Son/gospel ἐμοί/μοι (*to* me) but rather ἐν ἐμοί (*in me*). Third, Paul's claim that God set him apart from the womb (1.15) represents a rhetorical allusion to Christ, the suffering servant of Isaiah.[112] The intentionality here is perceptible. Paul is setting forth himself as a type or model of Christ. There is no surprise here, since Paul can dare the Galatians

112. Quintilian mentions the use of allusion in *Inst.* 5.11.14-17. For a discussion of allusions, see Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989).

to recall how they welcomed him ὡς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ('as Christ Jesus' [Gal. 4.14]; cf. 6.17).[113]

Such a self-understanding could only have been compelled by a real problem regarding the character and credibility of Paul, especially in relation to the question of circumcision. If in these terms we evaluate the success of the rhetorical unit in line with Kennedy's fifth step,[114] we can clearly see that Paul's response not only comports with the rhetorical situation described above but also successfully deals with the specific issue the letter was meant to address.

Conclusion

The disconnection of Gal. 1.10 from the narration in chs. 1–2 obscures the rhetorical intent of Paul and the function of the narration. This article has argued that Gal. 1.10 belongs to the *narratio* and that 1.10–2.21 coheres as a rhetorical unit. Thus, the narration functions primarily to portray Paul as a pleaser of God rather than people. This claim is grounded in the divine origin of the gospel and demonstrated in Paul's actions and ultimately in his likeness to Christ. Paul seeks to assert his ethos as one who embodies Christ—the one of whom God said, 'in him I am well-pleased' (Mt. 3.17). In all this, Paul aims to refute a false narrative or notion about himself by which the Galatians are being led astray, to dissuade them from embracing the adulterated gospel advocated by the agitators.

113. Cf. Col. 1.24.

114. See n. 5 above.