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***Pistis Christou* as the Irrevocable Nature of
Salvation with special reference to Gal 2:16**

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A. Introduction

In the New Testament there are a few passages indicating *Pistis Christou*,³ when its some variants are considered as identical. I here try to restrict its uses to only Galatians. The debate on the phrase has been still working, not only in terms of whether it is to be understood subjective or objective, but also, of how its implications relate to Pauline theology as a whole. In this article, the *Pistis Christou* construction will be primarily explored from the perspective of the subjective genitive (faith of Jesus Christ), after making sure that its semantic relevance is more obvious as the *Pistis Christou* formulation is taken into consideration as subjective. What should be noted here is that the construction at issue is related to justification, which is seen

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³ E.g. (Rom 3:22; Gal 3:22); (Rom 3:26); (Gal 2:16);(Gal 2:16; Phil 3:9); (Eph 3:12).

as what is associated with the matter of salvation in the Pauline corpus. Furthermore, we will examine in what way the formulation at issue is playing as a primary force in construing the soteriological scheme dealt with in Galatians. In addition, this task will require investigating what Paul had in mind (e.g. the intertexts) in writing down Galatians.

B. *Pistis Christou* in Gal 2:16: The Subjective Genitive and the Irrevocable Nature of Salvation

1. Semantic Relevance of the *Pistis Christou* formulation as Subjective Genitive

With regard to πίστις, Burton asserts that when πίστις is accompanied by a subjective genitive, “the article is ... *almost invariably present*.”⁴ Hultgren also concurs with Burton.⁵ These decisions compel us to examine at least a few popular Greek words as well as *Pistis*, though not covering all words in the NT. Table 1 explores whether πίστις plus genitive formulation alters its meaning – either subjective or objective - depending on the presence or absence of definite article. Table 2 in turn pays attention to other primary Greek words, except for πίστις, exploring whether the presence or absence of the definite article has any vital effect in deciding the significance of either subjective or objective in the ‘one word followed by another genitive word’ construction. As seen in Table 1 below, the structure of the articular πίστις + genitive construction turns out, for the most part, to take on the meaning of the subjective genitive.

However, it is to be acknowledged that there are some cases in which its form owns the objective meaning. When it comes to the

⁴ E. De W. Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1921), 482; Lk 22:32 ἡ πίστις σου ; Rom 1:8 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; Rom 1:12 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; 1Cor 2:5 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; 1Cor 15:14 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; 1Cor 15:17 ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν; 2 Cor 1:24a ὑμῶν τῆς πίστεως; 2 Cor 10:15 τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν; Phil 2:17 τῆς πίστεως ὑμῶν etc. [emphasis added] cf. H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, revised by Gordon M. Messing (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1956), 289, says that generally, abstract substantives have the article: ἡ ἀρητὴ μάλλον ἢ ἡ φυγὴ (valour rather than flight), and the article must be used with the reference to a definite person or thing or to an object well known: ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων εὐνοία the goodwill of the Greeks, Aeschines 3.70.

⁵ Arland J. Hultgren, “The *Pistis Christou* Formulation in Paul,” *NovT* 22 (1980): 253. He insists that when Paul uses the term πίστις followed by a subjective genitive, the articular πίστις is available. So he presents his examples as τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ at Rom 3:3; τῆς πίστεως τοῦ Ἀβραάμ at Rom 4:12; and ἡ πίστις ἡμῶν and equivalents.

frame of the anarthrous πίστις + genitive formulation we find it very difficult to discern whether it is a subjective or objective construction, even with close attention to the context.

Table 1 – Pistis Genitive Formulation

1) Articular ΠΙΣΤΙΣ + genitive formulation: subjective meaning
Mt 9:2; 9:22; 9:29; 15:28(cf. reverse in order); Mk 2:5; 5:34; 10:52; Lk 5:20; 7:50; 8:25; 8:48; 17:19; 18:42; 22:32; Rom 1:8; 1:12 (cf. διὰ τῆς ἐν ἀλλήλοις πίστεως ὑμῶν τε καὶ ἐμοῦ); 3:3 (τὴν πίστιν τοῦ θεοῦ); 4:5; 4:12 (cf. τῆς ἐν ἀκροβυστίᾳ πίστεως τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν Ἀβραάμ); 1Cho 2:5; 15:14; 15:17; 2Cho 1:24 (reverse in order); 10:15; Eph 3:12; Phil 2:17; Col 1:4; 2:5 (τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν); 2:12 (συνηγέρθητε διὰ τῆς πίστεως τῆς ἐνεργείας τοῦ θεοῦ) subjective or objective; 1 Thes 1:8 (ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν ἢ πρὸς τὸν θεόν); 3:2; 3:5; 3:6; 3:7 (διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν πίστεως); 3:10; 2 Thes 1:3; 1:4; 2 Tim 2:18 (τὴν τινῶν πίστιν); Philemon 6; James 1:3 (reverse in order); 2:18; 1 Pet 1:7 (reverse in order); 1:9; 1:21; 2 Pet 1:5; 1 John 5:4; Jud 20 (τῆ ἀγιωτάτῃ ὑμῶν πίστει); Rev 2:13; 13:10; 14:12 (τὴν πίστιν Ἰησοῦ) OT and Αποξρψηπηα: 1Sa 26:23 τὴν πίστιν αὐτοῦ (his faith); 1Ch 9:22 τῆ πίστει αὐτῶν (their faith); 1Macc 14:35 τὴν πίστιν τοῦ Ζιμωνος (Simon's faith); Ps (Psalms of Solomon) 8:28 ἡ πίστις σου (your faith)
2) Articular ΠΙΣΤΙΣ + genitive formulation: objective meaning
Acts 3:16 (τῆ πίστει τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ); Phil 1:27 (τῆ πίστει τοῦ εὐαγγελίου)
3) Anarthrous ΠΙΣΤΙΣ + genitive formulation
Mk 11:22 (πίστιν θεοῦ) : subjective meaning, though having been recognised as objective Rom 4:16 (ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ): subjective meaning 2 Thes 2:13 (ἐν ἀγιασμῶ πνεύματος καὶ πίστει ἀληθείας): subjective or objective 1 Tim 1:14 (μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ): objective 1 Tim 3:13 (ἐν πίστει τῆ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ): objective 2 Tim 1:13 (ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ): objective 2 Tim 3:15 (διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ): objective Tit 1:1 (πίστιν ἐκλεκτῶν θεοῦ) : subjective Apocrypha: Sir 1:27 αὐτοῦ πίστις (faith in him): objective

Table 2 – Greek Words Accompanied by Other Genitive

Greek words which are accompanied by other genitive Greek words in popular NT usage (excluding πίστις) and taking note of whether or not the definite article is present.⁶

1. the righteousness of God
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην; τῆ δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ/: Rom 10:3
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)
δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ: Rom 3:5, 21, 22, 2Co 5.21, Jam 1:20
cf. δικαιοσύνη τοῦ θεοῦ : 2Pe 1:1
2. the righteousness of faith
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
σφραγίδα τῆς δικαιοσύνης τῆς πίστεως Rom 4:11
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)
δια δικαιοσύνης πίστεως Rom 4:13
3. righteousness+ other Greek word
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης: Rom 5:17; ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης: 2Co 3:9
τὸν θῶρακα τῆς δικαιοσύνης: Eph 6:14; τὴν ὁδὸν τῆς δικαιοσύνης: 2Pe 2:21
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)
νόμον δικαιοσύνης: Rom 9:31; νόμου δικαιοσύνης: Gal 2:21
ἐλπίδα δικαιοσύνης: Gal 5:5; καρπὸν δικαιοσύνης: Phil 1:11
βασιλεὺς δικαιοσύνης: Heb 7:2; πίστιν δικαιοσύνης: Heb 11:7
καρπὸς δὲ δικαιοσύνης: Jam 3:18
4. The glory of God
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
τὴν δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ: John 11:40, 12:43, 2Co 4:15, Rev 21:11
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)
δόξα θεοῦ : Acts 7:55, Rom 10:31, Rom 11:7, Phil 2:11
cf. εἰς δόξαν τοῦ θεοῦ : Rom 15:7
5. glory + other Greek word
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
τὴν δόξαν κυρίου: 2Co 3:18; τοῦ κυρίου δόξαν: 2Co 8 :19
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)

⁶ Cf. In classical Greek, the use of the definite article does not influence in deciding the subjective or objective genitive. See Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, 319, for the subjective genitive, τῶν βαρβάρων φόβος (the fear which the barbarians feel) Xenophon *Anabasis* 1.2.17; for the objective genitive, φόβος τῶν εἰλωτῶν (the fear felt towards the Helots) Thucydides 3.54, ἡ τῶν Ἑλλήνων εὐνοία (good-will towards the Greeks) Xenophon *Anabasis* 4.7.20, ἡ τῶν καλῶν συνουσία (intercourse with the good) Plato *Leges* 838 a.

δόξα κυρίου : Lk 2:9; δόξα Χριστοῦ : 2Co 8:23
6. grace of God
(Articular Noun+ genitive formulation)
ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ : Acts 11:23, Acts 13:43, 14:26, 20:24; Rom 5:15
(Anarthrous Noun + genitive formulation)
χάρις θεοῦ : Lk 2:40, 2Co 1:12, Heb 2:9, 1Pe 4:10
cf. ἀληθῆ χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ : 1Pe 5:12

Seen from what is presented above, we can draw the conclusion that the presence or absence of definite article does not necessarily play a determinative role in confirming the significance of words, either as subjective or objective.

It would thus, to my knowledge, be important to search for (if any) the Greek locution⁷ which represents the earliest Christian expression for ‘faith in Christ’, other than the πίστις Χριστοῦ construction at issue here. Hultgren concludes that the phrase πίστις, followed by a preposition with Christ or God as the object, is quite commonly used outside the Pauline corpus: (1) πίστις ἐν Χριστῶ (or τῷ κυρίῳ) appears at Eph 1:15; Col 1:4; 1 Tim 3:13; and 2 Tim 3:15; (2) πίστις εἰς Χριστὸν (or τὸν κύριον or θεόν) appears at Acts 20:21; 24:25; 26:18; Col 2:5; and 1 Pet 1:21; and (3) πίστις ἐπὶ θεοῦ appears at Heb 6:1. Such constructions – having Christ or God as object of a preposition - do not exist within Paul’s own writings.⁸ Consequently, he seems to miss that πίστις πρὸς (plus accusative) in 1 Thes 1:8 and Philemon 5 respectively points to ‘faith in God or Christ.’ Their [Burton, Hultgren] arguments seem to be grounded upon Bultmann’s notion that the term πίστις combined with εἰς, ἐπὶ, πρὸς, or ἐν is identical in meaning with an objective genitive without any prepositions.⁹

More notably, Phm 5 shows that the construction ‘faith in Jesus’ can be expressed in a variety of ways: First, it reads as τὴν πίστιν ---

⁷ See footnote 16 and 24 of this article.

⁸ Hultgren, “The Pistis Christou Formulation in Paul,” 254. Unless he restricted the object of preposition to God or Christ, Rom 3:25 as the Pauline corpus would be a good example: διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν τῷ αὐτοῦ αἵματι.

⁹ R. Bultmann, “The Pistis Group in the New Testament,” in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1968), 6: 204.

πρὸς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν as the main text indicates;¹⁰ second, it reads as τὴν πίστιν --- εἰς τὸν κύριον Ἰησοῦν;¹¹ third, it reads as εἰς τὸν κυριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστον;¹² finally, it reads ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.¹³ The last choice is associated with Paul's 'in Christ' usage which often occurs within the Pauline corpus.¹⁴ Under the influence of the Pauline usage of 'in Christ,' the deutero-Pauline writers¹⁵ seem to develop the expression 'in Christ,' especially with the reference to the noun πίστις.¹⁶ Acts also presents a variety of phrases expressing 'faith in Christ'¹⁷

In the light of this exploration, we could conclude that it is of no great importance whether the phrase πίστις followed by a subjective genitive carries the definite article or not. Indeed, we find anarthrous and articular nouns used interchangeably to refer to the same thing (as shown in Table 2). As Witherington notes, "in the NT while a noun with a following genitive pronoun is normally articular, the rule is generally observed that when governed nouns are articular so are the governing ones, and when the governed nouns are not articular neither is the governing noun. Thus, since 'Christ' has no article before it in

¹⁰ See the following manuscripts, the Codex Sinaiticus, D² (Codex Claromontanus), F, G, Ψ 044, 1739, 1881, the Majority text

¹¹ See the following manuscripts, A C D* 048, 0278, 33 pc

¹² See the following manuscript, D*

¹³ See the following manuscript, 629

¹⁴ E.g. Rom 3:24, 6:11, 6:23, 8:1, 8:2, 8:39, 9:1, 12:5, 15:17, 16:3, 16:7, 16:9, 16:10; 1Co 1:2, 1:4, 1:30, 3:1, 4:10, 4:15, 4:17, 15:18, 15:19, 15:31, 16:24; 2Co 2:17, 3:14, 5:17, 5:19, 12:2, 12:19; Gal 1:22, 2:4, 2:17, 3:14, 3:26, 3:28; Eph 1:1, 1:3, 2:6, 2:7, 2:10, 2:13, 3:6, 3:21, 4:32; Phi 1:1, 1:13, 1:26, 2:1, 2:5, 3:3, 3:14, 4:7, 4:19, 4:21; Col 1:2, 1:4, 1:28; 1Th 2:14, 4:16, 5:18; 1Ti 1:14, 3:13; 2 Ti 1:1, 1:9, 1:13, 2:1, 2:10, 3:12, 3:15; Phm 1:8, 1:20, 1:23; 1Pe 3:16, 5:10, 5:14

¹⁵ Actually the undisputed letters of Paul are as follows: Rom, Gal, Phi, 1Co, 2Co, 1Th, Phm. The issue of authorship of the remaining epistles remains debatable.

¹⁶ Eph 1:15 τὴν καθ' ὑμᾶς πίστιν ἐν τῷ κυρίῳ Ἰησοῦ; Col 1:4 τὴν πίστιν ὑμῶν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; Col 2:5 τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως ὑμῶν; 1Tim 1:14 μετὰ πίστεως καὶ ἀγάπης τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; 1Tim 3:13 ἐν πίστει τῇ ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; 2 Tim 1:13 ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ τῇ ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; 2 Tim 3:15 διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ; cf In the same way, in the case of faith in God, ἡ πρὸς θεὸν πίστις is used in the following Philo's works: See E.g., Philo's *de Abr.* 268.270.271; *de mut. nom.* 201; *de praem. et poen.* 27; *de somniis* 1:68; *quis rer. div. heres* 94. ἡ περὶ θεοῦ πίστις is used in the following Josephus's works: *Ap.* 2:163; 2:169.

¹⁷ See below

Acts 3:16, ἡ πίστις ἡ δι' αὐτοῦ; Acts 20:21, τὴν εἰς θεὸν μετάνοιαν καὶ πίστιν εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν (B H L P etc) εἰς τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν Χριστον (□⁴) A C E 33 36 323 etc) δια τοῦ κυριοῦ ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (D); Acts 24:24 τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν πίστεως : (%⁷⁴) * (B) E L Ψ 049 33 81 etc) τῆς εἰς Χριστὸν πίστεως () ¹ A C^{vid} H P 614 1241 etc); Acts 26:18 πίστει τῇ εἰς ἐμέ

our key phrase, we would not expect one before ‘faith’ either.”¹⁸ It is to be recognized that if Paul wanted to speak of ‘the faith/faithfulness of Christ’ he certainly would have done so using either πίστις Χριστοῦ or ἡ πίστις τοῦ Χριστοῦ.¹⁹

Hays even claims that πίστις plus genitive, meaning ‘faith in’, cannot be demonstrated in the Pauline corpus.²⁰ Against Richard Hays’ assertion, Dunn insists that, from the beginning, Christianity developed its own distinctive ‘faith’ vocabulary: πιστεύειν ἐπι / εἰς as a verbal form and the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ to imply ‘faith in Christ’ as a nominal form.²¹ Dunn decisively points out that one of the reasons for interpreting πίστις Χριστοῦ as objective genitive, is that if the πίστις Χριστοῦ form is to be rendered the ‘faith of Jesus Christ’, the required verbal equivalent corresponding to such a nominal expression is completely lacking. In other words, there is no Greek idiom or phrase such as ‘Christ has faith in God’ or ‘he believed.’²²

Contrary to Dunn’s opinion,²³ the absence of any verbal expression representing ‘Jesus’ faith’ serves to strengthen rather than weaken the presence of the concept of ‘the faith of Jesus Christ.’²⁴

¹⁸ B. Witherington, *Grace in Galatia: A Commentary on Paul’s Letter to the Galatians*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998), 181. There are a few exceptions to this rule: cf. Gal 3:29. He illustrates the following cases to support his point that the issue of whether or not definite article occurs has hardly impact in meaning: in Rom 3:3-7 the phrases ‘the faithfulness of God’ and ‘the truth of God’ are the functional equivalent of θεοῦ δικαιοσύνη in 3:5. Furthermore, we also find δικαιοσύνη θεοῦ at 3:21 and Rom 1:17, but in Rom 10:3 we find the very same phrase with the definite article – ‘the righteousness of God’, without a difference in meaning. Thus, we could find more cases in the NT like above.

¹⁹ S.K. Williams, “Again Pistis Christou,” *CBQ* 49 (1987): 431-33.

²⁰ R.B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ: The Narrative Substructure of Galatians 3:1-4:11*, ed. Astrid B. Beck and David Noel Freedman, second ed., The Biblical Resource Series (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 149.

²¹ J.D.G. Dunn, “Once More, Pistis Christou,” in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. E. H. Lovering Jr. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991), 732 n.12. Dunn seems to view the construction at issue not as the question of subjective and objective genitive, but instead as one of whether and in what way πίστις plus genitive reflects the development of faith vocabulary. See footnote 22 of this article to show the Greek ‘faith in Jesus’ pattern.

²² *Ibid.*, 732 n.12.

²³ J.D.G. Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC (London: A&C Black, 1993), 139.

²⁴ 1) Verbal expression representing one who believes someone: πιστεύω+τινι; πιστεύω+εἰς τινος; πιστεύω+ἐν τινι; πιστεύω+ἐπι τινι; πιστεύω+ἐπι τινος; πιστεύω transitive): even if the transitive verb πιστεύω without accompanying any preposition can be used in this way, no example can be found in the New Testament. The frequency of verbal expression for each book of the NT is as follows. Matt 7; Mark 5; Luke 4; John 59; Acts 15; Rom 8; Gal 2; Eph 1; Phil 1; 2Th 2; 1Tim 1; 2Tim 1; Ti 1; Jam 1; 1Pt 3; 1John 7

[Footnote continued on next page ...]

For as shown in footnote 24 below, verbal expression and nominal expression meaning ‘one who believes someone’ or ‘has faith in someone’ are distributed evenly throughout each book of the NT. However, the point that the verbal epithet referring to the ‘faith of Jesus Christ’ is not in view seems to lead us to look at its implications: it would leave by far a stronger (provocative) impression than the image of circumlocution which the nominal expression (Jesus’ faith) carries. In other words, the scriptural authors intentionally would avoid employing the direct expression ‘Christ has faith in God’ and just wish to reveal its connotation, as in interpreting Mk 9:23, Achtemeier says that “the clear implication of Mk 9:23 is that Jesus can do this act because he has *the requisite faith*.”²⁵ What is to be noted here more is that the primitive Palestinian church made great efforts to lift the exalted Jesus to the object of the cultic worship.²⁶ Rather, if its verbal Greek idiom existed, it would serve to undermine the purpose of early Christianity which intended to relate Christ to the object of veneration.

Hence, it is no wonder that the Pauline (not to speak of the deutero-Pauline) corpus uses only the nominal expression. For this reason, early Christian writers could not have used the phrase πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ in pointing to ‘faith in Jesus Christ’. Rather, it would be more reasonable to say that this technical term was used in

2) Nominal expression representing faith of believing someone: πίστις ἢ δια τινος; πίστις (ἢ) εἰς τινος; πίστις ἐν τινι; πίστις ἐπι τινος; πίστις (ἢ) πρὸς τινος The frequency of nominal expression for each books of the NT is as follows: Acts 4; Rom 1; Eph 1; Col 2; 1Th 1; 1Tim 2; 2Tim 2; Phm 2; He 1; 1Pt 1

C.F.D. Moule, “The Biblical Conception of Faith,” *ExpT* 68 (1957): 157 points out that the verb πίστευω certainly is used with Christ as object, either explicitly or implicitly; πίστις itself, at least with prepositions, is used of faith in Christ. D.W.B. Robinson, “Faith of Jesus Christ - a New Testament Debate,” *RTR* 29 (1970): 78. “Where πίστις is clearly in active relation to an object (i.e. = “faith” or “belief”), this is expressed with εἰς or ἐν. For what it may signify, πίστευω in its transitive form is never used with an objective genitive, but always with the prepositions εἰς, ἐν or περὶ, or with τινι, or occasionally with the accusative object.”

3) The frequency of each book including πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ or πίστις θεοῦ: Mark 1; Rom 3; Gal 5; Eph 1; Phil 1; Col 1; James 1; Re 1

²⁵ P. J. Achtemeier, “Miracles and the Historical Jesus: A Study of Mark 9:14-29,” *CBQ* 37 (1975): 480-81. [emphasis added]

The case of Mk 9:23 is perceived, afresh among scholars, to be related to Jesus’ faith. See, Dunn, *Jesus Remembered, Christianity in the Making* (Grand Rapids and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2003), 502 n.60.

²⁶ David E. Aune, *The Cultic Setting of Realized Eschatology in Early Christianity*, *NovTSup* 28 (Leiden: Brill, 1.972), 5. He says that this perhaps was the single most important historical development within the early church.

expressing the ‘faith of Jesus Christ’ to distinguish it from the expression ‘faith in Jesus Christ’ with a variety of Greek forms, as illustrated in footnote 24.

Contrariwise, Matlock stands in opposition to the position of subjective genitive, choosing two voices in his linguistic arguments²⁷: first, resting on Harrisville, which concludes that no early Fathers used πίστις Χριστοῦ as the subjective genitive reading²⁸; second, citing Silva verbatim, “I am not aware of any ancient Greek father who even raised the possibility of understanding [πίστις Χριστοῦ] as subjective.”²⁹ Harrisville, who Matlock regards as an advocate of his position, finds Jesus’ faith only as a subjective rendering in the phrase πίστις αὐτοῦ and not the πίστις Χριστοῦ construction in itself.³⁰ If so, is it safe to say that in the early church Fathers, the πίστις Χριστοῦ construction is understood in every case as an objective rendering ?

Among *the Letters of Ignatius*, certain passages in “the Letter of Ignatius to the Romans,” “the Letter of Ignatius to the Philadelphians,” and “the Letter of Ignatius to the Magnesians”³¹ appear to point out the faith of Jesus Christ. For the first case,³² the opposite assertions exist: to see it at issue as subjective³³ or objective.³⁴ For the second case,³⁵ the similar phrase at issue (as a

²⁷ R. Barry Matlock, “Even the Demons Believe”: Paul and πίστις Χριστοῦ, *CBQ* 64 (2002): 303-7, 316-17.

²⁸ R.A. Harrisville III, “ ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ : Witness of the Fathers,” *NovT* 36 (1994): 237.

²⁹ M. Silva, *God, Language, and Scripture: Reading the Bible in the Light of General Linguistics* (Leicester: Apollos, 1990), 107.

³⁰ Harrisville III, “ ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ : Witness of the Fathers,” 236-37.

³¹ I consulted *the Letters of Ignatius* in Michael W. Homes, ed. and trans. *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008).

³² “the Letter of Ignatius to the Romans,” Salutation, in Homes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, see καὶ πεφωτισμένη ἐν θελήματι τοῦ θελήσαντος τὰ πάντα, ἃ ἔστιν κατὰ πίστιν καὶ ἀγάπην Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, τοῦ θεοῦ ἡμῶν

³³ Internet Christian Library, www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/christian-history.html. “all things that exist, beloved and illuminated through *the faith and love of Jesus Christ* our God”; C.C. Richardson, ed. *Early Christian Fathers* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1953) Shorter version “the Church which is beloved and enlightened by the will of Him that willeth all things which are according to *the love of Jesus Christ* our God.” Longer version “the Church which is sanctified and enlightened by the will of God, who formed all things that are according to *the faith and love of Jesus Christ*, our God.”

³⁴ W.R. Schoedel, *Ignatius of Antioch: A Commentary on the Letters of Ignatius of Antioch*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985), 165. “Ignatius --- to the church beloved and enlightened by the will of him who willed all things that are, in *faith and love toward Jesus Christ* our God” (emphasis added); J. Lightfoot, ed. *The Apostolic Fathers*, (London: Macmillan, 1891)”all things that are, by *faith and love towards Jesus Christ* our God”

subjective) appears to be in *Ign. Phil.* 8.2 “But for me, the archives are Jesus Christ, the unalterable archives are his cross and death and his resurrection, and the *faith that comes through him* (ἡ πίστις ἡ δι’ αὐτοῦ).”³⁶ It depends totally on how the part emphasized can be understood. Actually, though it does not carry the definite *Pistis Christou* formulation, it may serve as a rationale to discriminate whether the conception of *the faith of Jesus Christ* remains in the works of church fathers. In light of the context indicating Jesus’ cross, death, resurrection, the *faith that comes through him* (ἡ πίστις ἡ δι’ αὐτοῦ) that follows them must refer to Jesus’ faith and not a human faith in Jesus. Furthermore, what follows *Ign. Phil.* 8.2 mentioned above has the key to explain its subjective use: ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι (by these things I want, through your prayers, to be justified).³⁷ In other words, Ignatius appears to intend to refer to justification using Christological contents such as (Jesus’ cross, Jesus’ death, Jesus’ resurrection, and Jesus’ faith) as the primary force and then an anthropological thrust (through your prayers) as the secondary force. For the last case,³⁸ Homes translates ἐν πίστει Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as “in the faith of Jesus Christ”³⁹, as expected reasonably. The analytical observations stated above show that the assertions of Harrisville and Silva are merely oversimplified and extremely biased in one direction. These elaborations thus contribute to driving home the *Pistis Christou* construction as subjective.

2. The Moab Covenant (Deut 29-32) as an Intertextual Echo in Gal 2:16a

The Greek phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ is seen as Paul’s theological keynote in Galatians, especially standing out in Gal 2:16. Paul’s task

³⁵ “the Letter of Ignatius to the Philadelphians,” 8.2 in Homes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, see ἐμοὶ δὲ ἀρχεῖά ἐστιν Ἰησοῦς Χριστός τὰ ἄθικτα ἀρχεῖα ὁ σταυρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ θάνατος καὶ ἡ ἀνάστασις αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡ πίστις ἡ δι’ αὐτοῦ ἐν οἷς θέλω ἐν τῇ προσευχῇ ὑμῶν δικαιωθῆναι. See “the Letter of Ignatius to the Ephesians,” 20.1 Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ πίστει καὶ ἐν τῇ αὐτοῦ ἀγάπῃ, ἐν πάθει αὐτοῦ καὶ ἀναστάσει Jesus Christ, his faith, his love, his suffering and resurrection.

³⁶ This translation belongs to Homes.

³⁷ This translation belongs to Homes.

³⁸ “the Letter of Ignatius to the Magnesians” 1.1-2 in Homes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*.

³⁹ Homes, *The Apostolic Fathers: Greek Texts and English Translations*, 203.

of making existing Jewish theology Christology will show the move of the commissioned Paul from covenantal nomism to his soteriological scheme in terms of what Paul understood by ‘justification’ with reference to 2:16. The precise translation of Gal 2:16a⁴⁰ depends mainly upon the prepositional phrase ἐὰν μὴ as well as πίστις Χριστοῦ. Most scholars commenting on this passage agree that ἐὰν μὴ in Gal 2:16a is adversative, which implies that the phrase at issue is translated by ‘but’.⁴¹ Nevertheless, the carefully defined meaning of the Greek phrase ἐὰν μὴ is, for the most part, seen to be ‘if not,’ ‘unless,’⁴² while some (although rarely) would attempt to read it as ‘but’.⁴³ More importantly, it is to be noted that probably every case of the phrase ἐὰν μὴ (with the two words attached)

⁴⁰ I find it more plausible to divide Gal 2:16 into four parts:
2:16a εἰδότες δε ὅτι οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ;

2:16b καὶ ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν;
2:16c ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐκ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου;
2:16d ὅτι ἐξ ἔργων νόμου οὐ δικαιωθήσεται πᾶσα σὰρξ.

⁴¹ H.D Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 113- 17; F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 136, 38; C. Cousar, *Galatians, Interpretation* (Louisville: John Knox, 1982), 50; Heikki Räisänen, “Galatians 2:16 and Paul’s Break with Judaism,” *NTS* 31 (1985): 543-53; D. Lührmann, *Galatians: A Continental Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1992), 43,46; K.A. Moreland, *The Rhetoric of Curse in Galatians: Paul Confronts Another Gospel*, Emory Studies in Early Christianity 5 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 185-86; J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, edited by William Foxwell Albright and David Noel Freedman, AB 33A (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 246-47, 51 n.126, 263-75; Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 178-79; cf. E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 68, appreciates *ean me* as only.

⁴² W. Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3rd ed. Revised and Edited by F.W. Danker (Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000), 267-68. BDAG gives only ‘if not’ and ‘unless’ as meanings; and Henry George Liddell and Robert Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, 4th Revised ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1854), 355 restricts its meaning to ‘if not,’ ‘except,’ ‘unless’; In addition, F. Blass, A. Debrunner, and R.W. Funk, *BDF*, § 376, §480.6 says that *ean me* is an expression signifying absolute opposition to that which precedes: “ἐὰν μὴ is seldom used for ‘but, save’ (Att. Likewise) and always without verb.”; Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, trans. J. H. Thayer, 4 ed. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1992). This lexicon also presents ‘unless,’ ‘if not’ as its native force, but recognises that one may translate ἐὰν μὴ as *but that, without*, on such cases as Mt 26:42, Mk 4:22.

It is to be noted that the expression εἰ μὴ similar to ἐὰν μὴ in meaning has two significances: first, ‘except,’ ‘if not’; second, ‘but’ as adversative. See *BDAG*, 278-79.

⁴³ Alexander Buttmann, *A Grammar of the New Testament Greek* (Andover: W.F. Draper, 1873), §149, 6 on the supposed use of ἐὰν μὴ / εἰ μὴ as equivalent to ἄλλα: Gal 2:16 and Mt 12:4; Gal 1:7 respectively; G.B. Winer, *A Treatise on the Grammar of New Testament Greek*, trans. W.F. Moulton, 3rd Revised ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1882), 566 n.2, says that “it has frequently been maintained that we have in the NT instances of the converse practice, the use of εἰ μὴ (ἐὰν μὴ) in the sense of ἄλλα (Gal 1:7, 2:16, Rom 14:4, 1 Cor 7:17, Rev 21:27, Mt 12:4, Lk 4:26, 27).” Yet he recognises that “there is no sufficient reason for believing that this interchange exists in the NT.”

occurring in the New Testament tends to be translated as ‘if not’ or ‘unless’ and not, ‘but.’⁴⁴ If this corrected meaning is to be applied, the phrase subsequent to ἐὼν μὴ serves as the protasis, which means that this conditional clause or phrase becomes dominant in relation to the sentence prior to ἐὼν μὴ. Since the ‘faith of Jesus’ takes the precedence over the ‘observance of law’, even though it was once possible to be justified by the works of law, it was accomplished on the basis of the faith of Jesus. Thus, the precise translation of Gal 2:16a is as follows: one is not justified by the works of law unless one comes through the faith of Jesus Christ. Such an interpretation seems to point to Pauline Christological covenantal nomism and not theocentric one characteristic of Judaism, which is made up of divine election (God’s grace) and the obedience to the law. It is to be noted that, despite God’s grace being widely prevalent (at least as a premise) in the Old Testament (especially in Deuteronomy), when Paul wrote Gal 2:16a, he did not use the expression ‘God’s grace’ but rather ‘the faith of Jesus Christ’ - although he may have kept divine grace in mind. The theocentric thrust has been thought to be typical of the Old Testament or Judaism, while in the New Testament Paul launches his theological work by reinterpreting it and expressing it Christologically in order to establish a Pauline Christology,⁴⁵ which is closely bound up with soteriology.

The following remarks of Richardson and Thüsing seem to provide a decisive argument: “If it is true that Paul uses God-language in order to interpret and define Christ, it is also true that language about Christ in turn redefines the identity of God.”⁴⁶ The Pauline Christocentricity is intrinsically directed towards God, because the

⁴⁴ ἐὼν μὴ (attached): ‘unless’, ‘if not’ in the NT

Mat 5:20; 11:6; 12:29; 18:3; 18:35; 26:42; Mk 3:27; 4:22; 7:3; 7:4; 10:30; Lk 7:23; 13:3; 13:5; Joh 3:2; 3:3; 3:5; 3:27; 4:48; 5:19; 6:44; 6:53; 6:65; 7:51; 12:24; 13:8; 15:4; 15:6; 20:25; Acts 3:23; 8:31; 15:1; 27:31; Rom 10:15; 11:23; 1Co 8:8; 9:16; 14:6; 14:9; 15:36; Gal 2:16; 2Th 2:3; 2Ti 2:5; Jam 2:17; Rev 2:5; 2:22; 13:15

ἐὼν– μὴ (detached): ‘unless’, ‘if not’ in the NT

Mat 6:15; 10:13; 18:16; 21:21; 22:24; Mk 12:19; Jn 8:24; 12:47; 16:7; 1Co 13:1; 13:2; 13:3; 14:7; 14:11; 14:28; Jas 2:14; 1Jn 3:21; Rev 3:3

⁴⁵ Cf. N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1991), 2. Wright, in his discussion of Paul, suggests that Pauline theology consists precisely in the redefinition, by means of Christology and pneumatology, of those two key Jewish doctrines, i.e. monotheism and election.

⁴⁶ N. Richardson, *Paul’s Language About God*, JSNTS 99 (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic, 1994), 307.

Christology of Paul is already theocentric.⁴⁷ Martyn asserts, concerning Galatians, that for Paul, the locus of God's grace is defined by the locus of God's rectifying power, and consequently sees God's work of rectification as having been enacted in Christ's faithful death.⁴⁸ While for the Old Testament God's grace is expressed through the concept of election and covenant (to be made by God with Israel), for the New Testament God's grace seems to give way to the 'faith of Jesus Christ' expressed as the sacrificial act of Jesus Christ on his cross. Hays understands the 'grace of God' as manifested and made effectual by the grace of the one man Jesus Christ: "ἡ χάρις τοῦ θεοῦ abounds to many ἐν χάριτι τῇ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (Rom 5:15)."⁴⁹

We should therefore look at the biblical texts that Paul consulted when he wrote Gal 2:16a and which refer or allude to the practice of law-keeping under the divine sovereignty. The scriptural witnesses seem to describe, for the most part, the history of Israel's disobedience rather than her obedience to God's command. Despite Israel's consistent failure to obey, we need to identify the scriptural texts referring to God's grace covering her failure. The combination of God's grace and Israel's failure seems to stand out remarkably in Deuteronomy. Deuteronomy has been traditionally understood as attributing to primarily human action the cause of the blessing and the curse.⁵⁰ However, Olson divides the covenant into the Horeb and the Moab (Deut 29-32), and interprets the former as the traditional deuteronomistic thrust,⁵¹ and the latter as a radical new turn,⁵² which means that in the Moab covenant, Yahweh and not the people

⁴⁷ W. Thüsing, *Per Christum in Deum, Studien Zum Verhältnis Von Christozentrik Und Theozentrik in Den Paulinischen Hauptbriefen* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1965), 258.

⁴⁸ Martyn, *Galatians*, 259-60.

⁴⁹ R.B. Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, 160.

⁵⁰ James Crenshaw, "The Human Dilemma and Literature of Dissent," in *Tradition and Theology in the Old Testament*, ed. Douglas Knight (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1977), 249; James Crenshaw, *Story and Faith: A Guide to the Old Testament* (New York: Macmillan, 1986), 88; H.H. Rowley, *Job*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 18.

⁵¹ Dennis T. Olson, *Deuteronomy and the Death of Moses*, ed. John Donahue, Walter Brueggemann, Sharyn Dowd and Christopher Seitz, *Overtures to Biblical Theology* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 151.

⁵² Olson, *Deuteronomy and the Death of Moses*, 123, 175. He corrects the imbalance engendered by discounting the later chapters of Deuteronomy as secondary or later "appendixes" that do not figure in the explication of Deuteronomy's full theology.

emerges as the primary subject of the verbs: Yahweh will circumcise the heart so that the people will love Yahweh and obey the commandments (30:6-8).⁵³

Contrary to this, Barker has recently argued that in even the Horeb covenant, in addition to the Moab covenant, divine grace predominates over human action.⁵⁴ Barker also contends that, although the context of grace in Deut 10:12-22 (in which the command to circumcise the heart is set) points away from Israel's ability to Yahweh, the tension between Yahweh's faithfulness and Israel's faithlessness will not be resolved until 30:6, which refers to the circumcision of the heart *by Yahweh*.⁵⁵ However, many scholars have contended that Deut 30:1-10 points to the notion that Israel itself must take the initiative in restoring its relationship with Yahweh.⁵⁶ As a corrective to what has been argued previously that Israel saw the observance of commandment in relation to a nomistic legalism, Eichrodt insists that for Israel the notion of commandment should not be reduced to a nomistic legalism, but instead should be properly regarded as a gift of prevenient grace.⁵⁷ The thrust of covenantal nomism like this comes to expression within Jewish literature, particularly from Deuteronomy onwards.⁵⁸ In the light of the Moab covenant, indicating that divine grace takes precedence over human

⁵³ Ibid., 151. In chapter 31, Moses begins to fade out of sight as the faithfulness of Yahweh is repeatedly affirmed (31:3, 4, 6, 8, 20, 23).

⁵⁴ Barker, *The Triumph of Grace in Deuteronomy*, 55-215; Georg Braulik, "Deuteronomy and the Birth of Monotheism," in *Theology of Deuteronomy: Collected Essays of Georg Braulik* (Dallas: BIBAL Press, 1994), 110 says that "YHWH's fidelity extends further than Israel's apostasy, not only by a single act of grace, but basically."

⁵⁵ Barker, *The Triumph of Grace in Deuteronomy*, 106, 145, insists that "30:1-10 does not reflect an optimistic view of Israel's ability and that the maintenance, or restoration, of the covenant bond depends ultimately on Yahweh and not Israel's ability"; Georg Braulik, "The Development of the Doctrine of Justification in the Redactional Strata of the Book of Deuteronomy" in *Theology of Deuteronomy: Collected Essays of Georg Braulik* (Dallas: BIBAL Press, 1994), 152 points out that in 4:30 and 30:1-10 the conversion of Israel expressed as the term *šwb* is understood as a fruit of divine grace which precedes any observance of the law.

⁵⁶ J.D. Levenson, "Who Inserted the Book of the Torah?" *HTR* 68 (1975): 208; D. F. Payne, *Deuteronomy*, Daily Study Bible (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 1985), 164-65; P.C. Craigie, *The Book of Deuteronomy*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1976), 363; S.R. Driver, *Deuteronomy*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1902), 328; R. Polzin, *Moses and the Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History* (New York: Seabury Press, 1980), 70.

⁵⁷ Walther Eichrodt, "Covenant and Law: Thoughts on Recent Discussion," *Interpretation* 20 (1966): 313-15.

⁵⁸ J.D.G. Dunn, "The Theology of Galatians" in *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville: Westminster and John Knox, 1990), 242.

responsibility, Paul produces the summarised statement (e.g. Gal 2:16a) for his theologising. Although, he does not borrow from the narrative genre, even when the presence of an explicit proof-text seems to be lacking,⁵⁹ the story of Israel is fused into the thrust of Paul's theologising and the two ideas being inextricably linked. Wright explicates this as follows:

Within all his letters, though particularly in Romans and Galatians, we discover a larger implicit narrative, which stands out clearly as the true referential sequence behind the poetic sequence demanded by the different rhetorical needs of the various letters. Like his own story, this larger narrative is the Jewish story, but with a subversive twist at almost every point. Paul presupposes this story *even when he does not expound it directly*, and it is arguable that we can only understand the more limited narrative worlds of the different letters if we locate them at their appropriate points within this overall story-world, and indeed within the symbolic universe that accompanies it.⁶⁰

With covenantal nomism in mind, Paul may have portrayed Gal 2:16a by juxtaposing justification by the works of the law with the faith of Jesus Christ in a comprehensive⁶¹ and not antithetical way. Consequently, if we depart from the traditional interpretation of the Lutheran-antinomian tendency,⁶² it may be possible to see the way that Paul links Gal 2:16a to the Moab covenant. Although Paul wrote Gal 2:16a in the light of the covenantal nomism, he did not do so verbatim, but rather through employing his Christological technical term, πίστις Χριστοῦ. To be more specific, the Old Testament or Judaism seems to see God's grace or mercy in connection with election of Israel. The fate of the 'people of God' comes to mean relying exclusively on God alone. In Gal 2:16a, however, Paul the

⁵⁹ See, for Paul's theological use of scriptural texts taking on a narrative form, R. B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), esp. 15.

⁶⁰ Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God*, 405. Cf. Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce Longenecker (Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 24. He says that among Paul's epistles self-contained narratives are illustrative of 2 Cor 12:3-10 and Gal 1:13-2:14.

⁶¹ Cf. My rendering of Gal 2:16a serves to refute Räisänen's argument that for Paul, Judaism was legalism. Heikki Räisänen, "Legalism and Salvation by the Law: Essays in German and English on the Problem of the Law in Early Christianity," in *The Torah and Christ, Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society* (Helsinki: Finnish Exegetical Society, 1986), 64.

⁶² Traditional interpretation of Gal 2:16a reveals that "a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ." Probably this interpretation would be influenced by Luther, who excludes any possibility of works that humans may design, to the extent that any reliance on human works is idolatry. Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, ed. J. Pelikan, vol. 26 (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1963-64), 141, 227-29, 53-54, 333.

apostle does not restrict divine grace to the relationship between God and the people of God as does the Old Testament, but rather he introduces the πίστις Χριστοῦ formulation (the ‘faith of Jesus Christ’) so as to create a bridge between God and the people of God. In short, the πίστις Χριστοῦ formulation serves to accentuate the role of Christ as intermediary to bring salvation into play.

3. Pistis Christou as the Force and Nature of Salvation in Gal 2.16

Using as a connecting factor the (Christological) covenantal nomism, Paul launches his theologisation into Christology. In other words, he strives to move from a theocentric to a Christocentric stance in terms of justification. As a result, Paul seems to initiate his Christological soteriology here. It is true that New Testament scholarship in general, as well as dogmatic theology, has seen justification as the means of entry into the people of God.⁶³ This phenomenon seems to link justification to human faith as the setting of a right relationship with God. On the contrary, as McGrath puts it,⁶⁴ the concept of justification, based upon the scriptural texts, strongly reveals the divine initiative in soteriological history, whilst the doctrine of justification (developed through historical legacy) seems to take on an anthropological rather than divine aspect. Unlike the mainstream of the NT scholarship, Wright connects the questions concerning ‘how human beings are saved’ with Paul’s Gospel⁶⁵ and not justification. In so doing, his assertion dissociates justification from the inquiry of how one should be saved. If so, we should find out what justification is meant by Paul in Galatians.

3.1. The Common Ground of Paul with Contemporary Judaism: Gal 2:16a Revisited

The Jews in general are thought to take a Jewish paradigm through which one’s identity as a Jew is confirmed through the obedience to the law based on God’s grace and mercy; representative

⁶³ Seyoon Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1981), 281.

⁶⁴ McGrath, *Iustitia Dei*, vol.1, 2f. He makes a sharp distinction between the *concept* of justification (biblical) and the *doctrine* of justification (ecclesiastical tradition), which implies the former as describing *God’s saving action* towards his people and the latter as the *means by which man’s relationship to God is established*.

⁶⁵ N.T. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997), 45-57, 116-117. Wright unfolds Paul’s gospel with four elements: The crucified Jesus, the risen Jesus, King Jesus, and Jesus is Lord.

of the mechanism of election and covenant. Paul, in light of the perspective that he knows Christ and his work, redefines God's grace as the 'faith of Christ',⁶⁶ with a Christological term. Gal 1:15-16 appears to show the relationship between divine grace and the story of Jesus. What it means to be 'set apart and called by [divine] grace' is to signify that the grace of God was present in Paul's story, while the statement that God 'was pleased to reveal his Son in me' signifies that the grace of God was present as a historical event that changed the course of Paul's life.⁶⁷ When Paul's phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ is understood as "summary allusions to this story [the story of Jesus]"⁶⁸ (and not a human cognitive response to the preached gospel⁶⁹), what Paul calls the 'faith of Jesus Christ' in Galatians could be viewed as the embodiment of God's grace unveiled through the story of Jesus. Although consistently reading πίστις Χριστοῦ as 'faith *in* Jesus', Dunn recently examined the phrase in relation to introducing the concept of narrative to Pauline studies:

By setting the individual letter within the context or framework of the foundation story, we, like the first auditors, are enabled to fill in the 'gaps of indeterminacy' and thus to recognise a coherence that will remain invisible to those who remain only on the surface of the text. The classic example of this is the 'faith of Christ' reading of the phrase πίστις Χριστοῦ. As a phrase it is seen to sum up a complete story line, a substantial subplot in the narrative of Jesus. Never mind that the subplot is never spelled out in those terms in Paul, or indeed elsewhere in earliest Christian writing. *The phrase encapsulates the whole story in itself* and enables us to 'plug into' a whole dimension of Paul's story of Jesus to which we would otherwise be blind.⁷⁰

The grace of God is not, for Paul, an idea (or even primarily an attribute of God), but the action of God in history, working in history

⁶⁶ Paul emphasises that God acted in Christ.

⁶⁷ J.M.G. Barclay, "Paul's Story," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. Bruce Longenecker (Louisville/ London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 140.

⁶⁸ R.B. Hays, "Pistis and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?," in *Society of Biblical Literature 1991 Seminar Papers*, ed. E. H. Lovering Jr. (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1991), 715; Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 181-82 reads the phrase 'faith of Christ' as a shorthand allusion to the story of the faithful one who was obedient even unto death on the cross.

⁶⁹ R.B. Hays, "The Letter to the Galatians," in *New Interpreter's Bible: 2 Corinthians; Galatians; Ephesians; Philippians; Colossians: 1 & 2 Thessalonians; 1 & 2 Timothy; Titus; Philemon*, ed. Leander E. Keck (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 239.

⁷⁰ J. D.G. Dunn, "The Narrative Approach to Paul," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce Longenecker (Louisville/ London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), 217-18. [emphasis added]

to bring life out of death, power out of weakness and salvation out of sin.⁷¹

As argued earlier, the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate is significant in the sense that “the two readings do lead to two very different pictures of the theology of the entire letter.”⁷² Martyn supposes that Paul would imply that Law observance is a merely human act, while the faith of Christ is the deed of God.⁷³ Even Hays, who leads the vanguard in spreading the ‘faith of Jesus Christ’ reading, initially seems reluctant to argue for the same spirit in this passage - unlike the case of Gal 3:22 on which he is definitely convinced. However, his recent introduction to the second edition of his dissertation shows that he articulates the same strong conviction concerning this phrase as Gal 3:22.⁷⁴

Another important phrase to be investigated concerns the ‘works of the law’, which is to be understood, either with respect to Jewish distinctiveness⁷⁵, or to the obedience to the law in general.⁷⁶ Hays raises the question of how we are to understand the contrast that Paul draws in 2:16, between being rectified by faith and being rectified by the works of the law and asks if Paul is setting up an artificial foil, a false depiction of his own Jewish heritage.⁷⁷ In so doing, Hays finds

⁷¹ Barclay, “Paul’s Story,” 154.

⁷² Martyn, *Galatians*, 251.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 251. He admits the grammatical possibility that πίστις Χριστοῦ is rendered either the faith Christ had and enacted or the faith human beings have in Christ, yet concludes that πίστις Χριστοῦ here refers to the faith of Christ implying the faith God has chosen as the means of setting things right.

⁷⁴ Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, 162. He says that “in every case *except Gal 2:16* ‘the faith of Jesus Christ’ provides a better and more satisfying sense than the traditional translation of ‘faith in Jesus Christ.’ In the case of Gal 2:16, the sentence is so compact that it is difficult to decide what διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ and ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ might mean.” However, his ambiguous view is corrected in the introduction to the second edition of his dissertation, p. xlvi and the latest book on Galatians. Hays, “The Letter to the Galatians,” 236-41.

⁷⁵ J.D.G. Dunn, “Works of the Law and the Curse of the Law (Gal 3: 10- 14),” in *Jesus, Paul and the Law: Studies in Mark and Galatians* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1990), 219-25. J.D.G. Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC (London: A. & C. Black, 1993), 136; M. Barth, *Ephesians*, 244-48.

⁷⁶ J.D.G. Dunn, *Jesus, Paul and the Law*, 226-27, asserts that most Jews of Paul’s day see the phrase ἐξ ἔργων νόμου as remaining within all that the Torah lays down, doing what the law requires, while Paul comprehends it as not the same as fulfilling the law, less than what the law requires, the scope of God’s covenant people as Israel *per se*, as that people who are defined by the law and marked out by its distinctive requirements. If it is right, we should ask ourselves whether it was possible to communicate between Paul and his contemporary Jews. If Dunn’s guess is right, Paul should have coined another term except the ‘works of the law’ common in contemporary Judaism.

⁷⁷ Hays, “The Letter to the Galatians,” 239.

the solution to this enquiry in Dunn's interpretation that the works of the law function as outward symbols of Jewish ethnic distinctiveness. However, the latter (what the law requires) here provides a more appropriate and better understanding than former [Jewish distinctiveness]. For the notion of covenantal nomism is more tenable when it is associated with the comprehensive range of actions (required by the law), rather than comprising the Jewish distinctive identity marker.⁷⁸ What is also noteworthy is that 'works of the law' is "reckoned especially crucial in the *maintenance* of covenant righteousness, in the *maintenance* of an individual Jew's status within the covenant."⁷⁹ Therefore, covenantal nomism (in other words, the law-keeping justification tradition) is seen as the shared knowledge between Paul and the Jew.⁸⁰

What matters here is to note the tense of δικαιοῦται. The present tense, used here, must emphasize the aspect of maintenance rather than that of entering into the people of God. Therefore, justification here signifies living by works of the law and not attaining salvation by the works of the law.⁸¹ The Jews perform the commandments, not because they guarantee justification, but because God commands them to do so.⁸² Although not all 'righteousness' in the Old Testament had a religious basis (as seen in Gen 38:26), 'righteousness' in the OT

⁷⁸ Cf. Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 176, insists that the phrase 'works of the Law' would include their distinctive practices and ways of doing the Law, with the notion that the phrase was not limited to such distinctive practices. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 422 defines covenantal nomism as eight items, one of which is the requirement to obey concerning the law. That is to say, it points to correlation of covenantal nomism with the law as a whole.

⁷⁹ Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 136. [emphasis added] Dunn's explanation serves to rule out the possibility of entry into the community through works of law and instead, arranges the function of the law to the standard of responding to God's grace.

⁸⁰ Cf. Martyn, *Galatians*, 248-49, sees a Jewish-Christian formula called rectification (on his own term) as shared between Paul and Jewish Christians, with supplementary illustrations of other passages, such as Rom 3:25-26a, 4:25; 1Cor 6:11. Martyn implies, of course, faith-oriented justification, as 'faith' serves to play as the common ground no matter who he or they may be. Yet, justification, in my rendering, is viewed here as relating to the law, though its definition is to be understood not as membership language, but rather in terms of maintenance of those who are already part of the community.

⁸¹ For Sanders, Dunn, Paul did not oppose human works. For Bultmann, Paul opposed human works. Cf. In so far as biblical theology links work with the story of the fall, it regards it as a curse in its necessity for the maintenance of life. This view was almost completely dominant in Hellenistic Judaism. Georg Bertram, "Ergon, Ergazomai," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 2:643-44.

⁸² Alan Segal, *Paul the Convert: The Apostolate and Apostasy of Saul the Pharisee* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), 128.

is viewed as the fulfillment of the demands of a relationship, whether that relationship be with men or with God; the relationship being always regarded as the determinative factor.⁸³ However, contrary to this, in the Greco-Roman tradition ‘righteousness’ and ‘justice’ were used as ideal concepts or absolute ethical norms against which particular claims and duties could be measured.⁸⁴ It is probable that Luther is influenced by this Greco-Roman tradition, in the sense that he takes the concept of justification as the acquisition of the membership necessary for entering into the religious community without reservation.⁸⁵ As Achtemeier states in footnote 83 above, ‘righteousness’ in the Old Testament never implies entry into the community through human behavior.

Consequently, 2:16a presupposes that divine grace takes precedence over human obedience to the law: ‘unless there is the faith of Jesus Christ’ serves as protasis, while ‘no one is justified by the works of law’ serves as apodosis. Indeed, the structure of 2:16a represents two crucial motifs of God’s grace and human response to divine command.

3.2. Faith in Jesus Christ as the Christian Badge: Gal 2:16b

Since the clause Gal 2:15 is concessive, in relation to 2:16b,⁸⁶ it would be plausible to argue that the conjunction καὶ (within 2:16b) should read ‘even’, rather than ‘and’. In Gal 2:16b, the Greek word καὶ (translated ‘even’⁸⁷) should be noted as it points to the shift away

⁸³ E. R. Achtemeier, “Righteousness in the OT,” in *IDB*, ed. George Arthur Buttrick (New York: Abingdon Press, 1962), 80-82. Achtemeier makes this clearer by using negative definitions: “In the Old Testament it is *not behavior* in accordance with an ethical, legal, psychological, religious, or spiritual norm. It is *not conduct* which is dictated by either human or divine nature, no matter how undefiled. It is *not an action* appropriate to the attainment of a specific goal. It is *not an impartial ministry* to one’s fellow men. It is *not equivalent* to giving every man his just due. Further, there is no norm of righteousness outside the relationship itself. When God or man fulfils the conditions imposed upon him by a relationship, he is, in OT terms, righteous.” [emphasis added]

⁸⁴ G. von Rad, *Old Testament Theology*, trans. D.M.G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Row, 1962), 1: 370-1.

⁸⁵ Martin Luther, “Lectures on Galatians 1535, Ch. 1-4.” In *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1963-64),

122-24. His interpretation of Gal 2:16a is based on his theological propositions: that the law, including the ceremonial law is denied any place in justification, and that the works of the law themselves, whether performed before or after justification takes place, play no role in justification. Gal 2:16 (“knowing that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ”) Up to now, his stance has had an extensive impact on the New Testament scholarship.

⁸⁶ Burton, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 119.

⁸⁷ Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 130, translates καὶ as ‘even.’

from ‘works of the law’ to ‘faith in Jesus Christ’, even when as 2:16a puts it, the works of the law still seem to be (in terms of how humankind should conduct their lives) effective for the Jews. A further Greek word, ἐπιστεύσαμεν, demonstrates the turning point of Paul’s attention toward faith in Jesus.⁸⁸ The verb in question refers to the initial response of a person to the Gospel message⁸⁹ and a once-for-all response, which results in a transfer of status.⁹⁰ Paul appears to deliberately employ the aorist tense of πιστεύω in relation to ‘faith in Christ Jesus’ in order to impose a substantial effect on those who are determinative in confessing their faith after (as 2:16c puts it) they are justified by the faith of Jesus Christ. That is to say, 2:16b is not to be understood as a premise of 2:16c, but rather vice versa. 2:16b comes into view as the sign to internalize, as one’s subjective event, the objectified justification given by the faith of Jesus Christ.

According to Sanders, the notion that grace precedes the demand for obedience ‘is as clear in non-Christian Jewish literature as it is in the letters of Paul’, since in Jewish literature God’s grace always emerges as the most important point in any theological analysis of salvation.⁹¹ If so, we are required to resolve why Paul discards the way of being justified by the works of the law (even though it was understood, not as referring directly to a salvific concept, but rather as the way in which one should carry out - or maintain - one’s life) and instead, singles out a new pattern called ‘faith in Jesus’.⁹² Aligned with this position, Thielman goes beyond this stance and argues that with all the belief in atonement and repentance which was so

⁸⁸ See J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*, 13th ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975), 115 says that in order to display ‘to believe in’ LXX had used primarily the phrase πιστεύειν τινί, rarely πιστεύειν ἐπί τινι or ἐν τινι, and once only ἐπί τινα, Wisd 12:2 πιστεύειν ἐπὶ θεόν, while the NT used πιστεύειν εἰς or ἐπί τινα. Furthermore, he points out that many of the fathers maintained that πιστεύειν εἰς should be reserved for belief in God or in Christ. In this respect, we could see Paul may have used the Greek idiom deliberately to demonstrate the shift into Christ.

⁸⁹ Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 183.

⁹⁰ R.N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, ed. G. Barker, D. Hubbard, J. Watts, R. Martin, WBC 41 (Dallas: Word Books, 1990), 83; F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 85.

⁹¹ E.P. Sanders, *Judaism: Practice and Belief 63 BCE - 66 CE* (London: SCM / Philadelphia: Trinity Press International, 1992), 273, 278.

⁹² See J.C. Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 237-38; Jacob Neusner, *Judaic Law from Jesus to the Mishnah: A Systematic Reply to Professor E.P. Sanders*, South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 84 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1993), 295. The weakest point of Sanders’ analysis of Judaism and Christianity in first-century Judaism is frequently spelled out as its inability to explain why Jews became Christians.

prominent in Judaism, many Jews of Paul's time looked forward to an eschatological redemption through God's intervention on their behalf to re-create their hearts, restore their obedience and reestablish their nation. Furthermore, he thinks that Paul views the shedding of Christ's blood as the inauguration of this new covenant (Rom 3:25; 1Cor 11:25; 2Cor 3:6).⁹³

When it comes to Galatians 2:16b in particular, we must question what Paul had in mind as to how the Galatians would be saved. Wright points out that the Galatians are concerned, not so much about the means by which they gained redemption, as to how the people of God are to be defined, in the light of whether ex-pagan converts should be circumcised or not.⁹⁴ Wright thus, understands 'faith in Christ' functioning as a boundary-marker which sets apart those who believe in Christ from non-believers outside the Christian community.⁹⁵

Just as in Judaism, where salvation can be described as the result of an act of God's grace (God's election of Israel), so in Paul salvation is also granted by grace that leads to the acquisition of membership in God's people.⁹⁶ However, in terms of the maintenance of salvation, they are provided with different means respectively. The maintenance of salvation within Judaism is through the Jewish institutions, such as repentance and atonement in case of their failure to obey the law⁹⁷ (unless by 'heinous transgression' one opts out of the covenant).⁹⁸ Paul, on the other hand, introduces another device called 'faith'.⁹⁹ In other words, Paul appears to turn the way from the

⁹³ Frank Thielman, *Paul and the Law* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994), 242, 309 n.3 says that though Paul, like most Jews, took the Jewish institutions such as atonement and repentance for granted, he makes a mention of no references to the Jewish institutions since he looked forward to Israel's disobedience and God dealing with it. Cf. Barker, *The Triumph of Grace in Deuteronomy*, 144-52. See Deut 30:6 referring to divine initiative taking precedence over Israel's failure to obey.

⁹⁴ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 120. In the case of 2:16b, Wright's idea seems to be relevant, but when it comes to 2:16c, it becomes another matter, for it is closely related to how one should be saved.

⁹⁵ Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 3; Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 113-33.

⁹⁶ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 220, 543; Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, WUNT (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 184-86.

⁹⁷ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 182; E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983), 28.

⁹⁸ Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 136-37, 157.

⁹⁹ Cf. Betz, *Galatians*, 115 n.28, stresses that justification by faith was not only a Pauline idea in early Jewish Christianity: Jam 2:14-26; pseudo-Clementine Homilies 8:5-7; Heb and Justin Martyr, [Footnote continued on next page ...]

notion of Israel being justified by the works of the law (in Gal 2:16a) to the position of faith in Jesus in 2:16b.¹⁰⁰ Of course, even this transformation suggests that a scheme of faith is involved in terms of maintenance, referring to human responsibility under the aegis of divine mercy and grace. Since Paul allows human beings to be the subject of the verb ‘to place one’s trust,’ ‘to have faith’ and ‘to believe,’ he must be referring to the action of placing one’s trust as a human deed.¹⁰¹

Jüngel hardly seems to say that justification is restricted to only the past event despite his insistence, throughout his book, *Justification*, that justification is the event and not the process:

The doctrine of justification makes clear that *nothing* of Jesus’ being, works or suffering is irrelevant for salvation. Using the concept of time, we can word it thus: the story of Jesus, the man identical with the Son of God, is no *past* story; rather, as a *past story* it is *present* and effectual *in the present*. The doctrine of justification goes beyond the ‘fact’ of personal unity of Godhood and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ to make clear the soteriological effectiveness of that unity, an effectiveness which belongs to the *being* of the God-Man. This can also be worded using the concept of time: the justification article applies what happened then and there to the present time.¹⁰²

It is widely acknowledged that, “no other Jews in the first century distinguish faith and law in the way Paul does.”¹⁰³ That is to say, although there is no need to distinguish between faith and law, the reason Paul singles out faith rather than law, in manifesting the righteousness of God, is that it defines a new community of believers.¹⁰⁴

Dialogus Cum Tryphone 46.1; 47.1; 116; Acts 13:39; 15:10f; Matt 12:37; Luke 15:11-32; 16:15; 18:11-14.

¹⁰⁰ Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 128, understands entry into faith scheme through Paul’s conversion as the event raising faith to the level of a basic stance in life.

¹⁰¹ Martyn, *Galatians*, 275.

¹⁰² E. Jüngel, *Justification: The Heart of the Christian Faith*, trans. Jeffrey F. Cayzer (Edinburgh & New York: T&T Clark, 2001), 30.

¹⁰³ Segal, *Paul the Convert*, 128.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 128, recognises that Paul refuses for the law to be overthrown.

What must be recognized is that, prior to human faith coming, Christ's faith (as divine act) is already presupposed.¹⁰⁵ Martyn describes Paul's proposal as follows:

When we trust God, Paul would say, we signal that we ourselves have been invaded by God's presuppositionless grace, and we confess that the locus of God's invasion is especially our will! ---- Our trust in God has been awakened, kindled by God's trustworthy deed in Christ.¹⁰⁶

Since in Judaism we cannot find against Jewish background any reference to 'believe in the Messiah,' with the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ this pattern is altered, in that Christ's faithful death elicits faith in him.¹⁰⁷ Just as in Judaism, the works of law (no matter how important it may be), serve either as a response to divine grace or as an (Jewish) identifier which distinguishes the people of God, so too, in Paul, human faith serves as a Christian 'badge' which confirms those who belong to the community. Therefore, as Boyarin asserts, the works of the law should not be regarded as the means to salvation.¹⁰⁸ Rather, it would be more accurate to see it as a logical corollary in accordance with divine grace.

3.3. Jesus' Faith and Justification as Membership Language: Gal 2:16c

If 2:16a is to be understood in the traditional way (namely ἐὰν μὴ is rendered 'but only,' rather than my rendering, 'unless, or if not'), we should detect little or no difference between 2:16a and 2:16c.

However, if my rendering of ἐὰν μὴ is to be accepted, we should see that 2:16a and 2:16c express different positions, as argued above and will be argued below. Gal 2:16c reveals, in contrast to 2:16a, the characteristic of justification in terms of how one is admitted into the community so to speak, or how one acquires membership. The verb δικαιώσωμεν in this passage is designated as a subjunctive aorist passive. This makes it clear that the event happened at one specific

¹⁰⁵ Martyn, *Galatians*, 252, locates Christ's faith into the first place, and human trust in this faithful Christ into the second place in terms of God's means of rectification, without dealing less importantly with the issue of human trust.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 271-72 n.173.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 275 n.179.

¹⁰⁸ Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California, 1994), 292 n.15.

time, rather than being a repeated action.¹⁰⁹ On the basis of this self-evident proof, it would be reasonable to view that this phrase is surely related to the soteriological level,¹¹⁰ rather than attributing its meaning to ecclesiological level as did Wright.¹¹¹ Wright links the concept of justification to the question: ‘Who is defined the people of God?’ If he did it in connection with Gal 2:16b, his assertion would be convincing. However, Gal 2:16c surely aims to address the concern about how one should be saved.

More importantly, 2:16c strongly defends Paul’s intention against one who promulgates legalism for the acquisition of salvation, employing either devotion to the law or Jewish identifiers, such as circumcision, dietary laws and so forth.¹¹² Lastly, the phrase under discussion sees justification as being by the faith of Jesus Christ rather than by faith in Jesus Christ accepted in a traditionally interpreted way.¹¹³ The faithfulness of Christ is a foundational element of Paul’s

¹⁰⁹ Gerald L. Stevens, *New Testament Greek* (Lanham/ New York/ Oxford: University Press of America, 1997), 217-18. He categorises the usages of Greek aorist into a few groups: Constativ, Ingressive (Inceptive), Culminative, Epistolary, Dramatic, Prophetic, Gnostic. As far as Gal 2:16c is concerned, the usage of ‘Ingressive’ is seen reasonable, which implies that the emphasis is upon the beginning of the action; e.g. Rom 14:9 Χριστός ἀπέθανεν καὶ ἔζησεν = “Christ died and *lived* (again)”. The aorist, however, infers nothing about on-going consequences, as does the perfect. See Stevens’s same work, 217.

¹¹⁰ Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 139. He rightly points out that the texts where ‘faith of Christ’ phrase arises are about how a person is justified or acquitted. However, as Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 181-82 points out, unfortunately Dunn makes no mention that two dimensions of salvation work at the same time: it happens not only on the subjective side, but also on the objective side through or because of the death of Christ.

¹¹¹ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 119, explains that “justification in the first century was not about how someone might establish a relationship with God, but about God’s eschatological definition, both future and present, of who was a member of his people.”

¹¹² It would not be appropriate that Wright, as mentioned earlier, deals with justification as only the dimension of ecclesiology as the level of membership is closely associated with soteriology. Also what Paul refutes here is not who is the member of the people of God, but against those who try to put circumcision into advancing to salvific value.

¹¹³ Cf. Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 127-28, says, for Romans passage which refers to faith of Jesus Christ, that a faithful messenger is needed to complete and accomplish the covenantal task: to deal with the sin of the world, despite the indication that the Jews entrusted with the oracles of God could prove to be unfaithful, and thus that in Romans 3:21-31, God’s solution to the problem is disclosed that his covenant faithfulness would come true through the faithfulness of the true Jew, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth: 3:22 it is God’s righteousness, through the faithfulness of Jesus the Messiah, --- 3:26 he might justify people by Jesus’ faithfulness. [Wright’s translation] If Wright applied his view on faith of Jesus Christ to the passage concerned in Galatians as Romans, he would receive the substance of multivalent justification, in other words, justification could be sufficiently understood as the dimension of soteriology as well as ecclesiology.

theologising in the letters to Galatia and Rome.¹¹⁴ Martyn regards the faithfulness of Christ as “crucial to an understanding not only of Galatians, but also of the whole of Paul’s theology.”¹¹⁵ The greatest strength of the exegesis expressed as the faith of Jesus Christ is to see the expression πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ as a shorthand reference to Christ’s action.¹¹⁶ Of course, it must be kept in mind that “the implied agent of ‘justification’ is God.”¹¹⁷

If such phrase were to be translated into ‘faith in Jesus’, it would be impossible to avoid the danger of unnecessary misunderstanding that admittance to the believing community could be occasioned by human confession of faith in Jesus. For the expression ‘faith in Jesus’ gives the impression of a self initiated response to God and thereby placing humankind as the locus of the subject. Consequently, this phrase seems to demand a more repeated action from human beings.¹¹⁸

Accordingly, Jesus’ faith of 2:16c suggests strongly that this passage is associated with Paul’s soteriology and thereby Wright’s insistence to see justification from the perspective of ecclesiology would totally fail to gain credence. As illustrated above, justification language is semantically multivalent and thus seems to convey ‘how one can reach the level of salvation’ as well as, ‘what to do in order to maintain the state of salvation’ alike, or (in Sanders’ terms); ‘getting

¹¹⁴ W.A. Meeks, *The Origins of Christian Morality: The First Two Centuries* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), 160. Contra, Dunn, *A Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, 138-39 showing his argument that “‘the faithfulness of Christ’ would require a good deal of unpacking, which Paul never provides.”

¹¹⁵ J.Louis Martyn, “On Hearing the Gospel Both in the Silence of the Tradition and in Its Eloquence,” in *From Jesus to John: Essays on Jesus and New Testament Christology in Honour of Marinus De Jonge*, ed. M.C. de Boer, JSNTS 84 (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1993), 142.

¹¹⁶ Hays, *The Faith of Jesus Christ*, xxix.

¹¹⁷ Hays, “The Letter to the Galatians,” 237. Note that Gal 2:16 refers to God as agent of passive voice, ‘being justified’, but Gal 3:8a reveals God as explicit agent, in a way using active voice, ‘justify’.

¹¹⁸ Take note of the following innumerable cases. πιστεueiv, to believe is, almost predominantly, used as present tense, except the use of aorist tense to show the turning point of believing in Jesus as saviour, as the case of 2:16b.

See the instances of present participle: ὁ πιστεύων: John 3:16; 3:18 (2x); 3:36; 5:24; 6:40; 11:26; 12:44; 12:46; 14:12; Acts 13:39; 1 John 5:1; 5:5; 5:10 – τῷ πιστεύοντι: Mk 9:23; Rom 1 :16 ; 4 :5

τὸν πιστεύοντα: Acts 10 :43 – οἱ πιστεύοντες: John 6 :64 ; Act 2:44 – τῶν πιστεύοντων: Mat 18:6; Mk 9:42; John 17:20; Rom 4:11 – τοῖς πιστεύουσιν: John 1:12; Rom 4:24; 1 Cor 14:22 (2x); Gal 3:22; 1 Th 1:7; 2:10; 2:13; 1 Pe 2:7; 1 John 5:13 – τοὺς πιστεύοντας: Acts 22 :19 ; Rom 3 :22 ; 1 Co 1:21; Eph 1:19 –

Cf. See the instances of aorist participle: οἱ πιστεύσαντες: John 7 :39 – τῶν πιστευσάντων: Acts 4:32 – τοῖς πιστεύσασιν: Mk 16 :17 ; 2 Th 1:10 – τοὺς πιστεύσαντας: Jude 1:5

in’ and ‘staying in’. To my knowledge, the issue relating to, ‘who is the member of the people of God’ in Wright’s terms seems to parallel Sanders’ ‘staying in’ term.¹¹⁹ Yet, Wright totally excludes the possibility that, since faith is the ‘God-given badge of membership’, it could be a qualification, supplied from the human side, either for getting into God’s family or for *staying there once in*.¹²⁰

Seyoon Kim expounds, in the light of Rom 3:21-31, that justification is solely *by God’s grace* and solely *through man’s faith* apart from works of the law.¹²¹ Despite his right approach in dividing justification into two aspects, he treats all of the process as if it is attributable to faith in Jesus Christ. As has been consistently argued, the former linked with the faith of Jesus Christ, and the latter with faith in Jesus Christ. Paul sums this up with a statement in Eph 2:8: τῇ γὰρ χάριτί ἐστε σεσωσμένοι διὰ πίστεως.

Morna Hooker contends that Paul’s use of the πίστις Χριστοῦ formula must be understood in light of his ‘interchange’ soteriology: “Paul presents redemption in Christ as a radical restructuring of human nature: it is in effect a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). Christ became what we are in order that we might become what he is.”¹²² Consequently, πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ should be understood as “a concentric expression, which begins, always, from the faith of Christ himself, but which includes, necessarily, the answering faith of believers, who claim that faith as their own.”¹²³ She seems to think the significances of both, the faith of Jesus and faith in Jesus, are included in the phrase at issue. Her comprehensive assertion, however, would lose its force when it comes to the technical term referring to ‘faith in Jesus Christ.’¹²⁴

¹¹⁹ Wright, *What Saint Paul Really Said*, 113-33. Wright deals with ‘who is the member of the community’ independently of ‘what to do in order to maintain salvation.’ However, the former focuses on insiders who set apart from outsiders, while the latter on the role of insiders. Therefore, it would be proper to tell that the two are in the indispensable relation.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 160. [emphasis added] I think that if Wright differentiated between Jesus’ faith and Christian faith, the question would be sorted out without difficulty, so to speak, the former has a determinative impact on ‘getting in the community’ while the latter on ‘staying in.’

¹²¹ Kim, *The Origin of Paul’s Gospel*, 297, 299. He defines, on the basis of Rom 10:6-13, faith as essentially a response to the preached word, that is acceptance of the message of salvation.[emphasis added].

¹²² M. D. Hooker, “ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΧΡΙΣΤΟΥ,” *NTS* 35(1989): 321 -42, cited in 338.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, 341.

¹²⁴ See for the Greek expression pointing to ‘faith in Jesus Christ’, footnote 16 and 24.

In the πίστις Χριστοῦ construction, it would be correct to rule out the human element, as we find the Greek phrases which refer to human faith. Martyn explains that, in order for Paul to articulate the issue of source, he coined δικαιοθῆναι ἐκ, “to be rectified by” (of 2:16c), which is not supported by the familiar LXX, δικαιοθῆναι ἐν or ἄπο. The central clause of Gal 2:16 is read as “... in order that the source of our rectification might be the faith of Christ and not observance of the Law.”¹²⁵ God’s act in Christ’s faith is our rectification. Thus, we have placed our trust in Christ, in order that the source of our rectification should be what God purposed it to be; Christ’s faith.¹²⁶ God has set things right without laying down a prior condition of any sort:

God’s rectifying act, that is to say, is no more God’s response to human faith in Christ than it is God’s response to human observance of the Law. God’s rectification is not God’s response at all. It is the first move; it is God’s initiative, carried out by him in Christ’s faithful death.¹²⁷

Hence, Martyn points out that our absence of understanding concerning Paul’s Christ’s faith would lead to the inevitable result that his profound grasp of the relationship between faith in Christ and God’s rectification should also disappear, to be rediscovered only from time to time.¹²⁸ It is clear that Paul understands the ‘justification’ of believers to be dependent upon the death and resurrection of Christ, because Jesus himself was justified by God and acknowledged as righteous.¹²⁹ In accordance with Jesus’ faith

¹²⁵ Martyn, *Galatians*, 251 n.125, additionally, poses other basis for Paul’s creation of δικαιοθῆναι ἐκ: combining Paul’s equating ‘to be rectified’ with ‘to be made alive’ (Gal 3:21), and his fascination with Hab 2:4, he came to coin the expression *dikaiothenai ek*. To my knowledge, it would be plausible to identify ‘to be justified’ in 2:16a with ‘for the life to be carried out.’ However, it would be tenable to see that since ‘to be justified’ here is related to the faith of Jesus Christ, a determinative factor by which salvation is settled, it would be difficult to regard it as a sustaining factor referring to ‘to be made alive’.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 252.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 271.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 276 n. 182. He dismisses the case that *Pistis Christou* is read as ‘faith in Christ,’ because the conjunction ‘in order that’ falsely assumes a causative role, as though it had been Paul’s intention to say, ‘We have believed in order to be *thereby* rectified, God’s act of rectification, being God’s response to our deed of faith’, and its rendering goes beyond Paul’s understanding of the primacy of God’s rectifying act in Christ’s faith and his consequent understanding of the genesis of our faith is precluded.

¹²⁹ M.D. Hooker, “Interchange and Atonement,” *BJRL* 60 (1978): 468, 479. To my knowledge, 1 Tim 3:16 seems to reflect the vindication of Jesus Christ.

clarifying the role of Jesus in salvation,¹³⁰ Martyn contrasts, not so much between two human alternatives (Law observance or faith in Christ),¹³¹ as between a divine act (Christ's faithful death) and a human act (observance of the Law).¹³²

In shedding light on 2:16a, 16b, and 16c as a whole, Paul intends, not only to make a distinction between the 'works of the law' and the 'faith of Christ', but also to compare 'faith in Christ' with the 'faith of Christ'. 2:16a finds the law is worked out after presenting Jesus' faith as a premise, whereas 2:16bc finds human faith is demanded after presenting Jesus' faith as a presupposition. Martyn seems to miss the latter, that is to say, comparing 'faith in Christ' with the 'faith of Christ'. For Paul, just as the objective means of justification is Christ's death on the cross, the subjective means of appropriating justification (or right standing with God) is faith in the faithfulness of Christ.¹³³

Consequently, the flow of thought in this verse is that we are justified first by the faithful action of Jesus Christ in undergoing the cross (presumably) and then by our response to, our faith in, that faithful action.¹³⁴ That is to say, the justification of humanity cannot take place upon the grounds of an immediate relationship between the believer and God, even if it were a relationship of complete knowledge, assent, confidence or acceptance; for the means of justification is *Jesus Christ* himself, in his relationship to God and to humankind.¹³⁵ For a long time within New Testament scholarship, faith *in* Jesus has been considered to be incompatible with the faith *of* Jesus. Thompson suggests the possibility of there being a continuity between the faith *of* Jesus and faith *in* Jesus, in the sense that Jesus is portrayed as the one who trusted God in his darkest hours.¹³⁶

¹³⁰ L.E. Keck, "Jesus in Romans," *JBL* 108 (1989): 454.

¹³¹ G. S. Duncan, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians*, MNTC (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1934), 65. He sees the contrast between two conceivable modes of justification: faith and what Paul succinctly calls 'works of law'.

¹³² Martyn, *Galatians*, 271.

¹³³ Witherington, *Grace in Galatia*, 181-82. He considers objective means of justification to be on the Godward side of things, not on the side of the human response.

¹³⁴ J.A. Ziesler, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, ed. Ivor H. Jones, Epworth Commentaries (London: Epworth Press, 1992), 24.

¹³⁵ M. Barth, "The Faith of the Messiah," *HeyJ* 10 (1969): 366.

¹³⁶ Marianne M. Thompson, "Jesus and His God," in *The Cambridge Companion to Jesus*, ed. Markus Bockmuehl (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 52.

Furthermore, she points to the book of Hebrews, which successfully contains not only descriptions of the faith and obedience of Jesus, but also the reverence and worship of Jesus without any apparent conflict between them. She consequently concludes that Jesus' conviction or faith that through himself God's sovereign rule and judgment were being proclaimed and realized is vindicated by God.¹³⁷ That is to say, there seems to be little or no conflict between the two Christological perspectives which, on the one hand describes in anthropological terms (as in terms of a human response to God) Jesus as having faith *in* God, while on the other presenting Jesus as God's messiah who encompasses salvation, theologically (as in terms of God's salvific initiatives).¹³⁸

C. Conclusion

Paul the Apostle uses intentionally the πίστις Χριστοῦ construction as the sign which marks the soteriological schema of Christianity from the existing Jewish pattern of religion, and more specifically, the keynote for setting apart from many Greek expressions indicating 'faith *in* Jesus Christ.' In Galatians, Paul strives to drive home divine initiative by addressing 'faith in Jesus Christ' on the basis of Jesus' faith and in turn he intends to move away from Jewish theocentric theologisation to establishing his Christological soteriology, such as through a substitution of a specific terminology 'the grace of God' for 'the faith of Jesus Christ,' whose implied agent is God. It would be better to argue that one who entered into the religious community through the faith of Jesus Christ continues to believe in Jesus Christ and thereby comes to fulfill what the law requires.

With multivalent justification in mind, Galatians sees its concept as membership language referring to the means by which one is saved, on the one hand, and as a way of life indicating in what way one should live a life after acquisition of salvation, on the other. In adapting these implications to the context concerned, we reach a conclusion that Paul's use of the *Pistis Christou* construction was a theological work of indicating that an anthropological reading (called,

¹³⁷ Ibid., 54.

¹³⁸ G. Wallis, *The Faith of Jesus Christ in Early Christian Traditions*, ed. Margaret E. Thrall, SNTSMS 84 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 46.

‘faith *in* Jesus Christ’) is not possible without it first being based upon the Christological foundation of the ‘faith *of* Jesus Christ’.

See more

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