

# The Faithfulness of Jesus Christ in Romans and Galatians

## (with special reference to Romans 1:17 & 3:22)

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### § 1. Preamble

I have chosen to present here the key set of arguments concerning the relevant data in Romans for this debate.<sup>1</sup> Discussion of the relevant arguments and data in Galatians as well would be unmanageably extensive.<sup>2</sup> My initial suggestion is

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<sup>1</sup> The following is drawn, in the main, from several chapters in my forthcoming study *The Deliverance of God: an apocalyptic rereading of Justification in Paul* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, forthcoming 2008)—hereafter *DOG*. Cf. esp. *DOG*, chs. 11, 15, and 16.

<sup>2</sup> My current treatment of Galatians—*DOG*, ch. 20—which concentrates on the faith questions, is 52,000 words long, and would take, I estimate, around four hours to present. Romans 10 also ought to receive a detailed independent treatment; cf. *DOG*, ch. 19; and Rom. 3:25 and 26 some discussion; cf. *DOG*, chs. 16, § 2.1, and 17, § 5, respectively. Longenecker’s case vis-à-vis Rom. 3:25 remains compelling, in my view, despite Matlock’s objections; the latter are helpful but not decisive: cf. Bruce W. Longenecker, “Pistis in Rom 3.25: Neglected Evidence for the Faithfulness of Christ,” *New Testament Studies* 39 (1993): 478-80; R. Barry Matlock, “Πίστις in

that the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate in Romans must be recontextualized before it can be resolved.<sup>3</sup> The key issues are inaugurated by 1:17.

## § 2. Romans 1:17a & 3:22

In 1:17a Paul states that δικαιοσύνη [γὰρ] θεοῦ [ἐν αὐτῷ] ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν κ.τ.λ. The meaning of the series ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν has greatly puzzled interpreters.<sup>4</sup> However, this well-known difficulty unfolds into a less well-known problem in 3:21-22 (which of course includes an important πίστις Χριστοῦ genitive); consequently, two enigmatic textual features turn out

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Galatians 3:26: Neglected Evidence for 'Faith in Christ,'" *New Testament Studies* 49 (2003): 433-39.

And Keck's comments on Rom. 3:26 are pertinent: cf. Leander Keck, "Jesus in Romans," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 443-6.

<sup>3</sup> So I am treating the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate in a rather oblique way, but my different angle of approach is arguably more sensitive to the actual shape of the data (and certainly as far as Romans 1–4 is concerned). Cf. also in this relation the suggestion of (i.a.) Hays, that progress in the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate can be made only as the larger shape of Paul's argument is simultaneously introduced and assessed: cf. Richard B. Hays, "ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and Pauline Christology: What Is at Stake?," in *Pauline Theology. Volume IV: Looking Back, Pressing On*, ed. David M. Hay, and E. Elizabeth Johnson (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars, 1997), 38-39; *The Faith of Jesus Christ* (2<sup>nd</sup> edn; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2002), xxiv.

<sup>4</sup> Most recently, see the suggestions of Charles Quarles, "From Faith to Faith: A Fresh Examination of the Prepositional Series in Romans 1:17," *Novum Testamentum* 45 (2003): 1-21; and John W. Taylor, "From Faith to Faith: Romans 1.17 in the Light of Greek Idiom," *New Testament Studies* 50 (2004): 337-48. Moo notes the difficulties; cf. *The Epistle to the Romans* (NICNT; Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1996), 76.

on closer examination to denote precisely the same problematic argumentative dynamic, with which the meaning of πίστις Χριστοῦ is intimately connected—instrumentality within divine disclosure.

We will address the situation in 1:17 in more detail first (relying principally on an argument I first made in 1992 that still seems valid) and then turn to consider 3:22.<sup>5</sup> Four points in Romans 1:17 need to be noted and considered initially.

- (i) Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted by Paul immediately after the problematic prepositional series in v. 17b and concludes the same sentence: δικαιοσύνη γὰρ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν καθὼς γέγραπται ὁ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται. In view of this, it is difficult to avoid the suggestion that Paul has quoted Habakkuk 2:4—his first explicitly cited text in Romans—to resume, define, and affirm his use of its central phrase in the same sentence's preceding clause. Moreover, these two textual units must now be understood in parallel. It is implausible to supply a reading for ἐκ πίστεως in the prepositional series in 1:17a that Habakkuk 2:4 cannot accommodate in 1:17b. (This observation ultimately eliminates the elegant

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<sup>5</sup> If this argument is correct, then it immediately falsifies a great deal of the recent discussion (i.e., Quarles, Taylor et al.). To my knowledge, no cogent rejoinders or refutations have yet been made to it. See my Douglas A Campbell, "The Meaning of ΠΙΣΤΙΣ and ΝΟΜΟΣ in Paul: A Linguistic and Structural Investigation," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 111 (1992). 85-97; *idem*, Douglas A Campbell, "Rom. 1:17 - a *Crux Interpretum* for the πίστις Χριστοῦ Dispute," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 113 (1994). 265-85.

theocentric construal of the series; see more in this relation just below.)

- (ii) A consideration of the broader distribution of these two datums in Paul's letters suggests strongly that the citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17b does underlie Paul's use of the phrase ἐκ πίστεως in the series in Romans 1:17a, as well as, by direct implication, its uses everywhere else. Paul uses this phrase frequently in Romans and Galatians, where it occurs twenty-one times,<sup>6</sup> *but nowhere else* in his corpus. And so this distribution matches perfectly his quotation of Habakkuk 2:4, which he quotes only in Romans and Galatians. (Those two letters are also notably rich in scriptural quotations, and especially texts including πιστ- terminology.) This correlation is far too marked to be mere coincidence.

Hence, both localized and comparative evidence strongly support the interpretative claim that the meaning of the prepositional phrase ἐκ πίστεως and the citation of Habakkuk 2:4 are correlated.

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<sup>6</sup> Including the citations of Hab. 2:4 in this total. More specifically, it occurs in Romans twelve times, Galatians nine times, and elsewhere in the New Testament only in Heb. 10:37-38, which cites Hab. 2:3-4, and James 2:24. The first study to notice this strange set of correlations was, to my knowledge, Bruno Corsani, "'Ἐκ Πίστεως in the Letters of Paul," in *The New Testament Age: Essays in Honor of Bo Reicke*, ed. W. C. Weinrich (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), 87-93.

(iii) In many passages Paul tends to juxtapose πιστ- terminology with slogans that speak of “works of law” and “doing” (ποιεῖν/ἔργων νόμου). So, for example, Galatians 2:16b states—rather famously—ἡμεῖς εἰς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν ἐπιστεύσαμεν ἵνα δικαιωθῶμεν ἐκ πίστεως Χριστοῦ καὶ οὐχ ἐξ ἔργων νόμου. But Paul seems to employ a stylistic variation in some of these texts, using διὰ instead of ἐκ πίστεως. As Galatians 2:16a indicates, in a clause immediately preceding the statement just noted, οὐ δικαιούται ἄνθρωπος ἐξ ἔργων νόμου ἐὰν μὴ διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ (κ.τ.λ.). And it is really impossible to detect a significant shift in meaning between the prepositional variations used in these passages;<sup>7</sup> they seem mere stylistic flourishes supplied to avoid needless repetition, although as such they also supply important information about the function of ἐκ in the dominant phrase.<sup>8</sup> Paul’s parallel use of διὰ in the genitive indicates that ἐκ is functioning *instrumentally*; the programmatic phrase ἐκ πίστεως therefore means “through ...” or “by means of

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<sup>7</sup> Which is also to suggest that a shift would have to be demonstrated. Stowers has made the most perceptive and plausible such attempt in relation to Rom. 3:30, but no one has attempted this in relation to Gal. 2:16 (i.e., in terms of this phrase alone), which undermines the case in Romans. And Stowers’s case has other problems; Stanley K Stowers, “ἐκ πίστεως and διὰ τῆς πίστεως in Romans 3.30,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 108 (1989): 665-74.

<sup>8</sup> The parallelism and stylistic variation is apparent compactly and immediately in Rom. 3:30-31 and Gal. 2:16, but is also apparent, in a slightly more diffuse way, in Rom. 3:21-26; 4:13-16; (arguably) 5:1-2; Gal. 3:7-14; and 3:21-26.

πίστις” (a meaning that is of course quite compatible with a reading of Hab. 2:4).<sup>9</sup>

(iv) This observation now opens up the relevant data still further. Other instrumental phrases can be seen functioning in further parallels to the statistically dominant phrase ἐκ πίστεως in certain passages—principally dative prepositions and phrases (and this reinforces our preceding judgment concerning the phrase’s instrumental meaning).<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the actual passages under discussion can be slightly broadened. Philippians 3:9 now seems relevant, although it does not use the key phrase from Habakkuk 2:4, but this is probably because that letter cites no Jewish Scripture overtly, since its pagan audience

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<sup>9</sup> Cf. BDAG, mngs 3 and 4, 224-25 (here, in due course, 4, i.e., agency); and cf. esp., in Paul, Rom. 1:8; 2:16; 7:25; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 1:1; 3:19; cf. also Col. 1:16, 20; 3:17. Meaning 1—“through”—looks unlikely at this point as well, partly on the grounds of parallels in context (esp. the dative constructions; see just below), and partly on grounds of contradiction. If an essentially spatial notion of passing “through” is intended, then faith functions *simultaneously* as both a way-station and a goal on that journey—an obvious contradiction. Paul is not asserting with these series the theological equivalent of the statement, “I passed through Durham on the way to Durham.” For the overlap with ἐκ cf. BDAG, mngs 3d-f, 296-97—to denote effective cause, so “by, because of” (2 Cor. 7:9), reason, so “by reason of, as a result of, because of” (Rom. 3:20, 30; 4:2; 11:6; 12:18 [?]; 2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 5, 24), or means in relation to a definite purpose, so “with, by means of” (Lk 16:9).

<sup>10</sup> See, e.g., Rom. 3:28; 5:2 (perhaps extending to vv. 9-11); possibly Gal. 3:11 and 14 in context; arguably 3:26; and Phil. 3:9b.

would not have recognized this.<sup>11</sup> However, the most important correlation for our present purposes is the powerful linkage that is established between Romans 1:17 and 3:21-22. These can now be recognized as sibling texts (if not as twins).

Both texts deploy δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ in the position of subject, and then construct the predicate from a verb of revelation—ἀποκαλύπτω in 1:17 and φανερωῶ in 3:21. (These verbs overlap considerably in semantic terms as well.<sup>12</sup>) This sentence is then expanded with the addition of what we can now recognize as identical prepositional phrases in semantic terms—ἐκ πίστεως in 1:17a (echoed by 3:26) and διὰ πίστεως in 3:22 (and probably also in v. 25.) The characteristic purposive εἰς construction using πιστ- terms is also present in both texts (cf. 3:22). And the attestation of the Scriptures features prominently in both texts as well; note the actual citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in 1:17b, and the claim in 3:21 that the disclosure of δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is witnessed to by the Law and the Prophets. Indeed, this expansion is telling. As early as Romans 1:2—before the formalities of the address have even been completed—Paul signals the importance of the promissory witness of “the prophets in the holy scriptures,” a motif resumed explicitly by 3:21 and concretely attested by 1:17, which cites his most important prophetic text. These

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<sup>11</sup> Eph. 2:8-10 can also now be seen to resonate with these texts as well, along with 3:12 and 17.

<sup>12</sup> See further in *DOG*, part four, chs. fifteen through seventeen.

are five points of explicit overlap developed in the main in terms of semantic identity. Clearly, then, the interpretation of Romans 1:17 (presumably alongside v. 16) and 3:21-22 (presumably extending through v. 26) belong together. They should be interpreted in parallel. But in reaching this judgment, we have also displaced the textual conundrum with which we began.

The meaning of the series ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν in Romans 1:17 is not a tightly localized or marginal issue; it runs to the heart of what Paul is trying to say in both these important sub-sections in Romans. He is speaking here, repeatedly, of some revelation or disclosure of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ within which πίστις functions instrumentally: the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is revealed *by means of* this πίστις—an instrumental construction in 3:22 that is a πίστις Χριστοῦ genitive.

The conventional reading of Romans 1–4 and its associated soteriology of Justification tend to attribute “faith” monolithically to the Christian; it is of course the act by which non-Christians grasp salvation, and as such, it occupies a critical role in the unfolding theory. The conventional reading is consequently happy to emphasize it at every possible turn textually, and will certainly need to find Paul speaking of it plainly at least once. Presumably, the reading has no difficulty attributing fidelity to God in some sense as well, if that is necessary. The generous provision of a gospel of salvation sola fides can be regarded as an act of loving fidelity to Israel (although the retributive character of God remains more fundamental; the fidelity of God is only operative relative to the fulfillment



of certain conditions). Conventional readers therefore expect Paul to speak in his thesis paragraphs in Romans of salvation *sola fides*—in terms of the saving faith of the Christian.<sup>13</sup> He might also speak in this relation of divine fidelity, although this is not so necessary.<sup>14</sup> But what the conventional reading *cannot* explain is a “faith” that *discloses* or *reveals* the “righteousness of God” in *instrumental terms* (however we construe the meaning of this last important genitive phrase).

“Faith” simply does not function as the means by which something moves from a position of invisibility to one of visibility, from the unknown to the known, and to affirm that it does is to make a basic semantic error—to assert something unmeaningful or ungrammatical.<sup>15</sup> “Faith” tends to affirm something *already*

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<sup>13</sup> Moo asserts this—e.g., *Romans*, 218, 224.

<sup>14</sup> This is not infrequently suggested as the meaning of ἐκ πίστεως in Rom. 1:17a, and rather less frequently suggested in relation to διὰ [τῆς] πίστεως in 3:25; it is, however, an impossible reading of πίστις in 3:22 and 26. It is also impossible in 1:17a if an intertextual link is affirmed here (as it really must be). This reading of 3:25 is discussed in more detail in *DOG*, ch. 16.

<sup>15</sup> That is, unless it is being used in the sense of “proof.” This was a not uncommon usage in Paul’s day, and is Philo’s most common use. But it is difficult if not impossible to argue that in Romans’ thesis paragraphs πίστις generally means “proof.” David Hay has attempted this case but was forced to combine two distinguishable meanings of πίστις into one signifier! (He suggested that πίστις meant “ground for faith.”): David M. Hay, “*Pistis* as Ground for Faith in Hellenized Judaism and Paul,” *JBL* 18 (1989). 461-76. The case has been made more generally by James L. Kinneavy, *The Greek Rhetorical Origins of Christian Faith* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 1987). In fact, Paul tends to use ἔνδειξις when he wants to speak of a “proof.” More importantly, it is impossibly awkward to construe Hab. 2:4 in these terms—the text that sources these broader instances in Paul.

*known* as true, which is of course the way that it functions in Justification theory, in response to Christian preaching and the gospel. The gospel, when preached, makes God's saving act in Christ known. And "faith" then responds to that disclosure as an act of *affirmation*, not the act of *disclosure itself*.<sup>16</sup> Hence, to press it into the role of disclosure is simply to commit a semantic mistake; "faith" does not *mean* this, and so these texts, which speak explicitly and unavoidably of disclosure, cannot be read in this way. *Paul has to be talking about something else in these texts when he uses this phrase*.<sup>17</sup> (This is of course not to exclude Christian faith from Paul's thinking more broadly; it is only to suggest that that is not what Paul is trying to articulate here. Paul's purposive εἰς constructions in 1:16b, 17a and 3:22 clearly denote Christian faith in some sense, presumably as the goal or end of this process of disclosure.)

An appeal could perhaps be made at this point to the divine fidelity: God's faithfulness could function in some sense as an instrument of the disclosure of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ. This is perhaps a little awkward

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<sup>16</sup> So, for example, an act of belief cannot disclose to me what is hidden inside a box. I can have beliefs about what is hidden, but these may be right or wrong; they will not *reveal* what is hidden, which can only be done by opening the box and scrutinizing what is inside (or some such), at which point I might then find my beliefs confirmed or disconfirmed.

<sup>17</sup> Moo is especially indicative: "Paul highlights [in 3:22a, resuming a "key theme" from 1:17] faith as the means by which God's justifying work becomes applicable to individuals" (*Romans*, 224). Of course, Paul doesn't actually *say* this. Verse 22 does not contain the verb δικαίωω, the motif of "applicability," or an individual (except arguably as an implication of "faith in Christ"; the second reference to faith is plural—πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας). The apostle speaks of faith as the "means by which" God's righteousness is disclosed—rather a different thing.

argumentatively and theologically, if not tautologous—the righteousness of God is being disclosed through the fidelity of God<sup>18</sup>—but it does not seem *semantically* impossible. However, this appeal is excluded by the tight correlation that we have already noted between the programmatic phrase ἐκ πίστεως and the text of Habakkuk 2:4. Neither this text nor most of the other instances of the key phrase ἐκ πίστεως in Romans and Galatians can be read coherently in terms of God’s faithfulness. (Paul’s famous Christ genitives are especially problematic in this regard; see esp. Rom. 3:22, 26; Gal. 2:16; 3:22, 26; Phil. 3:9.) Again, this is not to exclude the notion of God’s faithfulness from either Romans or Paul’s thinking as a whole; clearly, it has a role to play there (see esp. Rom. 3:3). However, it is to point out that *that theme cannot be signified by these particular phrases and their associated texts!*

But our problems here are eliminated immediately, not to mention gracefully, if the meaning of πίστις in these statements is related directly to Christ. Such a reading completes the exact sense of these Pauline statements nicely: “the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is disclosed or revealed by means of the πίστις of Jesus Christ.” And various further areas of evidence progressively corroborate this initial decision.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Presumably, the Jewish Kabbalistic tradition would not have a difficulty at this point.

<sup>19</sup> This reading also accounts for the perfect tense of the verbs in 3:21-22 (one of which is elided) better than the conventional alternative, although I do not regard this as a decisive contention. It could be argued in reliance on Galatians 3 that the possibility of “faith” arrived decisively with Christ and has an ongoing effect. This is not in my view a very satisfactory reading of Galatians 3, but it will serve to delay any decisive advantage being generated by Paul’s use of the perfect tense in Romans 3:21-22.

We should remind ourselves at this point of certain lexicographical distinctions—that πίστις can signify, amongst other notions, “belief,” “trust,” and “faithfulness,” all of which are related but subtly different actions. Literature contemporary to Paul is replete with these distinctions (not to mention with shifts between them), and it is worth noting in particular that both Josephus and the LXX attest repeatedly to the notion of πίστις as “fidelity.”

We should also recall that Paul frequently refers to a story of Christ’s passion metonymically—that is to say, by mentioning only one element within it that serves to evoke the entire narrative, a claim that requires slightly longer discussion because it is so often misunderstood.

It is clear that Paul knows and uses a passion narrative.<sup>20</sup> He mentions the night of Jesus’ last supper, establishment of the Eucharist, and betrayal, when he

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The argument in terms of redundancy ought to be abandoned completely (i.e., that there is something problematic about the redundant reading that advocates of an objective construal produce). An emphatic redundancy emphasizing “all” also speaks to the possible objection that “faith” ought not to function as both a means and an end, as the prepositional series ἐκ... εἰς... might suggest. The accusative construction—it might be replied—denotes extension rather than purpose, and is included for rhetorical emphasis: “righteousness has been disclosed by means of faith, extending to *all* who have such faith.” A counterobjection to this defence is conceivable—namely, that purposive constructions are prominent in the context of 3:22, and constructions of mere reference or extension absent (although cf. παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι in 1:16b). However, this evidence seems too fragile to be emphasized strongly (although it does seem worth noting).

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*; and Douglas A. Campbell, “The Story of Jesus in Romans and Galatians,” in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul: A Critical Assessment*, ed. B. W. Longenecker (Louisville, Kent: Westminster John Knox, 2002), 97-124, repr. in Campbell, *The Quest for Paul’s Gospel. A Suggested Strategy* (London: T&T Clark International, 2005), 69-94.

was “handed over” to his enemies. Paul also knows that Jesus submitted to the humiliation of an execution by crucifixion, endured that form of death, shed his blood, and died, the shedding of his blood serving both to atone for sin(s) in some sense and to fulfill the Scriptures. Jesus was then buried and, “on the third day,” raised and enthroned, receiving at that point the acclamation of lordship.<sup>21</sup> Paul can of course emphasize one or another broad trajectory within this story as immediate circumstances demand. So he can allude at times to Jesus’ suffering and atoning death, and at other times to Christ’s resurrection and glorification—a broadly downward and/or upward movement. (The extent to which both of these narrative trajectories are in play in these particular texts is an important question that need not occupy us at the moment; it will be addressed shortly.)

But more often than not, Paul alludes to this story metonymically rather than by way of longer syntactical units and fuller descriptions, and doubtless because his early Christian audiences already knew it fairly well. So a single motif can denote the presence of the narrative—or of one of its broad trajectories—within the apostle’s developing arguments: “obedience,” “blood,” “death,” “cross/crucifixion,” and so on. It is important to emphasize that none of these motifs are therefore functioning with strict literalness (although they may be assuming some contingent emphasis, but that is not the same thing). No one seriously suggests that when Paul refers to the blood of Christ he is referring *only* to the important oxygen-carrying liquid that ran in Christ’s veins and then spilled out to a degree during his suffering and execution, thereby ignoring the

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<sup>21</sup> This is a truncated account of the story, which could be extended in each direction. However, it will suffice for the present discussion.

rest of Christ himself and his actions. Similarly, any reference to Christ's death by Paul involves far more than a reference to the actual moment at which Christ expired. So the claim that the phrase "the fidelity of Christ" could denote Jesus' entire passion more broadly is quite consistent with Paul's usual practice as that is attested elsewhere.

Indeed, the notion of fidelity fits smoothly into the downward martyrological trajectory in the story of Jesus' passion. It is largely self-evident that fidelity is an ingredient within any essentially martyrological story. Martyrs faithfully endure suffering and death (if not a horrible execution); the story of martyrdom thus encodes its heroes with the quality of fidelity, even if only implicitly, in view of their endurance and steadfastness within those unfolding stories.<sup>22</sup> But numerous martyrologies mention fidelity explicitly as well (cf. 4 Macc. 15:24; 16:22; 17:2).<sup>23</sup> So it seems entirely appropriate in terms of Paul's background to suggest that his account of Jesus' death—an essentially martyrological story—could include the element of faithfulness. Indeed, an examination of the lexical and narrative background would lead us almost to expect this narrative feature.

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<sup>22</sup> This quality is discernible in both militantly violent and pacifist narratives of martyrdom: cf. Daniel; Wisdom of Solomon; 2 Maccabees 6 and 7; 3 and 4 Maccabees; but pagan and Christian martyrologies make this point as well: cf. H. A. Musurillo, ed., *The Acts of the Pagan Martyrs* (Oxford: Acta Alexandrinorum, 1954); and H. A. Musurillo, ed., *The Acts of the Christian Martyrs* (Oxford: Acta Alexandrinorum, 1972).

<sup>23</sup> Cf. also 1 Macc. 2:52 (the cognate adjective), 59 (cognate verb); 2 Macc. 1:2 (adjective); and 4 Macc. 7:19, 21 (verbs).

But it is worth noting further that overlaps with other similar and closely related narrative elements are frequently detectable in these texts as well—overlaps of faithfulness with patience, endurance, obedience, submission, trust, and so on. So it is clear that martyrs must in fact possess a marvelous steadfastness *of mind*. Those martyred for the sake of God need to believe certain things about God unshakably, trusting in him over time, under duress, in an unwavering fashion—usually for their resurrection—and thereby eliding into faithfulness. Martyrs, in short, run the full semantic gamut of πίστις: they believe, they trust, and they are faithful to the point of death.<sup>24</sup>

It seems especially significant, then, that ὑπακοή is used as a strategic summary of Christ's saving activity as the second Adam in Romans 5:19, where it functions opposite the first Adam's παρακοή. The context then develops these paradigmatic actions in terms of realizations of life and death (5:12-21). The cognate adjective ὑπηκοός is used in an identical position in Philippians 2:5-11 (see v. 8)—one of Paul's most explicit and profound accounts of the Christ event. In this more extended narrative Paul speaks of Christ humbling himself to death—death on a cross! And this is, moreover, a way of thinking that Paul urges on the Philippians—a mentality that “does not take advantage” but “empties” and “humbles” itself, ultimately becoming “submissive” to a humiliating execution (and so, ultimately, being glorified). Hence, it is apparent that Paul could denote Jesus' passion narrative metonymically by referring to one of the

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<sup>24</sup> And this of course raises the possibility that πίστις Χριστοῦ could denote the “belief” (i.e., conviction) or “trust” rather than the “faithfulness” of Christ and/or be developed argumentatively in such terms if the rhetorical need required.

heroic personal attributes evident in that story—here obedience or submission (and on occasion several of the other elements in that underlying story are made explicit by these texts as well), hoping for the extension of that story into the lives of his converts: i.e., “through fidelity to fidelity.”

Finally, we should note that Paul even deploys the πιστ- and the ὑπακου- word groups together at times in what seem to be semantic overlaps, and there are good reasons for this in terms of Paul’s social context. Inferiors—for example, clients—should be obedient in the fulfillment of their assigned tasks and duties. But this could be spoken of equally accurately as a faithful or trustworthy discharge of their duties. In this setting, *these qualities are largely interchangeable*; obedient clients *are* faithful, trustworthy, and even submissive clients, and vice versa. This consequently suggests that for Paul to speak of the ὑπακοή of Christ might be equivalent semantically to speaking of the πίστις of Christ, given certain settings for those statements. The question would be raised why Paul speaks of Christ’s endurance in terms of πιστ- words in some texts and in terms of ὑπακου- words in others, but there is a plausible explanation for this, which we will address shortly. Perhaps most indicative that this overlap is in fact present in Paul’s texts is his interchangeable use of the cognate verbs in Romans 10.<sup>25</sup> The same semantic interchangeability is also possibly evident in Philippians

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<sup>25</sup> Paul speaks of believing in vv. 9, 10, 11, and 14 (2x) (in close relation to “confessing” and “calling”). A sequence of calling, believing, hearing, preaching, and sending or proclaiming is then enumerated from v. 14 onward, followed by the statement ἀλλ’ οὐ πάντες ὑπήκουσαν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ. And Paul then immediately quotes Isaiah 53:1, as if in explanation of the preceding claim: Κύριε, τίς ἐπίστευσεν τῇ ἀκοῇ ἡμῶν. So at two points in this subsection Paul



2:12 and 17, and is definitely apparent in the more disputable evidence of 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10.<sup>26</sup>

In sum, several strands of evidence support the plausibility of our initial christological interpretations of Romans 1:17 and 3:22 in view of their immediate syntactical sense: the readings are lexicographically and grammatically acceptable, and conform to Paul's broader usage. There is, in short, much to be said for them, and—as far as I can tell—little that can be said against them at this

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seems to shift between πιστ- and ὑπακου- language seamlessly. The verb ὑπακούω negates an action in the preceding sequence denoted by πιστεύω. And this negation in terms of ὑπακούω is confirmed by a Septuagintal intertext that uses πιστεύω. The preaching and sending mentioned in vv. 14-15 are not negated but affirmed as taking place, as corroborated by Isa. 52:7; the hearing is taken up by vv. 17-18; and the calling of v. 14a is not resumed by the subsection's argument but seems rooted rather in vv. 12-13 that precede it.

<sup>26</sup> Several more disparate parallelisms are arguably apparent elsewhere as well. In Romans—as we have already seen in ch. 13—Paul speaks repeatedly of the “obedience” of the Roman Christians to the gospel: see especially 6:17; 15:18; and 16:19; 10:2-3 seem to resonate here as well; and 10:16 has just been noted. (Somewhat curiously, although they are described at times as “believers”—1:16[?]; 4:23-24[?]; 6:8[?]; 13:11—and commended for their fidelity—1:5, 8, 12; 5:1[?]; 14:22[?—their belief in the gospel is never explicitly noted as such.) However, when Paul speaks of responding to the gospel in other letters, he often uses πιστ- terminology in the same location—to denote the appropriate human response to it: cf. 1 Cor. 15:1, 2; 2 Cor. 11:4 (receive); Phil. 1:29; 1 Thess. 1:5; cf. also Eph. 1:13 (believe); and Col. 1:5, 23. A similar interchangeability is then at least arguably apparent when Paul links πίστις and ὑπακοή together in Romans 1:5 (and the same phrase occurs in 16:26). The meaning of this genitive relation is disputed, but a martyrological reading that effectively equates them exegetically is clearly possible, and all the considerations that have just been adduced function in support of such an interpretation.

junction.<sup>27</sup> We should also recall that this is hardly a radical interpretative claim to make about Paul—that the death of Christ functions to disclose the purposes of God!

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<sup>27</sup> An additional reason could arguably be added here as well, but it depends on the fulfillment of a large prior task—the determination of the meaning of δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ.

If it can be shown prior to any analysis of these verses that this phrase has a cosmic, eschatological, and “apocalyptic” meaning, then the disclosure of this essentially divine action could hardly be *conditional on a human action*—faith. This would be absurd; it would be to take a divine, worldwide, and singular event and break it up in relation to each individual act of faith. (A theocentric instrumentality seems similarly flawed.) However, I prefer to try to determine the meaning of δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ after the πίστις questions have been settled, using evidence from the latter material to help determine the former. So this additional argument is not available to me at this point. A further but more minor contention will also be noted periodically with respect to the construal of “believers” (cf. Rom. 1:16b, 17a; 3:22; etc.). Things are more difficult in this data for conventional readers than they perhaps suspect.

### Excursus: a Christological reading of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17b

Perhaps an objection might arise at this point. We have already seen that Paul's use of ἐκ πίστεως in Romans 1:17a is correlated tightly with his citation of Habakkuk 2:4 in 1:17b, a text that uses the same phrase. But is the christological explanation sustainable through 1:17b. Can Paul's citation of Habakkuk 2:4 there be oriented christologically? However, once again, it seems that good reasons may be added in support of this suggestion, and that no good reasons stand against it.<sup>28</sup>

We should note first that a christological orientation supplies a perfectly acceptable reading of Romans 1:17: "The δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ is being revealed through it [the gospel] by means of fidelity and for fidelity, as it is written, 'The righteous one, by means of fidelity, will live.'" The righteous one spoken of here is plainly Christ, and this prophetic text, read in this fashion, suggests that by means of his faithfulness to the point of death he will live in the sense of being vindicated and resurrected.<sup>29</sup> So Habakkuk 2:4 now neatly predicts the passion of

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<sup>28</sup> The suggestion is not especially new, but it is not usually linked with the πίστις Χριστοῦ debate. However, Hays certainly made this connection (although he has not pressed it as hard as I do). Earlier advocates of the messianic construal of Hab. 2:4 in Rom. 1:17 include Hanson (etc.): cf. A. T. Hanson, *Studies in Paul's Technique and Theology* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1974), 39-45 (further references in my *Rhetoric of Righteousness in Romans 3:21-26* [Sheffield: JSOT, 1992], 211, n. 1).

<sup>29</sup> A christological reading of Hab. 2:4 automatically settles the earlier debate over whether the phrase ἐκ πίστεως modifies the subject or the verb. Paul could hardly be suggesting here that Jesus is the one who is righteous by faith! However, it seemed most likely in any case that the phrase's function is adverbial. Smith's case is definitive: cf. D. Moody Smith, "Ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται," in *Studies in the History and Text of the New Testament in Honor of Kenneth Willis Clark*, ed. Boyd L. Daniels, and M. Jack Suggs (Salt Lake City, Utah: University of Utah, 1967), 13-25. Smith assembles seven contentions, the combined weight of which is overwhelming: (1) all attested Jewish antecedent texts read the phrase adverbially (cf. MT; LXX

Jesus—his death and resurrection. It is a prophetic attestation to Paul's gospel, and to the disclosure of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ it presupposes. There seem to be no immediate problems with this reading. But what can be said further in its favor?

- (1) The use of a generalized arthrous construction to denote Christ—here employing the adjective δίκαιος—is entirely consistent with Pauline usage elsewhere. Merely in Romans itself, Paul seems to refer to Christ frequently in this way: see, for example, ὁ υἱός (1:3, 4, 9; 5:10; 8:3, 29, 32) ὁ Χριστός (9:3, 5; 14:18; 15:3, 7, 19; cf. 16:16) ὁ εἷς (5:15, 17, 18, 19), and probably also<sup>30</sup> ὁ ἀποθανών (6:7; 8:34).<sup>31</sup>

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[in both main variants]; Targum Jonathan; 1QpHab; cf. also Heb. 10:38), so an adjectival function would be a Pauline innovation; (2) Paul could then have modified the subject and its associated phrase into a clearer, attributive form (i.e., ὁ δὲ δίκαιος ὁ ἐκ πίστεως or ὁ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως δίκαιος), given that he almost certainly modified the text in any case by dropping the pronoun μου; (3) the verse functions in the letter's thanksgiving, where the fidelity of the Roman Christians is a particular emphasis, i.e., the way they are living (cf. 1:5, 8, 12); (4) in 1:17a the same phrase functions adverbially; (5) Hab. 2:4 functions in parallel to Lev. 18:5 in Gal. 3:11-12 and the phrase ἐκ πίστεως must be adverbial there (see further in *DOG*, ch. 20); (6) the main argument in favor of an adjectival function is a poor one—the suggestion that, construed in this way, the text anticipates the structure of Romans 1–8 (cf., i.a., Nygren, Feuillet, and Cambier); however, if this is true then the text is a poor anticipation of the rest of Romans, leaving both 9–11 and 12–14 out of account; and (7) elsewhere, Paul speaks frequently of living as Christians in relation to πίστις (cf. Rom. 12:3; 14:23; 15:13; 1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 1:24; 4:13; 5:7; Gal. 2:20; 3:11, 23, 25; 5:5), but never of someone who is righteous ἐκ πίστεως, so the latter construal of Rom. 1:17b is hardly more Pauline.

<sup>30</sup> Scroggs's important study is to my mind convincing: R. Scroggs, "Rom. 6.7: ὁ γὰρ ἀποθανών δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας," *New Testament Studies* 10 (1963): 104-8; cf. also Rom. 8:34; 14:9.

(2) ὁ δίκαιος is also a christological title recognizable from other parts of the New Testament.<sup>32</sup> The arthrous form is found in Acts 7:52 (an explicitly martyrological setting) and 22:14 (here on the lips of Paul), and possibly also in James 5:6 and Matthew 27:19.<sup>33</sup> (We will consider Heb. 10:38 momentarily.) Also relevant are several anarthrous occurrences—Acts 3:14, 1 Peter 3:18, and 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 29; and 3:7. This is enough evidence—around ten instances—to establish the

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<sup>31</sup> Paul might also be referring to Christ in Rom. 5:7 where τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ resumes δικαίου. In Paul's other letters it is of course important not to overlook ὁ κύριος.

<sup>32</sup> As noted some time ago by Richard Longenecker: see Richard N Longenecker, *The Christology of Early Jewish Christianity* (London: SCM, 1970), and canvassed recently by Larry W Hurtado, *Lord Jesus Christ. Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 189-90.

<sup>33</sup> The accusative construction in James could be merely generic; however, it is arthrous, is couched in the singular, in the past (using two aorists initially), and the text of James resonates with much of Romans' early argument. A reference here to Christ cannot therefore confidently be excluded (and an economic explanation of his execution opens up intriguing possibilities).

In the Matthean text, the origins of the title are more probably discernible than an overtly messianic usage. Here the phrase certainly denotes an innocent person who is being accused. (This verse notes the advice of Pilate's wife to him on the day of Jesus' trial: "Have nothing to do with that innocent man...") Martyrs were of course accused, perhaps tortured, and then executed, despite their innocence of any charges and their piety, so the name "righteous" was well suited to them; cf. also its application to Lot in 2 Pet. 2:8. However, it is possible that Matthew is engaging in a subtle wordplay (rather as Mark does with the title "son of God" in 15:39b).

existence of the title clearly within early Christianity. The title is also, however, arguably apparent in certain Jewish sources as well.<sup>34</sup>

(3) The evidence in Hebrews is slight but consists of two considerations that seem to reinforce one another.

First, we should note that a messianic reading of the quotation of Habakkuk 2:3-4 in Hebrews 10:37-39 “is by no means an unreasonable one” since “the LXX translators produced a text that is readily susceptible to messianic interpretation.”<sup>35</sup> Indeed, Hebrews 10:37 employs a text slightly different from the majority reading, deploying ὁ ἔρχομενος in an overt parallelism to ὁ δίκαιος. This arthrous usage seems to point in a titular fashion, along with ὁ δίκαιος,

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<sup>34</sup> Cf. Isa. 3:10; 53:11; 57:1; and various motifs in the Similitudes of Parables of *1 Enoch* — 38:2; 53:6, and also possibly 47:1 and 4; also Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 13:7 (Isa. 53:8); 16:4 (Isa. 57:1; cf. Jas 5:6), 5 (Isa. 57:1); 17:1-3 (57:1; 53:5; 51:4); 86:4 (2x—once here citing Ps. 91:13 LXX, which is then the basis for a related messianic introduction of Ps. 1:3 LXX); 119:3; 133:2 (Isa. 3:10); 136:2 (Isa. 57:1); cf. also 110:6 (citing Isa 1 Pet. 1:19 and Isa. 53:9; 53:8; 57:1). Cf. Richard B. Hays, “The Righteous One’ as Eschatological Deliverer: A Case Study in Paul’s Apocalyptic Hermeneutics,” in *Apocalyptic and the New Testament: Essays in Honour of J. Louis Martyn*, ed. Marcus J and M Soards (Sheffield: JSOT, 1988), 191-215, reprinted as “Apocalyptic Hermeneutics: Habakkuk Proclaims ‘The Righteous One,’” in Hays, *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel’s Scripture* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2005), 119-42.; see also James C. Vanderkam, “Righteous One, Messiah, Chosen One, and Son of Man in 1 Enoch 37-71,” in *The Messiah: Developments in Earliest Judaism and Christianity*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (Minneapolis, Minn.: Fortress, 1992), 169-91. Daniel P. Bailey discusses the relationship between Isaiah 53 and Justin’s *Dialogue* more generally in “Our Suffering and Crucified Messiah’ (Dial. 111.2): Justin Martyr’s Allusions to Isaiah 53 and His *Dialogue with Trypho* with Special Reference to the New Edition of M. Marcovich,” in *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, ed. Bernd Janowski, and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004), 324-417.

<sup>35</sup> Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 136, 135.

to a particular significant figure, and is arguably messianic in its own right.<sup>36</sup> It seems reasonable to suggest, then, that the letter's early Christian auditors would have interpreted "the righteous" and "the coming one" here as Christ.

Second, in v. 39 the author exhorts his auditors to be "of faith," not "of shrinking back," and so have their souls redeemed (ἡμεῖς... ἐσμὲν... πίστεως εἰς περιποίησιν ψυχῆς). This could be an exhortation in an exemplary mode and so probably a characterizing genitive, but it is worth noting that only Jesus is described in the entire catalogue of heroes of faith that follows as having both a generative and a perfecting function for the faithfulness of others; in 12:2 the auditors are exhorted to "fix their eyes upon the *founder* (or "*originator*") and *perfector* of πίστις, Jesus" (τὸν τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν Ἰησοῦν) whose own endurance and triumph are then briefly described. And since these two functions match perfectly the two outcomes spoken of in 10:39, a connection seems possible, in which case the genitive πίστεως there could be interpreted possessively or partitively. That is, Jesus could be the one who founds the auditors' fidelity, and the perfecter who ultimately also redeems their souls, after it has run its course, and they are consequently exhorted as

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<sup>36</sup> Hays points to the importance of this motif and title in Luke in particular (cf. esp. 7:18-23; 19:38; he also discusses the possible resonance with Isa. 35:5); see Richard B. Hays, "Reading the Bible with Eyes of Faith: The Practice of Theological Exegesis," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 1 (2007): 5-21, esp. 16-21. But it is also a prominent Johannine motif: cf. John 6:14; 11:27; 12:13 (cf. Ps. 118:25-26 [117:25-26 LXX]; cf. also John 12:15, citing Zech. 9:9); with further possible echoes in 1:9; 3:31 (2x); and 4:25. Josephus may also attest to this motif (inadvertently) in *War* 5:272, when he describes how watchers in the towers of the besieged Jerusalem cried out warnings concerning incoming artillery stones in the form "a/the son is coming/comes" (i.e., in the form of a joke)—ὁ υἱὸς ἔρχεται. This intriguing text is noted further in *DOG*, ch. 19 (including the probable basis for the joke).

people who “belong to” or “are part of” the fidelity of the righteous one. Moreover, both these considerations point in the same interpretative direction within 10:37-39, further (albeit marginally) reinforcing this suggestion’s probity.

- (4) It is also worth noting that the Wisdom of Solomon speaks at some length of “a righteous man” who suffers and is then granted life by God (see esp. 2:12-20 and, a little less directly, 3:1-9; 4:7-16; 5:1, 15). And since the text in which this story is embedded is deeply implicated in the opening chapters of Romans, it seems likely that the letter’s auditors would hear echoes of the righteous figure from that story when Paul cited Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17. The righteous person is not a messianic figure in the Wisdom of Solomon, but he is heroic, innocent, possessed of wisdom in his soul, and resurrected.<sup>37</sup> And if Habakkuk 2:4 was set against these particular narrative and intertextual expectations, it would have been read as a brief summary of the story of a righteous hero who suffered and then received an eschatological vindication (and not as a story of how individual Christians are justified by faith). Christ was the central Christian hero, and the first righteous story cycle in the book would have been especially apposite because, like the figure portrayed there, Christ was a relatively young, innocent, crucified (not to mention resurrected) person. In short, the narratives in the Wisdom of Solomon concerning a righteous man—a δίκαιος—fit Christ better than they fit the generic Christian, especially in his heroic and resurrected features, and so the Christian readers of the Wisdom of Solomon and Romans would probably have interpreted Paul’s first explicit intertext in the letter

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<sup>37</sup> This text’s heroes are invariably masculine, although wisdom is portrayed as feminine.



concerning “a righteous person” in a way that was related to their heroic messiah.<sup>38</sup>

(5) If Paul draws the key phrase ἐκ πίστεως from Habakkuk 2:4 in order to use it programmatically elsewhere (and we have noted its occurrences in Romans and Galatians another nineteen times), then this could explain the loss of the phrase’s pronoun (μου<sup>39</sup>) from its

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<sup>38</sup> We link hands at this point with a fascinating debate and possibility—that Isaiah 53 (esp. v. 11) lies behind the short narrative of the oppressed righteous man in Wisd. Sol. If so, then this text could also inform the early Christian appropriation of Hab. 2:4. (That Isaiah 53 is informing Paul more generally on the atonement is almost certain; cf. the discussion of Rom. 4:24-25 below.) Cf. esp. M. J. Suggs, “Wisdom 2:10-5: A Homily Based on the Fourth Servant Song,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 76 (1957): 26-53; also Morna Hooker, *Jesus and the Servant: The Influence of the Servant Concept of Deutero-Isaiah in the Nt* (London: SPCK, 1959)—at the skeptical end of the interpretative spectrum, and probably too much so; Donald H. Juel, *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation in the Old Testament and Early Christianity*, new ed. (Minneapolis, Minn.: Augsburg Fortress, 1998 [1988]); Joel Marcus, *The Way of the Lord: Christological Exegesis of the Old Testament in the Gospel of Mark* (Louisville, Kent.: Westminster John Knox, 1992); Richard Bauckham, *God Crucified. Monotheism and Christology in the New Testament* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1998), 45-79, esp. 51-53, 56-61; Bauckham, “The Worship of Jesus in Philippians 2:9-11,” in *Where Christology Began: Essays on Philippians 2*, ed. R. P. Martin, and B. J. Dodd (Louisville, Kent.: Westminster John Knox, 1998), 128-39; and Bernd Janowski, and Peter Stuhlmacher, ed., *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2004 [1996]).

<sup>39</sup> Its location also varies—whether ὁ [δὲ] δίκαιός μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται (A, C, Heb. 10:38) or ὁ [δὲ] δίκαιος ἐκ πίστεώς μου ζήσεται (⌘, W). The shift apparent in the LXX from the MT, from a third to a first person pronoun, *might* be explicable in terms of Hebrew pronominal forms and either the deliberate substitution or misreading of a yodh for a vav (·/·). The MT—if it was prior—should have generated αὐτοῦ in the LXX.

scriptural antecedent. Paul cannot deploy the phrase in other sentences if it is encumbered by a pronoun, since in the new locations this word would have no antecedent (or, worse still, it would have the wrong one!). A christological reading can therefore explain this otherwise troubling omission.<sup>40</sup>

(6) A messianic reading of Habakkuk 2:4 directly fulfills the expectations that Paul set in motion in Romans 1:2-4. There he broke into his address—amounting to a breach of ancient epistolary etiquette—to affirm that his gospel concerned God’s Son, who was descended from David and declared the Son of God by his resurrection in fulfillment of God’s prophets in the Scriptures. Paul’s explicit indications, then, would dispose the letter’s auditors to read prophetic texts from the Scriptures in Romans as witnesses to the Son of God, Christ, and in particular to either his Davidic lineage or, probably more importantly, his resurrection. And a messianic construal of Habakkuk 2:4 conforms *precisely* to this announced agenda—a prophetic text attesting to the resurrected Son of God. This is, moreover, the first such text that is quoted in Romans. Hence, the Roman Christians would need to retain Paul’s affirmations for a mere twelve verses, to the end of the epistolary introduction, in order to enact them there. In view of this, good reasons would need to be supplied for departing from such a reading.

(7) That Paul could deploy Scripture christocentrically should not be in dispute. He does not always do so, and may even evidence a slightly

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<sup>40</sup> This factor also contributes significantly to an explanation of Paul’s use (or not) of the definite article in these phrases.

different central hermeneutical fulcrum in numeric terms<sup>41</sup> but that he frequently quotes Scripture in christocentric terms is undeniable. Moreover, he even articulates this interpretative principle explicitly on occasion (see especially 2 Cor. 1:20; 4:4-6). So there is no difficulty with the basic suggestion that Habakkuk 2:4 is functioning christocentrically for Paul.

These various positive considerations add up, in my view, to an increasingly compelling case for the christological construal of Habakkuk 2:4 in Romans 1:17. I do not view them as probative in their own right, but they function as supplementary contentions that increase by degrees our confidence in the initial judgment that Paul is speaking christologically in Romans 1:17a and 3:22.<sup>42</sup>

[1,500/3,000]

We should turn now to consider briefly the prepositional completion of πίστις Χριστοῦ in Romans 3:22 with the phrase εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας.

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<sup>41</sup> In a classic discussion, Hays suggests that Paul's main tendency is "ecclesiocentric" interpretation: *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989). More recently, Watson has suggested that Paul uses a canonical reading of the Pentateuch (*Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* [London: T & T Clark International (Continuum), 2004]; discussed in detail in *DOG*, ch. 12, § 2.1). Both these scholars, however, concede the presence of numerous christological citations in Paul. And Hays of course argues vigorously for such a reading here, having also moved away somewhat from his earlier claim, which needs to be appreciated carefully in its context: cf. "On the Rebound: A Response to Critiques of *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*," in *The Conversion of the Imagination: Paul as Interpreter of Israel's Scripture*, 163-89, esp. 186-7.

<sup>42</sup> The discussion in *DOG*, ch. 17, supplements these claims with a further important explanation related to another intertextual dimension in 1:17.

### § 3. The meaning of εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας in Romans 3:22

Three interpretative issues arise in relation to this phrase—the implications of πᾶς, the sense of the participle and its underlying verb, and the implicit object. The first issue is probably the most straightforward.

(1) *The implications of πᾶς.* It is well known that πᾶς is a key word in Romans, occurring upward of **seventy-five** times. But what does it actually mean, and especially if this question has been detached from the strictures of Justification theory? There, it is usually taken to suggest that “everyone” who makes a decision of faith is saved, irrespective of other markers, especially “works of law.” And clearly there is something to be said for this reading. However, it is not necessary to place the question of inclusion in a voluntarist setting, after a journey through a state characterized by “works of law.” Paul’s use of πᾶς in v. 22 is arguably a counterclaim to the Teacher’s gospel and its restriction of salvation to those Christian converts who had in effect become orthopractic Jews. Perhaps the Teacher espoused a peculiarly restricted account of God’s election, limiting that to Israel and those who had thoroughly proselytized (although that is hard to say at this point in our interpretation of the letter—at 3:22). So Paul argues here that God’s saving purpose has broken out from Israel in Christ and now encompasses pagans as well—whether “Greek or barbarian, educated or ignorant” (1:14, DC). And he asserts repeatedly that everyone who is marked by πίστις is a participant in this eschatological age—whether “Jew or Greek” (1:16). So Paul’s repeated assertion of “everyone who ...” can be set in the first instance

over against a more restrictive claim that is being made by the Teacher. Most importantly, the Roman Christians would probably fall outside that constituency as the Teacher defines it (because they are not fully law observant) but *inside* it as Paul defines it. And this is of course a critical rhetorical move on Paul's part. The Teacher is generating much of his ethical and rhetorical leverage by way of exclusion and consequent anxiety; the Roman Christians must do certain things in order to be saved at the final judgment—things he recommends. However, by arguing that the appropriately marked Christians are saved *already*, Paul neutralizes this theological and rhetorical dynamic; he pulls the sting from this program (provided of course that his marker is deemed a plausible indicator of salvation).<sup>43</sup> Faith is, in short, an argument in terms of assurance, not appropriation; it targets Christians, not non-Christians. (Paul also begins to provide in 3:23 a theological rationale for this inclusiveness.<sup>44</sup>)

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<sup>43</sup> Few things can be more deflating to a “turn or burn” theologian than the quiet claim that someone is saved already, provided that he or she is confident enough to make and to sustain that claim under pressure.

<sup>44</sup> The abrogation of the traditional distinction between Jew and pagan rests, he suggests in 3:23, on their mutual participation in a deeper underlying problem—the human condition inherited from Adam. “All sinned and lack the glory of God” (v. 23); therefore, all benefit as well from participation in the solution to this problem that God has provided in Christ—a liberative solution that corresponds precisely to the inauguration of the age to come and is marked by πίστις. (So they are δικαιούμενοι δωρεὰν τῆ αὐτοῦ χάριτι that is, “delivered freely by his grace,” and this διὰ τῆς ἀπολυτρώσεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, through the deliverance that is through Christ Jesus.) The universality of the claim of “all” who have πίστις hence rests in Romans 3:23-24 on participation in the divine solution to the problem of an Adamic ontology that all also share—whether Jew or Greek.

(2) *The sense of the participle and its underlying verb.* It is important to emphasize that Paul does not yet tell us what the *mode* of πίστις is—that is, *how* these pagans and sympathetic Jews come to have it. He merely locates it several times as the *objective* of God’s eschatological saving purpose effected through Christ; that purpose is being visibly worked out in relation to a constituency marked by πίστις. This point is made in 1:16b, 1:17a, and 3:22 (viz., ...εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι; [...ἐκ πίστεως] εἰς πίστιν; and [...διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ] εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας]). And two further observations are possible at this point that can frame any later discussions (esp. in relation to Romans 10): (i) the wordplay that unfolds through these texts based on πιστ- terms creates two important possibilities for the interpretation of “faith’s” modality in Paul’s thinking; and (ii) it seems clear that the interpretation of Paul’s πιστ- language is bound up closely with intertextuality and must therefore itself be mediated by those dynamics. (We cannot simply read Paul’s theology off a discussion that is conducted in deeply intertextual terms; his own expression might be constrained by the texts that he is utilizing.)

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Questions are of course immediately raised by this, especially, why God has in fact chosen to reach out beyond the traditional locus of salvation in Israel to include pagans directly in this new reality that overcomes the entire human dilemma. But these issues are addressed by Paul in Romans 9–11 and so best postponed for the detailed exegesis of that later discussion (cf. *DOG*, chapter nineteen). For now it suffices to note what Paul does—and does not—say here.

(i) It seems that Paul is punning on πιστ- terms in 1:17 and 3:22, and in fact reproducing much the same pun. In 1:16 he states that God's power ἐστὶν εἰς σωτηρίαν παντὶ τῷ πιστεύοντι. And this purpose must inform the second member in the subsequent prepositional series that has proved so troublesome to commentators (not to mention to an exegesis informed by Justification theory), but that has been resolved here by attributing the central term to the faithful Christ: δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ... ἀποκαλύπτεται ἐκ πίστεως εἰς πίστιν. We have suggested that the first member here anticipates the introduction of Habakkuk 2:4, which follows immediately, and references Christ as the innocent one who is faithful and then "lives." So Paul is stating in 1:17a that God's δικαιοσύνη is being disclosed *through* the faithful Christ *for* those who trust/believe/are faithful (literally, "through fidelity for fidelity"). And it is now apparent that this pun is reproduced—unsurprisingly!—in 3:22, when Paul shifts some of the key terms to synonyms but basically says the same thing: δικαιοσύνη δὲ Θεοῦ [πεφανέρωται] διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς πάντας τοὺς πιστεύοντας. With the recognition of this wordplay (not to mention the possible separation of these texts from Justification theory and its dominating interpretation of 1:18–3:20), different interpretations of the origin and actual nature of faith can now be recognized. Two main explanations seem possible.

The "faith" of the Christian (if we may call it that for the moment) echoes the fidelity of Christ himself in some sense; the two notions obviously overlap. Hence, we could develop this series, on the

one hand, in an exemplary or strictly imitative mode: Christians are marked by “faith” because they copy the faithful Christ. However, this semantic overlap also creates the possibility, on the other hand, of a “participatory” interpretation: Christians possess “faith” because they participate in the faithful Christ, and this “faith” is therefore evidence of that participation—a mark in fact of a deeper shared character (only inaugurated, but nevertheless real for all that).<sup>45</sup> And the arrival of this interpretative possibility is a pivotal moment within any developing rereading of Romans 1–4 as a whole.

It now seems possible to give an account of Paul’s pervasive use of πιστ- terminology in Romans 1–4 and beyond that has exegetical and argumentative integrity (because it turns out to resolve the difficulties in the text better than the more conventional alternative) but also theological and rhetorical coherence. It can unfold directly into the participatory arguments that Paul will make in Romans 5–8—a transition that has proved so difficult to make in the past—and it can in so doing affirm a fundamentally unconditional and “apocalyptic” account of Paul’s gospel, thereby eliminating the raft of tensions and contradictions generated in substantive terms when that account is juxtaposed with Justification theory. The recognition of this simple πιστ- pun and its interpretative implications in Romans 1:16b-17a and

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<sup>45</sup> And such a participatory account should also include the imitative and exemplary language in Paul: cf. esp. Susan G. Eastman, *Recovering Paul’s Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatians* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2007).



3:22 is therefore a vital element in any broader unfolding argument in such terms (as indeed it was in Paul's). But it is often asked at this point, "why πίστις?" That is, why does Paul pun on, and elsewhere make such extensive use of, πιστ- terms? Why is "faith" *privileged* as the particular marker of inclusion in salvation in Romans (and Galatians, etc.)—a role that Justification theory at least supplied a vigorous answer to in terms of information, manageability, and so on, however problematic it turned out to be under closer scrutiny? The answer to this legitimate question lies in our second initial observation.

(ii) Paul's use of πιστ- terms is informed overtly and fundamentally by scriptural intertexts. We have already noted that his use of the substantive πίστις (at least, in many instances) and of the phrase ἐκ πίστεως is informed by Habakkuk 2:4, which is quoted in 1:17. But the second member in the pun is informed by scriptural texts that use πιστ- language as well. This dimension in 3:21-22 as a whole cannot unfortunately be elaborated on here (and it must again also take place in significant relation to Romans 10), so here it suffices to note that in 9:30–10:21 Paul quotes Isaiah 28:16b twice—ὁ πιστεῦων ἐπ' αὐτῷ οὐ μὴ κατασχυθῆ (in the second instance, following it rapidly with another πᾶς text, Joel 2:32, thereby resuming the language of 3:22 quite pointedly). And shortly after 3:21-26 Paul will of course discuss Genesis 15:6 extensively, which also contains the verb πιστεύω-- ἐπίστευσεν δὲ Ἀβραὰμ τῷ θεῷ καὶ ἐλογίσθη αὐτῷ εἰς δικαιοσύνην. So

Paul's πιστ- terms in 1:16b-17a and 3:22 are bound up deeply with intertextuality, and his participial phrase in the second member of this pun with certain texts in particular that use the verb—Genesis 15:6 and Isaiah 28:16b. It is for this reason that Paul can use a participle in the πιστ- series' second member, but never in the first. Furthermore, Pauls' extensive use of scripture is explained neatly by his need to counter the scriptural dexterity of his opponent, the Teacher. A false gospel underwritten (supposedly) by scripture must be countered by a true gospel authorized in much the same terms, and one of Paul's key authorizations is derived from various πιστ- texts.

(3) *The implicit object.* With these preliminary observations in place, we can turn to the third major interpretative issue in 3:22 and consider it from three angles. The intertextual, general, and syntactical evidence now point in the same direction in relation to the implicit object of the participle.

- (i) In intertextual terms, it must suffice here to note that while Christ will certainly be one object of belief in Romans 9:30–10:21, both in 9:33 and as the risen κύριος in 10:9-13, God “the Father” is present there as the object of confession and belief in equal measure (and this is arguably Paul's specific point). Moreover, God “the Father” is *always* the object of belief when Genesis 15:6 is discussed, and that exegesis takes place almost immediately following 3:22 in Romans 4 (cf. esp. 4:23-25). This is of course not to exclude the importance of Christian beliefs about

Christ; that is why Paul writes his letters in the first place. However, it is a matter of contingent emphasis. The intertextuality underpinning the apostle's use of the participle of πιστεύω in 3:22—here almost certainly echoing the programmatic εἰς phrases in 1:16-17—inclines fairly strongly toward the presence of God as the participle's implicit object. And bearing out this initial judgment are the comparative rareness of instances of Christ as an explicit object of πιστ-terminology in Paul, and the immediate syntactical implications. Who or what might we ordinarily expect to be the object of this “faith” in Romans 3:22?

In the undisputed letters, Christ is the object of knowledge and belief definitely—excluding question-begging instances—only in Galatians 2:15-16. He is arguably the object in Philippians 1:29—here more in the sense of trust—although it is very difficult to exclude the possibility of an elided εὐαγγέλιον in Philippians 1:29-30 in view of 1:27. Fidelity to Christ is then spoken of by the disputed Colossians 2:5 (cf. 2:7<sup>46</sup>). And while this sample does establish the possibility of belief/trust/fidelity in/to Christ in Paul, it is clearly not an extensive supporting sample. Adding in the two quotations of Isaiah 28:16b that reference Christ at least partially in Romans 9–10, this gives totals of between three and some half dozen instances of Christ as the object of Christian belief or trust or fidelity in Paul's extant corpus. Over against this sample we must now set the signals that Romans itself supplies

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<sup>46</sup> Colossians 1:4 is arguably a participatory statement; cf. also, at this point, Eph. 1:15.

(and these would have been far more significant in any case for its original auditors).

(ii) Clearly, Christ himself is a significantly muted signal, occurring only twice as an object in Romans, much later on, and in a partial sense. It might be suggested, then, that “the gospel” is an appropriate object to supply for εἰς πάντα τοὺς πιστεύοντας in 3:22. However, this motif is not especially frequent in Romans either (noun 8-9x; cognate verb 3x) and is confined largely to the epistolary frame. The last explicit mentions of the gospel prior to 3:22 were the prepositional phrase ἐν αὐτῷ in 1:17 and the aside of 2:16, which references the final judgment. Romans 1:17 is admittedly an anticipatory statement of 3:21-22, and it certainly includes the gospel; however, the motif receives absolutely no elaboration in 3:21-26, and is not used again until 10:16 (following the use of the cognate verb in Isa. 52:7, quoted in 10:15). Following this, only three further instances occur, one disputed (15:16, 19; 16:25; cf. 1:1, 9, 16; and the verb in 1:15 and 15:20). Moreover, only in 10:16 is any notion of belief in the gospel discussed, although even there the point is made slightly indirectly; Paul speaks first of “submitting to the gospel,” then he quotes Isaiah 53:1, which speaks of believing in a report (ἀκοή)—a pun in context that probably includes the gospel report. This scattered and rather scarce data must now be compared with the possibility that “God” is the implicit object of the participle.

Θεός occurs around one hundred fifty times in Romans<sup>47</sup>—forty-four times before we even reach 3:22—and in a few instances even as the stated or directly implicit object of the verb πιστεύω (4:3, 17, 20; 10:9 [cf. also 10:2, 3])—and this largely because “God” is the object of one of the key πιστεύω intertexts (i.e., Gen. 15:6; it is also directly implicit in the other—Isa. 28:16b). So it would seem that we have found our most likely implicit object on general grounds. Moreover, it is at this point that the syntactical implications become especially pointed.

(iii) It has already been suggested that ...πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ should be interpreted subjectively, as Jesus Christ’s own fidelity. It is this fidelity, interpreted metonymically with reference to the rest of the story of the passion, that reveals God’s δικαιοσύνη. But the implicit object of Jesus’ fidelity is then clearly God—the God who raises him from the dead after his martyrological journey through suffering and death (cf. 4:23-25!). And in view of this evidence alone, the supply of “God” to the following phrase based on the cognate participle seems most likely. The object “God” is clearly stated in the context and directly implicit in the martyrological narrative of Christ just evoked in the immediately preceding phrase—not to mention foregrounded by the most relevant intertext and massively dominating the relevant spreads of lexical data. So this assumption on the part of Paul’s

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<sup>47</sup> 151x excluding 16:25-27; 153x including those verses.

auditors could hardly seem more obvious. (“The righteousness of God has been disclosed through the fidelity of Christ [in God] for those who trust [in God].) Moreover, if this is not the case, *then Paul has changed objects in adjacent πιστ- statements without supplying any explicit signal that he has done so, and this surely asks too much of his auditors.* (“The righteousness of God has been disclosed through the fidelity of Christ [in God] for those who trust [in Christ and /or the gospel]?!”) Given that we have an obvious candidate for the unstated object of the participle, the reasons supplied to justify this unstated shift in focus would have to be very good.<sup>48</sup> (This reasoning and decision then seem to apply to related texts elsewhere in Paul; cf. esp. Rom. 1:16-17; Gal. 3:22.)

Determining the exact sense that the participle takes should probably await further elaboration on some other occasion; however, with an implicit object of “God,” a personal rather than a merely cognitive orientation seems likely—so “trust” rather than “belief” (and this choice will also align in due course with the cognates that Paul uses elsewhere of “submission” and “obedience”). This meaning, it should be emphasized, does not exclude beliefs but suggests certain

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<sup>48</sup> It is only fair to note that an objective reading of πίστις Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ partly alleviates the difficulties of an unstated and changed object for the following participle if that too is referred to Christ, but it *still* creates a baffling line of argument, because the key intertext ostensibly supporting this claim *now supplies a different object (God)*! The paucity of this object elsewhere in Romans (and Paul) is also a problem. And this object has certainly not been signaled clearly in the anticipation of 3:22 in 1:16b-17.

beliefs appropriate to a personal relationship. And with these clarifications in place, we can turn to address a final possible difficulty in our suggested reading.

#### § 4. Possible grammatical difficulties

Both sides of the πίστις Χριστοῦ dispute have in the past attempted grammatical solutions, which would have the virtue of economy. Advocates of the subjective reading of the genitive have suggested that an objective construal is ungrammatical, and rare if not entirely unattested. And advocates of the objective reading have suggested that the presence or absence of the definite article suggests definitively which type of genitive relation is in view—an objective one. But I am going to suggest briefly here that both these cases collapse and so any objections in such terms, on either side, ought to be abandoned without further ado.

Objective genitives involving πίστις are rare, but they are attested in Koiné,<sup>49</sup> as are instances in relation to the cognate verb, πιστεύω. Perhaps most

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<sup>49</sup> Cf. Philo, *On the Life of Moses*, 1, 90; Josephus, *Jewish War*, 1, 485; *Jewish Antiquities*, 2, 272, 283; 10, 268; and possibly also 17, 327. Matlock is right to correct my suggestion that extant Greek outside Paul contains only half a dozen instances; I ought to have said of course that extant *Jewish* Greek outside Paul supplies that number of instances, having surveyed Philo, Josephus, and the LXX. (And there may be some instances in other Jewish sources outside this principal sample that I have yet to discover.) Matlock then expands my sample by adding examples from Hellenistic sources—from Polybius, Strabo, and Plutarch. Cf. also R. Barry Matlock, "Detheologizing the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Debate: Cautionary Remarks from a Lexical Semantic Perspective," *Novum Testamentum* 42 (2000): 1-23, adding Polybius, *History*, 2.4.8.1 [LCL 2.4.7]; Strabo, 1.3.17; and Plutarch, *Lives*, 5.5.1 [5.4] (*Fabius Maximus*); 26.6.1 [26.4] (*Pelopidas*); 43.9.2 [43.5] (*Caius Marius*); 1.6.3 [1.3] (*Phocion*); 43.10.2 [43.6]; 55.1.4 [55.1] (*Cato the Younger*); 47.5.3 [47.3] (*Cicero*); 29.4.2 [29.3] (*Brutus*). However, seven of these ten instances are contestable—notably, Polybius (a very doubtful objective genitive: cf. "[the queen] ...undertook the details of



importantly, Romans 4:17—correctly understood—contains just such an instance

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administration through the trustworthiness of friends”—LCL is rather paraphrastic); Strabo (arguably not: cf. “...to furnish fully a strong proof concerning the works of nature...”); Plutarch, 26.4 (probably not, contra LCL: cf. “the fidelity [or trustworthiness] of its justice”); 43.5 (probably not: cf. “... even a pledge of hospitality and/or friendship had no firmness against fate”); 1.3 (probably not: cf. “...making the proof of virtue still weaker”); 55.5 (difficult to say because the second member of the antithesis may be dominating the case of the governed substantive— φόβον τοῦ ἀνδρός); 29.3 (almost certainly not, contra LCL; in context “... the trustworthiness/fidelity of his [Brutus’s] purpose”). A little ironically, Matlock sometimes proves insensitive here to lexical semantic considerations, overlooking plausible readings based on possible meanings of πίστις that are attested infrequently in the Bible but frequently in Philo, Josephus, et cetera (like “pledge” and “proof”: cf. *Quest*, 178-82). Nevertheless some of these references are certainly correct (i.e., at least three) and ought to be added to the growing sample of attested objective genitive constructions with πίστις. (I would add, further, Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 52:4.) That this sample is now approaching a dozen instances, however, does not seem to suggest that it was a common or even a predictable construction. That this construal of the genitive was possible may certainly be granted, *but it remains extremely rare*. Hence, Paul is still held by the objective reading’s advocates to use this construction far more than any other extant contemporary author, with at least six constructions in three letters. (If Plutarch uses it roughly the same number of times, his corpus is nevertheless much more extensive than Paul’s.) A Greek auditor would therefore not bring objective expectations initially to this construction, but would need that reading to be suggested *by explicit contextual indicators*. Alternatively, we must posit a private Christian language that used this construction repeatedly—in effect, the position of Cranfield and those arguing like him: C. E. B. Cranfield, “On the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Question,” in *On Romans, and Other NT Essays* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 81-107. So both these suggested interpretations require explicit evidence in their favor at some point. Consequently this argument from (in)frequency is not in my view decisive, but it ought to be appreciated. It affects the burden of proof.

in Paul himself (using the verb). An equivalent substantive phrase is, meanwhile, apparently attested in Mark 11:22 (although this instance is not in my view completely transparent).<sup>50</sup> But the invalidity of this basic contention by subjective genitive advocates is now being widely conceded and so need not detain us further.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Cf. also 2 Thess. 2:13 (πίσται ἀληθείας/[NRSV] “belief in the truth”), noted (i.a.) by Gordon D. Fee, *Pauline Christology: An Exegetical-Theological Study* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2007), 225; and Phil. 3:8-9 (τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ/“knowing Christ Jesus my Lord”); Rom. 10:2 (ζῆλον Θεοῦ/“zeal for God”); and Acts 3:16 (ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ/“faith in his name”), noted by James D. G. Dunn, “Once More, Πίστις Χριστοῦ,” in *Pauline Theology Volume IV: Looking Back, Pressing On*, ed. Hay and Johnson (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1997), 63 (who notes 2 Thess. 2:13 as well on p. 64). I am, incidentally, not convinced that Acts 3:16 does supply an objective genitive construction, but suggest rendering its two instances of πίστις in terms of “proof,” and the genitive consequently more as one of content—the proof of God’s saving activity in Christ that is supplied by the miraculously healed cripple. However, I concede the other three. Cranfield adds the evidence of Jas 2:1, Rev. 2:13, and 14:12: “On the Πίστις Χριστοῦ Question,” 84-85; however, these instances are all contestable. Nevertheless, most concede that Mark 11:22 is an objective construction, although Wallis demurs, stating—not unfairly—“it is possible that a genitive of origin should be preferred” because often in Judaism “faith was conceived of as an eschatological gift from God” (referring here esp. to 1 Enoch 108:13; Sibylline Oracles 3:584-5; Testament of Isaac, 1:8): Ian Wallis, *The Faith of Jesus Christ in Early Christian Traditions*, SNTSM 84 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 53-54; on this logion in its broader setting, cf. 24-64. Certainly Wallis succeeds in showing how the interpretation of Mark 11:22 is bound up with much broader and more complex discussions of the portrayal of Jesus and his miracles in the Gospels. Whether this entails a non-objective reading of the genitive construction is harder to say.

<sup>51</sup> See, e.g., Hays, *Faith of Jesus Christ*, 276-77.

Advocates of an objective reading have, meanwhile, been more persistent in claiming that the definite article is a definitive marker of either the subjective or objective sense.<sup>52</sup> Specifically, they suggest that a subjective sense for the genitive would have been signaled by Paul with a fully arthrous construction, and so any other sort of construction—which we supposedly have invariably in all the disputed πίστις Χριστοῦ genitives—should be construed differently, and in all probability objectively (and they basically draw here on an ancient rule formulated by the grammarian Apollonius, although it is not applied precisely). But this is a curiously weak argument in practice.

There are two main difficulties with this case: (1) two indisputable instances in Paul—Romans 4:16 and Galatians 2:20—falsify it directly; and (2) the rule itself is inadequate as an explanation of Paul’s use of the definite article, and especially in this relation.

(1) *Direct falsification.* In Romans 4:16 Paul states that the promise will be established παντὶ τῷ σπέρματι, οὐ τῷ ἐκ τοῦ νόμου μόνον ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἀβραάμ, (κ.τ.λ.). The rule of usage suggested by objective advocates would seem to suggest that the final genitive relation here is objective (i.e., denoting “faith *in* Abraham”), since its subjective meaning has not been signaled here, as it supposedly ought to have been, with a fully arthrous construction (viz., τῷ ἐκ τῆς πίστεως τοῦ Ἀβραάμ). However, no scholar suggests this

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. Arland J. Hultgren, “The Pistis Christou Formulations in Paul,” *NovT* 22 (1980): 248-63.; Dunn, “Once More,” 61-81, esp. 64-66; and Fee, *Pauline Christology*, 224-25—formidable scholars ordinarily!

reading, for it is patently absurd in context. It seems, then, that Paul can construct a subjective genitive phrase that is not fully arthrous (and in fact not arthrous at all). But this evidence is doubly significant for the issue in question.

In Romans 3:26 a precisely parallel expression occurs (and we will consider this carefully just below)—τῷ ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ.<sup>53</sup> Indeed, this is one of the half dozen or so explicitly disputed πίστις Χριστοῦ genitives in Paul. Hence, it necessarily follows from the existence of Romans 4:16 that this phrase in 3:26 *can* be construed subjectively, irrespective of any assertions about rules concerning articles by advocates of an objective reading. And if it can be so construed, v. 22 ought also to be so readable, because both phrases seem to be functioning clearly in parallel (and so on).<sup>54</sup>

Galatians 2:20 now adds to the difficulties of this contention, although from the opposite direction. There Paul states ὁ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκί, ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ (κ.τ.λ.). The first definite article that we see Paul using here—τῇ—is significant; it signals that πίστις is functioning in apposition to the following phrase, “the son of God,” but that Paul has pulled this signifier forward in the clause, presumably in an instance of hyperbaton—for the sake of emphasis. But read in its arthrously signaled location, so to speak, a fully arthrous construction results, which should of course, in accordance with the rule suggested by advocates of the objective construal of the genitive, be

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<sup>53</sup> Assuming for the moment the correctness of the genitive variant.

<sup>54</sup> I am therefore not suggesting here, as do some, that for this reason they *are* functioning in a precise parallel. But this *must* be a possibility, and in the grammatical terms established by 4:16.

construed *subjectively*. (And the often-unnoticed Ephesians 4:13 provides an identical instance.) Two observations now increase the impact of this data still further.

First, Romans 5:15 provides an almost identical clause that is also overtly subjective, further reinforcing the plausibility of the subjective reading of Galatians 2:20: πολλῶν μάλλον ἢ χάρις τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι τῆ τοῦ ἐνὸς ἀνθρώπου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐπερίσσευσεν. Second, the instance in Galatians 2:20 now threatens to draw the other instances of πίστις Χριστοῦ in context in Galatians into the same basic sense; otherwise, Paul seems to be shifting suddenly and inexplicably in his argument. And this clause follows shortly after one of the critical texts in the entire dispute, namely, Galatians 2:15-16, and precedes another important set of texts discussing πίστις, namely, 3:2-4 and 3:6-14. These all now seem susceptible to a subjective reading in terms of the rule established by objective advocates that seems to be functioning in 2:20.

The relationship between the two falsifications of the contention in terms of the presence or absence of the definite article now needs to be noted carefully. If the contention were true, then Galatians 2:20 would seem to prove the opposite of what the contention's advocates ultimately want, providing a definitive instance of a subjective construction (and further difficulties then follow from this in Galatians). But Romans 4:16 seems to suggest that the contention—in its inverse form—is false; Paul *can* provide a subjective phrase that is not fully arthrous. It does not follow, however, from this last falsification that the first difficulty is now irrelevant. The fully arthrous construction might still signal a

subjective construction (and this in fact seems likely).<sup>55</sup> It is just that the article's absence does not automatically denote the opposite—namely, a nonsubjective sense. So the objectivist contention concerning definite articles is falsified by the evidence in Paul, and also draws attention to perhaps the most difficult piece of evidence in the entire puzzle for the objective advocate! The worst of both worlds seems to have been achieved. And here the second major problem now seems to be emerging—namely, the objective camp does not seem to have given an accurate account of the function of the definite article in Paul.

(2) *Invalid "rule" in Paul.* Apollonius asserted that a subjective construction could be fully arthrous *or* fully anarthrous (article-substantive-article-substantive or A-S-A-S, or S-S). But most grammarians recognize the need to modify this canon immediately with the caveat that the governing noun may be anarthrous but not the governed (S-A-S). Further qualifying the canon, moreover, is the caveat that it does not apply to constructions involving *names* (at which point presumably A-S-S becomes possible as well!).<sup>56</sup> Hence, rather unhelpfully, all possible combinations of articles and their absence become compatible with a subjective construal of the disputed genitive constructions in Paul, because the governed substantive is almost always a name (i.e., presumably S-S, S-A-S, and A-S-S [if the latter is a name], could all signify a subjective construction consistent with

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<sup>55</sup> The context might still overrule a fully arthrous construction in favor of some alternative construal—perhaps objective. But this ought to be signaled incontestably, as it is in Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho*, 52:4.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of NT Greek* (2nd edn; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959), 114-15.

this rule and its variations; and it goes without saying the A-S-A-S would as well).

But a more general consideration of the function of the definite article in Koiné might still assist us with πίστις phrases in the context of the disputed genitives (such as Rom. 3:25). Moule warns that the uses of the definite article are quite flexible. Consequently, he advises repeatedly against adjudicating important theological issues in relation to the presence or absence of the article (being particularly concerned himself with the interpretation of πνεῦμα and νόμος). And this note of caution must constantly be borne in mind. Of the handful of idioms he goes on to record, we should note in particular the idiom of “renewed mention,” whereby writers insert an article when a thing mentioned is spoken of again.<sup>57</sup> And at this point we have arguably explained all of the Pauline occurrences neatly in subjective terms—both the genitive constructions *and* any instances of πίστις in context in grammatical terms.

The governed substantive usually lacks the article in Paul’s disputed πίστις Χριστοῦ genitives because it is almost always a name. The governing substantive usually lacks the article because it is an intertextual echo of an anarthrous phrase—διὰ πίστεως/ἐκ πίστεως. And the anarthrous state of the majority of the disputed πίστις Χριστοῦ genitives in Paul is thereby now completely explained. (Paul’s phrases also now do not violate Apollonius’

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<sup>57</sup> *Idiom Book*, 117 (leaning here on Middleton, 32). He also notes the occasional demonstrative or deictic function of definite articles (*Idiom Book*, 111), and the frequent absences of articles in predicate nouns that precede the verb and in similarly positioned names (leaning here on a study by Colwell; *Idiom Book*, 115).

dictum, once it has been suitably modified to encompass Koiné.) Furthermore, these conclusions are confirmed—and the subjective position considerably strengthened—by Galatians 2:20, which is a unique construction.

“The Son of God” is not a name for Paul (and only Gal. 2:20 uses it in a genitive combination with πίστις). Moreover, the phrase in which this designation appears in Galatians, also uniquely, does not use an instrumental preposition in the genitive in relation to πίστις, thereby echoing Habakkuk 2:4. Thus, we might expect articles in relation to both the governing and the governed substantives if this phrase is subjective, *and this is of course exactly what we find*. It would seem, then, that the *basic* applicability of Apollonius’s canon—suitably modified—holds for Paul, *and it indicates a subjective construal of the relevant genitive*. Where other related and disputed genitives occur, their peculiar construction invariably dictates the absence of the definite article, from both governing and governed substantives, for the reasons that have just been noted. But the one genitive construction not so constrained in the undisputed letters—by intertextuality and nomenclature—supplies an overtly subjective sense. The direct implication is that these other genitives are subjective as well, but any signals from the article are being masked by their differing construction. Galatians 2:20 is therefore an inordinately important text. But what of instances of πίστις in context?

Shorter instances of πίστις that occur in the immediate context of the genitives now seem to possess two basic possibilities. If they replicate the intertextual echo ἐκ πίστεως, then we would expect an anarthrous occurrence (and Paul seems happy to sustain this echo with διὰ πίστεως as well). However,



if Paul is more concerned in these isolated phrases to signal the resumption of those genitives or their equivalent—that is, of the faithful death of Christ himself—then a definite article is supplied. And this is clearly the case for the short possessive phrases. We almost always ask to whom a possessive pronoun and its governing substantive refer, at which point a definite article can provide invaluable assistance to the text's auditor(s). It coordinates by resuming a reference in context (and Rom. 4:16, just noted, is an excellent example of this practice; Rom. 3:25 also probably falls into this category).

## § 5. Some theses in closing

1. *Romans 1:17 is an anticipation of Romans 3:22, both sentences speaking of the disclosure of the δικαιοσύνη Θεοῦ by means of πίστις for all those who trust, Romans 3:22 containing a slightly more elaborate πίστις Χριστοῦ genitive construction.*
2. *Habakkuk 2:4 attests scripturally to this “instrumental” πίστις, confirming both its meaning and importance.*
3. *Only a Christological reference for this instrumental πίστις is coherent, and yet such a reference is entirely so.*
4. *The faithfulness of Christ is a metonymic reference to his passion.*
5. *It consequently seems entirely unobjectionable to suggest that Paul is speaking in Romans 1:17 and 3:22 of the dramatic disclosure of God’s salvation by means of the Christ event.*
6. *A Christological reading of Habakkuk 2:4 then corroborates this claim when it is made initially in Romans 1:17, and is itself unobjectionable if not likely.*
7. *It also makes sense that Paul would quote scripture in support of such a claim—especially if he is combating an alternative gospel offered by a learned exegete (i.e., the Teacher).*
8. *Paul also specifies the result or purpose of this disclosure as encompassing all who have faith—both Jew and pagan.*
9. *Such a claim concerning “faith” could be an argument for assurance rather than for appropriation. That is, it might seek to assure present converts who already have “faith”—confessing, e.g., that “Jesus is Lord”—that they are indeed saved*

- and do not need to do anything additional in order to be saved, as might be suggested by a rival Teacher to Paul. Their “faith” is an authentic marker of their current secure status. “All” who evidence it are saved, irrespective of law-observance (etc.).*
10. *Faith is privileged in these discussions precisely because of Paul’s desire to quote scripture, many texts of which use πιστ- language, including at this more general point (viz., Gen. 15:6; and Isa. 28:16; cf. earlier Hab. 2:4; cf. for the theme of universality, Joel 2:32).*
  11. *That Christ and Christians both evidence faith together, generating the word plays of 1:17 and 3:22, suggests that the causality of Christian faith might derive from participation in Christ himself. (This would also strengthen any claims in terms of assurance.)*
  12. *The object of faith throughout the series of 1:17 and 3:22 is therefore—as seems most likely in general statistical, and contextual terms as well—God (“the father”).*
  13. *The absence of definite articles from these Christological constructions is an invalid objection to their subjective meaning because the governing genitive is an intertextual echo of an anarthrous phrase and the governed substantive is a name (and cf. esp. Gal. 2:20).*