

The Sources of Pauline Ethos

Ioan Szasz, PhD

Sola Scriptura Bible College, Chicago, IL

Ekklesia Bible College, Atlanta, GA

iancsz@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This article aims to elaborate on the sources of Pauline ethos by presenting individuals who influenced Paul's thinking, and by demonstrating how his moral values were formed. Apostle Paul was the most influential apostle over all of Christianity. The very important contribution of his ministry can be seen in two aspects: missions and writing. Even though St. Paul demonstrated flexibility in the way he approached the mission, he had clear and strong values, evident in the way his epistemology followed his ontology. Paul was interested in *becoming* first and *acting* after. This perspective protected him from erroneous decisions. He also had to analyze very diverse types of situations. His values helped him to make correct decisions, based on the Old Testament and Jesus' teaching. Paul, a traditional Jew, though born in Tarsus in a Greek culture, kept the very early Jewish values, which were rooted in the Old Testament. After his conversion, the apostles from Jerusalem, and later in Antioch, disciplined him. But the critical moment of his life was the journey from Jerusalem to Damascus, when he experienced a direct revelation from Jesus. Pauline ethos was built based on the environments in which he lived.

KEYWORD: Paul, ethos, moral, values, Judaism, apostle, Christianity

Preliminary

In the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul, he confronted new situations for which he did not have clear solutions, even though he possessed a rich knowledge of the Old Testament and of Jesus' teaching. In these grey-zone

situations he had to go beyond the rules, following his holistic understanding of Christian moral values.

Although ethical and moral terms are often used interchangeably, they have different connotations that complement one another. From the etymological point of view, the ethical term defined, in the primary sense, the narrow box in which the horses were waiting for the race to start. Plato describes the character as the sum of habits, using two antithetical images, the good horse and the bad horse. This image expresses the limits and freedoms of their own choices. The moral word comes from the Latin *mos / mores* and has the meaning of applying community or individual ethics by adopting the standard of values. On a personal level, morality simply is the set of habits (Chappell 2006, 152). In the broad sense, ethics is understood as an antithetic delimitation between good and evil (Platts 1991, 25). Seen as a set of rules, ethics has emerged from the need of people to regulate their relationships and to protect the individual and the community, so that it manifests itself between two limits: prohibitions and permissions.

Ethics is composed of four forms: (i) descriptive ethics, which presents norms, standards; (ii) normative ethics, defining good and evil; (iii) applied ethics, judging specific cases; and (iv) meta-ethics casual senses. Moore believes that ethics has one role: defining good. He defines good in terms of interpersonal argument, and good is, from this perspective, a relative notion (Moore 1903, 1§2). In the secular sense, ethics refers to the conduct of an ideology, norms and values of a social character, some of which are of a relative nature, depending on the context in which it is applied. Mark Platts takes over Nietzsche's understanding of ethics: (i) ethics expresses the values by which aesthetics are judged; (ii) rejects the concept of uniformity in behaviour within the same communities; (iii) rejects the need to preach uniform values to all people, and (iv) behaviour, being adaptable, will influence ethics in permanent adaptation. For these reasons, Mark Platts calls him an "ethical immoralist" (Platts 1991, 160). From a biblical point of view, ethics takes into account those normative values for the lives of believers and the relationship between them, rules found in the Holy Scriptures. If, from a secular point of view, ethical rules differ according to the social, historical, cultural or geographic context, from a biblical point of view these norms are

absolute because they have as their source the immutable character of God (Eckman 1999, 6).

Morality is the sum of the applied virtues, and highlights how the individual respects predefined, ethical standards, stemming from the socio-cultural context (in the secular sense) or from the character of God (in a biblical sense). James P. Eckman emphasizes a difference between the two terms, synthesizing ethical and moral ethics: "Ethics is what is normative, absolute. It refers to a set of standards around which we organize our lives and from which we define our duties and obligations. It results in a set of imperatives that set up acceptable behavioral patterns. Ethics is what people should do. By contrast, morality is more concerned with what people do. It describes what people do, often unrelated to a set of absolute standards." (Eckman 1999, 8-9).

Morality is the ethics becoming the sum of habits, which is reflected in the character of individuals. Socrates puts reason at the foundation of morality, realizing a value hierarchy of virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance and justice (Taylor 1951, 140). Plato puts justice before the other three virtues, hierarchy shared by Aristotle (Shedd 1999, 62).

Together, ethics and morals create ethos, both the ontological, the epistemological, the personal and the group (Horrell 1996, 57). Behaviour is never the source of beliefs and values, but the effect of what is already established in consciousness. In other words, the ontology will determine the epistemology, not the other way around. If the Corinthians had adopted the Christian moral values promoted by Paul, the fruits would inevitably follow. The lack of Christian fruits of some of them was the direct effect of rejecting preached values.

Pauline Ethos

Apostle Paul, the founder of the most important churches in the Mediterranean Basin, did not intend to leave behind an exclusively ethical writing, even though in all his epistles (general or pastoral) he emphasized Christian moral values, advising believers on the lifestyle that the followers of Christ must respect. For example, Col. 3 is entirely devoted to describing the moral qualities that believers have to embrace. Attitudes such as anger,

indolence, un-forgiveness, fornication, lust, uncleanness, defamation, shameful speech, are some examples the apostle gives to the community to be avoided. In contrast, in the second part of the chapter, there are mentioned virtues that the believer must embrace: mercy, grace, forgiveness, love, kindness, longsuffering, humility, and gentleness. In the final part of the chapter, the apostle emphasizes some essential relational aspects: the family and the master-slave relationship. In the first case, women are urged to respect their husbands, an attitude emphasized in I Cor. 7 and 11; men are urged to love their wives, and parents are to have a positive attitude in their children's education. In the latter case, servants are urged to respect the authority of the masters, for the spirit of obedience in inter-human relationships will also be reflected in the believer's relationship with God. Another example is I Tim. 3, where the Apostle Paul describes the moral qualities necessary for the bishop and the deacon, which must be examples for the flock. They must have self-control, a faithful family, and a good reputation not only with those in the Church but also with the people outside.

The first aspect to be considered is the origins and the Jewish education that Paul had, even if he grew up in the Greco-Roman environment specific to his native town of Tarsus. Tarsus was located along the Cyndus River, at the foot of the Taurus Mountains, on the southeast coast of the Asia Minor Peninsula (today's Turkey), about 15 km from the Mediterranean Sea. Pompey occupied the city in 67 BC, and in 66 BC. entered under direct jurisdiction of Rome. In 44 BC Marcus Antonius declared the city free of tax, and this fact contributed to a great economic development. One of the most popular economic activities was the making of cloth from goat hair used to make tents. From an educational point of view, Tarsus could boast of schools, being under the influence of Hellenism from as early as 170 BC, which attracted the name of "Little Athens" (Wallace 1998, 180-182).

The second aspect is related to the revelation on the road to Damascus, which marks its own conversion. The experience of meeting Christ profoundly changed the apostle, both in terms of his being and thinking, as well as in terms of his attitude and attitude towards others. His writings demonstrate that the episode of conversion impacted him for the rest of his

life. Third, we must remember Paul's interaction with the other Apostles, who represented another way of modelling his thinking and teaching in his visits to Jerusalem, but especially when he spent time with Barnabas in Antioch (Johnson 1983, 70-71).

At the end of the 19th century, Ferdinand C. Baur described Paul as an aggressive prophet, full of anger-induced zeal. Bauer believes that all of Paul's pre-conversion rage against Christians was transformed into a form of "anger" manifested in his ministry as an expression of passion for fulfilling his call (Seesengood 2010, 14).

Ramsay emphasizes the intellectual capacity of the apostle by highlighting scholastic refinement (Ramsay 1895, 31). He considers the entire book of Acts as a history of the person and mission of the Apostle Paul, including a representation of the era before his conversion, followed by the conversion, and concluded by the missionary work. Paul becomes the brightest intellectual of ancient times, and the most innovative interpreter of the Scriptures. Philosophical and rhetorical studies, and Hellenistic influence (Rotaru 2005a, 268-274), open up opportunities for missionary journeys later on. On the other hand, the knowledge of the Scriptures and hence, of the Jewish tradition, makes him unconquerable in any confrontation, whether with Hellenists or Judaizers. Stelian Tofana perceives Paul as an erudite orator, who had adapted very well to different civilizations and cultures, while at the same time maintaining his strong values (Tofana 2005, 83-101). Barrett describes Paul as confrontational, argumentative, and focused solely on his own mission (Barret 2003, 165).

Pauline Ethos and the Influence of Judaism

From the autobiographical presentation in Phil. 3:5 we can easily observe that although originally from the diaspora, a context in which the use of the Greek language was more prevalent among the Jews in comparison to the other Jewish languages (Aramaic and Hebrew), the Apostle Paul simply referred to himself as a Jew. Thus, Paul deliberately emphasizes that the language in which Christ addressed Himself in the revelation on the road to Damascus was Aramaic: *"I heard a voice that said to me in the Hebrew*

language..." (Acts 26:14). Similarly, Paul addresses those in Jerusalem in Aramaic, his native tongue: "So when he had given him permission, Paul stood on the stairs and motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great silence, he spoke to them in the Hebrew language, saying" (Acts 21:40).

The Apostle Paul's early formative years relating to the educational phase are marked by two important places: Tarsus and Jerusalem. Tarsus represents the place of the apostle's childhood where he learns the mysteries of Judaism, and Jerusalem is the place where he is formally educated under pharisaic scholarly tradition, firmly rooting himself in Judaism. The secular education refers to the schools of Tarsus, a bastion of Greek Stoicism. Most likely, Paul studied in Tarsus at a renowned school. The Tarsus schools were renowned if we only referred to Athenodorus of Tarsus (74 BC-7 AD), a brilliant stoic philosopher, nicknamed "the Cannanite". Cicero and Seneca studied his writings. The study of rhetoric took about 3-4 years, and the minimum age for access to such a program was 15 years. If Paul graduated from the school of rhetorical studies at the age of 19-20, we can assume that around 20-25 AD, he travels to Jerusalem to study "at the feet" of Gamaliel I. After completing his studies, Saul returns to Tarsus, before Jesus has begun his public ministry. The quality of his education can be seen in the ability to communicate, in organizational skills and in the power of synthesis, as evidenced in the epistles. The depth of thought produced a certain difficulty for contemporary readers, a fact recognized by the Apostle Peter (Lentz Jr 1993, 31). Sandmel believes that the Judaism that Paul was exposed to be a poor Judaism, even though not denying the contact of the Apostle with Judaism in Jerusalem (Sandmel 1956, 37-51).

The Apostle Paul describes himself from the religious point of view, also in Phil 3:5: "*circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee;*" F.F. Bruce emphasizes the importance of mentioning Paul's inclusion in the lineage of the tribe of Benjamin. The Benjamites were located in the immediate vicinity of Judea, near Jerusalem. After Israel's division, this tribe remains faithful to the South Kingdom, Judea. Even if almost ceasing to exist, the Benjaminites regained their identity after exile, settling in Jerusalem and in the surrounding neighbourhood (Nehemiah 11:4: "*And in Jerusalem lived*

certain of the sons of Judah and of the sons of Benjamin (...)" The fact that he was named Saul expresses the parents' attachment to this tribe, its most prominent representative being King Saul (Bruce 1977, 41-52).

On one hand, these autobiographical statements can be perceived as a response to a possible contestation of his Jewish origin and, on the other hand, it reveals that Paul was an ardent practitioner of Pharisaic Judaism, a group whose ideologies greatly shaped the apostle's entire being. The possible contestation of Paul's pure Jewish roots could in fact have been a pretext for challenging his apostolicity, teaching and practice, and doubting his authority. Montefiore does not consider Paul a true Jew (Montefiore 1915, 183). He claims that the influence of Hellenism made an irremediable mark on the apostle's thinking and value system, and as such, cannot be placed alongside other famous rabbis, such as Akiba or Hillel. The same theologian claims that the Judaism practiced in Tarsus is not a pure one but is in fact affected by the Hellenistic thinking of that time (Montefiore 1915, 18).

Paul's adherence to Pharisaic Judaism is further demonstrated by his inclusion in the select group of scholars, led by Rabban Gamaliel I (Acts 22:3): "*am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel, according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers being zealous for God as all of you are this day.*" Raban Gamaliel I was the son of Shimon ben Hillel and, at the same time, the nephew of Hillel the Great (about 37-4 BC). He was given the title Rabban - an honorary title comparable to that of a professor (generally, the tannaims and amoraims of Eretz Israel were given the title of "rabbi", written in front of their name, and the Babylonian amoraims were labelled "rabbi." A particularly worthwhile title - namely the "rabban", was assigned to Gamaliel I, Shimon ben Gamaliel I, Iohanan ben Zakkai, Gamaliel II and Eleazar ben Azaria. For the title of "rabbi", the abbreviation "R" is used (Cohen 1999, 35). Rabban Gamaliel I became very famous both in the Christian and Jewish environments. In the book of Acts, Rabban Gamaliel I is first mentioned in the passage of 5.34. Through his work, he continued in the scholarly tradition of his grandfather, Hillel, and founded a famous rabbinical dynasty that lasted almost four centuries (Lenski 1961, 231).

In his plea, as noted in the passage of Acts previously mentioned, although Paul mentions his birthplace of Tarsus, Apostle Paul emphasizes

that he was educated from an early age in Jerusalem, having as a teacher and mentor Rabban Gamaliel I, nephew of the renowned Hillel and a representative of the *Hillelit* school of thought. According to R. Jehuda ben Thema: 5 years old is for teaching; 10 years old for Mishnah; 13 years old for practicing religious precepts; from the age of 15, begins the study of the Talmud; 18 years of age initiates the epoch of marriage; 20, the age for practicing a trade; 30 is the age of power; 40 is the one of experience; 50 is the age to give advice; 60 is the age of eldership; 70 is the age of gray hair; 100 is as dead, as passed away from this world. (Siddur 1977, 311-312). The first individuals responsible for the child's education were the parents, especially the father, who had to teach the child the Torah, from the very first five years of the child's life. According to the Jewish tradition, children start studying the Torah at the age of 5, and from 10 years old, Mishnah. At the age of 15, the studying of the Talmud begins, and at the age of 18 they are considered ready for marriage. At the age of 30, he is considered mature enough, at 40 he becomes a man with a comprehensive understanding of things, at 50 he can become a mentor and at the age of 60 he enters the rank of seniors. According to another type of assessment, a Jew undergoes three important stages in life: (1) education, up to 15 years; (2) between 15 and 50 years, family and social responsibilities; and (3) beyond 50 years is the period of wisdom and mentoring (Eisenberg 2004, 2-10).

As such, no one had the right to doubt his adherence to Judaism; rather, his association with the elevated group of Pharisees under the authority of Rabban Gamaliel I is the strongest argument of his Jewish roots (Collins 1999, 87).

Therefore, from the perspective of his ethical and religious values, the Apostle Paul was deeply rooted in the normative Judaism of that time. That is why his statement in I Cor. 9:27 – “*I discipline my body and keep it under control*” – is not surprising. He makes an allusion to the struggles between two pugilists (ὕπωπιάζω - striking a direct strike or striking the dough during kneading), he presents the harsh struggle of self-control, that is, the discipline of staying in the *narrow box* of Jewish ethical limits in order to keep his body under control (δουλαγωγῶ - a conquered city, but it must then be mastered, kept under control) (Christian 1868, 195).

In 2 Cor. 11:21-22 Paul defends his Apostleship by referencing his own Jewish origin: “*To my shame, I must say we were too weak for that! But whatever anyone else dares to boast of - I am speaking as fool - I also dare to boast of that. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they offspring of Abraham? So am I.*” St. John Chrysostom, in Homily to 2 Corinthians, 25.1 emphasizes the importance of the repetition of v. 22. Being Jewish is not the same as being Israelite; the Jews were of the Ammonites and Moabites. That is why the rhetorical question was necessary: Am I the seed of Abraham?

Even though Judaism may be considered to be the determining factor in the establishment of the Pauline ethos, Paul also interacted with the Hellenistic school of thought, especially during his early education, in Tarsus, where – according to some scholars – he became familiar with reasoning and arguments of the Platonic type (Rotaru 2005b, 140-164). Unlike the Jewish anthropological school of thought, the Apostle Paul distinguishes between physical and spiritual life, especially in Romans 7:14: “*For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am of the flesh, sold under sin.*” This statement expresses a state of resignation, an acceptance of a reality that cannot be changed, and the drama of this reality is amplified by the fact that the apostle must alone fight against his own bodily nature, to accept the spiritual values (Fitzmyer 1993, 472). This influence is evident in his capacity for synthesis and discernment between essential and formal. Consequently, the Apostle makes a clear distinction between the ethical values that Judaism embraces and which he – as a Jew – upholds (and later transmits in Greek-Roman Christianity), and the Jewish rituals he no longer considers necessary in Christian spirituality. What is to be emphasized, however, is that Apostle Paul’s entire being – as clearly shown in his epistles – was strictly grounded on Jewish moral values, as Greek culture was merely a framework for manifestation of those values (Munck 1959, 200-209).

Pauline Ethos and the Revelation on the Road to Damascus

After the Lord’s ascension, some of the Pharisees accepted the *messiahship* of Jesus, thus joining *The Way*. Others had a tolerant attitude towards Christians, amongst which included the influential Rabban Gamaliel I. Although not a member of Sanhedrin, it was perhaps due to his status as

disciple of Rabban Gamaliel I that he was present when his mentor addressed those who remained in the room, defending Christians. Acts 5:34, 38-39: *“But a Pharisee in the Council named Gamaliel, a teacher of the law, held in honour by all people, stood up and gave orders to put the men outside for a little while (...) So in the present case I tell you, keep away from these men, and let them alone, for if this plan or undertaking is of man, it will fail; but if it is of God, you will not be able to overthrow them. You might even be found opposing God.”* This fact certainly resonated in Paul’s conscience, even zealously consenting to the killing of Stephen and then further attempting to eliminate Christian groups from areas where they were established (Acts. 9).

The zeal for Judaism was the driving force that propelled Paul toward Damascus in order to persecute the Christians, yet this journey was a road with no return for the course of his life had changed forever. The major issue with which Paul was confronted at the time of the revelation while on the road to Damascus was of a particular theological depth: namely, the divine character of Jesus Christ (Longenecker 1981, 371).

Recognizing the sovereignty of Jesus (“Who are You, Lord?” - Acts 9:5) resulted in a complete tearing down of his Jewish theology. It is possible that – being well acquainted with the OT – he was no stranger to the text found in Ps. 110:1, which speaks of the Messiah’s victory; *“The Lord said to my Lord: Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.”* By the desperate cry of Lord (κύριε), Paul recognizes both the divinity and the authority of Christ. Consequently, Paul’s conversion on the road to Damascus produced a change in his spiritual authority, from the theocratic, old-testamentary type, to the Christic one, from which he would then receive the call and commission in ministry as apostle to the Gentiles. Krister Stendahl and E. Toews do not see Paul’s conversion as “a conversion,” considering that he does not refer to an unbeliever, because Paul believed in God, nor to a sinner that had become righteous. They argue that this episode only describes Paul’s call, by relying on Paul’s assertions about his calling to the apostleship (Gal. 1:15-18). From some points of view, his calling resembles the calling of OT prophets (Stendahl, 1976, 8). On the other hand, it is illogical to affirm that the Damascus road experience was his only call to the Apostolic ministry,

without taking into account subsequent events that confirm his conversion: baptism (Acts 9:18) and the filling of the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:17). The experience that Apostle Paul had on the road to Damascus can be considered to be his conversion point, but to the same extent, the call to the apostleship; as such, transitioning from the persecutor of the Church, to the “top of the chain” of the Christian mission.

During his ministry, but especially in those circumstances in which he had to defend his apostleship, Paul made a strong reference to his encounter with Christ on the road to Damascus – a moment of great spiritual confrontation for his own life. This moment – besides equating with his own conversion to Christianity – paved a path for a lengthy process through which Paul had to re-establish the basis of his new teaching.

The great change that the apostle underwent following the revelation on the road to Damascus was, therefore, a full acceptance of both the divinity and the messiahship of Lord Jesus. From that moment on, Christ became the center of Paul’s existence, such that Pauline ethos underwent transformations not only in form, but also in essence – transformations that evidently occurred in the very motives behind the subsequent ministry of the apostle. Thus, the rigorous values of the Law and of normative Judaism acquired a new dimension, as Apostle Paul entered into the process of adaptation to the new spiritual reality of which he entered into after the time of conversion on the road of Damascus.

Pauline Ethos and the Influence of the Apostles

Immediately after his conversion to Christianity, Paul began to preach the Gospel in Damascus. The context, however, was not favorable as he was labelled an agent of provocation and had to eventually flee Damascus (Acts 9:20-25). The apostles were still cautious about him, but Barnabas assumed the role of mediator among them (Acts 9:27). In Gal. 1:17 the apostle states that, after his flight from Damascus, he spent a period of time in Arabia. In Damascus, Paul begins to preach in the synagogues about “Jesus, the Son of God,” to the astonishment of the Jews in Damascus, who decide to kill him. Saul is helped by Christians to flee the city, lowering him over the city walls

in a basket, then withdrawing to Arabia, studying the Law and the Prophets from a new perspective, and meditating on his call and his future mission (Acts 9:1-26; 22:3-21). It is not possible to know exactly where the Apostle retired in Arabia, given the extensive territory between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf; some commentators suggest that Paul would have been in Felix Arabia (Strabo 1932, 499).

After approximately three years in Arabia, the Apostle Paul returns to Damascus, where he also spends about three years before heading for Jerusalem to meet the circle of apostles (Gal. 1:17).

The meeting with Peter and James was a determinant for Paul; some scholars believe that this was the time when Paul received the apostolic mandate. Referring to Gal. 1:18: *“Then, after three years, I went up to Jerusalem to visit Cephas, and remained with him fifteen days.”* and Acts 13:3: *“Then, after fasting and praying they laid their hands on them and sent them off”*; some thought Paul’s ordination took place at the meeting with Peter, and other commentators considered the ordination to take place in Antioch. There is also the opinion that the Apostles ordained Paul, with the act in Antioch serving as a confirmation of his ordination (Dunn 1993, 26).

This hypothesis has no solid arguments, all the more so since St. Paul himself states that he received the apostleship directly from Christ. Rather, a closer aspect to reality would be the recognition of the apostleship of St. Paul by the pillars of the Church in Jerusalem. Another important aspect associated with this encounter would also be the examination and alignment of Paul’s teachings with those of the apostles. In this context, it is notably important the apostle Paul’s custom of returning to Jerusalem after every missionary journey, despite the fact that his church was at home in Antioch. This act would reveal a predetermined model amongst the apostles, through which they seek to preserve unity and periodically re-evaluate their teachings.

After a short stay in Jerusalem, Apostle Paul heads to his native town of Tarsus. Barnabas seeks him there and returns with him to Antioch, where they spend an intense year fully immersed in Christian teaching (Acts 11:26). After returning to Jerusalem, from Damascus, the Apostle Paul leaves for a while to his birthplaces where he is sought by Barnabas to join the Church of Antioch: *“So Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he had*

found him, he brought him to Antioch. For a whole year they met with the church and taught a great many people. And in Antioch the disciples were first called Christians.” (Acts 11:25-26). Antioch on the Orontes was a city founded in 300 BC by Seleucus Nicator, one of the generals of Alexander the Great. It is called Antioch after the name of the father of Seleucus Nicator, Antiohus. Although it was originally founded as a Greek city, by the 1st Century BC it becomes a cosmopolitan city with a population of approx. 500,000 inhabitants. In this very city dwelled large Jewish population attracted by Seleucus’s offer, in which he granted equal rights to all the inhabitants of the city (Downey 1963, 142). After being conquered in 64 BC, Antioch became the home of Pompeii and the capital of the Syrian province. Latins also joined the already existing nationalities (Wallace 1998, 170). Following the period spent in Antioch, Paul leaves on his first missionary journey, accompanied by Barnabas and John Mark (Acts 13).

An important moment in the history of early Christianity is the Synod of Jerusalem (Acts 15), in which some aspects of Christian identity and practice are discussed in relation to the Jewish one. This event is facilitated in the presence of Paul, accompanied by Barnabas and Titus in Jerusalem, and determined by the tensions that began to appear between Jewish and Gentile Christians in the newly founded churches outside of Israel. For example, some Jewish believers in Jerusalem visited Antioch and promoted a Judaized message. This message is embraced by converted Pharisees who did not want to renounce the practice of mosaic Judaism, but to annex Christianity (Longenecker 1981, 442). Longenecker disagrees with Baur’s view that the Judaizers who came to Antioch would have been encouraged by Peter, and their arguments against Paul would have been based on a certain report that John Mark had brought against him (Acts 13:13). Longenecker agrees that both Paul and Peter wanted to settle the tensions created by the Judaizers and soothe the spirits of the Churches affected by their presence. They taught Christians in Antioch that salvation is conditional upon circumcision and other Jewish dogmas and rituals. The issue of the Judaizers is much more acute in Galatia, to which the apostle addresses them directly in the Epistle to the Galatians, but after the Council of Jerusalem (Mihoc 1983, 99).

Acts 15:19-20 is a critical passage in the development of the fundamental framework for Christian ethics. The unanimous decision of

the apostles was to write and send an epistle through which the Churches were informed of the unitary Christian norms, according to which Christians had to guard themselves in the following aspects: things sacrificed to idols (the problem approached by apostle in I Cor. 8-10); the consumption of meat from strangled animals and blood, through which – according to the passage of Lev. 17:10-16 – the sacredness of life is recognized; and the prohibition of any form of sexual impurity (a problem debated by Paul in I Cor. 5-6) (Thiselton 2000, 385-387). In the correspondence of the Apostle Paul with the Corinthians, he does not invoke the decisions of the Council in his arguments, but he brings theological, historical, rational and empirical arguments by which he tries to solve the difficult problems of Corinth, according with the Council decisions.

To summarize, the initial encounter in Jerusalem with some of the apostles and then the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15) served to clarify various teachings about salvation as well as some aspects of Christian ethics, the cornerstones of the Church's tradition. Even though the apostles had all agreed that the path of Christianity is different from that of Judaism, the Judaizers continued to preach a different gospel amongst Christians.

In conclusion, we can see that Pauline ethos is based on some specific sources: (1) the Jewish education he received from his parents in Tarsus during the early years of his childhood, consolidated in the synagogue and refined later in the elite Jewish education in Jerusalem; (2) conversion, the crucial moment that changed Paul's motivation to live a moral life; (3) contact with the apostles, who strengthened and supplemented his Christian teachings, resulting in an important contribution in the articulation of Pauline ethics.

References

- Barret, C.K. 2003. *On Paul. Essays on His Life, Work and Influence in the Early Church*. London: T&T Clark.
- Bruce, F.F. 1977. *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.
- Chappell, Timothy. 2006. *Values and Virtues*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Collins, R.F. 1999. *First Corinthians, SP*, vol. 7. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press.
- Downey, G. 1963. *Ancient Antioch*. New Jersey: Princeton.

- Dunn, James D.G. 1993. *The Epistle to the Galatians*, BNTC. London: A & C Black Publishers.
- Eckman, James P. 1999. *Christian Ethics in a Postmodern World*. Wheaton: Evangelical Training Association.
- Eisenberg, Ronald. 2004. *The JPS Guide to Jewish Tradition*. Philadelphia: JPS.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. 1993. *Romans*. Doubleday: Yale University Press.
- Horrell, David G. 1996. *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark.
- Johnson, Sherman. 1983. "Antioch, the Base of Operation", *Bible and Spade*, vol. BPS 12:3.
- Lenski, R.C.H. 1061. *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House.
- Longenecker, Richard, N. 1981. *The Acts of the Apostles*, EBC, vol. 9. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.
- Mihoc, Vasile. 1983. *Epistola Sf. Apostol Pavel către Galateni – studiu introductiv, traducere și comentariu*. Bucharest: EIBMBOR.
- Montefiore, Claude G. 1914. *Judaism and St. Paul*. London Max: Goschen.
- Moore, George E. 1903. *Principia Ethica*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Munck, Johannes. 1959. *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind*. London: SCM Press.
- Platts, Mark. 1991. *Moral Realities, An Essay in Philosophical Psychology*. London: Routledge.
- Ramsay, W.M. 1895. *St. Paul The Traveler and Roman Citizen*. Grand Rapids: Christian Classic Eternal Library.
- Rotaru, Ioan-Gheorghe. 2005a. *Aspecte antropologice în gândirea patristică și a primelor secole creștine (Anthropological Aspects in patristic thought and the first Christian centuries)*. Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press.
- Rotaru, Ioan-Gheorghe. 2005b. *Istoria filosofiei, de la începuturi până la Renaștere (The history of philosophy from the beginning until the Renaissance)*. Cluj-Napoca: Cluj University Press.
- Sanders, E.P. 2015. *Paul, The Apostle's Life, Letters and Thought*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press.
- Sandmel, Samuel. 1956. *A Jewish Understanding of the New Testament*. New York: University Publishers.

- Seesengood, Robert Paul. 2010. *Paul A Brief History*. New Jersey: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Stendahl, Krister. 1951. *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press.
- Taylor, Alfred. 1951. *Socrates*. Boston: The Beacon Press.
- Tofana, Stelian. 2005. "The Apostle Paul's Discourse in Areopagus or the First Confrontation between the Heathen Philosophy and the Word of God in the European World", *Sacra Scripta* XIII:83-101.
- Wallace, Richard. 1998. *The Three Worlds of Paul of Tarsus*. London: Routledge.