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A Discussion of Divine and Human Agency in Paul

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## “Indicative and Imperative” as the Substructure of Paul’s Theology-and-Ethics in Galatians?

*A Discussion of Divine and Human Agency in Paul*

**VOLKER RABENS**

Paul’s Letter to the Galatians has been a source of theological and spiritual inspiration for many groups and individuals during the roughly two thousand years it has been around. Several passages of the epistle have become key texts to which students of Paul turn when they try to understand the mind of the apostle, particularly regarding his theology and ethics (e.g., Gal. 2:16 and 3:28 have provoked theological and ethical discussion, respectively). Galatians 5:25 is such a passage, and it relates to both Paul’s theology and his ethics. The verse describes the new reality of Christian life, and it calls the believers in Galatia to live in accordance with this new dynamic state of affairs. It is striking that the Spirit plays a key role in both parts: “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” (5:25). In the first part of the verse, Paul appears to express positively what he then demands of believers in the second part—or at least he asks them to actively draw consequences from part one. This intriguing relationship of “is” and “ought” has become well known among exegetes and

theologians as that of “indicative” and “imperative.” Rudolf Bultmann’s 1924 essay, “Das Problem der Ethik bei Paulus,” has been particularly instrumental in this context. In his article Bultmann repeatedly refers to Galatians 5:25 as a prime example of what he conceived to be a key characteristic as well as fundamental problem of Paul’s theology and ethics.<sup>1</sup>

This article critically engages with the much-debated relation of “is” and “ought” in Paul’s theology-and-ethics, particularly as we find it in his Epistle to the Galatians. Are “indicative” and “imperative” helpful categories for understanding how Christian ethics should “work” according to Paul? And does the text of Galatians provide us with any answers in this direction, granted that the letter yields one of the prime texts upon which this concept of Paul’s ethics has been built (i.e., 5:25)? To approach these questions, I start by entering a dialogue with the critics of the indicative-imperative model (part 1) and look at what they offer instead (part 2). Then I suggest a more dynamic model of the relationship of divine and human agency in Paul’s theology-and-ethics, which will be demonstrated by a more detailed reading of Galatians (part 3).

Before we proceed, however, I briefly clarify that by using the designation “Paul’s *ethics*,” I do not intend to suggest that Paul’s Epistles offer a systematic analysis of the grounds, motives, forms, or goals of Christian conduct. From a systematic perspective one would rather need to speak about Paul’s “implicit ethics” (thus Ruben Zimmermann).<sup>2</sup> However, if one employs the term “ethics” in its everyday sense, it is certainly possible to speak of the “ethics” of Paul, because the apostle is obviously concerned for the practical conduct of Christ-believers, and this is inseparably related to the central themes of his preaching (hence the wording “theology-and-ethics”). The inquiry into the relationship of “indicative” and “imperative” looks at one aspect of the “enabling and grounds”<sup>3</sup> of Paul’s ethics. Victor Furnish even thinks that this relationship of Paul’s basic theological convictions and his ethical concerns, though “never raised to the level of critical examination by the apostle himself, never self-consciously formulated or presented by him, . . . is present, nonetheless, in the *dynamic of indicative and imperative which lies at the center of his thought*.”<sup>4</sup>

1. R. Bultmann, “Das Problem der Ethik bei Paulus,” *ZNW* 23 (1924): 123–40. Cf. the translations in idem, *The Old and the New Man in the Letters of Paul* (Richmond: John Knox, 1967), 7–32; and idem, “The Problem of Ethics in Paul,” in *Understanding Paul’s Ethics: Twentieth-Century Approaches*, ed. B. S. Rosner (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 195–216.

2. R. Zimmermann, “Jenseits von Indikativ und Imperativ: Zur ‘impliziten Ethik’ des Paulus am Beispiel des 1. Korintherbriefs,” *TLZ* (2007): 260–84.

3. Cf. the definition of NT ethics by W. Schrage, *Ethik des Neuen Testaments*; GNT/NTD 4 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1982), 9.

4. V. P. Furnish, *Theology and Ethics in Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1968), 211, emphasis added.

## Criticism of the Indicative-Imperative Model

It seems that both the inventors as well as some of the strongest critics of the terminology and concept of "indicative" and "imperative" are rooted in German scholarship.<sup>5</sup> Particularly at the Protestant faculty at the University of Mainz, the concept of "indicative" and "imperative" has been critically revisited. In 2009 Friedrich W. Horn and Ruben Zimmermann published the conference volume *Beyond Indicative and Imperative*.<sup>6</sup> While not all of the articles in the volume discard the indicative-imperative approach to ethics altogether, Ruben Zimmermann has done exactly this in a number of recent publications. He argues that there are good reasons to leave behind "indicative" and "imperative" and move ahead to a new model of "implicit ethics" that he has developed.<sup>7</sup> In this section, using the example of Galatians, I summarize and discuss the points critiquing the indicative-imperative approach to Paul's ethics that Zimmermann has collected in his essay "Jenseits von Indikativ und Imperativ."<sup>8</sup> In the course of this investigation, we will uncover various aspects of the relation of divine and human agency in Paul and discover that Zimmermann's criticism of the terminology of "indicative" and "imperative" is justified—whereas his criticism of the approach as such is not.

### *The Lack of Textual Evidence for the Model*

*Criticism 1:* The indicative-imperative schema is a research construct that contradicts the actual structure of Paul's Epistles because they are not homogeneously divided into dogmatics and ethics.

*Response:* It is true that the structure of Paul's Letters cannot be split into

5. For the former, see already P. Wernle, *Der Christ und die Sünde bei Paulus* (Freiburg and Leipzig: Mohr Siebeck, 1897), 89, 105. On the latter, see Zimmermann, "Jenseits von Indikativ."

6. F. W. Horn and R. Zimmermann, eds., *Jenseits von Indikativ und Imperativ*, Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik/Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics 1, WUNT 1/238 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009).

7. Zimmermann, "Jenseits von Indikativ," passim; R. Zimmermann, "The 'Implicit Ethics' of New Testament Writings: A Draft on a New Methodology in Analysing New Testament Ethics," *Neot* 43 (2009): 398–422; idem, "Ethikbegründung bei Paulus: Die bleibende Attraktivität und Insuffizienz des Indikativ-Imperativ-Modells, in *Die Diskussion des Paulus in der Diskussion: Reflexionen im Anschluss an Michael Wolters Grundriss*, ed. J. Frey and B. Schließer (BThS 140, Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 2013), 237–55; idem, "Die Ethik der Kirche: Normen, Begründungen, Strukturen, Argumentation," in *Paulus Handbuch*, ed. F. W. Horn (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 433–40; idem, "Pluralistische Ethikbegründung und Normenanalyse im Horizont einer 'impliziten Ethik' frühchristlicher Schriften," in *Ethische Normen des frühen Christentums: Gut—Leben—Leib—Tugend*, ed. F. W. Horn et al., WUNT 313 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2013), 3–28.

8. Zimmermann, "Jenseits von Indikativ," 264–65.

“indicative” and “imperative.” This can be seen in Galatians. Despite some claims to the contrary, “ethics” is not restricted to the second part of the epistle. Rather, the entire epistle is aimed at establishing among the Galatians a religious-ethical life that is in accordance with the gospel of Christ. To give just one example of an imperative that is placed outside the so-called “ethical part” of the letter (5:13–6:10): 4:12 starts a new subsection that is filled with grammatical imperatives and ethical argumentation (e.g., v. 12: “Become as I am, for I also have become as you are”). Also, the focal text of my present essay, 5:25, demonstrates that Paul can use “indicative” and “imperative” within the same part of one letter, even in the same sentence.

Nevertheless, while Zimmermann’s criticism points to a functional limitation of the indicative-imperative approach, it certainly does not discredit its usefulness altogether, for those who believe that “indicative” and “imperative” are (one) characteristic of Paul’s ethics usually do not derive this verdict (solely) from the formal structure of the Epistles, but from what they perceive as a substructure of the apostle’s *thought* (which may, of course, in some cases express itself in the rhetorical structure of a letter, as we can see from the fact that one usually finds accumulations of ethical instructions in the second part of a Pauline epistle).

*Criticism 2:* The classification of certain content into the grammatical forms “indicative” and “imperative” cannot be demonstrated from the text. Paul can express the same content as a grammatical indicative as well as an imperative. For instance, the motif of “putting on Christ” is expressed in Galatians 3:27 as an indicative and in Romans 13:14 as an imperative.<sup>10</sup>

*Response:* That Paul can express the same content in statements of both “is” and “ought,” points toward a complex relationship of divine and human agency in Paul (which will be discussed in greater detail in my response to criticism 5). However, it is the very strength of the indicative-imperative approach that it addresses this relationship.

Nonetheless, I agree that the grammatical terminology of “indicative” and “imperative” is confusing when applied to the ethics of Paul’s Letters. For example, Galatians contains a fair amount of “implicit imperatives” that are not grammatical imperatives, such as 6:8: “If you sow to your own flesh, you will reap corruption from the flesh; but if you sow to the Spirit, you will reap

9. Thus, e.g., F. Mußner, *Der Galaterbrief*, HTKNT 9 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2002), viii.

10. Further examples of indicatives and imperatives given by Zimmermann, “Jenseits von Indikativ,” 164n40, include 1 Thess. 5:8 and Rom. 13:12 (armor) (here both instances are imperatives); 1 Cor. 5:7b and 5:7a, 8 (yeast); 1 Cor. 6:11 and 1 Thess. 4:3–4 (sanctification); 2 Cor. 5:18–19 and 5:20 (reconciliation with God); Rom. 6:2, 10 and 6:11–12 (freedom from sin).

eternal life from the Spirit" (NRSV). Paul's "implicit imperative" here is that the church should sow to the Spirit. Even in our key verse, the verb *στοιχῶμεν* (5:25b) is a (hortative) subjunctive and not a grammatical imperative. From the point of terminology, then, a solution to the justified critique from a linguistic perspective could be, in true Zimmermannian fashion (the central term of his approach is "implicit ethics"),<sup>11</sup> to speak of Paul's (*implicit*) *indicative* and (*implicit*) *imperative*. On this rendering, "(implicit) indicative and imperative" would encompass explicit, grammatical indicatives and imperatives (hence the parentheses around "implicit"), but also include other statements of "is" and "ought" in Paul's theology-and-ethics.<sup>12</sup>

*Criticism 3:* Nowhere in his epistles does Paul deduce the imperative from the indicative.

*Response:* It is a general problem of Paul's theology that he does not elucidate the specific details of how to relate "is" and "ought." Nevertheless, that Paul does not explicitly unravel the relationship between the (implicit) indicatives and imperatives in his letters does not prove that the two are either identical or otherwise totally unrelated in Paul's theology-and-ethics. Our key verse proves the opposite. Although 5:25 is cast in the form of a (chiastic)<sup>13</sup> conditional sentence, what is expressed in the protasis (which summarizes 5:1–24)<sup>14</sup> is assumed to be true (hence 5:25 NIV: "Since we live by the Spirit"). It is on this basis that the apodosis then makes an appeal.<sup>15</sup> This causal connection is hence well expressed by F. F. Bruce's words that "living by the Spirit is the root, walking by the Spirit is the fruit."<sup>16</sup>

Numerous further texts evidence the same reasoning (*Begründungsstruktur*).<sup>17</sup> For instance, see Philippians 2:12c–13: "Work out your own salvation with

11. Nonetheless, even in his own approach, Zimmermann searches for *imperatives* when trying to approach NT ethics from the perspective of moral language. See R. Zimmermann, "Ethics in the New Testament and Language: Basic Explorations and Eph 5:21–33 as Test Case," in *Moral Language in the New Testament: The Interrelatedness of Language and Ethics in Early Christian Writings*, ed. R. Zimmermann et al., Kontexte und Normen neutestamentlicher Ethik/Contexts and Norms of New Testament Ethics 2, WUNT 2/296 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), esp. 30.

12. Alternatively, one could also put "indicative" and "imperative" in quotation marks in order to indicate that one is not merely concerned with grammatical indicatives and imperatives. See also the terminological suggestions in the conclusion to this first part of the article.

13. (A) If we live (B) by the Spirit, (B') by the Spirit (A') let us also walk. Cf., e.g., M. C. de Boer, *Galatians: A Commentary*, NTL (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2011), 371.

14. Cf. H. D. Betz, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1979), 293.

15. Cf. R. Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 275.

16. F. F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians: A Commentary on the Greek Text*, NIGTC (Exeter: Paternoster; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 257.

17. E.g., 1 Cor. 5:7; Rom. 6:2, 6, 10–12; using conjunctions such as οὐν, ἵνα, and καθώς.

fear and trembling; for [γάρα] it is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure” (NRSV). Here Paul explicitly deduces his imperative for human action from God’s continuous activity of both motivating and enabling this very action.

### *The Lack of Functional Suitability of the Model*

*Criticism 4:* Leading on from the last point, Zimmermann’s first comment regarding the lack of functional suitability of the indicative-imperative schema criticizes that the model is rigid and inaccurate because it suggests some type of temporal or logical precedence of the indicative over the imperative.

*Response:* While Paul does not explicate the temporal or logical precedence of the (implicit) indicative over the (implicit) imperative whenever his writing relates to these issues, one can nonetheless attest an overall precedence of divine agency in Paul. For example, Galatians 4:4–5 gives evidence of both a temporal and a “logical” precedence of the (implicit) indicative: “But when the fullness of *time* had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, *in order to redeem* those who were under the law, so that we might *receive adoption* as children” (NRSV, emphasis added). Everything has started with God’s act of redemption and adoption (cf. the salutation in 1:3–4).<sup>18</sup> In 4:9 Paul even explicitly corrects himself by stressing the priority of divine activity: “Now . . . that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God” (NRSV; for further examples, see my response to criticism 5 below). Nevertheless, this precedence does not imply that the relationship of (implicit) indicatives and imperatives is necessarily rigid and would contradict the dynamics and variety of Paul’s ethical reasoning. Rather, as will become clear below (in “A Relational Model”), it is possible to grasp a number of the key characteristics of Paul’s thought on the relation of divine and human agency with the help of a dynamic model of (implicit) indicatives and imperatives in Galatians.

*Criticism 5:* The indicative-imperative schema introduces an artificial division into a matter that is presented as a unity by Paul.<sup>19</sup>

*Response:* This criticism seems to build on one particular model of divine and human agency in Paul (i.e., that both are presented by Paul as a unity). The indicative-imperative model is designed to address this important aspect of Paul’s theology-and-ethics—namely, the respective roles attributed to

18. Cf. V. Rabens, “‘Schon jetzt’ und ‘noch mehr’: Gegenwart und Zukunft des Heils bei Paulus und in seinen Gemeinden,” *JBTh* 28 (2013), part 1.

19. In this criticism, Zimmermann uses neither the terminology of “indicative and imperative” nor that of “divine and human” agency but remains as vague as possible: “führt eine künstliche Trennung ein, die *das von Paulus als Einheit Dargestellte* retrospektiv zergliedert” (Zimmermann, “Jenseits von Indikativ,” 264), emphasis added.

divine and human agency. These two angles on Paul's theology-and-ethics are not identical, but they are intricately related: in Paul the (implicit) indicative sometimes designates the *result of divine agency*, that is, it describes the new state of affairs of the transformed believer (e.g., Gal. 6:14: "By the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world"). And sometimes the (implicit) indicative expresses the (continuous) *divine agency itself* (e.g., Phil. 2:13: "It is God who is at work in you, enabling you both to will and to work for his good pleasure"; cf. 2 Cor. 5:5). With his implicit or explicit imperatives, however, Paul appeals to human agency—although in Paul, human agency is always dependent on God. The precise relationship of divine and human agency is, of course, a matter of much debate. Nonetheless, Zimmermann appears to criticize the appropriateness of this approach by assuming one particular model of the relation of divine and human agency: he claims that Paul presents them as a unity.

However, at least three types of correlation of divine and human activity in religious-ethical life can be conceptualized, as John Barclay points out in the volume *Divine and Human Agency in Paul*. The *first model* places divine and human agency in an essentially *competitive* relationship: the more that one is said to be effective, the less can be attributed to the other. Divine sovereignty and human freedom are thus mutually exclusive; human freedom must be understood as freedom from God. The *second model* presents divine and human agency as related to each other by *kinship* or unity. God and humanity are here within the same spectrum of being, and the agency of one is shared with the other, rather than standing in competition with each other. Human agency is bound up with that of God; the two are essentially identical when properly aligned. On this model, human freedom is not freedom from God, but it is exercised precisely by acting in accordance with God and willing what God has willed. The *third model* presents divine agency in terms of a *noncontrastive transcendence*. God's sovereignty does not limit or reduce human freedom; rather, God's sovereignty is precisely what grounds and enables human freedom. The more the human agent is operative, the more (not the less) may be attributed to God. However, human agency is not an empty shell for divine power or a threat to divine agency (as in model 1), nor is it ultimately identical to divine agency (model 2). Rather, created human agencies are founded in, and constituted by, the divine creative agency, all the while remaining distinct from God.<sup>20</sup>

20. J. M. G. Barclay, introduction to *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ECC/LNTS 335, ed. J. M. G. Barclay and S. J. Gathercole (London: Continuum, 2006), 6–7.

Looking at these three models, it seems that Zimmermann is a proponent of model 2. However, the relation of divine and human agency and of (implicit) indicative and imperative in Paul appears to be more complex. On the one hand, we do find some “material” in Paul that is expressed *both* as (implicit) indicative *and* as (implicit) imperative, as we have seen in criticism 2. This may point toward the unity that Zimmermann appears to assume. However, even here it seems necessary to develop further subcategories: while Paul clearly stresses the divine “indicative” in salvation (e.g., Rom. 5:8–10, 15; 6:6–7; Gal. 1:3–4; 4:4–5; cf. Eph. 2:8–10), he can also at some points express the necessity of human agency in this regard by appealing to believers to fit their lives around the character and purpose of the divine agency and thus ensure the maximum possible match (e.g., Rom. 8:13; Gal. 6:8; Phil. 2:12c–13; cf. my response to criticism 7 below).<sup>21</sup> On the other hand, the “content” of (implicit) indicative and imperative is not always identical in Paul. For example, in Romans 8:13 Paul asks his audience to “put to death the deeds of the body”—a formulation that has no exact counterpart in Paul’s positive statements of divine agency in the life of the church, although putting to death the deeds of the body is clearly based on divine agency (Rom. 8:3–4; cf. Gal. 5:24) and can be seen as its practical continuation (after all, it is *by the aid of the Spirit* [πνεύματι] that Paul’s churches are to put to death the deeds of the body [Rom. 8:13]).<sup>22</sup>

In any case, Zimmermann would need to provide further support from Paul’s Epistles for his assumption that the indicative-imperative model takes apart what Paul presents as a unity. The concept of (implicit) indicative and imperative merely gives a name to the entities that compose this “unity” in Paul. And whatever is meant by unity, it certainly should not be understood as the identity of divine and human action in Paul.

*Criticism 6:* The relation of *being able* and *being obliged* to act morally is not an issue at the heart of Pauline theology.

*Response:* Furnish’s statement (quoted above) regarding Paul that “the dynamic of indicative and imperative . . . lies at the center of his thought” is indeed exaggerated. Nonetheless, the fact that something is not at the center

21. Cf. J. M. G. Barclay, “Believers and the Last ‘Judgment’ in Paul: Rethinking Grace and Recompense,” in *Eschatologie—Eschatology: The Sixth Durham-Tübingen Research Symposium; Eschatology in Old Testament, Ancient Judaism and Early Christianity* (Tübingen, September, 2009), ed. H.-J. Eckstein et al., WUNT 1/272 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 204–8; V. Rabens, “Inclusion of and Demarcation from ‘Outsiders’: Mission and Ethics in Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians,” in *Sensitivity to Outsiders: Exploring the Dynamic Relationship between Mission and Ethics in the New Testament and Early Christianity*, ed. K. Kok et al., WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014), parts 1 and 3.

22. Moreover, Paul’s Epistles also evince imperatives that are not directly based on implicit indicatives (e.g., Gal. 5:15); cf. Zimmermann’s criticism 8 below (and his overstated criticism 3).

of someone's thought does not mean that it does not play a role at all in that person's thinking. In Paul, the obligation of and the ability for moral action is an overt issue in one of the most central passages of theology: Romans 6–8. Paul's exposition of religious-ethical life in Galatians 5–6 evinces this concern too. For instance, in 5:17–18 Paul explicates both the apparent struggle and the potential inability to live according to the ethics of love proclaimed in the epistle (5:6, 13–14, 22). However, he also stresses the (implicit) indicative by pointing the Galatians to the fact that they are guided by the Spirit and hence free from "subjection to the law."

Thus, while the relation of divine and human agency may not be central in Paul, it clearly is a theme that Paul picks out in a number of his expositions. Zimmermann himself even thinks that Paul presupposes a clear relation between the two, as we will see in his next point of criticism (cf. criticism 5).

### ***The Precarious Theological Assumptions of the Model***

*Criticism 7:* The conception of "indicative" and "imperative" leads to insoluble problems regarding the validity of God's gift of salvation in the context of Paul's soteriology: if it has to be achieved or completed by human beings, then salvation is incomplete and limited.

*Response:* The complex relationship of "is" and "ought" that Zimmermann draws attention to is inherent in Paul's Letters. One can attempt to explain it by proclaiming the unity of "indicative" and "imperative," as Zimmermann appears to do in his criticisms 2 and 5 (cf. Barclay's category 2). Alternatively, one can stress divine action to the exclusion of human action (cf. Barclay's category 1), as Zimmermann appears to do here. In the end, Zimmermann does not disclose what his concept of the relation between divine and human action in Paul is. His own approach to ethics, which we will investigate in the next section, appears to leave divine agency out of the picture of Pauline ethics altogether.

The fact that there is a relation (or as some might say, an "underlying tension") in Paul's theology between "is" and "ought" does not discredit the model of "indicative" and "imperative," since it merely is giving a designation to this relation. As such, it does *not* suggest one particular model of that relation (or solution to the tension), as we can see from the two opposing models of "indicative" and "imperative" by Bultmann and Furnish.<sup>23</sup> However, we can observe the potentially "insoluble problems regarding the validity of God's gift of salvation" in Paul himself, as, for example, in Galatians 6:8. The apostle

23. Cf. the discussion in V. Rabens, *The Holy Spirit and Ethics in Paul: Transformation and Empowering for Religious-Ethical Life*, WUNT 2/283 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010), 273–82.

seems to say here, at least at face value, that only as the Galatians sow to the Spirit will they actually receive eternal life (cf. the example of Phil. 2:12c–13 and my discussion of criticism 5 above).

### *Critical Points from the Philosophy of Language and Morality*

*Criticism 8:* “Indicative” and “imperative” are metaphors that cannot describe the details of Paul’s moral reasoning with any precision. Rather, Paul’s paraenesis evinces a variety of different linguistic forms and patterns of ethical reasoning, which ask for a more sophisticated method of analysis.

*Response:* The indicative-imperative model indeed focuses on (only) one particular aspect of Paul’s ethics. However, this aspect of divine and human agency is related to other dimensions of Paul’s theology (such as “identity and ethics”).<sup>24</sup> To approach the interplay of these different dimensions of Paul’s theology-and-ethics, we need to look at Paul’s ethics from a wider perspective. Zimmermann provides a sophisticated method that has precisely this aim. It will be briefly introduced and discussed in the next section.

*Conclusion:* The indicative-imperative approach clearly points to an issue that is “under the surface” of Paul’s theology—and sometimes even clearly “above the surface,” as we have seen in a number of texts (focusing on Gal. 5:25). Of the critical points raised by Zimmermann, only the critique from the standpoint of linguistics holds ground: the terminology of “indicative” and “imperative” indeed has its primary reference in the realm of grammar. However, some scholars may still want to hold on to it<sup>25</sup> in the same way that Pauline scholarship has on the whole continued to use other debatable terminology, such as Paul’s “ethics” or—though less common—his “mysticism.”<sup>26</sup>

To indicate the terminological limitations of the indicative-imperative approach, I have suggested that we speak of “(implicit) indicatives” and “(implicit) imperatives,” which encompass grammatical indicatives and imperatives, but also include other statements of “is” and “ought” in Paul’s theology-and-ethics. They mark the “constitutive” and “appellative,” or the “ascriptive” and

24. Cf. esp. D. G. Horrell, *Solidarity and Difference: A Contemporary Reading of Paul’s Ethics* (London: T&T Clark, 2005).

25. E.g., M. Wolter, *Paulus: Ein Grundriss seiner Theologie* (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 2011), 312–17.

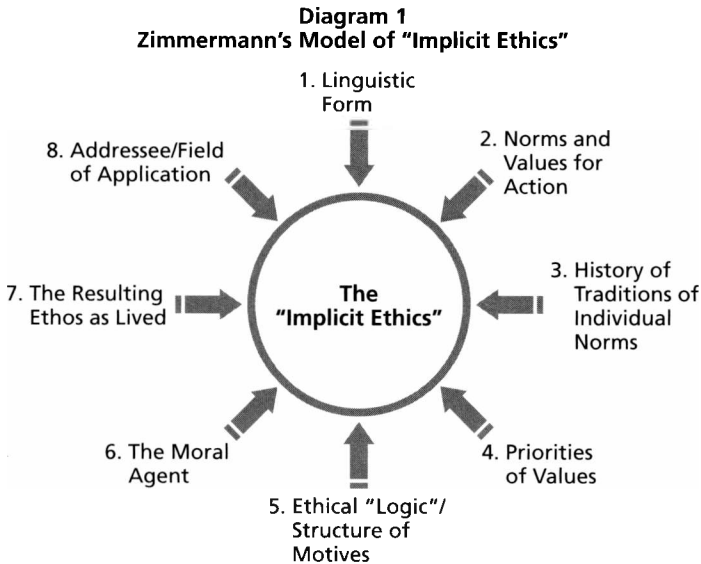
26. E.g., H.-C. Meier, *Mystik bei Paulus: Zur Phänomenologie religiöser Erfahrung im Neuen Testament*, TANZ 26 (Tübingen: Francke, 1998). See the discussion in V. Rabens, “Pneuma and the Beholding of God: Reading Paul in the Context of Philonic Mystical Traditions,” in *The Holy Spirit, Inspiration, and the Cultures of Antiquity: Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, ed. J. Frey and J. R. Levison, *Ekstasis 5* (Berlin/New York: De Gruyter, 2014), 295–331.

"prescriptive" elements of Paul's theology-and-ethics,<sup>27</sup> *Gabe* and *Aufgabe* (gift and task), without suggesting one particular model of their relation (on the latter, see "A Relational Model" below).

### An Alternative Approach to Paul's Ethics in Galatians

As the concept of (implicit) indicative and imperative targets only one aspect of Paul's theology-and-ethics, what could be a more comprehensive approach to the ethical dimension of Paul's thought, particularly as it is expressed in Galatians? Here too we turn to the most recent and sophisticated approach of those who have criticized the traditional indicative-imperative model—which is that of Zimmermann. With his model of "implicit ethics," Zimmermann aims to leave behind the focus of some scholars on a single, soteriological "indicative" in relation to a paraenetic "imperative" because Paul's Letters evidence a much broader set of reasons and grounds for ethical living.

Zimmermann provides us with eight avenues into Paul's implicit ethics, which are well illustrated by a diagram designed by Zimmermann.<sup>28</sup>



27. "Ascriptive" should not be understood along the lines of the German "Zuspruch" ("indicative") and "Anspruch" ("imperative"), because such a model of the (implicit) indicative seems to imply that the "indicative" of God's acting on human subjects boils down to mere words of encouragement. Cf. n. 45 below.

28. Zimmermann, "Ethics . . . and Language," 27.

Zimmermann has formulated a set of guiding questions to help us explore these eight aspects of ethics in general and Paul's ethics in Galatians in particular. Below I will list these questions<sup>29</sup> and indicate which aspect of Paul's ethics in Galatians they may help to elucidate.

1. *Linguistic Form: Which linguistic form does the ethical statement take?* Zimmermann rightly recognizes the complex difference between prescriptive and descriptive moral language. For instance, even narrative, metaphoric, and ironic texts can transport morality through their specific style.<sup>30</sup> Galatians 4:21–31 is an example of the former, although the narrative is already explicitly interwoven with an ethical argumentation. The linguistic form of ethics classically also involves the imperative mood. We have already looked at some grammatical imperatives in Galatians, to which we may add the central appeal in 5:1 (which builds on an “indicative”).

2. *Norms and Values for Action: Which leading norms and maxims of action are mentioned?* Here we are looking for basic principles that put normative obligations on the behavior of individuals or groups. In Galatians, most fundamentally, this is “love” (5:6, 14; cf. criterion 4 below). We also find two norms that mark a spectrum: freedom (5:1; cf. 1:4; 2:4) and “being a slave for Christ” (1:10).

3. *History of Traditions of Individual Norms/Moral Instances: In which traditional and contemporary context do these norms exist?* Norms can be classified with regard to their tradition and religious history. In Galatians, for instance, Paul explicitly cites the Hebrew Scriptures in support of his ethical argumentation (3:10, 13; 4:22, 27). Also, the *Traditionsgeschichte* of ethical concepts from Hellenistic moral philosophy could be analyzed in this context (e.g., that of the central concept of ἐλευθερία, 2:4; 5:1, 13).<sup>31</sup>

4. *Logic of Values: What inner relationship between different norms is produced? Which emphasis of norms and hierarchy of values can be recognized?* This criterion investigates the hierarchy of values that is implicitly or explicitly presented in a text. In Galatians, such a hierarchy is clearly expressed in 5:6, 14 (love).

5. *Ethical Argumentation/Structure of Motives: According to which internal structure of motives and according to which ethical argumentation does the*

29. The list is taken from *ibid.*, 24–26.

30. Zimmermann, “Implicit Ethics,” 405.

31. Cf., e.g., G. Dautzenberg, “Freiheit im hellenistischen Kontext,” in *Der neue Mensch in Christus: Hellenistische Anthropologie und Ethik im Neuen Testament*, ed. J. Beutler, QD 190 (Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder, 2001), 57; T. Engberg-Pedersen, “A Stoic Concept of the Person in Paul? From Galatians 5:17 to Romans 7:14–25,” in *Christian Body, Christian Self: Concepts of Early Christian Personhood*, ed. C. K. Rothschild et al. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2011), 85–112.

*ethical judgment take place?* Ethical texts usually provide reasons (e.g., deontological or teleological arguments) why the addressees should live by them. For instance, when Paul demands a certain religious-ethical lifestyle from his audience in Galatia, he bases this request on their new, Spirit-worked identity and experience of adoption in their lives (4:1–11).

6. *The Carrier of Ethical Judgments: Who is the subject of ethical judgments? Which factors constitute the ethical subject?* Different factors influence an ethical subject in the process of decision making. These include reason and emotions. For example, Paul's argumentative structure in Galatians 4:12–20 appeals to both reason and emotion when he brings his personal relationship to the Galatians into play and asserts his moral authority over that of the agitators in Galatia.

7. *The Resulting Ethos as Lived: What concrete ethos corresponds to or contradicts the ethical argumentation?* It is heuristically helpful to differentiate the investigation of norms and motives for ethical action from their actual implementation, although Zimmermann acknowledges that it is impossible to separate them completely. With regard to Galatians, we can only speculate how Paul's ethical instructions were put into practice in the church. Nonetheless, the group ethos that Paul attempts to implement, for instance in 6:2, is clearly one of mutual support.

8. *Field of Application: What field of application of a norm is mentioned?* Paul often deals with concrete ethical questions facing his churches. In doing this he regularly differentiates between norms of action that are valid for him, for his assistants, for individual community members, for the community as a whole, or even for humanity in general. When looking at a specific epistle, we can therefore try to identify whether Paul applies his ethical teaching to a particular group within the congregation or to the congregation at large, or whether he is even setting up some universal ethical principle. In the case of Galatians, Paul addresses the entire church throughout—and in particular those who feel attracted to the "different gospel" and the Jewish customs that belong to it (e.g., 5:7–12), although he also formulates some more "universal" principles, as for example in 5:14, 19–24.

Zimmermann has provided us with a very helpful model for approaching the various aspects of Paul's implicit ethics beyond those relating to (implicit) indicative and imperative. Even our short survey has broadened our view of the different ethical issues that surface in Galatians. We can hence warmly recommend the model for further application to New Testament ethics (and to ethics in the wider fields of science and society for which it opens up avenues for dialogue). Nevertheless, from a practical point of view it might be useful to reduce the individual aspects to slightly fewer and more specific points. For

instance, criteria 2 (“leading norms”) and 4 (“emphasis of norms”) could easily be subsumed under one point (“leading norms and their hierarchy”). More significantly, if this new approach is meant to go beyond and even replace the indicative-imperative schema, it seems that one important dimension of the “old model” is missing in the new approach: the aspect of *divine* and human agency. Zimmerman mentions the ethical subject at point 6, where he looks at human agency. However, one of the specifics of Jewish-Christian ethics, and of Paul’s ethics in particular, is the role that is attributed to divine enabling.<sup>32</sup> In Paul’s ethics human beings are transformed and empowered to live according to the ethical values set forth by the apostle and the ethical traditions that he endorses. For this reason I suggest that we add “divine agency” to Zimmermann’s model, since this is one of the key aspects of Paul’s ethics—also in Galatians. It comes to the fore, for instance, in 1:4 (cf. 3:23–29) and 2:19–20.



Zimmermann’s model is designed to fathom the grounds and motivation (*Handlungsgrund*) of Paul’s ethics. In this essay I am focusing on the enabling grounds (*Ermöglichungsgrund*) because this is the prime aspect of the indicative-imperative approach to Paul’s ethics. In contrast to Zimmermann’s model, the importance of this dimension of Paul’s ethics is also recognized by another critic

32. For an example of Jewish ethics in this regard, see, e.g., V. Rabens, “Philo’s Attractive Ethics on the ‘Religious Market’ of Ancient Alexandria,” in *Religions and Trade: Religious Formation, Transformation and Cross-Cultural Exchange between East and West*, ed. P. Wick and V. Rabens, DHR 5 (Leiden: Brill, 2014), 341–50.

of the indicative-imperative schema, Udo Schnelle, for whom "transformation and participation" are the key to Paul's theology-and-ethics.<sup>33</sup> Schnelle's language and emphasis are useful, although the way in which he conceptualizes "transformation and participation" may be too static to be helpful for understanding the dynamics of Paul's ethics in Galatians, particularly in 5:25. Schnelle strongly emphasizes the "new being" from which the ethical life flows. For him, "Entsprechung zum neuen Sein" is the central thought of Paul's ethics. Believers need to live in correspondence with the new being.<sup>34</sup> However, in 5:25a Paul's emphasis is not on a new being—although other texts like 2:19–20 and 5:24 clearly presuppose such an ontic change. Rather, Paul speaks about "living by the Spirit" as the implicit indicative. This "living in the Spirit" is the *continuous* experience of divine agency that transforms and empowers the Galatians so that they can resist the flesh (5:16) and "walk by the Spirit" (5:25b). It has a relational dimension, as I will show in the next and final section.<sup>35</sup>

### A Relational Model of Divine and Human Agency in Galatians

Applying Zimmermann's model of "implicit ethics" to Galatians has provided us with a broader and more nuanced picture of Paul's ethics in this epistle. However, the model does not provide any insights into the relation of divine and human agency (or into that of [implicit] indicative and imperative) in Paul. With regard to our test case, we are still left with questions: what is the relation of Galatians 5:25a to 5:25b? How does "walking in line with the Spirit" follow from "living in the Spirit"?

33. U. Schnelle, "Die Begründung und die Gestaltung der Ethik bei Paulus," in *Die bleibende Gegenwart des Evangeliums: Festschrift für Otto Merk zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. R. Gebauer and M. Meiser, MTS 76 (Marburg: Elwert, 2003), 117; cf. idem, *Paulus: Leben und Denken* (Berlin and New York: de Gruyter, 2003), 630.

34. Schnelle, "Begründung . . . der Ethik," 122, 131.

35. In contrast to the supposed opposition of a substance-ontological *or* a relational concept of the work of the Spirit in Paul's ethics, I build on J. D. G. Dunn's insight that "the basic idea assumed by Paul was of a relationship in which God acts on behalf of his human partner, first in calling Israel into and then in sustaining Israel in its covenant with him. . . . The covenant God counts the covenant partner as still in partnership, despite the latter's continued failure. But the covenant partner could hardly fail to be transformed by a living relationship with the life-giving God" (J. D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998], 344). Applying this insight to the debated ontological frameworks of ethical renewal (by the Spirit) leads us to appreciate that the dominance of the (covenant) relationship of God with his people in Paul's thinking rules out a "relational-as-opposed-to-ontological" approach to Paul's theology and anthropology. Paul's thinking rather encompasses both these aspects, and they are well captured by the concept of *transforming relationships*. Cf. Rabens, *Holy Spirit and Ethics*, vii, 143. See 123–24 on the definition of "relationship" in this context.

Gordon Fee writes that Paul does not provide any details on how “walking in the Spirit” works because the apostle could assume that his churches knew what he was talking about due to their fervent experience of the Spirit.<sup>36</sup> However, in this section I will show that it is possible to gain a deeper understanding of how, according to Galatians, ethical life can be empowered by the Spirit. We start by turning to the literary context of our key verse, since 5:25 is not the first description of the work of the Spirit in Galatians. A couple of lines earlier, Paul formulates his first explicit imperative that is related to the Spirit: “Walk by the Spirit, I say, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh” (5:16). This command does not offer any further clues with regard to the question of how ethical life (“walking by the Spirit”) is empowered, but it helps us to understand the content of what Paul is asking from the Galatians: walking by the Spirit means not gratifying the desires of the flesh. These desires are spelled out in detail in Paul’s list of the works of the flesh (5:19–21), which is contrasted with the fruit of the Spirit (5:22–23). The question regarding the ethically transforming and empowering work of the Spirit in the believer (i.e., the “[implicit] indicative”), however, can be approached by turning to Galatians 3 and 4, for it is here that Paul first mentions the life-transforming activity of the Spirit.

In 3:1–5 Paul asks the Galatians if they have received the Spirit through the works of the law or through believing the gospel. His argumentation can be persuasive only if the Galatians can indeed recall their receiving the Spirit. That this memory is tied to a tangible experience comes explicitly to the fore through the way in which Paul connects in parallel “receiving the Spirit” (ἐξ ἔργων νόμου τὸ πνεῦμα ἐλάβετε ἢ ἐξ ἀκοῆς πίστεως [v. 2]) and “experiencing so much” (τοσαῦτα ἐπάθετε εἰκῆ [v. 4]). The Spirit-reception was, therefore, a “great experience.” In the subsequent sentence it is listed together with powerful deeds brought about by God (cf. 1 Thess. 1:5–6). Galatians 3:1–5 thus shows that at the heart and at the start of the Christian life of the Galatians is the existential experience of the Spirit.

Galatians 4:1–7 then provides us with further details of the Spirit’s empowering work: the Spirit draws people to God as their Father through crying “Abba! Father!” This relational work by the “Spirit of the Son” (which, like “abba,” is family language) is placed within an ethical context. This is particularly evident from the way in which Paul continues his argument after 4:1–7. In the succeeding section (4:8–11) Paul explains to the Galatians that the filial relationship to God that they have come to experience through the Spirit is in

36. G. D. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994), 433.

stark contrast both to their former life in bondage (indicated by the opening ἀλλά; see also 3:23–27) and to their present inclination to return to this slavery (indicated by the rhetorical questions in 4:9). The issues at stake in the Galatian crisis were the identity of the Galatian Christians and their appropriate patterns of behavior.<sup>37</sup> Paul reacts to this insecurity by pointing them to their Christ-created and Spirit-sustained filial relationship with God, which is the reason why they no longer need the law as their identity marker and moral code, or as “guardians and trustees” (4:2) to look after their religious-ethical life. Since they have entered a relationship of filial intimacy with God (v. 6; cf. v. 9: knowing God and being known by God), the Galatians need not submit to the law<sup>38</sup> and thus return to being enslaved to the “weak and beggarly elements” (vv. 3, 9) by trying to perfect by the flesh what they had begun by the Spirit (3:3). Rather, through the transformation and empowering that derives from these intimate relationships,<sup>39</sup> they are enabled to live according to the values of the Spirit (cf. 5:16–25) and thus can demonstrate ongoing loyalty and public honor to their heavenly Father in the face of the agitators.

As I have shown elsewhere, the intimacy created by the Spirit of the Son between believers and their Father is not limited to the emulation of Jesus’s prayer life (cf. Mark 14:36) but seems to extend more comprehensively to the imitation of the Son’s religious-ethical life before God.<sup>40</sup> This gives further support to my argument that Galatians 4:4–6 (as well as further Pauline passages, esp. Rom. 5:5; 8:12–17; Eph. 3:16–19) demonstrates that the filial intimacy with God that believers come to experience through the Spirit of adoption as daughters and sons has become the fundamental formative force in the believers’ lives and empowers them for religious-ethical living as it is demanded in 5:25b and the rest of the letter.

This thesis is further strengthened by a brief look at the parallel of Galatians 4:4–6 in Romans 8:12–17, for here Paul spells out the ethical aspect of the empowering through the relational work of the Spirit in more detail than in Galatians 4 and 5:25. Paul grounds his implicit imperative to put to death the deeds of the body “through the Spirit” (πνεύματι τὰς πράξεις τοῦ

37. Cf. J. M. G. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth: A Study of Paul's Ethics in Galatians*, SNTW (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1988), 73–74.

38. Cf. J. D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1–8*, WBC 38A (Dallas: Word, 1988), 460: Sonship, including adoptive sonship, “speaks of freedom and intimate mutual trust, where filial concern can be assumed to provide the motivation and direction for living, and conduct be guided by spontaneous love rather than by law.” The Spirit provides all the necessary guidance in the fight against the flesh.

39. On the transforming and empowering character of intimate relationships in Paul, see Rabens, *Holy Spirit and Ethics*, esp. 133–38.

40. *Ibid.*, 234–35. Cf. B. W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God: The Transformation of Identity in Galatians* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 62.

σώματος θανατούτε [Rom. 8:13]; cf. Gal. 5:25 πνεύματι καὶ στοιχῶμεν) in the experiential reality of the Spirit's leading (8:14), freeing from fear, enabling to cry "Abba!" (8:15), and bearing witness to one's being a child of God (8:16). This line of reasoning is indicated through the employment of the causative conjunction "because" (γάρ) at the beginning of both verses 14 and 15. Paul can describe the Spirit in verse 13 as an instrument (πνεύματι) for fighting temptations because the (implicit) indicatives of the Spirit's relational work in the following verses enable (and require) such ethical behavior. Thus we can see that the quality and character of these Spirit-wrought experiences of love and fellowship in the family of faith<sup>41</sup> function in both Romans 8 and Galatians 4–5 as empowerment as well as criteria for living as children of God.

### Conclusion and Further Implications

It is not necessary to entirely give up the perspective on Pauline ethics that has come to be known as "indicative" and "imperative," as long as it is clear that this is merely *one aspect* of the substructure of Paul's theology-and-ethics. However, it is better to speak of "(implicit) indicative and imperative," because not all of Paul's language relating to divine enabling and human obligation is expressed with grammatical indicatives and imperatives. Moreover, with the help of Zimmermann's nuanced model of "implicit ethics," we have demonstrated that the "(implicit) indicative and imperative" approach to Paul's ethics in Galatians is only one (though important) aspect of the grounds for ethical life as it is presented in the epistle. Zimmermann's model, however, needs to be supplemented with the aspect of divine agency, which should be added to his category 6, "The Carrier of Ethical Judgments," currently focusing solely on human agency. The interplay of both agencies is reflected in, though not identical to, the concept of (implicit) indicative and imperative.

In Galatians we have discovered that the correlation between (implicit) indicative and imperative appears to be *more dynamic* than an approach that centers on the change of being of the believer. The relational approach that I have suggested reckons with the continuous transforming and empowering dynamic of the Spirit's drawing people closer to God and to one another. Applying this to Galatians 5:25, we can paraphrase Paul's words as saying, "Because we experience the transforming and empowering dynamic of the Spirit in our lives—by the Spirit's creation of filial intimacy with God and the

41. The movement from "you" to "we" is evident in Gal. 4:6: "Because *you* are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into *our* hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'" This shared experience existentially reinforces the corporate identity of the members of the community as children of God.

family of faith—we can and should orientate our lives toward precisely those values that are manifested among us through the expressions of life that the Spirit inspires." "Walking in the Spirit" thus means continuing in the gift of "life in the Spirit" that has already been given.

The results of this investigation of Paul's Letter to the Galatians have *further implications* for the broader theological debate regarding the relation of (implicit) indicative and imperative and of divine and human agency in Paul.<sup>42</sup> First of all, we need to emphasize that the transferal into the realm of influence of the Spirit has established new realities. The (implicit) indicative of "living in the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25a), or of the Spirit's being in the believer and the believer's being in the Spirit (Rom. 8:9), is not a state of affairs that would need to be "actualized" through the deeds of the believer.<sup>43</sup> There is an existential element in the Spirit-inspired Abba-cry of the believer (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6); nevertheless, the existential encounter with God as one's Father is what gives rise to this cry as part of a continual filial relationship with God. What matters to Paul is therefore not just a new self-understanding as *υιοί τοῦ θεοῦ*, but the ongoing experience of God's relating to believers as his sons and daughters through the Spirit. The experience of being part of God's family is part and parcel of this reality.

Therefore, one of the strengths of this model over against the line of scholarship that seems to collapse the "indicative" into the ethical "imperative" (as, e.g., Bultmann and those who have followed him)<sup>44</sup> is that it reckons with the reality of God's empowering presence—of a transcendent God who becomes immanent in his Spirit, but is not lost in the immanence of human relationships. Accordingly, the kind of relationality that is at the heart of Paul's Spirit-ethics in Galatians is one in which Spirit and believer do not fuse but remain independent subjects (cf. Barclay's category 3).

The new relational realities are established *by the Spirit*, not by the believer's ethical actions or feelings of being emotionally close to God. Nevertheless, while the precedence of the work of the Spirit in the ethical life of Christians needs to be maintained, the role of Paul's (implicit) ethical imperatives should not be undermined. The Spirit draws believers closer to God and to the faith community—both initially at conversion-initiation and continuously in the course of the Christian life. However, it is *the believer* who is transformed and empowered in the course of this process (cf. the continuation of human

42. These further implications are largely drawn from my study of the Pauline corpus in Rabens, *Holy Spirit and Ethics*; see esp. chap. 7.

43. Pace R. Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, vol. 1 (London: SCM, 1952), 336.

44. E.g., K. Stalder, *Das Werk des Geistes in der Heiligung bei Paulus* (Zurich: Theologischer Verlag Zürich, 1962).

agency in Gal. 2:20c: “And the *life I now live* in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God” [NRSV, emphasis added]). Accordingly, it is not the Spirit who lives ethically within the believer. Paul does not present the believer as needing, in the sense of a fusion, to “tune in” to the ethical conduct of the Spirit at the core of the person’s being.<sup>45</sup> Rather, the Spirit enables ethical living by drawing believers into the loving and empowering presence of the divine and of the community of faith. The moral character and the ethical actions are that of the believer, but they are lived within these loving relationships and can to a large extent be regarded as an outflow of the continual experience of love (cf. Rom. 5:5; 15:30; Eph. 3:16–19). Nonetheless, it seems to be possible to resist the relational work of the Spirit. In other words, resisting the love of God and of Christ and defying the encouragement that can be experienced in the church (see 1 Cor. 12:7; Phil. 2:1–3; etc.) will mean missing out on the ethically transforming and empowering work of the Spirit.

Finally, it is now possible to reply to Fee’s contention that Paul does not provide enough details for us to comprehend how one can practically do what Paul asks for, namely, to walk by the Spirit.<sup>46</sup> While it needs to be granted that Paul does not offer a psychological analysis of the conscious or subconscious cognitions of the individual in the process of change,<sup>47</sup> it nonetheless is possible to draw out a number of significant components of relational transformation and empowering. Most fundamentally, such a relational approach itself provides sufficient details about how change and empowering can happen. Psychological studies both cohere with this observation and offer further insights into the “mechanics” of how relationships transform and empower people.<sup>48</sup> As believers let the Spirit draw them into transforming and empowering re-

45. Cf. Barclay’s apt summary in “‘By the Grace of God I Am What I Am’: Grace and Agency in Philo and Paul,” in Barclay and Gathercole, eds., *Divine and Human Agency in Paul*, 156: “It appears that human agency is the *necessary expression* of the life of the Spirit, and certainly not its antithesis; the two are not mutually exclusive as if in some zero-sum calculation. And it is necessary not only because God’s grace engages the will and action of the believer, but also because it is always possible to reject the grace of God.” Barclay asks further how this human agency as reconstituted in Christ may be comprehended. He explains that “although in one sense we may speak properly of a ‘dual agency,’ in non-exclusive relation, this would be inadequately expressed as the co-operation or conjunction of two agents, or as the relationship of gift and response, if it is thereby forgotten that the ‘response’ continues to be activated by grace, and the believers’ agency *embedded within* that of the Spirit.”

46. Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence*, 433.

47. Cf. A. Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (London: Black, 1953), 296–97.

48. See, e.g., R. A. Hinde, *Towards Understanding Relationships*, EMSP 18 (London: Academic Press, 1979), 4, 14, 273, 326; J. Bowlby, *A Secure Base: Parent-Child Attachment and Healthy Human Development* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 119–36; H. LaFollette, *Personal Relationships: Love, Identity, and Morality* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), 89–90, 197–99, 207–9; P. R. Shaver and M. Mikulincer, “Attachment Theory, Individual Psychodynamics, and Relationship

relationships with God and the community of faith and then live according to the values set forth by Paul's gospel, the depth of their relationship to God and others will increase. Believers are thus further empowered as they put Paul's (implicit) ethical imperatives (which are, in fact, aimed at deepening their relationships to God and others) into practice. Human "walking by the Spirit" (Gal. 5:25b) is hence not only a continuation of "life in the Spirit" but also that which ensures a further unfolding of the divine gift of "life in the Spirit" (5:25a).

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Functioning," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Personal Relationships*, ed. A. L. Vangelisti and D. Perlman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 251–71.