Sensitivity towards Outsiders

Edited by
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Sensitivity towards Outsiders

Exploring the Dynamic Relationship
between Mission and Ethics in the
New Testament and Early Christianity

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Dieter T. Roth and Christopher M. Hays

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Preface

The seeds of this volume were sown in September 2011 at the Prestige FOKUS Lectures on Mission and Ethics held at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. These lectures take place twice a decade within the context of the Mission and Ethics research project of Prof. Jacobus (Kobus) Kok and have the aim of providing cutting-edge research for the benefit of academy, church, and society by bringing developed-world and developing-world scholars together in mutual learning experiences. The 2011 conference revolved around the dynamic relationship between mission and ethics in the New Testament and early Christianity, with a focus on sensitivity towards outsiders. Many thanks to University of Pretoria for the Staff Development Grant which helped make this conference possible.

Earlier versions of the aforementioned conference papers were previously published with the South African journal *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies*. We would like to thank Prof. Dr. Andries Van Aarde, editor-in-chief of *HTS*, for permission to reuse, revise, and expand these articles in the present volume. Footnotes at the outset of the relevant chapters refer the reader to the corresponding journal article.

We sincerely thank Prof. Dr. Jörg Frey and Dr. Henning Ziebritzki for accepting this book in the WUNT II series, as well as Prof. Dr. Tobias Nicklas, who, as a co-editor of this volume, was instrumental in both encouraging the pursuit of publication in this prestigious series and presenting this project to the WUNT II editors. We are particularly grateful to Mohr Siebeck for agreeing to include not only a revised and expanded form of the handful of articles originally appearing in *HTS Teologiese Studies/Theological Studies* but also for patiently working with us as the volume tripled in size so as to include nearly twenty hitherto unpublished essays on important topics and texts not addressed at the 2011 Prestige FOKUS Lectures. These additional, peer-reviewed essays provided the opportunity to include analyses of both further New Testament texts and literature from the second century C.E. As a result, a significantly more comprehensive consideration of mission and ethics grew out of the project which was initiated in South Africa and came to fruition in this volume.

From the inception of this volume in Pretoria in 2011 to the final work including the contributions of scholars hailing from numerous countries and multiple continents it is our hope that the vision of global, collaborative scholarship is not only reflected but also furthered through this book.

Pretoria, Regensburg, Mainz,   Jacobus Kok
& Medellín, January 2014   Tobias Nicklas
                                    Dieter T. Roth
                                    Christopher M. Hays

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Introduction

Sensitivity towards Outsiders and the Dynamic Relationship between Mission and Ethics/Ethos

Jacobus (Kobus) Kok and Dieter T. Roth
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A. General Introduction and Conceptual Background

In September 2011 the Prestige FOKUS Lectures[1] on Mission and Ethics was held at the University of Pretoria in South Africa. The conference revolved around the dynamic relationship between mission and ethics in the New Testament and early Christianity with a focus on sensitivity towards outsiders. The research question centered on the role that identity (cf. Van der Watt 2006:v-vii), ethos,[2] and implicit ethics[3] played in the missionary dimension of the early church. This volume presents both published versions of papers presented at this conference and contributions by scholars from around the globe who were invited to contribute chapters on topics from within their own respective fields of specialization.

1. Becoming Outsiders: 'Converting' to Christianity?

Wayne Meeks (1993:18) once remarked that early Christianity was a 'moral movement of converts' who had turned to serve the living and true God (cf.

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[1] The Prestige FOKUS Lectures in New Testament Ethics take place twice a decade at the University of Pretoria within the context of the Mission and Ethics research project of Prof. Jacobus (Kobus) Kok. It is the aim of these lectures to provide cutting-edge research for the benefit of academy, church, and society by bringing developed world and developing world scholars together in mutual learning experiences.

[2] Wolter (2009:127) sees ethos as '[E]inen Kanon von institutionalisierten Handlungen, die innerhalb eines bestimmten sozialen Systems in Geltung stehen. Ihnen wird Verbindlichkeit zugeschrieben, weil allererst durch solche Handlungen eine bestimmte Gruppe als solche erkennbar und erfahrbar wird.' The ethos of a group consists of an inclusive and exclusive ethos. The former is shared with the rest of the society while the latter serves to distinguish the group from outsiders.

[3] For the understanding of implicit ethics, see Horn and Zimmermann's (2009) book on the subject.

1 Th 1:9). Such language could be taken to mean that earliest Christianity was a movement that consisted of converts who had radically changed their lives and who had turned from one or no religion towards 'Christianity' as a new religion or group.

Michael Hogg (quoted by Trebilco 2013:2)[4] argues that 'Groups exist by virtue of there being outgroups'. A 'conversion' along the lines described above would have abruptly turned previous insiders into outsiders. In such a case one's own family members could suddenly fall into the category of 'outsiders'. But was that the way early Christian identity construction took place?

On one of my (J. Kok) recent academic tours to Turkey, our group had the opportunity to visit the ruins of (ancient) Ephesus. At the site where it is believed that John the apostle was buried, there is a baptismal font in the form of a cross. The tour guide explained to the group that early Christians would symbolically turn their back towards the direction of the temple of Artemis and their former life, walk down into the middle of the cross, be baptized, and then walk out of the baptismal font by climbing steps in the direction of the sun (east) into a new way of life. This typical example supports the idea that early Christian conversion represented a radical move from one religion to that of another. At first glance this idea seems plausible and unproblematic. There are, however, apart from the historical anachronism in this example,[5] some significant objections to this view, at least as it relates to earliest Christianity.

First of all, this view of a radical 'conversion' presupposes that it is possible to speak of early Christ-followers as being 'Christians' and that they have 'turned' from one religion (for instance Judaism) to another religion, namely 'Christianity'. It furthermore presupposes an essentialized view of Christianity as a fixed 'religion' at that time.[6] What this view fails to address adequately is the fact that Christianity as a religion developed

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[4] This citation was originally accessed through the referenced conference paper of Trebilco. The paper does not indicate the source; however, the citation is from Hogg (2001:56).

[5] The Artemis temple was destroyed by the Goths in 262 C.E. and the baptismal font referred to above dates from much later. However, the splendor of the former temple was still known in the fifth century C.E. and continued to be presented in contrast to the Christian movement/cult. At the beginning of the fifth century (402 C.E.), Prudentius states that 'the huntress maid resigned Ephesus to thee [Christ]' (cf. *Against Symmachus*, II.495) (source: http://penelope.uchicago.edu/~grout/encyclopaedia_romana/greece/paganism/artemis.html, accessed on 07 October 2013).

[6] One could even ask whether there has ever been one fixed 'religion' with reference to 'Christianity'? A related question is whether one should employ the word 'religion' to describe movements in antiquity, as it may be more accurate to speak of 'cults'. In this regard, see Nongbri (2013) who provides a history of the concept 'religion' and argues that it is anachronistic to 'insert the concept "religion" into ancient texts' (Nongbri 2013:25).

slowly and over time and that the boundaries between insiders and outsiders were not fixed, but rather changed in different contexts.

Recently some scholars have raised the question of whether it is even possible to speak of 'Christianity' as having been a self-contained (established) 'religion' in Paul's lifetime. Many scholars have pointed out that there is no indication that Jesus intended to establish a new religion. Indeed, Jesus himself was not a Christian but a Jew. The term 'Christian' (Χριστιανός) is first used decades after the death of Jesus (Acts 11:26; 1 Pt 4:16; cf. Ignatius of Antioch in *Mag.* 4, 10.1). The term 'Christianity' (ὁ Χριστιανισμός), to our knowledge, is first used by Ignatius of Antioch in the second century (cf. *Mag* 10.3 & *Rom* 3.3). Concerning Paul, Jörg Frey (2012:57–96) has made a strong case that it is factually incorrect to refer to Paul as having converted from Judaism to Christianity (cf. also Stendahl 1976:7–11).[7] It is more accurate to see Paul as having stayed a Jew from the beginning until the end of his life and not to view him as having made a clean break with Judaism. To understand Paul we need to see him in the first place *as a Jew,* says Frey (Frey 2012:57). Judith Lieu (2004:1) and others, including Tobias Nicklas in the present volume (pp. 490–491; cf. Nicklas 2014), state that it is simply anachronistic to speak of the earliest Christ-followers as being 'Christian'. Lieu (2004:1), referring to Polycarp of Smyrna (mid-second century; cf. *Mart. Poly.* 10.1; 12.1–2) who 'seals his own death warrant' by proclaiming that he is a 'Christian', asks: 'At what point in the century or more since the death of Jesus and the earliest preaching of his followers did this become possible?' In other words, how and when did the sense of being 'a Christian' emerge? Related to these questions, and against the background of the growing awareness of the Jewishness of Jesus and that of his first followers, one could very well ask 'When exactly did Christianity cease to be part of Judaism?' (Lieu 2004:3). Or, rephrased in the language of our title, when were Christians labeled as being 'outsiders' and not part of the 'us' of Judaism and *vice versa*? In the time of Polycarp, such a 'parting of the ways' seems to have taken place already (cf. Dunn 1999; Boyarin 2004). However, much of that which we find in the New Testament still reflects a context in which a definitive differentiation has *not yet* taken place. In this sense, there are significant challenges in referring to the 'parting of the ways' without seriously taking

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[7] In 1963 Krister Stendahl delivered a famous essay in which he argued that Paul's Damascus narrative should rather be seen as a story about a new calling *within* Judaism, and not as a *conversion out of* Judaism. This essay and several others were published in a collection of essays which appeared in 1976. The seminal article (1963) and consequent book (1976) gave new direction to the discussion regarding Paul's relation to Judaism and the parting of the ways. Much of the modern perspective can be traced back to this seminal essay.

certain problematic realities into account. In the early stages, the Christian movement was still part of, and in a dialogical relationship with, Judaism. According to many, including Lieu (2004:3), it is very difficult to assign *a* date when *the* separation took place.[8] One has to acknowledge that both the emergence of the movement that would later be known as 'Christianity' and the sense of being 'a Christian' was a gradual *process of social construction* that developed over an extended period of time. The implication of this perspective is that it is not correct to think of the Christian movement as having been a clearly defined, self-contained entity in its earliest decades. Furthermore, New Testament texts present *interpreted* and *creative* history; in other words, they are not merely historically *descriptive*, but are *co-creative* and *subjective representations* of particular authors' views at particular points in time. We, therefore, have 'snapshots' of 'Christian' identity and the ethos that should putatively flow from this identity. The texts in the New Testament, as well as those outside of the New Testament, point to the fact that there were, at least along some lines, different expressions of 'Christianity' among the earliest Christ-followers. Perhaps there is a certain sense in which one can speak of earliest 'Christianities' when discussing aspects of early Christian identity constructions and expressions. By implication some early 'Christians' would have labeled other 'Christians' as 'outsiders', a state of affairs which is attested in a number of New Testament epistles making reference to conflicts within 'Christian' communities. It would appear, therefore, that from the very beginning the movement was diverse in nature and that different groups defined their respective conceptions of identity and ethos in different ways (cf. Brakke 2010).[9] Such differences naturally led to varying constructions and descriptions of the identity of 'outsiders'.

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[8] A further point to consider is that recently some scholars have pointed out that the term 'parting of the ways' itself might be rather problematic. See, e.g., Becker & Yoshiko Reed (eds. 2007) as well as Nicklas (2014).

[9] Brakke (2010:7) refers to the work of the church historian Philip Rousseau, who uses the metaphor of a horse race to describe the tendency in scholarship to construct narratives concerning the victory of proto-orthodox Christianity over its rivals in the manner in which one describes the 'long shot' who eventually won when watching a replay of the race. One's gaze is fixed upon the horse one knows to have won as that horse unexpectedly moves forward through the field. According to Brakke, this is a misguided way of looking at the history of Christianity. Brakke (2010:7) opines that when using the metaphor of a horse race to think of the development of early Christianity: '[W]e cannot really see the starting gate, but around the year 100 C.E., numerous independent Christian communities come into view, none with a fully convincing claim to exclusive authenticity as "true Christianity". They jostle for position and argue with one another about which of them are the true Christians.' Of course, Brakke recognizes that 'in hindsight we can identify the "horse" that will emerge as the dominant orthodoxy by the end of the third century: it is represented by Irenaeus and other early Christians such as Justin Martyr, Clement of

II. The On-Going Construction of Early Christian Identity and Boundaries

As a 'new' movement, early Christ-followers had to construct their identity and social boundaries. Group identity construction is a gradual process that is extended over time and space and one that is always in a dialogical relationship with others. In the process of identity formation, according to Social Identity Theory, stereotypical categories of insiders and outsiders are created in the process of group formation and maintenance.[10] Part of constructing identity and a distinct sense of self entails the creation of inclusive and exclusive boundary markers. Inclusive boundary markers are shared with the rest of society and keep the group integrated with its *Umwelt* (Wolter 2009:129). Exclusive boundary markers refer to the distinctive ethos of the group that distinguishes it from outsiders and strengthens group identity for insiders. Wolter's (2009:129) comments, which relate to mission on the one hand and sensitivity towards outsiders on the other, are worth quoting here at some length:

> Insofern jede Gruppe aber auch darauf angewiesen ist, mit und innerhalb der Mehrheitsgesellschaft zu existieren, müssen zu ihrem Handlungsrepertoire zumindest partiell auch Elemente eines inklusiven Ethos gehören. Das ethische Profil einer Gruppe wird darum immer durch das spezifische Mischungsverhältnis zwischen exclusiven und inklusiven Handlungen in ihrem Ethos bestimmt. Dabei besteht zwischen dem Ausmaß ihrer Integration in die Mehrheitsgesellschaft und dem jeweiligen Anteil von inklusiven und von exclusive Handlungen an ihrem Ethos ein unmittelbarer Zusammenhang: Je größer der Anteil der inklusiven Handlungen an ihrem Ethos ist, desto integrierter ist sie, je größer der Anteil der exklusiven Handlungen ist, desto desintegrierter ist sie.

Paul Trebilco (2013:1) convincingly argues that early Christ-followers had to wrestle with significant questions and concerns such as: 'Deciding who was an outsider, defining and understanding "the outsider", grappling with how to represent outsiders to "ourselves" and negotiating across group boundaries'. In these ways early Christ-followers were involved with the *on-going* creation and definition of the boundaries of the movement and the creative negotiation of their identity in speech and in actions (ethos) (Trebilco 2013:1).

Early New Testament authors like Paul creatively expressed and guided the formation of the group's identity by using kinship language (cf. 1 Th 1:4

Alexandria, Origen, Hippolytus of Rome, Tertullian (before he "became a Montanist"), and others. We call this form of Christianity "proto-orthodoxy", because there is not yet an orthodoxy, but it will grow into it. We watch proto-orthodoxy as it competes with and overcomes its rivals, setting itself up as the horse that Constantine will ride, so to speak.' The point, however, is that when recounting the history of early Christianity, we should embrace a view which "recognizes diversity and tries not to privilege the proto-orthodox horse, which is just one of several competitors in the race" (Brakke 2010:8).

[10] For more introductory information and background on social identity theory, see Nicholas (2008:267–271).

– ἀδελφοί) and the idea of 'turning' (ἐπεστρέφω) away from one orientation (ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων) towards another (πρὸς τὸν θεόν), the latter being the 'in-group' (cf. 1 Th 1:9). At first glance, the 'turning' of Christ-followers to form an alternative kinship family implies and denotes the movement from one orientation to another. In the ancient dyadic or group-oriented world, such a perspective may almost seem self-evident; yet, this is not such a simple matter. From what exactly did people 'turn away' and to what alternative did they 'turn' instead? How did that kind of 'turning' function practically in the lives of believers, and did it always result in a clean break?

III. Sensitivity towards Outsiders from a 'Dialogical Self' Perspective

An approach that may be helpful in terms of answering the questions raised above is to consider identity questions from the perspective of Dialogical Self Theory (cf. Hermans and Hermans-Konopka 2010:1–20). This theory suggests that people may concurrently hold a pluriformity of identities and socio-cultural loyalties within themselves. According to DST, the self is not fixed or monolithic, but rather polyphonic and extended over time and space while continually developing. Furthermore, the self is polyphonic in nature so that the 'I' is an attempt to integrate *different identities* in different contexts and times (cf. Lindegger & Alberts 2012:219–220).[11] In other words, the 'I' is made up of several 'I'-positions that are part of the extended and developing (dialogical) self. Furthermore, each 'I'-position is 'located in a particular spatial and temporal plane' (Lindegger and Alberts 2012:220). Consequently, the self is 'successively or even simultaneously located in different positions in an imaginal landscape and is able to move between these positions' (Hermans and Kempen 1993:44, in Lindegger and Alberts 2012:220). As such, the self has different roles and positions; we, for instance, have roles as a husband, a father, an academic, etc. Sometimes these different roles or identities, and the ethos related to a particular identity, are in conflict with each other. This is true for individuals and for groups and may help us to think about the dynamic relationship between mission and ethos/ethics in a more nuanced way.

In the contemporary context, the experience of the 'Dialogical Self' is clearly seen in South Africa where we are often reminded of the reality of multiple dialogical self positions. Many Black Africans who live and work

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[11] Lindegger and Alberts (2012:219–220) remark that '[T]he challenge for each person is the construction of an effective dialogue of these various voices or *I*-positions with each other and with the other people in each version of the story, as part of the construction and maintenance of the self. It is the dialogical quality which is the ultimate defining quality of the self. This interaction of the multiple voices, or *I*-positions, of self may find resolution in various forms, one being the harmonious dialogue of the various voices, and another being the privileging of some voices and the subordination of others'.

in the contemporary post-apartheid (i.e. after 1994) context reflect on the dialogical process going on in their own lives as they move between a post-modern Western worldview in the corporate environment in which they work on a daily basis and that of the traditional African socio-cultural con-text and worldview in which they often also have to function. The well-known John Mbiti, as told by my (J. Kok's) African colleague Elijah Mahlangu, once remarked that many Africans are 'Christians by day, but traditionalists by night'. One of my former (African) Christian students, who is an executive in a large consulting firm in Pretoria, told me how he often has to take part in 'pagan' African rituals in the rural area of Natal where his father is a traditional African chief. When he goes home, he has to, in his words, 'leave his Western thinking hat behind' and 'enculturate into his tribal African identity, putting on his African hat' and 'adopt' the behavioral patterns of his tribe's ethos. His cognitive 'turn' to Western education and philosophy is often in tension with his 'traditional' upbringing and the philosophy of his family and African culture. He is confronted with 'nego-tiating' between the different social identities he has to embody – that of an accountant and being the son of a prominent African chief. The dialogical tension within him is only heightened when, desiring to avoid bringing shame on himself and his family by going against his father's will, questions of the 'fusion' of traditional spirituality with traditional Christianity or perspectives on the struggle against apartheid are considered. Clearly there are considerable challenges for this young man as he negotiates between his different roles and identities.

Perhaps this example provides an analogy for the dialogical tensions that the early Christ-followers may have faced and helps us to reflect on the manner in which early Christ-followers had to negotiate between their different identities and their relationship to 'outsiders'. In such a negotia-tion, the separation between 'Christianity' and previous socio-cultural identities may not have been as definitive and clear-cut as once thought.

For instance, it is only natural to assume that some believers remained a part of the families and social structures in which they existed before they came to faith in Jesus. In other words, these early 'Christians' might have experienced the dialogical tension of being, e.g., a wife to a pagan man and at the same time being a Christ-follower who had become part of a new kinship family. At least in 1 Peter 3 this seems to have been the case. In our opinion, therefore, it is problematic to think of the earliest Christ-followers as having had an essentialized sense of self and that their conversion always included a radical and complete turning from one religion to another. In the example of 1 Peter 3 for instance, the 'converted' wives remained the wives of their pagan husbands and all that that entailed in a paternalistic society. These women probably did not instantly become strangers to their husbands

but still kept on doing what was expected of them as they engaged socially with friends and neighbors. The implicit reader of the New Testament texts, however, knows that there must have been a *dialogical tension* within these women as they had to negotiate the plurality of their old and new identities and reflect upon where to draw lines between those identities.

Consequently, we could argue, in the case of 1 Peter, that these same women had to keep on showing hospitality to old pagan friends, although they might have felt that in some strange way they were no longer at home in these pagan contexts, precisely because of their new sense of self and their loyalty to the Christ-following movement. It is very interesting to note how the author of 1 Peter 3 constructs what may be considered to be a 'third alternative', incorporating both ethics and mission by encouraging the believing wives to be even more excellent in their (inclusive) conduct/social ethos so that they might win over their husbands. Here the missionary dimension embraces the third alternative through the vehicle of a commendable and inclusive social ethos. In this example it is readily apparent how the missionary and ethical dimensions interrelate in a dynamic dialogical way. The same is apparent in 1 Corinthians 7, where Paul presupposes that some believers will still be intimately involved with family members who are still caught up in their pagan ways and are labelled οἱ ἄπιστοι (cf. 1 Cor 7:12–15; see Trebilco 2013:5). It does not require much imagination to envision the tension with which these individuals were confronted. From one point of view their families are insiders, but from another point of view they have become outsiders.

A further example is found in Colossians, where we see how the author tried to steer the readers away from a view that he found problematic, a view that he believed entailed a capitulation to empty deceit and human tradition and involved a grievous misunderstanding of Christology (cf. Col 1:15–20; 2:8). The author was concerned about the possibility of welcoming the perspectives and influence of some people whom the Colossians considered 'insiders', but who were, according to the author of Colossians, actually 'outsiders'. This shows us that the boundaries between insiders and outsiders were perhaps rather complicated, especially when considered with attention to Dialogical Self theory. Furthermore, we might ask whether the construction of the 'other' in some Christian literature actually reflects the reality that was experienced in everyday life (cf. the essay of Nicklas below, pp. 490–504)? How did the process of 'negotiation' or dialogue between the different socio-cultural identities take place, and how did it change in different contexts?

The New Testament documents date from different time periods and originated in different contexts. Significant events like the destruction of the temple would be expected to have influenced the construction of self and

others. In the space of a few decades former outsiders could become insiders and *vice versa*. It is, therefore, important to reflect on the way early Christian identity formation took place over an extended period of time as different Christ-following communities had to renegotiate their own identity, social boundaries, and their view of outsiders in different contexts.

For this reason, in this book we speak of the *dynamic,* i.e., *changing,* relationship between mission and ethics and the way early Christ-followers constructed and reconstructed social and theological boundaries in their attempts to *shape/direct* the readers' thought (and actions) regarding sensitivity towards outsiders.[12] Some books of the New Testament seem to have *no explicit focus* on or sensitivity towards outsiders. The question is *why* this is the case. Others, like 1 Corinthians (7:12–15; 14:22–25) and 1 Peter 3, demonstrate 'a prominent degree of openness to these outsiders who are so labelled' (Trebilco 2013:5). These New Testament authors do not speak of outsiders in a vilifying way that seeks to exclude social interaction, but encourages missional engagement with outsiders in an effort to 'win them over' (cf. Kok 2012:1–10). Paul, for instance, tends to 'encourage social differentiation from these clearly labelled "outsiders" but without a corresponding social distance' (Trebilco 2013:5). In fact, one could argue that Paul encourages the transcending of social boundaries – an ethos that reminds us of the manner in which Jesus is presented as engaging with outsiders (cf. Jn 4:1–42; Lk 15:1–2), an engagement which implies a missional motivation. Jesus deconstructed otherness and constructed sameness – he was engaged in 'un-othering the other' (Trebilco 2013:11). The categorical 'other', the sinners, labeled 'outsiders', suddenly became insiders in the presence of Jesus, who crossed multiple boundaries in his interaction with them. There are many examples of such behavior in the Gospels, one being Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1–42. Jesus' actions transcended social boundaries, transformed 'profane space' into holy space, and innovatively created a new framework and language – a third alternative – for determining who is 'in' and who is 'out' (cf. Trebilco 2013:11; Kok 2014).

We see the same dynamics in Galatians 3:28, 1 Corinthians 12:13, and Colossians 3:11, where formerly exclusive social groups are addressed with

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[12] This title was inspired by Prof. Dr. Andrie Du Toit who delivered a paper with the same title at the September 2011 conference on mission and ethics in Pretoria. The topic resonated with many of us and eventually became an important lens through which we approached the issue of mission and ethics. At this conference Abraham Malherbe led us to consider the subject of sensitivity towards outsiders; in this respect his paper on the Thessalonian correspondence furthered his already well-known approach to Paul who was 'gentle as a nurse'. Further stimuli of this sort came from the comments of Cilliers Breytenbach, who mentioned early Christian grave inscriptions that accentuated the dimension of sensitivity to outsiders.

a new understanding concerning one's identity (Col 3:10). The question, however, is the extent to which such views functioned in the real, day-to-day lives of believers. On the other hand, there are many examples of ways in which early Christ-followers would create clear boundaries by linguistically labeling outsiders in a pejorative manner, as in John 8:44, where the opponents are labeled 'children of the devil'. We also find that Paul at times felt it necessary to create stronger social boundaries in an effort to strengthen the identity of the group, as Trebilco (2013:5) has illustrated by delineating the creative way that the term οἱ ἄπιστοι ('unbelievers') was used in contrast with οἱ πιστεύοντες ('the believers') (cf. 1 Cor 1:21; 14:22). The use of the terms οἱ ἄπιστοι and οἱ πιστεύοντες creates a sense of insiders and outsiders and attempts to establish some sort of distinct social boundary. In the light of such phenomena, we are obliged to acknowledge and try to explain the *dynamic* relationship between mission and ethics in early Christianity, as well as the sensitivity Christians displayed (and sometimes neglected) in relation to those they considered outsiders. Such inquiry has produced a fascinating and stimulating field of research, to which the present collection aims to make a significant and systematic contribution.

B. Aim of the Volume

One of the goals of this volume is to illustrate and explore the *plurality* of early Christian voices and the *dynamic relationship* between mission and ethics (inclusivity, exclusivity, and sensitivity to outsiders or the lack thereof). In our view there is an ebb and flow between inclusivity and exclusivity, which *inter alia* needs to be investigated against the background of early Christianity's rapidly changing religio-historical milieu.

The authors who participated in the writing of this book were given the opportunity to address the research question with a methodology of their own choosing. For this very reason the book's subtitle is '*Exploring* the Dynamic Relationship between Mission and Ethics'. The purpose is to create and explore new insights as well as to unpack and explain the ebb and flow of the dynamic, changing relationship between mission and ethics. Some chapters have done much to problematize our understanding of the dynamic relationship between mission and ethics and to illustrate that there is indeed a need to investigate these aspects in more depth.

This book includes contributions from biblical scholars (both Old and New Testament), scholars of the early church, a missiologist (Niemandt), a South African practical theologian who also specializes in philosophy (Meylahn), as well as a Catholic moral theologian (Schlögel).

The purpose of the volume is to create space in which the *dynamic relationship between mission and ethics* could be developed further. The various sections of the book reveal that scholarship in this area is applicable not only to historically-oriented fields such as biblical studies and patristics, but also to the fields of contemporary missiology and practical theology. This is the case not only in countries like South Africa, with its on-going struggle for social cohesion, other-regard, and reconciliation (cf. Wepener 2009), but also in many communities and contexts in our increasingly globalized world.

In 2015, the second Prestige FOKUS Lectures on Mission and Ethics will be held in South Africa. During this conference the dynamic relationship between mission and ethics will continue to be explored with a focus on the New Testament's reception in the first four centuries of the Common Era. The tentative title of the 2015 Prestige FOKUS Lectures to be held at the Kruger National Park in South Africa is: *Transcending Boundaries: New Perspectives on the Dialogical Construction, Maintenance, and Transcendence of Identities*[13] *and Social Boundaries in the First Four Centuries* (up to the time of Theodosius I). According to scholars like Rodney Stark (1996), early Christianity expanded rapidly in the first four centuries because of its radical ethos of other-regard and hospitality. On the other hand, the history of early Christianity also provides evidence of alterity,[14] i.e., the drawing of boundaries and the construction of 'outsiders' that are often vilified in Christian texts. The conference will reflect on what this state of affairs reveals concerning the manner in which Christians went about the innovation, maintenance, and transcendence of social and ethnic boundaries during the formative years of a movement that would eventually become the state religion of the Roman Empire.

C. The Contributions

In what follows we offer a short overview of the book, with descriptions of the contributions largely drawn from the abstracts of the chapters provided by the authors themselves.

Part One: Sensitivity towards Outsiders in Philo and the Old Testament

The first section of the book deals with sensitivity towards outsiders in the Old Testament and in Philo of Alexandria. In these chapters it becomes clear

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[13] See the work of Moxnes (2012:147–172) in which he illuminates the complexity of identities in Galilee as test case and draws out the implications of that case for understandings of social identity and ethnicity in the first century.

[14] Cf. the work of Levinas (1999) on alterity and transcendence.

that the Old Testament, as the background against which much of the New Testament thinking could be interpreted, includes different manifestations of sensitivity towards outsiders within the differing historical contexts of its texts. For this reason, the relationships with outsiders were dynamic.

Ehrhard S. Gerstenberger (pp. 27–40) begins by pointing out that in modern scholarship, one can hardly assume that the Old Testament speaks with one and the same theological voice in each and every one of its many literary layers. The 'ebb and flow between inclusivity and exclusivity' is a well-known feature in Old Testament literature, as political destinies and the form of social organization of the 'people of Israel' or 'the tribes of Yahweh' or the 'populations of Israel/Judah/Jerusalem' oscillated between autonomy, semi-independence, vassalage, and colonial subordination. Gerstenberger postulates that the political shape of a (spiritual or national) 'people' should not be the only criterion to be applied in any study of the role of outsiders or strangers. Rather, sociological and religious-historical parameters should also be included in order to understand attitudes towards those who did not belong to one's own identity groups. His chapter delineates specific postures towards 'aliens' based on some of the various social organisms recognizable in the Hebrew Scriptures.

Dirk J. Human (pp. 41–58) postulates that the Hebrew Bible is characterized by diversity and ambivalence and reflects multiple theologies from various contexts and different epochs. Human first outlines an understanding of foreigners and foreignness as well as the relation between 'ethics' and the Old Testament. It is evident that the Hebrew Scriptures portray divergent perspectives between the *inclusion* and *exclusion* of 'outsiders'. Despite this dichotomy, the literature of late post-exilic and Second Temple periods overwhelmingly portray the attitude of the YHWH faith community as one of sensitivity to 'outsiders'. In this epoch of Israelite history the Torah served as constitution and the Jerusalem temple as worship center. The Torah-based ethos was meant to influence all spheres of life, including the religious, social, economic, and political realms. An openness and sensitivity to outsiders was, *inter alia,* rooted in Israel's experience of her own vulnerability as foreigners or aliens in her relationship with outsiders and in the ethics of Deuteronomy, where love for the neighbor (or the 'other') finds its premise in the love for God (Dt 6:4–9).

Gert J. Steyn (pp. 59–78)*,* in his chapter entitled 'Some Observations on Philo of Alexandria's Sensitivity to Strangers', argues that Philo's hermeneutical engagement with his Scriptures is closely influenced by his own context as a Jewish 'stranger' in Hellenistic-Roman Egypt and that he was particularly influenced by his conviction that his Torah was authoritative Scripture. Philo carefully distinguishes between different kinds/categories of 'strangers' and refers to them in a nuanced manner. Varying amounts of

'sensitivity' are accorded to different groups as Philo displays 'a positive attitude with regard to interpersonal relationships with outsiders, who, according to him, deserve respect – an attitude closely related to his interpretation of (his) Scriptures, whereby sensitivity towards strangers was seen as virtue towards God'.

Part Two: Sensitivity towards Outsiders, Mission, and Ethics in the New Testament

The second section of the volume investigates sensitivity towards outsiders and the dynamic relationship between mission and ethics in the New Testament. The New Testament contains different kinds of literature, written at different times during the middle to late first and early second century. Furthermore, the books we now know as the New Testament originated from different authors, who belonged to different Christian communities and wrote from different theological perspectives. As the Christ-movement developed and became increasingly shaped by a growing tradition, its views of outsiders were also inevitably influenced. The members of the Christ-movement also experienced times of persecution, social pressure, and exclusion, experiences which certainly challenged the way they related to, or went about embodying, sensitivity towards outsiders.

The New Testament section of the book starts off with a contribution by *Dieter T. Roth* (pp. 81–100) on Q. Roth argues that the Mission Discourse in Q, along with the parable that introduces it (Q 10:2), provides insight into how Q conceives of 'mission' as well as into the ethical principles and precepts that are part of Jesus' missional charge in the Q document. Through an intertextual approach to Q, with particular emphasis on narrative structure and imagery, his chapter considers the interplay of mission and ethics in this early Christian text.

Ernest Van Eck (pp. 101–132) considers the relationship between mission, identity, and ethics in Mark by means of a postcolonial and social-scientific reading focusing on patronage as a practice that constituted the main bond of human society in the first-century Mediterranean world. Mark's narrative world is a world of three kingdoms: the kingdoms of Rome, the Temple elite, and God. Each of these kingdoms had their own gospel(s) and patrons, claimed the favor of God or the gods, and had a mission with a concomitant ethics. Two of these gospels created a world of outsiders (that of Rome and the Temple) and one a world of insiders (the kingdom of God proclaimed and enacted by the Markan Jesus). According to Mark, the kingdom of God is the only kingdom where peace and justice are abundantly available to all, because the true Son of God – Jesus, not Caesar – is that kingdom's patron. Being part of this kingdom entailed standing up for

justice and showing compassion towards outsiders created by the 'gospels' of Rome and the Temple elite.

Andries G. van Aarde (pp. 133–150) investigates Romans 15:22−33, where 'the apostle for the Gentiles' presents the motivation for his financial contribution (*diakonia*) to the poor (*ptōchous*) in Jerusalem in terms of his mission to the nations (*ta ethnē*). Van Aarde argues that 'the righteousness of God' (*diakaiosunē tou theou*), mentioned for example in Romans 1:18−3:20, not only accentuates God's saving act (a vertical dimension) but also God's intervention on behalf of the poor and other outcasts through the apostolic mission (the horizontal dimension). After considering the background of Paul's use of the concept of righteousness and examining the various groups of marginalized people who are affected by the revelation of the righteousness of God, Van Aarde contends that the intersection of the concepts 'the righteousness of God', 'begging for the poor', and Paul's apostolic mission helps us to understand why the beginning of Romans (1:18–2:20) comes full circle in its end (15:22–33).

Heike Omerzu (pp. 151–170) investigates the sensitivity that Luke-Acts shows towards outsiders from the perspective of Social Identity Theory (SIT). Omerzu applies SIT, a branch of social psychology that explores the dynamics between group membership and identity formation, to the text of Luke-Acts, arguing that such an approach facilitates the analysis of whom this text regards as 'outsider' to the Christ group. She observes that although the transgression of ethnic identity is already employed in Luke 1–2, the Lukan Jesus primarily addresses socially deprived persons and marginalized individuals within Israel, i.e., 'Jewish outsiders', such as the poor and the sick, women and the Samaritans. It is first in Acts that the Christ-group identity is gradually extended to ethnic non-Jews, i.e., 'Gentile outsiders' (e.g., Acts 1:6–8; 10:45; 11:20–21; 13:12, 48 etc.). Acts describes vividly how proselytizing, an activity that was not common in antiquity, leads to the emergence of two subgroups of Christ believers who disagree on the conditions on which non-Jews may become members of the Christ group (esp. Acts 15). From the point of view of SIT, Peter and Paul can be regarded as prototypes of a 'superordinate' Christ-group identity that incorporates both subgroups under the terms of the Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:23–29). Omerzu thus understands the Apostolic Council as a recategorization process and sees the unbelieving and recalcitrant 'outsiders' in the remainder of the narrative as a foil to help identify the in-group.

Andreas Köstenberger (pp. 171–186) sets out to argue that mission and ethics are inextricably intertwined in John's Gospel and letters and that neither theme can be rightly understood without the other. The vantage point of the *missio Dei,* which forms an integral part of John's ethos, requires a reevaluation of the negative attitude towards unbelievers (outsiders) often

ascribed to these writings. This study is complicated by the fact that many scholars claim, on the one hand, that John had little interest in mission and cared only about the sectarian Johannine community, and, on the other hand, that there is little to no ethical material in John's Gospels and letters. The chapter therefore begins by looking at each theme independently before examining the relationship that exists between them in John's Gospel and letters.

Abraham J. Malherbe (1930–2012) (pp. 187–208) presents his view that 1 Thessalonians was written within the first few months after Paul converted his Greek readers and reflects on how Paul's ethical teaching was part of his proclamation. Paul's preaching of the gospel, intimately connected with the kind of person he was, brought about a close personal relationship between him and his converts. While a moral model for them, he nevertheless spoke for God, thus providing a theological grounding for his ethical instruction. Malherbe contends that Paul's converts would have easily and naturally related the moral dicta which Paul preached to ideas with which they were already familiar and which were derived from pagan philosophy. Paul, however, sought to provide a theological basis to the implicit motivation behind the moral dicta, thus creating a completely different motivation for similar moral dicta. It is this connection that Paul is at great pains to underline in the overtly paraenetic sections of the letter (1 Th 4 and 5).

Bert-Jan Lietaert Peerbolte (pp. 209–224) postulates that ethics, ethos, and identity were closely intertwined in the Pauline communities. He analyses the way in which Paul emphasized the Christ communities' *mental boundaries* and also transformed them into *moral boundaries*. Key to this process was the way the Pauline communities fenced themselves off from their past, as a result of the decisive historical impact of the Christ event. Lietaert Peerbolte points out that the Christ event affected both Gentile and Jewish believers, who were challenged by Paul to set boundaries between themselves and the outside world. According to Lietaert Peerbolte, Paul characterized his communities as the loyal remnant of Israel, consisting of Jews and Gentiles alike, and identified them as a group of elect 'saints'. Subsequently it is argued that Paul's perspectives on in-group morality and ethics were strongly colored by his communities' putative assumption of the identity of 'Israel'. Although the Mosaic Law was no longer the focal point for the identity of this eschatological Israel, the ethical demands Paul set forth for the members of this new Israel were highly influenced by the morality of the law. For Paul, in Lietaert Peerbolte's view, sanctification was of fundamental importance, and this ideal reflected the spirituality of the Holiness Code of Leviticus. It is here that the interrelation between mission and ethics is seen most clearly: Paul's ethical model was framed by

his awareness that he (like Christ before him) had been 'sent' by God, much in the same way the prophets of Israel had themselves been sent.

Jeremy Punt (pp. 225–245) argues that Galatians is marked by concern *about* outsiders rather than sensitivity *to* them, as Paul's gaze in this epistle is turned inward. Outsiders are not totally absent from the letter but references to them are generally harsh and unforgiving. Punt concludes that reading Galatians through the prism of Paul's reaction to Otherness – both flesh-and-blood and immaterial others – shows his concern with the community of Christ-followers and their sense of identity.

John Anthony Dunne (pp. 246–269) engages with Susan Eastman's argument that Paul's citation of Genesis 21:10 in Galatians 4:30 ('Cast out the slave woman and her son …') is not a command to remove the agitators from the congregations in Galatia (as most interpreters suggest) but is rather a warning to the Galatians not to embrace the law and circumcision. Dunne, however, contends that Paul's citation is both a command and a warning. Dunne argues that Paul believed Christian identity, both individually and corporately, to entail suffering in solidarity with the crucified Messiah and that Paul understood his own mission in relation to the Isaianic Servant. The agitators, on the other hand, had an ambiguous status within the community because they avoided persecution (Gl 6:12) and acted aggressively towards the Galatians (Gl 4:29). The language of expulsion, suffering, and identity – which is densely packed into 4:29–30 – can be seen to permeate the entire letter and demonstrates that Galatians 4:30 likely calls for the expulsion of the agitators.

Ruben Zimmermann (pp. 270–289) argues that the central question concerning how mission and ethics are related arises within the context of the understanding of ethics itself. He explains that the familiar 'indicative and imperative' model is ultimately oversimplified and inadequate for characterizing the Pauline ethic in general and for the addressing the particular issue of interrelating mission and ethics. Zimmermann draws on 1 Corinthians 9 as an example for the model of 'implicit ethics', a model which allows for a more nuanced presentation of the grounds and justification for behavior and action. Paul's proclamation of the Gospel can be located and understood within the realm of the Pauline reflection on conduct, leading Zimmerman to conclude that one is justified in speaking of an 'ethic of missions (activity)' in Paul.

Volker Rabens (pp. 290–323) discusses the dynamic relationship between inclusiveness and exclusiveness in Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians. In 2 Corinthians 5:19 Paul proclaims that God has in Christ reconciled *the cosmos* to himself. But Rabens asks whether this proclamation means that 2 Corinthians portrays the *whole world as the in-group*, such that there are no out-groups from which the community of the reconciled is separated. Is

Paul's construction of Jewish-Christian identity in fact free from the sociological dynamics which appear to be characteristic of any other group, according to which a group's sense of identity is established or enhanced by demarcation from others? With this question in mind, Rabens first considers Paul's inclusive approach to outsiders and then turns to the potential limits of Paul's inclusivism. In this context he offers insight into the highly debated passage 2 Corinthians 6:14–7:1 in order to consider how Paul navigates the dynamic relationship between inclusion and exclusion.

Tobias Nicklas and *Herbert Schlögel* (pp. 324–339), explore Paul's construction of Christian identity and the relationship of that identity with ethics. The authors argue that the radicalism of conversion to the Christ-following community should not be underplayed, since that conversion entailed drastic shifts in identity, worldview, and inter-relational dynamics. With a new believer's turn from pagan cults to the mysterious God of Israel and his crucified and risen Son, Jesus Christ, a whole coordinate system of human relationships, expectations, hopes, and norms was altered. Nicklas and Schlögel illustrate this process utilizing Paul's own description of changed relationships: turning away rom idols towards the living *God*, being *in Christ* – or together *with others* – as part of the 'body of Christ'. The authors explain that these three dimensions of new relationships – with *God,* with *Christ*, and with *fellow believers* in Christ – correspond to three reference points for ethical decision-making in Pauline communities: the command to love *one another*, the notion of a human conscience (as a voice coming from *God*), and the concept of the 'ethos *of Christ*'.

Andrie Du Toit (pp. 340–356) sets out to illustrate that early Christian documents contain many indications of a sensitivity towards the presence of non-Christians in their environment, a sensitivity which increased as the expectation of an imminent end receded. Du Toit concentrates on those paraenetic texts which maintain that Christians, in the shaping of their lifestyle, should reckon with the reaction of outsiders. He identifies both a negative and positive trajectory in the sayings found in these texts and highlights the double perlocutionary aim of such 'outsider sayings'. A final word summarizes the hermeneutical implications of these sayings for our contemporary context.

David Moffitt (pp. 357–381) contends that the Epistle to the Hebrews, with its in-group focus, has little concern for outsiders. This chapter argues that this inward bias is related to the author's eschatological beliefs and that his Jewish apocalyptic worldview provides him with resources for shaping the social identity and ethics of his readers. By reminding them of their true identity as the final generation of God's people living in 'these last days', he both helps them understand the significance of their experiences of suffering and urges them, in view of the time, to live in a way that coheres

with this identity. His ethical directive to persevere and his corresponding emphasis on purity therefore flow out of this eschatological conviction. These aspects of his exhortation result in a narrow focus upon those who are already inside the community.

Stephan Joubert (pp. 382–400) postulates that for James, a counter-cultural (= missional) way of life implies patiently enduring tests and hardships without resorting to socially acceptable forms of reciprocal justice. At the same time it entails extending hospitality to strangers, irrespective of their social status or expected response (Ja 2:1–4). Thus, Joubert argues that James' missionality is bound up with his reinterpretation of the basic principle of ancient reciprocity according to which gratitude for benefits received also entailed that the beneficiary had incurred an obligetion that had to be repaid. Joubert ultimately concludes that James taught the messianic communities under his care to love others without any expectation of some kind of reciprocity

Christopher Rowland (pp. 401–417) opines that as a visionary text the book of Revelation does not have a consistent position on the theme of inclusivity. Instead, while reflecting the imaginative world of the visionary, Revelation's evocation of a different kind of world, and the upheavals required to reach it, results less in preoccupation with the gathered community and more in attention to what is required to practice obedience to God. Rowland argues that, in the case of Revelation, obedience is related particularly to the prophetic vocation and the readiness to pay the price for that prophetic activity. By reference to the apocalyptic hermeneutics of the early Christian exegete, Tyconius, this chapter shows that the book of Revelation is a visionary challenge which problematizes assumptions about the identities of 'insiders' and 'outsiders' and paints a stark picture of the risky nature of witness in this age leading up to the coming of the New Jerusalem from heaven to earth.

Part Three: Sensitivity towards Outsiders, Mission, and Ethics in the Early Church

As the early Christian movement became established and began developing into a 'religion of tradition' (cf. Wolter 2012:49–69), the boundaries between insiders and outsiders became more rigid. In addition, some texts began to reveal the lengths to which some voices in the movement were willing to go in order to preserve that which had been handed down in the tradition. By the second century, some writers could refer to Christ-followers as a 'third race' (cf. *Diognetus* 1) clearly distinguished from 'others' or 'outsiders'. For this reason, Part Three considers second-century material both as part of this volume's investigation into the trajectories of

the early Christian movement and as contributing to our inquiry into the direction(s) in which sensitivity to outsiders developed.

Chris L. De Wet authored chapters on *1* and *2 Clement* (pp. 421–446 and 447–469, respectively). In his first contribution, De Wet focuses on the discursive dynamics between missionality, religious identity, and power in *1 Clement*. He argues that missionality may be understood as those complex interactions and negotiations, not only between individuals, but also between ecclesiastical leadership structures. De Wet sees *1 Clement* introducing a discourse of virtuosity, as a missional negotiation attempting to stabilize renegade religious identities in Corinth and to reinstall the deposed presbyters. He further contends that three discursive motifs operate within this discourse: a) a new scopic economy; b) theotic panopticism and symbolic doulology; and, c) order and submission. De Wet concludes that each of these motifs serves the power interests of Roman ecclesiastical leadership, and that they ultimately aim at making religious identities docile by regulating, correcting, and/or punishing them.

In his second contribution, De Wet asks how the encratic, virtuous body in *2 Clement* 'speaks itself' as a 'missional performance'. The chapter, therefore, is in essence concerned with the discourses of corporeal virtuosity in this text. Several discourses are considered, including the *agon* motif (*2 Clem*. 7:1–6; 20:1–4) and the encratic technologies of soul and flesh as an extension and overamplification, respectively, of the body (*2 Clem*. 9:1–11). De Wet also considers the proliferation of visible technologies of the body in *2 Clement*, with special emphasis on these technologies as strategies of andromorphism, as well as the linking of holiness and the pneumatic dimension of spirituality in the text. Finally, De Wet argues that the concepts of suffering (*2 Clem*. 19:3–4), martyrdom (*2 Clem*. 5:1–7), and the apocalyptic anti-spectacle (*2 Clem*. 17:1–7) are central in 2 Clement's formulations of the missional performance.

Jonathan A. Draper (pp. 470–489) reflects on mission, ethics, and identity in the *Didache*, making use of the heuristic lens of Social Identity Theory in order to explore the dynamics of community formation through (re)construction of identity. Draper argues that, for Jewish members of the *Didache* community, holiness involved 'being perfect' through full observation of the Special Laws, whereas Gentile members were only obligated to observe the ethical Universal Laws of the Two Ways. Baptism provided ritual purification from the stain of idolatry, enabling Gentiles to share the pure meal of the community with Jews. Draper views social change as requiring real or imagined opportunities for success and for identity (re)construction. In the *Didache*, 'growing in perfection' offered the poor increased in-group status, while material contribution enabled the rich – who could