

# Towards constructing Paul's economic vision on work<sup>1</sup>

Jeremy Punt  
Faculty of Theology  
University of Fort Hare  
ALICE  
E-mail: pjeremy@ufh.ac.za

## Abstract

### Towards constructing Paul's economic vision on work

*It is often assumed that Paul, even more than the rest of the New Testament, is concerned with ethereal matters and are therefore inconsequential in contributing to a proper awareness of an economy ethics and the moulding of a corresponding ethos. As much as the Pauline letters cannot be presented as a textbook for economic theory and practice, ancient or modern, it is nevertheless argued that Paul showed considerable concern for the socio-economical situation of the communities he addressed. In this article an initial attempt is made to reread Paul's letters with a view towards identifying and formulating that which emerges as his "economic vision". Taking the socio-historical context of the first century CE into consideration and setting it against the broader discussion on Pauline economic perspectives, the emphasis here is on some Pauline comments on work.*

Economy and money have found even less attention [than the issue of Paul's collection] in New Testament scholarship despite the increasing interest in social history and social criticism (Georgi, 1992:viii-ix).

---

1 This is an edited section of a paper presented at the annual conference of the New Testament Society of South Africa, April 1999 at UPE, Port Elizabeth.

## **1. Introduction: Repositioning Paul**

There is a world-wide spiritual and moral struggle facing mankind in these final decades of the twentieth century. Within this moral struggle South Africa and its image bear what is quite possibly a decisive role. Our world is growing more sharply divided than ever before between rich and poor, haves and have-nots, the "North" and the "South" (Hastings, 1989: 174).

Although no-one would probably want to deny the ever-increasing gap between rich and poor in the world today, and the correspondence of wealth and poverty with the First and Two-Thirds Worlds respectively, the role of Christianity in this division is contested. Hastings (1989:170-183) argues in his study on the (Catholic) church in Africa, that one of the reasons "why the church in South Africa matters" can be found in the unexpected flourishing of the church here in the "poor, southern and non-white world". With the historical – and in some cases even contemporary if superficial – alignment of the "white rich" Western world with Christianity, and the assumed, and almost corresponding, non-Christian character of the largest parts of the "non-white poor world", the majority of black South Africans have not given up on Christianity amidst poverty, inhuman living and working conditions and, until recently, racist oppression.

Globally, the world is increasingly divided between rich and poor, haves and have-nots, the North and the South. The racial line between rich and poor puts with few exceptions, black and white on opposite sides. In South Africa, too, it is accepted by most that the racist dispensation of Apartheid emerged as "a local struggle ... of a rich, white minority to maintain its political power and consequent economic privilege over a poor black majority" (Hastings, 1989:177).

This struggle intimately concerned Christianity, as much as Christians were to be found on both sides, in the role of oppressor as much as oppressed, and largely still in terms of rich and poor. The involvement of the church in legitimising the struggle<sup>2</sup> were as pronounced as the prophetic voices against the injustices in South Africa, emerging from a

---

2 Cf. e.g. the studies on the role of the N.G. Kerk (Dutch Reformed Church) edited by Kinghorn (1986). However, many other including "English-speaking" churches were as much, if not as actively involved in justifying – actively or through their silence – if not defending Apartheid. Cf. De Gruchy (1986:53-102). The way in which the Bible was used to defend Apartheid ideology has been the subject of many studies, cf. e.g. Loubser (1987).

number of churches and church-leaders.<sup>3</sup> In fact, with the Apartheid-struggles, the credibility of the church was at stake. But since the demise of Apartheid, another perhaps more grave and definitely more pervasive challenge for the church – as well – has emerged: poverty. And the theology arena is not exempted from this challenge.

This article is a preliminary attempt to establish some discourse between our economic crises and the Pauline letters. Of all the New Testament authors, Paul talks about financial matters the most often, and his authentic writings “contain some of the most elaborate literary reflections on the flow of money surviving from the ancient world” (Georgi, 1992:141).<sup>4</sup> Without ever speaking about money in the abstract, “Paul demands of the Christian ... honesty, industriousness, contentment and generosity”.<sup>5</sup> As much as this sounds middle-class, as Dahl pointed out (1977:24), Paul’s concerns were in many ways unique. But moreover, “Paul the apostle must be recognized as the one responsible for providing the early church with the theology and philosophy of economic development and independence that factored out into a church of power and freedom, a church that commanded the respect of outsiders and was dependent on nobody” (Jones, 1984:225).

The goal of this article is not an attempt to “reconstruct” Paul’s economic policy in an idealist or historicist way.<sup>6</sup>

Proceeding from a cultural critical interest, incorporating socio-historical evaluations of the first-century economic context, and using a literary critical reading of the Pauline letters, no easy application of Pauline

---

3 Cf. De Gruchy (1986); De Gruchy & Villa-Vicencio (1983). The *Kairos* document (1986) criticises both the churches clinging to either a “state theology” or “church theology”, and advocates a shift towards “prophetic theology”.

4 Cf. also his metaphors drawn from the economic sphere: e.g. “down payment” •ροβαῖον (e.g. 2 Cor. 1:22; 2 Cor. 5:5 ; [Eph. 1:14]); “first fruits” •παρχ- (e.g. Rom. 8:23, 11:16, 16:5; 1 Cor. 1:16, 15:20, 23, 16:15). Schrage (1988:231), however, argues that Jesus was more vocal about property and possessions than Paul.

5 “Paul’s ideas on the theory and practice of money go far beyond the metallic value of coins”, as much as the contemporary discussion of the value of money has included attention to its political, social, legal, communicative and psychological sides (Georgi, 1992:143).

6 It needs to be emphasised that the author is no economist, will not claim to be conversant with economic policy or programmes, but relies upon secondary literature in this regard. In the end, this article is evidence of the biblical scholar’s role which increasingly includes cultural criticism (cf. Boyarin, 1994; especially Segovia, 1995a; 1995b; 1995c; 1998, incorporating but perhaps also going beyond such studies as contained in Exum & Moore, 1998).

sentiments to the evaluation of modern economics is suggested.<sup>7</sup> More important than avoiding anachronism, using the Pauline letters to construct a coherent and systematic response to contemporary economics,<sup>8</sup> in one sense certainly goes beyond the pastoral and ecclesiocentric purpose of his letters temporally and substantially. However, in another sense, such (post)modern construction of Paul's economic vision lies in the extension of that purpose. And after all, designating the formulation of such sentiments for today's economics "Paul's vision", suggests an interactive relationship between the economic notions expressed in his letters, and today's world and its economic setting. In other words, this is not an attempt at ventriloquising Paul. The interaction between the ancient economy, Paul's concerns and our modern circumstances is exploited in this article, as an introductory investigation into how Pauline sentiments might inform economic policy and decision-making in the new millennium.

## **2. Work in biblical times**

[E]conomic issues are everywhere in the pages of the Bible, embedded within political, family, or religious contexts. Our economic assumptions and experiences do not help us to read the Bible and its concerns with economy sensibly or reliably (Oakman, 1996:140).

Reading about work in the Old Testament could lead to the conclusion that work was the punishment for sin, or the result of sin (Gen. 3:17). On the other hand, creation in its diversity is often described as God's handiwork (Ps. 19:1; 95:3-5; 102:25; cf. implicitly, Gen. 2:1-3), elevating work to a "divine level" (Jones, 1984:216-218).<sup>9</sup>

---

7 The use and abuse of Acts 2 and 4 in arguing for an economic system which approximates modern day socialism or communism, should already provide reason enough for caution. Cf. Miranda's arguments (1982: especially 7-12) for "Christian communism"; Nolan's (1999:14-15) insistence on the sharing of surplus possessions; but, Johnson (1981) on the impossibility of taking these texts as ideology or programme. For criticism on Johnson, cf. González (1990:80-81) who argues for the historicity of these passages and against taking them as Hellenistic (Pythagorean) and idealised reconstructions of the Lukan author.

8 And therefore going beyond the question on the Christian church's economic position; for the latter, cf. e.g. Jones (1984:205) who argues "that for the contemporary Christian church to sustain its freedom and the freedom of its people, it must be economically strong and independent".

9 In the later Jewish tradition, manual work is deemed important for various reasons; cf. Barnett (1993:927) who refers to "late Jewish sources" which are clear on rabbis being "expected to support themselves by some form of labor"; cf. Schrage (1988:230). To extrapolate from this that Paul "learned his tentmaking as a pupil rabbi" might not be

Generalising, it can be said that two broad opinions on work went around in the first century. Positively, work was seen as an activity or way of life which contributed to the character of the worker.<sup>10</sup> On the other hand, work was perceived in a negative way as the plight of the unfortunate and disadvantaged people who needed to work. “Many people felt that the only truly respectable life was led by those not compelled to labour for a living” (Perkins, 1988:131; cf. O’Brien, 1992:131).<sup>11</sup> However, such general comments prove inadequate for understanding first-century economics, which was an integrated part of human existence in that context.

The first-century Mediterranean society was characterised by “in-groups” and “out-groups”, which determined people’s economic activities, too. “Mediterraneans define the universe in terms of the triumphs of the in-group over the out-group, of family/friend/ethnic group over enemies/outside/the rest of humankind” (Malina, 1993b:104).

Malina explains how business practices and those involved in such practices were restrained by “interpersonal debts of gratitude”, which required<sup>12</sup> acts of “loving-kindness”, towards members of one’s in-group. While economic ruthlessness in pursuit of financial success was possible and even encouraged as far as members from the out-group were concerned, an individual’s in-groups members always had the priority above one’s own success. The more prosperous or successful relative or friend in the in-group would constantly be petitioned on time and resources. Conversely, the successful members would be considered disloyal for accumulating wealth, presumed to be to the detriment of other in-group members. And therefore, defending a successful in-group member entailed claiming that the in-group is hostile or dishonourable (Malina, 1993b:104-107,172-174; 1993a:63-89).

---

adequately justified. Cf. Hock (referred to by Dahl, 1977:35 n 39) who argues that evidence to support this rabbinic practice is dated later than Paul.

- 10 For example the Stoics, who regarded idleness and the pursuit of pleasure as deplorable since they favoured work as a means of “self-improvement” (Schrage, 1988: 230).
- 11 Schrage (1988:229-230) refers to negative statements by Cicero and Seneca in this regard, and argues that the rise of an aristocracy and widespread slavery rendered physical labour “degrading” in the Greco-Roman world.
- 12 Malina also calls this a “debt” of gratitude. Although it refers to a more complicated social system, it is comparable to the modern notion that a “freebie” does not exist when it comes to business.

In contemporary Greek society opinions differed whether philosophers and teachers should rely on financial support with regard to obligations which will be created. Both requiring payment or acceptance of a wealthy individual as patron fitted the societal pattern of patronage and benefaction,<sup>13</sup> but compromised the ability of philosophers to maintain their freedom of thought and speech. The only other options for subsistence were to work at a trade or to resort to begging for money, both of which were considered socially undesirable. In these cases freedom was a trade-off against social status (Barnett, 1993:926-927; Everts, 1993:295).

## **2.1 The ancient economic system**

[F]rom its inception ancient Mediterranean urban society interrelated economic issues naturally with political, social, juridical, and religious ideas as well as ethical concerns (Georgi, 1992:145).

Georgi describes the origin and development of the Greco-Roman economy of the first millennium BCE, and disputes the general view that money arose from the barter system (Aristotle). Georgi argues that the concept of private property initiated the market economy,<sup>14</sup> although money was probably developed simultaneously, as quantifiable signs to express the market process. The divine was integrally part of the economic scene, as ancient Mediterranean economies “were born out of catastrophies and governed by fear of future disasters”.<sup>15</sup> The “fear of

---

13 For broader discussions of these terms, cf. Elliott (1996:144-158); Moxnes (1991:241-268). Joubert (1998:154-161) recently questioned whether (Roman) patronage and (Greek) benefaction should be understood to be on par with one another, insisting on avoiding generalisations while appreciating subtle distinctions between these two concepts. Both systems enshrined reciprocity but Hellenistic benefaction differed from Roman patronage in the former's inclusion of collective advantage to the community and not only an individual while status differentials were not entrenched (Joubert, 1998:160).

14 Georgi follows Heinsohn who, in short, claims that major natural disasters in the early centuries of the first millennium BCE had extreme consequences for the then matrilinear tribes. With their masters destabilised, the serfs “of the Romulus type” rebelled successfully, probably aided by equally destabilised and deserting tribesmen “of the Theseus type”. Feudal estates were divided among themselves, “in order to prevent people from their own ranks rising and becoming new overlords” – this was the origin of private ownership. As an aside, these events saw the change from reigning polygamy to monogamy (for economic reasons!), as well as the change to patriarchy (Georgi, 1992:214-215 n12-13). Cf. Potter (1993:25) for John Locke's vehement statements on the sanctity and defense of property, still largely providing the “ideological foundations” for globalisation. Cf. Szesnat's argument (1997:70-84) that the basic distinction between classes during the early Roman empire rested on ownership and control of land.

15 Individuals who grouped themselves into communities did so out of common interest and not from a feeling of solidarity (Georgi, 1992:146).

overindebtedness and a return to poverty remained inherent threats” and led to protective measures in this regard: Employing the labour of others, lending against credit and security, and so on. To emphasise, the divine featured significantly: In sanctioning contracts and debt arrangements (involving priests), their temples became trusted institutions – “the Temple became a bank, and money an abstraction, depersonalized and dematerialized”.<sup>16</sup> With the accumulation of interest a market on which to exchange the produced goods (commodities) was called for (Georgi, 1992:145-148).

The interplay between economics and religion in antiquity is therefore important for understanding the ancient economic system. This relationship entailed more than religion only providing some divine sanction or “safe-houses” for money. It was believed that “[t]he horizontal economic circulation would remain stable only if this connection with heavenly forces held”. The principle of reciprocity (*do ut des*, I give in order that you give) was primarily established between god and humans, and subsequently between human beings as well. It was a “cycle of mutual benefit and growth”,<sup>17</sup> and went beyond individuals to the community at large (Georgi, 1992:149-151).

A brief but concise sketch of the economic concerns and nature of pre-industrial or agrarian society characteristic of New Testament times, is found in Oakman (1996:126-143). Referring to Polanyi, Oakman isolates two important aspects of economic exchange in such societies: “reciprocity within kinship relations<sup>18</sup> and redistribution in political economies”.<sup>19</sup> Since the vast majority of people made a living from agriculture, land was the predominant factor of production, and control of land the “chief political question of antiquity”. No industry as it exists today was found and “labor was embedded in other institutions, especially kinship and household contexts”. Money appeared on the scene in the eighth century BCE, but was generally stockpiled and its value was restricted to functions such as the facilitation of long-distance

---

16 Yet, money’s value went way beyond economics and included various social, political and religious obligations as well (Georgi, 1992:147).

17 Georgi (1992:151) adds that in the Hellenistic world, the goddess Tyche in particular, was associated with this cycle. Beyond individual luck and advantage, she was “the positive potential of the community”.

18 “A gift accepted implies an obligation owed” (Oakman, 1996:129).

19 The latter was characterised by “(en)forced collection of economic surplus to a central point and redistribution at another time and place”, usually for a certain political end. Both the political considerations and the different level of supply and demand distinguish this from modern market economies! (Oakman, 1996:129).

commerce and trade. Money's "abstract exchange value" held true mostly for the political elites only.<sup>20</sup>

As far as the agrarian or peasant societies are concerned, economic exchange should be understood according to the belief in "limited good".<sup>21</sup> Such societies generally imposed mechanisms to ensure that everyone attain basically the same social level. These societies were socially highly stratified: roughly ninety percent of people were peasants who supported the (ten percent) ruling elite with their work.

Oakman (1996:137) concludes with the comment that studies of the economy of biblical times show that significant differences with modern economies exist as "major institutions of industrial or corporate capitalism are missing in the historical societies that hosted the biblical tradition". Economic exchanges were "embedded within other relationships and sanctioned by religious values" (Oakman, 1996:139). Caution should therefore be exercised in relating biblical and modern economical consideration with due acknowledgement of such discrepancies. The same caution has to be displayed when the concepts of *work* and *poverty* in the New Testament are investigated.

The important emphases are located on two levels (using mixed concepts): one, the macro-economic situation on the level of the political redistributive system; and, two, the micro-economic system of reciprocal household economy. In ancient Greco-Roman society a person was a *homo reciprocus* (Joubert, 1998:161), with reciprocity undeniably written into the societal text – typical of an agonistic society.

## 2.2 Slavery during the first century

Slavery was pervasive in the first century, to the extent that according to some sources as many as 85% to 90% of the citizens of Rome and the Italian peninsula were slaves, with a similar pattern in the Roman provinces.<sup>22</sup> Although slaves were "human tools" or "living possessions"

---

20 The political elite did not work for their money, but accumulated it generally through "slave-based mining of raw materials and wars of conquest". People accumulating wealth through commerce or a means other than lineage, often invested money in land in order to secure respectability as well as "a material basis for household (economic) stability" (Oakman, 1996:131).

21 "Because goods are always perceived in such societies to be in limited quantities, anyone who gets ahead is thought to have done so at the expense of everyone else" (Oakman, 1996:132). Cf. Malina (1993a:90-116).

22 For a brief summary and bibliography on slavery during New Testament times, cf. Osiek (1992).



(Aristotle), they were granted a number of important rights during this time, including the right to worship as members of their owners' extended family and the right to marry.<sup>23</sup> The feeding-sources of slaves were predominantly related to being born into slavery and as the result of war, with debt as *the* cause for slavery during early Roman history. The result was that first-century slaves were often highly skilled, working as physicians, architects, and also as craftsmen and artisans. Slaves from the eastern side of the empire were preferred to those of the north and west, with the former used as household servants, teachers, estate managers and the like, in contrast to the latter who often toiled under arduous conditions as farm labourers (Rupprecht, 1993:881).

In Paul's letters two passages are significant for his treatment of slavery, a topic he nowhere treats in the abstract.<sup>24</sup> In 1 Corinthians 7:20-22 Paul's advice to slaves who can obtain freedom is,  $\mu\bullet\lambda\lambda\omicron\nu\ \chi\rho\text{-}\sigma\alpha\iota$  ("rather make use of" or "make the most of"). He, however, does not provide the clause with an object, which from the context can be either "slavery" or "freedom". Opinions differ among scholars on this matter.<sup>25</sup>

23 These privileges were often granted only in so far as it did not conflict with the master's religion, requirements and sentiments. In general, however, other groups contributed to the "amelioration of the system"; e.g. Stoicism emphasised the "common humanity of all" (cf. Schrage, 1988:232).

24 It is interesting to note the important role slavery terminology plays in Pauline theology, with three words often identified as key terms in his theology closely related to slavery: redemption ( $\bullet\pi\omicron\lambda\beta\tau\rho\omega\sigma\iota\iota$ ), justification ( $\delta\iota\kappa\alpha\lambda\omega\sigma\iota\iota$ ) and reconciliation ( $\kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\lambda\lambda\alpha\gamma\zeta$ ). "Redemption" is used for describing a slave being set free, "justification" for the "complete freedom" a slave receives upon manumission, and "reconciliation" for the (re-)incorporation of a freed slave as a member of the society with the accompanying rights and privileges. Various other slavery-images are used, with the strongest paradox probably expressed in the notion that those who are enslaved to Christ are truly free (Rupprecht, 1993:882).

Whether the absence of an abstract study of slavery in Paul's letters necessarily implies that he was uninterested in issuing "an abstract moral imperative for the abolition of slavery" (Rupprecht, 1993:882), is debatable. Cf. e.g. Elliott (1994:202): "It is quite conceivable, therefore, that although Paul never formulated an attack on the legal category of slavery as such, he did not hesitate to condemn the sort of exploitation to which many slaves were subjected". Paul also used class-categories such as ( $\textcircled{\text{E}}\ \delta\upsilon\nu\alpha\mu\omicron\iota$ ) (the powerful) ( $\textcircled{\text{E}}\ \mu\eta\ \acute{\iota}\nu\tau\epsilon\iota$ ) (the nothings), ( $\textcircled{\text{E}}\ \acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\iota$ ) (the haves), and ( $\textcircled{\text{E}}\ \mu\eta\ \acute{\iota}\chi\omicron\nu\tau\epsilon\iota$ ) (the have-nots) (1 Cor. 1:26-29; 11:18-22).

25 Of which different Bible translations are a good example. E.g., the KJV translates non-committantly "use *it* rather", leaving the reader to decide whether "it" refers to the position of slavery or the opportunity to become free. The RSV translates "use freedom" but this is reversed in the NRSV to "use slavery". Although this is not an interpretive issue only to be solved with reference to the Greek, reading the text in the original Greek does suggest that Paul advises slaves to grasp freedom, e.g. the  $\bullet\lambda\lambda\upsilon$  ("but") which introduces the conditional sentence – and omitted by the NIV – indicates

In Philemon 8-16 Paul engages in elaborate wordplay in order to request the manumission of the slave Onesimus, ostensibly in order to assist Paul with his apostolic work (cf. Barr, 1995:83-84; Johnson, 1986:354-355).

In conclusion, there is no reason to assume that Paul was unaware of the “operative social grid of patron-client relationships” (Elliott, 1994: 201).<sup>26</sup> Reading Paul's letters as products of the first-century social world, and not as timeless, semi-dogmatic treatises, might help to understand Paul's insistence on supporting himself and fear for compromising the message about Christ, better.

### **3. Pauline perspectives**

The Pauline letters are too often still understood as more or less systematic-theological writings with a primary (abstract) soteriological purpose expressed in christocentric language. Far from this being an imaginary puppet created only to be shot down, the Pauline letters are today often perceived with sixteenth-century, Reformed-theology eyes. This, traditional reading of Paul has become such an established or ingrained approach that a separate study is required to unpack and debunk it. However, and without denying the strong christological thread throughout his letters, suffice it to claim here that a first step to liberating Paul is to see the primary concern of his letters as ecclesiocentric (cf. Hays, 1989): Paul's letters addressed specific pastoral situations.

The argument here is simple: To move beyond the traditional Paul – who has been deemed unfit for anything else but individual and soteriological concerns (except maybe in the negative, in particular about women, slaves, quietist politics, etc.) – requires a rereading of his letters as ecclesiocentric documents. It calls for a different approach and emphasis: not an individualist-soteriological but a communal-pastoral<sup>27</sup> angle to his letters. What starts with a renewed appreciation of the

---

a contrast with the previous sentences;  $\chi\rho\text{-}\sigma\alpha\iota$  is an aorist imperative indicating rather a single act than the continuation of a particular situation.

26 Georgi (1992:144) argues that, more-over, Paul's writings assumed “a monetary economy of worldwide proportions with a common (Roman) currency and an easy exchange of other currencies ... an urban society with a universal market-structure ... industry, division of labor, trade, and a labor market that included slavery ... Financial institutions were present”. However, “[i]t is clear that while Paul presupposes an effective economy, he consciously neglects certain economic principles and elements important to his day, and ours as well”.

27 It is precisely in Paul's emphasis on the church as a new, alternative community that Kysar (1991:73-75) finds the key to Paul's urgent pleas on meeting the needs of the poor and its ultimate goal, *viz* establishing the solidarity of the various churches.

interrelatedness of life and theology in Paul, will address the unnecessary curtailment of his “frame of reference” (Georgi, 1992:142).

In considering economic matters in Paul’s letters, it is well-known that he addressed a number of issues in particular. The emphasis here will be on some of his ideas on the value of work, for both the individual and the community.

#### 4. Paul on work<sup>28</sup>

Paul addressed communities in his letters which were probably as diverse materially, as in other aspects.<sup>29</sup> Little can be gathered from his letters on the relationship between rich and poor in the Pauline churches. However, at least in 1 Corinthians, tensions between rich and poor congregants can be detected regarding practices surrounding the Eucharist<sup>30</sup> (cf. Verhey, 1984:119).

##### 4.1 Financial support for “apostolic” work

It was by working with his hands that Paul sustained himself and, most importantly, maintained his freedom and independence (Jones, 1984:216).

In Paul’s self-defence of his apostleship (1 Cor. 9 and 2 Cor. 11-12) he deals with the issue of financial support for his (apostolic) work, and particularly with his right to refuse such support.

Part of the defense Paul put up for his apostolic authority, was his claim that he was entitled to material support (food and drink, 1 Cor. 9:4). He even suggested that he was entitled to be accompanied by a wife (1 Cor. 9:5), who would presumably also deserve support. Paul defends these claims by calling on a number of common examples where work is duly

---

28 No attempt will be made here to account for Paul’s family’s financial position. Dahl argues that Paul probably came from “a rather well-to-do family” and that he probably used his inheritance directly or indirectly in service of his ministry. The adequacy of the argument that “Paul’s financial sacrifice is likely to have been greater than we can determine from his letters, but he chooses not to talk about it” is difficult to establish (Dahl, 1977:35-36).

29 As Dahl (1977:27) points out, however, Paul never includes the distinction between rich and poor among other socio-economic contrasts such as in 1 Corinthians 1:26 and Galatians 3:18.

30 On the powerful significance of the Eucharist for fellowship, sharing and equality, today, cf. Éla (1994:147-148).

rewarded.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, acknowledgement that Paul was entitled to support would be tantamount to recognition of the legitimacy of his apostolic status (Dahl, 1977:33). On the other hand, Paul's letters attest to his self-supporting work<sup>32</sup> and its physically challenging nature (1 Cor. 4:12; 1 Thess. 2:9; cf. Acts 20:34-35).<sup>33</sup> This is underscored when Paul includes references to his work in his catalog of "apostolic sufferings" (1 Cor. 4:10-12; cf. 2 Cor. 11:27) (Barnett, 1993:926).

The following reasons can be noted for Paul's decision to work in order to support himself:

- Given the unacceptable practices of itinerant philosophers who often compromised both message and messenger when compensated for services rendered, Paul insisted on the freedom of his message and himself. Paul did not want to be perceived as one of those "who peddles the word of God" (καπηλεβουτει τῆν λ' γων τοῦ θεοῦ – 2 Cor. 2:17), "who tamper with God's word" (δολοθουντει τῆν λ' γων τοῦ θεοῦ – 2 Cor. 4:2), and who "prey upon" (κατεσθλει – 2 Cor. 11: 20), implying "the receipt of improper payment, the watering down of the message and the exploitation of the hearers" (cf. Dahl, 1977:32; Schrage, 1988:230).
- Paul considered work to be an appropriate alternative to the "endemic idleness" of the Hellenistic world, and also required those in his churches to follow suit (1 Thess. 5:14)

---

31 Without pursuing it to the extents of e.g. Castelli (1991, on Paul's call to imitate him as ideological mechanism to ensure his power over others), Everts (1993:296) successfully points out how Paul asserted his apostolic authority – and, it can be added, even ideological power? – by refusing to accept the support apparently on offer from the Corinthians.

As far the collection was concerned, Paul frequently felt equally compelled to defend his personal position. E.g. in 1 Corinthians 16:1-4 Paul is at pains to point out that his mission did not lead to the establishment of "some disintegrated clubs, but [resulted] in genuine communities willing to remember in gratitude their origin and, hence, were bound to the church as ecumenical body" (Georgi, 1992:55).

32 Cf. references in Paul's own letters (1 Cor. 4:12; 9:1-18; 2 Cor. 6:5; 11:23,27; 1 Thess. 2:9), as well as in 2 Thessalonians 3:8 and Acts 18:3; 20:34-35). The nature of Paul's self-supportive work is mentioned in Acts 18:3 only, viz σκηνοποιῶ τῆ τε τῆ χιῶ<sup>®</sup> (a tentmaker by trade).

33 The debate whether he was a "leather-worker", manufacturing and repairing a range of leather and woven goods will not be furthered here. To have to argue that Paul's work included leather tanning, which would put him in a despised position among Jews and made him socially unacceptable among those with high social status, is not required as his manual labour would already have put him in a socially precarious position. Cf. Barnett (1993:926).

- By working Paul was able to preach the gospel •δVπανοI (free of charge, 1 Cor. 9:18) (Barnett, 1993:926).

It is clear that there was for Paul an intimate connection between his manual work and his ministry (1 Thess. 2:9).<sup>34</sup>

## 4.2 Self-sufficiency

To use a word current in Paul's time which in ours describes a certain socio-economic ideal, Paul advocates autarchy. In Paul's letters, this word means that the individual must be content with what he [sic] has. But there is more to the word than that; in order to maintain his economic independence, the individual must at least have enough to get by, and he must avoid the entrapment of wealth (Dahl, 1977:23).

Paul claims he is entitled to material support for his apostolic work and referred to various analogies (soldiers, gardeners and shepherds) as well as to Scripture and Jesus' words.<sup>35</sup> Yet, for a variety of reasons, Paul deals very selectively with receiving such support from the churches he interacted with.

Paul's insistence on αὐτάρκεια (2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:11) has often been interpreted in relation to the Stoic emphasis on self-sufficiency. It would, however be an oversimplification to argue that Paul merely reproduced the Stoic notion in his advocacy thereof in his letters.<sup>36</sup> By the first

34 This is possibly also the context in which to understand 2 Corinthians 6:10. With the ever present temptation to spiritualise ἢ I πτωχοὶ πολλοὶ δὲ πλουτίζονται, ἢ I μηδὲν ἔχουσι καὶ πάντα κατέχουσι (like poor, yet making many rich; like those without anything, yet possessing everything), it can nevertheless be argued that Paul clearly saw the renunciation of wealth as a boon to his ministry. But Paul could also have had his efforts concerning the collection in mind. Cf. also Perkins (1988:131-132) on the importance of Paul's workshop as another outlet for the Gospel, especially for his ministry to those on the margins of society.

35 Dahl (1977:33) suggests that Paul's selective appropriation of Jesus' words in this regard points to the different *modi operandi* for rural and urban ministerial patterns in the first century. Whereas Paul's economic advice, especially concerning wealth and the rich, is less drastic than Jesus' as reported in the Synoptics (Verhey, 1984:119), it is intriguing to note that Paul appropriated much of Jesus' advice for his own economic situation.

36 Malherbe shows upon various forms of this, ranging from the claim that Paul's usage of αὐτάρκεια put himself on par with Greek philosophers to the more ingenious argument of Bultmann. Bultmann held that Paul's definition of human existence in terms of freedom implied an equally radical openness towards the future, and the only distinction between Paul and the Stoics (and Cynics) being then the ground of αὐτάρκεια: the grace of God and reason (Malherbe, 1995:813-814; Verhey, 1984:119).

century, ἀὐτάρκεια was widely and diversely used, mostly devoid of Stoic “intellectual or psychological baggage”,<sup>37</sup> to indicate the “acceptance of one’s circumstances and a concern to discover value in them”. Malherbe (1995) argues that ἀὐτάρκεια in Philippians 4:11 should in any case be understood within the broader context of the letter, namely friendship. Paul describes his Philippian friends as people of “one soul” (1:27, cf. 2:2), who “think the same thing” (2:2; 4:2), and “have all things in common” (1:5,7; 2:1). In Philippians 4:10-20 Paul succeeds in balancing self-sufficiency and friendship, by showing that his friendship with the Philippians was based on virtue (cf. Phil. 4:8) and not need.<sup>38</sup> He was careful to thank them for their gift, but within the ambit of friendship and not in a utilitarian manner (Malherbe, 1995:813-826).

Paul’s insistence on supporting himself which resulted in refusing, for example, Corinthian help (1 Cor. 9; 2 Cor. 11-12) could easily have been misunderstood and could have been part of the reason for resistance and conflict he encountered. Regarding the first-century emphasis on reciprocity, refusing support could be interpreted as a refusal of friendship which is offered, or even an attempt to deny others the opportunity to participate in the apostle’s ministry.<sup>39</sup> At the same time, Paul’s insistence on practising his own trade of tentmaking could be seen as humiliating both the Corinthians and himself, the status of both the congregation and that of the apostle. Indeed, argues Elliott (1994:201), Paul refused “to submit to the patronage of the powerful in Corinth” as Paul was afraid of compromising the gospel: “Paul voluntarily chooses simplicity for the sake of authenticity” (O’Brien, 1992:131). Paul’s refusal of support and his insistence on self-sufficiency were apparently the reasons he ultimately had to defend his apostleship itself (Everts, 1993:295).

There are, however, exceptions as Paul did not always refuse material support. Apparently Paul received some kind of material support from the Macedonian churches (cf. 2 Cor. 11:9), and Philippians 4:10-20 contains

---

37 Contentment with the basic necessities of life in a physical sense, and complete detachment from the world and worldly values in a spiritual sense (Rich, quoted in Malherbe, 1995:818).

38 Verhey (1984:119) missed this point when he ascribes Paul’s lack of concern with property and money (Phil. 4:5-6) to his “eschatological perspective”.

39 At a theological level, as Everts (1993:296) points out, Paul’s reasons for refusing material support are related to his reluctance to burden the community with his upkeep, but also that he wanted to reserve for himself some freedom in preaching the gospel. Paul begins his discussion (1 Cor. 9:1) on these matters with the rhetorical question: Οὐκ εἰμὶ ἰλἐβθερὸς (Am I not free?)

definite confirmation from Paul on support from the Philippians. Everts (1993:297, 299) concludes that “Paul did not accept support from any church when he was actively working in that church”. He extends his argument by hypothesising that Paul “did expect them [c. the Corinthian churches] to support his work later”. In sum, Everts (1993: 299) argues, the gospel was the “controlling force in his request for and refusal of money”.

### 4.3 Opposition encountered by the “working Paul”

It was pointed out that manual work was considered socially unacceptable for free-born citizens in the first-century Hellenistic world. The possibility that Paul’s practices in this regard were not appreciated was a real one, especially when read in the light of his reference to the haughtiness and demeaning attitude he claims to have experienced from the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:7).

Paul’s insistence to carry on with his own, self-supporting work and his accompanying refusal to accept support from churches, could have offended the existing social practices of patronage and benefaction. In the eyes of some churches such as those in Corinth, the problem would have been aggravated by the news that Paul did accept some support from the Macedonian churches (2 Cor. 11:9)<sup>40</sup> (Barnett, 1993:927).

### 4.4 The need to work: 1 Thessalonians 4

The instructions regarding work in 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 and 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12 imply a negative view of poverty that results from laziness<sup>41</sup> (Schmidt, 1993:827).

In an interesting argument on Paul’s directives to the early church on the need for sound economic practice, Jones (1984:209) argues that the first letter directed to Thessalonians are important in this regard for the following reasons: it is his first and Paul emphasised “economic development and independence”; “the church at Thessalonica suffered religious and political persecution”; and people in that church “had become overly enthusiastic about eschatology”.

40 Not accounting for benefaction leads Dahl (1977:34) to look for the origin of accusations levelled at Paul in the notion that Paul expected more from the Macedonian congregations than what the Corinthians deemed proper.

41 Cf. also the line from Pericles’ well-known funeral oration: Γκαἰ τῆ πλινεσθαι οὐχ ὁμολογεῖν τινι ἀσχερον, •λλ• μτ διαθεβγειν ἴργᾶ ασχιον (“and as for poverty, no one need be ashamed to admit it: the real shame is in not taking practical measures to escape from it”) (Thucydides 2:40).

Paul addressed the immorality which reared its head in the Thessalonian church and urged the community

(1 Thess. 4:11) [παρακαλοῦμεν] καὶ φιλοτιμεῖσθαι ὁσυχάζειν καὶ πρῶσσειν τὰ ἑαυτῶν καὶ ἰργάζεσθαι ταῦτα [ἑδναί] χερσῶν ὑμῶν, καθὰ ἡμεῖς παραγγέλλομεν (and [we exhort you] to make a point of living quietly, to attend to your own affairs, and to work with your own hands, as we instructed you).

It is Paul's exhortation that the Thessalonians should carry on with their daily labour which is of particular interest here. A prominent consideration appears to be Paul's concern that the idle men in the community were defiling the holiness and honour of others' wives. But, importantly, Paul adds that they should be working as he instructed them earlier παραγγέλλομεν, before they in fact embarked on immoral activity involving the wives of others.

An important, if not the overriding, reason for the Thessalonian community refraining from work was their zealous expectation of and impatient waiting for the *parousia*, the return of the Lord.<sup>42</sup> Paul nevertheless insists that everyone in the community should continue working.

Unlike the Greco-Roman society about them – which sought to graduate quickly from manual labor to sumptuous living and an opulent life through adroit maneuvering and business manipulations – Paul and the early church made a life, earning their living, and gained political leverage through manual labor, working with their hands (Jones, 1984:216).

As Dahl (1977:23) argues, Paul is at pains to go beyond warnings against economic abuses as he “advocates a positive economic ideal” in Thessalonians.<sup>43</sup>

But Paul's insistence that the Thessalonians should return to their work required of them to step out of the “rat-race”.<sup>44</sup> No-one should (1 Thess.

---

42 As Jones (1984:215) argues, if the rest of 1 Thessalonians (especially chapter 4) is considered, the Thessalonians did not spend their time in prayer and pursuing holiness (Best) but rather in “quarreling and bickering over one another's wives”. This probably led to a situation of dependency within the community, with some having to support those that stopped working. 2 Thessalonians 3:10b-12 could be directed at such behaviour.

43 Dahl (1977:23) argues that in addition to the Pauline emphasis on the need for people to sustain themselves through work, Paul also encouraged his readers to meet their economic obligations including the payment of taxes.



4:6a) τῆ μὴ βπερβαλνειν καὶ πλεονεκτεῖν ἰν τῷ πρὸνγματι τῶν •δελφῶν αὐτοῦ (exploit or defraud his brother in business).

Paul encouraged the members of the community to support themselves which would contribute to disallowing the exploitation of others. His encouragement to lead a quiet life does not boil down to “quietism” or a “withdrawal from the sphere of public life”, since the community should serve as an example of •γιασμῶν (sanctification, 4:3) for those outside (τοῦτο §ξω), 4:12). Paul’s advice then seems to countenance a “withdrawal from the public frenzy of exploitation” (Elliott, 1994:202).

Paul makes his feelings about πλεονεξία (greed) very clear by including it in vice lists.<sup>45</sup> Paul never insisted that early Christians avoid money and possessions as “dirty” items, and never castigates the rich for being rich, but greed contradicted the requirement to do good to all and to fellow Christians in particular (Gal. 6:10). “[F]or the Pauline school of thought covetousness is idolatry” (Nürnbergger, 1978:165). The opposite to greed<sup>46</sup> entails putting wealth to good use, and Paul emphasised generosity and hospitality in this regard as apparently adhered to by Gaius (Rom. 16:23), Philemon (Philem. 4-7) and of course as far as the collection was concerned.

In all this, however, Paul seemed to expect his fellow-believers “to act freely and lovingly, not under compulsion” (cf. Dahl, 1977:25-29). In Paul’s letters, the need for and importance of assisting others materially is often repeated (Dahl, 1977:23). Such assistance is never made obligatory by Paul, but remains a request or encouragement (2 Cor. 8:8).<sup>47</sup> Least of all should there be a compulsion of the conscience, as

44 Given the level of economic activity in Thessalonica, with its location on the Egnatian way and having an accessible sea-port and thus being a “prosperous trade center” (Barr, 1995:64-65).

45 E.g. 1 Corinthians 6:9-10. Referring to the Pastoral Epistles, as well as to Ephesians and Colossians, as “Pauline catechetical traditions”, Dahl (1977:23) reminds us that 1 Timothy 6:10 (cf. 6:6-9,17-19) asserts greed as the root of all evil. Cf. Sider (1977:110-112) who notes that Paul advised church discipline against “covetous” people (1 Cor. 5:11).

46 In his discussion of Luke’s stereotyping of the Pharisees as φιλλυργυροὶ (lovers of money), Moxnes (1988:1-9, especially 7) notes that this term was a well-known *topos* in the first century, and that Paul aligned himself with the notion that a “true teacher does not covet money or honor”. Paul’s insistence on ἀπὸρρηκεία (2 Cor. 9:8; Phil. 4:11) should perhaps be understood in this light: not self-serving self-sufficiency, but “the simplicity of an open, trusting, and faithful heart” (Georgi, 1992:160).

47 It is, however, not without some “gentle moral and psychological pressure” from Paul (Nürnbergger, 1978:168).

Paul insists that God loves a “cheerful giver” (ἑλαργίον δέκτην) 2 Cor. 9:7, quoting Prov. 22:8a; cf. Nürnberger, 1978:168).

Contrary to the traditional individualist approach to Pauline ethics,<sup>48</sup> Jones is at pains to point out that Paul's concern with work in the Thessalonian church was about the welfare of the whole community, amidst affliction and oppression of various kinds.<sup>49</sup> He underscores the notion that Paul's letter suggests that the Thessalonian church could only “nurture itself, grow, and sustain itself with necessary provisions” if the members of the community engaged themselves in active work (Jones, 1984:216). In other words, the requirement of generosity, for providing for others in need, only becomes a possibility when a community through work builds up such resources.

It is important to note, therefore, that Paul considered the endemic idleness of the Greco-Roman society as inappropriate for the Christian believer (2 Thess. 3:10-11; Barnett, 1993:927). In contemporary society the Protestant work ethic<sup>50</sup> is often a casualty of our (post)modern worldview, where attempts to achieve socio-economic security is often equal to the longing to sit back and enjoy life,<sup>51</sup> that is, to be financially strong enough to maintain a certain standard of living without continued working, that is, *effortlessly*.

## 5. Concluding remarks

Not only the broader context of first-century economic systems but also Paul's more immediate environment with its insistence on, amongst others, economic selfsufficiency are necessarily of importance for establishing an appropriate dialogue between Paul and our own economic situation, providing the proper setting for making sense of Pauline economic sentiments. Paul's insistence on continuing his self-

---

48 Although “individual morality” is among Paul's concerns, the argument that this was his focus in 1 Thessalonians 4:6 (Schrage, 1988:231), is not supported by the broader purpose of the letter or the wider context of this line.

49 Whether the hard work of members in the early church, and in the face of hardship, was the sole or even most important reason not only for the economic independence but especially for its ultimate respectability (Jones, 1984:221,225), is debatable.

50 Jones (1984:226) contends that John Calvin was significantly influenced by the Pauline literature in his formulation of the Protestant work ethic.

51 It is relatively easy today to find some anti-work ideas, often referred to as “get rich quick schemes”. The intention is generally to earn enough in order not to work at all. Apart from a questionable work ethic, such schemes often entail a sublime disadvantaging of others. The use of criminal activities to secure economic prosperity is generally a “white collar” offense.

supportive work created problems for and even opposition to him and his ministry; yet he continued to exhort those he addressed to follow suit – by working. He, however, warned against exploiting others in the community, and encouraged them to use the fruit of their labour to the advantage of others. Such sentiments should not be ignored amidst the situation of increasing globalisation which tends to advantage the rich and powerful and contributes to the marginalisation of the poor.

The value of revisiting ancient economic systems goes beyond the attempt to situate Paul's economic concerns. It also precludes generalisations regarding economic issues in Paul's letters, and superficial analogies between then and now. Still, contrary to our modernist inclination to categorise our experiences of life, since the earliest times many aspects of religion and economics – even if such concepts are retrospective descriptions – were undeniably if variously intertwined. Today there is an increasing awareness that religion and theology, through its different proponents in the church, academy and public life do not stand neutral regarding local and global economics. Rereading and contextualising the Pauline sentiments allow for a new look at economics today.

## Bibliography

- ANON. 1986. *Kairos Document. Challenge to the Church*. Rev. 2nd ed. Braamfontein : Skotaville.
- BARNETT, P.W. 1993. Tentmaking. (*In* Hawthorne, G.F., Martin, R.P. & Reid, D.G., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his letters*. Downers Grove : IVP. p. 925-927.)
- BARR, D.L. 1995. *New Testament Story. An Introduction*. 2nd ed. Belmont : Wadsworth.
- BOYARIN, D. 1994. A Radical Jew. Paul and the Politics of Identity. *Critical Studies in Jewish Literature, Culture, and Society*, vol. 1. Berkeley : University of California Press.
- CASTELLI, E. 1991. Imitating Paul. A Discourse of Power. *Literary Currents in Biblical Interpretation*. Louisville : WJK.
- DAHL, N.A. 1977. *Studies in Paul. Theology for the Early Christian Mission*. Minneapolis : Augsburg.
- DE GRUCHY, J.W. 1986. *The Church Struggle in South Africa*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids : Eerdmans.
- DE GRUCHY, J.W. & VILLA-VICENCIO, C., eds. 1983. *Apartheid is a Heresy*. Cape Town, Guildford : David Philip, Lutterworth.
- ÉLA, J. 1994. Christianity and Liberation in Africa. (*In* Gibellini, R., ed. *Paths of African Theology*. London : SCM. p. 136-153.)
- ELLIOTT, J.H. 1996. Patronage and Clientage. (*In* Rohrbaugh, R., ed. *The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation*. Peabody : Hendrickson. p. 144-158.)
- ELLIOTT, N. 1994. Liberating Paul. The Justice of God and the Politics of the Apostle. *Bible and Liberation*. Maryknoll : Orbis.
- EVERTS, J.M. 1993. Financial Support. (*In* Hawthorne, G.F., Martin, R.P. & Reid, D.G., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*. Downers Grove : IVP. p. 295-300.)

- EXUM, J.C. & MOORE, S.D., eds. 1998. Biblical Studies/Cultural Studies. The Third Sheffield Colloquium. *JSOTSS*, vol. 266; Gender, Culture, Theory vol. 7. Sheffield : Sheffield Academic Press.
- GEORGI, D. 1992. Remembering the Poor: The History of Paul's Collection for Jerusalem. Trans. Racz, I. Nashville : Abingdon.
- GONZÁLES, J.L. 1990. Faith and Wealth. A History of Early Christian Ideas on the Origin, Significance, and Use of Money. San Francisco : Harper SanFrancisco.
- HASTINGS, A. 1989. African Catholicism. Essays in Discovery. Philadelphia, London : SCM, Trinity.
- HAYS, R.B. 1989. Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul. New Haven : Yale University Press.
- JOHNSON, L.T. 1981. Sharing Possessions. Mandate and Symbol of Faith. Overtures to Biblical Theology, vol. 9. Philadelphia : Fortress.
- JOHNSON, L.T. 1986. The Writings of the New Testament. An Interpretation. Philadelphia : Fortress.
- JONES, jr, A. 1984. Paul's Message of Freedom: What does it Mean to the Black Church. Valley Forge : Judson.
- JOUBERT, S.J. 1998. Antieke weldoenerskap en die interpretasie van die Nuwe Testament. *Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, 39(3):154-161.
- KINGHORN, J., ed. 1986. Die NG Kerk en apartheid. Johannesburg : MacMillan SA.
- KYSAR, R. 1991. Called to Care. Biblical Images for Social Ministry. Minneapolis : Fortress.
- LOUBSER, J.A. 1987. The Apartheid Bible. A Critical Review of Racial Theology in South Africa. Cape Town : Maskew Miller Longmans.
- MALHERBE, A.J. 1995. Paul's Self-sufficiency (Philippians 4:11). (*In* Fornberg, T. & Hellholm, D., eds. Texts and Contexts. Biblical Texts in their Textual and Situational Contexts. Essays in Honor of Lars Hartman. Oslo : Scandinavian University Press. p. 813-826.)
- MALINA, B.J. 1993a. The New Testament Worlds. Insights from Cultural Anthropology. Rev. ed. Louisville : WJK.
- MALINA, B.J. 1993b. Windows on the World of Jesus. Time Travel to Ancient Judea. Louisville : WJK.
- MIRANDA, J. 1982. Communism in the Bible. Trans. Barr, R.R. Maryknoll : Orbis.
- MOXNES, H. 1988. The Economy of the Kingdom. Social Conflict and Economic Relations in Luke's Gospel. Overtures to Biblical Theology. Philadelphia : Fortress.
- MOXNES, H. 1991. Patron-Client Relations and the New Community in Luke-Acts. (*In* Neyrey, J.H., ed. The Social World of Luke-Acts. Models for Interpretation. Peabody: Hendrickson. p. 141-168.)
- NOLAN, A. 1999. Sharing is a Christian Virtue. *Challenge*, 52:14-15.
- NÜRNBERGER, K. 1978. The Economics of Paul. (*In* Nürnberger, K., ed. Affluence, Poverty and the Word of God. An Interdisciplinary Study Program of the Missiological Institute Mapumulo. Durban : Lutheran Publishing House. p. 163-171.)
- OAKMAN, D.E. 1996. The Ancient Economy. (*In* Rohrbaugh, R., ed. The Social Sciences and New Testament Interpretation. Peabody : Hendrickson. p. 126-143.)
- O'BRIEN, J. 1992. Theology, and the Option for the Poor. *Theology and Life*, vol. 22. Collegeville : Liturgical.
- OSIEK, C. 1992. Slavery in the Second Testament World. *Biblical Theology Bulletin*, 22(4):174-179.

- PERKINS, P. 1988. Reading the New Testament. An Introduction. Rev. ed. London : Geoffrey Chapman.
- POTTER, P. 1993. The Global Economic System in Biblical Perspective. (*In* Reuver, M., Solms, F. & Huizer, G., eds. *The Ecumenical Movement Tomorrow. Suggestions for Approaches and Alternatives.* Kampen, Geneva : Kok, WCC. p. 13-35.)
- RUPPRECHT, A.A. 1993. Slave, Slavery. (*In* Hawthorne, G.F., Martin, R.P. & Reid, D.G., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters.* Downers Grove : IVP. p. 881-883.)
- SCHMIDT, T.E. 1993. Riches and Poverty. (*In* Hawthorne, G.F., Martin, R.P. & Reid, D.G., eds. *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters.* Downers Grove : IVP. p. 826-827.)
- SCHRAGE, W. 1988. The Ethics of the New Testament. Trans. Green, D.E. Philadelphia : Fortress.
- SEGOVIA, F.F. 1995a. "And They Began to Speak in Other Tongues": Competing Modes of Discourse in Contemporary Biblical Criticism. (*In* Segovia, F.F. & Tolbert, M.A., eds. *Reading from This Place. Vol. 1: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in the United States.* Minneapolis : Fortress. p. 1-32.)
- SEGOVIA, F.F. 1995b. Cultural Studies and Contemporary Biblical Criticism: Ideological Criticism as Mode of Discourse. (*In* Segovia, F.F. & Tolbert, M.A., eds. *Reading from This Place. Vol. 2: Social Location and Biblical Interpretation in Global Perspective.* Minneapolis : Fortress. p. 1-17.)
- SEGOVIA, F.F. 1995c. The Text as Other: Towards a Hispanic American Hermeneutic. (*In* Smith-Christopher, D., ed. *Text & Experience: Towards a Cultural Exegesis of the Bible.* Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press. p. 276-298.)
- SEGOVIA, F.F. 1998. Biblical Criticism and Postcolonial Studies: Towards a Postcolonial Optic. (*In* Sugirtharajah, R.S., ed. *The Postcolonial Bible. Bible and Postcolonialism, vol. 1.* Sheffield : Sheffield Academic Press. p. 49-65.)
- SIDER, R.J. 1977. Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger. A Biblical Study. London : Hodder & Stoughton.
- SZESNAT, H. 1997. The Concept of "Class" and Social-Scientific Interpretation of the New Testament – Some Observations on the Analysis of Pauline Christianity within the Society of the Early Roman Principate. *Nederduits Gereformeerde Teologiese Tydskrif*, 38(1-2):70-84.
- VERHEY, A. 1984. The Great Reversal. Ethics and the New Testament. Grand Rapids : Eerdmans.

### **Key concepts:**

ancient economy  
 Paul – selfsufficiency  
 Paul's vision on work  
 Pauline studies

### **Kernbegrippe:**

ekonomie – in antieke tyd  
 Pauliniese navorsing  
 Paulus – siening van werk  
 Paulus – vergenoegdheid