

PAUL'S USE OF ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ (“SPIRITUAL”)

By John Harley¹

The idea of Pauline spirituality “is as old as the hills.” In *The Dictionary of Paul and His Letters* Meye categorizes Pauline spirituality, covering many themes, theological and ethical.² He has done an admirable job. This writer’s project is more modest, however. He will attempt merely to exegete Paul’s usage of the term πνευματικός (“spirituality”).³ The effort will hopefully bring the reader to appreciate the eschatological nature of the Spirit’s work, and to see that Pauline, and thus biblical, spirituality is “Spirit-uality,” because it is derived from the new world, the world of the risen Christ who has sent the Spirit of the age to come.

Gordon Fee takes a look at πνευματικός in Paul. Fee says that the word belongs to the -ικός class of adjectives, “formed from their corresponding nouns and bearing the meaning, “belonging to, or pertaining to,” the corresponding noun. Πνευματικός therefore denotes “belonging to the Spirit.”⁴ This is a shift away from the universal “of the spirit/Spirit.” Selwyn says the adjective means “concerned with the spirit”; in his view πνευματικός does not necessarily focus on Spirit.⁵

I believe that Fee is correct. He is one of many scholars breaking new ground in pneumatology. In his book *God’s Empowering Presence* he expertly and cogently demonstrates that the doctrine of the Holy Spirit is far, far more pervasive in Paul than normally understood. Even though Fee’s work is thoroughly rooted in exegesis, arguably his reasoning is heavily presuppositional: He starts from the basis that a

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²R. P. Meye, “Spirituality,” *DPL*, 906-16. His categories are background, the Spirit of God and spirituality, Pauline spirituality, “Yes to God,” the experiential foundation of Pauline spirituality, union with Christ, the practice of the Spirit, spirituality and sanctification, sin and sanctification, imitation and discipleship, the triad of prayer, word and community, prayer as a primary paradigm of spirituality, the locus of spirituality, the fruit and gifts of the Spirit, the Spirit and common life, Gratitude: the heartbeat of Pauline Spirituality.

³We shall also look at the adverb πνευματικῶς.

⁴Gordon Fee, *God’s Empowering Presence* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994), 28-32.

⁵Edward Gordon Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (London: MacMillan & Co. Ltd., 1955), 282. Also, James D. G. Dunn, “Πνεῦμα, Πνευματικός,” *DNTT* 3, 706-7; E. Schweitzer, “Πνεῦμα, Πνευματικός,” *TDNT* 6, 436-37.

theology of the Spirit is very evident in Paul. Part of his thesis is that πνευματικός denotes “Spiritual.” Is his exegesis contrived? I do not think so. Fee’s method is perfectly legitimate as long as he exegetically establishes his point.

My thesis about πνευματικός is stronger than Fee’s. I will demonstrate that it always denotes the eschatological Spirit, and not merely the Spirit from whom Spirit-ual blessing originates. As with Fee, my argument is also heavily presuppositional, but will be defended by exegesis.

The paper will build to an exegesis of Romans 7:14, which is the climax. This text belongs to a highly disputed pericope. I hope that what I will say will improve our understanding of the pericope.

The first section of this paper is a brief account of the theology of the eschatological Spirit in Paul. Following this is an exegesis of πνευματικός in Paul that shows the eschatological context and meaning of πνευματικὸς. Finally, the paper will offer a conclusion.

THE ESCHATOLOGICAL NATURE OF THE SPIRIT’S WORK

Lewis B. Smedes writes, “Most biblical scholars agree that for Paul the Spirit of Christ is the eschatological reality.”⁶ Only a tiny part of that vast scholarly material can be given. Fee says:

Pivotal to the Spirit’s central role is the thoroughly eschatological framework within which Paul both experienced and understood the Spirit. The Spirit had played a leading role in this—and others’—expectations about the end times. Along with the resurrection of Christ, therefore, the outpoured Spirit radically altered Paul’s eschatological perspective. On the one hand, the coming of the Spirit fulfilled the Old Testament promises, and was the sure evidence that the future had already been set in motion; on the other hand, since the final consummation of God’s kingdom had not yet taken place, the Spirit also served as the guarantee of the final glory. *It is impossible to understand Paul’s emphasis on the experienced*

⁶Lewis B. Smedes, *Union with Christ* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 46.

*life of the Spirit apart from this eschatological perspective that dominates his thinking [italics mine].*⁷

Salvation in Christ is fundamentally an eschatological reality; eschatology “so thoroughly conditions Paul’s outlook on everything.” Empowered “by the Spirit, we now live the life of the future in the present age, *the life that characterizes God himself*” [italics mine].⁸ “For Paul it was precisely the gift of the Spirit which distinguished the Christian from the Jew, the new age from the old.”⁹

The Spirit’s work is within the setting of the two Adams. The events of Pentecost and the promises of the Spirit in the Old Testament are founded upon the relationship “between protology and eschatology, between the first Adam and the last Adam.” The Spirit’s task is to restore fallen mankind to the glory it lost in Adam, but which has been recovered and surpassed in Christ, the second and last Adam.¹⁰ The Spirit is the Spirit of Christ, and therefore the Spirit of the crucified Christ. “The gift which is the Spirit is simply the foundation and starting point for all that follows in Paul’s soteriology.” The Spirit is the first installment of the full inheritance that awaits the final resurrection and the coming of the risen Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. “In the between times, the power of the resurrection is always experienced in the weakness of the flesh.” NT “spirituality” is therefore “Spirituality,” and must follow that path of the crucified Christ, and not result in a divisive “us-them” attitude. “The believer’s whole life as believer is lived in the overlap of the ages, within the eschatological tension between Adam and Christ, between death and life. That means also with the experience of the conflict between flesh and Spirit.”¹¹

Having related that the Spirit’s work is conspicuously set within an eschatological framework, we will see that the term πνευματικός participates, as we would expect, in the same nature.

⁷Gordon Fee, *Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999), 180.

⁸Ibid., 52. See, Richard Gaffin, “A Cessationist View,” *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today?* ed. Wayne Grudem (Leicester, England: IVP, 1996), 29; Geerhardus Vos, *Redemptive History and Biblical Interpretation: The Shorter Writings of Geerhardus Vos* ed. R. Gaffin (Phillipsburg, N. J.: Presbyterian & Reformed), 91-125.

⁹James D. G. Dunn, *Christ and the Spirit*, vol. 2, *Pneumatology* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 13.

¹⁰Sinclair Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit* (Leicester, England: IVP, 1996), 248-49.

¹¹James D. G. Dunn, *The Theology of the Apostle Paul* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 494, 495. See Herman Ridderbos, *Paul: An Outline of His Theology*, trans. J. R. De Witt (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1975), 221-22.

Richard Gaffin, in his superb work *Resurrection and Redemption*, informs us that the πνευμα - σαρκ antithesis in Paul, “while it has important anthropological implications, is fundamentally a historical contrast.”¹² The contrast is between this age, the age of the flesh, and the coming age, the age of the Spirit, which has invaded the present.¹³ Whatever is πνευματικός participates in the power of the age-to-come that comes from the Spirit.¹⁴ Gaffin does not exegete every use of πνευματικός; nevertheless, he does serve to make us aware that it is an eschatological concept.

I shall now proceed to exegete the various uses of πνευματικός.

AN EXEGESIS OF ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ¹⁵

1 Corinthians

2:4-3:1

The spiritual person of 1 Corinthians 2:15 is not one who is spiritually mature, but one endowed with the Spirit, and who discerns the mind of God concerning salvation, says Fee.¹⁶ Although this may be too strong a comment, since there is probably an emphasis upon maturity, Fee sets the tone for our discussion. The πνευματικός person is contrasted to the one who is ψυχικός —i.e., one who does not know the mind of God because he does not have the Spirit. This is an eschatological distinction, for Paul says that his words and preaching came not in words of the wisdom of men, but in demonstration of the Spirit and the power of God (vv. 4-5). The wisdom that Paul spoke was not of this age, for it is passing away with its rulers (v. 6).¹⁷ The eschatological emphasis reveals that the wisdom of God belongs to a

¹² Richard Gaffin, *Resurrection & Redemption* (Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian & Reformed, 1978), 109.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 107-9.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 108-9.

¹⁵ This writer will look at the usage of the term book by book and not by classification. By doing so, the reader will get a feel for the Spirit-ual context of πνευματικός. The classifications are as follow: substantive: masculine, singular and plural (1 Cor 2:15; Gal 6:1); substantive: neuter plural (Rom 15:27; 1 Cor 2:13; 9:11; 12:1; 14:1; Eph 6:12); adjective (1 Cor 3:1; 14:37; Rom 1:11; 7:14; 1 Cor 2:13; 10:3, 4 (x2); 15:44 (x2); 15:46 (x2); Eph 1:3; 5:19; Col 1:9; 3:16).

¹⁶ Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 108.

¹⁷ Σοφίαν δὲ λαλοῦμεν ἐν τοῖς τελείοις, σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου οὐδὲ τῶν ἀρχόντων τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου τῶν καταργουμένων.

different age or sphere.¹⁸ The wisdom of God is his mystery revealed through the Spirit; it was hidden in God himself and searched out by the Spirit, who then revealed it to the elect (vv. 7-10). Therefore, no one knows the mind of God except the Spirit (v. 11). All who believe in Christ have received the Spirit, and consequently know God's mind (v. 12). The eschatological distinction is taken up again in verse 12, where it says we have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit who is from God.¹⁹

On two different occasions it is said that the Spirit operates within an eschatological framework—verses 7 and 12. In verse 7 it might have been expected that Paul would have completed his contrast by describing the other age (αἰῶν) more distinctly in terms of the entrance of the new aeon's power or dominion. Instead, he refers to the hiddenness of God. This serves to demonstrate that God's eschatological work can be expressed in what seems to be non-eschatological language. In referring to the hiddenness of God's wisdom the greatness of the revelation of the age to come is magnified. In verse 12 Paul contrasts the world and its spirit with the Spirit from God. By "world" is denoted the evil nature of mankind, while possibly connoting the environment of earth itself. The fallen world, with fallen man at its center, is not able to taste the wisdom of God. Paul contrasts that world with the Spirit who comes from God. Again, we might have expected eschatological language; but Paul chooses to use more simplified language. The distinction Paul is making is not merely between earthly, thus sinful, things and God who is holy and all wise; the contrast is not merely cosmological, ontological or moral. Instead, the contrast is essentially eschatological: The world that we presently live in is contrasted to the "world" that is to come and that we presently experience in the Spirit. The new world has begun in Christ Jesus' death and his resurrection from the dead. Contextually speaking, the new world has its roots in the wisdom of the all-wise God, who is victorious over the present evil world.

In verse 13 Paul begins by saying that what he speaks is from God and His wisdom, and not from human wisdom. In verse 13b Paul adds, "but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual

¹⁸C. K. Barrett, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, BNTC, 2nd ed. (London: A & C Black, 1992), 70. See Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 103.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 112-13.

(πνευματικοῖς) thoughts with spiritual (πνευματικὰ) words.” Verse 13b is exceedingly difficult to exegete. Fee paraphrases, “‘We speak words taught by the Spirit,’ which means that we [explain] spiritual things [probably referring to the ‘things freely given us by God,’ v.12] by means of, or with, the spiritual words taught us by the Spirit.”²⁰ In continuance of the theme of “spiritual” things, Paul says in verse 14 that the natural man does not and cannot understand the things of the Spirit because they are “spiritually (πνευματικῶς) appraised.” Now Paul is using the adverb. Contra Selwyn,²¹ the Spirit endows the Christian so he can discern the things of God.²²

Throughout 1 Corinthians 2:4-13 Paul maintains that the eschatological Spirit imparts the knowledge of God. In verse 15 the “spiritual” (πνευματικὸς) man is the one who has received the wisdom that belongs to God, to the other world or aeon. This is not merely to say that the wisdom has come from God and is not earthly. The contrast is between the fading away forces of this earth and the power of the world to come. Paul concludes in verse 16 by identifying the wisdom of God with the mind of Christ. He applies what he has said up to this point, and concludes that he could not speak to the Corinthians as spiritual men, but as men of flesh, as babes in Christ (1 Cor.3:1).²³ Many Corinthians were behaving as though they had never been given the Spirit of God. They were divisive (1 Cor 3:2ff). The fruits of their lives demonstrated that they were fleshly (σαρκίνοις). The fleshly behavior of the Corinthians is contrasted to the Spirit-ual wisdom of God. Once again, Paul has in mind an eschatological distinction: Some of the Corinthians’ mentality and life was truly this-worldly and did not accept the wisdom of the world to come, divine wisdom. This is highlighted in that Paul goes on to warn the Corinthians of the coming day of judgment (vv. 13-15). After that, he asserts, “Do not deceive yourselves. If any one of you thinks he is wise by the standards of this age (ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ), he should become a “fool” so that he may become wise” (v. 18).

This brings us to look at other uses of πνευματικός in 1 Corinthians.

²⁰Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 115.

²¹Selwyn, 283.

²²Ibid., 117.

²³Οὐκ ἠδυνήθητε λαλῆσαι ὑμῖν ὡς πνευματικοὺς ἀλλ’ ὡς σαρκίνοις, ὡς νηπίοις ἐν Χριστῷ.

9:11²⁴

The Spiritual work that Paul refers to in 1 Corinthians 9:11 is the preaching of the Gospel, the wisdom of God, referred to in verses 14, 18, and explicated in 1 Corinthians 1-3. Fee says that the Corinthians are reaping “the things that have to do with the Spirit.”²⁵ This is correct. Yet, the eschatological element is not necessarily missing—bearing in mind that what I mean by eschatological is not merely that which is of divine origin and does not belong to this world, but *also* that which belongs to God and therefore to the world to come. Preaching is compared to the material benefits reaped by the apostles (vv. 8-12). There is probably the undertone of a two aeon distinction: The new world blessing of preaching the Gospel is compared and contrasted to reaping the benefits of this world (see the exegesis of Romans 15:27). Paul later comments that his Spiritual service is to the end of attaining the great prize of final salvation as expressed in the new world and its order (1 Cor 9:24-26).

10:3-4

Moo cites 1 Corinthians 10:3-4 as an example of πνευματικός meaning “of divine origin.”²⁶ Fee notes that the verses relate that the drinking and eating in the wilderness provide a type or analogy of the Lord’s supper. He adds that verse 4b suggests a spiritual reality beyond that which meets the human eye.²⁷ Barrett writes that the miracles “were used by the Spirit as visible prophecies of what was still to be established.”²⁸ I would suggest that the *significant* nature of the blessings of the wilderness is that they pointed toward the heavenly, new world, life of God.

To develop matters, the context needs scrutinizing. Paul is continuing his polemic against the immature Corinthians. To rebuke the Corinthians, he cites the example of the Jews in the wilderness. They

²⁴In 1 Corinthians 1:10-3:1, the triumvirate of wisdom, Spirit, and spirituality coinhere, and is the expression of the revelation of God that is eschatological in nature and that has the cross of Christ as its core. Paul refers to σοφία again in 3:19 and 12:8, and drops off πνευματικόν in 3:1, to pick it up again in 9:11, etc. Paul continues to refer to the Spirit up until 7:40, only to incline to Him again in 12:3. Arguably, the thrust of the epistle is the superior wisdom of God revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord—a wisdom that protects the sanctity of God’s church, the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that opposes all the fleshly ways of men. The point being made is that Paul’s use of πνευματικός is conceivably reiterating the same idea of eschatological life throughout his epistle.

²⁵Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 409.

²⁶Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 453.

²⁷Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 446-47.

²⁸Barrett, 222.

were punished for not having accepted the blessings they received, and for revolting into idolatry (10:5-7; see 5:11; 6:9). Secondly, there is an obvious eschatological element in 1 Corinthians 10, for in verse 11 it says, “Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come.” It is the eschatological element that is most important for my argument. To understand this I must describe the eschatological nature of OT miracles.

The history of the OT people of God and the revelation integral to that history had a theocentric focus: They pointed to God, the God of history, and yet who is above history, unfolding his plan of redemption, His new age, in ever increasing intensity.²⁹ Not every incident in the OT evinced an overtly Christological aspect. Indeed, it can be argued that Christology proper does not begin until the NT era and the revelation of God in His Son (cf. Heb 1:1-2). Even so, the whole history of the Israelites is the history of salvation; and salvation is by nature an eschatological entity. Looking from the NT perspective, the eschatological dimension of the OT is more readily seen, and is even, on a literary level, artistically sketched on occasions into NT interpretations of the OT. Another way of saying the same thing is that the blessings of the Israelites in the OT came from the Spirit of the heavens. God is the key to hermeneutics. His “timelessness” is in itself the surety of the fulfillment of salvation expressed in the new heavens and new earth. More specifically, His separation from the progression of time ensured that time was being used by Him to bring redemptive history unto its only natural conclusion: the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. It makes our task more difficult if we do not construe the OT with this eschatological-theocentric paradigm. Commenting on the Spirit-endued prophets of the OT, Geerhardus Vos writes,

All this, while not eschatological in itself, becomes of importance for our present purpose, because it is a recognized principle in New Testament teaching that in one aspect the eschatological order of things is identical with the heavenly order of things brought to light. If the Spirit stands

²⁹Cf. W. Van Gemeren, *Interpreting the Prophetic Word* (Grand Rapids: Academie Books, 1990), 80-92.

representatively for the latter, He will naturally reappear in the same capacity as regards the former.³⁰

This formula probably also applies to the reference to Christ in 1 Corinthians 10:5. Paul writes that the Israelites of the wilderness had rejected Christ. Here again we see the coinherence of wisdom (Christ) and the Spirit-ual. Just as the OT people of God rejected the food of the heavenly (new world), the NT saints were in danger of doing the same thing by abusing the Spirit-ual “food” of the Lord’s Supper.

12:1; 14:1

In 1 Corinthians 12:1 we are told of “spiritual things.” Fee maintains that πνευματικά here and in 14:1 refers mainly to the Spirit’s activity, and *charismata* (spiritual gifts) is the particular form of the πνευματικά.³¹

Paul is still in polemical mode in chapters 12-14. The divisiveness of chapters 1-3 takes a new form: superiority according to possession of certain spiritual gifts. Such behavior is effectively the same as that of the Jews in the wilderness. Paul’s opening salvo in chapter 1 is to affirm that we are baptized into Christ, into the wisdom of His cross. The same rationale is developed in chapter 12. Here Paul asserts that the person possessed by the Spirit will not follow idols but confess that there is one God, one Lord, and one Spirit. The Corinthians were guilty of returning to dumb idols, but of a different nature. These new, yet old, idols were the false gods of the abused charisma that the Corinthians had created. The Corinthians had idolized the gifts and had completely suppressed their purpose. The one Spirit imparted these gifts for the edification of the one body of the one Lord. Boasting about possession of certain gifts was to attack the truly Spirit-ual origin of the gifts. The gifts were given by the new-age Spirit to be instruments of edification or love (cf. chapter 13). And the love of God is the only “gift” or grace to endure and bring us into the presence of God in the new age.

14:37

1 Corinthians 14:37 says, “If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual.” Fee says that this was the core of Paul’s argument in 1

³⁰Vos, 97.

³¹See Fee’s discussion, Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 575.

Corinthians. The Corinthians were convinced they were “spiritual” but Paul was not convinced (2:15; 3:1).³² What has been said up to this point in the article would suffice to interpret 1 Corinthians 14:37. Yet we can say that the implication of 14:37 is that a truly Spirit-ual person will acknowledge that the Spiritual gifts and blessings are special endowments that are meant to draw the church into deeper experiences, experiences of love (1 Cor 13), a love that is the ultimate expression of the new world (1 Cor 13:12-13). However, the charismatically gifted “elite ones,” instead of perceiving the Spirit of the new world behind the πνευματικόν, were falling into the selfish and divisive mentality (wisdom) of this age.

15:44, 46

Perhaps one of the clearest evidences that πνευματικός denotes the other, new world is found in 1 Corinthians 15:44, 46. Fee thinks that for Paul to say that the σῶμα was πνευματικός would have shocked the Corinthians. Paul is contrasting the body that belongs to this age and the body that belongs to the new aeon, and has been recreated in Christ's image by the Spirit; the former body bears the image of Adam, the latter bears the image of the risen Christ.³³

Although there is no explicit reference to wisdom theology in 1 Corinthians 15, wisdom elements are there. The difference is that Paul's refrain concerns the resurrection of the dead, especially the resurrection of believers in Christ. Certain Corinthians were threatening the unity of the body by teaching that the resurrection from the dead was a myth. Paul says that this heresy has to stop, for if Christ has not been raised from the dead our faith is in vain. Paul's use of πνευματικός is concerned with the bodily resurrection of believers from the dead. They will receive new, Spirit-ual bodies. The unSpiritual behavior of the Corinthians, which I have already recorded, is in fact a category of this world's destructive and divisive powers, of which death is the final expression. Thus, there is overlap: The divisive doctrine of the so-called Spirit-ual ones is tantamount to denying the Spirit-ual victory of Christ over death.

³²Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 711.

³³*Ibid.*, 788. Paul's eschatological argument is taken further; in 15:50 he says that flesh (*sarx*) and blood will not inherit the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is the new world, the place of the Spirit; the flesh will inherit the corruption of this age.

1 Corinthians 15 is the capstone of Paul's polemic begun in chapters 1-2. Having made the same point earlier, it is still to our advantage to recount the "two Adams" theology of Paul. To him, salvation was deliverance from one Adam to another, from one world to another, from one age to another, from one wisdom to another. Commenting on 1 Corinthians 15, Herman Ridderbos says that Adam and Christ

. stand over against each other as the two great figures at the entrance of two worlds, two aeons, two "creations," the old and the new; and in their actions and fate lies the decision for all who belong to them, because these are comprehended in them and thus are reckoned either to death or life. This is now expressed by "in Adam" and "in Christ."³⁴

The new Adam's status is so intertwined with the role of the Spirit that Paul terms Christ the life giving Spirit (15:45; cf. 2 Cor 3:17).³⁵

Throughout Paul's use of the term in 1 Corinthians, there is a polemical strain, which is to say that πνευματικός is used to underline the unSpirituality of Corinthians, their abuse of the Spiritual, new world origin of the blessings and wisdom that they have received.

Galatians 6:1

Galatians 6:1 says, "Brethren, even if a man is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, lest you too be tempted." For Fee, πνευματικός denotes "Spirit" people and not spiritual people. All of the Galatians were in Christ and therefore had His Spirit. They were to restore a fallen brother. Paul uses πνευμα in the second part of the verse. Fee says that the Galatians would have recalled everything that Paul had already said about the Holy Spirit. Consequently, Fee opts for

³⁴Herman Ridderbos, *Paul*, 61. Cf., Chul-Hae Kim, " "The Last Adam, a Life-Giving Spirit": Starting Point for Understanding the Book of Romans," *TTJ* 2, no. 1 (Nov. 1999), 101-14; Anders Nygren, *Commentary on Romans* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 47-51; N. T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1993), 18-40; James D. G. Dunn, *Theology of the Apostle Paul*, 79-101, 495.

³⁵See Ridderbos, 88; Smedes, 36-43.

S(s)piritual: Those who are patient, who have received patience from the Spirit, ought to restore weak brothers.³⁶

Fee again is very helpful. However, it is hard to see how πνευματικός can refer to all the Galatian Christians. He does not see the tension in his argument: All the Galatians are Spiritual; those who are Spiritual should restore those who are not. But who was not Spirit-ual? Paul is not critiquing some external group of Judaizers, but members of the Galatian church. All the Galatians had received the Spirit, but not all were keeping in step with Him (5:25b). That is why previously he said in 5:16, “But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.” The same contrast between Spirituality and fleshliness was evident in 1 Corinthians 3:1. The tension is resolved if we remember that Spirit-uality means submitting to the wisdom of God and living by it, a wisdom that lies at the center of the coming age.

The eschatological category can be detected in the rest of chapter 6. Paul is addressing the problem of inflated egos (6:3). Some had promoted themselves to an eloquent spiritual status. Paul had been dealing with Judaizing tendencies and its concomitant misinterpretation of the role of the Law. True fulfillment of the Law of Christ (which is to say the Mosaic Law exalted in Christ—see exegesis of Romans 7:14) is love. If a man boasts in his relationship to the Law, let him love and share the burdens of his brother (cf. Rom 2).³⁷ The unSpiritual person is fleshly (Gal 6:7-10). The Spirit and the flesh are opposed to one another. Paul had remonstrated that true “Law” obedience is Spirit-energized love for Christ and His people (3:2, 3, 5, 14; 4:6, 29; 5:5, 16, 17, 18, 22, 25; 6:8). A Spiritual one is one who is justified by faith in the Lord Jesus and walking in the Spirit, fulfilling the law of Christ. It is eschatological Spirituality, for it has as its goal eternal life. In the meantime, in this age, we are to continue to demonstrate that we are qualified to be saints who have an inheritance, “but the one who sows to the Spirit shall from the Spirit reap eternal life. And let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we shall reap if we do not grow weary” (6:8-9).

³⁶Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 461-62.

³⁷Cf., R. Alan Cole, *Galatians*, rev. ed., TNTC (Leicester, England: IVP, 1989), 226.

Ephesians

1:3

Ephesians 1:3 says, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.” Fee says that there is not a contrast here between heaven and earth.³⁸ Best thinks that the spiritual blessings are those derived from the eschatological Spirit.³⁹ Fee⁴⁰ and Lincoln⁴¹ write that the heavenly realm is the realm of the spirits, good and evil; because believers are united with Christ, they reign triumphantly over evil forces in the heavenly places (6:12).⁴² Lincoln holds that the victory of Christ is eschatological as both heaven and earth have been appropriated by the new age.⁴³

What are these blessings? The Spiritual blessings are described in verses 3ff.. They are Spirit-ual because we have received the eschatological Spirit who is the seal of our inheritance, “In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory” (1:13-14). Our present experience of the blessings of the Spirit are the first fruits of the ultimate subjugation of all heavenly forces at the time when we will receive our inheritance (cf. 1 Cor 15:24; Rom 8:38ff.; Eph 1:21ff; Phil 2:9; Col 1:20; 2:10, 15).⁴⁴

5:19

We need to see the wider context of 5:19. There is a distinct eschatological background. In 5:5, the Ephesians are told that no immoral person has a part in the inheritance of the kingdom of God and Christ. As children of the light, we are to flee the darkness and walk in the light. We are to redeem the time because this present day or time is evil (5:15-16). This is to say that the Ephesians are to be filled with the Spirit (5:18). Then Paul says that they are to encourage one another

³⁸Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 667.

³⁹Ernest Best, *Ephesians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1998), 114.

⁴⁰Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 667-68.

⁴¹Andrew Lincoln, *Ephesians*, WBC 42 (Texas: Word Books, Publisher, 1990), 20-21.

⁴²Cf. Ephesians 1:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12; Philippians 2:10; Colossians 1:19-20.

⁴³Lincoln, 20-21.

⁴⁴Cf., Ridderbos, 89.

with songs (v19), which, according to Best, is the fruit of being filled with the Spirit.⁴⁵ There is an implied contrast: Not all of the Ephesians were of a humble nature. 5:21-6:9 details how submission must be attained to in relationships. The songs were probably Spirit-ual in that they were derived from the Spirit, and that they proclaimed the victory of Christ. The Spiritual songs were signs of the greater fulfillment of Christ's victory over the heavenly spirits, and its application to us in the reception of the Spirit who is the guarantee and seal.⁴⁶

6:12

Here we have the only instance of πνευματικον being used in a non-Spiritual manner, as it refers to spiritual forces of evil—obviously a reference to fallen angels. The Spiritual songs of the saints are a victory cry over the forces of evil, forces that, ironically, oppose God's kingdom, the new order of things, the Spiritual domain.

Colossians

1:9

The triumvirate I spoke of in 1 Corinthians surfaces again in Colossians. The Colossians demonstrated love in the Spirit (1:7). Paul prays that they be filled with all Spiritual wisdom and understanding (1:9),⁴⁷ so that they may enjoy the inheritance of the saints in light. Dunn says that the will of God referred to, His knowledge, no doubt includes the teaching of the rest of the epistle to the Colossians, but it should not be limited to it. Knowledge includes Torah. There was a more sure way of knowing the revelation of God—namely, personal transformation flowing from inward renewal, “so that [Paul] can sum up the call to Christian conduct in terms of walking in accordance with the Spirit (Rom 8:4, 13-14; Gal 5:16, 18, 25).” The eschatological Spirit renews the inner man to obey the Torah, the will of God.⁴⁸ Fee says that the wisdom of God is contrasted to the earthly, fleshly,

⁴⁵Best, 510.

⁴⁶For an account of God the Warrior's defeat of principalities and powers in Paul's writings, see Tremper Longman, III, & Daniel G. Reid, *God is a Warrior* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 136-64.

⁴⁷ Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ἡμεῖς, ἀφ' ἧς ἡμέρας ἠκούσαμεν, οὐ παύομεθα ὑπὲρ ὑμῶν προσευχόμενοι καὶ αὐτοῦ ἕμενοι, ἵνα πληρωθῆτε τὴν ἐπίγνωσιν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ ἐν πάσῃ σοφίᾳ καὶ συνέσει πνευματικῆς.

⁴⁸James D. G. Dunn, *The Epistles to Colossians and to Philemon*, NIGTC (Carlisle, England: Paternoster Press, 1996), 69-70.

ψυχικός wisdom of man (see 1 Cor 2:13-3:3). As in 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, the mind of Christ is imparted by the Spirit and leads us into holiness.⁴⁹

In 1 Corinthians we saw that the wisdom of God was eschatological. As in Ephesians, Christ has conquered the heavenlies, “through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven” (1:20). He has also reconciled the Colossians in order to present them before God holy and blameless and beyond reproach on the day of final judgment (1:21).

3:16

An eschatological context is not wanting for 3:16. 3:1 refers to the Colossians as having been raised with Christ to the right hand of God. Because of this, they are to set their hearts on things above, the other world, and not on earthly things (v. 2). Their life is hidden in the resurrected, other-world Christ (v. 3) He will appear for a second time to consummate His victory and His glory in them (v. 4).⁵⁰ Verse 10 recalls the theology of the two Adams and two worlds.⁵¹ There are no racial, gender, or social distinctions in the new kingdom (v. 11). Paul then begins a series of applications in verses 12-17. In particular the word of Christ, the risen, other-world Messiah, is to dwell richly in the hearts of the Colossians *in all wisdom* to spur and enable them to teach, admonish and sing spiritual (πνευματικόν) songs (v. 16). These songs were given by the eschatological Spirit so that the Colossians could make melody concerning the wonder of the new age in Christ Jesus, His supremacy as the one who has reconciled all things to Himself.

Romans

1:11

The wider context takes us into two aeon theology. The contrast between flesh and Spirit in Romans 1:4 is indicative of the two world theology.⁵² I agree with N. T. Wright⁵³ that Romans 1:3-4 is

⁴⁹Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 642-43.

⁵⁰Peter T. O’ Brien, *Colossians, Philemon*, WBC 44 (Milton Keynes, England: Word Publishing, 1987), 159-71, 119-21. Cf. Markus Barth & Helmut Blanke, *Colossians*, The Anchor Bible 34b (New York: Doubleday, 1994), 392-97.

⁵¹Barth & Blanke, 410-13; Dunn, *Colossians*, 221-23; O’ Brien, 190-92.

⁵²Most commentators agree—e.g., Nygren, 47-51.

programmatically for Romans—contra Moo.⁵⁴ At the very least, it must be conceded that Paul summarizes the Gospel in verses 3-4.⁵⁵ Ridderbos believes the contrast in verses 3-4 is between the old Adamic aeon and the new aeon in Christ. Ridderbos is bold enough to say that Christ was also subject to the old aeon, but that he ushered in the new through His resurrection.⁵⁶

However, our immediate concern is not the programmatic nature of Romans 1:3-4—as important as this is—but the purpose of these verses. By his Spirit-ual resurrection, having been raised by, clothed and gifted with, the Spirit, the Messiah sets apart His workers to call a people from among the Gentiles (vv. 5-6). Paul personalizes this theology and expresses his longing to be once again in the midst of the Romans, so that he may have a harvest amongst them (vv. 11, 13). The apostle of the Gentiles, called by the risen, Spirit-endowed, and Spirit-gifted Christ, longs to impart a Spiritual blessing to the Corinthians.

Moo believes the “spiritual gift” of Romans 1:11 is “an insight or ability given Paul by the Spirit, that Paul hopes to “share” with the Romans.”⁵⁷ Kasemann holds that Paul is probably referring to the charismatic gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:3ff.⁵⁸ Cranfield prefers to look at the charismata more generically: Although Paul’s gift was of the same nature—i.e., spiritual, as the gifts of 1 Corinthians, nevertheless it had a different appearance.⁵⁹ Fee has an exciting interpretation. He states that throughout his letter Paul is seeking to explicate the mystery of the Gospel to the Gentiles—God has opened up the gates of salvation to Gentiles. For Fee, the “gift” is knowledge. Paul sent Phoebe back with the “Spirit-gift” of the epistle to the Romans; but he longed to be with the Romans to explicate this knowledge.⁶⁰ Therefore, the precise Spirit-

⁵³Nicholas T. Wright, “The Messiah and the People of God. A Study with Particular Reference to the Argument of the Epistle to the Romans” (Ph.D. diss., University of Oxford, 1980), 52-55. The programmatic section is possibly 1:1-5. Wright refers to the linguistic links between 1:3-5 and 1:16-17, and thematic links between the verses 3-5 and the rest of the epistle.

⁵⁴Moo, *Romans*, 47.

⁵⁵See Joseph A. Fitzmeyer, *Romans*, The Anchor Bible 33 (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1993), 230.

⁵⁶Ridderbos, 66-67.

⁵⁷Moo, *Romans*, 60.

⁵⁸Ernst Kasemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. & ed. G W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994), 19.

⁵⁹C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, 2 vols. in 1 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1990), 1:79.

⁶⁰Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 488-89.

ual gift given by Paul is the knowledge, *wisdom*, from God given through the eschatological Spirit, knowledge of the blessing of the new covenant that has the gift of the resurrection, new world Spirit at its heart. In context, the Spirit-ual blessing is the wisdom of God that creates out of two rebellious people, Jews and Gentiles (see Romans 1-2), one new man or body.

Before coming to Romans 7:14, Romans 15:27 will be examined.

15:27

Paul refers to the Gentiles as having shared in Spiritual blessings belonging to the Jews, and that, consequently, the Jews ought to receive material blessings from the Gentiles. What is the spiritual nature of the blessings received by the Gentiles? They probably are the Gospel message and a tradition of religion.⁶¹

It may seem that all we have in Romans 15:27 is a distinction between spiritual blessings and material blessings. However true this is, there may be more to it than that. Dunn comments,

The contrast between πνευματικά and σαρκικά is understandable simply as a contrast between spiritual blessings and material needs. But there may be an overtone here of the πνευμα/σάρξ antithesis which has been a feature of the letter (1:3-4; 2:28-29; 7:5-6, 14; 8:4-13), with the neatly turned implication that the flow of the blessing from Jew to Gentile is at the spiritual level and not in terms of ethical assimilation; on the contrary, at the level of the flesh, the flow of benefit is from Gentile to Jew!⁶²

In 1:11 Paul refers to the Spiritual gospel. There it meant the new-world gospel. The Gentiles could help materially, that is, they could provide help from this world. But their giving is meant to be a response to the fact that they heard the gospel of the Spirit, of the new world, from the lips of the Jews. In this way, the πνευμα/σάρξ antithesis is better appreciated. To say that God gives spiritual blessings as contrasted to earthly blessings is rather unclear. What is a "spiritual" blessing? A blessing that is from God. Do not all blessings flow from

⁶¹Cf. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, 2 vols. in 1. (Edin burgh: T & T Clark, 1990), 2:733.

⁶²James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 9-16*, WBC 38b (Dallas: Word Books, Publisher, 1988), 876.

God? Moreover, the Word of God is certainly given to men through earthly or human *means*: Jews proclaimed the Gospel; Jews wrote the Gospel. It is better to think of Spiritual, new world blessings, as this sets the contrast between the present world and its “resources” and the future world and its.

This brings us to perhaps the most complex and controversial use of πνευματικόν.

7:14

Basic thesis. Fee⁶³ and Moo⁶⁴ believe that the Law is spiritual because it has a divine or spiritual origin—God inspired the Mosaic Law. Dunn does say that the πνευματικός - σαρκίνοσ distinction is part of Paul's emphasis on the dichotomy between the present epoch of Adam, and the epoch of salvation originating from the second Adam.⁶⁵ Fitzmeyer writes, “as *pneumatikos*, the law belongs to the sphere of God, to the sphere of the Spirit of God.”⁶⁶ Cranfield comments, “It is only those who have the Spirit who can truly acknowledge the law and consent to it with their minds. and also in their lives make a beginning of real obedience to it...”⁶⁷ Don Garlington believes that the Law's spirituality is to be identified with the new creation. In Matthew 12:28 and Luke 11:20 the Spirit of God is equated with the “finger of God.” The Spirit is the author of the Law. It is the Spirit who wrote the requirements of the Law of God on the hearts of the Gentiles (Rom 2:14-15). He continues his work in writing the Law of God upon our hearts (2 Cor 3:3; Jer 31:31f.).⁶⁸ I believe Garlington is on the right track, and his view does make allowance for the perspective taught by Moo and Fee. However, I also think that the eschatological distinction is not yet pronounced enough. Dunn has more to say:

On the contrary, it is the flesh-law tie-up which has brought Israel, in its pride in national identity as the elect people of God, under the power of sin, whereas it is the eschatological outpouring of the Spirit which has liberated Paul and the law

⁶³Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 510.

⁶⁴Moo, *Romans*, 453.

⁶⁵Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 388. See, Ernst Kasemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. & ed. G. W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 200; Bruce, *Romans*, 151-52; Fitzmeyer, 474.

⁶⁶Fitzmeyer, 473.

⁶⁷Cranfield, *Romans 1*: 356.

⁶⁸Don Garlington, “Romans 7,” *Reformation Today* 91 (Jan-Feb): 4.

from that too narrowing understanding of the law's role. This liberated and liberating tie-up of the law and Spirit Paul expresses more clearly in 8:2-4.⁶⁹

I do not accept Dunn's understanding of the role of Law in first-century Israel, and in the first-century church. However, his belief that the Law is Spiritual because it is liberated by the eschatological Spirit is commendable. David Peterson concludes, "In a sense, the law belongs to both epochs."⁷⁰

Moo rejects this argument, preferring to believe that in Romans 7:14ff. Paul is referring to unregenerate man.⁷¹ It would take a separate paper to answer Moo.⁷² All we can provide is some general criticisms of his exegesis. The issue is, ultimately, theological: Did the Mosaic Law liberate us? Let me start with Romans 6:1-10.

Romans 6:1-10. Paul says that we have been once-for-all delivered from sin. Salvation is depicted in antithetical categories: Either we serve sin or we serve God. More specifically, we are told that the Christian *cannot* serve sin. It is also true that for this reason we are told not to offer the parts of our bodies to sin (v. 13). Even so, there must be a reason why Paul makes such an injunction. What is the ground of his command? The ground is that the sinner is still fighting with sin. But according to Romans 6 we have once-for-all been delivered from "sin." Sin is that evil master, which has allied itself with the Law and the flesh, to overcome all men. "Sin" in Romans 6 is not without the Law; it is νόμιμα, it is Law-sin. The triumvirate of Law-sin-flesh is unbreakable. Therefore, the *implication* is that, although we have been delivered once-for-all from the flesh, sin, and the Law, flesh, sin, and the Law still wage war against us. This implication is developed in Romans 7.

Romans 7:1-6. Romans 7:1-6 throws up additional information. Moo sees more in the details of the allegory of these verses than many commentators.⁷³ He is right to do so. Again, at the risk of over simplification, what we have in these verses is an implied dualism in the role of the Law. We died to the Law "in Christ." This is the key. It

⁶⁹Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 387.

⁷⁰David Peterson, *Possessed by God*, NSBT (Leicester, England: IVP, 1995), 107. See pages 106-08, 143-49.

⁷¹Moo, *Romans*, 423-67.

⁷²For a response to Moo, I would refer the reader to Dunn's commentary on Romans 7.

⁷³Moo, *Romans*, 413-14.

is the same theology as Romans 6:1-3. For the Christian, the difference is Christ. The logic of Paul is this: Our former husband died; therefore, we are free from the Law of marriage. Who was our former husband? It was Christ! He is the one who was cursed. Christ became sin, a curse; in effect, he became, the province of the Law, sin, and death.

We are married to a new husband. Who is the new husband? Christ! It is the risen Christ we are married to. The old way of the letter, of the Mosaic covenant, has disappeared, the new way of the Spirit has appeared. However, the point is this: You cannot have a husband without the “law of her husband” (ατήρηται ἀπὸ τοῦ νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός). Here is a new triumvirate: Husband, marriage, Law! Why, then, does Paul not refer to a new Law? He does not do so because it is already pointed out to the readers that the new Law is the Spiritual-Law/covenant, the Law of God written on our hearts by the Spirit of God (Rom 2:28-29).

Romans 7:13ff. In the rest of Romans 7, Paul expounds upon the part the Law has and is playing in his life. First of all, he counters any accusations that he is saying that the Law as such is evil (vv. 7-13).⁷⁴ He then proceeds to the role of the Law in the believer (vv. 14ff.). Moo comments on verse 21, “Consistency would suggest that the ‘law’ (νομος) Paul refers to here is the Mosaic law, in accordance with his usual use of the term and its meaning throughout 7:4-20.” However, Moo concludes νομος means “principle.”⁷⁵ Fee is prepared to go as far to say that the “law” that the mind serves (v. 25) is the Torah, but he denies that “law” in verse 21, and “law of sin” in verses 23 and 25, is the Torah. Fee’s argument, when boiled down to its essentials, is that there is only one Torah; and, therefore, Paul cannot be referring to two “Torah-laws.”⁷⁶

I am not in full agreement with Fee. Dunn gives a structural analysis. He says that ευρισκω (v. 21) reiterates Paul’s message of verse 10:

ευρεθη μοι η εντολήεις ζωνν...εις θανατον (v. 10)
ευρισκω τον νομον...το καλοντο κακον (v. 21)

⁷⁴Cf. Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 510-11.

⁷⁵Moo, *Romans*, 460.

⁷⁶Fee, *Empowering Presence*, 511-14.

The Torah or command (v. 10) brought death; the Torah or Law brought evil (v. 21). Verse 21b is a compression of verses 18-19, “with *καλον* again providing a variation of *αγαθον*.”⁷⁷

Perceiving the eschatological nature of the Law, its spirituality, is vital to exegeting Romans 7:21-25. Pauline dualism in Romans 7 surrounds *νομος* and *εγω*, “[In verse 14] Paul is beginning his argument that there is a duality both in the law (law-sin, and law-Spirit), and in himself as a typical believer (flesh-sin, and mind-Spirit; see on 7:21, 22, 23, 25), and that these two dualities are mutually complementary (flesh-law-sin; mind-law-Spirit).”⁷⁸ Paul, “I,” is split between two kingdoms: the world of Adam and the world of Christ and His Spirit. He belongs to both at the same time.⁷⁹ The Law has a dual meaning to Paul therefore. Welker crystallises my overall position on the Spirituality of the Law:

Yet the clarity attained with the simple dichotomization and abstract of (negatively characterized) “law” and (positively characterized) “Spirit” is deceptive. This becomes evident even if one looks only at texts of Paul. Romans 7:14 says explicitly that “the law is *spiritual*.” Romans 8:2 sets in opposition to the “law of sin and of death” not simply the Spirit who makes alive, but the liberating “*law* of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.” These formulations would be incomprehensible if Paul thought that a merely negative characterization of the law and the naked opposition of law and Spirit were appropriate to the material. In addition, it would be impossible to explain why Paul speaks not only of the “*law* of the Spirit,” but also of the “*law* of faith” (Rom 3:27) and the “*law* of Christ” (Gal 6:2; 1 Cor 9:21), if his point were to set up an abstract opposition between the negative law that leads to ruin and the positive forces and effects of the Spirit [*italics his*].⁸⁰

Ultimately, it is the “rock” of Romans 7:25 into which Moo’s thesis crashes and is made shipwreck; for having eulogized the grace of

⁷⁷Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 392.

⁷⁸*Ibid.*, 387.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, 388; Bruce, 151-52; Ridderbos, 67-68;

⁸⁰Michael Welker, *God the Spirit*, trans. J. F. Hoffmeyer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994), 254.

God in verse 24, Paul concludes that he, the believing sinner, is fighting a war within himself, a war of two "Laws."

I will continue my exegesis into Romans 8:1-4, since, as Dunn notes, it is a highly important pericope for understanding Romans 7:14.

Romans 8:1-4. Moo struggles with the idea of νόμος in verse 2 meaning the Mosaic Law on both occasions. The notion that νόμος can liberate sinners from the same νόμος is incongruous, and also ignores the Pauline dualism between Law and Spirit.⁸¹ The key matter is, in what way does the Spirit enable us to fulfill the requirements of νόμος (v. 4)? We must first of all understand verses 1-4 against their eschatological background.

Dunn points out that οὐν (v. 1) is eschatological (3:26; 5:9, 11; 6:19, 21; 8:18, 22; 11:5, 30-31; 13:11; 16:26; cf. οὐν in 3:21; 6:22; 7:16-17). He continues, arguing that κατακρῖμα recalls the great climax of 5:12-21, "It is the black and white contrast between both epochs (Adam and Christ) marked out so decisively in 5:12-21 to which Paul here reverts, not the grayer area of overlap which characterizes so much of the discussion in the latter halves of chaps. 6 and 7." Further, τοῖς ἐν χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ focuses our attention on the division between Adam and Christ.⁸² Contra Dunn, the two-aeon motif permeates the whole of Romans 6-7,⁸³ but the rest of what Dunn says is exceedingly enlightening.

Christ died in order that the requirements of the Torah might be fulfilled in the believer (v. 4). "Paul deliberately and provocatively insists on the continuity of God's purpose in the law and through the Spirit."⁸⁴ Moo refuses to accept that "fulfillment" refers to Spirit empowering the believer to obey the Law and thus fulfill it. First of all, the verb says, "might be fulfilled," and points "to something that is done in and for us." To Paul, πληρωσθαι pertains "not to a human being "doing" the law in a concrete existence," but to "the climactic, eschatological completion of the law first made possible in Christ (cf. also Rom 13:8, 10) [πληρωμα]; Gal 5:14)." Second, the believer can never perfectly fulfill the law. Christ fulfilled the law, and his righteousness is imparted, through union, to the believer. In this way the believer has "done the law".⁸⁵

⁸¹Moo, *Romans*, 474-75.

⁸²Dunn, *Romans* 1-8, 415.

⁸³See Peterson, 107-9.

⁸⁴*Ibid.*, 423.

⁸⁵Moo, *Romans*, 483-85.

Moo's citation of Romans 13:8, 10 and Galatians 5:14 is, to say the least, perplexing. The plain force of these verses is that the Law is fulfilled by obedience. The only other instance of πληρωθῆ in Paul is 2 Corinthians 10:6, where it is written that the believer's *obedience* will be made complete.

Looking at "requirement" (δικαιώματος) also presents difficulties for Moo. Its use in Romans 5:16, 18 might seem to support his thesis. However, in Romans 1:32 δικαιώμα is the internal knowledge of God written on the hearts of Gentiles. Further, in Romans 2:26 we read, "If therefore the uncircumcised man *keeps* the requirements (δικαιώματα) of the Law, will not his uncircumcision be regarded as circumcision?" I accept Moo's assumption that Paul is here describing regenerate Gentiles.⁸⁶

The allegory of Romans 7:1-3 is picked up in 8:3-4. The Son condemned sin in the flesh (8:3); our husband, Christ, died to the Law (7:4); in order that the righteous requirements of the Law might be fulfilled in us (8:4); in order that we might belong to another, that we might bear fruit to God (7:4).

Mark A. Seifrid dissents to this view. We get to the heart of his opinion in the following comment:

The law no longer represents the substance of the *b^erit*, but has become an object of it: God will write the law upon the hearts of his people. He promises to replace the former commandment with an act which will accomplish that which the commandment could never achieve. God himself alone will effect obedience within his people. He will then truly be their God. The people themselves will no longer need instruction or admonition: to put the matter in Paul's terms, no "written code"! Each one from the least to the greatest will know the Lord. The new *b^erit* which God takes upon himself is predicated upon his utter mercy. He will forgive the iniquity of his people and remember their sin no longer.⁸⁷

I want to underline with Seifrid that the Law *as written code*, as the means of salvation, is indeed *not* the substance of the new covenant. However, *the Law* as fulfilled by our Lord and sealed upon our hearts

⁸⁶Ibid., 171-172. Cf., Cranfield, *Romans* 1:384.

⁸⁷Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness* (Leicester, England: Apollos, 2000), 111.

by the Spirit *is* the substance of the new covenant. The “written code” was preparatory and could only condemn. The Spirit-ual Law is the final matter, the liberator of our souls.

Seifrid, Moo, and Fee make the fundamental error of subordinating the place of the “new Law” written on the heart to being a consequence of the work of Christ, the work of the Spirit. But it is precisely because *Christ's* work, his life and death, are constantly at work within us that Paul can refer to a Spirit-ual Law. Of course, the predicate of the Law written on the heart is the mercy of God. However, this does not obviate the Law as substance; indeed, it demands it; for the salvation or mercy given to sinners is itself founded upon the activity of Christ in fulfilling the Law. Another way of stating the same tension is to say that, although Paul radically dichotomizes the Law and the Gospel, in doing so he contrasts the “written code” with the good news *of the Law written on the heart*.⁸⁸

CONCLUSION

The foundation for my exegesis was the eschatological nature of the Spirit's work. He brings to full fruition the victory of Christ, the second and last Adam, in his death and resurrection. 1 Corinthians 15:44, 46 is the message that Christ's victory over Adam is completed by the resurrection of believers from the dead in the power of the Spirit—they are to receive Spiritual bodies. This ultimate and final victory has already begun in the believer. He has received the Spiritual blessing of salvation (Eph 1:3), and has concurrently been raised with Christ into heavenly places to reign triumphantly over spiritual forces (Eph 6:12). The victory of Christ is expressed in songs given by the eschatological Spirit (Eph 5:19; see Col 3:16). Christ's victory as the second and last Adam must express itself in those who are united with

⁸⁸In 2 Corinthians 3, Seifrid observes that the Mosaic Law was divinely ordained to be a ministry of death, and that its glory was therefore the precursor to the superior glory of the apostolic ministry. In a footnote Seifrid says that because of the nature of the Mosaic covenant the Jews could never fulfill it. Then he makes a most interesting comment, “[Israel] can receive the law from the good Lord himself, but it cannot keep it. It requires a mediator, the role which Moses fills for a time” (Seifrid, 112). In what way did Moses fulfill the role of mediator? He did so inasmuch as he was the only one who had access into the presence of God. He thereby demonstrated that a greater glory was to come. What is central for our concern is Seifrid's thought that Moses fulfilled the role of mediator of the Law *for a time only*. The corollary is that Christ fulfilled the Law as mediator *on a permanent basis*. Is this not the message of Hebrews? Christ is *the* mediator *of the Law*, for He brings *all* His brothers into the presence of God.

him. In the Christian, the Spirit wars against the flesh, but the truly spiritual believer is the one who walks in the Spirit (Gal 6:1). The “unSpiritual” believer does not apply the thought that all temporal gifts or blessings given by the Spirit (1 Cor 10:3-4; 12:1; 14:1) are to the end of provoking him to persevere to the end and to live his whole life in the power of the Spirit of the new world.

The most repeated concept filling out πνευματικόν is knowledge or wisdom. Because it is the Spirit's role to magnify the risen and resurrected Lord, his most fundamental activity is to impart knowledge of the Savior. The Spirit imparts to believers the mind or wisdom of God. This wisdom is the knowledge of Christ's death and resurrection (1 Cor 2-3:1; Col 1:9; Rom 1:11). The tension between the next world and the present is set forth in the difference between receiving material blessings belonging to this world, and the Spiritual knowledge of God belonging to the next (1 Cor 9:11; Rom 15:27). Through this knowledge, God is calling to himself a new people, and creating a new body, made up of Jews and Gentiles (Rom 1:11). The most controversial aspect of the heavenly, eschatological knowledge is the Spiritual Law. The Law's Spirituality was contrasted to the flesh. It was determined that the Law's Spirituality was a reference to its exalted and consummated nature that resulted from the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He fulfilled the Law. By faith in this fulfillment, the Christian receives the Spirit, who enables him to likewise fulfill the Law in love. This had implications for the rest of Romans 7, especially the latter verses and their use of νόμος.

There may still be doubt in the reader's mind. The tendency of exegetes today is to discover the nuances of biblical terminology and to be exceedingly cautious in making generalizations, or in providing comprehensive categories. It may well be that I have read too much into certain texts. I do not believe, however, that my basic thesis would be undermined if some references to πνευματικός denoted merely “belonging to the Spirit.” Having said this, there is the danger of “missing the woods for the trees.” There are many broad theological principles, motifs, and concepts that underlie Paul's theology that must be taken into account, else the full depth of a given text may not be perceived; a mere “on-the-surface” exegesis—however erudite—would not be able to “mine” these concepts. Thoughtfulness is therefore necessary, for there is a real risk of abstracting the Spirit from his eschatological setting. We saw that Paul set the language of

150-PAUL' S USE OF ΠΝΕΥΜΑΤΙΚΟΣ

Spirit/Spirituality within an eschatological setting without explicitly using eschatological terms (1 Cor 2:7, 12; 10:3, 4; cf. Gal 4:21ff). In establishing an eschatological context for each use of πνευματικον, I have applied the method of Geerhardus Vos:

The pneumatic life of the believer, while centered in heaven, loses none of its eschatological setting. Back of the static continues to lie the dramatic; the distinction between the earthly and the heavenly is not cosmologically but eschatologically conceived. By the pneumatic as a synonym of the heavenly Paul does not mean the heaven or the spiritual in abstract, but heaven and the spiritual as they have become in result of the process of redemption.⁸⁹

If this thesis is correct, it would mean that πνευμα and its cognates need to be reconsidered in the light of a distinctly engineered two-age theology.

⁸⁹Vos, 116.