

JOHN FREDERICK

The Ethics of the  
Enactment and Reception  
of Cruciform Love

*Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
zum Neuen Testament 2. Reihe*

487

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**Mohr Siebeck**

Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen  
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John Frederick

# The Ethics of the Enactment and Reception of Cruciform Love

A Comparative Lexical, Conceptual,  
Exegetical, and Theological Study  
of Colossians 3:1–17

Mohr Siebeck

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*For my spiritual fathers in the faith,  
Rt. Rev. William Murdoch (Bishop Bill), Rev. Roger Nelson, and  
Matthew Kruse*



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# Abbreviations

## Primary Sources

De Finibus	Cicero. <i>De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum</i> . Vol. XVII. Translated by H. Harris Rackham et al. 30 Volumes. LCL (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1914).
Ench.	Epictetus, <i>Enchiridion</i>
Diss.	Epictetus, <i>Dissertations/Discourses</i>
DL	Diogenes Laertius
Lives	<i>Lives of Eminent Philosophers</i>
NE	Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i>
Or./Discourses	Dio Chrysostom. <i>Discourses</i> . Translated by J. W. Cohoon (Or. 1-31) and H. Lamar Crosby (Or. 32-80). 5 Volumes. LCL (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1932–1955).

## Select Journals, Monograph Series and Commentaries

Journal, monograph, and commentary series abbreviations follow the SBL Handbook of Style. The following list includes some journals not accounted for in the SBL Handbook and a selection of other sources cited in this book, some of which may be less well known in the discipline.

AB	Anchor Bible Commentary
AGJU	Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
ARSHLL	Acta Regiae Societatis Humaniorum Litterarum Lundensis
BDAG	A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature.
BJS	Brown Judaic Studies
BJSSPM	Brown Judaic Studies: Studia Philonica Monographs

BRS	Biblical Resource Series
BSS	Black Sea Studies
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
COQG	Christian Origins and the Question of God
CPh	Classical Philology
CSAP	Continuum Studies in Ancient Philosophy
DBZAW	Durham Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
EGGNT	Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament
FPh	Forum Philosophicum
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HCS	Hellenistic Culture and Society
HNT	Handbuch zum Neuen Testament
HTKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
JHS	The Journal of Hellenic Studies
JJS	Journal of Jewish Studies
JMT	Journal of Moral Theology
JR	The Journal of Religion
JSP	Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha
KTAH	Key Themes in Ancient History
LCM	Loeb Classical Monographs
LEC	Library of Early Christianity
MCL	Martin Classical Lectures
MTZ	Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift
ÖTK	Ökumenischer Taschenbuchkommentar zum Neuen Testament
PFES	Publications of the Finnish Exegetical Society
Phr	Phronesis
RNT	Regensburger Neues Testament
RUSCH	Rutgers University Studies in Classical Humanities
SCLT	Stoicism in Christian Latin Thought Through the Sixth Century
SCHNT	Studia ad corpus hellenicum Novi Testamenti
Sem	Semeia
SHC	Studies in Hellenistic Civilization

SHR	Studies in the History of Religions
SIPOT	Studies in Personalities of the Old Testament
SMGP	Studien und Materialien zur Geschichte der Philosophie
SNTW	Studies of the New Testament and Its World
SUNT	Studien zur Umwelt des Neuen Testaments
SVF	Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta





## Chapter 1

# Literature Review and Methodology

### A. Thesis Statement

This book will demonstrate that the use of the ethical catalogue form in Colossians 3 is an example of a common literary form which appears in almost every tradition of the first century Hellenistic world. I will show that the author of Colossians has taken up this literary form as means of communicating and demonstrating the Christian ethical life to a largely Gentile audience (in Colossae) in a way that would be conducive to effective communication, easy comprehension, and successful acquisition and appropriation. Furthermore, I will argue, contrary to Troels Engberg-Pedersen,<sup>1</sup> that neither the apostle Paul nor the author of Colossians adopts a Stoic underlying pattern of thought. Neither, as N.T. Wright has recently proposed, does Paul<sup>2</sup> appropriate or transform a more Aristotelian virtue ethic in the form of an “ancient pagan theory of virtue” on account of his use of the catalogue form.<sup>3</sup> Such claims cannot merely be assumed but instead must be demonstrated by a detailed study of both the correspondences of the words themselves in their various contexts, and the function of those words within the texts, systems, and patterns of thought of each particular author. Based upon the results of my lexical and conceptual studies and the theological conclusions which stem from them, I will demonstrate that Aristotelian, Stoic, and Cynic categories and concepts do not form the basis upon which the author of Colossians was constructing his ethical vision for the church. Instead I will demonstrate that Paul and Colossians is working from an inherited Jewish Two Way ethic which views ethical realities in terms of binary opposites.

Any study in the provenance and pattern of ethics in Colossians must seek to identify: (1) the primary source of influence of the ethical language, lexemes,

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<sup>1</sup> Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000).

<sup>2</sup> N.T. Wright, *The Epistles of Paul to the Colossians and to Philemon: An Introduction and Commentary* (TNTC 12; Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 1988). Wright considers the apostle Paul to be the author of Colossians. Cf. N.T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*. 2 Vols. (COQG 4; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> N.T. Wright, *Virtue Reborn* (London: SPCK, 2010), 207, 209.

and content of the epistle, and (2) the nature of the driving, ethical, programmatic pattern of thought which controls the mechanics and logic of the ethical system of Colossians.

Concerning the primary sources of influence for the ethical words in Colossians, in regard to the virtues, I will argue that the author chooses ethical terms which describe the character of the *Righteous* and the character of God in the LXX and Jewish sources, and which can also be derived from the sayings and descriptions of God and Jesus Christ in the New Testament. In regard to the vice terms, I will show that the author derives the bulk of his terms from his inherited Jewish ethical tradition, but feels free to incorporate new terms of vice from his cultural milieu when they are commensurable with his governing Jewish moral vision. These terms are then embedded in a Hellenistic literary catalogue form. Whenever there is true overlap between Paul, Colossians, and the Greco-Roman moralists, these parallel terms show themselves to be incidental, common, all-purpose, ubiquitous ethical words which are widely used in antiquity and across ethical schools of thought. The terms, on the other hand, which show themselves to be entirely absent from Colossians (and from the generally accepted Pauline epistles) prove to be of the greatest importance. For, these Greco-Roman terms which are unattested in Colossians represent those key systematic and programmatic themes, such as *εὐδαιμονία* and *ἀπάθεια*, which drive the governing ethical patterns of thought of the ethical schools of Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Cynicism. Therefore, the presence of ubiquitous incidental words across Greco-Roman schools and in Colossians essentially tells us nothing more than that the author of Colossians was situated in the same first century context as those Hellenistic writers who use these widely shared and generally agreed upon terms of moral virtue and vice. The absence of the key systematic and programmatic terms, however, in concert with the absence of other crucial Greco-Roman doctrines, concepts, and ideas makes it exceedingly unlikely that the author of Colossians was operating under an Aristotelian, Cynic, or Stoic pattern of thought.

Through an exegesis of Colossians, I will demonstrate that the pattern of thought which drives the ethic of the epistle is neither the *eudaemonia* nor *middle way* of Aristotle, nor the principles of *life in accord with nature* or *apathy* of the Stoics or the Cynics. Rather, the moral vision of Colossians is governed by a pattern of thought that aims at the perfection of the Christian through the enactment and reception of cruciform love in the context of the church. For Colossians, ethics and ethical catalogues are not personal codes that lead to individualistic behaviorism and perfectionism, but rather the blueprint of communal Christlike transformation through cruciform participation in divine love.

## B. General Introduction

This book constitutes a study of the ethical material in Colossians 3 which is widely considered to represent the form of the ethical catalogue. Additionally, it is a study of the ethical patterns of thought within which catalogues of this sort appear and function in a selection of literary works of antiquity by the authors who are antecedent to and roughly contemporaneous with Colossians. The study of the use of ethical catalogue forms in the New Testament received significant attention in the 20th century, primarily through four major German works by Alfred Seeberg, Anton Vögtle, Siegfried Wibbing, and Ehrhard Kamlah.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, a major work was published in English by E.G. Selwyn<sup>5</sup> as a part of his commentary on 1 Peter in 1947. Lastly, several short articles throughout the 20th century were published, including a notable and oft-quoted contribution arguing for a Hellenistic provenance by Burton Easton Scott<sup>6</sup> and an equally influential article by M. Jack Suggs which argued for a New Testament connection with the Scriptural theme of the Jewish Two Ways.<sup>7</sup> More recently, scholars such as Abraham Malherbe, Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Michael Thompson, N.T. Wright, Allan Bevere, and James W. Thompson have contributed new research which has both expanded old theories and put forth new theories concerning the nature of the apostle Paul's interaction with Hellenistic ethics and his Jewish heritage.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Alfred Seeberg, *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit*. Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung (Georg Böhme), 1903; Anton Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament: Exegetisch, religions- und formgeschichtlich untersucht* (NTA 16; Münster: Aschendorff, 1936); Siegfried Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge im Neuen Testament: und ihre Traditionsgeschichte unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Qumran-Texte* (BZNT 25; Berlin: Alfred Töpelmann, 1959); Ehrhard Kamlah, *Die Form der katalogischen Paränese im Neuen Testament* (WUNT 7; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1964).

<sup>5</sup> E.G. Selwyn, *The First Epistle of St. Peter* (London: MacMillan, 1947).

<sup>6</sup> Burton Easton Scott, "New Testament Ethical Lists," *JBL* 51 (1932): 1–12.

<sup>7</sup> M. Jack Suggs, "The Christian Two Ways Tradition: Its Antiquity, Form, and Function," in *Studies in New Testament and Early Christian Literature*, ed. David Edward Aune (NovTSupp 33; Leiden: Brill, 1972), 60–74.

<sup>8</sup> Abraham J. Malherbe, *The Cynic Epistles: A Study Edition* (SBLSPS 12; Missoula: Scholars Press, 1977); Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* (LEC 4; Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1986); Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989); Abraham J. Malherbe, "Greco-Roman Religion and Philosophy and the New Testament," in *The New Testament and Its Modern Interpreters*, ed. Eldon Jay Epp and George W. MacRae (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1989), 1–26; Abraham J. Malherbe, "Hellenistic Moralists and the New Testament," in *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neueren Forschung. Part 2, Principat, 26.1* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1992), 267–333; Abraham J. Malherbe, "Stoics," in *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*, ed. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *The Stoic Theory of Oikeiosis: Moral Development and Social Interaction in Early Stoic*

While the standard classic works and the more recent contributions on the topic provide illuminating facts concerning the NT catalogues in their historical context, there is a definite need for new works which investigate not only the literary form and the lexical content of the NT ethical lists but also the governing ethical patterns of thought in which these catalogues are situated. These new studies need to operate from an updated and more critical methodology which takes into account not only the lexical correspondences and parallels, but also the semantic value of words, phrases, forms, and ideas within their own contexts and within the operative and respective systems of thought of the author of each particular work. The earlier 20th century studies tend to look broadly across massive spans and schools of Hellenistic and Jewish thought in the first century, and across several books and authors of the NT. This approach is useful to an extent, especially in tracing the phenomenon and frequency of word usage and forms across a variety of contemporaneous schools. However, as my methodology section will indicate, this former approach, with its heavy emphasis on comparative lexical study *alone*, does not sufficiently provide information concerning the operative ethical underlying pattern of thought of any of the authors or texts in question.

Therefore, this book is an attempt at both continuity and progress: continuity, in terms of working from a conscious effort to proceed with the level of rigor and detail in comparative lexical study that was indicative of the works of the past centuries; progress, in that by focusing on a more narrow group of texts than past studies, I intend to uncover both the lexical similarities and differences between the terms in the literary works, and also to understand how these words function in their various contexts. My study will focus specifically on the Epistle to the Colossians 3:5, 8, 12–17 and the ethical terms contained therein, in comparison with a selection of antecedent and contemporaneous Aristotelian, Cynic, Stoic, and Jewish works in order to determine: (1) the provenance of the literary form, (2) the source of influence for the ethical content of the catalogues of Col 3:1–17, and (3) the governing ethical pattern of thought which drives the usage of the ethical list in Colossians.

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*Philosophy* (SHC 2; Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "Stoicism in Philippians," in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context*, ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1994), 256–90; Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Paul and the Stoics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000); Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "Paul, Virtues, and Vices," in *Paul in the Greco-Roman World: A Handbook*, ed. Paul Sampley (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2003), 608–33; Michael Thompson, *Clothed with Christ: The Example and Teaching of Jesus in Romans 12.1–15.13* (JSNTSup 59; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991); N.T. Wright, *Virtue Reborn* and N.T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*; Allan R. Bevere, *Identity and the Moral Life in Colossians* (JSNTSup 226; London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003); James W. Thompson, *Moral Formation according to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2012).

The limitation of this study to Aristotelian, Cynic, Stoic, and Jewish works is intentional. The lack of engagement with Epicurean, Neopythagorean, Middle Platonic, and Jewish pseudepigraphal sources should not be taken, however, to suggest a disregard for the importance of these sources as significant literary works of antiquity which would make a valuable contribution to the field of inquiry pursued in this book. Ideally, the works of Plutarch, the fragments of Epicurean writings, and the Jewish Pseudepigrapha, as well as the Latin works of Seneca—at the very least—would have been included. Yet, given that the methodological praxis of this work revolves around a deep (rather than a surface level, merely lexical) engagement with each original source surveyed, the breadth of sources consulted must be limited in advance.<sup>9</sup>

## C. Literature Review

### 1. *Studies dealing with Ethical Catalogues and Comparative Lexical Studies*

#### 1.1. *Alfred Seeberg*

In 1903 Alfred Seeberg published the work *Der Katechismus der Urchristenheit*, which argued, in part, that the ethical content of the Pauline epistles was derived from a fixed oral teaching called “the ways.” This early Christian paradosis was said to have been constructed from Jewish sources and traditions which were themselves derived from the moral contents of OT passages such as Leviticus 18 and 19.

Though Seeberg’s hypothesis for a fixed ethical teaching (“the ways”) as the source of the Pauline paraenetic content seems to have been largely rejected (to the point of being called a “fiction”)<sup>10</sup> and has been subsequently abandoned by scholars, it continues to offer some valuable prolegomena for any study of virtue and vice lists in the NT. Seeberg’s view that the NT ethical lists stem in part from a shared Jewish tradition of teaching which was rooted in the Scriptures as received through the early Christian faith communities is a point which has been frequently argued in several recent publications on Pauline ethics, and is becoming a dominant position in the field.<sup>11</sup>

However, Seeberg’s main argument, which proposes that the apostles (and specifically Paul) were drawing from a *consciously-received* and specifically

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<sup>9</sup> For an introduction to religious and philosophical movements contemporaneous with early Christianity beyond the ones considered in the current study see Hans-Josef Klauck, *The Religious Context of Early Christianity: A Guide to Graeco-Roman Religions* (SNTW; Fortress: Minneapolis, 2003).

<sup>10</sup> Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, 109: “Die Fiktion eines Proselytenkatechismus erweist sich so auf Grund des vorliegenden Materials als unhaltbar.”

<sup>11</sup> See esp. Bevere, *Sharing in the Inheritance* and Thompson, *Moral Formation according to Paul*. My own research in this thesis will further strengthen this proposal.

*fixed* form, is problematic and has not found modern scholarly support. The evidence presented in Seeberg's work does not make the case for the necessity of, nor the existence of, a hypothetical orally-transmitted *fixed* form. Furthermore, there is no ground for claiming that in his use of the word διδαχή, "the apostle must have had ethical instruction in mind as the content."<sup>12</sup> The word almost certainly includes ethical content, but the evidence from the context of the passages in which it appears are either too general to limit its meaning to an exclusively ethical teaching (e.g. Rom 6:17; 1 Cor 14:6, 26) or actually seem to work against such an interpretation altogether by suggesting that what is meant is more doctrinal in nature (see Rom 16:17). Likewise, the idea that the Two Ways constitutes a conscious, fixed tradition rather than a shared, scripturally-based understanding of ethics, while clever, is not sustainable or necessary.<sup>13</sup> Lastly, although Seeberg is correct to emphasize the certainly plausible notion of a shared ethical ethos amongst the NT authors and the early church in general (indeed, this seems to go without saying), he tends to rely far too heavily on lexical proofs which, upon further investigation, do not actually strengthen his thesis.

For example, his claim that, based upon the common occurrence of the words *πλεονεξία* and *πορνεία* in Paul's epistles, "we may assume that the catalogues of sins are based on a pattern, which belonged to the traditional material of the ways,"<sup>14</sup> is flawed because in order to make this claim we would expect to encounter this pattern across the entire collection of ethical teachings in the NT. Yet we do not find this level of consistency in the NT. In fact, in the NT, the word *πορνεία* occurs, outside of the Gospels and the Pauline writings, only in the Book of Revelation. Therefore, instead of serving as support for the moral catechism theory ("the ways") this lexical data actually works against it. Similarly, in the epistles, we encounter *πλεονεξία* only in Paul (6x) and 2 Peter (2x). If this word were drawn from a shared fixed oral tradition, should we not also expect it to appear in other major ethical portions from roughly contemporaneous works such as James and 1 Peter?

While Seeberg helpfully discerns a pattern in the *Kingdom of God* sayings in the Pauline epistles, this does not add anything substantial to his moral catechism theory. He rightly points out that in 1 Cor 6:9, 10; 15:50 and Gal 5:21 the word *βασιλείαν*, when acting as the direct object of the verb *κληρονομέω*, is, in every instance, non-articular. For Seeberg, this "proves beyond a doubt"<sup>15</sup> that we are dealing with a fixed-formula. However, when we notice that the

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<sup>12</sup> Seeberg, "Moral Teaching: The Existence and Contents of 'the ways'" in *Understanding Paul's Ethics: Twentieth Century Approaches*, ed. Brian S. Rosner; trans. Christoph W. Stenschke (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 55–75, 160.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 162, 163.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 165.

verbal form of *κληρονομίῳ* in conjunction with the word *βασιλείαν* occurs literally *no-where else outside of Paul*, then the entire idea of a shared *fixed-pattern* becomes doubtful. How can we construct a hypothetical source for an apostolic pattern which is attested in only one NT author?

### 1.2. Burton Easton Scott

Burton Easton Scott's article from 1932 on the ethical lists of the NT is one which is still widely read today. It is one of the few articles that has been written specifically about the ethical catalogues of the NT. He writes:

It is now generally recognised that the catalogs of virtues and vices in the New Testament are derived ultimately from the teaching of the Stoa. Lists of this kind are all but absent from the Old Testament and are scantily represented in the Talmud...In Hellenistic Jewish literature, however, such lists are fairly abundant and are elaborately developed by Philo...Early Greek Christianity, therefore, was in contact with the practice of teaching by using ethical lists on two sides, the Hellenistic Jewish and the pure Greek.<sup>16</sup>

The "generally recognised" fact of Stoic teaching as the ultimate source of the catalogues of virtue and vice is no longer generally recognized. Many of the most recent works, including my own research in this book, disagree quite substantially with Scott's emphasis on Hellenistic sources (and particularly the Stoics) as the primary influencing agent and source for NT ethics.<sup>17</sup> Nevertheless, the position, as we shall soon see, does still find some serious contemporary support, thus necessitating attention and reassessment in present day research on NT ethics, including my own in this book.<sup>18</sup>

Scott argues that there is no "original list" of NT virtues and vices, nor is there a fixed oral teaching which is informing the NT authors' choice of ethical terms. He is certainly correct in this assertion. Overall, however, Scott's methodology places too much emphasis on the catalogue form itself and as a result does not pay enough attention to OT ethics, ethical terms, and moral themes which occur outside of the catalogue form. Thus, Scott fails to see what most recent researchers and commentators now acknowledge to be a common and demonstrable theme, namely, the fact that Paul's Jewish lineage, traditions, and the LXX/Hebrew Bible itself present several unique ethical terms and concepts that are central to Paul, which are incommensurable with and absent from the Greco-Roman sources and ethical schools most contemporaneous with Paul and the other authors of the NT.

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<sup>16</sup> Scott, "New Testament Ethical Lists," 1.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. Bever, *Sharing in the Inheritance*; Thompson, *Moral Formation according to Paul*.

<sup>18</sup> I am thinking particularly of the extensive work of Engberg-Pedersen on Paul and the Stoics.



### 1.3. Anton Vögtle

Anton Vögtle's work on the virtue and vice lists in the New Testament is the first of three major comparative and lexical studies on the content and literary form of ethical catalogues. The fact that practically every recent commentary on a NT text that contains an ethical catalogue cites Vögtle's work speaks volumes for the quality of his study and the extent of its influence across theological perspectives. Vögtle attempts to investigate the literary form, content, and potential sources for ethical lists across the entire NT and very broadly across the Hellenistic world. The work, therefore, treats an impressive and wide representation of Greco-Roman sources. However, on account of this breadth it lacks depth in the analysis of the context and systems of thought for the works and authors in which the lexemes appear.<sup>19</sup>

Vögtle does manage to offer one particularly helpful contextual/theological discourse in some depth, namely, his treatment of Pauline ethics. Here his proposals continue to find resonance and support in contemporary discussions, although not always as a result of direct influence of his own theories. In particular, Vögtle's focus on the centrality of love as the center of Paul's ethic is a point which continues to be a widely agreed upon majority position in the study of Pauline ethics.<sup>20</sup> Vögtle expresses his exegetical and theological impression that, for Paul, love (*ἀγάπη*) is clearly given a preeminent status of which the other virtues seem to be manifestations. He writes:

Der Apostel selbst hat 1 Kor 13 den inneren wesensnotwendigen Zusammenhang zwischen der einen unübertrefflichen Agape und der Vielheit ihrer Erscheinungsformen in einzigartiger Weise grundsätzlich ausgesprochen und illustriert.<sup>21</sup>

The apostle's view of *ἀγάπη*, according to Vögtle is that love functions as the Quellpunkt ("source point"), Inbegriff ("epitome), Wurzel ("root"), Ziel ("aim"), and Ruhepunkt ("resting point") of his ethical instruction.<sup>22</sup> Vögtle's incorporation of the theme of "union with Christ" as an "intrinsic element of Pauline ethics" is another abiding contribution which finds a central place in current studies on Paul's ethics.<sup>23</sup>

Aside from this focus on reigning Pauline concepts, however, Vögtle's monograph tends to be more focused on a thorough, comparative lexical study. He avoids the "Greek vs. Hebrew influence" fallacy and points out that the volume

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<sup>19</sup> Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, V.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 132–33. Cf., for example, Wright, *Virtue Reborn* and Michael J. Gorman, *Cruciformity: Paul's Narrative Spirituality of the Cross* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001); *Inhabiting the Cruciform God: Kenosis, Justification, and Theosis in Paul's Narrative Soteriology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009).

<sup>21</sup> Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, 160. He argues that the love commandment is a mechanism that incorporates "eine Vielheit von Tugendbegriffen." Cf. 158.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 167.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

and influence of popular moral-philosophical ethical material in the first century would have been massive and wide-reaching. Not only is it difficult, but in many ways pointless (“sinnlos”), thinks Vögtle, to attempt to determine a neat and artificial division between the various streams of influence in Paul.<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, Vögtle arrives at a position which emphasizes the Hellenistic influence on both the content and the catalogue form of Paul’s ethical lists.

Dazu kommt, daß das Griechentum nicht nur allgemein der ethischen Terminologie des Christentums vorgearbeitet hat, sondern speziell im Katalogisieren und Systematisieren von Tugenden und Lastern, ethischen Habitualitäten und Qualitäten Einzigartiges geleistet hat; tatsächlich sind die aus griechischer Entwicklung erwachsenen Analogien am meisten unseren ntl Ken verwandt.<sup>25</sup>

At other points, Vögtle notes that many of the terms do appear in the Jewish sources. Yet, he argues, they never occur in any sort of literary style that is comparable to the catalogue form that commonly occurs in the NT.<sup>26</sup> Vögtle’s methodology here exhibits the same problem as that of Scott, that is, it focuses too heavily on the literary form of the ethical catalogue rather than the words contained therein. This impedes and masks the evidence of the OT lexemes which are now agreed to have been informing Paul’s ethics, but which, of course, do not occur in an ethical catalogue, but rather in other forms, such as poetry, prose, or historical narrative. On account of this methodology based on literary form, Vögtle argues that the Covenant Book (Exod 20:21–23:19), the rules of the Mosaic Law, the re-giving of the Law, the “Fluchkatalog” in Deut 27:15–26, the general rules of Lev 19:11–18 “cannot be used as virtue and vice catalogs,”<sup>27</sup> and that the “Spruchliteratur” does not really offer any virtues (with a few exceptions). This line of thinking has generally not been accepted and, indeed, is in the process of being addressed in the most recent literature on the subject.<sup>28</sup>

It is now understood that the lack of the literary form of the ethical catalogue in the OT does not necessarily mean that the ethical content of the NT could not be derived from the OT’s concepts and words which were originally presented in other literary forms and genres such as proverbs and psalms. In fact, it will be shown that, in the NT, ethical content originally presented in one literary form in the OT can and is re-presented in a newer textual form, namely

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 201: “Es ist bei dem gemeinsamen Bestand eben überhaupt schwierig, wenn nicht im Einzelfall sinnlos, eine griechisch-heidnische und jüdische Traditionslinie des LKS säuberlich scheiden zu wollen.”

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 4, 92.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 93.

<sup>28</sup> E.g., Bevere, *Sharing in the Inheritance*; Thompson, *Moral Formation according to Paul*.

the catalogue form, in the NT. This is because the catalogue form was a common and contextual style of writing and communication in the first century Greco-Roman world. It is Vögtle's commitment to approaching his study from the standpoint and priority of the ethical-catalogue *form* (as opposed to singular words occurring outside of catalogues and their relation to broader theological, metaphorical, and literary themes) that causes him to make methodological and interpretive errors. Although he does not say this overtly, one gets the definite impression from Vögtle's monograph that he believes the NT writers are taking over the Hellenistic forms and concepts<sup>29</sup> and adjusting them according to a distinctly Jewish perspective.

#### 1.4. Siegfried Wibbing

While Vögtle's work emphasizes more heavily the Hellenistic roots of the NT virtue and vice catalogues, Wibbing's similarly titled monograph spends more time in the Jewish sources such as the Dead Sea Scrolls, and traditions such as the Jewish Two Way ethical scheme. Taken together, the works of Wibbing and Vögtle balance one another by providing a wide-scope of the Jewish and Hellenistic literature in comparison with the ethical portions of the NT.

As with Vögtle, Wibbing is involved in a much broader study of sources here, but unlike Vögtle, the level of engagement with the Jewish sources is more substantive and revealing, especially in terms of his treatment of the theme of the Two Ways. Furthermore, Wibbing describes his method as a history-of-traditions approach which analyzes the lexical data via a comparison, not primarily of the form itself, but of the perceived structure-of-thought that constitutes the particular words used and the meaning of the passage as a whole.<sup>30</sup> In his willingness to engage in this type of analysis, Wibbing's approach is especially influential on my own methodology in terms of applying both a lexical (literary form and comparative-lexical) and conceptual (theological concepts and patterns of thought) analysis to the texts. Though he interacts frequently in his monograph with the earlier work of Vögtle, Wibbing is somewhat critical of any thesis which gives primary emphasis to Stoic and popular philosophical teachings as the source of NT ethical content on the basis of lexical parallels. He argues that many of the words are so frequent in the culture that they had become common, everyday terms. The point is well taken.<sup>31</sup>

Wibbing's basic hypothesis is that the content of the NT catalogues are influenced primarily by the concepts and ways of thought of the OT and "Late Judaism," delivered in contemporary Hellenistic forms (i.e. *Haustafeln* and

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<sup>29</sup> Vögtle, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, 158: "Aus der reichen Nomenklatur des popularphilosophischen TKs nimmt Pl einige stimmungsmäßig verwandte T-begriffe, die eine aus der neu orientierten Sittlichkeit geforderte Tugend bezeichnen konnten, auf."

<sup>30</sup> Wibbing, *Die Tugend- und Lasterkataloge*, 190.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

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